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## DISCOURSE.

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THE Honorable PAUL DUDLEY, to whose forecast and munificence the College is indebted for the foundation of this Annual Lecture, and in conformity with whose bequests and statutes I appear before you to-day, was descended from one of the most distinguished families among the first planters of Massachusetts, and was himself one of the most prominent men of his time in New England. His father, Joseph Dudley, a graduate of this College in 1665, was Governor of the Province in the time of Queen Anne. His grandfather, Thomas Dudley, who also held the same office for many years, was chosen Deputy Governor of the Colony on board the *Arbella* at Southampton, just before the sailing of Winthrop's fleet in April, 1630; and his admirable Letter to his friend and patroness, the Countess of Lincoln, dated in March, 1631, nine months after his arrival here, and written, as he says, "rudely, having yet no table, nor other room to write in, than by the fireside, upon my knee, in this sharp winter,"

is the most interesting as well as authentic document in the early annals of this Colony.

The founder of this Lecture was born at Roxbury, the seat of his ancestors, September 3, 1675, and was graduated at this College in 1690, which he afterwards served in the capacity of Tutor. After reading law for some years in this country, he went to England to finish his studies at the Inner Temple, in London; whence he returned in 1702 as Attorney General of the Province, and in 1718 was raised to the Bench, and in 1745 was appointed Chief Justice of the Superior Court. He was not only an accomplished lawyer, but a well-read theologian, and a man of learning and science; no other evidence of which need be mentioned, than his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of London, an honor to which very few natives of this country have ever attained, and to whose Transactions he contributed several valuable papers relating to the natural history of New England.

By birth and descent, as well as in spirit and principle, Judge Dudley was a Puritan. And sitting in the old wooden meeting-house at Roxbury, — built probably of rough, unhewn logs, according to the primitive architecture of the country, — and in which he thought he had heard as good sermons preached as ever he had listened to beneath the arches of the magnificent church of the Temple, where he had been bred to the law, and as fervent

and effectual prayers offered from the heart as ever he had heard read from book in the stateliest cathedrals of the mother-land, he could hardly sit quiet in his pew when he reflected that the godly and worthy pastors, who delivered those sermons and uttered those prayers, were denounced as intruders upon the Christian ministry, the ordinances of religion as administered by them pronounced invalid and nugatory, their claim to be regarded as Gospel ministers set at naught, and the very exercise of their office declared to be an unwarrantable assumption and usurpation. It was this feeling which prompted him, ninety-five years ago, to institute this quadrennial Lecture “for the maintaining, explaining, and proving,” as he says, “the validity of the ordination of ministers, or pastors of the churches, and so their administration of the sacraments or ordinances of religion, as the same hath been practised in New England from the first beginning of it, and so continued to this day. For I do esteem,” he continues, “the method of ordination as practised in the churches of this country to be very safe, and scriptural, and valid; and that the Great Head of the Church, by his blessed spirit, hath owned, sanctified, and blessed them accordingly, and will continue so to do to the end of time.”

It was right and well that Judge Dudley instituted this Lecture. There have been times, I am aware, when the wisdom and propriety of appoint-

ing this as the topic of a stated discourse, especially before an Academical body, like this, have been questioned. It has been said, that the time for the discussion of such matters has long since gone by ; that the world has outgrown them ; that this is not a practical question, in which any one at the present day takes, or can take, a real and living interest ; that it is of very little consequence how it is settled ; and that it is hardly worth while for men to waste their time about such a dry, unprofitable controversy. But it is not so. This is not a dead, inoperative question. It is a practical question, and a very serious one, too. To us, Congregationalists, at least, it is a matter of life or death ; it is “ *articulus stantis aut cadentis Ecclesiæ.*” You will pardon us, then, if we seem interested in it, and speak somewhat plainly on the subject.

The history of the Church, too, within the few past years, has shown us the value and uses of this Lecture, as well as the sagacity and good judgment of its founder. The rise of what has been called *Puseyism* in Great Britain, and the awkward aping of it in this country, — the appearance of the “ *Tracts for the Times,*” and their eager reception and republication in America, — the numerous secessions from the Church of England to Popery, the posting of so many of its clergy to Rome, and the tendency of so many others that way, — and the countenance and sympathy which these measures

and movements have met with from a portion, and that too a considerable and zealous portion, of the Episcopal Church in the United States, — all serve to show that this question of ministerial ordination, and the consequent validity of the sacraments, is a live question, one in which men really take an interest, — that, in fact, it is the great ecclesiastical question of the day. The sons of the Puritans, at least, with their views of the matter, can see no middle ground, nothing stable and permanent, between Congregationalism and Popery. To the New England Pilgrim, Lambeth seems but the vestibule to the Vatican, and Oxford the half-way house to Rome.

It will be understood, I trust, that this is not a question about the truths and principles of religion ; and that therefore the Lecturer cannot be justly charged with introducing doctrinal controversy into the College pulpit. This is a question in which both divisions of the Congregational body, however differing in point of doctrines, are alike interested, and about which they are perfectly agreed and united. And may I not add, that it is a question in which we have the entire sympathy and hearty coöperation of all the other principal denominations among us ; all, I say, except the Roman Catholics and the Episcopalians. We plead the cause, therefore, of no fragment of a denomination, but of the great majority of the churches and pastors of New

England. We present a broad, unbroken front, and raise the standard of Independency against what John Knox would call “the monstrous regiment” of bishops.

Let it also be understood, that this controversy is not of our making or seeking. For myself I can truly say that I appear here to-day solely from a sense of duty, to discharge one of those equivocal offices which are neither to be sought nor shunned, at the bidding of those whose request has with me the force of a command. In this whole matter we stand upon the defensive, to maintain our ecclesiastical rights, to assert our title to an existence as a Church, and our claim to be recognized and respected as such.

