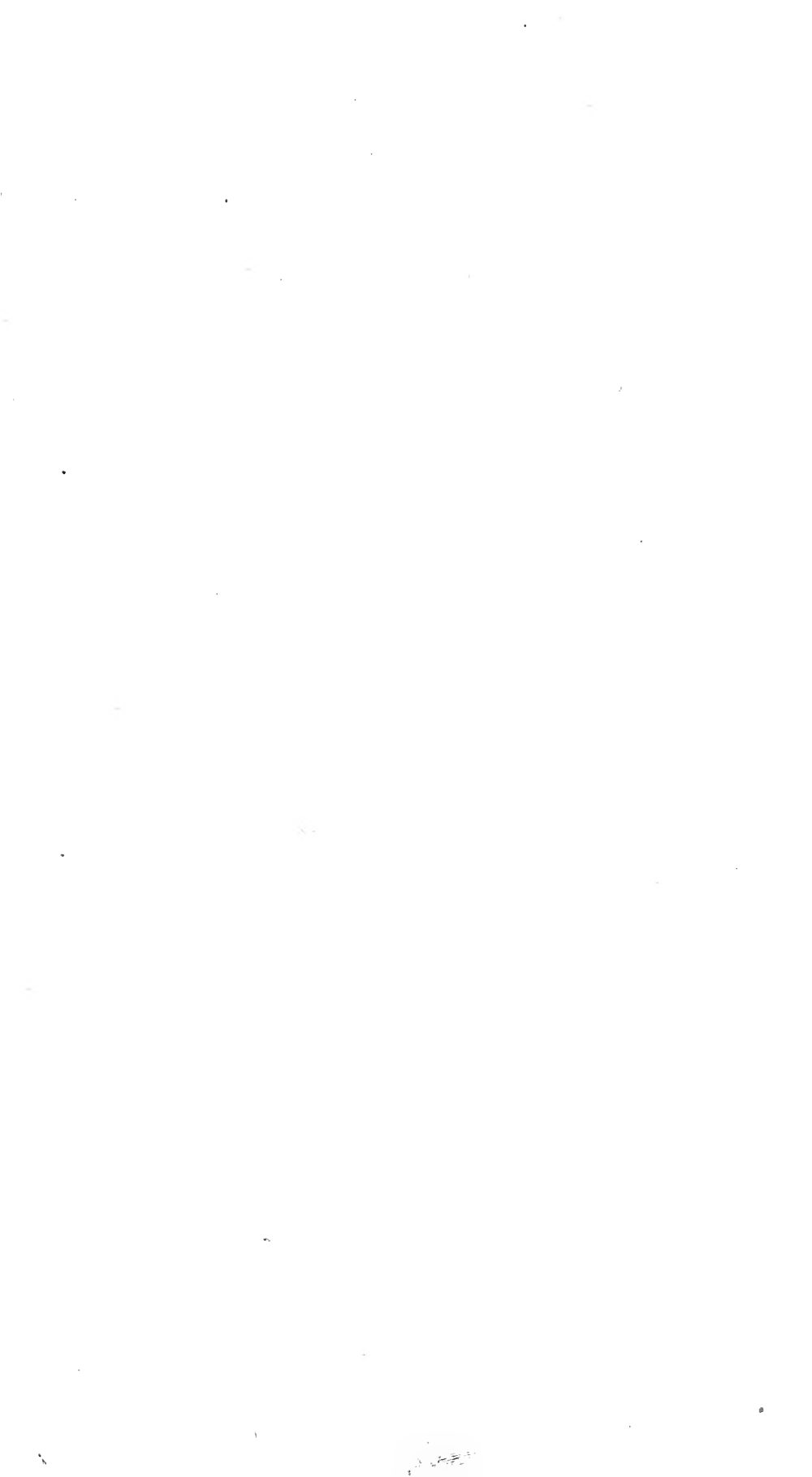


NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 07998368 4





James Chrystal.

estate of Rev James Chrystal

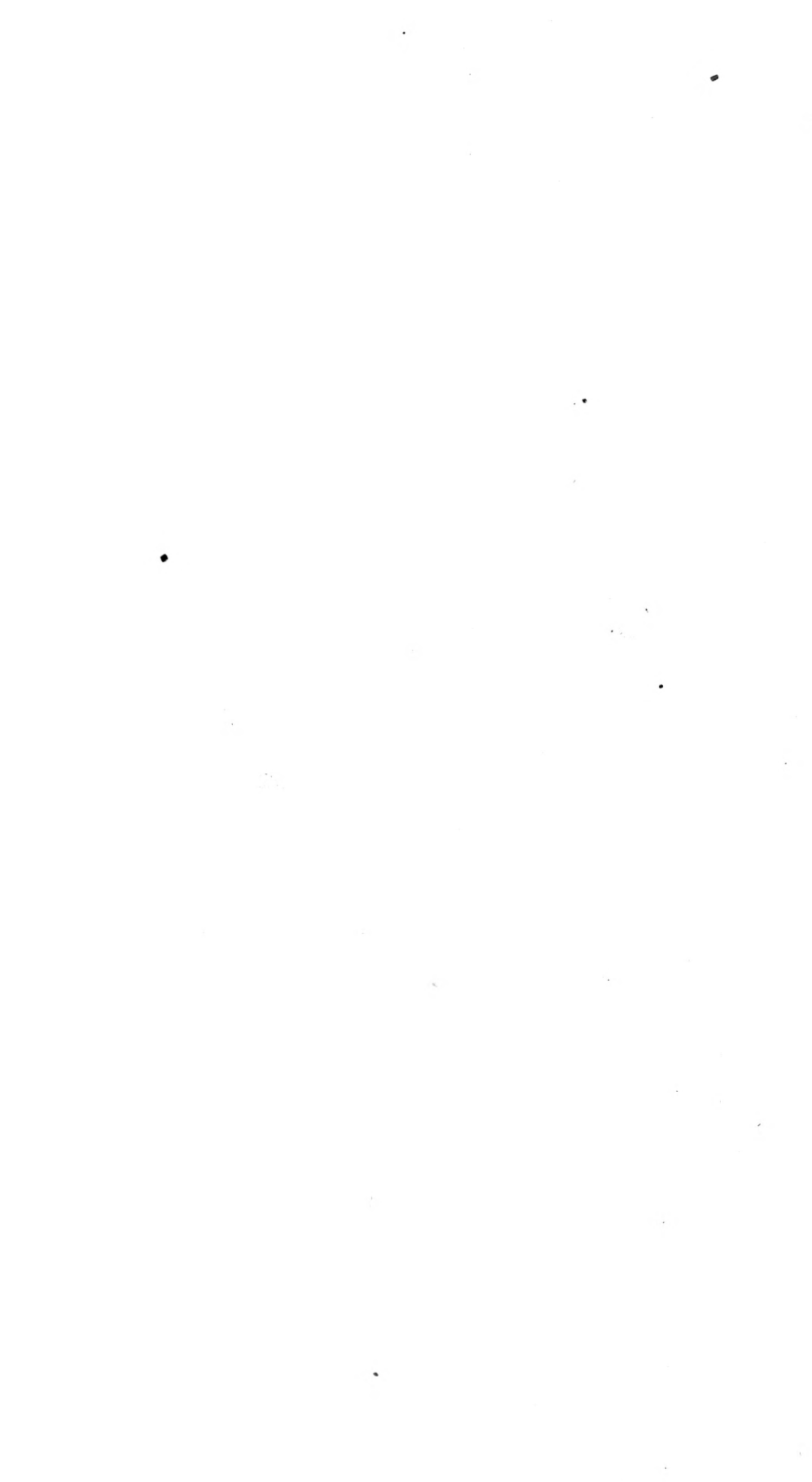
April 6 '09

211
ZKB

شماره ۱۰۰

۱۰۰





12-11-17
11-23-17
A

DISCOURSE

OF

Church Government:

WHEREIN THE

RIGHTS OF THE CHURCH,

AND THE

SUPREMACY OF CHRISTIAN PRINCES,

ARE VINDICATED AND ADJUSTED.

BY JOHN POTTER, D. D.

Bishop of Oxford and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.



PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY S. POTTER & CO. 115, CHESNUT STREET, E. BLISS &
E. WHITE, NEW YORK, S. C. & I. SCHENCK, SAVANNAH,
E. D. WITHERS, FREDERICKSBURG, VA. E. J. COLE,
AND SAMUEL YOUNG, BALTIMORE.

Stavely & Bringhurst, Printers.

.....
1824.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
492439
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATION
R

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

It will be perceived from the title page of the work, and from a few remarks in the last chapter of it, that the learned author contemplated his subject, in reference not only to what he deemed correct principles of ecclesiastical government, but also to the constitution of the country of which he was a subject. The American reader will be aware, concerning the very small portion of the book which has a bearing on the latter point, that it is irrelative to the concerns of any ecclesiastical body in this country; there being no establishment of any particular church, by the laws of any state or by the union. But it was thought not proper now to edit the book in any other form than that in which it was originally given to the public by the author, who afterwards filled the first station in the church of England.

PREFACE.

SEVERAL books having appeared of late years, wherein either the rights of the church, or the supremacy of christian princes, or both together have been invaded, it was thought convenient that something should be published, wherein the grounds, on which the church of England ever since the reformation, and other ancient churches before the papal usurpation, have at once maintained their own inherent rights, and the just prerogative of the civil magistrate, should be explained and vindicated, for the satisfaction of honest and well disposed persons, without entering into controversy with any particular writer.

The following treatise contains an account of the constitution, government and rights of the christian church, chiefly as they are described by the Scriptures, and the fathers of the three first centuries, whose sense I have represented for the most part in their own words, to avoid mistakes. This I have always thought the best method of discovering the genuine sense of the Scriptures, to compare them with the practice of the first christians, who had far better opportunity of acquainting themselves with the judgment of the apostles, than we can pretend to at this distance; and cannot generally be supposed in those times of danger and persecution, when there was no motive to profess christianity but the preserving of a good conscience, to have wilfully corrupted, or deviated in any respect from the divine oracles. And if any of them should be thought to speak

sometimes with less caution, or to carry their expressions higher than might have been wished, as the best men in the heat of disputation, or at other times through too much zeal often do, all candid and impartial readers will easily be persuaded to make a just allowance for it.

To continue this account after the church was taken into the protection of the civil powers, to vindicate the supremacy of christian princes, and to adjust it with the rights of the church, as the subject leads me to do, will require another book: this, if I have opportunity, and be not prevented by some abler hand, which I shall be glad to find, may perhaps follow in a convenient time.

What is here published, I submit to the christian reader, and shall always be ready, upon better information, to correct any thing wherein I have been mistaken. And if this discourse be found to contribute any thing towards the putting a stop to those Erastian and other licentious principles, which are too rife, and have been too much countenanced by some among us, I shall think my time well bestowed.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION,

Containing the design and order of the following discourse, page 9

Chap. I. Of the nature and constitution of the christian church, - - - - 11

The church proved to be a society, p. 11. Not a mere voluntary society, but one whereof all men must be members, p. 16. A spiritual society, p. 23. An outward and visible society, p. 28. A universal society, with regard to time and place, p. 31.

Chap. II. Of the foundation and government of the church whilst Christ lived on earth, - 35

First, is shown, what was done towards it by our Lord in his own person, p. 36. His life considered from his birth to his baptism, p. 36. From his baptism to his death, p. 37. From his resurrection to his ascension, p. 42. Secondly, what ministers were employed under him, whereof the apostles and seventy disciples, p. 44.

Chap. III. Of the government of the church in the time of the apostles, - - - 50

It is shown, first, that when our Lord left the world, the apostles were intrusted with authority to govern the church, and did accordingly govern it, p. 52. Secondly, that this authority was equally intrusted with all the twelve, p. 70. Thirdly, what inferior ministers were employed under the apostles, p. 91.

Chap. IV. Of the government of the church from
the time of the apostles, till Constantine the
great, - - - - - 114

It is shown that there was to be a succession of ministers from the apostles till the world's end, p. 114. That this was in fact continued in the order of bishops till Constantine's time, and that this order was reckoned of divine institution, p. 128, 129. Whether all bishops were originally equal, where of Metropolitans, p. 181.

Chap. V. Of the powers which belong to the
church, - - - - - 193

It is shown, first, what is the general nature and design of the powers which belong to the church, p. 193. Secondly, who is the subject of these powers in general, p. 197. Thirdly, what are these powers, and to whom each of them belongs in particular, p. 203. Of preaching, p. 203. Of praying, p. 221. Of baptizing, p. 226. Of consecrating the Lord's supper, p. 235. Of confirming persons baptized, p. 245. Of ordaining ministers, p. 254. Of making canons, p. 278. Of spiritual jurisdiction, particularly of excommunication, p. 295. Of demanding maintenance, p. 363. Fourthly, In what place the several persons, whom Christ has intrusted with the forementioned powers, are to exercise them, p. 388. The office and character of men in holy orders, shown to extend over the whole world, p. 388. The ordinary exercise of their office limited to a particular district, p. 392. Whence this limitation proceeds, p. 395.

INTRODUCTION.



SCARCE any thing in religion has been more mistaken, than the nature and extent of that power, which our blessed Saviour established in his church. Some have not only excluded the civil magistrates of christian states from having any concernment in the exercise of this power, and exempted all persons invested with it from the civil courts of justice; but have raised their supreme governor of the church to a supremacy, even in civil affairs, over the chief magistrate; insomuch that he has pretended on some occasions to absolve subjects from their allegiance to their lawful princes: And others have run so far into contrary mistakes, as either to derive all spiritual power wholly from the civil magistrate, or to allow the exercise thereof to all christians without distinction. The first of these opinions manifestly tends to create divisions in the state, and to excite subjects to rebel against their civil governors: The latter do both plainly strike at the foundation of all ecclesiastical power, and wherever they are put in practice, not only the external order and discipline, but even the sacraments of the church must be destroyed, and its whole constitution quite dissolved. And therefore in order to correct these and the like pernicious errors, which seem chiefly to proceed from false notions concerning the church established by Christ, it will be necessary to explain:

First, The government of the christian church before its union with the civil state.

Secondly, The same after such an union.

In treating on the first of these heads I shall observe the following method :

First, I shall explain the nature and constitution of the christian church.

Secondly, I shall show in what manner it was founded and governed, whilst our blessed Saviour lived on earth.

Thirdly, In what manner it was governed in the times of the apostles.

Fourthly, By whom it was governed from the time of the apostles, till the Roman emperors embraced christianity.

Fifthly, What powers belong to it.

A
DISCOURSE
OF
CHURCH GOVERNMENT.



CHAP. I.

OF THE NATURE AND CONSTITUTION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BEFORE we discourse of church government, it will be necessary to inquire into the nature and constitution of the christian church. In treating on which subject I shall

First, Show that the christian church is a society.

Secondly, Explain some of the chief characters and properties of it, so far as they concern the present subject.

I. First, from the account which the Holy Scriptures have given us of the christian church, it appears to be no confused multitude of men, independent on one another, but a well formed and regular society.

Though the members of which it is composed, are dispersed through all the countries of the world, and both in their language, and their manners, and their civil interests, do very much differ from one another ; yet we may learn from the Scriptures, that,

all these are so joined together, as to be one.¹ Whence our creeds teach us to profess our faith in one holy catholic church; and the name of church does often signify all christians wheresoever dispersed through the whole world.²

Neither are the members of the church united only by love and affection, by consent of opinion, or similitude of manners, which may happen to the members of distinct societies; but they all bear the same relation to the same common head. This it is, whereby regular societies are distinguished from confused multitudes; that whereas the latter* are only locally united, and when their parts are dispersed, utterly cease to be; the former are joined under the same form of government to the same common head, by their alliance to which their several parts, how remote soever in place, do maintain a strict communion with one another. Thus the several persons, who live in the same city or kingdom, are united into one civil society: And the jews, however dispersed, were all united to God and to one another in the same religious society, having all obliged themselves by the same covenant, to be the people of God.³ Whence they are called God's peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests, an holy nation.⁴ And being engaged as one and the same person to him, they are called his spouse, whence God is said to have married them,⁵ and to be their husband.⁶

¹ Jo. x. 16. xvii. 21, 22, 23. ² Matt. xvi. 18. 1 Cor. xii. 28. xv. 9. Gal. i. 13. Eph. i. 22. iii. 10, 21. v. 23, 25, 27, 29, 32. Phil. iii. 6. Col. i. 18, 24. Heb. xii. 23. ³ Deut. xxvi. 17, 18. ⁴ Exod. xix. 5, 6. ⁵ Jer. iii. 14. ⁶ Isa. liv. 5.

In the very same manner, christians, being separated from the world, and united to Christ by the new covenant, are called a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.¹ They are said to be the bride, and wife of Christ,² to be married to him,³ and to be espoused to him as to one husband.⁴ And I will add farther, that the jewish and christian churches, though they differ in their outward polity, are the same in substance: The jews believed in Christ to come, and drank of the spiritual rock which followed them,⁵ and the christians are saved by Christ already come: but both jews and christians are members of the same church of Christ. Whence St. Paul compares the church to a tree, in which there are two sorts of branches; one natural, which are the jews; the other ingrafted, which are the christian converts from gentilism; but both of them belong to the same stock.⁶ And therefore if the church of the jews was a society, of which there is no doubt; then the christian church is a society too, since it is not a new church, but only the jewish church perfected and enlarged.

Neither is there any thing, which makes any number of men to be one society, which does not equally, or in a more perfect manner belong to all the members of the christian church. For as they are subject to the same head, so they live under the same laws, have the same religious worship, and enjoy the same common privileges. Whence the names and allusions, whereby the church is de-

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 9. ² Rev. xxi. 9. xxii. 17. ³ Rom. vii. 4. ⁴ 2 Cor. xi. 2. ⁵ 1 Cor. x. 4. ⁶ Rom. xi. 24.

scribed in the scriptures, are commonly such as would be used to represent the most proper society.

The jews and gentiles, as incorporated together in the church, are said, of twain to make one new man,¹ to be one fold under one shepherd.² They are compared to a building fitly framed, growing to an holy temple in the Lord,³ and are called one spiritual house, reared upon the foundation of prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.⁴ The church is sometimes called a family, whereof Christ is the master;⁵ and sometimes a city: thus it is said to be the city of the living God,⁶ whence the christian people are fellow citizens with the saints;⁷ and in regard that they are not members of an earthly, but an heavenly city, their citizenship (Πολίτευμα) is said to be in heaven.⁸

Civil societies are commonly called bodies, by way of allusion to natural and organized bodies, the several members whereof, in their different capacities, are helpful to one another, and receive their life and motion from the same head. Thus also the christian church is described. Its head is said to be Christ;⁹ and as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be jews or gentiles, whether we be bond or free.¹⁰ Here also the members have distinct

¹ Eph. ii. 15. ² Jo. x. 16. ³ Eph. ii. 21. ⁴ 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10. Eph. ii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 5. ⁵ Heb. iii. 6. xii. 22. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Eph. iii. 14, 15. Matt. x. 25. ⁶ Heb. xii. 22. ⁷ Eph. ii. 19. ⁸ Phil. iii. 20. ⁹ Eph. i. 22. ¹⁰ 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

offices, wherein they promote the common benefit of the whole body : “ We being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another ; having gifts differing, according to the grace which is given us.”¹ And, to complete the allusion, all these offices are derived from, and depend on Christ, the common head ; “ Who gave, some, apostles ; and some, prophets ; and some, evangelists ; and some, pastors, and teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ : that we may grow up unto him in all things, who is the head, even Christ : from whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that, which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working of the measure of every part, maketh increase unto the edifying of itself in love.”²

Lastly, The christian church is very often said to be a kingdom, whereof Christ is the king. Thus, in our Lord’s words,³ “ Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church ; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven :” Where the church and the kingdom of heaven mean the same thing. To be translated into the kingdom of Christ,⁴ and called to the kingdom of God,⁵ signifies no more than to be made a member of the christian church. And the kingdom of God, and of Christ, and of heaven, are often expressions of the same sense with the church of God and of Christ. Neither is our blessed Saviour, as he is mediator of the new covenant, described only as

¹ Rom. xii. 4, 5, 6, &c. ² Eph. iv. 11, 12, 15, 16. ³ Matt. xvi. 18, 19. ⁴ Col. i. 13. ⁵ 1 Thess. ii. 12.

a priest and prophet, but also as a king. Under this notion he was represented by Melchizedek king of Salem,¹ by David,² and by Solomon,³ who were types of King Messias. The prophets foretold in express words, that he should be a king: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; behold, thy king cometh unto thee; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass."⁴ Under this title he was inquired for by the wise men,⁵ acknowledged by Nathaniel,⁶ and saluted by the Jews who attended him in his progress to Jerusalem.⁷ For assuming this title he was arraigned before Pilate, as a rebel against Cæsar.⁸ Lastly, he expressly owned this title before Pilate,⁹ though not in the same sense, wherein the Jews understood it.

II. From this account of the christian church, and of Christ, its head, it sufficiently appears, that it is a regular and well formed society: but the same will be made out more fully, when we come to describe the particular form, wherein it was governed by Christ, and afterwards by those who acted in his name. In the mean time let us proceed to consider some of the chief characters and properties of this society, so far as they concern the present subject.

And *First*, It is not a mere voluntary society, but one whereof men are obliged to be members.

Secondly, It is a spiritual society.

¹ Gen. xiv. 18. Heb. vii. 1. ² Jer. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25. xxxiv. 23, 24. Hos. iii. 5. ³ Psal. xlv. lxxii. ⁴ Zach. ix. 9. Matt. xxi. 5. Jo. xii. 15. ⁵ Matt. ii. 2. ⁶ John i. 49. ⁷ John xii. 13. ⁸ Luke xxii. 2. John xix. 12. ⁹ John xviii. 36, 37.

Thirdly, It is also an outward and visible society.
Fourthly, It is an universal society.

1. The christian church is not a mere voluntary society, but one whereof men are obliged to be members. Some have conceived the christian church to resemble a society of philosophers, where many useful and excellent truths are taught; but no man is obliged to come into it, or to continue in it: and if any man has learnt the truths which are there delivered, by any other means, it is all one as if he had lived in the society. In these men's opinion, there lies no farther obligation on any man to be a member of the christian church, than as this is a means to the knowledge of the christian religion: which being once attained, they think men may be saved by keeping God's commandments, without associating themselves with any body of christians. For the confutation of this notion, two things may be considered:

First, That the christian church is a society of God's appointment.

Secondly, That this society is appointed with an enforcement of rewards and punishments.

First, The christian church is a society of God's appointment. It has already been proved that the christian church is a society, which whoever owns, will not deny that it is a society of God's appointment. And taking it for granted, that this society is of God's appointment, it follows, that men are obliged to become members of it. God's appointing a society is a sufficient declaration, that it is his will men should associate into it: for he who does nothing in vain, would not have instituted a

society, into which he did not design men to enter. And therefore whoever neglects to be made a member of the church, does as much as lies in him, frustrate the design of God, by whom the church was founded; especially since in its nature and original constitution it is an universal society, fitted and designed for the reception of all mankind, as will be shown under the last head of this chapter.

Secondly, This society was appointed with an enforcement of rewards and punishments. What was to be the consequence of neglecting to hear Christ and his apostles, may be understood from the judgments denounced against Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum,¹ Jerusalem;² and in general against all persons and places whatever, which would not receive them.³ “And whoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words; when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for that city.”

And lest these, and the like denunciations, should be thought to concern only those, who went on in their former vicious courses; and that the reformation of these would have entitled them to God's favour, without associating themselves with Christ and his disciples; it is plainly said, that this also was required as a necessary condition of salvation. The ruler, who had *kept all the commandments from his youth*, was farther required, as a qualification for the *inheritance of eternal life*, to follow Christ.⁴

¹ Matt. xi. 21. 23. ² Luke xiii. 24. ³ Matt. x. 15. ⁴ Luke xviii. 18.

Whoever beside offered himself to be the disciple of Christ, was obliged to follow him. “If any man serve me, saith he, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be.”¹ And not openly to follow Christ, as interpreted by himself, was to be at enmity with him: “he that is not with me, is against me.”²

Further, whoever wilfully neglects to be made a member of the christian church, does by necessary consequence deprive himself of all the privileges which belong to it: just as in any civil corporation, they who are not members of it, can plead no right to any of its privileges. This has already been shown to be the sense of Christ, and the same is constantly affirmed by the christian writers of all ages. “They who do not come into the church (saith Irenæus) do not partake of the Spirit, but deprive themselves of life. For where the church is, there is the Spirit of God.”* And in St. Cyprian’s opinion, “he cannot have God for his father who has not the church for his mother.”†

Hence the privileges of the christian church, such as remission of sins, the grace of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life, are commonly said to be annexed to baptism, this being the constant rite of initiation into the Church. Thus in Ananias’ exhortation to St. Paul, “Arise, and be baptized, and

¹ John xii. 26. ² Luke xi. 23. Matt. xii. 30.

* Irenæus, lib. iii. cap. XL. Cujus (Spiritus) non sunt participes, qui non concurrunt ad Ecclesiam, sed semetipsos fraudant a vita.—Ubi enim Ecclesia, ibi & spiritus Dei, &c.

† Cyprianus lib. de Unitate Ecclesiæ. Habere jam non potest Deum patrem, qui Ecclesiam non habet matrem.

wash away thy sins.¹ St. Barnabas expressly affirms, that *baptism procures remission of sins*; and proves from the Scriptures, that they who are baptized, are received into God's favour, whilst all the rest of mankind lie under his displeasure.* Peter thus exhorts his new converts: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."² Our blessed Saviour joins faith and baptism together, as necessary conditions of salvation: "Except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."³ And in another place, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."⁴ From these and the like passages of Scripture, the primitive church constantly inferred, that where the gospel had been sufficiently propounded, no man could be saved without baptism actually obtained, or earnestly desired. Whence Tertullian calls it the "happy sacrament of water, whereby we are washed from the sins of our former blindness, and delivered into eternal life."[†] And Cyprian gives this reason, why the baptism of infants should not be delayed so long as the eighth day after their birth, that "since it is said in the gospel, that the Son of man came not to destroy men's souls, but to save them: it is our duty, as far as in us lies, to take care, that no soul shall be destroyed."⁵ This he delivers, not as his own private opinion, but as

¹ Acts xxii. 16.

* Barnabæ Epist. cap. XI. sub initium.

² Acts ii. 38. ³ John iii. 5. ⁴ Mark xvi. 16.

[†] Lib. de Baptismo, cap. I.

⁵ Epist. LXIV. juxta Edit. Oxon.

the judgment of the council, whereof he was president. And the same thing was typified by circumcision, the forerunner of baptism, which whoever neglected to receive, was interpreted to have rejected the covenant of God, whereof this rite was the sign and ratification, and for that offence was to be *cut off from the people*.¹

This is plainly the doctrine both of the scriptures, and of the catholic church in all ages; and to say that a man may repent of his sins, and keep God's commandments, without being thus admitted into the christian church, implies a manifest contradiction: this being one of the first and chief commandments of God, that all men be so admitted.

Neither is it less necessary to continue in the christian church, than it was to be first admitted into it. In mere voluntary societies, men are permitted to come in, and to go out again when they please. But here the command of God for our continuance in the church is as full and express, as for our admission into it. The word of God must be heard, the public worship frequented, the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper received: and the christian people are expressly commanded, "To obey them who have the rule over them, and to submit themselves,"² and not to forsake the assembling of themselves together.³ And how any part of these duties is consistent with a man's leaving the church, will not easily be shown.

It may further be observed, that the same reason, which makes it necessary for men to be admitted

* ¹ Gen. xvii. 13, 14. ² Heb. xiii. 7. 17. ³ Heb. x. 26.

into the church, does with the same force oblige them to continue in it as long as they live. For they who leave the church, are no more in communion with Christ, its head, nor have any better title to the privileges of the church, than they, who were never admitted into it. We find in the natural body, that whatever member is cut off from the body, does as entirely lose all the life and motion, which is imparted from the natural head, as if it had never been a part of that body: and in all civil corporations, they, who renounce their freedom, do by consequence forfeit all the privileges, to which that gave them a title: neither can it be otherwise in this spiritual society, but that whoever does without cause separate himself from it, must be deprived of the privileges, to which his admission entitled him; “As not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.”¹

This also is confessed to have been the constant doctrine of the primitive church, that, to use St. Augustine’s words, “Whoever is separated from the catholic church, however worthy of praise he may think himself to live in all other respects, yet by reason of this one wickedness, that he is disjoined from the unity of Christ, shall not have life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”*

¹ Col. ii. 19. Eph. iv. 13. 16.

* Augustini Epist. CLII. Quisquis ab hac Catholica Ecclesia fuerit separatus, quantumlibet laudabiliter se vivere existimet, hoc solo scelere, quod a Christi unitate disjunctus est, non habebit vitam, sed ira Dei manet super ipsum.

So that, from the Holy Scriptures, and from the nature of this, and all societies, and from the consent of the catholic church, it appears, that the christian church can be called a voluntary society in no other sense, than as it is left to every man's choice, whether he will be for ever happy or miserable.

2. The christian church is a spiritual society. This will plainly appear by considering,

First, That it was founded in opposition to the kingdom of darkness.

Secondly, Which is a consequence of the former, that by the design of its foundation it was to be distinct from all earthly kingdoms.

First, The christian church was founded in opposition to the kingdom of darkness. This is plainly implied in our blessed Saviour's words to St. Peter: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."¹ The devil being cast out of heaven for his ambition to be like the most high, erected a kingdom in these lower regions: whence he is called, "The prince of this world,"² and "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience."³ The instruments, whereby he subdues mankind, are sin and death, which are also said to reign, and to have kingdoms. Sin hath reigned unto death.⁴ Death reigned from Adam to Moses.⁵ By one man's offence death reigned.⁶ In order to destroy these

¹ Matt. xvi. 18. ² John xii. 31. ³ Eph. ii. 2. ⁴ Rom. v. 21.

⁵ Rom. v. 14. ⁶ Rom. v. 17.

kingdoms, the Son of God came into the world, and there erected his kingdom, which is often opposed to the kingdom of the devil. Whence the members of the christian church are said to be “delivered out of the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Christ.”¹ In the vow, which all christians, both in the present church, and that of the primitive ages, made at their admission, they *renounced the devil and his works*, and promised to be faithful subjects of Christ.* The captain of our salvation, is said by his death to have destroyed him, who has the power of death, even the devil;² and to have spoiled principalities and powers, and to have made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in the cross.³ The christian people, as soldiers under Christ, are said “to fight, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”⁴ Their armour is not such, as will guard them against carnal enemies, but the armour of light,⁵ the armour of God, the girdle of truth, the breast plate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit.⁶ The weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds.⁷

¹ Col. i. 13.

* Conf. Constitut. Apost. lib. VII. cap. XLI. Cypriani Epist. VII. Tertullianus de corona milit. Chrysostomus sub finem Homil. XXI. ad populum Antiochen. Hieronymus ad finem cap. VI. Amos. Ambrosius de Sacrament. lib. I. cap. 2. alii passim.

² Heb. ii. 14. ³ Col. ii. 14, 15. ⁴ Eph. vi. 12. ⁵ Rom. xiii. 12. ⁶ Eph. vi. 13, &c. ⁷ 2 Cor. x. 4.

The next enemy, against which Christ, and under his banner all faithful christians are said to fight, is sin ; which he subdues by destroying its dominion over mankind through his grace, and the guilt of it by the merits of his death.

“ The last enemy, which shall be destroyed is death : then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.” And after this, all the enemies of Christ’s kingdom being put under his feet, and so the design of his mediatorial office accomplished, cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father.¹

Secondly, The kingdom or church of Christ was, by the design of the foundation, to be distinct from all earthly kingdoms : which is a plain consequence from the last particular, that it was founded in opposition to the kingdom of darkness : because the kingdoms of the world are designed for men’s temporal welfare and happiness, and for the security of their lives and properties, against fraud and violence.

The same appears farther from hence, that Christ himself, though he was the sovereign of this spiritual kingdom, yet lived in constant subjection to the civil kingdom of the Romans. He always gave to Cæsar what was Cæsar’s due ; and at length patiently suffered a cruel death, in obedience to Cæsar’s deputy. Indeed the Jews, who explained the prophecies, which speak of Messiah’s kingdom, in such a sense as agreed best with their own prejudices,

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 26, 54, 27, 24.

conceived, that their Messiah was to be a glorious temporal monarch, who should subdue the Romans, and restore to the Jews their ancient laws and liberties; and therefore that Jesus, by declaring himself to be the Messiah, was a professed enemy to the Roman government. This was the crime, for which they arraigned him before Pilate: “If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar’s friend; who-soever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar.”¹ But Christ himself, who best understood the nature of his own kingdom, requires all his subjects to pay all due obedience to Cæsar.² The same duty is earnestly recommended by those, whom he appointed to govern his church after his ascension;³ and has always been observed in a most strict manner by the primitive and all other good christians. He never exercised any one act of civil jurisdiction: when one desired justice of him against his brother, his answer was: man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you?⁴ *Lastly*, When Pilate examined him, whether he was the king of the jews, he declared himself indeed to be a king, but one of a quite different order from that, which his enemies accused him for affecting to be: “My kingdom (said he) is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence.”⁵ Which answer did in Pilate’s opinion so fully vindicate him from being Cæsar’s enemy, that when he had said this, Pilate

¹ John xix. 12. ² Matt. xxii. 2. ³ Rom. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 13.
⁴ Luke xii. 14. ⁵ John xviii. 36.

went out to the jews, and said unto them, " I find in him no fault at all."¹

It is indeed true, that all power in heaven and earth was given to Christ, as our mediator;² and that in the same manner, as his father sent him, so he sent his apostles.³ But then the power here expressed, is of a very different nature, and to be exercised in a different manner, and for quite different ends, from those powers which are claimed by the civil magistrate. I need not here repeat what has been said concerning the enemies, which are to be subdued by this power; since its distinction from the civil power fully appears many other ways. The rights, which this power is designed to secure, are of a quite different sort from our civil rights and liberties. They are such as Greeks and barbarians, bond and free, they who have civil rights and they who have none, are all alike capable of enjoying: for all of them are one and the same in Christ Jesus.⁴ The rewards and punishments, whereby this power enforceth its laws, are chiefly spiritual and future, and such as in this life, can only influence men by means of their faith: whereas those, which proceed from the civil power, if they do not reach us in this life, cannot affect us at all. Lastly, the laws enacted by this power, though they are the greatest security to the civil government, which can possibly be devised, are very different from the laws, which are there in force: these latter being designed to maintain the outward peace and pros-

¹ John xviii. 39. ² Matt. xxviii. 18. ³ John xx. 21. ⁴ Gal. iii. 28. Col. iii. 11.

perity of the world, whereas the end of the former is to promote our everlasting happiness. So that, though God and mammon are such masters, as it is impossible for us to serve at the same time ; there is no inconsistency in being at once the faithful servants of Christ, and loyal subjects to our civil governors : so far from it, that unless we pay all due obedience to our civil governors, we cannot be owned by Christ, as his faithful servants.

3. The christian church is also an outward and visible society. Some, having observed, that the kingdom of Christ is plainly distinct from all worldly kingdoms ; that the graces, whereby our inward communion with Christ is maintained, are invisible ; and that some, who live in the church's outward communion, have no title to the chief privileges of the church, by reason of their wicked lives, have hence concluded, that the true church does only consist of such men, as have a title to God's favour by their faith, and other christian virtues, the sincerity whereof is invisible to the world ; and that whoever is adorned with these inward qualifications, does by them maintain a strict communion with Christ, and enjoy all the privileges of the christian church, though he has never associated himself with any visible body of christians.

And it is true, that to live in the church's outward communion, though it gives a right to all the outward ordinances of the church, unless it be accompanied with faith and obedience, does neither entitle us to any of the inward blessings, which are conferred on the worthy receivers of those ordinances here, nor to eternal life hereafter. Neither shall

we deny, that it is possible for men to be excluded from the church's outward communion, and at the same time to maintain an uninterrupted invisible communion with Christ: which is the case of all those who are unjustly excommunicated. Yet we still affirm, that the christian church, whereof every man is obliged to be a member, when he has it in his power to be so, is an outward and visible society.

The name of church is constantly applied in the Scriptures to such a society. Thus we find it in our blessed Saviour's words: "Tell it to the church. If he neglect to hear the church."¹ Paul and Barnabas are said to be brought on their way by the church, and to be received by the church at Jerusalem.² Diotrephes cast out of the church those, who received the brethren.³ The elders of Ephesus are commanded to feed the church of God, over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers.⁴ I shall not trouble you with more examples of the use of this word, since there cannot be produced one passage in the whole New Testament, where it signifies any, but an outward and visible, congregation.

And the society of christians, which is the notion implied in the name of church, is constantly described as a visible body of men, sometimes indeed confined within lesser bounds, and enjoying far less outward splendour than at others; but always consisting of members, associated together, but separated, and easy to be distinguished from all others. This may be observed in the passages of Scripture, where the church is compared to a marriage feast,

¹ Matt. xviii. 9. ² Acts xv. 3, 4. ³ 3 John x. ⁴ Acts xx. 28.

to a sheepfold, to a net full of fishes, to a field of corn, and in most of the other allusions, whereby it is there described.

If we proceed from the descriptions of the church to its first constitution, we shall plainly see, that it was intended to be an outward and visible society. Public rulers were appointed to govern it, the faith was to be publicly confessed, the public worship of God to be frequented, and visible sacraments to be received by all the members of it. I need not enlarge any further on this subject, because the same arguments, whereby the church has been proved to be a society, do with the same force conclude, that it is an outward and visible society. A society of visible men must needs be a visible society; and they who are of opinion, that the christian church is wholly invisible, if they will adhere to the consequence of this opinion, must deny that it is a society.

Lastly, If we consider the state of the christian church in the first ages after its foundation, we shall find, that then it was always visible. Our blessed Saviour openly preached the gospel, and openly baptized disciples; and his disciples openly followed him, whithersoever he went. After his ascension great numbers were converted to the faith, who constantly assembled together in great bodies, steadfastly continuing in the apostle's fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.¹ Neither can one example be produced of any christian church through the whole world, where the sacra-

¹ Acts ii. 42.

ments were not administered, the gospel preached, and the worship of God celebrated in an open and public manner. Even in the sharpest persecutions, the christian assemblies, though it may be not so openly as in times of peace, were constantly held, and frequented; and whoever did not choose to endure the most cruel death, rather than to preserve his life by absenting himself, was thought unworthy to be called a christian. So little had the notion of an invisible church prevailed in those ages.

4. The last character of the christian church now to be mentioned, is, that it is an universal society. This universality may be understood in two senses: 1. With regard to place. 2. With regard to time.

First, The christian church is universal, with regard to its place: that is, it is not confined to any one place or country, but by the design of its foundation was to comprehend all the nations of the world. In which sense chiefly it is, that we profess our belief in one catholic church. The jewish church chiefly consisted of one nation, and their public worship was not only confined to one country, but to one place of that country. He showed his word unto Jacob, his statutes and ordinances unto Israel: he hath not dealt so with any nation.¹ In Judah was God known, his name was great in Israel: in Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.² But the christian church by its original charter, was to take in both jews and gentiles,³ that is, all the world.

¹ Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20. ² Psal. lxxvi. 1, 2. ³ Rom. ii. 9.

The design of Christ's kingdom was to destroy that universal empire, which the devil had erected in the world: that as in Adam all died, so in Christ all should be made alive.¹ Hence it was foretold by the prophets, that God would give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession :² that all kings should fall down before him, and all nations do him service: that his dominion should be extended from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the world:³ that his kingdom should fill the whole earth,⁴ and that all nations shall flow unto it.⁵ Accordingly, before his ascension, he gave his apostles commission to preach the gospel, not only to the jewish nation, though to them before others, but to every creature ;⁶ and to teach and baptize all nations,⁷ even to the utmost parts of the earth.⁸ And this was performed with such incredible industry and zeal, that when St. Paul wrote his epistle to the Colossians, which was not much more than thirty years after the death of Christ, the gospel had been preached in all the world.⁹

Secondly, The christian church, or visible society of christians, is also universal in respect of time: that is, it was designed by Christ to continue to the end of the world. The jewish economy, which was only a schoolmaster to Christ, was to cease when Christ appeared: but the church of Christ is every where represented as a perfect and lasting constitution. And the end of his coming into the

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 22. ² Psal. ii. 8. ³ Psal. lxxii. 8, 11. ⁴ Dan. ii. 35, 44. ⁵ Isa. ii. 2. ⁶ Mark xvi. 15. ⁷ Matt. xxviii. 19. ⁸ Acts i. 8. ⁹ Col. i. 6.

world being to redeem all those, who fell in Adam; it was absolutely necessary towards the accomplishment of this end, that his church should last as long as men descend from Adam.

Hence the prophets foretold concerning Christ's kingdom, that it should be established for ever, as the sun and moon, throughout all generations;¹ and that it should never be destroyed.² The same was foretold by the angel to the blessed virgin; "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."³ And the jews, though they were mistaken as to the nature of Christ's kingdom, plainly saw that it was to be perpetual, and therefore were at a loss, how to reconcile that saying of Jesus, that he should be taken from them, with his being the Messiah; "We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, the Son of Man must be lift up?"⁴ Lastly, We are told by St. Paul, that Christ must reign, till all his enemies, the last of which is death, shall be put under his feet;⁵ which cannot be till the general resurrection.

The same is affirmed of this kingdom, under other names and descriptions. In our blessed Saviour's words, it is said expressly, that *the gates of hell* should never prevail *against the church*, which he designed to found.⁶ And in his parable of the field, the good seed and the tares, that is good and bad men, were to be let alone, and to grow toge-

¹ Psal. lxxii. 5. lxxix. 36, 37. Isa. ix. 7. liv. 9, 10. lix. 21. Jer. xxxi. 35. 36. ² Dan. ii. 44. ³ Luke i. 33. ⁴ John xii. 34.
⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. ⁶ Matt. xvi. 18.

ther, till the time of harvest, that is, as Christ himself hath explained it, till the end of the world.¹

Lastly, In order to preserve his church till this last period of time, he has promised to be with his apostles and their successors always, even unto the end of the world.² The true meaning of which words will be explained and vindicated in the fourth chapter of this discourse.

¹ Matt. xiii, 24, 25, &c. ² Matt. xxvii. 20.

CHAP. II.

OF THE FOUNDATION AND GOVERNMENT OF THE
CHURCH, WHILST CHRIST LIVED ON EARTH.

HAVING in the last chapter considered the nature and chief characters of the christian church, as they are described in the Holy Scriptures ; let us now inquire, what account the Scriptures have given us of the foundation and government of this church, whilst Christ lived upon earth.

And here it may be remembered, that in our present discourse, Christ is not considered as the Eternal Word, who was in the beginning with God, and by whom all things were made ;¹ in which respect he is Lord of the whole creation, by a natural and unalienable right : but we now speak of him as mediator of the new covenant ; under which character he received his kingdom, that is, his church, from God, which he governs as God's vicegerent,² and must resign to him, as soon as the design of his mediation shall be fully accomplished.³

Neither shall we consider him, as he presided over the church of God, before or under the Mosaic economy ; in which periods of time, as the church was the same in substance with the present christian church, though differing from it as to its outward polity, so there is no doubt but it was

¹ John i. 1, 3. ² Heb. ii. 7, 8. ³ 1 Cor. xv. 28.

then in a peculiar manner governed by the Son of God, the great angel both of the old and new covenant : all that our present design leads us to inquire, is, in what manner the last establishment of the church was begun and settled by our blessed Saviour, when he was made flesh, and lived among us. In treating on which subject, two things must be considered :

First, What was done towards it by our blessed Saviour in his own person.

Secondly, What ministers were employed under him.

I. In order to a clear and distinct understanding of what was done by our blessed Saviour in his own person, it will be necessary to consider his life under these three periods :

1. From his birth till his baptism.

2. From his baptism till his death.

3. From his resurrection till his ascension into heaven.

1. Now in the first period of our Saviour's life, which reacheth from his birth to his baptism, which happened about the thirtieth year of his age, there are found no marks of any sovereign authority, no instances wherein he exercised either a regal, or any other peculiar power. It had been foretold by the prophets, and by the angel, who appeared to the blessed virgin, that God would give him the throne of his father David :¹ and the wise men who had seen the star in the east, inquired, where is he who is born king of the Jews ?² But this was only meant of his designation to the regal office

¹ Luke 1. 32. ² Matt. ii. 1. .

from his birth, and not of his being actually possessed of it. Accordingly we read of his waxing strong in the spirit, of his having the grace of God upon him, of his increasing in wisdom, and favour with God and man, and of his being filled with wisdom; insomuch that at the age of twelve years he heard the Jewish doctors, and asked them questions:¹ whereby we may understand, what early proofs he gave of his fitness for the vast charge he was to undertake. But all the time which passed between his birth and his baptism, was spent in privacy and retirement: we find no miracle done by him in that period,* except some which are mentioned by fabulous writers; that at Cana in Galilee, where he turned the water into wine, which happened some time after his baptism, is expressly recorded by St. John as the beginning of his miracles.² All that time he was subject to his parents, and in some part of it wrought at his father's trade,† whence he was called the carpenter by his countrymen.³

2. From what has been said it is plain, that our blessed Saviour entered not upon his office till his baptism, whence the second period of his life was

¹ Luke ii. 40, 46, 52.

* Chrysostomus Homil. XVII. in cap. I. Joan. *Δῆλον ὅτι καὶ τὰ σημεῖα ἐκεῖνα, ἃ παιδικὰ εἶναι φασὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ψευδῆ καὶ πλάσματά τινά ἐπεισαγῶν ἐστίν.*

² John ii. 11.

† Justinus Martyr. dialog. adv. Tryphon. p. 316. Ed. Paris. *Τέκνονος νομιζομένου, ταῦτα γὰρ τὰ τεκλονικὰ ἔργα εἰργάζετο ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἂν ἄροτρα καὶ ζυγά, διὰ τούτων καὶ τὰ της δικαιοσύνης σύμβολα διδάσκων, καὶ ενεργῆ βίον.*

³ Matt. vi. 2.

dated. Presently after his baptism we find, that as he went up out of the water, the heavens were opened upon him, and the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and lighted upon him : and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.¹ This was a solemn inauguration to his office : for the more full understanding whereof it may be remembered, that under the jewish economy the kings, priests, and prophets, were inaugurated to their several offices by unction : and when the person appointed to succeed in any of these offices, had no approved right to it by lineal descent or otherways, his designation was commonly declared by some of the prophets ; as appears from the examples of Saul, David, Jehu, Aaron, and Elisha. Answerable to this custom, our blessed Saviour's designation to his mediatorial office, in which all the three forementioned offices of king, priest and prophet are contained, was not only attested by John the Baptist, the greatest of all the prophets,² but by the voice of God himself speaking from heaven. The custom of anointing to offices ceased about the time of the Babylonian captivity ; but the Jews had a tradition that it should be revived in the time of Messias ; and it had been foretold in the psalms, that Messias, who is there described under the type of Solomon, should be anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows.³ And therefore to fulfil these predictions, our Saviour was anointed to his office, not with that material oil which was described in the jewish law, and was only a type of this more excellent unction, but

¹ Matt. iii. 16, 17. ² John i. 29, 30. Matt. xi. 11. ³ Psal. xlv. 7.

with the Holy Spirit. Whence we are told by St. Peter, that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.¹ And whereas all other men, whether before, or after him, have the Holy Ghost in measure, some in greater, some in less degrees ;² it pleased the Father that in our Lord Christ all fullness should dwell ;³ and therefore he gave not the spirit by measure unto him,⁴ that of his fullness all others might receive.⁵

There are some who date our blessed Saviour's unction from his first conception in the virgin's womb: for it was thus foretold to her by the angel : " The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God."⁶ And since John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb,⁷ it cannot be doubted but that our blessed Saviour, who, both in regard of the dignity of his person, and also of his office, was very much superior to the Baptist, was sanctified by the Holy Ghost from the very moment of his conception. But this was very consistent with the practice of the Jews, and had long before been represented in the person of David, the most undoubted type of Messias: he was first anointed in Bethlehem, and by that ceremony designed and appointed to be king, when the throne should become vacant : Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren ; and the Spirit of the Lord

¹ Acts x. 38. ² Eph. iv. 7. ³ Col. i. 19. ii. 9. ⁴ John iii. 34.

⁵ John i. 16. ⁶ Luke i. 35. ⁷ Luke i. 15.

came upon David from that day forward.¹ And about seven years after, during which time he made no pretensions to the kingdom, he was again solemnly anointed in Hebron to be king of Judah.²

From our blessed Saviour's inauguration, let us now proceed to his execution of this office. And here the first thing recorded of him is, that being led by the spirit, which he had lately received, into the wilderness, he there encountered and overcome the great enemy of the spiritual kingdom, which he was now to establish.³

Having obtained this triumph, he presently began to lay the foundation of his kingdom by preaching the gospel and inviting all the jews to become members of it.⁴ This was one part of the office to which he was anointed, as he declared not long after his temptation, when having returned in the power of the spirit unto Galilee, upon reading this passage of Esaias in the synagogue of Nazareth, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel;" he said unto them, this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.⁵

Neither was his preaching of the same kind with that of others, whose design was only to inculcate the precepts of the Mosaical laws, or to give some probable sense of the more difficult parts of it: for our blessed Saviour improved the law with large additions; he explained it with such authority, that all his comments are of the same force with the

¹ 1 Sam. xvi. 13. ² 2 Sam. ii. 4. ³ Matt. iv. 1. Luke iv. 1.
⁴ Matt. iv. 17. Mark i. 14, 15. ⁵ Luke iv. 14, 18, 21.

laws themselves; and enforced all with much higher rewards and punishments, than any of those which were inflicted by Moses. All which is a clear proof of his exercising this regal power; there being the same authority required to change and explain any law, as there was first to enact it.

This may be farther observed in our blessed Saviour's preaching, and particularly in his sermon on the mount, that his laws were delivered in his own name: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time; but I say unto you, &c."¹ Whereas the scribes pretended no higher authority for what they delivered than the traditions of the elders: whence the people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.² And even the prophets, and Moses, the chief of them, commonly introduced their precepts with these, or the like prefaces: God spake these words: thus saith the Lord. "But this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses; inasmuch as he, who buildeth the house, hath more honour than the house. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant: but Christ as a son over his own house: whose house are we."³

Then to prove the truth of his mission, he wrought miracles, healed the sick, restored the blind and lame, raised the dead to life again, cast out devils; and all this, not by the authority of any other, but in his own name, and by his own power: "insomuch that they were all amazed, and questioned among themselves, saying, what new thing is this?"

¹ Matt. v. 21, 22, &c. ² Matt. vii. 28, 29. ³ Heb. iii. 3, 5, 6.

What new doctrine is this? For with authority he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.”¹

By these means he gathered disciples, whom he baptized, not as John had done, in the name of one to come after him,² but in his own name; declaring, that without his baptism no man should enter into the kingdom of God;³ and that whoever would follow him, and thereby expose his life, should save it to life eternal; but whoever refused to be his disciple in order to save his life, should lose it.⁴

To his disciples he gave a commission to preach the gospel, with power and authority over devils, and over diseases, and all the power of the enemy of his kingdom.⁵

Lastly, Though the power which he had to execute judgment,⁶ was chiefly to be exercised after his ascension into heaven, yet we find some acts of this power, and particularly that of forgiving sins, exercised whilst he lived on earth.⁷

3. These are some of the chief powers, which our blessed Saviour thought fit to exercise before his death. And it may be observed, that all this time his church and kingdom was confined to the Jewish nation. He plainly declared, that he was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel:⁸ whence he is called by St. Paul, a minister of the circumcision, that is, one who was sent to

¹ Mark i. 27. Luke iv. 36. ² Acts xix. 4. ³ John iii. 5. ⁴ Luke ix. 24. ⁵ Matt. x. 1, 8. Mark iii. 14. vi. 7. Luke ix. 1. x. 19, 20. ⁶ John v. 22, 27. ⁷ Matt. ix. 2, 6. Luke vii. 47, 48. ⁸ Matt. xv. 24.

the jews only;¹ and in many places of the gospels he is styled the king of the jews.

But upon his death, whereby the distinction between jew and gentile was taken away,² the bounds of his kingdom were enlarged. After this he declares, that all power was given to him in heaven and in earth; and thereupon gives his apostles a most full and absolute commission to teach and baptize, not the jews only, though them before any others, but all nations.³ Indeed this plenitude of power was conferred on him as the reward of his sufferings: "He humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord."⁴ "And, worthy is the lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and glory, and blessing."⁵

Yet he was not actually invested with all this glory, till he ascended into heaven, and there sat down at the right hand of God, as the next in honour and power under him. "God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his

¹Rom. xv. 18. ²Eph. ii. 15, 16, 17. Colos. ii. 14. ³Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. Acts i. 8. Luke xxiv. 47. ⁴Phil. ii. 8, 9, 10, 11. Rom. xiv. 9. ⁵Rev. v. 12.

feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him which filleth all in all.”¹ Hence, in a short time after his ascension, he sent down the Holy Spirit to anoint those, whom he had before appointed, to their several offices: “When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men: and he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors, and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”² And here he will continue, governing and protecting his church, till all his enemies, the last of which is death, are made his footstool, that is, according to St. Paul’s interpretation, till the general resurrection.³

This increase of our Saviour’s kingdom was exactly typified in David, who was not only first anointed in token of his designation to be king, and afterwards again anointed to reign over the tribe of Judah, which hath been already observed, but by a third unction was made king of all the tribes of Israel.⁴

II. Having thus briefly described what was done by our blessed Saviour in his own person, let us now consider, what ministers were employed under him, whilst he lived on earth. These were of two sorts, as they are described in the gospels: 1. Apostles. 2. Disciples, sent forth to preach.

1. Concerning the apostles we have this account:

¹ Eph. i. 20, 21, 22, 23. ² Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12. ³ 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26, &c. ⁴ 2 Sam. v. 3.

that our blessed Saviour having first gathered a few disciples by the witness of John the Baptist, and his own preaching,¹ “went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people.” Hereupon great multitudes flocked to him from all parts; whom “when he saw, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”² After this, “he went out into a mountain, where he continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples, and of them he chose twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, whom he named apostles.”³ Some time after this, he actually sent these twelve by two and two to preach the gospel, with this command, that they should “not go into the way of the gentiles, nor to any city of the Samaritans, but only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel:” and at the same time “gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure all manner of diseases,”⁴ as we read in the gospels, where their commission and instructions are described at large. After their return from executing this commission, they continued with our blessed Saviour as his constant attendants,

¹ John i. 37, &c. ii. 2. Matt. iv. 18. ² Matt. ix. 35, 36, 37, 38.

³ Luke. vi. 12, 13. Mark iii. 13, 14. Matt. x. 1. ⁴ Luke. ix. 1. Mark vi. 7. Matt. x. 1, 5.

and we do not read that during his abode on earth they were sent forth a second time; or that they received any farther commission, till that a little before his death, when he commanded them to commemorate his sacrifice of himself by blessing bread and wine, as they had seen him do;¹ and that other before his ascension, when they were commissioned to preach the gospel to all nations, and invested with all the powers necessary to that work, which nevertheless they could not execute, till by the descent of the Holy Spirit, whom Christ promised to send, they were farther endued with power from on high.²

2. Some time after the twelve apostles had returned to our Lord, he “appointed other seventy, and sent them two and two.”³ The commission which he gave to these, and the instructions concerning their conduct, are in most respects the same with those, which he had before given to the twelve apostles. Yet there are these two remarkable differences between them.

First, That whereas the apostles were ordained to be *with* our Lord,⁴ and accordingly are every where throughout the gospels reckoned as his constant attendants, both from the time of their ordination till they were sent forth to preach; and again, after their return from preaching, till his death: the seventy were only appointed to preach, and after they returned to our Lord, and gave him an ac-

¹ Luke. xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 24, 26. ² Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15. John xx. 21, 22, 23. Luke. xxiv. 48, 49. Acts i. 4, 8.

³ Luke. x. 1. ⁴ Mark iii. 14.

count of their success in the execution of that office, they are never once mentioned again.

Secondly, The seventy were only “sent before our Lord’s face into the cities and places, whither he himself would come,”¹ to prepare the people for his reception : whereas the apostles’ commission was in general to preach to all the jews, as was before noted.

It may be observed farther, that the inauguration of the seventy to their office, was not so solemn as that of the twelve, before which our Lord not only commanded his disciples to pray to God to send labourers into his harvest, but continued a whole night in prayer by himself : that the twelve were distinguished from the rest by the name of apostles, whereas the seventy were only called by the general name of disciples : that after the mission of the seventy, the apostles were still constantly called the twelve ; whereas they must have been more than eighty, if (as some have thought) the seventy had been admitted into their number : that the twelve only received the commission to commemorate the sacrifice of our Lord on the cross, and to preach the gospel to all nations : that twelve thrones were appointed, whereon these twelve men should sit to judge the twelve tribes of Israel ;² and the twelve foundations of the new Jerusalem were to contain the names of the twelve apostles :³ that when a vacancy happened in the college of apostles by the apostacy of Judas, another was in a most solemn manner by divine designation appointed to take his

¹ Luke x. 1. ² Matt. xix. 28. Luke xxii. 30. ³ Rev. xxi. 14.

bishoprick, and to be numbered with the eleven apostles, and to be a witness with them of Christ's resurrection, and to take part of their ministry and apostleship :¹ that Matthias, the person ordained to succeed Judas, if any credit may be given to Eusebius, Jerom, or Epiphanius, was one of the seventy. Lastly, that Barnabas, Mark, Luke, Sosthenes, and other evangelists, as also the seven deacons, who were all undoubtedly, even after their promotion to these offices, inferior to the twelve apostles, if the primitive fathers of the church may be believed, were also of the seventy.* From all and every one of which observations it appears, how very unreasonable their opinion is, who think that the seventy disciples were of the same order or dignity with the twelve apostles.

Thus in the first establishment of the christian church, which is the Israel of God, in the spiritual and mystical sense of that phrase, was fulfilled what had long before been represented in the literal or carnal Israel.² The literal Israel was delivered from

¹ Acts i. 20, 22, 25, 26.

* Clemens Alex. Strom. II. p. 410. Ed. Paris. Eusebius Historia Eccles. lib. 1. cap. XII. Epiphanius Hæres. XX. Idem Hæres. LI. ac præcipue sub finem tomi prioris, lib. I. p. 50. Ed. Paris. *Ἀπέστειλε δὲ καὶ ἄλλους ἑβδομήκοντα δύο κηρύττειν, ἐξ ὧν ἦσαν ἐπία, οἱ ἐπὶ τῶν χηρῶν τεύλαγμοιοι· Στέφανος, Φίλιππος, Πρόχορος, Νικάνωρ, Τίμων, Παρμενᾶς, καὶ Νικόλαος· πρὸ τούτων δὲ Μαθθίας, ὁ ἀνὴρ τοῦδα συμψηφισθεὶς μετὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων, μετὰ τῶν δὲ τοὺς ἐπία, καὶ Μαθθίαν τον πρὸ αὐτῶν, Μάρκον, Λουκᾶν, Ἰοῦστον, Βαρνάβαν, καὶ Ἀπελλῆν, Ροῦφον, Νίγερα, καὶ τοὺς λοιποὺς τῶν ἑβδομήκοντα δύο.*

² 1 Cor. x. 18. Gal. vi. 16. Matt. iii. 19. Luke iii. 8. Rom. iv. 11, 12, 16. Gal. iii. 7.

the Egyptian slavery by Moses, the servant of God. The spiritual Israel is delivered from bondage to sin and the devil, which is a slavery infinitely more deplorable than that of Egypt, by Jesus Christ, the Son of God.¹

The twelve tribes of the literal Israel were conducted by twelve officers, the heads of their several tribes, who were all subject to Moses.² In the same manner, under Christ, the supreme head of the spiritual Israel, twelve apostles were appointed to sit on twelve thrones, and to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.³

Lastly, To complete the allusion, our Lord's seventy disciples answer to the same number of the heads of families in the literal Israel, who were appointed according to the number of Jacob's children,⁴ who went with him into Egypt.*

¹ Heb. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4. John viii. 34, 36. Rom. vi. 16, 20. 2 Pet. ii. 19. ² Numb. i. 4, 16. ³ Matt. xix. 28. Luke xxii. 30. Rev. xxi. 12, 14. ⁴ Exod. i. 5. xxiv. 1, 9. Numb. xi. 16. Luke x. 1.

* Recognit. 3. Clementis lib. I. cap. XL. Nos ergo primos elegit duodecim, quos apostolos nominavit. Postmodum alios Septuaginta duos probatissimos discipulos: ut vel hoc modo, recognita imagine Moysis, crederet multitudo, quia hic est, quem prædixit Moyses, venturum prophetam. Eusebius Demonstrat. Evang. lib. III. cap. II. Μωσῆς κατέστησε τῶ λαῶ ἡγουμένους ἑβδομήκοντα. ὡσαύτως καὶ ὁ Σωτὴρ ἀνέδειξεν αὐτοῦ μαθητὰς ἑβδομήκοντα, καὶ ἀπέστειλεν ἀνὰ δύο πρὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ.

CHAP. III.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH IN THE TIME
OF THE APOSTLES.

WE have seen in what manner the christian church was governed, whilst Christ, its founder, lived on earth : let us now inquire, to whom the care of it was committed, when he ascended into heaven. And since in temporal kingdoms, when any king dies, the royal dignity is presently transferred to another; and in the kingdom of Israel, other men succeeded in the places of Moses and David, the two great types of Christ : it will here be inquired, whether in this christian church or kingdom, it was necessary, that when our blessed Saviour left the world, any other should succeed him in the same office and character, which he sustained ? Which question may easily be answered from what has been shown in the precedent chapters, that as this christian kingdom must last till the general resurrection, so it will be governed by Christ in his own person till that time. The thrones of temporal kingdoms become vacant by the death of those who filled them; and therefore must be possessed by others : but Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more,¹ he still lives through the power of God.² And though he is absent in body

¹ Rom. vi. 9. ² 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

from his church, yet being God as well as man, he is present in all places, and has promised to be with his apostles and their successors, always to the end of the world.¹ All faithful christians are still united to him as their head ; being many, they are still spoken of as one body in Christ, and on that account are every one members, one of another.² They still receive their life and nourishment from him ; and are exhorted to “ grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ : from whom the body fitly joined together and compacted, maketh increase.”³ This vital influence is constantly imparted by the Holy Spirit, whom he sends to supply his place, and the benefits which the church receives by the Spirit, are greater than any which could be expected from the bodily presence of Christ himself : whence he assured his disciples, that it was expedient for them, that he should go away, that he might send the Holy Ghost unto them.⁴ And he farther promised, that the same Spirit should always remain with them : “ I will pray the Father, and he will give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever : even the Spirit of truth.”⁵ And under this character of a perpetual king our Lord was represented by Melchisedek ; whose parentage, birth, death and successors, having not been recorded to posterity, he was a very fit type of one, who is truly “ without father and mother, without beginning of days, or end of life, and abides a king and priest for ever.”⁶

¹ Matt. xxviii. 20. ² Rom. xii. 5. ³ Eph. iv. 15, 16. ⁴ John xvi. 7. ⁵ John xiv. 16, 17. ⁶ Heb. vii. 1, 3, 16, 24.

