A CONTINUATION
OF
LETTERS
CONCERNING THE
CONSTITUTION AND ORDER
OF THE
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY;
ADDRESSED TO THE MEMBERS OF
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES
IN THE
CITY OF NEW-YORK.

BEING AN EXAMINATION OF THE STRictures OF THE
REV. DRS. BOWDEN AND KEMP, AND THE REV.
MR. HOW, ON THE FORMER SERIES.

BY SAMUEL MILLER, D. D.
ONE OF THE PASTORS OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH IN THE SAID CITY.

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BE it remembered, that on the fifth day of December, in the thirty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, WILLIAMS & WHITING, of the said district, have deposited in this Office the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

"A Continuation of Letters concerning the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry; addressed to the Members of the Presbyterian Churches in the city of New-York. Being an examination of the strictures of the Rev. Drs. Bowden and Kemp, and the Rev. Mr. How, on the former series. By Samuel Miller, D. D. one of the Pastors of the First Presbyterian Church in the said City."

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the time therein mentioned; and also to an Act, entitled an Act, supplemental to an Act, entitled an Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the time therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching, historical and other prints."

CHARLES CLINTON,
Clerk of the District of New-York.
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LETTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

It is more than two years since I addressed you in a series of "Letters on the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry, as deduced from Scripture and Primitive Usage." The resolution to call your attention to that subject was reluctantly formed, after much deliberation, and in compliance with what appeared to me an evident and imperious demand of duty. A love of controversy makes no part of my character. Neither my taste nor my talents are by any means suited to the field of contention. But when a minister of the gospel perceives any thing which is likely to have an unfriendly influence on the church of Christ, to which he has solemnly devoted himself, every consideration of
faithfulness forbids him to be idle. Such influence I saw, or thought I saw, was likely to result from certain publications, and other efforts, which had been made by some respectable individuals among our Episcopal brethren, in this city, and in different parts of the state, for several years preceding. The nature and tendency of these efforts are well understood by many of you, but they ought to be understood by all.

For more than twenty years after the establishment of American independence, the Presbyterians of New-York dwelt in peace and harmony with their Episcopal neighbours. They well recollected, indeed, the long course of oppressions and provocations which they had suffered, by means of Episcopal influence, prior to the Revolution. They recollected that, for more than half a century, besides supporting their own churches, they had been forced to contribute to the support of the Episcopal church, already enriched and strengthened by governmental aid. They recollected in how many instances the fairest and most laudable exertions to promote the interest of their denomination, were opposed, thwarted, and frustrated, by the direct interference of the same favoured sect. But when our national independence and equal rights became established; when all denominations of Christians were placed on the same footing, with respect to the state, and left to enjoy their privileges together, the Presbyterians were disposed to forget every injury; to cover every former subject
of uneasiness with the mantle of charity; to dwell in equal concord and love with their brethren of every name. It was not supposed, indeed, during this period of tranquillity, that Presbyterians and Episcopalians were agreed in their views either of evangelical truth, or of ecclesiastical order; or that they considered all the points in which they differed as of small importance. But while both thought for themselves, and pursued their own views of doctrine and worship, they avoided an unnecessary, and especially, an irritating and offensive obtrusion of their points of difference; and, above all, never seem to have thought, on either side, of that system of proscription and attack, which our Episcopal brethren have since chosen to commence.

The formal and open commencement of this system may be dated in the year 1804. Previous to that period, indeed, several sermons, and other fugitive pamphlets, had evinced a disposition on the part of some individuals, to revive and urge certain claims, as unfounded in scripture as they are offensive to liberal minds. But in that year there appeared, in the city of New York, the first of a series of larger publications, which evidently had for their object a system of more bold and decisive proscription than had been ventured upon for a considerable time before. These publications, among other doctrines, were professedly intended to maintain and disseminate the following, viz. "That the power of ordination to the Christian ministry is, by divine appointment, vested ex-
clusively in Diocesan Bishops; that where these
Bishops are wanting, there is no authorized mi-
ministry, no true church, no valid ordinances; that,
of course, the Presbyterian, and all other non-
 Episcopal churches, and ministers, are not only
unauthorized, and perfectly destitute of validity,
but are to be viewed as institutions founded in re-
bellion and schism; and that all who are in com-
union with such non-Episcopal churches, are
aliens from Christ," "out of the appointed road
to heaven," have no interest in the promises of
God, and no hope but in his. "uncovenanted
mercy," which may be extended to them, in
common with the serious and conscientious hea-
then." Books containing doctrines of this kind,
had been published and sent abroad with much as-
siduity, for more than a year, before any Presbyte-
rian came forward to refute them, or to vindicate
primitive simplicity and order; and since that
time, similar books have been printed, re-printed,
new modelled, and circulated, especially in the city
and state of New-York, with a degree of zeal and
perseverance altogether new and extraordinary.

Nor is this all. These books have been put in-
to the hands of non-Episcopalian. Presbyterians
have been personally addressed on the subject, and
attempts made to seduce them from their church,
on the express allegation that they were totally des-
titute of an authorized ministry, and of valid ordi-
nances. And, that nothing might be wanting to fix
the character and purpose of these measures, they
were accompanied with declarations, that a state of warfare with the Presbyterian church, on the subject of Episcopacy, was earnestly wished for, and considered as one of the most probable means of promoting the Episcopal cause.

It was not possible for one denomination of Christians to act in a more inoffensive manner towards another, than we had uniformly done towards our Episcopal brethren. We had never attempted to unchurch them. We had never, directly or indirectly, called in question the validity of their ministrations or ordinances. We had never, on any occasion, obtruded our particular views of church order, as essential either to the being or prosperity of the body of Christ. On the contrary, whenever we had occasion, from the pulpit or the press, to instruct our people on those points in which we differ from Episcopalians, it was always done in a manner respectful and conciliatory, and perfectly consistent with acknowledging them as a sister church; a sister, by no means indeed, in our estimation, free from error; but yet sufficiently near the primitive model to be regarded as a church of Christ. All this, however, did not secure us from the treatment of which you have heard.

Under these circumstances, when we were virtually denounced and excommunicated; when the name of a Christian church was denied us; when our people were warned to abandon the ministry of their pastors, under the penalty of being regarded as rebels
and schismatics, both by God and man; when more than insinuations of this kind were presented and reiterated, from the pulpit and the press, on every practicable occasion, and in almost every possible variety of form; when, by the frequency and the confidence with which they were brought forward, some in our communion were perplexed, others, more discerning and better informed, rendered indignant, and all appeared to feel the propriety of vindicating the abused ordinances of Christ;—it became at least excusable to say something in our own defence. It was no bitterness against our Episcopal brethren; no love of controversy; no restless ambition; no desire to intrude into another denomination for the purpose of making proselytes, that dictated an attempt to justify our principles.—The attempt was purely defensive, and was demanded by every consideration of duty to the souls of men, and of fidelity to our Master in heaven.

Impressed with this conviction, I addressed to you my Letters on the Christian Ministry. Such a manual appeared to me to be much wanted; a manual which was intended to present a concise view of the whole subject, without the useless appendages, and the offensive recriminations which have been too frequently admitted. In composing this work, it was my sincere aim to render it as free from every thing personal or irritating as possible. Accordingly I attacked no particular writer. I avoided even mentioning the name of any American who had written in opposition to that apostolic
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truth and order which we maintain. My arguments were stated, as far as the nature of the undertaking admitted, in the abstract; and a studious care was exercised to exhibit the whole in language of the most mild and conciliatory character. In all this it was not supposed that offence could reasonably be taken by any, and least of all by our Episcopal brethren. As they had been in the habit, for several years before the appearance of my volume, of publishing, and distributing, even beyond the bounds of their own society, books, in which the Episcopal doctrine was warmly urged, and Presbyterian principles loaded with opprobrious epithets; it was supposed that they would scarcely think it very consistent or decent to attack with violence, if at all, a publication so moderate, so respectful, and so exclusively intended for Presbyterians. It was, therefore, my prevailing expectation, that the work would be considered as not belonging to the polemic class, and would be suffered to pass without a reply.

But in this I was mistaken. With all the mildness and inoffensiveness of their character, my Letters no sooner made their appearance, than murmurs of resentment, and threats of overwhelming refutation were heard from various quarters. These threats had not been long proclaimed, before attempts were made to fulfil them. The first who presented himself before the public, as an assailant, was Mr. Thomas Y. How, (since the Rev. Mr. How, of New-York,) who, in about six
months after the publication of my volume, produced an angry and vehement pamphlet, which he announced as introductory to a more full discussion of the subject. Mr. How, after an interval of six months more, was followed by the Rev. Dr. Bowden, Professor of Moral Philosophy, Logic, and Belles Lettres in Columbia College. This gentleman, who had been long versed in the Episcopal controversy, and who, more than twenty years ago, stepped forth as a champion of the hierarchy, did me the honour again to take the field against me, and undertook in a work, at least formidable in size, to give a complete refutation of all my arguments, and to prostrate the Presbyterian cause. About the same time with Dr. Bowden's two volumes, there appeared, on the same side, and with the same object, the first of a series of Letters addressed to me by the Rev. Dr. Kemp, Rector of Great Choptank, in Maryland. And finally, with this number, the Rev. Dr. Hobart has united himself, as an occasional remarker on my Letters, in the Churchman's Magazine, published in the city of New-York, for the contents of which he acknowledges himself, both as Editor and Proprietor, to be responsible.

To be fallen upon by so many assailants, and with so much vehemence, is a compliment as great as it was unexpected. My thanks are due to these gentlemen for conferring on my work a degree of importance, and unwittingly disclosing that it has made a degree of impression, which I had never
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ventured to anticipate or to claim. I have also to thank them for another favour. Their violent attacks, and their numerous cavils, have induced me to examine the subject with more care, and to pursue my inquiries respecting it to a greater extent than I should probably otherwise have done. The result is a deeper conviction than ever of the weakness of their cause, and of the Apostolic character of our Church.

With respect to Mr. How's pamphlet, it is written with so much heat and impetuosity; discovers such a singular want of acquaintance with radical parts of the subject; and breathes a spirit so evidently calculated, with all sober and impartial readers, to discredit the author himself, more than the object of his attack; that my first resolution, as well as the general advice of my friends, was to let it pass unnoticed. I could scarcely, indeed, form a more selfish wish than that all my opponents might write thus. And it is certain that Mr. How would never have received a syllable of public reply from me, had there been any reason to suppose that his work would fall into the hands of none but the discerning and well-informed. Recollecting, however, that all readers are not qualified to distinguish between assertion and proof, between lofty assumption and solid argument, I felt doubtful whether some remarks might not be usefully made, especially on some of the more extraordinary and exceptionable parts of his book. The appearance of Dr. Bowdren's work terminated my doubts. This work,
written in a style of more calmness, and rather more decorum than Mr. How's; more respectable on the score of sober and grave reasoning; and discovering more acquaintance with the subject, appeared to me entitled to some reply. In making this reply, I determined to bring into one view, the most material allegations and reasonings of all the gentlemen who have honoured me with their notice; and, as they have taken care to praise and quote each other, they cannot be displeased at being associated together in my remarks.

And in the first place, my acknowledgments are due to these gentlemen, and particularly to Mr. How, for being so kind as to remove all uncertainty with respect to the real nature of the opinions which they hold. Dr. Bowden, it is true, does not appear very fond of committing himself by explicit avowals; but Mr. How manifests no scruple in declaring, in his usual "masterly" manner, that he considers Presbyterian clergymen as having no more right to administer sacraments, or to ordain, than so many "laymen" or "women," that all their ministrations are perfectly unauthorized and void; that without Episcopal ordination, there is no ministry, no church; that no case of necessity, however extreme, can justify any minister or body of ministers, in attempting to ordain others, or to form churches, without the intervention of a prelate's hands; and that all who are not in communion with an Episcopal bishop, are out of the church, and have no covenanted title to salvation. Letters,
Mr. How also lets us know that Dr. Bowden holds similar opinions; p. 68. and truly the Doctor himself repeatedly uses language which admits of no other construction. It is agreeable to find opponents thus candid and explicit. We now know the nature of the claim which these gentlemen advance, and of course, how to meet them. I am happy also to perceive, that in my former publication, I have neither misrepresented nor exaggerated their sentiments.—They are precisely such as I ascribed to the third, or highest-toned class of Episcopalians. It is to the claims of this class only, and not to the moderate and liberal part of that denomination, that the reasonings in the following sheets are intended to apply.

But while these gentlemen are very undisguised and decided in advancing their claims, they write in a manner strangely vague and obscure on another point. Even admitting, (what we cannot admit, for we know the contrary,) that the question whether Episcopacy was in fact, the primitive constitution of the church, were decided in favour of our Episcopal brethren; still another question remains, viz. Is a compliance with that constitution so unalterably and indispensably binding on the church, that there can be no church, no ministry, no ordinances without it? These questions are totally distinct, and ought never to be confounded. Yet Dr. Bowden and Mr. How almost uniformly confound them; and seem to think that if the former ques-
tion be answered in the affirmative, the latter must of course be answered in a similar manner.—In a few instances, indeed, they admit the distinction to which I allude, and assert, that their only object is to establish the Apostolical institution of Episcopacy, without undertaking to pronounce on the consequences of rejecting it. But it is evident that, for the most part, they entirely lose sight of this distinction, and write as if the establishment of the fact, that Prelacy existed in the primitive church, must effectually destroy the character of all churches not found in possession of that form of government. Whether these positions so totally distinct are so generally confounded by my opponents for want of clear and distinguishing views, or with design, I presume not to say.—But every discerning reader will be on his guard against imposition from either source.

These gentlemen, indeed, themselves assert, with the whole body of Episcopal writers, that the apostles never intended to lay down a model of church government, which should be, in all its parts, perpetually binding: and, of course, that the church is not bound to be, in all respects, conformed to the apostolic model. I am not now inquiring whether this doctrine be correct or not. But if it be, how can the want of prelacy destroy the character and even the existence of the church? In what part of Scripture is it said, that every other part of the Apostolic government of the church is mutable, and may be modified by
human wisdom; but that dispensing with the single point of Bishops, is fatal to the whole? My opponents, then, even on their own principles, are far from having accomplished the task which they prescribed to themselves. They have never shown, and are not able to show, that prelacy was instituted by the Apostles; but even if they could, many links would still be wanting in the chain of proof, that this form of government is so necessary, that there can be no church without it.

Mr. How, for reasons which he himself best understands, has thought proper to assert, that my Letters "are well known to be the result of several years of laborious attention to the subject which they discuss." Another writer in the Churchman's Magazine, has made a similar assertion; and boasts that the advocates of the Episcopal church will not require as much time to answer, as was employed in writing them. I cheerfully yield to these gentlemen the palm of celerity and copiousness in writing; and even if the statement respecting the time employed in preparing my publication were true, it is not easy to see how it bears on the argument. What would it avail a culprit to show that the collection of the testimony which seals his conviction was the work of a month instead of a day? But the statement is not true. My attention to the Episcopal controversy had been very small, perhaps culpably so, until within a few months previous to the publication of my Let-
When the printing was begun, not more than one third of the volume was written; and the greater part of it was actually composed during the three months which were consumed in passing the sheets through the press. But though the work was chiefly written with that haste which every one who has run a race with the press well understands; and amidst the feebleness of an habitual valetudinarian, as well as the distraction and fatigue of multiplied professional labours; it affords me some satisfaction to reflect, that, after the maturest deliberation, I see no cause to retract a single argument, or materially to alter a single statement. On the contrary, further reading and reflection have convinced me, that every argument, and every statement, notwithstanding all the contemptuous sneers, and confident assertions of my opponents, are capable of being irrefragably fortified.

Mr. How also endeavours to represent my work as an unprovoked attack on the Episcopal church, and to throw upon it all the odium of aggression. To those who are acquainted with the incontrovertible facts stated in the beginning of this letter, such a representation will appear something more than strange! If to state and defend the principles of my own church, after they had been frequently and violently attacked; if a calm and respectful plea against a sentence of excommunication from the church of Christ; if an attempt to show, that we, as Presbyterians, are not aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant
of promise; if a work designed to prove that our ministry and ordinances have as fair a claim to divine warrant as those of our Episcopal brethren; and that they, in denying us the character of a church, and in consigning us over, with the heathen, to the uncovenanted mercies of God, act wholly without warrant—if these things constitute an unprovoked attack on the Episcopal church—then, indeed, I have been guilty of such an attack. But I am not afraid that any one who is acquainted with facts, and who understands the import of terms, will either bring such a charge himself, or consider it with respect when brought by others.

Another charge which these gentlemen concur in urging, is no less unexpected and extraordinary. It is, that I have written with great bitterness, and that even my moderation is affected and insidious. This is a point concerning which no man can be an impartial judge in his own case. But, after receiving so many respectable suffrages in favour of the mildness and decorum of my style; after receiving the acknowledgments of so many moderate and candid Episcopalians in different parts of the United States, both clergymen and laymen, that I had avoided asperity and bitterness to a very unusual degree; it is impossible to avoid suspecting that these gentlemen, (who, so far as I know stand alone in making this charge,) have felt irritated by statements which they could not deny, and by arguments which they could not refute; and that they have mistaken both for bitterness and
abuse. **Dr. Bowden** and **Mr. How** never discover so much wounded feeling and irascible temper, as when they meet with intimations of any affinity between some of their high-toned doctrines, and those of Popery. The intimations of this kind which my book contains, were made neither lightly, nor with passion; but with a conscientious persuasion of their correctness. This persuasion remains with undiminished or rather with increased force. And it happens, unfortunately for these gentlemen, that similar charges of popish origin and tendency, have been brought against several of the same doctrines, by some of the most pious and learned Bishops of their own church. Nor can I forbear to add, that the pointed resentment which my opponents manifest at every suggestion of this kind, is calculated to excite the suspicion, that they feel it more easy to rail at such intimations than to answer them.

**Dr. Bowden** makes frequent and heavy complaints, that, in citing authorities, I have not been sufficiently careful to refer to the precise chapter and page. He rebukes me severely for the trouble which I have given him in this way; and more than once insinuates that my references were made in this general manner, either because I had never read the books quoted, or because I was unwilling the quotations should be fairly examined. Without stopping to answer the insinuation, I would ask this gentleman whether, in writing plain, didactic, pastoral addresses, such as my Letters were intended...
to be, it is either customary or proper to attend with as much care to references, and to detail with as much exactness the history of every quotation, as in works of a controversial nature? If I do not misconceive both the point of propriety, and the actual practice of the best writers, it would have been vain parade, as well as needless scrupulosity, to crowd my pages with references. The Professor's rebuke is therefore unmerited. But is Dr. Bowden himself free from the fault with which he charges me? He is not. After a number of severe, and certainly not very delicate remarks, on my want of precision in a few of my references; and, after solemnly promising to act in a more "scholar-like" manner on his part, he has, if I do not mistake, fallen, at least as frequently as myself, into the very omission of which he so heavily complains. This is as unpardonable as it is extraordinary. But it is only one among the numerous facts which daily prove that it is much more easy to see a mote in our brothers's eye than a beam in our own.

Dr. Bowden and Mr. How both repeatedly insinuate, that I quote writers at "second-hand," that I "garble" quotations; and that I frequently either entirely mistake, or wilfully pervert, their meaning. These are heavy charges; but they give me little concern, firmly persuaded that all who read my Letters, and compare my citations with the works from which they are derived, will need no other refutation. How far my opponents have a right to assume lofty airs about mutilating quota-
tions, or giving them with parade at second-hand, you will be better able to judge before you complete the perusal of these sheets. I have, indeed, read little—alas! by far too little. But I have read enough to perceive that all ignorance and all mistakes are not on the side of Presbyterians. And though I have sometimes been compelled to quote writers at second hand, and on trust, because their books were not within my reach; yet I have consulted a sufficient number of originals to detect arts of which their authors would have been wise not to invite an investigation.

But Dr. Bowden makes another complaint, which is still more extraordinary. He thinks me very censurable for not having stated, in addition to the arguments in support of our opinions, the principal answers, "the triumphant replies," which Episcopal writers have given to these arguments. In one case, particularly, he addresses me thus: "You certainly must have heard of, if you have not read, "Slater's Original Draught, in answer to lord King, "which it has always been confidently said, made "his lordship a convert to Diocesan Episcopacy. "If you have heard of Slater's book, but not read "it, you should have made a point of procuring "it, and of stating his answer, that your readers "might have a fair opportunity of judging for them-"selves." Vol. I. Letter 7. p. 186. I can assure this learned Professor, who so kindly undertakes to instruct me in my duty, that I both possessed and had read Slater's work, long before I ever heard of Dr.
Bowden or his Letters; and that, however it impressed lord King, it was so far from converting me to Diocesan Episcopacy, that it rather served to confirm me in my Presbyterian principles. But is it possible that this complaint of Dr. Bowden can be seriously made? Did I not distinctly announce, in my introductory Letter, that my object was, not to write a full and complete treatise, but a small and popular manual? Did I not fairly apprise my readers, that this plan would "lay me under the necessity of being every where extremely brief, and of totally excluding many topics, both of argument and illustration, which might be profitably introduced?" And did I not, to relieve, in some measure, the difficulty thence arising, promise, that "no arguments should be urged, but those which I believed to have stood immovably solid, after every attempt to answer them?" Was it my duty, then; would it have been proper, after all this, when I felt myself obliged to omit many arguments on my own side, which were, in my view, powerful and important, to introduce arguments, many of them frivolous, and most of them destitute of real force, merely for the purpose of swelling my work into a number of volumes, and preventing it from being read by those for whom it was intended? I have the charity to believe, that if Dr. Bowden had indulged a moment's reflection, he would have been ashamed to urge a complaint so unworthy of his grave character.

Besides, if it was my duty to state in detail all
those arguments which the fond partiality of some Episcopal writers has been pleased to style "unanswerable," "triumphant," "demonstrative," &c. was it not Dr. Bowden's duty to do the same with respect to the arguments of Presbyterian writers? But has he done this? If I do not mistake, every impartial reader will pronounce, that in my little manual, I have gone as far, if not further, in stating the arguments and replies of my opponents, than this gentleman has in his two volumes.

These gentlemen, in the course of their strictures, have allowed themselves frequently to employ language of which I cannot forbear to exhibit a specimen. Dr. Bowden charges me with "contemptible cavilling;" with "contemptible puerilities;" with "misrepresentations gross to excess;" with writing "nonsense," "palpable nonsense," &c. Mr. How's pamphlet abounds with language, which I hope he will reconsider, in his cooler moments, with shame and regret. He charges me with "a continued strain of misrepresentation;" with "an outrage on decency itself;" with a construction "as puerile as it is disingenuous;" with "fanatical absurdity;" with "violations of the plain language of Scripture, as presumptuous as are to be met with in the entire annals of fanaticism;" with "talking like a deranged fanatic;" and with advancing allegations which I "ought to know, and cannot but know," to be groundless. In fact, he frequently imputes to me, in terms a little indirect and softened, known and
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deliberate falsehood. And on one occasion, he permits himself to address me thus: "You could not possibly have adopted a mode of address more calculated to sour the minds of your readers, or better fitted to indulge the bitterness of your own heart. It is indirect and insidious, covering under the mask of moderation and kindness, all the loftiness of pride, and all the rankling of passion."

p. 16. Dr. Hobart represents me as writing with great "arrogance" and "bitterness," and even with insidiousness, a term which no intelligent reader needs to be told, implies dishonesty. I regret that such language has found its way into this controversy. I am not able to see that it aids the argument of those who employ it; and it certainly contributes nothing to the charity of Christian intercourse. You will not imagine, I am sure, that this language is capable of exciting in me a feeling of personal resentment or pain. But it is exceedingly to be lamented, that gentlemen of their station should indulge in a style so scrupulously banished from all dignified and polished society; that a person so long employed as one of them has been, in forming the moral principles and character of youth, should discover so little success in the discipline of his own temper; and that they have not more highly appreciated the duty of being examples to the flock. It shall be my aim, in the following pages, to avoid all similar language. And if you should ever find me inadvertently betrayed into it, be assured it is contrary to my fixed resolution; and
that, when discovered, it will be a source of un-
feigned regret. May we all remember, with the
celebrated author of the Ecclesiastical Polity, that
"there will come a time when three words uttered
"with charity and meekness shall receive a far
"more blessed reward than three thousand vo-
"lumes written with disdainful sharpness of wit!"

But these gentlemen not only employ, on their
part, what I must consider as exceptionable lan-
guage; they also impute to me language scarcely
less offensive or exceptionable than their own. Dr.
Bowden says that I pronounce Episcopacy an anti-
christian usurpation. Vol. I. p. 245. And Mr. How
asserts, that I "brand prelacy as the detested off-
spring of ecclesiastical fraud and tyranny." I can
only say that no such expressions are to be found in
my book; and that whatever there is in them which
bears an opprobrious or indelicate character, is to
be ascribed, not to me, but to the invention of my
accusers.

I shall not attempt to follow these gentlemen
through all their minute and tedious details. For
this drudgery I have neither leisure nor inclination.
It would be again to travel over the whole ground
which I have already endeavoured to explore, and
to exhibit in a just light; and which, after careful-
ly attending to all that they have said, still appears
to me to rest on immoveable foundations. After
requesting you to peruse my former Letters a se-
cond time with care, and to compare them impar-
tially with what my opponents have advanced, the
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cause is cheerfully committed to your decision. All that I propose, at present, is to review some of the most plausible reasonings of these zealous and confident polemics; to point out a few of their more gross and palpable mistakes; and to show the candid reader how far he can rely on the statements of persons who discover so little acquaintance with more than one side of the controversy; and at the same time allow themselves to speak as if they engrossed all knowledge, and as if wisdom would die with them.

These Letters, my brethren, as well as the former series, are intended solely for your use. They are occasioned, indeed, by the strictures of the gentlemen whose names are mentioned in the title page; but I have not thought proper to address those gentlemen directly. With them I have no personal dispute. Though they have intruded into our Church for the purpose of attacking me in the peaceable discharge of my pastoral duties, I have still no disposition to do more than to act on the defensive. But to refute their cavils, to repel their unfounded and injurious charges, to lay open the weakness of their cause, and to expose their want of information on this subject, is a duty which I owe to you. This duty I will attempt to discharge; and in the execution of it, I hope you will follow me patiently.
LETTER II.

Comparative stress laid on Ecclesiastical Order by Presbyterians and High-Churchmen. The doctrine of the Jure-Divino Presbyterians briefly stated.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

Two of the gentlemen whose attacks I am called upon to repel, accuse me of misrepresenting the high-toned Episcopal doctrine which they avow, and endeavour to maintain. They impute to me a desire to excite prejudices against them, by insinuating, that they exclude all but Episcopalians from salvation. Mr. How, in particular, brings forward and urges this accusation with great zeal. I utterly deny the charge. I never intended to convey such an insinuation; and am persuaded that my Letters do not contain a single sentence which can be fairly construed as expressing it.

But I have asserted, that such Episcopalians as agree with these writers, exclude us from the covenanted mercy of God, and declare us to be destitute of all interest in the promises of salvation. I have asserted, that they pronounce us to be out of the church of Christ, and aliens from the covenant of grace. I have asserted, that, while they express a
charitable hope that such of us as depart from the Episcopal church from "involuntary ignorance or error," will find mercy; they uniformly consider and represent this mercy as extended to Presbyterians, in the same manner, and on the same principles, as to the heathen; that is, not in virtue of any covenant engagement, or explicit promise; but on the footing of general, unpledged mercy. I have said this, and this only; and all this, they have themselves, in effect, avowed, repeated, and gloried in with a zeal worthy of a better cause.

But these gentlemen insist, that however high and offensive their claims may be considered, we, on our part, advance claims as high and as offensive as theirs; and, therefore, on our own principles, have no right to complain. They urge this argument with much confidence, and seem to regard it as a triumphant answer to the charge of unscriptural assumption. Mr. How expresses himself thus: "Episcopalians lay no more stress on "external order than does the society to which you "belong. Who could have supposed it possible, "after seeing you through several pages, declaim- "ing against the monstrous pretensions of your "opponents, that they carry external order precise-"ly as far as your own Confession of Faith, and not "a tittle further." p. 16. Again he says, "You "inveigh bitterly against your Episcopal neigh-"bours, for asserting the exclusive validity of Epis-"copal ordination. But you equally assert the ex-"clusive validity of Presbyterial ordination; tell-
ing us, that, without such ordination, there can be no ministry; without a ministry, no church; and without a church, no covenanted title to salvation. In addition to all this, you assert the divine institution of Presbyterial government, in all its parts, excluding its habitual violators, cases of unavoidable ignorance or involuntary error excepted, from the kingdom of heaven. If the Episcopal doctrine is of a nature nearly allied to the claim of Papal infallibility, your doctrine must be the claim of Papal infallibility itself.”

Nay, he asserts, that Presbyterians carry their ideas of the importance of external order much further than Episcopalians. p. 22, 23. “I proceed to observe that Presbyterians go much further than Episcopalians in their ideas of external order. Thus, not contented with making Presbyterial ordination essential to the existence of the church, and to all covenanted title to salvation, they tell us that Presbyterial government is, in all its parts, sketched out in scripture; that it is the duty of all Christians to conform to it; and that, in refusing or neglecting to do so, they incur great guilt. The plan of ruling elders and deacons, with mere temporal functions; the whole system of church sessions, Presbyterial assemblies, Synodical assemblies, and General assemblies, they say, is prescribed in the word of God. In fact, it is impossible to carry external order further than these men carry it. See the language which they hold!
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"Presbyterial government, in church sessions, " Presbyterial assemblies, Synodical assemblies, " and General assemblies, is established by the " Apostles, and is the law of God's house. All are " bound to conform to it. Habitual disobedience " to any of the divine commands will exclude from " the kingdom of heaven. Thus all but Presbyte- " rians are consigned to perdition. And what re- " lief do they give? Why, simply, that there are " sins of ignorance and infirmity which may consist " with a gracious state. So that our opponents not " only make Presbyterial ordination essential to the " existence of the church, but they represent obe- " dience to their particular mode of ecclesiastical " government as a condition of salvation: placing " all who reject it on the ground of the general " mercy which, it is hoped, God will extend to per- " sons labouring under unavoidable, or involuntary, " error. And is not this sir, the exact ground on " which those who depart from the Episcopal consti- " tution of the priesthood, are placed by the very " men against whom you so bitterly inveigh?" "This is such a favourite topic of declamation with "Mr. How, that he can scarcely get through a single "page, without directly or indirectly recurring to it. "His coadjutors seem to be never better pleased than "when joining in the same strain. And truly it "wants nothing to render it a very plausible argu- "ment, but the single circumstance of having some "foundation in fact." Of this, I am compelled to say, "it is totally destitute.
To show that Mr. How, in writing thus, unjustly accuses our church, nothing more is necessary than to transcribe the following chapters from our *Confession of Faith, and Form of Government*. They are given entire, that there may be no suspicion of concealment or mutilation; that the several sections of each chapter may explain one another; and, I will add, that Mr. How, if he should ever happen to look into these pages, may have an opportunity of reading them, which, after perusing such remarks as are quoted above, I cannot suppose he has ever yet done.

*Confession of Faith. Chap. XXV. Of the Church.*

"I. The Catholic or universal church, which is *invisible*, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

"II. The *visible* church which is also catholic or universal under the gospel, (not confined to one nation as before under the law,) consists of all those throughout the world, that profess the true religion, together with their children; and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

"III. Unto this catholic visible church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and doth by
his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto.

"IV. This catholic church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible. And particular churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them.

"V. The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error: and some have so degenerated, as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless there shall be always a church on earth, to worship God according to his will.

"VI. There is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can the Pope of Rome, in any sense be head thereof; but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself, in the church, against Christ, and all that is called God."

Form of Government. Chap. I. Of the Church.

"I. Jesus Christ, who is now exalted, far above all principality, and power, hath erected, in this world, a kingdom, which is his church.

"II. The universal church consists of all those persons, in every nation, together with their children, who make profession of the holy religion of Christ, and of submission to his laws.

"III. As this immense multitude cannot meet
together, in one place, to hold communion, or to worship God, it is reasonable, and warranted by scripture example, that they should be divided into many particular churches.

"IV. A particular church consists of a number of professing Christians, with their offspring, voluntarily associated together, for divine worship and godly living, agreeably to the holy scriptures; and submitting to a certain form of government."

*Form of Government. Chap. II. Of the Officers of the Church.*

"I. Our blessed Lord, at first, collected his church out of different nations, and formed it into one body, by the mission of men endued with miraculous gifts, which have long since ceased.

"II. The ordinary and perpetual officers, in the church, are Bishops or Pastors; the representatives of the people, usually styled Ruling Elders, and Deacons."


"I. It is absolutely necessary that the government of the church be exercised under some certain and definite form: And we hold it to be expedient, and agreeable to scripture and the practice of the primitive Christians, that the church be governed by congregational, presbyterial and synodical assemblies. In full consistency with this belief, we embrace, in the spirit of charity, those Christians
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who differ from us, in opinion or in practice, on these subjects.

"II. These assemblies ought not to possess any civil jurisdiction, nor to inflict any civil penalties: Their power is wholly moral or spiritual, and that only ministeral and declarative. They possess the right of requiring obedience to the laws of Christ; and of excluding the disobedient and disorderly, from the privileges of the church. To give efficiency, however, to this necessary and scriptural authority, they possess the powers requisite for obtaining evidence and inflicting censure: They can call before them any offender against the order and government of the church: They can require members, of their own society, to appear and give testimony on the cause; but the highest punishment to which their authority extends is to exclude the contumacious and impenitent, from the congregation of believers."

In these chapters, every line is marked with wisdom, moderation, and charity. They are so far from asserting that no church is entitled to the name of a church of Christ, but our own, that the contrary is clearly and unequivocally acknowledged. They are so far from maintaining, that there is no salvation out of the pale of our church, that they could scarcely have found words more strongly to express an opposite opinion, without running into unlimited latitudinarianism. They make the visible church to consist of all those throughout the world, who profess the true religion, together with
their children; and, lest the phrase, the true religion, might be construed to mean an exact conformity with our own standards, they declare that they consider as included in the visible catholic Church, many churches less pure than their own, and that they freely "embrace in the spirit of Charity, "those christians who differ from them, in opinion, "or in practice, on these subjects." They go on to state, that this visible church is the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation; thus making express provision for the exercise of mercy in ways extraordinary, and therefore unknown to us. Could any thing be more guarded or remote from bigotry? These gentlemen, however, insist, that in the chapter of the Confession of Faith, (Chap. 27.) which treats of the Sacraments, it is formally declared, that "neither of the sacraments may be dispensed by any other than a minister of the word lawfully ordained." But what is this to the purpose? Who is a "Minister of the word lawfully ordained?" If any preceding or subsequent passage in our public standards, had asserted, or even intimated, that no minister is lawfully ordained, but one who has been set apart exactly in our mode, there would be some pretext for this cavil. But no such assertion or intimation, nor any thing that resembles either, is contained in the whole book. It prescribes the course of study, and the kind of trials which candidates for the ministry, in our church, shall be re-
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quired to pass through, and it also directs the mode of their ordination: but it pronounces no sentence of invalidity on other modes of conducting these important concerns; nor does it give a hint, from which, by fair reasoning, such a sentence can be deduced.

But this is not all. While the language of our Confession of Faith, and Articles of Government, is catholic and charitable in a very remarkable degree, their history illustrates and confirms their language. They were drawn up by the Westminster Assembly of Divines, than which a more venerable body of ministers never convened. This illustrious ecclesiastical Council consisted of more than a hundred divines, besides the lay members. And it is remarkable, that all of these divines, excepting about seven or eight, had received Episcopal ordination, and no other. Is it credible that these men, assembled as ministers, judicially deliberating and acting as ministers, could have intended to pronounce their own ordination null and void? Or that they would frame articles declaring all such ordinations in future invalid? No; such a sentence was never pronounced; and I may confidently assert, was never thought of by a member of that assembly. While they declared the Presbyterian form of church government to be the apostolic and primitive plan; they explicitly acknowledged the validity of Episcopal orders and ministrations. And the same has been the language and the conduct of every Presbyterian church that ever existed on earth.
Ministers *Episcopally* ordained have frequently applied to be received into Christian and ministerial communion with Presbyterian churches, both in *Europe* and *America*. But did Mr. *How* ever hear of one of them being *re-ordained*? I will venture to say he never did. Ministers have offered themselves to the church to which I have the honour to belong, not only from the *Episcopal*, but also from the *Methodist* and the *Baptist* churches. But was a *re-ordination* ever attempted, in *any one* of these cases? I can confidently affirm that no such case ever occurred; certainly none ever came to my knowledge. In every instance in which it was ascertained that the minister applying to be received, had been regularly set apart to the sacred office, by the imposition of the hands of men authorized to preach and administer sacraments in their own church, he was freely received, and his ordination sustained as valid. Does this look like pronouncing our precise form of church order *indispensable* to a regular ministry, to valid ordinances, or to final salvation? Had we been accused of being zealous advocates for the doctrine of *Purgatory* or *Transubstantiation*, the charge would have been equally true, and equally creditable to the candour of its author.

But perhaps Mr. *How* will plead, that, although *our* church, in the language of her public standards, is, on the whole, liberal and conciliatory; yet that other branches of the Presbyterian body, particularly those with which Dr. *Mason*, and Mr. *M'Leod*
are connected, go the whole length of asserting the exclusive validity of the Presbyterian ministry and ordinances. Such is one of the arts to which this gentleman resorts, when he cannot find materials enough in our *Confession of Faith*, to satisfy his insatiable appetite for proscription and excommunication. But neither will this subterfuge avail him. He accuses *others* as unjustly as he accuses *us*. It is not true that the most high-toned Presbyterians on earth, go any thing like the length, in maintaining the necessity of our particular mode of constituting the Christian ministry, that this gentleman and his friends do in asserting the exclusive validity of Episcopal ordination. And, although both Dr. *Mason* and Mr. *McLeod* may hold some opinions concerning the Christian church in which I do not entirely concur with them; yet there cannot be greater injustice than to speak of them and their writings in the manner in which Mr. *How* has permitted himself to do. To what this mis-statement of their opinions is to be ascribed, it becomes not me to say. I dare not impeach the integrity of Mr. *How*. For acquitting his honesty at the expense of his understanding, he would not thank me: And to suppose that he has allowed himself to speak with so much positiveness of their tenets, without any acquaintance with them, would be as offensive as either.

But are there not some Presbyterians who hold that their form of church government was the apostolic and primitive form? Undoubtedly, many.
And are there not some also, who go further, and insist that this form is binding on the church, under all circumstances and states of society, and, of course, ought to be adopted in all ages? There are certainly some who go even this length. Well! my opponents will reply, is not this holding to the divine right of Presbyterian government? It is. And is it not, of consequence, going the whole length with us, and denying that there can be any true church, or valid ordinances without it? Certainly not. The conclusion has no more connexion with the premises, than with the most remote object in creation.

As both Dr. Bowden and Mr. How have evidently yet to learn the sentiments of the jure divino Presbyterians, and as, for want of information on this point, they are groping in the dark, whenever they approach it; I will endeavour to enlighten this part of their path, and, if possible, prevent, in future, those perpetual wanderings, which are really much more calculated to excite the ridicule, or the commiseration, than the resentment of their Presbyterian readers.

The advocates, then, for the divine right of Presbytery, (I now speak of the most rigid class of them,) believe that, in the apostolic church every regularly organized congregation of christians was furnished with three classes of church officers, with a Bishop, (or Pastor,) Ruling Elders, and Deacons; that the bench of Elders, with the Bishop as their standing Moderator or President.
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constituted the spiritual court, for directing all affairs purely ecclesiastical in the congregation; that the Bishops of a number of neighbouring congregations, were in the habit of statedly meeting together, not only to cherish a spirit of union and fraternal affection, but also to deliberate on matters of more general concern, than those of a particular church; that in these larger assemblies or Presbyteries, (or by whatever name they were called,) a delegation from the Eldership of each church attended with their Bishop; and that, either statedly or occasionally, (it matters not which, as to the principle,) the Bishops and Elders of much larger districts, convened under the title of Synods or Councils, for the purpose of discussing and deciding great questions, and of making general arrangements. This, they suppose, was the form of government which the Apostles, acting under the inspiration of God, established in the primitive church. They believe, moreover, that as this form of ecclesiastical polity was adopted by inspired men, it is the best form; that it was intended to be perpetual; that it is the duty of churches, in all ages, and in all states of society, to adopt it; and that in proportion as any deviate from it, they deviate from the simplicity and purity of the apostolic age, and contravene the will of God.

But, while this class of Presbyterians zealously maintain the principles which have been stated, they, at the same time, explicitly grant, that there may be deviations from this apostolic form of go-
vernment, without destroying, or, in any essential degree, impairing, the character of a Christian church. They suppose that imperfection attends every thing human. That although every church, as well as every man, is required to be in all respects perfectly conformed to the Divine will; yet that neither any church, nor any man is, in fact, thus perfect. They suppose that, among individual professors of religion, there may be all manner of variety as to the degrees of exemplariness which they manifest; and yet that they may all be entitled, in the judgment of charity, to be considered as visible christians; and further, that cases may arise, in which it would be difficult to decide whether a man's deviations had proceeded so far, as that he ought, on the whole, to be excluded from this class or not. In like manner, the Presbyterians of whom we are speaking, admit that there are churches which differ considerably as to the degrees of purity which they have preserved, but which, notwithstanding, are all entitled to the character of visible Churches of Christ. They suppose, indeed, that all deviations from primitive simplicity, whether in doctrine, in worship, or in government, are blameable, and ought to be corrected; but still, that such may exist, in a certain degree, without excluding those who are guilty of them from the class of Churches. And in what actual cases these deviations have become so numerous and important as to render them no longer Churches of Christ, but Synagogues of Satan, they have seldom undertaken to pronounce.
The most rigid Presbyterians have, at different times, both as individuals and judicatories; both by their writings, and their decisions, explicitly acknowledged different denominations of Christians to be true churches of Christ. They have acknowledged our Congregational brethren in New-England; the regular Independents in various parts of Great-Britain; the Episcopalians in England and America; the Lutherans in Germany and the United States; and the Methodist and Baptist denominations, as all churches of Christ. They consider all these, indeed, as more or less corrupt; and have, accordingly, at different times, and without reserve, written, preached, and printed their testimony against those corruptions; but still they have never said of any of them, that they had no church, no ministry, no valid ordinances, but acknowledged the contrary without hesitation or scruple.

In short, the high-toned Presbyterians, of whom we are speaking do not carry the divine right of Church Government further than they carry the divine right of doctrine and worship in the church. Nay, it may be asserted, that, without a single exception, they have always laid more stress on the two latter than on the first, as entering more immediately than that into the vital interests and character of the church. Now, it is well known, that this class of Presbyterians, as well as all others, freely admit that there may be departures from absolute purity, both in doctrine and worship, without un-churching those who admit them. They be-
Lieve, for instance, that Arminianism is a doctrinal corruption; but yet they would shudder to pronounce that those churches which receive it, have no valid ministry or ordinances, or to deny that any of their members may be saved. They are persuaded, that in the primitive church there were no Forms of Prayer used in public worship; and that the introduction of them is unwarranted and inexpedient; yet I never heard of any one who considered this as so essential an innovation, as either to doubt the piety of those who used forms, or even to pronounce it absolutely unlawful to unite in worship conducted by a liturgy. They know that kneeling at the Lord's Supper, and the doctrine of Transubstantiation came into the church together, and have no doubt that together they ought to have been discarded; yet they do not imagine, that this mode of receiving is inconsistent with pious and acceptable communicating; much less that it vitiates the sacrament; and least of all, that it infers a belief in the grand popish error with which it was originally connected. I have known Episcopaliansto receive the sacred bread and wine, kneeling, from the hands of a Presbyterian minister, when all the rest of the communicants were sitting; and have no reason to suppose that any other Presbyterian minister would have scrupled to comply with a similar application.

It is to no purpose to say, "that if these be the opinions of jure divino Presbyterians, they are inconsistent with themselves; for that a belief that
Presbyterianism was the apostolic form of church government, necessarily carries with it, on every principle of sober reasoning, a belief that there can be no church, no ministry without it." This conclusion is as illegitimate in reasoning, as it is false in fact. The Presbyterians of whom we are speaking, utterly disavow this doctrine which is, by inference, imputed to them; and declare, that, as it is not deducible from their principles, so it makes no part of their creed.

The warmest advocates of the divine right of Prelacy admit that a church may depart in many respects, from the primitive model, without forfeiting the title of a church of Christ? They consider the church of Rome as a true church of Christ, though a degenerate and corrupt one. In one of the Homilies, of the Church of England, drawn up by Archbishop Cranmer, and the other Reformers, it is expressly declared, that that church is not only "idolatrous and unchristian; not only an harlot, as the scripture calleth her, but also a foul, filthy, old withered harlot; the foulest and filthiest harlot, that ever was seen*. I do not contend for the decency of these epithets. That is no concern of mine. I state the real language of the church of England, as deliberately expressed in her Standards. And yet, while high-churchmen solemnly declare their belief in the doctrine of these Homilies, they ac-

knowledge the church of Rome to be a church of Christ; trace their line of succession through her; and uniformly acknowledge her ministry and ordinances to be valid. In fact, it is on the principle that it is lawful to depart from the exact pattern of the primitive church, with respect to rites, ceremonies, and discipline, that the church of England vindicates many things in her own system, which she acknowledges were neither enjoined nor practised in the days of the Apostles. Nay, many of her sons, and especially those who advocate the doctrine of my opponents, do not scruple to affirm, that the whole system of ecclesiastical government and discipline is mutable *, and may be lawfully modified according to human wisdom, excepting the single part, so dearly beloved, which respects the three orders of Clergy. Every thing else, in the external organization, they suppose may be altered, without affecting the essence of the church; but to touch this part of the body, they consider as the invasion of its vital organ.

Thus it appears, that the highest toned jure divino Presbyterians do not lay any thing like the stress on their form of church government, that Dr. Bowden, Mr. How, and other jure divino Pretatists do on the point of Episcopacy; that the charge brought against them that they un-church all who reject the Presbyterian government, is perfectly unfounded; not deducible from any of their

* See Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, passim.
principles, and totally disavowed by them; that their public standards, their judicial decisions, and their most esteemed writers, all with one voice, acknowledge that there are true churches, a regular ministry, and valid ordinances, where Presbyterianism is wanting; and, of course, that the allegations of Dr. Bowden and Mr. How, are not only unsupported by evidence, but brought forward directly in the face of all legitimate evidence. When these gentlemen, or either of them, shall produce a single volume or document, sanctioned by any Presbyterian church, or from the pen of any esteemed Presbyterian divine, which contradicts my statement, I shall then, and not till then, acquit them of calumniating our venerable Church.

But these gentlemen will, perhaps, ask, “Do we not find in the writings of many Presbyterian divines, severe epithets, expressive of strong disapprobation, applied to the Episcopal hierarchy? Have we not actually pointed out some instances of this kind?” Granted. And what then? May I not see an egregious fault in an acquaintance, and reprove him sharply for it, without deeming it so great as to expunge his name from the list of my friends, or to pronounce him a bad man? May we not consider and oppose as an error, that which we do not believe, at the same time, will destroy the character of a church? I am sure that no offensive language directed against Episcopalians, is to be found in the Confession of Faith of our church, and very seldom in our best writers. But if it were other-
wise, where shall we find language, to be compared on the score either of indelicacy or severity, with that which the church of England has formally directed against the church of Rome*, while at the same time she acknowledged, and does still acknowledge, her ministry and ordinances to be valid.

Dr. Bowden and Mr. How make much use of the society of Quakers in this controversy. They ask me, whether, amidst all my professions of liberality, I can consistently with our Confession of Faith, acknowledge the Quakers as a visible church of Christ? And if not, how I can find fault with Episcopalians for not acknowledging us? My only reply to all their declamation on this subject shall be short. It is not a practical question. The society of Quakers do not profess to have an ordained ministry, at all, in the sense of most other denominations of Protestants.—The question, then, whether we can acknowledge their ordinations, ministry, and sacraments to be valid, can never come before us; for none of these things make any part of their ecclesiastical system; and, of course, can never be offered to us to receive our sanction. I consider, therefore, all that my opponents have said on this subject, as a vain effort to obscure the merits of the real question, and as inconclusive as it is irrelevant to the controversy.

Dr. Bowden and Mr. How speak much of "covenanted" and "uncovenanted" mercy. The latter

* See page 53.
candidly and repeatedly avows his belief, that all who are in communion with a church organized in the Episcopal form, are in covenant with God; and that all others, without exception, are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant of promise, and have no hope but in the general uncovenanted mercy of God. We certainly can have no objection to his informing us what is his creed, and we thank him for being so unreservedly communicative on the subject. But he goes further. He undertakes to say that Presbyterians, on their part, hold a similar opinion; that they exclude from the Christian covenant all but Presbyterians; nay, that they pronounce all who do not embrace "the rigid peculiarities of Calvinism," to be in an unregenerate state, and coolly consign them to "uncovenanted mercy." Had Mr. How asserted that all Presbyterians are zealous advocates of the divine mission of Mahomet, it would have been, rather more ridiculous indeed, but not a whit more remote from fact than this statement. His position is not only not true, but there is not a shadow of foundation for it; nor can he produce a single Presbyterian writer, of respectable character, who says any thing that can be reasonably construed as bearing the least resemblance to this doctrine.*

* It is to be hoped that Presbyterians understand the Gospel too well to speak of "uncovenanted mercy" at all. The phrase itself is unscriptural; and if it convey any meaning, it is an erroneous one. Fallen creatures know of no mercy
Presbyterians (I speak now of all that I have ever known or heard of, particularly the most rigid among them) Presbyterians, I say, believe, that according to the tenor of the Covenant of Grace, salvation is promised, that is, secured by covenant engagement, to all who sincerely repent of sin, and unfeignedly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course they consider all who bear this character, to whatever external church they may belong, or even if they bear no relation to any visible church, as in covenant with God, as interested in his great and precious promises, and as in the sure and certain road to his heavenly kingdom—They know, indeed, and teach that it is the duty of all who believe in Christ, to connect themselves with his visible church; they teach also, that receiving the seals of God’s covenant and attending on all the ordinances of his house, are solemnly enjoined, and productive of essential advantages. Nay, they go so far as to pronounce that he who neglects these ordinances, when he is favoured with an opportunity of attending on them, gives, in ordinary cases, too much reason to fear, whatever may be his declarations to the contrary, that he has no real love to Christ. But still they do not, and without contradicting the scriptures, they cannot, teach that the means of religion but that which is promised or secured by the covenant of grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord. If Dr. Bowden and Mr. How have discovered any other kind or channel of divine mercy, I can only say, they have not found it in the Bible.
constitute its essence, or that the seals of the covenant, form the covenant itself. The seal on a bond, is not itself the contract, but only the evidence of it. In like manner, the seals of the Christian covenant, are not in themselves the promise or the engagement either on the part of God or man; but are the constituted means of recognizing or ratifying a covenant transaction, supposed to have previously taken place in secret, when the person receiving the seal, embraced the gospel, and cordially devoted himself to Christ on the terms of the covenant.

I repeat it then, the doctrine of all Calvinistic Presbyterians is, that every one who loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and maintains a holy life, whatever may be the mistakes into which he may fall, or the prejudices against particular parts of evangelical truth and order which he may entertain; whatever the disadvantages under which he may labour, with respect to his ecclesiastical connections; or even if he were placed in circumstances in which he never saw a place of public worship, a minister of the gospel, or a church officer of any kind, in his life; that every such person is in covenant with God, and has that title to salvation which is given by the promise of a faithful God to every sincere believer. How much error, how much infirmity, how much deviation from the external order which God hath appointed in his house, is consistent with true faith, we know not, nor has any Presbyterian, with whose person
or writings I am acquainted, ever attempted to decide. But that every one who has sincere faith in Christ, is in covenant with God, they, with one voice, proclaim and teach.

This simple statement also refutes another assertion, which Mr. How permits himself, without the smallest foundation, to make and repeat. The assertion to which I allude, is conveyed in the following terms. "All of you declare baptism and "the supper to be general conditions of salvation; "representing them as seals of the covenant of "grace, without which, it is impossible to have "any ordinary or regular claim to the blessings of "that covenant. Such as habitually neglect these "ordinances, saving a little allowance for error, "you exclude from the kingdom of heaven.— "Intolerant and wretched bigots! To give so "much importance to the ceremony of sprinkling "water, or of receiving bread and wine! And to "tell us too, that it is impossible to have these or- "dinances, except at the hands of ministers Pres- "byterially ordained. How much better is all "this than the tale of Papal infallibility! How far "are you removed from catholic absurdity and "arrogance!" Letters, p. 117. Mr. How asserts that all Presbyterians believe and speak thus. But can he find one that does? I know of none; and am confident there is none. Our Confession of Faith says no such thing. On the contrary, it expressly declares, that persons to whom these ordinances are never administered, may be saved; and that those
Doctrine of Presbyterian*. 61

who do receive them may perish. "But," says Mr. How, "Your Confession of Faith represents Baptism as the only mode of admission into the visible church; it declares that out of the visible church, there is no ordinary possibility of salvation; and it maintains that Baptism ought not to be administered by any but a minister of the gospel lawfully ordained. Does it not follow then, that without Baptism, there is "no ordinary possibility of salvation?" No, it does not follow. His premises are incorrect, and his conclusion is equally so. With all his confidence, he blunders at every step. Every one who has read our Confession of Faith, knows its doctrine on this subject to be, that all who profess the true religion are members of the visible church; that the children of such persons, by virtue of their birth, and of course anterior to Baptism, are also members of the church; and that Baptism is only the appointed seal, or solemn recognition and ratification of their membership. This is perfectly plain; and it cuts up by the roots every pretence for the statement which Mr. How has made.

With respect to Mr. How's direct and repeated assertion, that Calvinistic Presbyterians make a belief in the doctrine of "Election," and the other, "rigid peculiarities of Calvinism," essential to our being in covenant with God, and that they represent all who do not receive these "peculiarities" as given up to uncovenanted mercy, it
is difficult to answer it as it deserves, without speaking of its author in a manner in which I cannot permit myself to speak of a Christian minister. It is no arrogance to say that I am probably as familiar with the writings of Calvinistic divines, as Mr. How: and I can solemnly declare, that to the best of my recollection, I never met with one who expressed such a sentiment, or who gave the least reason to suppose that he held it: nor do I believe that Mr. How ever saw or heard of one. On the contrary, I have scarcely ever opened a volume by the most zealous Calvinist, in which a question of this kind was discussed, without finding an acknowledgment, either express or implied, of the sincere piety, and of course the covenant title to heaven, of many who were far from being Calvinists. But you will find, my brethren, before you have completed the perusal of these sheets, some apology for Mr. How. You will clearly perceive that he is not acquainted with the writings of Calvin, and that he does not understand the system of doctrines which is distinguished by the name of that great Reformer.

Mr. How, in his zeal to prove that Presbyterians are even more uncharitable than such high-church-men as himself and others, endeavours to throw great odium on a clause in the 10th chapter of our Confession of Faith, which is in the following words—"Much less can men, not professing the Christian religion, be saved, in any other way
"whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame "their lives according to the light of nature, and "the law of that religion which they do profess; "and to assert and maintain that they may, is very "pernicious, and to be detested." All that these 
words are intended to assert, is, that none of our 
fallen race can be saved in any other way than 
through Christ. The slightest perusal is sufficient 
to ascertain that this is their real meaning. But, 
even if the language of the clause itself had left this 
point doubtful, all doubt would be removed by at- 
tending to another clause in the same chapter, and 
only five lines distant from that which we are consi-
dering, which expressly recognizes the possibility of 
some being saved, who have never had an opportu-
nity of hearing the gospel preached. The doctrine, 
then, of the passage alluded to by Mr. How, is sim-
ply this, That it is false and pernicious to teach that 
men may be saved in any other way, than through 
the atoning sacrifice, and sanctifying spirit of 
Christ. A position in which one would imagine 
all professing Christians, except Socinians and Uni-
versalists, must without hesitation, concur. But Mr. 
How exceedingly dislikes it, and is determined to 
hold it up to detestation and abhorrence, as assert-
ing that none who have not been favoured with the 
preaching of the gospel can possibly be saved; and 
as consigning the whole heathen world to inevita-
ble perdition. By what management does he at-
tempt to do this? By faithfully transcribing the
clause, and laying it before his readers in a fair and unmutilated form? Not at all. Had he done this, his purpose would have been defeated. Every reader would instantly have recognized in the language of our Confession of Faith, a perfect coincidence with that of the Scriptures *. But by a contrivance, which it will hereafter be seen is not unusual with this gentleman, he first essentially alters the passage, and then presents it, regularly marked with inverted commas, as if it were the real language of the article. What that language in fact is, you have already seen. Mr. How declares that it is as follows— "They who having never heard the Gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in him, cannot be saved, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature." Letters, p. 25. Having thus taken out of the passage an important clause which it does contain, and added to it what it does not contain, he holds it up to his readers as consigning to inevitable perdition, the whole heathen world. And assuming this as the acknowledged construction, he vehemently declaims against it as "uncharitable," "cruel," a "position of deep-toned horror," and calculated to "fill the rational mind with dismay."

But the most wonderful part of the story is yet to be told. It is a fact, that one of the Thirty-

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nine Articles of Mr. How's own church, contains precisely the same declaration that he, with so much violence, condemns in our Confession of Faith. The article referred to, is the eighteenth, which is in the following 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." The only difference worthy of attention, is, that the Presbyterian Confession of Faith pronounces the doctrine, that men may be saved otherwise than by Christ, "pernicious" and to be "detested." Whereas, the Episcopal article, more harshly, declares, that the persons who hold it, are to be had accursed. This article Mr. How has solemnly subscribed, and the doctrine contained in it, he has canonically sworn to preach and support. And yet he declares "he has no power to express the feelings with which this most de-testable doctrine fills his bosom." To what can we ascribe this conduct? I am unable to think of it without the deepest astonishment and horror!

In my introductory Letter, in a note, p. 17, I expressed myself in the following terms. "Several distinguished writers in Great-Britain, who have lately espoused with much warmth, the
exclusive Episcopal notions under consideration, do not scruple to assert, that all who are in communion with the Episcopal church, are in communion with Christ," and in the "sure road to salvation." They deny that there is any pledged or covenanted mercy; in other words, that there are any promises given in the gospel to persons who are not in communion with that church, however sincere their faith and repentance, and however ardent their piety. And, accordingly, they turn into ridicule every attempt to distinguish between a professing Episcopalian, and a real Christian." —With this passage Mr. How is much offended. He not only rebukes me with great severity for penning a paragraph so "calculated to deceive and inflame my readers," but he goes further, and declares that the sentiment which I ascribe to the writers in question, is not held by them; and that I "ought to know, and cannot but know," that they do not hold it. Thus charging me in pretty direct terms with writing a known and deliberate falsehood.—p. 14, 15.