After this somewhat long, but I trust not altogether irrelevant introduction, I address myself to the main business in hand, and proceed to take up this question of the validity of the Congregational Ministry, the consequent efficacy of the Ordinances as administered by them, and the right of our Congregational churches to be regarded as true churches of Christ. And I hope that the remarks which shall be offered, taken together, may constitute a not unworthy *Vindication of Congregationalism*,—of its idea, its principles, its constitution,—a vindication drawn from its history, from its nature and character, and from its tendency, influence and effects.

In the first place, what was the Church which Christ instituted? It was the congregation of Christian believers, whether few or many. Where two or three of his disciples were gathered together in his name, there was he in the midst of them; and *there* was a Christian church, such a one as Paul recognized when he greeted "the church which is in the house of Nymphas," and "the church that is in the house of Aquila and Priscilla," and "the church in the house of Philemon." Every little band of this sort, that met together for Christian purposes, to remember Christ and worship the Father, was a church, and contained within itself everything necessary to constitute it a true church. Christ, indeed, nowhere tells his Apostles to gather churches. He commands them to go forth and "make disciples;" but he leaves it to the converts themselves to appoint the time and place of their religious assemblies, and to determine the constitution and arrangement of their social worship. He implies, more than once, that they will thus meet together; but he prescribes to them no organization, no government, no ritual. He does not command them to assemble on any particular day in the week, or to read a liturgy, or to kneel in prayer. On these points he leaves his followers at perfect liberty to adopt, in every age and country, such forms of religious service as shall seem to them most expedient and edifying, and best suited to their particular condition and wants.

And what were the officers whom Christ appointed in his Church? Were they rectors, deans, archdeacons, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, popes, a long line of superior and inferior clergy, to lord it over one another, as well as over God's heritage? No such thing. "Ye know," says he, addressing them, "that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." The officers whom he commissioned, were "apostles," that is to say, missionaries, persons sent abroad into the world, ministers at large. And what was their function and office? What did he tell them to do? "Go ye," says he, "and teach all nations—teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you." *Teaching*—this was their great office, than which there can be none higher or greater—the influence which one mind exerts over another by superior wisdom and intelligence, no matter how acquired, whether by supernatural illumination, or by study and toil. They were to be the heralds of truth, the lights of their age, the guides of the world, the moral and spiritual instructors of their fellow-men.

And this is the grand distinction between them and the ministers of all other religions, Jewish as well as Pagan. The ministers of all other religions

were priests, sacrificers, the actors in a bloody ritual. But in Christianity there is no priest, and no work of this kind to perform. "Christ having appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," as the Epistle to the Hebrews states, no further sacrifices are needed; there is no room left for the altar or the priest. The only holocaust that we can offer is ourselves; the only altar is the altar of the heart; the only sacrifice is the sacrifice of self, the denial of appetite, the surrender of passion, the immolation of sin. Since there is one Mediator between God and man, we need no priest now to make atonement for us, to intercede in our behalf, or to presume to forgive our sins. By the introduction of Christianity the whole system of priesthood and the whole fabric of priestcraft were swept away at once. The religion which Christ taught was not a ceremonial religion, a religion of rites and forms and sacrifices, but a spiritual religion, a religion of truths, and doctrines, and principles, addressing not the outward senses, but the intellect and the heart. Henceforth the great instrument of religious influence was to be, not sacrifice, but instruction; and the ministers of religion were no longer to be priests, but teachers.

So the Apostles understood their commission, and on this they acted. They set up no altar, they offered no sacrifice, they ordained no priest. They proclaimed the great moral and spiritual truths of

Christianity, and called upon others to aid them in their work. And what were to be the qualifications and endowments of these companions and successors of the primitive heralds of the Gospel? Were they all to be divinely inspired, and empowered to forgive sins? Must they have the hands of Prelacy laid upon their heads, or the chain of an apostolical succession hung around their necks? Let the Apostle Paul answer, who, in an Epistle to one of his fellow-workers, says, “The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” “*Faithful men, able to teach,*”—that is the qualification, and the whole of the qualification. This it is that makes a Gospel minister. This is the only divine right that is needed—the only apostolical succession that we covet for our ministers. If they only have this, we ask for nothing higher.

Every assembly of Christian believers, then, is a church, a true, complete church of Christ, competent to manage its own affairs, and to elect its own teachers, whether from among its own members, or from abroad; competent, too, to induct them into office, and to invest them with whatever powers and privileges are requisite to enable them to teach and administer Christianity in that church. Every sincere, conscientious Christian, who understands the Gospel, and is able to teach it, is authorized to

teach it, provided he can get anybody to hear him ; and he is fully authorized to take the charge of a church, and be its “overseer,” or “bishop,” provided the people want him, and elect him. Three things, you see, and three things only, are required to make a Christian bishop, — sincerity, capacity, and election. He must be a “faithful man, able to teach ;” and if, thus qualified, a church want his services and call him to office, they are fully competent to install and ordain him as their pastor and teacher ; and thenceforth he has all the rights and prerogatives of a Christian minister, and is as good a bishop as ever was made.

This is *Congregationalism*, in its purity and essence, as drawn from the New Testament, and carried out to its full extent, to its ultimate results. It asserts the entire independency of each congregation, and its competency to elect and ordain its ministers ; and it asserts, also, the independency of the ministers themselves, in respect to one another, and their entire parity in their official powers and rights.