It is therefore certain, that Christ cannot have any successor, strictly so called, in the government of the church : but it remains to be inquired, whether he has entrusted any one man, or any number of men to rule it as his deputies, or vicegerents ; or whether he has left all his subjects in such a state of equality, that no christian has any spiritual authority over another, besides what he is allowed to exercise by the agreement of christians among themselves. For the answering of these and the like inquiries, I shall endeavour in this chapter to show :

First, That when our Lord left the world, his apostles were entrusted with authority to govern the christian church.

Secondly, That this authority was entrusted equally with all the apostles.

Thirdly, I shall enquire, what inferior ministers had a share in it.

I. I am to show in the first place, that when our Lord left the world, the apostles were entrusted with authority to govern the christian church. For the more full proof of which proposition, these three things shall be made out :

First, That this authority is not repugnant to the nature of the christian church, or the rules of the gospel.

Secondly, That this authority was actually conferred by our Lord on his apostles.

Thirdly, That the apostles exercised this authority after our Lord's ascension.

1. And *First*, There is nothing in the nature of the christian church, or in the rules of the gospel, but what is very consistent with this authority. If

there be any thing in the nature of the christian church, so contrary to the nature of all other societies, that it cannot be governed by officers subordinate to its chief governor, it must be this, that it is a spiritual society. Whence this indeed follows, that they who govern the church, can claim no civil prerogative, nor enforce their laws with civil rewards or punishments, nor exercise any part of the power, which belongs to the magistrates of temporal kingdoms : but it will be difficult to find a reason, why in a spiritual society there may not be spiritual ministers, who are subordinate to the chief spiritual head, and act by his commission, as well as in civil societies there are civil officers under the chief civil magistrate. And it rather follows on the contrary side, that as in civil societies the supreme civil magistrate does commission others to exercise some part of his civil power ; so in this spiritual society, some part of the spiritual power may be communicated to fit persons by the Supreme Spiritual Head, who is the fountain of this power : unless it could be shown, that the power of Christ over his church, is less absolute than that of temporal kings over their kingdoms ; or that spiritual power is of such a nature, that no share of it can be imparted to any other. The former of these will scarce be pretended ; and that several parts of the spiritual power, whereby our Lord governs his church, are such as may be exercised by others, who act in his name, will appear to every one, who considers the acts of power, whereby Christ and his ministers founded and governed the christian church, whilst he lived on earth, as they

have been related in the last chapter ; and shall be farther made out, when we come to discourse of the particular powers, which have been exercised by his apostles and their successors since his ascension.

Neither is there any thing in the rules of the gospel, which is inconsistent with the having or exercising of such an authority. Some have wrested to this purpose those passages of Scripture, which recommend humility and lowliness of mind, and command us to esteem others, and in honour to prefer them above ourselves ; and others, wherein the Pharisees are blamed for affecting to have the chief places in the synagogue, and the uppermost rooms at feasts, and to be called masters and fathers : which are so many lessons against pride and ambition ; but no more repugnant to a just use of spiritual power and authority, than they are of temporal ; and have been urged with no less force by those, who are enemies to all civil government and to the civil distinctions of orders amongst men, than they are by such, as would destroy all spiritual jurisdiction and pre-eminence.

However, there is one saying of Christ, which because it has been much insisted on by those, who contend for an equality among christians, may be thought to deserve a more particular consideration. It is that in which we are told, that when the ten apostles were moved with indignation against the two brethren, James and John, who had desired the chief places in Christ's kingdom, " Jesus called them all unto him, and said : ye know, that the princes of the gentiles exercise dominion over them ;

and they that are great, exercise authority upon them : but it shall not be so among you : but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister : and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”¹ Hence they conclude, that all distinction of degrees in the christian church, at least such as implies any jurisdiction of one christian over another, and especially of one minister over another, is unlawful. For the correction of which error, these three things may be considered.

First, That the design of this passage is to correct the vain glorious humour, which prevailed at that time among the apostles, who hoped to enjoy temporal principalities, and to live in outward pomp and splendour, under Christ. It is certain, that both they, and generally all the jews expected that the Messiah would erect a most glorious temporal kingdom. Hence Herod hearing that the Messiah was born in Bethlehem, caused all the infants thereabouts to be put to death, hoping among the rest to destroy his rival. On the same account, the chief priests accused our Lord as Cæsar’s enemy, for declaring himself to be the Messiah. A little before his death, the apostles believed they were to fight with swords against his enemies.² When they saw him dead, and their hopes of temporal glory and power gone with him, they began to think him a

¹ Matt. xx. 24—28. Mark x. 42, 43, 44. Luke xxii. 25, 26, 27. ² John xviii. 10.

deceiver : we trusted, say two of his disciples, that it had been he, who should have redeemed Israel.¹ After his resurrection, the same hopes revived, which put them upon asking this question : “ Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?²” So that we cannot in the least doubt, but that when our Lord promised they should sit around him on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel ;³ they understood this of some temporal dignity, to which they should be advanced : or that when James and John desired to sit on his right hand, and on his left, that is, to be next in honour to him in his kingdom, they aspired after temporal greatness. And the very words of our Saviour, which spake of the dominion and authority of princes and great men among the gentiles, are plainly levelled at this sort of ambition : which some of the socinians have thought to be so clear and unquestionable, that they have grounded upon this text that dangerous opinion of theirs, that it is “ unlawful for any christian to exercise civil dominion, or to be a magistrate.”*

Secondly, It must be considered, that no power is denied to the apostles in this place, which was exercised at that time by Christ. Whatever it be which they are commanded to do, or to forbear, it is enforced by our Lord’s own example in all the three evangelists, who have related this story : “ For

¹ Luke xxiv. 21. ² Acts i. 6. ³ Matt. xix. 28.

* Wolzogenius comment. in loc. cit. Matthæi ; Hinc jam clare perspicitur, christum hic sub apostolorum persona universum fidelem populum suum intelligere, & civilem dominationem omnibus illis ademisse, qui in regno ejus subditi esse voluerint.

even the Son of man (said he) came not to be ministered unto, but to minister :”¹ or as it is expressed by St. Luke : “ I am among you as he that serveth.”² So that unless we are willing to affirm, that our Lord exercised no spiritual power over his apostles, we cannot conclude, that he forbid his apostles the exercise of this power over others.

Thirdly, It may be farther considered, that the same sort of power and dignity which belonged to our Lord as king of his church, was promised to the apostles at the very time, wherein he spoke the forementioned words. For having forbidden them to expect the same dominion which the kings of the gentiles exercised over their subjects, he presently adds, as it were to support their spirits under this disappointment, that he would give them such a kingdom as God had appointed him: “ And I appoint to you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed to me ; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”³

So that we may safely conclude, the whole design of this passage was to restrain the ambitious desire of temporal greatness, which then prevailed among the apostles : or should we allow it to have any respect to spiritual power or dignity, which it does not appear to have, the meaning of it can only be this : that the apostles were not to make use of it in the same manner, or for the same ends, as the kings of the gentiles used to employ their authority,

¹ Matt. xx. 28. Mark x. 45. ² Luke xxii. 27. ³ Luke xxii. 29, 30.

that is, to serve their vanity and other lusts, but for the service and benefit of the people committed to their charge ; even as Christ himself, the great king of kings, came not into the world to be ministered unto by his subjects, and to gratify himself, but rather to minister to them, and for their service and advantage.

2. I hope it has appeared, that it is no way repugnant to the nature of the church, or the rules of the gospel, that the apostles should be instructed with authority to govern the christian church. Let us therefore inquire in the second place, whether our Lord did actually entrust them with this authority.

And here we may remember, from the last chapter, that neither our Lord, nor David, the great type of him, were instated at once in the full power and dignity, which God had appointed them ; but advanced to it by several degrees : agreeably to these patterns, the plenitude of apostolic power was not conferred on the apostles at their first ordination, but given them at three different times.

First, After a whole night spent in solemn prayer, our Lord chose them to be with him as his constant attendants and ministers, and to preach the gospel. They had also power to baptize, though that be not expressed in their commission ; which is evident from St. John's gospel, where it is said, that " Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples."¹ All which offices have been generally executed in the christian church, since our Lord's ascension, by the deacons, or third order of ministers.

¹ John iv. 1, 2.

After this, they received authority to commemorate our Lord's sacrifice on the cross, when he commanded them at his last supper to do as he had done, that is, to bless the elements of bread and wine in remembrance of him.¹ Which office has constantly been performed in all ages of the church, by the presbyters, or second order of ministers.

Thirdly, When our Lord was going to leave the world, he again enlarged their powers. In the doing whereof this deserves to be observed, that the apostles were admitted to their office in the same manner, wherein our Lord entered upon his; and scarce any power is said to belong to our Lord, which he did not confer on them. Our Lord was anointed from his mother's womb to be a king, priest and prophet; but did not actually execute any of these offices, till the Holy Ghost, descending visibly from heaven upon him, had anointed him the second time. In like manner he appeared to the apostles after his resurrection, and gave them this commission: "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost."² Nevertheless, they were not yet to enter upon their office till the Holy Ghost, descending in a visible manner, should give them power.³ The Holy Ghost descended on our Lord at his baptism, and therefore he used the same word of baptizing the apostles with it: ye shall be baptized, said he, with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.⁴ This was done upon the day of pentecost next following,

¹ Luke xxii. 19. ² John xx. 21, 22. ³ Acts i. 4, 5, 8. ⁴ Acts i. 5.

and then they began to preach the gospel.¹ Their government was of the same nature with the government of Christ, for thus he promised: "I appoint to you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed to me."² Our Lord received from God the keys of heaven;³ and by virtue of this grant, had power to remit sins on earth:⁴ the same keys, with the power which accompanied them, were first promised to Peter as the foreman of the apostolic college,⁵ and afterwards actually conferred on all the apostles, in these words: "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."⁶ The Father committed all judgment to his Son,⁷ and set him on his right hand; and our Lord promised, that when "The Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, the twelve apostles should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."⁸ Our Lord is the chief shepherd,⁹ and his apostles, as shepherds under him, are entrusted with the care of his flock.¹⁰ Our Lord at first was only king of the jews, but after his death received power over all the world: and by virtue of this, he commissioned the apostles, who till that time had only been sent to the house of Israel, to admit all nations into his church: "All power, says he, is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them."¹¹ Our Lord was the foundation, and the corner stone, on which the church was built;¹²

¹ Acts ii. ² Luke xxii. 29. ³ Isa. xxii. 22. Rev. iii. 7. ⁴ Matt. ix. 6. ⁵ Matt. xvi. 19. ⁶ John xx. 23. ⁷ John v. 22, 27. ⁸ Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30. ⁹ John x. 11. Heb. xiii. 20. 1 Pet. v. 4. ¹⁰ John xi. 15, 16, 17. ¹¹ Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. ¹² 1 Cor. iii. 11.

and the apostles are also spoken of as a part of this foundation : the wall of the new Jerusalem is said to have twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles :¹ and St. Paul tells the Ephesians, “ That they are the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”²

The things which, in these and other passages of Scripture, are affirmed of the apostles, are so very great, and come so near those which are spoken of our blessed Lord, that some have been apt to describe them rather as kings and princes of the christian church, than the ministers of Christ : and certainly whoever considers the full meaning and extent of the forementioned texts, will rather be inclined to think too highly of them, and above what he ought to think, than to bring them down upon a level with other christians. However, because the nature and extent of their authority and office may be farther discovered by their execution of it, who being led by the Spirit into all necessary truths, cannot be supposed to have erred in a matter of so great and universal concern to the whole church, let us proceed to consider,

3. In what manner the twelve apostles exercised their authority after our Lord’s ascension. And whoever carefully reads over the New Testament, will find, that scarce any act of power was done by our Lord whilst he lived on earth, which was not, at least in some degree, exercised by the apostles

¹ Rev. xxi. 14. ² Eph. ii. 19, 20.

after his ascension. In order to have a more clear and distinct view of what was done by the apostles, let us first consider those acts of theirs, which had a relation to the christian people without distinction; and afterwards, such as concerned only the inferior and subordinate ministers of the church.

First, Let us take a view of those acts, which had a relation to the christian people without distinction. And as our Lord, having received his unction by the Holy Spirit, presently began to preach, and to baptize disciples; so the same Spirit having descended on the apostles at the time of pentecost, on that very day they preached the gospel with such wonderful success, that no less than three thousand souls were then baptized.¹

The disciples of Christ followed him, and the new converts steadfastly continued in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship.²

Our blessed Saviour left so complete a system of all religious and moral duties, that no addition of new duties could be made to it; and therefore the apostles could not be law-givers in so ample and extensive a manner as their Master: but when any of Christ's laws wanted to be explained, recourse was had to them, and their sentence was every where obeyed. Besides this, they enjoined whatever was farther necessary towards the peace of the church, or the order and decency of divine worship. Many examples of their exercising this power must not be expected in the acts, which seldom relate any thing farther than the first conversion of churches

¹ Acts ii. 41. ² Acts ii. 42.

to the faith, and do not inform us how they were governed afterwards : however, there is one famous instance, wherein the apostles and elders of Jerusalem, upon an appeal from the churches in other countries, decreed, that the converts from gentilism should be excused from observing the law of Moses, some few precepts, which were necessary for those times, excepted.¹ And if we go on to the epistles of St. Paul, we shall find that he exercised this authority in all the churches under his care : the whole 7th, 8th, 11th, and 14th chapters of his first epistle to the Corinthians, consist of laws and directions for the church of Corinth, many of which were never expressly enjoined by Christ, and some of them are expressly required by the apostle's own authority : “ And to the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord ; but to the rest speak I, not the Lord.”² He promiseth to make more laws at his next coming to them ; “ and the rest will I set in order when I come.”³ He speaks of other rules, and those also such as we do not find to have been made by Christ, which he appointed in other churches : “ And so ordain I in all churches.”⁴ He useth the same style of command to the Thessalonians : “ We have confidence that ye both do, and will do the things which we command you. When we were with you, we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. Them that are such we command, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.”⁵ All which, with several other passages, do plainly imply an authority to make rules.

¹ Acts xv. 1. ² 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11. ³ 1 Cor. xi. 34. ⁴ 1 Cor. vii 17. ⁵ 2 Thes. iii. 4, 10, 12.

To this authority of prescribing rules must be added that of enforcing these rules with suitable punishments. That the Corinthians believed St. Paul to have this power, appears from that passage, wherein he speaks of their obedience, how with fear and trembling they received Titus, whom he had sent with authority among them.¹ And he does very often put them in mind of it: he tells them of his authority, and his power, *which the Lord had given him for edification*; by virtue whereof he threatens to use sharpness, to come to them with a rod, and *to revenge all disobedience*;² that he would not spare,³ and that he would be found among them such as they would not.⁴ In his second epistle to the Thessalonians, he “ commands them to withdraw themselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the traditions which they received of him. Again, “ If any man (saith he) obey not our word, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.”⁵ In the same manner he requires the Corinthians, “ not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one, do not eat.”⁶ And sometimes we find him passing sentence on particular offenders. He delivered Hymenæus and Alexander unto satan, *that they might learn not to blaspheme*:⁷ and even in his absence he condemned the incestuous Corinthian; “ I verily (saith he) as ab-

¹ 2 Cor. vii. 15. ² 1 Cor. iv. 21. 2 Cor. x. 6, 8. xiii. 10.
³ 2 Cor. xiii. 2. ⁴ 2 Cor. xii. 20. ⁵ 2 Thes. iii. 6. 14. ⁶ 1 Cor.
v. 2. ⁷ 1 Tim. 1. 20.

sent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already as though I were present, that such an one be delivered to satan, and that he be put away from among you.”¹ And he strictly requires them to put this sentence in execution, and writes to know the proof of them, whether they be obedient, as in all other things, so particularly in this.²

Lastly, To the exercise of this power of judging and condemning, let us join that of pardoning and absolving the condemned from punishment. This he exercised towards the incestuous person upon his repentance, as Christ’s vicegerent: “Sufficient to such a man (saith he) is this punishment:” and afterwards thus goes on; “for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it, in the person of Christ;”³ that is, by his authority committed to me.

These are plain proofs that the christian church was then governed by the apostles. Yet it must not be concealed, that there were some at Corinth who disclaimed St. Paul’s authority: but upon what pretence was this done? Did they deny, that the authority which he exercised, belonged to the apostolic office? If this had been objected, it would have put him upon asserting the power of the apostles to govern the church: but instead of that, he only proves his own title to the apostolic office, which these men seem to have denied, because he had been a persecutor, and was not one of the twelve: whence they rather chose to be called the followers of Apollos, who was an eloquent orator, or of Cephas.

¹ 1 Cor. v. 3, 4, 5, 7, 13. ² 2 Cor. ii. 9. ³ 2 Cor. ii. 6. 10

the first apostle.¹ In opposition to these schismatics, he proves himself to be an apostle, both in the general sense of that name, and particularly as he had been sent to preach the gospel to them: "Am I not an apostle? If I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you, whom I have converted, and on whom I have conferred the gifts of the Holy Spirit, so that ye are the seal of mine apostleship in the Lord."² In another place he tells them, that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles;³ and that he had given full proof of his title to this office: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds."⁴ So that this very objection is rather a proof, that the apostles had such an authority as was exercised by St. Paul; since it appears, that they who denied him this authority, did it on this pretence, that he was not an apostle; and the way he takes to assert his right to this authority, is only to prove his right to the apostolic office.

Thus I have considered some of the chief acts of authority, which the apostles exercised over the christian people without distinction: it is now time to proceed to those other acts, which concerned the subordinate ministers of the church. And here it will again appear, that all other ministers were subject to the apostles, almost in the same manner as these had before been to our Lord.

One of our Saviour's prerogatives, whilst he lived on earth, was the power of ordaining ministers:

¹ 1 Cor. i. 12. iii. 22. ² 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2. ³ 2 Cor. xi. 5. xii. 11.
⁴ 2 Cor. xii. 12.

And this belonged to the apotles; the twelve together ordained the seven deacons;¹ Paul and Barnabas ordained elders;² and Paul, with the elders, ordained Timothy.³

Whilst our Lord lived on earth, the apostles were his constant attendants, and were sent forth by him to preach, as he saw occasion. The like obedience and attendance was paid by the inferior ministers to the apostles after our Lord's reception into heaven. Mark was first minister to Paul and Barnabas,⁴ and afterwards to Barnabas alone.⁵ When St. Paul was at Ephesus, he was attended by Timotheus and Erastus, whom he sent before him into Macedonia.⁶ Towards the latter part of the Acts, the author of that book, who is supposed to have been Luke, the evangelist, is spoken of as his constant attendant.⁷ Not to mention several others, whose attendance on the apostles, and especially on St. Paul, is spoken of in their epistles.

Baptizing was reckoned an inferior ministry, and as such was not performed by our Lord himself, but by his disciples.⁸ Neither did the apostles baptize in their own persons, but commonly deputed some of the ministers, who waited on them, to do it. Cornelius and his family were converted by St. Peter's preaching, but he *commanded them to be baptized*, as it is probable, by some of the *six brethren, who accompanied him*.⁹ St. Paul converted the Corin-

¹ Acts vi. 3. ² Acts xiv. 23. ³ 2 Tim. ii. 6. ⁴ Acts xii. 25. xiii. 5. ⁵ Acts xv. 39. ⁶ Acts xix. 22. ⁷ Acts xvi. 12. xx. 6. 13. xxi. 1, 3, &c. xxvii. 2, 3, &c. xxviii. 2. 16. ⁸ John iv. 20. ⁹ Acts x. 45, 48, xi. 12.

thians, and yet declares, that to the best of his remembrance he baptized none of them, but Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanas : and he gives this reason for it, that Christ sent him *not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.*¹ The meaning of which words is not, that St. Paul wanted authority to baptize, which was conferred by our Lord on all his apostles,² and exercised by St. Paul himself in baptizing the persons before-mentioned : but he means, that preaching was his principal business, and that he rather chose to depute inferior ministers, who had more leisure, and whose proper business it was, to baptize. And thus he seems to have done at Ephesus, where his preaching to twelve disciples, who had received John's baptism, and his conferring on them the gifts of the Spirit, are expressly mentioned ; whereas it is only said, *they were baptized*, without any mention of the person, by whom their baptism was conferred, who probably was one of St. Paul's deacons. When they heard this, that is, St. Paul's exhortation, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus : and when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them.³

This naturally leads us to another prerogative, which belonged to our Lord, and afterwards, to the apostles, namely, the power of giving the Holy Ghost. Philip, the deacon, preached the gospel to the Samaritans, and baptized, those of them who believed ; but the Holy Ghost fell on none of them, till Peter and John laid their hands on them.⁴

¹ 1 Cor. i. 14, 15, 17. ² Matt. xxviii. 19. ³ Acts xix. 5, 6.
⁴ Acts viii. 6—17.

It may be farther observed, that all other ministers, of what quality soever, were subject to the apostles, and that not only when they were present, but in their absence. We find that St. Paul all along through his epistles to Timothy and Titus, writes in a style which implies his authority over them. He tells Philemon, who is called his fellow-labourer, (*συνεργός*) and therefore seems to have been a minister of the gospel, that though he was willing for love's sake rather to beseech him, yet he might be bold in Christ, that is, by the power which our Lord had given him, to enjoin him what was convenient.¹ He sends from Miletus, and calls thither the elders or bishops of Ephesus, to whom he gives a most solemn charge; which is a manifest sign that they were under his government.² And at Corinth, where several prophets and evangelists were then present, the same apostle, being absent, both excommunicates and absolves, and enacts laws, some of which were to be observed by the gifted ministers themselves: "Let the prophets (saith he) speak two, or three, and let the rest judge."³ Not to mention several other rules, which he prescribes in the same place by his apostolic authority, and as Christ's vicegerent: "What? came the word of God out from you? or came it to you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write unto you, are the commandments of the Lord."⁴

¹ Phil. i. 8, 9. ² Acts xx. 17, &c. ³ 1 Cor. xiv. 29. ⁴ 1 Cor. xiv. 36, 37.

Lastly, The ministers who refused to pay the apostles their due respect and obedience, are every where censured as heretics, and disturbers of the church's peace. One of these was Diotrephes, who loved to have the pre-eminence, and rejected St. John's authority, prating against him with malicious words, and casting out of the church those, who received and entertained the brethren; for which crimes the apostle threatens to punish him.¹ Some of them are called by St. Paul, false apostles, deceitful teachers;² and he wishes to have others of them cut off for troubling the church.³ And lastly, others of the same character are described by St. Jude, and censured in this manner: "Wo unto them, for they have gone into the way of Cain," that is, have persecuted to death their brethren, who were more beloved and favoured by God than themselves; "and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward," namely, by seducing God's people in hope of gain, as Balaam counselled Balak to entice the Israelites to fornication and idolatry; "and perished in the gainsaying of Core,"⁴ an ambitious Levite, who aspired to the priesthood.⁵

II. I hope it has been sufficiently proved, that the apostles were entrusted with authority to govern the christian church after our Lord's ascension into heaven: let us now inquire, whether this authority was equally entrusted with all the twelve, which was the second thing to be considered in this chapter.

¹ 3 John 10. ² 2 Cor. xi. 13. ³ Gal. v. 12. ⁴ Jude 11. Numb. 3 xxxi. 16. ⁵ Numb. xvi.

And here it must not be denied, that some of the apostles were superior to the rest, both in personal merit and abilities, and in order of place. St. Paul speaks of some, namely, James, Péter, and John, who seemed to be pillars,¹ that is, principal supports of the church; and were accounted chief apostles.² And it is remarkable, that in all the catalogues of the twelve apostles which are extant in the Scriptures, Peter is constantly placed the first, next to him these three, Andrew, James and John, though not always in the same order; and last of all, Judas Iscariot.³ It may be farther observed, that some of the twelve were admitted to a greater degree of confidence and familiarity with our Lord than others: John was his beloved disciple, and as such leaned on his bosom at his last supper.⁴ Peter, James, and John, were present at his transfiguration, which they were commanded to conceal from all others.⁵ The same persons were admitted to be witnesses of his agony in the garden.⁶ When he raised the ruler of the synagogue's daughter from the dead, he suffered no man to follow him save these three;⁷ and he gave surnames of honour only to these three; to Simon, the name of Peter, or Cephas; and to James and John, the name of Boanerges.⁸ The same persons, with Andrew, asked him privately concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world.⁹ When the Greeks, who came to Jerusalem to worship at the feast of the passover, came to Philip, and desired him, saying, sir, we

¹ Gal. ii. 9. ² 2 Cor. xi. 5. xii. 11. ³ Matt. x. Mark iii. Luke vi. Acts i. ⁴ John xxi. 24. xiii. 23. ⁵ Matt. xvii. 1, 9. ⁶ Matt. xxvi. 37. ⁷ Mark v. 37. ⁸ Mark iii. 16, 17. ⁹ Mark xiii. 3.

would see Jesus ; Philip did not presume to acquaint our Lord with their request, till he had first told it to Andrew, who was the superior apostle, and then Andrew and Philip went together and told Jesus.¹ Hence it plainly appears, that some of the apostles had a pre-eminence above others : and it may be observed farther, that in most places Peter is preferred before all the rest : whence our Lord often speaks to him, and he replies before, and as it were in the name of the rest. Thus a little before our Lord's passion, he said, " Simon, Simon, satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat."² Again, when Jesus found Peter, James, and John, sleeping, he said unto Peter, " Simon, sleepest thou ? Coudest thou not watch with me one hour ?" Reproving the other two in the person of Peter. When many of our Lord's disciples forsook him, he spoke to all the twelve ; *Will ye also go away ?* Whereupon Simon Peter, in the name of the rest, answered him, *Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life.*³ Again, when our Lord asked the twelve, " Whom say ye that I am ?" Simon Peter answered, for the rest, thou art Christ : whereupon our Lord again addresses his answer to him in particular, blessed art thou, Simon : I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."⁴ Our Lord appeared to Peter after his resurrection, before the rest of the apostles ;⁵ and before this, he sent the message of his resurrection to him in particular.⁶ From these and

¹ John xii. 20, 21, 22. ² Luke xxii. 31. ³ John vi. 66, 67, 68.
⁴ Matt. xvi. 15. &c. ⁵ Luke xxiv. 34. ⁶ 1 Cor. xv. 5. ⁶ Mark xvi. 7.

the like passages, it is evident that Peter was the foreman of the college of the apostles, whilst our Lord lived on earth; and it is plain, that he kept the same dignity, at least for some time, after his ascension. For we find in the beginning of the Acts, before the descent of the Holy Spirit, that when the disciples were assembled together, Peter stood in the midst of them, and propounded the election of a twelfth apostle, into the place of Judas.¹ After the Holy Ghost's descent, he speaks to the jews in the name of the rest: Peter standing up with the eleven, said unto them.² And Peter is often mentioned by name, when the rest are only spoken of in general. The jews who were converted on the day of Pentecost, applying themselves to Peter and the rest of the apostles, said, men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter, as the foreman of the apostles, said unto them, repent, and be baptized.³ When the twelve apostles were brought before the high priest, Peter and the other apostles, that is, the rest of the apostles by Peter, their foreman, answered and said, "We ought to obey God rather than men."⁴ When many signs and wonders were wrought by the apostles, and the people magnified them on that account, a particular regard seems to have been paid to Peter above the rest: for it is said, "They brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them."⁵ When Ananias and Sapphira had laid part of the price of their possession at the apostles' feet, and

¹ Acts i. 15. ² Acts ii. 14. iii. 12. iv. 8. ³ Acts ii. 37, 38.

⁴ Acts v. 29. ⁵ Acts v. 12, 13, 15.

kept back the rest, Peter said, in the name of all the rest, who were then present, "Ananias why hath satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" Whereupon he presently fell down dead.¹ And, *Lastly*, He was the first whom God chose to preach the gospel to the gentiles.² From these and other examples which occur in the Scriptures, it is evident, that St. Peter acted as chief of the college of apostles, and so he is constantly described by the primitive writers of the church, who called him the head, the president, the prolocutor, the chief, the foreman of the apostles, with several other titles of distinction.

What was the reason of this order in the apostolic college, is not agreed. Some are of opinion, that Peter was placed the first, as being the eldest; but others affirm that Andrew was his elder brother;* and it is certain, this reason will not hold in the order of the rest; for then John, who is generally reckoned the youngest of the twelve, must have had the lowest place, whereas he is always reputed among the four first. Others rather think, that a regard was had to the time, in which they became our Lord's disciples: and it is plain, that Andrew and Peter, and after them James and John, were called by our Lord, and followed him before any of the rest:³ and though Andrew was first called,⁴ it is probable that Peter was the first who forsook all, and followed Christ.⁵ *Lastly*, There are

¹ Acts v. 2, 3, 5. ² Acts xv. 7.

* Epiphanius Hæres. LI.

³ Matt. iv. Mark i. Luke v. John i. ⁴ John i. 40, 41.

⁵ Luke v. 8.

others, who rather choose to derive the distinction of their places from the merit of some above others : and it deserves to be observed, that as Judas who kept the bag, and was a thief,¹ was the last of all the twelve ; so Peter, who had the first place, does all along, through the whole history of the gospels, show a greater zeal for our Lord's honour and service, than any of the rest.

But whatever was the true reason of this order, which we will not pretend to determine, since the Scriptures are silent, it is certain that nothing more was founded on it, than a mere priority of place ; and that neither Peter, nor any other apostle, had any power or authority over the rest.* When they were first separated from the rest of our Lord's followers, they were all distinguished by the same common name of apostles, and there was not the least difference in their commission, or instructions : but they were all alike admitted to be attendants and ministers of Christ, and authorised to preach the gospel. Afterwards they were all equally commanded to commemorate our Lord's death, and received the same authority to teach and baptize all nations, and to remit and retain sins, and to execute all other parts of the apostolic office ; and the Holy Spirit descended on them all without any distinction, and sat upon each of them.²

¹ John xii. 6.

* Cyprianus, lib. de Unitate Ecclesiæ. Hoc erant utique & cæteri apostoli, quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio præditi & honoris & potestatis, sed exordium ab unitate proficiscitur, ut Ecclesia una monstratur.

² Acts ii. 3.

As they were admitted to the same office, so they were all of the same order, there being no order above that of an apostle. For, “When Christ ascended on high, he gave first apostles :¹ whereas it would have been first his vicegerent, and then apostles, if any one person had been appointed to represent the person of Christ in contradistinction to other apostles. And twelve thrones were appointed without any difference, in which they should judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Indeed, some of these must of necessity be nearer to the royal throne of Christ than others ; and by consequence the persons who sit in them, must be superior in place to the rest ; and this was the honour to which James and John aspired, when they desired to sit one on our Lord’s right hand, and the other on the left ; but they were all to be placed in the same rank and order, and none of them exalted above the rest.

And if we consider the practice of the apostles, we shall find, that none of them pretended to exercise any authority over the rest ; but that they all acted with the same power, and had an equal share in the management of all ecclesiastical affairs. On the day of pentecost Peter stood up with the eleven to preach to the multitude : they who then received the faith, applied themselves to Peter, and the rest of the apostles, to know what they should do ; and after they were baptized, continued in the doctrine and fellowship, not of Peter only, or any one

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 18.

beside, but of all the twelve apostles.¹ They who sold their possessions for the use of the church, “laid down the price at the feet of all the apostles, who made distribution to every man according as he had need.”² Which, in all succeeding ages, was one part of the episcopal charge, though the bishops were herein assisted by the deacons, in imitation of the apostles, who, finding this to be a very troublesome office, and to hinder them from their great work of preaching, ordained seven deacons to execute it under them. This we find in one of the following chapters, where it is said, when the Grecians murmured “against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations; the twelve called the multitude of disciples to them, and directed them to look out seven men, whom we (said they) may appoint over this business: and when the multitude had chosen the fore-mentioned number of men, qualified as the apostles had directed, they set them before the apostles, who, when they had prayed, laid their hands on them.”³ Thus we find that all things were carried on by the joint authority of all the twelve: and it must be here observed farther, that particular members of the apostolic college were subject to the whole body. For, “when the apostles which were at Jerusalem, heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, to confirm them in the faith, and to give them the Holy Spirit.”⁴ And therefore, if our Lord’s maxim

¹ Acts ii. 14, 37, 42. ² Ib. iv. 45. ³ Ib. vi. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
⁴ Acts viii. 14.

be true, “ That he who sendeth, is greater than he who is sent by him;” neither of these two apostles, and by consequence none of the rest, who were all inferior in place to one, or both of these, claimed any power or authority over the college of apostles.

However, it must not be forgotten, that contrary to this plain account, which the Scriptures give us of the apostles and their office, some have invested Peter with a primacy, not only of place, which we are willing, at least till this time, to allow him, but of power and jurisdiction over all the rest. Enough has already been said to confute this notion ; nevertheless, lest any thing should be thought wanting to complete this part of our present subject, I shall briefly consider the chief passages of Scripture, wherein this primacy is supposed to have been given him.

The principal of these texts, is that saying of our Lord, “ Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it : and I will give unto thee the keys of heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.”¹ In which words these two things are chiefly to be considered :

First, That Christ having here given, or rather confirmed to Simon the name of Peter, that is, a rock, which he had given him before, at the time when he first called him to be a disciple,² presently

¹ Matt. xvi. 18, 19. ² John. i. 42.

adds, "Upon this rock I will build my church;" whereby he seems to affirm, that Peter was the foundation on which the christian church should be built.

Secondly, That the keys of heaven, with the power of forgiving and retaining sins, are promised to him; without the least intimation, that he should have any copartner in either of these prerogatives.

But to the first of these observations it may be answered, that though the name of Peter signifies a rock, it does not follow, that the person of Peter is the very rock on which the church of Christ was to be built, but only that he had some relation to it. For it was common to give names to men, or things, from whatever they had a relation to. Thus the name of a certain place through which Jacob travelled, was called Mahanaim, that is, two hosts; not because that place itself was two hosts, but from the hosts of God, that is, his angels, which met Jacob there.¹ And Bethel was called Elbethel, or the God of Bethel, from God's appearing to Jacob in that place.² In the same manner some of the ancient fathers will have the rock on which the church is founded, to be the confession then made by Peter; and others understand it of Christ so confessed, who is in several other places of Scripture called the chief corner stone, and the foundation of the church.* And in which soever of these senses

¹ Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. ² Gen. xxxv. 7.

* Τῇ πέτρῃ τοῦτέστι τῇ πίστει της ὁμολογίας. Chrysostomus in Matt. xxviii. 18. Ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρῃ, οὐκ εἶπεν ἐπὶ τῷ Πέτρῳ οὔτε γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὴν πίστιν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ Ἐκκλησία ἠκοδόμησε. Idem Tom. V. Orat. 163. Super hanc, inquit, Pe

it be taken, there is as much reason to think that the apostle by whom this confession was made, should hence be called a rock, as that the before-mentioned places should be called God, or the hosts of God, because God and his angels appeared there. Or supposing that Peter himself was the very rock, on which Christ promised to build his church; the same is elsewhere said of all the other apostles, whose names were all in the foundation of the wall of the new Jerusalem;¹ and upon whom, as a foundation, the Ephesians, and by the same reason all other christians, if we may believe St. Paul, were built: “Ye are built (saith he) upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”²

And then what was promised to Peter in the other part of this text, namely, that the keys of heaven, with the power of remitting and retaining sins should be given him,* was actually conferred on all the twelve apostles, to whom our Lord said, without any distinction, “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.”³ So that if we may explain

¹ Rev. xxi. 14. ² Eph. ii. 20.

tram, quam confessus es, ædificabo Ecclesiam meam. Augustinus de verb. Domini in Matt. Serm. XIII.

* Origenes in Matt. xvi. pag. 257. Ἄρα τῷ Πέτρῳ δίδουαι ὑπο τοῦ Κυρίου αἱ κλεῖδες τῆς τῶν οὐρανῶν βασιλείας, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἕτερος τῶν μακαρίων ἀνὴρ ἀνὴρ λήψεται; εἰ δὲ κοινὸν ἐστὶ καὶ πρὸς ἑτέρους, τὸ δάσω σοὶ τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ πάντα, τὰ τε προειρημενα καὶ τὰ ἐπιφερόμενα, ὡς πρὸς Πέτρον λελεγμενα. Theophylactus in loc. Ἐἰ γὰρ καὶ πρὸς Πέτρον μόνον εἶρηται τὸ δάσω σοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς Ἀποστόλοις δίδουαι.

³ John xx. 23.

our Lord's promise by its completion, what is promised to Peter by name, as the foreman of the apostles, or because he had then made a particular confession of his faith, when the rest were silent, was equally promised to all the rest. And if this promise was not fulfilled to Peter at the same time and in the same manner, as it was to all the rest, we do not find that it was fulfilled at all : for there is no power actually conferred in any place of the Scriptures upon Peter, which is not given to all the rest. *Lastly*, It is certain, that the rest of the apostles did not conceive any power or pre-eminence over them to have been promised at this time to Peter, because, after this James and John desired to be next in dignity to our Lord, and there was a contention among them and the other apostles, who should be the greatest ;¹ which could not well have happened, if they had understood, that this honour had been already granted to Peter.

Another text whereon Peter's supremacy has been founded, is that wherein Christ tells him, he had prayed that his faith should not fail ; and when he should be converted, our Lord there commands him to strengthen his brethren. Which seems to have been spoken to Peter in particular, to correct him for confiding too much in his own strength and resolution ; as appears from what immediately follows : " Peter said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and unto death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, till thou shalt thrice deny that thou know-

¹ Matt. xx. 20, 21. Luke xxii. 24.

est me."¹ But whatever was the occasion of this saying, there is not the least colour for inferring from it, that any authority was given to Peter over the other apostles; unless they, who are converted from sin, and afterwards help to comfort and support their weak brethren, as any christian may do, must be thought to have power and authority over them.

Neither is there any better proof of Peter's authority over his fellow apostles, in the other passage commonly alledged for it, wherein our Lord commands him to feed his sheep;² which includes nothing more, than what was required of all other apostles, who were shepherds of the flock of Christ, as well as Peter: but it may be, this command was given to Peter by name, either as he was the foreman of the apostolic college, and represented all the rest, as he did at other times; or rather, because he alone had lately denied and abjured his master, and therefore had greater need than the rest to be admonished and put in mind of his duty.

These are some of the chief texts of Scripture, from which the supremacy of Peter has commonly been inferred: the rest, such as that where he pays tribute for Christ and himself, where he walks with Christ on the water, where Christ teaches the people in his ship, which they say was a type of the christian church, with others of no greater strength, scarce deserve to be mentioned. And it is certainly an argument, that these men's cause is very defenceless, when they have recourse to such weak

¹ Luke xxii. 32, 33, 34. ² John xxi. 15.

proofs for the support of an article, which in their scheme of religion, is essential to the constitution of the christian church.

We have shown, that all the apostles had equal authority over the church, and it is evident from the first part of the Acts, that they lived some time at Jerusalem, and managed all ecclesiastical affairs together. It now remains to be considered, in what manner they governed the church, when they left Jerusalem, and lived apart.

Now, in the first place, lest the mother church of Jerusalem should be destitute of a fixed pastor, James, whom some call the son of Alphæus, and one of the twelve apostles ; others the son of Joseph, the blessed virgin's husband, by a former wife, but all speak of as our Lord's kinsman, was appointed the bishop of this place. Whether this was done by our Lord's express order, when he appeared to James apart from the rest after his resurrection,¹ or by the free election of the apostles, is not agreed. However, it is constantly affirmed by the ancient fathers, that this James was the first bishop of Jerusalem ; and on this account he is distinguished by the title of bishop of bishops, prince of bishops, bishop of the apostles, prince of the apostles, with others not inferior to those commonly given to Peter. The catalogues of the bishops of Jerusalem, which are extant in the first christian writers, do all place James at the head of them : and the throne or episcopal chair, wherein he used to teach the people, was still preserved and had in veneration.

¹ Cor. xv. 7.

tion, when Eusebius wrote his history, which was in the former part of the fourth century after Christ.* And though the Scriptures do not expressly mention his promotion, they give us many proofs of his being the head of the church of Jerusalem, after the apostles began to leave that place. It is remarkable, that when in the first five chapters of the Acts, Peter is constantly spoken of as the chief apostle, and the principal person in the church of Jerusalem, there is nothing after that said of him, which implies that character; and from the twelfth chapter of that book, which is the first place wherein James is mentioned with any character of distinction, he is constantly described as the chief person at Jerusalem, even when Peter was present. For when Peter was delivered by the angel out of prison, he bid some of the disciples, go show these things, that is, what had befallen himself, to James, as the head of the church, and the brethren, that is, the rest of the church.¹ Again, when Paul arrived at Jerusalem from his travels in preaching the gospel to foreign countries, being desirous to give an account of the success which God had given him, the day following he went in unto James, as the bishop of that place, and all the elders, who were

* Eusebius, Lib. II. cap. i. Lib. VII. cap. xix. Chrysostomus Homil. XXXVIII. in Epist. prior. ad Corinth. in illa verba; *Deinde visus est Jacobo.* Epiphanius Hæres. IX. page 119. Edit. Paris. Clementis Recognit. Lib. I. cap. lxxviii. Clementis Constitut. Lib. VIII. cap. xxxv. Rufinus Hist. Eccles. Eusebii a se versæ Lib. II. cap. i. Epistola Clementis ad Jacobum, Hesychius Presbyter Hierosolym. apud Photium Bibliothec. Cod. 275.

¹ Acts xii. 17.

next in authority to him, were present.¹ In the synod which was held at Jerusalem, about the great question, whether the converts from gentilism should be circumcised, Peter delivers his judgment, as one who was a member of the assembly : but James speaks with authority, and his sentence is decisive.*² The name of James is placed by St. Paul before Peter and John : James, Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars.³ And some of the church of Jerusalem, who came to Antioch, are said to be certain who came from James ;⁴ which implies that James was the head of that church, otherwise they should rather have been said to come from Jerusalem, or from the church of that place.

From all this together it plainly appears, that the church of Jerusalem was under the particular care and government of St. James. The Scriptures give us no account what became of the greatest part of the other apostles, nor of the churches founded by them : neither do they inform us, whether the several provinces, where they preached the gospel, as Andrew is said to have done in Scythia, Thomas and Bartholomew in India, Simeon in Africa, and others in other countries, were assigned by the immediate command of the Holy Spirit, or of any other apostle, or by an agreement among themselves, or whether every apostle followed his own private judgment and inclination in the choice of the country where he would exercise his office. But if

¹ Acts xxi. 18.

* Hesychius Hierosol. loc. cit. Πέτρος δημηγορεῖ. ἀλλοὶ Ἰακώβος νομοθελεῖ.

² Acts xv. 13, 19. ³ Gal. ii. 9. ⁴ Gal. ii. 12.

we may judge of the rest by what we find of St. Paul, it is certain they were directed by the Holy Spirit, or by their own judgment, and exercised the authority which our Lord gave them, without any dependence on Peter, or any other apostle.

For we find that St. Paul, whose authority was questioned by some of the judaizing christians, as was before observed, does every where assert his independency on all others but Christ. He not only affirms, that he received his commission, neither of men, nor by man, that is, neither from men, as the first authors of it, nor by their choice or designation, but from Jesus Christ, who personally appeared to him for this purpose;¹ but he tells us farther, “That the gospel of uncircumcision was committed to him, as the gospel of circumcision was to Peter.”² That is, as Peter was by the direction of our Lord and the Holy Spirit sent to preach chiefly to the dispersed jews; so he himself, by the same direction and authority, was ordered to preach to the gentiles, on which account he calls himself in other places the apostle of the gentiles.³ And he expressly affirms, that though he went to Jerusalem to see Peter, and, it may be, to be owned and declared an apostle, to silence those who denied his authority, yet he exercised his office without any instructions, or authority from any person but Christ. And he was so far from depending on Peter, that when Peter dissembled with the jews, he publicly reprov- ed him, and withstood him to the face.⁴ And we

¹ Gal. i. 1. 1 Cor. xv. 8. Acts ix. 4, 5. xxii. 8, 21. ² Gal. ii. 7.

³ Rom. xi. 13. xv. 15, 16. ⁴ Gal. i. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. ii. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

find in the Acts, that he, together with Barnabas, was first sent forth to preach to the gentiles by the particular command of the Holy Ghost.¹ After this, sometimes he was directed by God whither to go: for he was ordered by a vision to go into Macedonia; and forbidden by the Spirit to go into Bithynia, and to preach the word at that time in Asia.² Sometimes he speaks as if he was guided by his own inclination and judgment, though even then he seems to have been secretly influenced and directed by the Spirit. Thus he tells the Romans: "So I have strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation; but as it is written, to whom he was not spoken, they shall see; and they that have not heard, shall understand. For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you. But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: and I am sure that when I come, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ."³ Some expressions of which passage plainly signify St. Paul's own desires, and others show that those desires were approved by Christ. And as he was not directed by any superior power on earth in preaching the gospel, and planting churches, so neither was he subject to any other in governing the churches which he had planted; but we find him all along, both in the

¹ Acts xiii. 2, 3, 4. ² Acts xvi. 5, 6, 7. ³ Rom. xv. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29.

Acts, and his own epistles, making laws, ordaining elders, and exercising other acts of jurisdiction by his own authority, without the leave or consent of any superior on earth, as appears from what was before observed.

I hope it now fully appears, that all the apostles were invested with equal authority to govern the christian church, and that every one of them exercised this authority, by virtue of his commission from Christ, without depending on any other. But before the conclusion of this argument, in order to a more clear knowledge of the method which they observed in governing the church, these three things may be remembered :

First, That after their dispersion from Jerusalem, particular apostles still remained subject to the apostolic college, when all or any number of them met, in the same manner as they had been whilst they lived together. An instance of this we find in the forementioned synod of Jerusalem, where a general decree was framed for the use of other churches.

Secondly, That every apostle exercised a particular authority over the churches which he had planted. This is the reason of the difference between such of St. Paul's epistles as were written to churches converted by himself, and those to others. To the former he writes in a style of command and authority ; but in these last he only exhorts, and persuades, and intreats. Thus, in his epistles to the Corinthians, he asserts his own particular authority over them, exclusive of all others, which he grounds on his having converted them : " As my beloved sons

I warn you. For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you in the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be followers of me.” And though he condescends to beseech, yet he presently adds, that if they proved refractory, he would come with a rod to chastise them.¹ Again, “If I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you.”² And in another place he threatens to exercise his apostolical authority upon them, “Having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, through the authority which the Lord gave him for edification.”³ Thus also in his epistles to the Thesalonians, he speaks of his being their nurse, and their father:⁴ and under that character lays on them several commands, which have been mentioned before, and threatens to punish the disobedient.⁵ And, *Lastly*, he propounds himself both to them, and to the Corinthians and Philippians, as an example to be followed and imitated: “Be ye followers of me. And, mark them, who so walk, as ye have us for an example.”⁶ Again, “Be ye followers of me, even as as I am of Christ.”⁷ And, “we make ourselves an example for you to follow us.”⁸ To the Galatians, who had also been converted by him, he writes in a style of entreaty and exhortation, because through the persuasion of some false teachers, they had revolted from him, and even accounted him their enemy.⁹ And when he writes to the Ro-

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 14, 15, 16, 21. ² Ib. ix. 2. ³ 2 Cor. x. 6, 7.
⁴ 1 Thes. ii. 7, 11. ⁵ Ib. iv. 2. 2 Thes. iii. 4, 6, 10, 12. ⁶ 1 Cor. iv. 16. Phil. iii. 17. ⁷ 1 Cor. xi. 1. ⁸ 2 Thes. iii. 9. ⁹ Gal. iv. 16.

mans, the Colossians, and the Hebrews, who had been converted by others, there is no mention of commanding, but he instructs and exhorts them, as one who had obtained grace to be an apostle to all nations, but had no particular authority over them. The same may be observed in his epistle to the Ephesians, which, though particularly sent to the church of Ephesus, seems to have been, like that to the Colossians, a circular epistle, which was to be communicated to other Asian churches, some of which had never seen him. Hence it was not only directed to the Ephesians, but to the faithful in Christ Jesus:¹ and there is no salutation to any person, which he could scarce have omitted, if this epistle had been designed for the particular use of the church at Ephesus, where he had lived three years, and without doubt had many friends: but instead of this, he seems rather to doubt, whether they, to whom this epistle was addressed, had heard of his being made an apostle: “If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery, whereof I was made a minister.”² And he speaks of his hearing of their faith,³ as he also doth to the Colossians.⁴

Thirdly, Every apostle had a general concern for the whole church of Christ, as well as those parts of it, which he himself had converted. This appears from the before-mentioned epistles of St. Paul to the Romans, and other churches, which had never seen him. After this Paul and Peter

¹ Eph. i. 1. ² Ib. iii. 2, 3—7. ³ Ib. i. 15. ⁴ Col. i. 4.

coming to Rome ordained the first bishop there.* And in other churches, which had been converted by evangelists and others of the lower orders of ministers, the apostles ordained ministers, conferred the Holy Ghost, and were submitted to by all the christians, when they happened to come thither : which was before observed of the church in Samaria, converted by Philip the deacon, and that of Antioch converted by other christians scattered from Jerusalem. And in churches converted by apostles, inferior ministers were not only subject to the apostle, by whom they had been converted, but to all other apostles who visited them : thus we find, that after St. Paul's martyrdom, St. John took upon him to govern the church of Ephesus, and others thereabouts, which had been first planted by St. Paul.†

III. Having seen in what manner the apostles governed the christian church, let us now inquire, what ministers were employed under them, which was the last part of our present subject. And here the candid and impartial reader will not expect so full and distinct an account of the ministers who assisted the apostles in governing the church, and of their several offices, as may be given of those, who lived in the succeeding ages, chiefly for these reasons :

First, Because many of the ministers, who lived in the age of the apostles, were extraordinary persons, whose ministrations are not always easy to

* Irenæus, Lib. II. cap. 3.

† Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. III. cap. xxiii. Lib. V. cap. xxiv.

be distinguished from those of the ordinary offices of the church, or from one another. We are told, that God hath set some in his church, first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.¹ In which place it is certain, that different orders of ministers are described, some of which did not only excel others in the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, but also had authority to govern them; because the first order is that of apostles, to whom all other christians, of what rank soever, were subject: and it is scarce to be doubted, that prophets, and teachers, who are mentioned as next under the apostles, were distinct orders of ministers, they being every where through the Acts and epistles distinguished from one another; or that the gifts of healing, with the rest which follow, were rather extraordinary graces of the Spirit, imparted both to the three fore-mentioned orders of apostles, prophets, and teachers, and also in some degree to other christians, than distinct offices. Thus again we are told, that “He gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”² Where it is probable, that besides apostles, who had authority over all other orders, two orders of different kinds are spoken of: in one kind are prophets and evangelists; in another, pastors and teachers, who seem not to have had so high a degree of inspiration, as the prophets and evangelists; and it is plain through the Acts and epistles, that prophets and

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 28. ² Eph. iv. 11.

evangelists were of an higher order than pastors, and teachers : so that by this interpretation there were two distinct orders of a different kind, and a third order of apostles superior to them both. But then it is not easy to give a distinct and certain account, what were the particular offices of these persons, and which of them were extraordinary and temporary, and which designed for the constant and lasting use of the church, since the Scriptures do not speak clearly, and learned men have differed in their judgments about them.

Secondly, Another reason why so clear and distinct an account ought not to be expected of the ministers of this age, as of those which follow, is, that the historical parts of the New Testament are very short, and many times relate nothing farther than the first plantation of churches ; and that most of the epistles were sent to churches lately converted, where no standing ministers were settled. One qualification for a bishop was, that he should not be (*Νεοφύτος*) a novice, that is, one newly converted ;¹ time being required to prove men, before they could be entrusted with the care of the church : and therefore the apostles used not to ordain ministers in any place, before the second time of their coming thither : but when they had preached the gospel, they left the new converts to be farther instructed by some of the ministers who attended them, and staid behind for that purpose, as Silas and Timotheus did at Berœa, when Paul went to Athens ;² or by other itinerant prophets and teachers,

¹ 1 Tim. iii. 6. ² Acts xvii. 14, 15.

who travelled from one place to another, as they were directed by the apostles, or the Holy Spirit. After some time, the apostles commonly returned to strengthen their disciples in the faith, and then ordained such of them, as they found best qualified to be ministers. Thus Paul went through Phrygia and Galatia, strengthening the disciples¹ whom he had before converted.² Paul and Barnabas in another place agree to go again to visit the brethren in every church, which they had planted.³ And we find the same apostles returning to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, in order to “confirm the souls of the disciples, and exhort them to continue in the faith,” and at this time to have ordained them elders, whom they wanted before.⁴ Sometimes, when they had no prospect of returning, they gave others a commission to ordain ministers: for which reason Titus was left in Crete by St. Paul, to ordain ministers in all cities.⁵ But there will scarce be found any instance of their ordaining ministers at the first time of their coming to any place. St. Paul had been twice at Philippi, once by the particular direction of the Holy Spirit, to preach the gospel;⁶ and again, to confirm the disciples, after he had left Ephesus:⁷ and therefore here we find bishops and deacons, to whom with the rest of the church in that place, he directs his epistle.⁸ But when he writes to the Thessalonians, which seems to have been the year after their conversion,⁹ having then

¹ Acts xviii. 23. ² Ib. xvi. 6. ³ Ib. xv. 36. ⁴ Ib. xiv. 21, 22, 23. ⁵ Tit. i. 5. ⁶ Acts xvi. 9. 12. ⁷ Ib. xx. 1. 6. ⁸ Phil. i. 1. ⁹ Acts xvii. 1.

only been once among them (though it is probable he visited them afterwards, when he went through Macedonia)¹ he mentions no standing ministers, but all along addresseth himself to the brethren in general.² Yet there were prophets, and men endued with spiritual gifts, who seem to have been the persons that “laboured among them, and were over them in the Lord, and admonished them.”³ And there were some unruly and contentious persons among them, who despised both the spiritual gifts of these men, and their persons: whence he commands them in the same chapter, to know the men, that is, so as to distinguish them from others, and to esteem them very highly in love, and also to show a just regard for their gifts: quench not the spirit, says he, that is, by rejecting the persons inspired by him, and refusing to hearken to their advice and instructions: despise not prophesyings. The apostle was twice in Galatia, once when he converted it,⁴ and a second time to strengthen the disciples:⁵ but there is no mention of his second coming thither in his epistle to the Galatians; and therefore it is probable, that it was written before; or, however, since it is certain they so far revolted from him, at the persuasion of some false apostles, as to account him their enemy, as was before observed, we need not wonder that no standing ministry was yet ordained there; as it seems there was not, because he neither salutes any minister,

¹ Acts xx. 1, 2. ² 1 Thes. i. 1, 4. ii. 1, 14, 17. iv. 1, 13. v. 1, 14, 25, 26, 27. ³ 1 Thes. i. 1. ii. 1, 15. iii. 6, 13. ⁴ 1 Thes. v. 12, 13, 19, 20. ⁵ Acts xvi. 6. ⁶ Ib. xvii. 13.

nor charges him to oppose the false apostles ; which he could not well have omitted in this epistle which was purposely written against those men, if he had entrusted that church with any such. All we find mentioned in this epistle are spiritual (*πνευμαλικοι*) persons, that is, men who had spiritual gifts ;¹ and one or more who catechised (*ὁκατηχῶν*) or instructed them in the rudiments of the christian faith, who might be any of the spiritual persons, who addicted himself to that ministry. In his second epistle to the Corinthians, he tells them : “ This is the third time I am coming to you ; ”² which must not be understood, as if he had been twice with them before ; but only that he had once been with them, when he converted them to christianity ; that afterwards he was prepared to visit them again, at which time he was prevented by their disorderly behaviour ;³ and now was the third time ready to come to them (*τρίτον ἐτοίμως ἔχω ἔλθειν*) as he elsewhere expresseth it ;⁴ for he plainly affirms, in his second epistle, that he had been only once at Corinth.⁵ Hence there is no mention of any standing minister among them in either of these epistles, neither had they any stated method of divine worship, and other religious offices ; but all was performed by prophets and other gifted men, who acted according to their own judgment, and many times contrary to the rules of order and decency, appears at large by the directions which the apostle gives them in the fourteenth chapter of the first of these epistles, and in other

¹ Gal. vi. 1, 6. ² 2 Cor. xiii. 1. ³ 2 Cor. 1. 15, 23. ⁴ 1 Cor. xii. 14. ⁵ 2 Cor. i. 15, 17. xiii. 2.

places. From all which together it follows, that no light can reasonably be expected in our present inquiry from these, or any other parts of the New Testament, which concern places where the apostles had not been oftener than once. Much less are we to expect any account of fixed and ordinary ministers in such epistles as are directed to places where no apostle had been; as in those to the Romans and Colossians, which are addressed in general to all the saints,¹ and do not mention any settled ministers. For these churches were both converted by itinerant evangelists, who had no power to ordain ministers: and it is not likely they had ever seen St Paul² or any other apostle.

Thirdly, It may be farther considered, that most of the epistles being written to persons lately converted from judaism, or heathenism, their chief design is to instruct them in the principles of christianity, or to arm them against false teachers: but there was no occasion to speak any thing concerning the form of church government, which the apostles either kept in their own hands, or committed to persons chosen by themselves, as Paul did that of Ephesus to Timothy, and that of Crete to Titus; but only in general terms to put them in mind to be obedient to those who laboured among them in the ministry. So that it would be very unreasonable to expect any distinct account of the offices and orders of the christian ministers in these parts of the New Testament.

¹ Rom. i. 7. Col. i. 2. ² Rom. i. 10, 13. Col. i. 4.

However, this is plain from the short account which the Scriptures have given us of those times, that in most places there were two orders under the apostles, either of standing and fixed, or of extraordinary and inspired teachers.

1. And first of all, if we look into the church of Jerusalem, besides the twelve apostles who lived there, and governed the church together for some time, and James the fixed bishop, we shall find seven deacons, who were solemnly ordained by the apostles. And though the particular occasion of their ordination was to distribute the public charity, which was one part of the deacon's office in the ages next after this; yet they were (*διάκονοι λογῆ*) ministers of the word, as well as (*διάκονοι τραπέζῳν*) ministers of tables. Whence it was required as a previous qualification, that they should be full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.¹ And presently after their ordination, Stephen, the first deacon, publicly preached the gospel, confuted the unbelieving jews, and wrought miracles, till he was put to death through the malice of some who were not able to resist the spirit and wisdom by which he spake.² And afterwards we find Philip, the next after Stephen, preaching and baptizing.³

There is hitherto no mention of presbyters in this church, but all things are managed by the joint authority of the apostles, who still remained at Jerusalem, when the rest were dispersed in foreign parts upon the persecution which arose about Stephen.⁴

¹ Acts vi. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. ² *Ib.* vi. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11. vii. 6. ³ Acts viii. 1. ⁴ xi. 19.

But as it was before observed, that James was appointed the fixed apostle or bishop of Jerusalem before the apostles left it, so there was a college of presbyters ordained about the same time. This is not expressly mentioned in the Acts, any more than the election of James ; but it is remarkable, that as the first time James is mentioned with any character of distinction, is in the twelfth chapter of that book :¹ so the presbyters are first spoken of in the last verse of the eleventh chapter :² and they are there mentioned in such a manner, as plainly shows them to be concerned in the care of the church : for Paul and Barnabas are said to bring the charitable collections of the church of Antioch, for the relief of the brethren in Judea, to them. And whereas till this time, even to the first verse of this chapter, there is no mention of any, beside apostles and brethren, except the deacons in the sixth chapter ; henceforward the elders are constantly spoken of, sometimes with the apostles, and sometimes only with James their bishop, as men of authority in this church. Thus we are told, that the disciples came from Antioch to Jerusalem to consult with the apostles and elders, whether the converts from heathenism ought to be circumcised.³ These disciples are said to be received by the apostles and elders. Afterwards we find that the apostles and elders came together to consider of this matter. When the controversy was decided, it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men to Antioch : where the same difference is made be-

¹ Acts ix. 17. ² Verse 29, 30. ³ Ib. xv. 2, 4, 6, 22, 23

tween the elders and the church, as between the apostles and elders ; and the decree which was then enacted, runs in the name of the apostles, elders and brethren. In the next chapter, the same decree is said to be ordained by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, without mentioning the rest of the church.¹ Afterwards when St. Paul, who had been preaching the gospel in foreign parts, returned to Jerusalem, being desirous to give an account what things God had wrought by his ministry among the gentiles, the day following he went in unto James, all the elders being present : James as the chief, the elders as next under him, pastors of the church in that place.² Which is the more remarkable, because in other places, where there were yet no fixed pastors, he did not go in, as here he is said to do, to particular men, but called the church together to him. Thus Paul and Barnabas are said to have done at Antioch : “ When they were come thither, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the gentiles : and they abode there a long time, not with the elders, or any other church officers, who were not yet ordained, but with the disciples.³ From this time there was no farther occasion to mention the presbyters of the church of Jerusalem in the Acts : but if the epistle to the Hebrews was written to the jews in Judea, as Chrysostom and others have thought, then it is not to be doubted, but that they are included in the rulers (*ἡγούμενοι*) who are thrice mentioned in

¹ Acts xvi. 4. ² Ib. xxi. 18. ³ Acts xiv. 27, 28.

one chapter of that epistle, and to whom the people are exhorted to be obedient, and to submit themselves.¹

2. From the church of Jerusalem let us go to that of Antioch, where the disciples were first called christians.² Here the gospel was first preached by some, who left Jerusalem upon the persecution which arose about Stephen: tidings hereof being brought to the church of Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas to confirm them in the faith, and he fetched Saul from Tarsus to help him in that work.³ Saul had been before called to be an apostle by Christ, who personally appeared to him: but neither he nor Barnabas were yet owned to be apostles by the church, nor are they called by that name: so that hitherto there were only two orders of ministers in this church, namely, those by whom the Antiochians had been converted, who probably were of the lowest order, with Saul and Barnabas, and perhaps some others of the second order: we find them distinguished by the names of prophets and teachers. Afterward these inspired men were commanded by the Holy Ghost to set apart Saul and Barnabas for the work for which he had called them, that is, to preach to the gentiles:⁴ which being done by imposition of hands, with solemn prayers and fasting, Saul is thenceforward called Paul, his name being changed with his character, and both he and Barnabas have constantly the title of apostles.⁵ So that here again, though no standing and ordinary pastors seem yet to have been ordain-

¹ Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 24. ² Acts xi. 26. ³ Ib. xi. 19, 22, 26. ⁴ Ib. xiii. 1, 2, 3, 9. ⁵ Ib. xiv. 4, 14.

ed in this church, there are plainly three distinct orders of ministers, apostles, prophets and teachers.

3. From these two primitive churches let us pass to the history of St. Paul's travels, which almost wholly takes up the remaining part of the Acts. And here again we shall find a manifest distinction between the orders of ministers. In the beginning of his travels, when Barnabas accompanied him, John, whose surname was Mark, attended on them as their minister or deacon.¹ This person was an evangelist or teacher, as we learn from several passages of St. Paul's epistles ;² yet he being of the lowest order of ministers, the two apostles are all along described as principals in the business they went about : whence Sergius Paulus, the deputy governor of Paphos, being desirous to hear the word of God, is said to call for Paul and Barnabas, without any mention of Mark.³ Which is the more to be observed, because when any of the second order are joined with the apostles, they are spoken of as their associates, and not their ministers (*ὑπηρέται*). This plainly appears concerning the elders of Jerusalem, who are all along mentioned as co-partners with James in the care of the church ; and the same will farther appear from that which comes now to be related.