As I had mentioned no names, and as Mr. How, of course, could not certainly know to what particular writers I alluded, it is somewhat singular that he should venture a contradiction with so much confidence and indecorum. But as neither delicacy nor caution enter into the plan of controversy which this gentleman has adopted, I no longer wonder at any extremes of his rash-
ness or violence. The truth is, that in the para-
graph above stated, I have not only not inten-
tionally misrepresented any one, but am also still
persuaded that I fell into no real error. But, how-
ever this may be, all that I said, was advanced on
the authority of a respectable divine of the Church
of England, now living, who expresses himself in
the following words. "Mr. Daubeny, in like
manner, sees no difference between the true
church of Christ, and the national church;
represents professed membership with this na-
tional society as forming the line of distinc-
tion between the world which lieth in wicked-
ness and a state of condemnation before God,
and those who are in a state of sanctification
and salvation; and speaks indiscriminately of
all who have been regularly baptized, and re-
main in the established communion, as "mem-
bers of Christ's body," "partakers of Christ's
spirit," the "peculiar property of Christ," and
as having "a peculiar interest in him:" in
other words, as "translated from the world;"
"delivered from the powers of darkness," and
"heirs with Christ of an eternal kingdom."
"Guide to the Church, p. 15, 16, 171, 172, 234
and passim. "Every Christian," that is, every
professed Christian, he says again, after being
called to re-consider the subject, who is "living
in a state of communion with the church,"
"namely, with that "visible society" of Chris-
tians, where the Episcopal form of govern-
"ment is to be found, is in the sure road of salvation." Appendix, Letter 7, 452. Antijacobin Review, Feb. 1809, p. 145. The distinction between the national establishment, and the true church of Christ, Mr. Daubeney teaches, is "unnecessary," and a "false distinction." "That," he says, "may be a true church in which the pure word of God is not preached." Appendix, p. 252, 475, 476. Mr. Poiwhele considers it among the greatest extravagancies, to think unfavourably of the state of many, "who every Lord's day attend the service of the church." Letter to Dr. Hawker, p. 38. Dr. Paley, Dr. Croft, and their admirers, teach that the scripture titles of "elect," "called," "saints," "being in Christ," &c. "were intended in a sense common to all Christian converts," and that, "the application of such titles to distinguish individuals amongst us, the professors of Christianity, from one another," argues the greatest ignorance and presumption. Dr. Paley's Visitation Serm. at Carlisle, 1777, p. 11, 12. Dr. Croft's preface to his Thoughts, &c. and Mr. Clapham's Sermon. In further conformity to this doctrine, the scripture terms and phrases, "conversion," "regeneration," the becoming "dead to sin," and "alive from the dead," the being made "sons of God, from children of wrath," these divines tell us, now mean nothing," that is, as they explain it, "nothing to us, or to any one educated in a Christian
What Mr. How himself may think of his own prudence, after reading these extracts, I know not; but I should suppose that others could be at no loss what opinion to form on the subject.

Mr. How refers frequently, and with much triumph, to a passage toward the close of my Letters in which he considers me as having advanced a claim as high and offensive as his own, and also, as having contradicted myself. The passage alluded to, is one which occurs in discussing the doctrine of Uninterrupted Succession, and is in the following words. "If, as we have proved in the foregoing Letters, the right of ordination, according to Scripture and primitive usage, belongs to Presbyters, it is evident that the succession through them, is as valid as any other: or rather, to speak more properly, it is only so far as any succession flows through the line of Presbyters, that it is

*OVERTON'S True Churchman ascertained. 2d Edit. p. 115—118. It will probably be contended by Mr. How and his friends in this controversy, that Mr. Overtton, though a good Churchman, is not accurate in his representation. He has indeed been loaded with much abuse by many for his fidelity. But it unluckily happens, that the editors of the Christian Observer, though warm Episcopalian, and men of great talents and learning, fully justify Mr. Overtton in the substance of his representation. They think, it is true, that he scarcely does justice to Mr. Daubeney; but they acknowledge at the same time, that Mr. D. has too frequently expressed himself in a manner calculated to give countenance to the opinions ascribed to him.
"either regular or valid. It is the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, that constitutes a scriptural ordination; and it is because Episcopal Bishops are Presbyters, and assisted in all ordinations by other Presbyters, that we consider their ordaining acts, on the principles of Scripture and primitive usage, as valid." In this passage, Mr. H. asserts, that I have pronounced Presbyterian ordination alone to be valid, and, of course, have unchurched all who are destitute of it. Now as the whole strain of my volume is of a different kind; and as, in various parts of it, an opposite doctrine is explicitly avowed and maintained, candour, I think, should have dictated to this gentleman a more favourable construction, even supposing my language to admit of that which he puts upon it. But, in truth, when this passage is examined, it will be found that the doctrine which it contains, is so far from being high-toned and offensive, that it is taking the very lowest ground that any denomination of Christians, who hold to a regular ministry at all, have maintained. What does it say? It affirms that ordination by Presbyters is valid, and that it is the only ordination which the Scriptures warrant. Now the Presbyterian Pastors, the Episcopal Bishops, the Ministers of the Independent, Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist churches, are all Presbyters; and, of course, are all empowered to ordain. The doctrine of the above cited passage, therefore, instead of being high-toned or exclusive, recognizes as valid the ordinations of every
church on earth, which receives and acts on the principle that clerical ordination of any kind is necessary.

But after all, how has the Episcopal claim been construed by impartial judges? If, as these gentlemen assert, the most zealous and high-toned advocates of Prelacy, do not lay greater stress on their particular form of church order, than Presbyterians do on theirs; if they make no greater nor more offensive claims; how has it come to pass that the contrary has been, by all parties, so generally understood and acknowledged? How has it happened, that every respectable Presbyterian who ever wrote on this subject, has utterly disclaimed sentiments in anywise resembling those of the jure divino Prelatists? How has it come to pass that many warm friends of Episcopacy have reprobated the claims of some of their own denomination, as peculiar to themselves, as well as groundless and offensive? How could such men as Archbishop Wake, be so grossly deceived? He, in a letter to a Presbyterian Minister of Geneva, in the year 1719, pronounced the high-churchmen of his day, for advancing exactly such claims as those of Dr. Bowden and Mr. How, to be madmen.* Was this respectable prelate; were the great body of the most eminent writers, both Presbyterian and Episcopal, who have treated of this subject for the last two hundred years, all ignorant

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* See my former Letters, p. 273, 274.
and mistaken? I must be allowed to believe that they were at least as learned, and discerning, and that they understood the points in dispute, at least as well as either Dr. Bowden or Mr. How.

Dr. Bowden, and Mr. How, more than once accuse me of departing from the doctrine of our Confession of Faith concerning the Christian ministry; and express some apprehensions that I may be called to an account by my own church, for deviating from her standards. The former of these gentlemen also observes, that, before he saw my Letters, he had supposed me to be a Presbyterian; but that to such Presbyterianism as mine both Calvin and Knox were entire strangers. The best refutation of these charges will be found in the facts exhibited in the following sheets; the slightest attention to which will convince you, that, until my opponents become better acquainted with our Confession of Faith, and also with the writings of Presbyterian Reformers, they are but ill qualified to pronounce what system agrees or is at variance with these great authorities.

But although I am not conscious of departing either from the letter or the spirit of that Confession of Faith which I have solemnly subscribed; and although I am confident that my Presbyterianism is substantially the same with that of Calvin and Knox; yet let us remember that we are to call no man, or body of men, Master on earth. One is our Master, even Christ. His word is the sole standard by which, as Christians, or as Churches, we must stand
or fall. Happy will it be for us, if we can appeal to the great Searcher of hearts, that we have not followed the traditions and inventions of men, but the sure word of prophecy, which is given us to be a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path, to guide us in the way of peace!
LETTER III.

Testimony of Scripture.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

In the second Letter of my former series, I endeavoured to establish the principle, that the only testimony by which the controversy in question ever ought to be, or can be decided, is that of Scripture. The word of God is the only perfect and infallible rule of faith and practice. The moment we quit this ground, we are plunged into all the uncertainty of tradition, and into all the confusion of contradictory testimony. The moment we quit this ground, the defence of Protestantism against the Papists is impossible. In this general principle, our Episcopal brethren concur. They acknowledge that the question before us is a matter of fact, to be ascertained by a sound interpretation of Scripture. And yet, for the most part, they have no sooner made the acknowledgment, than they contradict themselves, by setting human authority above the inspired volume.

In this inconsistent course Dr. Bowden has signalized himself. He has, indeed, pursued it with a degree of boldness which is truly rare. He does not think it necessary even to save appearan-
Testimony of Scripture.

Instead of assigning to Scripture the first and highest place; instead of beginning with it, and permitting it to stand on its own proper eminence, he begins with the Fathers! Nor is this all. As if afraid of examining and exhibiting the testimony of the Fathers in their natural order, from the apostolic age downwards, he begins with the Fathers of the fourth century; reasons backward; assumes the corrupt principles and language of that age as genuine, and then employs them to interpret the primitive writers; and thus endeavours to make his readers believe that the order of the Church was the same in the fourth, that it had been in the first century; and that the words bishop, elder, deacon, meant exactly the same thing in the days of Eusebius, Basil, and Jerome, that they had done in the days of the Apostles. I thank Dr. Bowden for the important concessions which this course of reasoning tacitly discloses. I thank him for the manifest unwillingness which he discovers to encounter either the testimony of Scripture alone, or the testimony of the early Fathers alone. His very arrangement of evidence speaks more than volumes. Of the fairness of this arrangement, I say nothing. No reader of the smallest discernment needs a single remark to aid him in judging of this point. But I could scarcely have asked for a more humiliating confession of the weakness of his cause, and of his distressing consciousness that neither Scripture nor early antiquity will bear him out in his claims,
than is to be found in this management, which he, no doubt, considered as a master stroke of policy. But this gentleman goes a step further. After conducting his readers through a catalogue of quotations, placed in retrograde order, from the fourth century upward to the apostles;—after presenting to them a corresponding series of pictures in an inverted, and therefore deceptive light;—and after bringing them, wearied and perplexed, to the dividing line between the Fathers and the canon of Scripture, he expresses himself in the following terms—"As Episcopacy appears from a cloud of witnesses to be the government of the church at the close of the apostolic age, it can never be admitted that any thing in the New Testament militates against this fact." Letters, i. p. 240. The plain English of this declaration is, "The controversy is to be decided by the Fathers. In approaching the inspired volume, we are previously to take for granted that it does not, and cannot contain any thing contrary to their testimony. And even if it appears to contain facts or principles inconsistent with their writings, we are to draw our conclusions from the latter rather than the former. Were the scriptures to teach otherwise than the Fathers, we could not believe them."—I do not say that this doctrine is, in so many words, avowed by the reverend Professor; nor even that he distinctly recognizes such a monstrous position in his own mind: but I will say, that such is the spirit of the
principle which he lays down, and that I verily believe him to have been governed by it in all his reasonings.

But although my opponents discover so much reluctance to be judged by the law and the testimony, I hope, my brethren, we shall never so far forget our character as Christians and Protestants, as to suffer our faith or practice to be tried by any other test. I will, therefore, request your serious and impartial attention to some further remarks on the scriptural evidence relative to the subject before us.—You will not expect me, however, again to go over the whole ground of the scriptural argument. I shall only advert to a few points on which either the most plausible or the most exceptionable strictures have been made on our principles, as formerly advanced and defended.

I again assert, then, that there is not to be found in the whole New Testament a single doctrine or fact, which yields the least solid support to the cause of prelacy; but that, on the contrary, the whole strain of the evangelical records is favourable to the doctrine of ministerial parity.

Dr. Bowden still insists that the Angels of the seven Asiatic churches, spoken of in Rev. ii. and iii. were no other than diocesan bishops. But really he does little more than assert and re-assert this, without producing any proof that deserves to be considered even as plausible. I had asked, “Is it certain that by these Angels are meant in-
"dividual ministers?" Dr. Bowden replies, "I think there can be no doubt of it." A very strong argument, it must be acknowledged! But unfortunately there is much doubt of it. Some of the most learned and able Episcopalians that ever lived, have not only doubted, but denied it. And Dr. Mason has lately shown, with a force of argument which, in my opinion, no impartial mind can resist, that the title of Angel in this portion of scripture, is a symbolical term, intended to express the ministry collectively of each of those churches; that both the phraseology and matter of the addresses made to the angels are, in several instances, such as could only be directed to collective bodies; and that to consider the title as designating an individual, is a construction attended not only with insuperable difficulty, but with manifest absurdity*.

But, admitting that this term designates individual ministers, does it follow that they can be no other than diocesan bishops? By no means. The angels of Ephesus, Smyrna, &c. might have been, as was observed in my former Letters, the Moderators of the Presbyteries of those cities respectively; or they might have been the Senior pas-

* See that gentleman's very luminous and able Review of the Episcopal Essays, in the Christian's Magazine. This work, which I consider as one of the ablest periodical publications that ever appeared, ought to be in the hands of every one who wishes to attain clear and sound views of "Evangelical truth and order."
tors, to whom, on account of their standing and age, all communications intended for the churches in which they ministered, were, by common consent, directed. The Rector of Trinity Church, in the city of New-York, has five congregations under his pastoral care, and is aided by the labours of several assistant clergymen; yet this rector is not, as such, a bishop; nor are his assistant clergymen inferior in order to him. The whole city of Edinburgh in Scotland, is one Parish, while there are near twenty churches, and more than twenty ministers, within and belonging to that parish; still all these ministers are ecclesiastically equal, excepting that there is a Moderator of the city Presbytery, who has certain powers vested in him, for convening the body, and preserving order during the sessions; and to whom, also, all letters are directed, and all communications made. And yet this is not considered as at all infringing the doctrine of Presbyterian parity.—In truth, neither the title of Angel, nor the addresses made to those on whom it was bestowed, nor any of the powers implied in these addresses, give the least countenance to the system of prelacy; and to suppose that they do, is as gross an instance of begging the whole question in dispute, as can well be produced.

Dr. Bowden appears, indeed, to be sensible that the Scriptures, left to speak for themselves, by no means decide that the angels in question were prelates: he, therefore, has recourse to Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, Eusebius, Ambrose, &c. to
help him out in his difficulty. They, it seems, assert that these angels were the bishops of the respective churches mentioned in connection with their names. But supposing these Fathers to be, in all respects, credible witnesses; and supposing, too, that their assertion is founded, not on conjecture, but authentic records; it still remains to be ascertained in what sense they use the word bishop. What kind of bishops do they mean? Such bishops as the Presbyterian, and the great body of the Reformed Churches, allow to have existed in the days of the apostles, and still retain? or such as our Episcopal brethren contend for? Dr. Bowden undertakes to assert that they were of the latter kind; but he says it without authority; for the Fathers whom he quotes as witnesses, do not say so. They might have been scriptural bishops, without, in the least degree, serving the Episcopal argument.

Dr. Bowden endeavours to press the learned Blondel into his service, by representing him as admitting that the angels of the Asiatic churches are addressed as "having jurisdiction over both clergy and laity;" and thus by implication as acknowledging the existence of diocesan Episcopacy in the apostolic age. This is a mistake. Blondel says no such thing. After investigating this subject perhaps as profoundly as any man ever did, he tells us, that during the apostolic age, and for a considerable time after, Bishop and Presbyter were reciprocally one and the same; that these were com-
bined into Classes or Presbyteries; that the eldest minister, pastor, or bishop belonging to the Presbytery, was, by virtue of his seniority, constantly the moderator; that when he died, the next in age succeeded him, of course, and continued to hold the place during life.—"These senior pastors," says he, "had a certain singular and peerless power, such a power as all moderators, after whatsoever manner constituted, ever had, and ever will have, belonging to them. Neither was the moderator of any of these sacred colleges, chief among his colleague Presbyters, as a Presbyter, or as one placed in higher order above all the other Presbyters; but as the eldest and first ordained pastor. Nor did the rest as Presbyters, but as younger Presbyters, and afterwards ordained, yield the moderatorship to him. His office was to exhort the brotherhood; to war a good warfare; to commend them to God by prayer; to gather the Presbytery; to give them a good example; and to declare himself to be a diligent messenger of God to mankind. And, therefore, as Christ does in his admonitions to the angels of the Asiatic churches, both the good and the evil deeds of the churches might be imputed to these moderators."—And again he says, "Linus, as he was a bishop, had for his colleagues Clement and Anacletus, who were shortly after ordained bishops, with himself, in the same church of Rome. But as he was the exarch"
or moderator of the brethren, he neither had,
nor could have any colleagues, (seeing the mo-
deratorship can only fall to one person at once)
but only successors. There was a plurality of
Bishops, Presbyters, or Governors, at the same
time, and in the same church. All these Pas-
tors or Bishops, on the very account of their
Presbyterate, were endued with equal power and
honour. The moderator was subject to the
Presbytery, and obeyed its commands with no
less submission than did the meanest of their
number. He had the chief power in the col-
lege of Presbyters, but had no power over the
college itself." And, as if this learned man
had been aware of every cavil that ignorance or
sophistry could suggest, he expressly compares
these ancient moderators, with the moderators of
Presbyteries, in the reformed churches of Scotland
and France, and assigns to the former no more
power or pre-eminence than belongs to the latter.
Blondelli Apolog. Prafat. pag. 6. 7. 18. 35. 38.
I make no comment on Dr. Bowden's perver-
sion of these plain declarations. If he fell into it
ignorantly, he is to be excused; if wilfully, no
reader will be at a loss for appropriate reflections.

Of the same character, and equally destitute of
force, is all that Dr. Bowden has advanced to show
that Timothy and Titus were prelates. After fill-
ing about thirty pages with what he calls his proofs
of this point, he will really be found, when closely
examined, to have done little more than beg the whole question in dispute.

He insists that Timothy and Titus were not sent to Ephesus and Crete in the character of Evangelists; that they had finished all the labours which belonged to them in this character, before they went thither; and that their principal duties in those places were of an higher kind, and appropriate to an higher office. Nay, he formally sets it down, in a long catalogue, as one of my "unfounded assertions," that I represent them as acting in that capacity in the Ephesian and Cretian churches. Has Dr. Bowden ever read that portion of the New Testament which is called the Second Epistle to Timothy? Does not the apostle Paul say to Timothy, in that Epistle, Do the work of an Evangelist? And was this written before he went to Ephesus? Truly, when this gentleman can permit himself, with so little ceremony, to contradict an inspired Apostle, I need not wonder that others fare so roughly in his hands. Nor will it afford any relief to his cause, to cavil about the meaning of the word evangelist. Whatever it then meant, or may now mean, it is certain that Paul applied it to Timothy, and that after he had been sent on his Ephesian mission. And if it were applied to Timothy, no good reason can be assigned why it may not, with equal propriety, be applied to Titus. In fact, if it be conceded that the former was an Evangelist, and acted as such, when the Epistles directed to him were written,
the friends of prelacy can have no interest in contending that the latter bore a different character; for the same reasoning, in substance, applies to both.

But Dr. Bowden still contends, that Timothy and Titus were Diocesan Bishops, because they were empowered to ordain others to the work of the Gospel Ministry? Shall we never have done with this begging of the whole question, in a manner so unworthy of logicians and divines? Suppose they were empowered to ordain? What then? Do we not consider Presbyters as invested with this power? And is it not the great object of Dr. Bowden's book to show that it was otherwise? Why, then, does he attempt to impose upon his readers by taking the main point for granted? Let him first prove that, in the primitive church, none were permitted to ordain, but an order of ministers superior to Presbyters, and then his argument from the fact of Timothy and Titus having been invested with the ordaining power, will be conclusive; but until he shall have established the former, which neither he, nor any other man, has done, or can do, the latter will be considered, by every discerning reader, as worse than trifling.

Dr. Bowden and his friends also lay great stress on another point. They take for granted that there had been Elders (or Presbyters) ordained by the apostle Paul himself, both at Ephesus and Crete, before Timothy and Titus were sent to those places. Assuming this as a fact, they say, these
Presbyters, on Presbyterian principles, must have been invested with the ordaining power; but if this were so, why were others sent on so long a journey, to perform that which persons on the spot could have done as well? Here, again, every thing is taken for granted. Where did Dr. B. learn that there had been Presbyters fixed, either in Ephesus or Crete, before Timothy or Titus went thither? The sacred history says no such thing. With what face, then, can any man undertake to found his whole argument on a mere assumption? It is certain that the Epistle to Titus contains a direction to ordain Elders in every city. There were, therefore, some cities, at least, which were not furnished with the requisite number, and probably with none at all. But admitting that there were Elders already ordained both at Ephesus and Crete, still the argument is good for nothing. That some portions of those churches were unfurnished with ministers of any kind, and that they were all in a comparatively unorganized and immature state, is perfectly manifest from the whole strain of the Apostle's language concerning them. Was it unnatural, on Presbyterian principles, that in this state of things, special missionaries should be sent among them; men well known as possessing the entire confidence of the Apostle; fully instructed in their duty; and qualified to travel from place to place, and set in order the things which were wanting? Might not many prudential considerations have rendered it expedient to send such
eminent characters from a distance, rather than to select men of less distinguished and commanding reputation on the spot, to perform a service as delicate as it was arduous? In fact, this is precisely the course which has been, more than once, pursued, in Presbyterian churches, when they were in an unsettled state, without any one ever dreaming that it infringed the doctrine of ministerial parity; or that it implied any deficiency of power in those ministers who resided nearer the scene of action.

But Dr. Bowden further contends, that Timothy and Titus were empowered to ordain alone; that is, that in the ordinations which they performed at Ephesus and Crete, there were no other ordainers joined with them; and hence he infers that the Presbyterian doctrine cannot be true, because our rules do not admit of ordination by a single Presbyter. Here, once more, this dextrous disputant takes for granted the very thing to be proved. Who informed him that Timothy was the sole ordainer at Ephesus, and Titus at Crete? The Epistles to those Evangelists do not say so. Is he sure that they had not travelling companions, of equal power with themselves, who united with them in every ordination? Can he determine for what purpose Mark travelled with Timothy; and Zenas and Apollos with Titus? Or can he undertake to say that these persons never joined in setting apart others to the ministry? Dr. B. is confident there had been Presbyters ordained, both at Ephesus and Crete before these Evangelists went thither.
Testimony of Scripture.

Now, if there were such Presbyters in those churches, will he venture to assert, that one or more of these were not always joined with Timothy and Titus in ordaining other Presbyters? In short, neither Dr. B. nor any other man, knows any thing about these matters; and yet he assumes facts, and argues upon them with as much confidence, as if he were perfectly acquainted with every minute particular.

This gentleman, however, still pleads, that directions about ordaining ministers, and regulating the affairs of the church, were given to Timothy and Titus alone; that we hear of no others joined with them in those instructions; and that we have no right to suppose there were such. This plea does not deserve an answer; but it shall have one. Suppose one of our Presbyteries or Synods

* Dr. Bowden appears to think it strange that I suggest the possibility that some of the Presbyters of Ephesus and Crete might have been united with Timothy and Titus in their ordaining acts; when I had before represented it as utterly uncertain whether there were such Presbyters in existence, and as rather probable that there were not. But there is no inconsistency here: I only mean to show that Dr. B. does not know whether there were, or were not such Presbyters; and that he can gain nothing by either supposition. If there were none such at Ephesus or Crete, before these Evangelists were sent, then a fundamental argument in favour of the prelatical character of Timothy and Titus is destroyed. If there were such, then they might have assisted, for aught we know, in every ordination: and then another boasted argument on the same side falls to the ground. Whichever supposition is adopted, it is equally fatal.
were to send out a company of two or three missionaries; and, for the sake of convenience, were to convey their instructions in the form of a Letter to the oldest and most prudent of the number; would this individual have reason to consider himself as a person of a superior order, on account of such a circumstance? Again, when we ordain a minister, the person who presides in the ordination generally recites to the newly admitted brother many passages from the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, seldom omitting, in particular, the injunction—Lay hands suddenly on no man. But no minister ever considered this mode of address, as constituting him the sole ordainer in any case in which he should afterwards act. It would be as reasonable to say, that, because the Apostle gave Timothy direction about public preaching, therefore he alone was empowered to preach; or, because he was instructed with respect to some parts of public prayer*, therefore he only was allowed

* By the way it is not a little remarkable that the Apostle should content himself with giving Timothy only general directions with respect to public prayer, and even these only with regard to some of the objects of petition. Where were the Liturgies of those times? Had Forms of Prayer been so indispensably necessary, or, at least, so pre-eminently important, as our Episcopal brethren, tell us they are, and always have been, why did not Paul, or some other of the Apostles, furnish the churches with Liturgies written by themselves, and under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost? How shall we account for it, that instead of sending Timothy a Form, he only laid down for him a few general words
Testimony of Scripture.

to pray. But there would be no end to such absurdities. It is really wonderful that gentlemen who appear to be serious, should lay so much stress on arguments, much better calculated to pour ridicule on their cause, than to afford it efficient aid.

But, admitting that Timothy and Titus each acted as sole ordainers at Ephesus and Crete—the probability is, that they did not; but, supposing it proved that they did, it does not affect the question in dispute. Although Presbyterians, wishing to conform as perfectly as possible to Scriptural example, require a plurality of ministers to be present, and to lay on their hands in ordination; yet I have no reason to suppose that any Presbyterian minister or church, would consider an ordination performed, in a case of necessity, by a single Presbyter, as null and void. Supposing it proved, therefore, that an inspired Apostle, in a new and unsettled state of the church, sent forth Evangelists singly to preach, ordain, and organize churches, it would establish nothing, either way, material to the present controversy.

Every thing, therefore, that Dr. Bowden has advanced to establish the prelatical character of Timothy and Titus, is perfectly nugatory. It is all mere assumption, instead of proof; and were it

of direction? But this is not the only instance in which the Apostles appear to have been of a different mind from some modern churchmen.
not for the respectable character of the author, would be totally unworthy of reply. He has no where proved that these ministers went to Ephesus and Crete in a higher character than that of itinerant Presbyters. He has no where proved that they were the fixed pastors or bishops of the churches which he undertakes to assign to them. He has no where proved that there were Presbyters in those churches, before these Evangelists were sent thither, who might, on Presbyterian principles, have performed the rite of ordination, without the trouble and expense of sending special missionaries to so great a distance. He has no where proved that Timothy or Titus was, either of them, the sole ordainer in any case. He has no where, in short, established a single fact concerning either of them, which has the least appearance of prelatical superiority. Even if he could establish these facts, his point would not be gained. He would, after all, be obliged to show, that they took place in a regular and established and not in a new and unsettled state of the church; and that they were intended to serve, in every minute particular, as precedents. But he has not proved, and cannot prove, either the one or the other. I therefore repeat, with increased confidence, the closing sentence of the discussion of this subject in my former Letters. "The argument which our Episcopal brethren derive from "Timothy and Titus is absolutely worth nothing; "and after all the changes that may be rung upon
"it, and all the decorations with which it may " be exhibited, it amounts only to a gratuitous as- " sumption of the whole point in dispute."

As to the testimony adduced from the Fathers, to establish the prelatical character of Timothy and Titus, it is more, much more, suited, in the view of all intelligent readers, to discredit than to aid the Episcopal cause. I had quoted from Dr. Whitby, an eminent Episcopal divine, the following passage.—"The great controversy concerning " this, and the Epistle to Timothy is, whether " Timothy and Titus were indeed made Bishops, " the one of Ephesus, and the pro-consular Asia; " the other of Crete. Now of this matter I con- " fess I can find nothing in any writer of the first " three centuries, nor any intimation that they " bore that name." Dr. Bowden virtually concurs in this statement of Dr. Whitby; for though he speaks with much confidence of the testimony of the Fathers on this point, yet the first authentic witness *, among the Fathers, whom he brings

* Dr. Bowden does, indeed, adduce one witness, whom he places before Eusebius, in the following words. "From a " fragment of a treatise by Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, " towards the close of the second century. This fragment " is preserved in Photius's Bibliotheca, and quoted by Arch- " bishop Usher in his discourse on Episcopacy. In that " fragment it is said, that "Timothy was ordained Bishop " of Ephesus by the great Paul." Nobody has ever seen the original work of Polycrates; but Photius, who was Pa- " triarch of Constantinople, toward the close of the ninth cen- " tury, has preserved, it seems, a fragment of it in his Bibli-
forward is Eusebius, who says, “it is related that “Timothy was the first bishop of Ephesus.” Now Eusebius does indeed say so; but he also declares, generally, that his sources of information were exceedingly scanty and uncertain; and, in particular, he confesses, that it was not easy to say, who were left Bishops of the several churches, by the Apostles, except so far as might be gathered from the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of Paul. Eccles. Hist. Lib. iii. Cap. 4. Here, then, is the sum of the evidence from the Fathers, as to this point. Eusebius stands first on the list. He quotes as his authority, the New Testament. All the others, as Ambrose, Epiphanius, Jerome, Chrysostom, &c. follow Eusebius. The fathers, then, virtually confess that they knew no more of the matter than we do; and of course their whole testimony is, to us, perfectly worthless.

But some of the Fathers speak on this subject in a manner that is somewhat unfortunate for the Episcopal cause. On the one hand, several of them represent Timothy and Titus, and especially the former, as more than a single Bishop, as bearing the dignity of an Archbishop, or Metropolitan.

This Bibliotheca has been seen, and is quoted, we are told, by Archbishop Usher, “in his Discourse on Episcopacy.” But as Dr. B. has no reference, by means of which this fragment may be found, either in the “Bibliotheca,” or in the “Discourse,” I consider myself as absolved from all obligation to pay it the least attention. Did not Dr. B. promise to act in a more “scholar-like” manner?
Now, as Dr. Bowden, and his friends, acknowledge that there were no Archbishops in the Apostle's days, they must of course consider this testimony as false and worthless. On the other hand, one of the Fathers quoted by Dr. Bowden, (Chrysostom) in his Commentary on Titus i. 5. speaks of that Evangelist in the following clear and decisive terms: "That thou mayest ordain Elders, says the Apostle: he means Bishops. In every city, says he, for he would not have the whole Island committed to one man; but that every one should have and mind his own proper cure; for so he knew the labour would be easier to him, and the people to be governed would have more care taken of them; since their teacher would not run about to govern many churches; but would attend to the ruling of one only, and so would keep it in good order."

Here Chrysostom expressly declares, that Titus was not the Bishop of all Crete; that he was sent, not to take the fixed pastoral charge of the Island, but to place its churches under a permanent and regular ministry; that the Apostolic direction was to set a Bishop over every particular church: and that a single church was quite enough for a Scriptural Bishop to have under his care. In short, the whole passage is so entirely Presbyterian in its strain, that its force in our favour can be overlooked by none.

But one of the most extraordinary parts of Dr. Bowden's work, is that in which he undertakes to
answer my argument drawn from the constitution of the Jewish Synagogue I had shown, in my second Letter, that the Synagogue worship universally prevailed among the Jews, at the time of our Lord's coming in the flesh; that the apostles, in organizing Christian Churches, willing to conform as far as possible, to the habits and prejudices of the first converts to Christianity, who were Jews, deviated as little as circumstances would admit from the synagogue model; that this model was Presbyterian in its form; and that the nature of the public service, the names and duties of church officers, the manner of ordination, &c. were all transferred from the synagogue to the church. It is not easy to exhibit this argument in its native strong light before common readers, because few have any tolerable acquaintance with Jewish antiquities. But the more I reflect upon it, the more deeply I am persuaded, that, when properly stated and understood, it will be found an argument of the most conclusive and satisfactory kind.

Dr. Bowden, however, views it as wholly destitute of force. This, indeed, might be expected from a man, who, as we have lately seen, is hardy enough to dissent from a direct statement of the apostle Paul. But let us examine his objections and his reasonings.

In the first place, Dr. B. insists that the Christian Church could not have been organized after the model of the Jewish Synagogue, because the synagogue did not, properly speaking, partake of the
character of a church; being a mere human institution, and resting on no other basis than human authority. He asserts, that my not adverting to this fact, is the foundation of my whole error; and that the due consideration of it will completely destroy my argument. I trust, however, that a few remarks will be sufficient to show that the want of due consideration is on his part, and not on mine; and that the argument stands firm and unanswerable, notwithstanding all he has said.

When Dr. Bowden so confidently asserts that the synagouge was a mere human institution; that no Jew was under any obligation to attend upon its service; and that, being a mere creature of man, every one was at liberty, in the sight of God, to treat it as he pleased;—when he makes these assertions, he ought to know that he is speaking wholly without authority. Who told the learned professor all these things? If he can inform us when synagogues were instituted, by whom, and from what source the suggestion or command to establish them came, he will render a piece of service to ecclesiastical history, for which all its students will have reason to thank him: for, truly, no other person has ever yet been able with any degree of certainty to give us this information. But if he cannot give a decisive answer to any one of these questions, how could he dare to speak on the subject in the manner that he has ventured to do?—It is certain that synagogues are mentioned in the 78th Psalm, and that they
are there called synagogues of God. It is certain that putting an offender out of the synagogue, was a well known mode of speaking among the Jews, to express excommunication from the church; and it is equally certain, that our Lord and his apostles attended the synagogue service every sabbath day, and thus gave it their decided sanction. Now, all these taken together, look, to say the least, like something more than mere human contrivance. If, as some suppose, the synagogue was instituted by Ezra, after the Babylonish captivity, and none, that I know, ascribe to it a later, or less respectable origin, even this supposition will not aid Dr. Bowden, or countenance his reasoning. Was not Ezra an inspired man? And will not, of course, an institution of his, rest on substantially the same ground, as to authority, with an institution established or enjoined by Peter or Paul?

But granting to Dr. Bowden all that he asks; granting that the synagogue was a mere human institution; that it made no part of the Jewish church, properly so called; and that no Jew was under any divine obligation to attend on its service;—what does he gain by the concession? Nothing. It is so far from destroying my argument, that it does not affect or even touch it. Dr. B. does not deny that synagogues existed, and were in use, at the time in which the apostles were called upon to form their Jewish converts into Christian churches. How they came into use, or by what authority they were introduced, are
questions foreign from the present inquiry. Again, Dr. B. does not deny, that every particular synagogue had three classes of officers, a bishop, elders, and deacons; that the peculiar office of the bishop, (or as he was sometimes called, the angel of the church) was to preside in the public service, and lead the devotions of the people; that the principal duty of the bench of elders, was to assist in ruling the synagogue, and administering its discipline*; and that the deacons, though sometimes called to the performance of other services, were particularly charged with collecting and distributing alms for the poor. Dr. B. does not deny, that ordination by the imposition of hands was always employed in constituting the synagogue ministry. And, finally, he does not deny, that reading the sacred scriptures, expounding them, and offering up public prayers, formed the ordinary service of the synagogue. He does not deny that all these were found in the Synagogue, and that none of them were found in the Temple service. This is conceding all that I desire, or that my argument demands. I care not what doubts may be started concerning the date or the origin of these institutions. All that I have to do with, are the great and indubitable facts, that they were in use among the Jews; and

* Dr. Bowden explicitly grants that there was a class of officers in every Jewish synagogue, similar to the ruling elders in the Presbyterian church. We shall hereafter see that this is an important concession.
that in organizing the Christian church, the Apostles, acting in the name, and under the authority of Christ, appointed for the Church the same classes of officers as existed in the synagogue; gave them the same names; assigned to them similar duties; directed their ordination to be solemnized in the same manner; and prescribed for them, substantially, the same course of public service. Can any thing be more conclusive? He who can reject this plain induction of facts, will find it difficult to be satisfied with demonstration itself.

You will now be able, my brethren, to judge between Dr. Bowden and me, with respect to this point; or rather between the Presbyterian and Episcopal doctrine. We say that the Christian church was formed by the apostles after the model of the Jewish Synagogue; while those who contend for the divine right of Diocesan Episcopacy, assert, that it was organized, after the model of the Temple service. We produce proof. We show that the organization and service of the Christian church, resemble the Temple in scarcely any thing; while they resemble the Synagogue in almost every thing. We show that there were bishops, elders, and deacons in the synagogue; but not in the temple:—That there was ordination by the imposition of hands in the synagogue, but no ordination at all in the temple:—That there were reading the scriptures, expounding them, and public prayers, every sabbath day, in the synagogue;
While the body of the people went up to the temple only three times a year, and even then to attend on a very different service:—That in the synagogue, there was a system established, which included a weekly provision not only for the instruction and devotions of the people, but also for the maintenance of discipline, and the care of the poor; while scarcely any thing of this kind was to be found in the temple. Now, in all these respects, and in many more which might be mentioned, the Christian church followed the Synagogue, and departed from the Temple. Could we trace a resemblance in one or a few points, it might be considered as accidental; but the resemblance is so close, so striking, and extends to so many particulars, as to arrest the attention of the most careless inquirer. It was, indeed, notoriously so great in the early ages, that the heathen frequently suspected and charged Christian churches, with being Jewish synagogues in disguise. But with respect to the Temple service, this resemblance is, in almost every particular, entirely wanting. I ask, then, after which of these models was the Christian church formed? The answer is so plain, that I should insult your
understandings by supposing it possible for you to doubt.

It is vain to object as Dr. Bowden does, that the resemblance between the Christian church and the synagogue is not absolutely perfect as to every minute particular. This does not affect the general principle. He objects, for instance, that neither Baptism nor the Lord's Supper is to be found in the synagogue service. Be it so. But were they to be found in the Temple service, for the resemblance of which to the Christian church, he so ardently contends? No. Baptism, among the Jews had no connexion with the Temple; and with respect to the Passover, it was instituted long before the temple had a being; and has been continued near eighteen hundred years since it was no more.

But Dr. Bowden is incorrect in his premises, as well as in his conclusion. Both Baptism and the Passover, though they had no connexion with the Temple, were connected with the Synagogue. The ministers of the Synagogue admitted Proselytes to their communion by baptising parents and children. To constitute a regular Jewish baptism, it was necessary that three Elders of the Synagogue should be present. The Synagogue officers also determined the question of right who should eat the Passover. In fact, the Synagogue officers did admit Proselytes into the Jewish Church, and excommunicate offenders. They had the care of the whole discipline from the time of Ezra.
priests, it is true, had a voice; but it was as members of the Sanhedrim, and not as officers of the Temple.

As to Dr. B.'s objection, that the organization of the Christian church cannot resemble that of the synagogue, because the bishop of the synagogue had only the charge of a single congregation, whereas he is persuaded, that the Christian Bishop has a charge extending over many congregations—I can only say, that while it includes a most ludicrous begging of the question in debate, it carries with it also a most important concession, which I take for granted the Dr. was not aware of; but which is fatal to his cause.—He grants that the bishop of the synagogue, (and of course, the only kind of bishop to which the first converts to Christianity had been accustomed,) was the pastor, or presiding officer, over a single congregation. Now if the model of the synagogue, and not of the temple, was adopted by the apostles, it affords a strong presumption that the scriptural bishop was, what we suppose him to have been, the pastor of a single church. In fact, Dr. B. fully concedes this: for, in another part of his work, he frankly acknowledges that, in the days of the apostles, the title of bishop was currently applied to the pastors of particular churches. There is nothing now wanting, even on Dr. B.'s own principles, to render the resemblance between the synagogue and the church complete, so far as the officers of each are concerned, but to find ruling
elders in the primitive church. But a bench of ruling elders, corresponding with those who bear that name in our church, he acknowledges belonged to the Synagogue; and in the next Letter I hope to prove, to the satisfaction of every impartial mind, that such officers were instituted in the primitive Church.

The great principle for which I am contending, viz. that the Christian Church was organized on the model of the Synagogue, has been received and maintained by a number of the ablest divines that ever wrote on the subject, both Presbyterian and Episcopal. But all testimonies adduced from the former will be viewed, by Dr. Bowden and his friends, with a suspicious eye. I shall, therefore, pass by all that has been said on this subject, by the incomparably learned and able Professor Vistringa, of Holland, and by that prodigy of erudition, the celebrated Selden, of England—because they were Presbyterians*. But I hope my opponents, in this controversy will pay some respect to the following quotations from some of the most respectable writers in their own church, who concede all that I ask or desire.

The first quotation shall be taken from Bishop Burnet. "Among the Jews, (says he) he who

*I call Selden a Presbyterian, because, though not a thorough-advocate for Presbyterianism; strictly so called, he was decidedly anti-episcopal:
Testimony of Scripture.

"was the chief of the Synagogue, was called "Chazan Hakeneseth, i.e. the Bishop of the "Congregation, and Sheliach Tsibbor, the Angel "of the Church. And the Christian Church be- "ing modelled as near the form of the Syna- "gogue as they could be; as they retained many "of the rites, so the form of the government was "continued, and the names remained the same."

And again, "In the Synagogues there was, first, "one who was called the Bishop of the Congrega- "tion; next the three orderers and judges of eve- "ry thing about the Synagogue; who were called "Tsekenim, and by the Greeks ἐπίσκοπος, or "ἐργοντες, that is, Elders. These ordered and "determined every thing that concerned the Syn- "agogue, or the persons in it. Next them were "the three Parnassin or Deacons, whose charge "was to gather the collections of the rich, and "distribute them to the poor.*"

The next quotation shall be taken from Dr. Lightfoot, another Episcopal Divine, not less dis- "tinguished for his learning and talents. "The "Apostle," (says he) " calleth the minister, Epis- "copus, (or Bishop) from the common and known "title of the Chazan or Overseer in the Syna- "gogue." And again, "Besides these, there "was the public minister of the Synagogue, who "prayed publicly, and took care about reading "the law, and sometimes preached, if there were

"not some other to discharge this office. This
person was called Sheliach Tsibbor, the Angel
of the Church, and Chazan Hakeneseth the Cha-
zan or Bishop of the Congregation. The Aruch
gives the reason of the name. The Chazan,
says he, is Sheliach Tsibbor, the Angel of the
Church, (or the public minister,) and the Tar-
gum renders the word Roveh by the word
Hose, one that oversees. For it is incumbent
on him to oversee how the reader reads, and
whom he may call out to read in the law. The
public minister of the Synagogue himself read
not the law publicly, but every Sabbath he called
out seven of the Synagogue (on other days
fewer) whom he judged fit to read. He stood
by him that read, with great care observing that
he read nothing either falsely or improperly,
and calling him back, and correcting him, if
he had failed in any thing. And hence he was
called Chazan, that is Esworos, i. e. Bishop or
Overseer. Certainly the signification of the
word Bishop, and Angel of the Church, had
been determined with less noise, if recourse
had been had to the proper fountains, and men
had not vainly disputed about the signification
of words taken I know not whence. The ser-
vice and worship of the Temple being abolish-
ed, as being ceremonial, God transplanted the
worship and public adoration of God used in
the Synagogues, which was moral, into the
Christian Church; viz. the public ministry,
Testimony of Scripture.

"Public prayers, reading God’s word, and preaching, &c. Hence the names of the ministers of the Gospel were the very same, the Angel of the Church, the Bishop which belonged to the Ministers in the Synagogues. There were also three Deacons, or Almoners, on whom was the care of the poor."

The celebrated Grotius†, whose great learning and talents will be considered by all as giving much weight to his opinion on any subject, is full and decided in maintaining that the primitive church was formed after the model of the Synagogue. Many passages might be quoted from his writings, in which this opinion is directly asserted. The following may suffice. In his Commentary on Acts xi. 30. he expresses himself thus: "The whole polity (regimen) of the Christian Church was conformed to the pattern of the Synagogue." And in his Commentary on 1. Tim. v. 17. he has the following passage. "Formerly, in large cities, as there were many Synagogues, so there were also many churches, or separate meetings of Christians. And every particular Church had its own President, or Bishop, who instruct-

† Though Grotius was bred a Presbyterian; yet being soured by what he considered as ill treatment from the Church of Holland, he discovered a strong predilection for Episcopacy. When this is considered, the declarations above cited, carry with them peculiar force.
ed the people, and ordained Presbyters. In Alexandria alone it was the custom to have but one President or Bishop, for the whole city, who distributed Presbyters through the city for the purpose of instructing the people; as we are taught by Sozomen. i. 14.

The next point in Dr. Bowden's exhibition of Scriptural testimony, which demands attention, is the alleged Episcopal character of James over the church of Jerusalem.—This argument in favour of Prelacy, was wholly omitted in my former volume, not because there was any difficulty in answering it, but because it really appeared to me too frivolous to be seriously considered. Dr. Bowden, however, having no arguments to spare, has brought it forward with much confidence, and seems to consider it, like every other on the Episcopal side, as perfectly conclusive. Indeed he appears to regard me as guilty of injustice to the Episcopal cause in passing it over in silence.

But how does it appear, from the New Testament, that James was Bishop of Jerusalem? From such considerations, the advocates of prelacy tell us, as the following: 1. That in the Synod at Jerusalem, (Acts xv.) he spoke last, and expressed himself thus—Wherefore my sentence is, &c. 2. That Peter, after his release from prison, said to certain persons—Go show these things unto James and to the brethren. Acts xii. 17. And 3. That, in Acts xxi. 17, 18. it is said—And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.
And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the Elders were present. On these passages Dr. Bowden asks, "Why did Peter direct certain things to be communicated particularly to James, if he were not the Bishop? What induced Paul and his company to go in unto James in particular; and how came all the Elders to be with James, unless he were the Bishop? On the supposition that he bore this character everything is natural; but on any other supposition these facts must appear very strange. I see enough to convince me that he was the head of all the Presbyters and Congregations in Jerusalem. For I find him constantly distinguished from his clergy. He is always mentioned first, and the name of no other Presbyter, however eminent he may have been, is ever given. He is mentioned with marked respect on various occasions," &c. &c. 1. 345—352.

This argument, when stripped of all its decorations, stands simply thus—James was the last person who spoke in the Synod; therefore he was superior to all the Apostles and others present! Peter requested an account of his release from prison to be sent to James; therefore James was a Diocesan Bishop! Paul and his company went to the house of James in Jerusalem, and there found the Elders convened; therefore James was their ecclesiastical Governor!

Now, in the name of common sense, what connexion is there in this case, between the premises and the conclusion? Are no clergymen ever treated
with "pointed respect," unless they are Diocesan Bishops? Do no clerical meetings ever take place in the houses of any other class of ministers than Diocesan Bishops? Cannot messages of a public nature be sent to individual ministers of the Gospel, without supposing them to be Prelates? Suppose a number of Presbyterian ministers had an important communication to make to the Clergy of a certain city, would it be inconsistent with their doctrine of parity to address this communication to a particular individual, most distinguished for his age, talents, piety, and influence, to be by him imparted to the rest of his brethren? Nay, is not this, in all Presbyterian, as well as other countries, the ordinary method of proceeding? When the clergy of any town or district convene for mutual consultation, does their assembling in the house of some aged and venerable brother in the ministry constitute that brother their Bishop, in the Episcopal sense of the word? To propose questions of this kind seriously is little short of an insult to the understanding of the reader. Do not facts of the very kind related of James, happen every day to Presbyterian ministers? When gentlemen who would be thought to argue, and not to trifle, condescend to amuse their readers with representations of this kind, under the garb of reasoning, it is really difficult to answer them in the language of respect or gravity.

But the Fathers, it seems, assert that James was Bishop of Jerusalem. Admitting this fact;
and admitting, also, that there were no circumstan-
ces tending to invalidate their testimony; to what
does it amount? Why, simply, that James was one
of the Clergy, perhaps the Senior Clergyman of
the Church of Jerusalem, and probably the most
conspicuous and eminent of them all. For let it
never be forgotten that our Episcopal brethren
themselves acknowledge, that the title of Bishop
was applied in the Apostles' days, and for some
time afterwards, to the Pastors of single congrega-
tions, and of course that this term alone decides
nothing in their favour. But let us sift this matter
a little. Hegesippus is quoted by Eusebius as relat-
ing, that "James, the brother of our Lord, under-
took, together with the Apostles, the government
of the Church of Jerusalem*." This is the earliest
writer that is brought to testify directly on the sub-
ject; and he declares that James presided over the
Church in Jerusalem in conjunction with the other
Apostles. He says, indeed, a little before, that the
Bishoprick of Jerusalem was given to James by
the Apostles, but when we come to compare the
two passages, and to interpret the one by the other,
the whole testimony of this writer will be found
perfectly equivocal. Some of the later Fathers,
also, following Hegesippus, speak of James as Bi-
shop of Jerusalem; but do they tell us in what sense
they employ this title? That the apostles and pri-
mitive christians sometimes employed it in a sense


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different from that which is adopted by our Episcopal brethren, is confessed on all hands. And that these early writers, when they speak of James as Bishop of Jerusalem, mean to say that he was a Prelate, a Bishop, in the modern and perverted sense of the term, is what we confidently call in question, and what Dr. Bowden, with all his brethren to aid him, cannot prove. I know that the learned Professor loses all patience at intimations of this kind; but it is by no means the first time that a man has been provoked by a demand of proof, when he had nothing but assertion to produce.

But the most wonderful part of the story is, that Dr. Bowden produces Calvin as a witness in support of the Episcopal dignity of James. On this point he speaks in the following terms: "So evident is it, that James was Bishop of Jerusalem, that even Calvin thinks it highly probable that he was Governor of that Church. When, says Calvin, the question is concerning dignity, it is wonderful James should be preferred before Peter. Perhaps it was because he was Prefect of the Church of Jerusalem." In Galat. c. ii. v. 9. Calvin did not choose to speak plainer; for that would have been in direct contradiction to his ecclesiastical regimen." I. p. 346.

The moment I cast my eye on this quotation from Calvin, I took for granted that something had been kept back, which, if produced, would turn the tables on the Professor. And this accor-
Testimony of Scripture.

Dingly proves to be the case. The passage, as it really stands in Calvin, is as follows. "The Apostle speaks of their (James, Cephas, and John,) seeming to be pillars, not by way of contempt, but he repeats a common sentiment. "Because from this it follows, that what they did, ought not to be lightly rejected. When the question is concerning dignity, it is wonderful that James should be preferred to Peter. Perhaps this was done because he was President of the Church of Jerusalem. With respect to the word pillar, we know, that, in the very nature of things, those who excel others in talents, in prudence, or in other endowments, must also be superior in authority. In the Church of God it is a fact, that in proportion as any one is strong in grace in the same proportion is honour due to him. It is ingratitude, nay, it is impiety, not to do homage to the Spirit of God wherever he appears in his gifts. And further, as the people of a Church cannot do without a pastor, so each particular assembly of pastors stands in need of some one to be moderator. But let it be always understood, that he who is first of all should be as a servant, according to Matthew 23. 11."

Where is the testimony from Calvin now? And, I will add, where are Dr. Bowden's blushes? The truth is, the whole passage, like the tenour of all Calvin's writings, is decidedly anti-prelatical. That great Reformer, as will be more fully seen here-
after, believed in no authority of one minister over another, as having existed in the primitive church, but a moderatorship, either occasional or standing, for the maintenance of order.

This is not the only instance in which Dr. Bowden entirely perverts the language of Calvin, and represents him as delivering opinions directly opposite to those which he really does deliver. Of this, more in a future letter, in which the writings of Calvin, so far as they relate to Episcopacy, will be particularly considered. In the mean time I cannot forbear to notice a single specimen, so gross and remarkable, that I could scarcely credit the testimony of my own senses when I found it advanced by both my opponents, not only with confidence, but even with sarcastic and reproachful exultation, as a great concession from the reformer of Geneva in their favour.

In his Commentary on Titus 1. 5. Calvin speaks largely of the mission of that Evangelist to the Churches of Crete. Dr. Bowden and Mr. How wish to persuade their readers, that, in these remarks, he fairly gives up the point that Titus was a Diocesan Bishop, or Prelate. Accordingly they both represent him as saying—“Hence we learn that there was not any equality among the ministers of the Church, but that one was placed over the rest in authority and counsel.” On this pretended quotation from Calvin, Mr. How observes, “Here the divine institution of superior and inferior grades of ministers, is asserted in
unqualified terms." p. 63. Dr. Bowden quotes the passage from Calvin, exactly in the same manner, and makes precisely the same use of it with Mr. How.

You will, no doubt, be filled with astonishment, my brethren, to find that the passage from which these gentlemen profess to make this quotation, is in fact as follows: "Presbyters, or Elders, it is well known, are not so denominated on account of their age, since young men are sometimes chosen to this office, as for instance, Timothy; but it has ever been customary, in all languages, to apply this title, as a term of honour, to all Rulers. And, as we gather from the first Epistle to Timothy, that there were two kinds of Elders; so here the context shows that no other than teaching Elders are to be understood; that is, those who were ordained to teach; because the same persons are presently called Bishops. It may be objected that too much power seems to be given to Titus, when the Apostle commands him to appoint ministers over all the Churches. This, it may be said, is little less than kingly power; for, on this plan, the right of choice is taken away from the particular Churches, and the right of judging in the case from the College of Pastors; and this would be to profane the whole of the sacred discipline of the Church. But the answer is easy. Every thing was not intrusted to the will of Titus as an individual, nor was he allowed to impose such
"Bishops on the Churches, as he pleased: but he was commanded to preside in the elections as Moderator, as it is necessary for some one to do. This is a mode of speaking exceedingly common. Thus a Consul, or Regent, or Dictator, is said to create Consuls, because he convenes assemblies for the purpose of making choice of them. So also Luke uses the same mode of speaking concerning Paul and Barnabas in the Acts of the Apostles; not that they alone authoritatively appointed Pastors over the Churches, without their being tried or approved; but they ordained suitable men, who had been elected or chosen by the people. We learn also from this place, that there was not then such an equality among the ministers of the Church, but that some one might preside in authority and counsel. This, however, was nothing like the tyrannical and unscriptural Prelacy which reigns in the Papacy*. The plan of the Apostles was extremely different."

Here is not only a passage taken out of its connexion, and interpreted in a sense diametrically opposite to the whole scope and strain of the writer; but, what is much worse, the passage itself is mistranslated, and made to speak a language essentially different from the original. Mr. How may possibly plead that he never saw the original; that

* Here Calvin not only represents Prelacy as a tyrannical and unscriptural system, but evidently considers it as a part of the corruptions of Popery.
he quoted entirely on the authority of some other person. But Dr. Bowden cannot make the same plea. He inserts in the margin the very words which he mistranslates and perverts! What are we to think of such a fact? Is Dr. B. unable to translate a plain piece of Latin? or did he design to deceive? He may choose which alternative he pleases.

Dr. Bowden thinks me inconsistent with myself in demanding decided Scriptural warrant, and in maintaining the sufficiency of Scripture to direct us on the subject of ecclesiastical order; while, at the same time, I acknowledge that there are no formal or explicit decisions delivered on this subject, either by Christ or his Apostles. But where is the inconsistency here? Do I not maintain that, although the Scriptures present no formal or explicit decisions on this subject, yet we find in the New Testament, "a mode of expression, and a number of facts, from which we may, without difficulty, ascertain the outlines of the Apostolic plan of Church order?" And is not this "Scriptural warrant?" Is it not "decided" Scriptural warrant, in the estimation of all those who consider the form of the Apostolic Church as a model intended for our imitation? This is perfectly clear to every impartial mind: with others it is vain to reason.

With respect to Dr. Bowden's open declaration, that the Scriptures, taken alone, are not a sufficient guide on this subject; that we cannot
stir a step," in the controversy, to any purpose, without the aid of the Fathers; and even that we cannot establish the genuineness and authenticity of the Scriptures themselves, without the writings of the Fathers—I can only say that I consider it as a declaration equally unworthy of his character as a Divine, and as a Christian. Has Dr. Bowden no evidence that the Scriptures are from God, but what the Fathers say? Then he is exceedingly to be pitied; for his hope rests upon a most precarious foundation. I bless God that much better judges have been of a different opinion. I bless God that the greatest ornaments of his own Church, from Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, to the present day, have considered the internal evidence of the Scriptures as the strongest, the best, and most precious of all. The testimony of the Fathers, indeed, has its use; but to place it in the point of light in which Dr. Bowden does, and to lay so much stress upon it as he avows a disposition to do, is really extraordinary conduct for a Protestant minister of the Gospel!

The doctrine of our Confession of Faith is full and explicit on this subject. "We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church, to an high and reverend esteem for the Holy Scripture: And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole, the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other in-
"comparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God. Yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness, by and with the word in our hearts.—The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or, by good and necessary consequence, may be deduced from Scripture; unto which nothing, at any time, is to be added, whether by new revelations, or by the spirit and traditions of men." Chap. i. This is the doctrine of all the Reformed Churches. The doctrine of the latter clause, is explicitly recognized in the VIth article of Dr. Bowden's own Church, which, in my opinion, he misunderstands and perverts. "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation." This is the rock on which we stand. As long as we can show, and while the Bible lasts I am sure we shall always be able to show, that Presbyterian government was the Apostolic model of Church order, we may stand unmoved at all opposite testimony, however plausible in its nature, and however confidently adduced.
LETTER IV.

Testimony in favour of the office of Ruling Elder.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

In several passages in my former Letters, I adverted to the office of Ruling Elder, and offered some considerations to show that it was instituted in the primitive Church. Dr. Bowden, perceiving that this position, if maintained, would prove fatal to his cause, has endeavoured, with all his force, to drive me from it, and to persuade his readers, that no such officer was known in the Christian Church until modern times. As this will hereafter appear to be a question of great importance, not only on account of the office itself, but also on account of its close connexion with the doctrine of ministerial parity, I hope you will pardon me for discussing it more carefully, and at greater length than I was able to do in my former volume.

There is, independent of all historical testimony, strong presumptive evidence that such an office must have been instituted by the Apostles. There is a demand, little short of absolute necessity, that one or more persons, under some name, to perform the duties of Ruling Elders, should be appointed in every well ordered Congregation. The Minis-
Ruling Elders.

whether he be called Pastor, Bishop, Rector, or by whatever title, cannot individually perform all the duties which are included in maintaining government and discipline in the Church, as well as ministering in the word and sacraments. He cannot be every where, or know every thing. He must have a number of grave, judicious, and pious persons, who shall assist him with information and counsel; whose official duty it shall be to aid him in overseeing, regulating, and edifying the Church. We can hardly have a better comment on these remarks, than the practice of those Churches which reject Ruling Elders. Our Episcopalian brethren reject them; but they are obliged to have their Vestrymen and Church-Wardens, who perform the duties belonging to such Elders. Our independent brethren also reject this class of Church Officers; but they too are forced to resort to a Committee, who attend to the numberless details of parochial duty, which the Ministers cannot perform. They can scarcely take a single step without having in fact, though not in name, precisely such officers as we recognize under the Scriptural appellation of Elders. Now, is it probable, is it credible, that the Apostles, acting under the inspiration of Christ, the King and Head of the Church, should entirely overlook this necessity, and make no provision for it? It is not credible. We must, then, either suppose that some such officers as those in question were appointed by the Apostles, or that means, acknowledged by the
practice of all, to be indispensable in conducting the affairs of the Church, were forgotten or neglected.