In opposition to this, comes up the system of *Pre-lacy*, or *Episcopacy*, which prevails in the Romish Church, the Greek Church, the Church of England, and the Protestant Episcopal Church of this country. This system implies, and in some of its departments asserts, that the people, the body of Christian believers, have no right whatever, under

any circumstances, to meet together and form a church ; that the clergy, not the people, are the church ; that the people have no power to ordain their ministers, even though they had the power to elect them. Above all, it maintains that the ministers of religion are not equal in point of rank, authority, and function ; but that there are certain superior ones among them, in whom alone resides the priest-making power ; which power has been transmitted to them, through a mysterious influence accompanying the imposition of hands, in an unbroken succession, from the Apostles ; and that none but those ordained by the superior clergy, or bishops, as they are technically termed, are Gospel ministers, or have any right to administer the ordinances of Christianity.

Now, to say the least of it, this is a very extraordinary pretension, — a claim which cannot be admitted upon the mere assertion of those who hold and wield this Episcopal jurisdiction. We want *proof*, we demand proof ; and in such a momentous affair as this we think we have a right to demand clear, unequivocal proof ; not naked assertion, not ingenious, far-fetched inferences, but direct, conclusive evidence from the Scriptures. We object to this Episcopal pretension, first, because we do not find that the Founder of the Church instituted any such order of superior clergy, or authorized anybody else to do so ; and, secondly, because we

do not find that his Apostles instituted any such order. What our Saviour did in planting his Church and appointing its ministers, we have already seen. What his Apostles did, we shall see presently.

Let it be distinctly understood, that we have no quarrel with *bishops*. We admit their existence, we recognize their office, we find their name in the Scriptures, we maintain their importance and necessity in the Church. We hold to Scripture bishops, to New Testament bishops — overseers, that is, of separate, independent churches — parochial bishops, Congregational bishops, each having the charge and oversight of a single congregation. The Greek word which is sometimes translated *bishop*, and sometimes *overseer*, — which is its equivalent, — does not trouble us in the least, when we meet with it in the New Testament. We adopt it; we like it. I suppose there are now upwards of a thousand such bishops in this Commonwealth.

What we object to, and protest against, is the conversion of this overseer of a single parish, this occasional presiding officer among his ministerial brethren, into the permanent overseer of a cluster of churches, or diocese, — claiming to be superior to his brethren, both of the clergy and laity, — appropriating to himself the sole right of inducting other ministers into office, and of investing them with their spiritual functions, — assuming to be exclusively the successor of the Apostles, and to in-

herit from them certain mysterious powers, such as communicating the Holy Ghost by touch, and imparting to his inferior clergy the ability to wash away sins by the laver of baptism, to pronounce absolution of personal transgressions, and to change the bread and wine of the Eucharist into the real body and blood of the Lord. Whenever I see one of this class appropriating to himself this Scripture title of overseer, and styling himself, for example, “the Bishop of Boston,” or “the Bishop of Massachusetts,” I am reminded of the words of King Henry IV. of England, when the sad tidings reached him that Earl Percy, of Northumberland, was slain in Chevy Chace: —

“ Now God be with him, said our king,  
 Sith it will no better be ;  
 I trust I have within my realm  
 Five hundred as good as he.”

In order to establish their exclusive claims, the Prelatists must prove first that the bishops mentioned in the New Testament, were not parochial, but *diocesan* bishops ; secondly, that these diocesan bishops were invested by Christ and his Apostles with the sole, exclusive power of ordination ; and thirdly, that this priest-making power has been handed down, and can be distinctly traced, in an unbroken line of succession, from the primitive, apostolical bishops to the diocesan bishops of the

present day. This is the work that they have got to do ; and it is more, I think, than they can accomplish, with all their learning, be it more or less.

For, in the first place, there was not the distinction, which they assert, among the ministers of the Gospel. In the New Testament we read nothing about three orders of clergy, — bishops, priests, and deacons, differing in rank, authority, and spiritual functions. The teachers of religion appointed by Christ, as we have already seen, were missionaries and ministers, — which is the true meaning of “apostles” and “deacons”; and they were invested by him with no power over one another. They constituted but one order, the great order of *teachers*, and stood upon a level of perfect equality.

We come to the Acts of the Apostles, and we find there still but one order of clergy, called indiscriminately ministers, elders and overseers, three titles designating the same office, and corresponding to the three Greek terms, “deacons, presbyters and bishops;” the first implying service, the second venerableness or seniority, and the third, watchfulness or oversight. So far is it from being true that these words were employed as distinctive titles of different orders in the ministry, that Paul, who certainly would be entitled to the highest, appropriates to himself the humblest of them all. He never calls himself a bishop, by way of eminence but he repeatedly styles himself a *deacon*, and addresses

Timothy by the same title. Peter, too, calls himself not a bishop, but an elder. "The elders which are among you," he says, "I exhort, who am also an *elder*."

It is worthy of remark, that the word, bishop, occurs but five times in the original language of the New Testament. Once it is translated *overseer*, which is its true meaning. Once it is applied to Christ himself, when he is called "the shepherd and bishop," that is, the watchman and guardian, "of your souls." Twice Paul uses it, when, writing to his youthful fellow-laborers, Timothy and Titus, he tells them that "a bishop," that is, a spiritual overseer, who watches for souls, "must be himself blameless." And lastly, Paul uses the term when he addresses "the saints which are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons," that is, the officers and ministers of the church there. And it is deserving of notice, that in this single church of Philippi there were more bishops than one. Now-a-days, there is one bishop for several churches; then there were several bishops for one church. Of course they could not have been *diocesan* bishops.

And not only do these various terms of "elder," "overseer," and "minister," designate one and the same person, but they are applied to those who exercise precisely the same functions. Two citations in proof of this statement will be sufficient.

Paul, we are told, called for “the *elders* of the church at Ephesus,” that is, according to the Prelatical theory, the presbyters, the second order of clergy, and exhorted them to take heed to themselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them “*bishops*.” These presbyters, then, were bishops, in the estimation of Paul. He saw no difference between an elder and an overseer. Peter, too, in the passage just quoted, addresses the elders thus, “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the *oversight* thereof,” as it is in our translation; but in the original, “acting as *bishops*,” exercising episcopal jurisdiction. Peter evidently recognized no distinction between a presbyter and a bishop.