When Paul parted from Barnabas, he took with him Silas or Silvanus :⁴ this man was a prophet, and is so called in this history,⁵ and by consequence was of the order next to that of Apostles.⁶ After-

¹ Acts xii. 12, 15. xiii. 5, 13. ² Col. iv. 10. ³ 2 Tim. 4. 11.

⁴ Acts xiii. 7. ⁵ Ib. xv. 40. ⁶ Ib. ver. 32. ⁶ 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11.

wards Paul admitted some others into his company, and particularly Timotheus ;¹ Timotheus was an evangelist, and preached the gospel to the Corinthians, as St. Paul affirms ;² but he did (*διακονειν*) minister as a deacon to St. Paul.³ So that now there were in this company an apostle, a prophet, and an evangelist or deacon. When these are mentioned together, it is constantly in this order, Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus ; Silvanus being superior to Timothy, as Paul was to Silvanus.⁴ And the two former are all along in the Acts described as principals in preaching the gospel and planting churches. Which is agreeable to what St. Paul tells the Ephesians, and in them other churches, that they “ are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone ;”⁵ making the prophets to be the fellows and co-partners of the apostles in the foundation of the christian church. Hence Paul and Silas only were apprehended at Philippi,⁶ as being the chief persons : though Timothy was said to be taken into their company in the beginning of this chapter where this is related. In the next chapter we find them all three together ;⁷ yet the disciples at Thessalonica are there said to consort with Paul and Silas : and afterwards Paul and Silas are sent away by night, without any mention of Timothy ; who being only their deacon or minister, may be supposed to be included as one of the company, when they on whom he attended are

¹ Acts xvi. 3. ² 2 Cor. i. 19. ³ Acts xix. 22. ⁴ 2 Cor. i. 10.
¹ Thes. i. 1. ² Thes. i. 1. ⁵ Eph. ii. 20. ⁶ Acts xvi. 10, 20.
⁷ Ib. xvii. 4, 14.

spoken of. And it is probable, there were at the same time several other evangelists and deacons of lesser note in this company, whose names are not set down, and particularly Luke, the writer of this history, who in this chapter before speaks of St. Paul's company in the first person : the Lord (saith he) called us to preach the gospel in Macedonia ;¹ and the same is done several times in the following verses, yet no man is mentioned by name but Paul and Silas. And in other places where Paul only is mentioned, having then no apostle or prophet with him, there were several other ministers in his company. Thus in the first twenty verses of the nineteenth chapter of the same book, the planting and increase of the church at Ephesus is entirely ascribed to St. Paul ; whereas it is plain, that not only Timothy, but also Erastus, with others who did (*διακονειν*) attend on him as deacons, were there at the same time : for we find in the twenty-second verse of this chapter, that having determined to go into Macedonia, he sent thither before him two of those who ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus. So that in St. Paul's travels we constantly find several order of ministers, sometimes apostles, with one or more deacons, as when Paul and Barnabas travelled with Mark : sometimes an apostle, prophet, and one or more deacons, as when Paul and Silas with Timothy, and others of the lowest order, went together : sometimes an apostle attended by his deacons only, as in the latter part of this history, in which none but Paul and his dea-

¹ Acts xvi. 10.

cons are spoken of, there being no mention of Silas after the eighteenth chapter.

4. We may farther observe, that there are several other passages, both in the Acts and epistles of the apostles, from which it is manifest, that in all places, which had been long enough converted to be formed into regular churches, there were orders of standing and fixed ministers. Paul and Barnabas, returning to visit the churches which they had lately planted, ordained elders in every church.¹ James, who writes to the twelve tribes, wherever scattered abroad,² directs the sick among them to send for the elders of the church to pray over them, and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.³ So that in all places, where the twelve tribes were dispersed, and that was all over the Roman empire, there were elders, when this epistle was written. There was a presbytery, or college of elders in the place where Timothy was ordained: for it was by the imposition of their hands, that he received his orders.⁴ Yet this was not done without an apostle, and therefore the grace, which in the passage now cited is conferred on him by the presbytery, in another place is said to have been given him by the imposition of St. Paul's hands.⁵ Peter, who writes to the strangers scattered through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, exhorts the elders to feed the flock of God, and the people to be obedient to their elders.⁶ And these elders are said (*ἐπισκοποι*) to have the oversight, which is to be bishops of those

¹ Acts xiv. 23. ² James i. 1. ³ Ibid. v. 14. ⁴ 1 Tim. iv. 4.
⁵ 2. Tim. i. 6. ⁶ 1 Pet. i. 1. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

churches, and are spoken of as governors ; whence he exhorts them not to behave themselves as lords over the flock, but to be ensamples to it, as they were concerned to approve themselves to Christ, the chief shepherd. St. Paul having called the elders of Ephesus to Miletus, gives them a solemn charge to take care of the flock, over which the Holy Ghost had made them (*ἐπισκοπους*) overseers or bishops.¹ So that here again are elders called bishops, and intrusted with the care of the church. St. Paul tells Titus, that he had left him in Crete to ordain elders in every city ; and advises him to ordain none but such as are blameless ; for which he gives this reason, that a bishop must be blameless, as being the steward of God.² So that in all the cities of Crete there were to be elders, and they also seemed to be called bishops, and to be intrusted with the government of God's church, as his stewards and vicegerents. In the first epistle to Timothy, elders are several times mentioned with characters of distinction from other christians, whom they are said to rule.³ And rules are prescribed to Timothy, for his conduct in the ordination of bishops and deacons.⁴ One of which is this ; “ A bishop must be one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity : for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God ? ” So that here are deacons, and over them bishops, who rule and take care of the church. But there are no rules for or-

¹ Acts xx. 17, 28. ² Tit. i. 5, 6, 7. ³ 1 Tim. v. 1, 17, 19.

⁴ 1 Tim. iii.

daining elders, unless they be comprehended in those which relate to bishops. *Lastly*, The epistle to the Philippians is directed to the bishops, deacons, and saints at Philippi:¹ whence it is manifest, that here also, beside the christian people who are called saints, as they are in other places, there were two orders of ministers, distinguished by the names of bishops and deacons.

From these passages of Scripture it is evident beyond all dispute, that besides the apostles, there were in this first age of the church, at least two orders of fixed and standing ministers, namely, that of bishops and elders, with another of deacons. But it has been disputed, whether the bishops, who are called presbyters in some of the forementioned texts, and in others joined with deacons only, were all of the order next above deacons, and the same with those, who, in the following ages, were distinguished by the name of presbyters, from a superior order of bishops; or whether they were of an order above that of mere presbyters.

I will not take upon me to decide this controversy, which has exercised the pens of many wise and learned men; but only suggest a few things, which I shall leave to the judgment of the impartial reader.

First, Then, it does not follow, that all presbyters were of the same order with bishops, because bishops are sometimes included in the name of presbyters. The apostles themselves were undoubtedly presbyters, and are sometimes so called: St. John calls himself a presbyter, both in his second and

¹ Phil. i. 1.

third epistle : and St. Peter styles himself a fellow-presbyter of the presbyters, to whom his first epistle was directed :¹ but we must not conclude from hence, that all presbyters were apostles. For though all the power of presbyters belonged to the apostles, and therefore they may well be called presbyters ; there were several powers exercised by the apostles, which never belonged to any mere presbyter. In like manner in the jewish church there was an high priest, under him priests of an inferior order, and a third order of levites below both the former : yet in several ancient authors, who do expressly in other places distinguish the high priest from the inferior order of priests, all the three orders are comprehended under the two names of priests and levites.* The reason whereof is plainly this, that though the priests were not high priests, nor ever dignified with that title, or the office annexed to it ; yet the high priest was a true and proper priest, and could lawfully discharge any part of the sacerdotal office. And thus in Clemens of Alexandria, we find all the ministers of the christian church contained under the two names of presbyters and deacons ;† and yet in other places he speaks of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, as three distinct orders.‡

¹ 1 Pet. v. 1.

* Clemens Romanus Epist. cap. xxxii. & xl. Philo Judæus, lib. III. De vita Mosis, p. 679. Edit. Paris. Ibid. p. 694. Idem. Lib. De Sacerdotum Honoribus, p. 834.

† Clemens Alex. Strom. VII. p. 700.

‡ Idem. Strom. p. 677. Edit. Paris.

Secondly, It cannot be proved, that the forementioned texts of Scripture, where the names of bishops and presbyters are used promiscuously, do not relate to ministers of the highest order. In the epistle of St. Peter, and that of Paul to Titus, where several cities are spoken of, why may not the bishops and elders respect the several bishops who presided in each of those cities? There is a greater appearance of difficulty, when they who governed the church of Ephesus, or of Philippi, are called in the plural bishops; because this rule was held sacred in all ages, that in one city there should be only one bishop, or chief pastor; and therefore if it can be made out, that these bishops lived together in either of those cities, I shall readily allow, that they were mere presbyters. But since all Asia, that is Natolia, had before that time received the gospel by St. Paul's preaching, when he lived almost three years together at Ephesus,¹ how can it be proved, that he did not send to all the bishops of the country thereabouts, as well as to him who ruled the particular church of Ephesus? And if so, the bishops of Ephesus may mean all the bishops, who presided in the cities within that district. And though I will not say, the bishops at Philippi were the bishops of the district thereabouts, who were under the metropolitan of Philippi, as some learned men have done; because it does not appear that Philippi was then a metropolitical church; and it is well known that afterwards Thessalonica, and not Philippi, was the metropolis of Macedonia; yet why may not the

¹ Acts xix. 8, 9, 10, 26.

bishops, to whom this epistle was directed, be some bishops of the neighbouring cities, who assembled on some special occasion, at Philippi? Or, if this will not be allowed, how can it be proved, that this was not a circular epistle, like those to the Ephesians and Colossians; which though first sent to Philippi, was designed for the use of other churches in Macedonia? And if so, the bishops here mentioned were those who governed these churches.

Thirdly, It may be, that when some churches were first established, they had only a bishop, with deacons to minister, without any presbyters. We find that St. Paul was sometimes accompanied by persons of the higher orders, and sometimes by none but deacons: and it is very possible, that in churches where the disciples were so few, that they could all assemble in one place, there might be no church officer to perform the duties of religion beside the bishop and his deacons; and that afterwards, as the number of christians increased, the bishop ordained presbyters, who should officiate in the congregations, where he could not be personally present, and assist him in other parts of his pastoral charge. And if this was so, we need not wonder why bishops and deacons are sometimes mentioned without any order between them.

Fourthly, It may be that when St. Paul delivers rules for the ordination of bishops and deacons, without mentioning the intermediate order of presbyters, he included these last in the rules which concern bishops; because presbyters are ordained to a sort of co-partnership in the pastoral or episcopal charge, and excepting the imposition of hands

in confirmation and ordination, (as will be shown in the fifth chapter) there is scarce any act, which presbyters may not exercise as well as bishops : so that the rules which are laid down for bishops, might serve for presbyters. This was the opinion of Chrysostom, Oecumenius, and Hilary, the deacon : and if it be true, we need inquire no farther, why the same rules are given for the ordination of bishops and presbyters in St. Paul's epistle to Titus : or why bishops and deacons are spoken of in the third chapter of his first epistle to Timothy, without any mention of mere presbyters.

Lastly, Though we should allow that the names of bishop and presbyter did in that age signify the same office, as some fathers in the fourth century seem to have thought ; and farther, that all the bishops spoken of in the forementioned texts of Scripture, were mere presbyters, and of the next order above deacons, which is the utmost concession that can be desired ; hence it plainly appears, that in this age there were three distinct orders of ministers in the church, namely, that of deacons, another of presbyters, and over them a superior order, in which were not only the apostles, but also Timothy and Titus, who governed the churches in which they resided, when the above-mentioned epistles were written to them. Or if it should be denied, that Timothy and Titus were governors of these churches, which shall be farther examined in the next chapter, yet it must be granted, that the apostle who gave them a commission to ordain ministers, and to set things in order there, had then the care of the churches in his own hands. And hence it follows,

that there was an apostle, with presbyters and deacons at the same time, which is all we are obliged at present to make out. And it appears, the Philippians still remained under St. Paul's government, when he sent his epistle to them, in which mention is made of their bishops and deacons, from his taking maintenance from them. This was an ordinance of our Saviour's own appointment, that they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel, as St. Paul affirms; and though sometimes that apostle refrained from using this power over his disciples, when it was like to be made an objection against his preaching;¹ yet he fully asserts his right to exercise it in all places, where the care of the church was incumbent on him.² And therefore, since it appears from his epistle to the Philippians, that he took maintenance of them at the time when it was written,³ we may reasonably conclude, that they were then under his government; and the same has already been proved in the former part of this chapter by other arguments. So that in this church also, allowing their bishops to have been simple presbyters, there was an apostle, with presbyters and deacons.

From what has been said, I hope it will fully appear to every impartial reader, that in the times of the apostles, there were three distinct orders of ministers, by whom the christian church was governed. And here again, as was done in the conclusion of the last chapter, we may observe how the government of the christian church, which is the mystical

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 9—23. ² 2 Cor. xi. 7—12. ³ 1 Cor. ix. 6.—14. ⁴ Phil. iv. 14, 15, 16, 18. ii. 29, 30. 2 Cor. xi. 9.

Israel, was typified in the literal Israel ; the chief priest whereof, with his priests and levites, exactly represented the christian apostles, presbyters and deacons ; whereby the prediction of Isaias was accomplished, “ That God would declare his glory to all nations, and take out of them priests and levites.”¹

¹ Isa. lxvi. 19, 20, 21. lx. 17. lxi. 6.

CHAP. IV.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH FROM THE
TIME OF THE APOSTLES TILL CONSTANTINE THE
GREAT.

HAVING shown in the last chapter, by what officers the christian church was governed in the first age after of our Lord's ascension, let us now proceed to examine, whether it was to be governed by a succession of the same officers in the following ages ; or whether, as some would insinuate, the offices of these men were all extinguished with their persons. It is not pretended, that there is the least intimation of the failure of these offices in the Scriptures ; and I am persuaded it will seem very strange to all unprejudiced men, that Christ should appoint officers over his church, and these ordain others through all parts of the world ; and yet, upon the death of these men, the church should be left, contrary to the first institution, without any settled order of government.

Neither is it less contrary to the nature of the church, considered as a society, that its offices should be extinguished, than to its original institution. No orderly society ever did, or can subsist without officers and some subordination among them : and therefore it having been proved, that

the church is a regular society, and that this society shall be continued by a succession of believers to the world's end, it follows that there must be an uninterrupted succession of officers till the same time.

And if we may judge of the officers of the christian church by those of the jewish, which have been shown to be types of the christian, it is plain, that as Aaron and his cotemporary priests and levites were succeeded by others, through all the revolutions of the jewish state till the end of the Mosaical economy: so the several orders of christian officers must be preserved by a constant succession till the end of the christian economy, which is to last as long as the world. Neither can any reason be assigned, why the christian ministry should be changed or abolished before the end of the world; which would not equally have held for the change or total extinction of the jewish priesthood before the end of the Mosaical economy.

It has been shown, that the officers of the christian church were appointed by God, as well as those of the jewish: and therefore, like all other divine institutions, they must remain in the same state, till it shall please God to change, or wholly lay them aside: the same authority being required to change any institution which first made it. And if men will presume to declare the functions of church officers to be mutable, or temporary, without producing the least intimation of God's will that he has so designed them, they may with the same reason abolish all other christian institutions:

and even the sacraments of the church will lie as much at their mercy, as its ministers.

Indeed there are some, who derive all the authority which our Lord's ministers exercised in the church, from the free consent and permission of the people ; and then it is not strange they should conclude, that the same people may lay them aside whenever they please. But there is no need to make any reply to this groundless notion in this place, both because it will appear, when we come to discourse of the powers which are exercised by officers of the church, that they are of such a nature, as can only be derived from God, or those who act by his special commission ; and because it was fully shown in the preceding chapters, that the apostles received their commission, not from any set of people, but from our Lord himself ; that by virtue of this commission, they had authority to preach the gospel to all nations ; that all nations were obliged, under the penalty of damnation, to receive the gospel as soon as it was preached to them ; and that all who received it, were thence-forwards, without any other act or consent of theirs, besides that of becoming christians, obliged to be subject in spiritual matters to the apostles, as our Lord's vicegerents ; and that for any man to reject them, was in effect to reject the authority of Christ.

Others, who allow the offices of the first age of the church to have been of divine institution, pretend they were extraordinary, and merely personal, and so not capable of being derived to posterity. But I should be glad to know, what these mean by the offices of the first age. Do they think these

offices consisted in working miracles ? If this were so, though it would not be true that they ceased with the first age of the church, because it appears from the fathers of the next ages, that the power of working miracles still remained in the church in their times ; yet we must allow, they were not designed to last till the world's end. But it is manifest from the Scripture, that the offices of the apostles and their cotemporary ministers, did not consist in working miracles ; but that the power of working miracles was given them, to attest the divine commission, whereby they were authorised to preach the gospel ; and to perform other parts of their several offices. Hence, when the world had generally embraced christianity, there was no farther need of miracles, which were given “ for a sign to them who believe not, and not to them who believe ;”¹ but the offices themselves, which consisted in preaching the gospel, in administering the sacraments, in maintaining order and discipline, peace and unity, which are things of everlasting necessity, must be preserved through all ages to the world's end. And it may as well be affirmed, that no gospel shall be preached, no sacraments administered, no peace and order maintained, nor any discipline exercised in the church, as that there shall not be a constant succession of officers, by whom these things shall be done.

Neither will it be any just objection against the succession of church officers, to say, that the particular means whereby some of the forementioned

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 22.

effects are brought to pass, must be varied : for instance, that very different rules must be prescribed in one age or place, for the order, well government and edification of the church, from those which are necessary in others. Hence, when the jews were to be cemented into one body with the gentiles, the last were commanded to abstain from blood : which apostolical precept, since the evangelical liberty has been fully explained, and so no just offence can be given to the jews by our neglecting any part of the ceremonial law, has been long ago declared by the general voice of the church, to be of no farther force. For the same reason, the deaconesses, who commonly attended the first preachers of the gospel, as having easier access to those of their own sex than the men, afterwards, when the design of their institution ceased, were laid aside. And the kiss of charity, several times mentioned by St. Paul, whereby the primitive christians expressed their mutual love and affection, when it began to give occasion of scandal, was wholly disused. And the same may be said of several other things, which were practised by the primitive church, and afterwards, when times changed, came to be laid aside for the very same reason they had been before prescribed, namely, the benefit and edification of christians. But they who object this against the succession of officers in the church, do not consider, that the same reason will destroy all civil government : for if the change of particular laws infers a change in the authority which made them, the state must in a short time be deprived of its magistrates, as well as the church of its ministers. It ought

rather to have been concluded on the contrary side, that as the changes which happen in civil affairs, make it necessary to the support and happiness of the state, to have a constant legislative intrusted with one or more persons, who shall prescribe laws suitable to the various occasions which happen: so there should be standing officers in the church, who have authority, not indeed to change any essential part of christian faith or duty, which must remain the same through all ages, but to prescribe rules to be observed for maintaining the outward peace and order of the church.

And the same reason will hold through all other branches of authority, which our Lord hath intrusted with the officers of his church. The gospel must be preached, and they who received it, admitted into the church by baptism till the world's end: which is intimated by St. Peter, who having exhorted those who were converted on the day of pentecost, to repent and be baptized, that they might receive remission of sins, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, presently adds, "for the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call;"¹ that is, the same promise of remission of sins, and of the Holy Ghost, though not to enable them to speak with tongues, and to work miracles, yet to illuminate and sanctify the faithful christians, was made not only to the jews then present, but to all others in all countries, and all ages, even to as many as should at any time receive the gospel preached

¹ Acts ii. 38, 39.

to them, and be baptized into the profession of christianity; which supposes, that there should always be an order of men, commissioned to call others to the profession of the christian religion, and to receive them into the church by baptism, upon their hearkening to this call.

Another reason why God appointed officers of different orders in his church, is that assigned by St. Paul, namely, that there should be no schism in the body, and that some of the members should preside, and others be subservient, in order to promote the common good, as it is in the natural body.¹ But was this a reason peculiar to the apostolic age, or the church of Corinth? No, certainly: it is founded on the general nature of societies, and observed in every one of them from the widest empire down to the least family, and therefore ought to be equally regarded in all ages and countries. In the same manner St. Paul tells the Ephesians, “That our Lord gave some, Apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints,” (or, as it is a little after expressed, for the compacting them together into one body, in doing which, the officers, who are derived from Christ the head, answer to the joints and bands, which hold the members of the natural body together,) for the work of the evangelical ministry, and for the edifying in the knowledge of Christ, and all other christian graces, all the members of the body of Christ. These being the purposes why Christ appointed church offi-

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 4, 12, 18, 24, 28.

cers, how long must they continue? “ Even till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ :” that is, till the christians of all ages and countries, shall be fully instructed in all christian knowledge, and firmly established in one common faith.¹ Indeed, some of the officers here mentioned, were inspired men, and endued with extraordinary gifts; but these ceasing, as they did for the most part when the gospel was fully received in any place, the same reasons will hold for appointing men qualified by instruction and study, to perform the same offices till the world’s end.

Another function appropriated to church officers, as was shown in the last chapter, and shall be farther proved in the next, was the ministration of the eucharist, which must be celebrated till our Lord’s second coming, as appears from his particular revelation to St. Paul.² And consequently there must be a succession of officers in all ages to celebrate it.

Another end of ordaining church officers, was to oppose heresies, which our blessed Saviour and his apostles foresaw would infest the church.³ For this reason St. Paul charges the elders of Ephesus to watch over the church after his departure, from which time they were to see his face no more. And he exhorts Timothy and Titus to withstand the heretics in the several churches, which he had left them to take care of in his absence. Now no cause

¹ Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12, 13, 16. ² 1 Cor. xi. 23, 26. ³ Matt. xviii. 7. 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. Acts xx. 29, 30.

can be given, why the same reason should not hold for the continuance of these, and the succession of other officers, after St. Paul's death, as well as in his absence, and when they were never to see him more. It is plain St. Paul was of this mind, and therefore he commanded Timothy to ordain others, who should maintain the faith after him: "The things, saith he, which thou hast heard of me, the same commit thou to faithful men, who may be able to teach others."¹ It is manifest, this second epistle was sent to Timothy a little before St. Paul's death, when he was the second time imprisoned at Rome; ² whereas before his first going to Rome, he had lived almost three years at Ephesus, where he left Timothy to preside,³ and committed the care of that church to the elders before-mentioned.⁴ And there were beside these, other elders and deacons, as it is probable, whom Timothy had ordained by St. Paul's direction in his former epistle; so that what is here prescribed to Timothy, must concern the succession of others into some of these places. Accordingly we find a succession of officers in this church, in the earliest accounts of the next ages, as shall be shown more fully in the following part of this chapter.

It was observed in the last chapter, that (ἡγούμενοι) rulers, were settled among those Hebrews to whom the apostle's epistle was directed: it must here be added, that when this epistle was sent to them, it is probable there had been at least one succession of

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 2. ² 2 Tim. i. 8. ii. 9. iv. 6. ³ Acts xix. 8, 10.

⁴ Ib. xx. 17, 18.

rulers, after the first were dead. For the apostle first propounds the example of their deceased rulers to their imitation: "Remember them which have, or had, as it should be translated, the rule over you, (*ἡγουμένων*) who have spoken to you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation;" and afterwards exhorts them to be obedient to their living rulers: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account."¹ So that these living rulers were to be obeyed, as well as their predecessors.

We cannot suppose that Clemens, who not only conversed with the apostles, but was ordained bishop of Rome by St. Peter,* and is commonly thought to be the same whom St. Paul calls his fellow labourer in his epistle to the Philippians, was ignorant of our Lord's intention, or of the apostle's doctrine in a matter of such vast concern as the succession of officers in the church: and if we may rely on his word, "The apostles having it revealed by our Lord Jesus Christ, that contentions would arise about episcopacy or church government; on this account ordained bishops and deacons, and gave them this prescript, that upon their death, other approved men should succeed in their ministry."† So that

¹ Heb. xiii. 7, 17.

* Irenæus Lib. III. cap. iii. Eusebius Eccl. Hist. Lib. III. cap. iv. Tertullianus de Præscrip. Hæretic. cap. xxxii.

† Clemens Epist. ad Corinth. cap. xlv. *Καὶ οἱ Ἀπόστολοι ἡμῶν ἔγνωσαν διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι ἔρις ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς· διὰ τούτην ἔν τῃν αἰτίαν πρόγνωσιν εἴλη-*

there was to be a succession of officers after the death of those whom the apostles ordained, and consequently to the end of the world.

Neither is this any more, than what is manifestly implied in some of our Lord's parables. One of these is the parable of tares, related by St. Matthew,¹ the other characters whereof are thus explained by Christ himself: the householder, who sowed the good seed, is Christ; the field in which the seed was sown, is the world; the good seed are the faithful christians; the tares are the wicked christians; the enemy who sowed them, is the devil: by analogy, the servants of the householder, though no exposition is given of them, are the ministers of the gospel, whose more particular concern it is to keep weeds out of God's field: these are introduced complaining of the growth of tares in the several ages of christianity: but what saith the householder to them? Let both, that is, wheat and tares, grow together till the harvest; that is, have patience till the end of the world, (for so the harvest is interpreted) and then God will make a just separation. So that Christ will keep servants, whose office it is to cultivate the wheat, till the great harvest of the universal judgment.

In another parable related by St. Luke,² and in part by St. Matthew;³ the name of servant is interpreted by that of steward, which is commonly

φότες τελείαν κατέστησαν τους προειρημενους (επισκόπους και διακόνους, cap. xlii.) και μελαξυ επινομήν δεδώκασιν, όπως εαν κοιμηθῶσιν, διαδέξωνται ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμενοι την λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν. h. 171

¹ Matt. xiii. 24, 27, 30, 37, 40. ² Luke xii. 35. ³ Matt. xxiv. 47.

the title of church officers in the New Testament.¹ And here it is declared, that the stewards of Christ shall rule his household, that is, his church, till his second coming. And Christ having said, that in his absence from the world, some of his stewards should faithfully discharge their office, and others grow dissolute in their lives, and tyrannise over his household; Peter, perceiving the discourse related to church officers, of whom he and his fellow apostles were to be the first, demands of him, “Lord, speakest thou this parable to us, or even to all?” To this our Lord answers, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.”² That is, I speak to you and all others who shall be my stewards; and as Tertullian explains this passage, shall preside over my church after you;* that ye be ready, when I come to judge the world. Whence it is manifest, that our Lord expects to find his stewards and ministers ruling his church at his coming to judge the world. Consequently, there must be a constant succession of church officers till the world’s end.

Accordingly, when our Lord commissioned his apostles to teach and baptize all nations, he promised to be with them (*πάσας ἡμέρας ἕως συνιλευίας τοῦ αἰῶνος*)

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. Tit. i. 7. 1 Pet. iv. 10. ² Luke xii. 41, 42, 43.

* Tertullian. adv. Marcion. Lib. IV. cap. xxix. Interroganti Petro in illos, an & in omnes parabolam dixisset; ad ipsos, & ad universos, qui Ecclesiæ præfuturi essent, proponit actorum similitudinem.

Co
A.

always to the end of the world.¹ This promise was made, not to all christians in general, as some pretend in order to avoid the force of this argument, but only to those whom Christ authorised to teach and baptize in his name, as the words themselves, and the occasion of speaking them, plainly show: and it contains a full declaration of our Lord's intention, that they should always be succeeded by others in the same office: his being with them till the world's end, can imply no less than this; since the apostles all died within the compass of fourscore years after this extensive promise was made, which consequently could no other way be fulfilled, but by our Lord's being with their successors in the gospel ministry till the world's end. Some endeavour to elude this reason by explaining the phrase, which we translate the end of the world (*συνέλευσις τῆς αἰῶνος*) to be the end of the jewish age (*αἰὼν*) or economy, which lasted (as they say) till the destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem by Titus Vespasian, so confining our Lord's promise to the persons of the apostles. But I would ask these men, why the presence of our Lord with those who preach and baptize, should be confined to the persons of the apostles, and the time of the jewish economy? Unless they will say, that neither baptism must be administered, nor the gospel preached after the destruction of Jerusalem, they must own that the same presence was necessary with those, who should perform these functions after it, as well as before. I would ask them, how this promise could

¹ Matt. xxviii. 20.

be fulfilled to those apostles who died before the destruction of Jerusalem? Or whether St. John, who lived many years after, had all that time no benefit of this promise? It will be shown in the following part of this chapter, that his gospel and revelation were both written, and that he governed the church, and ordained bishops after the destruction of Jerusalem: and therefore if we may be allowed to explain the design and meaning of this promise by the manner of its completion, we must conclude that our Lord here engaged himself to be present with his ministers, both by his special grace and his authority, after the end of the Jewish economy, as well as till that time. Others therefore understand the end here spoken of to be the end of the apostle's own age, (*αἰὼν*) as if our Lord had promised to be with them as long as they should live in the world. And if our Lord, instead of "always to the end of the world," had said always (*ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος ὑμῶν*) till the end of your age, there would have been some colour for this explication: but when he speaks of the age of human life, he calls it *γενεά*, and not *αἰὼν*. Thus we find in these words: "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."¹ And *γενεά* is used near thirty times in the same sense in the New Testament: whereas there is not one place in the whole Bible where the other phrase (*συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος*) signifies the end of a man's natural age or life: but it is often used for the last consummation of all things, in which sense it thrice occurs in the thirteenth chapter of this gospel,² and

¹ Matt. xxiv. 34. ² Verse 39, 40, 49

once in the twenty-fourth,¹ which are the only places where St. Matthew has used it : and therefore if we will allow this promise to be explained by the evangelist himself, or by our Lord's design in making it, we must conclude that it is to be extended to a constant succession of gospel ministers to the world's end.

Thus it appears, both from the original state of the church, and from its nature as a society, from the divine institution of church officers, from the nature and design of their several functions, from the sense and practice of the apostles, and first christians ; and lastly, from the express declaration and promise of our Lord himself, that there is to be a constant succession of officers in the church till the end of the world. It now remains to be examined, whether there was in fact a constant succession of the same officers, who first governed the church in the next ages after the apostles. But because it would draw out this discourse to too great a length, to consider the three distinct orders mentioned in the last chapters, by themselves ; and since there are some who plead for the continuance of one or both the lower orders, and reject the superior order ; but none allow the superior to have been continued, who are not willing to grant both the lower orders ; I shall chiefly inquire, whether there was a constant succession of officers of the apostolical or supreme order, from the time of the apostles down to Constantine, mentioning only the

lower orders occasionally, as they serve to give us light into the office and authority of the chief order.

It was shown in the last chapter, that James was appointed the fixed apostle and bishop of Jerusalem, before the rest of the apostles left it. It must here be added, that after the death of James, the surviving apostles, disciples and kinsmen of our Lord, assembled together at Jerusalem, and ordained Simeon, the son of Cleophas, mentioned in St. John's gospel,¹ to be his successor. Simeon presided in the church till the time of Trajan, as we learn from Hegesippus, who was a diligent searcher into the practice of the apostles and their disciples, and lived in the next age after them :* and after Simeon there succeeded thirteen bishops of the jewish race, before the final excision of the jews by Adrian, whose names Eusebius has inserted into his history from the ancient monuments of the church.†

And there are many examples in other churches, of men succeeding in the apostolic or chief order, before the canon of Scripture was finished. Besides Epaphroditus, whom St. Paul calls the apostle,² and the ancient fathers affirm to have been bishop of the Philippians ; and others whom St. Paul calls apostles, and the ancient fathers do for that reason speak of as bishops of the churches,³ we have a remarkable example in Timothy, who was bishop or chief governor of the church of Ephesus, planted by St. Paul. The authority which Timothy exercised in

¹ John xix. 25.

* Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. III. cap. xi. & xxxii.

† Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. IV. cap. v.

² Phil. ii. 25. ³ 2 Cor. viii. 23.

this church, was not conferred on him by any agreement or vote of the people, but by the imposition of St. Paul's hands.¹ By virtue of this authority he ruled the whole church of Ephesus, officers as well as private christians, in the same manner as the apostles used to do. He was empowered to command and teach those under his care ;² to make rules for the orderly celebration of divine worship ;³ to hinder women from speaking in the public assemblies ;⁴ to see that the teachers taught no doctrine but what they had received from our Lord and his apostles ;⁵ to commit the doctrine of the gospel to faithful men who should be able to teach others ;⁶ and to ordain some of those whom he found duly qualified to be bishops and deacons :⁷ and he was to judge of men's abilities and fitness for these offices, whence he is exhorted to lay hands suddenly on no man ;⁸ which would have been unreasonable, if he had not had power to reject the unworthy. Farther, he was authorised to take care, that a competent maintenance should be provided, and all due honour paid to the church officers ;⁹ to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and to take cognizance of accusations, not only against private christians, but even against the elders ; though in this latter case, where the church's honour was more highly concerned, he was to proceed with more caution : “ Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses ;”¹⁰ and if to take cog-

¹ 2 Tim. i. 6. ¹ 1 Tim. iv. 14. ² Ib. ver. 11. ³ 1 Tim. ii. 1.

⁴ Verses 11, 12. ⁵ Ib. i. 3. ⁶ 2 Tim. ii. 2. ⁷ 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2, &c.

⁸ 1 Tim. v. 22. ⁹ Ib. v. 17. ¹⁰ Ib. v. 19.

nizance of accusations, consequently to inflict censures proportionably to the crimes proved against them. Accordingly, it follows: "Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."¹ Here is an entire account of almost all the parts of the apostolic authority, as it was to be exercised by Timothy, whom the ancient fathers constantly call the bishop of Ephesus: and the bishops of that see are called his successors, and twenty-seven of them are said to have been derived from him in a continued line of succession, at the celebration of the great council of Chalcedon.*

The same authority which Timothy had at Ephesus, was exercised in the churches of Crete by Titus, whence the ancient fathers often call him the bishop of Crete. He was ordained and appointed to this office, not by the people's choice, but by St. Paul, who had converted the Cretians to the christian faith.² And by virtue of this appointment he

¹ Tim. v. 20, 21.

* Hieronymus Comment. in Galat. i. 19. Paullatim, tempore procedente, & alii ab his, quos Dominus elegerat, ordinati sunt Apostoli: Sicut ille ad Philippenses sermo declarat, dicens, necessarium existimavi Epaphroditum, &c. Theodoretus in Philip. i. 1. Σαφῶς τοίνυν ἐδίδαξεν, ὡς ἐπισκοπικὴν οἰκονομίαν αὐτὸς ἐπεπίστευτο ἔχων Ἀποστόλου προσηγορίαν. Concil. Chalced. Act. II. Tom. IV. Ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου Τιμοθέου μέχρι νῦν εἰκοσιεπὶ ἐπίσκοποι ἐγένοντο, πάντες ἐν Εφέσῳ ἐχειροτονήθησαν. Conf. Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. III. cap. iv. Photius Bibliothec. Cod. 254. Chrysostomus. aliiq; in Epistolas ad Timotheum, & Titum.

² Tit. i. 5.

was empowered to teach all degrees of men, and to exhort, and rebuke them with authority;¹ to take cognizance of heretics, and to reject from his own and the church's communion, such of them as did not repent upon the second admonition;² to set in order whatever St. Paul had left wanting;³ lastly, to ordain those whom he himself should approve, to be bishops and elders.⁴

Neither are these the only examples which are to be found in the Scriptures of single persons invested with apostolic or episcopal authority: for St. John, in the three first chapters of his revelation, has given us a lively description of seven bishops who presided in the seven principal cities of the proconsular Asia. Our Lord is there introduced, sending seven epistles to the seven churches of these cities, directed to the seven angels of the churches, whom he calls the seven stars in his right hand.⁵ Now if it appears that the seven angels were so many single persons invested with supreme authority in the seven churches, there can be no reason to doubt, whether they were the bishops of these churches; a bishop being nothing else but one who has chief authority in the church.

Let us examine in the first place, whether the seven angels were so many single persons? And first of all, it is manifest they were not the whole church or collective body of christians in their several cities; because the churches are represented by seven candlesticks, which are all along distinguished

¹ Tit. ii. 1, 2—15.

² Ib. iii. 10.

³ Ib. i. 5.

⁴ Ib. i. 5, 6.

⁵ Rev. i. 16, 20. ii. 1.

from the seven stars, which are emblems of the angels. Neither were they any select number or body of men: for they are constantly mentioned as single persons; the angel of the church of Ephesus, the angel of the church of Smyrna, and so the rest; and if in the epistle to Thyatira, instead of (την γυναικα Ιεζεβελ) the woman Jezebel, we read (την γυναϊκά σε Ιεζεβελ) thy wife Jezebel,¹ as it is in St. Cyprian,* the Syriac version, the Alexandrian, and several other manuscript copies, then the angel of Thyatira was a married man, and consequently but one person. Accordingly, both he, and all the rest, are constantly addressed to in the singular number; I “know thy works, I have a few things against thee, remember how thou hast heard, thou hast kept the word of my patience,” and so in the rest, where our Lord speaks to them in particular: but when what he writes, equally concerns the people, he changes his style and speaks in the plural: “The devil shall cast some of you into prison.² Thou hast not denied my faith when Antipas, my faithful martyr, was slain among you.³ I will reward every one of you according to your works.⁴ That which ye have, hold fast till I come.”⁵ Which variation of the number, is a plain argument that some parts of these epistles relate to the whole churches, and others only to the persons of the angels. There is only one exception made to this observation: which is, that the angel of Thyatira is

¹ Rev. ii. 20.

* Epist. LV. ad Antonianum.

² Rev. ii. 10. ³ Verse 13. ⁴ Verse 23. ⁵ Verse 25.

once spoken of in the plural. The passage where this is supposed to be done, runs thus: "I will cast her (Jezebel) into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her, into great tribulation, and I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know, that I am he which searcheth the reins and the hearts; and I will give every one of you according to your works. But unto you I say, and unto the rest of Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine (of Jezebel) I will put upon you none other burthen."¹ Where in these words, unto you I say, and unto the rest of Thyatira, you is taken for the angel; and the rest, for the people of Thyatira. Some answer this objection by referring you, not to the angel of Thyatira, but to the churches mentioned in the preceding verse: and then the sense will be: but unto you, the forementioned churches, I say, and to the rest of Thyatira, who have not been corrupted by Jezebel. Neither is it strange, that the other six churches should be addressed to in the epistle directed to Thyatira; since the seven epistles were not sent severally to each church, but addressed together in one common epistle to all the seven. Thus we find in the beginning: John to the seven churches of Asia.² And afterwards they are again mentioned together: he that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the churches.³ So that it is far more probable, the other churches should be spoken of in this passage, than that the angel of Thyatira should be addressed to in the plural number, contrary to what is done in all other

¹ Rev. ii. 22, 23, 24. ² Ib. i. 4. ³ Ib. ii. 11, 17, 29.

places. However, if this explication should be thought forced, we need only leave out the conjunctive particle (*και*,) and then the words will run thus: (*ὑμῶν δὲ λέγω τοῖς λοιποῖς ἐν Θυατείροις*) to you the rest, (that is, to the rest of you) in Thyatira I say, meaning those who had withstood Jezebel. This way of reading this passage is followed by the vulgar Latin, the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions, the Alexandrian manuscript, another of Curcellæus', two of Beza's, and several others; and it makes the sense very easy and natural: for our Lord having before severely threatened Jezebel and her disciples, it was very natural for him to add, as a comfort and encouragement to the faithful christians; "But to the rest of you in Thyatira, whom Jezebel has not been able to seduce, I say, I will lay no other burthen upon you." So that notwithstanding this exception, we may safely understand the seven angels to be seven single persons. But there is one thing yet behind, which will put this matter beyond dispute: namely, that the titles of angels and stars are constantly applied in this book of revelation to single men: our Lord is called the morning star,¹ and the sun,² and the apostles are called twelve stars,³ and twelve angels;⁴ but there is not one example where these titles are given to any society or number of men. So that if we will allow the divine author of this book to speak in this place, as he does in all others, the angels of the seven churches can be none but single persons.

¹ Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16. ² Ib. xii. 1. ³ Ib. ⁴ Ib. xxi. 12, 14.

The next thing to be made out is, that these single persons were men of chief authority in their several churches. And we might safely conclude they were so, though we had no other proof of it, because our Lord has directed to them the epistles, which he designed for the use of their churches; for so we find it was usual all the world over in Cyprian's time, to direct the letters which were designed to be read in any church, to their bishop; he being the person by whom all ecclesiastical affairs were transacted. But there are several other arguments, which prove that the angels were men of eminent station and authority; for whereas the churches are only called candlesticks, the angels are resembled to stars, which give light to the candlesticks. Which is a very fit emblem of those who succeeded in the place of the apostles, whom our Lord calls the light of the world, and resembles to candles, which being put into candlesticks, give light to all in the house;¹ on which account they are elsewhere called stars in the revelation, as was before observed; and the same title is given to our Lord himself, who is the great light of the world.² Their other name of angels is never given to any but such as are placed in some high office and dignity under God: the angels of God are the blessed spirits, who always live in his presence, and execute his commands: the jews used to call their high priest by this name, because they looked on him as God's messenger to them.* Our Lord him-

¹ Matt. v. 14, 15. ² John i. 5, 9.

* Diodorus Siculus apud Photium Bibliothec. cod. 244. Αρχιερέα τοῦτον προσαγορεύουσι, καὶ νομίζουσιν ἀνθρώποις ἄγγελον γενέσθαι τῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ προσταγμάτων.

self is called the angel of the covenant,¹ and his apostles, whom he left to declare the will of God to his church, are also styled angels in the revelation, as was before observed. Indeed, the names of angel and apostle are almost synonymous words ; both signify the messengers of God, only this of apostles more expressly denotes his sending or commissioning them to do a message in his name ; and that of angel implies the telling or declaring that message. So that this is a very fit name for those, who succeeded the apostles in their office of preaching God's will to the church. And if we pass from the names of the seven angels to the characters which are given of them, we shall soon discover several other marks of their authority : they are praised for all the good, and blamed for all the evil which happened in their churches : the angel of Ephesus is commended, because he could not bear them that were evil, and had tried those who called themselves apostles, and were not so ;² which seems to imply, that he had judicially convicted them to be impostors. And the angel of Pergamos is reproved for having them who hold the doctrine of Balaam ; that is, the Nicolatians, who allowed themselves to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols ; and he is severely threatened, unless he repented :³ which shows he had authority to correct these disorders, otherwise he could not justly have been punished for them. The same may be said of the angel of Thyatira, who is blamed for suffering Jezebel, who called herself a prophetess,

¹ Mal. iii. 1. ² Rev. ii. 2. ³ Rev. ii. 14, 15, 16.

to teach and seduce the people.¹ And the angel of Sardis is commanded to be watchful, and to strengthen those who are ready to die; otherwise our Lord threatens to come on him, as a thief, at an hour which he should not know;² plainly alluding to what he says in the gospels to his stewards, that is, his apostles and other ministers, whom he made rulers over his household, the church.³ So that the angels of the seven churches having appeared to be single persons, invested with chief authority, we need not scruple to call them, with St. Austin, in one of his homilies on the revelation, and other ancient fathers, “*Episcopos sive præpositos Ecclesiarum,*” the bishops, or presidents of the churches.

It will be a farther confirmation of the episcopal authority of the seven angels in their several churches, if it be shown from the most early accounts of the primitive church, that bishops were settled in all the seven churches, at or near the time when this epistle was sent to them. Now this epistle, with the rest of the revelation, if we may believe* Irenæus and †Eusebius, was written towards the end of Domitian’s reign, when St. John lived in exile in Patmos. And we are told, that in a very short time after Domitian’s death, being recalled from banishment by Nerva, he went to Ephesus, and took upon him the care of the church of

¹ Verse 20. ² Rev. iii. 2, 3. ³ Matt. xxiv. 44, 45. Luke xii. 42.

* Adv. Hæres. Lib. V. cap. xxx.

† Eccles. Histor. Lib. III. cap. xviii.

that city, in the presence of seven bishops.* I will not affirm, that these seven bishops presided in the seven churches we are speaking of; though some think they did, both because the numbers agree, and all these seven churches lay within the proconsular Asia, whereof Ephesus was the metropolis: but thus much we may safely pronounce, that if bishops were settled at that time in other cities thereabouts, there is no reason to think these seven churches, every one of which was in a city of note, were without bishops. And to descend to particulars, it can scarce be doubted but there was a bishop in Ephesus when the revelation was written. For in the next age after this, Polycrates, who was born within a short time after St. John's death, is well known to have been bishop of Ephesus: and, to come nearer to the time we are speaking of, Ignatius, who suffered martyrdom about the tenth year of Trajan, which at the most was not above twelve years after St. John returned from Patmos, in his epistle to the Ephesians, speaks of Onesimus, their bishop, whom he exhorts all of them, presbyters and deacons, as well as private christians, to obey. And to carry this account yet a little higher, Timothy was made bishop of Ephesus by St. Paul, and there was an uninterrupted succession of twenty-seven bishops from him to the time of the great council of Chalcedon, as was before shown from the public acts of that council. So that here was a

* Martyrium S. Timothei apud Photium Bibliothec. cod. 254.

*Ἐπιφάνιος Νέβδα της ὑπερορίας ἀνακληθεὶς, τῇ Εφεσίων ὑπέστη μῆροπ-
όλει, καὶ αὐτὸς δι' ἑαυτοῦ, ἐπὶ τὰ συμπαραδόντων ἐπισκόπων, της Εφεσίων
ἀντιλαμδάνειοι μῆλιοπόλεως.*

bishop mentioned a little before the revelation was written, and again not long after, beside a constant succession of many bishops from the foundation of this church for several ages after. Then if we proceed to the rest of the seven churches, not long after St. John's time, Sagaris was bishop of Laodicea : he is spoken of by the fore-mentioned Polycrates in his epistle to Victor,* as one who suffered martyrdom in the past times ; that is, when Servilius Paulus was proconsul of Asia, as we learn from Melito's tract about Easter, who was himself bishop of Sardis in the reign of Marcus Aurelius.† And, if the Roman Martyrology may be credited, Sagaris was one of St. Paul's disciples : so that very near the time we are speaking of, we find a bishop in Laodicea ; and not long after this, another in Sardis. When Ignatius wrote his epistle to the Philadelphians, they had a bishop, whose gravity, modesty, and other virtues Ignatius commends, and exhorts the Philadelphians to be dutiful to him. The old Roman Martyrologie speaks of Carpus, bishop of Thyatira, who suffered martyrdom under Antoninus, who was emperor in the next age after the revelation was written : if the commentary of Arethas on the revelation, compiled out of the ancient fathers, may be credited, Antipas, whom our Lord calls his faithful martyr,¹ was bishop of Pergamus. And if we may judge of the rest by the church of Smyrna, (and there is no reason why we should not, since

* Eusebius Eccles. Histor. Lib. V. cap. xxiv.

† Eusebius Eccles. Histor. Lib. IV. cap. xxvi.

¹ Rev. ii. 23.

the angel of this city is not described under a different character from the rest) we shall no longer doubt, whether they were governed by bishops in the first age of christianity, it being certain that Polycarp, who is allowed by all to have conversed with the apostles, was bishop of Smyrna. He is so called by Polycrates in his fore-mentioned epistle to Victor, who was thirty-eight years old when Polycarp suffered martyrdom, and therefore is a witness without exception; and the same title is given him by the church of Smyrna in their epistle concerning his martyrdom, which is still extant in Eusebius :* Ignatius, his cotemporary, who wrote an epistle to Polycarp, and another to the church of Smyrna, not only calls him bishop of Smyrna, but exhorts all the church of Smyrna, presbyters and deacons, as well as laymen, to be obedient to him. *Lastly*, We are assured by Irenæus, who was Polycarp's disciple, that he was ordained bishop of Smyrna by the apostles.† So that here is sufficient evidence for the presiding of bishops in the seven fore-mentioned churches in or soon after the time in which the revelation was written; and indeed more than could well have been expected from the short and imperfect accounts which are left us of the church in that age.

And, if we descend from the Scriptures to the most early records of the next ages, we shall find that the succession of bishops was preserved in all churches whereof we have any account.

* Eccles. Hist. Lib. iv. cap. xii.

† Irenæus, Lib. III. cap. iii. Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. III. cap. xxxvi.

To begin with Ignatius, who suffered martyrdom about the tenth year of Trajan, which was only four years, or thereabouts, after the death of St. John the apostle, at which time he had been forty years bishop of Antioch, being promoted to that dignity, upon the death of Evodius, the first bishop of that church, διὰ τῆς τῆ μεγάλου Πέτρης δεξιᾶς, by Peter the apostle's own hands:* so that we cannot suppose him unacquainted either with the state of the church in the first age after the apostles, or with the doctrine and practice of the apostles. And in his epistles, which were written a little before his martyrdom, there is scarce any duty so earnestly pressed, or so often inculcated, as that private christians should be obedient to the officers of the church, and the inferior officers, namely, presbyters and deacons, to their bishops. In the beginning of his epistle to the Magnesians, he speaks of Damas, their bishop; of Bassus and Apollonius, their presbyters; and of Sotion, their deacon: the last of these he praises, because he was subject (ὑποτάσσεται) to the bishop and presbyters; and he exhorts all of them to reverence their bishop, and to do all things in godly peace and concord, "their bishop presiding in the place of God, the presbyters as the council of apostles, and the deacons as the ministers of Christ."† In the entrance of his epistle to the Trallians, he mentions

* Chrysostomus Homil. in S. Ignatium, page 499. Vol. I. Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. III. cap. xxii. xxxvi.

† Epist. ad Magnes. cap. vi. Προκαθημενου τοῦ ἐπισκόπου εἰς τόπον θεοῦ, καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων εἰς τόπον συνεδρίου τῶν Ἀποστόλων, καὶ τῶν διακόνων, τῶν ἐμοὶ γλυκυλάτων, πεπιστευμένων διακονίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. — β-18-2 Cletius. Apost. Pat.

dei concordiam omni aere Episcopo ma
 luita dei loco, & Presbyteris loco Senatus
 apostolicis & Diaconis mihi suavi-

their bishop Polybius; and a little after tells them, that “ Whilſt they live in ſubjection to their biſhop, as to Jeſus Chriſt, they ſeem to live, not after the manner of men, but according to Jeſus Chriſt.”* A little after he proceeds thus: “ Let nothing by any means be done without the biſhop, even as ye now practice: ſubject yourſelves to the college of preſbyters, as to the apoſtles of Jeſus Chriſt: and let the deacons, who are the myſtery of Jeſus Chriſt, ſtudy to pleaſe all men; for they are not deacons of meats and drinks, but miniſters of God’s church. In like manner, let all of you reverence the deacons, as the commandment of Jeſus Chriſt; the biſhop, as the Son of the Father; and the preſbyters, as the council of God, and aſſembly of apoſtles. Without theſe a church is not named.”† Afterwards, having cautioned them to beware of heresies and heretics, he adds, “ And ſo ye will, whilſt ye are not puffed up, and are not ſeparated from God, Jeſus Chriſt, nor from the biſhop, nor the precepts of the apoſtles. He that is within the altar, is pure: but whoever does any thing without the

* Epist. ad Tralliam. cap. ii. “Οταν γαρ τῷ ἐπιſκόπῳ ὑποτάσσεσθε ὡς Ἰησοῦ Χριſτῷ, φαίνεσθέ μοι οὐ κατὰ ἀνθρώπινον ζῶντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριſτόν.” *Clavicus. Ap. Pt. p. 22.*

† Ibid. cap. ii. & iii. Αναγκαῖον οὖν ἔſτιν, ὡς περ ποιεῖτε, ἀνευ τοῦ ἐπιſκόπου μηδὲν πράσσειν ὑμᾶς· ἀλλὰ ὑποτάσσεσθε καὶ τῷ πρεſβυτέρῳ, ὡς τοῖς ἀποſτόλοις Ἰησοῦ Χριſτοῦ.—δεῖ δὲ καὶ τοὺς διακόνους, μυſτήριον ὄντας Ἰησοῦ Χριſτοῦ, κατὰ πάντα τρόπον πᾶσιν ἀρέσκειν· οὐ γαρ βρωμάτων καὶ πόλιν ἕσι διακόνου, ἀλλ’ ἐκκληſίας Θεοῦ ὑπηρεταί.—

Ὁμοίως πάντες ἐλῆρεπέſθωσαν τοὺς διακόνους, ὡς ἐντολὴν Ἰησοῦ Χριſτοῦ· ὡς καὶ τὸν ἐπιſκόπον, ὡς ὄντα υἱὸν τοῦ Πατρὸς· τοὺς δὲ πρεſβυτέρους, ὡς ſυνέδριον Θεοῦ, καὶ ὡς ſυνδεſμον ἀποſτόλων. Χωρὶς τούτων ἐκκληſία οὐ καλεῖται. *2. Cl. Ap. Pt. p. 22-23.*

*Clavicus
Ap. Pt.
p. 22-23*

bishop, the college of presbyters, and the deacons, his conscience is defiled.”* In the same manner he speaks to the Ephesians, “ Let no man (says he) be deceived : whoever is without the altar, is deprived of the bread of God. Let us have a care of opposing the bishop, that we may be subject to God.”† And in the same epistle he speaks of bishops settled to the ends of the world, “ Who are after the mind of Jesus Christ, even as Christ is the mind of the father.”‡ And then he goes on to praise them all, and particularly the college of presbyters, for their unanimous and ready compliance in all things with their bishop. In the beginning of his epistle to the Philadelphians, he says, that “ he knew their bishop to be promoted to his public office in the church, neither by himself, nor by men, nor through ambition, but by the love of God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”§ Then, having cautioned them against divisions, he adds, “ Whoever belongs

* Ibid. cap. vii. Τοῦτο δὲ ἔσται ὑμῖν, μὴ Φυσιουμένοις, καὶ οὖσιν ἀχωρίστοις Θεοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου, καὶ τῶν διαταγμάτων τῶν ἀποστόλων· ὁ ἐντὸς θυσιαστηρίου ἂν, καθαρὸς ἐστίν· τῆς ἐστίν, ὁ χωρὶς ἐπισκόπου καὶ πρεσβυτερίου καὶ διακόνου πρᾶσσαν τι, οὗτος οὐ καθαρὸς ἐστὶ τῇ συνειδήσει. 2. *Cl. Ap. Pt. 24.*

† Epist. ad Ephes. cap. v. Μηδεὶς πλανᾶσθω, ἰὰν μὴ τις ἦ ἐντὸς τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, ὑστερεῖται τοῦ ἄρτου Θεοῦ. Paulo post, Σπουδάσωμεν οὖν μὴ ἀντιτάσσεσθαι τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, ἵνα ὦμεν Θεῷ ὑποτασσόμενοι. 2. *Cl. Ap. Pt. 13.*

‡ Ibid. cap. iii. Καὶ γὰρ Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, τὸ ἀδιάκριτον ἡμῶν ἦν, τοῦ Πατρὸς ἡ γνώμη, ὡς καὶ οἱ ἐπίσκοποι κατὰ τὰ πέρατα ὀρισθέντες ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ γνώμη εἰσίν. 2. *Ulenius. A. P. 12*

§ Epist. ad Philadelph. cap. i. Οἱ ἐπίσκοπον ἔγνων, οὐκ ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ, οὐδὲ δι' ἀνθρώπων κειτῆσθαι τὴν διακονίαν τὴν εἰς κοινὸν ἀνήκουσαν, οὐδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀγάπῃ Θεοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. 2. *Cl. Ap. Pt.*

to God and Jesus Christ, is with the bishop; and they who repent, and return to the unity of the church, shall be God's, that they may live according to Jesus Christ. Be not deceived, my brethren: if any man follows one, who divides the church, he shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Endeavour therefore to partake of one and the same eucharist; for there is but one flesh of Christ, and one cup in the union of his blood; and one altar; as there is one bishop, with the college of presbyters, and my fellow-servants the deacons, that whatever ye do, may be done according to God."* Not long after, "when I was with you, says he, I cried out, and spoke with a loud voice: adhere to the bishop, the college of presbyters, and the deacons. Which some have thought to be said by me, from my foresight of the separation which hath happened since that time. And he, for whose sake I am in bonds, is my witness, that I knew it not from men; but the spirit proclaimed these things, saying, do nothing without the bishop; keep your bodies as the temple of God; love unity; fly divisions; be followers of Jesus Christ, as he is of his father."† A little after

* Ibid. cap. iii. & iv. Ὅσοι γὰρ Θεοῦ εἰσὶν καὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, οὗτοι μετὰ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου εἰσὶν καὶ ὅσοι ἂν μετανοήσαντες ἔλθωσιν ἐπὶ τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς ἐκκλησίας. οὗτοι Θεοῦ ἔσονται, ἵνα ᾧσιν μετὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστὸν ζῶντες· μὴ πλανᾶσθε, ἀδελφοί μου· εἴ τις σχιζοῦσι ἀκολουθεῖν βασιλείαν Θεοῦ οὐ κληρονομεῖ.—Σπουδάχετε οὐ μίᾳ εὐχαριστίᾳ χρῆσθαι· μία γὰρ σὰρξ τοῦ κυρίου ὑμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἓν ποτήριον εἰς ἐνώσιν τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, ἐν θυσιαστήριον, ὡς εἰς ἐπίσκοπος, ἅμα τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ. καὶ διακόνους τοῖς συνδουλοῖς μου· ἵνα ὃ ἐὰν πράσσητε, κατὰ Θεὸν πράσσητε.

2. Cor. 12.

† Ibid. cap. vii. Ἐκραύγασα μετὰξὺ ἂν, ἐλάλουν μεγάλη φωνή· τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ προσέχετε, καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ, καὶ διακόνους. Οἱ δὲ

he adds, "that God would forgive the schismatics, provided they repented, and returned to the unity of God, and the council of the bishop."* In his epistle to the church of Smyrna, he thus exhorts them: "Let all of you follow the bishop, as Jesus Christ does the Father; and the college of presbyters, as the apostles; and reverence the deacons, as the commandment of God. Let no man do any thing which concerns the church, without the bishop. Let that eucharist be accounted valid, which is ordered by the bishop, or one whom he appoints. Where the bishop, appears, there let the people be; even as where Christ is, there is the catholic church. Without the bishop it is neither lawful to baptize, nor to celebrate the feast of charity: but that which he approves, is well-pleasing to God."† And a little after, he goes on thus: "It is well to know God and the bishop. He that honours the bishop, is

ὑποπτύσαντές με, ὡς προειδότες τον μερισμόν τινων, λέγειν ταῦτα· μαρ-
 τυς δὲ μοι ἐν ᾧ δέδεμαι, ὅτι ἀπὸ σαρκὸς ἀνθρωπίνης οὐκ ἔγνων· τὸ δὲ
 πνεῦμα ἐκήρυσσεν λέγων τάδε, χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν ποιεῖτε· τὴν
 σάρκα ὑμῶν ὡς ναὸν Θεοῦ τηρεῖτε· τὴν ἑνώσιν ἀγαπάτε· τοὺς μερισμὸς
 φεύγετε· μιμηταὶ γίνεσθε Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς τοῦ πατρὸς
 αὐτοῦ.

* Ibid. cap. viii. Πᾶσιν οὖν μετανοοῦσιν ἀφίει (leg. ἀφιεῖ) ὁ Κύριος,
 εἰὰν μετανοήσωσιν εἰς ἐνότητα Θεοῦ, καὶ συνέδριον τοῦ ἐπισκόπου.

† Epist. ad Smyrn. cap. viii. Πάντες τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ἀκολουθεῖτε,
 ὡς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ πατρί· καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ, ὡς τοῖς ἀποστόλοις.
 τοὺς δὲ διακόνους ἐντρέψεσθε, ὡς Θεοῦ ἐντολήν. Μηδεὶς χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπι-
 σκόπου τι πρᾶσσει τῶν ἀνηκόντων εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν· ἐκεῖνη βεβαία
 εὐχαριστία ἠγείσθω, ἡ ὑπὸ τον ἐπίσκοπον οὖσα, ἡ ᾧ ἂν αὐτὸς ἐπιτρέψῃ·
 ὅπου ἂν Φανῇ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος, ἐκεῖ τὸ πλῆθος ἔστω· ὡς περ ὅπου ἂν ᾗ
 Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς, ἐκεῖ ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία· οὐκ ἔξω ἔστιν χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπι-
 σκόπου οὔτε βαπτίζειν, οὔτε ἀγάπην ποιεῖν· ἀλλ' ὃ ἂν ἐκεῖνος δοκιμάσῃ,
 τοῦτο καὶ τῷ Θεῷ εὐάρεστον.

honoured of God. He that does any thing without the bishop's privity, serves the devil."* In his epistle to Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, "Let nothing, (says he) be done without your approbation, and do you nothing but what is approved by God, as indeed you do not."† Afterwards, addressing himself to the church of that place, he has these words: "If he, who remains a virgin, think himself better than the bishop, he is undone. It is meet that they who marry, should do it with the bishop's approbation, that their marriage may be according to God, and not according to lust; let all things be done to the honour of God. Give heed to the bishop, that God may give heed to you. May my life be a ransom for those, who are subject to the bishop, the presbyters, and deacons, and may I have my portion in God with them."‡ There are many other passages in the epistles of this glorious saint and martyr to the same purpose: but these which have been produced, are sufficient to show, not only that the christian church was governed, in the age wherein he lived, by the three orders of bishops, priests and

* Ibid. cap. ix. Καλῶς ἔχει Θεὸν καὶ ἐπίσκοπον εἰδέναι· ὁ τιμῶν ἐπίσκοπον, ὑπὸ Θεοῦ τετίμηται· ὁ λάθρα ἐπισκόπου τι πράσων, τῷ διαβόλῳ λοτρεύει.

† Epist. ad Polycarp. cap. iv. Μηδὲν ἄνευ γνώμης σου γινέσθω, μηδὲ σὺ ἄνευ Θεοῦ γνώμης τί πράσῃτε, ἄσπερ οὐδὲ πρασσεις.