Again; Dr. Bowden acknowledges, and with perfect correctness, that there were such officers in the Jewish Synagogue. "The Elders," says he, "of the Jewish Synagogue corresponded with the Lay-Elders of your (the Presbyterian) "Church." Letters, Vol. i. 330. But if the Christian Church was organized after the model of the Synagogue, a fact of which there is the fullest evidence, then we may presume that similar Elders were included in this organization. This class of officers, so familiar to every Jew, and so indispensable in his eyes to the maintenance of ecclesiastical government and order, would, by no means, be likely to be left out, when every other was notoriously retained.

But we have better evidence. The New Testament makes express mention of such Elders. There is undoubtedly a reference to them in 1 Timothy, v. 17. Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. Every man of plain good sense, who had never heard of any controversy on the subject, would conclude, on reading this passage, that, when it was written, there were two kinds of Elders, one whose duty it was to labour in the word and doctrine, and another who did not thus labour, but only ruled in the Church; the Apostle says, Elders that rule well, are worthy
of double honour, but especially those who labour in the word and doctrine. Now if we suppose that there was only one kind of Elders then in the Church, and that they were all teachers or labourers in the word, we must make the inspired writer speak a language utterly unworthy of his character. There was, therefore, a class of Elders in the Apostolic Church, who did not preach, nor administer sacraments, but assisted in government. These, by whatever name they may be called, were precisely the same with those officers which we denominate Ruling Elders.

For this construction of the passage, Dr. Whitaker, a zealous and learned Episcopal Divine, and Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, zealously contends. And though his declaration on the subject was quoted in my former Letters, I cannot help repeating it here. "By these words," says he, "the Apostle evidently distinguishes between the Bishops and the Inspectors of the Church. If all who rule well be worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine, it is plain there were some who did not so labour; for if all had been of this description, the meaning would have been absurd; but the word especially points out a difference. If I should say, that all who study well at the university are worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the study of theology, I must either mean that all do not apply themselves to the study of theo-
"I logy, or I should speak nonsense. Wherefore I confess that to be the most genuine sense by which pastors and teachers are distinguished from those who only governed."—Prælect. ap. Didioclav. p. 681. Equally to our purpose is the opinion of that acute and learned Episcopal Divine, Dr. Whitby, in his note on this passage, which was also in part before quoted. "The Elders of the Jews," says he, "were of two sorts; 1st. Such as governed in the Synagogue; and 2dly. Such as ministered in reading and expounding their Scriptures and traditions, and from them pronouncing what did bind or loose, or what was forbidden, and what was lawful to be done. For when, partly by their captivity, and partly through increase and traffick, they were dispersed in considerable bodies through divers regions of the world, it was necessary that they should have governors or magistrates, to keep them in their duty, and judge of criminal causes; and also Rabbins to teach them the law, and the traditions of their fathers. The first were ordained ad judicandum, sed non ad docendum de licitis et vetitis, i.e. to judge, and govern, but not to teach: The second, ad docendum, sed non ad judicandum, i.e. to teach but not to judge or govern. And these the Apostle here declares to be the most honourable and worthy of the chiefest reward. Accordingly, the Apostle, reckoning up the offices
"God had appointed in the Church, places teachers before governments. 1 Corin. xii. 28."

I am aware that several glosses have been adopted to set aside the testimony of this text in favour of Ruling Elders. To enumerate and expose them would be a waste of time and patience. It is sufficient to say, that none of them possess any real force, and scarcely any of them even plausibility. And you will hereafter find, that, notwithstanding all these glosses, the text in question has been considered as conclusive in support of our doctrine, by some of the best judges, and by the great body of orthodox Christians, from the Apostles to the present day.

The next passage of Scripture which affords a warrant for the office of Ruling Elder is to be found in Romans xii. 6. 7. 8. Having then gifts, differing according to the grace given to us; whether prophesy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on an exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. With this passage may be connected another, of similar character, and to be interpreted on the same principles. I mean the following from 1 Corinthians xii. 28. God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.
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In both these passages, there is a reference to the different offices and gifts bestowed on the Church, by her divine King and Head; in both of them there is a plain designation of an office for ruling or government, distinct from that of teaching; and in both, also, this office evidently has a place assigned to it below that of Pastors and Teachers. This office, by whatever name it may be called, and however its character may be disguised by ingenuity, is, to all intents and purposes, the same with that which Presbyterians distinguish by the title of Ruling Elder.

Let us now proceed to inquire what the Fathers say concerning this class of Church officers. And here, for the sake of presenting a connected view of the argument, I shall incorporate a portion of the evidence adduced in my former Letters, with such further testimonies as I find to my purpose.

In the Gesta Purgationis Cæcilianii et Felicis *, we meet with the following enumeration of Church Officers, Presbyteri, Diacones et Seniores, i. e. "The Presbyters, the Deacons and Elders." And a little after it is added— "Adhibite con-
clericos et seniores plebis, ecclesiasticos viros, et "inquirant diligentem quae sint istae dissensiones," i. e. "call the fellow-clergymen, and Elders of "the people, ecclesiastical men, and let them "inquire diligently what are these dissensions." In that assembly, likewise, several letters were pro-

* See these Gesta, &c. preserved at the end of Optatus, by Albaspineus, his Commentator.
duced and read; one addressed *Clero et Senioribus*, i. e. "to the Clergyman and the Elders;" and another, *Clericis et Senioribus*. i. e. "to the Clergymen and the Elders." Now I ask, what can this language mean? Here is a class of men, expressly called *ecclesiastical men*, or *Church Officers*, who are styled *Elders*, and yet distinguished from the *clergy*, with whom, at the same time, they meet, and officially transact business. If these be not the *Elders* of whom we are in search, we may give up all the rules of evidence.

*Cyprian*, in his 29th Epistle, directed "To his "brethren, the Presbyters and Deacons," expresses himself in the following terms:

"You are to take notice that I have ordained "*Saturus* a reader, and the confessor *Optatus*, a "*Subdeacon*; whom we had all before agreed to "place in the rank and degree next to that of the "clergy. Upon Easter day, we made one or two "trials of *Saturus*, in reading, when we were ap- "proving our *readers* before the teaching *Presby- "ters*; and then appointed *Optatus* from among "the *readers*, to be a teacher of the hearers." On this passage the Rev. Mr. *Marshall*, the Episcopal Translator and Commentator of *Cyprian*, remarks —"It is hence, I think, apparent, that all *Presby- "ters* were not *teachers*, but *assisted the Bishop* in "*other parts* of his office." And Bishop *Fell*, another Editor and Commentator on *Cyprian*, re- marks on the same passage in the following words: "*Inter Presbyteros rectores et doctores* olim dis-
"tinxisse videter divus Paulus, 1 Tim. v. 17."
i. e. "St. Paul appears to have made a distinc-
tion, in ancient times, between Teaching and Ru-
ling Elders, in 1 Timothy v. 17." Here two
learned Episcopal Divines explicitly acknowledge
the distinction between Teaching and Ruling
Elders, in the Primitive Church; and one of
them, an eminent Bishop, not only allows that
Cyprian referred to this distinction, but also
quotes as an authority for it, the principal
text which Presbyterians adduce for the same
purpose.

Hilary (frequently called Ambrose) who lived
in the 4th century, in his explication of 1 Timothy
v. 1. has the following passage—"For, indeed,
"among all nations old age is honourable. Hence
"it is that the Synagogue, and afterwards the
"Church, had Elders, without whose counsel
"nothing was done in the Church; which by
"what negligence it grew into disuse I know not,
"unless, perhaps, by the sloth, or rather by the
"pride of the Teachers, while they alone wished
"to appear something." It is scarcely credible to
what a miserable expedient Dr. Bowden resorts to
set aside the force of this testimony. He insists
upon it that the pious Father only meant to say,
that "in former times the elderly men of the
"Church used to be consulted, which custom is
"now laid aside." And again—"He says nothing
"more than that it was formerly customary to
"consult the aged; no doubt in difficult situations
"of the Church, which frequently occurred in the first three centuries, while persecution lasted." It is difficult to answer suggestions of this kind in grave or respectful language. Can any man in his senses believe that Hilary only designed to inform his readers that in the Jewish Synagogues there were persons who had attained a considerable age; that this is also the case in the Christian Church; and that, in difficult cases, these aged persons were consulted? This would have been a sage remark indeed! Was there ever a community, ecclesiastical or civil, which did not include some aged persons? Or was there ever a state of society, or an age of the world, in which the practice of consulting the aged had fallen into disuse? I am really ashamed of such an attempt, on the part of a grave and "aged" divine, to pervert a passage which could scarcely have been made plainer. Hilary says that, "in the Synagogue, and afterwards in the Church, there were certain Seniors or Elders, without whose counsel nothing was done in the Church." If this language does not describe a class of persons, who held an official station, and whose official duty it was to aid by their counsel in the government of the Church, then we may despair of attaching any definite meaning to words. But what decides the question is, as he further states, that in the fourth century, this plan of having Elders, to assist by their counsel in the government of the Church, had chiefly grown into disuse. Had the Christian
Church become so corrupt, in a little more than three centuries from its commencement, as to thrust all aged persons out of its communion? Or if the more venerable and aged were suffered to remain, were they never more consulted in cases of difficulty and danger? Besides, if there was no intention to distinguish between Teaching and Ruling Elders, why is it said that these Seniors or Elders were laid aside "on account of the sloth, or rather the pride of the Teachers, who alone wished to be something?" I can very well conceive that both the pride and the sloth of the Teaching Elders, should render them willing to get rid of a bench of officers, of equal power with themselves in the government of the Church, and able to control their wishes in cases of discipline; but I cannot conceive why either sloth or pride should prefer consulting the young, rather than the aged, on the affairs of the Church. But you will scarcely pardon me for detaining you so long with the refutation of reasonings so totally unworthy of notice.

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, who also lived in the fourth century, often refers to this class of officers in his writings. Thus, in his work, Contra Crescon. lib. iii. cap. 56. he speaks of Peregrinus, Presbyter, et Seniores Musticanæ regionis, i.e. "Peregrine, the Presbyter, and the Elders of the Mustacan district." And again, he addresses one of his Epistles to his Church at Hippo, [Epist. 137,] Dilectissimis fratribus, Clero, Senioribus et
There were some Elders, then, in the days of Augustine, who were not Clergymen, i.e. Lay-Elders. It would be easy to produce, from the same writer, a number of other quotations equally to our purpose. But Dr. Bowden has rendered this unnecessary, by making an explicit acknowledgment, that Augustine repeatedly mentions these Seniors or Elders as belonging to other Churches as well as his own. And to what expedient do you suppose the Doctor resorts to avoid the consequence of this acknowledgment? Why, he gravely tells us, that he fully believes, with the "learned Birmingham," that there were, within the first three or four centuries, a class of aged and respectable men in the Church, who were styled Seniors or Elders, and whose official duty it was to assist in promoting the interests of the Church: That some of these were called Seniores Ecclesiae, i.e. Elders of the Church, who were chosen to assist the Bishop, with their advice and counsel in the weighty affairs of the Church: and that another class were called Seniores Ecclesiastici, i.e. Ecclesiastical Elders, who were sometimes entrusted with the utensils, treasures, and outward affairs of the Church; but had no share in the administration of discipline. These he compares with the Vestrymen and Church Wardens, which are generally found in Episcopal Churches. Vol. 1. p. 205—207. Now, I ask,
what material difference can any man see between the Seniores Ecclesiae, the Lay Elders, which Dr. Bowden acknowledges to have existed in the Primitive Church, and the Lay Elders of the Presbyterian Church? Our Elders are appointed to assist the Bishop of each particular Church with their counsel, in conducting the spiritual concerns of the Church. And is not this precisely the duty which he assigns to the Seniores Ecclesiae of the Primitive Church? It is really laughable to find Dr. B. conceding, in substance, all that we desire; and yet, on account of some petty points of difference, which are too frivolous to be noticed, and which do not affect the main question, insisting that there is nothing like our Lay Elders to be found in primitive times!

Though the readers of my former volume, know that I have no great respect for the authority of the work generally styled Apostolic Constitutions; yet many Episcopal writers have expressed very high regard for this work, and entire confidence in its authenticity. And, although, when it claims Apostolic origin, it is to be rejected as an "impudent forgery;" yet there is a high degree of probability that it was composed, by different hands, between the second and fifth centuries. The following quotation from it will, therefore, have some weight. "To Presbyters also, when they "labour in teaching, let a double portion be "assigned." 11. 28. Here is, obviously, a distinction between Elders who are employed in
teaching, and those who are not so employed. How the others were employed, indeed, is not said; but teaching made no part of their official duty. We may take for granted their duty was to assist in the other spiritual concerns of the Church, viz. in maintaining good order and discipline. This is precisely the distinction which we make, and which we are confident was made in the Primitive Church.

It would be easy to produce many more quotations from other early writers, which ascertain the existence of these Elders, within the first three or four centuries of the Christian era. But it is needless. Our opponents acknowledge the fact. Bishop Taylor, a great authority with them, among others, explicitly grants *, that a class of men, under the name of Seniors or Elders, distinguished from Clergymen, are mentioned by a number of early writers, as having existed in the Church at an early period, and as holding in it some kind of official station. The only question is, what kind of Elders they were? These gentlemen exceedingly dislike the idea of their being such Lay-Elders as are found in the Presbyterian Church, and assert that they were not; but really they offer nothing against it that deserves the name even of a plausible argument.

* I think this concession is to be found in his Episcopacy Asserted. That it is to be found in one of his works, I am certain.
In my former Letters, in exhibiting the testimony usually produced from Ignatius, I spoke of the Presbyters or Elders so frequently mentioned by that Father, in the following terms. "Some of these Elders were probably ordained to the work of the ministry, and of course, empowered to preach and administer ordinances: but this is not certain. They might all have been Ruling Elders for aught that appears to the contrary. For in all these Epistles, it is no where said that they either preached or dispensed the sacraments. It cannot be shown, then, that Ignatius, by his Presbyters and Presbytery, or Eldership, means any thing else than a bench of Ruling Elders in each Church." p. 147. This suggestion Dr. Bowden not only opposes with much zeal, but he also endeavours to cover it with ridicule, as perfectly frivolous and improbable. So far as he reasons on the point, the arguments which he employs are two. The first is that "there is no proof whatever that there ever was such an order of men in the Church as Ruling Elders." Of the force of this argument you will be able to judge, after reading what has been advanced, and what is yet to come in proof of the Apostolic institution of this class of officers. The second argument, is that "the Epistles of Ignatius are totally inconsistent with such a notion." Now, I think, in direct opposition to Dr. B. that the Epistles of Ignatius are strongly in favour of this "notion." When that Father says, "It is not lawful, without
"the Bishop, either to baptize, or to celebrate the "holy communion," it is evident that his Presby-
ters could not have been the same with those who bear that title in modern Episcopal Churches, who in virtue of their original commission, and without any subsequent permission of the Bishop, are em-
powered, at all times, and in all places, when called upon, to administer both Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Again; when Ignatius says, "Let that "Eucharist be looked upon as valid, which is ei-
ther offered by the Bishop, or by him to whom "the bishop has given his consent;" Dr. Bowden chooses to take for granted that the person to whom the Bishop might give his consent and who, with that consent, might dispense the Eucharist, was one of the Presbyters whom Ignatius distinguishes from the Bishop. But this is not said by Ignatius; he might mean the Bishop of some neighbouring congregation. There is not a single instance in which the pious Father represents his Presby-
ters as, in fact, preaching or administering Sacra-
ments. But even supposing his Presbyters to be Ruling Elders, and supposing him to mean, that they, with the Bishop's (or Pastor's) leave, might administer both sacraments; this would only show that Ignatius was in an error, as Tertullian was after him, who, in his work de Baptismo, after as-
serting that the administration of Baptism was ap-
propriated to the office of Bishop, does not scruple to say, that even a Layman may baptize with the Bi-
shop's leave. There is, then, nothing in the Epis-
ties of Ignatius at all inconsistent with the supposition that a portion, or even the whole of his Presbyters were Ruling Elders, whose official duty it was to assist the Pastor in maintaining order and discipline in the Church.

It is no solid objection to this argument from the Fathers, that they sometimes mention these Elders after the Deacons, as if the former were inferior to the latter. Nothing can be inferred from a fact of this kind. Ignatius, speaking of the different classes of Church officers, expresses himself thus: "Let all reverence the Deacons as Jesus Christ; and the Bishop as the Father; and the Presbyters as the Sanhedrim of God, and college of the Apostles." But, notwithstanding the extravagance and impiety of this exhortation, did any one ever suppose that Ignatius designed to represent Deacons as a higher order than Bishops? In like manner, Clemens Alexandrinus speaks of "Presbyters, Bishops, and Deacons;" but who ever dreamed that any inference with respect to the order of authority was to be drawn from this arrangement? Again; Dr. Bowden objects, that "Ignatius makes the Deacons a branch of the Ministry; but every branch of the Ministry had authority to preach; consequently the Deacons, instead of being inferior to the Ruling Elders, must have been superior to them." This objection is of as little force as the last. It is notorious that the word Ministry, both in Scripture and the writings of the Fathers, is by no means
confined to the Clergy, but is frequently employed to express any kind of official service rendered to the Church. To produce instances in support of this position is needless. Every well-informed Divine knows it to be so. When, therefore, the word Ministry, unaccompanied with any distinctive epithet, is applied either to Elders or Deacons, it no more implies a power to preach, or administer sealing ordinances, nor does it throw any more light on the point of order and precedence, than the general word officer.

Having seen that both Scripture and the Fathers afford a clear warrant for the office of Ruling or Lay Elders in the Church; let us next inquire whether the Reformers and other distinguished witnesses for the truth, in different ages and countries, declared for or against this office. I know that the authority of the Reformers is not to be considered, any more than that of the Fathers, as a rule either of faith or practice; but when we recollect the great talents, the profound learning, the fervent piety, and the eminent services of many of those distinguished men, in clearing away the errors of Popery, and restoring the faith and order of the Primitive Church, we cannot fail to acknowledge that their opinions and decisions are worthy of high regard. It is worth while, therefore, to inquire what those opinions and decisions were, with respect to the question before us.

John Paul Perrin, the celebrated historian of the Waldenses, and who was himself one of the
Ministers of that people, in a number of places recognizes the office of *Ruling Elder* as retained in their Churches. He expressly and repeatedly asserts, that the *Synods* of the *Waldenses*, long before the time of *Luther*, were composed of *Ministers* and *Elders*.

The same writer tells us, that, in the year 1467, the *Hussites* being engaged in reforming and separating their Churches from the Church of *Rome*, understood that there were some Churches of the ancient *Waldenses* in *Austria*, in which the purity of the Gospel was retained, and in which there were many eminent Pastors. In order to ascertain the truth of this account, they (the *Hussites*) sent two of their *Ministers* with *two Elders* to inquire into, and know what those flocks or *Congregations* were.

The same historian, in the same work, speaks of "the *Ministers* and *Elders* of the *Bohemian Churches*".

The testimony of *Perrin* is supported by that of *Gillis*, another historian of the *Waldenses*, and also one of their Pastors. In the *Confession of Faith* § of that people, inserted at length in the "Addition" to his work, it is declared, (p. 490:

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* Hist. of the old Waldenses, Part II. Book II. Chap. 4.
† Ibid. Chap. 10.
‡ Ibid. Chap. 9.
§ This Confession, Gillis expressly declares to have been the Confession of the ancient, as well as the modern Waldenses.
Art. 31.) that “It is necessary for the Church “ to have Pastors to preach God’s word, to admi-“ nister the Sacraments, and to watch over the “ sheep of Jesus Christ; and also Elders and “ Deacons, according to the rules of good and “ holy Church discipline, and the practice of the “ Primitive Church.”

Here, then, is direct and unquestionable testi-mony that the Waldenses, the Hussites, and the Bohemian Brethren, had Ruling Elders in their Churches long before Calvin was born. Yet Calvin, we are gravely told by Dr. Bowden and his friends, was the inventor of this class of Church officers! I cannot help thinking that a “learned “ man,” and a “scholar,” (a character which Dr. B. often impliedly assumes to himself) ought to have taken care to be better informed before he ventured to make such an assertion.

But we have still more pointed evidence that the Churches which ecclesiastical historians have generally distinguished by the title of the Bohemian Brethren, and which flourished before the time of Luther, bore their testimony in favour of the office of Ruling Elder, by retaining it, amidst all the degeneracy of the times. This fact is at-tested by Martin Bucer, a learned Lutheran Di- vine, whose fame induced Archbishop Cranmer to invite him to England, where he received prefer-ment and patronage, and was held in high estima-tion. He speaks of it in the following terms:

“ The Bohemian Brethren, who published a
"Confession of their faith in the year 1535, with a preface by Luther, and who almost alone preserved in the world the purity of the doctrine, and the vigour of the discipline of Christ, observed an excellent rule, for which we are compelled to give them credit, and especially to praise that God who thus wrought by them; notwithstanding those brethren are preposterously despised by some learned men. The rule which they observed was this: besides ministers of the word and sacraments, they had, in each Church, a bench or college of men excelling in gravity and prudence, who performed the duties of admonishing and correcting offenders, composing differences, and judicially deciding in cases of dispute. Of this kind of Elders, Hilary (Ambrose) wrote, when he said, "Therefore the Synagogue, and afterwards the Church had Elders, without whose counsel nothing was done *."

The celebrated Peter Martyr, a Protestant Divine of Italy, whose high reputation induced Edward VI. to invite him into England, where he was made Professor of Divinity at Oxford, and Canon of Christ Church, speaks of Ruling Elders in the following decisive terms: "The Church," (speaking of the Primitive Church) "had its Elders, or if I may so speak, its Senate, who

*Scripta duo Adversaria Latomi, &c. in Cap. De Eccles. Authoritat. p. 159."
Ruling Elders.

consulted about things that were for edification for the time being. Paul describes this kind of ministry, not only in the 12th Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, but also in the first Epistle to Timothy, where he thus writes, Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those that labour in the word and doctrine. Which words appear to me to signify, that there were then some Elders who taught and preached the word of God; and another class of Elders who did not teach, but only ruled in the Church. Concerning these Ambrose speaks, when he expounds this passage in Timothy. Nay, he inquires whether it was owing to the pride or the sloth of the sacerdotal order that they had then almost ceased in the Church.*

In the Confession of Saxony, drawn up by Melancthon, in 1551, and subscribed by a large number of Lutheran Churches, we find this class of Church Officers, recognized, and represented as in use in those Churches. Speaking of the exercise of discipline, in its various parts, they say—"That these things may be done orderly, there be also Consistories appointed in our Churches." Of these Consistories, the principal members, it is well known, were Ruling Elders.

That there were Ruling Elders in the Primitive Church, is also explicitly granted by Archbishop *P. Martyris Loci Communes. Class iv. Cap. r. Sect. 2.*
Whitgift, a warm and learned friend of Diocesan Episcopacy. "I know," says he, "that in the Primitive Church, they had in every Church certain Seniors, to whom the government of the Congregation was committed; but that was before there was any Christian Prince or Magistrate that openly professed the Gospel; and before there was any Church by public authority established." And again, "Both the names and offices of Seniors were extinguished before Ambrose his time, as he himself doth testify, writing upon the fifth of the first Epistle to Timothy. Indeed, as Ambrose saith, the Synagogue, and after the Church, had Seniors, without whose counsel nothing was done in the Church; but that was before his time, and before there was any Christian Magistrate, or any Church established." *Szegedin, a very eminent Lutheran Divine, of Hungary, contemporary with Luther, also speaks decidedly of the Apostolic institution of Ruling Elders. The following passage is sufficient to exhibit his sentiments. "The ancient Church had Presbyters or Elders, of which the Apostle speaks, 1 Corinthians 5. 4. And these Elders were of two kinds. One class of them preached the Gospel, administered the Sacraments, and governed the Church, the same as Bishops; for Bishops and Presbyters are the same order. But another class of Elders consisted of grave *Defence against Cartwright. p. 638. 651.
"and upright men, taken from among the Laity, who, together with the Preaching Elders before mentioned, consulted respecting the affairs of the Church, and devoted their labour to admonishing, correcting, and taking care of the flock of Christ."

Hieronymus Kromayer, a learned Lutheran Divine, and Professor of Divinity in the University of Leipsic, who lived in the age immediately following that of Luther, bears decided testimony to the Apostolic institution of Ruling Elders. "The title of Bishop," says he, "takes its name from a Greek word, which signifies an Overseer. This title differs from that of Presbyter, because the latter is taken from age. Of Presbyters or Elders there were formerly two kinds, those who taught, and those who exercised the office of Rulers in the Church. This is taught in 1 Timothy v. 17. Let the Elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the word and doctrine. The latter were the same as our Ministers, at present; the former were like the members of our consistories. Jerome tells us that the practice of choosing one to preside over the rest, was brought in as a remedy for schism; so that a Bishop is nothing more than the first Presbyter. This doctrine is very offensive to the Papists; but we have the

*Szegedini Loci Communes, p. 197. Edit. quint. folio—Basil, 1608.*
"word of God going before us, as a light and a

guide, and this plainly represents Presbyters

and Bishops as the same thing*."

The learned Voetius, a German Divine of great
eminence, also contends for the Apostolic institu-
tion of Ruling Elders. He speaks of a number of
Popish writers, as particularly warm and zealous
in their opposition to this class of Church officers;

"Nor is this," says he, "any wonder, since no-
thing is more opposite to the Papal monarchy,
and anti-Christian tyranny, than is the institu-
tion of Ruling Elders." Voetius is of the opin-
ion that the Church Wardens in the Church of
England are the "vestiges" of these "Ruling
Seniors†."

Ursinus, an eminent German Divine, who lived
about the same time with Luther, in enumerating
the officers of the Church, as laid down in the
word of God, speaks of Ruling Elders and De-
cons. The former he defines to be officers "elect-
ed by the voice of the Church, to assist in con-
ducting discipline, and to order a variety of ne-
cessary matters in the Church." And the latter
as officers, "elected by the Church, to take care of
the poor, and to distribute alms ‡."

After this view of the opinions of some of the
most distinguished Reformers and others, in fa-

* Historia Ecclesiastica Autore Hieronymo Kromayero, D.
‡ Corpus Doctrinar. Par. iii. p. 721.
Ruling Elders. vour of the office of Ruling Elders, you will not be surprised to hear, that the great body of the Reformed Churches adopted, and have always maintained, this class of officers. Instead of being confined, as Dr. Bowden and his friends seem to imagine, to Geneva and Scotland, they were generally introduced, with the Reformation, by Lutherans as well as Calvinists; and are generally retained to the present day, in almost all the Protestant Churches, excepting that of England. We have seen that the Waldenses, the Hussites, and the Bohemian Brethren had them long before Calvin was born. It is notorious that the Reformed Churches of Germany, France, Holland, &c. received this class of Elders early, and expressly represented them in their public Confessions, as founded on the word of God. And it is a fact equally notorious, that the Lutherans, as well as the Presbyterians in our own country, have, at this hour, Lay Elders to assist in the government and discipline of the Church. The truth is, that at the period of the Reformation, three fourths of the whole Protestant world declared in favour of this class of Elders; not merely as expedient, but as appointed in the Apostolic Church, and as necessary to be restored. And to the present time a decided majority of Protestants maintain the same opinion and practice.

Many of the objections against Ruling Elders, on which my opponents lay the greatest stress, are entirely groundless, and arise from a total want of
acquaintance with the nature and duties of the office. Mr. How speaks of them as officers invested with "mere temporal functions." Now this is so far from being the case, that they are not invested with "temporal functions" at all. Their office and duties are *purely spiritual*. Dr. Kemp represents them as "unordained" officers, and expresses much astonishment that I should insist on the Church having been organized after the model of the Synagogue, since the Elders of the Synagogue were *ordained*, while he asserts that those of the Presbyterian Church are *not*. This gentleman gives us to understand that he was bred a Presbyterian, and speaks of it as one of the advantages which he enjoys in conducting the controversy. But, truly, he discovers, on a variety of occasions, that he left our Church without being acquainted with even the elementary principles of its government. To prove this I need not go further than the case under consideration. The fact is, that in every regular Presbyterian Church, *Ruling Elders are always ordained*; sometimes with the *imposition of hands*, and sometimes without it. Both methods are in use, in different parts of Europe, as well as our own country. But an ordination, of some kind, is *never omitted* by those who act regularly. Perhaps Dr. Kemp would say, that the imposition of hands is *essential* to every ordination; and that, as we ordain our *Ruling Elders* more frequently *without* this ceremony than with it, he is warranted in representing them generally as
"unordained." If so, he is of a different mind from some of the most learned and pious bishops of the Church of England, who have decided that it is not the formality of laying on hands which constitutes the essence of a lawful vocation to office in the Church; but the election and appointment to the office.*

Dr. Bowden makes an objection to the office of Ruling Elder, as it exists in the Presbyterian Church, which I scarcely expected from so grave a reasoner. It is this: That if the office be such as we represent it, and the Scriptural warrant for it such as we are in the habit of quoting, especially if 1 Tim. v. 17. be considered as pointing out this class of Elders, that then there ought to be a salary or some kind of temporal support annexed to the office. "But," he adds, "to put a Ruling Elder in this respect, upon a footing with a minister of the word, is altogether preposterous.

* When I began these sheets, it was my intention to take notice of all the material points in the Letters of Dr. Kemp, as well as in the writings of my other opponents; and accordingly I made a kind of engagement to do so, in a former Letter. But I had not gone far on this plan, before it became apparent that fulfilling my engagement would be equally useless and irksome. The fact is, that the "Rector of Great Choptank," has scarcely stated a single objection or argument, but what has been exhibited with more plausibility and strength by Dr. Bowden. In refuting the latter, therefore, the former is, of course, refuted. On this account I beg to be excused in future, for passing over the attack of Dr. Kemp in silence.
And I am convinced that your Congregations would think it so, were it proposed to allow the Ruling Elders as ample a salary as they do their ministers, or any salary at all. Let the experiment be made universally in your Churches, and I will commit myself, that we shall never see the face of a Ruling Elder again." 1. 201. But what has this to do with the Apostolic institution of the Ruling Elder's office? Suppose it conceded, that a compensation ought to be made to this class of officers, for their services; and suppose it also conceded, that no such compensation is ever, in fact, made; will it follow that such officers cannot be of divine appointment? Dr. B. would think it strange reasoning in any man to infer, that, because the labourer is worthy of his hire, his clerical commission depends on the payment of his salary; and that if the one should be withdrawn, the other would cease with it. Did the Apostle Paul cease to be a Minister of Jesus Christ because he laboured, working with his own hands, that he might not be chargeable to any; while, at the same time, he declared, that they who serve at the altar, should live by the altar? Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose it. Yet this, even conceding the fact for which Dr. B. contends, is the amount of his whole argument.

But the fact cannot be conceded. If Dr. Bowden had been as well acquainted with the Presbyterian Church, as a discreet man would have taken care to be, before he suffered himself to speak so
Ruling Elders.

confidently on the subject, he would have known, that a compensation for their services has often been made to *Ruling Elders*; and that the nature and amount of this compensation, depend on the circumstances of the *Elders* themselves, and of the Church which they serve.

But, leaving this collateral inquiry, it is time that we should return to the main question; which shall be resumed in the next Letter.
LETTER V.

Testimony of the Fathers.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

In my former volume, while I insisted that the cause in question should be tried at the bar of Scripture alone, and utterly protested against the jurisdiction of the Fathers, I still consented to examine their testimony, and devoted two long Letters to that examination. In those Letters, if more impartial judges, as well as myself, are not deceived, there is abundant proof, that the Fathers of the first two centuries, do not contain a sentence that can be justly construed in favor of Prelacy; but that, on the contrary, their testimony is decisively favourable to Presbyterian parity. Dr. Bowden, indeed, is of a different opinion, and speaks with great confidence and asperity in a different strain. But after the specimen which has been given of the manner in which that gentleman can treat demonstrative proof, and even plain declarations of Scripture, we need not wonder that, in his eyes, every argument is "frivolous," and even "contemptible cavilling," which opposes his Episcopal creed.
I have neither the leisure nor the patience again to go over the whole ground of the testimony of the Fathers on this subject. My only design in the present Letter, is, with great brevity, to examine a few of the strictures of Dr. Bowden; to confirm some of my statements which have been most confidently and boldly called in question; and to supply some of the defects of my former Letters on this part of the controversy.

Suffer me, my brethren, again to remind you of the principle on which we proceed, in this part of our inquiry. If it could be demonstrated from the writings of the Fathers, that, in one hundred, or even in fifty years, after the death of the last Apostle, the system of Diocesan Episcopacy had been generally adopted in the Church, it would be nothing to the purpose. As long as no traces of this fact could be found in the Bible, but much of a directly opposite nature, we should stand on a secure and immovable foundation. To all reasonings, then, derived from the Fathers, I answer with the venerable Augustine, who, when pressed with the authority of Cyprian, replied, "His writings I hold not to be canonical, but examine them by the canonical writings: And in them, what agreeth with the authority of Divine Scripture, I accept, with his praise; what agreeth not, I reject with his leave."

But our refusal to be tried by the Fathers, is

* Contra Crescon. ii. Cap. 32. N 2
founded on principle, and not upon any fear of the result of such a trial. We know what their writings contain; and are sure that our Episcopal brethren would lose instead of gaining, by an impartial examination of their testimony. We are perfectly ready, then, to meet Dr. Bowden or any other man, and to hear what he has to say on this department of evidence.

In entering on this branch of the controversy in my former Letters, I made the following remarks: “Before we proceed to examine the testimony of the Fathers, let us be careful to recollect precisely, what our Episcopal brethren contend for, and what they are bound to prove by these witnesses, in order to make good their claims. When they show us passages in which these early writers merely speak of Bishops, they seem to imagine that their point is gained: but such passages are, in fact, nothing to their purpose. We do not deny that there were Bishops in the Primitive Church: on the contrary, we contend that the word Bishop was a title given, in Apostolic times and long afterwards, to every pastor of a particular congregation. Again, when they quote passages which barely enumerate Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, as distinct officers in the Church, they can derive no assistance even from these; because there were, doubtless, Presbyters, at that time, as well as now, who, though in full orders, were not invested with a pastoral charge; and who must, therefore, be distinguished from such as were literally Overseers.
or Bishops of particular flocks. Besides, we know that there were Ruling Elders in the primitive Church; a class of Presbyters confessed to be inferior to Bishops in their ecclesiastical character. In enumerating Church officers, then, there was frequently a necessity for making the distinction above stated, without in the least favouring the pretended superiority of order among those who laboured in the word and doctrine. No; the advocates for diocesan Episcopacy, if they would derive any support to their cause from the writings of the Fathers, must do what they have never yet done. They must produce, from those venerable remains of antiquity, passages which prove, either by direct assertion, or fair inference, that the Bishops of the Primitive Church were a distinct order of Clergy from those Presbyters who were authorized to preach and administer sacraments, and superior to them; that these Bishops, when they were advanced to this superior office, had a new and distinct ordination; that each Bishop had under him a number of congregations, with their Pastors, whom he governed; that these Bishops were exclusively invested with the right of ordaining, and administering the rite of confirmation; and that this kind of Episcopacy was considered, by the whole primitive Church, as an institution of Jesus Christ. When any one of these facts is fairly proved, from early antiquity, the friends of Presbyterian Church Government will feel as if they had something like solid argument to contend with; but not till then.
Now, after having given much close and serious attention to this subject, I can venture to assure you, that in all the authentic writings which have come down to us, of those Fathers who lived within the first two hundred years after Christ, there is not a single sentence which can be considered, by an impartial reader, as affording the least support to any one of these positions."

Of these remarks I cannot find that Dr. Bowden has taken the least notice. He goes on, falling into the very errors, against which he was thus explicitly warned; and confidently urging the very arguments which are here shown to be worthless. For instance, when he finds one of the early Fathers speaking of a particular person as Bishop of a certain Church, he immediately takes for granted that a Prelatical Bishop was intended, and claims accordingly with all the parade of complete triumph. But this is a gross and most unwarrantable begging of the question. The word Bishop unquestionably decides nothing in his favour; for Dr. B. and all our opponents, acknowledge, what we know to have been the fact, that this title was applied, in the days of the Apostles, and is expressly used by the inspired writers, to designate the Pastors of single Congregations. Nay, they acknowledge, that for near an hundred years after the Apostolic age, the titles of Bishop and Presbyter were often interchangeably applied to the same persons. When we attempt to derive an argument from the application of the title Bishop to
the Pastors of single Churches, which is undoubt-
edly to be found in Scripture, they do not attempt
to deny the fact; but insist that the argument from
names is of no value. But why is it of more va-
lue in one case than another? If a name decides
nothing when found in the Bible, it decides no-
thing when found in the Fathers. When, there-
fore, so much is made of the mere insulated title
of Bishop, when found in the early writers, it is
mere imposition on vulgar credulity. No infer-
ence can be legitimately drawn from it, in the
least degree favourable to the Episcopal cause.

Again; when Dr. B. finds Bishops, Presbyters,
and Deacons, mentioned separately, and distin-
guished from each other, in some of the early
Fathers, he never fails immediately to rush to the
conclusion, that different orders or ranks of clergy
were intended by this distinct enumeration. But
this conclusion is no less illogical and groundless
than the former. Dr. B. knows, or ought to know,
that, on Presbyterian principles, though every Bi-
shop is a Presbyter, yet every Presbyter is not a
Bishop; since no man can, with propriety, accord-
ing to our system, receive the latter title unless he
have the Pastoral charge of a Congregation. We
have satisfactory proof that there were, in the Pri-
mitive Church, Clergymen in full orders, that is,
empowered to preach and administer sacraments,
who yet had no Pastoral charge; but acted the
part of Assistants or Curates to the Pastor, Rec-
tor, or Bishop. Now, in what manner could such
persons be distinguished from those who were invested with a Pastoral charge, but by calling the one class Bishops, and the other Presbyters? In the Presbyterian Church, we distinguish them in this manner; and in the Church of England, they distinguish them by calling the former Rectors, and the latter Curates. And with just as much reason might some person, five hundred years hence, assert that Pastors and Assistant Presbyters, or Rectors and Curates, were different orders of Clergy in the eighteenth century; as Dr. Bowden can now insist that Bishops and Presbyters were different orders in the primitive Church. The argument is totally delusive; nor could it have been so often and so gravely repeated, had there not been, on the part of those who have urged it, a miserable deficiency of sounder proof.

But further; I have proved, in the foregoing Letter, that there were Ruling, as well as Teaching Presbyters, or Elders, in the Apostolic Church, and for several centuries after the Apostolic age. It was, doubtless, necessary, sometimes at least, to speak of this class of officers, as distinguished from those who, in the character of Pastors, preached and administered Sacraments. And what method of making this distinction was more convenient than that which we now employ, when we divide our Church officers into three general classes, viz. Bishops, Elders, and Deacons? In whatever point of light, then, we view this three-fold distinction, which is sometimes met
with in the early writers, it cannot, in the smallest degree, serve the cause of Prelacy.

Dr. Bowden makes a number of complaints respecting my manner of stating the testimony of the Fathers. I shall consider, and endeavour to answer these complaints, before I proceed to exhibit such further testimony from those early writers, as appears to me favourable to the doctrine of Presbyterian parity.

He complains, in the first place, that I have omitted to state some material testimony from writers of the second century. He evidently intimates, that this omission was designed; and that it is a very important one; and undertakes to supply it by bringing forward a few detached scraps from three early writers. These writers are Dionysius, Polycrates, and Hegesippus. To render the charge of omission more serious, the Doctor inserts it in a long and solemn list of accusations, to which he endeavours to give as much point as possible, at the close of his work.

This charge surprises me, on a variety of accounts. Had I professed to give all the testimony, which the first two centuries furnish, Dr. B. might justly have complained of any omission. But when no such profession was made; when the contrary was distinctly announced; when I formally, and more than once stated, that not the whole, but the great body of the strongest and most important testimony was intended to be brought forward; and when, from the very nature and
size of my work, nothing more than a selection, and even that a very limited one, was possible; it is more than wonderful that an imputation so serious should be advanced, even if I had omitted to produce passages of real importance. But this is far from being the case. The passages concerning which so formal and heavy a complaint is made, will be found, on examination, to be of no solid value to the advocates of Episcopacy. What do these writers say? Why, Dionysius, who lived about the year 170, and whose writings are all lost, excepting a few sentences, preserved by Eusebius, is represented by that historian as speaking of several persons as Bishops of particular Churches. Polycrates, also, who lived about the year 180, and of whose writings we have nothing except a fragment or two, preserved by a writer who lived long after him, simply says, that Timothy was ordained Bishop of Ephesus, by the great Paul; speaks of Polycarp as Bishop of Smyrna; and of himself and six others, as having been Bishops of Ephesus, in succession, after Timothy. And Hegesippus, contemporary with Polycrates, of whom nothing remains, but a few detached sentences, recorded by Eusebius, only says that one Primus was Bishop of Corinth; that Anicetus, Soter, and Eleutherius were successively Bishops of Rome; and that James was constituted Bishop of Jerusalem, because he was the Lord's near kinsman. But what is the amount of this testimony? It is really
Testimony of the Fathers.

too frivolous to be treated with respect. What Presbyterian ever doubted that there were Bishops, in the primitive Church; not only in Jerusalem, Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome, but also in every other city or town on the globe, where a congregation of Christians was organized? And when it has not only been demonstrated, but also acknowledged by our opponents, that the word Bishop was applied, in the days of the Apostles, and for a considerable time afterwards, to those who were not Prelates, it is really something worse than trifling, still to insist upon an argument founded upon an equivocal title, and only calculated to insult the discerning, or to deceive the unwary.

But why did Dr. Bowden mention the testimony of three Fathers only, as having been omitted? Why did he not enumerate Bachyllus of Corinth, Serapion, and others, in the second century, who are represented as having left writings, in which, though now lost, the word Bishop was found? The truth is, I considered all this testimony as vague and irrelevant; and am still confident, that in the selection of testimony from the Fathers of the first two centuries, which I professed to make, I did full justice to the Episcopal side of the question. There was no passage omitted which can be considered as speaking more forcibly in their favour, than several which were exhibited; nor any which wear, in my opinion, so plausible an aspect, as some which I candidly brought forward. Nor can I believe that Dr. Bowden would have com-

O
plained so loudly of the omission of testimony, had he not felt that every scrap which bears the most distant appearance of plausibility, is necessary to assist his cause.

With respect to another charge of Dr. Bowden, that I have omitted to produce certain testimony from some of the Fathers of the third and fourth centuries, it is scarcely worthy of an answer. In entering on this part of the controversy in my former Letters, I made the following explicit declaration:

"In examining the writings of the Fathers, I shall admit only the testimony of those who wrote within the first two centuries. Immediately after this period so many corruptions began to creep into the Church; so many of the most respectable Christian writers are known to have been heterodox in their opinions; so much evidence appears, that even before the commencement of the third century, the Papacy began to exhibit its pretensions; and such multiplied proofs of wide spreading degeneracy crowd into view, that the testimony of every subsequent writer is to be received with suspicion. Besides, if diocesan Episcopacy existed, and were of the fundamental importance that our Episcopal brethren make it to be, we may surely expect to find some reference to it in the records of two hundred years; and especially when we consider that those were years of the greatest simplicity and purity ever known to the Church."
Testimony of the Fathers.

After such a declaration, who would have expected to find it imputed to me, as an unfair proceeding, that I had not exhibited the whole testimony of the Fathers of the third and fourth centuries; especially after conceding, in the most unequivocal manner, that clerical imparity had begun to appear in the third, and was established in the fourth century? But I forbear. To take up your time in replying to cavils of this nature, even if one had patience enough for the purpose, would be equally irksome and useless.

In my former Letters, I omitted to examine the testimony of the Apostolical Canons, and the Apostolical Constitutions; and assigned as a reason for the omission that I considered them as spurious and unworthy of credit. With this omission, and the reason for it, Dr. Bowden is much offended. He does not, indeed, attempt to establish the authenticity of the Apostolical Constitutions; but for that of the Canons he contends with ardent zeal. He charges me with having "vilified" them; and thinks, if I had ever read Beveridge's defence of them, I should have been more "cautious" and "modest." I beg leave to inform my "learned" antagonist, that I am not an entire stranger to Beveridge's work, and that after weighing his arguments as impartially as I can, I am still so "cautious" and "immodest" as to believe that these Canons are not what they profess to be. Beveridge himself does not contend that they were made by the Apostles; and Dr. Bowden acknowledges the
same thing. They are not, therefore, *Apostolical Canons*. The learned Daillé is of the opinion that they were not compiled till the *fifth* century; Blondel dates their compilation towards the close of the *third* century; and even Beveridge himself, their most partial defender, supposes them to be the decrees of Synods in the *second* and *third* centuries, collected at different times, and by different hands. Now, so far as they belong to the *third* century, the line which I have drawn excludes them from my notice. When Dr. Bowden can decide which of them were formed in the *second* century, and which of them are of a later date, I shall consider myself as bound by my plan to examine the former class, and not before.

But, if I do not mistake, some imputations may be brought against both the "caution" and the "modesty" of Dr. Bowden himself, in this business. It would be easy to produce a number of Episcopal writers, of the highest reputation for talents and learning, who have, without ceremony, pronounced the *Apostolical Canons*, as well as the *Apostolical Constitutions*, to be destitute of authenticity. Dr. B. certainly could not have been acquainted with these writers, of his own Church; as it is not supposable that he would set up his judgment in opposition to theirs. Among others, Bishop Taylor, who was at least as competent a judge as Dr. B. speaks of the writings in question in the following language:
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"Even of the fifty (Canons) which are most respected, it is evident that there are some things so mixed with them, and no mark of difference left, that the credit of all is much impaired; in so much that Isidore, of Seville, says, "they were apocryphal, made by heretics, and published under the title Apostolical; but neither the Fathers nor the Church of Rome did give assent to them."

Dr. Bowden not only charges me with omitting to state the testimony of some Fathers, but also with misrepresenting that of others. Most of the instances which he produces in support of this charge, do not appear to me entitled to any reply. Of a few, however, it may be proper to take a cursory notice.

He asserts that I have misrepresented the testimony of Ignatius; but wherein does this misrepresentation consist? Dr. Bowden will not dare to deny that my quotations from that Father are larger and more numerous than his own; nor will he dare to deny, that I have selected, and fairly exhibited, those very quotations which high churchmen have generally adduced as, in their view, most decisive in favour of Prelacy. In what respect, then, have I been guilty of misrepresentation? He will probably reply that my comments on the testimony of Ignatius are unfair. The best answer to this charge will be a dispassionate review of those comments;

* Liberty of Prophecying, Sect. 5. Art. 9.
and I will venture to say, that no one who takes this trouble, will find any thing in them but what is natural, probable, and abundantly warranted by the strain of the testimony itself.

Ignatius, indeed, speaks much of Bishops. But I have shown that this title furnishes no ground of argument in favour of Prelacy. He speaks much, too, of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, as distinguished from each other: but I have also clearly shown that this distinction is perfectly consistent with our doctrine of ministerial parity; and that to represent it in a different light, is a mere begging of the question in dispute. But I will go further, and again venture, with greater confidence than ever, to repeat my former assertion, that the Bishop so often mentioned by Ignatius is evidently a parochial and not a diocesan Bishop. If the Bishop to whom this Father refers, was the only person, in each Church, empowered to baptize, and administer the Lord's Supper; if no marriage could take place without his knowledge and consent; if it was considered as his duty to be personally acquainted with all his flock, to take notice with his own eye of those who were present and absent at the time of public worship, to attend to the widows and the poor of his congregation, to seek out all by name, and not to overlook even the men and maid-servants of the flock committed to his charge; then, surely, no man in his senses can suppose that this officer could have been any other than a parochial Bishop or Pastor. I know that
Dr. Bowden is of the opinion, and endeavours to show, that the duties which I have stated, are not all represented by Ignatius as belonging to his Bishop. I do not consider it as worth while to take up your time in discussing this point. Let any one look over the Epistles of Ignatius, or if he cannot have access to them, let him look over the extracts which I have given in my former Letters, including those on which Dr. B. lays the greatest stress, and then let him say whether it is possible to reconcile the whole strain and language of that venerable Father with any other than parochial or Presbyterian Episcopacy? For my part, though Dr. B. very delicately loads this suggestion with the terms "nonsense," "contemptible puerility," &c. I am persuaded every impartial reader will say, it is both sounder sense, and better logic, than this gentleman, with all his "scholar-like" management, has drawn from the testimony of the pious martyr. In short, Dr. Bowden may fume and fret as long and as much as he pleases, but, after all that he has said, or can say, nothing intelligible can be made of the Bishop, Presbyters, and Deacons of that Father, materially different from the Pastor, Elders, and Deacons of every regularly organized Presbyterian Church.

Dr. Bowden supposes that Presbyterians consider the Bishop so often mentioned by Ignatius, in no other light than as the Moderator of some ecclesiastical assembly. Assuming this as our opinion, he attempts to pour ridicule upon it, by substi
tuting the word Moderator for Bishop, and endeav-ouring to show that the supposition is utterly in-consistent with the representation given of the du-ties of this officer. When a man does not compre-hend the subject which he attempts to ridicule, he is extremely apt to draw upon himself the laughter which he thought to turn against others. This is the unfortunate situation of Dr. Bowden. He seizes upon a detached fragment of Presbyterian doctrine; and, imagining that he sees and under-stands the whole system, he thinks to involve that system, in the absurdity which he makes to recoil upon his own.

Dr. Bowden ought to know, that Bishop and Mo-derator are not convertible terms; and that they are not so considered by Presbyterians. We sup-pose, and believe it is easy to prove, that the word Bishop, in the Apostolic age, signified, simply, the Pastor or Overseer of a flock, or single congrega-tion. Accordingly we conclude that there were several organized Churches both at Ephesus and Philippi, in the days of the Apostles, because the Scriptures expressly tell us that, at that time, there were several Bishops in both those cities. We have shown, too, that each Church, in the days of the Apostles, was commonly furnished with a bench of Ruling Elders, and Deacons. We have also rea-son to believe; that, in large congregations, there were several Elders who, as assistants, laboured in the word and doctrine. The Pastor, that is the Pres-byter who was particularly invested with the Pas-
toral charge, was called the Bishop of that Church; and when the Elders came together, and sat as a Church session, or ecclesiastical court, he, of course presided as their Moderator. It is easy to perceive, however, that this Bishop was equally such, both in fact, and in name, whether he was ever called to act as Moderator or not. The mere circumstance of his having no bench of Elders, and no Church session in which to preside, did not destroy or affect his Pastoral character. We maintain, that there was no other species of Bishop, during the time of the Apostles, than such as has been described, that is, the Pastor of a single flock or Church.

But we suppose that, very early after the Apostle's days, when the congregations, and, of course, the Pastors, in large cities, became numerous, and frequently convened for the transaction of ecclesiastical business, that the custom was adopted of choosing one person, generally the most aged and venerable of the number, to act as President, Chairman, or Moderator, and that, after a while, the tide of Bishop was, by way of eminence conferred on him; and, in process of time, gradually appropriated to him. Hence it is a notorious fact, which our Episcopal brethren do not pretend to deny, that Bishops, in the second and third centuries, were frequently distinguished by the titles, President, Chairman, and the person who filled the first seat in the Presbytery. But this no more implied, nor, at that time, was considered as im-
plying, a superiority of rank or order, on the part of the Chairman, than the office of Moderator in one of our Presbyteries or Synods, clothes the Pastor who fills it with a permanent superiority of order over his brethren.

In some cities, however, it is evident that a different plan was pursued. When the converts to the Christian faith became so numerous, that they were no longer able to worship in one assembly; and especially when a number of persons from the neighbouring villages joined the city Church, some of these members began to lay plans for forming separate and smaller congregations nearer home. To this the Bishop consented, on condition that the little worshipping societies thus formed should consider themselves as still under his pastoral care, as amenable to the parent Church, and as bound to obey him as their spiritual guide. When the Pastor agreed to this arrangement, it was generally understood, that there should be but one Communion table, and one Baptistery in the city or parish; and, of course, that when the members of these neighbouring societies wished to receive either of the sacraments, they were to attend at the parent Church, and receive them from the hands of the Pastor or Bishop himself. The ordinary services of public worship on the Lord's day, were performed at little oratories, or chapels of ease, planted at different and convenient places within the parish; and on these, it was considered as sufficient for the assistant preachers, or curates to at-
tend. But at special seasons, at least once or twice in the year, every Church-member was held under obligations to attend the Mother Church, and commune with the Pastor himself. This was laying the foundation for the authority of one Bishop or Pastor over several distinctly organized congregations, which, not long afterwards, was claimed and yielded.

We have specimens of a similar arrangement in modern times. Fifteen years ago all the Episcopal inhabitants of the city of New-York, were under the pastoral care of the Rector of Trinity-Church. In the beginning, that Rector had only one Church under his inspection, and was himself the only Preacher in it. But when a second and a third were built, and a large congregation established in each, it was still thought proper to retain the whole under the care of one Pastor with several Assistants; so that when there were three Episcopal Churches, and probably from eight to ten thousand Episcopalians in the city, there was still but one Rector over the whole, with a number of Assistant Clergymen, who were considered, and treated as officially subordinate to him. Yet these Assistant Clergymen had, in reality, the same ordination with their Rector; were as perfectly qualified as himself, to take a Rectorate or Pastoral charge, without any new ordination; and were of the same ecclesiastical order, although, as long as they retained this relation to him, they were his clergy, and were under his control in all their professional
services. The whole city was, to all intents and purposes, one parish, and the Rector its ecclesiastical head.

That an arrangement substantially of this kind was frequent in the second and third centuries, is not merely a supposition of mine; but is asserted by a number of the best informed and most able advocates of Prelacy. The learned Mede, a zealous Episcopal divine, in his Discourse on Churches, p. 48. says, "Nay, more than this, it should seem that in those first times, before dioceses were divided into those lesser and subordinate Churches, which we now call parishes, and Presbyters assigned to them, they had only one Altar to a Church, taking Church for the company or corporation of the faithful, united under one Bishop or Pastor; and that was in the city or place where the Bishop had his see and residence. Unless this were so, whence came it else, that a schismatical Bishop was said, consti- tuere or collocare alium altare? And that a Bishop and an Altar are made correlatives?"

The same fact is asserted by Bishop Stillingfleet, in his Sermon against Separation. "Though, when the Churches increased," says he, "the occasional meetings were frequent in several places; yet still there was but one Church; and one Altar, and one Baptistery, and one Bishop, with many Presbyters assisting him. Which, is so plain, in antiquity, as to the Churches planted by the Apostles themselves, that none
but a great stranger to the history of the Church can call it in question. 'Tis true, after some time, in the greater cities, they had distinct places allotted, and Presbyters fixed among them. And such allotments were called Tituli at Rome, and Laura at Alexandria, and Parishes in other places. But these were never thought, then, to be new Churches, or to have any independent government in themselves, but were all in subjection to the Bishop and his college of Presbyters; of which multitudes of examples might be brought from the most authentic testimonies of antiquity, if a thing so evident needed any proof at all. And yet this distribution (into distinct Tituli) even in cities, was looked on as so uncommon in those elder times, that Epiphanius takes notice of it as an extraordinary thing at Alexandria; and, therefore, it is probably supposed that there was no such thing in all the cities of Crete in his time.

Accordingly Ignatius, in his Epistle to the Philadelphians, declares, "There is, to every Church, one Altar, and one Bishop." And he elsewhere represents it as a characteristic of the unity of a Church, that there is one Altar, and one Bishop in each. Cyprian, in like manner, repeatedly speaks of setting up a new Altar, or Communion table within the parish or diocese of a Pastor, without his leave, as irregular and schismatical. These facts perfectly agree with the declaration made by several of the Fathers, that administering the ordi-
nance of Baptism was considered as the appropriate work of the Bishop within the bounds of his Church; and also that the members of each church received the Lord's Supper from no other hands than those of their Bishop. Accordingly Dr. Hammond, a zealous friend of Prelacy, expressly affirms, that in the days of Tertullian, all Christians received the Eucharist from no other than the Bishop's hands; and Dr. Heylin, an Episcopalian of still higher tone, distinctly acknowledges the same fact. To suppose that these representations are consistent with the Episcopal arrangement, in which a number of distinct and independent congregations, each supplied with a Pastor or Rector, are all under the government of a Prelate, in the habit of visiting each congregation once or twice every year, is manifestly absurd. They can only be reconciled with a system in which, as in the Presbyterian Church, the Pastor or Bishop is made overseer of a single Flock or Church; is ordinarily the sole dispenser of the word and ordinances in that Church; and must be consulted, and his leave directly or indirectly obtained, when others attempt to dispense them within his parish.

We are now prepared to determine what kind of Bishop Ignatius was, and in what sense the other contemporary Pastors were addressed by that Father under this title. If we suppose that in each

* Diersertat. iii. Cap. vii. § 5.
† History of Episcopacy, Part ii. p. 96, 97
of the cities of Antioch, Smyrna, &c. there was only a single congregation of Christians, then the case is plain. Those venerable ministers were only Pastors or Bishops of single flocks, in perfect conformity with the Presbyterian model. But let us suppose that there were several large worshipping assemblies of Christians in each of those cities. It is true, the epistles of Ignatius do not give the least hint that this was the case; and we only infer it, from probable evidence, derived from other sources, without being able, on either side, to establish or to disprove the fact. Let it be admitted, however, that there were several worshipping assemblies in each of these cities; still this fact proves nothing in favor of prelacy. Their Pastors might each have had several congregations under their care, and several clergymen to assist them, without being Prelates, any more than the Rector of Trinity-Church thirty years ago was a Prelate. But we may go even further. Suppose it abundantly proved, that in the days of Ignatius, there were established in each of the cities of Antioch, Smyrna, &c. a number of separate and distinctly organized congregations, and that each was under the care of a Pastor. And suppose it further proved that, notwithstanding this Ignatius was, by way of eminence, styled Bishop of Antioch, and Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna; still the fact, even if established, would be perfectly consistent with Presbyterian parity. We have only to suppose these men were Moderators of the respective Presbyteries of those
cities, and all is natural, intelligible, and probable. In this case, we may consider all the instructions concerning Bishops and their flocks, which the epistles in question contain, as merely conveyed through the medium of the senior or presiding Pastor, to his colleagues, and as intended equally for all. Thus it appears that the epistles of Ignatius do not, on any supposition, contain a sentence which can be legitimately construed in favour of Prelacy; and that all the confidence of my opponents in asserting the contrary, is groundless and futile.