But it will be said, perhaps, that the bishops had the exclusive power of ordering and ruling in the Church. Let us see. Paul writing to Timothy, says, “Let the *elders* that *rule* well, be accounted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.” It appears from this, that the government of the church did not belong exclusively to the first order of clergy, the bishops, but was also exercised by the second order, the presbyters, or elders. It could hardly be otherwise, when they were the same persons.

The power of ordination, too, of instituting other ministers in office, was not the exclusive prerogative of a superior order of clergy, as the Prelatists

pretend. The bishops of the New Testament had no monopoly in the matter. The presbyters ordained as well as the bishops: and it could not be otherwise; for they were the same officers, bearing different names. If the Episcopal pretension were well founded, one would expect that such eminent ministers as Paul and Barnabas would have been ordained by the original, primitive bishops, the Apostles. But we do not find that they were ordained by any *bishop* at all. Nay, we are expressly told, that they were separated and ordained by the hands of "certain prophets and teachers" in the church at Antioch. And yet, when James, Peter and John, the chief of the Apostles, afterwards met Paul and Barnabas, they gave them the right hand of fellowship, thus acknowledging them to be true ministers, rightly ordained, though they had not been ordained by bishops, but by the second or third order of clergy, by "certain prophets and teachers."

Timothy too, one would suppose, if it had been important or indispensable to give validity to his ministry, would have been ordained by Paul, or by some other of the Apostles, or by a bishop at least. But what was the fact? He was ordained, as we learn from Paul, "by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery; — not of the *episcopate*, but of the *presbytery*, the second order of clergy.

To evade the force of this statement and get rid

of this difficulty, it will not do for the Prelatists to turn a short corner, and coolly tell us that those elders or presbyters by whom Timothy was ordained, and those prophets and teachers by whom Paul and Barnabas were ordained, were veritable bishops; for that will be giving up the very point in dispute, and coming over to our ground. We cannot suffer them to play fast and loose in this way. They must take their stand on one side or the other, and keep it, without shifting their position to evade the force of the argument. If they say that those elders and prophets were the same officers as bishops, very well; that is what *we* say. But if they take their usual ground, and maintain that bishops alone had the power to ordain, then we bring forward again these cases of Barnabas and Timothy to prove that it was not so, but that presbyters and teachers had the power of ordaining, as well as bishops.

Our position is this, — that there was but *one* order of ministers in the primitive Church, designated indiscriminately bishops or presbyters, overseers or elders. Now if the Prelatists admit that presbyters were bishops, and did ordain in the time of the Apostles, they confound two of their orders, one of them absorbing the other. At the same time they give us, Congregationalists, the opportunity to put this question; — “If a presbyter could ordain in the time of the Apostles, why cannot a

presbyter ordain now, and why is not ordination by a presbyter of your Church or our Church as valid and efficacious as ordination by a bishop?" One case of this sort, you see, breaks the whole charm, and is fatal to the whole pretension. For the claim is an exclusive one. It is strenuously maintained by the Prelatists, that no person can be a Gospel minister, unless he has been ordained by a bishop. In opposition to this, we bring forward from the New Testament three instances to the contrary — those of Paul, Barnabas, and Timothy, who were ordained not by bishops, but by "certain prophets, teachers, and elders," the ordinary ministers of the Church, the *inferior* clergy, as the Prelatists call them, the second or third estate. But if their ordination was regular and valid, (and they undoubtedly would take care that it should be,) there is no reason at the present day to question the validity of a minister's ordination, even though he may not have had the imposition of a diocesan bishop's hands practised upon him.

But even though the Prelatists could prove that in the primitive Church there was an order of superior clergy, in whom alone resided the power of ordination, they have done but half their work. They have got to prove its transmission to the present time. They must show, beyond a reasonable doubt, that this spiritual function, this priest-making power, has been handed down and can be

distinctly traced from the apostolic age to the present day, and that the bishops of the nineteenth century are descended from the bishops of the first century by a lineal and unbroken succession of individuals. How will they do this? Will they bring forward a long catalogue of names, an Episcopal pedigree, running through eighteen hundred years, and gravely ask us to receive that as a genuine and authentic document? One of their own order, Bishop Stillingfleet, will teach them better. He shows clearly that these catalogues are so very different, that nothing certain can be gathered from them; and he distinctly asserts, that "by the loss of records of the British churches, we cannot draw down the succession of bishops from the Apostles' times." Will they undertake to prove that no informality has ever occurred in the ordination of bishops, to interrupt the succession, or to vitiate and taint the sacramental virtue transmitted thereby? Another of their own order, a high dignitary in their Church, Archbishop Whately, will tell them, and moreover will demonstrate it to them by a mathematical formula which they cannot escape, that it is next to impossible that such informalities should not have occurred, and thus the continuity have been broken; and he affirms, that "there is not a minister in all Christendom who is able to trace up, with any approach to certainty, his own spiritual pedigree." To the same effect we have the testi-

mony of another eminent prelate of the Church of England. "As sure as God is just, and equal, and good," says Bishop Hoadly, "He cannot put the salvation and happiness of any man upon what He himself hath put it out of the power of any man upon earth to be entirely satisfied in. It hath not pleased God, in his providence, to keep up any proof of the least probability or moral possibility of a regular, uninterrupted succession. But there is a great appearance, and, humanly speaking, a certainty of the contrary."

Now if there be any break whatever in the chain, if a single link, a single foot of the wire, be wanting, the whole sacramental virtue, the whole ordaining power, supposed to be transmitted by such a chain, fails; as inevitably as all communication is interrupted by a break in the wire of the electric telegraph.