‡ Ibid. cap. v. & vi. Καὶ εἰάν γινωσθῇ πλείοι τοῦ ἐπισκόπου. ἀπόλετο· πρέπει δὲ τοῖς γαμοῦσι καὶ ταῖς γαμουμέναις μετὰ γνώμης τοῦ ἐπισκόπου τὴν ἔνωσιν ποιῆσθαι, ἵνα ὁ γάμος ᾖ κατὰ Θεόν, καὶ μὴ κατ' ἐπιθυμίαν πάντα εἰς τιμὴν Θεοῦ γινέσθω. Τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ προστέχετε, ἵνα καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὑμῖν ἀντίψυχον ἐγὼ τῶν ὑπαλασσομένων τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, πρεσβυτέροις καὶ διακόνοις· καὶ μετ' αὐτῶν μοι τὸ μέρος γένοιτο σχεῖν ἐν Θεῷ.

deacons ; but that these were of divine institution, and essential to the regular constitution of any church ; and that no religious act could lawfully be done in the church without some of them, nor by the priests and deacons without the bishop's consent ; and that communion could not be maintained with Christ, without adhering to the communion of the bishop. And he calls Christ to witness, that he spoke some part of this, namely, that nothing was to be done without the bishop, by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

From Ignatius let us pass to Irenæus, who professes himself to have been the disciple of Polycarp, the cotemporary of Ignatius, and was first a presbyter, and afterwards bishop of Lyons.* And he makes the succession of bishops an argument against the heretics, who crept into the church in that age, and propounds it as the surest way to orthodoxy in the christian faith, to follow those who descended in a direct line of succession from the apostles. " We, says he, can reckon up those whom the apostles ordained to be bishops in the several churches, and who they were that succeeded them down to our own times. And had the apostles known any hidden mysteries, which they imparted to none but the perfect (as the heretics pretend) they would have committed them to those men, to whom they committed the churches themselves : for they desired to have those in all things perfect, and unreprou-able; whom they left to be their successors, and to

* Irenæus. Lib. III. cap. iii. Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. V. cap. iv. & v.

whom they committed their own apostolic authority." He then adds, that "because it would be endless to enumerate the successions of bishops in all the churches, he would instance in that of Rome; in which he tells us, Linus was ordained the first bishop by St. Peter and St. Paul, the next was Anacletus, after him Clemens, and so on to Eleutherius, who was the twelfth from the apostles, and filled the episcopal chair when Irenæus wrote this treatise."* So that in this age there were bishops, or single men, who acted with apostolic authority, and succeeded in a direct line from the apostles, not only at Rome, but in all churches through the world.

At the same time lived Hegesippus in a different part of the world, who travelled through a great part of the world on purpose to learn the doctrine and traditions, left by the apostles in the churches which they founded. And after this inquiry he urges the heretics with the same argument which Irenæus makes use of. He says, he had conversed

* Irenæus, Lib. III. cap. iii. Habemus annumerare eos, qui ab Apostolis instituti sunt episcopi in Ecclesiis, & successores eorum usque ad nos, qui nil tale docuerunt, neque cognoverunt, quale ab his deliratur. Etenim si recondita mysteria scissent Apostoli, quæ seorsum & latenter ab reliquis perfectos docebant, his vel maxime traderent ea, quibus etiam ipsas Ecclesias committebant. Valde enim perfectos & irreprehensibiles in omnibus eos volebant esse, quos & successores relinquebant, suum ipsorum locum magisterii tradentes.—Sed quoniam valde longum est, in hoc tali volumine omnium Ecclesiarum enumerare successiones, maximæ, & antiquissimæ, & omnibus cognitæ, à gloriosissimis duobus Apostolis Petro & Paulo Romæ fundatæ & constitutæ Ecclesiæ, eam, quam habet ab Apostolis traditionem, & annunciatam hominibus fidem, per successiones episcoporum usque ad nos indicantes, &c. *Comit*
1. 2

with many bishops, and received the same doctrine from them all. One of these, whom he mentions by name, was Primus, bishop of Corinth : another was Anicetus, whom he found bishop of Rome at his arrival there, at which time Eleutherius was his deacon : after Anicetus, he tells us, Soter was bishop of Rome, and that Soter was succeeded by Eleutherius. He also relates that Simeon, the son of Cleophas, being of our Lord's family, succeeded James in the bishopric of Jerusalem : " And in every succession, says he, and in every city, the same doctrine is received, which was taught by the law, the prophets, and our Lord."*

Another who lived in this age, was Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, who in a synodical epistle to Victor, bishop of Rome, about the time of keeping easter, part whereof is still extant in Eusebius,† appeals to the tradition of former bishops and martyrs, and the practice of those, who lived in his own time : among others he mentions Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna and martyr ; Thraseas, bishop of Eumonia and martyr ; Sagaris, bishop of Leodicea and martyr ; seven bishops of his own kindred, and (πολλα πληθη) great multitudes of bishops, who assembled with him to consult about the time of easter. And he says, that when he wrote this epistle, he had been sixty-five years (εν Κυρίω) a chris-

* Fragment. Commentar. Hegesippi apud Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. IV. cap. xxii. Δηλοῖ, ὡς πλείστοις ἐπισκόποις συμμίξειεν, ἀποδημίαν στειλάμενος μέχρι Ρώμης, καὶ ὡς τὴν αὐτὴν παρὰ πάντων παρείληφε διδασκαλίαν.—'Εν ἐκάστη δε διαδοχῇ καὶ ἐκάστη πόλει, οὕτως ἔχει, ὡς ὄνομος κηρύσσει, καὶ οἱ προφῆται, καὶ ὁ Κύριος.

† Eccles. Hist. Lib V. cap. xxiv.

tian. So that here is a witness beyond exception, who lived the greatest part of the next age after the death of the apostles, that bishops were settled in all the churches about him.

Cotemporary with these was Clemens of Alexandria, who in a passage of his *Stromata* comprehends all the officers of the christian church under the two names of presbyters and deacons, which was accounted for in the last chapter; but in several other places he speaks of all the three orders, as distinct from one another. In his *Pædagogus*, having selected some texts of Scripture, which contain a summary of the duties which concern all christians in general, he adds, “That there are other precepts without number, which concern men in particular capacities: some which relate to presbyters; others which belong to bishops; others respecting deacons; and others “which concern widows.”* So that if we may believe Clemens, who was the most universally learned man of any in that age, even in the apostles’ times, when the Scriptures were written, there were all these orders in the church, and every one of them had distinct offices. In another place he tells us, “That though Matthias was not elected by our Lord with the rest of the apostles, yet having deserved to be advanced to that office, he was substituted in Judas’ place. And even now (says he) they who live up to the perfect rules of the gospel, may be taken into the

* *Pædag.* Lib. III. cap. xii. p. 264. Ed. Paris. *Μυρίαί δὲ ὅσαι ὑποθήκαι εἰς πρόσωπα ἐκλεκτὰ διαλείνουσαι, ἐγγεγραφαί ταις βίβλοις ταῖς ἀγίαις· αἱ μὲν, πρεσβυτέρους, αἱ δὲ, ἐπισκόπους· αἱ δὲ, διακόνους· ἄλλαι, χήραι.* β. 264.

number of the apostles. He is indeed a deacon and minister of the divine will, and he is a presbyter of the church, who does both practice and teach what our Lord has prescribed; not being reputed just, only because he is a presbyter; but chosen into the college of presbyters, because he was a just person: though such an one be not honoured with the chief seat here on earth, he shall sit on one of the twenty-four thrones, spoken of in John's Revelation, judging the people."* And a little after he speaks of the gradual promotion of bishops, presbyters and deacons, which he resembles to the orders of angels.† So that here again are manifestly three orders of ministers, the chief of which is the place and office of the apostles. In another place he reports, "That St. John, the apostle, returning from Patmos, the place of his banishment, to Ephesus, went about the neighbouring nations, and in some places ordained bishops; in others, established entire churches; and in others, set apart such for the

* Strom. lib. VI. p. 667. Ο γοῦν μὴ συν αὐτοῖς ἐκλεγείς Ματθίας, ἄξιον ἑαυτοῦ παρασχόμενος τοῦ γενέσθαι Ἀπόστολον, ἀνικαλίασσεται Ἰουδαῖ· ἕξεστιν οὖν καὶ νῦν ταῖς Κυριακαῖς ἐνασκήσαντας ἐντολαῖς, κατὰ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον τελείως θιάσαντας καὶ γνωστικῶς, εἰς τὴν ὁλοκλήν τῶν Ἀποστόλων ἐγγραφῆναι· οὗτος πρεσβύτερός ἐστι τῶ ὄντι της ἐκκλησίας, καὶ διάκονος ἀληθῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ βουλευσεως, ἐὰν ποιῆ καὶ διδάσκη τὰ τοῦ Κυρίου· οὐχ ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων χειροτονούμενος, οὐδ' ὅτι πρεσβύτερος, δίκαιος νομιζόμενος· ἀλλ' ὅτι δίκαιος ἐν πρεσβυτερίῳ καταλεγόμενος· καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἐπὶ γῆς πρωτοκαθεδρία μὴ τιμηθῆ, ἐν τοῖς εἰκοσι καὶ τέσσαρσι καθεδεῖται θρόνοις, τον λαὸν κρίνων, ὡς φησὶν ἐν τῇ Ἀποκαλύψει Ἰωάννης. 667

† Ibid. Ἐπεὶ καὶ αἱ ἐνταῦθα κατὰ τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν προκοπαὶ ἐπισκόπων, προσούτερων, καὶ διακόνων, μιμήματα, οἶμαι, Ἀγγελικῆς δόξης, κακείνη, της οἰκονομίας τυγχάνουσιν. 667.

Comp. Ap. 6
Comp. Ap. 6

clergy, as were pointed out to him by the Spirit.”* So that St. John the apostle ordained bishops, and also inferior clergymen, by the particular direction of the Holy Spirit, in the countries about Ephesus.

Another, who flourished about the same time in a different part of the world, was Tertullian; from whom it appears, that bishops were universally settled in all the churches of Africa, his native country, and had been so from the most early times. In his treatise of baptism, he affirms, “ That the power of baptizing is lodged in the bishop; and that it may also be exercised by presbyters and deacons, but not without the bishop’s commission.”† Which is a full evidence of the superiority of bishops over the two lower orders in that age, these being not allowed to exercise even the lowest function in the church, as baptism was reckoned, without the bishop’s permission. And that Tertullian accounted not this an innovation in the polity of the church, appears from his urging against heretics the same argument of the universal consent of bishops succeeding in a direct line from the apostles, which Irenæus and Hegesippus had used before him. And

* Libro Quis Dives Salvetur, p. 111. Edit. Oxon. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. III. cap. xxiii. Επειδὴ γὰρ, τοῦ τυράννου τελευτήσαντος, ἀπὸ τῆς Πάτμου τῆς Ἰησοῦ μετῆλθεν (Ἰωάννης ὁ Ἀπόστολος) ἐπὶ τὴν Ἐφεσον, ἀπῆκει παρακαλούμενος καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ πλησίον χωρὰ τῶν ἔθνῶν, ὅπου μὲν ἐπισκόπους καθίστησαν, ὅπου δὲ ὅλας ἐκκλησίας ἀρμόσων, ὅπου δὲ κλήρω ἓνα γέ τινα κληρώσαν τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ πνευμαλίου σημαίνοντων.

† Lib. de Baptismo, cap. xvii. Dandi (baptismum) quidem habet jus summus sacerdos, qui est episcopus, dehinc Presbyteri & Diaconi, non tamen sine Episcopi auctoritate, propter Ecclesie honorem, quo salvo, salva pax est.

6
 1/2
 1/2

this succession (he says) was to be seen, not only in Smyrna, where Polycarp was made bishop by St. John; or in Rome, where Clemens was ordained by St. Peter; but in all catholic churches: and he challenges the heretics to show the like;* which is an undeniable proof, that then the lineal succession of bishops from the apostles, was a thing undoubted. And this is a sufficient answer to some other passages of this author, where he affirms, that all christians were made priests by Christ, so that where three are gathered together, they make a church, though they be all laymen; and where no clergyman is present, laymen may baptize and celebrate the eucharist, the distinction between clergy and laity being only of the church's appointing. This he concludes chiefly from that text of Scripture, where our Lord promised, "That where two or three are gathered together in his name, he

* Tertulianus Lib. de Præscript. Hæretic. cap. xxxii. Cæterum, si quæ audeant interferere se ætati Apostolicæ, ut ideo videantur ab Apostolis traditæ, quia sub Apostolis fuerunt, possumus dicere: Edant ergo origines Ecclesiarum suarum: evolvant ordinem episcoporum suorum ita per successiones ab initio decurrentem, ut primus ille episcopus aliquem ex Apostolis, vel Apostolicis viris, qui tamen cum Apostolis perseveraverit, habuerit auctorem & antecessorem. Hoc enim modo Ecclesiæ Apostolicæ census suos deferunt: Sicut Smyrnæorum Ecclesia Polycarpum ab Joanne conlocatum refert: Sicut Romanorum, Clementum à Petro ordinatum itidem. Perinde utique & ceteræ exhibent, quos ab Apostolis in episcopatum constitutos seminis traduces habeant. Confingant tale aliquid hæretici. Idem adv. Marcionem. Lib. IV. cap. v.* Habemus & Joannis alumnas Ecclesias. Nam etsi Apocalypsim ejus Marcion respuit, ordo tamen episcoporum ad originem recensus, in Joannem stabit auctorem. Sic & ceterarum generositas recognoscitur. (p. 415)

*and
415
p. 213)*
imp. 415
** In summa si constat id series quod
s. id prius quod & ab initio, id ab initio,
d. ab apostolis; pariter utique constabit id
tim sua*

would be in the midst of them ;”¹ and from another text, where Christ is said “ to have made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.”² This account, I say, is fully refuted by the forementioned passages of this author, wherein he affirms, that bishops were ordained in all churches by the apostles, and derived from them in a constant succession down to his time. If this be true, the distinction between clergy and laity was not of the church’s, but of the apostles’ appointment ; unless by the church he means the apostles, and then he must allow, that this distinction was of apostolical institution.* However, this difference must be made between his opinion concerning the priesthood of all christians in general, and what he affirms of the

¹ Matt. xviii. 20. ² Rev. i. 6. v. 10.

* Tertullian. Lib. De exhort. Castitat. cap. vii. Inde igitur apud nos plenius atque instructius præscribitur, unius esse Matrimonii oportere, qui alleguntur in ordinem sacerdotalem. Usque adeo quosdam memini digamos loco dejectos. Sed dices : Ergo ceteris licet, quos excipit : Vani erimus, si putaverimus, quod sacerdotibus non liceat, laicis licete. Nonne & laici, sacerdotes sumus ? Scriptum est, “ Regnum quoque nos, & sacerdotes Deo & Patri suo fecit.” Differentiam inter Ordinem & Plebem constituit Ecclesiæ auctoritas, & honor per Ordinis consessum sanctificatus, adeo ubi Ecclesiastici ordinis non est consessus, & offers, & tinguis, & sacerdos es tibi solus. Sed ubi tres, ecclesia est, licet laici. Unusquisque enim sua fide vivit, nec est personarum acceptio apud Deum : Quoniam non auditores legis justificantur, sed factores, secundum quod Apostolus dicit : Igitur si habes jus sacerdotis in temetipso ubi necesse est, habeas etiam oportet disciplinam sacerdotis, ubi necesse sit habere jus sacerdotis. Digamus tinguis ? Digamus offers ? Quanto magis laico digamo capitale est agere pro sacerdote, cum ipsi sacerdoti digamo facto, auferatur esse sacerdotem ?

p. 522.

→ sequitur Galatas sunt reconsecrati; quid loquitur Philippenses, Thessalonicensis, Ephesii, etiam Romani de proximo sonent. quod

Comp. M. 2

succession of bishops from the apostles; that he speaks of the episcopal succession as a known matter of fact, in which he, who lived in the next age after those who were ordained bishops by apostles, could not be mistaken; whereas he speaks of the priesthood of christian laymen as a matter of opinion, which he pretends not to support by any apostolical, or ancient tradition, but only infers it from certain texts of Scripture; and therefore his assertion has no farther weight, than what it derives from those Scriptures. And in the first of them, where our Lord promises, that where two or three are met together in his name, he will be in the midst of them; it is true, priests are not mentioned; but there is no more mention of sacraments, than of priests: and therefore by the same reason, whence Tertullian infers, that the assembly here spoken of may consist of any two or three christians, though without a priest, we may conclude, that our Lord's being in the midst of them, has no relation to the sacraments, but only is an expression of his readiness to intercede with the father, for whatever any two or three christians should agree to ask in his name: as it is said in the words which immediately precede: "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing which they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my father, which is in heaven."¹ Or, if we consider these words, as having a connexion to what goes before, they will be found chiefly to relate to ecclesiastical censures, which cannot be inflicted with-

¹ Matt. xviii. 19.

out a priest, as was shown in the last chapter, and will be made out more fully in the next. So that understanding the two or three here spoken of in this sense, we must take them for a regular and public assembly of the church, which implies, that one at least of the number is a priest. And the other passage of Scripture, where Christ is said to have made us kings and priests, is a manifest allusion to a passage in the Old Testament, where God promised the jews, that if they would "Obey his voice and keep his covenant, they should be to him a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."¹ So that the jews were all priests, that is, set apart and dedicated to the service of God, or whatever else the name of priests implies in this place, as well as christians: and it can no more be hence inferred that all christians are priests in the strict sense of this name, and authorised to administer the sacraments, than that all the jews were invested with the sacerdotal office, and allowed to offer sacrifices; which none of them, except the family of Aaron, not even their kings, ever presumed to do without incurring most heavy and exemplary punishments. The other texts, on which Tertullian seems to ground his assertion, that every one lives by his faith;² and that God is no acceptor of persons,³ that is, that gentiles are as capable of his favour, as jews, are so manifestly foreign from this subject, that they deserve not to be particularly refuted. And therefore we may safely conclude, that he had no ground from Scripture, to affirm that all chris-

¹ Exod. xix. 5. 6. ² Rom. i. 17. ³ Ib. i. 2.

tians are priests, in the proper sense of that word, or have authority to administer the sacraments. Neither will they, who cite so much of this passage of Tertullian, as serves their purpose, agree to the whole passage taken together ; notwithstanding that part of it, which they omit, is full as probable as that which they allege. The sense of the whole together runs thus : “ Christ having made all christians priests, and promised to be with any three of them wherever assembled, it follows, that all Christians whatever, are properly priests, and authorised to administer the sacraments ; and consequently, that the distinction between clergymen and laymen, is only of ecclesiastical, and not of divine institution. Consequently, St. Paul having commanded that clergymen should be the husbands of one wife, that is, not oftener than once married, and the church having thereupon sometimes degraded priests upon their second marriage ; it is unlawful for any christian whatever to marry a second wife.” Thus he defends the unlawfulness of all second marriages, which was an opinion he fell into after his turning heretic : and they who are not willing to allow the latter part of his argument, have no reason to contend for the former, which is built on no better, or rather a much less probable ground than the latter. But the truth is, a great difference must be made between the reasonings of the ancient fathers, and their testimony : in the former, we have full liberty upon a candid and impartial examination, to follow their conclusions, or to reject them, as we find them well or ill-grounded : but in the latter, since we look on them as men of probity, and such as would

not willingly deceive us, we cannot deny them our assent, when they relate things done in their own times, or in the times of those with whom they conversed. They who refuse to allow them this authority, may with the same reason reject all history whatever.

In the beginning of the next century flourished Origen, who was Clemens, the Alexandrian's scholar. And he, speaking of the debts in the Lord's Prayer, first insists on the debts or duties common to all christians; and then he adds, "Besides these general debts, there is a debt peculiar to widows, who are maintained by the church; another to deacons; another to presbyters; and another to bishops; which is the greatest of all, and exacted by the Saviour of the whole church, who will severely punish the non-payment of it."* So that he plainly makes bishops superior to presbyters and deacons, by the appointment of Christ. In another place he prescribes the same method for orthodoxy in the faith, which has already been mentioned from Irenæus and others, namely, "To adhere to the rule of the celestial church of Christ, according to the succession of the apostles,"† that is, as appears from the like passages of Irenæus and the rest, of bishops succeeding in a direct line from, and in the

* Origen. lib. Περὶ εὐχῆς· Χωρὶς δὲ τούτων καθολικωτέρων ὄντων, ἔστι τις χήρας προνοουμένης ὑπὸ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ὀφειλή, καὶ ἑτέρα διακόνου, καὶ ἄλλη πρεσβυτέρου· καὶ ἐπισκόπου δὲ ὀφειλή, βαρυσίατη ἔστιν, ἀπαίλουμένη ὑπὸ τῆς ὅλης ἐκκλησίας Σωτήρος, καὶ ἐκδικουμένη, εἰ μὴ ἀποδιδῶτο.

† Idem. Philocal. cap. i. p. 7. Editio Cantabr. Τοῦ κανόνος τῆς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κατὰ διαδοχὴν τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐρανοῦ ἐκκλησίας.

place of the apostles. And he distinguishes the three forementioned orders in several other places.

In the same age flourished Cyprian, who was Tertullian's scholar, and bishop of Carthage. His epistles and tracts contain a most full account of the church officers, and the method of transacting all ecclesiastical affairs, which was then observed both in his own and other churches; which being put together, is enough to make an entire volume: and therefore I shall only select a few passages out of him, which may be sufficient to our present purpose. First, he affirms, that no church was without a bishop. Hence, as from an unquestionable matter of fact, he argues against Novatian,* "That there being only one church, and one episcopacy all the world over, and orthodox and pious bishops being already regularly ordained through all the provinces of the Roman empire, and in every city, he must needs be a schismatic, who laboured to set up false bishops in opposition to them." And in another place he argues against those, who used water instead of wine in the eucharistical

* Cypriani Epist. LV. Edit. Oxon. Cum sit à Christo una Ecclesia per totum mundum in multa membra divisa, item Episcopatus unus, Episcoporum multorum concordie numerositate diffusus; ille post Dei traditionem, post connexam & ubique conjunctam Catholicæ ecclesiæ unitatem, humanam conetur Ecclesiam facere, & per plurimas civitates novos Apostolos suos mittat, ut quædam recentia institutionis suæ fundamenta constituat; cumque jam pridem per omnes provincias & per urbes singulas ordinati sint Episcopi in ætate antiqui, in fide integri, in pressura probati, in persecutione proscripti, ille super eos creare alios pseudoepiscopos audeat. p. 112. —

Cyprianus
 Epist. LV.

cup, from the universal practice of bishops through the whole world.*

Secondly, He affirms, that there cannot be more than one bishop at the same time in a church ; that a second bishop is no bishop at all ; and they who adhere to him, are schismatics, and have no title to the church's communion, or the privileges of the new covenant. To this purpose he speaks in the case of Novatian, who was set up against Cornelius, bishop of Rome : " Cornelius, having lawfully, and according to the will of God and Christ, succeeded upon the death of Fabianus, whoever will be made bishop, whilst he fills the episcopal chair, must be ordained out of the church : for he cannot be ordained by the church, who does not maintain the church's unity. Whoever he be, or whatever he may boast of, or assume to himself, he is profane, he is an alien, he is out of the church : and since after the first, there can be no second, whoever is made bishop after the first, is not a second bishop, but no bishop."† In another place, speaking of the

* Idem initio Epist. LXIII. p. 276. Quanquam sciam, frater carissime, Episcopos plurimos, Ecclesijs Dominicis in toto mundo divina dignatione præpositos Evangelicæ veritatis, & Dominicæ traditionis tenere veritatem, &c.

† Idem Epist. LV. p. 243. Factus est autem Cornelius Episcopus de Dei & Christi ejus judicio, de Clericorum pene omnium testimonio, de plebis, quæ tunc affuit, suffragio, & de sacerdotum antiquorum & bonorum virorum collegio ; cum nemo ante se factus esset, cum Fabiani locus, id est, cum locus Petri, & gradus cathedræ sacerdotalis vacaret : Quo occupato de Dei voluntate, atque omnium nostrorum consensione firmato, quisquis jam Episcopus fieri voluerit, foris fiat necesse est ; nec habeat Ecclesiasticam ordinationem, qui Ecclesiæ non tenet unitatem ; quisquis ille fuerit,

Corrupt. 1113.6

same case, "The church, saith he, is but one; and if it be with Novatian, it is not with Cornelius: if it be with Cornelius, Novatian is not in the church." And a little before: "Since the church beloved by Christ, and purged by his laver, is but one; he that is not in the church, can neither be beloved by Christ, nor washed and purged in his laver. Hence he concludes, that no man could be baptized, or sanctified in the communion of Novatian."* So that in Cyprian's opinion, to have two bishops at once, is utterly inconsistent with the constitution of the christian church; and they who adhere to the second bishop, do thereby forfeit all their right to the blessings and privileges of the church. Yet to have many presbyters and deacons, was a thing ordinary and necessary. It appears from Cyprian's epistles, that there were several of both these orders in the church of Carthage, where he was bishop: and Cornelius himself affirms, in his epistle to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, that in his church of Rome, there

multum de se licet jactans, & sibi plurimum vindicans, profanus est, foris est. Et cum post primum secundus esse non possit, quisquis post unum, qui solus esse debeat, factus est; non jam secundus ille, sed nullus est.

* Idem Epist. LXIX. *p. 104. —* Quod si una est Ecclesia, quæ à Christo diligitur, & lavacro ejus sola purgatur; quomodo qui in Ecclesia non est, aut diligi à Christo, aut abluì & purgari lavacro ejus potest? Propter quod, cum sola Ecclesia habeat aquam vitalem, & baptizandi atque abluendi hominis potestatem; qui dicit, apud Novitianum baptizari & sanctificari aliquem posse, prius ostendat & doceat Novatianum in Ecclesia esse, aut Ecclesiæ præsidere. Ecclesia enim una est, quæ una & intus & foris esse non potest. Si enim apud Novatianum est, apud Cornelium non fuit. Si vero apud Cornelium fuit, — Novatianus in Ecclesia non est. *p. 180*

were forty-six presbyters, and seven deacons.* Thirdly, Cyprian affirms, that bishops are of our Lord's appointment, and derive their office by succession from the apostles. "Our Lord, says he, intending to establish the episcopal dignity together with the constitution of his church, said thus to Peter: I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not conquer it; and I will give unto thee the keys of heaven, and whatever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. Thence in the course of times and successions, the ordination of bishops, and the constitution of the church proceeds; so that the church is built on the bishops, and all acts of the church are governed and directed by them its presidents."† In another place, writing to Cornelius bishop of Rome, "This is, and ought to be, says he, our chief care and study, that we maintain the unity, which was delivered by our Lord and his apostles to us their successors; and to gather into the church the wandering sheep, which factious and heretical men have separated from their mother."‡ Fourthly, It

* Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. xliii.

† Cyprianus principio Epist. XXXIII. p. 216. Dominus noster, cujus præcepta observare & metuere debemus, Episcopi honorem, & Ecclesiæ suæ rationem disponens in Evangelio, loquitur & dicit Petro; Ego tibi dico, quia tu es Petrus, & super istam Petram, &c. Inde per temporum & successionum vices, Episcoporum ordinatio, & Ecclesiæ ratio decurrit, ut Ecclesia super Episcopos constituitur, & omnis actus Ecclesiæ per eosdem Præpositos gubernetur.

‡ Idem Epist. XLV. p. 232. Hoc enim vel maxime, Frater, & laboramus, & laborare debemus, ut unitatem à Domino & ab

Handwritten notes:
 66
 comp

is plain from many passages in Cyprian, beside those already cited, that all christians whatever, priests as well as people, were governed in all ecclesiastical affairs by their bishop. He speaks of the christians under his own charge, as temporal rulers use to do of their subjects: "my clergy and people, my presbyters and deacons."* He advises Rogatian, one of his cotemporary bishops, who had desired his opinion concerning a disobedient deacon: "That if he persisted in provoking him, he should exert the power of his dignity, whereby he means his episcopal office, and either depose him from his office, or excommunicate him."† In the same epistle he says, "The deacons ought to remember, that our Lord chose apostles, that is, bishops and presidents, but the apostles appointed deacons for themselves, to be the ministers of their episcopal office and of the church: and therefore the deacons ought no more to attempt any thing against bishops, by whom deacons are made, than bishops should do against God who makes bishops."‡ And though

Apostolis, nobis successoribus traditam, quantum possumus, obtinere curemus; & quod in nobis est, palabundas & errantes oves, quas quorundam pervicax factio, & hæretica tentatio à matre discernit, in Ecclesiam colligamus. p. 8

* Idem Epist. XIV. XVII. XXIX. XXXI. XL. XLV. &c.

† Idem Epist. III. p. 173. Quod si ultra te contumeliis suis exacerbaverit & provocaverit, fungeris circa eum potestate honoris sui, ut eum vel deponas, vel abstineas.

‡ Ibid. Meminisse autem Diaconi debent, quoniam Apostolos, id est, Episcopos & Præpositos, Dominus elegit; Diaconos autem post ascensum Domini in cælos Apostoli sibi constituerunt Episcopatus sui & Ecclesiæ ministros. Quod si nos aliquid audere contra Deum possumus, qui Episcopos facit; possunt & contra nos audere Diaconi, à quibus fiunt. p. 6

presbyters were admitted to a sort of partnership in the pastoral charge with the bishop, whence this glorious martyr often calls them (compresbyteros) his fellow-presbyters; they could not do any ecclesiastical act without the bishop's allowance, and were liable to be censured by him, when they made any such attempt. Hence, when some of his presbyters, in his absence and without his consent, would have restored to the church's communion some who had lapsed in the time of persecution, he tells them, "He had a long time held his peace, hoping by his forbearance to have obliged them to be quiet. But their excessive presumption would not suffer him to be silent any longer. For what a dreadful prospect, says he, must we have of the divine vengeance, when some of the presbyters, neither mindful of the gospel, nor of their own station; neither regarding the future judgment of God, nor the bishop who now presides over them, dare arrogate entirely to themselves, what was never attempted under any of my predecessors."* Which is a sufficient evidence of the subordination of presbyters to their bishop,

* Idem principio Epist. XVI. p. 194. Diu patientiam meam tenui, Fratres carissimi, quasi verecundum silentium nostrum proficeret ad quietem. Sed cum quorundam immoderata & abrupta præsumtio, temeritate sua, & honorem Martyrum, & Confessorum pudorem, & plebis universæ tranquillitatem turbare conetur; tacere ultra non oportet, ne ad periculum plebis pariter & nostrum taciturnitas nimia procedat. Quod enim non periculum metuere debemus de offensa Domini, quando aliqui de Presbyteris, nec evangelii, nec loci sui memores; sed neque futurum Domini iudicium, neque nunc sibi præpositum Episcopum cogitantes, quod nunquam omnino sub antecessoribus factum est, cum contumelia & contemptu Præpositi totum sibi vindicent.

both in Cyprian's own age, and under his predecessors. Afterwards he proceeded to excommunicate these presbyters, and his sentence was approved all over the world. In many other places, too long to be set down, he fully asserts the episcopal authority over priests as well as people; and charges all, of what rank soever, who disobey their bishop, and separate without just cause from him, with the sin of schism, which he speaks of as one of the greatest crimes any christian can be guilty of. Indeed he, with the council of African bishops, whereof he was president, commends the presbyters, and other members of two churches in Spain, for separating from their bishops, Basilides, and Martialis; and they lay down this as a general rule, "That the people, who are obedient to the Lord's commandments, and fear God, must separate from a sinful bishop."* Whence some have inferred, that the people have power to judge, and depose their bishops. But if we consider the occasion, upon which this was said, we shall find, that the two bishops who are here spoken of, had been guilty of idolatry, and consequently joined in communion to the devil. And in this case, and others, wherein the bishops forsake the communion of Christ and his church, there is no doubt but every christian is in duty bound to leave them. For this reason heretical bishops were usually deserted by their flocks; and Irenæus, whose testimony has also been produced for the doctrine of deposing bishops,

* Idem Epist. LXVII. p. 288. Plebs obsequens præceptis Dominicis, & Deum metuens, à peccatore præposito separare debet. p. 17.

affirms, “That we ought to separate from all such, and to adhere to those who faithfully keep the apostles’ doctrine.”* Hence the proceedings of those presbyters who withdrew from Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople, upon his introducing heretical doctrines, were approved by the great council of Ephesus : and the general council of Constantinople lays down this rule : “That whoever separate from such as publicly teach heresy in the church, even before they are synodically condemned, are not guilty of schism ; but maintain the unity of the church from schisms, by condemning not a bishop, but a false bishop, and a false teacher.”

One of Cyprian’s cotemporaries was Firmilian, bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, who in an epistle to Cyprian, agrees with him in calling bishops the successors of the apostles ; and affirms, “that the power of remitting sins, which our Lord conferred on his apostles, was derived from them to the bishops, who succeed in their places.”†

In the declining part of this century, and the beginning of the next, flourished Eusebius, who, after a most diligent search into the ancient records of the church, and the christian writers who lived before him, derives the bishops of all churches from the apostles. How many, says he, of the apostles’

* Irenæus Lib. IV. cap. xliv. ab omnibus talibus absistere oportet, adhærere vero iis, qui Apostolorum doctrinam custodiunt.

† Cyprian. Epist. LXXXV. p. 324. Potestas ergo peccatorum remittendorum Apostolis data est, & Ecclesiis, quas illi à Christo missi constituerunt, & Episcopis, qui eis ordinatione vicaria successerunt. Hostes autem unius Ecclesiæ Catholicæ, in qua nos sumus, & adversarii nostri qui Apostolis successimus, &c.

disciples and who they were that faithfully copied the example of the apostles, and were approved to be shepherds of the churches which they founded, is not easy to say, beside those whom Paul himself mentions. He had indeed a great number of assistants, and, as he calls them, fellow soldiers, whose memories are preserved to all posterity in his epistles. And Luke, in the Acts of the apostles, mentions some of them by name. Of these Timothy is said to have been the first bishop of Ephesus, Titus of the churches in Crete.* A little after he proceeds thus: "Crescens was sent to Gallia (so he calls Galatia) as St. Paul himself is witness: Linus, whom he mentions in his second to Timothy, as being at Rome with him, was made bishop of Rome next after Peter: Clemens, who was the third bishop of Rome, is owned by St. Paul as his fellow-labourer, and fellow-wrestler: and Dionysius, the Areopagite, whom Luke mentions as Paul's first convert after his oration in the Areopagus at Athens, is reported to have been the first bishop of that church by another Dionysius, a very ancient writer and bishop of Corinth. And in the sequel of this history, the succession of bishops from the apostles

* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. III. cap. iv. "Ὅσοι δε τούτων, καὶ Ἴωνες, γνήσιοι ζηλαταὶ γεγονότες, τὰς πρὸς αὐτῶν ἰδρυθείσας ἱκανοὶ ποιμαίνειν ἐδοκιμάσθησαν ἐκκλησίας, οὐ ράδιον εἰπεῖν, μὴ ὅτισε ὅσους ἂν τις ἐκ τοῦ Παύλου φωνῶν ἀναλέξοιτο. Τούτου γὰρ τουν μυρίοι σαυερσοὶ καὶ ὡς αὐτὸς ὠνόματε συστρατιῶται γεγονάσιν· ὧν οἱ πλείους ἀλήστου πρὸς αὐτοῦ μνήμης ἠξίωονται, διηνεκῆ την περι αὐτῶν μαρτυριαν ταῖς ἰδίαις ἐπιστολαῖς ἐγκαταλέξαις. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ Λουκᾶς ἐν ταῖς πράξεσι τους γνωσίμους αὐτοῦ καταλέξων, ἐξ ὀνόματος αὐτῶν μνημονεύει. Τιμόθεός γε μὴν της ἐν Εφέσω παροικίας ἱστορεῖται πρῶτος τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν εἰληχεναι, ὡς καὶ Τίτος του ἐπὶ Κρήτης ἐκκλησιῶν.

shall be set down in their order.”* This was the rise of episcopacy according to Eusebius : and in the following parts of his history he has given us such exact and authentic catalogues of the bishops who presided in all the principal cities of the Roman empire, from the apostles down to his own time ; that it is as impossible for an impartial man who shall compare this historian with the rest of the primitive fathers, to doubt, whether there was a succession of bishops from the apostles ; as it would be to call in question the succession of Roman emperors from Julius Cæsar, or the succession of kings in any other country. Indeed these who have been produced, and others who have been passed by lest this discourse should be drawn out into too great a length, are such a multitude of unexceptionable witnesses, as can scarce be produced for any other matter of fact, except the rise and progress of christianity ; so that whoever shall deny this, may with better reason reject all histories whatever.

* Ibid. Κρισκης μὲν ἐπιτὰς Γαλλίας στείλαμενος ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ μαρτυρεῖται· Λίνος δὲ, αὐτὸ μέμνηται συνόντος ἐπὶ Ρώμης αὐτῷ κατὰ τὴν δευτέραν πρὸς Τιμόθεον ἐπιστολὴν, πρῶτος μετὰ Πέτρον τῆς Ρωμαίων ἐκκλησίας τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν ἤδη πρότερον κληρωθεὶς δεδήλωται. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ Κλήμης τῆς Ρωμαίων καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκκλησίας τρίτος ἐπίσκοπος καλίστας, Παύλου συνεργὸς καὶ συναθλητὴς γερονεῖται πρὸς αὐτοῦ μαρτυρεῖται. Ἐπὶ τούτοις καὶ τὸν Ἀρεωπαγίτην ἐκεῖνον, Διονύσιος ὄνομα αὐτῷ, ὃν ἐν Πράξεσι μετὰ τὴν ἐν Ἀρειῳ πάγῳ πρὸς Ἀθηναίους Παύλου δημηγορίαν, πρῶτον πιστεῦσαι ἀνέγραπσεν ὁ Λουκᾶς, τῆς ἐν Ἀθήναις ἐκκλησίας, πρῶτον ἐπίσκοπον, ἀρχαίων τις ἕτερος Διονύσιος τῆς Κορινθίων παροικίας ποιμὴν ἱστορεῖ γερονεῖται. Ἀλλὰ γὰρ ὁδῶ πρόσκαινοῦσιν, ἐπὶ καιροῦ καὶ τῆς κατὰ τοὺς χρόνους τῶν Ἀποστόλων διαδοχῆς ἡμῖν εἰρήσεται.

It would be easy to continue this account of the government of the church by bishops through all succeeding ages to this time ; but it being universally confessed, even by the professed enemies of episcopacy, that the church was governed by bishops of a superior order to mere presbyters after the time of Constantine, in which Eusebius, the last witness I have cited, lived ; it will be needless to carry it beyond this period. However, to confirm what has been said, let us inquire whether in the age of Constantine, or those next after him, the government of the church by bishops was reckoned a late and human institution, or of divine appointment, and derived from the apostles.

To begin with Athanasius, he tells Dracontius, who declined a bishopric to which he was elected, that “ Since the government of the church by bishops was instituted by the apostles, according to Christ’s direction, by refusing to be a bishop in that exigence of affairs, he would despise our Saviour, who ordained the episcopal office.” And he adds, “ That if all others before him had been of his mind, he could not have been made a christian ; and if others after him should take up the same resolution, the churches could not subsist.”* Where he manifestly

* Athanasii Epist. ad Dracontium. Tom. I. p. 264, 265. Edit. Paris, MDCXCVIII. *Εἰ δὲ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ἡ διάταξις οὐκ ἀρεσκεί σοι, οὐδὲ νομιζεῖς τὸ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς λειτουργημάτων μισθὸν ἔχειν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀφρονεῖν τοῦ ταῦτα διαλαζαμένου σωτῆρος πεποιήκας σεαυτὸν. ΜΟΧ. Ἀ γὰρ ὁ Κύριος διὰ τῶν Ἀποστόλων τετύπωκεν, ταῦτα καλὰ καὶ βέβαια μενεῖ. ΜΟΧ. Εἰ γὰρ αὐτὸν νοῦν εἶχον πάντες, οἷον νῦν ἔχουσιν οἱ συμβουλευόντες σοι, πῶς ἂν ἐγένου σὺ Χριστιανός, ἐπισκόπων μὴ ὄντων; ἔάν δὲ οἱ μεθ’ ἡμᾶς ἀναλάβωσιν τὸν τοιοῦτον νοῦν, πῶς ἂν τυστήναι δυνήσωνται αἱ ἐκκλησίαι;*

declares, that bishops were of our Lord's appointment, and essential to the constitution of the church.

Epiphanius accounting, why St. Paul in some places mentions only bishops and deacons, without presbyters ; in others, presbyters and deacons, without bishops ; gives this reason for it ; “ That the apostles could not perfectly settle all things at once ; and therefore in their conversions, where no person was fitly qualified to be a bishop, they only ordained presbyters and deacons ; and such places for the present remained without a bishop : in other places where one was found fit to be a bishop, but by reason of the paucity of believers, there were no others qualified to be presbyters, they ordained only bishops and deacons. But never was any bishop without a deacon to minister to him.”* This account he affirms to be taken from the most ancient histories ; (*βαθυτάταις ιστορίαις*) and it is hence manifest, that in his time it was believed, that the superiority of bishops over presbyters was established by the apostles.

St. Ambrose having said, “ That one duty is required by God of bishops, another of priests, and another of deacons :” presently adds, “ That in order to describe the office of bishops, he would go through the rules, which the apostle has prescribed for every

* Epiphanius Hæres. LXXV. Sect. V. p. 908. Edit. Paris.

Οὐ γὰρ πάντα ἐυθὺς ἠδυνήθησαν οἱ Ἀπόστολοι καλίστα ἤσθαι. Πρεσβυτέρων γὰρ ἐγένετο χρεία καὶ Διακόνων· διὰ γὰρ τῶν δύο τούτων τὰ Ἐκκλησιαστικά δύνανται πληροῦσθαι· ὅπου δὲ οὐχ εὐρέθη τις ἄξιος Ἐπισκοπῆς, ἔμεινεν ὁ τόπος χωρὶς Ἐπισκόπου· ὅπου δὲ γέγονε χρεία, καὶ ἦσαν ἄξιοι Ἐπισκοπῆς, καλίστάθησαν Ἐπισκοποὶ· πλήθους δὲ μὴ ὄντος, οὐχ εὐρέθησαν ἐν αὐτοῖς Πρεσβυτέρους καλίστα ἤσθαι, καὶ ἠρκέσθησαν ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ τόπον μόνων Ἐπισκοπῶν· ἄνευ δὲ Διακόνου Ἐπίσκοπον ἀδύνατον εἶναι.

act of the episcopal office :”* And then he proceeds to explain that part of St. Paul’s epistle to Timothy, which concerns the ordination and office of bishop. So that in the account of St. Ambrose, bishops of a superior order to presbyters, were settled in the church in the days of the apostles, and by their direction.

And it is very common for the fathers of this and the following ages to use the names of apostles and bishops, as synonymous terms ; whence Epaphroditus, and others whom St. Paul called apostles, are generally said to have been bishops, as was before observed. It would be endless to cite all the witnesses, who might be produced on this occasion, and therefore I shall only mention two or three more, who having said, that the names of bishop and presbyter were used promiscuously, and without distinction in the apostolical age, may be thought less prejudiced in favour of the episcopal order, than some others. Let us see then, whether these fathers inferred, that there was a parity between the offices of presbyters and bishops, because they supposed them to have had the same names.

One of these, and perhaps the first who speaks of the promiscuous use of the names of bishops and presbyters, was St. Chrysostom, who flourished about the end of the fourth century : and he de-

* Ambrosius lib. de Dignitate Sacerd. sub finem cap. iv. Aliud est enim, quod ab Episcopo requirit Deus, & aliud quod à Presbytero, & aliud quod a Diacono. Mox, initio cap. v. Et ut specialiter ipsius episcopatus modum & formulam omnibus sacerdotibus depingamus, Apostolica est nobis regula revolvenda, quæ de iis per singula episcopales actus depingit.

clares in many places, that bishops and presbyters were distinct orders in the apostolic age : particularly in his eleventh homily on the first epistle to Timothy, he says, “ That the reason why the apostle, having delivered rules for the behaviour of bishops, immediately proceeds to the deacons, without mentioning the intermediate order of presbyters, was this : that there was not a great difference between bishops and presbyters ; for even presbyters are intrusted to teach, and preside over the church, so that the same rules, which are prescribed for bishops, may also serve for presbyters ; there being scarce any act of the episcopal office, which may not be exercised by presbyters, except imposition of hands.”* So that in this father’s opinion, the order of bishops was distinct from that of presbyters, when St. Paul wrote his first epistle to Timothy, however their names might not then constantly be distinguished. And the imposition of hands, which he makes the bishop’s prerogative, as all other ancient fathers do, was in his judgment a thing of such vast consequence, that he calls it, “ The chief and principal of all ecclesiastical powers, and that which chiefly maintains and holds together the christian church.”†

* S. Chrysostomus principio Homil. XI. in 1 Tim. Διαλεγόμενος περι Επισκόπων, και χαρακτηρισσα, αυτους, και ειπών, τίνα μεν ἔχειν, τίνων δε ἀπέχεσθαι χρὴ, και τὸ τῶν Πρεσβυτέρων τάγμα ἀφεῖς εἰς τους Διακόνους μελεπήδησε· τί δή ποτε; ὅτι οὐ πολὺ τὸ μέτρον αὐτῶν, και τῶν Επισκόπων· και γὰρ και αὐτοὶ διδασκαλίαν εἰσὶν ἀναδεδεδεγμενοι και προστασίαν της εκκλησίας· και ἃ περι Επισκόπων ειπε, ταῦτα και τοῖς Πρεσβυτέροις ἀρμοττεῖ· τῇ γὰρ χειροτονία μόνη υπερβεβήκασι, και τούτω μόνον δοκοῦσι πλεονεκτεῖν τουν πρεσβυτέρου.

† S. Chrysostomus Homi. XVI. in 1 Tim. Πάντων μάλιστα κρυπτότατον, και ὁ μάλιστα συνέχει την Εκκλησίαν, τὸ τῶν χειροτονιῶν

The first of the Latin fathers, who is cited for the promiscuous use of the names of bishop and presbyter, is the author of the commentaries on St. Paul's epistles, published under the name of St. Ambrose, who professes himself to write under Pope Damasus, who died in the year of our Lord CCCLXXXIV. And, if we may rely on this author's judgment, there were bishops in the strictest sense of this name, when St Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians: for he, explaining that passage of this epistle, where the women are commanded to have power over their heads because of the angels, says, "That by angels are meant bishops, as we may learn from St. John's revelation."* Whether this interpretation be true, or otherwise (which is not material to know) it is a full proof, that he thought there were then bishops in the church. And that he meant bishops distinct from presbyters, is plain from what he says a little after, "That the bishop is the vicegerent of Christ, and represents his person; and, that he decreed every church should be governed by one bishop, even as all things proceed from one God the Father."† And in several other places this author affirms, "That in a church there were several presbyters and deacons, but never more than one bishop, even in the apostles' times."‡

* Ambrosiaster in 1 Cor. xi. 10. Potestatem, velamen significavit: Angelos, Episcopus dicit, sicut docetur in Apocalypsi Joannis.

† Ibidem. Episcopus personam habet Christi—vicarius Domini est. Paulo post. Quia ab uno Patre sunt omnia, singulos Episcopos singulis Ecclesiis præesse decrevit.

‡ Idem illud, 1 Cor. xii. 29. explicans, Numquid omnes Apostoli?

Not long after flourished Theodoret, in the beginning of the fifth century, who makes the names of bishop and presbyter to have been synonymous terms in the apostolic age ; but then he will have those of the chief order to have been called apostles. "The same persons, says he, were anciently called bishops and presbyters, and they whom we now call bishops, were then called apostles : but in process of time the name of apostles was appropriated to them who were apostles in the strict sense ; and the rest who had formerly the name of apostles, were styled bishops. In this sense Epaphroditus is called the apostle of the Philippians ; Titus was the apostle of the Cretians, and Timothy of Asia."*

From these testimonies, with many others easy to be produced, it appears, that in the next ages after the Roman emperors professed the christian religion, the distinction of the clergy from the laity, and of bishops from the lower orders of clergymen, were constantly reckoned to be of divine institution, and derived from the apostles down to that time. And it deserves to be observed, that there is scarce any doctrine of christianity, which met with less opposition in the primitive ages of the church, than

Verum est, quia in Ecclesia unus est Episcopus. Idem ad 1 Tim. iv. Nunc autem septem Diaconos esse oportet, & aliquantos Presbyteros, ut bini sint per Ecclesias, & unus in civitate Episcopus.

* Theodoretus in 1 Tim. iii. Τους αυτους εκάλουν ποτε Πρεσβυτέρους και Επισκόπους· τους δε νυν καλουμενους επισκόπους, Αποστόλους ανιμαζον· τοῦ δε χρόνου προϊόντος, τὸ μὲν της Αποστολῆς ἔνομα τοῖς ἀληθῶς Αποστόλοις κατέλιπον· την δε της Επισκοπῆς προσηγοριαν τοῖς πάλαι καλουμενοις Αποστόλοις ἐπέθεσαν. οὔτω Φιλιππησίον Αποστόλος ὁ Επαφρόδιτος ἦν· οὔτω Κρητῶν ὁ Τίτος, και Ασιανῶν ὁ Τιμόθεος Απὸστολοι.

this. Indeed, in Tertullian's time there were some, who allowed laymen to execute all the functions of the sacerdotal office: "Their ordinations, says he, are without distinction, mutable and unfix'd. One is a bishop to-day, and another to-morrow: to-day he is a deacon, who to-morrow is a reader: to-day he is a presbyter, who to-morrow is a layman. For they commit the sacerdotal functions to laymen."* But then, what sort of principles were these men of? If we may take the same author's account of them, they were such, as allowed not laymen only, but even women, contrary to St. Paul's express command, to teach in their public assemblies, and (as he supposes) to baptize.† Some of them were for plurality of Gods; and the rest who declared for the unity of the Godhead, spoke of God in a very different manner, from what the church in all ages has believed, and the Scriptures describe him to be.‡ So that we need not envy any man the company of these heretics, in speaking against the christian priesthood, who neither regarded the

* Tertullianus de Præscript. Hæret, cap. xli. Ordinationes eorum temerariæ, leves, inconstantes. Mox. Itaque alius hodie Episcopus, cras alius: Hodie Diaconus, qui cras Lector: Hodie Presbyter, qui cras Laicus: Nam & Laicis sacerdotalia munera injungunt. 217

† Ibid. Mulieres hæreticæ, quam procaces, quæ audeant docere, contendere, exorcismos agere, curationes repromittere, forsitan & tingere? b. 217

‡ Ibid. Paulo ante: Deum aut fingunt alium adversus Creatorem: aut si unicum Creatorem confitentur, aliter eum disserunt; quam in vero. Itaque omne mendacium, quod de Deo dicunt, quodammodo genus est idololatriæ. p 217

authority of our Lord's apostles, nor worshipped the same God with christians.

Afterwards in the fourth century appeared Acrius, a presbyter of Sebastia in Pontus, and a follower of Arius' heresy, who having been disappointed of the bishopric of Sebastia, began to load the bishop with calumnies, and by other artifices to lessen his authority with the people; and afterwards, when he could not compass his design by these means, he left the bishop's communion, and drew a party after him, whom he persuaded, in order to make them adhere to him in opposition to their bishop, that bishops and presbyters are of the same order; and that there is no act of religion, which a presbyter is not as capable of doing as a bishop: for which opinion chiefly, he is ranked among the heretics by Epiphanius, his cotemporary, who calls it a notion (*ἀφροσύνης ἐμπλεων*) full of folly, and madness beyond what human nature is capable of.* So that this is rather a confirmation, that it was the received opinion in that age, that the order of bishops was superior to that of presbyters: otherwise Acrius' assertion could not have been condemned for heresy, or even singularity.

All this considered, it is strange that St. Jerom's conjecture about the original of episcopacy should prejudice any considering man against the divine institution of it. His opinion, and the foundation of it, as he himself explains them in an epistle to Evagrius, and in his comment on the first chapter to Titus, were briefly thus: "Having observed that the

* Epiphanius Hæres. LXXV. p. 906. *Ἦν δὲ αὐτοῦ ὁ λόγος
μανιώδης μᾶλλον ἢ περὶ καλοστάσεως ἀνθρωπίνης.*

name of bishop and presbyter are used promiscuously in the Scriptures, and that the apostles call themselves presbyters;¹ he concludes, that at first there was no distinction between their offices, but that apostle, bishop and presbyter, were only different names of the same thing; and that the churches were then generally governed by a college of presbyters, equal in rank and dignity to one another. Afterwards, divisions being occasioned by this parity among presbyters, when every presbyter began to claim as his own particular subjects those whom he had baptized; and it was said by the people, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas; to remedy this evil, it was decreed all the world over, that one of the presbyters in every church should be set over the rest, and peculiarly called bishop; and that the chief care of the church should be committed to him.”

In which account of the rise of episcopal primacy over presbyters, it may be observed, that St. Jerom finds it on the synonymous use of the names of apostle, bishop and presbyter; which was observed by St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, and other ancient fathers, who drew no such inference from it; but constantly affirmed, that there was a disparity of order among them, notwithstanding their names were used promiscuously. And I hope it has been fully made out in this and the last chapter, that this was no good foundation for this opinion. But it is not strange, that having raised presbyters to a parity with apostles, contrary to the most plain testimony

¹ 1 Pet. v. 1. 2 John i. 3 John i.

of the Scriptures, he should equal them with bishops, contrary to the sense of the ancient fathers.

And thus the premises, on which this opinion is founded, being inconclusive, there is no reason to regard what he says of the decree passed in all churches for the raising of one presbyter above the rest, which he does not pretend to support by any ancient testimony; but only conjectures, that such a decree must have been passed, because he had before conjectured, that apostles, bishops, and presbyters were all equal at the first. But when, or by what authority was this decree enacted? If in the second century, as some would persuade us, for no better reason than that they are unwilling to derive episcopacy from the apostles, it is very strange, not only that no presbyter in the world should take it ill, that one of his fellow-presbyters should be advanced above him; or think it his duty to oppose this new unscriptural model; but that so great a change should be introduced in all parts of the world, at a time when the church flourished with men of great parts and learning, and yet not the least mention be made of it in any of their writings; but on the contrary both they, and the christian writers of the next ages after them, should constantly speak of the primacy of bishops over presbyters, as no late invention, but of ancient right, and derived from the apostles themselves. We may as well affirm, contrary to the accounts of all historians, that all nations in the world were first republics, and afterwards at a certain time, upon the consideration of their being obnoxious to factions, by general consent became monarchies. But

it is needless to raise more objections against this notion, since Jerom himself plainly refers the making of this decree to the apostles: he not only assigns, as the occasion of it, the adherence of some to Paul, of others to Apollos, and of others to Peter, which is reprov'd in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians; but in his forementioned epistle to Evagrius he expressly calls the distinction of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, an apostolical tradition, and taken by the apostles from the Old Testament, where Aaron, his sons the priests, and the Levites, correspond to the three orders of the christian church;* and in his catalogue of ecclesiastical writers, he affirms, "That presently after our Lord's ascension, James was ordained bishop of Jerusalem by the apostles; that Timothy was made bishop of Ephesus, and Titus bishop of Crete by St. Paul, and Polycarp bishop of Smyrna by St. John; and he mentions several other bishops who lived in the next age after the apostles." So that even in St. Jerom's opinion, the primacy of bishops over presbyters was an apostolic institution.

But whatever was St. Jerom's sense of this matter, since it has appeared to be ill-grounded, and contrary both to the universal consent of primitive antiquity, and of the Scriptures, we need not have the least concern about it. The truth is this: some deacons, who enjoyed wealthier places in the church than many presbyters, claimed several privileges

* Ut sciamus traditiones Apostolicas sumtas de Veteri Testamento; quod Aaron & filii ejus, atque Levitæ in templo fuerint: hoc sibi Episcopi, Presbyteri & Diaconi vindicent in Ecclesia.

superior to them, and were unwilling to be admitted into that order: which irregularity was so highly resented by St. Jerom, who was a man of passion, and only a presbyter, that to raise his own order beyond the competition of deacons, he endeavoured to make it equal by its original institution with bishops and apostles: as it is common even for the best of men, in the heat of disputation, to run into one extreme by avoiding another. Yet even at this time he owns, in the forementioned epistle to Evagrius, that none but bishops had authority to ordain ministers. And in many other places he approves of the subordination of presbyters to bishops, and never once allows mere presbyters the power of ordaining, or seems inclined to introduce a parity of ministers into the church.

I hope it has now appeared from the Scriptures, and the chief writers of the four first centuries, that as our Lord was sent by God the Father to establish a church in the world; so the apostles were authorised by our Lord to enlarge and govern the church after his ascension, and that they derived the same authority to their successors the bishops: which was the thing at first propounded to be shown.

But before we leave this argument, it may be expected, that as it was inquired in the last chapter, whether there was a parity of power given to all the apostles, so here we should consider, whether this parity was derived to their successors the bishops; or whether some one or more of the episcopal college were invested by our Lord or his apostles, with power over the rest. But there is

less occasion to set about a full proof of the parity of bishops, since all they who contend for an original imparity among them, derive it from the supposed primacy of Peter over the rest of the apostles ; which having appeared in the last chapter to be contrary to the Scriptures and the ancient fathers, we have no reason to be concerned, what conclusions are drawn from it. However, as there is no example of the bishop of Rome, or any others exercising any peculiar jurisdiction in the (*παροικήσιαι*) dioceses of other bishops ; so there are many plain proofs that every bishop in the first centuries, was supreme in his own diocese, and subject to none but Christ. One bishop might excel another in the extent of his diocese, in the number and quality of the christians under his care, or in outward splendor and magnificence ; but, to apply St. Jerom's words, " Wherever a bishop is, whether at Rome or at Eugubium, at Constantinople or at Rhegium, at Alexandria or at Tani, he has the same merit, and the same priesthood : neither the power of riches, nor the humility of poverty makes a bishop higher or lower, but they are all successors of the apostles."* St. Cyprian's notion of this matter was, that as there is but one church, so there is but one episcopacy all the world over : but then as the catholic church is divided into many members, which

* Hieronymus ad Evagrium : Ubicunque fuerit episcopus, sive Romæ sive Eugubii, sive Constantinopoli sive Rhegii. sive Alexandriæ, sive Tanis, ejusdem meriti est, & ejusdem Sacerdotii : Potentia divitiarum, & paupertatis humilitas, vel sublimiorem, vel inferiorem Episcopum non facit. Cæterum omnes apostolorum successores sunt.

lie dispersed in remote cities and countries ; so every member must be subject to its own particular bishop who presides over it with the plentitude of episcopal authority, without being accountable to any foreign bishop.* He says, that though the keys of heaven were promised only to Peter by name, they were given to all the apostles ; and every apostle was invested with the same dignity and power, which was given to Peter. And he makes every bishop in the world to succeed Peter, as well as the rest of the apostles, and to have the same station and authority within his own diocese, which our Lord conferred upon Peter.† In a council of eighty-seven bishops, whereof he was president, having briefly declared the occasion of their meeting, he proceeds thus : “ It remains now, that every one of us speak his own sense of this matter, neither judging any man, nor rejecting him from our communion, for dissenting in opinion from us. For none of us does make himself a bishop of bishops, or force his colleagues to a necessity of

* Cyprian. Epist. LVI. A Christo una Ecclesia per totum mundum in multa membra diffusa : Item Episcopatus unus, Episcoporum multorum concordia numerositate diffusus. Epist. LIX. Singulis pastoribus portio gregis adscripta, quam regat unusquisque, & gubernet, rationem actus sui Domino redditurus.

† Cyprian. Lib. de Unitate Eccles. p. 77, 78. Hoc erant utique reliqui Apostoli, quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio præditi honoris & potestatis. Epist. XXXIII. Dominus noster—Episcopi honorem, & Ecclesiæ suæ rationem disponens, in Evangelio loquitur Petro, Ego dico tibi, quia tu es Petrus, &c. Inde per temporum & successionum vices, Episcoporum ordinatio, & Ecclesiæ ratio decurrit, ut Ecclesia super Episcopos constituatur, & omnis actus Ecclesiæ per eosdem Præpositos gubernetur.

complying with him by any tyrannical terror ; since every bishop has full power to determine for himself, and can no more be judged by others, than he can judge them. But let us all wait for the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone has power to make us governors of his church, and to call us to account for our administration.* So that it was the received opinion, when this council was held, that no bishop was accountable to another. And what Cyprian affirms here in general, he applies in other places to the bishop of Rome. Thus in one of his epistles to Cornelius bishop of Rome, whom some schismatics of Carthage, who had set up Fortunatus against Cyprian, treated with to countenance what they had done : “ For what end, says he, did they go to Rome, and tell you that a false bishop was made in opposition to the bishops ? For either they are pleased with what they have done, and then they persist in their wickedness ; or they are sorry, and willing to retract it : if so, they know whither to return. For since it has been determined by us all, and also is most just and reasonable in itself, that every one’s cause

* Concil. Carthag. inter opera Cypriani p. 158. Superest, ut de hac ipsa re singuli quod sentiamus, proferamus ; neminem judicantes, aut à jure communionis aliquem, si diversum senserit, amoventes. Neque enim quisquam nostrum Episcopum se Episcoporum constituit, aut tyrannico terrore Collegas ad obsequendi necessitatem adigit ; quando habeat omnis Episcopus pro licentia libertatis & potestatis suæ, arbitrium, proprium, tamque judicari ab alio non possit, quam nec ipse potest judicari ; sed exspectemus universi judicium Domini nostri Jesu Christi qui unus & solus habet protestatem præponendi nos in Ecclesiæ suæ gubernatione, & de actu nostro judicandi.

should be heard, where his crime was committed; and since a portion of the church is assigned to every bishop, to be ruled and governed by him, for which he is accountable to our Lord; our subjects ought not to run about from bishop to bishop, nor to break the harmonious concord of bishops by their fallacious and rash attempts; but they must answer, where accusers and witnesses can appear against them: unless a few desperate and forlorn men think the authority of the African bishops, who have already condemned them, to be insufficient:”* whence it is manifest, that he believed himself and other African bishops to be the supreme and ultimate judges of their own subjects, from whose sentence there lay no appeal to any but Christ. And in the ancient fathers the order of bishops is constantly spoken of as the chief of all ecclesiastical powers, and succeeding in the place of the apostles.†

* Epist. LIX. p. 266. Quæ autem causa veniendi, & pseudo episcopum contra Episcopos factum nunciandi? Aut enim placet illis, quod fecerunt, & in suo scelere perseverant: Aut si displicet, & recedunt, sciunt quo revertantur. Nam cum statutum sit omnibus nobis, & æquum sit pariter ac justum, ut uniuscujusque causa illic audiatur, ubi est crimen admissum, & singulis pastoribus portio gregis sit adscripta, quam regat unusquisque & gubernet, rationem sui actus Domino redditurus; oportet utique eos, quibus præsumus, non circumcursare, nec episcoporum concordiam cohærentem sua subdola & fallaci temeritate collidere, sed agere illic causam suam ubi accusatores habere & testes sui criminis possint; nisi si paucis desperatis & perditis minor videtur esse auctoritas Episcoporum in Africa constitutorum, qui jam de illis judicaverunt, & eorum conscientiam multis delictorum laqueis vinctam judicii sui nuper gravitate damnarunt.

† Hieronymus ad Marcellam. Epist. LIV. Apud nos Apostolorum locum Episcopi tenent, apud illos (Montanistas) Episcopus tertius est.