Dr. Bowden is equally positive, that I have misrepresented the testimony of Irenæus. Here again I beg of you impartially to review the extracts which I gave from the writings of that Father, and my comments upon them, together with all that Dr. B. has said on the subject; and then to decide between us. It is plain, and Dr. B. does not deny, that Irenæus speaks of certain persons, by name, as Presbyters, and represents them as successors of the Apostles. It is equally plain, that he speaks of the same persons, in another place, as Bishops, and, under that title also, represents them as having the succession from the Apostles. He does this, not once merely, but several times, and with as much point, and apparent care, as if his grand object had been to show that Presbyters and Bishops were then the same. The argument arising from this language is obviously in our favour. Dr. Bowden, indeed, thinks otherwise, and makes an attempt to answer it; but his embarrassment, and inability to
accomplish his purpose, must be apparent to every reader.

Dr. Bowden lays much stress on a passage in Irenæus, in which he speaks of these persons, whom he alternately calls Bishops and Presbyters, as succeeding the Apostles in their mastership. What is mastership? Simply, official authority. And what has this to do with Prelacy? Nothing. Suppose a Presbyterian were to say, "The Bishops of our Church are the successors of the Apostles, and succeed to as much of their authority or mastership, as was intended to be perpetual in the Church:" would any intelligent person who heard him, imagine that he was speaking a language either favourable to diocesan Episcopacy, or hostile to his own principles? Certainly not. And yet this language coincides, in every essential point, with that of Irenæus.—Dr. Bowden seems not to understand, or perpetually to forget, that we consider our Pastors or Bishops as the true and proper successors of the Apostles, so far as their office was ordinary and intended to be transmitted; and that we consider them as invested with the highest authority, or (if he prefer the word,) mastership in the Church.

But that part of the testimony of Irenæus to which Dr. Bowden attaches the greatest importance, is, that he represents the succession in the Church of Rome as flowing through single ministers whom he styles Bishops; although we have reason to believe that there were many Presbyters connected with
the Church in that city. Now, if there were a number of Bishops, in our sense of the word, in Rome, how, it is asked, could Irenæus trace the line of succession through single persons only? In other words, why does he single out Linus, Anacletus, Clemens, and Evaristus, as successively Bishops of Rome, when, according to our doctrine, there were, pretty certainly, a number of contemporary ministers in that Church, of the same rank with those whose names are mentioned? I answer, this statement of Irenæus is not to be relied on; and if it were, it is nothing to the purpose.

I say, the statement of this Father, respecting the succession in the Church of Rome, is not to be relied upon. He says that Anacletus was before Clemens, and next to Linus. Tertullian and several others assure us that Clemens was next to Peter, and, of course, before Anacletus. Epiphanius and Optatus say that Anacletus and Cletus were before Clemens. While Augustine, Damasus, and others, assert that Anacletus, Cletus, and Linus, were all antecedent to Clemens. Here is perfect confusion. It is evident that these writers were guided by vague and contradictory traditions, and knew nothing of the matter. The probability, from the very face of the story, is that the Bishops or Pastors of whom they speak, did not all sit in the pastoral chair of Rome singly, and in succession, but several of them together. Accordingly Damasus, in his work De Gestis Pontificum, hath these words: “St. Peter ordained two Bishops, Linus and Cle-
Testimony of the Fathers.

"tus, who, in their own persons, should perform all sacred offices to the Roman people." It is true these words are not to be found in the printed editions of that work; but they are in all the manuscript copies, and so they are cited by Marianus Scotus, as the learned Vossius assures us; who adds, "That the succession of Bishops at Rome, in a single person, began under Evaristus. Before his time two or three sat together*." The learned Junius, also, an illustrious Reformer of Holland, nearly contemporary with Luther, speaking of the contradictory testimony of the Fathers, respecting the succession of the first Bishops or Pastors of Rome, delivers the following decisive opinion. "These, or some of these, were Presbyter or Bishops of Rome, at the same time, ruling the Church in common. But the following writers, fancying to themselves such Bishops as had then obtained in the Church, fell into these snares of tradition, because they supposed, according to the custom of their own times, that there could be but one Bishop in one Church at the same time†."

But, granting that there is no mistake in the testimony of Trench; granting that it is all authentic and worthy of confidence; it proves nothing inconsistent with the doctrine of Presbyterian parity. What though the pious Father represents a succes-

sion of single persons as styled Bishops in the Church of Rome? They might have been the senior Pastors of that city, or they might have been the successive Moderators of the city Presbytery. Or a few names might have been selected out of a number of contemporary ministers, of the same ecclesiastical order, on account of their superior age, talents, or weight of character. In short, a variety of suppositions may be made concerning them, all equally reconcileable with Presbyterian principles, and with the language of Irenæus; but none of them giving the least countenance to the prelatical doctrine of different orders of clergy.

But the most extraordinary charge of Dr. B. is that I have misrepresented and perverted the testimony of Jerome. He insists that Jerome says nothing, which can be justly construed as intimating that ministerial parity existed in the Apostolic Church; but much of a directly opposite import. With a man who can persist in assertions of this kind, in the face of evidence so clear and indubitable, it is vain to reason. Let me request you, brethren, again to review the long and faithful extracts from the writings of this Father, which are contained in the fifth of my former Letters, and then decide whether it is possible for sophistry itself to set aside testimony so full and positive. What does Jerome say? Instead of speaking "obscurely," or "doubtfully," as Dr. B. alleges, his declarations on this point are absolutely among the most express and unequivocal passages to be found on
any subject, in all antiquity! He says, in so many words, that in the beginning, "Not only in his opinion, but also in that of Scripture, Bishop and Presbyter were the same, the one being the name of age, the other of office."—And again, "Among the ancients, Presbyters and Bishops were the same."—And again, "A Presbyter is the same as a Bishop; and before there were, by the devil's influence, parties in religion, the Churches were governed by the common council of Presbyters." To prove this, he formally quotes passages from the Acts of the Apostles, from the Epistle to the Philippians, from the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, from the first Epistle of Peter, and from the second and third Epistles of John:—The very passages which are generally quoted by Presbyterians in favour of their doctrine. Jerome further declares that afterwards the practice was introduced of placing one of the Presbyters above the rest, as a remedy against schism. He declares, expressly, that this practice was "brought in (paulatim) by little and little." He asserts, with equal explicitness, that "Bishops are above Presbyters, more by the custom of the Church, than by the appointment of Christ." And finally, he asserts that this departure from the primitive model, owed its origin to the decay of religion, and especially to the ambition of Ministers. It commenced "When every one began to think that those whom he baptized were rather his than Christ's." I appeal to your candour, my
brethren, whether any thing can be plainer or more decisive than this language? I appeal to your candour, whether the man who is capable of saying that these are "obscure" and "doubtful" passages, can be safely trusted either as a discerning or an impartial judge.

Dr. Bowden, indeed, alleges, that these "obscure" passages from Jerome are more than counterbalanced by others, in which he avowedly maintains the Apostolical origin of Prelacy. But where are such passages to be found in that Father? Dr. B. has produced none of them; and until he does produce them, I must be excused for doubting their existence. He has brought forward, it is true, seven quotations, each of which he tells us is clear and pointed. But no person, it is presumed, excepting Dr. B. himself, can see the "clearness," or the "point" of any one of the number. Jerome, it seems, asserts, that "Without the Bishop's command, neither Presbyter nor Deacon has a right to baptize." He observes, "That the Scriptures give the name of Princes to those who should be Bishops of the Church." He styles Polycarp, prince of Asia*; and asserts that

* For the passage in which Jerome represents Polycarp as prince of all Asia, and Bishop of Smyrna, Dr. Bowden refers to the work De Scriptor. Eccles. Has the Doctor yet to learn that this work is acknowledged by the ablest Episcopal writers to be interpolated and suspicious; and particularly, that they have acknowledged as among the interpolations, several passages in which persons are mentioned as Bishops of particular Churches in the Apostolic age!
he was "made Bishop of Smyrna by St. John himself." Speaking of certain differences between the Catholic Churches, and those of the Montanists, he says, "With us, the Bishops hold the place of the Apostles; with them the Bishop holds the third place." Again, he says, "it is the custom of the Church, for Bishops to go and invoke the Holy Spirit by imposition of hands, on such as were baptized by Presbyters and Deacons, in villages and places remote from the mother Church. Do you ask, where this is written? In the Acts of the Apostles." In another place he says, "The Apostles were thy Fathers, because they begat thee; but now that they have left the world, thou hast in their stead, their sons, the Bishops*." And finally, in his Epistle to Evagrius, he remarks, "That we may know that the Apostolic traditions were taken from the Old Testament, that which Aaron and his sons, and the Levites, were in the temple, let the Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons,

Besides, supposing the work to be genuine, why is no reference made to the particular part in which the passages referred to may be found? I really expected more "scholar like" conduct from this gentleman; especially after his repeated and solemn promises to that effect.

* This quotation also Dr. Bowden takes from the adulterated work De Script. Eccles.; and again quotes it without any reference to a particular part or page. The "learned" professor is perpetually forgetting his promise, to act a more "scholar like" part.
"claim to themselves in the Church."—These are all the passages which Dr. Bowden cites with so much exultation, and which he considers as pointedly asserting the Apostolical institution of Prelacy. But I will venture to pronounce, that there is not one of these passages, which can be considered by any impartial reader, as furnishing the least solid ground for such a conclusion; and only one of the whole number which bears even the semblance of an argument to this effect.

When Jerome says that Bishops come in the place of the Apostles, and hold the first place among the officers of the Church; when he remarks, that the Apostles having left the world, we have the Bishops in their place; and when he asserts that Polycarp was Bishop of Smyrna; he speaks a language in which every Presbyterian is ready to join him. Is it possible that Dr. Bowden is so utterly unacquainted with our principles, as not to know, that we consider our Bishops or Pastors, as the true and proper successors of the Apostles; and as holding the highest official station in the Church? Did he ever meet with a Presbyterian who doubted that Polycarp had a pastoral charge, or, in other words, was a Bishop in Smyrna? Again, when Jerome says, "Without the Bishop's command, neither Presbyter nor Deacon has a right to baptize," he evidently meant to assert that this was the case in the fourth century, when he lived. But did any Presbyterian ever deny that in the days of Jerome, Prelacy was estab-
lished? The criticism which Dr. B. makes on the word *right (jus)* which occurs in this passage, I pass over as unworthy of his good sense, and as undeserving of reply. Further, when Jerome declares, that the Scriptures give the name of Princes to Bishops, and when he asserts that Polycarp was Prince of all Asia, he says what our Episcopal brethren themselves acknowledge to be falsehoods. They know that no such official title is, anywhere in Scripture, given to Bishops; and they acknowledge also that Polycarp was Bishop of Smyrna only, and that Metropolitans and Patriarchs did not arise until a considerable time after his day. When Jerome says, "It is the custom of the church for Bishops to lay their hands on such as have been baptized by Presbyters and Deacons, and to invoke the Holy Spirit," he asserts nothing more than that it was the custom of the Church in his day. Who doubts this? Do we not all know that, before the time of Jerome, the rite which is called Confirmation had crept into the Church, and began to claim apostolic institution? And even when Jerome refers to the Acts of the Apostles as his authority for this custom, it is nothing to the purpose as to the present controversy; for he does not say, that the persons who laid hands on baptized persons in the Apostles' days, were the same kind of Bishops with those who arrogated to themselves that power in his days. Nay, he says, in another place, directly the contrary. And, finally, when Je-
romer remarks, "what Aaron and his sons, and the Levites were in the temple, let the Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons claim to themselves in the Church;" and when he speaks of this parallel as an "apostolical tradition," we can only infer from his language the well-known fact, that in his day, high-churchmen were fond of comparing the Christian ministry with the Jewish Priesthood; of endeavouring to show that the former succeeded to the grades, titles, and privileges of the latter; and of pleading apostolical tradition for this doctrine. It is known, independent of any testimony from Jerome, that this was the fashionable doctrine and language of his time; and it was natural for him to adopt that language, when he was not particularly called to speak of the system actually established by the apostles. But when Jerome undertakes professedly and formally to tell us how this matter actually stood in the apostolic age, he speaks in the following explicit and unequivocal language. Comment. in Tit. 1. 9. "A Presbyter is the same as a Bishop; and before there were, by the instigation of the devil, parties in religion, and it was said among the people, I am of Paul, I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, the churches were governed by the common council of Presbyters. But afterwards when every one thought that those whom he baptized were rather his than Christ's, it was determined through the whole world, that one of the Presbyters should be set above the rest, to whom
"all care of the Church should belong, that the
seeds of schism might be taken away. If any
suppose that it is merely my opinion, 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 the words of the
Apostle to the Philippians, saying, Paul and Ti-
mothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints
in Christ Jesus that are in Philippi, with the Bish-
ops and Deacons. Philippi is a city of Macedonia,
and certainly, in one city, there could not be
more than one Bishop, as they are now styled.
But at that time they called the same men Bishops
whom they called Presbyters; therefore, he
speaks indifferently of Bishops as of Presbyters.
This may seem, even yet, doubtful to some, till
it be proved by another testimony. It is written
in the Acts of the Apostles, that when the Apos-
tle 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 whom the Holy Ghost hath
made you Bishops, to feed the Church of God which
he hath purchased with his own blood. Here ob-
serve diligently, that calling together the Presby-
ters of one city, Ephesus, he afterwards styles
the same persons Bishops.
These things I have written to show, that
among the ancients, Presbyters and Bishops
were the same. But, by little and little, that
all the seeds of dissention might be plucked up,
the whole care was devolved on one. As, therefore, the Presbyters know, that by the custom of the Church they are subject to him who is their President, so let Bishops know, that they are above Presbyters more by the custom of the Church, than by any real appointment of Christ.

In his epistle to Evagrius, he speaks in the same pointed language, asserting, and proving by the same quotations from Scripture, that in the beginning and during the Apostle's days, a Bishop and a Presbyter were the same thing. After having done this, he proceeds thus:—"As to the fact, that afterwards, one was elected to preside over the rest, this was done as a remedy against schism; lest every one drawing his proselytes to himself, should rend the Church of Christ. For at Alexandria, from Mark the Evangelist, to the Bishops Heraclas and Dionysius, the Presbyters always chose one of their number, placed him in a superior station, and gave him the title of Bishop. In the same manner as if any army should make an Emperor, or the Deacons should choose from among themselves, one whom they knew to be particularly active, and should call him Arch-deacon."

Dr. Bowden, and his friends, do not hesitate to acknowledge, that Jerome represents some alteration of the original constitution of the Church as having early taken place; but they insist that, according to him, this alteration took place during the time, and under the authority of the Apostles.
Dr. B. then prepared to adopt the opinion, that the inspired Apostles at first adopted a form of government, which in a little while, they found ill-judged, and insufficient to answer the purpose; and that they then altered it for a better? Yet if there is any meaning in part of his reasoning, this is the amount of it! But besides the blasphemy of the suggestion, Jerome could not have intended to say that this alteration took place during the times of the Apostles, because he quotes the Apostolical epistles to prove that it had not taken place at their date; and particularly in his epistle to Evagrius, he quotes the second and third epistles of John to show that Presbyterian parity existed when they were written, which was about thirty years, after the schism at Corinth, which Dr. Bowden asserts is the period assigned by Jerome for the rise of Prelacy. Jerome further tells us, that the practice of setting one of the Presbyters above the rest, was brought in by degrees; which could never have been the case had it been founded on a distinct and positive order of the Apostles. And, as if this were not sufficiently explicit, he adds, to take away all possibility of mistake, "Let the Presby-
"ters know that they are subject to him who is
"set over them by the custom of the Church; and
"let the Bishops know, that they are greater than
"Presbyters, rather by the custom of the Church,
"than by any real appointment of Christ."

If I were further to take up your time, brethren, in exposing the various attempts of Dr. Bowden
to set aside this plain and unequivocal testimony of Jerome, I should trespass on your patience, and insult your understandings. I have only to say, that some of the most learned and able advocates of Prelacy, as well as others, have understood Jerome as we understand him, and have confessed that he decisively maintains the Apostolic origin of Presbyterian parity. To establish this fact, the most pointed quotations might be adduced, almost without number. The few following will be sufficient.

The celebrated Episcopal Divine, Dr. Saravia, explicitly grants that Jerome was against the divine right of Episcopacy. "Jerome's opinion," says he, "was private, and coincided with that of Aerius*.

The learned prelatist, Alphonso de Castro understood Jerome in the same manner. He sharply reproves a certain writer who had endeavoured to set aside the testimony commonly derived from that Father in favor of Presbytery, and insists that the testimony, as usually adduced, is correct. "But Thomas Waldensis," says he, "truly is deceived; for Jerome does endeavour to prove that, according to divine institution, there was no difference between Presbyter and Bishop." He afterwards adds, "Neither ought any one to wonder that Jerome, though otherwise a most learned and excellent man, was mistaken†."

* De Gradibus Minist. Evangel. Cap. 23.
† Contra Heres. p. 103; 104.
Bishop Jewel understood Jerome as we do, and expressly quotes the passage which is commonly quoted by presbyterians, to show that this Father asserts the original equality and identity of Bishops and Presbyters.

Bishop Morton interprets Jerome in the same manner. He expressly acknowledges that Jerome represents the difference between Bishop and Presbyter as brought into the church not by divine, but human authority. He further asserts, that there was no substantial difference, on the subject of Episcopacy, between Jerome and Aerius. And further, that not only all the Protestants, but also all the primitive Doctors were of the same mind with Jerome.

The learned Episcopalian, Professor Whitaker, concurred in this interpretation. "If Aerius," says he, "was a heretic in this point, he had Jerome to be his neighbour in that heresy; and not only him, but other Fathers, both Greek and Latin, as is confessed by Medina. Aerius thought that Presbyter did not differ from Bishop by any divine law and authority; and the same thing was contended for by Jerome, and he defended it by those very Scripture testimonies that Aerius did."

* Defence of his Apology for the Church of England, p. 248.
† Cathol. Apolog. Lib. i. p. 118—120.
‡ Controv. iv. Quest. i. Cap. iii. Sect. 30.
Few men have been more distinguished for their learned and zealous labours in favour of Episcopacy than Dr. William Nichols. Yet this eminent Episcopalian, speaking of Jerome, thus expresses himself. "At last came St. Jerome, though not till above three centuries after the Apostles' times, who valuing himself upon his learning, which, indeed, was very great; and being provoked by the insolence of some deacons, who set themselves above Presbyters; to the end he might maintain the dignity of his order against such arrogant persons, he advanced a notion never heard of before, viz. that Presbyters were not a different order from Bishops; and that a Bishop was only a more eminent Presbyter, chosen out of the rest, and set over them, for preventing of schism*.

Luther, whom some of our Episcopal brethren ignorantly claim as their own, in the articles of Smalcald, which he framed, expressly declares, that "Jerome teaches that the distinction of degrees between a Bishop and a Presbyter, or Pastor, was appointed only by human authority." This declaration was also formally subscribed by Melanchthon. In the Confession of Wirtemberg, Jerome is interpreted in the same manner; and in the second Helvetic Confession, he is particularly quoted in support of the doctrine that in the primitive Church Bishop and Presbyter were the same. And, in a

subsequent letter, you will find a number of other illustrious Divines, of different denominations, all concurring in the interpretation which we give of the learned Father.

I shall close my remarks on the testimony of Jerome, with the judgment of Bishop Croft, expressed in the following words—"And now I desire my reader, if he understands Latin, to view the epistle of St. Jerome to Evagrius; and doubtless he will wonder to see men have the confidence to quote any thing out of it for the distinction between Episcopacy and Presbytery; for the whole epistle is to show the identity of them*.

I will not attempt to follow Dr. Bowden through all his tedious details of testimony from the Fathers of the third, fourth, and following centuries, and his still more tedious comments on that testimony. What if Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen, Hilary, Epiphanius, Augustine, and a dozen more, who lived within the same period, could be brought to attest in the most unequivocal terms that prelacy existed in their time? Does any Presbyterian deny that clerical imparity had begun to appear in the third, and was established in the fourth century? But Dr. Bowden alleges that several of these writers expressly assert the Apostolical institution of Prelacy. Now if it were even true that they do make this assertion, it would weigh nothing with me,

* Naked Truth, p. 43.
nor with any other reasonable man. In this opinion every one must concur who seriously weighs the following facts.

Within fifty years after the Apostolic age, the wine in the Lord's Supper was constantly mixed with water. This mixture, considered, at first, as a measure of human prudence, soon began to be urged, not only as a matter of importance, but as a divine institution. Irenæus declares it to have been both taught and practised by our Saviour himself. Lib. iv. Cap. 57.—Cyprian also asserts that the same thing was enjoined by tradition from the Lord, and made a part of the original institution. Epist. 63. ad Cæcil. But no Protestant now believes either the one or the other. Administering the Lord's Supper to infants arose early in the Church. It is certain that this corruption existed in the second century. Cyprian, in the third century, speaks of it, not as a new thing, but as an ordinary practice. De Lapsis. Sect. 13. Augustine calls it an Apostolical tradition, represents it as a general custom, and expressly founds the propriety and necessity of it on John vi. 53. Now that this practice never had the least foundation either in Scripture or Apostolic example, our opponents, as well as ourselves, are fully agreed. Again; Irenæus positively asserts that Christ remained on earth until he had reached old age; that he was at least fifty years old when he was crucified; and that "this was ascertained by the unanimous tradition, and positive testimony of all the old men"
Testimony of the Fathers. 191

"who had lived with St. John, and the other Apostles, from whom they all received this account, and constantly bore witness to the truth of it." Lib. II, Cap. 39. But no one can open the Bible, without perceiving that this pretended fact, in behalf of which the authority of inspired men is quoted, is totally false. To mention only one case more; we learn from Eusebius, that, in the days of Irenæus, there arose a very fierce dispute respecting the proper time for the celebration of Easter. The Churches of Asia took one side; and the Western Churches, with Victor, Bishop of Rome, at their head, took the other. The former asserted, that they were supported by the authority of the Apostles John and Phillip. The latter, with equal confidence, plead the authority of Peter and Paul in justification of their practice. Irenæus addressed a letter to Victor on the subject, in which there is found the following passage. "This diversity did not begin in our time; but long ago among our forefathers; who, as it seems, through negligence in the management of their charge, handed down to their posterity a custom which through simplicity and ignorance had crept into the Church." And Socrates, the Ecclesiastical Historian, who wrote about a century after Eusebius, speaks of such observances generally in the following language. "Neither the ancients, nor the moderns, who have studiously followed the

"Jews, had, in my opinion, any just or rational cause for contending so much about this festival (Easter.) For they considered not with themselves, that when the Jewish religion was changed into Christianity, those accurate observances of the Mosaic law, and the types, wholly ceased. And this carries along with it its own demonstration. For no one of Christ's laws has permitted Christians to observe the rites of the Jews. On the contrary, the Apostle has expressly forbid this, and does not only reject circumcision, but also advises against contending about festival days. Moreover, it is his admonitions, that days, and months, and years, should in no wise be observed. Besides, in his epistle to the Colossians, he loudly affirms that such observances are a shadow. Men love festival-days because thereon they have a cessation from their labour. Neither our Saviour nor his Apostles have enjoined upon us by any law to observe such days." Here, then, is a large body of Churches and Bishops asserting that they have Apostolical authority for a certain practice. On the other hand there is a large body of equally respectable Churches and Bishops, who assert, with no less confidence, that they have Apostolical authority for a different practice. And, to crown all, a third class, as much entitled to respect as either, pronounce, that both the former speak falsehood;
and that the plea of Apostolical authority advanced by each, is equally and totally without foundation! Who, after such notorious instances of either credulity or dishonesty, would give the least credit to a claim of Apostolical institution, resting on no other ground than the assertion of the Fathers? Could we find in them, therefore, the most direct and decisive claim of this kind, in behalf of diocesan Episcopacy, it would be unworthy of confidence.

But it is not true that any one of the Fathers, within the first four centuries, does assert the Apostolical institution of Prelacy. Dr. Bowden produces Cyprian as saying, that "Jesus Christ and he alone " has the power of setting Bishops over the Church " to govern it;" that "Christ constitutes as well " as protects Bishops;" and that "it is by divine " appointment a Bishop is set over the Church." He produces Origen, as saying, "Shall I not be " subject to the Bishop who is of God ordained to " be my father? Shall not I be subject to the " Presbyter, who is, by divine vouchsafement, set " over me?" He quotes Hilary as declaring, "The " Bishop is the chief; though every Bishop is a " Presbyter, yet every Presbyter is not a Bishop." And also as asserting, that James, and Timothy, and Titus, and the Angels of the Asiatic Churches were Bishops. He cites Athanasius as remonstrating with one who declined a Bishopric, in the following terms—"If you think there is no reward " allotted to the office of a Bishop, you despise the " Saviour who instituted that office." He repre-
sents Chrysostom, as commenting on 1 Tim. iv. 4. in these words—"Paul does not speak of Presby-
ters, but of Bishops, for Presbyters did not or-
dain Timothy a Bishop." And finally he pro-
duces the Fathers of the Council of Antioch, in the
year 265, as declaring, that the office of a Bishop
is sacred and exemplary, both to the clergy and
to the people." Now, is it possible that Dr.
Bowden, after devoting the best powers of his mind,
for thirty years, to this controversy, has yet to learn,
that all these quotations, and ten thousand more
like them, are nothing to his purpose? It is truly
amazing! Have not I, who am a Presbyterian,
repeatedly said, in the foregoing sheets, that "Bi-
shops were, by divine appointment, set over the
Church?" Do not Presbyterians perpetually speak
of the office of Bishop in their Church as a " sa-
cred office?" And would any Presbyterian on earth
scruple to say, that Bishops were, and are ordain-
ed of God to be set over the Church; and also
that every member of their flock, and even assis-
tant preachers, within their parish, if not invested
with a share in the pastoral charge, are bound to
be "subject to them?" But no one, surely, could
construe these expressions, on our part, as implying
that we believed in the divine institution of such
Bishops as our Episcopal brethren contend for. The
truth is, these quotations, so pompously made, only
prove two points; First, that the Fathers in question
believed that there were Bishops in the Apostolic
Church; which no man, in his senses, ever doubt-
Testimony of the Fathers. 195

ed: and Secondly, that at the time when they wrote, Bishops were considered as having some kind of superiority over common Presbyters; which is as little doubted as the former. In short, Dr. Bowden is deceived by the bare occurrence of the word Bishop. Whenever he finds this word in the writings of the Fathers, his imagination is instantly filled with Prelates, and with all the peculiarities of the Episcopal system. But before the smallest touch of inquiry this hallucination vanishes. Though Bishops in the third and fourth centuries, had appropriated to themselves powers, which before had been enjoyed by others in common with them; yet their office itself was of divine appointment. Dr. Bowden, indeed, says, and endeavours to persuade his readers, that the writers whom he quotes, declare the Bishops which existed in the days of the Apostles to have been just such Bishops, as existed several centuries afterwards, in their own times—Bishops in the prelatical sense of the word. But the Doctor, with all his confidence, must pardon me for saying, this is not true. He has produced no passage which makes any such declaration, or which legitimately implies it; nor is he able to produce such a passage, from all the stores of antiquity, within the specified limits.

Besides the direct quotations from the Fathers, which prove that the primitive Bishop was the Pastor of a single congregation, I mentioned, in my former Letters, some facts, incidentally stated by early writers, which serve remarkably to confirm
the same truth. Dr. Bowden treats these alleged facts with great contempt, and endeavours to show that they are all either unfounded, or nothing to the purpose. I do not think it necessary to go over this part of the ground again. Of the five facts mentioned by me and assailed by Dr. B. there are only two of which it appears proper to take any further notice.

The first of these is, the great number of Bishops which ecclesiastical historians inform us were found, in early periods of the Church, within small districts of country. Suppose a man in Europe were to be told, that there are, at this time, within the State of New-York, two hundred and fifty Bishops. What would be his conclusion? Why, certainly, that these could not be such Bishops as are found in any church in which diocesan Episcopacy is established. And if he were immediately afterwards informed that, within the whole State, there are only about two hundred and fifty organized congregations, he would confidently infer that there must be a Bishop in every congregation, and, therefore, that the title Bishop was considered as synonymous with that of Pastor of a single Church. This is precisely my argument in the present case. When we find in Provincial synods, in early times, several hundred Bishops convened; when we find, upon enquiry, that these Bishops and their Bishoprics were all embraced in districts of country not much, if at all more extensive than the State of New-York; and when we have reason further to
conclude that many parts, even of these districts, were not subjected to the empire of Christianity; what must be our conclusion? Unquestionably, that which has been just mentioned. These Bishops could have been no other than parish Rectors, or Pastors; and the fact goes far toward corroborating the doctrine in support of which it was produced, viz. that primitive Episcopacy was parochial, and not diocesan.

Dr. Bowden does not deny that, in the council of Antioch, in the third century, there were upwards of six hundred Bishops. He does not deny that there were present at a Provincial synod, in Africa, in the time of Augustine, between five and six hundred Bishops. Neither does he deny, that about the same time, according to Victor Uticensis, from that part of Africa in which the Vandalic persecution raged, six hundred and sixty Bishops fled, besides the great number that were murdered and imprisoned, and many more who were tolerated. Now when it is recollected that this persecution extended only to a small portion of Africa, and that it was carried on by one denomination of professing Christians against another, we are necessarily led to conclude that there must have been in that section of Africa alone, at least two thousand Bishops. Could these have been Prelates, each with a number of congregations and Pastors under his care? It is incredible. They could not have been more than the ordinary Pastors of single congregations. It is not likely that organized Churches
were more thickly strewed in Africa, at that time, than at present in our own country; nor can we, by any means, suppose that the persecution in question prevailed through a district larger than the United States: yet I am persuaded we have not in the United States many more than two thousand regular clergymen of all denominations.

All that Dr. Bowden has to offer in opposition to this reasoning, is, that the "learned Bingham, in his Antiquities of the Church, has given a geographical description of the ancient Bishoprics, as first made toward the close of the ninth century;" and that, according to his representation, there is no difficulty in accounting for the number of Bishops found in the early councils.—To this testimony of Bingham I might offer many objections. The work which contains it, though apparently much respected by Dr. Bowden, is a work of great partiality, and little credit. The sources from which the author derived his information, are by no means such as ought to inspire the confidence of any reasonable man. And, how any mortal can with confidence determine, from arrangements made in the ninth century, what were those of the third and fourth, Dr. Bowden may be able to explain; I am not. But after all, what is the amount of Bingham's testimony? It is that, even in the ninth century, many of the Bishops' dioceses were of very small extent, little, if any, larger than many of our modern parishes. And is not this precisely the position for which I contend, and on which this
whole argument is founded? Besides, if Bishoprics were thus small in the ninth century, have we not abundant-proof that they were smaller still, in the third and fourth centuries, when it is certain that Bishops were more numerous than they were several hundred years afterwards? But this is not the only instance in which Dr. Bowden unwittingly betrays his own cause, and supports the Presbyterian doctrine.

But, with respect to the African Bishoprics, Dr. Bowden, following his suspicious guide, Bingham, takes a ground somewhat different. He asserts, that "in the whole extent of that country, from the borders of Egypt to the western part of the peninsula, comprehending a length of 2360 miles, and a breadth in some places of 200, in others of 500 miles, there were but 466 dioceses; as appears, he adds, from the Collation of Carthage, the Abstract of St. Austin, and the Notitia of the African Church, made about fifty years after Austin's death, and published by Sirmondus." On this statement I shall make no remark; but shall leave it, to be treated as it deserves, by those who recollect the account given by Victor Uticensis of the number of Bishops banished, murdered, &c. during the Vandalic persecution; and also the numbers of Bishops actually convened in provincial synods, about the same time.

As another signal instance of the number of Bishops found in early times, I mentioned that Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland, who went thither about the
year 432, founded in that island 365 Churches, and ordained over them the same number of Bishops; and also ordained for these Churches 3000 Elders. These facts I represented as resting on the authority of archbishop Usher, and other ecclesiastical historians. Dr. Bowden utterly denies that Usher says this, or "any thing like it." Has the Doctor ever read Usher's work on the Antiquities of the British Churches? In that work, in pages 491 and 492*, if he does not find the learned author quoting with apparent approbation, several respectable antecedent historians, all of whom expressly state the facts which I have mentioned concerning Patrick, he must read with eyes very different from those of most other men.

But Dr. Bowden endeavours to turn this whole account into ridicule. "We have," says he, "according to this story, St. Patrick, who lived in the fifth century, when all our adversaries acknowledge that diocesan Episcopacy was universal, and who was also made a Bishop of that kind by Pope Celestine, converting the Irish, and planting among them Presbyterian parity." Did I any where assert that Patrick established Presbyterian parity? Was it not my object to prove, that the primitive extent of a Bishop's charge was a single flock; and that this plan continued to be realized in some parts of the Christian world, even after

Prelacy had been firmly and generally established? He who cannot understand how the statement concerning Patrick may be admitted, consistently with the doctrine of my Letters, has reason to suspect that the fault lies, not in the doctrine itself, nor in its advocate, but in some other quarter.

As another fact, illustrative of the number of Bishops found in early times, I mentioned, "that Dalmatius, Bishop of Cyzicum, who assisted at the general council of Ephesus, against the Nestorians, told the Emperor that there were six thousand Bishops in that council, who opposed Nestorius." In this statement I acknowledge myself to have fallen into a mistake; a mistake which I had discovered and regretted long before Dr. Bowden's volumes made their appearance. The fact, as it ought to have stood, is this; "Dalmatius told the Emperor, that one of the metropolitans who attended the general council of Ephesus, had six thousand Bishops under him, who were all against Nestorius." This fact I found recorded in Baxter's Treatise on Episcopacy, Part. ii. p. 38. And he quotes as his authority for it the learned Binnius, in Concil. Ephes. i. Tom. ii. Cap. 20. In hastily reading a sentence of unusual structure, I was so unfortunate as to receive an erroneous impression from it, which, though a candid reader, in reviewing the sentence for himself, would at once find reason to excuse, I am still glad of an opportunity to acknowledge and explain. But while I confess my mistake, it is plain that the
fact as it really stands is quite as much in my favour, as my erroneous statement, if true, would have been: or rather the fact of one metropolitan having within his district six thousand Bishops, is even a stronger testimony in support of my principle. The fidelity of the quotation will scarcely be doubted. For although I have never been able to procure the work of Binnius which is here quoted; yet being confident that Richard Baxter had read more books than many of those who affect to despise him ever saw, I have no fear of leading you astray in trusting to his citations. As to Dr. B.'s objection to the truth of this account, that he never before heard of Dalmatius; and that he is not able to find his name either in Cave or Mosheim, it is to be sure a real difficulty! How it is to be surmounted, is a very serious question! But I much fear that this objection, if admitted in general, would blot out of existence the names and writings of some of the best men that have ever adorned the Christian Church.

The next fact which I think it my duty further to notice, is, that in early times, it was customary for the flock of which the Bishop was to have the charge, to meet together for the purpose of electing him; and that he was always ordained in their presence. This was mentioned as another consideration which evinces that primitive Episcopacy was parochial, and not diocesan. Dr. Bowden denies the fact. He declares that there are no traces of the popular election of Bishops during the first two
hundred years after Christ; and that so far as this practice ever prevailed, it arose in the third century, but was soon laid aside. In reply to these bold assertions, I shall only present the following quotation from Cyprian, Doctor Bowden's favourite authority. Epist. 67. "Wherefore a people who would obey the rules of the gospel should separate themselves from a sinful Bishop, and should not partake with a profane priest in his sacrifices; especially since the chief power of choosing worthy priests, and of rejecting unworthy ones, is lodged with them: which rule we see proceeded originally from God's authority, that a Bishop should be chosen in the presence of the people, in the most public manner, and be approved as worthy by the common suffrage of the whole body. God directs his priest to be made so before all the congregation; and thereby shows us, that he would not have the ordinations of his bishops performed, but in the presence, and with the privity of the people. This rule, thus appointed by God, we find afterwards observed in the Acts of the Apostles, when Peter spoke to the people, upon the point of substituting some one to be an Apostle, in the room of Judas. Nor do we find the Apostles observing this rule in the case of Bishops and Priests only, but even in the ordination of Deacons; concerning which it is recorded in Acts, vi. 2. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, Look ye out seven men of
"honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom; and the saying pleased the whole multitude; and they chose Stephen &c. whom they set before the Apostles, &c. Wherefore the rule which we have handed down to us from God himself, and from the practice of his Apostles, should be observed with all exactness, as it is, indeed, already amongst us, and generally amongst the provinces here; viz. that in celebrating our ordinations, the neighbouring Bishops of the province, where a Bishop is to be ordained for any people*, should meet upon the place, and choose a Bishop in the presence of the people. This rule we find you observed in the ordination of our Colleague, Sabinus, who was unanimously chosen by the votes of all the people, and the approbation of the Bishops who were there assembled."

Here Cyprian, who flourished about the middle of the third century, declares that the election of Bishops by the votes of all the people, was a regulation established by God himself, and sanctioned by the practice of the Apostles. And, lest the nature of this election should be mistaken, he asserts that the chief power of choice lies with the people, by divine right. Nay, to render the point still more

* How remarkably does Cyprian speak in the Presbyterian style! To ordain a Bishop for, or over, a people, or flock, is scarcely intelligible on Episcopal principles. The Episcopal Bishop of New-York, as such, is equally related to all the congregations belonging to that communion in the State. In our Church, a Bishop is ordained over a particular flock or people.
unequivocal, he represents the election in question as of the same nature with that of the Deacons, in Acts vi. 2, 3, &c. in which it is expressly asserted, that the whole multitude, or the body of the people, made the choice*. If this is not testimony that the method of popular election was practised in the days of Cyprian; and that that Father considered it as of divine appointment, and as having been received in the Church from the days of the Apostles, then I know not how to understand or interpret his language. Dr. Bowden gives only a part of the above extract from Cyprian; and endeavours to prove from it that an actual election by the people is not at all intended. I trust, however, that of this gloss, on further consideration, he will be ashamed.

Having thus, with all possible brevity, replied to such of Dr. Bowden's strictures as appeared worthy of notice, I shall select a few additional testimonies from the Fathers, and request you to give them your serious attention.

Hilary, in his commentary on 1 Timothy iii. affirms "The ordination of Bishop and Presbyter is

* It ought to be recollected, that the Epistle from which the above extract is taken, was written to some people in Spain, who wished advice in a case in which the right of the people to choose their own Bishop was immediately concerned; and that it was written not in the name of Cyprian only, but in that of the African Synod.
one and the same." Could he possibly have said this, if they had been different orders, and had received a different ordination?

Chrysostom, in his 14th homily, on Acts vi. declares, that, "in his time such Deacons as the Apostles ordained were not in the Church." This incontestibly shows that, in his day, the Apostolic order of the Church with regard to her officers, had been invaded and altered by human contrivance, which is precisely the position for which we contend.

The following passage from Basil, Bishop of Cesarea, who was contemporary with Jerome, is also worthy of notice.— "Christ says, Lovest thou me, Peter, more than these? Feed my sheep. And from thence he gave to all Pastors and Doctors equal power; whereof this is a token, that all of them, as Peter did, bind and loose*.

In the 4th Council of Carthage, the following Canon was passed: "Let the Bishop, when he is in the Church, and sitting in the Presbytery, be placed in a higher seat; but when he is in the house, let him know that he is the colleague of the "Presbyters." Can. 35. By the same Council it was enacted, "that every Bishop should reside in a small house near the Church in which he officiated"—that he should have "plain and even "coarse household furniture"—and that "he "should give himself perpetually to reading, praying, and preaching." Can. 14, 15, 20.

In the *Apostolical Constitutions* the following passages are found, which Dr. Bowden is bound, on his own principles, to respect, and admit. *Lib. 11.*

**Cap. 27.** "It behoves you, brethren, to bring your sacrifices and oblations to the Bishop, as to the high priest, and offer them, either by yourselves, or by the Deacons. Offer the Bishop also your first fruits and tythes, and your voluntary gifts; for he knows the poor, and gives to every one what is convenient; lest one receive twice or oftener the same day, or the same week, and another receive not so much as once." *Cap. 31.* "The Deacon must give nothing to any poor man without the Bishop's knowledge and consent."

**Cap. 44.** "The Deacon must be the Bishop's eye, and ear, and mouth, nay, his heart and soul, that the Bishop may be only taken up with the weightier affairs of his flock." Here it is evident that the business of the Deacons was to take care of the poor. This is exactly the doctrine of the Presbyterians, and, what is much more important, of the New Testament. Here it is evident, also, that no poor man was to be relieved without the knowledge and approbation of the Bishop; who, it is expressly said, is presumed to know all the poor, and to be able to give to every one what is convenient. Could this officer have been any other than the Pastor of a single flock?

Again; the same *Apostolical Constitutions* thus describe the ordinary solemnities of public worship.

**Lib. 11. Cap. 57.** "When thou, O Bishop, hast
called together the Church of God, like the master of a ship, require them to assemble often, with all prudence and regularity of discipline. Command the Deacons, as so many mariners, that they appoint convenient places for all the brethren, as for so many passengers, with all care and decency. And first let the house of worship be oblong, turned toward the east, having seats (or pews) on both sides, towards the east, and like a ship. In the middle place let the Bishop's seat be; and on both sides of him let the Presbyters sit. But let the Deacons stand ready for service, lightly clothed, for they are like the mariners, and those that order the sides of the ship. By their care, let the laymen sit quietly and orderly in one part of the Church: and the women also by themselves, abstaining from talking. Let the Reader, standing in the middle, in some high place, read the Books of Moses, &c. The reading being finished, let another sing the hymns of David. Then let our Acts (i.e. the Acts of the Apostles) and the Epistles, be recited. After these things let the Presbyters exhort the people; and last of all the Bishop, who is like the master of the ship. Let the Door-keepers stand at the Church doors, where the men enter; and the Deaconesses where the women enter. If any be found sitting out of his own place, let the Deacon reprove him, and let him be conducted to a proper place. Let the Deacons take care that none whisper, sleep, laugh, nod, &c. After
"the catechumens and penitents have retired, let "the Deacons prepare for the celebration of the "Eucharist, &c."

No one can read these rules without perceiving that they relate to the ordinary worship of Christian assemblies, when convened on the sabbath. To doubt this, is to fly in the face of common sense. Yet we find the presence of the Bishop, in every public service, spoken of as indispensable. Is it not manifest, then, that this Bishop could only have been the Pastor of a single flock?

The sixth General Council of Constantinople, which was held about the year 692, acknowledged the "Scripture Deacons to be no other than overseers of the poor; and that this was the opinion of the ancient Fathers." Can. 16. Here is another explicit acknowledgment, that the Apostolic constitution of the Church, as to her officers, was notoriously changed, prior to the year 692.

The Council of Aix la Chapelle, held about the year 816, in the most unequivocal terms owned the original identity of Bishops and Presbyters, and expressly declared, that "the ordination of the clergy was reserved to the high-priest only for the maintenance of his dignity." Can. 8. Could this form of expression have been thought correct if Presbyters were, by divine right, destitute of the power of ordaining? Certainly not.

Some other facts, which are ascertained from the writings of the Fathers, and which were mentioned in my former Letters, deserve further considera-
tion. We are informed, by several early writers, that the Bishops, during the first three centuries, were alone considered as authorized to administer Baptism and the Lord's Supper. From Ignatius, Tertullian, and Cyprian, we learn that Christians, in those days, received the Eucharist from no hands but those of the Bishop; and that Baptism was considered as his appropriate work, and never to be administered by any other hands, unless in cases of necessity. Again, in the 30th Canon of the Council of Agatha, it is said—"It shall not be lawful for a Presbyter in the Church to pronounce the benediction on the people, or to bless a penitant." Now, when it is notorious, that, in those days, the Lord's Supper was administered every sabbath, and in some Churches oftener; when cases of Baptism doubtless continually occurred; and when pronouncing the benediction on the people made, then, as well as now, a part of every public service; it is plain that the presence of a Bishop was considered as indispensable, every Lord's day, in every worshipping assembly. Is it not evident, when this was the case, that the Bishop could have been nothing less or more than the Pastor of a single Church?

Dr. Bowden does not attempt to deny the facts here alleged. They are, indeed, so abundantly confirmed by the voice of antiquity, that he cannot possibly call them in question. But he endeavours to evade their force by saying, that these writers only mean in general to represent the Bishop
as the fountain of all ecclesiastical power; and to assert that none have a right to administer the ordinances of religion, excepting those who are empowered by him. And, in like manner, and on the same principle, he intimates, that the Presbyters in the Episcopal Church, baptize and administer the Eucharist in virtue of permission given them by the Bishop for that purpose. This is an evasion unworthy of Dr. B.'s understanding and gravity. The writers above quoted, undoubtedly convey the idea, that administering Baptism and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was the appropriate and peculiar work of the Bishop as such; that in cases of necessity only they might commit these ordinances to other hands; but that for every such dispensation there must be a distinct expression of the Bishop's will, and his leave expressly obtained. In short, the idea evidently meant to be conveyed is, that certain acts could be done regularly by the Bishop only; but that in cases of sickness, necessary absence, &c. he might empower some one to perform them as his substitute; just as, among Presbyterians, the administration of sealing ordinances is considered as the appropriate duty of each Pastor within his parish; though at the same time, if he have an assistant, or if any other ordained minister happen to be present, the Pastor may, without transgressing any ecclesiastical law, request him to officiate in his room: it being always remembered, however, that for every such act, a new request, and a new permission, on the part of the Pastor, are ne-
But does this bear any resemblance to the Episcopal system, in which Baptism and the Lord's Supper are in no degree the appropriated duty of a Prelate; but according to which every Presbyter, whether he have the charge of a congregation or not, is considered as possessing, in virtue of his general commission, a right to administer both the sacraments, at all times, and in all places, without consulting his Bishop? I am astonished that Dr. Bowden could so far impose on himself as to imagine that there is any resemblance between the two cases.

After all, then, that Dr. Bowden has urged against my exhibition of the testimony of the Fathers, it appears that he has not succeeded in setting aside a single material fact, or in refuting a single important argument, which I had deduced from the works of those early writers.

It appears, that the titles, Bishop and Presbyter, were promiscuously applied to the same persons, not only in the Apostolic age, but also till the close of the second century. This Dr. Bowden himself acknowledges; though he asserts, at the same time, that in the second century, it was seldom so applied. Now if the interchangeable application of these terms was continued until that time, and afterwards does not occur, must we not conclude, that about, or immediately after that time, some change took place in the arrangement of ecclesiastical dignities, which led to a more restricted use of the
Word Bishop? No supposition can be more natural; and it is precisely this for which we contend.

It appears, that Dr. Bowden has not produced, and cannot produce, a single sentence, from any writer within the first two hundred years, which gives the least hint that Ordination or Confirmation was in fact confined to a particular order of Prelates, or was considered as a rite which ought to be so confined.

It appears, that Presbyters are expressly represented by early writers, and particularly by Ignatius and Irenæus, as the successors of the Apostles, and as presiding over the Church.

It appears, that in every worshipping assembly, in the primitive church, the presence of a Bishop was considered as indispensable. That it was the Bishop's peculiar duty to preach, and to bless the people; to administer Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; to attend to the case of every poor person in his parish that needed relief; to celebrate, or give his personal consent to the celebration, of all marriages among the people of his charge; to visit the sick; to instruct the children of his flock statedly every week; and, in short, to perform all those duties which are now, and ever have been considered, as the proper work of a parish minister.

It appears, after all that has been said to the contrary, that the number of Bishops found, in early times, in small districts of country, precludes the
idea of their having been any other than parish ministers.

It appears, that, even after a kind of Prelacy arose, the Bishops were still, for the most part, only Pastors of single congregations; and that there was little, if any other difference between them and their Presbyters, than that which now subsists between Pastors and their Assistants, in Presbyterian Churches, and Rectors and their Curates, in Episcopal Churches.

It appears that Jerome, after all the unwearied pains which have been taken by high-church-men, to set aside his testimony, does explicitly declare, that Presbyterian parity was the Apostolic and primitive form of Church government; and that this form was afterwards, and gradually exchanged for Prelacy. And it is evident, moreover, that some of the most learned and zealous Episcopal Divines have so understood him.

It appears from Jerome, that the first approach towards Prelacy was the standing moderatorship of one of the Presbyters; that this began in the Church of Alexandria very early; soon, if not immediately after the days of Mark the Evangelist; and that this was the only kind of clerical imparity that existed in that Church until the middle of the third century, when it gave place to some higher encroachments of ecclesiastical ambition.

It appears from several unexceptionable testimonies, that Deacons in the primitive Church, were not an order of Clergy at all; that they were only
entrusted with the care of the poor, and employed to assist in the administration of the Lord's Supper, as in the Presbyterian Church at present; and that their gradually coming to be considered as a third order of Clergy, was, like the claims of the Prelates, an innovation.

It appears, from the declaration of several Fathers, besides Jerome, that some change in the powers and prerogatives of Bishops, did actually take place, within the first three centuries; and that several things were appropriated to Bishops in the third and fourth centuries, which those writers assert were not appropriated to them in the Apostolic age.*

Finally, it appears, from all that has been said, that the writings of the Fathers, instead of speaking of this change, as Hilary. I represent him as saying, "And in Egypt, even at this day, the Presbyters ordain (contignant) in the Bishop's absence." Dr. Bowden asserts, that the word contignant has no reference to ordination. He does not, indeed, appear to be certain what it does signify; but is very confident that it cannot mean ordination. I forgot to notice this in its proper place; and have now neither time, nor room to make more than two remarks upon it. The first is, that several eminent Episcopal Divines, and, among others, Bishop Forbes, have understood Hilary as I do, to be speaking here of ordination. The second remark is, that whatever religious rite it is that Hilary refers to, it is something which the Bishops, in his day, generally claimed as their prerogative; but which had not been always appropriated to them; and which even in his time, in the Bishop's absence, the Presbyters considered themselves as empowered to perform. This is sufficient for my purpose.

* Among the Fathers mentioned in my former volume, as speaking of this change, is Hilary. I represent him as saying, "And in Egypt, even at this day, the Presbyters ordain (contignant) in the Bishop's absence." Dr. Bowden asserts, that the word contignant has no reference to ordination. He does not, indeed, appear to be certain what it does signify; but is very confident that it cannot mean ordination. I forgot to notice this in its proper place; and have now neither time, nor room to make more than two remarks upon it. The first is, that several eminent Episcopal Divines, and, among others, Bishop Forbes, have understood Hilary as I do, to be speaking here of ordination. The second remark is, that whatever religious rite it is that Hilary refers to, it is something which the Bishops, in his day, generally claimed as their prerogative; but which had not been always appropriated to them; and which even in his time, in the Bishop's absence, the Presbyters considered themselves as empowered to perform. This is sufficient for my purpose.
ing "decisively" and "unanimously" in favour of Prelacy, as some of our high-toned Episcopal brethren assert, do not produce a single testimony, within the prescribed limits, which gives the least countenance to the prelatical claim; and that we are abundantly warranted (to repeat the language of Bishop Croft, formerly cited) in pronouncing, that the proofs brought to support this claim are altogether "weak; no Scripture; no primitive general Council; no general consent of primitive Doctors and Fathers; no, not one primitive Father of note, speaking particularly and home to the purpose," of its advocates.
LETTER VI.

Testimony of the Reformers.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IN the sixth of my former Letters, I endeavoured to show that the great body of the Reformers, and other Witnesses for the Truth, in different ages and nations, were Presbyterians in principle. This allegation, and the proof by which it is supported, Dr. Bowden, according to his usual manner, confidently rejects, and pronounces a total misrepresentation. With what justice he does this, a few remarks will enable you to determine.

I asserted that the Waldenses were substantially Presbyterians, both in principle and practice; that, among other points, in which they rejected the corruptions of the Romish Church, they held, that there ought to be no diversity of rank among the ministers of the Gospel; and that Bishops and Presbyters, according to the word of God, and primitive usage, were the same order. All this, Dr. Bowden denies; and insists that the Waldenses were uniformly Episcopat in their ecclesiastical character. The following testimonies will show on which side the truth lies.
John Paul Perrin, who was himself a Pastor among them, in his History of that people, delivers at length, "the discipline under which the "Waldenses and Albigenses lived; extracted out "of divers authentic manuscripts, written in their "own language, several hundreds of years "before Luther or Calvin." From this work the following extracts are made. Art. 2. "Of "Pastors." "All they that are to be received as "Pastors amongst us, whilst they are yet with "their own people, are to entreat ours, that they "would be pleased to receive them to the min- "istry; and to pray to God that they may be "made worthy of so great an office. We also "appoint them their lectures, and set them their "task, causing them to learn by memory all the "chapters of St. Matthew and St. John, and all "the Epistles that are canonical, and a good part "of the writings of Solomon, David, and the Pro-
"phets. Afterwards, having produced good testi-
"monials, and being well approved for their suf-
"ficiency, they are received with imposition of "hands into the office of teachers. He that is ad-
"mitted in the last place, shall not do any thing "without the leave or allowance of him that was "admitted before him. As also he that was ad-
"mitted first, shall do nothing without the leave of "his associates, to the end that all things, with us, "may be done in order. Diet and apparel are "given unto us freely, and by way of alms, and that "with sufficiency, by those good people whom we
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"teach. Amongst other powers and abilities
which God hath given to his Servants, he hath
given authority to choose leaders, to rule the peo-
ple, and to ordain Elders in their charges.—
When any of us, the aforesaid Pastors, falls
into any gross sins, he is both excommunicated,
and prohibited to preach." Art. 4. "Our Pas-
tors do call assemblies once every year, to deter-
mine of all affairs in a general Synod*.

In another Confession of Faith, drawn up about
the year 1220, they declare that the functions of
Ministers consist in "preaching the word and ad-
ministering sacraments," and that "all other min-
isterial things may be reduced to the aforesaid."
Speaking of the rite of Confirmation, and of the Po-
pish claims that it must be administered by a Bi-
shop, they assert, that "it has no ground at all in
Scripture; that it was introduced by the Devil's
instigation, to seduce the people; that by such
means they might be induced the more to be-
lieve the ceremonies, and the necessity of the
Bishops†."

In the same work, (chap. 4.) it is expressly and
repeatedly asserted, that the Synods of the Walden-
se were composed of Ministers and Elders. This
mode of speaking is surely not Episcopal.
The same historian tells us, that Waldo, (from
whose name that of the Waldenses is said to be deriv-

Chap. 7.
† Ibid. Chap. 8.
ed,) " upon his departure from Lyons, came into Dauphiny, and thence, having erected some Churches, and laid the foundation of those which have been miraculously preserved there to this day, he went into Languedoc, and left some notable Pastors there, who set up and governed those Churches, which afterwards cost the Pope and his clergy so much pains to destroy*. Now it is certain that Waldo himself was no Prelate; neither can we suppose that the Pastors whom he left in Languedoc, were Prelates. Yet these Pastors set up and governed Churches.

In perfect coincidence with all this, is the testimony of Gillis, in his History of the Waldenses. This writer, like Perrin, was one of the Pastors of that people, and therefore perfectly qualified to give an account of their peculiar doctrines and practices. He speaks familiarly of the Pastors of their Churches, in the Presbyterian style. He says, "These Pastors, in their ordinary assemblies, came together and held a Synod once a year, and most generally in the month of September, at which they examined the Students, and admitted them to the ministry." Chap. II. p. 12.

In their Confession of Faith, which Gillis inserts at length, in the "Addition" to his work, p. 490, and which he expressly informs us was the confession of the ancient as well as the modern Waldenses; in Article 31, they declare, "It is necessary for the

* Part II. Book II. Chap. 9.
"Church to have Pastors esteemed sufficiently learned, and exemplary in their conduct, as well to preach God's word, as to administer the sacraments, and watch over the sheep of Jesus Christ, together with the Elders and Deacons, according to the rules of good and holy Church discipline, and the practice of the primitive Church."

Here is better testimony than Thuanus or Walsingham, than Mosheim or Allix. Here are the declarations of the Waldenses themselves. And I will venture to say that there is not a syllable in the above extracts which has the most distant appearance of Prelacy. On the contrary, they all bear the most decisive indications of Presbyterian parity. But besides this, Bellarmine acknowledges that the Waldenses denied the divine right of Prelacy. Medina, in the council of Trent, declared that the Waldenses were of the same mind with Aerius on this subject. And the learned Episcopalian, Professor Raignolds, in his famous Letter to Sir Francis Knollys, asserts, that the Waldenses, and all others who had distinguished themselves as opposers of Popery, and as Reformers of the Church, for 500 years, prior to the seventeenth century, had uniformly taught that "all Pastors, whether styled Bishops or Priests, have one and the same authority by the word of God."

Dr. Bowden also insists, in opposition to my statement, that the Bohemian Churches were Episcopal, in his sense of the word. In this, however,
as in the former case, he is contradicted by the most unquestionable testimony. In their Confession, there is not only a profound silence as to any distinction or difference of degrees among Pastors; but, what is more decisive, they place ordination, and excommunication, as well as preaching the gospel, not in the power of one, but in the hands of Presbyters and Brethren of the ministry. And in their Book of Order, or Discipline, p. 20. we have the following express words. "It is true, the Bohemians have certain Bishops, or Superintendents, who are conspicuous for age and gifts; and chosen by the suffrages of all the ministers, for the keeping of order, and to see that all the rest do their office. Four, or five, or six such have they, as need requires; and each of these has his diocese. But the dignity of these above other ministers, is not founded in the prerogative of honours or revenues, but of labours and cares for others. And, according to the Apostles' rules, a Presbyter and Bishop are one and the same thing." But it is to be presumed that Dr. Bowden will not doubt a moment longer, when he is told, that even his own favourite high-church historian Dr. Heylin, explicitly grants that the Bohemian Churches were not Episcopal, either in principle or practice. In his History of the Presbyterians, p. 409, 410. there is the following decisive passage. "About the year 1400, we find a strong party to be raised amongst the Bohemians, against some superstitions and corruptions in the Church
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"of Rome; occasioned, as some say, by reading
the works of Wickliffe, and by the diligence of
Picardus, a Fleming, as is affirmed by some
others, from whom they had the name of Pi-
cards. Cruelly persecuted by their own kings,
and publicly condemned in the Council of Con-
stance, they continued constant, notwithstanding,
to their own persuasions. In this condition they
remained till the preaching of Luther, and the
receiving of the Augustan Confession in most
parts of the empire, which gave them so much
confidence as to purge themselves from all for-
mer calumnies, by publishing a declaration of
their faith and doctrine; which they presented
at Vienna to the Archduke Ferdinand, about
ten years before chosen king of Bohemia; to-
gether with a large apology prefixed before it.
By which Confession it appears that they ascribe
no power to the civil magistrate in the concern-
ments of the Church; that they had fallen upon
a way of ordaining ministers amongst themselves,
without recourse unto the Bishop, or any such su-
perior officer as a superintendent; and finally,
that they retained the use of excommunication,
and other ecclesiastical censures, for the chasti-
ing of irregular and scandalous persons."