"From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,  
Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike."

And even had it always remained entire, and its continuity never been interrupted, still this chain has lain for ages imbedded in the mud of the Tiber, and has become so encrusted and corroded, that it cannot transmit the *afflatus* of a divine succession. For ourselves, we covet no such pedigree, we feel the want of no such ecclesiastical ancestry. If we have not the Episcopal succession, descending

through a long line of corrupt popes, flagitious cardinals, and scandalous prelates, we have what we deem far better, an apostolical and uninterrupted succession of great and wise and good men, able teachers and humble ministers of the Gospel of Christ.

We have thus shown, from the Scriptures, that the pretensions set up by the Prelatists for the exclusive power of ordination, are groundless. To draw us from this strong and secure position, they may appeal to the testimony of the Christian Fathers and the practice of the Church. But we shall not go into that question. Not because we fear the argument from ecclesiastical history ; not because it does not furnish the most ample and satisfactory support to the view which we have taken of the primitive constitution of the Church and Ministry. But because, as Protestants, when we have proved our case from the Scriptures, we think we have done enough ; and if our adversaries adduce something contrary to this from the writings of the Christian Fathers or the practice of the Church, we leave it to them to reconcile it with the New Testament. We do not put the traditions of the elders, nor the authority of the Church, nor the voice of Christian antiquity above the Bible, nor even on a level with the Bible. I have two other reasons for leaving this topic untouched.

Time will not allow me to do it justice ; and moreover, the subject has recently been so thoroughly examined and so forcibly stated by one of my predecessors in this Lecture, that I know I should find little to glean in the field which he has reaped. In what remains of this Lecture, therefore, I shall confine myself to the moral argument in favor of Congregationalism, and conclude with some practical views of the subject.

We prefer Congregationalism to Prelacy, because, as a system of church government and a mode of administering Christianity, it is not only more Scriptural, but more rational, more just, and more equitable, — is more favorable to intellectual and religious freedom, consults better the rights of the people, and harmonizes better with the spirit of our republican institutions.

The great, fundamental point of difference between the Prelatists and the Congregationalists, is this. They hold that there can be “no church without a bishop” — a diocesan bishop, that is — and that the clergy are in fact the Church. On the contrary, we maintain that *the people* are the Church. So it was in the beginning. Look into the earliest records of Christianity, and you will find that the very word which is now used to prop up the pretensions of the Prelatical clergy, — this word, Church — signified originally the congregation, the

mass of assembled worshippers, the body of Christian believers. It is so now. The lay brethren are the Church, as much as the clergy. And if driven by the assumptions of the Prelatical order to separate the two, and to adjudicate on their respective claims, then we do not hesitate to say that the people alone, by themselves, irrespective of the clergy, and independent of the clergy, are the Church. The clergy, according to our view, are but certain "faithful men, able to teach," coming out from among the brethren, and having no rightful power or authority over them, except what the brethren themselves have seen fit to delegate and confer. The distinguishing feature of Congregationalism is, that it is self-contained, bearing within itself all the elements of its organization, efficiency, and perpetuity. According to the theory of the Prelatists, the people can have "no church without a bishop;" and if, by any providence, they should be separated from their spiritual guides, they can have none of the peculiar privileges and ordinances of Christianity. Were a ship's company, for instance, with its hundred passengers, thrown upon a desolate island, they must be forever debarred the rites of the Church, unless they happened to have on board a priest who had been episcopally ordained. Their children must remain unbaptized, and they themselves deprived of the benefit and comfort of the holy communion. They might, it

is true, perform these solemn services themselves ; but without the sanction of Episcopal authority, they would have no validity, no efficacy nor worth whatever. And even if they were so fortunate as to have a minister among them, properly qualified to administer these ordinances, yet unless he were a bishop, he could ordain no successor, and at his death they would be left without the sacramental means of grace.

Now I ask, is such a theory as this reasonable, probable, equitable, or conformable to just views of God's character and government ?

Suppose, again, the clergy of some isolated place, like Japan — cut off from all intercourse with the rest of the world — were by some fatality, some pestilence, entirely swept away, bishops and all. According to the theory we are considering, their place could never be supplied. The clerical order would be extinct. The succession once lost, could never be restored. Once gone, it is gone forever, irrecoverably gone ; and that whole nation would present the lamentable spectacle of a church without an officer competent to administer its solemn rites.

Thank Heaven, we hold to no such unreasonable and extravagant doctrine. As on the death of the queen-bee in the hive, the members of that little monarchy can make a new one from among themselves, so we hold that a Christian church can make a bishop out of their own number, a real, veritable

bishop, without calling in the aid of other bishops. We maintain that as the people can make a king or a president to oversee the State, so they can make a bishop to oversee the Church.

I know not but this may sound to some ears latitudinarian, and radical. But just look at what would be the consequence, of what has been the consequence, of denying this doctrine, that the Christian laity are the Church, and the source of ecclesiastical authority and power. You put the people entirely at the mercy of the clergy. The bishop's hand is upon the head of his inferior clergy; but his foot is upon the neck of a prostrate laity. The opposite doctrine establishes the aristocracy of the Church of England, and the monarchy of the Church of Rome. The prelate lifts his mitred head in courts and parliaments, and the power that is wielded by the bishop who is enthroned upon the seven hills, is mightier than that of any monarch in Christendom. The latter may have the power of life and death over his subjects; the former extends his power further, beyond this world. He holds the keys, by which to open or shut the gates of heaven, — the power of *eternal* life and death — the power of absolution, to bind or loose, to forgive or retain sin, and to exclude from the bliss of Paradise all who are refractory or disobedient to the edicts of the Church. And this is not a mere theory. The power has been exercised.