And, as the apostles together made one college, every member whereof was equal to the rest of his college, and superior to all other christians whatever ; so the bishops all the world over were reckoned as one society or college : when any member of this college by falling into idolatry, or heresy, separated from the catholic communion of Christ and his church, he was disowned by the rest all the world over, and the neighbouring bishops assembled to ordain another to take care of his part of the christian flock ; every bishop having, beside the care of his own particular flock, an universal concern for all the parts of the catholic church : “ There is, saith Cyprian in one of his epistles to Stephen, bishop of Rome, a very large body of bishops joined together by the bands of unity and concord ; so that if any of our college raise an heresy, and destroy the flock of Christ, the rest may come in to rescue them, and, like useful and merciful sheperds, may gather our Lord’s sheep into his flock.”* But this gave not one bishop any particular jurisdiction over another, and by this rule the rest of the episcopal college might as well have deposed the bishop of Rome, as he could have deposed any of them.

But though the bishops of the primitive church were all invested with the same office and autho-

* Cyprian. Epist. LXVIII. page 292, 293. Copiosum corpus est sacerdotum, (Episcoporum) concordiae mutuae glutino atque unitatis vinculo copulatum, ut siquis e collegio nostro haeresin facere, & gregem Christi lacerare & vastare tentaverit, subveniant caeteri & quasi pastores utiles & misericordes, oves Dominicas in-gregem colligant.

rity, some of them were superior to others in place, as it was before in the college of apostles. In the first age of christianity, our Lord's kinsmen, the bishops of Jerusalem, were reckoned the first of the episcopal college. Afterwards, the bishop of Rome, the chief metropolis of the world, was allowed to have the pre-eminence by common consent: hence Cyprian calls the church of Rome the principal church; and says, that Rome ought to precede Carthage "pro magnitudine sua," by reason of its greatness. For the same reason, when the Roman emperors made Constantinople the place of their residence, the bishop of Constantinople was next in dignity to the bishop of Rome. Before that time, the bishop of Alexandria, which was the next city to Rome for wealth and the number of its inhabitants, had the second place in the college of bishops. The third place was allowed to the bishop of Antioch, which was the third city of the Roman empire. For the same reason, when our Lord's kinsmen were all dead, the bishop of Cæsarea preceded the bishop of Jerusalem, and all others in Palestine, Cæsarea being the political metropolis of that province: and, to mention only this instance more, the rest of the African bishops gave place to the bishop of Carthage, which was the principal city in the countries thereabouts. So that the bishops of the greater metropolitical cities seem by a general consent to have taken place of the bishops of the lesser and more obscure cities.

This primacy of place drew along with it several other prerogatives, the chief whereof, mentioned in the primitive fathers, were, that the bishops of me-

metropolitan cities presided in provincial synods, and had the charge of consecrating the bishops of all the cities within their provinces. How ancient these and the like prerogatives were, is not easy to determine. But we find them mentioned in the apostolical canons, the first part of which seems to be transcripts of the rules and customs observed in the primitive ages. It is there decreed, “ That the bishops of every nation should have a regard to the first among them, and account him their head, and attempt nothing without him, beside what concerns their own particular dioceses ; and that he should do nothing but by the consent of all the rest.”* And it deserves to be observed, that the prerogatives of the metropolitanical sees, seem rather to be confirmed and enforced, as things formerly allowed them, than first instituted by this canon.

In the great council assembled at Nice, in the year of our Lord CCCXXV. the following canon was enacted, upon a complaint of Alexander the bishop of Alexandria, that the metropolitanical rights of his see had been invaded by Meletius, the schismatical bishop of Lycopolis in Thebais, who had taken upon him to ordain bishops without Alexander’s consent : “ Let the ancient customs still take place, which obtain in Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, that the bishop of Alexandria have power over

* Can. Apost. XXXIV. Τὸς Ἐπισκόπους ἑκάστου ἔθνους εἶδεναι χρὴ τὸν ἐν αὐτοῖς πρῶτον, καὶ ηγεῖσθαι αὐτὸν ὡς κεφαλὴν, καὶ μηδὲν τι πράττειν περιττὸν ἄνευ τῆς ἐκείνου γνώμης· ἐκεῖνα δὲ μόνον πράττειν ἕκαστος ὅσα τῇ ἑαυτοῦ παροικίᾳ ἐπιβάλλει, καὶ ταῖς ὑπ’ αὐτὴν χώραις· ἀλλὰ μηδὲ ἐκεῖνος ἄνευ τῆς πάντων γνώμης ποιεῖται τι.

all these : because the same is customary with the bishop of Rome. And accordingly, in Antioch, and other provinces, let the prerogatives be preserved to the churches. And in general, let this be undoubted, that if any man be made a bishop without the metropolitan's consent, this great synod decrees such a one to be no bishop.* Hence it is manifest ; *First*, That when this synod was held, metropolitans were settled in most parts of the Roman empire. *Secondly*, That the metropolitical sees of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, were the chief ; they being mentioned by name, and the rest only spoken of in general : though indeed there is a particular reason why Alexandria should be expressly mentioned, namely, because this canon was occasioned by the invasion of the prerogatives of that see. *Thirdly*, That the bishop of Rome had then a limited jurisdiction. *Fourthly*, That the jurisdiction of metropolitans was owing to primitive custom.

About the middle of the third century, Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, was metropolitan of all the bishops in proconsular Africa, Numidia, and the two Mauritanias. This he himself expressly affirms ; † and accordingly, the bishops of those coun-

* Concil. Nicæn. Can. VI. Τὰ ἀρχαῖα ἔθη κραλεῖτω, τὰ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ Λιβύῃ καὶ Πενταπόλει ὥστε τὸν Ἀλεξανδρείας ἐπίσκοπον πάντων τούτων ἔχειν τὴν ἐξουσίαν. Ἐπειδὴ καὶ τῶ ἐν τῇ Ρώμῃ ἐπιστοκοπῇ τοῦτο συνεθὲς ἐστὶ. Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ κατὰ τὴν Ἀντιόχειαν, καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις ἐπαρχίαις, τὰ πρεσβεῖα σώζεσθαι ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις· καθόλου δὲ πρόδηλον ἐκεῖνο ὅτι εἰ τις χωρὶς γνώμης τοῦ μητροπολίτου γινούσῃ ἐπίσκοπος, τὸν τοιοῦτον ἡ μεγάλη συνοδος ὤρισεν μὴ δεῖν εἶναι ἐπίσκοπον.

† Cypriani Epist. XLVIII. p. 234. Latinus fusa est nostra provincia, habet enim Mauritaniam & Numidiam sibi cohærentes.

tries had recourse to him for advice and direction in all emergencies, as appears from his epistles to them; and he was president of the councils of bishops who assembled from those countries, particularly of that wherein the validity of baptism, administered by heretics, was examined.* Before this there was another council held at Carthage about the same controversy, whereof Agrippinus, bishop of Carthage, was president. How long Agrippinus lived before Cyprian, is not easy to determine: some think, about twenty or thirty years; others, fifty or sixty: the words of Cyprian are indefinite, but they seem to imply no less a space of time than the longest of these periods: for he says, that many years, and a long age, or interval of time had passed since the council under Agrippinus.†

Towards the decline of the second century, provincial synods were convened in several countries, to consider what time Easter should be kept.‡ In the synod of Palestine, assembled on this occasion,

* Concil. Carthag. inter Opera Cypriani, p. 158. Cum in unum Carthaginia convenissent Kalend. Septembris Episcopi plurimi ex provincia Africa, Numidia, Mauritania, &c.

† Cypriani Epist. LXXIII. p. 307. Quando multi jam anni sint, & longa ætas, ex quo sub Agrippino bonæ memoriæ viro convenientes in unum Episcopi plurimi hoc statuerint.

‡ Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. V. cap. xxiii. Φέρεται δ' εἶσεται νῦν τῶν κατὰ Παλαιστίνην τηνικᾶδε συσκηροσημενον γραφῆ, ὧν προῦτετακτο Θεούφιλος τῆς ἐν Καισαρεία παροικίᾳς Ἐπίσκοπος, καὶ Ναρκισσος τῆς ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις, καὶ τῶν ἐπὶ Ῥώμης δὲ ὁμοίως ἄλλη περι τοῦ αὐτοῦ ζήηματος ἐπίσκοπον Βίκτορα δηλοῦσα τῶν τε κατὰ Πόνιον Ἐπισκόπων, ὧν Πάλμας, ὡς ἀρχαιότατος, προῦτετακτο, καὶ τῶν κατὰ Γαλλίαν δὲ παροικιῶν ὡς Εἰρηναῖος ἐπεσκόπει. cap. xxiv. Τῶν δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀσίας ἐπισκόπων—ἠγεῖτο Πολυκράτης.

Theophilus, bishop of Cæsarea, and Narcissus of Jerusalem, were presidents; Narcissus being joined with Theophilus, because the bishop of Jerusalem had the next place to his metropolitan; and this, as the Nicene fathers affirm, by primitive custom. Victor, bishop of Rome, presided in the synod assembled at Rome. In the synod of French bishops, Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, the metropolis of France, was president. For the same reason, Pylycrates, bishop of Ephesus, the political metropolis of the proconsular Asia, was president in the synod of that country. So that it was then the general practice for the bishop of the political metropolis to preside in the synods of the bishops of his own province. Only in the synods of bishops assembled on the same occasion in Pontus, Palmas who was bishop of Amastris, and not of Heraclea, the metropolis of that country, presided *ὡς ἀρχαιότατος*, as the eldest: so that there was no metropolitan then established in Pontus, or else the metropolitanical see was vacant. These accounts are taken from the authentic epistles of these synods, which were extant when Eusebius wrote his history.

Some time before these synods, flourished Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, who in an epistle to Philip bishop of Gortyn in Crete, styles him bishop of all the dioceses in Crete.* One of these was the diocese of Gnossus, whereof Pinytus, to whom another letter was sent by Dionysius, was bishop.† So that

* Eusebius, Lib. IV. cap. xxiii. Καὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ δὲ τῇ παροικούσῃ Γόρτυναν ἅμα ταῖς λοιπαῖς κατὰ Χρῆτην παροικίαις ἐπιστείλας (Διονύσιος) Φίλιππον ἐπίσκοτον αὐμῶν ἀποδέχεται.

† Ibidem.

Philip seems to have been the metropolitan of Crete. And some derive this metropolitical pre-eminence from the apostles' times, wherein Titus presided over the bishops of all the churches in Crete, as Timothy is said to have done over those in the proconsular Asia, of which his own city Ephesus was the metropolis.*

* Eusebius Lib. III. cap. iv. Τίτος (επισκοπήν εἴληχε) τῶν ἐπὶ Κρήτης ἐκκλησιῶν. Chrysostomus principio Homil. I. in Tit. Εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἦν δοκιμος, οὐκ ἂν αὐτῷ τὴν νῆσον ὀλόκληρον, — τοσούτων ἐπισκόπων κρίσιν ἐπέτρεψεν. Idem Homil. XV. in 1 Tim. Ἐκκλησίαν ἦν ἔμπεπιστευμένος ὁ Τιμόθεος, ἢ καὶ ἔθνος ὀλόκληρον τὸ τῆς Ἀσίας.

CHAP. V.

OF THE POWERS WHICH BELONG TO THE CHURCH.

NO society can long subsist without power to do all things which are necessary to its own preservation and well-government; and therefore it having appeared, that the church is a society instituted by God, and designed to last till the world's end; there can be no doubt but that he has invested it with all the powers, which the nature of such a society requires. In treating on this argument, I shall endeavor to show :

First, The general nature and design of the powers which belong to the church.

Secondly, Who is the subject of these powers in general.

Thirdly, What these powers are, and to whom every one of them belongs in particular.

Fourthly, In what place the several persons, whom Christ has intrusted with these powers, are to exercise them.

I. *First,* The nature and design of the powers, which belong to the church, will best appear by considering the constitution of the church, and the ends for which it was founded : which having been formerly shown to be spiritual, and such as wholly relate to the next world ; it follows, that all the powers which belong to the church, are of the same

nature ; and consequently distinct from those of civil magistrates, which concern the affairs of this life, and are designed for the present welfare of human societies.

Our Lord himself wholly disclaimed all civil power, and left the civil rights of mankind in the same state wherein he found them. And when the apostles expressed their expectation of enjoying temporal power and dignity under him : he plainly told them, they must entertain no such hopes, and that in this world they should rather be servants than masters. And therefore when the apostle exhorts the Hebrews to yield obedience to their pastors, he restrains it to the affairs of their souls, for which their pastors were accountable to God : “ Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves ; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.”¹

And the primitive fathers, who speak the highest of the church’s authority, and raise the dignity of the christian priesthood to the utmost pitch, do nevertheless exclude from the church all civil jurisdiction, and all coercive compulsory power. Thus St. Chrysostom affirms, “ That the limits of the kingdom are entirely distinct from the limits of the priesthood : but the priesthood is greater than the kingdom : and we must not judge of the king by the gold and precious stones, wherewith he is adorned. The king’s province is to manage the affairs of the earth ; but the power of priests reaches heaven ; whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in

¹ Heb. viii. 17.

heaven. To the king are committed the things here below ; to me, the bishop, the things of heaven. The king is intrusted with men's bodies, but the priest with their souls. The king remits their debts of money, but the priest the debts of their sins. The king compels, the priest exhorts. The king governs by compulsion, the priest by counsel : the former hath sensible weapons ; the latter spiritual. The former wages war with the barbarians, we with devils : and this is the greater government."* In another place, where he shows that there is no just cause why any man should desire to be a bishop, he has these words : " Is it honour, or government, which allures thee ? But what pleasure canst thou find in this honour ? I truly do not see any. For a bishop is not truly a governor, since it lies in the subjects own power to obey him, or not. And if we rightly consider, we shall find that he rather takes upon him to serve many masters, whose inclinations and commands are contrary to one another,

* S. Chrysostomus Homil. IV. in verba Isaiaë, Vidi Dominum, &c. Vol. III. p. 872, 873. Edit. Front. Duc. " Ἄλλοι ὄροι βασιλείας, καὶ ἄλλοι ὄροι ἱερωσύνης· ἀλλ' αὐτὴ μείζων ἐκείνης· οὐ γὰρ ἀπο τῶν Φαινομένων φαίνεται βασιλεὺς, οὐδὲ ἀπὸ τῶν πεπηγμένων αὐτῶ λίθων, καὶ ἃν περιέκειται χρυσίαν, ὑφείλει κρῖνεσθαι ὁ βασιλεὺς· οὗτος μὲν γὰρ τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς ἔλαχεν οἰκονομεῖν· ὁ δὲ τῆς ἱερωσύνης θεσμῶς ἄνω κάθηται ὅσα ἂν δῆσῃ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ἔσται δεδεδεμένα ἐν τῶ οὐρανῷ· ὁ βασιλεὺς τὰ ἐνλαῦθα πεπίστευται, ἐγὼ τὰ οὐράνια. Εἰγὼ ὅταν εἶπω, τὸν ἱερέα λέγω. ΜΟΧ. Ὁ βασιλεὺς σώματα ἐμπειπίσειλαι, ὁ δὲ ἱερεὺς ψυχάς· ὁ βασιλεὺς λοιπάδας χρημάτων ἀφήσιν, ὁ δὲ ἱερεὺς λοιπάδας ἀμαρτημάτων· ἐκεῖνος ἀνασκάζει, αὐτὸς παρακαλεῖ· ἐκεῖνος ἀνάγκη, αὐτὸς γνώμη· ἐκεῖνος ὅπλα ἔχει αἰσθητὰ, αὐτὸς ὅπλα πνευματικά· ἐκεῖνος πολεμεῖ πρὸς βαρβάρους, ἐμοὶ πόλεμος πρὸς δαίμονας· μείζων ἢ ἀρχὴ αὐτῆς.

than to govern. Tell me then, is this honour? Is this government or power? The bishop requires one of his subjects to bring in his contribution of money: the subject, if he is unwilling, not only refuses to do it; but to save his own credit, raises calumnies against the bishop for requiring it of him. He steals, says the man, he robs, he devours the substance of the poor. Cease thy slanders. How long wilt thou speak in this manner? Art thou unwilling to bring in thy money? No man forces thee, no man compels thee.”* Where he manifestly denies the church to have any outward or compulsory power. And St. Jerom comparing kings and bishops, speaks in the same manner: “The king governs his subjects, whether they will, or not: the bishop governs none but the willing. One keeps them in subjection by fear, the other is no better than their servant. One holds men’s bodies in custody for death, the other keeps and preserves souls to life.”†

* Idem. Homil. I. in Tit. Vol. ult. p. 625, 626. Ἀλλὰ τιμῆς ἐφίεσαι καὶ ἀρχῆς; καὶ τίς ἡ ἡδονὴ ταύτης τῆς τιμῆς; οὐ γὰρ δὴ οὐδὲ τοῦτο ὀρέω· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶ δυνατὸν ἀρχοῦν εἶναι ἀληθῶς. πῶς; ὅτι ἐν τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ κεῖται τῶν ἀρχομένων τὸ ὑπακούειν, καὶ ἔτις ἀκριβῶς ἐξελάσειε τὸ πρᾶγμα, οὐκ ἐπὶ ἀρχὴν ἔρχεται ὁ τοιοῦτος, ἀλλὰ δουλεύει μυριοῖς δεσπότηαις ἐναντία καὶ ἐπιθυμοῦσι καὶ λέγουσιν· Μοχ. Τοῦτο οὖν, εἰπέ μοι, τιμὴ; τοῦτο ἀρχή; τοῦτο ἐξουσία; εἶπεν ὁ τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν ἔχων, εἰσενεγκεῖν χρῆματα· ἂν μὴ θέλῃ, οὐ μόνον οὐκ εἰσήνεκεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑπερ τοῦ μὴ δόξαι ῥαθυμίας ἕνεκεν τοῦτο ποιεῖν, κατηγορεῖ τοῦ κελεύσαντος. κλέπτει, φησὶν, ἀρπάζει, καλαπίνει τὰ τῶν πενήτων, καλεσθεῖ τὰ τῶν πτωχῶν. παῦσαι λοιδορᾶν· μέχρι τίνος ταῦτα φῆς; οὐ βούλει εἰσενεγκεῖν, οὐδεὶς ὁ κατανασκάζων, οὐδεὶς βιαζόμενος.

† Hieronymus Epitaph. Nepotiani, cap. vii. Ille (rex) enim nolentibus præest, hic volentibus; ille terrore subjicit, hic servituti donatur; ille corpora custodit ad mortem, hic animas servat ad vitam.

Many other things may be observed on this argument, some of which have already been mentioned in the first chapter of this discourse, where the church was shown to be a spiritual society ; and the rest shall be reserved till we come to compare the powers of the church and state with one another : and therefore let us now proceed to consider,

II. Secondly, who is the subject of these powers. And since it has already appeared, that God has appointed officers to govern his church, it follows by plain and necessary consequence, that the powers which he has committed to the church for its well-government, must ordinarily be executed by them. For every office implies power ; and to say, that the officers of the church have no power, but what all private christians may lawfully exercise, is all one as to say, there are no such officers.

And as there are distinct offices, so there must be distinct powers appropriated to every one of them. For as the notion of an office implies power, so distinct offices do necessarily infer distinct powers. And therefore, though the Scriptures had been silent in this matter, we might safely have concluded from the different kinds of officers, whom Christ hath intrusted with the care and government of his church, not only that private christians are excluded from the ordinary execution of any ecclesiastical power ; but that some powers are appropriated in such a manner to the chief officers, that they cannot lawfully be exercised by those of lower orders.

If in any civil government private men, who have no authority from the chief governor, should take upon them the management of public affairs ; or

subordinate magistrates should transgress the limits of their several charges, and invade the prerogatives and jurisdiction which belong to their superiors, such confusion would follow, as would soon destroy the whole constitution. And though the fatal consequences of private men usurping any public authority, may not always appear so visibly in the church as it does in the state; because many of them are of a spiritual nature, and such as will only be known in their full extent, when we come into the next world; yet as the church is a society no less orderly and regular in its constitution, than any temporal kingdom whatever; so this usurpation is equally inconsistent with the well-government and design of this spiritual, as it is of that of any civil society. Nay farther, as the honour of God, and the eternal happiness of men are more directly and immediately concerned in whatever befalls the church, than they are in what happens to the civil government, whose chief end is to promote and secure our present interests in the world; so any confusion or disorder, which happens in the church, may justly be reckoned far more displeasing to God, and dangerous to the authors of it, than the disorders which happen in the state. But let us examine what account the Scriptures have given us of this matter.

And it may be here remembered, that in the last chapter, the officers of the church were described from our Lord's own account of them, to be God's stewards, who are intrusted with the care and government of his household, that is, his church; and whose business and duty it is to dispense their constant food, whereby is meant the word and sacra-

ments, to all the members of it. Where it is plainly supposed, that private christians have no power to dispense the ordinances of the gospel to others, but must themselves expect them from the hands of God's ministers. And the names of apostles and angels, with several others, whereby the officers of the church were distinguished from other christians in the apostolic age, do manifestly imply, that they acted by a commission from God, which the rest had no title to.

We are farther told in express terms, that no man taketh this honour of being an officer in God's church to himself, but only he can claim it, who is called and commissioned by God, as was Aaron.¹ Nay, that even our Lord, who was God as well as man, "glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but he who said unto him, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee."² Accordingly, we find in the gospels, that he lived privately, and assumed no part of that office, which he came into the world to execute, till he had first been solemnly anointed to it, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, as hath been already shown.*

Neither did he reckon it sufficient to instruct the apostles by preaching to them whilst he lived on earth, and afterwards by sending upon them the Holy Spirit; but besides this, he solemnly called and set them apart, and invested them with a peculiar authority, before they presumed to undertake their office. And we find that St. Paul does often

¹ Heb. v. 4. ² Ib. ver. 5.

* Chap. ii.

insist on this mission from Christ, and demands attention and obedience on that account.¹

It may be farther observed, that the gifts or abilities of church officers are every where through the whole New Testament distinguished from their commission, and described as previous qualifications to it. Not only bishops and presbyters are required to have several qualifications, and to give sufficient proof of them, and after that to wait for a commission, before they presume to govern the church;² but even the deacons, however endued with natural and spiritual abilities, could not assume their office, which was the lowest of any in the church, till they had been approved and authorised by the apostles, or others invested with apostolic authority. Hence we are told, that the apostles directed the people to look out seven men full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, whom we (say they) may appoint.³ They were antecedently distinguished from the rest by their eminent virtues and abilities, and Stephen, one of their number, is said in particular to be a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost; yet they were not permitted to exercise this least of all ecclesiastical ministries, till the apostle had ordained them by prayer and laying on of hands.⁴ And St. Paul thus directs Timothy concerning the appointment of deacons: "Let these also first be proved, then let them use the office of a deacon."⁵ Whence it is manifest, that no qualifications whatever are sufficient to empower any man to exercise any function

¹ Rom. i. 1. 1 Cor. i. 1. ix. 1. Gal. i. 15, 16. ² 1 Tim. iii Tit. 1.

³ Acts vi. 3. ⁴ Verse 5, 6. ⁵ 1 Tim. iii. 10.

or office in the church, who has not been first approved and commissioned by those whom God has invested with authority to that end.

And how displeasing it is to God for any man to assume any office in the church without his commission, we may learn from the example of king Saul; who at a time when no priest could be procured to make his peace with God, just when the Philistines were preparing to fall upon him, and his own people being sensible of his distressed condition, began to desert him, forced himself, and offered a burnt offering. The consequence whereof may be read in the sentence, which Samuel pronounced upon him: "And Samuel said unto Saul, thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue."¹ We have another remarkable instance in king Uzziah, who was immediately stricken with an incurable leprosy, which made him incapable to govern his kingdom any longer, for presuming to offer incense.² These are examples, wherein they who had no ecclesiastical function, took upon them the sacerdotal office: let us now examine, how it fared with inferior ministers, when any of them usurped the offices appropriated to those of an higher order. And this may be understood from what is said of the Kohathites, whose office it was to bear the ark of God, that if they presumed to touch, or but to look

¹ 1 Sam. xiii. 11, 12, 13. ² 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—21.

upon the holy things within the ark, the care whereof belonged to the family of Aaron, they were to die.¹ Insomuch that when Uzzah put forth his hand, and took hold of it, to save it from falling, the anger of the Lord was kindled against him, and God smote him there for his error, and there he died by the ark of God.² And to mention only one instance more, when Corah and his confederates took upon them the sacerdotal office, "the Lord made a new thing, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained to them."³ Indeed, under the christian economy, they who violate the laws of God, are seldom punished in a visible and miraculous way: but then they are reserved to the future judgment of God, which, though it is more distant, and consequently less apt to affect unthinking men, is no less certain, and if duly considered, far more terrible, than any punishment inflicted in this life. And as the offices of the christian church are of divine appointment as well as those of the jewish; and as much more sacred and honourable than they, as the substance is preferable to its own type, or shadow; so they who usurp these offices, though their punishment may not be so sudden, will undoubtedly find themselves in a worse condition in the next life, which is the proper season of punishment for offences against the gospel, than those who invaded the rights of the jewish priesthood.

¹ Numb. iv. 12, 13. ² 2 Sam. vi. 6. 7. 1 Chron. xiii. 9, 10.

³ Numb. xvi. 30, 32.

This may suffice in general to show, that God has strictly appropriated the ordinary exercise of the ecclesiastical powers to the officers of his church in their respective stations. What I have to add farther on this argument, comes now to be spoken under the next general head of this chapter, where I propounded to show :

III. *Thirdly*, What are the powers of the church, and to whom each of them belongs in particular. And they may be reduced under the following heads, viz. The power, 1. Of preaching. 2. Of praying. 3. Of baptizing. 4. Of confirming persons baptized. 5. Of celebrating the Lord's supper. 6. Of ordaining ministers. 7. Of making canons. 8. Of jurisdiction. 9. Of demanding maintenance.

1. The first of these powers, is that of preaching the gospel, which naturally precedes all the rest, because it is the means which God has been pleased to appoint for converting men to the christian faith, in order to bring them into his church, where the other powers are exercised. And if we examine those accounts which the Scriptures give us of the exercise of this power, we shall find first of all, that our Lord himself was sent and commissioned by God to preach the gospel ;¹ and that this was one of the functions to which he was anointed by the Holy Spirit, as was before observed.* In like manner he solemnly called and set apart his apostles to this office :² and whereas they were only sent to the jews, whilst our Lord lived here on earth ; having

¹ Luke iv. 18. * Chap. ii. ² Mark iii. 14. vi. 7.

himself received all power in heaven and in earth after his resurrection, he enlarged their commissions, and authorised them to teach all nations,¹ or, as the same thing is expressed by another evangelist, to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.² In pursuance of which commission, they went forth, and preached every where.³

This they describe as one of the principal parts of their apostolic office. St. Paul expressly gives it the preference to baptism : “ Christ, says he, sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.”⁴ Not that he was not intrusted with authority to baptize, but that his chief business was to preach, as was before shown.* In another place he affirms, “ that necessity was laid upon him, yea, wo is unto me, says he, if I preach not the gospel.”⁵ And in his valedictory charge to the bishops of Ephesus, “ I am pure, says he, from the blood of all men : for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”⁶ Manifestly implying, that he should have been guilty of destroying both them, and the people committed to their care, if he had not fully preached the gospel to them. So that nothing can be more certain, than that preaching was an essential part of the apostolic office.

The same appears to have been derived to their successors, the bishops. Hence St. Paul gives the following solemn charge to Timothy, whom he appointed to exercise episcopal authority at Ephesus : “ I charge thee, says he, before God, and the Lord

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19. ² Mark xvi. 15. ³ Verse 20. ⁴ 1 Cor. i. 18.
* Chap. iii. ⁵ 1 Cor. ix. 16. ⁶ Acts xx. 26, 27.

Jesus, to preach the word, to be instant in season, and out of season."¹ A great part of the second and third chapters of his epistle to Titus, are taken up in enumerating the particular duties, which he exhorts him to inculcate upon the Cretians, whose bishop he had made him. And one previous qualification, which this apostle requires of such as were to be ordained bishops, is, "that they be apt to teach;"² and, that they hold fast the faithful word, that they may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort, and to convince the gainsayers."³

How faithfully this part of the episcopal office was discharged by the primitive bishops in the christian congregations, may be learned from the account which Justin Martyr has given of the christian assemblies in his time: "Upon Sunday, says he, all the christians come together both out of the city and country, and after a sufficient portion of the apostolical or prophetic writings has been read, the president makes a sermon, wherein he admonishes and exhorts them to follow the good examples, or precepts which have been read to them."^{*} In the same manner St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, to mention no more examples, preached every Sunday, as we are informed by St. Augustin, who was one of his auditors.†

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. ² 1 Tim. iii. 2. ³ Tit. i. 9.

* Justini M. Apol. I. cap. lxxxvii. p. 131. Edit. Oxon. τῆ τοῦ ἡλίου λεβόμενῃ ἡμέρᾳ, πάντων κατὰ πόλεις ἢ ἀγροὺς συνήλθον ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ συνέλευσις γίνεται, καὶ τὰ ἀποικημοσιεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων, ἢ τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν προφητῶν ἀναγινώσκεται μέχρις ἐξωραεῖ· εἶτα πάντα μίσην τοῦ ἀναγιγνωσκόντος, ὁ προσεστὸς διὰ λόγου τῆν νοθεσίαν καὶ πρὸ κλησιν τῆς τῶν καλῶν τούτων μιμητικῆς ποιεῖται.

† Confess. lib. VI. cap. iii.

Indeed, the bishop being the chief steward of our Lord's household, that is, the chief pastor of the church under Christ, is principally concerned, that all the members of the church have their portion of food, to use our Lord's expression, in due season; that is, that they be timely instructed in all things necessary for them to know. And it may do well to observe here, what must be remembered under several of the following heads, that the plenitude of power, which is communicated to inferior ministers by parts, according to their respective orders, is wholly and altogether lodged in the bishop; so that whatever duty is incumbent on any inferior minister, does in a more eminent manner belong to him.

The presbyters are admitted to a sort of co-partnership in the care of the church with their bishop, and are described both in the Scriptures and the primitive fathers, as his assistants in feeding the flock of Christ; and therefore there is no doubt, but the power of preaching belongs to their office. Accordingly we find in the Scriptures, that Silas and other prophets, whose order was inferior to that of apostles, preached as well in the christian assemblies, as to the gentiles. And several persons, who are allowed not to have been apostles, are called by St. Paul his fellow labourers, and fellow soldiers, that is, his associates in preaching the gospel, as was before shown.* In the primitive ages it was customary in some places, after the reading of the Scripture, which was constantly done in all christian assemblies, for some of the presbyters, one after

* Chap. III.

another, and last of all the bishop to make a sermon to the people. This method is prescribed by the apostolical constitution.* It appears from several of St. Chrysostom's homilies, which were pronounced whilst he was a presbyter at Antioch, that Flavianus, the bishop of that city, was to preach after him. And we are told by Socrates,† that in the island of Cyprus, and in Cæsarea of Cappadocia, it was customary for the presbyters and bishop to expound the Scriptures to the people every Sabbath, and every Lord's day. St. Jerom commends this method, which he derives from the apostolic age, wherein it was the custom for several preachers to speak in the same assembly, as appears from that passage of the first epistle to the Corinthians : ye may all prophesy one by one :¹ yet he says, that in some churches the presbyters were not allowed to preach in their bishop's presence, which custom he very much blames.‡ However, it seems to have prevailed in many churches, especially those in Africa. For Optatus, bishop of Milevis, expressly affirms, that none but bishops used to preach.§ In

* Lib. II. cap. lviii. p. 263. edit. Cleric. *Καὶ ἐξῆς παρακαλεῖ-
τῶσαν οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τὸν λαὸν ὁ καθεὶς αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἅπαντες, καὶ
τελευταῖος πάντων ὁ ἐπίσκοπος, ὃς ἔοικε κυβερνήτη.*

† Eccles. Hist. lib. V. cap. xxii.

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 31.

‡ Hieronymus Epist. ad Nepotianum, cap. ix. *Pessimæ consuetudinis est in quibusdam Ecclesiis, tacere Presbyteros, & præsentibus Episcopis non loqui : Quasi aut invideant, aut non dignentur audire. Et si alii, inquit Apostolus Paulus, fuerit revelatum sedenti, prior taceat. Potestis enim per singulos Prophetare, &c.*

§ Sub finem operis adv. Donatistas : *Et locutum esse Macarum aliquid in populo constat, sed insinuandi alicujus rei causa, non tamen tractandi, quod est Episcoporum.*

the church of Hippo, St. Augustine, whilst he was only a presbyter, was desired to preach by Valerius the bishop who was a foreigner, and could not speak so as the people could readily understand him; whereas before that time, presbyters had never preached there, when the bishop was present. This change was then defended by the practice of the eastern churches, where the presbyters commonly preached in their bishops' presence; and the rest of the African bishops soon after introduced it into their churches.* In Alexandria the presbyters were anciently allowed to preach, but when Arius and his adherents took that opportunity to propagate their heretical doctrines among the people, a general order was made, that all the presbyters of that church should desist from preaching.† *Lastly,* There are teaching presbyters (doctors) spoken of in several other churches, by way of distinction from other presbyters, who did not exercise this office of public teaching.‡ Whence it is manifest, that preaching was reckoned to be chiefly the bishop's office, yet not so appropriated to him, but that presbyters were often allowed to perform it, even when the bishop himself was present.

But then, since this function of preaching was not a constant part of the presbyter's office, we may conclude that it was not always committed to deacons. And since the deacons are not ordained to be pastors of the flock of Christ, but only to minister to the

* Possidius vit. St. Augustini.

† Socrates Lib. V. cap. xxi. Sozomenus Lib. VII. cap. xix.

‡ Conf. Dodwelli Dissert. Cyprianic. VI. quæ agit de Presbyteris Doctoribus.

pastors,* preaching in the public congregation, which does inseparably accompany the cure of souls, cannot properly be any part of their office. It may be observed, that in St. Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus, where it is required, that they who are ordained bishops, should be apt to teach, no such qualification is expected in deacons. And in the above-mentioned passage of the apostolical constitutions, where bishops and presbyters are directed to preach, all which is prescribed to be done by deacons, is only to read the gospel. And the author of the commentary on the apostle's epistles, which bears the name of St. Ambrose, expressly affirms, that in his time, which was in the latter part of the fourth century, as appears by his mentioning Damasus as then bishop of Rome,† deacons were not allowed to preach.‡ However, though it was not properly any part of the deacon's office to preach, yet as they were not ordained to be ministers of meats and drinks, but of the church, to use the words of St. Ignatius,§ so they were often commissioned by their bishop to exercise this function, when any of them were found sufficiently qualified for it. Which is nothing but what may be defended by many examples in the Scriptures. The seventy disciples, whom our Lord sent forth to preach, were of the lowest rank of ministers. Philip, who was only a deacon,

* Constitut. Apost. Lib. IV. sub finem cap. ult. Lib. VIII. cap. xxviii.

† Comment. in 1 Tim. iii.

‡ Comment. in Ephes. iv.

§ Principio Epist. ad Trullianer. Conf. Cypriani Epist. ad Rogasianum.

and could not confer the gifts of the Holy Spirit, preached in Samaria, and other places. And lastly, the evangelists and teachers, who are often spoken of in the Acts and epistles, were inferior both to the apostles and prophets, and consequently were of the third and lowest order; and yet one part of their business was to preach, as hath been shown in one of the former chapters.* And therefore it has never been doubted, but that deacons may be deputed by the bishops to preach.

But what remains chiefly to be inquired, is, whether laymen, who have attained a competent knowledge of the christian religion, may take upon them this office of preaching without any particular call or commission?

And here it is not doubted, but that private christians may instruct and admonish one another in their private conversation: happy were it for themselves and the church, if they would thus employ the time, which is too often spent in vain, unprofitable, and sinful discourses. And farther, it is the duty of every christian, and especially theirs, whom God has raised to any station of authority, to contribute whatever lies in their power, to engage others to the profession and practice of the true religion; and consequently, they must endeavour this by their words, as well as by their actions.

Neither is it disputed, whether the same duties which are enjoined in the Scriptures, may not be openly explained by the civil magistrate. For the same things which are prescribed by our Lord in

* Chap. iii.

the gospel, may be made the subject matter of civil laws, and enforced by civil sanctions ; and it cannot be doubted, but that they whom God has intrusted with authority to make laws, have authority to explain them when they are made.

But the question is, whether laymen may take upon them the office of preaching the gospel of Christ in public congregations of christians ? And it is certain in the first place, that this is one part of the cure of souls, and therefore belongs of right to those persons whom Christ has intrusted with the care and government of the flock. Consequently, when laymen take upon them this office of public preaching, they usurp the province of other men : And if it were once generally allowed, either in this spiritual, or in any civil society, for men thus to invade one another's functions and rights ; it is easy to see what confusion would ensue. So that if there were no other reason, why laymen should not take upon them to preach, but this, that our Lord has set apart an order of men to that office, this alone would be sufficient.

But farther, it is expressly affirmed, that no man, how great soever his abilities are, shall presume to preach without being lawfully commissioned. “ How then shall they call, saith St. Paul, on him in whom they have not believed ? And how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard ? And how shall they hear without a preacher ? And how shall they preach except they be sent ?”¹ Which questions being an emphatical denial of the things called into

¹ Rom. x. 14. 15.

question, to preach the gospel without being sent. is manifestly reckoned as impossible in a Christian or moral sense, as it is in a natural sense for a man to believe what he never heard, or to hear what was never preached, or spoken to him. Accordingly, neither our Lord nor his apostles began to preach, till they were particularly commissioned to do it, as was before observed. And preachers or teachers are spoken of in the Scriptures, as men invested with a particular office. Thus we are told, that when Christ ascended on high, he gave to his church several officers, among whom teachers are reckoned.¹ In the church of Antioch there are said to be, beside private christians, prophets and teachers.² And in other places this name of teachers, and the work of teaching, or preaching, are generally appropriated to persons commissioned by God.

Hence the ministers of Christ are called ambassadors, and said to speak in the name of God and Christ. "God hath committed to us," saith St. Paul, "the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."³ Hence there are many warnings of the danger of despising or neglecting those who come with this character; as well as express precepts both to attend to their message, and to honour their persons for their works' sake. When our Lord first sent forth the twelve apostles to preach, he told them for their encouragement, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that re-

¹ Eph. iv. 8, 11.

² Acts xiii. 1.

³ 2 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

ceiveth me, receiveth him that sent me;” with many other expressions to the same purpose.¹ To the seventy he said in like manner: “He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.”² And lest any man should limit this to those who were sent by our Lord himself, as some have done without the least colour of reason for it, St. Paul gives this charge concerning Timothy: “If Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear, for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do: let no man therefore despise him.”³ To the same purpose, “we beseech you, brethren,” says he to the Thessalonians, “to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you: and to esteem them very highly in love for their works’ sake.”⁴ And to the Hebrews: “obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account.”⁵ Hence not only St. Paul speaks to the christians under his care in a style of command, as was formerly shown,* but other bishops and pastors may do so too. And preaching the gospel in the scriptural notion implies the preacher’s authority over the persons to whom he preaches. Hence St. Paul says to Titus: “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority.”⁶ Which had been very improper, if the people had not been obliged to obey him. For the same reason he for-

¹ Matt. x. ² Luke x. 16. ³ 1 Cor. xvi. 10. ⁴ 1 Thes. v. 12, 13. ⁵ Heb. xiii. 17. * Chap. III. ⁶ Tit. ii. 15.

bids women, how well soever qualified to teach in the christian assemblies: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience."¹ Where this public teaching is manifestly supposed inconsistent with the subjection and obedience which women owe to men. In another place he expressly calls it usurping authority: I suffer not a woman to teach, says he, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.² Women may privately instruct not only their own sex, and their children, as they are elsewhere required to do, but also men: the believing wife is encouraged by St. Paul to endeavour the conversion of her unbelieving husband.³ And we find that Apollos was instructed in the way of God by Priscilla.⁴ But in the public congregation where the preacher speaks in God's name to the people, women, whom nature has made subject to men, must be silent. Whereas, if nothing was required to authorise any person to preach, beside ability to instruct others, there is no reason why such women as have competent learning and eloquence, might not preach as well as men. *Lastly*, It may be added, to show that preaching implies authority, that they whose office it is to preach, that is, bishops and priests, have power to inflict punishments on those christians, who refuse to obey them: but this will be proved in the following part of this chapter. And therefore I shall now proceed to

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 3. ² 1 Tim. ii. 12. ³ 1 Cor. vii. 16. ⁴ Acts xviii. 16.

consider some objections against what has been here asserted.

Some have objected, that St. Paul tells the Corinthians, they may all prophesy.¹ But this cannot be applied with the least colour of reason to any but those who had the gift of prophesy. For the whole design of this chapter is to treat of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; and both the words which immediately precede this passage, and those which follow it, do manifestly relate to persons miraculously inspired: let the prophets, says he, speak two or three, and let the rest judge: if any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.² Then it follows: for ye may all prophecy one by one.³ And again in the next verse; the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.⁴ Which words cannot be understood of any, but those who had extraordinary revelations from the Spirit of God: and consequently, all who are said to prophesy, are not the whole church of Corinth, but only all of that church who were miraculously inspired. Indeed it is probable, these persons were not ordained ministers, and therefore had not the same ordinary commission, whereby the present ministers of the church are authorised to preach: but then their divine inspiration was a plenary commission: and it is all one to our present argument, whether they were commissioned by imposition of the apostle's hands, which was the ordinary way of sending men to preach, or by a miraculous call from God.

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 31. ² Verse 29. 30. ³ Ibid. 31. ⁴ Ibid. 32.

Others object, that after Stephen's martyrdom, when there was a great persecution against the church, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles,¹ it is said, they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word.² And some of them travelled as far as Phœnice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word: and the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.³ Where we find, that all, except the apostles, left Jerusalem; and they who left Jerusalem preached the gospel, with God's manifest approbation: consequently, private christians were then allowed to preach. And this objection may be farther strengthened by the testimony of the commentary ascribed to St. Ambrose, where it is said that at first all christians preached.* But to this it may be replied:

First, That all, who are said to have been scattered, must not be taken in a strict sense for every member of the church of Jerusalem; both because it is highly improbable, that all the christians without any exception, should fly from their native country at once, which they were never known to do in any other of the heaviest persecutions; and because the very next chapter speaks of brethren and disciples, distinct from the apostles, who resided at Jerusalem.⁴ So that all may perhaps only mean the deacons, and other men of note in the church, who preached to the people, and consequently were

¹ Acts viii. 1. ² Verse 4. ³ Acts xi. 19, 21. * In Eph. iy.
⁴ Acts ix. 26, 27, 30.

most in danger of the persecution, which always begins with the ministers. And it is plain from the verses immediately following, that one of these, who planted the gospel in Samaria, was Philip the deacon and evangelist.¹

Secondly, Though we suppose all the christians without exception, to have been scattered from Jerusalem, there is not the least proof, that every one of these preached the gospel: for whatever is said of preaching in the fore-mentioned passage, may fairly be applied to such of the dispersed christians, as had an ordinary, or miraculous call to that office. Or should it be granted, that most of these who were scattered abroad, or even all of them, preached the gospel, how does it appear, they were not inspired by the Holy Ghost, which was conferred in an extraordinary manner, on a very great part of the first converts to christianity?

Lastly, Though we suppose that these preachers, or some of them, had no particular commission to preach, which cannot be proved, yet this may very easily be reconciled with what has been said. For it is one thing to explain and confirm by reasons and testimonies the christian faith to unbelievers or others, with whom we happen to converse, which is all these men appear to have done; and another to assume the office of preaching in a settled congregation of christians. St. Peter's advice extends to all christians, laymen as well as clergy: "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope which is in you."² And

¹ Acts viii. 5. ² 1 Pet. iii. 15.

it is certain that not only laymen, but even women, as was before shown, are obliged to convert as many to the true religion as they can. But then to officiate in an established church, and to enforce the duties of religion in the name of Christ, belongs only to those who are authorised by his special commission. And though the conversions here spoken of, be supposed to have been made by private christians, it will not follow that they assumed the office of preaching in the congregations of their own converts, longer than till regular ministers could be sent: for when tidings of these things, that is, of the before-mentioned conversions, came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas, who was an inspired prophet, to take care of the new converts: Barnabas took with him Saul, who was also a prophet: and beside these, there were other prophets and teachers, manifestly distinct from private christians, who ministered to the Lord, with them.¹ The same may be farther proved and explained by several other examples in the primitive ages, where laymen having made conversions, they themselves or others were afterwards ordained to officiate among the new converts. When Athanasius was bishop of Alexandria, Frumentius and Ædesius, two laymen, converted some of the Indians: after which Frumentius coming to Alexandria, was ordained bishop, and then returned to officiate in his new raised church, which he presumed not to do without ordination.* And in the same age, the

¹ Acts xii. 22, 26. xiii. 1, 2.

* Theodoret. Eccles. Hist. Lib. I. cap. xxiii.

Iberians, having been converted by a captive maid, sent to Constantine, the Roman emperor, for ordained ministers to preach and perform other religious offices among them.* Whence it is manifest, that a distinction was made between converting unbelievers, and preaching in christian assemblies; and consequently, that though we should allow private christians to have made great conversions in their first dispersion from Jerusalem, it does not follow that they took upon them the office of preaching, as before explained.

Yet it must not be concealed, that there were some early examples of laymen preaching in the church, as will appear by the following relation which we find in Eusebius; who reports, “That Origen happening to come from Egypt to Cæsarea in Palestine, was desired by the bishops of that country to preach, and to expound the Scriptures publicly in the church, before he was ordained presbyter. Which appears from the defence which Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, and Theoctistus, bishop of Cæsarea, made for themselves, when Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, wrote to them, that it was a thing never heard of in former times, nor then practised, that laymen should preach in the presence of bishops. To this they replied; that he was manifestly in the wrong, there having been several instances of laymen, whom the holy bishops, finding them qualified to instruct the brethren, desired to preach to the congregation. So Euelpis preached to the Larandians at the request of Neon, Paulinus

* Ibidem, cap. xxiv.

at Inconium, being desired by Celsus ; and Theodorus at Synada, at the desire of Atticus. And it is probable, that the same is done in other places, though we do not know it.* And in the apostolical constitutions, St. Paul is introduced allowing “Laymen who are skilful in speaking, and of honest conversation, to teach.”† Whence it may be observed, *First*, That it was not common for laymen to preach, since the bishop of Alexandria in the third century, had never heard any example of it ; and the other bishops, who were concerned to defend their having permitted Origen to preach, by as many examples as they could, produce only three, and seem to confess they know of no more. *Secondly*, That this was not done without a special license obtained from the bishop. So that all that can be inferred hence, is, that some in the third

* Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. xix. ΕΛΘΩΝ ΕΠΙ ΠΑΛΑΙΣΤΙΝΗΣ, ΕΝ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑ ΤΑΣ ΔΙΑΛΕΙΘΙΑΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΙΤΟ· ΕΝΘΑ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΑΛΕΪΣΘΑΙ, ΤΑΣ ΤΕ ΘΕΙΑΣ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΥΕΙΝ ΓΡΑΦΑΣ ΕΠΙ ΤΟΥ ΚΟΙΝΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΟΙ ΤΗΔΕ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΙ, ΚΑΙ ΤΟΙ ΤΗΣ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΙΟΥ ΧΕΙΡΟΝΟΜΙΑΣ ΟΥΔ' ΕΠΑ ΤΕΙΛΥΧΗΚΟΤΑ ΑΥΤΟΝ ΗΞΙΟΥΝ· Ο ΚΑΙ ΑΥΤΟ ΓΕΝΟΙΤ' Α' ΕΚΔΗΛΟΝ, ΑΦ' ΩΝ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥΤΟΥ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΕΙΩ ΓΡΑΦΟΝΤΕΣ, ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ Ο ΙΕΡΟΣΟΛΥΜΩΝ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΟΚΛΙΣΤΟΣ Ο ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑΣ, ΩΔΕ ΠΩΣ ΑΠΟΛΟΓΟΥΝΤΑΙ. ΠΡΟΣΕΔΗΚΕ ΔΕ ΤΟΙΣ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΣΙΝ, ΟΤΙ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΟΥΔ' ΕΠΟΣΕ ΗΚΟΥΣΘΗ, ΟΥΔΕ ΝΥΝ ΓΕΓΕΝΗΤΑΙ, ΤΟ, ΠΑΡΟΝΤΑΝ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΩΝ ΛΑΙΚΟΥΣ ΟΜΙΛΕΙΝ· ΟΥΚ ΟΙΔ' ΟΠΩΣ ΠΡΟΦΑΝΩΣ ΟΥΚ ΑΛΗΘΗ ΛΕΓΩΝ· ΟΠΟΥ ΓΟΥΝ ΕΥΡΙΣΚΟΝΤΑΙ ΟΙ ΕΠΙΗΔΕΙΟΙ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΑΦΕΛΕΙΝ ΤΟΥΣ ΑΔΕΛΦΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΡΑΚΑΛΟΥΝΤΑΙ ΤΩ ΛΑΩ ΠΡΟΣΟΜΙΛΕΙΝ, ΥΠΟ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΩΝ, ΩΣΠΕΡ ΕΝ ΛΑΡΑΝΔΟΙΣ ΕΥΪΛΠΙΣ ΥΠΟ ΝΕΑΝΟΣ, ΚΑΙ ΕΝ ΙΚΟΝΙΑ ΠΑΥΛΙΝΟΣ ΥΠΟ ΚΕΛΣΟΥ, ΚΑΙ ΕΝ ΣΥΝΑΔΟΙΣ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ ΥΠΟ ΑΤΤΙΚΟΥ, ΤΩΝ ΜΑΚΚΑΡΙΑΝ ΑΔΕΛΦΩΝ· ΕΙΚΟΣ ΔΕ ΚΑΙ ΕΝ ΑΛΛΟΙΣ ΤΟΠΟΙΣ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΓΙΝΕΣΘΑΙ, ΗΜΑΣ ΔΕ ΜΗ ΕΙΔΕΝΑΙ.

† Apostolic. Constit. Lib. VIII. cap. xxxii. Ο ΔΙΔΑΣΚΩΝ ΕΙ ΚΑΙ ΛΑΪΚΟΣ ἢ, ἔμπειρος δὲ τοῦ λόγου, καὶ τὸν τρόπον σεμνός, διδασκέτω. Conf. Concilii Carthaginensis IV. Can. 98. Leonis Pope Epist. LXII. and LXIII.

century believed it lawful for the bishops to allow laymen, whom they found qualified, to instruct the people.

2. Another religious act, which has always been appropriated to the clergy, is offering to God the prayers of the church. In secret every man is his own orator, and in private families the performance of divine worship is incumbent on them, to whom the care and government of the families belong ; but in the public congregation of christians, divine worship must be celebrated only by those, to whom it has pleased God to commit this office.

And if nothing be regarded beside the decent and orderly performance of this duty, this alone would make it necessary that the priest should be the mouth of the congregation. Otherwise it is not possible, that when christians meet together, they should have one prayer, and one supplication, as Ignatius directs,* and the design of public worship requires ; there being no way for a congregation to join in one prayer, but by attending to one speaker. And for whom can it be so proper to preside in public prayers, as for those whom God has authorised to govern his church, and to officiate in all other parts of divine service ?

But it must be considered farther, that to present the people's prayers to God, and to intercede with him to bless them, has always been reckoned an essential part of the sacerdotal office. Thus it was all over the heathen world,† as well as in the jewish

* Epist. ad Magnes. cap. vii. *Ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ μία προσευχὴ, μία ἕξις.*

† Conf. Archæologia Græc. Lib. II. cap. iii.

church.¹ And it seems to have been an universal notion, that the priests are intercessors between God and men, who communicate the laws of God, and impart his blessing to the people; and on the other side, convey the people's devotion to God. Whence Philo observes of the jewish high priest, "That the law required him to be raised above human nature, to a proximity with God, that being placed, as it were, in a middle station, between God and man, he may supplicate God in the behalf of men, and convey to men the graces of God."* And our Lord's intercession is reckoned a principal part of his sacerdotal office: whence we are told, that he is entered into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us:² that he intercedes for us at the right hand of God:³ and that, if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ.⁴ Indeed this prevalent intercession of Christ is made by pleading to God the merit of his death; and in like manner the jewish high priest interceded for the people's sins, by presenting to God the blood of sacrificed victims.⁵ Consequently the christian presbyter, who has no new propitiatory sacrifice to offer, cannot perform this act of the sacerdotal office in the very same manner, wherein it was executed by other priests: but then he prays for the christian

¹ Num. vi. 23. Chron. xxx. 27.

* Philo Judæus, Lib. II. de Monarchia. page. 828. Edit. Paris. Βούλειαι γὰρ αὐτὸν νόμος μείζονος μεμοιρᾶσθαι φύσεως, ἢ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον. ἐγὼ γὰρ προσιόνα της θείας, μεθόριον, εἰ δεῖ τᾶλληθῆς λέγειν, ἀμφοῖν· ἵνα διὰ μέσου τινὸς ἄνθρωποι μὲν ἰλάσκωνται θεόν, θεὸς δὲ πᾶς χάριτας ἀνθρώποις υποδιακόνω τινι χρώμενος ὀρέγη καὶ χορηγή.

² Heb. ix. xxiv. ³ Rom. viii. 34. ⁴ 1 John ii. 1. ⁵ Heb. ix. 7, 11, 17.

congregation in the name of Christ, whose meritorious sacrifice he is authorised to represent and plead to God, with infinitely greater success, than could be done upon any new and distinct oblation. So that the christian priests are so far from being inferior to those of the jews in this part of the sacerdotal office, that they rather excel them.

And this has always been reckoned one chief duty of the sacerdotal office in the christian church. The apostles join the offices of prayer and preaching together: we, say they, will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.¹ Several other duties were incumbent on them, but these two are particularly mentioned, as the principal, and those which required their most constant attendance. The prophets and teachers at Antioch,² are said *λειβαρῆσιν τῷ Κυρίῳ*, to minister to the Lord and fast: where ministering to the Lord, is meant of praying, as appears not only because it is joined with fasting, but also because this and the like expressions are commonly used in that sense. St. James directs sick persons to send for the presbyters of the church to pray and intercede for them,³ with a promise of success, and having their sins forgiven. And the twenty-four elders in the revelation, who represent the ministers of the christian church, have every one of them golden vials, full of incense, which is the prayers of the saints.⁴ Which is an allusion to that incense which was offered by the jewish priests, and mystically signified the prayers of the people.⁵ So that what was mystically offered by

¹ Acts vi. 4.

² Ib. xiii. 2.

³ Jam. v. 14.

⁴ Rev. v. 3.

⁵ Luke i. 10.

the jewish priests, is here intimated to be literally presented to God by the christian.

In the next ages after the apostles, the priest constantly presided in public prayers, as well as other religious offices. Indeed this difference seems to have been commonly observed between the ordinary prayers of the congregation, and the solemn prayers of ordination, consecration of the eucharist, and others, wherein the bishop or presbyter exercised any peculiar act of his authority: that in these latter, the minister alone pronounced the prayer, which being ended, the people answered, amen: whereas in the former, they repeated (*κοινῇ πάντες*) all together following the minister, as may be seen in the ancient liturgies.* This distinction seems to be made in the Scripture, where, when our Lord consecrates the eucharist, he alone is said to bless, or to give thanks.¹ Whereas in the Acts, when prayer is made, wherein the whole assembly are equally concerned, we are told, they lift up their voices with one accord:² that is, Peter, or some other apostle, pronounced the prayer there set down, and the rest of the assembly repeated it after him. The same is manifest in the forementioned passage of Justin Martyr, where he tells us, the christians assembled every Sunday, and after some portion of Scripture had been read, the president of the assembly preached: “Then, says he, we rise all together, and send up our prayers to God: and when we cease from prayers, bread, wine, and water, are brought to the president, who prays and gives thanks with all his

* Conf. Apostol. Constit. Lib. VIII. cap. vi. viii. ix. xi. & alibi

¹ Matt. xxvi. 26, 27. ² Acts iv. 24.

might; which being done, the people answer amen.”* And the same father not long before describes first the (*κοιναὶ εὐχαὶ*) common prayers, which all seem to have repeated, and afterwards proceeds to the eucharistical prayer, which was pronounced by the president alone, the people answering amen.† So that he manifestly distinguishes between the common prayers, which the people pronounced all together after the priest, and those of consecration, to which they only answered amen. However this be, for I will not contend about it, the priest constantly presided in this duty, and offered the prayers of the congregation. Whence St. Chrysostom takes occasion to show the great difficulty of the sacerdotal office, from the extraordinary purity and holiness requisite in those, whose business it is (*πρεσβευεῖν*) to be ambassadors to God in the behalf of mankind.‡ In another place he says, “That the priests preside in public prayers for this reason, that the prayers of the people, which are weak of themselves, laying hold on the more prevailing prayers of the priests, may be carried by them into heaven.”§ And in another place he describes “the priest to be one

* Justinus M. Apol. I. cap. lxxxvii. p. 131. *Ἐπειτα ἀνιστάμεθα κοινῇ πάντες, καὶ εὐχὰς πῆμπομεν καὶ ὡς προίφημεν, παυσάμενων ἡμῶν τῆς εὐχῆς, ἄριστος προσφέρεται, καὶ οἶνος, καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ ὁ πρῶτος εὐχὰς ὁμοίως καὶ εὐχαριστίας, ὅση δύναμις αὐτῶ, ἀναπέμπει, καὶ ὁ λαὸς ἐπιυφημιῖ, λέγων τὸ Ἀμήν.*

† Ibid. cap. lxxxv. p. 125, 126.

‡ De Sacerdotio, Lib. VI. cap. iii.

§ Homil. iii. de incomprehensibili Dei natura: *Διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ οἱ ἱερεῖς προσεστήκασιν, ἵνα καὶ αἱ τοῦ πλῆθους εὐχαὶ, ἀσθενέστεραι οὔσαι, τῶν δυναλωτέρων τούτων ἐπιλασθῶσιν, ὁμοῦ συνανέλθωσιν αὐταὶ εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν.*

placed in the middle between God and mankind, to convey God's blessings to men, and the supplications of men to God."* which is the same that other ancient fathers design to express, when they call the christian priests mediators between God and his faithful people.† Some indeed, particularly St. Augustin,‡ rather choose to appropriate the name of mediator to him, whom the Scriptures affirm to be the one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. But though in the highest sense of this name, there is only one mediator between God and man, that is, one who partakes of both the divine and human nature, and one by whose meritorious sacrifice, and prevailing intercession, God is reconciled to mankind; yet the ministerial mediation as now explained to consist in conveying the divine will and blessing to the people, and the people's devotions to God, is nothing but what the Scriptures and the primitive fathers do constantly attribute to the christian priests. But there will be occasion to discourse farther on this subject under some of the following heads, and therefore I shall now proceed to the next particular, viz.

3. The power of admitting members into the church by baptism. This is expressed in the commission which our Lord gave to his apostles just before his ascension: "Go, teach all nations, bap-

* Homil. V. in *Esaiæ* verba de rege Ozia: *Καὶ μέσος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων φύσει ἐστῆκεν ὁ ἱερεὺς, τὰς ἐκεῖθεν τιμὰς προσάγων πρὸς ἡμᾶς, καὶ τὰς παρ' ἡμῶν ἰκετηρίας ἀνάγων ἐκῆ.*

† *Constitut. Apostol. Lib. II. cap. xxv. Οἱ μεσίται Θεοῦ καὶ τῶν πιστῶν αὐτοῦ.*

‡ *Contra Parmenian. Lib. II. cap. viii.*

tizing them.”¹ Yet it was never understood to be so strictly appropriated to them, but that it might lawfully be exercised by inferior ministers. For we find in the Acts, that Philip, the deacon, baptized the Samaritans, and the Ethiopian eunuch;² and that St. Paul was baptized by Ananias, whom some affirm to have been one of the seventy disciples; others, a prophet; which is not unlikely, because he was sent to baptize St. Paul by a particular revelation:³ however, it is manifest he was not an apostle. And it has been observed oftener than once, that baptism was one of the lowest ministries, and as such rarely performed by our Lord in person, but committed to his apostles and other disciples; and it was afterwards by the apostles to the ministers who attended them.*

In the primitive ages, presbyters baptized as well as bishops: but the practice of the church has varied as to deacons. Tertullian,† Cyril of Jerusalem,‡ St. Jerom§ and others, allow deacons to baptize; but other ancient fathers rather deny this function to belong to them. In some places|| of the apostolical constitutions, bishops and presbyters are directed to baptize, and the deacons to attend them in that office; which plainly supposes, that the deacons should not presume to do it themselves:

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19. ² Acts viii. 12, 38. ³ Acts ix.

* Chap. II. III.

† Lib. de Baptismo.

‡ Cateches. XVII. sub finem.

|| Contra Luciferian. cap. iv.

§ Conf. Maximus ad cap. iii. Dionys. Areop. cxlest. Hierarch. Balsamon ad Can. Apost. XLIX.

and in other passages of that work, it is expressly affirmed, that deacons must not baptize.* Again, in some churches deacons commonly baptized, in others they baptized in cases of necessity, or in the priest's absence. This seems to be certain, that deacons not being ordained to take upon them the cure of souls, are not made by their office the ordinary ministers of baptism, which is an essential part of that cure: yet it has never been doubted, but they may lawfully exercise this function, either by the allowance and commission of the superior orders, or in cases of necessity.

However, baptism, and all other offices annexed to the cure of souls, have constantly been understood to belong primarily to the bishop, or chief pastor, and to be executed by the inferior orders of presbyters and deacons only in subordination to him. We are not only told by Ignatius, "That nothing which relates to the church must be done without the bishop's consent;" but he affirms in particular, "That it is not lawful to baptize without it."† In the next age Tertullian expressly affirms, "That the power of baptizing is primarily lodged in the chief priest, or bishop, and that the presbyters and deacons also may baptize, but not without the bishop's authority."‡ After him St.

* Lib. III. cap. xi. & xx. Lib. VIII. cap. xxviii. & xlvi.

† Epist. ad Smyrnæos, cap. viii. *Μηδείς χωρίς τοῦ Ἐπισκόπου τι πρᾶσσέτω τῶν ἀνηκόντων εἰς Ἐκκλησίαν. ΜΟΧ. Οὐκ ἔξόν ἐστιν ἄλλοις τοῦ ἐπισκόπου, ἕτε βαπτίζειν, &c.*

‡ Lib de Baptismo cap. xvii. Dandi quidem (baptismum) habet jus summus sacerdos qui est Episcopus, dehinc Presbyteri, & Diaconi; non tamen sine Episcopi auctoritate. - 6230-

Cyprian makes baptism an essential part of the episcopal office: "We, says he, meaning the bishops, who give the first baptism to believers by our Lord's permission."* In another place he concludes, that the baptism of heretics and schismatics is invalid, because it is administered without the bishop's authority, to whom, in the person of Peter and the apostles, our Lord gave power to remit sins in baptism.† Whether his conclusion, that the baptism of heretics and schismatics is invalid be true, or otherwise, is not very material to our present design: all we desire to prove from his way of reasoning, is, that the supreme power of baptism is lodged in the bishop: and this he builds upon as a principle, wherein both the church of Christ, and the heretics agree. The same is expressly asserted by Fortunatus, bishop of Thuchaboris, in his suffrage at the council of Carthage, where St. Cyprian was president. "Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, says he, the Son of God, the Father and Creator, built his church upon a rock, and not upon heresy; and gave the power of baptism to bishops, and not to heretics:"‡ and thence he concludes in the same manner with St. Cyprian, that they who are not within the church, and consequently act without the bishop's authority, cannot administer valid

* Præfat. ad Exhort. Martyr. Nos tantum, qui Domino permittente primum baptisma credentibus damus.