As to the observations made by Dr. Bowden, and
his clerical friend in Philadelphia, on the testimony
of Thuanus, Enæs Sylvius, and Walsingham, res-
pecting the Waldenses and the Bohemian Brethren,
I consider them as unworthy of notice. It would
be easy for me to show, that these writers really say what I ascribe to them; and that they are entitled to credit. It would also be easy to produce passages from Alphonso de Castro, Voetius, and other learned writers, who, in the most positive terms, give the same account of those celebrated witnesses for the truth. But it is unnecessary. The authority of their own historians and Confessions of Faith is paramount to every other.

Dr. Bowden does not deny that Wickliffe held the doctrine of Presbyterian parity. But in order to diminish the weight of this fact, he endeavours to destroy the character of that illustrious Reformer, by repeating the accusations brought against him by some virulent Papists. I must say that I expected more prudence, if not more consistency, from this gentleman. It is really astonishing to find a Protestant Divine so often obliged to avail himself of the arguments, the cavils, and even the

* Among the few gratifications which this controversy has afforded me, none of the least is, that it has led me to peruse, with particular care, the History and the Confessions of the Waldenses, who are allowed, by all Protestants, to have been the purest part of the Christian Church during the dark ages. Their coincidence with our Church, in almost all respects, both of doctrine and discipline, is really remarkable. Our Baptist brethren, among other advocates of error, have sometimes ventured to assert, with confidence, that the Waldenses were Anti-pedobaptists. I take for granted that those who have made this assertion, never read the ancient Confessions of that celebrated people. In those Confessions, and other authentic documents concerning them, the Pedobaptist doctrine is unequivocally and strongly maintained.
violence of Papists, in order to support his cause. But his attempt, in this instance, is as impotent as it is reprehensible. Wickliffe will continue to be hailed as the "Morning Star of the Reformation," and honoured as an eminent "Witness for the Truth," and that by the great body of learned and pious Episcopalians, as well as others, when the slanders with which his character has been aspersed shall have "gone the way of all such misbegotten things."

With respect to Tyndal, Lambert, Barnes, Hamilton, and other distinguished martyrs for the truth in Great-Britain, before the time of Cranmer, it is notorious that they, with one voice, maintained the doctrine of Presbyterian parity. Dr. Bowden, indeed, denies this, with respect to Tyndal and Lambert, or rather endeavours to put an unnatural gloss on their language. It really surprizes me that such an attempt should be made by a gentleman who professes to be acquainted with the history of the Reformation in Britain.

But Dr. Bowden seems to be most of all offended at my having asserted, that Archbishop Cranmer, and the Fathers of the Reformation in England, generally, believed that Bishop and Presbyterian were the same, by divine right; and that ministerial parity was the doctrine and practice of the primitive Church. He denies this position with warmth and confidence; and insists that those venerable Reformers were firm believers in the divine institution of Prelacy. Mr. How takes the
same ground, with even greater warmth, and with much acrimonious remark. On this point, my ob-
servations shall be few and short.

Dr. Bowden, in many of his statements concern-
ing the Reformation in England, avowedly relies
on the authority of Heylin and Collier. With res-
pect to these writers, I think proper, once for all,
to declare, that I place no reliance either on the
candour or the truth of their representations. And
of course that no alleged fact, which does not rest
on some other testimony, will be acknowledged by
me. The learned and able Editors of the Chris-
tian Observer, who, as was before observed, are
warm Episcopalians, speak of these writers in the
following manner: "Mr. Daubeny," say they, "in
many of his references to historical facts, and in
the deductions made from them, professedly fol-
lows authorities of a highly exceptionable nature.
Every reader who is conversant with the present
subject of debate, knows how forcibly this re-
mark applies to the writings of Collier and Heylin.
We speak from a careful comparison of what
they have written, with the sources from which
they drew, or might have drawn their materials
—when we affirm, that in all matters immediate-
ly bearing upon the Calvinistic controversy, they
are most unsafe guides. Of Dr. Heylin, in parti-
cular, we have no hesitation in saying, that we do
not know of any author, ancient or modern, in
whose pages is to be found a larger portion of
false reasonings, incorrect statements, and pal-
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"pable misrepresentations*." Bishop Burnet, in the preface to his History of the Reformation, declares, "Either Heylin was very ill informed, or very much led by his passions; and being wrought on by most violent prejudices, against some that were concerned in that time, delivers many things in such a manner, and so strangely, that one would think he had been secretly set on to it by those of the Church of Rome. In one thing he is not to be excused, that he never vouched any authority for what he writ, which is not to be forgiven any who write of transactions beyond their own time, and deliver new things not known before. So that upon what grounds he wrote a great deal of his book we can only conjecture, and many in their guesses are not apt to be very favourable to him." Of the same wretched bigot and calumniator, Bishop Barlow uses this strong language—"Peter Heylin's angry, and (to our Church and truth) scandalous writings†."

I had stated, that the Bishop's Book composed by Cranmer, and several other Prelates, in 1537, and subscribed by nineteen Bishops, and by the lower house of Convocation, expressly declared that in the New Testament, there is no mention made of any other ecclesiastical orders than Deacons or Ministers, and Presbyters or Bishops." I also

† Barlow's Genuine Remains, p. 181.
asserted, that another Book, drawn up and published by the same high authority, in 1542, taught, in the most explicit terms, a similar doctrine. To this Dr. Bowden replies that he has examined Collier, who undertakes to give an abstract of both these books, and that he does not find in him "a syllable of what I have quoted, but much to the contrary." My authorities are Calamy's Defence of moderate Nonconformity, p. 91. and Neal's History of the Puritans; in both which the writers profess to quote the very words of the Books in question: And whether a direct and positive statement, by authors of undoubted character, does not more than countervail the silence of a writer, who, as Episcopalians themselves acknowledge, is not to be depended on, let every impartial reader decide.

Now when it is considered, that those venerable Reformers unquestionably drew up and published the Books which have been just mentioned: When we find Professor Raignolds, one of the most learned and pious Episcopal Divines of his day, and who lived within about half a century after Cranmer and his associates, expressly asserting that they did not place Prelacy on the footing of divine right*: When we find Bishop Stillingfleet, in his Irenicum, and several other eminent Episcopal Divines, strongly asserting the same thing, not as their opinion merely, but as a fact: And when we find Dr. White, of Pennsylvania, now

* See my former Letters, p. 251.
Bishop of the Episcopal Church in that State, declaring, after the best examination that he had been able to give the subject, that those illustrious Divines did not establish or defend Prelacy as a matter of divine right*—When these things are considered, I presume every impartial judge will admit, that they form a mass of evidence incomparably more weighty than the opinions of Dr. Bowden and Mr. How, with the partial and prejudiced Collier to aid them.

I asserted, that, about the year 1547, in an assembly of Divines called by Edward VI. archbishop Cranmer, in answer to a question respecting the office of Bishops and Presbyters, replied, "Bishops and Priests were at one time, and were not two things; but one office in the beginning of Christ's Religion." And that two other Bishops, together with Dr. Redmayn, and Dr. Cox, delivered a similar opinion in still stronger terms; and that several of them quoted Jerome as a decisive authority in support of their opinion.

To this, Dr. Bowden replies, in the first place, that he can see nothing in Cranmer's answer inconsistent with Episcopal pre-eminence. Indeed! Were any one to ask Dr. B. himself, as King Edward did that assembly, "Whether Bishops or Priests were first; and if the Priests were first, whether the Priests made the Bishops?" would
he answer as Cranmer did; that Bishops and Priests were not two things in the beginning of Christ's religion, but one and the same office? Could he lay his hand on his heart, and say that he would consider such an answer as agreeable to his principles? The archbishop not only declares that the names of Bishop and Priest were interchangeably applied; but that they were one thing, or one office in the beginning of Christ's religion.—The Bishop of London's answer, in the same assembly, is in a similar strain. "I think," says he, "the Bishops were first; and yet I think it is not of importance whether the Priest then made the Bishop, or the Bishop the Priest; considering (after the sentence of St. Jerome) that in the beginning of the Church there was none (or if it were, very small) difference between a Bishop and a Priest, especially touching the significance." The man who can say that this answer only asserts the indiscriminate application of names in the primitive Church, must have a strange method of interpreting language.

Dr. B.'s second objection to my argument drawn from this answer, is, that the assembly, in which Cranmer, and his associates delivered these opinions, was not called in 1547, but seven years before, in the reign of Henry VIII. when the minds of the Reformers, just emerging from the darkness of Popery, were unsettled and immature. He asserts, that, afterwards, on further inquiry, they entertain-
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ed a different opinion. In this representation also Mr. How concurs.

It is certain that Stillingfleet, with the original manuscripts relating to this subject in his hand, declares that this assembly was called by Edward VI. about the year 1547. It is certain that Bishop Burnet quotes the very same manuscripts, under the name of Bishop Stillingfleet's. And it is equally certain that the former does not charge the latter with mistake in his date. I readily grant, however, that when the several passages of these two writers are carefully compared, it is not easy to decide on the correct date, with absolute certainty*. But at whatever period this assembly was called, Bishop Burnet speaks of the answers which its members gave in the following strong terms of approbation. "This paper the reader will find in the collection, of which, though it be somewhat large, yet I thought such pieces were of too great importance not to be communicated to the world; since it is, perhaps, as great an evidence of the ripeness of their proceedings, as can be shown in any Church, or any age of it†."

Both Dr. Bowden and Mr. How assert that Archbishop Cranmer published a Catechism in 1548,

* Dr. Bowden undoubtedly mistakes when he dates this assembly in 1538, and assigns as a reason that a certain Paper is signed by Fox, Bishop of Hereford, who died that year. Dr. B. is here confounding two very different things, as he will instantly see by comparing several passages in Burnet, Vol. i. p. 248. 289. Collection XXI. Addenda V.

† Hist. Ref. i. p. 289.
and a Sermon, about the same time, in both which they assure us he delivered doctrines "as highly Episcopal as any thing can be." Dr. Bowden has given a short extract from the latter of these publications, and took care, no doubt, to select the strongest and most decisive passage he could find. But, strange to tell! this passage affords no proof that the Archbishop believed in the divine institution of Prelacy at all. It speaks of the ministry of the word being derived from the Apostles by the imposition of hands. And do not many Presbyterians speak the same language? It speaks of the Apostles making Bishops and Priests. And does not every Presbyterian grant that there were many Presbyters in the Apostles' days who had no pastoral charge, and who were, of course, no Bishops? Is Dr. B. unable to understand this? or does he close his eyes against it? I take for granted that all Cranmer's "high-church notions," as Mr. How calls them, if candidly examined, would be found to be of a similar kind.

Dr. Bowden admits that in the 13th year of the reign of Elizabeth, there was an act passed which admitted into the Church of England, those who had received ordination in the foreign Reformed Churches, on their subscribing the articles of faith. Now as there was no other, strictly speaking, than Presbyterian ordination in any of the foreign Reformed Churches, it is manifest that this was a great national acknowledgment of the validity of
such ordinations. Dr. Bowden contends, however, that, from the language of Strype, in his Annals, it is evident that this Act was not designed to recognize as valid the ordinations in all the Reformed Churches; but only to comprehend, besides the Papists, "such ministers as had received their ordination in some of those Churches, when they were in exile under Queen Mary." And by the phrase, "some of the foreign Reformed Churches," Dr. B. thinks was probably meant, the Churches of Sweden, Denmark, and Bohemia, which he insists were Episcopal in their form. It will, hereafter, be shown, that none of these Churches were Episcopal, in Dr. Bowden's sense of the word; and, therefore, that the ordinations in question, even if they had been performed in those Churches, would have been nothing to his purpose. But this is not the worst part of the Doctor's blunder. It is notorious that not one of the Exiles under the reign of Mary ever settled in Sweden, Denmark, or Bohemia, or ever received ordination in any of those countries. I appeal to all the accounts of their exile, by whomsoever written, for the truth of this fact. Some of those persecuted Protestants went to France and Flanders; some to Geneva; and others to those parts of Germany and Switzerland, in which the Reformation had taken place, particularly to Embden, Strasburgh, Zurich, and Frankfort, in all which countries, no other ordination than that by Presbyters existed. I repeat it, none of the Exiles either settled in Sweden, Denmark, or Bohemia,
or were ordained there. Was Dr. Bowden igno-
rant of this fact? Or, if he knew it, to what shall
we ascribe his erroneous representation? But I
forbear further to expose, what, I trust, was only an
unintentional error.

As another proof that the Reformers of the
Church of England did not hold the excluding, jure
divino doctrine of Prelacy which many of their suc-
cessors in that Church have espoused, I produced a
public document under the hand of Archbishop
Grindal, in which he gave a formal license to a
Presbyterian minister, as one who had been "ad-
mittet and ordained to sacred orders, and the holy
ministry, by the imposition of hands, according to
the laudable form and rite of the reformed Church
of Scotland."

To take away the force of this concession on the
part of Archbishop Grindal, Dr. Bowden, with
much zeal, urges several considerations.

The first is, that this Prelate was not one of the
Reformers of the Church of England at all; and
that it is nothing less than imposition on my rea-
ders to place him among them. This is truly a
wonderful assertion! Has Dr. Bowden ever read
Strype's Life of Grindal? If he has not, I would
recommend to him to procure and peruse it, before
he undertakes again to write on this subject. From
that work he will learn, that Grindal was an active,
popular Clergyman, and a decisive advocate of the
Reformation in the reign of Edward VI.; that he
was nominated to a Bishopric by that Monarch;
that he was so obnoxious to the Catholic party, on account of his exertions in the cause of the Reformation, as to be compelled to leave the kingdom on the accession of Mary to the throne; that, immediately on his return, he, with others, was employed by Queen Elizabeth in reforming the Liturgy and Offices of the Church; that he was soon made Bishop of London; that he was afterwards successively promoted to the Archbishops of York and Canterbury, in all which stations he signalized himself as a Reformer. But "he was not Archbishop until the reign of Elizabeth." And was no man ever ranked among the Reformers unless he was an Archbishop? Then Cranmer did not become a Reformer until some years after he had begun to struggle for the purification of the Church; and Ridley, Latimer, and Hooper, to say nothing of several others, their illustrious contemporaries, were never Reformers at all! But this plea is really beneath further notice.

Another mode of getting rid of this difficulty, to which Dr. Bowden resorts, is to attack the character of Grindal, and to endeavour to make it appear, that he was so "fanatical" and "irregular," that his opinion or decision on a subject of this kind ought not to be considered as of any weight. I am perfectly willing to leave this insinuation to be estimated as it deserves, by all who are tolerably acquainted with the history of the Reformation in England, and the agency of the pious Archbishop in that glorious struggle.
But, one of the most extraordinary parts of Dr. Bowden’s work, is that in which he attempts to show that the Reformed Church of Scotland, as first established by Knox and his associates, was not Presbyterian but Prelatic in its form. Nay, he goes so far as to assert in conformity with the misrepresentations of Sage, Collier, Spotswood, and Skinner, that in that church ministerial “parity was disclaimed; that superintendents with Episcopal jurisdiction were established; and that Presbyterianism had no existence in that country until 1580, twenty years after the reformation was established.” The man who can write thus, discovers a want of information, or a force of prejudice, which renders him a much more proper object of compassion than of resentment. The statement is not only not true, but diametrically contrary to the truth, and advanced in direct opposition to all authentic testimony. This is so notoriously the case, that I did not suppose it possible for any well-informed man, at the present day, to give such a representation as Dr. Bowden has given.

The model of the Reformed Church of Scotland, as established in 1560, appears in the First Book of Discipline, drawn up by Knox and others. In that book, in chapter fourth, the ministry is spoken of, as consisting of a single order, in the same language which has been common among Presbyterians ever since; nor is there the least hint given of different ranks or grades of ministers, much less of such an hierarchy as was then established in
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England. In the 7th chapter, Ruling Elders and Deacons are described, and their duties pointed out; the former to assist the minister in the government of his flock, and the latter to take care of the poor. And in other parts of the work, the government of the Church by Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods, is expressly laid down. If this is not the essence of Presbyterianism, then I know not what is. It is true, in that Book, the appointment of ten or twelve ministers, under the name of Superintendents is recognized and directed. But it is as true, that the same Book, declares, that this appointment was made, not because Superintendents were considered as of divine institution, or an order to be observed perpetually in the Kirk; but because they were compelled to resort to some such expedient, at that time, when the deficiency of well qualified Protestant ministers was so great, that if some of the more able and pious had not been entrusted with much larger districts than single parishes, in which to preach the Gospel, to plant Churches, and to superintend the general interests of religion, the greater part of the country must have been given up, either to Popish teachers, or to total ignorance. And it is as true, that the powers with which those Superintendents were invested, were, in all respects, essentially different from those of Prelates. They did not confirm; they did not exclusively ordain; they had no Episcopal consecration; they had none of the prerogatives of Prelates; they were entirely subject to the Synodical assemblies, consisting of
Ministers and Elders; they were appointed by men who were known to be Presbyterians in principle; who, in the very act of appointing them, disclaimed Prelacy as an institution of Christ; and who gave the strongest evidence that they viewed the subject in this light, by refusing to make the former Bishops, Superintendents, lest their offices should be abused, and afterwards degenerate into the "old power of the Prelates." In short, the Superintendents were only the Agents of the Synods, for managing the affairs of the Church, in times of peculiar difficulty and peril; and whenever these times ceased, or rather before, their office was abolished. They were no more inconsistent with Presbyterian parity, than the practice of appointing Professors of Divinity, whose certificates shall be necessary to the introduction of every candidate into the ministry. Yet such Professors have been appointed in every Presbyterian Church that was able to provide for their support.

In 1578, the Second Book of Discipline was agreed upon and published by the General assembly of the Church of Scotland. In this Book the plan of Church Government laid down, is as perfectly Presbyterian as ever was formed. Nay more, it contains a positive declaration that diocesan Episcopacy is a "corruption;" that a Scriptural Bishop is the Pastor of a single Church or Congregation; and that the plan of giving to certain ministers, under the name of Bishops, a prelatical authority over a number of Congregations, and their
Pastors, is a popish error. It even goes so far as to require that all such Bishops then in the kingdom renounce their unscriptural title and authority, and submit to the Presbyterian order of the Church, or that they be deposed from all ecclesiastical office, and excommunicated. In all this, the assembly was supported by an act of Parliament; and thus Prelacy was by law abolished. And yet, "Presbyterianism had no existence in Scotland until 1580!" I charitably hope that Dr. Bowden, when he made this representation, had never read either the First or Second Book of Discipline, or the Acts of the General Assembly which accompanied those public documents.

It is readily granted that the Reformers in Scotland carried on this glorious work with much difficulty, and amidst great opposition. It is granted that in 1572, and again in 1584, the most violent exertions were made, in the former case, by some ambitious Noblemen; and in the latter, by the King, to restore Prelacy; and that in both cases, there was a partial and nominal restoration of it for a few months, in the same manner as the progress of the Reformation was more than once, and grievously, interrupted in England. But it is notorious, that this was in opposition to the views and wishes of all the principal Reformers. It is notorious, that, even in those intervals in which there were nominal Bishops, candidates for the ministry were ordained, not by them, but by the Presbyteries. And it is equally notorious that, from the first or-
ganization of Presbyterianism in 1560, until it was ultimately and permanently established, the great body both of the clergy and laity, who manifested friendship to the Reformation at all, were decided Presbyterians. For the truth of this representation, I appeal to the public and accredited documents of the Church; I appeal to Knox, to Calderwood, to Woodrow, to Crookshank, to any historian, who is not carried away with the violent, I had almost said insane, prejudice of Sage, Spotswood, and Collier, by whom subsequent writers, who ought to have known better, have suffered themselves to be misled. Even Dr. Heylin, with all the bitterness of his prejudice, in his History of Presbyterianism, gives a view of the Reformation in Scotland, which I cannot help thinking will excite a blush in Dr. B. if he should ever peruse it,—and should remember what he himself has written.

Though Heylin was a violent enemy of every thing like Presbytery; and though he wished to make it appear that the first Scottish Reformers did not admit of ministerial parity, in the strict sense of the word; yet he was forced to acknowledge that they adopted a plan of Church Government, of which the "predominant" features were Presbyterian. And he confesses, further, that even the small deviations from the strict Presbyterian model which took place, were admitted by Knox on account of the then "unsettled state of the Church."
The same historian, in another work, declares, more strongly, "Being once settled in an orderly and constant hierarchy, they (the Scotch) held the same, until the Reformation began by Knox; when he and his Associates, approving the Geneva Platform, took the advantage of the minority of King James VI, to introduce Presbyterian discipline, and suppress the Bishops*.

Accordingly, soon after the first establishment of the Reformation in Scotland, Beza, whose warm attachment to Presbyterianism is universally known, wrote to Knox in the following language. "But I would have you, my dear Knox, and the other brethren, to remember that which is before your eyes; that as Bishops brought forth the Papacy; so false Bishops, the relics of Popery, shall bring Epicurism into the world. They that desire the good and safety of the Church, let them take heed of this pest; and seeing you have put that plague to flight, I heartily pray you never to admit again; although it may seem plausible, under the pretence of keeping unity; which pretence deceived the ancient Fathers, even the best of them.†"

Dr. Bowden seems to think that, if Bishops had been the leading Reformers in Scotland, as they were in England, Prelacy would have been retained in the former, as well as in the latter. This is only

* Cosmographie, p. 332.
† Epist. 79.

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saying that even good men, who enjoy high ecclesiastical pre-eminence, and corresponding revenues, when two plans of Reformation are offered them, will be most likely to embrace that which will secure the continuance of their honours and emoluments. And does Dr. Bowden really think that this affords a solid argument in favour of Prelacy? I cannot possibly suppose a Gentleman of his character to be so far gone in absurdity. Besides, the Doctor does not appear to know, that three Scotch Prelates, viz. the Bishops of Orkney, Galway and Caithness, did embrace the Reformation, and became Presbyterian, or parochial Bishops. And, what is still more worthy of notice, it is well known, not only that Knox himself was in Episcopal orders, and was a popular preacher in England, in the reign of Edward VI; but also that a Bishoprick was offered him, which he refused, because he considered Prelacy as unlawful; or as having “quid commune cum Anti-christo*.” Accordingly, when John Douglass was made Tulchan (or nominal) Bishop of St. Andrews, Knox utterly refused to ordain him, denouncing anathemas both against the giver and the receiver. And, when this refusal was imputed to unworthy motives, he publicly declared, in a Sermon, on the next sabbath, “I have refused a greater Bishoprick than ever it was; and might have had it with the favour of greater men than he hath this: but I did and do

* Fuller's Lives of the Divines.
"repine, for discharge of my conscience, that the Church of Scotland be not subject to that order." 

Let us now pass from the Reformers of Great-Britain to those of the continent of Europe.

Dr. Bowden would persuade us that Luther also believed in the divine right of diocesan Episcopacy. Of this Reformer he speaks in the following terms. "As to Luther, he professes that if the Popish Bishops would cease to persecute the Gospel," he and those of his communion, "would acknowledge them as their fathers, and willingly obey their authority, which (says he) we find supported by the word of God." Consequently, in his "and their estimation, Episcopacy was an Apostolic institution." Letter 15. Dr. Bowden has not given us the least hint in what part of Luther's writings this declaration is to be found; and I shall certainly require to see it with my own eyes, and to trace its connexion, before it is admitted as an authentic testimony of that Reformer's opinion. I make this demand with the more confidence, and with a deeper conviction of its justice, because, in turning over the works of Luther, I find numerous passages, which speak, directly and unequivocally, an opposite language: passages which Dr. Bowden

* Calderwood.

† Really, considering the severity with which Dr. Bowden censures me for not being in all cases sufficiently attentive to my references, and his formal and solemn promises to be more "scholar like" himself, this omission occurs by far too frequently!
certainly could not have been acquainted with, or he would have been ashamed to pen the above cited paragraph.

It were easy to fill several letters with quotations, strongly in point, from this illustrious man. The following, however, will suffice.

In his treatise, De Abroganda Missa Privata, contained in the second volume of his works*, remarking on Titus 1. 5, he makes the following explicit declaration. "Here, if we believe that the Spirit of Christ spake and directed by Paul, we must acknowledge that it is a divine appointment, that in every city there be a plurality of Bishops, or at least one. It is manifest also, that, by the same divine authority, he makes Presbyters and Bishops to be one and the same thing; for he says that Presbyters are to be ordained in every city, if any can be found who are blameless, because a Bishop ought to be blameless."

In his treatise Adversus Falso Nominatum Ordinem Episcoporum†, Oper. Tom. Ibid. p. 342. remarking on the same passage of Scripture, he speaks as follows—"Paul writes to Titus that he

* My edition of Luther's works is in seven volumes, folio, printed at Wittenberg, 1546—1552.

† Whoever will take the trouble to look into this treatise, which is expressly written against Bishops, as a separate and pre-eminent order, will find Luther decidedly maintaining that a Scriptural Bishop was nothing more than a Pastor of a single Congregation; and strongly inveighing against the doctrine that Bishops are an order above Pastors, as a Popish error.
should ordain Elders in every city. Here, I think, no one can deny that the Apostle represents Bishop and Elder as signifying the same thing. Since he commands Titus to ordain Elders in every city; and because a Bishop ought to be blameless, he calls an Elder by the same title. It is, therefore, plain what Paul means by the term Bishop, viz. a man eminently good and upright, of proper age, who hath a virtuous wife, and children in subjection in the fear of God. He wills such an one to preside over the congregation, in the ministry of the word, and the administration of the sacraments. Is there any one who attends to these words of the Apostle, together with those which precede and follow, so hardened as to deny this sense of them, or to pervert them to another meaning?

In the same work, page 344, 345. he thus speaks "But let us hear Paul concerning this divine ordination. For Luke in the 20th chapter of the Acts of the the Apostles, writes concerning him in this manner. From Miletus, having sent messengers to Ephesus, he collected the Elders of the Church, to whom, when they had come to him, he thus said—Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, &c. But what new thing is this? Is Paul insane? Ephesus was but a single city, and yet Paul openly calls all the Presbyters or Elders, by the common style of Bishops. But perhaps Paul had never read the legends, the mi-
serably patched up fables, and the sacred decre-
tals of the Papists; for how otherwise would he
have dared to place a plurality of Bishops over
one city, and to denominate all the Presbyters of
that one city, Bishops; when they were not all
Prelates, nor supported a train of dependents,
and pack horses, but were poor and humble
men.—But, to be serious, you see plainly that the
Apostle Paul calls those alone Bishops who
preach the Gospel to the people, and administer
the Sacraments, as, in our times, parish ministers
and preachers are wont to do. These, therefore,
though they preach the Gospel in small villages
and hamlets, yet, as faithful ministers of the
word, I believe, beyond all doubt, possess, of
right, the title and name of Bishop.

A little after, commenting on Philip. i. 1. he
says—"Behold Paul, speaking of Philippi, which
was a single city, salutes all the believers, togeth-
er with the Bishops. These were, beyond all
doubt, the Presbyters, whom he had been wont
to appoint in every city. This now is the third
instance in the writings of Paul, in which we see
what God and the Holy Spirit hath appointed,
via. that those alone, truly and of-right, are to be
called Bishops who have the care of a flock in
the ministry of the word, the care of the poor,
and the administration of the Sacraments, as is
the case with parish ministers in our age."

In the same work, p. 346. commenting on
Peter 5. 1. he says—"Here you see, that
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"Peter, in the same manner as Paul had done, uses the terms Presbyter and Bishop to signify the same thing. He represents those as Bishops who teach the people, and preach the word of God; and he makes them all of equal power, and forbids them to conduct themselves as if they were lords, or to indulge a spirit of domination over their flocks. He calls himself a fellow-presbyter, plainly teaching, by this expression, that all parish ministers, and Bishops of cities, were of equal authority among themselves; that in what pertained to the office of Bishop, no one could claim any superiority over another; and that he was their fellow-presbyter, having no more power in his own city than others had in theirs, or than every one of them had in his own Congregation."

In his Commentary on 1 Peter 5. 1. Oper. Tom. v. p. 481. he thus speaks—"The word Presbyter signifies an Elder. It has the same meaning as the term Senators, that is, men who on account of their age, prudence, and experience, bear sway in society.—In the same manner Christ calls his ministers, and his senate, whose duty it is to administer spiritual government, to preach the word, and to watch over the Church, he calls them Elders. Wherefore let it not surprise you, if this name is now very differently applied; for of those who are at present called by this name, the Scriptures say nothing. Therefore banish the present order of things from your eyes, and
you will be able to conceive of the fact as it was. When Peter, or either of the other Apostles, came to any city where there were Christians, out of the number he chose one or more aged men, of blameless lives, who had wives and children, and were well acquainted with the Scriptures, to be set over the rest. These were called Presbyters, that is Elders, whom both Peter and Paul also style Bishops, that we may know that Bishops and Presbyters were the same.

Again, in his Commentary on the second verse of the same chapter, he says, "I have often said, that if we would wish to have the Christian commonwealth rightly established, it is necessary that there be, in every city, three or four Bishops, who should superintend the Church, and, if any thing should be at any time delinquent or lost, restore it."

But this is not all. Luther declared his principles on this subject by his practice, as well as by his writings. He was ordained a Presbyter in the Romish Church, in the year 1507, in the 24th year of his age*. As a Presbyter, he considered himself as authorized to ordain others to the Gospel ministry; and accordingly, soon after assuming the character of a Reformer, he actually did or-

* Vid. Gerhard, De Ministerio, p. 147, 148. The same fact is also attested by Zanchius. In iv. Precept. p. 774. Gerhard, who lived not long after Luther, expressly asserts that he was ordained a Presbyter, with the imposition of hands, in the year above mentioned.
Nay, he went a step further. Though a firm believer in the doctrine of the primitive parity of ministers, he seems to have considered it as not unlawful to have diocesan Bishops or Superintendents in the Church, when either the form of the civil government, or the habits or wishes of the people rendered it desirable; always, however, placing their appointment on the ground of human expediency alone. Accordingly, in the year 1542, when an Episcopal seat within the electorate of Saxony became vacant, Luther, at the request of the Elector, though himself nothing more than a Presbyter, consecrated Amsdorff Bishop of that diocese. But if Luther had believed in "the Apostolic institution of diocesan Episcopacy," as Dr. Bowden tells us he did, could he have acted thus? It is not possible. It would have been a grossness of inconsistency and dishonesty with which that holy Reformer was never charged.

Nor did Luther abandon either his principles or his practice, on this subject, to his last hour. This appears from the following testimony of his biographer, concerning what occurred a few days before his death. "From the 29th day of January till the 17th day of February, he was continually occupied about the matters of concord and agreement of the aforesaid noble princes, bringing it unto a most godly conclusion. And besides his great

* Melchior Adam, 129.
† Ibid. 150.
"labour in so necessary a cause, he preached in the mean time, four worthy sermons, and two times communicated with the Christian Church there, in the holy Supper of the Lord; and in the latter communion, which was on Sunday, he ordained two ministers of the word of God, after the Apostles' manner." This great Reformer, then, in the solemn anticipation of death, and when he expected, in a few days, to appear before his eternal Judge, still claimed and exercised the right of ordaining ministers, as he had done for near thirty years; and what is more, his biographers, who were eminent divines of the Lutheran denomination, and Luther's most intimate friends, declare, that, in their judgment, as well as that of their illustrious chief, ordination by a Presbyter was in conformity with "the Apostles' manner."

Nor did Luther stand alone, among the Churches of his denomination, in maintaining the primitive parity of Gospel ministers. This is evident from the Confessions, and other ecclesiastical documents, which were early set forth, and which have been ever since received by those Churches.

Among the standards of the Lutheran Churches, the Augustan Confession holds the first rank. It was drawn up by Melanchthon, approved by Luther,
and formally presented to the Emperor Charles V, by those Reformers, and their adherents, in the year 1530, as a summary of the doctrines received by them. In this celebrated Confession there is a reference to a charge brought against the Lutherans by the Papists, that they had abolished the order of Bishops, as a superior grade of Clergy. The fact is not denied, but defended; and that on the ground that it was necessary to obey God rather than man; and to be guided by Scripture rather than human traditions. It is observable, also, that in this Confession, the preaching of the Gospel, and the administration of the Sacraments, are represented as the highest functions of the ministry, and the right to perform these as including all other ministerial power.

The work next in authority, as a compend of Lutheran doctrine, is the famous Defence of the Augustan Confession, composed by Melancthon, in the year 1530; presented to the Emperor at Augsburg, the same year; acknowledged as the Creed of the Protestants there assembled; published in 1531, and solemnly adopted as one of the standards of the Lutheran Church, by her principal civil and ecclesiastical guides of that day. — In the 7th chapter of this Defence, the following passage is found. Speaking of Episcopacy, they say, "Concerning this point, we have often declared, in the present convention, that we earnestly desire to retain the ecclesiastical Power throughout"
siastical polity, and those grades which are established in the Church, although brought in by human authority. For we know that this form of ecclesiastical discipline, as it is described in the ancient Canons, was introduced by the Fathers of the Church with good and useful counsel.

—Here is one of the strongest testimonies imaginable in favour of the doctrine of primitive parity. In a Confession of Faith, drawn up and subscribed by some of the most eminently pious and learned Divines that ever lived, while they express a strong predilection in favour of that Episcopal regimen which they found in the Church, and which had been long established; they still declare, that they consider it as "brought in by human authority"—and as resting on no other ground than "the good and useful counsel of their fathers."

The work next in authority in the Lutheran Churches, is the famous collection of Articles drawn up and adopted at Smalkald, in 1537. They were composed by Luther, subscribed by him, and also by Melancthon, Jonas, Bugenhagius, Myconius, and many other illustrious Lutheran Divines; and solemnly acknowledged, at a general meeting of Protestants, in the city whose name they bear, as containing a summary of their theological and ecclesiastical principles. In those articles, the following declarations are found. "It is clear, even from the confession of our adversaries, that this power, (to wit of preaching, dispensing the Sacraments, excommunication, and absolution,) is
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common to all that are set over the Churches, whether they be called Pastors, Presbyters, or Bishops. Wherefore Jerome plainly affirms, that there is no difference between a Bishop and a Presbyter; but that every Pastor is a Bishop.

Here Jerome teaches that the distinction of degrees between a Bishop, and a Presbyter or Pastor, was only appointed by human authority; and the thing itself imports no less; for on both Bishop and Presbyter is laid the same duty, and the same charge. Only Ordination in after times made the difference between Bishop and Pastor. By divine right there is no difference between them.*

The last public document of the Lutheran Church, which I shall quote, as supporting our doctrine, is a Syllabus of Controverted Points, digested out of the received Creeds and Confessions of that Church, and published with those Creeds and Confessions by authority. In chapter 18. §4. of this work, we find the following explicit declaration. "Ordination to the work of the ministry is necessary in a Church at liberty; but this act does not belong to Bishops alone, nor can it with propriety be called a sacrament. We hold this in opposition to the Papists, and also to certain English Episcopalians, as Carleton, Hall, and Bilson, who dis-

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"tistinguish between Presbyters and Bishops as to "the point of ordination*.""

But we may go much further. Almost all the public Confessions which were drawn up and adopted at the era of the Reformation, contain the same doctrine, and speak the same language. Mr. How indeed declares, that "the universal language at the time of the Reformation," was in favour of the Apostolical institution of Prelacy, and offering no other plea but that of necessity for establishing a different system of ecclesiastical order. Dr. Bowden makes, in substance, the same assertion. What these gentlemen will think of themselves, and of their representation, after perusing the following extracts, is not for me to decide.

In the Confession of Saxony, drawn up in 1551, by Melancthon, and subscribed by all the Saxon Churches, the following passages are found. Art. 11. "We do also retain in our Churches the public rite of ordination, whereby the ministry of the Gospel is commended to those that are truly chosen, whose manners and doctrine we do first thoroughly examine. These things pertain to the ministry,—to teach the Gospel; to administer the Sacraments; to give absolution to them that ask it, and do not persevere in manifest offences; to ordain ministers of the Gospel, being rightly

* Appendix ad Libros Ecclesiae Lutheranæ Symbolicos, &c. p. 195.
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"called and examined; to exercise the judgment of the Church after a lawful manner, upon those who are guilty of manifest crimes in manners or in doctrine; and to pronounce the sentence of excommunication against them that are stubborn, and again to absolve and pardon them that do repent. That these things may be done orderly, there be also Consistories appointed in our Churches.*"

The Confession of Wirtemberg, drawn up in 1552, by order of the Duke of Wirtemberg, and presented by his ambassadors to the Council of Trent, as a specimen of Protestant doctrine, contains the following declarations. Art. 20. "Christ, in his Church, hath instituted Ministers who should preach his Gospel, and administer the Sacraments. Neither is it to be permitted to every one to usurp a public ministry in the Church, without a lawful calling. Paul writeth that a Bishop ought to be apt to teach; and Jerome teacheth that a Priest and a Bishop are all one. Therefore it is evident, that except a Priest be ordained in the Church to the ministry of teaching, he cannot rightly take unto him neither the name of a Priest, nor the name of a Bishop."

The French Confession, formed in 1559, and subscribed by all the Pastors of the Protestant

* Harmony of Confessions. Sect. 10.
† Ibid. Sect. 11.
Churches in that kingdom, contains the following explicit declarations. *Art. 29.* "We believe that this true Church ought to be governed by that regiment or discipline, which our Lord Jesus Christ hath established, to wit, so that there be in it *Pastors, Elders, and Deacons,* that the purity of doctrine may be retained, vices suppressed, the poor, and others that be in misery, according to their necessity, may be provided for; and that there may be holy meetings, for the edifying both of small and great." *Art. 30.* "We believe that all true Pastors, in what place soever they be placed, have the same and equal authority given unto them, under Jesus Christ, the only Head, and the chief and alone universal Bishop; and that, therefore, it is not lawful for any Church to challenge unto itself dominion or sovereignty over any other Church*.

The *Belgic Confession*, formed in 1566, contains the following explicit and decisive articles. *Art. 30.* "We believe, that this Church ought to be ruled and governed by that spiritual regiment, which God himself hath delivered in his word, so that there be placed in it *Pastors and Ministers,* purely to preach, and rightly to administer the holy Sacraments—That there be also in it *Seniors (or Elders)* and *Deacons,* of whom the Senate of the Church might consist, that, by these means, true Religion might be preserved,

* Harm. of Confessions, Sect. 11.*
and sincere doctrine in every place retained and spread abroad, that vicious and wicked men might, after a spiritual manner, be rebuked, amended, and as it were by the bridle of discipline kept within their compass; that the poor in like manner, and those that be afflicted, may be relieved, either with aid or comfort, according to the several necessities of every one. For then shall all things in the Church be done in due and convenient order, when faithful and godly men are chosen to have the government of the same, even as St. Paul hath prescribed in 1 Timothy 3. and in Titus 1.” Art. 31. “We believe that the Ministers, Elders, and Deacons, ought to be called to those their functions, and by the lawful election of the Church to be advanced into those rooms, earnest prayer being made unto God, and after the order and manner which is set down unto us in the word of God. This especially every one ought to take diligent heed of, that he do not by unlawful means thrust himself into those offices. For every one must wait until he be called of God himself, that he may have a certain testimony of his vocation, and may know that it is from the Lord. Yet in what place of the world soever the ministers of the word of God do keep, they have all of them the same and equal power and authority; being all of them equally the ministers of Christ, the only universal Bishop and Head of the Church*."

* Harmony of Confessions, Sect. 11.

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The second Helvetic Confession was drawn up by the Pastors of Zurich, in the year 1566, and subscribed not only by themselves, but also by the Churches of Geneva, Hungary, and Scotland. In the eighteenth chapter of that Confession, which is entitled, Of the Ministers of the Church, their Institution and Offices, are found the following declarations—"The Apostles of Christ do term all those which believe in Christ, Priests, but not in regard of their ministry, but because all the faithful, being made Kings and Priests by Christ, may offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God. The Ministry, then, and Priesthood are things far different one from the other. For priesthood, as we said even now, is common to all Christians, so is not the ministry. And we have not taken away the ministry from the Church, because we have thrust the Popish priesthood out of the Church of Christ. For surely in the New Covenant of Christ, there is no longer any such Priesthood as was in the ancient Church of the Jews, which had an external anointing, holy garments, and very many ceremonies, which were figures and types of Christ, who by his coming, fulfilled and abolished them. And he himself remaineth the only Priest forever; and we do not communicate the name of Priest to any of the ministers, lest we should detract any thing from Christ. Now the power that is given to the ministers of the Church is the same and alike in all: and, in the beginning, the Bishops or Elders,
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...did, with a common consent and labour, govern the Church. No man lifted up himself above another; none usurped greater authority or power over his fellow Bishops; for they remembered the words of the Lord, *He which will be the chiefest among you, let him be your servant.* They kept in themselves by humility, and did mutually aid one another in the government and preservation of the Church. Notwithstanding for orders' sake, some one of the ministers called the Assembly together, propounded unto the Assembly the matters to be consulted of, gathered together the voices or sentences of the rest, and, to be brief, as much as lay in him, provided that there might arise no confusion. So did Saint Peter, as we read in the *Acts*; who yet, for all that, was neither above the rest, nor had greater authority than the rest. Very true, therefore, is that saying of Cyprian, the Martyr, in his book *De Simpl. Cler.*—The same doubtless were the rest of the Apostles that Peter was, having an equal fellowship with him both in honour and power; but the beginning thereof proceedeth from unity, to signify unto us that there is but one Church.—Saint Jerome, upon the Epistle of Paul to Titus, hath a saying not much unlike this—Before that by the instinct of the Devil there was partaking in religion, the Churches were governed by the common advice of the Presbyters; but after that every one thought, that those whom he baptized were his own and not Christ's, it was decreed...
that one of the Presbyters should be chosen and set over the rest, who should have the care of the whole Church laid upon him, and by whose means all schism should be removed. Yet Jerome doth not avouch this as an order set down of God: for straightway after, he addeth—Even as, saith he, the Presbyters knew by the continual custom of the Church, that they were subject to him that is set over them—So the Bishops must know that they are above the Presbyters, rather by custom, than by the prescript rule of God's truth; and they should have the government of the Church in common with them. Thus far Jerome. Now therefore no man can forbid by any right, that we may return to the old appointment of God, and rather receive that, than the custom devised by men.—Furthermore, no man ought to usurp the honour of the ecclesiastical ministry, that is to say, greedily to pluck it to him by bribes, or any evil shifts, or of his own accord. But let the ministers of the Church be called and chosen by a lawful and ecclesiastical election and vocation. —And those which are chosen, let them be ordained of the Elders, with public prayer, and laying on of hands. We do condemn all those which run of their own accord, being neither chosen, sent, nor ordained.

The Confession of Bohemia, drawn up about 1573, in chapter 9th, contains the following passage—

* Harmony of Confessions, Sect. 11.
"Ministers ought not of their own accord to press forward in that calling; but ought, according to the example of the Lord and the Apostles, to be lawfully appointed and ordained thereunto. And again, these ought to be proved and tried by examination, and so afterwards, prayers and fastings being made, they may be confirmed or approved of the Elders, by laying on of hands."—Chapter 14. "The power of the keys is committed to the Church of Christ, and to the ministers thereof unto the end of the world; that they should not only, by preaching, publish the holy Gospel, although they should do this especially, that is, should show forth that word of true comfort, and the joyful message of peace, and new tidings of that favour which God offereth; but also that, to the believing and unbelieving, they should publicly or privately denounce or make known, to them his favour, to these his wrath, and that to all in general, or to every one in particular, that they may wisely receive some into the house of God, to the communion of saints, and drive some out from thence, and may so, through the performance of their ministry, hold in their hand the sceptre of Christ his kingdom, and use the same to the government of Christ his sheep. And all these things are done by the faithful shepherds of souls in the Lord's stead, not doing this of themselves, but upon Christ his commandment; not by their own and proper virtue, but by Christ's, and by the efficacy of his
word and sacraments, as those that are stewards and dispensers of the mysteries of God, and ministers only. In the administration of which things they may use some seemly and indifferent ceremonies, that is, which are no way necessary, such as laying on hands, or reaching out the right hand; or else they may omit them.—This power of his sceptre and spirit hath the Lord granted and delivered to the holy Apostles, and in them to all ministers of Churches lawfully ordained, that they might exercise in his stead: and he granted it to them by these words, As the Father hath sent me, so do I send you also. By this we may understand that these keys, or this divine function of the Lord's, is committed and granted to those that have the charge of souls, and to each several ecclesiastical society*, whether small or great. Moreover, every Christian, so often as he needeth these keys of the Lord, ought to require them particularly for himself of the Pastors of souls of that Church or fellowship, of which himself is a part, and to which he belongeth; and that he use them with full confidence, no otherwise than if he had received them of Christ himself, seeing that Christ hath delivered them unto the Pastors. This is

* This is explained, by a note on the article, in the following words—"That is to Presbyteries or Consistories, which stand of Pastors and Elders; and unto whom properly the dispensing and ordering of the keys, and ecclesiastical censures do belong."
"also taught and handled, that the Priests ought "not to use these keys of the Lord, otherwise than "according to the meaning and will of Christ, ex-" pressed in his word*.

From public Confessions drawn up by the Reformers, let us descend to individual opinions expressed by those illustrious Witnesses for the truth, in different countries. Of these the following specimen will be sufficient.

Ursinus, a learned German Divine, contemporary with Luther and Melancthon, speaks the same language. "Ministers," says he, "are either immediately called of God, or mediately through the instrumentality of the Church. Of the former class, were Prophets and Apostles. Of the latter class there are five kinds, viz. Evangelists, Bishops, or Pastors, Teachers, Ruling Elders, and Deacons. Evangelists are ministers appointed to go forth and preach the Gospel to a number of Churches. Bishops are ministers ordained to preach the word of God, and administer the sacraments, in particular Churches. Teachers are ministers appointed merely to fulfil the function of teaching in particular Churches. Ruling Elders are ministers elected by the voice of the Church, to assist in conducting discipline, and to order a variety of necessary matters in the Church. Deacons are ministers elected by the

* Harmony of Confessions, Sect. 11.
Church, to take care of the poor; and to distribute alms.*

The very learned Musculus, also of Germany, a Reformer contemporary with Luther, and who embraced his principles, having proved from Acts 20. Phillip. i. 1. Titus i. 5. and 1 Peter v. 1. that, in the Apostles' times a Bishop and Presbyter were all one, adds as follows: "But after the Apostles' times, when, amongst the Elders of the Church, (as Jerome saith,) schisms arose, and, as I verily think, they began to strive for the pre-eminence by little and little, they began to choose one out of the number of the Elders, who was placed above the rest, in a higher degree, and called Bishop. But whether that device of man profited the Church or no, those who lived in succeeding times could better judge, than when it first began. If Jerome had seen as much as those who came after him, he would, no doubt, have concluded that this was never brought in to take away schism, but was a project of the Devil to waste and destroy the primitive ministry, appointed for feeding the Lord's flock." Again, he declares, "Whence it evidently appears that, in the times of the Apostles, Elders, Pastors, and Bishops were one and the same in God's Church." —It is beyond all dispute, that the first and Apostolic Church, was, by the Apostles so constituted, that the Elders of the Church did ex-

* Ursin. Corpus Doctrinae, Par. iii. p. 721.
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"ercline a common Episcopal care over the Lord's flock, and enjoyed the same function of teaching and governing, and were therein subject to no head or president."

Zsegedin, an eminent Lutheran divine of Hungary, contemporary with Luther and Calvin, delivers, in substance, the same doctrine. The following quotations are decisive. "May one Pastor preside over other pastors? The practice, indeed, hath obtained that Presbyters should preside, each one in his own College, and that this person alone should be called Bishop. This, however, arose from human custom, and is by no means supported by the authority of Scripture. And from perverting the signification of a word this evil hath arisen, that, as if all Presbyters were not Colleagues, and called to the same function, one, under the pretext of a new title, arrogated to himself a dominion over others." Again, hence learn that all Pastors are equal both in their vocation and function; and that there is no prelatical tyranny constituted. It is necessary, indeed, that, among brethren, there should be some one to convene the college, to state the business, and, when it is necessary, to write and speak in the name of the college. But this person, to avoid the odium of prelatical tyranny, may be called Superintendent. The power of Super-

"Intendents ought to be temporary and definite, not perpetual." Again, "Is the title of Bishop common to all ministers of the word? Yes, certainly. For Paul, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, represents many Bishops as belonging to one Church. The titles Bishop, Pastor, Presbyter, are, therefore, synonymous. Bishop is a term expressive of duty and care, not of dignity."—Again, "The Popish Bishops are false Bishops; not successors of the Apostles, but of Balaam, cruel, heretical, enemies of Christ, who esteem the Episcopate on account of its introducing them to great riches. While Paul comprehends under the name of Bishop, all Pastors, the Papists will have it that none is to be held as a Bishop but the one who is chosen by the college to preside over his brethren."

The learned Junius, an eminent Dutch professor of divinity, who lived at the commencement of the Reformation in Holland, and who was, of course, nearly contemporary with Luther, wrote very fully and explicitly in support of Presbyterian principles. In his work entitled Ecclesiastici, he decidedly, and with great learning, maintains, that

* Loci Communes, p. 197.
† Ibid. 202.
‡ Of this illustrious Reformer, it is related, that he preached in the city of Antwerp at midnight, with no other light than that which was produced by the flames of burning martyrs.
Pastors, Ruling Elders, and Deacons, are the only three scriptural orders of Church officers; that Pastors, or ministers of the word and sacraments, are the highest order, and, of course, are invested with the power of ordaining; that the second class are men of distinguished piety and prudence, chosen from among the members of the Church, to assist the Pastor in the government of the Church; and that the Deacons are appointed to collect and distribute the alms of the Church. He affirms that these three orders are set forth in Scripture, and existed in the primitive Church. He declares that a scriptural Bishop was the Pastor of a single Congregation; and that giving this title, by way of eminence, to one of the Pastors in a city or district, was a practice introduced after the time of the Apostles, and is to be be considered as a departure from the primitive model.

The same writer, in his Animadversions on Cardinal Bellarmine, is still more pointed and positive against the claims of diocesan Episcopacy, and in favour of the Presbyterian doctrine of parity.—It is really amusing to trace the Popish Cardinal through all his reasonings and cavils, and to observe what a remarkable coincidence there is between him and Dr. Bowden; and it is no less worthy of notice that Junius, though he wrote nearly two hundred and fifty years ago, and, of course, many

years before the Synod of Dort, argues as uniformly and strongly in favour of Presbyterian principles, as any champion of Presbytery that ever appeared. I cannot forbear particularly to observe, that Bellarmine turns in every direction, and strains every nerve, to set aside the testimony of Jerome; and for this purpose, in almost every instance, employs exactly the same arguments and the same subterfuges with Dr. Bowden: While Junius pronounces and proves his arguments to be futile, and his subterfuges unavailing, and the testimony of that celebrated Father to be precisely what the friends of parity have ever considered it*

The learned Sadeel, a French Protestant Divine, contemporary with Calvin and Beza, has frequently been represented by Episcopal writers, as friendly to their claims, and even as acknowledging the apostolical institution of Episcopacy. What the opinions of this Reformer really were, will appear from the following quotations. In answer to a learned Popish Doctor, who, like some of our zealous Episcopalianists, warmly contended that the power of ordination was confined to diocesan Bishops, he declares, "This Sorbonne Doctor objects, that our ministers are only Presbyters, and not Bishops; and therefore could not ordain other ministers, since only Bishops have a right to ordain. That this opinion is false, I shall imme-

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It is evident, from the word of God, that Bishop and Presbyter are the same. This appears from Titus i. 5, from Acts xx, and from Philip i. 1. But the Doctor will reply, that the names are indeed used interchangeably in the passages above stated; but that the offices themselves are carefully distinguished in Scripture. But, I answer, when the Presbyters are called Bishops, the Apostle is, in such places, treating not of the names and titles only, but of the office and function itself. For when he exhorts the Presbyters of Ephesus to the right exercise of their office, he adds this reason, that the Holy Ghost had constituted them Bishops; and, therefore, he says, not that they were only called so; but that they were, in very deed, constituted such Bishops. So that the answer touching the confusion of names is quite overthrown.

—But the Sorbonne Doctor tells us that Paul enjoins Timothy to lay hands suddenly on no man, and, therefore, none but Timothy had the right of ordination. But this conclusion is utterly without foundation; for Timothy is also enjoined to reject fables, and to give attendance to reading, exhortation, and doctrine, &c. Did Timothy, therefore, arrogate all these things to himself alone? Did they not belong to Presbyters, who, by Paul's testimony, laboured in the word and doctrine? Timothy's episcopacy at Ephesus cannot be made good by any testimony of Scripture.” Again—"If we allow to Presbyters the
right to preach the Gospel, to administer Baptism, and to celebrate the Lord's Supper, upon what imaginable ground can we deny them the right to ordain? Therefore such as exclude Presbyters from the right to ordain, show themselves to be grossly ignorant both of the nature of ordination, and of the Pastoral office." And in support of all this reasoning, and much more, which I am compelled to omit, he quotes the famous testimony of Jerome, and pronounces it to be conclusive. He quotes also Irenæus, Ambrose, and Augustine, as giving testimony which coincides with that of Jerome; and adds, "I cite these, because the Papists esteem the authority of the Fathers, more than that of plain declarations of Scripture*."

But, in addition to all this, there is testimony of a different kind. It not only appears, from the public Confessions, and individual declarations, which have been quoted, that the Apostolical institution of ministerial parity was believed by the Lutheran, as well as the Reformed Churches; but it is evident that they were considered by others as having avowed their belief in that doctrine.

The famous Cardinal Bellarmine certainly understood the Protestants of his day generally to hold the equality of Bishops and Presbyters by divine

right. "If," saith he, "Episcopacy be a sacra-
ment distinct from the Presbyterate, it will be
easy to prove that a Bishop is, both in order and
jurisdiction, greater than a Presbyter, by divine
right; which now, ALL THE HERETICS (the Pro-
testants) DENY." De Sacramento Ordinis, Cap. 5.
And in his work, De Clericis, he makes a similar
declaration in terms equally express. For having
asserted that a Bishop is superior to a Presbyter,
by divine right, both with respect to order and ju-
risdiction, he ascribes the contrary doctrine to
Aerius, to Wickliffe, to the Lutherans, and the Cal-

Crakenthorp, a learned divine of the church of
England, contemporary with Bellarmine, speaking
of Luther, and the other Reformers on the continent
of Europe, expresses himself in the following terms.
"They have not, I know, Bishops, distinct from
Presbyters, and superior to them; but at the same
time, they do not teach, as Aerius did, that minis-
terial impparity is contrary to the word of God.
They do not condemn it. They hold that, by
the word of God, and divine right, either parity,
or impparity is lawful; and that every Church

Bellarmine was contemporary with Archbishop Whi-
gift. It seems that, at that time, the Cardinal knew of no
Protestants who held to the divine right of Prelacy. It is evi-
dent, therefore, that this doctrine was then either wholly un-
known in England, or maintained by so few, that they were
not considered as worthy of being recognized as an excep-
tion.
"has authority or power to admit either the one or the other as it thinks best*."

On these documents I shall not trouble you with many remarks. They speak a language so uniform, decided, and conclusive, that it can neither be mistaken nor resisted. And they establish, beyond the possibility of dispute, that all the leading Reformers were firm believers in the primitive parity of ministers. That this was the opinion of Luther, Melancthon †, and all the principal divines of their communion, has been abundantly proved. That Calvin was uniformly of the same opinion, will be demonstrated in the next Letter. That the Saxon, Helvetic, French, Belgic, and Bohemian Confessions, all declare in favour of this


† It has been said that Melancthon, on a certain occasion, expressed a willingness to submit to the power of Prelates, provided they would become patrons of the Reformation. This is true. It is also true, that the same pious and amiable, but too accommodating, Melancthon, when he subscribed the famous Smalkald Articles, annexed to his subscription a declaration, (which is still to be seen,) that he was willing to allow the Pope a superiority over all other Bishops, for the sake of the peace of the church; provided he would aid in reforming the church. And it is as true as either, that by these concessions, Melancthon gave great offence to the Protestants of his own communion, and complains in one of his letters, of the resentment which they manifested against him on this account. See Melancthon's Epistles, near the beginning of the volume. Having mislaid the notes which I made, at the time of perusing the passage, I am not able, at present, to make a more particular reference.


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doctrine, as received and practised in the Apostolic age, you have seen with your own eyes. And, finally, that Cranmer and his associates, who commenced the Reformation in England, did also, at least at one period, concur in the same acknowledgment, has been placed beyond all reasonable doubt.

After viewing this body of testimony, what must we think of Mr. How's repeated declarations, that "the Reformers, universally admitted the Apostolic claims of the Episcopal constitution," that "Luther and Melancthon acknowledged the obligation of Episcopacy; excusing their departure from it on the ground of necessity," that "Episcopacy was never ranked, by the Reformers, among the corruptions, or innovations of the Papacy;" that "they all recognized it as an institution primitive and apostolic; acknowledging without reserve, their obligation to conform to it?" And what must we think of Dr. Bowden, (from whom better information and more caution might have been expected,) when he fully concurs with Dr. Hobart and Mr. How, in this language of bold and unqualified assertion? How Gentlemen who have any accurate knowledge of the rise and progress of the Reformation; or who have attended to the history and the contents of public Confessions, could write thus, is, indeed, unaccountable! I am lost in astonishment when I think of the fact!

It only remains that we notice, for a moment,
the assertion of Dr. Bowden and Mr. How, that in the Lutheran churches of Sweden and Denmark, Prelacy, both in fact and name, is received. If these Gentlemen mean, that there are ministers in Sweden and Denmark, who bear the titles of Bishop and Archbishop, their assertion is undoubtedly correct; and this is no more than I explicitly stated in my former Letters. But if they mean, that the Swedish and Danish churches believe in the divine right of Prelacy; that they consider Episcopal ordination as necessary to constitute the Christian ministry; or that they do, in fact, always insist upon such ordination—they are unquestionably in a gross error; and have given their readers a most delusive view of the subject.