The Church of Rome has wielded it, and still wields it, and rules with a rod of iron. The Church of England holds the same theory, and, as far as it can or dares, enforces it.

For one, I do not understand how a man, who is imbued with the spirit of Christian humility and is conscious of his own frailty, can aspire, or consent even, to hold this official preëminence over his ministerial brethren, or presume to look down upon them as his subordinates. Nor can I conceive how a person, who has a proper self-respect and the spirit of a man or a Christian, can submit to this usurpation, and consent to be thus enrolled by a prelate among his underlings, his inferior clergy. *Inferior?* In what respect? Look at them both, in all ages and in all countries, in the pages of history, and in the stations which they fill. In what particulars have the working clergy in prelatical churches, been inferior to their overseers? Certainly not in talent, in learning, in moral worth, or in piety. Have the prelates always been the most distinguished lights in the Church in their day? Have they in modern times been the prominent advocates and defenders of the Christian faith? Have they been preëminently the ones who by their writings have done most to enforce the truths, and by their characters and lives to recommend the graces and virtues, of our common Christianity? Far be it from me to disparage the talents or the

virtues of any who have worn the mitre. I am not unmindful of the services which some of them have rendered to Christian truth, nor would I deprive them of the least merit which rightfully belongs to them. I revere the names of Barrow, and Butler, and Taylor, and Fenelon. But I remember, too, that there were such men as Baxter and Lardner, Cudworth and Paley, Whitby and Priestley, — some of them belonging to the same Church with those just named, yet never exalted to its highest honors, though not a whit behind them in intellectual and moral worth. Did any bishop that ever sat upon his throne in England, do better service to the common cause of Christianity than the modest Lardner, who in his learned and ponderous volumes has built up an impregnable bulwark around the records of our common faith? Did any prelate of the Establishment ever shed a clearer or fuller flood of light upon the evidences of natural and revealed religion, than the clear-sighted and judicious Paley? Yet one of these was a Dissenter from the Church of England, and the other one of its inferior clergy.

Then look at our own country. What have the prelates here done for Christian truth and righteousness? They may have done something, I admit, for their own sect, and written ingenious treatises to convince the clergy and laity of their divine right to rule over them. But what have they done,

on a large scale and in a generous spirit, for Christian theology, compared with their inferior clergy, or with the clergy of other denominations? What great work of an American bishop can be named? What work, for metaphysical acuteness and profound analysis, to be put on a level with the great work of Edwards upon the Will? For argumentative power and intellectual vigor, what production of theirs can be compared with the writings of their great antagonist, Mayhew, who silenced the Archbishop of Canterbury, and postponed for twenty years the introduction of their order into this country? Who among them can be mentioned by the side of Channing for largeness of views, eloquence of utterance, and extent of influence? And what sermons of theirs, for grace, and finish, and melting persuasion, can stand a comparison with those of Buckminster?

Once more. We feel an attachment to Congregationalism, from a consideration of the circumstances under which our forefathers planted it here. They came over and settled down, as one of them said, "upon bare creation." They began the world anew, and remodelled the Church and the State, to suit their own views of truth and right. They brought over with them none of the institutions of the mother country, except the trial by jury and the system of popular representation. They left behind them the monarchy, the aristocracy, and

the hierarchy, all parts of one system. They had no special reason for retaining or liking them, since through their agency they had been driven from their pleasant fields, the homes of their childhood, the churches of their affections, and the graves of their fathers. "What numbers of faithful and free-born Englishmen, and good Christians," says Milton, "have been constrained to forsake their dearest home, their friends and kindred, whom nothing but the wide ocean, and the savage deserts of America could hide and shelter from the fury of the bishops. O if we could but see the shape of our dear mother England, — as poets are wont to give a personal form to what they please, — how would she appear, think ye, but in a mourning weed, with ashes upon her head, and tears abundantly flowing from her eyes, to behold so many of her children exposed at once, and thrust from things of dearest necessity, because their conscience could not assent to things which the bishops thought indifferent? Let the astrologer be dismayed at the portentous blaze of comets, and impressions in the air, as foretelling troubles and changes to States. I shall believe there cannot be a more ill-boding sign to a nation, (God turn the omen from us!) than when the inhabitants, to avoid insufferable grievances at home, are enforced by heaps to forsake their native country."

Our fathers were Nonconformists, dissatisfied

with the existing ceremonies of the Church — Puritans, sighing for a simpler and purer worship. Prelacy did not emigrate. She staid at home, reclining in her palaces, seated upon her throne in the cathedrals. It was *Puritanism* that came over to plant the wilderness. Nor was it the nobility that emigrated; though some sprigs of the peerage, like Lord Leigh, son and heir of the Earl of Marlborough, came and looked at the nakedness of the land, and speedily returned, having seen enough of it. It was the *people* that emigrated — the commons of England, — with whom have always resided the moral worth and the sterling virtues of that noble land; not the scum of the nation, not the offscouring and refuse of her population, not the sweepings of her jails and almshouses, — which were the seed of other colonies, — but the substantial gentry and yeomanry of England; among them old families of good estates, ample fortunes and established character, — such men as John Winthrop, leaving his ancestral mansion at Groton, in Suffolk, which for more than two hundred years had been the seat of his family, and Isaac Johnson, the founder of Boston, who married a daughter of the Earl of Lincoln, and who named as one of his executors his friend, the great John Hampden, who died for liberty on Chalgrove field.

These were the men that emigrated. And when they arrived here, what would you have them do?

What could you expect them to do? Rebuild in the New World the obnoxious, unequal institutions of the old?—revive the pomp of prelacy, and establish an hereditary aristocracy, and a hierarchy? No. They could do no such thing. They did no such thing. They went back to first principles, to the natural rights of man, both in politics and religion, in civil government and church affairs. They carried the same principle into both; and, what is better, they carried it out, fully and unflinchingly, to its legitimate, ultimate results; they established democracy in both. In their view all men were equal before the magistrate; much more were all men equal before God.