† Epist. LXXIII. page 308.

‡ Concil. Carthag. Suffrag. 17. Inter opera Cypriani, p. 161. Jesus Christus, Dominus & Deus noster, Dei Patris & creatoris filius, super petram ædificavit Ecclesiam suam, non super hæresin: & potestatem baptizandi Episcopis dedit, non hæreticis.

baptism. Firmilian, another eminent bishop of the same age, ascribes the power of baptizing to the elders, who have the power of imposing hands, and ordaining ;* that is, as will afterwards be shown, to the bishops. And Athanasius, in the passage cited in the last chapter, appropriates the power of baptism to the episcopal office in so strict and unalienable a manner, that if bishops fail, this power, and consequently the church itself, must fail with them. Even Jerom, who cannot be supposed to have been partial on the side of bishops, affirms, “ That neither presbyters nor deacons can lawfully baptize in ordinary cases, without the bishop’s commission.”†

Hence it is manifest, that the power of baptism belongs chiefly and primarily to bishops ; that it belongs also to presbyters, who are the bishop’s assistants in the care and government of the church ; and that it may lawfully be committed to deacons ; yet that neither deacons nor presbyters ought to baptize without the bishop’s allowance. It remains to be considered, whether laymen may baptize ; which must not be understood, as if it was inquired, whether laymen might lawfully baptize where ordained ministers can be procured : for it has been already shown, that baptism is annexed to the cure of souls, and consequently can ordinarily be administered by none, but the bishop, and other ministers

* *Inter opera Cypriani Epist. LXXV. page 322. Majores natu, qui & baptizandi, & manum imponendi, & ordinandi possident potestatem.*

† *Adv. Luciferian. cap. iv. Sine Episcopi jussione neque Presbyter, neque Diaconus jus habeant baptizandi.*

whom he appoints. But the question is, whether laymen may baptize in cases of necessity, where no minister can be procured, and men are in danger of dying unbaptized? Now if Tertullian may be credited, "Laymen have power to baptize, which yet for the sake of order, they ought only to use in cases of necessity."* Indeed his judgment ought less to be regarded, because he seems to give laymen an inherent power of baptism, which naturally follows from that absurd notion of his, which was examined in the last chapter, that all christians were originally priests, and are only prohibited from exercising the sacerdotal office for the sake of order: but it deserves to be observed, that in this passage concerning laymen's baptizing in cases of necessity, he seems to describe the practice of the church, and not merely to speak his own opinion: otherwise, the reason he gives for laymen's baptizing, "That one may give what he has received;" would equally conclude, that women may baptize, having themselves received baptism, as well as men; and yet he makes it both impious and absurd to allow women to baptize in any case. Whence it seems probable, that he conformed his assertion to the practice of the church in that age, which permitted laymen to baptize in cases of necessity, but not women. And there are many other testimonies for laymen's baptizing; one remarkable instance we find in the church of Rome, where No-

* Lib. de baptismo cap. xvii. Laicis etiam jus est (baptizandi).
 — Sufficiat in necessitatibus utaris, sicubi aut loci, aut temporis,
 aut personæ conditio compellit.

* *quod enim ex equo accipitur, equo dari potest, nisi Episcopi id aut Presbyteri - aut Diaconi vo-*
to - discedat. — Act

vation, being in danger of death, was baptized in his bed by the exorcists, who were an order of ministers below deacons, and consequently had no greater share of spiritual authority than mere laymen. Which baptism was so fully approved of by the bishop and church of Rome, that Novatian was afterwards ordained presbyter. Indeed there was then a canon, whereby men who had been baptized in their sick beds, were denied admission into orders; but this had no relation to the persons by whom baptism was administered on such occasions, but only to the backwardness or negligence of the person who deferred his baptism to the last extremity.* So that this baptism of Novatian is a full evidence of the practice and opinion of the church in this age. The same practice was confirmed in the age next following by a decree of the council of Eliberis,† which does expressly authorise laymen to baptize in cases of necessity.

The ancient author of the treatise, “that baptism in the name of Christ must not be repeated,” printed with Cyprian’s works, allows baptism to be administered a “*minore clero*” by the lower clergy, (whereby the exorcists, readers, and others below the order of deacons, seem to be meant) in cases of necessity. The commentary ascribed to St. Ambrose, affirms in the place before cited, “That at the begin-

* Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. xliii.

† Concil. Eliber. Can. XXXVIII. *Peregre navigantes, aut si Ecclesia in proximo non fuerit, posse fidelem, qui lavacrum suum integrum habet, nec sit bigamus, baptizare in necessitate, ita ut, si supervixerit, ad Episcopum eum perducatur, ut per manus impositionem perfici possit.*

ning laymen were permitted to preach and baptize in order to increase the number of christians ; but that in his time the deacons were not allowed to preach, nor the clergy, (that is, those below the deacons) nor laymen to baptize.”* So that in this author’s opinion, it is evident the baptism of laymen was to be accounted valid, though the church in his time, which was in the decline of the fourth century, did not ordinarily allow them to baptize. St. Augustin affirms, “ that it is a very small fault, or none at all, for laymen to baptize in cases of urgent necessity : and that baptism administered by laymen, when there is no necessity, is valid, and must not be repeated, though it be unlawful for them, and an usurpation of other men’s office to administer it.”† St. Jerom speaks of it as a thing certain, that laymen may lawfully baptize, when there is urgent necessity for it.‡ So that it was the common opinion, that laymen may lawfully baptize in cases of extreme danger : neither can any instance be produced where this practice was condemned by any

* S. Ambrosius in Eph. iv. Ut cresceret plebs, & multiplicaretur, omnibus inter initia concessum est, & evangelizare, & baptizare.—Nunc neque Diaconi in populo prædicant, neque clerici vel laici baptizant.

† S. Augustinus Contra Parmenian. Lib. II. cap. xiii. Nulla enim cogente necessitate si fiat, alieni muneris usurpatio est : Si autem necessitas urgeat, aut nullum, aut veniale delictum est. Sed & si nulla necessitate usurpetur, & a quolibet cuilibet detur, quod datum fuerit, non potest dici non datum, quamvis recte dici possit illicite datum. Illicitam ergo usurpationem corrigit reminiscens & pœnitentis affectus.—non tamen pro non dato habebitur.

‡ S. Hieronymus adv. Luciferianos, cap. v. Si tamen necessitas cogit, scimus licere etiam laicis : Ut enim quis accipit, ita etiam dare potest.

council, or so much as found fault with by any of the primitive fathers ; unless perhaps Basil about the end of the fourth century : who says, that persons baptized by heretics or schismatics, ought, like those baptized by laymen, to be rebaptized by the church.* But we may observe that he speaks in general, without expressly condemning the baptism of laymen in cases of necessity ; and therefore may be understood to mean only those laymen, who presumed commonly and ordinarily to baptize. However, his judgment is less to be regarded, because he there defends the error of Cyprian and Firmilian, which had been long before condemned and exploded by the church, and seems in some measure to build this assertion upon it, viz. That baptism, administered by any heretic or schismatic, is invalid, because it proceeds not from the authority of the church. But then there is not the least ground in the monuments of the primitive ages for women's baptizing, which is now universally allowed by the popish church : even Tertullian, whose opinion of the christian priesthood was more loose than others, has been shown to disapprove it : the apostolical constitutions affirm, “ that for women to baptize, is extremely dangerous ; that it is an hazardous thing, or rather wicked and impious.” And several fathers declare against women's having any concernment in the public offices of religion.† Nevertheless it crept by degrees into

* Epist. ad Amphiloeh. Διὸ, ὡς παρα λαϊκῶν βαπτίζομενους, τοὺς παρ' αὐτῶν ἐκέλευσαν ἐρχομένους ἐπὶ τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν τῶ ἀληθινῶ βαπτίσματι τῶ τῆς Ἐκκλησίης ἀνακαθαίρεσθαι.

† Apostolic. Constitut. Lib. III. cap. ix. Περὶ δὲ τοῦ γυναικας βαπτίζειν, γνωρίζομεν ὑμῖν, ὅτι κίνδυνος οὐ μικρὸς ταῖς τοῦτο ἐπι-

the church, and at length was expressly confirmed by a decree of pope Urban the second, in the latter end of the eleventh century.

4. Another power which our Lord has left to his church, is that of consecrating the eucharist, or Lord's supper. The first eucharist was consecrated by our Lord himself a little before his passion. At the same time he gave his apostles commission to do as he had done: do this, said he, in remembrance of me.¹ Yet this office was not so strictly appropriated to the apostles, but that it might lawfully be executed by the ministers of the second order. Whence we find that the eucharist was consecrated in the church of Corinth, when no minister above the order of prophets, who were next below the apostles, was there.²

In the primitive church, the bishop consecrated, when he was present. Which appears from the before cited passage of Justin Martyr, where he tells us, that sermon being ended, the elements of bread and wine mixt with water, were brought to the president of the brethren, who immediately proceeded to consecrate them by prayer and thanksgiving.* Clemens of Rome, in the words hereafter cited,† speaks of this office, as one part of the episcopal or pastoral charge. In the bishop's absence,

χειρούσαις· διὸ οὐ συμβουλεύομεν· επισφαλὲς γάρ, μᾶλλον δὲ παρανομον καὶ ἀσεβὲς, &c. Conf. Epiphanius hæres. XLIV. cap. iv. hæres. LXXIX. cap. iii. & iv. Chrysostomus Homil. de Bernice, Prosdoce, & Domnina. Concilium Carthag. IV. Can. C.

¹ Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 23. ² 1 Cor. xi. 23, &c. xiv. 29, 32.

* Apol. I. cap. lxxvi. p. 125, & seq. cap. lxxxvii. p. 131.

† Page 265.

it was common for the presbyters to consecrate. But they neither did this, nor any other act of their office, without the bishop's direction or allowance. Hence, "let that eucharist," says Ignatius, "be accounted firm and good, which is consecrated by the bishop, or one whom he appoints."* And in another place, "without the bishop," says he, "it is neither lawful to baptize, nor to consecrate the feast of love."† And there is a large discourse in Cyprian, where he compares the priests, who perform the offices of religion, and particularly those of baptism and the Lord's supper, without their bishop's allowance, to Corah and his rebellious associates, who conspired against Aaron the high priest.‡

What part the deacons had in this office, may be learned from the forementioned passage of Justin Martyr, where he tells us, that when the bread and wine had been consecrated by the president, it was customary for the deacons to distribute them among the people who were present, and to carry them to such as were absent.§ Which office was not thought to imply any power in the deacons to consecrate this sacrament; but they did it as the bishops' and the

* Epist. ad Smyrn. cap. viii. Εκείνη θέσθαία εὐχαριστία ἡγείσθω, ἢ ὑπο τὸν ἐπίσκοπον οὔσα, ἢ ᾧ ἂν αὐτὸς ἐπιτρέψῃ.

† Ibid. Οὐκ ἐξὸν ἐστὶν χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου οὔτε βαπτίζειν, οὔτε ἀγάπην ποιεῖν.

‡ Epist. LXIX.

§ Justin. Apol. I. p. 127. Εὐχαριστησαντος δὲ τοῦ προσητάτου, καὶ ἐπευφημισαντος παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ, οἱ καλούμενοι παρ' ἡμῶν διακονοὶ διδῶσιν ἐκάστῳ τῶν παρόντων μίτρα λαβεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ εὐχαριστηθέντος ἄρτου καὶ οἴνου καὶ ὕδατος, καὶ τοῖς οὐ παροῦσιν ἐπιφέρουσιν. Μοχ. eadem fere repetit, p. 132.

priests' ministers, as we are expressly assured by the apostolical constitutions.* In some places the bishop or priest distributed the bread, and the deacons followed him with the cup.† And in others even this was not allowed them.‡ In Africa, where Tertullian lived, the people received the bread and wine from the hands of the president of the assembly; that is, the bishop. Which, he says, was not commanded by our Lord, but only derived from tradition: and he affirms the same of their custom of receiving this sacrament in the morning.§ Some have cited this passage to show that Tertullian looked on the priests consecrating the eucharist to be an innovation, and contrary to our Lord's institution. To which it may be replied: 1. That supposing Tertullian was of this opinion, it is plainly a consequence of his mistaken notion concerning the priesthood of all christians, which was refuted in

* Lib. VIII. cap. xxviii. Διάκονος ——— οὐ θαπτιζοι, οὐ προσηφίρει· τοῦ δὲ ἐπισκόπου ἁρροσηφίκοτος, ἢ προσηφίτου, αὐτὸς ἐπιδίδωσι τῷ λαῷ, οὐχ ὡς ἱερεὺς, ἀλλ' ὡς διακονοῦμενος τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν. Conf. ibid. sub finem cap. xlvj.

† Ibid. cap. xiii.

‡ Hugo a S. Victore de Sacramentis, cap. xxxviii. Horum (Diaconorum) officium est corpus & sanguinem Domini distribuere, licet non ubique hoc observetur.

§ Lib. de corona, cap. iii. Eucharistiæ Sacramentum, & in tempore victus, & omnibus mandatum a Domino, etiam antelucanis cœtibus, nec de aliorum manu, quam præsentium sumimus. — Calicis aut panis etiam nostri aliquid in terram decuti anxie patimur. — Harum & aliarum ejusmodi disciplinarum si legem expostules Scripturarum, nullam invenies: Traditio tibi prætendetur auctrix, consuetudo confirmatrix, & fides observatrix. Rationem traditioni & consuetudini, & fidei patrocinatorum, aut ipse perspicias, aut ab aliquo, qui perspexerit, discas.

the last chapter. 2. That he does not affirm any thing to be an innovation, or contrary to our Lord's institution; but only that some practices which he there mentions, were owing to tradition, and not to any positive precept of our Lord. Neither does he disapprove of them, or desire they should be altered, as he must have done, if he had thought them contrary to Christ's institution; but he rather approves and commends them. 3. It does not appear, that what he says has any relation to the consecration of the elements, but only to their distribution by the president: which, with the celebration of the Lord's supper in the morning, he justly ascribes to tradition, and not to the institution of our Lord, who celebrated this sacrament in the evening, and did not distribute the elements himself, but commanded his apostles to take them: take this, said he, and divide it among yourselves.¹

It will here be inquired, why deacons, who were allowed to administer baptism, never consecrated the Lord's supper? To which this might be a sufficient answer, that baptism was always reckoned one of the lowest ministries, and therefore was usually committed by the apostles to ministers of the lower orders, as was before observed: or that baptism, being the rite of admission into the church, was thought more necessary than the Lord's supper; which reason is commonly assigned by the ancient fathers, for permitting laymen to baptize, when any person was in danger of leaving the world unbaptized: but there is yet a farther reason, why

¹ Luke xxii. 17.

none but bishops and presbyters have ever consecrated the Lord's supper ; viz. because the Lord's supper was always believed to succeed in the place of sacrifices : consequently, as none beside the high priest and inferior priests, were permitted to offer sacrifices under the jewish law ; so, the Lord's supper was consecrated by none but bishops and presbyters, who alone are priests in the christian sense of that name. It is not my design to explain the nature and ends of the Lord's supper, any farther than these may lead us to the proper minister of it, and therefore I shall only hint a few things necessary to this purpose.

Here then it may be remembered, that in the ancient sacrifices, both among the jews and heathens, one part of the victim was offered upon the altar, and another reserved to be eaten by those persons, in whose name the sacrifice was made : this was accounted a sort of partaking of God's table, and was a federal rite, whereby he owned the guests to be in his favour and under his protection, as they by offering sacrifices acknowledged him to be their God. There are several examples of this in Homer, one of which we find in the second Iliad, where Agamemnon, the captain general of the Grecian army, invites the rest of the captains and princes to partake of an ox sacrificed to Jupiter,* and the same custom is often described in the Roman authors : † but I shall rather consider the practice of the nations in Canaan and thereabouts, to which there are frequent

* Iliad. 6. v. 402—431.

† Plautus Pænul. Act. III. Sc. III. v. 1. aliique complures.
Conf. Archæhlogia Græc. Lib. II. cap. iv. sub fine.

allusions in the Scripture. God gave the jews this precept to be observed, when they should come thither : “ Ye shall destroy their altars, and break their images, and cut down their groves ; lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and thou go a whoring after their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice.”¹ And that which is here provided against, came to pass before the Israelites reached the promised land : “ Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab : and they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods, and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.”² We find the same custom among those who worshipped the true God : “ Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread.”³ And when Saul inquired for Samuel, he received this answer : “ Make haste now : for he came to-day to the city : for there is a sacrifice of the people to-day in the high place. As soon as ye come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat : for the people will not eat till he come ; because he doth bless the sacrifice, and afterwards they eat that be bidden.”⁴ In the christian church there is only one proper sacrifice, which our Lord offered upon the cross ; and consequently christians cannot partake of any sacrifice in a literal and strict sense, without allowing transubstantiation : lest therefore they should want the same pledge to assure them of the divine favour,

¹ Exod. xxxiv. 13, 15. ² Numb. xxv. 1, 2. ³ Gen. xxxi. 54.

⁴ 1 Sam. ix. 12. 3.

which the jews enjoyed, our Lord appointed the elements of bread and wine to signify his body and blood offered in sacrifice ; whence they are expressly called his body and blood, it being common for representatives to bear the name of those things, or persons, which they represent : “ And, as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, drink ye all of it. For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”¹ The elements were not his real body and blood, nor understood to be so by the apostles, or any primitive fathers ; but they were made the symbols of his body and blood, the partaking whereof is all one to the receivers, and does as much assure them of the favour of God, as if they should eat and drink the real body and blood of Christ offered upon the cross. To this purpose is the following discourse of St. Paul : “ The cup of blessing, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ? For we being many, are one bread, and one body : for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh ; are not they which eat of the sacrifices, partakers of the altar ? What say I then, that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing ? But I say, that the things which the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God :

¹ Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, 28.

and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils : ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils : ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils."¹ Where it may be observed : First, that eating the Lord's supper is the same rite in the christian church, with eating the things offered in sacrifice among the jews and heathens. Second, That it is an act of communion or fellowship with God, at whose table we are said to be entertained ; and therefore it is declared to be inconsistent with the eating the gentile sacrifices, which is an act of communion with devils, to whom those sacrifices are offered. Thirdly, That it is an act of communion between christians, who eat at the same table, and by that means are owned to be members of the same evangelical covenant under Christ. Whence the apostle declares in another place, that the jews, who are not within the christian covenant, and consequently not in communion with Christ and his church, have no right to partake of the christian altar : " We have an altar, says he, whereof they have no right to partake, who serve the tabernacle."² Hence it is manifest, that to eat the Lord's supper, is to partake of the sacrifice of Christ, which is there commemorated and represented. For which reason the most primitive fathers speak of eating at the christian altar : he that is not within the altar, says Ignatius in the passage which was cited in the last chapter, is deprived of the bread of God : where by the bread of God, he means the sacrament, which God imparts to christians from his own table, which this father

¹ 1 Cor. x. 16—21. ² Heb. xiii. 13.

calls the altar. And the Lord's supper is called an oblation, a sacrifice, and a gift. Thus in Clemens of Rome : " It is no small crime, if we depose those from their episcopal office, who have unblameably and holily offered the gifts."* Where he manifestly takes this phrase of offering gifts, in the sense wherein the jews and our Lord used it : " If thou bring thy gift unto the altar, says our Lord, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee : leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."¹ Where gift is put for sacrifice. Justin Maytyr in several places of his dialogue with Trypho, the jew, calls the eucharist a sacrifice : having cited the passage of Malachi, where God tells the jews : " I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hand : for, from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering, &c."² He makes this comment upon it. " He (that is, God,) then foretold the sacrifices which are offered to him by us gentiles, namely the eucharist of bread and wine, whereby he says we glorify his name, but ye (jews) profane it."[†] Afterwards he

* Ad Corinth, Epist. I. cap. xlv. *Αμαρτία γὰρ οὐ μικρὰ ἡμῖν ἔσται, εἰὰν τοὺς ἀμίμπλιως καὶ ὀσιως προσενέγκοντες τὰ δῶρα, τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἀποοάλωμεν.*

¹ Matt. v. 23, 24. ² Mal. i. 10, 11.

† Dialog. cum Tryphone. p. 260. Edit. Paris. *Περὶ δὲ τῶν ἐν παντὶ τόπω ὑφ' ἡμῶν τῶν ἐθνῶν προσφερομένων αὐτῷ θυσιῶν, τούτεστι τοῦ ἄρτου τῆς εὐχαριστίας καὶ τοῦ ποτηρίου ὁμοίως τῆς εὐχαριστίας, προλέγει τότε εἰπὼν, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ δοξάζειν ἡμᾶς, ὑμᾶς δὲ βεβηλοῦν.*

has these words: "We (christians) are the true nation of God's priests, as God himself witnesseth, when he saith, that in every place among the gentiles they shall offer to him pure and acceptable sacrifices: for God accepts sacrifices from no man but his own priests. And therefore he foretells, that all those shall be acceptable to him, who shall offer in his (Jesus') name the sacrifices which Jesus Christ directed to be made, namely, those which are made by the christians in all places in the eucharist of bread and wine."* Irenæus calls the eucharist, "the oblation of the church, which our Lord directed us to offer through the whole world, which, he says, is accounted by God a pure sacrifice, and it is acceptable to him."† In another place where he speaks of our Lord's instituting the eucharist, he has these words: "He taught the new oblation of the New Testament, which the church has received from the apostles, and offers through the whole world."‡ And in the fathers of

* Page 344. Αρχιερατικὸν τὸ ἀληθινὸν γένος ἴσμεν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Θεὸς μαρτυρεῖ, εἰπὼν ὅτι ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν θυσίας εὐαρέστους αὐτῷ καὶ καθαρὰς προσφερόμεναι. οὐ δέχεται δὲ παρ' οὐδενὸς θυσίας ὁ Θεὸς, εἰ μὴ διὰ τῶν ἱερέων αὐτοῦ. πάντας οὖν, οἳ δι' ὀνόματος τούτου θυσίας ἄς παρεδῶκεν Ἰησοῦς ὁ χριστὸς γίνεσθαι, τούτεστιν ἐπὶ τῇ εὐχαριστίᾳ τοῦ ἄρτου καὶ τοῦ ποτηρίου τὰς ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ γινομενάς ὑπο τῶν χριστιανῶν προλαβὼν ὁ Θεὸς, μαρτυρεῖ εὐαρέστους ὑπάρχειν αὐτῷ.

† Irenæus. Lib. IV. cap. xxxiv. Igitur Ecclesiæ oblatio, quam Dominus docuit offerri in universo mundo, purum Sacrificium reputatum est apud Deum, & acceptum est ei.

‡ Lib. IV. cap. xxxii. Novi Testamenti novam docuit oblationem, quam Ecclesia ab Apostolis accipiens, in universo mundo offert Deo.

the next age, to consecrate the Lord's supper is so constantly called *προσφέρειν* in Greek, and *offerre* in Latin, that is, to offer it, that it is needless to cite any testimonies from them. So that it is plain, both from the design and nature of the Lord's supper, and from the concurrent testimony of the most primitive fathers, who conversed with the apostles, or their disciples, that it was reckoned throughout the whole world to be a commemorative sacrifice, or the memorial of our Lord offered upon the cross, which being first dedicated to God by prayer and thanksgiving, and afterwards eaten by the faithful, was to all intents the same to them, as if they had really eaten the natural body and blood of Christ, which are thereby represented. The consequence whereof, as explained by the constant practice of the church in all ages, is, that they who consecrate this sacrament, must be priests in the christian sense of this name, as was before observed. But it is not to be wondered, that those of the reformed religion have either wholly abstained from the names of sacrifice or oblation, or mention them with caution and reserve in explaining this sacrament, which were used by the primitive fathers in a very true and pious sense, since they have been so grossly abused by the papists in their doctrine of the mass, which depends upon their other absurd doctrine of transubstantiation, which is the daily occasion of many superstitious and idolatrous practices, and has for several ages given infinite scandal both to the jews and gentiles, and to the church of God.

5. Another power which belongs to the church, is that of imposing hands on persons baptized, com-

monly called confirmation. The account which the Scriptures gives us of the exercise of this power, is this: “When Philip the deacon and evangelist had converted and baptized the Samaritans, the apostles which were at Jarusalem, sent unto them Peter and John, who having prayed, and laid their hands on them, they received the Holy Ghost, who before was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”¹ When the twelve disciples at Ephesus had been baptized by Timothy, or some other of St. Paul’s assistants, as was observed in one of the former chapters,* “Paul laid his hands on them, and the Holy Ghost came upon them.”² From which passages these two things appear: 1. That the end and design of this office, was to confer the gifts of the Holy Ghost upon persons lately baptized. 2. That it was so strictly appropriated to the apostles, that it could not ordinarily be performed even by inspired men and workers of miracles, who were of an inferior order. There is only one objection from the Scriptures against this observation, namely, that Ananias, who certainly was not an apostle, imposed hands on St. Paul. To which it is answered, that this was done by the special command of Christ, and therefore must not be made a precedent for others to usurp this office, who have no such commission. Which appears from the express words of Scripture; “Ananias went his way, and entered into the house, and putting his hands on him, said, brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus,

¹ Acts viii. 14—17. * Chap. III. ² Acts xix. 6.

that appeared unto thee in the way thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.”¹

If we descend to the records of the primitive church, we shall find this office still reserved to the chief pastors of every church. We are told by Clemens of Alexandria, that a certain bishop of Asia, having first baptized a young man, whom St. John the apostle had committed to his care, sealed him with the Lord’s seal as a perfect guard :* which was the common way of expressing confirmation in the primitive church, and seems derived from the Scriptures, which speak of christians being sealed by the Holy Spirit, and sealed by God giving the earnest of the Spirit.² Cornelius, bishop of Rome, in his epistle to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, gives him this account of Novatian : that he had been baptized in his bed, when he was in extreme danger of death ; “ And having recovered from his distemper, he did not receive the other things, which the rule of the church obliged him to receive, nor was sealed by the bishop : and having not obtained this, how, says he, could he receive the Holy Spirit ?”† And we have a full and distinct account of the practice and sense of the primitive church in

¹ Acts ix. 17.

* Libro Quis Dives Salvetur ? Page 113. Edit. Oxon. Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. III. cap. xxiii. Τέλειον αὐτῷ φυλακίηριον ἐπιστήσας τὴν σφραγίδα κυρίου.

² 2 Cor. i. 22. Eph. i. 13. iv. 30.

† Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. xliiii. Οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ τῶν λοιπῶν ἔτυχες, διαφυγὼν τὸν νόσον, ὧν χρὴ μελαλαμῶάνειν κατὰ τοῦ τῆς ἐκκλησίας κανόνα, τοῦ τε σφραγισθῆναι ὑπο τοῦ ἐπισκόπου. τούτου δὲ μὴ τυχάν, πῶς ἂν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἔτυχες ;

this matter, from Cyprian, who writes thus to Jubaianus: "They who believed in Samaria, were baptized by Philip the deacon, who was sent by the apostles, and therefore having received lawful baptism, were not re-baptized, but only that which was wanting to them, was supplied by Peter and John, who conferred on them the Holy Ghost by prayer and imposition of hands. The same is now practised with us: they who have been baptized in the church, are brought to the presidents of the church, that by our prayer and imposition of hands, they may receive the Holy Ghost, and be consummated with the Lord's seal."* Many other examples of the practice of the primitive ages in this particular, might easily be produced. Even St. Jerome† affirms, "That they who are baptized in the church, cannot receive the Holy Ghost but by the imposition of the bishop's hands." And he says, that they who lived in villages so remote from the episcopal seat, that they could not be brought to the bishop, were not confirmed at all. Neither can there be shown any one instance in any author, who lived within the three first centuries, where mere presby-

* Epist. LXXIII. Illi enim, qui in Samaria crediderant, a Philippo Diacono quem iidem Apostoli miserant, Baptizati erant. Et iccirco, quia legitimum & Ecclesiasticum baptisma consecuti fuerant, baptizari eos ultra non oportebat: Sed tantummodo quod deerat, id a Petro & Joanne factum est, ut oratione pro eis habita, & manu imposita, invocaretur, & infunderetur super eos Spiritus Sanctus. Quod nunc quoque apud nos geritur, & qui in Ecclesia baptizantur, præpositis Ecclesiæ offerantur, & per nostram orationem ac manus impositionem Spiritum Sanctum consequantur, & signaculo Domini consummentur.

† Adv. Luciferian, cap. iv.

ters exercised this power in any case whatever. So that I hope it fully appears : First, That confirmation was continued in the church for the same end it had been instituted, namely to confer the Holy Spirit. Secondly, That it was generally administered by the bishops. Thirdly, That they derived it from the practice of the apostles.

Some have objected against the present use of this office, that it was instituted merely for the conveyance of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which having ceased many ages since, this office ought consequently to have expired with them. To which it is answered : First, That the primitive church, which may reasonably be supposed to have best understood the design of this and other institutions of Christ and his apostles, universally kept up this office, after miraculous gifts had generally ceased, which is an argument, that they thought it designed for other ends, besides the conveyance of such gifts. Secondly, That the Scriptures describe it not as a temporary institution, but one which is fundamental to christianity, and consequently lasting and perpetual. Thus, in the epistle to the Hebrews, it is called a principle and foundation, and joined with some of the most essential duties and articles of the christian religion : “ Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection ; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.”¹

¹ Heb. vi. 1, 2.

Where laying on of hands being placed immediately after baptism, can fairly be understood of no imposition of hands, but that in confirmation which constantly followed baptism ; either at the same time, which seems to have happened to the fore-mentioned twelve Ephesians, and generally to others, at whose baptism any apostle or bishop was present : or as soon after, as it could conveniently be administered, which happened to the Samaritans baptized by Philip, and others who were baptized, where no apostle or bishop was present. Such as these were afterwards brought to the bishop to be confirmed. Some would elude this text of Scripture by explaining baptisms, which is here spoken in the plural, of the jewish baptisms, or washings, and not of the christian baptism, which they affirm to be always used in the singular. But on the contrary, it is evident the apostle speaks of the principles and foundations of christianity, which the doctrine of jewish washings cannot in any sense be, and therefore if he means any thing more by baptisms in the plural, than the baptism of christians, which may justly be spoken of in that number, when applied to many persons, he must be understood of the baptism of John the Baptist and our Lord, which are both in some sense principles of christianity ; because it was necessary by divine appointment, that John's baptism should precede the baptism of Christ. And then laying on of hands does naturally follow these two baptisms, as we find in the case of the twelve men at Ephesus, who were first baptized with John's baptism, before they had heard of Christ ; afterwards upon St. Paul's preaching to them, they were

baptized in the name of Christ ; which being done, they received the Holy Ghost by the imposition of St. Paul's hands.¹ 3. To answer directly to this objection against the present use of confirmation, it is not true, which is there affirmed, that this office was merely designed for the conveyance of miraculous gifts. It cannot be proved, that all who received imposition of hands in the apostolic age, were presently endued with miraculous gifts. It is more probable, that some of the converts to christianity never obtained this favour ; and in these either the imposition of the apostles' hands had some other effect, or else it was wholly vain and useless. Or should it be granted, that the imposition of the apostles' hands always conferred miraculous gifts, we cannot hence conclude, that it conferred none of those standing and ordinary graces of the Spirit, which will be necessary to every christian as long as the world lasts. One of these is fortitude, which the Scripture speaks of, as a consequence of men receiving the Spirit. Thus it is said of the apostles and others : " They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the word of God with boldness :"² where boldness to preach God's word, is made an effect of the Holy Ghost's descent upon them. And several other spiritual graces are described as the effects of the imposition of St. Paul's hands on Timothy : " Stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear ; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."³ Where the spirit of

¹ Acts xix. 1—6.

² Acts iv. 31.

³ 2 Tim. i. 6. 7.

power, of love, and of a sound mind, which are graces undoubtedly necessary in all ages, as well as when the gospel was first preached, are said to be given by God, and this gift of God was conveyed by the imposition of the apostles' hands. So that the ordinary graces of the Holy Ghost were conferred by imposition of hands, and consequently the design of this institution was lasting and perpetual. Neither is it material, whether the imposition of hands in this passage to Timothy, was for his ordination or confirmation, since the same objection will hold with equal force against them both; and may also be levelled at all other acts of the apostles: for their prayers, their preaching, their spiritual censures, were often accompanied with miraculous effects: and we may as well conclude, that there must be no prayers, no preaching, no censuring offenders, and no ordination of ministers, because no miraculous effects are now annexed to these offices, as that there must be no confirmation of baptized persons. The same answer is given by St Augustine to this objection, which it seems was urged by some of his age: "At the first," says he, "the Holy Ghost fell on those who believed, and they spoke with tongues which they had not learnt, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Which signs were proper at that time. But when we now lay hands on baptized persons, is it expected they should speak with tongues? Or when we laid our hands on those infants, did you all expect to hear them presently speak with tongues? And when you saw they did not speak with tongues, was any of you of so perverse a heart, as to say, these have not received the

Holy Ghost; for if they had received him, they would speak with tongues, as when the gospel was first preached? Well, but it will be said, if there are no miracles to attest the presence of the Holy Ghost, how can any man be assured, that he has received him? Let him ask his own heart: if he loves his brother, the Spirit of God abideth in him.”* In another place he speaks thus: “In our times the collation of the Holy Ghost is not attested by temporal and sensible miracles, as it was formerly to recommend the new faith, and to enlarge the new planted church. For who now expects, that they, on whom hands are imposed, should straightway begin to speak with tongues? But the divine love is secretly and invisibly inspired into their hearts, by the band of peace; so that they may say: the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit which is given to us.”¹ There are many operations of the Holy Spirit, which the same apostle having reckoned up so far as was sufficient to his purpose,

* S. Augustinus Tractat. VI. in Epist. Joan. post med. Primis temporibus cadebat super credentes Spiritus Sanctus, & loquebantur linguis, quas non didicerant, quomodo Spiritus dabat eis pronuciare. Signa erant temporis opportuna—Numquid modo quibus imponitur manus, ut accipiant Spiritum Sanctum, hoc expectatur, ut linguis loquantur? Aut quando imposuimus manum istis infantibus, attendit unusquisque vestrum, utrum linguis loquerentur? Et cum videret eos linguis non loqui, ita perverso corde aliquis vestrum fuit, ut diceret: Non acceperunt isti Spiritum Sanctum: nam si accepissent, linguis loquerentur, ut tunc factum est? Si ergo per hæc miracula non fiat modo testimonium præsentiae Spiritus Sancti, unde fit, unde cognoscit quisque accepisse se Spiritum Sanctum? Interroget cor suum: Si diligit fratrem, manet Spiritus Dei in illo.

¹ Rom. v. 5.

concludes thus: "All these worketh one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."¹*

6. Another power which belongs to the church, is that of ordaining ministers. It has already been shown, that there must always be ministers of different orders in the church; and that no man can ordinarily exercise any ecclesiastical office, or function, who is not lawfully called to it. It now remains to be inquired, from whom this call, or commission, must be expected?

Now the original of this commission is derived from God the Father, by whom our Lord was sent into the world to mediate between God and man, as he himself often witnesseth: "As thou hast sent me into the world, saith he to the Father, even so have I also sent them into the world."¹ And to his apostles: "As my Father sent me, even so send I you."² So that the whole power of erecting the christian church,

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 11.

* *Idem de Baptismo contra Donat. lib. III. cap. xvi. Neque enim temporalibus, & sensibilibus miraculis attestantibus per manus impositionem modo datur Spiritus Sanctus, sicut antea dabatur ad commendationem rudis fidei, & Ecclesiæ primordia dilatanda. Quis enim nunc hoc exspectat, ut ii quibus manus ad accipiendum Spiritum Sanctum imponitur, repente incipiant linguis loqui? Sed invisibiliter & latenter intelligitur per vinculum pacis eorum cordibus divina charitas inspirari, ut possint dicere: Quoniam charitas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum, qui datus est nobis. Multæ autem operationes sunt Spiritus Sancti, quas idem Apostolus eum quodam loco, quantum sufficere arbitratus est, commemorasset, ita conclusit: Omnia autem hæc operatur unus atque idem Spiritus, dividens singulis prout valt.*

¹ John xvii. 18. ² John xx. 21.

and of governing it since it was erected, is derived from the Father.

But then the person by whom this power is immediately conferred, is the Holy Spirit. He it was, by whose anointing our Lord was invested with his mediatorial office: whence he is said to have preached by the Spirit,¹ through the Holy Spirit he gave commandments to the apostles, whom he had chosen:² by the Spirit of God he cast out devils, and wrought other miracles:³ through the eternal Spirit he offered himself to God:⁴ and by the same Spirit he was conceived in the virgin's womb, and raised from the dead.⁵ So that though Christ, as God, has the same nature with the Father and the Holy Spirit, yet as man and mediator of the new covenant, he receives his office and power from the Holy Spirit's operation and influence. And the authority and special grace, whereby the apostles and all church officers execute their respective functions, are in the same manner ascribed to the Spirit. This was expressed in the very form of the apostles ordination, "receive ye the Holy Ghost: and whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."⁶ Where the authority to remit and retain sins, is made a consequence of their receiving the Holy Ghost. To which St. Paul seems to allude, when he directs the Corinthians to excommunicate the incestuous person, in the name of the Lord and my (St. Paul's) Spirit.⁷ That is, by Christ's authority, committed through the Spirit to me his apostle. The same apostle exhorts the elders

¹ Luke iv. 18. ² 1 Pet. iii. 19. ³ Acts i. 2. ⁴ Matt. xii. 28.

⁵ Heb. ix. 14. ⁶ Luke i. 35. Rom. i. 4. ⁷ John xx. 22, 23.

⁸ 1 Cor. v. 4.

of Ephesus to take heed unto the flock, over which, saith he, the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.¹ In his second epistle to Timothy he affirms, that the graces which were given to Timothy and himself, when they were made officers of the church, were gifts of the Spirit.² And in other places he ascribes to the same Spirit, both the offices of the apostles and other ministers, and their abilities to discharge those offices.³ So that all ecclesiastical authority, and the graces whereby men are enabled to exercise this authority to the benefit of the church, are the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But then it remains to be inquired, by whose ministry the Spirit is conferred for this end? Or, in other terms, what persons God has intrusted with authority to ordain ministers in the church?

And if we may be allowed to reason from the constitution and universal practice of civil societies, we must conclude, that the power of ordaining ministers belongs to the bishops, who are the chief governors of the church; because the power of constituting subordinate magistrates, belongs to the supreme governors of all civil societies. And it is against reason, that they who exercise any authority, whether in the church, or in the state, should derive their authority from any but those, in whom the supreme authority is lodged.

Accordingly we find in the gospels, that whilst our Lord lived on earth, he reserved the power of ordaining ministers to himself. He gave the apostles, and the seventy disciples a commission to preach, but

¹ Acts xx. 28. ² 2 Tim. i. 5, 6. ³ 1 Cor. xii. 1—31. Eph. iv. 7, 8, 11.

never allowed them to communicate that commission to any other. This was his own prerogative, which he would not impart to others, whilst he visibly governed the church in person.

Afterwards, when the apostles were the chief visible governors of the church, they ordained ministers. All the apostles together ordained the seven deacons in the church of Jerusalem: these men were chosen by the people according to the apostles' particular direction, but they were invested with their office, by prayer and imposition of the apostles' hands.¹ It was not our Lord's intention, that the apostles should always live together at Jerusalem, and govern the church by the joint authority of their whole college; but that they should exercise their apostolical authority in several districts; and therefore any one or more of them had the same authority to ordain ministers, when they were separated, which all together exercised at Jerusalem: Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every church which they visited.² Clemens of Rome, their disciple, tells us, "that the apostles preaching through countries and cities, constituted their first fruits, (that is, the first of their disciples in any place,) when they had proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should believe."* In Antioch, Evodius was ordained bishop by St. Paul, and upon his death Ignatius was ordained to the same office by St. Peter: Linus was ordained first bishop of Rome by

¹ Acts vi. 3—16. ² Acts xiv. 23.

* Epist. I. ad Corinth. cap. xlii. Κατὰ πόλεις οὖν καὶ χωρὰς κηρύσσοντες, καθίστανον τὰς ἀρχαὶς αὐτῶν δοκιμάσαντες τῷ πνεύματι. εἰς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλόντων πιστεύειν.

St. Peter and St. Paul together : Polycarp was constituted bishop of Smyrna by St. John, by whom several other Asian bishops were ordained : Timothy was made bishop of Ephesus, and Titus of Crete by St. Paul : and, in short, the succession of bishops in most other eminent churches, if driven up to the original, “in apostolos stabit auctores,” will be found to have been begun by the apostles, as appears from the testimonies which were cited in the last chapter.

In the same age this authority was exercised by others, whom the apostles had ordained to be chief governors of churches. It was shown in the last chapter, that Timothy and Titus ordained ministers in their respective dioceses of Ephesus and Crete ; and it is not doubted but that St. Mark did so at Alexandria, and others in other churches. In the next ages ordinations were constantly made by bishops. When Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, withdrew himself, the neighbouring bishops came together and ordained Dius to succeed him.* In the apostolical canons, the first of which are transcripts of the ancient practice of the church, we find it decreed, “That a bishop shall be ordained by two or three bishops ; presbyters and deacons, and the rest of the clergy, by one bishop.”† In Cyprian’s writings there are many proofs that the power of ordination was reserved to the bishop. In an epistle which he wrote to Caldonius and Herculanus, two bishops of some of the neighbouring

* Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. x.

† Apostol. Can. I. *Επίσκοπος υπό επισκόπων χειροτονείσθω δύο ἢ τριῶν· πρεσβύτερος ὑπο ἐνὸς επισκόπου, καὶ διάκονος καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ κληρικοί.*

cities, and to Rogatianus and Numidicus two of his own presbyters, in the time of his banishment from Carthage, he says, “ That he had made them his vicegerents to inquire into the ages, conditions, and merits of the brethren: that I, says he, whose proper business it is, may be well informed about them, and promote none to ecclesiastical offices, but those who are worthy, and humble, and meek.”* In an epistle to Stephen, bishop of Rome, wherein he and the other African bishops acquaint him with the determination, which they had made concerning presbyters and deacons, who returned from a state of schism to the communion of the church, they have these words: “ We tell you farther, dear brother, by common consent and authority, that if any presbyters or deacons, who either have been ordained before in the catholic church, and afterward turned traitors and rebels against the church; or have been promoted by a profane ordination, in a state of heresy, by false bishops and anti-christs, contrary to our Lord’s institution; that such, if they return to the church, shall only be admitted to lay communion.”† From which passage it ap-

* Epist. XLI. page 226. Cumque ego vos pro me vicarios miserim, ut—ætatis eorum (fratrum nostrorum) & conditiones, & merita discerneretis, ut jam nunc ego cui cura incumbit, omnes optime nossem & dignos quoque & humiles & mites ad Ecclesiasticæ administrationis officia promoverem.

† Cypriani Epist. LXXII. Adijmus plane, & adjungimus, frater carissime, consensu & auctoritate communi, ut etiam si qui presbyteri aut Diaconi, qui vel in Ecclesia catholica prius ordinati fuerunt, & postmodum perfidi ac rebelles contra Ecclesiam steterint, vel apud hæreticos à pseudo-episcopis & antichristis contra Christi dispositionem profana ordinatione promoti sint,—cos quoque hac conditione suscipi cum revertuntur, ut communicent laici.

pears, that even among heretics the power of ordination was reserved to the bishops. In the next age the same practice was constantly believed to have been derived from the apostles. It was shown in the last chapter from a passage of St. Chrysostom, that he believed the first bishops to have been ordained by the apostles, as the apostles were by our Lord, and that the characteristical mark, whereby their order is distinguished from that of presbyters, is the power of ordination: consequently, this prerogative was reserved to them by those persons, who introduced the distinction of the two orders of bishops and presbyters into the church, that is, by our Lord and his apostles. For since the distinction of bishops and presbyters has been proved to have been of divine appointment: it necessarily follows, that the power of ordination, which is the chief mark of this distinction, was reserved to the bishops by the same appointment. Whence Aerius was reckoned among the heretics of this age, chiefly because he gave presbyters power to ordain, and consequently made them equal to bishops: which Epiphanius imputes to his ignorance of the Scriptures, and proves hence, as from an undoubted principle, that bishops and presbyters were not of the same order, because presbyters had not power to ordain. “How is it possible, says he, that this should be, (namely that presbyters are equal to bishops,) since the order of bishops begets fathers for the church, whereas the order of presbyters has no power to beget fathers or teachers, but only to beget sons to the church by baptism? Indeed, how should any presbyter constitute teachers, since he

has not power to impose hands in ordination?"* And St. Jerom himself, in the very place where he professedly endeavours to raise presbyters as near to a parity with bishops, as he could, owns that presbyters have not power to ordain. "For what is it, says he, that a bishop does, which a presbyter cannot do, except ordination?"† If presbyters had been believed to be invested with this power of ordination, there had been no need for Novatian, who set himself up to be bishop of Rome against Cornelius, to send to the remote parts of Italy for some obscure and ignorant bishops, whom he made drunk, and then prevailed with them to ordain him:‡ he might with more ease and reputation have received episcopal orders from some of the Roman presbyters, who favoured his pretensions to the episcopal chair. And the method which he was forced to take, would of itself give us a strong presumption, that in this age, (and that is in the middle of the third century) it was the general opinion, that presbyters have not authority to confer orders, though we had no farther proof of it. But the opinion of the primitive church in this matter will be put beyond dispute, if we compare the judgment concerning Ischyras, who was ordained by one Col-

*Epiphanius hæref. LXXV. page 908. Καὶ πῶς ἔσται τοῦτο δυνατόν; ἢ μὲν γὰρ ἐστὶ πατέρων γεννητικὴ τάξις; πατέρας γὰρ γεννᾷ τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ. ἢ δὲ πατέρας μὴ δυναμένη γεννᾷν, διὰ τῆς τοῦ λουίσεω παλιγενεσίας τέκνα γεννᾷ τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ, οὐ μὲν πατέρας, ἢ διδασκάλους; καὶ πῶς οἶόντι οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ πρεσβύτερον καθιστᾶν, μὴ ἔχοντα χειροθεσίαν τοῦ χειροποιεῖν;

† Hieronymus Epist. ad Evagrium: Quid enim, excepta ordinatione, facit Episcopus, quod non facit Presbyter?

‡ Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. xliii.

luthus, a mere presbyter, with that about the presbyters ordained by Meletius, a schismatical bishop. The latter having been ordained by one who had the episcopal character, were received as presbyters without being re-ordained; whereas Ischyras having received his orders from one, who had not power to give them, was reckoned as a mere layman. This appears from the synodical epistle of the bishops of Egypt, Thebais, Libya and Pentapolis, in which are these words: * “ This is the famous Ischyras, who was neither ordained by the church, nor reckoned among the presbyters ordained by Meletius, whom Alexander, the bishop of Alexandria, received. How then came Ischyras to be a presbyter, and by whom was he ordained? Was it by Colluthus? For that only remains to be said. But Colluthus died a presbyter, so that all the impositions of his hands were invalid and null; and all those, whom he ordained in his schism, are well known to have been reduced to the laity.” And in an epistle of the clergy of the province of Mareotis, we are told, “ that Ischyras, who calls himself a presbyter, is not a presbyter, since he was ordained by Colluthus, who assumed to himself an imaginary episcopacy, and afterwards was commanded by

* Athanasti Apolog. contra Arianos. page 134. Edit. Paris, MDCXCVIII. Οὗτος δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ πολυθρύλληλος Ἰσχύρας, ὁ μὴτε υπο
της ἐκκλησίας χειροτονηθεὶς, καὶ ὅτε τοὺς υπο Μελετίου καίσαταθέντας
πρεσβυτέρους Ἀλέξανδρος ἐδέχετο, μηδὲ ἐκείνοις συναριθμηθεὶς, οὕτως
οὐδὲ ἐκείθεν κατεστάθη. Πόθεν οὖν πρεσβύτερος Ἰσχύρας; τίνας κατασ-
τήσαντος; ἄρα Κολλούθου; τοῦτο γὰρ λοιπόν· ἀλλ’ ὅτι Κολλούθος
πρεσβύτερος ἂν ἐτελεύτησε, καὶ πᾶσα χεὶρ αὐτοῦ γέγονεν ἄκυρος, καὶ
πάντες οἱ παρ’ αὐτοῦ καίσαταθέντες ἐν τῷ σχισματι λαϊκοὶ γεγόνασι,
καὶ οὕτως συνάγονται δῆλον, καὶ οὐδενὶ καθέστηκεν ἀμφίβολον.

Hosius, and other bishops synodically assembled, to return to the order of presbyters, whereto he was ordained. And consequently all those whom Coluthus ordained, returned to their former stations, and Ischyras himself became a layman.”*

Thus it appears from the Scriptures, the nature of the episcopal office, and the sense and practice of the primitive church, that none but bishops have authority to ordain ministers in the church. But there are two passages of Scripture, which some have alledged to prove, that mere presbyters have power to ordain, now to be considered. The first is that in the Acts, where certain men in the church of Antioch, the chief whereof were no more than prophets, and consequently no higher than the second order of ministers, after fasting and prayer, lay their hands on Paul and Barnabas,¹ who are thenceforwards called apostles, which title does not appear to have been given them before. Hence it is concluded, that ministers of the second order may lawfully ordain others, even those of the apostolical or highest order. To which these two things may be replied :

First, That it cannot be proved, that Paul and Barnabas were ordained at this time to be ministers. If they were ordained to any office or ministry, it

* Ibid. page 193. *Ισχύρα*—λεῖψοῖσιν ἑαυτὸν εἶναι πρεσβύτερον, ὅς οὐκ ἔστι πρεσβύτερος· ὑπο γὰρ Κολλούθου τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου Φανιασθέντος ἐπισκοπῆν, καὶ ὕστερον ὑπο κοινῆς συνόδου Οσίου καὶ τῶν συν αὐτῷ ἐπισκόπων κελευσθέντος πρεσβυτέρου εἶναι, καθὼ καὶ πρότερον ἦν, καλίσταθῃ· καὶ κατὰ ἀκολουθίαν πάντες οἱ ὑπο Κολλούθου καλίσταθέντες, ἀνδραμον εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν, εἰς δὲ καὶ πρότερον ἦσαν, ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς *Ισχύρας λαϊκὸς ὤφθη*.

¹ Acts xiii. 1, 2, &c.

must be that of apostles, not only because they are presently after this called apostles, before they received any farther ordination, but also because they were prophets before that time, as was shown in one of the precedent chapters.* But this is very unlikely, because this rite of imposing hands, whereby other ministers were ordained, was never used in making apostles. It was a distinguishing part of their character, that they were immediately called and ordained by Christ himself; who gave them the Holy Ghost by breathing on them; but neither he, nor any other is ever said to lay hands on them. When a place became vacant in the apostolic college by the apostacy of Judas, the apostles with the rest of the disciples chose two candidates, but left it to God to appoint whether of them he pleased, to take part of the ministry and apostleship, from which Judas fell.¹ Neither was St. Paul inferior to the rest of the apostles in this mark of honour: for he often asserts himself to be an apostle not of men, nor by man, but immediately and without the intervention of men, to have been appointed by Jesus Christ, in opposition to those who denied him to be an apostle, as was shown in one of the former chapters.* But then it will be asked, for what end Paul and Barnabas received imposition of hands? To which it may be answered, that this rite was commonly used both by the jews and primitive christians in benedictions. Jacob put his hands on the heads of Ephraim and Menasseh, when he blessed them:² and, to mention only one instance more,

* Chap. III. ¹ Acts i. 25. * Chap. III. ² Gen. xlvi.

little children were brought to Christ, that he should put his hands on them, and bless them.¹ Accordingly it is probable, this imposition of hands on Paul and Barnabas, was a solemn benediction on their ministry of preaching the gospel in a particular circuit, to which they were then sent by the Holy Spirit's direction. Hence it is called in the next chapter, a recommendation to the grace of God for the work of ministering the gospel to certain cities, which they are there said to have fulfilled.² So that this rite was not their ordination to the apostolic office ; because the end for which it was given, is here said to be fulfilled, whereas their apostolic office lasted as long as their lives. And therefore Paul and Barnabas seem only now to have had a particular mission to preach the gospel in a certain and limited district, in the same manner as Peter and John were sent by the college of apostles to Samaria, to confirm the new converts, and settle the church there.

Secondly, supposing Paul and Barnabas were now ordained apostles, this was done by the express command of the Holy Ghost, who said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them :³ And therefore it can be no precedent for others to ordain, who have neither such an extraordinary commission from the Spirit, nor any ordinary one to do it. It was a maxim among the jews, that a prophet may do all things : the meaning whereof was, that prophets having a particular warrant from God, might do things prohibited by the Mosaical law, which would have been criminal

¹ Matt. xix. 13. Mark x. 16. ² Acts xiv. 26. ³ Acts xiii. 2.

for other men to attempt. It was death for any one of the other tribes to assume the office of a levite ; or for a common levite to offer sacrifice, which was appropriated to Aaron and his sons ;¹ or for any of these to sacrifice in any other place beside the tabernacle :² and yet Elijah, who was a Tishbite of the inhabitants of Gilead, and does not appear to have had the least relation to Aaron's family, sacrificed a bullock upon mount Carmel, whereof God declared his acceptance by consuming it by fire from heaven.³ And we find that Samuel anointed David, and another prophet anointed Jehu to be kings of Israel, whilst others were in possession of the throne : which acts, if they had been performed without God's express commission, would not only have been invalid and null, but treasonable ; whereas both of them had their full force and effect, as appears from the sequel of that history. And if the command of God authorised prophets to break God's own positive precepts, and to constitute kings, we cannot doubt but the same command might enable them to ordain apostles. But then should another, to whom God has given no such commandment, take upon him by this example to ordain apostles and other ecclesiastical ministers, he would be guilty of the same offence against the church, which private men who set up kings and magistrates, commit against the state.

The second text- of Scripture now to be considered, is that in the first epistle to Timothy, where

¹ Numb. i. 5. iii. 10. 38. xviii. 3, 4, 7. ² Levit. xvii. 4. Deut. xii. 5, 13. ³ 1 Kings xviii. 20, 33, 38.

St. Paul thus exhorts him: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."¹ Whence it is concluded, that the presbytery ordained even those who were to ordain others, that is, bishops. But it must be remembered, that the gift which is here affirmed to have been conferred on Timothy by the hands of the presbytery, in another place is said to have been given him by the putting on of St. Paul's hands:² so that the utmost which can be inferred from this passage, is, that presbyters sometimes imposed their hands together with an apostle or bishop; but there is not the least colour to conclude, they always did so, or that ever they did it without a bishop. And there are some who refer the word presbytery, to the office to which Timothy was ordained, and not to the persons who ordained him. It is certain that the Greek name (*πρεσβυτέριον*) does often signify the office and station, as well as a college or number of presbyters. And if we take it here in this sense, the meaning of this passage will be: neglect not the gift of presbytery, that is, the office of priesthood, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of hands. Which explication is embraced not only by St. Jerom and St. Ambrose, but even by Mr. Calvin.* Or,

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 14. ² 2 Tim. i. 6.

* *Calvini Institut. Lib. IV. sub finem cap. iii. Paulus ipse alibi se, non complures alios, Timotheo manus imposuisse commemorat. Admoneo te, inquit, ut gratiam suscites, quæ in te est, per impositionem manuum mearum. Nam quod in altera epistola de impositione manuum Presbyterii dicitur, non ita accipio, quasi Paulus de Sanctorum Collegio loquatur, sed hoc nomine ordinationem ipsam intelligo, quasi diceret: Fæc ut gratiam, quam per manuum impositionem, cum te presbyterum crearem, recepisti, non sit irrita.*

lastly, should presbytery signify in this place a number of presbyters, yet that these were mere presbyters, is more than the primitive fathers, who understand it in that sense, are willing to allow. It is granted, and very much insisted on by those who would exalt presbyters to an equality with bishops, that apostles and bishops are sometimes called presbyters; and why then may not (*πρεσβυτέριον*) presbytery signify a college of such presbyters, that is, of apostles and bishops? Or, if we attend only to the name of presbytery, why may not this in Greek signify the supreme council, as well as *senatus*, which exactly answers to it, is known to do in Latin? And then the presbytery, or senate, may be an assembly of apostles, or one apostle and some bishops, who jointly laid their hands on Timothy, as the twelve did in the ordination of the first deacons. Thus this passage was understood by the author of the Ethiopic version, in which the hands of the presbytery are translated the hands of the bishops. And the same explication is given by St. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and other Greek expositors, who assign this reason for it: that presbyters cannot ordain a bishop.* Indeed it is unreasonable to think, that presbyters should concur in the ordination of bishops, and so confer on other men a degree of ecclesiastical power and dignity, which they themselves have not attained. Neither has there been produced so much as one example in the three first centuries, of any mere presbyters imposing

* Chrysostomus in loc. Οὐ περι πρεσβυτέρων φησὶν ἐνταῦθα, ἀλλὰ περι ἐπισκόπων· οὐ γὰρ δὴ πρεσβυτέροι τον ἐπισκοπον ἐχειροτόνουν. Conf. Theodoretus, Theophylactus, Occumenius.

hands on bishops, and much less without them, in any ordination whatever. In the latter end of the fourth century, the fourth council of Carthage decreed, “ That in the ordination of presbyters, all the presbyters present should lay on their hands near the bishop’s hand.”* The design of which canon seems to have been, that the ordination of presbyters should be performed with solemnity and deliberation, and to prevent bishops from admitting into this order any, whom their clergy did not approve ; but there is not the least intimation, that the validity of orders was thought to depend on the presbyters imposing their hands. In the same council it was ordered, that the bishop only should lay on his hand in the ordination of deacons.† In the ordination of bishops there is never any mention of presbyters imposing their hands, either before the making of the forementioned canon, or afterwards. And before that time, there are no proofs that they laid on their hands in the ordination of presbyters, either in the church of Carthage, where this canon was enacted, or any other. However, the custom of allowing presbyters to lay on their hands with the bishop in the ordination of presbyters, was introduced by degrees into most of the western churches ; but in the oriental churches they have still kept up the more ancient practice of excluding the presbyters from having any concernment in ordination.

* Concil. Carthag. IV. Can. iii. *Presbyter cum ordinatur, Episcopo eum benedicente, & manum super caput ejus tenente, omnes presbyteri, qui præsentés sunt, manus suas juxta manum Episcopi super caput ejus tenent.*

† *Ibid.* Can. IV.

Thus I have finished what was propounded on this argument, and should now proceed to the next particular, but that some have questioned, whether the character of holy orders be perpetual and indelible, or only temporary, and like that of any civil office, which may be conferred one day, and taken away the next ; which is necessary to be resolved in this place, because we cannot always be certain, what persons have authority to ordain, without knowing whether the episcopal character be indelible, or not.

And though we had no particular direction from Scripture, nor the practice of the primitive church, this question might easily be resolved by considering the nature of holy orders ; in the susception whereof two things are done : first, the persons ordained are solemnly dedicated to the service of God and his church. Consequently, they cannot renounce their order without sacrilege : which has always been reckoned one of the blackest crimes, when only inanimate things, such as God's temple and the sacred utensils consecrated there, have been profaned ; and must be aggravated to a much higher pitch, when rational creatures, whose value is far greater in the sight of God, are alienated from him. Secondly, they who are ordained, receive authority from God, in whose name the bishop puts his hands on them ; and authority conferred by God can be destroyed, or resumed by none but God, or one commissioned by him for that purpose. Consequently, since God has no where signified, that the character which he confers on persons admitted into orders, shall expire before their death ; we might

safely conclude, though we had no farther reason for it, that it is perpetual, such as cannot be forfeited by any misbehaviour, nor taken away by any authority, but that which gave it.

This may be farther illustrated by comparing the character of orders with that of baptism; wherein two things are done in the same manner as hath been spoken of orders: the person baptized is dedicated to God, and God admits him by the ministry of his priests, to be a member of his church. When this is once done, no man can possibly divest himself of his relation to God and the church: he may forfeit his title to the privileges of the church by breaking his baptismal vow: but the church still retains a right to him which he cannot destroy. And though he falls into schism, heresy, or even into idolatry, he still belongs to the church, he still retains his baptismal character; and if he repents and returns to the church's communion, he must be admitted, without being re-baptized. This is a ruled case, and universally confirmed by the practice of the church in all ages and countries.

Another proof, that the character of orders is perpetual, is, that it extends over all the world: whoever is a bishop, presbyter, or deacon in any one church, retains the same character in all other churches, as will hereafter be proved. Now there is scarce any argument for limiting the character of orders to a particular time, which does not equally hold for confining it to a certain place. For instance, if the character of a bishop depended on the will of any number of people consenting to live under his ministry, as some have affirmed, then it must expire,

when those people are pleased to withdraw their consent, which is the foundation of this character ; and it can extend no farther than to the place, where the people thus consenting inhabit. Consequently, since every bishop's character extends beyond his own diocese, in places where no number of people have consented to own him for their bishop, it is manifest that it does not depend on any such consent ; and therefore will remain, though the people, who have once consented to own him for their bishop, should afterwards change their minds.

In the Scriptures we do not find one example of any priest whose character did not last as long as his life. Melchizedek was a priest for ever : all the jewish priests and levites, through the exercise of their function was limited to a certain age, were accounted sacred persons, and distinguished from common Israelites from their birth to their death.¹ And the apostles, and all their ministers under them, maintained their respective characters from the time of their consecration to their death, without any exception.

And if we descend to the churches of the next ages after the apostles, we shall find no examples of ordained ministers, who out-lived their orders. Indeed we find in the passage of Tertullian, which was cited in the last chapter, that among some of the vilest heretics, who denied the unity of God, ordinations were unfixed and mutable : one to-day, says he, is a bishop, or invested with any other ecclesiastical function, who to-morrow becomes a

¹ Numb. iv. 8.

layman: but there is not the least footstep of any such practice in the church: and his reproaching the heretics for the instability of their orders, is a manifest proof, that the orders of the church were fixed and perpetual. Neither could they who had been ordained, divest themselves of their character, though they desired it ever so earnestly. Which appears from the forementioned epistle of Cornelius to Fabius, wherein he tells him, that in a time of persecution, Novatian being called by the deacons to exercise his office, renounced his orders, saying, he would no longer be a presbyter, and so went away.* Yet after this he retained his character, and aspired to the episcopal chair; it being thought in that age to be as impossible for one to lose the character of his order by renouncing his title to it, as it is to lose that of his baptism, by denying the faith.