With respect to Sweden, it is well known, that those who planted the Reformation, and ordained the first Protestant ministers in that country, were mere Presbyters. And although, from the influence of habit, they chose to retain the names and some of the functions of Bishops and Archbishops; yet it is equally certain, that the first persons who bore these titles, were set apart to their office by Presbyters; and, of course, received themselves, and were enabled to communicate to others, no other than Presbyterian ordination. As to the point of light in which this subject is regarded by the church of Sweden, I am happy in being able to produce the testimony of the Rev. Dr. Collin, Pastor of the Swedish church in Philadelphia; a Gentleman whose acquaintance with the ecclesiastical sys-
tem of his native country cannot be doubted; and whose character is a sufficient guarantee for the accuracy of his statements. He assures me, in a letter, written at my request, that all the Swedish Divines, and particularly those who themselves enjoy the Episcopal dignity, consider Episcopacy merely as a human regulation; that this is the doctrine of all their standard books; that accordingly, in the absence of those who are styled Bishops, ordinations are performed by ordinary clergymen; and that even Bishops and Archbishops, may be set apart to their office by Presbyterers. In support of these facts, Dr. Collin produces the most decisive testimony from Swedish writers of the highest authority; and declares, that there is but one opinion among them on the subject. He adds, "The Danes agree with us in this matter. Vandalin, Primarius Professor of Theology in Copenhagen, in a much esteemed work published in the year 1727, has the following passage, p. 354. An jure divino Episcopi a Presbyteris distincti sunt? Negatur; contra Pontificios et quosdam Anglos." i.e. "Are Bishops and Presbyterers distinct orders by divine right? We deny it; in opposition to the Papists, and to certain persons of the church of England." He then goes on to establish his opinion by reference to a number of passages of Scripture, which are precisely those which Presbyterians usually quote.

The result of all the testimony exhibited in the present Letter, is this. That the Waldenses,
the Bohemian Brethren, and all the great individual witnesses for the truth, prior to the time of Luther, were almost without exception, decidedly anti-prelatical in their sentiments. That at the period of the Reformation, the Presbyterian form of church government was established in all the Reformed churches in Germany, Scotland, France, Geneva, and Holland; and its establishment in all these countries, accompanied with public and solemn declarations that they considered this as having been the Apostolic and primitive form. And, that, although in the Lutheran churches of Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and other parts of Europe, some ministers were invested with pre-eminent powers, under different titles; yet that they all, with one voice, declared, that in the Apostolic church, ministerial parity prevailed; and acknowledged, that the order of Bishops was brought in by human authority, and was a regulation of expediency alone. Such was the doctrine maintained by those churches, at that interesting period; and the same doctrine has been maintained by them uniformly to the present hour. It follows, then, agreeably to my declaration in a former Letter, that the church of England stands absolutely alone, in the whole Protestant world, in asserting the divine institution of Prelacy, (if indeed, she, as a church, does assert it, which many of her own most respectable sons have denied); that every other Protestant church on earth has formally disclaimed this doctrine, and pronounced the distinction between Bishops and
Presbyteros to be a mere human invention; and, consequently, that the doctrine of the jure divino prelatists, is so far from being the general doctrine of the Reformed churches, that it never has been, and is not now, received, by more than a very small portion—a mere handful of the Protestant world.

I repeat once more—the Bible is the Statute-book of the church of Christ; and by this book alone, must the question before us be finally decided. But, so far as human opinion, fortified by all the considerations of talents, learning and piety, is of any value, the doctrine of Presbyterian parity stands on the most elevated and triumphant ground.
LETTER VII.

The Testimony of Calvin.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

It has fallen to the lot of few individuals to be more mistaken and misrepresented than the venerable Calvin. His great talents, his profound learning, his fervent piety, his stupendous labours, his astonishing self-denial, and his sublime disinterestedness, have all been insufficient to protect him from the grossest abuse. His personal character, his theological opinions, and the form of ecclesiastical government which he preferred, have each, in turn, been the objects of accusation and slander. Had these unfair statements been either always the same, or consistent with themselves, it would not have been wonderful to find them making some impression on persons who had no access to sources of correct information. But when scarcely any two of these statements can be reconciled with each other; and when the most of them are expressly contradicted by authentic documents, it is truly, a matter of wonder that they should be favourably received by any who have the least claim to the character of learning or impar-
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This wonder, however, exists. We can hardly open a controversial work from the pen of any of our Episcopal brethren, without finding more or less obloquy directed against the illustrious Reformer of Geneva.

Dr. Bowden and Mr. How have indulged themselves in this obloquy in a manner, and to an extent, which appears to me to demand animadversion. And as they lay so much stress on the supposed concessions of Calvin in favour of Episcopacy; and, at the same time, appear to enter with such hearty good will into every attempt, by whomsoever made, to load his character with reproach, I have resolved to devote the whole of the present letter to a view of the writings, the opinions, and the general character of that celebrated man.

Had these gentlemen, been contented with exhibiting Calvin, as a man of a "fierce," "turbulent," and "intolerant spirit;" had they spoken only of his "characteristic violence," of his "playing, the tyrant," and of his malignant disposition to crush all who opposed him;—to such charges I should have thought it unnecessary to reply. To refute them, completely and triumphantly, as applicable in any peculiar or pre-eminent degree to that apostolic man, nothing more is requisite than a tolerable acquaintance with the history of his life and time. When so many of the greatest and best Prelates that ever adorned the Church of England; men really learned, and breathing in an extraordinary degree the spirit of
the Gospel, have delighted to dwell on the praises of Calvin; when they have almost exhausted every epithet of respect in eulogizing his talents, his learning, his piety, his judgment, and the usefulness of his labours;—his memory surely needs no defence against the attacks of Dr. Bowden and Mr. How. But when these gentlemen bring forward allegations and extracts, which are calculated to mislead even their intelligent readers, and to set the declarations and the practice of the pious Reformer at variance; I deem it my duty to make a few remarks, and to state a few facts, in vindication of what I consider as the cause of primitive truth and order.

Dr. Bowden and Mr. How represent Presbyterianism as having originated with Calvin. Now it happens that Presbyterianism, (to say nothing of its apostolic origin,) was introduced into Geneva, before Calvin ever saw that city, when he was about nineteen years of age, and while he was yet in the communion of the Church of Rome. The following quotation from Dr. Heylin, a high-toned Episcopalian, and a favourite authority of Dr. Bowden, will be considered by him as decisive. "In this condition it (Geneva) continued, till the year 1528, when those of Berne, after a public disputation held, had made an alteration in religion, defacing images, and innovating all things in the Church on the Zuinglian principles. Viretus and Farellus, two men exceeding studious of the Reformation, had gained some footing in Geneva, about that time, and laboured with the Bishop to
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"admit of such alterations, as had been newly made in Berne. But when they saw no hopes of prevailing with him, they practised on the lower part of the people, with whom they had gotten most esteem, and travelled so effectually with them in it, that the Bishop and his clergy, in a popular tumult, are expelled the town, never to be restored to their former power. After which they proceeded to reform the Church, defacing images, and following in all points the example of Berne, as by Viretus and Farellus they had been instructed; whose doings in the same, were afterwards countenanced and approved by Calvin, as himself confesseth*.

The declaration of Calvin to which Heylin refers, is probably that which he makes in his famous Letter to Cardinal Sadolet. In the beginning of that Letter, he expressly informs the Cardinal, that "the religious system of Geneva had been instituted, and its ecclesiastical government reformed, before he was called thither. But that what had been done by Farel and Viret, he heartily approved, and strove, by all the means in his power, to preserve and establish."

Beza also informs us, and, after him, Melchior Adam, and others, that in the year 1536, when Calvin stopped at Geneva, on his way to Basil, without having the remotest thought of settling at the former place, Farel and Viret, then Pastors of Geneva,

* Heylin's Hist. of Presbyter, p. 4—9.
earnestly importuned him to remain in that city, and to become their associate in the ministry; that he still, however, declined; that it was not until Farel ventured, in the name of the Omnipotent God, to denounce a curse against him, if he should persist in refusing, that he consented to remain at Geneva; and that he at length submitted himself to the will of the Presbytery, and of the magistrates, by whose suffrages, the consent of the people being obtained, he was elected and set apart as a Pastor; and also as a public Teacher of divinity, in the month of August, 1536*. From this statement one fact is indubitable, viz. that there was a Presbytery in Geneva before Calvin went thither. Another fact is equally clear, viz. that the settlement of a minister was considered as a proper act of the Presbytery. Nor will it in the least degree serve the cause of my opponents to contend that the ecclesiastical system of Geneva was, afterwards, new-modelled and improved by Calvin. Be it so. Still it is certain that the leading principles of Presbyterian polity, viz. the doctrine of ministerial parity, the government of the Church by Presbyteries, and the appointment of Ruling Elders, or a number of pious and judicious laymen, formed into Church Sessions, or Consistories, to assist in administering discipline, were received and in use, before the public ministry of Calvin commenced, or any of his writings had appeared.

* See Beza's Life of Calvin; and Melchior Adam's do. p. 68.
Dr. Henry More, in his Divine Dialogues, p. 82, speaking of the Reformation of Geneva, says,—

"As for Calvin, the charge of rebellion upon him is, that he expelled the Bishop of Geneva, who was the chief magistrate of that city, and changed the government, and so carried on the Reformation. But this is a mere calumny against Calvin, and without all ground; for not so much as that is true, that Calvin was one of the first planters of the Reformation at Geneva; and much less that he, or any other Reformers expelled the Bishop out of that city. It was Farel, Viret, and Froment, that, by their preaching, converted Geneva, in the Bishop's absence, who fled away eight months before, being hated by the citizens for the rape of a virgin, and many adulteries with their wives."

That Dr. Bowden and Mr. How should be unacquainted with all this, is truly surprising! I know, indeed, that it is expecting too much to suppose that these gentlemen will take the trouble to investigate more than one side of this controversy. But when their own favourite writers might have informed them of all the facts above stated, it is rather singular that they should have yet to learn them.

Another allegation of these Gentlemen is, that Calvin, in the early part of his public life, thought very favourably of diocesan Episcopacy, and even believed and acknowledged its Apostolic origin. That afterwards, when he had undertaken to erect
a church on a different model, and especially when he had the prospect of attaining great distinction in the Presbyterian establishment of Geneva, he began to alter his views and his language; but that, even after he had fairly embarked in support of Presbyterian principles, he rather defended himself by the plea of necessity than divine authority. Nay, Mr. How declares, that Calvin, in rearing the church of Geneva, acknowledged that he was departing from the primitive discipline; that he considered prelacy as an apostolic institution; and that he expressed a decided preference in favour of this form of government: But adds, "I deny not that Calvin and Beza held, afterwards, a language more Presbyterian. At length, indeed, schism, and the pride of sect, either changed their sentiments, or perverted their principles. In fact, the conduct of these men, in relation to the ministry of the Christian church, presents one of the most melancholy examples of the prevalence of pride over virtue, and of the unhappy influence of schism, in blinding and infatuating the mind, that the history of human frailty has ever recorded." Letters, p. 62—75. Dr. Bowden, is equally positive in asserting, that Calvin believed and acknowledged the Apostolic origin of Episcopacy; and that he justified himself in departing from it only on the ground of necessity. In fact, by subscribing and referring to Dr. Hobart's statement of the case, in his Apology for Apostolic Order, p. 91
When I read assertions of this kind, I cannot help recollecting, in a well-known and popular fictitious history, a certain chapter which bears the following title—"An humble attempt to prove that an author will write the better for having some knowledge of the subject on which he writes." If I had the least apprehension that these gentlemen had ever perused the works of Calvin, or really knew what he has left on record upon this subject, such a representation, so frequently and confidently made, would excite feelings more unfavourable than those of astonishment. But as I have no such apprehension, and feel perfectly persuaded that the perusal of a few detached passages, forms the sum total of their acquaintance with Calvin's writings, I cannot find in my heart to apply a severe epithet to a misrepresentation so total concerning the history of his language and opinions.

The truth is, that the earliest of Calvin's writings contain some of the strongest declarations in favour of Presbyterian principles that are to be found in all his works. His Institutions, his first theological work, were published in 1536, before he had ever seen Geneva; before he ever thought of settling there; and when he was so far from aspiring to pre-eminence in any Presbyterian establishment, that he does not appear to have had in view the pastoral office in any Church. Now it is certain that this work is as decisive on the subject
of Presbytery as any that ever came from his pen. At that period, when his mind appears to have been as dispassionate and impartial as ever that of a Reformer was; when he had no visible temptation to deviate from the Apostolic model; and when both habit and prejudice were leagued against Presbytery, and in favour of Episcopacy; at that period, and in that work, he decidedly declared himself an advocate of Presbyterian government, as the truly Apostolic and primitive plan. But the following quotations from it will place this fact in a stronger light, than any reasonings or statements of mine.

Book iv. Chap. iii. In this chapter he expressly declares it to be his intention to exhibit "that order by which it was the Lord's will to have his Church governed."—In doing this, he unequivocally delivers it as his opinion, that the Apostolic model of Church-government was Presbyterian;—that both the office and ordination of Bishop and Presbyter were the same; that the scriptural Bishop was the Pastor of a single Church; that there were sometimes more Bishops than one in the primitive Churches, and all on a perfect equality; and that there were Ruling Elders and Deacons in those Churches, exactly on the Presbyterian plan.

The following extracts, out of many that might be made, are decisive. "Whereas I have indiscriminately called those who govern the Churches, Bishops, Presbyters, and Pastors, I have done so according to the usage of Scripture,
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which indifferently employs these terms to designate the same officer; for whoever executes the office of ministers of the Gospel, to them the Scriptures give the title of Bishops. So by Paul, where Titus is commanded to ordain Elders in every city, it is immediately added, for a Bishop must be blameless, &c. Tit. i. 5. So, in another place, (Philip. i. 1.) he salutes many Bishops in one Church. And in the Acts it is related that he called together the Elders of Ephesus, whom he himself, in his discourse to them, styles Bishops. Acts xx. 17. But here it is to be observed, that hitherto we have only taken notice of those offices which pertain to the ministry of the word; neither doth Paul make mention of any other in the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, which we before cited. But in the Epistle to the Romans (xii. 7.) and in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, (xii. 28) he reckons up other offices, as powers, the gift of healing, interpretation, government, taking care of the poor. Of these, I omit such as were merely temporary, because it is not worth the trouble to dwell upon them. But there are two that are permanent, government, and the care of the poor. Those who governed were, in my opinion, Elders chosen out of the laymen of each congregation, who, together with the Bishops, bore rule in the correction of morals, and in the exercise of discipline. For no one can otherwise expound that which the Apostle saith,
(Rom. xii. 8.) He that ruleth let him do it with diligence. Every Church, therefore, from the beginning, had its own Senate, collected from among the godly, grave and holy, who had that jurisdiction over the correction of vices of which we shall speak hereafter.—And, moreover, that this was the order of more than one age, experience itself teaches. This office of government, therefore, is necessary for all ages.

The care of the poor was committed to the Deacons—Although the word Deacon has a more extensive meaning; yet the Scripture especially calls them Deacons, to whom the Church hath given in charge the distribution of alms, and the care of the poor; and hath appointed them, as it were, stewards of the common treasury of the poor—whose origin, institution, and office are described by Luke in Acts vi.

For when a murmuring arose among the Grecians, because in the ministrations to the poor, their widows were neglected, the Apostles, excusing themselves, as not being adequate to the execution of both offices, both the preaching of the word, and the ministering at tables, requested the multitude to choose seven honest men, to whom they might commit that business. Behold what manner of Deacons the Apostolic Church had; and what kind of Deacons it becomes us to have in conformity with their example!

Book iv. Chap. 4th. Having treated of the order of the Church as "delivered in the pure Word"
of God, and of the ministries as instituted by Christ," he undertakes, in this chapter, to exhibit the order which obtained in the "ancient Church," that is, as he explains it, the Church as it existed soon after the Apostolic age, and before the rise of the Papacy. Now this "ancient Church," he expressly declares, deviated from the pure Apostolic model; but, at the same time, he supposes that the deviation was not great or essential. He proceeds, "As we have declared that there are three sorts of ministers commended to us in the Scriptures; so all the ministers that the ancient Church had, it divided into three orders. For out of the order of Presbyters, part were chosen Pastors and Teachers, and the rest bore rule in the administration of discipline. To the Deacons was committed the care of the poor, and the distribution of alms. All those to whom the office of teaching was committed, were called Presbyters. They, in every city, chose one, out of their own number, to whom they, specially, gave the title of Bishop; that dissentions might not grow out of equality, as is wont to be the case. Yet the Bishop was not so in honour and dignity above the rest, as to have any dominion over his colleagues; but the office which the Consul had in the Senate, to propose business; to collect opinions; to preside in consulting, admonishing, and exhorting; to direct, by his authority, the whole process of business; and to put in execution that which was decreed by the common counsel of all,
—the same office had the Bishop in the assembly of Presbyters. And even this the ancient writers themselves confess, was brought in by human consent, on account of the necessity of the times.—Therefore Jerome, in his commentary on the Epistle to Titus, saith—A Presbyter was the same with a Bishop. And before there were, by the Devil's instigation, dissensions in religion, and it was said among the people, I am of Paul, and I of Cephas, the Churches were governed by the common council of Presbyters. Afterwards, that the seeds of dissension might be plucked up, all the care was devolved on one person.—As therefore the Presbyters know that by the custom of the Church, they are subject to him who presides among them; so let the Bishops know, that they are above the Presbyters rather by custom, than by any real appointment of Christ; and that they ought to govern the Churches in common. And in another place, (Epist. ad Evagr.) he teaches how ancient an institution this was; for he says that at Alexandria, from Mark, the Evangelist, down to Heracles and Dionysius, the Presbyters always placed one, chosen out of their own number, in a higher station, and called him Bishop. Every city, then, had a college of Presbyters, who were Pastors and Teachers, and who all executed among the people the offices of instructing, exhorting, and exercising discipline, which Paul enjoins on Bishops, Titus i. 9. And every one
of these colleges, (as I said before,) was under
the presidency of one Bishop, who was only so
far above the rest in dignity, as to be himself
subject to the assembly of his brethren."

In chapter 11th, Sect. 6, of the same Book,
speaking of the exercise of discipline in particular
Churches, he says—" But such authority was not
in the power of one man, to do every thing ac-
cording to his own will; but in the assembly of
the Elders, which was the same thing in the
Church that a senate is in a city. The com-
mon and usual manner was for the authority of
the Church to be exercised by a senate of Elders,
of whom (as I have before said) there were two
sorts, for some were ordained to teach, and
others only to rule in matters of discipline. But
by little and little this institution degenerated
from its original character; so that even in the
time of Ambrose, the clergy alone had cognizance
of ecclesiastical causes, of which he complains
in these words—The ancient synagogue," says
he, "and afterwards the Church, had Elders,
without whose counsel nothing was done."—We
see how much the holy man was displeased, that
there should be a falling off in any respect, when
as yet things continued, to say the least, in a
tolerable condition.—What would he have said
if he had seen the mis-shapen ruins which now
appear, and which exhibit scarcely any vestige of
the ancient edifice? What lamentation would
he have expressed? For, first, against law and
right, the Bishop hath usurped to himself that
authority which was vested in the Church. For
it is all one as if the Consul had expelled the Se-
nate, and assumed the empire to himself alone.
For surely, though he is in honour superior to
the rest, yet there is more authority in the col-
lege than in one man. It was, therefore, a very
wicked deed, that one man, having gotten into his
own hands the power which was before common
to the whole college, paved the way to tyranni-
cal domination, snatched from the Church her
own right, and abolished the Presbytery, which,
by the Spirit of Christ had been ordained.”

Book iv. Chapter. v. Sect. 15. “Now let the
Deacons come forth, and that holy distribution
which they have of the Church’s goods; although
they by no means, at present, create their Dea-
cons for that purpose. For they (the Papists)
enjoin upon them nothing else but to minister at
the altar, to read or sing the Gospels, and to
perform I know not what trifles. Nothing of
the alms, nothing of the care of the poor, nothing
of the whole function which, in former times, they
executed. I speak of the very institution; for
if we have a respect to what they do, it is not in
itself an office, but only a step toward the priest-
hood. Therefore they mock the Church with
this lying Deaconry. Truly therein they have
nothing like, either the institution of the Apos-
tles, or ancient usage.”
Testimony of Calvin.

Such was the language of Calvin in 1536, when he was just entering on his great career. And this was his uniform language to the end of his life. I cannot find a single passage in all his writings in which he speaks with greater severity of diocesan Episcopacy, than in some of the preceding extracts. On their import it is unnecessary to enlarge. They speak for themselves.

The following extracts from Calvin's Commentary, written at different periods of his life, and under different circumstances, will show that his opinion on the subject in dispute was uniformly the same.

In his Commentary on Philip. i. 1. written in the year 1548, we find the following passage. "He calls the Pastors, Bishops, for the sake of honour. Moreover we infer from this place that the name of Bishop is common to all ministers of the word, since the Apostle assigns a plurality of Bishops to a single Church. The names Bishop and Pastor are, therefore, synonymous. And this passage is one of those which Jerome cites to prove the same thing, in his Epistle to Evagrius, and in his exposition of the Epistle to Titus. Afterwards it became customary that he who presided in the bench of Presbyters of a particular Church, should alone be called Bishop. This, however, arose from human custom, and is by no means supported by Scripture.—I confess, indeed, that such are the tempers and habits of men.
that order cannot be maintained among ministers of the word, unless one preside. But I speak of particular bodies; not of whole provinces; and much less of the whole world. And although it is not proper to dispute about words; yet it is better in speaking, to follow the Holy Spirit, the author of language, than to change the forms of expression established by him for the worse. —For out of the corrupted signification of a word, this evil arose, that thence, as if all the Presbyters were not colleagues, and called to the same function, one, under the pretext of a new title, arrogated to himself a dominion over others.

In his exposition of Titus 1. 5. written in 1549, he thus writes. "Presbyters or Elders, it is well known, are not so denominated on account of their age, since young men are sometimes chosen to this office, as, for instance, Timothy; but it has always been customary, in all languages, to apply this title, as a term of honour, to all rulers. And as we gather, from the first Epistle to Timothy, that there were two kinds of Elders, so here the context shows that no other than teaching Elders are to be understood; that is, those who were ordained to teach; because the same persons are immediately afterwards called Bishops.—It may be objected, that too much power seems to be given to Titus, when the Apostle commands him to appoint ministers over all the Churches. This, it may be said, is little less than kingly power; for, on this plan, the
Testimony of Calvin.

right of choice is taken away from the particular Churches, and the right of judging in the case from the college of Pastors; and this would be to profane the whole of the sacred discipline of the church. But the answer is easy. Every thing was not entrusted to the will of Titus as an individual, nor was he allowed to impose such Bishops on the Churches as he pleased; but he was commanded to preside in the elections, as a Moderator, as it is necessary for some one to do. This is a mode of speaking exceedingly common. Thus a Consul, or Regent, or Dictator is said to create Consuls, because he convenes assemblies for the purpose of making choice of them. So also Luke uses the same mode of speaking concerning Paul and Barnabas, in the Acts of the Apostles; not that they alone, authoritatively appointed Pastors over the Churches, without their being tried or approved; but they ordained suitable men, who had been 'elected, or chosen by the people. We learn also, from this place, that there was not, then, such an equality among the ministers of the Church, as was inconsistent with some one presiding in authority and council*. This, how-

* The original of this sentence is as follows—Discimui quidem ex hoc loco, non eam fuisse tunc equalitatem inter Ecclesia ministros quin unus aliquis autoritate et consilio precesset. Dr. Bowden and Mr. How both quote this sentence, both undertake to translate it for the benefit of their readers, and both concur in giving the following translation—"Hence we learn that there was not any equality among the ministers of the Church, but that one was placed over the rest in
ever, is nothing like the tyrannical and unscriptural prelacy which reigns in the Papacy. The plan of the Apostles was extremely different."

On the 7th verse of the same chapter, he thus expresses himself—"Moreover this place abundantly teaches us that there is no difference between Presbyters and Bishops; because, the Apostle now calls promiscuously by the second of these names, those whom he had before called Presbyters; and indeed the argument which follows, employs both names indifferently in the same sense; which Jerome hath observed, as well in his commentary on this passage, as in his Epistle to Evagrius. And hence we may see how much more has been yielded to the opinions of men than was decent: because the style of the Holy Spirit being abrogated, a custom introduced by the will of man, prevailed.—I do not, indeed, disapprove of the opinion, that, soon after the commencement of the Church, every college of Bishops had some one to act as Moderator. But that a name of office which God had given in common to all, should be transferred to an indi-
Testimony of Calvin.

"vidual alone, the rest being robbed of it, was both injurious and absurd. Wherefore so to pervert the language of the Holy Spirit, as that the same expressions should convey a meaning to us different from that which he intended, partakes too much of profane audacity."

In his commentary on 1 Peter v. 1. written in 1551, and dedicated to Edward VI, of England, the following passage occurs. "Presbyters. By this title he designates Pastors, and whoever were appointed to the government of the Church. And since Peter calls himself a Presbyter, like the rest, it is hence apparent that this name was common; which, indeed, from many other passages appears still more clearly. Moreover, by this title he claimed to himself authority; as if he had said, that he admonished Pastors in his own right, because he was one of their number; for among colleagues there ought to be this mutual privilege. Whereas if he had enjoyed any pre-eminence of authority among them, he might have urged that, and it would have been more pertinent to the occasion: But although he was an Apostle, yet he knew that this gave him no authority over his colleagues; but that he was rather joined with the rest in a social office."

Calvin's exposition of the first Epistle to Timothy was written in the year 1556, and dedicated to the Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector of England. In his remarks on the fifth chapter and seventeenth verse, of that Epistle, he speaks thus.—"From
this passage we may gather that there were then

two kinds of Presbyters, because they were not
all ordained to the work of teaching. For the
words plainly mean, that some ruled well, to
whom no part of the public instruction was com-
mitted. And verily there were chosen from
among the people, grave and approved men, who,
in common council, and joint authority with the
Pastors, administered the discipline of the church,
and acted the part of censors for the correction
of morals.—This practice Ambrose complains
had fallen into disuse, through the indolence, or
rather the pride of the teaching Elders, while
they wished to be alone distinguished.

I will only add, that, in his commentary on Acts
xx. 28, written in 1560, a short time before his
death, he expresses himself thus—"Concerning
the word Bishop, it is observable, that Paul gives
this title to all the Presbyters of Ephesus: from
which we may infer, that according to Scripture,
Presbyters differed, in no respect, from Bishops:
but that it arose from corruption, and a departure
from primitive purity, that those who held the
first seats in particular cities, began to be called
Bishops. I say that it arose from corruption, not
that it is an evil for some one, in each college of
Pastors, to be distinguished above the rest; but
because it is intolerable presumption, that men,
in perverting the titles of Scripture to their own
humour, do no hesitate to alter the meaning of
the Holy Spirit."
But, in spite of all these repeated and positive declarations of Calvin, Dr. Bowdler and Mr. How still insist, that he acknowledged the Apostolical institution of Prelacy, and offered the plea of necessity for adopting the Presbyterian government in Geneva. To prove this, they produce two extracts from his writings, which have really nothing to do with the subject; but which, ever since the time of the ignorant or disingenuous Durell, have been triumphantly quoted by high-church-men, for a similar purpose.

The first of these extracts is from Calvin's famous letter to Cardinal Sadolet, and is in the following words. "We do not deny that we want a "discipline such as the ancient Church (Vetus Ecclesia) had. But with what justice can we be accused of subverting discipline, by those very men (the Papists) who alone have entirely destroyed it; and who, when we endeavoured to restore it, have hitherto prevented us? But with respect to doctrine, we are willing to be compared with the ancient Church*.

How far this extract really goes towards proving the point intended to be established by it, will appear from the following analysis of the Letter. Calvin, in his reply to Sadolet, pursues the method which the Cardinal had adapted in arranging his charges against the Church of Geneva. He

* Ad Sadoletum Respondio CALVITI. Tractatus Theologici, p. 125.
firmly defends his own ministry, which we all know was Presbyterian, and which his antagonist had represented as invalid. He warmly refutes the charge of ambition, and pecuniary influence, alleged against the reforming ministers. After defining what he means by a Church; and after repelling the charge, that he had left the Church, by showing that he had only reformed it; he invites Sadolet to compare their respective Churches with the Ancient Church. The Cardinal could not, consistently with Popish pretensions, submit to be tried by the state of the Church as described in the New Testament. Calvin, therefore, although he considered the Apostolic Church as the only proper model, waves his right, for the sake of argument, and challenges the Cardinal to compare with antiquity. "Not," says he expressly, "not with that form which the Apostles appointed, which is the only model of a true Church;" but even with the "Ancient Church," as it stood in the days of Chrysostom and Basil, among the Greeks; and of Cyprian, Ambrose, &c. among the Latins: which "ancient Church," he justly asserts, differed as much from the Church of Rome, at the time of his writing, as did the reign of David from that of Zechariah. In order to make an impression on Popish minds, Calvin judged it more suitable to show the defection of their Church from what they themselves called the standard, than their inconsistency with Apostolic order, about which they had less concern.
Testimony of Calvin.

Calvin maintains in this Letter, that the Sacraments and the doctrine of the "ancient Church," corresponded much more nearly with the Reformed than with the Popish Church. He readily confesses that the discipline of the Reformed, differs from that of the "ancient Church." But he alleges, at the same time, that this concession cannot avail the Cardinal, whose Church differs still more from that discipline. And he also alleges, that, amidst all the opposition and difficulties with which they had to struggle, in the restoration of strict discipline, they were still going on; that they had already approached nearer to the "ancient Church" than their popish neighbours; and, by perseverance, were likely soon even to surpass that model. Now, all this reasoning would have been very preposterous, if Calvin had been here speaking of Prelacy. For how could the Church of Geneva, which was Presbyterian in its form, be nearer, on prelatical principles, to the "ancient Church," than that of Rome was which embraced Prelacy? And, above all, how could Calvin say that the Church of Geneva was still approaching nearer to the "ancient Church" in discipline, and was likely to surpass it? Was the Church of Geneva then growing more prelatical? No one ever supposed it. The truth is, by discipline, Calvin and Sadolet both mean the system of rules for directing the whole Christian conduct both of ministers and people. There is nothing in this part of the argu-
ment that has the least reference to different orders in the ministry.

It turns out, then, that this famous extract from the Letter to Sadolet has nothing to do with the question in dispute; that the tenor of the Letter, so far as it bears on Prelacy, is directly opposed to it; that the *Vetus Ecclesia*, the "ancient Church," intended by Calvin, is not, as he himself expressly declares, the Church as it was left by the Apostles, but as it stood in the *third* and *fourth* centuries; that the *discipline* of which he speaks, has no reference to orders in the Christian ministry; and, of course, that the boasted passage in question could never have been quoted as affording the least hint in favour of Prelacy, excepting by those who had never read the whole letter, or grossly perverted its evident meaning. With the latter, I do not charge Dr. Bowden or Mr. How. I take for granted they have never read a sentence of the Letter, excepting the detached passage under consideration. They have been led astray by others, probably as little acquainted with it as themselves.

The other passage which Mr. How quotes as positive proof that Calvin believed in the divine institution of Prelacy, is taken from his Tract *De Necessitate Reformatione Ecclesiae*, as follows. "If they (the Papists) would exhibit to us an hierarchy, in which the Bishops should be so distinguished, as not to refuse subjection to Christ; then I will confess that they are worthy of all anathemas, if any such there be, who would not reverence it,
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"and submit themselves to it with the utmost obe-
dience*." This passage, when impartially examined, will be found as little to the purpose as the former. It is only saying, that Calvin stood ready to approve of a scriptural and primitive Episcopacy, whenever it should be introduced. And would not all Presbyterians, as well as Calvin, say the same thing? Nay, blessed be God! we can go further. It is the happiness of our Church that we have such an Episcopacy, and we glory in having it. Calvin never denied that there were Bishops in the days of the Apostles. No Presbyterian ever denied it. It is for such an Episcopacy as was established by inspired men in Jerusalem, Ephesus, Antioch, and Philippi, that we contend; and the venerable Reformer of Geneva meant no other.

It has been said that Calvin's employing the word hierarchy (hierarchiam) in this passage, proves that he referred with approbation to an ecclesiastical constitution embracing different orders of clergy. It has been even asserted, that this word is exclusively appropriated to government by Prelates; and that no instance can be found of its application to any other kind of ecclesiastical regi-
men. This is a total mistake. The word hierarchy simply implies sacred or ecclesiastical government. It may be applied with as much propriety to Presbyterianism or Independency, as to diocesan

* J. Calvin, Tractatus Theologici, p. 69.
Episcopacy. It has been often so applied by the best writers. But, what settles the matter is, that Calvin himself so applies it. In his Institutions, Lib. iv. Cap. 5. he speaks of "that hierarchy or spiritual government," which was left in the Church by the Apostles, and which he expressly declares, in the same chapter, to have been Presbyterian in its form. Many other instances might be produced in which this Reformer has used the same word in a similar sense. When gentlemen undertake to interpret Calvin, and especially to speak with so much positiveness of his meaning, they ought to have some acquaintance with his writings.

Where now, let me ask, is the proof of which my opponents speak so much, and so confidently, that Calvin believed in the divine institution of Prelacy; that he lamented the want of it in Geneva; and that he justified himself by the plea of necessity, in establishing Presbyterian government in that Church? It is not to be found. No such proof exists. They have not produced a syllable which looks like it. Nor do I believe that they can produce a solitary scrap, from all his voluminous writings, nor any well attested declaration*, made at any period of his public life, which will bear such a construction.

* I say well attested, because the story which Dr. Bowden gravely repeats of Calvin, Bullinger, &c. having written to Edward VI, in 1549, "offering to make him their defender, and to have Bishops in their Churches, for better unity and concord," is not so attested. I think no impartial reader can
The truth is, Calvin never pretended any such necessity. On the contrary, he steadfastly represented the Genevan form of government and discipline, as strictly agreeable to the word of God, and as that which he felt himself bound, by obedience to Christ, to establish and defend. "Besides," says he, "that our conscience acquits us in the sight of God, the thing itself will answer for us in the sight of men. Nobody has yet appeared that could prove that we had altered any one thing, which God has commanded; or that we have appointed any new thing, contrary to his word; or that we have turned aside from the truth, to follow any evil opinion. On the contrary, it is manifest that we have reformed our Church merely by God's word, which is the only rule by which it is to be ordered, and lawfully defended. It is, indeed, an unpleasant work to alter what has been formerly in use, were it not that the order which God has once fixed, must be esteemed by us as sacred and inviolable; insomuch that if it has, for a time, been laid aside, it must peruse the account, as given by Strype, (the most respectable authority quoted in support of it,) without suspecting the whole to be a fable. Let us see the Letter; and we will answer to the charge. But even admitting this to be true, to what does it amount? Why, that Calvin, in an evil hour, made a concession with respect to Prelates, similar to that which Melancthon had made before him, with respect to the Pope; and that in direct opposition to all his solemnly declared principles, and uniform practice.
of necessity, (and whatever the consequences
should prove,) be restored again. No antiquity,
no prescription of custom, may be allowed to be
an obstacle in this case, that the government of
the Church which God has appointed, should
not be perpetual, since the Lord himself has once
fixed it*.

So much for the opinion of Calvin on the sub-
ject of Episcopacy. I shall now proceed to take
notice of some other allegations which Dr. Bowden
has made concerning this great man, and which are
destitute of foundation as those which have been
already refuted.

Doctor Bowden asserts, on the authority of Dr.
Learning, that Calvin never was ordained; and re-
presents that gentleman as having derived his infor-
mation from Beza. The Doctor has suffered him-
self to be led astray, by an ignorant or dishonest
guide. Beza says no such thing. On the contra-
ry, after informing us that Calvin had frequently
preached while he was yet a youth, in the com-
munion of the Church of Rome, and that he did this,
without having received any Popish orders; Beza
proceeds to state that he was set apart (designatus)
to the ministry by the Presbytery of Geneva, in the
month of August, in the year 1586†. Besides,
even if there were no record establishing the time

* Epist. ad quendam Curatum; in Calvin. Epist. p. 386.
† See Beza's Life of Calvin.
and place of his ordination, we might fairly presume that such a solemnity had taken place, because it was the general sentiment of the Reformers that ordination by the imposition of hands is both scriptural and necessary; because this mode of constituting the ministry is well known to have been the habit of the times; because Calvin in his Institutions, published only a few weeks before he went to Geneva, expressly enjoins ordination in this manner; and because, in the confession of the French Churches, which he drew up a short time afterwards, such ordination is declared to be essential to a regular ministry. Now is it credible, that Calvin, when it was perfectly within his reach, would have suffered himself, under all the circumstances which have been mentioned, to be without that seal of office, which habit and public opinion imperiously demanded, and which both before and after, he himself represented as so highly important? It is not credible. We should be bound, on every principle of probability, to take for granted that he was regularly ordained, even if no hint had ever been given on the subject by a single writer.

But we have other evidence that Calvin was regularly ordained. Junius, the learned professor of Divinity in the University of Leyden, before mentioned, who was a contemporary with Calvin, explicitly states the fact. Bellarmine had asserted that, before Calvin, Presbyters had not undertaken to ordain. Junius contradicts him; asserts that the Reformers who preceded Calvin, held and prac-
tised Presbyterian ordination; and declares that by some of these, "his predecessors, Calvin was himself ordained*." And Cardinal Bellarmine, speaking of the validity of ordinations as performed in the Protestant Churches, says, "Neither Luther, nor Zuingle, nor Calvin were Bishops, but only Presbyters." Neque Lutherus, neque Zuin- 
glius, neque Calvinus Episcopi fuerunt, sed tantum Presbyteri†. Neither the learning nor the talents of this celebrated Papist will be denied. He lived at the same time with Calvin, and must have known his history; and he had as strong temptation, as Dr. Bowden can have, to degrade both the personal and ecclesiastical character of that Reformer; yet he explicitly concedes that he was reputed a Presbyter.

But supposing the fact established that he never was ordained, either in the Presbyterian, the Episcopal, or any other mode. What then? It has no more to do with the argument in question than with the remotest speculation in mathematical or physical science. Has Calvin been the ordainer of all Presbyterian ministers since he entered the Church? Did he ever undertake, alone, to ordain even a single minister? It is one of the numerous advantages of Presbyterianism that it affords much


† Bellarmin. Controv. v. Lib. Cap. 3.
greater security against spurious ordinations, than Episcopacy. It vests the power of ordaining, not in a single man, but in a Presbytery; so that a case can never occur, among us, in which a defect of ecclesiastical character in an individual, can vitiate an ordination.

But Dr. Bowden not only denies that there is any evidence that Calvin was ever ordained; he even goes so far as to express a very serious doubt whether the Reformers ever considered him in the light of a minister at all. Instead of taking up your time to express my surprise at a suggestion so extraordinary, I shall content myself with presenting two or three testimonies, which will show how Calvin was viewed by contemporary English Divines.

The celebrated Martyr, Philpot, a very eminent Divine of the Church of England, who suffered for the truth in the reign of Queen Mary, said to his Popish judges—"Which of you is able to answer Calvin's Institutions, who is Minister of Geneva? I am sure you blaspheme that godly man, and that godly Church where he is Minister, as it is your church's condition, when you cannot answer men by learning, to oppress them with blasphemies and false reports. For in the matter of Predestination, he (Calvin) is in no other opinion than all the doctors of the Church be, agreeing with the Scriptures." On a subsequent examination he declared—"I allow the Church of Geneva, and the doctrine of the same; for it
"is una, catholica, et Apostolica, and doth follow
the doctrines which the Apostles did preach:
and the doctrine taught and preached in King
Edward’s days was also according to the
same*."

Bishop Jewel’s opinion of Calvin and of Calvin-
ism will appear from the following declarations.
His antagonist Harding, a virulent Papist, is con-
tinually reviling the Bishop as a disciple of Calvin,
and the English Protestants as Calvinists. The
Bishop never disavows the charge, and repeatedly
defends Calvin in terms of high respect. "Touch-
ing Mr. Calvin,” says he, “it is a great wrong
untruly to report so reverend a Father, and so
a worthy an ornament of the Church of God. If
you had ever known the order of the Church at
Geneva, and had seen four thousand people of
more receiving the holy mysteries together at
one communion, you could not, without great
shame and want of modesty, thus untruly have
published to the world that, by Mr. Calvin’s
doctrine, the sacraments of Christ are super-
fluous†.”

Bishop Hooper, when he was imprisoned for
his adherence to the truth, in the reign of Queen
Mary, wrote in the most friendly and affectionate
manner to Calvin, addressing him in terms of pro-
found respect for his ecclesiastical, as well as his per-

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† Jewel’s Defence of his Apology, Part ii. p. 188.
Calvin's personal character, and begging his, and his Church's prayers.

Bishop Hall, though not a contemporary of Calvin, yet lived so near his time, as to be perfectly acquainted with the light in which he was viewed by the English Reformers. Speaking of him, he says, "That the Latin or Western Church, subject to the Romish tyranny (unto the very times of Luther) was a true Church, in which a saving profession of the truth of Christ was found, our learned Dr. Field hath saved me the labour to prove, by the suffrages of our best and most renowned Divines, among whom he cites Calvin, Bucer, Melancthon, Beza, &c." Here Bishop Hall not only acknowledges the illustrious Reformer of Geneva, as one of the best and most renowned of Divines; but even places him at the head of the list!

Dr. Bowden asserts, that soon after the Reformation commenced in England, Calvin made an officious offer of his services, to aid the cause in that country; that the English Reformers, knowing his "arrogant" and "tyrannical" spirit "civilly rejected his offer;" and that this "displeased him to such a degree, that although he had before spoken handsome things of the Church of England, yet from that time he began to say "harsh things of her." Here again, I am compelled to say, Dr. Bowden shows himself to be entirely unacquainted with facts; and with facts too,
which he might have learned from his own historians.

The truth is, the services of Calvin in the cause of the Reformation, instead of being obtrusively and officiously offered by him, were expressly and warmly solicited by Archbishop Cranmer. This is attested so decidedly by the most impartial historians, that the only wonder is, how a gentleman of Dr. Bowden's character, could stoop to be the retailer of so stale a calumny as the opposite story unquestionably is. In the reign of Edward VI, as Strype tells us, Archbishop Cranmer having formed a plan of drawing up a book of articles, which should comprehend every thing essential relating to faith and practice, and in which all Protestants might unite; sent letters to Calvin, Bullinger, and Melancthon, disclosing his pious design, and requesting "their counsel and furtherance." Calvin wrote repeatedly and freely to the Archbishop on this subject; and, in the course of his correspondence, took the liberty of gently imputing blame to Cranmer for not having made greater progress in the Reformation. Cranmer does not appear, however, to have been at all offended with Calvin for this freedom, but retained a high esteem and value for him, and kept up an affectionate intercourse with him to the end of life*.

Archbishop Cranmer, not only kept up a friendly communication with Calvin, as long as he lived;

but he also constantly consulted him, on all the leading questions connected with the Reformation. On a certain occasion, Calvin dispatched a messenger to England, with Letters to the Duke of Somerset, and likewise to King Edward, to whom he presented, at the same time, a volume of his Commentary, just before published, and dedicated to the King. Both the King and his Council were much gratified with this communication; and Archbishop Cranmer, in particular, was so much pleased, as to send word to Calvin, that he could do nothing more profitable to the Church, than to write often to the King*.

Nor is this all. Calvin was not only respectfully consulted by the English Reformers; but he had also much influence among them. That great deference was paid to his judgment, will appear from this fact, that on the first appearance of the English Liturgy, it prescribed praying for the dead, chrism, extreme unction, and other Popish superstitions. These Calvin, in a letter to the Protector, very frankly and decidedly blamed. The consequence of which was, that all these offensive things were left out, agreeably to his advice. Dr. Heylin himself declares that these alterations were made in compliance with Calvin's wishes.—"The first Liturgy," says he, "was discontinued, and the second superinduced upon it, to give satisfaction

unto Calvin's cavils, the curiosities of some, and the mistakes of others, his friends and followers*. And Dr. Nichols gives us the same information. "Four years afterwards," says he; "the Book of Common Prayer underwent another review; wherein some ceremonies and usages were laid aside, and some new prayers added, at the instance of Mr. Calvin of Geneva, and Bucer, a foreign Divine, who was invited to be a Professor at Cambridge†."

Nor was the authority of Calvin without its influence, in drawing up the Articles of the Church of England. It is commonly said, by our Episcopal brethren, that those Articles are anti-Calvinistic; and that especially on the doctrine of Predestination, as exhibited in the seventeenth Article, the Reformers held, and meant to express, a different opinion from that of Calvin. Now it happens that this article itself bears the most unquestionable internal evidence of the contrary. The qualifying clause toward the end of it, which has been quoted as decisive proof that the framers rejected Calvinism, is nearly copied from Calvin's *Institutes*; and the latter part of it is a literal translation of that Reformer's caution against the abuse of this doctrine. For evidence of the former, see his *Institutes* iii. 2. 4. 5. compared with the article. For proof of the latter, read the following—Pro-

† Comment. on the Book of Com. Prayer, Pref. p. 5.
Testimony of Calvin.

inde, in rebus agendis, ea est nobis perspicienda Dei voluntas quam verbo suo declarat. Instit. i. 17. 5.

"Furthermore, in our doings, that will of God is " to be followed, which we have expressly declared " to us in the word of God." Art. 17th.

Of the point of light in which Calvin and his opinions were viewed by the leading Divines of the Church of England, during the reigns of Elizabeth, and James I, the following attestation by Dr. Heylin, a bitter enemy, affords the most unquestionable evidence. "It cannot be denied but that, " by the error of these times, the reputation which " Calvin had attained to in both Universities, and " the extreme diligence of his followers, there was " a general tendency unto his opinions; his Book " of Institutes being, for the most part, the foun- " dation on which the young divines of those days " did build their studies*." Again he declares, " Of any men who publicly opposed the Calvinian " tenets, in the University of Oxford, till after the " beginning of King James's reign, I must confess " that I have hitherto found no good assurance." He speaks of two divines, of inferior note, who secretly propagated other principles; and com- " pares these to the Prophet Elijah, who considered himself as left alone to oppose a whole world of idolaters. Further; in the reign of Charles I, " more than 60 years after the final settling of the Articles, when a suppression of the Calvinistic

* See Heylin's Quinq. Hist. Works. p. 626, &c
doctrines was contemplated by Archbishop Laud; Dr. Heylin acknowledges, that such was the general attachment of the Bishops and Clergy to these doctrines, that the Arminian party did not dare to "venture the determining of these points to a Convocation," And he again explicitly informs us, that, from the resettling of the Church under Queen Elizabeth, to the period already mentioned, "the maintainers of the anti-Calvinian doctrines were but few in number, and made but a very thin appearance." In short, the sum of his representation, compared with other historians, is, that for 60 years after the Articles were settled, only four or five anti-Calvinistic divines appeared, in both Universities, and the whole nation; that out of this number three were actually punished for propagating their opinions; and that the rest only saved themselves by silence, and discretion†!

The celebrated Hooker would have abhorred the thought of joining with Dr. Bowden and Mr. How in their aspersions of Calvin. That truly great man, with all his Episcopal prejudices, speaking of the Reformer of Geneva, thus expresses himself. "I think him 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 teach-

* See Heylin's Quinq. Hist. Works. p. 636, &c. See also his Life of Laud, 147.
† See Overton's True Churchman, p. 81, 82, 83.
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...ing 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. In another place, Hooker speaks of Calvin as "a worthy vessel of God’s glory." And again he remarks, "Two things of principal moment there are, which have deservedly procured him honour throughout the world; the one his exceeding pains in composing the Institutions of Christian Religion; the other, his no less industrious travails for exposition of Holy Scripture according unto the same Institutions*."

Bishop Carleton in his Examination of Montague’s Appeal; printed in 1626, and dedicated to Charles I, says, p. 97. "As for Calvin, his name and doctrines are made odious; but why, I know not. What greater pleasure can a man procure to the enemies of the truth, than to speak evil and odiously of those men whose service God hath used, and made them excellent instruments to make the truth known unto us? Some take it for a sign of looking toward Popery, when the members of our own Church offer such a service to the Papists, as to speak evil of them that have been the greatest enemies of Popery, the greatest propagators of the truth."

* Preface to his Ecclesiastical Polity.
Dr. Hakewell, chaplain of Charles I, while Prince of Wales, in a work addressed to Dr. Carrier, a Papist, says, p. 135. "One of the main points you drive at is, to put us off from all fellowship, and communion with those Churches who acknowledge Calvin to have been an excellent instrument of God, in abolishing Popery, and the clearing and spreading of his truth; that so, being separated from them, we may either stand single, and be encountered alone, or return again to our old bias, and relapse unto Rome; and so, through Calvin's sides, you strike at the throat and heart of our Religion."

Dr. Joshua Hoyl, Professor of Divinity in Trinity College, Dublin, in the reign of Charles I, in his Rejoinder to Mr. Malone's Reply on the Real Presence, dedicated to Archbishop Usher, in p. 654, &c. says—"That great instrument of God's glory, John Calvin, a man of whom I had almost said, as once it was of Moses, there arose not a prophet since like him in Israel, nor since the Apostles' days was before him—His works shall praise him for wit, eloquence, fulness, and soundness of divinity."

On this part of the subject I shall content myself with one witness more. A clergyman of the Church of England, now living, who writes in the Christian Observer, in speaking of the disposition of many in his own Church, to vilify the name and opinions of Calvin, makes the following remarks.—"Few names stand higher, or in 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 honour.' Whoever examines into the sermons, writings, &c. of our Divines, in the reign of Elizabeth, and James I, will continually meet with epithets of honour 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 dishonoured, that it would be no difficult matter to prove, that there is not, perhaps, 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*."

Dr. Bowden, not content with aspersing the opinions of Calvin, goes further, and attacks, with great apparent cordiality, his personal character. Besides a number of reproachful epithets, which the Dr. throws out in various parts of his work, the following passage occurs toward the close. Letter 20. " The return of Calvin evinced the gentle sway " of Presbytery. Castellio, (he probably means " Castalio,) a man of great learning, was soon ex- " pelled, at the instigation of the Reformer. A " violent contest then took place between him and " the Senate, about the election of a minister. It " produced almost sedition. Calvin's quarrels with " Perinus proceeded to such a length that the Coun- " cil became furious against one another. And " what do you think was the cause of it? Why " Perinus thought it no harm to recreate himself " now and then with dancing. But Calvin, al- " though no Bishop, played the tyrant, and forbad " that amusement upon pain of excommunication. " Perinus was not to be treated in that manner. " He opposed such tyranny; and two of the mi- " nisters who joined with him, were turned out of " their livings. The contention became general " throughout the city, and the Council, taking dif- " ferent sides, almost cut one another's throats.

Testimony of Calvin.

"One person was put to death for libelling Calvin. Another was banished the city for preaching against Predestination. Servetus was burned for heresy. So much for the mother Church of Presbytery."

It is easy, in half a line, to convey a slander which it would require several pages to expose. I cannot help regretting that Dr. Bowden has permitted himself to believe and to retail all the unfounded charges against Calvin, which were first propagated by malice, and which ignorance and prejudice have, ever since, continued to repeat. It is impossible here to enter into a full refutation of these charges. I can only suggest a few hints for aiding those who have a disposition further to pursue the inquiry.

With respect to the case of Castalio, it is thus related by M. Sennebier, one of the most respectable biographers of Calvin, and whose testimony is entitled to the more credit, as he was an opponent of that Reformer's religious principles. "Calvin knew Castalio at Strasburg, in 1539. He procured for him the place of Regent in Geneva, in 1543. This man, who was a good humanist, but an extravagant theologian, translated the Bible into Latin. He endeavored to make the Hebrews speak the language of Cicero; and even essayed to make them sometimes sigh the tender verses of Ovid. On this account Calvin strongly blamed his version, together with different sentiments which this singular man did not
fear to advance. Castalio, feeling hurt, demanded of the Council permission to dispute publicly with Calvin on the descent of Jesus Christ into hell. They refused him this permission. But from love to truth, and from regard to liberty of thought, they permitted him to open this dispute before the assembly of ministers. It continued a long time without any success. Castalio was so irritated, that he attacked Calvin in a Sermon destined to resolve the objections that could be opposed to the doctrine which he had taught; and he so grossly insulted the ministers of Geneva, that the Council deposed him from the holy ministry, and took from him the place of Regent. Castalio retired to Basil, where he persisted in his extraordinary sentiments, and in his hatred of Calvin, until his death.”

The conduct of Calvin, in the case of Perrin, is thus stated, by the same writer. “Calvin, in the exercise of discipline, saw only the man who had violated his duties, in the man in office, who had believed that he might be dispensed from them. He caused to be cited before the Consistory the wife of the Captain-General, Ami Perrin, who had danced, acted in a comedy, and blasphemed in a particular house. Ami Perrin himself, whose life was very irregular, was excommunicated, deprived of his office of counselor, and condemned to two months imprisonment.”

* Sennebier's Histoire Litteraire de Geneve, Tom. i. p. 196.
"Testimony of Calvin."

"ment. But, though this man had always instigated the enemies of Calvin; though he had caused all the difficulties that Calvin experienced at Geneva from the government; Calvin, nevertheless, employed his eloquence and his influence to cause the judgment against him to be annulled; and had the christian satisfaction of seeing his mortal enemy restored to his offices, and delivered from prison.*"

"One person," says Dr. B. "was put to death for libelling Calvin." This wonderful assertion refers to the case of James Gruet, who was beheaded July 26, 1547. He was a man notorious for his vice and profligacy—He, of course, hated Calvin, and abused him in the most violent manner. But this was not the cause of his death. In his sentence he is condemned, "For having spoken with contempt of religion; for having maintained that divine and human laws were the work of caprice; for having written impious letters, and libertine verses; for having maintained that fornication was not criminal, when the two parties were agreed; for having laboured to overturn ecclesiastical ordinances, and to shake by a petition the authority of the Consistory; for having threatened the Reformers and ministers, and having spoken ill of them, especially of Calvin; for having written letters calculated to irritate the court of France against Calvin, and having en-

"gaged the King of France to write to the Council against him; and, finally, for having threatened the Council itself*."—Do you not admire the candour and impartiality of Doctor Bowdler?

The Doctor proceeds—"Another was banished the city for preaching against Predestination." This was the noted Jerome Bolsec, of whom Dr. Watkins, an Episcopal clergyman, in his Biographical Dictionary, gives the following account,—"He was an infamous renegado, who, from being a Carmelite, turned Protestant, practised for some time as a physician, and married. He went to Geneva, and abandoned physic for theology; but having avowed the doctrines of Pelagius in a public discourse, which was answered by Calvin on the spot, the magistrates, on account of his turbulent conduct, banished him from the city: on which he retired to Berne, where he raised a great deal of disturbance, and was then driven from that city. He returned after this to France, and went back to his old communion (that of Rome;) and, by way of showing the sincerity of his conversion, wrote what he called the Lives of Theodore Beza, and John Calvin, filled with the blackest falsehoods, and expressed in the most abusive language. He lived in a profligate manner, and suffered his wife to prostitute herself for gain." Sennebier also informs us that

Bolsec, having adopted the sentiments of Pelagius, came to publish them at Geneva as a missionary. He was censured by the ministers, and banished by the Council, after useless attempts to silence him.—This is the man whose part Doctor Bowden, more than once, indirectly takes, for the purpose of blackening the character of the venerable Calvin!

The case of Servetus, which has furnished to the revilers of Calvin a favourite theme of declamation, for near two hundred years, Dr. Bowden could not have been expected either to forget, or to pass in silence. He has noticed it in the usual style; and charged it to the "tyrannical spirit" of Calvin, and the "gentle sway of Presbytery." On this accusation I will only offer the following remarks.

First; it has never been shown that the death of Servetus can be justly imputed to Calvin. Sennebier, though no Calvinist, assures us that the imputation is a cruel calumny; that the bitterest enemies of Calvin, who were contemporary with him, did not dare to advance it; and that it has been since repeated and believed, only by those who were ignorant of facts. He declares that Calvin, so far from desiring the death of this arch-heretic, was anxious to prevent it; that he warned him against coming to Geneva, and apprized him, that if he did come thither, he would probably lose his life; which he concluded must be the case from the spirit of the laws and government of that city. This writer further asserts, that the Council of Geneva, before passing sentence on Servetus, asked
the advice of the Swiss Cantons, who unanimously exhorted them to put him to death. And, finally, he informs us, that after sentence had been passed on *Servetus*, *Calvin* laboured to procure a mitigation of it, but without effect; and that he sincerely deplored his fate*. If this statement be true, and the author supports it by a reference to undoubted authorities; then the representation of Dr. Bowden, or rather of those revilers of *Calvin* whom he has followed, is something worse than ungenerous.

But, Secondly; supposing the fact to be as Doctor Bowden insinuates. Supposing it established that *Calvin* fully approved, and even procured the death of *Servetus*; still it was evidently not so much the fault of the man, as the universal delusion of the age in which he lived; an age in which liberty of conscience was not at all, either understood or admitted, by any denomination of Christians; and in which the most pious, benevolent, and exemplary men, were more or less chargeable with error on this point. It is certain that Bucer, Oecolampadius, Beza, and even the mild and gentle Melancthon, approved the sentence that was executed on *Servetus*. It is certain that Archbishop Cranmer, and the great body of the English Reformers, were decidedly of the opinion that he ought to have suffered death†. And it is equally undeniable, that the pious and excellent Bishop Hall, solemnly pro-

* Lit. Hist. de Geneve, Tom. i. p. 204, &c.
† Sennebier. Also Melanthon's Epistles.
nounced, that, in that transaction, Calvin did well approve himself to God's Church*. To reproach Calvin, therefore, for not possessing that light which no man of his age possessed; to attempt to fix a stigma upon his memory for an error into which he fell in common with all the best of his contemporaries, is certainly as unreasonable as it is unjust.

But, finally; why do Dr. Bowden and his friends take so much delight in reproaching Calvin for a single supposed instance of persecution? And why do they take so much pains to make it believed that the death of Servetus was the native product of the "spirit of Presbyterianism?" Have these gentlemen forgotten the history of the Church of England? Or do they suppose that we have forgotten it? Have they lost all recollection of the conduct of their boasted favourites, Archbishops Cranmer, Whitgift, and Laud, to say nothing of other eminent dignitaries of that Church? Or do they imagine that our memories are as politely accommodating as their own? Calvin is only charged with bringing one unhappy victim to the stake; and even this is a false charge. But it is acknowledged, even by Episcopal historians themselves, that the pious and excellent Cranmer, was active in dragging at least four persons to the flames, of whom two were women. In the reign of Henry VIII, the Archbishop is expressly said, by Strype and Burnet, to have been concern-

ed in burning John Lambert, and Anne Askew, for those very principles which he himself afterwards embraced*. And in the reign of Edward VI, he is confessed, by the same historians, to have "procured the death," (as one of them expresses it,) of Joanna Bocher, and George Paris. The King was opposed to the execution of these persons, and signed the warrants for their execution with tears in his eyes, telling Cranmer that he did it in compliance with his persuasion, and in submission to his ecclesiastical authority; and that if it was wrong, he, (the Archbishop,) must answer for it to God†. In this representation, the Episcopal biographer, Mr. Gilpin, in his Lives of the Reformers, concurs. "Joan Bocher," says he, "and George Paris were accused, one for denying the humanity of Christ; the other for denying his divinity. They were both tried and condemned to the stake; and the Archbishop not only consented to these acts of blood; but even persuaded the aversion of the young King into a compliance. Your Majesty must distinguish, (said he, informing his royal pupil’s conscience,) between common opinions, and such as are the essential articles of faith. These latter we must, on no account, suffer to be opposed‡.”