And let it be observed, that in all this, they were not radicals or anarchists. They went for government and authority, for law and order, both in Church and State. They brought over with them, it is true, no statute-book; but they brought, as their birth-right, the common law of England, the gathered wisdom of her jurists, embodied in oral decisions, and by tradition handed down,—always remembered, because they were the decisions of natural justice and the universal conscience. They brought with them no canon law; but they brought the Bible, and from that alone gathered their system of church government,—the system of Congregationalism,—the independency of the churches, the equality of the clergy among themselves, the

equality of the laity to the clergy, and the competency of the people to elect and inaugurate their officers in the Church as well as in the State. We venerate this system which they have transmitted to us, and, please God, we will uphold and perpetuate it.

The students of the University will permit me, in concluding this Lecture, to congratulate them upon their privileges and their prospects. We rejoice that by the recent accession to the Presidency, you are henceforth to pursue your academical career under the genial and stimulating influence of a successful example—that you are to see, embodied in life, the result of well directed and persevering study—that you are to have constantly before you the model of what a true scholar should be. And whilst we congratulate you upon your privileges and rejoice with you in your prospects, will you not permit us to exhort you to be faithful in the use of your unequalled opportunities and blessings—that you may here obtain what Milton calls “a complete and generous education, which will fit you to perform skilfully, justly, and magnanimously, all the offices both of private and public life.”