It may be objected, that in the primitive church priests were sometimes reduced to the condition of laymen. So we find in the before-mentioned passage of the synodical epistle sent by Cyprian and the bishops of his province, to the bishop of Rome, that they had decreed, that if any presbyters and deacons ordained in the church should turn schismatics or heretics, and afterwards returned to the church's communion, they should only be received as laymen. The same discipline was observed in the church of Rome, whence Cornelius writes in his before cited epistle to Fabius, "That one of the schismatical bishops who had ordained Novatian,

* *Απίναι και ἀπαλλάττεσθαι μη γὰρ εν βουλευσθαι προςεσύτεροι. ειναι ἔφη.*

not long after returned to the church, lamenting and confessing his sin, whom, “ says he,” we admitted to communicate as a layman at the request of all the people who were then present. And we ordained others to succeed the rest of those bishops, and sent them to their respective dioceses.”* And in the apostolical canons, and those of ancient councils, there are many decrees for deposing clergymen from their offices. To which it is replied :

First, That supposing deposed clergymen to have been deprived of their character, this was done by the same authority, by which their orders were conferred, namely, by the bishops who govern the church as Christ’s vicegerents. Consequently, it cannot be inferred hence, either that any other human authority can take away this character, or that they may divest themselves of it by any act of their own.

Secondly, It does not appear, that deposed clergymen were thought to be deprived of their character. But then it will be asked, what it was they lost by deposition? To which I answer, that they could not after that lawfully preach or baptize, or exercise any part of their office : they lost farther their share of the maintenance, which was allotted for the clergy : and they were removed from their places in the church, and sate among the laymen, whose places were then distinct from those of the clergy. But

* Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. xliii. Εξ ὧν εἰς μετ’ οὐ πολὺ ἐπανήλθεν εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, υποδυρόμενος καὶ ἕξομολογούμενος τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἀμάρτημα, ᾧ καὶ ἐκοιωνήσαμεν ὡς λαϊκῶ, ὑπερ αὐτοῦ διηθέλιος πάντος τοῦ παρόντος λαοῦ· καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν δὲ ἐπισκόπων διαδόχους εἰς τοὺς τόπους, ἐν οἷς ἦσαν, χειροτονήσαντες, ἀπεστάλκαμεν.

all this does very well consist with their retaining the character of their order ; because the character of any order is a quite different thing from the exercise of the power which belongs to that order, and may remain when this is taken away. For instance, the jewish priests were not allowed to exercise their sacerdotal office, till they were arrived to a certain age, yet they were priests before that time. And a bishop who travels into another's diocese, cannot lawfully exercise his office there without the consent of the incumbent bishop ; yet he retains his episcopal and sacerdotal character, as will afterwards be shown. And if it should be inquired, how this appears to have been the case of deposed clergymen, that they were only forbidden to exercise their office, but still retained their respective characters ; I answer, that such men were sometimes admitted to exercise their office again, without being re-ordained ; which could not have been done, if deposition had been thought to deprive them of the character of their order. And farther, the acts which they performed during the time of their suspension from the exercise of their office, were afterwards allowed to be valid, though irregular. It was universally owned, that schismatics and heretics could not lawfully exercise their office, during their separation from the church. These crimes did "ipso facto" deprive them of their stations, whether any sentence of deposition was passed upon them, or not : yet, as it was before shown, the presbyters ordained by Meletius, a schismatical bishop, were afterwards allowed to officiate as presbyters, when they returned to the church, without being re-ordained. I shall

here add, that this was decreed by the great council of Nice, and that the same council, to encourage the Novatianists to return to the church, allowed all their clergy, who had been ordained in a state of schism, the same power and dignity in the church, to which they had been promoted in their own assemblies.* On this same account Melchiades, bishop of Rome, yielded to communicate with all the Donatist bishops except Donatus the head of that schism.† And it was decreed in the council of Hippo, “That though it had been determined in former councils, that such of the Donatist clergy, who returned to the church, should only be admitted to communicate as laymen, yet because there was a scarcity of clergymen in that country, such as had never been guilty of re-baptizing, or brought their people to the catholic communion along with them, should keep their station.”‡ So that the same thing seems done to clergymen with regard to their order by deposition, which is done to laymen with regard to the effects of their baptism by excommunication. The deposed clergyman is forbidden to exercise his function, and loses

* Concil. Nicæen. Can. VIII. Theodreti Hist. Eccles. Lib. I. cap. ix.

† S. Augustinus Epist. CLXII.

‡ Monument. veter. inter opera Optati, page 318. Edit. Paris. MDCC. Placuit etiam, ut quia in præcedentibus conciliis statutum est, nequis Donatarum cum honore suo recipiatur a nobis, sed in numero Laicorum : Propter salutem, quæ nulli deneganda est (tantum autem inopiæ clericorum ordinandorum in Africa patiuntur ecclesiæ, ut quædam loca omnino deserta, sint) servetur quidem in istis, quod jam antea traditum est ; sed exceptis, quos aut non re-baptizasse constiterit, aut qui cum suis plebibus ad communionem catholicam transire voluerint.

all other benefits of his order ; and the excommunicated person is rejected from the Lord's supper, and all other acts of christian communion, to which he was intitled by his baptism : yet neither of them are divested of their characters, and therefore when the sentence of excommunication is taken off, the layman returns to the church without being re-baptized ; and the sentence of deposition being taken off, the clergyman resumes his office, without repeating his ordination. Indeed Cyprian, and the Donatists, were of opinion that all acts done in schism were null, and therefore re-baptized and re-ordained all such as had received baptism and ordination in schismatical assemblies, before they admitted them to their stations in the church ; and the Luciferians re-ordained schismatics, though they did not re-baptize : but this opinion and practice was not grounded upon this, that they thought priests lost their character when they left the church ; but that they looked on all acts done in a state of schism, to be null and invalid, because not done within the church : and therefore though they re-baptized and re-ordained those, who had received baptism and orders in a state of schism, yet they never re-baptized or re-ordained those, who having been baptized or ordained in the church, turned schismatics, and afterwards returned to the church ; which is a manifest proof, that even these men thought the characters of baptism and orders to be indelible. However, their re-baptization and re-ordination of schismatics, were universally condemned by the church ; as appears both from the forementioned examples, and

from the confutations of their opinions, which are still extant in the works of the ancient fathers.*

7. Another power, which the church exercised in the primitive ages, was that of making canons, or laws for the behaviour of its members in spiritual affairs. Whereby it is not meant, that the church has authority to change any of the divine laws: when any attempt of this kind is made, our rule is plain and express, “We must obey God rather than men.”¹ Neither is it pretended, that the church has power to impose any article of faith, or rule of moral duty, or to prescribe any condition of salvation, which is neither expressly contained in the Scriptures, nor can certainly be concluded from them. For it is God’s prerogative to declare in what manner he will be worshipped and obeyed, and upon what terms he will make us happy: and therefore the papists, who are the only persons that claim this power, do pretend at the same time to be infallibly guided by the Spirit of God. It is not my design to dispute with them at present, and therefore I shall only add, that they must excuse us from assenting to their new articles of faith, till they give us better evidence for their divine inspiration, than they have hitherto done. So that all which remains to be prescribed by the church, only relates to outward peace and order. And if it appears, that things of this kind are left undetermined by the Scripture, and also that it is necessary they should be determined, then we cannot doubt but that Christ has intrusted the church with authority to determine them: other-

* S. Hieronymus Dialog. adversus Luciferian. S. Augustinus Contra Parmenid. Lib. II. ¹ Acts v. 29.

wise its constitution would be defective, and such as could not answer the ends for which it was founded.

Now that things of this kind are not particularly determined in the Scriptures, is most evident: for the rules of Scripture are all general: we are commanded to assemble together to worship God, but the times and places wherein we must assemble, are not expressed. We are commanded to follow such things as make for peace and edification, and to do all things decently and in order; but the particular methods, whereby order must be maintained, and edification promoted, are no where set down. Timothy, and all other bishops with him, are commanded to “lay hands suddenly on no man;” but the previous trials of such as are candidates for holy orders, and the time and methods of inspection into their abilities and behaviour, are left undetermined. Neither is it possible, in things of this nature, to give particular rules, which shall never need to be varied. For the same methods, which at one time very much promote peace and edification, when the scene is changed, may happen to obstruct these ends: and what in one age or country is decent, in another may be highly indecent. And therefore it is no lessening to the perfection of the Scriptures, to affirm they do not particularly determine things of this kind, which being variable in their own nature, are not capable of any fixed determination.

Neither is it less certain, that it is necessary for things of this kind to be determined in particular churches, than that the Scriptures have left them undetermined. For instance, the times and places where Christians assemble together to worship God,

must be fixed; otherwise they cannot assemble at all. When they are come together, it must be determined in what order the several offices of religion shall be performed; whether praying, or preaching, or singing of psalms, or administering of the sacraments, shall be first; otherwise one will be for praying, whilst another is for preaching, and a third for some other office, and nothing but disorder and confusion will be seen in the church. On the same account, the division of christians into districts and parishes, for the more convenient assembling together, and keeping up of order and discipline, is a thing which must be varied: and a more strict, or gentle discipline of offenders must be proportioned to what the times will bear, and to what men will be brought to submit to; as God himself hath set us a pattern, who connived at many things in the jews, for the hardness of their hearts, as our blessed Lord affirms: these, I say, are things which must of necessity be varied, as times and circumstances change, and yet the variation of them cannot safely be left to the discretion of particular men. And the same will hold in other circumstances of public duties, which the Scriptures have left undetermined. So that the things of this kind having been left undetermined by the Scriptures, and also it being necessary they should be determined, it follows, that Christ has left the church authority to determine them.

Neither is this any more than does evidently follow from allowing the church to be a society. All societies have authority to prescribe rules for the behaviour of their members, and without this they

would soon fall into extreme confusion. There are indeed standing and perpetual laws in the church, like the charters of corporations, which can receive no addition, or diminution from any authority, but that which first gave them force: such are the articles of faith, and the moral duties of christianity, as was before observed. But then, in determining matters of order and decency, which never were, or can be fixed by constant and invariable rules, no reason can be given why the church should not have the same authority which was exercised by all other societies whatever.

The religion of the jews was delivered to one nation, and the chief parts of it confined to one place, and the rites and circumstances of their worship were most strictly limited: and yet we find many rites among them in our blessed Saviour's time, some of which were neither prescribed by Moses, nor ever mentioned in the Old Testament. Beside the whole service of psalms and prayers in the temple, which were composed long after Moses' time, they had several rites added to the paschal solemnity, they used a sort of baptism, they had synagogues with officers and services appropriated to them, for which there neither appears to have been any particular precept, nor express allowance from God. And though our blessed Lord reprov'd the scribes for venting some traditions contrary to the precepts of God, and teaching others as divine laws, and so imposing on men's consciences, he was so far from condemning them merely because they were superadded to the law, that he himself observed many of them; he frequented not only their temple

service, but their synagogues, and he consecrated both their baptism, and their custom of blessing bread and wine after the paschal supper, to be federal rites of the christian covenant. And if so much liberty was allowed in so limited a religion, it cannot be doubted but that rather more room for alterations was left in the christian church, which is designed to extend over all countries, and to last through all ages, and therefore could not be so particularly determined in the circumstances of worship and government, as the jews were.

And if we inquire into the practice of the apostles, and other primitive governors of the church, we shall find, that beside the standing rules of the gospel, they gave out various rules, as the several occasions of the churches under their care required. One of these was, that the converts from heathenism should abstain from blood in order to their more easy incorporation with the jews. Another apostolical institution was the order of deaconesses, who ministered to the first preachers of the gospel, and assisted them in converting and baptizing women. The kiss of charity, whereby the primitive christians used to express their mutual love to one another, was introduced by the same authority. In several of St. Paul's epistles, especially those to the Corinthians, he prescribes particular rules for the decency of divine worship, the avoiding of scandal, and other things which were not determined by Christ; and he speaks of customs, which he himself and other apostles established, and the churches observed.¹ In the next ages after the apostles we

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 16.

and different rules and customs in different churches; which is a proof, that the apostles did not institute these customs by any express precept from God, for then they would have been more uniform, but followed their own judgment and inclination. A great variety of primitive usages, which were reckoned to be derived from the apostles and other founders of churches, have been collected by Socrates* and others, but I shall only mention those about the time of Easter, which the Asian churches, who followed St. John's prescription, kept at the same time with the jews, namely, on the fourteenth day of the moon, whatever day of the week it happened to fall; whereas the church of Rome, and most others following the direction of St. Peter and other apostles, constantly held it on the first day of the week: which is not only attested by Victor bishop of Rome with others of his mind, and also by Polycrates, and the rest of the Asian bishops; but it appears from the accounts which Irenæus has left us of Polycarp's journey to Rome.†

From these and many other examples, some of which have been produced in one of the precedent chapters,‡ it appears, that the apostles prescribed rules for the churches under their care by their own authority and if it should be said, that this authority was personal, and not communicated by the apostles to their successors: we may reply from what was intimated in the last chapter, that it is of lasting and constant use in the church, and consequently there is the same reason, why it should be transmitted to

* Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. xxii. † Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. V. cap. xxv. ‡ Cap. iii.

the bishops in all ages, as any other part of the apostolical office. There is, and ever will be the same necessity of prescribing rules for the peace and well government of the church, and the order and decency of divine service, as there was in the apostolical age. Neither are these things which require immediate revelation from God to settle them. The apostles made use of their own judgment, as hath been proved, in their directions on these occasions : and things of this nature do manifestly lie within the compass of human understanding, and may be managed by men of common capacities, assisted by the ordinary direction of the divine Spirit.

In all public affairs the same influence and authority belongs to the magistrate, which private men exercise in their own private concerns. Now it is manifest, that private christians are left to apply the general rules of the gospel to their own particular cases, and to prescribe such rules to themselves, as will enable them most effectually to promote the honour of God, and their own and other men's edification ; and therefore why may not the same be done with regard to the behaviour of christians, as members of the church, by those whom God has intrusted to govern his church ? There is indeed, more difficulty in the wise management of the public, than of ones own private affairs, which commonly lie within a more narrow compass than those of the public ; and therefore greater degrees of wisdom and application are necessary to one, who is honoured with any public character, either in church or state, than are commonly expected from private men : but still this does not exceed the com-

pass of human understanding, or require any miraculous assistance from God, and therefore may as well belong to the governors of the church, as it does to those of the civil society.

It is manifest, that the church has exercised this authority in some cases with universal approbation, even to the laying aside of apostolical usages. The kiss of charity, and the order of deaconesses, have for many ages been disused; and all the world remains satisfied to this day with the reasons of letting them fall. And if the church may lay aside apostolical usages in things which relate to order, it has certainly authority to make new rules about such things: if there is any difference, it is an higher attempt to alter what was settled by the apostles, than to establish new rules in things which they left undetermined.

Farther, we find many things were ordered by the first bishops, which are not expressly contained in the Scriptures. Titus was left by St. Paul in Crete, to set in order the things which are wanting;¹ that is, things relating to outward order, which St. Paul had not leisure to settle, when he laid the foundation of the church in that country. The passages cited in the last chapter out of Ignatius and other primitive fathers, wherein the christian people are exhorted to be subject to the clergy, and both clergy and laity to their bishop, to attempt nothing in matters of religion without his consent, nor to celebrate divine worship, but when, and where he appoints, are so many proofs, that in the earliest

¹ Tit. i. 3.

ages, the place, time, and other circumstantial of religious service were determined by the bishop, and that all others were obliged to be conformable to his prescriptions. In Cyprian's epistles, which were written to his clergy and people in his banishment from them, there are several injunctions about the management of ecclesiastical affairs during his absence: and if he exercised this authority when he was absent, there is no doubt but he had a right to it, when he was present with them. We are informed by Tertullian, that the bishops of his age used to appoint solemn fasts in their respective dioceses;* and by the same reason they did this, they might order all other circumstantial, which are not determined in the Scriptures.

Another proof of the judgment and practice of the primitive church in this matter, are the ancient canons, many of which were made long before the emperors became christians. Several canons are spoken of, which related to the time and methods of punishment and penance, which the lapsers in persecution, and other offenders should undergo before their re-admission to the church's communion; one of which is affirmed by Cyprian and his council of bishops to have been decreed through the whole world, namely, that the lapsers should never be allowed to exercise any clerical office.† Another

* Tertullianus lib. de jejun. cap. xiii. Episcopi universæ plebi mandare jejunia assolent.

† Cyprian. Epist. LXVII. Jam pridem nobiscum, & cum omnibus omnino Episcopis in toto mundo constitutis, etiam Cornelius collega noster—decreverit ejusmodi homines ad pœnitentiam quidem agendam posse admitti, ab ordinatione autem Cleri atque sacerdotali honore prohiberi.

ancient canon was before mentioned, that men baptized in their sick beds, should be incapable of receiving orders. Another is spoken of by Cyprian, that no christian should name a clergyman to be guardian to his children:¹ The design whereof was to prevent clergymen from being involved in secular business. To these, and many others which are mentioned in the writings of the primitive fathers, may be added the apostolical canons, many of which, though not made by the apostles, as their title seems to affirm, have been proved by learned men to be very ancient. The same farther appears from the celebration of councils, which are required by the apostolical canons to be held twice a year in every province: and several instances of councils held in the second century were mentioned in the last chapter. And lest it should be said, that the canons of councils were only rules of direction, which christians might observe, or neglect according to their own discretion; we find that the common penalties of breaking the ancient canons, were deposition to the clergy, and excommunication to the laity, as may be seen in the apostolical canons, and those of the most ancient councils, whereof any decrees are extant. So that it was universally believed in the primitive ages, that the church had authority to make laws for its own members.

Some, who allow the church this legislative power, as before explained, will have it to be lodged in the whole body of bishops, clergy and people; so that no rules can be made by one or more bishops

¹ Epist. 1.

for the inferior clergy, nor by the bishops and clergy together for the people, without their consent. But it appears from the instances which have been mentioned, that the apostles and their successors made rules for the people under their government, without expecting any man's concurrence. Indeed, in cases of greater moment, and such as had not been determined by any council, the primitive bishops commonly consulted both their clergy and people. Cyprian, in an epistle to his presbyters and deacons, tells them, "That from his entrance upon his episcopal office, he had determined to do nothing without their advice, and the people's consent."* And the presbyters and deacons of Rome, in an epistle which they wrote to Cyprian, when the episcopal chair of their church was vacant, speak of consulting not only with bishops, priests and deacons, but with confessors distinct from the clergy, and with other laymen.† But this must not be understood, as if the bishop, or the clergy during the vacancy of the episcopal chair, could not have ordered affairs by their own inherent authority. For though it was an ancient custom for such of the people, as were willing to come, to have free access to the councils and assemblies of the clergy; there is no example of their giving definitive voices there: and when their advice, or consent was asked, this was under-

* Epist. XIV. A primordio Episcopatus mei statuerim nihil sine consilio vestro, & sine consensu plebis, mea privatim sententia gerere.

† Inter opera Cypriani Epist. XXX. Collatione consiliorum cum Episcopis, Presbyteris, Diaconis, confessoribus pariter ac stantibus laicis.

stood to be done, that things might be carried on with unanimity, and not because their concurrence was believed necessary to give authority to any thing which was decreed. It is said, that in the apostolical council held at Jerusalem about the great question, whether the converts from heathenism were obliged to observe the law of Moses; not only the apostles and elders, but the whole church, that is, as many of the rest as would come, were present and assented to the decree, which is enacted in the name of the apostles, elders and brethren.¹ But then it is manifest on the other side, that though the people were allowed to be present, yet the apostles and elders are described as principals in this whole affair. Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem, not to the people, but to the apostles and elders about this question.² Then it is said, the apostles and elders came together to consider,³ without any mention of the people, though they also were present. Afterwards the decree is said to be ordained by the apostles and elders.⁴ And if we leave out the conjunctive particle (*καὶ*) in the epistle wherein the decree is contained, it will run in the names of the apostles and elders brethren, that is, christian elders, in opposition to the jewish, and other elders and rulers. This is an usual way of speaking in the Scripture: for thus we often find in conjunction men-brethren spoken to christians in opposition to jews, or to jews in opposition to heathens.⁵ And St. Paul speaks of a wife-sister

¹ Acts xv. 22, 23. ² Acts xv. 2. ³ Acts xv. 6. ⁴ Acts xvi. 4.

⁵ Acts i. 16. ii. 29, 37. vii. 2. xiii. 15, 26, 33. xv. 7, 13. xxii. 1. xxiii. 1. xxviii. 17.

(ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα) have we not power (says he) to lead about a wife-sister, that is, a christian wife.¹ It is not unlikely that the uncommonness of the phrase of elders-brethren, might occasion some unskilful transcriber to insert the particle *and* between them, to make the sense, as he might think, more clear or perfect; and having once crept into the text, it is not to be wondered, that it should afterwards be recommended, by the seeming easiness of the expression, to most of the transcribers who followed. But it was not there in the time of Irenæus,* nor when the old Latin version was made: it is omitted in the Alexandrian, and other manuscripts of good authority: and it is more probable, that it was not originally in the text, because this very decree is said in the next chapter to be ordained by the apostles and elders, without any mention of brethren, as was before said. If this correction be allowed, then here is an undoubted proof that the laity had no authority in councils, though they were present. However from what was before said, it appears, they gave no authority to the decrees of the apostolic council, but only were present to witness what was done, and that things might be carried with more general approbation, than they would have been in those early times before the government of the church was fully settled, if the people had been excluded. Neither can it be supposed with any colour of reason, that the apostles could not have enacted this decree by their own authority without the people's consent; or that the laity of Jerusalem

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 5. * Lib. III. cap. xii.

had authority over those of Antioch and other places, where this decree was to be observed. And it appears farther from the very form and words of the decree, 1st, that something was enjoined ; for there is mention of laying the things to be observed upon certain persons, and the whole is framed in a style of authority and command. 2dly, that the persons to whom these things were enjoined, gave no express consent to them : for the decree is written in the form of an epistle, to the church of Syria and others which were not present in this council. Neither is there the least intimation of their sending any proxies to represent them. Whence it follows, 3dly, that the governors of the church have authority to make laws for their people without asking their consent. Indeed it is called the decree of the apostles and elders, whence it may be inferred, that the elders gave authority to it as well the apostles. But it is not said who these elders were, whether mere presbyters, or bishops of the countries thereabouts, as some think them to have been ; and though we should allow them to have been mere presbyters, yet this is no more than may justly be granted, that presbyters may join in making canons with their bishops. In particular dioceses, things of greater moment were generally determined in a consistory of the bishop and his clergy : and though the presbyters could do nothing without the (*γνωμην*) consent of their bishop, they were always understood to have authority over the people, which they exercised in subordination to him ; and when the episcopal chair was vacant, their authority was supreme : an example whereof we find in the presbyters of Rome,

who governed that diocese a whole year, between the death of Fabianus, and the ordination of Cornelius. So that there is good reason, why presbyters may be allowed to join with their bishops in making canons; namely, because they have authority, though subordinate to the bishops, over the people. But then, what was before said concerning the people, must here be applied to the presbyters, that they were rather allowed to be present for the sake of their advice, or that things might be carried on with more solemnity, or that their consent might give greater reputation among the people to what should be decreed, than that their authority was believed to add any thing to that of the apostles. For beside that a subordinate authority, as that of the presbyters has been shown to be, can give no strength to what is enacted by the supreme authority; it has been proved before both in this and the former chapter, that many things were commanded by the apostles and primitive bishops, without the concurrence of any other. And the same farther appears from the acts of the ancient provincial councils, which consisted of the bishops within any one province; none of which could pretend to have greater authority in the province than in his own diocese, and therefore if the bishops together could impose laws upon the whole province, there is no reason, why every bishop might not exercise the same authority within his own diocese. Indeed provincial councils were held in a public manner, and presbyters, and also laymen, were usually present there, and it might be, they were sometimes allowed to give their opinions; and when

any decree was enacted, to signify their consent for the reasons above mentioned. But then the difference between the bishops and the rest, whether clergy or laity, consisted in this; that all the bishops of the province were summoned to provincial councils, and had decisive voices, which in case of sickness, or other lawful impediment, they sometimes gave by proxies; whereas the rest, whether clergy or people, neither had decisive voices, nor were all present, either in person, or by proxies; but only such of the clergy and people, as lived in the place where the council was held, or happened to be there at that time, were admitted, if they desired it; whereas if they had come upon the account of any authority lodged in them, all must have been present, and all must have had votes. For a proof of this we need only have recourse to the synodical epistles of the provincial councils under Victor, Polycrates, and others mentioned by Eusebius, and cited in the last chapter, and those extant in Cyprian's works,* all which bear the name of bishops, without any mention of clergy or people: and Cyprian himself calls the canons of such councils "Episcoporum decreta," the decrees of bishops†. Indeed the same father in his epistle to Quintus, speaks of a determination concerning the baptism of heretics, which he says was agreed to by many of his fellow bishops in council with such of their fellow presbyters as were present:‡ whence some will conclude, that this de-

* Cyprian. Epis. lvii. lxi. lxxvii. lxx. lxxiv.

† Epist. i. xlvi. lv.

‡ Epist. lxxii. De qua re quid nuper in concilio plurimi coepicopi, cum presbyteris qui aderant censuerimus, ut scires, ejusdem epistolæ exemplum tibi misi.

termination was confirmed by the votes of the presbyters, as well as those of the bishops: but to this it may be replied, 1st, that he plainly makes a difference between the bishops and presbyters, in these words, *such of the presbyters as were present*, which implies, that though all the bishops were present, yet there were only some of the presbyters, who happened occasionally to be there; whereas, if they had definitive votes in provincial councils, they must have been there, either in person or by their proxies, as well as the bishops. 2dly, the acts of the council held at Carthage under Cyprian on this occasion, which are extant in Cyprian's works, plainly show, that none but bishops gave their votes. 3dly, the Synodical epistle on the subject of heretical baptism, which seems to be the same to which Cyprian refers in this passage to Quintus, bears the name of none but bishops. So that though the presbyters might express their assent to what was determined by the bishops, as both they and the people commonly did, yet they had no definitive voices, but all things were enacted by the sole authority of the bishops. In the same manner, when a synod was held at Rome under Cornelius about the lapsers in persecution, beside sixty bishops, many presbyters and deacons were present:* yet the acts of this synod are expressly said by Cyprian to have been done by the authority of Cornelius and his fellow bishops, without any mention of the rest of the clergy.† So that

* Eusebius Eccles. Hist. lib. VI. cap. xliii. Epis. LV. p. 242.

† Qui & ipse (Cornelius) cum plurimis coepiscopis habito concilio, in eandem nobiscum sententiam pari gravitate & salubri modestia consensit.

we may safely conclude from the judgment and practice of the primitive church, as well as from Scripture and reason, that the church has authority to make laws in the manner before explained, and that this authority is lodged in the bishops.

8. From the power of making laws, let us proceed to that of jurisdiction, or executing the laws : wherein, if we take this word in the most extensive sense, there is contained authority to preach the gospel in order to convert unbelievers, to admit them into the church when they are converted, to govern the members of the church, to dispense or withhold the benefits and privileges of the church, to censure and punish offenders, and to ordain inferior officers to execute any part of this authority. Thus in civil societies, whoever is invested with supreme jurisdiction, has authority to incorporate whom he judges fit, to govern all the members of his society, to reward the worthy, to punish the unworthy ; and lastly, because the execution of this power is more than one man has time and strength to go through with, he has power to authorise others to discharge such parts of it, as he has not leisure or convenience to execute in his own person. So that the power of jurisdiction, taken in the most general sense, implies all other powers, which are exercised in this christian, or any other society, beside that of making laws. And these two powers are always joined in the supreme governor. For he having the supreme power of making laws, must have power to execute the laws when they are made, otherwise it would have been in vain to make them. Hence some have inferred, that the christian church has no jurisdic-

tion, because they say it has no legislative power ; and sometimes the other way, that it has no legislative power, because it has no jurisdiction. And if this had been spoken of civil affairs only, we should readily have allowed, that the christian church, as such, has neither authority to make laws, nor to execute them when they are made. But having already showed, that the church has authority to make laws in spiritual affairs, this way of arguing will teach us to infer, that the church has also spiritual jurisdiction. And on the other side, since the church has authority to admit new members by baptism, to ordain officers, and to perform all other acts of spiritual jurisdiction, as hath already been shown in part, and will now be farther proved ; we must conclude by the same method of reasoning, that the church has power to make laws for her own members, over whom this jurisdiction is exercised. Because it is supposed in this argument that legislation and jurisdiction are always joined in the same person. And it is true, that the supreme power in all societies both makes laws, and puts those laws in execution, as was before observed : but then it ought to have been remembered, that the power of executing laws may be delegated to those, who are not intrusted with authority to make laws. Thus we find in civil societies, that subordinate magistrates are intrusted to execute the laws, which none but the supreme magistrate has authority to enact. And others have not only authority to execute the laws of the supreme magistrate, but also to make private laws of their own : as we find in lesser corporations, the governors whereof have both

authority to execute the public laws of the realm, and to make private laws for their members. And to apply this to our present subject, the church has both authority to execute the laws of Christ in the government of her members, and also to prescribe whatever other rules are necessary to maintain peace and order; which have the same relation to the laws of Christ, which the private laws of corporations bear to the public laws of the realm, or to the royal charter, as was observed under the last head. And yet if any man should deny that this last power belongs to the church, he cannot thence infer with the least colour of reason, that the church has no jurisdiction; because the church may have power to govern its members by the laws which Christ our law giver hath established, though it should have no power to make new laws.

Having premised thus much concerning jurisdiction in general, and explained several branches of it under the former heads, I shall now proceed to that part of it, which the name jurisdiction signifies in the most strict sense, namely, the power of judging and censuring offenders. In most of the former heads I have rather treated of the subject or minister of spiritual powers, than of the powers themselves; because, for instance, it is not so much questioned, whether the church has authority to preach, or baptize, or celebrate the Lord's supper, as whether these offices may not be done by all christians without any distinction: but in the present subject, as also under the last head of making laws, it is necessary to vindicate the powers themselves; because it is not only doubted, whether the power of making

laws and censuring offenders belongs to the governors of the church, but whether the church has any such power ; and therefore in treating on the present argument I shall endeavour to show :

First, That our blessed Lord has intrusted the church, and particularly the governors of it, with authority to censure offenders, and to exclude them from its communion.

Secondly, That this authority was constantly exercised and held to be of divine right in the first ages of the church.

Thirdly, That it is most agreeable to reason, and to the general sense and practice of mankind, that the church should exercise this authority.

First, Then, our blessed Lord has intrusted the church, and particularly the governors of it, with authority to censure offenders, and to exclude them from its communion. Which will appear, if we consider the church, 1st, as a society ; 2dly, as a society, the privileges whereof are annexed to certain conditions ; 3dly, as it has received this power from our Lord's positive institution.

1. The church being a society, has authority to exclude offending members from its communion, because this authority is exercised by all societies whatever. All civil governors, those of private families and lesser corporations, as well as those of kingdoms, have authority to banish unruly members, who violate the laws, and disturb the peace of their societies. Without this they would be unable to protect their subjects, and men might, almost as well, have lived independent on one another, and never have combined into societies. And as in civil

societies this authority is necessary for the securing men's lives and properties, which is the chief end, for which it pleased God to institute these societies: so in the church, or spiritual society the same authority is equally necessary to attain the ends for which the church was founded, namely, to maintain the purity of divine worship, to secure men from the pollutions of the world, and to train them up in virtue and piety here, in order to make them happy hereafter. For there is scarce any possibility of doing this, if the church has not authority to exclude from its communion such unworthy members, as endeavour to oppose these ends by promoting vice, superstition and impiety. But this will farther appear under the third particular, where I shall discourse of the reasonableness of this authority: and therefore,

2dly. The church has authority to exclude unworthy members from its communion, because it is a society, the privileges whereof are annexed to certain conditions. If the privileges of the church were absolute and unconditional, there would be no reason, why any man should be debarred from them, how wicked soever he be: but the quite contrary is manifest from the Scriptures, where we find, that no man must be admitted into the church by baptism, who does not first profess the faith, and vow obedience to the laws of Christ. And if faith and obedience are necessary conditions of men's admission into the church, they must be so of their continuance in it. For no reason can be shown, why men should be obliged to vow faith and obedience in order to their becoming members of the church, which does

not equally hold for their exclusion from it, when they notoriously break that vow. So that the power of excommunication is a manifest consequence of the baptismal covenant: it is upon this that men are admitted into the church, and therefore when they violate their covenant, which was the foundation of their admission, they must again be excluded. And the same consideration will lead us to the persons, in whom this authority is placed: for we need only remember, who they are, to whom Christ has committed the dispensation of the sacraments; and these having already appeared to be the governors of the church, we might safely conclude, though Christ had left us no express direction, that it is their duty to exclude from the sacraments those, whom they find to be unworthy of them.

3. But, lastly, the governors of the church have received authority to exclude offenders by our blessed Lord's positive institution. Upon Peter's confessing our Lord to be the Son of God, he declared first, that upon this rock he would build his church, against which the gates of hell should never prevail; and then added: and I will give unto thee, that is to Peter, and with him, to the rest of the apostles, as was before proved, the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.¹ In which words the same thing is twice promised under different expressions: First, it is said, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Then, se-

¹ Matt. xxi. 19.

condly, it follows as a consequence of Peter's having these keys : " whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." For the understanding of the first of these expressions, it may be remembered, that the kingdom of heaven, in the scriptural notion, is the church of Christ, of which heaven is the metropolis, or principal part, whence the members of the church are called citizens of heaven,¹ and fellow citizens with the saints.² And this kingdom, as was formerly observed,³ is sometimes represented under the notion of a house, where some are admitted, and others excluded, according to their different merits. The wise virgins, whose lamps were prepared, were admitted, and then the door was shut : after which, the foolish virgins, who had not taken oil in their lamps, were denied admittance.⁴ So that whoever is intrusted with the keys of heaven, in the scriptural sense of this phrase, has authority to admit into the church, and to exclude from it. This is one part of the business of a steward, to take in servants, or to exclude them, as he shall find them fit, or unfit for his master's service ; and therefore it most properly belongs in the church, which our Lord calls his household, to those whom he has constituted stewards of this household, that is, to his apostles and their successors.⁵ King David and his household in Jerusalem of Canaan are described as types of Christ and his household, or church, in heaven, which is called the

¹ Philip. iii. 20. ² Eph. ii. 20. ³ Chap. i. ⁴ Matt. xxv. 1, 2, &c. ⁵ Luke xii. 42.

new Jerusalem.¹ Whence our blessed Lord, as the king of this household, who has the supreme power to admit and exclude whomsoever he pleaseth, is said to have the keys of David: "these things, saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth."² The same phrase is applied to Eliakim: "the key of the house of David, saith God, will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open."³ The meaning whereof is, that he should be the chief officer in the king's household, and have power to take in, and exclude whom he judged convenient: accordingly, we find, that he was over the household of Hezekiah,⁴ when Sennacherib sent Rabshakeh to Jerusalem, which happened several years after Isaiah prophesied that this honour should be conferred on him. So that the supreme power of the keys of the king's house was in the king himself, but a subordinate power was intrusted to Eliakim, his principal steward. Consequently, when we apply this expression to the church, which is the antitype of David's household, the supreme power of the keys, that is, the authority of admitting and excluding, belongs to Christ the king; but the same is exercised by his apostles and their successors, whom he has appointed to govern the church as his stewards, or vicegerents. And therefore the meaning of this promise, as explained by parallel texts of Scripture, is manifestly this: That the apostles and their successors (for there is

¹ Rev. xxi. 2. Heb. xii. 22. ² Rev. iii. 7. ³ Isai. xxii. 22.

⁴ 2 Kings xviii. 18.

no reason to confine the power of keys to the persons of the apostles, as will afterwards be proved) should be chief governors of the church under Christ, and as such should have authority to admit and exclude whom they judged convenient.

This explication is confirmed by the following words, which come now to be considered: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Where it may be remembered, that the expressions of binding and loosing do commonly signify imprisoning, and releasing from prison; to do which belongs to those who have the keys in their custody: whence the angel in the revelation, who descended from heaven to cast satan into the prison of the bottomless pit, and to shut him up there, is said to have the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand to bind him,¹ because malfactors were commonly bound with chains, when they were imprisoned: so that the power of binding and loosing, as thus explained, is a consequence of having the keys; and when applied to the members of Christ's church, it signifies authority to condemn them for their sins, or absolve them, which is the only way of imprisoning and releasing from prison in the spiritual sense of those expressions. There are some, who having observed that our blessed Lord here says, whatsoever ye shall bind, and not whomsoever, infer, that this must not be understood of binding persons, but things: and by binding things, they understand making or declaring them

¹ Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3.

unlawful. And then the sense of the promise is, that Christ would hold unlawful in heaven, whatever the apostles declared to be so on earth. Which is not only a manifest force upon the words, which the Scriptures never use in any such sense; but it is also false, because the apostles had no power either to make or declare any thing to be unlawful, which was not before made and declared by Christ to be so. And therefore, though we shall not deny that things are here expressed, yet we affirm, that it is very common to put adjectives of the neuter gender instead of substantives, and so to express things, when persons are understood, of which many instances occur in all authors. Or, if any man rather incline to understand it of things than of persons, the most natural sense, and that which is most agreeable to other passages of Scripture, will be this: whatsoever sins ye shall bind, that is, pronounce any man bound for; and whatsoever sins ye shall loose, that is, acquit any man of upon earth, the same shall accordingly be bound or loosed by me in heaven. These words thus understood do naturally follow the power of the keys of heaven, as before explained; and both together imply, that whatever sentence shall be passed and declared by the governors of the church, shall be ratified by Christ whom they represent: which is no more than may be said of the vicegerents of any other prince; that whatever they act or declare in his name, and by his commission, has the same authority, as if it was done by the prince himself.

This will more fully appear to be the true meaning of the promise, if we compare it with another passage in the same gospel, where our blessed Lord

having cautioned his disciples, that they should not offend others, proceeds to instruct them how to behave themselves, when others offend them: that first they should privately admonish the offender; if this did not bring him to repentance, they should then reprove him in a more public manner, before two or three witnesses; but if this also proved unsuccessful, their last remedy should be, to tell it to the church, that is, to the christian congregation. And what if the offender neglect to hear them? They could not inflict any civil punishment on him; for that would not have been allowed by the civil magistrate, neither is it consistent with the nature of church authority, which has been shown to be wholly spiritual: and therefore all that our Lord directs them to do, is, that they should account the obstinate offender as an heathen, or a publican; that is, in the most natural and common sense of the words, they should look on him no longer as a member of the church, but place him among infidels, and other profligate men, whose conversation they used to shun.¹

To avoid the force of this passage several things have been said: as first, that by the church is not meant the christian church, but the jewish synagogue; because there was no christian church settled, when our Lord spake these words; and therefore it is said, that he speaking to his disciples as jews, advised them to make their complaint to the jewish synagogue. Secondly, that the meaning of these words, let him be to thee as an heathen, or a

¹ Matt. xviii. 15, 16, 17.

publican, is only, that if the offender should not repent, and make satisfaction to the person whom he had injured, upon the church's admonition, he might be prosecuted in the courts of their heathen governors, which was the only method they could take for relief, when they were injured by heathens; but it was not thought lawful for them, as it is pretended, thus to prosecute those of their own nation. Thirdly, It is said, that whatever be the meaning of these words, let him be to thee, &c. they are only a direction to private men how to behave themselves toward any brother who had injured them; and not to the church to pass any censure upon him.

In answer to the first of these objections, that not the christian church, but the jewish synagogue, is here understood, these things may be considered: First, that not long before this, in the above mentioned text, our Lord used this name in such a manner, as that it cannot be doubted but he spake of the church which he intended to erect: and what reason can there be, why he should not mean the same church which he had so lately mentioned? Especially, since in both places he manifestly speaks of the same authority belonging to his church, namely, that whatever it should bind, or loose on earth, should be accordingly bound or loosed in heaven, as will presently be shown. Secondly, the name of church is often given to the christian church, but never once to the jewish synagogue through the whole New Testament; which alone, though we had no farther reason for it, will hinder any impartial man from acquiescing in this sense. Thirdly, though the name of church could fairly be

understood of the jewish synagogue in this place, as indeed it cannot, yet it is most incredible, that our Lord should send his disciples thither, where it was more likely they would receive fresh injuries, than that they should have their old ones redressed. Beside, it is not probable, that our Lord's disciples had the liberty of appealing to the jewish synagogues, because we find in the gospel, the jews had agreed to cast them all out of the synagogues,¹ and consequently to deprive them of the privilege of appealing thither, as well as heathens, or publicans. And, lastly, if our Lord had sent his disciples to the synagogue, he needed not to have assigned this as a consequence of the offender's neglecting to hear the synagogue, that the person whom he had injured, should reckon him as a heathen, or a publican; because, when these words were spoken, the rulers of the synagogue had a coercive power, whereby they could oblige offenders to reform their wicked courses; whence our Saviour told his disciples, they should be beaten in the synagogues,² which we find afterwards fulfilled in the persecution raised by Saul.³

Then to the second objection, that these words, let him be to thee as an heathen, or a publican, imply no more, than that the injured person should have liberty to implead him in the Roman courts, it may be answered; that though this should be implied in these words, which cannot easily be proved, yet the apostles could not rest in this as the full meaning of treating any man as a heathen then and a publican, because a great deal more was constantly

¹ John ix. 12. ² Matt. x. 17. ³ Acts ix. 1, 2.

implied in this expression, as the jews then used it. For it was accounted a profanation of the temple, to bring any heathen so far as into the exterior court, where the people used to pray : and they neither conversed freely with heathens, or publicans, nor so much as eat and drank with them, nor entered into their houses.¹ And therefore, in the notion which our Lord's disciples, to whom he gave this advice, had of treating men as heathens and publicans, it implied not only, that they might lawfully accuse them before the Roman governor, but that they should have no religious, or civil conversation with them.

But supposing this to be the meaning of these words, it is objected lastly, that no direction is here given to the church to pass any sentence on the offender, but only to the injured person to avoid his company. And it is true, that no more is directly expressed in these words, "let him be to thee," &c. But then it is easy to infer from them, that the obstinate offender was to be an heathen, and a publican to the rest of the church, as well as to the person whom he had injured : for he could not be an heathen to the injured person, that is, not admitted to religious communion with him, without being an heathen in the same sense to the whole church : because if the church owned him as a christian by admitting him into her assemblies, no private christian could renounce religious communion with him without forsaking the church. And then the avoiding him in civil conversation would have been no pu-

¹ Matt. ix. 11. Acts ix. 3. xxi. 28. Gal. ii. 12:

nishment, unless others shunned him, as well as the person he had injured, whose company it is likely he would desire to avoid out of mere shame, and for fear of being put in mind of his wickedness, though the injured person should have been willing to receive him. Lastly, when any offender continues obstinate after the church has publicly admonished him, the whole society is thereby injured and offended, and consequently has the same reason to reckon him in the number of heathens and publicans, as that one member who first complained. And in the case of public sins, which equally offend the whole christian congregation, such as heresy, blasphemy, and the like, there is at least as great reason, why the whole congregation should avoid the offender as an heathen, as for private men treating those who have injured them, in that manner.

So that, notwithstanding these objections, the plain meaning of this text seems to be this: that they who persist in their offences after the christian church's admonition, should thenceforward be deprived both of religious and civil communion with the members of the church, and consequently be reduced into the state of heathens and publicans. And this will more fully appear by considering our Lord's words, which immediately follow: "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. Again, I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my

name, there am I in the midst of them.”¹ It is manifest, that our blessed Lord still pursues the same argument, which he had spoken of in the words before explained, not only because these last words are presently subjoined without any others intervening, and that with a manifest relation to the church, and the occasion whereof he had been speaking ; but because the same subject is still continued after these words to the end of the chapter. Now from these words as following those, which were before explained, we may infer, first, that the expressions of binding and loosing, as was before intimated, relate to persons, and not to things ; or at least to things, as they concern persons. For our Lord’s discourse in this place is confined to offending persons, whom he directs to treat as heathens or publicans, and then adds, that whatever the church shall bind or loose on earth, shall accordingly be bound or loosed in heaven : whereby nothing else can fairly be understood, but that offending brethren, whom the church shall condemn to be reckoned as heathens, and so bind them on earth, shall have the same sentence passed on them in heaven. Secondly, the congregation here spoken of, cannot be any other than the christian church, because they are such as ask in Christ’s name, in the midst of whom Christ promises to be, and whose prayers he promises that God will grant. Which is a full proof that what was before said, concerns not the Jewish synagogue, but only the christian church. Thirdly, what is here said, manifestly implies something done by the church,

¹ Matt. xviii. 18, 19, 20.

and not by any one private member of it: for it is the church's sentence of binding and loosing, which our Lord promiseth to ratify in heaven: and the prayers which he promiseth to fulfil, are those which the congregations make in his name. Which confirms what was before said, that these words, "let him be to thee as an heathen," &c. though expressed in the singular number, implies the sentence of the whole church. Lastly, from the whole passage together it appears, that our Lord instructed his church to exercise a judicial power over its members. For this is a manifest description of a judicial process: he who has been injured, is first directed to tell the offender of his fault privately between themselves: if that have no effect, to admonish him before witness: if this admonition also prove unsuccessful, to complain to the church: then, if he neglects to hear the church, follows the church's sentence, whereby the obstinate offender is separated from the communion of the faithful, and reduced into the state of heathens; which being decreed by virtue of Christ's commission, he promiseth to ratify it in heaven.

One thing farther remains to be explained before we dismiss this text; and that is, whether by the church, and afterwards by the congregation of two or three assembled in the name of Christ, be meant the whole society of christians, or only the rulers of it. And here, though it is not to be doubted but that sentences of this kind were pronounced in the public assembly, we must not infer, that all the members of the assembly gave their voices before they could be passed. What was said under the last head of making ecclesiastical laws, may be applied

to the church's censures; that they were pronounced in public assemblies, where as many as desired might be present, but received their force from the governors of the church: it must be added, that since these have appeared to be invested with authority to make laws, it is very unlikely they should not have power to pass sentence on those who break them; because, if there be any difference, legislation is rather an act of higher authority than jurisdiction. Neither is it an uncommon way of speaking, to ascribe to any society what is done by the rulers of it. Thus in political bodies, any judicial sentence pronounced by those who have authority, is the sentence of the whole body, though perhaps the greater part of the members never heard of it. And war proclaimed by the supreme powers of any kingdom, brings all the members of the kingdom into a state of war, whether they expressly consented to it or not. In the same manner, what is here spoken of the church, is ascribed by St: Chrysostom* and other ancient fathers, to the rulers of it; that complaints are to be made to them, and that they are to pass sentence when any members of the church are accused. Which explication agrees with the above mentioned words of our Lord, where he does not promise the power of binding and loosing to all christians in general, but only to Peter and the apostles, and in them to the governors of the church in succeeding ages: and it is farther confirmed by another passage, which comes now to be considered.

* S. Chrysostomus: *Εἰπὲ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, τοῦτίστι τοῖς προεδρεύουσι.*
Conf. Theophylactus, aliique.

It is that in St. John's gospel, where our Lord appearing to his apostles after his resurrection, said thus to them: "as my Father hath sent me, so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them: receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."¹ In which words he sends the apostles in the same manner as the Father had sent him; which can import no less, than that as he was sent by the Father with authority to found and govern the church, so they should have the same authority under him. In order hereto he confers on them the Holy Ghost, by whom all sorts of power are derived from God in the manner formerly explained; and as a consequence of this, he gives them full authority to judge the members of his church as his vicegerents and ministers, promising to ratify in heaven the sentences which they should pronounce on earth: "whose soever sins ye remit," &c. These expressions of remitting and retaining import the same with those of binding and loosing, which have been already explained. For retaining (*κρατειν*) implies holding fast, or taking hold of any thing, or person:² and therefore is sometimes joined with binding, as being preparative to it: thus Herod having laid hold on John, bound him (*κρατησας εδησε*);³ and the angel, who had the key of the bottomless pit, laid hold on the devil and bound him (*εκρατησε και εδησε*).⁴ And sometimes these words of retaining and binding are used as

¹ John xx. 21, 23, 23. ² Matt. xviii. 28. xxi. 46. xxvi. 4.

³ Matt. xiv. 3. ⁴ Rev. xx. 1, 2.

synonymous terms; whence the same Hebrew word is sometimes translated by the LXX. retaining,¹ sometimes binding:² and retaining (*καρταειν*) is set in opposition to loosing from bonds (*λυσαι*),³ and consequently signifies keeping men bound: and other authors commonly take it in the same sense with binding: whence St. Basil describing the freedom of christians in their bonds, says, they were *κεκρᾶλημενοὶ ἀκράτητοι*, unbound, though in bonds. And in like manner remitting sin (*ἀφίεναι*) and loosing (*λυσαι*) have the same meaning in the Scriptures.⁴ And sometimes they are joined together, when applied to other things; as we find in our Lord's words concerning Lazarus, who was bound (*δεδεμένος*) with his grave clothes: "loose him," said he, "and let him go" (*λύσατε καὶ ἄφειτε.*) So that we cannot doubt but that our Lord speaks of the same authority in this passage with that, which he had before promised under the names of binding and loosing.

Some indeed will have nothing farther to be understood by these words, than that the apostles were authorised to preach the gospel, which whoever embraced, should have his sins forgiven; and on the contrary, the sins of those who rejected the gospel, should be retained, or punished. But this is a manifest force upon the words, which are never taken in this sense through the whole New Testament. It is manifest, the jews understood remitting sins in a proper sense, when our Lord remitted the sins of the paralytic, and of the woman who anointed his feet; otherwise they would not have charged him

¹ Dan. x. 8. xi. 6. ² Jer. xxxiii. 1. ³ Acts ii. 24. ⁴ Exod. xxxii. 21. Job xlii. 9.

with blasphemy for it : and our Lord himself meant it in the same sense, and therefore ascribes his remitting the sins of those persons to their faith.¹ And since this expression was used in a proper sense, when applied to our Lord's own power, there is no reason to understand it in any other way, when he speaks of the power which he committed to his apostles, especially in this place, where he expressly gives them the same authority under him, which he exercised under the Father: "as my Father sent me, so send I you." So that if we allow our Lord to have remitted sins as he was sent from the Father, we must not deny this authority to the apostles as sent by our Lord. Besides, this power of remitting and retaining sins, or, as it is called in other places, of binding and loosing, manifestly implies a difference to be made by the apostles: the sins of some men they were to remit, those of others to retain; whereas they were obliged to preach the gospel to all nations, and, as it is elsewhere expressed, to every creature, without partiality or distinction. And if any difference afterwards happened in the condition of those to whom they preached, this was owing to the disposition wherewith they received the gospel, and their behaviour afterwards, and not to the apostles' authority. Lastly, the apostles received the power of preaching when they were made apostles, whereas the power of binding and loosing was not promised till some time had passed after their ordination, and never actually conferred till after our Lord's resurrection, when he had received all power in heaven and in earth.²

¹ Matt. ix. 2. Luke vii. 48.

² Matt. xxvi.

Others object, that the taking of remitting and retaining sin in the literal sense, would make men's salvation very precarious and uncertain, by putting it into the hands of ecclesiastics, who through ignorance or partiality, may condemn the righteous and absolve the wicked. Which would be true, if the governors of the church were the last and supreme judges; and therefore we must here repeat, what has been intimated several times before; that their judgment is ministerial and subordinate to the superior tribunal of Christ, who will undoubtedly reverse any unjust sentence passed by his ministers. So that neither they who live up to the rules of the gospel, need to fear the condemnation of any man whatever; nor they who transgress the laws of Christ, will better their condition by procuring absolution from his ministers.

To this it has been sometimes replied, that if the case be thus, the wicked will neither fare any better for being acquitted, nor good men any worse for being condemned by the church, and then the judicial power, to which the church pretends, is vain, and without any effect. For the answering of which objection, we need only consider the case of a good man unjustly excommunicated, or that of a wicked man, who having been justly excommunicated, afterwards becomes penitent. In the former case, the good man must plead his innocence, and use all proper methods to bring his judges to a sense of their mistake, with due respect and submission to their authority: just as it is practised in civil courts of justice, where innocent men who have been unjustly condemned, must endeavour with humility to clear

themselves : if after this, the innocent person is not released by the church, there is no doubt but he will be absolved by Christ the supreme judge. But if this person, instead of vindicating his own innocence, should behave himself undutifully to the ministers of Christ, he will fall under the same sentence, which would be passed in any civil court on those, who should revile their judges ; that is, he will be punished for his disobedience, let him be ever so innocent as to the crime laid to his charge. Then in the second case, it is first of all certain, that a wicked man cannot become truly and fully penitent, without submitting to the church. For repentance implies a sincere resolution of obedience to God in all things : and this being one of God's appointments, that private christians be subject to the church, whoever does not submit to the church's censures, however sorry he may seem to be for his former sin, cannot be truly penitent. Just as if one should believe the history, and be desirous to perform the moral duties of the gospel, yet refuse to be baptised, and admitted into the church's communion, it is certain this man has not his sins remitted, let his resolutions in other respects be ever so commendable, because he wilfully neglects the visible ordinance to which Christ has annexed this privilege, and despises his church : so in the present case, the church's just sentence against men will be confirmed by Christ in heaven, however penitent they may seem in other respects, unless they are absolved, or at least duly endeavour to obtain absolution on earth. For God will most certainly maintain his own insti-

tutions; and whoever expects to be saved any other way than that which he has appointed, makes himself wiser than God.

If any should yet remain, who think they may be saved by inward faith and repentance, without submitting to the governors, and returning to the outward communion of the church; let them remember, that it is God's ordinary method to dispense both his blessings and judgments by the hands of men. He would not heal Abimelech, though he knew the integrity of his heart, till Abraham prayed for him: "He is a prophet, said God, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live."¹ God commanded Eliphaz and his friends to desire the prayers of Job; for him, said he, will I accept.²

Under the law of Moses the offerings were presented by the priests, and it was death for any of the rest of the jews to sacrifice for themselves. And the same method was still kept up in the New Testament: our Lord assumed human nature in order to become our mediator: and he required all his disciples, in order to their salvation, to associate into a visible society, and to partake of visible ordinances, the ministration whereof he committed to his apostles and ministers. And to come nearer to the present subject, the power of judging was committed to Christ as man, and will be exercised by him in that capacity at the great day of accounts: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son; and hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the son of man."³

¹ Gen. xx. 7, 17. ² Job. xxii. 8. ³ John v. 22. 27.

Our Lord promised to the apostles, that when he "shall sit upon the throne of his glory, they also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."¹ And St. Paul affirms in general of the saints, that they shall judge both men and angels.² So that this will have no weight with any reasonable man against the censures of the church, or any other ordinance of the gospel, that they make the intervention of other men necessary to our salvation, since it is, and always has been God's ordinary method, to dispense his blessings and judgments by the hands of men.

Having thus explained and vindicated the church's authority to censure offenders, as it was given and instituted by our blessed Lord, let us now in the second place consider the sense and practice of the apostles, and their successors, the bishops of the primitive church; who may reasonably be supposed to have understood the design and extent of their own commission far better than we can do at this distance.

And the first sin, which is said to have been retained by the apostles, was that of Ananias and Sapphira, who brought part of the price of their estate to the apostles, pretending it to be the whole; and so lied to the Holy Ghost. Hereupon it pleased God to attest the apostolic authority of retaining sins by enabling Peter to strike both the offenders with present death.³ Just as on the contrary side our Lord's healing the paralytic, was a testimony from God, that he had given him power to remit

¹ Matt. xix. 28. ² 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. ³ Acts, v. 1, 2, &c.

sins: "That ye may know, saith he, that the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then said he to the sick of the palsy) arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house."¹

The next was that of Simon, the magician, who having been converted and baptized by Philip, the deacon, afterwards would have bribed Peter and John with money to give him the power of conferring the Holy Ghost; whereby he not only betrayed his covetous and wicked design of increasing his wealth by the power of miracles, but exceedingly dishonoured the Holy Ghost, whose gifts he thought were to be purchased with money. Upon this, St. Peter presently pronounced him to be under the curse of God: "Thy money, said he, perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money:"² then, as a consequence of this, he declares him to be excluded from the church's communion: "thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God."³ Where the phrase which we translate this matter (*τω λόγω τουτω*) signifies this word, and in other places of the Acts is taken for the gospel: and if we take it here in the same sense, St. Peter not only declares Simon to have no part in the matter of conferring the Holy Ghost, but also to have no part in the gospel. And this expression of having no part, is the same whereby the tribes beyond Jordan signified the exclusion of their posterity from religious communion with the rest of the jews: "In time to come your children might say

¹ Matt. ix. 6.

² Acts viii. 20.

³ Ibid. 21.

to our children, ye have no part in the Lord. So shall your children make our children to cease from fearing the Lord.”¹ And our Lord applies it to separation from himself, in those words to Peter, “if I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me.”² The same phrase sometimes also signifies separation from civil communion. Thus Sheba blew a trumpet, and said, we have no part in David, when he rebelled against him:³ and it was again used by the ten tribes, when they deserted Rehoboam.⁴ So that to have no part in the gospel, is to be excluded from the communion and privileges of the society founded on the gospel covenant. Accordingly this was understood by the primitive church to be an excommunication of Simon; whence we find it decreed in one of the apostolical canons, “That if any bishop, priest, or deacon, gives money to be ordained, both the person ordained, and he who ordained him, shall be deposed from their office, and wholly rejected from communion, as Simon, the magician, was by Peter.”* Yet this was not designed to be a final and irreversible separation from Christ and his church, and therefore St. Peter exhorts him to repent; and Simon, fearing some divine judgment would fall on him, presently submits, and intreats the apostles to intercede with God in his behalf:

¹ Josh. xxii. 24, 25. ² John xiii. 8. ³ 2 Sam. xx. ⁴ 1 Kings xii. 16.

* Apost. can. xii. *Εἴτις ἐπισκοπος διὰ χρημάτων τῆς ἀξίας ταύτης ἐκράτης γένηται, ἢ πρεσβύτερος, ἢ διάκονος, καθαιρεῖσθω καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ ὁ χειροτονήσας, καὶ ἐκκοπήσθω παντάπασι καὶ τῆς κοινωνίας, ὡς Σίμων ὁ μάγος ὑπο Πέτρον.*

“ Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken, come upon me.”¹

Another remarkable example is that of the Corinthian, who married his father's wife.² St. Paul having heard this, reproveth the Corinthians because they had not mourned, that he, who had done this deed, might be taken away from among them.³ Which words describe to us the practice of the primitive christians, who used to lament over such of their brethren, as had made themselves obnoxious to the censures of the church: and this phrase of taking away from among them, compared with a parallel expression in the last verse of the same chapter, plainly appears to be meant of separating the offender from the communion of the faithful. So that the meaning of this verse is this, that the Corinthians ought to have lamented for the great scandal, which their offending brother had given to the enemies of religion, and for the danger to which he had exposed himself, and thereupon to have excluded him from their communion. But they having neglected this part of their duty, the apostle himself proceeds to pass sentence on him: “ For I verily, as absent in body, but present in Spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed: in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”⁴ In which words there are

¹ Acts viii. 24. ² 1 Cor. v. 1. ³ Verse 2. ⁴ 1 Cor. v. 3, 4, 5.

several things which deserve to be particularly considered: as first, the authority, whereby sentence is here passed; which is expressed by the spirit of St. Paul, whereby is meant the apostolic power conferred on him by Christ, who gave to him, as also to the rest of the apostles, the Holy Spirit in order to retain and remit sins in the manner before explained. With the spirit of St. Paul, the name of our Lord Jesus is also mentioned; which implies, that St. Paul acted in this case as Christ's vicegerent and minister, and that this sentence, though pronounced by St. Paul, was passed by the authority and commission of Christ. Secondly, here is the manner of passing the sentence, which was to be done in St. Paul's absence, and by the church gathered together, that is, in the public congregation. For we cannot suppose, that it was to be pronounced by the whole congregation, but only by some of the prophets presiding there in St. Paul's absence, whose acts may very well be said to be done by the church, as was before shown. Thirdly, here is the punishment itself, which is called delivering to satan. For the better understanding of which expression, it may be remembered, that the church, or kingdom of Christ, as was shown in the first chapter of this discourse, was erected in opposition to satan's kingdom. Hence all christians covenant at their baptism to renounce the devil and his works, whereupon they are admitted into the church of Christ, and taken into his protection: and therefore they who notoriously break their baptismal covenant, and instead of obeying Christ, openly adhere to the devil, are again excluded from the

church of Christ, and consequently delivered back to the devil, and reduced into the state of heathens, who are under the dominion of the devil, the prince of this world.¹ It is probable that in this first age of the church, such as were delivered to satan, commonly fell into some very great pain or disease of body ; God being then pleased to attest the church's authority, by permitting satan to torment them in this visible manner. And the Scriptures ascribe all sorts of calamities, which befall mankind, to the procurement of the devil : thus all the afflictions of Job are said to be of the devil's sending.² The woman in the gospel, who was so bound together that she could not lift up herself, is said to have had a spirit of infirmity, and to be bound by satan.³ And to mention only one instance more, another person is said to be dumb and deaf, to foam, gnash with his teeth, and pine away through the possession of the devil.⁴ But though these and the like effects proceeded merely from the malice of satan, it often pleased God to turn them contrary to satan's intention, to the great benefit of the sufferers. Thus it happened to Job, and in the case before us, the incestuous person was to be delivered to satan, not in order to his eternal damnation, but that the destruction of his flesh, caused by the devil's inflicting on him some great pain of body, might bring him to consideration and repentance, and consequently be a means to save his spirit, that is, his soul, in the day of the Lord Jesus, that is, in the day when our

¹ John xv. 11. ² Job i. 12—20. ii. 7. ³ Luke xiii. 11, 16.

⁴ Mark ix. 18, 19.

Lord shall judge the world. This together, seems to be the most natural exposition of this passage : for we must not suppose that delivering to satan, implied merely that the person so delivered should be put into the hands of satan to be tormented, and not that he should also be excluded from the communion of Christ and his church, and thereby reduced to be a member of satan's kingdom : since it is manifest, that the incestuous Corinthian was to be banished from the communion of christians : for the apostle adds in the next verse, " purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened ;"¹ which metaphorical words he explains in one of the following verses : " Now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one no not to eat."² Which is the same our Lord directed in other words concerning the person, who neglected to hear the church ; let him be to thee as an heathen man, or a publican ; that is, have no conversation, nor so much as eat a common meal with him : and if the incestuous Corinthian was banished from the common meals of christians, most certainly he was excluded from the Lord's supper, and the feasts of charity, which in the first ages commonly went along with it. This sentence the apostle urges farther in the following words, wherein he asserts the church's authority to judge and censure its own members, whom he distinguishes from those who are without the pale of the church,

¹ 1 Cor. v. 7.

² Ibid. 11.

over whom the church has no authority, and therefore he leaves them to be judged by God: "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."¹

What effect this injunction of St. Paul had upon the Corinthians, may be learnt from his second epistle to them, where having told them the reason, why he had grieved and made them sorry, by requiring them to mourn over their incestuous brother, and to excommunicate him, he adds: "sufficient to such an one is this punishment, which was afflicted of many:"² which manifestly implies that many, that is, the church of Corinth, or the chief minister acting with their approbation, had inflicted the punishment decreed by St. Paul, and that the offender was thereby brought to a better mind: whence the apostle now directs them to comfort and forgive him, namely, by restoring him to their communion, lest he should be swallowed up with over much sorrow, and lest satan should by that means get advantage to destroy him by tempting him to despair, or otherways: as therefore he had before decreed him to be censured in the name, and by the authority of Christ, so now he remits the censure passed on him by the same authority: "To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it, in the person of Christ."³ So that here is full evidence, that the apostles exercised a judicial power over the members

¹ 1 Cor. v. 9, 12, 13. ² 2 Cor. ii. 6. ³ 2 Cor. ii. 10.

of the church, by censuring offenders, and afterwards remitting the censures passed on them, upon their repentance. And though all this was to be done in the face of the congregation, yet both the censure and the remission of it were decreed by the apostle as our Lord's vicegerent, who expressly commands the congregation to comply with him,¹ and requires their obedience to his authority.² And from the latter part of this account it is manifest, that the offender's inward grief and repentance were not sufficient to give him consolation, till the church had delivered him out of the hands of satan, and restored him to the communion of the faithful, by taking off his censure.