† Hist. Ref. ii. 112.
But it is gratifying to know, that Presbyterians, instead of delighting to load Cranmer with reproach, for these instances of misguided zeal, have always treated his memory with a respectful generosity. They have seldom failed to charge this part of his conduct to the delusion of the age, and not to the heart of the man; and have been ready to acknowledge, in the strongest terms, his excellent qualities, and his noble services to the Church of Christ. And it is but justice to add, that the Bishops and other leading divines of England, who were contemporary with Calvin, or who lived half a century after him, always treated his character with similar respect and affection, nor ever lisped a syllable in the strain of Dr. Bowden. To what are we to ascribe the different representation which is now so fashionable, and so industriously propagated among our Episcopal brethren? How shall we account for it, that gentlemen who abound in unqualified praises of Cranmer, and even of Laud, are not ashamed continually to reproach the memory of Calvin, with conduct in which they went far beyond him? Can charity herself avoid suspecting, that it is the man himself who is hated, more than his alleged persecuting spirit?

Dr. Bowden and Mr. How both throw out many reflections on that system of doctrine which is generally called Calvinism. The latter, in particular, speaks of it as a “detestable” system, of which he has no language adequately to express his “abhor.
rence." It was my original intention to devote a whole letter to the consideration of this, greatly misunderstood and abused system of truth. But having been already carried so much beyond the limits at first prescribed to this reply, I dare not so far trespass on your patience as to enter into the formal discussion of a subject, which has engaged the attention of the strongest heads and best hearts that the world ever knew; and a subject as awful and difficult as it is interesting.

I cannot forbear, however, to state a few facts. And when these are calmly considered, I think your surprise at the conduct of these gentlemen, will by no means be diminished.

The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England are undoubtedly Calvinistic. This is proved, not only by the bare inspection of the Articles themselves; but also by the known sentiments of those who formed them; and by the decisive interpretation of some of the ablest Bishops, and other divines, that ever adorned that Church.*

The same Convocation which drew up the Thirty-nine Articles, reviewed, corrected, formally approved, and ordered to be published, as it now

* See Overton's True Churchman, passim. I know that this writer has made some mistakes. But when his work is compared with the able Review of it in the Christian Observer, an Episcopal Journal; and also with Mr. Daubeney's answer and the Review of the latter, in the same Journal, the mass of evidence in support of my position will be found irresistible.
stands, the celebrated *Catechism* of Dr. Nowell. This *Catechism* is acknowledged, by the worst enemies of Calvin, to be decidedly *Calvinistic*. It is acknowledged to be so by Bishop Cleaver, who, a few years ago, gave a new edition of it. And yet the Convocation, which embraced all the principal dignitaries of the Church, publicly recommended it, as "a standing summary of the doctrines professed in that Church;" and many years after it was held in such high esteem, by Archbishops Whitgift and Parker, and other cotemporary Prelates, that even *ministers* were enjoined to study it, that they might "learn true divinity from it*."  

The illustrious Reformer, and Martyr, Bradford, a short time before he suffered, wrote and published a decidedly *Calvinistic* work on *Election* and *Predestination*, which he sent to Archbishop Cranmer, and to Bishops Ridley and Latimer, who all gave it their approbation; after which it received the approbation of "the rest of the eminent ministers in and about London†."  

The famous *Lambeth Articles*, formed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, are acknowledged by all who ever read them, to be among the most strongly *Calvinistical* compositions that ever were penned. Yet these articles were drawn up and signed by

* Strype’s Annals, 313—316—Life of Parker, 122, 301.  
† Strype’s Memorials of Cranmer, p. 350. The Editors of the Christian Observer attest that they have seen Bradford’s treatise, and that it is unquestionably *Calvinistic*.  


Archbishop Whitgift, that very Prelate of whose character and principles Dr. Hobart frequently speaks in the most exalted terms, and whom he holds up to view as one of the most illustrious divines and fathers of the Church of England. — The Archbishop was assisted in this service by the Bishops of London and Bangor, and by some others. After receiving the public approbation of these dignitaries, the Articles were sent to the Archbishop of York, and the Bishop of Rochester, who also subscribed them. Thus ratified, Archbishop Whitgift sent them to the University of Cambridge, with a letter, in which he declared, "That these Articles were not to be considered as laws and decrees, but as propositions, which he and his brethren were persuaded were true, and corresponding with the doctrine professed in the Church of England, and established by the laws of the land." Nor is this all. It having been suggested by some, that the Archbishop agreed to these articles, rather for the sake of peace, than because he believed them; Strype, his Episcopal biographer, repels the charge with indignation; declaring that such an insinuation is as false, as it is mean and disparaging to the Primate.

We have seen also, in a foregoing part of this Letter, by the confession of Heylin himself, an implacable enemy of Calvin, that the great body of

* Strype's Life of Whitgift; p. 461—463.
† Ibid. p. 462.
the Bishops and other clergy of the Church of England, were doctrinal Calvinists, for more than half a century after the articles were formed. And we have found a modern Episcopal clergyman asserting, on undeniable evidence, that "Calvin’s Institutions" were read and studied, in both 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."

All the Delegates from the Church of England to the Synod of Dort, among whom were Bishop Carleton, Bishop Hall, and Bishop Davenant, formally subscribed to the five Calvinistic Articles drawn up and adopted by that venerable Synod. On their return home, they were attacked by a certain writer, and charged with having given countenance to error, and also with having departed from the public standards of their own Church. Against this attack they thought proper to defend themselves, and accordingly wrote a Joint Attestation, which contains the following passage. "Whatsoever there was assented unto, and subscribed by us, concerning the five articles, either in the joint synodical judgment, or in our particular collegiate suffrage, is not only warrantable by the holy Scriptures, but also conformable to the received doctrine of our said venerable Mother; which we are ready to maintain and justify against all gainsayers*."

* See their Joint Attestation.
Again, Bishop Hall, in a work of his own, addressing some who had charged him and other Bishops of his day, with entertaining Arminian sentiments as to the doctrine of Election, thus indignantly replies to the charge—"You add, "Election upon faith foreseen." What! nothing but gross untruths? Is this the doctrine of the Bishops of England? Have they not strongly confuted it, in Papists and Arminians*? Have they not cried it down to the lowest pit of hell†?

The same pious Prelate himself tells us, that, after his return from the Synod of Dort, where he had been an advocate of Calvinistic doctrine, and a warm opponent of Arminianism, he was distressed to find that heresy gaining ground in England. "Not many years," says he, "after settling at home, it grieved my soul to see our own Church begin to sicken of the same disease, which we had endeavoured to cure in our neighbours."

* It seems, then, that Bishop Hall was not only a Calvinist himself; but that he considered the body of English Bishops, until his time, as having been Calvinists also. But perhaps Dr. Bowden and Mr. How understand this matter better than the good Bishop!


‡ Some Specialities of the Life of Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich, written by himself—Prefixed to the 3d. vol. of his Works.
If all this be not conclusive testimony, that the Thirty-nine Articles, which Mr. How has recently subscribed, are Calvinistic; that the Reformers were Calvinistic; and that the great body of the English Bishops and other Clergy, were Calvinistic until the time of Archbishop Laud, then I know not what evidence can be called conclusive. And yet, Mr. How, with the highest praises of those Articles, and Reformers, and Prelates, and Clergy, in his mouth, does not scruple to speak of Calvinism in language which could scarcely be more contemptuous, or more abhorrent, if it were acknowledged to be a system of the most undisguised blasphevmy! I am happy that it is not incumbent on me, either to account for this fact, or to frame an apology for it.

But you will, perhaps, ask, are there no difficulties to be encountered in embracing that system of evangelical truth, which is usually styled Calvinism? It ought not to be disguised that there are in this system real difficulties, which, probably, no human wisdom will ever be able to solve. But are the difficulties which belong to the system of Arminianism, either fewer in number, or less in magnitude? Instead of this, they are more numerous, and more serious; more contradictory to reason, more inconsistent with the character of God, and more directly opposed both to the letter and the spirit of his word. I rest in the Calvinistic system, with a confidence daily increasing, not only because the more I examine it, the more clearly it
appears to me to be taught in the Holy Scriptures; but also because, the more frequently and the more carefully I compare the amount of the difficulties, on both sides, the more heavily they seem to me to press against the Arminian doctrine.

It is easy and popular to object, that Calvinism has a tendency to cut the nerves of all spiritual exertion; that, if we are elected, there is no need of exertion, and if not elected, it will be in vain. But this objection lies with quite as much force against the Arminian hypothesis. Dr. Bowden, and Mr. Hov, and all Armenians, though they reject the doctrine of Election, explicitly grant that, while some will, in fact, be saved, others will, in fact, as certainly perish. Now it is perfectly plain that this position is just as liable to the abuse above stated, as the Calvinistic doctrine. For a man may say, "I shall either be saved, or I shall not. If I am to be saved, no anxiety about it is necessary; and if I am to perish, all anxiety about it will be useless." Would these gentlemen consider this objection as a valid one against their creed? I presume not. But it has no more validity against ours. Another objection is equally common and popular. It is said, if none but the elect will be saved, how can God be considered as sincere in making the offers of mercy to all? The Arminian is just as much bound to answer this question as the Calvinist. He grants that all men will not, in fact, be saved; he grants, moreover, that God foreknew this from eternity; and that he not only foreknew the
general fact; but also the particular persons who will, and who will not, partake of salvation. How, then, we may ask the Arminian, is God sincere, on his plan, in urging and entreating all to accept of mercy? Again, it has been frequently asked, “If none but the elect will be saved, is not God a partial master, and a respecter of persons?” But it may be quite as plausibly and confidently asked, “How can we reconcile it with the impartiality and the benevolence of God to save only a part of mankind?” If salvation be his work, then, why does he not save all? Why does he make a distinction? And if it be not his work, then men save themselves. Will even Mr. How, with all his inveteracy against Calvinism, go this length?

But while all the objections which our Arminian brethren urge against Calvinism, lie with full as much force against their own system; there are others, of a still more serious nature, to which that system is liable, and which, if I were compelled to admit, would plunge me into darkness and despair.

Yes, my brethren, if I could bring myself to believe, that the infinite and eternal God has had no plan in the kingdom of his grace, but has left all to be decided by chance, or accident, not knowing the end from the beginning—If I could believe that the purposes of Jehovah, instead of being eternal, are all formed in time; and instead of being immutable, are all liable to be altered by the changing will of his creatures—If I could suppose that,
after all the Redeemer has done and suffered, the work of redemption cannot be completed, unless perishing mortals choose to lend their arm to its aid—If I could admit the idea, that God has done nothing more than decree, in general, to save all who may happen to believe; without any determination, or, which is the same thing, without any certainty, whether few, or many, or none, would be thus blessed—If I could suppose that God foresaw events as certainly future, which he had not unchangeably determined to accomplish, and which, therefore, might never happen—If I could suppose that the omniscient Saviour died with a distinct purpose and design to save all men alike, while it is certain that all will not be saved—If I could embrace the opinion that real Christians are no more indebted to grace than others, having received no more than they; and that what makes them to differ from others is, not the sovereign goodness of God, but their own superior wisdom, strength, or merit; in other words, that they make themselves to differ—If I could admit the dreadful thought, that the Christian's continuance in his journey heavenward, depends, not on the immutable love and promise of his God; but on the firmness of his own strength, and the stability of his own resolutions; and, of course, that he who is the most eminent saint to day, may become a child of wrath, and an heir of perdition to-morrow—In short, if I could conceive of God as working without any providential design, and willing without any certain effect; desiring to
save man, yet unable to save him, and often disappointed in his expectations; doing as much, and designing as much, for those that perish, as for those that are saved; but after all baffled in his wishes concerning them; hoping and desiring great things, but certain of nothing, because he had determined on nothing—If I could believe these things, then, indeed, I should renounce Calvinism; but it would not be to embrace the system of Arminius. Alas! it would be impossible to stop here. I must consider the character of God as dishonoured; his counsels as degraded to a chaos of wishes and endeavours; his promises as the fallible and uncertain declarations of circumscribed knowledge and endless doubt; the best hopes of the Christian as liable every hour to be blasted; and the whole plan of salvation as nothing better than a gloomy system of possibilities and peradventures; a system on the whole, nearly, if not quite, as likely to land the believer in the abyss of the damned, as in the paradise of God.

But, while I verily believe all these shocking consequences to flow, unavoidably, from the rejection of Calvinism; while the Arminian doctrine appears to me inconsistent with itself; dishonourable to God; and comfortless to man; yet I dare not bring a railing accusation against those who embrace this doctrine; I dare not impute to them the consequences which have been stated. They neither acknowledge nor perceive them; and if they did, would no doubt, be as ready to abhor them as
ourselves. Nor can I cease to cherish the animating belief, as well as to offer the fervent prayer, that thousands who now reject, in words, the doctrines of Calvinism, and entertain invincible prejudices against the system which is generally called by that name; may, notwithstanding, for ever rejoice in these doctrines, and bless God for them, in a more enlightened, and a more happy world.
LETTER VIII.

Testimony of the Successors of the Reformers.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

By the Successors of the Reformers, I mean those great and good men who adorned the Protestant Churches, and took the lead in the direction of their affairs, for sixty or seventy years after the establishment of the Reformation. Some of these excellent men have been quoted by our Episcopal brethren as witnesses in their favour; especially some of the greatest ornaments of the Dutch and French Churches. Mr. How speaks with confidence of their testimony, as decisively favourable to his system; and Dr. Bowden, by referring, with approbation, to what Dr. Hobart has advanced on this part of the controversy, virtually speaks the same language.

These gentlemen, in giving this representation, surely count largely on the ignorance of their readers. For although, if one might believe Durell, and other collectors and perverters of scraps from the writers in question, they sometimes speak like believers in the Apostolical institution of prelacy;
yet when we come to peruse their works, and especially to examine the passages in which they formally deliver their opinion on this subject, we shall find them, almost with one voice, speaking a language directly opposite to that which is ascribed to them.

The truth is, when the Nonconformists in England, after the establishment of the Reformation, began to revolt from the Episcopal hierarchy, and to oppose its unscriptural pretensions, a number of the Bishops, and other divines of the established Church in that country, wrote to some of the most eminent Presbyterian divines of the foreign Reformed Churches, soliciting their influence, and the authority of their names, to quiet the minds of the discontented. In answer to solicitations of this kind, some of the foreign divines wrote letters, in which they spoke politely and respectfully of the Church of England; and plainly expressed an opinion that the Nonconformists ought not to make the point of Church government a cause of separation. Still, however, these men were Presbyterians in principle; they had solemnly subscribed Confessions of Faith, which declared ministerial parity to be the doctrine of Scripture, and the practice of the primitive Church; and when they came to discuss and decide the question concerning Prelacy, they spoke a language corresponding with their creed. And I venture to add, that for every concession in favour of Prelacy, which my opponents produce from the French, Dutch, Swiss,
and German divines, who succeeded to the Reformers, any man of reading might safely engage to produce ten, more pointed concessions from divines of the Church of England, in favour of Presbyterianism.

It would be perfectly easy to fill a volume with quotations in proof of what has been advanced. The following selection will be sufficient to answer my purpose. It will be clearly seen, that, as the great body of the Reformers never offered the plea of necessity for establishing Presbyterian parity; but steadily appealed to the word of God, and primitive usage as their warrant; so the great and excellent men who came after them, with scarcely any important exception, took the same ground, and made the same appeal.

The learned Le Blanc, a French Protestant divine of great eminence, who flourished in the age immediately succeeding that of the Reformation, says, "It is the most general opinion of the English, that Episcopacy and Presbyterian offices; but the rest of the Reformed, as also those of the Augustan Confession, (the Lutherans,) do unanimously believe that there is no such distinction by divine right; and that the superiority of Bishops above Presbyters is only of ecclesiastical right, and has been introduced into the Church by degrees. In the ages after the Apostles, a custom was introduced, that one of the Presbyters should be chosen, by the votes of the whole college, to preside over the other
"Presbyters; and these, after a while, assumed to themselves the name of Bishops, and, by degrees, gained more and more prerogatives, and brought their colleagues into subjection to them, until, at length, the matter grew up to that tyranny which now obtains in the Church of Rome." 

The very learned Chamier, a French Protestant divine of great distinction, contemporary with Beza, has been sometimes quoted by Episcopalians, as making concessions in favour of their cause—

The following quotation will show his opinion of ministerial imparity. "Prelacy was not, by those who first began it, judged to be absolutely better than Presbytery; but only in a certain respect. Upon the same account we may likewise say, that equality among Pastors is better in a certain respect, viz. for the avoiding of the tyranny of a few over the rest of their brethren, yea, of one over all. And how great an evil tyranny is, and how wide a gate was opened to it from the ambition for this presidency, experience hath, long since, more than sufficiently shown." In another part of the same work, he speaks still more strongly—"There is no one who doubts that this custom of giving one Presbyter a presidency over the rest, was introduced by good men, and upon a good design. Would to God that it had not

* Thee. de Grad. Minist.
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"rather arisen from carnal prudence, than from the direction of the Spirit! Would to God it had been attended with as happy and prosperous success, as it was introduced with applause." In the next chapter, after having shown at large how Episcopacy introduced the Papacy, he closes the account with the following remark—"Thus human wisdom, if once it decline but a jot from the original truth, becomes worse and worse." M. Danau, a very eminent divine of the French Protestant Church, also contemporary with Beza, treating of the subject under consideration, thus writes. "So long as the Apostolic Constitution continued in the Church, the Presbyters that laboured in the word and doctrine differed not at all from Bishops. But after that, by the ambition of those who presided over other Presbyters, and took to themselves the name of Bishops, the Apostolical form and discipline was abolished; then the Bishops began to be distinguished even from those Presbyters that preached the word; and to these Bishops, contrary to God's word, the whole dignity was ascribed; scarcely any part thereof being left to the Presbyters; which thing, and the ambition of the Bishops, did in time ruin the whole Church, as the fact of the Papacy itself proclaims: And so the Apostolic Episcopacy was abolished, and a hu-

* Pamstrat. Lib. 10. Cap. 5. § 22.
† Ibid. Cap. 6. § 18.
man Episcopacy began, from which sprang the
satanic Episcopacy, as it now is in the Papacy.
—The distinction of a Bishop from a preaching
Presbyter is juris pontificii, of Pontifian and
positive right, being brought in after the foun-
dations of the tyranny of the Bishops were laid;
but is not of divine right*.

The celebrated Bochart, a French Protestant di-
vine of great learning and authority, has often been
quoted by Episcopal writers, as having expressed
himself in favour of Prelacy. The following decla-
rations from his pen are found in a letter which he-
wrote to Dr. Morley, an English Bishop, who had
requested his opinion on the subject. "In the
office of Overseer or Bishop, there are three
things which we must not mix together,—the
πρεσβυτείον, i.e. the Eldership, or Pastoral office,
which Scripture ascribes to the Overseer or Bi-
shop;—the υἱόχριστος, i.e. the pre-eminence above
other pastors, which the ancient Church added
to the Bishop; and the lordship over God's heri-
tage which some in these last times have stren-
uously advocated. The first of these is of di-
vine authority; the second of ecclesiastical au-
thority; and the third of neither, but a mere
abuse. The first, the Church cannot dispense
with; the second may be borne; but the third
ought at once to be rooted out."—In answer to
Bishop Morley's question, whether it was better

* Daniæ Controv. 5. Lib. i. Cap. 14.
for the English Church to be governed by Presbyters than by Bishops, Bochart replies—"The Episcopal government was not of divine, but ecclesiastical appointment; but since the English Church has hitherto been governed by Bishops, that form of government may and can with propriety be borne. For every where men live; but men cannot live every where in the same way. As in political society some prefer being governed by one, and others by many; so it is in ecclesiastical society. In England they are so accustomed to Episcopal government, that though of no divine or apostolical authority, it cannot be dispensed with. In other places, government by Overseers, or Ministers, or Presbyters, is preferred. But in Churches which have never been governed by Bishops, they may be dispensed with, even though the civil government be monarchical; since this new institution, of human origin, sprung merely from pride and ambition, and has never been of the least advantage to the Church, which in every change of things ought always to be contemplated. And since it will neither diminish nor increase the glory of a Prince, whether he receive his crown from a Bishop or Pastor."—In another part of the same letter, he says—"If you ask for the opinions of the Ancients, I entirely agree with Jerome, that, in the Apostolic times, there was no difference between Bishops and Presbyters, or Elders, and
that the Church was governed by a common council of Presbyters*.

In this manner did Bochart, unquestionably one of the most learned men of his day, speak on the subject under consideration, when his opinion was formally requested. And when it is considered that he communicated this opinion to a respectable Prelate; and, of course, had every inducement to speak as favourably of the English hierarchy as possible, the quotation carries with it peculiar weight.

But none of the writers of the Reformed Churches have been quoted, by our Episcopal brethren, with more confidence, as a witness in their favour, than the very learned and celebrated M. Claude. The following quotation leaves no room to doubt what were his real sentiments on the subject in dispute.

The Apostles have left no successors in their office, which was unique. It was an extraordinary office; and they continue to teach and instruct the Church in all ages, by their writings. The Apostles first collected Churches by their preaching. These Churches, when assembled, with their advice and assistance, appointed their own Presbyters or Elders, Overseers or Bishops; and they received the symbol, or ceremonial investiture of office, by the laying on of the hands

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of the Presbytery or Eldership: The office itself
being conferred, and the vocation made by the
election of the Church. And so scrupulous
were the Apostles in appointing this order of
things, which was to remain in the Church, that,
even in their presence, the ordination rite was
performed by the laying on of the hands of the
Presbytery*.”

Again, he says, “As to ordinations of this kind,
(by Presbyters,) can the Author be ignorant
that the distinction of Bishop and Presbyter, as
expressive of different offices, is a distinction
which not only cannot be proved by the Scrip-
tures; but which contradicts their express lan-
guage, in which it is plain that Bishop and Pres-
byter are only different names expressive of the
same office? Can this author be ignorant of the
opinion of St. Jerome, of Hilary, the Deacon,
and, after them, of Hincmar, which they have
so explicitly given, concerning the unity or iden-
tity of the office of Bishop and Presbyter, in the
earliest ages of the Church; and concerning the
origin of that distinction which afterwards took
place between them? Can he be ignorant that
St. Augustine himself, writing to St. Jerome, re-
fers that distinction, not to the primitive institu-
tion of the ministry, but merely to an ecclesiasti-
cal custom, which had since grown up? Can

* Historical Defence of the Reformation, 4to. Edit. 1672.
he be ignorant that some of the fathers have taught us, that the ordination of a Presbyter and a Bishop are strictly one and the same, and not different kinds of acts, sufficiently expressing to us the identity of the offices? And as to the right of ordaining, can this author deny that St. Paul speaks of the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery? Can he deny that Presbyters anciently ordained equally with Bishops? Further, "The right of ordination, therefore, is one that naturally belongs to Presbyters. And since they have been deprived of it by rules and constitutions which are merely of human authority, the right still remains essentially attached to their office, and they may justly reclaim it, whenever the state of the Church will permit. And that I may declare my opinion with freedom, it appears to me that the haughty and insolent opinion, which maintains the absolute necessity of Episcopal ordinations, and, without them, annihilates the Church, the ministry, and the sacraments, however pure the faith, the doctrine, and the piety of the Church may be;—thus making religion depend on a form, and that form of mere human invention;—I repeat it, it appears to me that this insolent opinion carries on it the character of a shameful corruption; it bears the mark of profound hypocrisy, of a pure Pharisaism, which strains at a gnat, while it swallows a camel. I cannot help having, at least, a deep con-

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"tempt for such opinions, and compassion for those who are thus obstinate and headstrong in maintaining them*."

In 1680, when Owen, Baxter, Alsop, Clarkson, Howe, and other eminent English Presbyterians, had written largely and ably in defence of their principles; the Episcopal writers, feeling themselves deficient in argument, made an attempt to support their cause, by soliciting some of the foreign Presbyterians to speak in their favour. For this purpose the Bishop of London, in that year, wrote to M. Claude, requesting him to give his opinion of English Presbyterianism. Claude returned a complaisant answer, expressing great respect for the English Church; gently blaming the Nonconformists for separating from it merely on a question of government; and explicitly conceding that salvation might be obtained, and every spiritual advantage received under the Episcopal regimen. Messieurs L'Angle and Le Moyne, being addressed in the same manner, wrote in a similar strain. These letters Bishop Stillingfleet subjoined to a work of his own, on The Unreasonableness of Separation, and pompously published as suffrages for Episcopacy; and ever since, they have been confidently quoted for the same purpose.

M. Claude complained that his Letter was published without his permission; that a construction was put upon it, which he never intended; and that a use was made of it contrary to his wishes. These

complaints were contained in Letters addressed to the Bishop of London, and to a Lady of his acquaintance, in the year 1681; which, however, the Episcopalians of England took care never to publish; and which were never given to the world until after the death of Claude, when they were brought to light by his son. The following extracts from these Letters will be sufficient to place the sentiments of the excellent writer in a just point of light.

"I have received the Letter which you were pleased to send me from the Bishop of London, with the book which accompanied it. I shall have the honour to reply to the Bishop, and to thank him for the present which he hath sent me. Nevertheless, Madam, as I learn from different places, that many persons have not entirely understood my sentiments and expressions, touching the present state of the English Church, I have believed that it would not be improper to explain myself more particularly to you, and to let you know the innocence of my thoughts and intentions. First; I can conscientiously declare that when I wrote on the subject to the Bishop of London, it was not with the intention that my letter should be printed, or rendered public; and that I have even been surprised and astonished to see it as well in French as in English, at the end of the book which you have sent me, with two others, one of Mons. M. and another of Mons. A.—But besides this, be assured, Ma-
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"dam, that, in what I have written, I have had "two things only in view; viz. to justify us from "a calumny which some persons imputed to us, "of believing that salvation could not be obtained "under the Episcopal government; and of aiding "as much as my weakness was capable of, a good "and holy union of the two parties. With respect "to the first, I believe I have, with sufficient just- "ness, explained the sentiments of all the Protes- "tants of this kingdom, and in particular, of all "those who are honoured with our character, (the "clergy.) And I am even assured that the Eng- "lish Presbyterians would not go so far as to con- "test the possibility of salvation under the minis- "try of Bishops. They have, for that, too much "light, wisdom, and christian charity. With re- "spect to the second, I have endeavoured to keep "all the measures which ought to be kept in so "great and important an affair as this. I have ex- "plained myself only in the form of a wish, and "in showing what I desired that the Presbyte- "rians might attentively consider. I have not been "silent with regard to the Episcopalians. I have "condemned the excesses into which some of both "parties have gone; and I have shown, as far as "my little wisdom enabled me, the reasons which "should induce both to a just and reasonable ac- "commodation*."

In a Letter to the Bishop of London, of the same

* _Les Oeuvres Posthumes, de M. Claude._ Tom. v. Let. 38.
date, M. Claude writes thus. "The Nonconformists complain, that the Episcopalians are as ardent in pursuing them with the penalties of the laws, as if they were adversaries and enemies. They complain, that your government is no less arbitrary and despotic with regard to dissenting Ministers, than that of the Bishops of the Roman communion. They complain, that you will receive no one to the ministry, till he acknowledges, on oath, that Episcopacy is of divine right, which is a hell (Gehenne) to the conscience. They complain, that, whilst you do not re-ordain the Roman Catholic priests who come to you, you do re-ordain ministers, who come to you from beyond the seas, in the Churches of France, Holland, &c. They complain, that the Bishops have a rigid attachment to many ceremonies which are offensive, and for which, nevertheless, they combat tanquam pro aris et focis. In the name of God, my Lord, labour to remove these grounds of complaint, if there is any truth in them, and if there is not, to give information of the real state of the case. And let all Europe know, that there is nothing which the glory of God, and the love of the Church can demand of you, that you are not ready to grant*."

It is evident, then, from all the documents which have come to light on this subject, that the English Bishops, in order to draw from the foreign Presby-

terians something in their favour, sent to them a
disingenuous statement of the case; that, under
this deception, their answers were written; and
that, as soon as they understood the real state of
things, they complained of having been treated
with duplicity, and declared opinions very different
from those which had been imputed to them. That
this was the case with M. Claude, is certain; and
that it was also the case with his brethren, who
shared in the imposition which was practised upon
him, I have no doubt would appear, if we had ac-
cess to their other writings.

The learned Daille is also frequently quoted by
zealous Episcopalians, as having made important
concessions in favour of Prelacy. I cannot un-
take to say that no incautious or doubtful sentence
ever escaped from the pen of this illustrious Pro-
testant, on the subject of Episcopacy; though I
have never seen any which warrants the construc-
tion of our Episcopal brethren; but I may venture
to assert, that no candid man can peruse his Ser-
mans on the First Epistle to Timothy, without being
convinced that he was a decided and warm adva-
cate of ministerial parity, as having obtained in
the Apostolic and primitive Church. To prove
this, the following extracts are sufficient.

"Here the hierarchs, having their imagination
full of their grand prelatures, of their bishoprics,
their archbishoprics, and their primacies, do not
fail to dream of one in these words of the Apos-
tle. That he besought Timothy to abide still at
“Ephesus, signifies, if you believe them, that he made Timothy Bishop of the Church of Ephesus; and not only that, but even Metropolitan, or Archbishop of the province; and even primate of all Asia. You see how ingenious is the passion for the crosier and the mitre; being able, in so few and simple words, to detect such great mysteries! For where is the man, who, in the use of his natural understanding, without being heated by a previous attachment, could ever have found so many mitres—that of a Bishop, that of an Archbishop, and that of a Primate, in these two words, Paul besought Timothy to abide still at Ephesus? Who, without the help of some extraordinary passion, could ever have made so charming and so rare a discovery? And imagine that to beseech a man to stay in a city, means, to establish him Bishop of that city, Archbishop of the province, and primate of all the country? In very deed, the cause of these gentlemen of the hierarchy must be reduced to an evil plight, since they are constrained to resort to such pitiful proofs.*

Again, he says—“St. Paul, and all the company of Pastors, laid hands on Timothy at his ordination. St. Paul as president, and the rest as colleagues, according to the practice which obtains among us, where it is usual for the person appointed by the Synod first to lay hands on him.

* See his First Sermon on the Epistle.
that is ordained; all the rest of the pastors present, afterwards joining with him in laying on their hands on the same person.*"}

The language of those divines of the Lutheran Church, who succeeded the Reformers, was not less explicit and decisive than that of the other Protestant divines of Europe. The following specimen of their opinions, is all that I have room to admit.

The learned Frederick Balduin, Professor of Divinity in the University of Wittembergh and a Superintendent in the Lutheran Church, speaking on the subject in question, expresses himself in the following manner. "Hence the Papists commonly cry out against the pastors of our Churches, as if they were not legitimately ordained, because they were not ordained by Bishops; and they assert that neither Luther, nor any other orthodox ministers, had the power of conferring orders, because they were not Bishops; but only Presbyters. But our judgment is that Bishops have their pre-eminence in the Church, not by divine right, but by a voluntary arrangement of the Church, which thought proper to direct that, for the sake of order, a Bishop, or he who was first in the ministry, should ordain in the Church; the whole Presbytery being present, and laying on hands at the same time; but so,

* See his 31st Sermon on the Epistle.
however, that if the Bishop or first minister, should happen to be absent, a Presbyter might perform the same duty in his stead, that nothing may be neglected in the Church. For a Bishop is nothing more than the first Presbyter, as St. Augustine tells us, _Quaest. 101. ex utroque Testam._ Accordingly, "in Egypt, Presbyters ordain, if a Bishop be not present," as Ambrose writes, in his Commentary on _Ephesians_ iv. "There is nothing, therefore, wanting to the validity of our ministry; for with respect to the difference which the Episcopists make between a Bishop and a Presbyter, as if the former only had the power of ordaining, the Scriptures do not recognize it. The Scriptures ascribe the power of ordination to the whole Presbytery, not to a single Bishop; as the Apostle writes to Timothy—Neglect not the gift which is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. And the Apostle Paul, though not inferior to a Bishop in dignity, accepted ordination from the Presbytery of Antioch, not from a single Bishop; as we find related, _Acts_ xii. 2. From all which considerations we plainly infer that the legitimacy of the ordinations in the Lutheran Churches, whether performed by Luther or by other Lutheran ministers, cannot by any means be called in question*."

* _Tractatus Luculentus de Casibus Conscientiae._ Lib 4. Cap. 6. _Cas. 4._ 4to. 1628.
Another respectable authority on this subject, is the learned C. Dieterich, a Doctor of Divinity, and also a Superintendent in the Lutheran Church of Germany, who lived in the age immediately following that of Luther. He declares, that "the ordination of ministers in the Lutheran Church is by Presbyters, and that this method of ordination has the divine warrant." And a little after, he remarks, "They (the Papists) rail against us that we are not able to produce a regular commission, because we are neither called, nor ordained by Bishops, having papal jurisdiction, nor have any legitimate claim to the Apostolic succession. But let them rail. This is the old Popish tune to which our ears have become accustomed. Neither Bishops alone, nor the Pope alone, have the power of ordaining ministers. The blessed Apostles, without any parade of ceremony, were in the habit of introducing candidates into the sacred office by fasting, prayer, and the imposition of the hands of Ministers. We imitate this Apostolic simplicity. And where men are called, examined, ordained, and placed in the Church, by prayer, and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, the ministry of the word and sacraments, the government of the flock, &c. are committed to them. Which kind of ordination, though not enjoined by absolute divine command, we nevertheless judge proper to be retained, partly because it is conformable with the practice of the primitive Church; and
partly on account of its salutary effects*.” Again, he remarks—“Scripture knows nothing of any difference between Presbyter and Bishop. Those who are in one place called Presbyters are, a little after, called Bishops; as in Acts xx. 17. 28. St. Jerome shows the same thing in his Commentary on the Epistle to Titus. With Jerome agreed Chrysostom, Theodoret, Primasius, Theophylact, and other Fathers. Even in the Canon Law the same doctrine is contained. For it is there asserted, that, ‘formerly a Presbyter and a Bishop were the same thing.’ Even Belarmino does not deny this, in his work De Cleris, Lib. i. Cap. 12. for he says that the Episcopal pre-eminence of one was brought in by the Church, as a remedy for schism; and quotes Jerome as his authority. How, then, can it be of divine right†?

Professor Hulsemann, a Lutheran Divine of great eminence, and who also lived in the age immediately following that of Luther, in a commentary on the Augustan Confession, expresses himself in the following manner. "The Bishops succeeded in the place of the Apostles; not, however, as to that which formally constituted them Apostles, Gal. i. 1. 2 Cor. xii. 11, 12; but as to that which they hold in common with Presbyters; for,

* Analysis Evangeliorum. Par. 11. 47-49.
† Ibid. 61, 62.
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"by divine right, they are in no respect superior to "Presbyters*.""

Gerhard, a Lutheran Divine of great eminence and authority, who lived a little after the time of Luther, though he admits that a moderate kind of Episcopacy, amounting to nothing more than a standing moderatorship, is lawful, and, in some cases, expedient, yet he represents it as a mere human institution; and explicitly speaks of the doctrine that Bishops are, by divine right, an order superior to Presbyters, and alone possess the power of ordination, as a Popish error†.

The works of few Lutheran divines hold a higher place in the esteem of the Churches of that denomination, than those of Budeæus, the celebrated Professor of divinity at Leipsic. This learned theologian makes the following statement, with regard to the government of his own Church. "The judgment of the divines of our Church, is this, that, among those who preside in the Church, there is, by divine right, no difference, on the score of dignity, so that Presbyters and Bishops are equal: But, notwithstanding that, there is no solid objection against introducing a certain inequality, on the ground of human expediency, and giving to one of the ministers of the word a sort of inspection over the rest, and, at the same time, a certain pre-eminence of character. Neither

† Loci Communes, Tom. 6. Col. 260, 261.
do we deny that this was the case in the ancient Church; although the abuse which arose from this, in which the Bishops usurped to themselves a tyrannical domination, we greatly detest. Nor can we be charged with having abolished the office of Bishop in our Church, as Henry Dodwell, and others, have reproachfully alleged against us; since it is plain from fact, that we have only restored the office to those just limits, and to that true character which it held in the ancient Church. For we have not only given to ministers of the word that power which Presbyters enjoyed in the Apostolic Church; but to certain of them there is allowed a kind of pre-eminence or inspection over others. These are called Superintendents, or Presidents, or Inspectors, and, in some places, they are styled Bi-

* The learned Dodwell understood the government of the Lutheran Church much better than Dr. Bowden and Mr. How. He thought that, on the principles of the jure divi-no prelatists, the Lutherans had no Bishops among them; and the learned Buddæus confesses the fact; though he contends that they have such Bishops as the ancient Church had.

† Here Buddæus makes a clear distinction between the ancient church, and the Apostolic church. By the former, he elsewhere explains himself to mean that which existed soon after the Apostolic age; by the latter he means that ecclesiastical order which the Apostles themselves established. In the former he admits that a moderate kind of Episcopacy was introduced by human wisdom, and this he says the Lutherans imitate. In the latter, he repeatedly and explicitly declares that ministerial parity prevailed.
“shops.” The same writer, in the very section from which the above extract is taken, more than once remarks, that the Papists, and the English Episcopalians are equally in error in asserting the divine right of prelacy. He speaks of his having written two works on the Origin and Power of Bishops, which were particularly intended to oppose the notions of certain high-Churchmen in England. He declares, that it is notorious and unquestionable that Jerome contended zealously for the primitive equality of Bishops and Presbyters. And he also asserts, that the office of Deacon was, in process of time, perverted from that guardianship of the poor which it was expressly intended to subserv by the Apostles.

The same Divine, in his able and learned Preface to Bingham's Origines Ecclesiasticae, adverting to Bingham's high-Church opinions, makes the following declarations. "But when he asserts, further on, that the order of Bishops was instituted by the Apostles, he will have very few to join him, excepting the Roman Catholics, and the high-toned Episcopalians in England. For there is not only no vestige of such a thing to be found in Scripture; but the very contrary is plainly intimated there, viz. that Presbyters and Bishops were the same thing in the Apostolic age." He then goes on to show that the Fathers teach no-

thing contrary to this; and by a number of quotations from Ignatius, Clemens Alexandrinus, Irenaeus, and Tertullian, evidently establishes his point.

I have reserved for separate consideration, the testimony of the Synod of Dort; not only because the proceedings of that venerable assembly hold a most important station in the history of the Christian Church; but also because they have been misunderstood and misrepresented by my opponents, in a manner so extraordinary as to demand particular notice. Mr. How, especially, has allowed himself to speak on this subject in a way for which I really feel at a loss to form an adequate apology. To suppose that it has never fallen in his way to obtain correct information respecting it, is the most favourable construction which the case seems to admit.

It is generally known, that the Synod of Dort sat in the years 1618 and 1619; that it was convened for the purpose of considering and deciding on the heresy of Arminius; that it was composed of delegates from the greater part of the Protestant Churches of Europe; that King James I. sent five delegates from the Church of England, to deliberate and vote in the Synod; and that of these delegates one was, at that time, a Bishop, and two others were, soon after their return home, raised to that dignity. It is also well known, that the Synod, after long and solemn deliberation, formally condemned the doctrines of Arminius, and adopted
those of Calvin; and that the English delegates concurred, with one voice, both in the condemnation of the former, and in the adoption of the latter.

In speaking of the proceedings of this Synod, in my seventh Letter, having no temptation to conceal or disguise the truth, I was careful to state, that "Bishop Carleton, and the other English delegates expressed their opinion, in the Synod, very fully in favour of the Episcopal form of government." This, however, does not satisfy Mr. How. He professes to quote my sentence, but adroitly leaves out the words "very fully," and then exclaims—"See, Sir, how you mis-state? They declared the divine right of Episcopacy. Is there no difference between the two modes of expression? You seem to have been aware of the necessity of concealing the true state of the case from your readers; thus entitling yourself to the credit, at least, of caution as an advocate, whatever may be thought of your candour as a man." Passing by the indelicate suggestion which this passage contains, as beneath a reply, I would only ask, where is the "mis-statement?" To say that they "expressed an opinion very fully in favour of Episcopacy," is surely a mode of speaking sufficiently strong to cover the fact, even as Mr. How states it. Whatever "difference" there may be in the two modes of expression, there is certainly no inconsistency between them.

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Mr. How seems desirous of impressing on the minds of his readers, that the English delegates had been warmly solicited by the Dutch to attend their Synod; and complied with their solicitation, rather as a matter of courtesy, than of strict ecclesiastical order. He says, "The English Bishops being invited to attend, thought it would be wrong to refuse the invitation; especially as it was their ardent wish to promote union and harmony among protestants." Now it happens that the solicitation was all on the other side. The fact is, that the states of Holland at first intended to form the Synod of Dort of delegates from their own Churches only; and it was at the express solicitation of King James, (whose request was communicated and seconded by Maurice, Prince of Orange, that eminent Divines deputed from England, and other reformed countries, were admitted to sit and deliberate in that assembly*. Had Mr. How been acquainted with this fact, he could not possibly have penned the above cited paragraph.

I had produced, in my seventh Letter, the conduct of the English delegates to the Synod of Dort, in accepting seats in that assembly, as an implied recognition of the Presbyterian Church of Holland, as a true Church; and of all the ministers of the continent who composed the Synod, (though

none of them had received Episcopal ordination,) as true ministers of Christ.—And in this judgment the Episcopal historian Collier, concurs. Dr. Bowden, however, is of opinion, that the conduct of the English delegates does by no means admit of such a construction. Mr. How goes further, and even ventures to affirm, that the history of the English delegation to the Synod of Dort, instead of affording the least countenance to the Presbyterian doctrine of parity, rather shows that the most respectable delegates to that Synod, from the different Reformed Churches, really believed in the doctrine of Prelacy by divine right; lamented their want of diocesan Bishops; and ascribed their want of this ecclesiastical regimen only to necessity. Nay he declares, that to attempt to construe the attendance of the English delegates as I have done, "is as puerile as it is disingenuous." Nothing more is necessary than this simple statement to show Mr. How's entire want of acquaintance with the history of that Synod, and the import of its transactions; which, indeed, he betrays in almost every sentence he has written on the subject.—Let me request your attention to the following particulars.

The ministers of the Dutch Church had it in their power, at the time of the Reformation, to retain diocesan Episcopacy, if they had thought it either scriptural or expedient. The people, for a number of centuries, had been accustomed to this kind of ecclesiastical government. The magistrates made no objection to its continuance. And
nothing would have been more easy than to obtain regular consecration for protestant Bishops. No necessity, therefore, of rejecting prelacy, or of adopting Presbyterian parity, in Holland, ever existed, or was pretended to exist. But such was the knowledge which the great and good Reformers, in that country, had obtained of the government, as well as the doctrines of the primitive Church, that when they broke off from Popery, they thought it their duty to restore the scriptural order, together with the primitive truth of the Church. They had seen the mischiefs of Prelacy. They knew that it had no divine authority for its support—And, therefore, when they threw off the yoke of bondage, they rejected this, not by any means as the worst, but still as one of the errors of the Church of Rome.

The Faith, Government, and Discipline of the Reformed Dutch Church were settled by a succession of National Synods, beginning with that of Wesel in 1568, and ending with that of Dort in 1618 and 1619*. The Synods held at Wesel, in the year above mentioned, and at Emden, in 1571, are considered as having formed the fundamental articles of that Church, both with respect to doctrine and government. Among the proceedings of the Synod of Wesel, it was ordained, in the second article of their acts, "That besides forming a Consis-

* See a brief and perspicuous sketch of the rise, progress, and principles of the Reformed church of Holland, in a small Book entitled, Kerkelyk Hantboekje, &c. i.e Church Manual, necessary for Ministers and Consistories. Delf. 1738.
"tory in every congregation, the Netherland Pro-
vinces should be divided into certain Classes"—
And in the third article, they say, “As soon as it
shall please the Lord to open a door for the free
preaching of his word in the Netherlands, care
shall be taken immediately for calling Provincial
Synods, for arranging all matters,” &c. And it
is expressly added, that in these judicatories the
ministers shall preside in rotation.—In the Synod
of Embden, in 1571, their acts commence with the
same regulation respecting Consistories, Classes,
and Synods, as were stated as having passed at
Wesel, three years before. One of their articles
begins with these words—“No Church shall be
considered as having authority over another
Church. No minister of the Gospel shall be
vested with power above another minister; but
every one shall avoid the very suspicion, and
watch against every temptation that might draw
him to assume a superiority.”

It is observable that, for the formation of these
ecclesiastical judicatories, this Synod distributed
the Reformed Churches into three great districts.
One comprehended all the Churches in the Wes-
tern part of Germany, and Holland, or East-Fries-
land. Another comprised what they called the
Churches under the Cross, meaning those which
were surrounded by Papists, and exposed to the
persecution of Popish magistrates and ecclesiastics.
And the last district which they named, took in all
the English Churches. The 12th article, which re-
lates to these last, is very remarkable. " And the 
" members of the Church of England shall be ad-
" monished to distribute their Churches also into 
" Classes without any further delay." From this 
article it is evident, not only that the Dutch Church, 
at this period, was decidedly anti-Episcopal in her 
principles; but also that she wished and hoped to 
prevail on the Church of England to come nearer to 
her views of ecclesiastical government, if not to 
adopt them. There is peculiar emphasis in the 
word admonish, which conveys the idea of exhorta-
tion and warning, with some fear of delinquency.

In every succeeding national Synod down to that 
of Dort, the same Presbyterian principles were de-
cidedly avowed and maintained, as every public 
document respecting them unequivocally proves. 
In fact, with regard to the parity of ministers, and 
the government of the Church by consistorial, clas-
sical, and synodical assemblies, there was not only 
a perfect harmony, and absolute decision, in all the 
Synods antecedent to that of Dort, but each suc-
ceeding Synod literally copied the language of the 
preceding; and all, with undeviating consistency, 
opposed prelacy, and adhered to the Presbyterian 
model. I challenge Mr. How, or any of his friends, 
to produce a single authentic testimony which 
shows that, among all the discussions and transac-
tions of the Church of Holland, respecting ecclesi-
astical policy, there was ever so much as a proposal 
to make the government of that Church Episcopal;
" a single sentence from the writings of any res-
pectable divine in her communion, which expresses a belief in the divine right of diocesan Episcopacy, or even a preference for this form of Church order.

With respect to the Synod of Dort, everyone who is acquainted with its history, and with its published Acts, knows that it was entirely and exclusively Presbyterian. To assert or insinuate the contrary, is to insult the understanding of every well-informed man. The ministers who composed that Synod, were among the most learned, pious, and dignified divines that ever adorned the Christian Church. In transacting the business entrusted to them, they bound themselves by the solemnity of an oath, to adhere strictly to the word of God in all their proceedings. And the indisputable fact is, that these men, acting under this awful solemnity, did, among other articles relating to Church government, form and adopt the following: “We believe that this true Church must be governed by that spiritual policy, which our Lord hath taught us in his word; namely, that there must be Ministers or Pastors, to preach the word of God, and to administer the sacraments; also Elders and Deacons, who, together with the Pastors, form the council of the Church.—As for the ministers of God’s word, they have equally the same power and authority wheresoever they are; as they are all ministers of Christ, the only universal Bishop, and the only Head of the Church.”

But Dr. Bowden and Mr. How, in the face of all this unquestionable testimony, still contend, that the principal members of the Synod of Dort gave their suffrage in favour of Episcopacy. In support of this assertion, they quote a laconic and equivocal reply of Bogerman, the President of the Synod, to Bishop Carleton; and also certain private conversations said to have been held by the Bishop with the other members of the Synod. But neither of these when examined, will be found to justify the use which is attempted to be made of them.

The nature and circumstances of the polite reply of President Bogerman, on which so much stress has been laid, were as follows. Bishop Carleton, when the article maintaining the parity of ministers came under consideration, rose in his place and opposed its adoption. He declared that diocesan Bishops were of divine appointment; that this order had been retained in the Church from the time of the Apostles; and that he could by no means give his sanction to the article proposed. To this address the Bishop himself expressly tells us, "no answer was made by any*." And Dr. Heylin says, of the same speech, that "though it was admitted, and perhaps recorded, it received no other answer but neglect, if not scorn withal†."

Bishop Hall, however, (though by the way, he was not present when this event occurred, having

* See his Protestation, published after his return, and entitled Appello ad Cesarem.
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retired from the Synod three months before, on account of indisposition,) gives a different account of the matter. Bishop Carleton himself, tells us that, in his speech, besides declaring his belief in the divine appointment of Prelacy, he launched out in praise of this form of ecclesiastical government, and spoke of its benign effects in England, in promoting union, order, and harmony in the Church of that kingdom. To all this, Bishop Hall says, the only answer made was by the President, Bogerman, who simply replied, "Domine, nos non sumus adeo felices." My Lord, we are not so happy*. Now as Bishop Carleton, who made the speech, declares that no answer was given to it by any one; as Heylin asserts that it was treated with neglect, if not with scorn; and as Bishop Hall was not himself present, at this time, in the Synod; the probability is, that he has given an erroneous statement. But supposing it to be perfectly correct, to what does it amount? It might have been intended as a delicate sarcasm on the Bishop, for his unseasonable introduction of this controversy. It might have been uttered as a mere compliment to a stranger, who was a Prelate, and with whom it was not desirable to have any dispute, when the object of the Synod was so entirely different. It might have been meant only to convey the idea, that the Church of Holland was not so happy as to be in that quiet, united, and orderly state, which had been represent-

* Hall's Episcopacy by Divine Right, &c. Part i. § 4.
ed as existing in the Church of England. At any rate the answer is perfectly equivocal, and furnishes no warrant whatever for the construction of my opponents.

But these gentlemen lay no small stress on another circumstance. Bishop Carleton, in the same Protestation which was before quoted, informs us, that, "in his private discourse with some of the most learned divines of the Synod, he told them that the troubles of Holland proceeded from their want of Bishops; and that the Churches of those Provinces would never be quiet until they had Bishops to govern the Clergy." To these remarks, he tells us, they answered, "that they highly esteemed the good order and discipline of the Church of England, and heartily wished the same order was established in their country; but that they could not hope for it, in the present posture of affairs. They added, that they hoped God would assist them by his grace, and that they would contribute with all their might to the establishment of that good order." "Such," the Bishop adds, "was their answer to me. This, I think, justifies them sufficiently. It appears that they do not love popular confusion, and a government destitute of all authority." Mr. How must really be at a loss for testimony, when he can speak with so much exultation of this answer. It is nothing to the purpose. The Bishop, according to his own account, had been declaiming on the advantages of Episcopal government, and
on its influence as he supposed, in promoting the tranquillity, and happiness of the Church which he represented. To this, the Dutch divines, according to the same account, replied, that they had a very respectful opinion of the good order and discipline of the Church of England, and heartily wished that similar order and discipline were established in their own Church. But what did they mean by the "good order" and "discipline" of the Church of England? Did they mean her Prelacy? This is so far from being certain that it is not even probable. There is every reason to believe they only meant to say, that they highly esteemed the regular, settled, and orderly state which the English Church had attained; that they should be glad to see a similar regularity, and quietness established among themselves; but that, amidst so much confusion, they could hardly expect so happy a result. The truth is, the peace of the Church of Holland was, at this time, much disturbed by the controversy with the Remonstrants, which deeply agitated both Church and State. In these circumstances, nothing was more natural than that the members of the Synod should lament their divisions, and express a desire to establish among themselves the same quietness and peace which the Church of England enjoyed; and all this they might say without having the least wish or preference in favour of her Prelacy.

This, then, is the state of the case. The Reformed Church of Holland was Presbyterian from
the beginning. By a succession of national Synods the doctrine of ministerial parity was asserted, published, and maintained, in the most decisive manner, not merely as dictated by expediency, but also as founded in divine appointment. The Synod of Dort spoke the same language, and maintained the same doctrine. Nay, with a solemnity which had taken place at no preceding Synod, the members of that assembly, under the obligation of an oath, declared, that they considered themselves as bound to conform to the Apostolic model of Church government, and that this model was Presbyterian. And to all this evidence, Mr. How has nothing to oppose, but a few equivocal words of some individual members of the Synod, which probably had no reference to Prelacy at all. Who, now, let me ask, has proved himself most liable to the charges of "extreme imprudence," and of having brought forward "puerile" and "disingenuous" allegations? Truly charges of this kind come with a very ill grace from Mr. How.

But we have another method of ascertaining the real sentiments of some of those Divines who composed the Synod of Dort, besides their public conduct in that body. I mean by examining their private writings, in which we may take for granted they expressed their genuine convictions. From such of those writings as I have been able to procure, a few short extracts will be presented, and will be found conclusive.

Gomarus, Professor of Divinity at Groningen,
Successors of the Reformers

was one of the most eminent of the Dutch delegates to that famous Synod. On the subject of Episcopacy, he expresses himself in the following strong and decisive language. "The designation of Bishop, as introduced after the Apostles' time, is unknown to the Scriptures, in which it signifies the same thing with the Presbyter and Pastor. Where Paul recites the various kinds of Gospel ministers, as in Ephes. 4. 11, he acknowledges no such Bishops distinct fromPresbyters, and superior to them. To which purpose Jerome's judgment is memorable, which is extant in his commentary on the Epistle to Titus i. 1, where, comparing the 5th and 7th verses, he infers that the Bishop and Presbyter are one and the same. Which point he doth, likewise, (in the same manner that we have done,) demonstrate from Philip. i. 1, and Acts xx. 28, 29. and other passages connected therewith, concluding all with this weighty assertion, that with the ancients, Bishops and Presbyters were one and the same; until, by degrees, the care and inspection were put upon one; and that the Bishops were set over the Presbyters, rather by custom than by divine appointment. This custom, continues Gomarus, did, at last, bring upon the Church, the mischievous dominion of Bishops, contrary to the Apostle's command.*

Again, "There is no Bishop to be found set

over Presbyters in any place of holy writ. The distinguishing of Bishops from Presbyters, and setting them over Presbyters, in an authoritative Prelacy, took its rise from no Divine institution, but from human tradition, which had its foundation in pride.*

Polyander, Thysius, and Wacæus, Professors of Divinity in the Universities of Leyden, Harderwick, and Middelburg, were also conspicuous and active members of the Synod of Dort. These learned Divines were engaged in a joint work, under the title of Synopsis Theologiae, which has been long highly esteemed in the Church of Holland. Of that work, the following strong and decisive passages are a specimen.

The Apostle calls the same persons Presbyters and Bishops indifferently. Of this we have examples, in Acts 20, 28, where he exhorts the Presbyters of the Church of Ephesus to attend to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them Bishops;—also in 1 Timothy 3, 2. where he describes a Bishop from his qualifications and duties, which same qualifications and duties, the Apostle Peter ascribes to his fellow-Presbyters; so also in his Epistle to the Philippians 1. 1. by Bishops he evidently understands those who presided over the Church of Philippi, in the administration of the word and discipline; and these he distinguishes from Deacons who were entrust-

* * * * *

Explicat. in 1 Pet. 5. p. 704.
Successors of the Reformers.

"ed with the Church's treasure, &c. &c." After adducing several other instances of a similar kind, it is added, "The title of Bishop in Scripture does not denote the authority of one minister over other ministers of Christ, or any kind of prerogative enjoyed by one over others; but is merely used to designate that watch and care over the Church which belongs to an individual."

Again, "The practice, therefore, of investing one person from among the Presbyters with the authority of President, and giving him, by way of eminence, the title of Bishop, was not a divine, but a mere human appointment, and was brought in after the Apostles' time; as, after Jerome, many of the Papists themselves confess, particularly Lombard, Gratian, Cusan, and others."

Further, "The right of choosing Pastors belongs to the Church, and as well to the body of the people as to the Elders; but the right of ordination belongs to the Presbytery alone. And accordingly, in ancient times, the election of Pastors was made by the suffrages of the whole body of the people belonging to a Church; but the ordination was performed by one of the Pastors, in the name of the whole Presbytery, and in the presence of the Church, by the imposition of hands."

In another place they declare, "Although a few of the first Pastors of our Churches were ordained by Bishops, by far the greater part have been more recently ordained by Presbyters. The or-
"dination of the latter is quite as valid as that of " the former; because Bishops and Presbyters " were formerly the same thing; and by divine ." right, the power of ordaining Pastors equally " belonged to both*."

In the same work, these Divines, in the most explicit manner, assert the apostolical institution of Ruling Elders and Deacons; the former to assist the Pastor in the exercise of government and discipline in each Church; the latter to take care of the poor. And they expressly declare, that they consider the Church of Holland, in retaining these officers, as following the example of the Apostolic Church†.

You will pardon me, my Brethren, for this long, and I fear, tedious induction of authorities and quotations. It never occurred to me, before I saw Mr. How's pamphlet, that it was possible for any well-informed man, who valued his reputation, to give such a statement as that gentleman has done of the sentiments of the principal divines of the Reformed Churches. We now see of what he is capable. The next step will probably be to assert, that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, ever has been, and now is, decidedly Prelatical both in its principles and practice. For, really, such an assertion would not be a whit more unfounded. n r f more direct-

* Synop. Pur. Theologie. Disputat. xlili. § 20, 30. 32, 33, 47
† Ibid. Disputat. xlili. 20. 59, 60. 65.
Successors of the Reformers.

ly in the face of all authentic testimony, than several which I have been called to refute in the foregoing pages. It is plain, however, that the more deeply and extensively we pursue our inquiries, the stronger and brighter appears the evidence in favour of the Presbyterian doctrine. It is more and more manifest, that, in pleading the cause of this doctrine, we are pleading the cause of every Protestant Church on earth, excepting that of England, and those who claim descent from her as their Parent.
LETTER IX.

Rise and Progress of Prelacy.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

Dr. Bowden represents Presbyterians as believing that Prelacy was suddenly and violently established; that "a wonderful revolution took place, calculated to influence the passions of thousands, producing violent convulsions, and virulent animosities." And expresses great astonishment that such a revolution, introduced at once, should not have been more distinctly recorded by the early writers.