## THE DUDLEIAN LECTURES.

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<i>Year.</i>	<i>Name of the Lecturer.</i>	<i>Residence.</i>	<i>Topic.</i>	<i>Text.</i>
1755.	Edward Holyoke,	Cambridge,	N. R.	Heb. xi. 6.
1756.	*John Barnard,	Marblehead,	C. R.	Mark, xiv. 61, 62.
1757.	*Ed'wd. Wigglesworth, D. D.	Cambridge,	E. P.	1 John, iv. 1.
1758.	Nathaniel Appleton, D. D.	Cambridge,	C. O.	Acts, xiv. 23.
1759.	*Ebenezer Gay, D. D.	Hingham,	N. R.	Rom. ii. 14, 15.
1760.	Samuel Wigglesworth,	Ipswich,	C. R.	1 Cor. i. 21.
1761.	Thomas Foxcroft,	Boston,	E. P.	Mark, x. 43.
1762.	*Charles Chauncy, D. D.	Boston,	C. O.	1 Tim. iv. 14.
1763.	*Peter Clark,	Danvers,	N. R.	Job, xxxv. 10, 11.
1764.	Hull Abbot,	Charlestown,	C. R.	Acts, xix. 20.
1765.	*Jonathan Mayhew, D. D.	Boston,	E. P.	2 Cor. vi. 16.
1766.	*Ebenezer Pemberton, D. D.	Boston,	C. O.	Acts, xx. 28.
1767.	Samuel Cooke,	W. Cambridge,	N. R.	Rom. i. 19, 20.
1768.	*Thomas Barnard,	Salem,	C. R.	1 Cor. ii. 5.
1769.	Samuel Mather, D. D.	Boston,	E. P.	2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.
1770.	Amos Adams,	Roxbury,	C. O.	Titus, i. 5.
1771.	*Andrew Eliot, D. D.	Boston,	N. R.	Acts, xvii. 27.
1772.	*Benjamin Stevens, D. D.	Kittery,	C. R.	Heb. i. 1.
1773.	*Samuel Cooper, D. D.	Boston,	E. P.	2 Thess. ii. 1-10.
1774.	*Samuel Webster, D. D.	Salisbury,	C. O.	Matt. xx. 25-28.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Name of the Lecturer.</i>	<i>Residence.</i>	<i>Topic.</i>	<i>Text.</i>
1775.	*Samuel Langdon, D. D.	Cambridge,	C. R.	Micah, iv. 5.
1776.	Isaac Morrill,	Wilmington,	C. R.	1 Peter, iii. 15.
1777.	*Ed'wd Wigglesworth, D. D.	Cambridge,	E. P.	Matt. xv. 6.
1778.	*John Tucker, D. D.	Newbury,	C. O.	John, xviii. 36.
1779.	*Gad Hitchcock, D. D.	Pembroke,	C. R.	Gen. i. 26, 27.
1780.	David Barnes, D. D.	Scituate,	C. R.	John, xx. 31.
1781.	William Gordon, D. D.	Roxbury,	E. P.	Matt. xxvi. 26.
1782.	Samuel West, D. D.	Dartmouth,	C. O.	Matt. xxviii. 18-20.
1783.	Moses Hemmenway, D. D.	Wells,	N. R.	Prov. xx. 27.
1784.	Phillips Payson, D. D.	Chelsea,	C. R.	Acts, xxvi. 25.
1785.	Joseph Willard, D. D.	Cambridge,	E. P.	Luke, ix. 55, 56.
1786.	William Symmes, D. D.	Andover,	C. O.	Mark, vii. 7. 8.
1787.	Simeon Howard, D. D.	Boston,	N. R.	Acts, xvii. 28.
1788.	*Timothy Hilliard,	Cambridge,	C. R.	Rom. i. 4.
1789.	Jason Haven,	Dedham,	E. P.	Matt. xxv. 8, 9.
1790.	Jeremy Belknap, D. D.	Boston,	C. O.	2 Tim. ii. 2.
1791.	Henry Cumming, D. D.	Billerica,	N. R.	Luke, xii. 57.
1792.	Jacob Cushing, D. D.	Waltham,	C. R.	2 Tim. iii. 16.
1793.	*John Lathrop, D. D.	Boston,	E. P.	1 Peter, v. 3.
1794.	Zabdiel Adams,	Lunenburg,	C. O.	1 Cor. xiv. 40.
1795.	*Thomas Barnard, D. D.	Salem,	N. R.	Acts, xiv. 14-17.
1796.	*Nathan Fisk, D. D.	Brookfield,	C. R.	John, x. 32.
1797.	Josiah Bridge,	Sudbury,	E. P.	2 Tim. iii. 17.
1798.	*Samuel Haven, D. D.	Portsmouth,	C. O.	Phil. i. 15-18.
1799.	*John Mellen,	Barnstable,	N. R.	Acts, xvii. 27.
1800.	Thomas Prentiss, D. D.	Medfield,	C. R.	Acts xxvi. 26.
1801.	Charles Stearns, D. D.	Lincoln,	E. P.	Rev. xiii. 14.
1802.	*David Osgood, D. D.	Medford,	C. O.	Matt. xxiii. 8.
1803.	Eliphalet Porter, D. D.	Roxbury,	N. R.	Mark, xii. 34.
1804.	John Eliot, D. D.	Boston,	C. R.	
1805.	*Thomas Thacher,	Dedham,	E. P.	Mark, xiii. 32.
1806.	*Joseph Eckley, D. D.	Boston,	C. O.	1 Peter, v. 1, 2.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Name of the Lecturer.</i>	<i>Residence.</i>	<i>Topic.</i>	<i>Text.</i>
1807.	Aaron Bancroft, D. D.	Worcester,	N. R.	Acts, xvii. 28.
1808.	*Reuben Puffer, D. D.	Berlin,	C. R.	John, i. 46.
1809.	John Allyn, D. D.	Duxbury,	E. P.	Matt. xxiii. 8, 9.
1810.	*Abiel Holmes, D. D.	Cambridge,	C. O.	1 Cor. iv. 1.
1811.	Henry Ware, D. D.	Cambridge,	N. R.	Psalm, x. 4.
1812.	John Reed, D. D.	Bridgewater,	C. R.	Gen. iii. 15.
1813.	John T. Kirkland, D. D.	Cambridge,	E. P.	Rom. xiv. 22.
1814.	Hezekiah Packard, D. D.	Wiscasset,	C. O.	Acts, xiii. 3.
1815.	John Foster, D. D.	Brighton,	N. R.	Acts xiv. 15-17.
1816.	Thaddeus M. Harris, D. D.	Dorchester,	C. R.	1 Cor. i. 20, 21.
1817.	Nathaniel Thayer, D. D.	Lancaster,	E. P.	Matt. xiii. 15.
1818.	Abiel Abbot, D. D.	Beverly,	C. O.	Heb. v. 4.
1819.	James Kendall, D. D.	Plymouth,	N. R.	Heb. xi. 6.
1820.	*William E. Channing, D. D.	Boston,	C. R.	John, iii. 2.
1821.	*John Pierce, D. D.	Brookline,	E. P.	2 Cor. i. 24.
1822.	Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.	Chelsea,	C. O.	No text.
1823.	Ichabod Nichols, D. D.	Portland,	N. R.	No text.
1824.	*James Flint, D. D.	Salem,	C. R.	John, xx. 29.
1825.	William Jenks, D. D.	Boston,	E. P.	Rev. xvi. 10.
1826.	Nathan Parker, D. D.	Portsmouth,	C. O.	Titus, i. 5.
1827.	Sidney Willard,	Cambridge,	N. R.	Rom. i. 20.
1828.	*Francis Parkman, D. D.	Boston,	C. R.	John, iv. 13, 14.
1829.	*Hosea Hildreth,	Gloucester,	E. P.	John, xviii. 36.
1830.	*William Allen, D. D.	Brunswick,	C. O.	2 Tim. ii. 2.
1831.	Francis Wayland, D. D.	Providence,	N. R.	Rom. ii. 14.
1832.	*N. L. Frothingham, D. D.	Boston,	C. R.	1 Tim. iii. 16.
1833.	*Convers Francis, D. D.	Watertown,	E. P.	Eph. v. 8
1834.	*Alvan Lamson, D. D.	Dedham,	C. O.	Matt. xx. 28.
1835.	*John Brazer, D. D.	Salem,	N. R.	No text.
1836.	*Orville Dewey, D. D.	New York,	C. R.	Mark, iv. 40, 41.
1837.	*James Walker, D. D.	Charlestown,	E. P.	2 Cor. xi. 3.
1838.	*George R. Noyes, D. D.	Petersham,	C. O.	No text.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Name of the Lecturer.</i>	<i>Residence.</i>	<i>Topic.</i>	<i>Text.</i>
1839.	*John G. Palfrey, D. D.	Cambridge,	N. R.	No text.
1840.	*Wm. B. O. Peabody, D. D.	Springfield,	C. R.	John, iv. 14.
1841.	David Damon, D. D.	W. Cambridge,	E. P.	Rev. xviii. 2.
1842.	Samuel Barrett,	Boston,	C. O.	Mark, x. 42-45.
1843.	*Ezra S. Gannett, D. D.	Boston,	N. R.	No text.
1844.	Barnas Sears, D. D.	Newton,	C. R.	No text.
1845.	*Edwards A. Park, D. D.	Andover,	E. P.	Matt. vii. 20.
1846.	*Alexander Young,	Boston,	C. O.	No text.

## NOTE.

The Lectures to which an asterisk \* is prefixed, have been printed. In the fourth column, N. R. denotes the Evidences of Natural Religion, C. R. the Evidences of the Christian Religion, E. P. the Errors of Popery, and C. O. Congregational Ordination. These were the four topics designated in the Will of the Founder, and they recur once in every four years. The Lecture has been delivered uninterruptedly every year since its commencement in 1755.





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