This is a total misrepresentation. Presbyterians believe and affirm, with Jerome, that Prelacy arose "by little and little." They attribute its introduction to causes quite sufficient to account for the fact, without producing the convulsions and noise which fill the imagination of Dr. Bowden. These causes were, the facility, the indolence, and the inconsideration of some; the ambition of others; the precedency of standing moderators; the veneration paid to senior ministers, and such as were of superior talents and influence; the respect attached to those who resided in large cities, and other considerations of a similar kind. With such
causes as these incessantly at work, who can fail to consider as the most probable of all events, that which Dr. B. represents as altogether impossible?

But Dr. Bowden thinks it utterly incredible that the clergy in the second or third centuries should have been guilty of usurping power, or of struggling for pre-eminence. If we may believe him they were too pious, disinterested and humble, to admit the suspicion of selfishness or ambition having any place among them. "Surely," says he, "men of such distinguished virtue and piety as the Bishops of that period are universally acknowledged to have been, could not have entertained a thought so inconsistent with a pure conscience, with peace of mind, and with the hope of future happiness. Could men who displayed all the meekness and humility of Christians, have attempted a plan of domination so completely at variance with these virtues? Could men who endured every thing for the sake of Christ, violate his sacred institution? Could men, who, to save themselves from the most excruciating torments, would not offer incense at the idol altars, deliberately associate for the purpose of acquiring a trifling authority over their brethren? What! conscientious in every thing relating to Christian purity, to Christian manners, and yet profligate as to the constitution of the Christian church! "Gross inconsistency! Palpable contradiction!" Again—"What was the motive that influenced a few of the Presbyters to attempt an assumption
"of superiority over their brethren? Was it a desire of temporal power? That was entirely out of the question, without the aid of civil authority. And everyone knows that kind of authority was exerted for the destruction of the church. Was it the love of wealth? None resulted from the acquisition, or could result from it. The people were generally poor, and the Bishops, as well as the Presbyters and Deacons, were maintained out of the offerings at the altar; and scanty was the fare that proceeded from that source. Was it the love of ease and security? That could not be; for Episcopal superiority greatly increased the labours of the Bishops, and exposed them to almost certain destruction. If, then, neither dominion, nor wealth, nor ease, nor security, could possibly be the motives for so daring an attempt, as to deprive the Presbyters of their most sacred rights, those ambitious spirits, as you deem them, must have acted without any motive, which is evidently inconsistent with the very nature and constitution of the human mind."

It is really putting one's patience to a very severe test to find an opponent so frequently alluding to his own superior "scholarship" and reading, and at the same time permitting himself to write in this manner. What! no clerical ambition? No strife about pre-eminence? No ecclesiastical usurpation in those early ages? It would have been just as reasonable, and just as true, if he
had said that the gospel was preached in those
days by none but angels.—But let us attend to a
few facts.

Passing by several cases in point which occurred
during the lives, and under the immediate eye of
the Apostles, when, as St. Paul himself assures us,
the mystery of iniquity had already begun to work,
let me ask, Was there no spirit of domination ma-
manifested in the fierce dispute between Victor, Bishop
of Rome, and Polycrates, of Ephesus, which took
place in the second century, as related by Eusebius?
Was no love of pre-eminence displayed by Cerin-
thus and Basilides, whose burning desire was "to be
accounted great apostles?" Did Montanus, in
the same century, exhibit no ambition in broaching
his celebrated heresy? Was Samosatenus, in the
third, wholly free from the same charge? Did De-
metrius of Alexandria, discover nothing of an as-
piring temper, when he sickened with envy at the
fame and the success of Origen? Are there no
accounts of Novatus having sought, ambitiously and
fraudently, to obtain the Bishopric of Rome? Did
not his contemporary, Felicissimus, make a vigo-
rous attempt to supplant Cyprian, as Bishop of
Carthage? Was not Cyprian brought in to be
Bishop in that city, by the influence of the people,
in opposition to the majority of the Presbyters,
some of whom were anxious to obtain the place for
themselves? And did there not hence arise fre-
quent collisions between him and them, and at
length an open rupture? I ask, are any of these
things related in the early history of the Church?
And can any man, with such records before him,
lay his hand on his heart, and assert that there
were no symptoms of a spirit of ambition and do-
mination in those times?

But I will not content myself with this general
reference to the early conflicts of selfishness and
ambition. The following specific quotations will
be more than sufficient, if I do not mistake, to co-
ver Dr. Bewden with confusion.

Hermas, one of the earliest Fathers whose wri-
tings are extant, says, in his Pastor, "As for those
who had their rods green, but yet cleft; they
are such as were always faithful and good; but
they had some envy and strife among themselves,
concerning dignity and pre-eminence. Now all
such are vain and without understanding, as con-
tend with one another about these things. Ne-
evertheless, seeing they are otherwise good, if,
when they shall hear these commands, they
shall amend themselves, and shall, at my persua-
sion, suddenly repent; they shall, at last, dwell
in the tower, as they who have truly and worthily
repented. But if any one shall again return to
his dissentions, he shall be shut out of the
tower, and lose his life. For the life of those
who keep the commandments of the Lord, con-
sists in doing what they are commanded; not
in principality, or in any other dignity*."

* Simil. 8. § 7.
Hegesippus, who lived in the second century, and who was the first Father who undertook to compose a regular ecclesiastical history, writes thus. "When James, the just, had been martyred for the same doctrine which our Lord preached, Simon, the son of Cleophas, was constituted Bishop with universal preference, because he was the Lord's near kinsman. Wherefore they called that Church a pure virgin, because it was not defiled with corrupt doctrine. But Thebuli, because he was not made Bishop, endeavoured to corrupt the Church; being one of the seven heretics among the people, whereof was Simon, of whom the Simonians*."

Dr. Bowden represents the age of Cyprian as among the very purest periods of the Christian Church, and quotes that Father with a frequency and a confidence which evince the highest respect for his authority. The following passages will show how far the illustrious Pastor of Carthage considered the Bishops of his day as beyond the reach of selfishness and ambition.

"A long continuance of peace and security† had relaxed the rigour of that holy discipline which was delivered to us from above. All were set upon an immeasurable increase of gain; and, forgetting how the first converts to our religion

* See fragments of this writer preserved in Eusebius, Lib. iv. Cap. 22.
† They had been free from persecution only about thirty-eight years.
had behaved under the personal direction and
care of the Lord's Apostles, or how all ought
in after times to conduct themselves; the love
care of money was their darling passion, and the mas-
ter spring of all their actions. The religion of
the clergy slackened and decayed; the faith of
priests and deacons grew languid and inactive;
works of charity were discontinued; and an
universal licence and corruption prevailed. Dif-
ers Bishops, who should have taught, both by
their example and persuasion, neglecting their
high trust, and their commission from above,
entered upon the management of secular affairs;
and leaving their chair, and their charge with it,
wandered about, from place to place in different
provinces, upon mercantile business, and in quest
of disreputable gain. Thus the poor of the
Church were miserably neglected, while the Bi-
shops, who should have taken care of them,
were intent upon nothing but their own private
profit, which they were forward to advance at
any rate, and by any, even the foulest methods*.”

Speaking of Cornelius, who had been made Bi-
shop, Cyprian, says, “In the next place, he neither
desired, nor canvassed for the dignity conferred
upon him; much less did he invade it, as some
others would, who were actuated by a great and
lofty conceit of their own qualifications; but
peaceably and modestly, like such as are called
of God to this office.—Instead of using violence,

* De Lapsis. § 4.
as a certain person in this case hath done, to be made a Bishop, he suffered violence, and was raised to his dignity by force and compulsion*.

The same Father, in the same Epistle, has the following passage. "Unless you can think him a Bishop, who, when another was ordained by sixteen of his brethren Bishops, would obtrude upon the Church a spurious and foreign Bishop, ordained by a parcel of renegadoes and deserters; and that by canvassing and intriguing for it†.

Cyprian speaks also of a certain Deacon who had been deposed from his sacred Diaconate, on account of his fraudulent and sacrilegious misapplication of the Church’s money to his own private use; and by his denial of the widows’ and orphans’ pledges deposited with him‡.

Origen, the contemporary of Cyprian, more than once lashes the clergy of his day for their vices. The following passage is surely strong enough, were there no other, to take away all doubt. "If Christ justly wept over Jerusalem, he may now, on much better grounds, weep over the Church, which was built to the end that it might be an house of prayer; and yet, through the filthy usury of some, (and I wish these were not even the Pastors of the people,) is made a den of thieves. But I think that that which is written concerning the sellers of doves, doth agree to those who commit the Churches to greedy, ty-

* Epist. 55. † Ibid. ‡ Epist. 52.
"rannical, unlearned, and irreligious Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons*." The same Father, elsewhere declares, "We are such as that we sometimes in pride go beyond even the wicked-est of the princes of the gentiles; and are just at the point of procuring for ourselves splendid guards, as if we were kings, making it our study moreover to be a terror to others, and giving them, especially if they be poor, very uneasy access. We are to them, when they come and seek any thing from us, more cruel than are even tyrants, or the cruellest princes to their suppli- cants. And you may see, even in the greater part of lawfully constituted Churches, especially those of greater cities, how the Pastors of God's people, suffer none, though they were even the chiefest of Christ's disciples, to be equal with themselves†.

Eusebius, who lived in the next century, writes in the same strain concerning the age of Cyprian. When, through too much liberty, we fell into sloth and negligence; when every one began to envy and backbite another; when we waged, as it were, an intestine war amongst ourselves, with words as with swords; Pastors rushed against Pastors, and people against people, and strife and tumult, deceit and guile advanced to the highest pitch of wickedness—Our Pastors, despising the rule of religion, strove mutually with one another, studying nothing more.

"than how to outdo each other in strife, emulations, hatred, and mutual enmity; proudly usurping principalities, as so many places of tyrannical domination. Then the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger*.

Nay, Archbishop Whitgift, with all his Episcopal partialities, was constrained to acknowledge the ambitious and aspiring temper which disgraced many Bishops even as early as the time of Cyprian. "There was great contention," says he, "among the Bishops in the council of Nice, in so much that even in the presence of the Emperor, they ceased not to libel one against another. What bitterness and cursing was there between Epiphanius and Chrysostom! What jarring between Jerome and Augustine! Bishops shall not now need to live by pilling and polling, as it seems they did in Cyprian's time; for he complaineth thereof in his sermon De Lapsis†."

With Whitgift agrees his cotemporary Rigaltius, who was so much distinguished for his learned Annotations on the works of Cyprian. Speaking of Cyprian's age, and of the Deacon's office, he says, "By little and little, and from small beginnings, a kingdom, and a love of dominion entered into the Church.—In the Apostles' time there were only Deacons; Cyprian's age admitted sub-

† Defence of his Answer against Cartwright, p. 472. &c.
"deacons; the following age Arch-deacons, and then Arch-bishops and Patriarchs."

These extracts are produced, not to blacken the ministerial character; but to establish the fact, which Dr. Bowden denies, that clerical ambition, and clerical encroachments were familiarly known, even during that period which he pronounces the purest that was ever enjoyed by the Christian Church. I certainly have no interest, and can take no pleasure in depicting the foibles, the strife, and the vices, of the clergy in any age. But when assertions are made respecting them as directly contradictory to all history, as they are contrary to the course of depraved human nature; and especially when these assertions are triumphantly employed as arguments to establish other assertions equally unfounded, it is time to vindicate the truth. To do this, in the present case, is an easy task. The man who, after perusing the foregoing extracts, can dare to say, that the clergy of the first three centuries, were all too pious and disinterested to admit the suspicion, that they aspired to titles and honors, and intrigued for the attainment of Episcopal chairs, must have a hardihood of incredulity, or an obliquity of perception truly extraordinary. We have seen that Hermas plainly refers to certain ecclesiastics of his time, who had "envy and strife among themselves concerning dignity and pre-eminence." Hegesippus goes further, and points out the case of a particular individual, who ambitiously aspired to the office of Bishop, and
was exceedingly disappointed and mortified at not obtaining it. Cyprian expressly declares not only that a spirit of intrigue, of worldly gain, and of ecclesiastical domination, existed among the clergy of his day, but that such a spirit was awfully prevalent among them. Eusebius gives us similar information in still stronger terms. Archbishop Whitgift makes the same acknowledgment, more particularly with respect to the Bishops of that period. And even Dr. Bowden himself, forgetting his own assertions, unwarily acknowledges, in several other parts of his work, that a number of persons, as early as the days of Cyprian, and before his time, who aspired to the office of Bishop, and who used every effort and artifice to attain it, on being disappointed, distinguished themselves as heretics or schismatics, and became the pests of the Church. Was there no spirit of ambition and domination among such men? Why did they aspire to the office of Bishop? Was there nothing in that office to attract their regard, or to excite their cupidity? Or did they act without motive? Surely this gentleman needs to have some one at hand to refresh his memory, and to prevent him from warring against his own cause. But a man must be wary and ingenious indeed, who can be consistent when truth is against him.

Still, however, the question recurs; What, in those days of persecution and peril, before christianity was established; when the powers of the world were leagued against it; and when every
christian pastor especially held a station of much self-denial and danger, what could induce any selfish or ambitious man to desire the pastoral office, and to intrigue for the extension of the powers and honours of that office? When my opponents can tell me what induced Judas Iscariot to follow Christ, at the risk of his life; when they can tell me what impelled Diotrephes to desire the pre-eminence in the Church; or what were the objects of Demas, Hymenæus, and Alexander, in their restless and ambitious conduct, while Calvary was yet smoking with the blood of their crucified Lord, and while their own lives were every moment exposed to the rage of persecution;—when my opponents can tell me what actuated these men, I shall be equally ready to assign a reason for the early rise and progress of Prelacy.

But there is no need of retreating into the obscurity of conjecture, when causes enough to satisfy every mind may easily be assigned. If Dr. Bowden does not know that there are multitudes of men, in all ages, in the Church, and out of it, who are ready to court distinction, merely for distinction's sake, and at the evident hazard of their lives, he is less acquainted both with human nature and with history than I have been accustomed to suppose him. But this is not all. It is a notorious fact, notwithstanding all the round assertions of Dr. Bowden to the contrary, that the office of Bishop, even in very early times, had much to attract the cupidity as well as the ambition of selfish and
aspiring men. The revenues of the primitive Church were large and alluring. It is granted that, during the first three centuries, the Church held little or no real property; as the Roman laws did not allow any person to give or bequeath real estates to ecclesiastical bodies, without the consent of the Senate or the Emperor. The contributions, however, which were made to the Church, for the support of the Clergy, the poor, &c. were immense. During the Apostolic age, the proceeds of the sale of real estates were devoted to ecclesiastical and charitable purposes, and laid at the Apostles' feet. We find the Gentile Churches contributing liberally to the relief of the Churches of Judea, in Acts xi. 29. Rom. xv. 26. 1 Corinth. xvi. 1. and 2 Corinth. viii. The same liberality manifested itself in subsequent times*. So ample were the funds of the Church of Rome, about the middle of the second century, that they were adequate not only to the support of her own clergy and poor members; but also to the relief of other Churches, and of a great number of Christian captives in the

* One cause of the liberality of the primitive Christians in their contributions to the church, was the notion which generally prevailed, that the end of the world was at hand. This notion was adopted by some of the early Fathers, and propagated among the people with great diligence. Cyprian taught, in his day, with great confidence, that the dissolution of the world was but a few years distant. Epist. ad Thibart. The tendency of this opinion to diminish the self-denial of parting with temporal wealth is obvious. See Father Paul's Hist. of Benefices and Revenues. Chap. II.
several provinces, and of such as were condemned to the mines*. Such was the wealth of the same Church, in the third century, that it was considered as an object not unworthy of Imperial rapacity. By order of the Emperor Decius, the Roman Deacon Laurentius was seized, under the expectation of finding in his possession the treasures of the Church, and of transferring them to the coffers of the Emperor: But the vigilant Deacon, fearing the avarice of the tyrant, had distributed them, as usual, when a persecution was expected. Prudentius introduces an officer of the Emperor, thus addressing the Deacon, Quod Cæsaris scis, Cæsari da, nemi justum postulo; ni fallor, haud ullam tuus signat Deus pecuniam. i. e. Give to Cæsar what you know to be his, I ask what is just; for if I mistake not, your God coins no money†.

Now the revenues of the Churches, whether great or small, were at the disposal of the Bishops. The Deacons executed their orders. Of course they had every opportunity of enriching themselves at the expense of the Church. And that they embraced this opportunity, is attested by Cyprian, who laments the fact, and is of opinion that the persecution which took place in the reign of Decius, was intended by God to punish a guilty people, and to purge this corruption from his Church‡.

* Father Paul's Hist. of Ecclesiastical Benefices and Revenues, Chap. iii.
† Prudent. in Lib. de Coronis. Father Paul's History of Ecclesiastical Benefices and Revenues, Chap. iii.
‡ See his discourse, De Lapsis before quoted.
And yet, in the face of all this testimony, Dr. Bowden has permitted himself to assert, that there was no temptation, either before or during the age of Cyprian, to induce any man to desire the office of Bishop; and especially that it was impossible for any to be moved by the love of wealth to seek that office, because no acquisitions of that kind resulted from it, or could result from it! It is really amazing that gentlemen can so entirely close their eyes against the light of all authentic history. If Dr. Bowden were an ardent and incautious young man who had but lately commenced the examination of this subject, he might be pardoned on the score of ignorance; but to a gentleman of his long experience and standing in the controversy, it is difficult to suppose this apology applicable.

One of the arguments which I adduced in support of the gradual introduction of Prelacy, was the fact, that Metropolitans, or Archbishops, though acknowledged on all hands not to have been instituted by the Apostles, were yet early brought in by human ambition; while, at the same time, the early records are so scanty, that we are unable to pronounce when they were first introduced.

To this Dr. Bowden gives two answers. The first is, that we can decide, with certainty, when the authority of Metropolitans took its rise: And the second, that the cases are by no means parallel, and that the argument, even if the facts were admitted, is of no force.
To establish the first point Dr. B. quotes a short passage from Dr. Cave, a divine of the eighteenth century, who gives it as his opinion, that Metropolitans were introduced "not long after the apostolic age, when sects and schisms broke in apace, and when controversies were multiplied "between particular Bishops." But was Cave a primitive Father? What authority had he to decide such a question? And what did he mean by the expression "not long after the apostolic age?" Did he mean two, three, or four centuries? All is vague and conjectural. Besides, from this passage it leaks out, after all Dr. Bowden's care to conceal it, or rather his explicit denial of the fact, that there were sects, and schisms, and jarrings among the Bishops, "not long after the apostolic age." In support of the same assertion, Dr. Bowden quotes a longer passage from Bingham, another divine of the eighteenth century, who, after expressing his agreement with Cave, adds, "Perhaps the office of Metropolitan took its rise from that common respect and deference, which was usually paid by the rest of the Bishops to the "Bishops of the civil metropolis in every province." He then produces, what Dr. B. calls "sufficient evidence," that this office existed in the second century; that there are traces of its commencement as early as the time of Irenæus; that it advanced gradually; and that it was not until about the time of the Council of Nice that the term Metropolitan came into frequent use. Now,
though Dr. Bowden contents himself with very slender proof; and though his confident conclusion, that "there is not the least difficulty in determining when Primates or Metropolitans took their rise in the Christian Church," is, in the connection in which it stands, truly ludicrous; yet, allowing it to be correct, does not every discerning reader perceive that he is unwittingly confirming my argument? He concedes, that Metropolitans were not instituted by the Apostles; and he also concedes, that they were brought in, by human contrivance, soon after the Apostolic age; but that they were not spoken of familiarly, under this title, until near the middle of the fourth century. But how they were introduced; by what means; whether with or without opposition, neither he nor the divines whom he quotes as his authorities, have anything more than conjecture to offer. And is not this exactly the ground on which I assert the fact to stand? With whom is this gentleman contending?

But Dr. Bowden goes further; and contends, in the second place, that, "even if it were impossible to determine the time when Metropolitans first appeared in the church, there would be no parallel between this difficulty, and the one relating to Episcopacy." But why no parallel? The office of Metropolitan was a grade of ecclesiastical pre-eminence, as well as that of ordinary Bishop. Now, if it be granted, that the former office was introduced by human contrivance; that it was gradual-
ly brought in; that it was introduced without any known opposition and noise; why might not the same facts have occurred with respect to Prelacy? Dr. Bowden, indeed, asserts, that the office of Metropolitan was, in the beginning, a mere presidency, introduced for the sake of convenience and order; that, in this stage of its rise, there was no material encroachment on the rights of others; and, of course, nothing that had a tendency to excite alarm, resentment, or opposition. And is not this exactly what we say concerning the rise of Prelacy? In all these respects, indeed, Dr. B. would persuade us, that the rise of Metropolitanism was wholly unlike that of Prelacy. But for this we have only his word. He does not produce even a shadow of proof. On the contrary we maintain, that Prelacy arose, with very little variation, in the same manner in which he represents metropolitanism as having been brought in. And the acknowledged fact, that the latter was early introduced, without exciting, so far as we know, any extensive opposition or noise, we consider as conclusive evidence that the former might have arisen in the same manner. We suppose, that the first steps, in both cases, were small, and studiously ordered so as to excite as little attention as possible; that the introduction of new names was, for a considerable time, carefully avoided; and that the object was, in fact, fully gained, before the mask was thrown off, and the purpose avowed.

Dr. B. insists that the rise of Metropolitans was
not as likely to excite alarm and opposition as that of Bishops. But why not? Were not Prelates as likely to perceive and take the alarm, when some of their own number assumed a superiority over the rest, as Presbyters were, when some of their number gradually gained a pre-eminence among their brethren? Were Prelates less discerning, less awake to encroachments, or less conscientious in guarding against them, than Presbyters? But, says Dr. Bowden, in the case of Metropolitans, there was no usurpation of any particular rite or power; whereas, in the rise of Prelacy, according to the ideas of Presbyterians, there was a direct usurpation of the ordaining and confirming power, which before belonged to all Presbyters in common. The latter, therefore, in his opinion, was much less likely to gain undisputed admittance than the former. But in this reasoning Dr. Bowden betrays a total misunderstanding of what Presbyterians believe. They do not suppose, or admit, that the usurpation of the ordaining power was the first step, or even among the first steps in the rise of Prelacy. They suppose that an occasional and then a stated presidency were the first steps; and that the power of ordaining was not taken entirely out of the hands of Presbyters, until several centuries after the claims of Prelacy commenced.

The cases, then, after all that Dr. Bowden has said to the contrary, are strictly parallel. The time and manner of the rise of Metropolitans, are left as completely undefined in early history, as are
the time and manner of the rise of Prelates. In both cases, by a careful comparison of testimony, we can come, with certainty, near the truth, but nothing more. In both cases, the rise was evidently gradual. In both cases, the first steps were small, and dictated, as those concerned were made to believe, by convenience, expediency, and even necessity, rather than by ambition. And, in both cases, it was not until several hundred years, when long habit and prescription had reconciled every mind to the usurpation, that its claims were openly and unreservedly urged.

It is of some importance to advert to two or three other facts. Although Metropolitans, when first introduced, appear to have been, as Dr. B. supposes, nothing more than mere Presidents or Moderators; yet it is manifest that they very soon became something more. I know not when those writings, called the Apostolical Canons, were composed. Dr. B. thinks in the second and third centuries. But one thing I know, that, whenever they were composed, the 34th Canon decrees, "that the Bishops of every nation ought to know him who is first among them, and acknowledge him for their head, and do nothing of moment without his consent, and he nothing without their's." Here is a power greatly exceeding that of a mere presiding equal. How was this power acquired? How could it be acquired so soon, and when, if we may believe Dr. B. no such thing as clerical am-
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Bition existed? Above all, how could it be acquired so quietly, and with so little opposition, as that the several steps of its progress should not be found recorded by the early Fathers? Again; in the age of Cyprian, we find Sub-deacons and Readers spoken of as distinct orders of Clergy, who had each a distinct ordination*. How could these orders be introduced, in an age, which, according to Dr. B. was so perfectly pure, and so strict in its adherence to apostolic precedent? How could Readers and Sub-deacons be ranked among the Clergy? This single fact is enough to show, that before the age of Cyprian, undisguised innovation had found its way into the Church; and also that, when Deacons are spoken of, by some of the Fathers, as ministers of the word, and as of the order of Clergy, it affords not the smallest presumption that such was the apostolic model.

As another proof, that a spirit of ambition and of ecclesiastical encroachment, early began to appear in the Church, I mentioned the rise and progress of the Papacy. I observed, that the anti-christian claims of the Bishop of Rome began as early as the time of Irenæus, and might be considered as gradually rising from that period, until he was at length established and acknowledged as universal Bishop. And I observed, moreover, that, “although the most impartial and learned

*Cyprian. Epist. 8. and 39.
**LETTER IX.**

"divines may and do differ among themselves in fixing the several dates of the rise, progress, and establishment of this great spiritual usurper; yet the fact, that he did thus rise and advance, and erect a tyrannical throne in the Church, contrary to all that might have been expected both from the piety and the selfishness of the early Christians, is doubted by none."

In answer to this argument Dr. Bowden ventures to assert, that "there is not, before the seventh century, the least trace of any system of policy in the Holy See, (that of Rome,) to establish its claim of superiority over other Bishops." Of an assertion of this kind, I really feel at a loss what to think, or what to say. That it is an assertion which directly contradicts all history, I need not stay to demonstrate. Every well-informed man knows it to be so. The only question which can arise is, how Dr. Bowden could have ventured to advance it?

By the Papacy, strictly speaking, is meant that claim which the Bishop of Rome has long made of being, as such, the successor of Peter, superior to all other Bishops, and the visible Head of the Church. No man in his senses ever supposed that this system of ecclesiastical usurpation was either claimed or acknowledged all at once. It had a rise, a progress, and a completion. That it did not reach its summit until the seventh century, I have no hesitation in granting. Nor have I ever penned a sentence inconsistent with this acknowledg-
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But that it began to rise several centuries before, every Protestant historian that I have ever met with, has unequivocally stated: And that it made slow, but steady progress, from the time of Victor to that of Boniface, in so much, that at the end of every successive century, it was perceived to have sensibly gained ground, I took for granted, before I saw Dr. Bowden's book, that every man who regarded his reputation, either for discernment or candour, would readily allow. Nay, Dr. Bowden himself, if I understand him, acknowledges that the power of the Popes was gradually assumed; for "the several epochs of their increasing power," he tells us, have been so distinctly marked, that we can be at no loss to ascertain them. And yet he says, "there was not, before the seventh century, the least trace of any system of policy in the Holy See to establish its claim of superiority over other Bishops!" Unless this gentleman can retreat behind some unusual signification of terms, I know not how he can escape very serious charges from every discerning reader.

I consider the following facts, then, as perfectly established—viz. that as early as the second and third centuries there was quite enough clerical ambition in the Church to account for the rise of prelacy; that the acknowledged rise of Metropolitans, during that period, is a proof, at once, that there was a disposition among many of the clergy to aspire after pre-eminence, and that it was by no
means an impossible thing so far to hoodwink and cajole others, as to obtain it; and that the beginning, progress, and establishment of the Papal power, is quite as difficult to be accounted for on Episcopal principles, as the introduction of Prelacy by human authority. But, if it be fact, that there were materials enough in the clergy of that age, and circumstances enough in the times, to generate irregular ambition; and if other facts demonstrate that they did cherish this ambition; that they did thus aspire and encroach; then we are surely warranted in inferring that the human invention and introduction of prelacy, was not only a possible, but a very probable event.

Among the numerous facts which prove that diocesan Episcopacy is an innovation on the apostolic model, and that it was gradually introduced, I mentioned in my former letters, that ministerial parity continued longest in those parts of the Church which were at the greatest distance from the capital cities. As an instance, to illustrate this remark, I observed, that "the Churches in Scotland remained Presbyterian in their government, from the introduction of Christianity into that country, in the second century, until the fifth century, when Palladius succeeded in introducing diocesan Bishops." This fact Dr. Bowden entirely denies. Let us see on what evidence it rests. That the gospel was introduced into North Britain before the fifth century, is evident from
Tertullian, who says, "The places of Britain to which the Romans could not have access, are notwithstanding subject to Christ*. Fordon, a Scotch historian, who wrote in the fourteenth century, and who was no Presbyterian, on the one hand declares, (as Dr. B. acknowledges,) that the Scots received the christian faith in the year of our Lord 203; and on the other asserts, (what Dr. B. has not acknowledged,) that "Before the coming of Palladius, the Scots, following the custom of the primitive Church, had teachers of the faith, and dispensers of the sacraments, who were only "Presbyters or Monks†." This statement is confirmed by Major, another Scottish historian, who wrote about the beginning of the sixteenth century, and who lived and died a friend of prelacy. He declares, "The Scots were instructed in the faith, by Priests and Monks, without Bishops‡." Boethius, a third historian of Scotland, who was contemporary with Major, and also a prelatist, still more explicitly says, "Palladius was the first who exercised any hierarchal power among the Scots, being ordained their Bishop by the Pope, whereas, before, their Priests were, by the suffrages of the people, chosen out of the Monks and Culdees§." Prosper Aquitanaeus, in his Chronicle, has these words—"Palladius is ordained by Pope Cælestine, for the Scots, who had already "believed in Christ, and is sent to them to be their

"first Bishop." Palladius, according to this writer, did not introduce the gospel among the Scots; they believed in Christ before he was sent to them; but he was the first Bishop, or Prelate, that they ever had. The same fact is attested by Cardinal Baronius, who says, "All men agree that this nation, (the Scots,) had Palladius their first Bishop from Pope Celestine."

Dr. Bowden has no other method of evading the force of this evidence, but by insinuating, (as others, who were perplexed by the argument, had done before him,) that by the Scots these writers meant the Irish! This evasion is too ridiculous to be seriously refuted. It contradicts the most authentic history. And if Dr. B. will take the trouble to consult his own Episcopal historians, Skinner and Goodall, he will be satisfied, that in adopting this notion, he has been led astray by blind guides. But, suppose that it were even so; what advantage to Dr. Bowden's cause would result from this discovery? Would it not be a fact equally against him, if it were found that the Churches of Ireland, instead of Scotland, were, under the government of Presbyters, without Prelates, for more than 200 years after their being first planted?

* Annal. 429.

† Cardinal Baronius expressly distinguishes between the visits of Palladius to Scotland, and Ireland. His visit to the former country, he mentions in the manner cited above: that to the latter, he speaks of in a subsequent paragraph.

‡ Skinner's Ecclesiastical History of Scotland, letter i. Goodall's Introduction to the History and Antiquities of Scotland, Chapters 2, 7, and 16.
Dr. Bowden, in attempting to show the improbability that Prelacy was introduced after the Apostolic age, as a measure of human expediency, still insists that, if it were introduced at all, it must have been very suddenly. To corroborate this assertion, he represents some of the ablest Presbyterian Divines who have written on the subject, as acknowledging that Prelacy had been brought in as early as the middle of the second century. He assures us, more than once, that, among others, the learned Blondel concedes the existence of Prelacy as early as the year of our Lord 140, which was within fifty years of the death of the last Apostle. This is a misrepresentation; and a misrepresentation so extraordinary, that I know not how to account for it but by supposing that Dr. Bowden never saw Blondel's far-famed work. Whatever Dr. B. may say to the contrary, Blondel does not make such a concession as he imputes to him. The passage to which Dr. B. no doubt, refers, is found in the Preface to the Apology; and its import is, that, about the year 140, according to the best light the author had been able to attain, one of the steps toward the establishment of Prelacy was taken, which consisted in choosing standing moderators. If by Bishops be understood, not what the Scriptures and the Presbyterian Church mean by that title, but what Dr. Bowden and his friends mean, an order of clergy, who were alone invested with the power of ordination; then it is perfectly mani-
fest to all who ever perused Blondel's work, that its grand scope is to show the direct contrary of that which Dr. Bowden ascribes to him; and that for this purpose, he quotes Cyprian, Tertullian, Origen, and still later Fathers, who lived long after the year 140, to show that, in their day, Episcopacy, in the prelatical sense of that word, was not introduced. In short, Blondel's whole book is written to prove that Prelacy was not an apostolic institution; that it was brought into the Church gradually; and that it was several hundred years in gaining an establishment. Considering the frequency and positiveness with which Dr. Bowden undertakes to state the testimony of Blondel, he certainly ought to have understood it better.

Dr. B. also asserts that Salmasius, an acute and learned advocate of ministerial parity, makes a concession of the same kind with that which he ascribes to Blondel. I have never seen the Walo Messalinus of that celebrated Presbyterian; and cannot undertake with confidence to say that Dr. B. has misrepresented him also; but I strongly suspect this to be the case, and shall certainly require, after all that I have seen, better evidence of the contrary than his assertion. The learned Chamier and Du Moulin are also quoted by Dr. B. as making still more pointed and important concessions. But as he has not chosen to inform us where these concessions are to be found, I consider myself as liberated from all further obligation to no-
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tice them*. I am verily persuaded, however, that he has been deceived by the representation of others, and that he entirely mistakes the opinions of those writers.

After carefully reviewing all that Dr. Bowden has said on the rise and progress of Prelacy, I only think it necessary to offer and illustrate a single additional remark. It is this. That the indiscriminate application of the titles Bishop and Presbyter, during the first and second, and occasionally, as Dr. B. himself acknowledges, in the third century, furnishes, in my view, a most powerful argument in support of ministerial parity, and that in a point of light which I have not hitherto stated. The use of terms is to express distinct ideas. The use of official titles is to express in single terms official rank and powers. Now it is conceded by Dr. Bowden, and by Episcopalians generally, that the titles Bishop and Presbyter were applied indiscriminately, in the days of the Apostles, to designate the same order of clergy; and that both are most frequently applied, in the New Testament, to what they call the second order, or the Pastors of single Churches. They contend that the Apostles themselves were, strictly speaking, the Prelates of the apostolic Church; and that the title of Bishop was, in fact, then applied precisely as the

* It is really not a little extraordinary that Dr. Bowden, after all his promises to the contrary, should so frequently be guilty of this conduct.
Presbyterians now apply it, to every minister of the gospel who had a pastoral charge. This they all explicitly grant. But they insist that, in process of time, as the Apostles died, the title of Apostle was laid aside, and that of Bishop began to take its place, and to be restricted to an order of clergy superior to Pastors, and succeeding to the apostolic pre-eminence. But does not all this carry improbability on the very face of it? Is it likely that the inspired Apostles, or men immediately taught by them, when the Churches, for more than half a century, had been accustomed to employ a certain title to designate a particular class of ecclesiastical officers, would have adopted that very title to designate a totally different class, and that when all the riches of language were open to their selection? Can it be supposed, above all, that this would have been done in a case in which, if we believe our Episcopal brethren, the distinction of orders has always been essential to the very being of the Church? It cannot be supposed. Had their object been to produce confusion of ideas, and perpetual inconvenience in the expression of them, they could scarcely have adopted a more direct method to attain their end.

But, on the other hand, supposing Prelacy not to have been an apostolic institution, but to have been brought in by human ambition, and that in a gradual and almost insensible manner, as we contend; then nothing is more natural than this indiscriminate use of official titles in early times. The most
effectual way to disguise a new office, and to prevent the mass of the people from suspecting it of either encroachment or innovation, was to give it an old name. When, therefore, one of the Pastors, in a city or district, began to assume pre-eminent honours and powers over his colleagues, instead of taking some new and high-sounding title, it was an obvious dictate of policy to content himself with a title which was common to his brethren. This policy was accordingly adopted. The plain title of Bishop, which was before given to all Pastors, and to which the people had been long accustomed, was still the only one which the aspiring individual ventured to employ. But it obviously would not have served the purpose either of convenience or ambition to continue this community of title when a new order had arisen in the Church. Some alteration of ecclesiastical language was necessary for the sake of being understood; and it was equally necessary that the alteration should be such as not to alarm or offend. The consequence was, that the ordinary Pastors gradually dropped the title of Bishop, leaving it to be the appropriate title of those who had succeeded in raising themselves above the rest, and consenting to be called Presbyters or Elders only.

When, therefore, our Episcopal brethren grant, as they all do, that the titles of Bishop and Presbyter, in the days of the Apostles, were interchangeably applied to the same class of officers, and those ordinary Pastors of the Church; when they grant,
as they also universally do, that the former of these titles was gradually disused by ordinary Pastors and appropriated to Prelates; and when they further concede, as they do with one voice, that the process of dropping this title on the part of the former, and appropriating it on the part of the latter, took up a period of more than a hundred years after the death of the Apostles;—I think no candid man can hesitate to conclude, that the necessity of this change in ecclesiastical titles, arose from the introduction of an order of officers before unknown in the Church.

What confirms this reasoning is, that we certainly know facts of a similar kind to have taken place very early. Dr. Bowden himself asserts that although Metropolitans existed, in fact, in the second century, yet that the use of this distinctive title, was but little known before the council of Nice, in the fourth century. It is certain that the title of Pope was frequently applied to Pastors in general, as early as the third century. We find Cyprian repeatedly called by this title, in the Epistles addressed to him. It was not until a considerable time afterwards, that the Roman Pontiff succeeded in appropriating to himself the title of the Pope, by way of eminence. These examples are exactly in point. A policy which we know to have been adopted in other cases, we have every reason to believe was adopted in that under consideration. In short, our doctrine concerning the rise and progress of Prelacy is not only, in itself, natural and
probable; but it is so remarkably confirmed by early history, and especially by a variety of minute facts incidentally recorded, that my only surprise is, how any candid mind can withstand the evidence in its favour.
LETTER X.

Miscellaneous Remarks—Conclusion.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

I HAVE now nearly completed my review of such parts of Dr. Bowden's volumes, and of Mr. How's pamphlet, as appear to me worthy of notice. I have, indeed, passed over many passages in both, which might justly have been made the objects of severe criticism; but which I considered as either of too little importance to demand animadversion, or so obviously erroneous, as to leave no unprejudiced reader of the least discernment in danger of being led astray by them. It only remains that I make a few miscellaneous remarks, and then close a controversy which I unfeignedly regret that there should ever have been a necessity of beginning.

It was my intention to add another Letter on the Concessions of Episcopalians, for the purpose of vindicating and establishing what I had before advanced under this head*; and also of presenting a

* Dr. Bowden has made an insinuation with regard to one of the Episcopal concessions cited in my work, of which it is proper to take notice. He says he has examined Jewel's Defence of his Apology, and cannot find the passage which I pro-
number of additional concessions from the works of eminent Episcopal writers. To fulfil the latter purpose, I had made a large collection of extracts from the works of Bishop Jewel, Bishop Andrews, Bishop Morton, Bishop Hall, Bishop Taylor, Bishop Burnet, Bishop Warburton, Dr. Fortin, and several other Prelates and Divines, all containing sentiments very different from those of Dr. Bowden and Mr. How, and making concessions of the most decisive kind. But having already drawn out this work to a length greatly beyond my original design, I am constrained to suppress the proposed letter, and to content myself with the Episcopal concessions already laid before the public.

But really, independent of the fear of trespassing on the patience of my readers, there is little use in collecting testimony for such opponents as Dr. Bowden and Mr. How. However abundant and pointed it may be, they appear to find no difficulty to quote from that work, in my seventh Letter. He therefore infers that I have either taken the quotation at second hand, on the authority of some person who has blundered in the business; or that my references are to a different edition from that which he has consulted. I can assure this learned professor, who has, it must be confessed, much reason to plume himself on the fairness and accuracy of his quotations, that I possess a copy of the work from which my citation was made; that my edition is, like that which he professes to have consulted with so much care, (a folio, printed in 1570,) and that I am ready, whenever he will please to favour me with a visit, to show him the very words which I have quoted, in the very page referred to as containing them.
in persuading themselves that it is of no value. The unceremonious manner in which Dr. B. rejects testimony is amusing. The testimony of Archbishop Grindal is set aside on the ground of his being "somewhat fanatically inclined," and "lax in his discipline." The testimony of Wickliffe, on the ground of his being supposed to have embraced error as to other points. The testimony of Dr. Raignolds is rejected, because, though a regular member of the Church of England, he was a puritan at heart. The testimony of Archbishop Usher is pronounced to consist only in a scholastic distinction, which dull Presbyterians have not perceived; "the difference between him and other Episcopalians being only verbal." That of Bishop Stillingfleet, upon the ground of the immaturity of a juvenile mind, the visionary speculations of which were corrected by age. That of Archbishop Tillotson, because he was a "a very moderate churchman"—"a sort of neutral man," and withal "suspected of Arianism and Universalism." That of Bishop Croft, because his name is so obscure that not one of the Episcopal clergy of this city ever heard of him before; and because he was "a man of very comprehensive principles, and an "enemy of all creeds and subscriptions." That of Mosheim, because "he had the system of his own Church to maintain". But when testimony is

* If the testimony of Mosheim is to be rejected on this ground, then the testimony of all the Episcopalians quoted by Dr. B. himself, must be set aside on the same ground.
adduced which cannot be set aside by any such frivolous pretext, it is boldly pronounced "worthless," "of no value," perfectly "destitute of force," &c. Nothing can be drawn from testimony. It is waste of time and labour to collect it.

Mr. How's mode of treating the concessions of Episcopalians, is still more ludicrous. He complains that I have produced extracts only from "between thirty and forty writers;" pronounces this a number too trifling to be regarded as of any weight; and expresses a suspicion that he could present a much larger list of Presbyterian writers who have opposed the doctrines of their own Church.—In answer to this plea, I will only say, that when Mr. How shall present me with an equally long list of standard Presbyterian writers, who are praised,

Will he agree to this? Besides, I thought Dr. Bowden had assured us that the Lutheran church is Episcopal; and yet Dr. Mosheim's testimony against Episcopacy is to be rejected, because he had, "the system of his own church to maintain!" The truth is, the testimony of Mosheim, and of other Lutheran divines on this subject is peculiarly weighty: for while they have in their church a sort of qualified Episcopacy; and while they have as strong a temptation as other churches to place their constitution on the footing of divine right; they unanimously grant now, what they have unanimously granted since the days of Luther, that Prelacy is not a divine or apostolic institution; that it was introduced after the days of the Apostles; and that it rests on the ground of human expediency alone. This fact will weigh more, with every impartial inquirer, than all that the collected learning and zeal of the divines of the church of England have ever advanced in favour of Episcopacy, because "they have the system of their own church to maintain."
quoted, studied, and made the *guides* of theological students, and who at the same time oppose our fundamental doctrines, I shall then acknowledge that those doctrines are not the doctrines of the Presbyterian Church.

Were there time to go over in detail the extracts from Episcopal writers which I have presented as *concessions*, it would be easy to show that almost all the glosses of Dr. Bowden and Mr. How are either irrelevant or worse. But such a process would be an unreasonable trespass on your patience. I have already given a specimen of the mode of answering adopted by the former of these gentlemen, in the case of Bishop Jewel. The latter is no less vulnerable in a variety of instances. He tells us, for example, (p. 56.) that Archbishop Usher pronounces Presbyterian ordination to be *schismatical*, in all cases excepting that of necessity alone. This is not true. *Usher* says neither *this*, nor any thing *like* it. He says, "the ordinations made by *such* Presbyters as have severed themselves from those *Bishops unto whom they had sworn canonical obedience*, cannot possibly by me be excused from *being schismatical*;" immediately after which he goes on to say, that he "loves and honours" the Presbyterian Churches of *Holland* and *France*, as "true members of the Church universal;" and that he would with pleasure receive the sacrament from the hands of the ministers in either.*

* Judgment of the late Archbishop of Armagh. 110—123.
My argument drawn from the Practical influence of Prelacy, has, as I fully expected, both embarrassed and offended my opponents. But, after all their impatience and irritation under it, and all their cavils against it, I still think it a sound and irresistible argument. If the Episcopal Church, be the only true Church, the only denomination of professing Christians who are "in covenant with God," then the demand that they should exhibit more of the distinguishing character of God's covenant people, viz. universal holiness, is surely a reasonable demand. In truth, their mode of replying to this demand amounts to a surrender of the argument. With their subterfuge respecting the Quakers, I have already shown that we have nothing to do.

Dr. Bowden complains that, in speaking of the practical influence of Prelacy, I have expressed myself in terms much too severe concerning Prelates and their system. He complains especially of the following passage: "If we examine the history of any Episcopal Church on earth, we shall find it exhibiting, to say the least, as large a share of heresy, contention, and schism, as any which bears the Presbyterian form: and, what is more, we shall ever find the Prelates themselves quite as forward as any others in scenes of violence and outrage." He asserts that "these charges could not have proceeded from a proper motive;" and that, "if they were even well-found, they ought not to have been advanced."
what ground Dr. Bowden should have taken so much offence at this passage, it is not easy to see. Was it going either an indecent or an unreasonable length, when I was fairly called to speak on the subject, to say, that Prelacy has been proved to be quite as favourable to heresy, contention, and schism, as Presbyterianism; and Prelates as chargeable with violence and outrage as Presbyters? If this was indecent, then what shall be said of this gentleman himself, who has asserted that every charge which I have brought against Prelacy "may be retorted upon Presbytery in a ten-fold degree?" If my motives were bad for merely alleging that Presbyterians stand on as good ground, with regard to the practical influence of their system, as Episcopalians do; what must have been the motives of Dr. B. in alleging that the former are ten-fold worse than the latter? What must have been his motives in expressing himself frequently in much more severe and indelicate terms of Presbyterians and Presbytery? But the cases are, in his estimation, essentially different. The abuse of Presbyterians is no crime. That this must be his opinion is evident from the reproachful charges which he unreservedly heaps upon them, in those very parts of his work in which he censures me for my unexceptionable comparison.

Dr. Bowden still insists that there is peculiar efficacy in the Episcopal form of government in securing the unity of the Church; and undertakes to give a contrasted view of Presbyterian and Episco-
pal Churches with respect to this point. I utterly deny the correctness of his alleged facts on this subject; and have no fear in repeating my assertion, that the history of any number of Episcopal Churches exhibits quite as large a share of heresy, contention, and schism, as the history of any corresponding number of Presbyterian Churches. I am perfectly willing to go for an example to the Church of England, or to any part of the world, where Prelacy has ever existed; and am sure that no impartial student of ecclesiastical history will be of a different opinion. What does Dr. Bowden mean by unity, as applied to a Church? Does he mean unity of spirit, or unity of name? If the latter, then no one who understands Christianity can respect or value it: if the former, then it may be shown, that the Church of England, (which probably Dr. B. would consider as the most favourable specimen the world has ever seen,) is, and has long been, as much a stranger to it, as any of her neighbours. If all manner of discordant sentiment; if every grade of heresy, from that of Arminius, to the cold, gloomy, semi-deistical scheme of Socinus; if the constant public manifestation of this discordance, and of these contending heresies; and that not only among the people, and the inferior clergy, but also among the Prelates themselves; if embracing multitudes of clergy who disbelieve her Articles, who dislike her Liturgy, and who yet have consciences which admit of their canonically swearing to the belief and support of both;—if these things
constitute unity, then indeed she may be said to possess it. But this is a kind of unity of which the Apostles knew nothing, and which, if they were now on earth, they would pronounce of no value. There is unspeakably more real unity among all the different portions of Presbyterians in the United States, though called by different names, than exists, or has for near 200 years existed, in the Church of England, though nominally one. They have the same confession of Faith, the same mode of worship, the same form of church government, and are, in all important points, so entirely united, that many of their best members often wonder and lament, that they are not one in name as well as in reality.

With respect to the doctrine of Uninterrupted Succession, I have little to add to what is contained in my former Letters. Dr. Bowden is indeed right in suspecting that I lay no great stress on this doctrine, as he understands and states it. That there always has been, since the days of Christ, and that there always will be to the end of the world, a true Church, and a true and valid gospel ministry, in that Church, I firmly believe. But as to the historical proof that this succession in the ministry has never been interrupted, by any event which might be called an irregular or uncanonical ordination, I neither care for it, nor believe in it. The promise of the Saviour that neither the church nor her ministry shall ever become extinct, is
enough to satisfy me. That the succession in this ministry will be kept up in the same exact manner in every age, I consider neither Scripture nor common sense as requiring me to believe. There is no Presbyterian who contends more zealously for a strict adherence to ecclesiastical rules than I am disposed to do; nor one who deems it of more importance that we set our faces against every kind of spurious investiture, and that we retain the scriptural method of ordination by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery; yet I have no hesitation in saying, that if it were to be discovered, that, about two hundred or five hundred years ago, the regular succession of our ordinations had been really interrupted by some ecclesiastical oversight or disorder, I should not consider it as in the least degree affecting either the legitimacy of our present ministry, or the validity of our present ordinances.

The learned and acute Episcopal divine, Chillingworth, if I understand him, takes the same ground, and views the subject in the same light. Though he is a warm advocate for the apostolical institution of Prelacy; yet he evidently considers the doctrine of uninterrupted succession, and especially the idea of attaching fundamental importance to it, as a Popish error; and the historic proof of the fact as equally ridiculous and impossible.*


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Dr. Bowden, however, objects that, even on Presbyterian principles, the Episcopal succession is better than ours; or rather that ours is utterly invalid, because, at the era of the Reformation, the Presbyterians, in different parts of Europe, who first began to ordain, had not the ordaining power specifically or professedly imparted to them by the Bishops who ordained them; so that they did not even stand on equal ground with modern Presbyterian ministers, on whom in their ordination, the ordaining power is formally bestowed. But this objection has no force. The Popish doctrine, “that it is the intention of the administrator which constitutes the validity of an ecclesiastical ordinance,” is discarded by all Protestants. And as the first Presbyterians who undertook to ordain, after emerging from the darkness of Popery, were regularly invested with the power of preaching the gospel, and administering sacraments, all Presbyterians consider the right to ordain as necessarily included in those powers, whether the fact be mentioned, or even thought of at the time of ordination or not.

Dr. Bowden, toward the close of his last letter, expresses much irritated feeling at my having represented clerical imparity as a “Popish doctrine.” He demands, in a tone to which I forbear to give a name, whether I “know what Popery is?” In the next page he calls upon me to “lay my hand upon my heart, and in the fear of God to say, whether “I do not think that I have most grossly libelled
"the whole Episcopal Church throughout the " world;" and adds, that "something explicit upon this point will be expected from me." This good gentleman shall have "something explicit." Let me assure him, then, that, after the most serious and conscientious review of all that I have written, I am so far from thinking that I have "libelled" the Episcopal Church in representing Prelacy as a "Popish doctrine," that all my inquiries convince me, more than ever, of the justness of my representation, and embolden me to repeat and urge it with new confidence. In answer to Dr. Bowden's question, what is Popery? I answer, Popery, strictly speaking, as was remarked in a former Letter, is the ecclesiastical supremacy usurped by the Bishop of Rome. But, more generally speaking, it implies that system of corruption, both in doctrine, government, and practice, which characterizes, and has, for nearly 1500 years, characterized the Romish or Latin Church. Hence Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Auricular Confession, the worship of Images, the invocation of Saints, and the adoration of the Cross, are all spoken of by the most accurate writers, as Popish errors; although most of them had crept into the Church, long before the period which Dr. Bowden assigns for the rise of the Papal usurpation; and although none of them, excepting perhaps the first, could ever be traced to the Roman Pontiff himself as their immediate author.

I say then, again, that, in this sense, clerical im-
parity is a "Popish error," nearly coeval in its rise with the commencement of the Papacy; originating from the same source; and tending, in a degree, to the same mischief. And though I would by no means place the former of these errors on a par with the latter; nor venture to pronounce the one, as I do the other, an anti-Christian abuse, being fully persuaded that many of the greatest and best men that ever lived have been friends of Prelacy; yet all my inquiries have more and more confirmed me in the persuasion, that it is a real and a mischievous departure from apostolic simplicity, and that it first arose from the same principle of clerical ambition which gave rise to the Papacy. I hope this is "explicit" enough.

Nor is this all. When I look over the charges and reasonings urged by the Popish writers, against the Waldenses and Albigenses, as they are preserved and exhibited in Perrin's history of those illustrious witnesses for the truth; when I read the language used by the Popish persecutors of the English Reformers, as it is recorded in different parts of Fox's Acts and Monuments; when I examine the cavils and objections made by Harding, Saunders, Stapleton, Campian, and other zealous Catholics, against the Church of England; and when I look into the writings which Chillingworth, in his Safe way of Salvation, examines and refutes, I could almost fancy myself listening to the pleas of some high-toned Episcopalians in the United States against their Presbyterian neighbours. Could you
make it convenient to examine those writings for yourselves, you would find in them so large a portion of the same reasonings, and the same language, which are now found in certain Episcopal writers; so much of the same cry, in exactly or nearly the same words, about the Church! the true Church! the Apostolic Church! so much of the same kind of charges, respecting schism, departure from the covenant'd way of salvation, loss of the Apostolic succession, and having no true priesthood, or valid ordinances, as would fill you with astonishment, if not with emotions of a more unfavourable nature. Nor would your astonishment be at all diminished by finding, as you would find, that the friends of the Church of England, in defending themselves and their cause against the writers in question, resorted, in a multitude of instances, to the very same scriptural authorities, and the very same arguments, which Presbyterians employ against the high-toned Prelatists of the present day!—Reflect seriously on these facts, and then ask yourselves, whether Dr. Bowden has any just reason to complain of me for speaking of an affinity between his claims and those of Popery? I have, indeed, repeatedly suggested the idea of such an affinity, and distinctly meant to do so. I have done it, however, without passion, and without any wish to give unnecessary pain; but with a calm, deliberate, and firm conviction, that the suggestion was well-founded. And I can assure the gentlemen who have written so much and so resentfully for the
purpose of removing it, that their publications are far, very far, from having diminished the force of this conviction.

I have now, my Brethren, completed my examination of such parts of Dr. Bowden’s and Mr. How’s Letters as I deem worthy of notice. It was my intention, after the example of the former of these gentlemen, to collect and present in one view, a catalogue of the “misrepresentations,” “unfound ed assertions,” “mistakes,” and “omissions,” with which their pages abound. But finding these “misrepresentations,” &c. to be so numerous, that a mere list of them, without comment, would fill another long letter; and many of them of so disreputable and offensive a character as not to be contemplated, even by opponents, without much commiseration for their authors; I have determined to spare myself the pain of writing, and you of reading such a Letter; and here to take a final leave of the subject. I engaged in this controversy, without the least expectation of convincing Episcopalians, or of bringing over to my own opinion an individual of that communion; but solely for the purpose of satisfying and confirming Presbyterians. My object, I have the pleasure to know, is attained; and perceiving no further advantage in prolonging the controversy, I now lay down the pen; nor can I foresee any event that will ever tempt me to resume it on this subject.

I take for granted that all the gentlemen who
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have already appeared as my opponents, will again come before the public in reply to these Letters; and will endeavour to persuade their readers that I have again misrepresented them and their cause, and again laid myself open to the heaviest charges and the severest reproach. All this and more I deliberately expect from gentlemen who have generally manifested a wish to have the last word. Should my expectation be realized, it will give me no uneasiness; nor shall I ever, (according to my present views,) take the least public notice of anything that they may say. If, indeed, I should hereafter discover any important errors in the foregoing pages, (trivial ones, which do not affect the main question, will probably be discovered and pointed out,) I shall consider it as a duty which I owe to you to correct them. But with the controversy, as such, it is my firm resolution to have nothing more to do. This resolution is formed and expressed, not out of any disrespect to the gentlemen in question; but from a deliberate conviction that enough has been said on the Presbyterian side of the argument; and that my time and pen may be hereafter devoted to objects more agreeable to myself, and more useful to others.

That the high-toned class of our Episcopal brethren will, in any respect, alter their tone, either of speaking or writing, I have no expectation; nor have I the least anxiety that they should. Having provided the antidote, I am perfectly indifferent how often or how long the poison may be dissemini-
nated. Let them hereafter sing the praises of their truly primitive and apostolic Church as loudly and as confidently as they please. Let them arrogate to themselves the honour of having the only true priesthood, and the only valid ordinances in the land. Let them embrace every occasion of pronouncing that we, as Presbyterians, are rebels and schismatics, and out of the covenanted way of salvation. I trust, my brethren, that not an individual among us has any feelings which are capable of being wounded by such language. Were we inhabitants of South-Britain, where all the smiles of government, and all the treasures of the nation, not only give confidence to language of this kind, but also impart to it no small degree of efficacy, we might feel it as a mortifying grievance. But in this country, where governmental preferences among religious denominations are unknown, and where numbers as well as truth, are, by a great preponderance, on the side of Presbyterians, we may listen to the most obtrusive promulgation of such claims, with perfect indifference, or, at the utmost, with a smile.

That it is our earnest desire to live in peace and harmony with our brethren of the Episcopal church, you can all bear witness. For them, I can truly say, that I entertain a high respect; and am happy to number individuals of that communion among my most valued friends. I know, also, that many of that denomination entirely disapprove, and deeply lament, the offensive writings of their own cler-
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...gy, which have produced this controversy. Were I capable of applying to such persons many of the remarks which I have been compelled to apply, in the foregoing pages, to Dr. Bowden and Mr. How, I should deem myself one of the most uncandid and unjust of men. And, I will add, that it would give me much pain, if any thing in this, or my preceding volume, should be considered as pointing at Episcopalians of that liberal class. Differences of opinion there are, and will be, between us; but if these differences are maintained on both sides with that spirit which the Holy Ghost teacheth, they will neither foster the wrath of man, nor interfere with real Christian unity. Continue, then, I intreat you, to cherish on your part a spirit of amity and conciliation whatever reception it may meet with. Be always ready to exhibit your share, and more than your share, of this temper. And then, whatever may be the result, it will turn to you for a testimony. Remember that the haughty language, or the unscriptural claims of the most uncharitable of our Episcopal brethren, cannot possibly injure us; but that we shall always injure ourselves exactly in proportion as we lose sight of that holy spirit which adorned and united the disciples of Christ in the days of apostolic purity, and which compelled even their enemies to exclaim, “Behold how these Christians love one another!”

Whether your Pastors are lawful ministers, and the ordinances which they dispense legitimate ordinances, are questions which, happily, it is not for
Dr. Bowden and Mr. How to decide. There is a day approaching when they will be decided before a higher Tribunal, and with consequences more interesting than language can express. Happy will it be for us if, in that day, we shall all be found members of that holy Church, which the divine Redeemer hath purchased with his blood, and adorned with his Spirit! Happy will it be for your ministers, if they shall be found, in that day, to have preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and themselves your servants for Jesus' sake! And happy will it be for you, my brethren, if it shall then appear that you have not rested in rites and forms; but that you have received the truth in the love of it; that Christ has been formed in you the hope of glory; and that you belong to that chosen generation, that royal priesthood, that holy nation, that peculiar people, who shall for ever show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light! That this blessedness may be shared by you, and equally by them also, whom, in this controversy, we have been called to oppose, is the unfeigned prayer of,

My Christian Brethren,

Your affectionate Servant in the Gospel,

SAMUEL MILLER.