There are several other passages in St. Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, where he asserts his authority to censure offenders. He threatens to come to them with a rod, if they should be refractory and disobedient; and this he opposes to coming with love, and the spirit of meekness, which he would do if he found them obedient:³ which manifestly implies his intention to chastise such of them as were disobedient to his authority, by censuring them. In other places he threatens, that if they persisted in their evil courses, he would not spare, but would use sharpness, and revenge all disobedience, and this by the authority which the Lord had given him,⁴ which are plain expressions of his power to judge and punish offenders. The same is intimated again in these words: "I fear, lest when I come, I shall not

¹ 1 Cor. v. 13. ² 2 Cor. ii. 9. ³ 1 Cor. iv. 21. ⁴ 2 Cor. x. 6, 8. xiii. 2, 10.

find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not : lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults : and lest when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many, which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness, which they have committed.”¹ Where his being found to them such as they would not, means his exercising severity in censuring them: and his being humbled and made sorrowful, and bewailing them, are expressions of the sorrow and lamentation, which the separation of the offenders from communion occasioned, as was before observed : whence speaking of what was before commanded concerning the incestuous person, out of much affliction and anguish of heart, says he, I have wrote to you with many tears ;² and he speaks also of the grief and mourning, which this occasioned to the Corinthians themselves.³

The same apostle tells Timothy, that he had delivered Hymenæus over to satan, who had made shipwreck of the faith, and blasphemed the christian religion : and as it is said in another place, “ had erred concerning the faith, saying, that the resurrection is passed already.”⁴ So that the same sentence which the Corinthian suffered for immorality, was passed on Hymenæus for blasphemy and heresy.

The same apostle directs the Romans to avoid, that is, shun the company of those men, who sowed

¹ 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21. ² 2 Cor. ii. 4. ³ 2 Cor. ii. 2. vii. 11.
⁴ 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.

dissensions among them.¹ And he writes thus to the Thessalonians, “we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the traditions which he received of us.”² And again, “if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.”³ Which are general precepts to banish from their communion all sorts of notorious criminals.

St. John not only requires those, to whom his second epistle was written, to shun the company of heretics, but even to deny them common civilities: “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed. For he that biddeth him God-speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.”⁴ Which passage may be illustrated by what Irenæus, who was disciple to Polycarp, one of St. John’s disciples, relates of this apostle: that happening to go into the bath at Ephesus, he found there Cerinthus, the heretic, who denied our Lord’s divinity; whereupon he presently leaped out, without staying to wash himself, saying, “let us fly, lest the bath, having in it Cerinthus, the truth’s enemy, should fall on us.”* And since this apostle suffered not the orthodox christians to admit heretics into their houses, which in that age were their churches, and would not himself stay under the same roof, where any of them happened to be, we may rest assured, that he did not assemble with them to worship God.

¹ Rom. ~~x. 6~~, 17. ² 2 Thess. iii. 6. ³ 2 Thess. iii. 14. ⁴ 2 John x. 11.

* Irenæus Lib. III. cap. iii. Eusebius Lib. IV. cap. xxii.

If the Scriptures had left us no farther account of ecclesiastical discipline, than this which was exercised by the apostles, we might safely conclude, that the same was to be continued in succeeding ages ; because the reason and necessity of discipline are not confined to the apostolic age, but are lasting and perpetual. However, there do not want scriptural examples to prove, that the authority of exercising discipline belonged to others beside the apostles. Not to repeat the general exhortations of St. Paul and St. John to exclude notorious offenders from communion, which have already been mentioned, and would of themselves be sufficient, though we could produce no others, to show, that those churches had an inherent power to censure their own members, for otherwise they must have expected a particular precept from some apostle to do it ; it was committed to Timothy and to Titus, whom St. Paul set over the churches of Ephesus and Crete : for he writes thus to Timothy : “ Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses :”¹ which manifestly implies, that he had power to receive accusations against any members of the church, the elders themselves not excepted, though when they were concerned, more caution was required than at other times : and if to receive accusations, and hear witnesses, he must have authority to pass some censure upon them, if they were found guilty. And the same apostle writes thus to Titus : “ A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.”² Which

¹ 1 Tim. v. 19. ² Tit. iii. 80.

words, if compared with the practice of the apostles, and our Lord's direction as before explained, plainly import, that heretics, who persisted in their errors after several admonitions, were to be excluded from the communion of christians. The same power is expressly said to have been exercised by Diotrephes. Who this person was, is not certain; but he appears to have been a man of authority, and one that affected a greater pre-eminence than was his due; inso-much that he refused to submit to St. John, and to receive those who came from him, and such as received them he cast out of the church.¹ This indeed was a very high abuse of his jurisdiction, and therefore St. John threatens to chastise him for it: "Wherefore," says he, "if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doth;" meaning probably, that he would depose him from his office, or excommunicate him; for remembering crimes in the scriptural notion of this expression, implies an intention to punish; whence God is said to remember men's sins no more, when he forgives them.² However, we may reasonably conclude from Diotrephes' misapplication of ecclesiastical censures, that the governors of the church in that age exercised this power of censuring offenders, otherwise there would have been no colour for him to pretend to it. *Lastly*, It was observed in the last chapter, and must here be repeated, that the angel or bishop of the church of Ephesus had authority to try and convict the false apostles.³ And that the bishop of Pergamus was severely reprov'd for having the Nicolaitans in

¹ 3 John 9, 10. ² Heb. viii. 12. ³ Rev. ii. 2.

his communion;¹ and the bishop of Thyatira for suffering that woman Jezebel.² Which manifestly implies, they had authority to exclude them from the church, otherwise they could not have been blamed for permitting them to remain in it.

If we descend from the Scriptures to the earliest accounts of the church in the next ages after the apostles, we shall find many convincing proofs that the same method excluding notorious offenders from the civil and religious conversation of the faithful, was constantly kept up as a thing of divine institution. We are told that Polycarp, St. John's disciple, happening to meet Marcion, with whom he had some acquaintance before his falling into heresy, the heretic asked him, do you know me Polycarp? I know thee, replied Polycarp, to be the first-born of satan; and so refused to have any farther conversation with him. This is attested by Irenæus, Polycarp's disciple, who compares it with the before-mentioned account of St. John's flying from Cerinthus, then and concludes with this epiphonema: "So much did the apostles and their disciples avoid even the speaking to those who had corrupted the truth, according to St. Paul's advice; an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject."³* In the same age with Polycarp flourished Aquilas, an eminent mathematician and astrologer, who being intrusted by Adrian, the Roman emperor, with the re-

¹ Rev. ii. 15, 16. ² Ibid. 20.

* Irenæus Lib. III. cap. iii. pag. 204. *Τοσαύτην οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτῶν εὐλάβειαν, πρὸς τὸ μηδὲ μέχρι λόγου κοινωεῖν τινὶ τῶν παραχαρασσόντων τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ὡς καὶ Παῦλος ἔφησεν, Αἰρετικὸν ἀνθρώπων μετὰ μίαν καὶ δευτέραν νοουθεσίαν παραιτοῦ.*

building of Jerusalem, was converted and baptized there. After which he still pursued his astrological studies, and every day observed the horoscope of his nativity: for this he was admonished and reprov- ed by the teachers of the church, but instead of hearkening to them, he grew peevish and contentious, and obstinately defended his astrological doctrines, particularly that of fate; whereupon he was cast out of the church as unfit for salvation,* after which he turned jew. Another, whom the church of this age excommunicated for heresy, was Cerdon, who coming to Rome when Hyginus was bishop there, recanted his errors, and was restored to communion: after which relapsing into his heresy, he was again excommunicated; and thus was cast out of the church, and again received into it several times, till at length he finally revolted. This account is delivered by Irenæus, who lived in the same age.† Cotemporary with these was Marcion, as appears from the forementioned account of his meeting Poly- carp; this man was excommunicated for whoredom by his own father, who was bishop of Sinope in Pontus; whereupon he fled from his own country, and came to Rome, where several of those who had conversed with the apostles, were still a'ive; and they having understood that Marcion was excommu- nicated in his own country, refused to have any communion with him, whereupon he joined himself

* Epiphanius lib. de Ponder. & mensur. cap. xv. Ἐλεγχό- μενος υπο τῶν διδασκάλων καὶ ἐπιτιμώμενος ἕνεκα τούτου, μὴ διορθού- μενος δε, ἀλλὰ φιλονείκως μᾶλλον ἀντιτιθέμενος ἐξέωσθη πάλιν της εκ- κλησίας ὡς ἀχρεῖος πρὸς σωτηρίαν.

† Lib. III. sub finem cap. iv.

to Cerdon the heretic.* After this, if Tertullian's account may be credited, he was restored to the church, but upon his relapse into heresy, he was again cast out of it. And this happened several times both to Marcion and his cotemporary heretic Valentinus, till at length upon their repeated relapses they were for ever banished from the communion of christians.†

About this time flourished Justin Martyr, who remonstrating to Antoninus Pius, the Roman emperor, how unjust it was for christians to be put to death merely for owning themselves to be christians, without any crime proved against them, has these words: "It is our desire, that inquiry be made into crimes, which are laid to the charge of christians; and if they appear to be true, that the authors be punished according to their demerit, or rather that we may punish them."‡ Now it is certain, that christians having then no civil authority, could inflict no punishment on their members, but excommunication; and this phrase of punishing (*κολάζειν*) is applied by other fathers to excommunication; particularly by Theophylact, who says that St. Paul, by God's humbling him among the Corinthians, means that he should be obliged to punish, that is, excommunicate some of them.§ Indeed some other

* Eriphanius hæres. XLII.

† Tertullian. lib. de præscript. hæret. cap. xxx.

‡ Apol. I. pag. 4, Edit. Oxon. *Ἀξιοῦμεν τὰ κατηγορούμενα αὐτῶν ἐξελάζεσθαι, καὶ ἐὰν οὕτως ἔχοντα ἀποδεικνύωνται, κολάζεσθαι, ὡς πρέπειν ἐστι, μᾶλλον δὲ κολάζειν.*

§ Theophylactus in 2 Cor. xii. 21. *Ταπεινώσιν γὰρ τοῦτο καλεῖ τὸ κολάζσαι τινας.*

senses have been put upon this passage of Justin Martyr, but they are so forced and inconsistent with the context, that they do not deserve to be particularly examined. Afterwards the same author has these words: "This repast we call the eucharist, whereof no man is allowed to partake, who does not believe our doctrine to be true, and has been washed for the remission of sins, and regeneration, and so lives as Christ prescribed."* Where it is manifest, that in order to receive the eucharist, it was not sufficient for one to have been baptized, but he must also live according to our Lord's prescription. Consequently they who lived otherwise, were then debarred from this sacrament, which was an excommunication.

A little before the conclusion of this century, Victor, bishop of Rome, cast Theodotus out of the Church for denying our Lord's divinity.† And the same person excommunicated the bishops of Asia, and their churches for observing Easter at the same time with the jews, wherein he pretended they deviated from the apostolical rule. This indeed was an unjust act, and blamed by Irenæus and other bishops of that age, who rightly thought that churches might differ from one another in things of this kind, without any breach of catholic communion, or charity: however, it is a good evidence, that ex-

* Justin. Apol. I. pag. 128. *Καὶ ἡ τροφή αὕτη καλεῖται παρ' ἡμῖν εὐχαριστία· ἧς οὐδεὶς ἄλλω μείσασχεῖν ἐξόν ἐστιν ἢ τῷ πιστεύοντι· ἀληθῆ εἶναι τὰ δεδιδάχμενα ὑφ' ἡμῶν, καὶ λουσαμένω τὸ ὑπερ' ἀφέσεως ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ εἰς ἀναγέννησιν λουτρὸν, καὶ οὕτως βιοῦντι ὡς ὁ Χριστὸς παρέδωκεν.*

† Eusebius Eccles. Hist. lib. V. cap. xxviii.

communication was used at this time in the church. In the time of Zephyrinus, Victor's immediate successor, there was one Natalis, who had been a confessor, but afterwards was seduced by the disciples of Theodotus to be their bishop: this man being made sensible of his crime, covered himself with sackcloth, and in that habit fell prostrate before Zephyrinus, and also rolled himself at the feet both of the clergy and laity as they went into the church, intreating to be restored to their communion; which was at length, not without some difficulty, granted.*

About this time lived Tertullian, in whose description of the christian assemblies there is this remarkable passage: "There are exhortations, says he, reproofs, and the divine censure. They judge with great authority, as being assured that God is present with them; and if any offend in such a manner, as to be excluded from communicating in prayer, from the assemblies, and from all religious intercourse, it is a strong presumption of their condemnation in the last judgment."† In which words it may be observed: First, that men were admonished, and then with more severity reprov'd, before their excommunication. Secondly, that the sentence of excommunication banished men from the public assemblies, and all religious communion. Thirdly, that it was pronounced as in God's presence, and

* Ibidem.

† Tertullian. Apolog. cap. xxxix. Ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes, & censura divina. Nam & judicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de Dei conspectu; summumque futuri judicii præjudicium est, si quis ita deliquerit, ut a communione orationis, conventus, & omnis sancti commercii relegatur. 31

6 om. p.
172.

reckoned to be a forerunner of condemnation in the last judgment. In another place the same father informs us, who it was that had power to excommunicate, when he says, “That it is a part of the president’s, or bishop’s office, to cast out of the church:”^{*} Which is the more remarkable, because he there describes the practice of the church from the apostles’ times. In other places he mentions several of the crimes, for which excommunication was commonly inflicted. Not to speak of heresy, of which some examples were before produced from this author, he says, “It was customary to exclude those who had been guilty of any sort of unlawful lust, not only from the threshold, but from all places under the church’s roof.”[†] In another place he affirms in general, “That all grievous crimes are to be watched against with such care, that we must not only shun the crimes, but those who commit them.”[‡]

Not long after this, Origen, comparing the discipline of christians with that of heathen philosophers, gives us a particular account of the manner of admitting men into the church, and excluding them from it, as it was practised in his time: “The philosophers,” says he, “make their discourses in public, and admit all, who will come to be their auditors,

* Lib. de Pudicit. cap. xiv. ut extra ecclesiam detur—inerat in Præsidentis Officio.

† Lib. de Pudicit. cap. iv. Reliquas autem libidinum furias impias & in corpora & in sexus ultra jura naturæ, non modo limine, verum omni ecclesiæ tecto submovemus. *p. 55^y*

‡ Lib. de Idololatr. cap. xi. Graviora delicta quæque pro magnitudine periculi diligentiam extendunt observationis, ut non ab iis tantum abscedamus, sed & ab iis per quæ fiunt.

*6
A. 17. 6*

without any distinction : whereas the christians try and examine, as far as it is possible, the very souls of those who desire to be their hearers : they first instruct them privately, and when they are found sufficiently disposed to lead a good life, they introduce them into the public assembly. Here they who have been but lately introduced, and have not received the symbol of purification, (that is, baptism) are assigned to a different place from the rest, who have already given full proof of their sincere resolution to addict themselves wholly to the christian doctrine and way of life. Some of these latter are ordained to inquire into the lives and conversations of those who present themselves to be admitted, in order to prohibit infamous and vile persons from coming into their assembly : the rest they receive with great willingness, and make them every day better. And though Celsus describes them to be like a company of infamous jugglers and impostors, how severe is their discipline towards sinners, especially those who have been defiled with lust, whom they drive out of their common assembly ? The school of Pythagorean philosophers used to erect monuments for such as deserted them, reckoning them to be dead : and so the christians lament over those who have been overcome by lust or any other crime, as persons dead to God : and if after this they give sufficient proof of their penitence and amendment, they undergo another probation, which is longer than that before their first admission into the church ; and this being completed, they are re-admitted as men raised from the dead. Yet whoever is found lapsing after his first admission, is for ever

excluded from all offices and government in the church of God.”* This is a very full and plain account of the church discipline in this age. And the same father in other places informs us, that this discipline was exercised by the bishops: “the bishop,” saith he, “ought sometimes to use his power, and deliver sinners to satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved.”† In another place, “though he (the wicked person) shall be concealed from the bishop, or escape exclusion through

* Origen. adv. Celsum. Lib. III. p. 142. Edit. Cant. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ δεμσσία διαλεγόμενοι φιλόσοφοι, οὐ φιλοκρηνοῦσι τοὺς ἀκούοντας· ἀλλ’ ὁ βουλούμενος ἔπηκε καὶ ἀκούει· χριστιανοὶ δὲ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν αὐτοῖς, προβασιανισαγες τῶν ἀκούειν σφῶν βιυλόμενων τὰς ψυχὰς, καὶ κατ’ ἰδίαν αὐτοῖς προεπάσαντες ἐπὶ ἀνδοκῶσιν αὐτάρκως οἱ ἀκροαταί, πρὶν εἰς τὸ κοινὸν εἰσελθεῖν, ἐπιδεδωκέναι πρὸς τὸ θῆλειν καλῶς βιοῦν· τὸ τηλικαδὲ αὐτοὺς εἰπάσουσιν, ἰδία μὲν ποιήσαντες· τάγμα τῶν ἀξίῳ ἀρχομένων καὶ εἰσαγομένων. καὶ οὐδέπω τὸ σύμβολον τοῦ ἀποκεκάρθαι ἀνεληφῶτων ἕτερον δὲ τὸ τῶν κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν πρακτῆσαντων ἑαυτῶν τὴν προαίρεσιν. οὐκ ἄλλο τι βουλευθαι ἢ τὰ χριστιανοῖς δοκοῦντα· παρ’ οἷς εἰσὶ τινες τέ αἰμενοὶ πρὸς τὸ φιλοπέυστειν τοὺς βίους, καὶ τὰς ἀσωγὰς τῶν προσιώνων. ἵνα τοὺς μὲν τὰ ἐπιρρήθια πρακτῶν ἀποκαλυψωσιν ἢ κειν ἐπὶ τὸν κοινὸν αὐτῶν σύλλογον· τοὺς δὲ μὴ τοιοῦτους ὅλη ψυχῇ ἀποδεχόμενοι, βελτίους ὁσημέρην κλισκεύαζωσιν. Οἷα δ’ ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἀσωγὴ καὶ περὶ ἀμαρτανόνων, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν ἀκολαστανόνων, οὓς ἀπελαύνουσι τοῦ κοινου· οἱ κατὰ τὸν Κέλσον παραπλήσιοι· ἐν ταῖς ἀφοραῖς τὰ ἐπιρρήθια ἐπιδεικνυμένοις· καὶ τὸ ἀν τῶν Πυθαγορείων σεμνὸν διδασκαλίον κενόαρια τῶν ἀπισταντων τῆς σφῶν Φιλοσοφίας κλισκεύαζε, λογιζόμενον νεκροὺς αὐτοὺς γεφάναι· οὗτοι δὲ ὡς ἀπωλοτάς καὶ τεθηκοτας τῷ θεῷ τοὺς ὑπ ἀτελείας ἢ τινος ἀτόπου νενικημενους, ὡς νεκροὺς πινθοῦσι· καὶ ὡς ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστάντας ἐὰν ἀξιόλογον ἐνδείξωνται μετὰ πολλὴν, χρόνῳ πλείονι τῶν κατ’ ἀρχὰς εἰσαγομένων ὕστερον πῶτε προσίενται· εἰς οὐδέμιαν ἀρχὴν καὶ προστασίαν τῆς λεγομένης ἐκκλησίας τοῦ θεοῦ καταλέγουτες τοὺς φθάσαντας μετὰ τὸ προσελθεῖναι τῷ λόγῳ, ἐπταικέναι.

† Homil. xii. in Matt. xv.

his partiality, yet he is self-condemned.”* In both which places he manifestly supposes the power of excommunication to be lodged in the bishop.

In this age lived Paulus Samosatenus, bishop of Antioch, who denied our Lord’s divinity, for which he was deposed from his office and expelled from the communion of the church, and this by a very great company of bishops, who assembled on that occasion.†

A little before Paulus flourished Cyprian, in whose works there are many proofs of the bishop’s power to excommunicate. In his epistle to Caldonius and Herculanus, two bishops, and Rogatianus and Numidicus, two presbyters, which he wrote in his banishment, he deposes them to excommunicate Felicissimus, one of the presbyters of Carthage, for schism, adultery, and other crimes; and Augendus, one of his adherents, with all the rest of their associates.‡ How this delegation was executed we may learn from the answer returned by the delegates to Cyprian, wherein they acquaint him, that they had excluded from communion Felicissimus, Augendus, Repostus, Irene, Paula, Sophronius, and Soliassus.§ It was observed in the last chapter, that Cyprian advised Rogatianus, a certain bishop, “to exercise the power of his episcopal dignity, by deposing or excommunicating a disobedient deacon.”|| Sometimes the clergy and people, especially such of them as had been confessors in the time of persecu-

* Homil. xii. in Levit xxi.

† Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. VII. cap. xxix.

‡ Cypriani Epist. XLI.

§ Epist. XLII.

|| Epist. III. Fungaris circa eum potestate honoris tui, ut cum vel deponas, vel abstineas.

tion, interceded with the bishop to restore penitent offenders to communion ; which is a manifest proof, they could not do it without him ; especially since the bishops sometimes rejected such petitions. The confessors of Carthage having desired Cyprian to restore the lapsers in persecutian, in a more assuming manner than was usual, he was so far from complying with their request, that he tells his presbyters and deacon, “ If any of them, or any others should presume to communicate with the lapsers before he had restored them, they themselves should be deprived of communion.”* And he tells the lapsers, “ That all ecclesiastical acts were to be managed by the bishops, to whom Christ gave the keys of heaven with the power of binding and loosing in the person of Peter ; and this is founded on divine institution.” Then he proceeds to reprove such of the lapsers as had wrote to him with too much confidence, and to commend the rest, who had humbly desired he would restore them to the church at his return to Carthage.† Cornelius, who was bishop of Rome at this time, in his epistle to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, acquaints him, that one of the three Italian bishops, who had schismatically ordained Novatian, returned to the church in a short time after, confessing and bewailing his sin, and that all the people then present interceded in his behalf, whereupon he admitted him to lay communion.‡ Cyprian and the

* Epist. XXXIV. Interea si quis immoderatus & præceps, sive de nostris Presbyteris vel Diaconibus, sive de peregrinis ausus fuerit ante sententiam nostram communicare cum lapsis, a communicatione nostra arceatur.

† Epist. XXXIII. Verba supra citata sunt.

‡ Eusebius Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. xliii.

council of bishops, of which he was president, in their epistle to two churches of Spain, whose bishops had lapsed into idolatry, tells them, “that both they themselves, and all other bishops in the whole world, and particularly Cornelius, bishop of Rome, had decreed, that lapsers should be admitted to penitence, but not allowed to continue among the clergy.”* Whence it is manifest, *first*, that lapsers into idolatry were excluded from communion, otherwise there would have been no dispute about their re-admission to it by penitence. *Secondly*, that this was decreed by bishops. *Thirdly*, that it was thus all the world over. Indeed there was no dispute in the primitive ages, whether these and other notorious offenders should be shut out of the church; but the only question was, whether they might be restored to it upon their repentance? In Cyprian’s time Decius, the emperor, persecuted the christians with very great fury, and many of them saved themselves by wicked compliances, both at Rome and Carthage, and in other churches. Some of these afterwards repented, and having performed the penances enjoined by their superiors, were restored to the church’s communion. This was opposed by Novatian at Rome, and others in other churches, who affirmed, that they who had lapsed into idolatry, could never be restored to the communion of christians. And

* Epist. LXVII. pag. 291. Jam pridem nobiscum, & cum omnibus omnino Episcopis in toto mundo constitutis, etiam Cornelius collega noster—decreverit ejusmodi homines ad penitentiam quidem agendam posse admitti, ab ordinatione autem Cleri atque sacerdotali honore prohiberi.

in the end, these men not being able to prevail with their bishops to reject the penitent lapsers, separated from their communion as impure and unchristian. In the age before this, one occasion of Montanus' schism, into which Tertullian was seduced, was, that idolaters, adulterers and murderers, whom he would have banished for ever from the church, were restored to communion upon their repentance. Afterwards, in Diocletian's persecution, Meletius and his adherents in Egypt made a schism in the church for the same cause which Novatian had pretended; namely, that lapsers were re-admitted upon their penitence. And the like pretence afterwards gave occasion to the schisms of the Donatists and Luciferians. Whence it is manifest, not only that the power of excommunication was universally allowed in the primitive church, but that it was believed to be of divine institution. For there had not been the least colour for Montanus in the next age after the apostles, and afterwards for Novatian, and the rest to have separated from the church, because offenders were re-admitted upon their repentance, had not the excommunication of such offenders been allowed to have been prescribed by God. Many more examples might easily be produced, where sentences of excommunication were decreed by whole councils, as well as by particular bishops; whoever will be at the pains to look into the acts of the earliest councils, will find that it was the most usual sanction of ecclesiastical canons.

Yet the power of inflicting, or remitting ecclesiastical censures was not so strictly appropriated to the episcopal office, but that presbyters might exe-

cute it, with the bishop's leave. The incestuous Corinthian was excommunicated in St. Paul's absence, when there were no church-officers at Corinth above prophets, who were only of the second order; and it was observed before, that Cyprian deputed two presbyters, as well as two bishops, to excommunicate Felicissimus and his adherents. When the episcopal chair was vacant, though the presbyters never ordained ministers, yet they had authority to excommunicate offenders. An example of this we find in Ephesus, where Noetus, the patripassian, with some of his followers, was cited before the presbyters, and twice admonished, and at length expelled out of the church;* which happened before Cyprian was bishop of Cathage. Not long after this, when the see of Rome was vacant by the death of Fabianus, the presbyters excommunicated some, and absolved others, as there was occasion; yet in these, and all other affairs of moment, they proceeded with more than usual caution, leaving undetermined whatever the exigencies of the church did not oblige them to conclude, till they should have a bishop, as themselves declare in their epistle to Cyprian.†

But the primitive ages afford no examples of excommunications pronounced by laymen, or any others below the order of presbyters: and it seems utterly inconsistent with the nature of this act, that it should be done by those who have no jurisdiction or government in the church. If the people had

* Epiphanius Hæres. LVII. † Cyprian. Epist. XXX.

any concernment in this matter, it was chiefly to give their testimony concerning the lives and conversations of those who were accused: what was allowed them farther than this, was only for the sake of peace and unanimity. For this reason Cyprian writing to his clergy, tells them, “that from his entrance upon his episcopal charge, he had determined to do nothing without their advice, and the consent of the people.”* But though he and other primitive bishops, sometimes thought fit to ask advice of their clergy, and the consent of their people, it appears from the forementioned examples, that when they saw it convenient, they censured offenders by their own inherent authority, without waiting for the concurrence either of the laity or clergy: whereas neither the inferior clergy, nor the laity, nor all of them together, could inflict or remit any ecclesiastical censure without the bishop’s consent.

I hope it has now fully appeared, that the power of excluding offenders from the church’s communion, and of re-admitting them to it upon their repentance, was exercised by the apostles and their successors the primitive bishops; which was the second thing to be proved. It remains in the last place to show, what is the end and design of treating offenders in this manner, and that it is agreeable to the general sense and practice of mankind; in order to obviate some objections, which pretend that it is both highly unreasonable in itself, and has done great disservice to the church.

* Epist. XIV. *A primordio Episcopatus mei statuerim, nihil sine consilio vestro, & sine consensu plebis, meâ privatim sententiâ gerere.*

And it must be observed in the first place, that this is a most fallacious way of reasoning, and if thoroughly pursued will soon destroy all government, whether spiritual or civil, to reject plain and undoubted laws because of some remote and uncertain inconveniencies which attend them. And therefore if it should be true, that some mischievous consequences have followed from the undue use of this, or any other part of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, we must not presently conclude, that the church has no jurisdiction. It is very true, that if the church had not been intrusted with power to excommunicate, Diotrophes could not have had any colour to excommunicate the missionaries who came from St. John; nor Montanus, Novatian, or Meletius, to leave the church's communion because some excommunicated members were restored to it upon their repentance: but then it must be considered, that there is no institution in the world, divine or human, which weak and inconsiderate, or designing and wicked men may not abuse to evil purposes. If there was no government, there would be no tyranny, no rebellion; if no property, there would be no rapine: if there was no faith, there would be no heresy; nor any schism, if there was no union between the members of the church: and therefore the same reason which some have urged against excommunication, will oblige us to give up our civil government and properties, our christian faith and communion, and consequently both our church and state. However, that nothing may be wanting towards a full answer to the objections against excommunication, I shall proceed

briefly to set down some of the principal ends, for which it was instituted. And they are these :

First, the honour of God and his church. The church is a society of men dedicated to God's service, and under his particular protection. The members are described to be a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.¹ "And our Lord is said to have given himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it might be holy, and without blemish."² Consequently when men, whose wicked lives show them to be in the interests of satan, are kept in the church, the design for which the church was founded is perverted, and our blessed Lord, its founder and head, is very much dishonoured. It is farther an open affront to God, when such men are admitted to worship him in the public congregation ; and to receive the holy sacraments, which he has instituted as seals and pledges of his favours, who are known to lie under his most heavy displeasure, and whose religious services he has declared to be an abomination to him. Besides, it gives great occasion of scandal to the enemies of God and religion to have such men in the church's communion. On this account St. Paul tells the jews, when they were God's people, "that the name of God was blasphemed through them among the gentiles."³ And when David had been guilty in the matter of Uriah, the prophet told him, that he must be punished, because he had given the enemies of the Lord oc-

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 9. ² Eph. v. 25, 27. ³ Rom. ii. 24.

casion to blaspheme.¹ For when they whom God has distinguished by his favours, commit any notorious sin, the enemies of religion are apt to think him willing to connive at such actions. Lastly, it is a very great dishonour to the church, to have men of scandalous lives in its communion. For the church is thought to own the actions of her members, when they are public and often repeated, if she does not clear herself by reforming, or excluding them from her communion. And it is manifest, that the church's reputation in the world was never so great, as in the primitive ages, when discipline was exercised with severity and vigor. Then her professed enemies admired her, great numbers of proselytes daily flocked into her, and could not be restrained by the utmost torments, which human or devilish malice could inflict: whereas since the primitive discipline has been laid aside, and christians have lived like the rest of the world, though the church has been protected by the civil powers, and flourished with far more outward splendour than before, fewer converts have been brought over to her, and too many of her own sons and members have lost their first love and zeal for her.

Secondly, another end of excommunication, is to reform offenders. But is this a proper method, say some, to reform men, to deprive them of the worship of God, and the ordinances of the church, which are the means of reformation? To which we may answer, that St. Paul thought it so, and therefore he calls his authority to exercise discipline, "the power

¹ 2 Sam. xii. 14.

which the Lord had given him for edification, and not for destruction :¹ and he requires the incestuous Corinthian to be delivered over to satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."² What effect it had upon this man may be learnt from the second epistle to the Corinthians, where we find, that it was exceeding great trouble to him to be separated from the church, whereupon he reformed his vicious course, and was restored to communion. And whoever reads the accounts of the church in the primitive times, will find, that scarce any thing contributed more to keep christians from offending, than the severe discipline which was then exercised. There are two prevailing passions, upon which it is apt to work, shame and fear. To be publicly cast out of the church, to be banished from religious and civil communion, and shunned by those for whom we have the highest love and reverence, is enough to prevail with any man to reform his wicked courses, who has not put off all shame. Hence St. Paul writes thus to the Thessalonians, "if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."³ But when men are so hardened in their wicked courses, that shame cannot influence them, there is another passion, on which the censures may operate, and that is fear. In the apostolic age, the fear of present and corporal punishment, which the apostles had power to inflict, sometimes kept wicked men in awe. The miraculous death of Ananias and

¹ 2 Cor. x. 8. xiii. 10. ² 1 Cor. v. 5. ³ 2 Thess. iii. 14.

Sapphira, which was inflicted on them by Peter, occasioned "great fear to come upon the church, and upon as many as heard it."¹ When Elymas, the sorcerer, endeavoured to turn away Sergius Paulus, the deputy of Cyprus, from the faith, St. Paul restrained his wicked attempt by punishing him with blindness.² And it was before observed, that they whom the church delivered over to satan, were commonly seized with some bodily pain or sickness. So that in this age not only christians, but jews and infidels had cause to be afraid of the apostolic power. But though this miraculous way of punishing wicked men has now ceased for many ages, there still remains a greater cause of terror, and that is eternal punishment, to which they are consigned by the sentence of the church. This indeed will have no force upon infidels, but it must have a great effect upon all, who have not made shipwreck of their faith as well as their good manners: however careless and inconsiderate such men were before, they cannot but begin to reflect seriously on their condition, when they find themselves excluded from the communion of Christ and his church, by those judges, whose just sentence our Lord has promised to ratify in heaven. Neither is there the least weight in that objection, that excommunication deprives men of the means of becoming better, because it excludes them from the service of God, and the ordinances of the church: since excommunicated persons have still the means of christian knowledge in their bibles and other religious books; and the ministers of the

¹ Acts v. 11.

² Acts xiii. 8, 11.

church, and other good christians may still converse with them in order to admonish them, and instruct them in their duty. Thus the Thessalonians are advised by St. Paul to do to the brother, whose company he requires them to avoid at other times: "Count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."¹ And it is a great charity to such persons to deprive them of the sacraments, because they are not qualified to receive them: for though it be a very great sin to neglect the sacraments, yet it is a much higher affront to God to receive them with an unbelieving and impenitent heart, than not to receive them at all.

Thirdly, excommunication of offenders is a means to preserve the rest of the church from being corrupted. St. Paul gives this reason for his excommunicating the incestuous Corinthian: "Know ye not," says he, "that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven."² But what he says to Timothy is still more full to this purpose: "Shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker, of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus: who concerning the truth have erred, saying, that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some."³

Having thus explained the design and ends of excommunication, it remains to be shown that this method of treating offenders is agreeable to the general sense and practice of mankind. Now we find all

¹ 2 Thess. iii. 15. ² 1 Cor. v. 6, 7. ³ 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17, 18.

civil societies exclude notorious malefactors, whom they judge unfit to live among them, either by death or banishment ; and even clubs or voluntary societies separate from their company such members as give disturbance to the rest. But what I design chiefly to show, is, that both jews and heathens have excluded notorious offenders from communion in divine worship.

It has been made an objection against the christian excommunication, that the jewish law excluded no man from the worship of God for moral pravity. But were this true, it would be no just reason against the christian excommunication, which is not founded on the jewish law, but derived from the institution of Christ. However, they who make this objection ought to have considered farther : *First*, that the legal impurities, and the ways of cleansing among the jews, were types of the moral pollutions of sin, and the inward purification of christians from it. Whence it may with some probability be inferred, that christians must be separated from communion for notorious sins, as the jews were for any legal uncleanness.¹ *Secondly*, that under the jewish law there was no need to exclude notorious offenders from the temple, because no such persons were suffered to live : for by the jewish law murderers, man-stealers, adulterers, abusers of their parents, idolaters, witches, and in short, all enormous offenders, were to be put to death ; “ The soul that doth ought presumptuously, whether he be

¹ Lev. xii. xiii. xiv. xv. Eph. v. 26, 27. Heb. x. 22. Jam. iv. 8.

born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.”¹ And when any such offenders had power and interest enough to secure themselves from justice, sometimes it pleased God to interpose; thus he did in the case of Corah and his company, whom he caused to be swallowed up alive by the earth;² and of king Uzziah, whom he punished with an incurable leprosy, which deprived him of all religious and civil conversation till his death.³ And when God did not thus interpose, some have thought that such men refrained, or were some way or other hindered from coming to the public worship; they affirm this to have been David’s case, and that he alludes to it in these words of his penitential psalm, “Cast me not away from thy presence.”⁴ And when the Benjamites refused to deliver up the men of Gibeah to justice, the rest of the tribes not only renounced their communion, but resolved to destroy them.⁵ However, the law does not suppose any cases wherein justice cannot be executed, and therefore makes no provision for them; so that in this period it would be very unreasonable to expect many examples of excommunication for moral pravity.

But after the Babylonian captivity, when the jews could not fully execute their own laws, and the divine interposition for the punishment of offenders was not so common as it had been before; they

¹ Numb. xv. 30. ² Ibid. xvi. ³ 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—21. ⁴ Psalm li. 11. ⁵ Judg. xx.

had more frequent recourse to this method of treating scandalous offenders. By the direction of Ezra, who was a person inspired by God, they made proclamation throughout Juda and Jerusalem, unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem; and that whosoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and elders, all his substance should be forfeited, and himself separated from the congregation.¹ Which is an express decree of excommunication against the jews, who neglected to come to Jerusalem, to renew their covenant with God. Afterwards, when Ptolemy Philometor required the Alexandrian jews to worship an idol, the rest of those jews abhorred those of their own nation, who apostatised, and reckoned them as enemies to their nation, and deprived them of all mutual conversation and kindness.² The obscure passage concerning Razis, which is thus translated: “In the former times, when they mingled not themselves with the gentiles, he had been accused of judaism, and did boldly venture his body and life for the religion of the jews;” seems rather to mean, that in former times, when great numbers of the jews apostatised, under the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, he brought in a decree not to mix judaism, that is, forbidding the rest of the jews to have any communion with the apostates;³ and then this is another remarkable example of excommunication in

¹ Ezra x. 7, 8. ² III Maccab. iii. 25. ³ II Maccab. xiv. 38.

² *Ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν χρόνοις τῆς ἀμιξίας κριστίν εἰσηνεηγμένος τοῦ Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ.*

the jewish church. In our blessed Saviour's time, the punishment of excommunication was very frequent. He seems to allude to it, when he tells the apostles, that the rest of the jews shall separate them from their company.¹ And we are told by St. John, that the jews, that is, their rulers, agreed, that if any man confessed, that he (Jesus,) was the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.² For which reason the parents of the man who was born blind, durst not own that their son had his sight restored by Jesus, when they were publicly examined about it; and the man himself was cast out, that is, (according to the most probable sense of this phrase compared with the forementioned resolution of the jews) he was expelled from the synagogue, for confessing Jesus to be of God.³ And hence it came to pass, that "among the chief rulers many believed on him; but because of the pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue."⁴ Some have endeavoured to elude these proofs, by affirming, that the jews assembled in their synagogues for civil ends, such as the deciding of controversies, as well as for the worship of God; and therefore exclusion from the synagogue implied nothing farther, than that men should no longer have justice done, or that they were deprived of some other civil privileges there. Which is said to be agreeable enough to the name of synagogue, which is a general word, and may be applied to any assembly, whatever the occasion of their meeting be. And it is farther confirmed by what we find of the

¹ Luke vi. 22. ² John ix. 22. ³ Verse 54. ⁴ John xii. 42.

first christians being beaten in the synagogues;¹ which is a civil punishment, and thought to imply, that these places were civil courts of justice. To which it may be replied; *First*, that it does not appear from the Scriptures, that any causes were heard in the synagogues, beside those of irreligion and impiety. It was on pretence of this, that the first christians were condemned and beaten in these places; and therefore it cannot be thence inferred, that exclusion from them implied the loss of civil privileges. *Secondly*, that supposing that civil as well as religious affairs were transacted in the synagogues, and that exclusion from them implied the loss of civil privileges, it does by no means follow, that the same persons, who were excluded from the civil use of synagogues, were not also excluded from the divine service performed there. We find that the first christians were required to decide the controversies, which happened among them in their own assemblies; and there is no reason to doubt but that excommunicated christians were excluded from the public assemblies, when controversies were heard, as well as at other times: but it would be a very strange inference, if we should conclude, that christian excommunication did not hinder men from worshipping God in the assemblies of christians, because it deprived them of the privilege of appealing thither for justice. And it is manifestly the same way of reasoning, to infer that exclusion from the synagogue implied no separation from divine ser-

¹ Matt. x. 17. xxiii. 34. Mark xiii. 9. Luke xxi. 12. Acts xxii. 19. xxvi. 11.

vice, because it was accompanied with the loss of civil privileges. *Thirdly*, if exclusion from the synagogues be allowed to signify only a deprivation of one part of the privileges which belonged to those who assembled there, it would be far more reasonable to suppose, that it excluded men from the religious, and left them the civil use of synagogues, than that it deprived them of their civil, and left them all their religious privileges there: because the coming to synagogues, as it is taken in the Scriptures, is generally referred to religious, and not to civil purposes. It is true that synagogue, in its original sense, is a general name for any assembly, whatever the occasion of their coming together be; but then, in our Saviour's time, it was chiefly appropriated to places or assemblies, where the jews met for divine service. It appears from the history of our Lord and his apostles, as it is related in the gospels and acts, that the jews had fixed places for this purpose, both at Jerusalem, and in Galilee, and in all countries, where they were dispersed, which they constantly called synagogues; whence this name is applied by St. James to the religious assemblies of christians:¹ and some false jews, who pretended to worship God, whilst they served the devil, are said by our Lord, in the Revelation, to be of the synagogue of satan.² So that synagogue is here again used in a religious sense. And in about threescore passages, which are all wherein this word occurs in the New Testament, it is for the most part used in such a manner, that no sense but

¹ Jam. ii. 2. ² Rev. ii. 9. iii. 9.

that of a place or assembly for divine service, can possibly be put upon it: and in the rest, where its meaning is not so strictly limited, there seldom appears any just reason to take it otherwise: and therefore nothing but a very high prejudice against the practice of excommunication, can induce any man to think, that casting out of the synagogue did not imply exclusion from the divine service performed there. And if we descend from the Scripture to the practice and tradition of the jewish masters, we shall meet with three sorts of excommunication, which they distinguish by the names of Niddui, Cherem, and Schammatha. The Niddui separated the offender from other jews; yet they were not wholly restrained from conversing with him, but only from coming within four paces of him, and that but for a limited time: and there were several degrees of it; some were to be avoided by the whole nation of the jews, others only by a certain province, or city, or some certain persons, according to the nature and degree of their offence. The Cherem, or Anathema, totally separated the obstinate offender, whom the Niddui could not reform, from the company of the jews, and also imprecated the vengeance and curse of God upon him. The Schammatha was a sort of proscription, and delivering over to desolation and destruction, or to the coming of the Lord in judgment against him, noted by Maranatha added to the Anathema. Wherein it is said to differ from Cherem, which implied a total separation for the present only, and was reversible upon the offender's repentance; whereas the Schammatha was final and irremissible. And they derive their excommunication from the

divine institution. For when Achan's wickedness was discovered, Joshua took him, and his sons, and his daughters, and all that he had, and brought them to the valley of Achor : after which, sentence was pronounced and executed upon him.¹ And before this, when Corah and his associates had engaged the greatest part of the congregation to rebel against Moses and Aaron, the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, separate yourselves from this congregation, that I may consume them :² whereupon they interceded with God for the people, and then all the rest were required to depart from the other rebels ; which being done, the earth swallowed them up.³ From which accounts the jewish masters infer, that the people were to separate from the company of malefactors, before the execution of justice upon them. And some carry excommunication yet higher, to the time of Cain, whom God is said to have driven from the rest of Adam's family, and from his own face or presence :⁴ which is taken to imply his separation both from the company of other men, and from the public worship of God.

If we inquire into the practice of other nations, we shall find, that as Tertullian has observed, profane persons were constantly excluded from all holy mysteries.* Hence both in Greece and at Rome, they proclaimed before solemn prayers and sacrifices, "be gone all that are profane."[†] At Athens the herald

¹ Josh. vii. 24, 25. ² Numb. xvi. 21. ³ Verse 33. ⁴ Gen. iv. 14.

* Tertullian. Apolog. Cap. vii. Semper piæ initiationes arceant profanos.

† Callimachus Hymn. in Apollinem, v. 2.—'Εκὰς, ἐκὰς, ὄστις ἀλιτρός. Virgilius Æneid. VI. 258.—Procul, o procul este, profani, Conclamat vates, totoque absistite luco.

cried aloud, before the religious rites began: "who is here?" To which the people replied, "many and good men." The design whereof was, that they who had contracted any pollution, by impiety, or otherways, might have timely notice to withdraw, lest their presence should offend the gods. Hence there were many rites of purification, which men of all ranks and qualities were obliged to perform, before they could approach the divine altars and statues: and they who neglected thus to qualify themselves, were thought to incur the divine displeasure, though they escaped the observation of men:* insomuch that kings and princes would not adventure to be present at the more solemn rites of religion, till they had first been regularly purified: whereof we find a memorable example at the Eleusinian mysteries, where the customary proclamation being made, that the impious should depart, Nero, the Roman emperor, withdrew himself.† There was a very ancient and universal tradition, which forbade innocent men to permit murderers to come under their roof, to warm themselves at their fire, or to communicate at their sacrifices; that is, in short, to have any religious or civil intercourse with them:‡ accordingly, to give only one instance out of many, Oedipus, king of Thebes, in Sophocles, makes an edict concerning the person who had murdered Lajus:

* Archæologia Græc. Lib. II. cap. iv.

† Suetonius Nerone, cap. xxxiv.

‡ Sopater de Divis. quæst. "Ὅσα τοῖς φονεῦσι πρόσεστι κακά: τὸ μῆτε μάλα λαμβάνειν πυρῶς. πῆ στέγης, μὴ ἱερῶν. Conf. Meursii Themis Attica lib. i. cap. 14, 15. Feithii Antiquit. Homeric. lib. i. cap. 6.

“ That none of his subjects should receive him into their houses, nor speak to him, nor communicate with him at prayers, or sacrifices, nor wash their hands with him.”* The same punishment was inflicted for impiety of several kinds: whence Horace professes, “ he would not stay in the same house, or sail in the same bark, with one, who had divulged the mysteries of Ceres Eleusinia;”† which was reckoned a very provoking impiety, and such as would involve the criminal and all his company in ruin. Alcibiades and his companions, who ridiculed these mysteries, were not only forbid all religious and civil intercourse at Athens, but solemnly cursed by all the priests and priestesses;‡ which practice answers to the jewish Anathema. The Phocensian nation having protected some of their countrymen, who robbed the Delphian temple, were not only forbidden to come to that temple, and to assist in the general council of the Grecian states; but the rest of the Greeks joined their forces against them, and after a war of ten years, waged with various success, demolished all their cities, except Abæ, which

* Sophocles *Œdip. Tyran.* vers. 244.

Μήτ' εἰσδέχεσθαι, μήτε προσθωνεῖν τινα,
 Μήτ' ἐν θεῶν εὐχαῖσι μήτε θυμᾶσι
 Κοινὸν ποιεῖσθαι, μήτε χεῖρι βίας νέμειν,
 Ὡθεῖν δ' ἀπ' οἴκων πάντας. —

† Horatius *lib. iii. Od. ii.* vers. 26.

— Vetabo, qui Cereris sacrum
 Vulgârit arcanæ, sub iisdem
 Sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum
 Solvat phaselum. —

‡ Plutarchus *Alcibiade. Pollux Onomast. Lib. viii. cap. ix.*

was not concerned in the sacrilege.* When Cylou and his associates, who conspired against the liberties of Athens, took sanctuary in Minerva's temple, the magistrates, who committed sacrilege by forcing them away to execution, were themselves afterwards banished from all religious and civil intercourse at Athens, and forced to quit the city; and the bones of some of them, who died before this sentence could be executed, were dugged out of their graves, and cast out of the Athenian territories, lest their relics should pollute the country.† There was a sort of excommunication among the barbarous Germans, as we find in Tacitus.‡ But the most remarkable is that of the Druids in Gallia, whereof Cæsar has left us this account: "The Druids," says he, "are present at all solemn worship; they manage public and private sacrifices, and are interpreters of religion. They determine almost all controversies, whether public or private. If any murder be committed, or any dispute arises about inheritances, or landmarks, they judge it, and decree rewards and punishments. If any private man, or state, do not submit to their decree, they interdict them their sacrifices. This they account the greatest of punishments: for they who are thus interdicted, are reckoned impious and forlorn men. All the rest avoid them, will not speak to them, nor meet them, for fear of infection. Neither have they justice, when they sue for it, nor any dignity or honour."§ Many other examples

* Pausanias phocicis page. 613. edit. Hanov. † Thucydides lib. 1. Plutarchus Solone. ‡ Lib. de moribus German.

§ C. Julii Cæsaris Commentar. de bello Gallic. lib. vi. cap. xiii. Illi (Druides) rebus divinis intersunt, sacrificia publica & privata

might easily be produced, but I hope these will be thought sufficient to show, that it has been the general sense of mankind, heathens as well as jews, that notorious offenders ought not to be present at divine service.

9. Another right of the clergy, is that of demanding a competent maintenance from the people committed to their charge. It is certain, that God has an absolute right to dispose of all we have in the world; and since it has appeared, that he has appointed an order of men, to attend continually on his worship and service, we cannot doubt but that he requires so much of our worldly substance to be set apart for their support, as may enable them to discharge the duties of their function, without being interrupted by their own private affairs.

And since the worship of God must be celebrated in such a manner, as may at once express our reverence and devotion to him, and invite others to join with us; whence it was, that both among the jews and heathens, the places of public worship were built and adorned in the most splendid manner, and nothing was offered to God, which was not the best and most perfect in its kind; it follows that the

procurant, religiones interpretantur. — Fere de omnibus controversiis, publicis privatisque, constituunt; & si quod est admissum facinus, si cædes facta, si de hæreditate, si de finibus controversia est, iidem decernunt, præmia pœnasque constituunt: si quis aut privatus, aut publicus, eorum decreto non stetit, sacrificiis interdicitur. Hæc pœna apud eos est gravissima: quibus ita est interdictum, ii numero impiorum ac sceleratorum habentur; iis omnes descedunt, aditum eorum, sermonemque defugiunt, ne quid ex contagione incommodi accipiant; neque iis petentibus jus redditur, neque honos ullus communicatur.

maintenance of God's priests must be plentiful and liberal, and such as may express the just respect which is born to their office and character. For it would be most unreasonable, that the temples of God should be rich and magnificent, and his altars loaded with constant sacrifices, whilst his priests are exposed to poverty and contempt. And therefore all nations, barbarous as well as civil, have treated their priests with great respect, have paid their maintenance cheerfully, and accounted their persons and whatever belonged to them, sacred and inviolable. It were easy to show this from the histories of all countries, but I am unwilling to digress too far from our present subject, and therefore shall now proceed to consider what the Scriptures have delivered concerning the maintenance of the christian clergy.

And first of all our Lord himself with his retinue of apostles and disciples, was maintained by charitable contributions. Though he was born king of the jews, he had no temporal possessions, not so much as where to lay his head;¹ yet he was furnished with money, out of which he not only provided necessaries for himself, but also used to be liberal to the poor. This is manifestly implied in that which is told of Judas Iscariot; that when Mary poured forth a box of very costly ointment upon our Lord's head, he broke out into these words: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bore what was put therein."² Again,

¹ Matt. viii. 20. Luke ix. 58.

² John xii. 5, 6.

when our Lord said to him, at his last paschal supper, "that thou dost, do quickly;" meaning, what he had contracted with the chief priests to do; some of the apostles "thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, buy those things which we have need of against the feast, or that he should give something to the poor."¹ Whence it is manifest that our Lord had a stock of money, which Judas had the care of expending for the relief of the poor, and other necessary uses, as our Lord directed. Whence this stock used to arise, may be learnt from the forementioned words of Judas, wherein he expressed his desire to have Mary's ointment sold, and the price delivered to him as our Lord's steward; which implies, that it was his office to receive the contributions of well disposed persons, for our Lord's use; and consequently, that his stock was made up this way. The same is directly affirmed by St. Matthew: "many women," says he, "were there, beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him. Among which was Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children."² For the ministering here spoken of, was that of their worldly substance, as it is explained by St. Luke; "there went about," saith he, "with Jesus, certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits, and infirmities, Mary called Magdalen, out of whom went seven devils; and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others,

¹ John xiii. 27, 28.

² Matt. xxvii. 55, 56.

which ministered unto him of their substance.¹ Whence it is manifest, that our Lord and his company were supported by the pious contributions of his followers. When he first sent forth his apostles to preach, he gave them this instruction: “provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.”² To the same purpose he speaks to the seventy disciples; “carry neither purse nor scrip; and into whatsoever house ye enter, in the same remain, eating and drinking such things as they give you; for the labourer is worthy of his hire.”³ Whence it is manifest, that our Lord accounted it the duty of those, to whom the gospel was preached: to give a competent maintenance to those who preached it. And how the disciples succeeded, we may learn from the same gospel, where our Lord having asked them, when I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked you any thing? They said, nothing.⁴

The apostles, and the rest of the gospel ministers, were supported the same way, after our Lord’s ascension. For we find, that the first christians sold their estates, and laid the price of them at the apostles feet, to be disposed of by them as the necessities of the church required.⁵ St. Paul received large contributions from the Philippians whom he had converted: “Now ye Philippians,” says he to them, “know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed

¹ Luke viii. 2, 3. ² Matt. x. 9, 10. ³ Luke x. 5. ⁴ Luke xxii. 35. ⁵ Acts iv. 37.

from Macedonia, no church communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again to my necessity. Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit, which may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”¹ Where the apostle assures them, that the liberal supply they had sent him, was accepted by God as an oblation to himself, and that he would abundantly recompense it. Indeed he owns, that in the beginning of the gospel, that is, when he first preached in the country thereabouts, other churches had made no collections for him: and he puts the Thessalonians in mind, that he had maintained himself, by his own labour, whilst he lived among them: “neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought,” says he, “but wrought with labour and travel night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you.”² But at the same time he asserts his right to require maintenance of them, which he forbore to exercise, lest he should give offence, and to show them an example of industry and frugality; as it follows in the next words: “not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For

¹ Philip. iv. 16, 17, 18, 19.

² 2 Thess. iii. 8.

we hear that there are some, which walk among you disorderly, working not at all; but are busy bodies.”¹ The same apostle refused to accept maintenance of the Corinthians, to silence some false apostles, who preached without receiving any thing from them, in order to insinuate themselves the better into their good opinion; but then he very fully declares and proves his right to it: “Or I only,” says he, “and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man, or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox, that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen, or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written; that he that plougheth, should plough in hope; and he that thresheth in hope, should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. Do ye not know, that they who minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple; and they who wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none of these

¹ Verses 9, 10, 11.

things.”¹ In which words we may observe: First, that all the apostles, except Paul and Barnabas, forbore working, and consequently were maintained by the church. Secondly, that though these two, sometimes refused to accept maintenance, they had a right to it. Thirdly, that the apostle proves this right, 1st, from the law of nature and reason, which requires, that every man should have a reward for his labour; and this he shows from the examples of soldiers, husbandmen and others. 2dly, from the law and practice of the jews, among whom all labourers in general, and in particular those who waited at God’s altar, were maintained by their labour and service. 3dly, from our Lord’s express institution, who requires, that the preachers of the gospel should live of the gospel; as was before shown from his instructions to his apostles and disciples, when he sent them forth to preach. The same apostle commanded the Galatians to be liberal to all, who ministered God’s word to them, as a thing which would very much recommend them to the divine blessing: “let him,” says he, “that is taught in the word, communicate to him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap.”² And he enjoins Timothy, whom he appointed to govern the church of Ephesus, to take care that the elders, who faithfully discharged their duty, should have double honour; whereby he plainly means a liberal proportion of maintenance which he again asserts to be their due by the same right.

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 6—15.

² Gal. vi. 6. 7.

in the jews maintained their priests and levites ; yet this we may say, that there is no reason, why the christian ministers should not be treated with as much respect, and enjoy as competent a maintenance, as the jewish priests.

This will appear still more reasonable, when we consider, that the custom of dedicating tenths to the service of God and his ministers, was not peculiar to the jewish economy, but practised a long time before Moses. For we find, that Abraham gave tithes to Melchisedek, king of Salem, and priest of the most high God.¹ Neither was this paid by a way of tribute to Melchisedek, as king of Salem, as some pretend, who would elude this argument ; for Abraham was none of his subjects, and therefore had no obligation to pay him a tribute ; but it was presented to him as the priest of God ; as we find it expressly asserted by the apostle, who proves that the levitical priesthood was inferior to that of Melchisedek, because Levi paid tithes to him : for Levi, says he, was in the loins of his father Abraham, when Melchisedek met him.²

Another example of the payment of tithes before the law of Moses, is that of Jacob, who vowed, that if God would provide for him in his journey to Padan Aram, and bring him back in safety, the Lord should be his God : “ and of all,” said he to God, “ which thou shalt give me, I will give thee the tenth.”³ Some have objected, that this payment of tenths, was only due by Jacob’s vow, which was a voluntary obligation upon himself, and consequently need not be

¹ Gen. xiv. 18, 20. ² Heb. vii. 9, 10. ³ Gen. xxviii. 21, 22.

a rule or precedent to others. But it is more probable, that his payment of tenths, was only a consequence of his owning the Lord for his God. For the dedication of tithes to any person, was a solemn acknowledgment, that both that and the remaining nine parts were given by him, and therefore Jacob declared by paying tithes to the Lord, that he was his God, in opposition to false gods, to whom it is probable the nations thereabouts paid their tithes. Neither is it any just reason against this explication, that Jacob would not have vowed to pay tithes if they had been antecedently due to God; because there is nothing more frequent, than for men to vow the performance of what was their duty before they vowed; and we may as well conclude, that Jacob was not always obliged to own the Lord for his God, because he vows here to do it, as that he was not antecedently bound to pay the tenth of all he had to him, because he makes this the matter of his vow.

It is still objected, that there is no divine precept for the dedication of tithes, extant before the time of Moses, and consequently those paid by Abraham and Jacob were only voluntary oblations, which neither their posterity, nor any other before or after them, were obliged to make. To which it may be replied, that it does not follow, there was no divine precept for the payment of tithes, because it is not mentioned in the history of Genesis. For this book contains the history of between two and three thousand years, and relates things very briefly; and therefore negative arguments drawn from it, are extremely uncertain and inconclusive. By this way

of reasoning we might conclude, that God neither required the first race of men to sacrifice to him, nor to pay him any sort of worship, nor scarce to perform any moral duties toward one another, because there are no express precepts for these things. But as in this case, we conclude, that God commanded men to worship him, and sacrifice to him, and the like; because we find that religious men did these things with God's approbation; so in the matter of tenths, it is far more reasonable to conclude, that there was a precept for the dedication of them, because we find the practice of dedicating tenths was observed by the patriarchs, and accepted by God; than that there was no such precept, because we do not find it mentioned in the Mosaical history.

There is yet farther evidence, that the proportion of tenths was of divine institution, from the general agreement of other nations in it. They who are guided by chance or fancy, and act without any certain and fixed rule, cannot be supposed to agree in the same manner of acting. And therefore, since the most distant nations, many of which do not appear to have had any intercourse with one another, agreed in dedicating an exact tenth, we can scarce derive this consent from any other principle, beside the tradition of Adam, or Noah, or some other Patriarch, who lived before the dispersion from Babel; and it can scarce be conceived, that any of the patriarchs should enjoin the observation of this tradition upon the whole race of mankind, without a divine precept for it. Let us therefore examine, what accounts ancient authors have left us of this practice.

In Arabia we find a law, whereby every merchant was obliged to offer the tenth of his frankincense, which was the chief product and commodity of this country, to the god Sabis.* The Carthagenians sent the tithe of their spoils taken in the Sicilian war, to Hercules of Tyre.† The Ethiopians paid tithes to their god Assabinus.‡ The Grecian army, which was conducted by Xenophon in their memorable retreat after the death of Cyrus, reserved a tenth of their money to be dedicated to Apollo at Delphi, and Diana at Ephesus.§ When the Greeks had driven the Persians out of their country, they consecrated a golden tripod made of the tenths of their spoils, to Delphian Apollo.|| The inhabitants of the Isle Siphnus presented every year the tenths of the gold and silver digged out of their mines, to the same god.¶ The Athenians and their confederates dedicated a buckler of gold out of the tenths of the spoils taken at Tanagra, to Jupiter.** And the Athenians dedicated a chariot and horses of gold, made out of another tenth, to Pallas.†† When Cyrus had conquered Lydia, Cræsus advised him to prevent his soldiers from plundering the goods of the Lydians, *ὡς σφέα ἀναγκάτως ἔχειν δεκαλευσθῆναι τῷ Διῷ*. because they were of necessity to be tithed to Jupiter.‡‡ The Crotonians vowed to give a tenth of their spoils, which they should take in their war with the Locrians, to Delphian Apollo.§§ Sylla, the Roman

* Plinius Nat. Hist. Lib. XII. cap. xiv. † Justin. Lib. XVIII. cap. vii. ‡ Plin. Lib. XII. cap. xix. § Xenophon de expedit. Cyri, Lib. V. || Diodorus Siculus Bibliothec. histor. Lib. XI. ¶ Pausanias Phocicis. ** Idem. Eliac. á †† Herodotus Lib. V. cap. lxxvii. ‡‡ Idem. Lib. I. §§ Justin. Lib. XX. cap. ult.

general, dedicated the tenth of all his estate to Hercules ;* and the same was done by M. Crassus :† and we are told by Plutarch,‡ that this was a constant custom at Rome. Hercules himself is said to have dedicated to the gods the tenth of the spoils which he took from Geryon.§ When Camillus sacked Veii, a city of Hetruria, the soldiers seized the spoils for their own use, without reserving the accustomed tenth for the gods: after this the Augurs discovered, by their observations on the sacrifices, that the gods were exceedingly offended; whereupon the senate of Rome required all the soldiers to account upon oath, for the spoils which they had taken, and to pay a tenth of them, or the full value, all which, with a golden cup of eight talents, was conveyed to Apollo's temple at Delphi, by three men of the first quality in Rome.|| And lastly, we are informed by Festus, that the ancients offered to their gods the tithes of all things, without any exception.¶

Many more examples might easily be produced, some of which already have been collected by other hands ;** but these are sufficient to show, that the dedication of tenths was generally practised in the heathen nations. Some indeed have thought that this custom might be derived from the jews to the rest of the world: but it is extremely improbable, that any custom so ancient and universal as this,

* Plutarchus Sylla. † Idem, Crasso. ‡ Roman. Quæst. § Dionysius Halicarnass. Lib. I. || Plutarchus Camillo. ¶ Decima quæque Veteres Diis suis offerebant. ** Conf. Selden's History of Tithes, Chap. iii. Montague's Diatrib. Part I. Chap. iii. Spencerus de Legibus Hebr. Lib. III. cap. x.

should be derived from any one nation, to all the rest; and it is still more unlikely to be derived from the jews, who had less correspondence with their neighbours, than any nation in the world; beside, they were universally hated and despised for the great difference of their manners from the rest of mankind: and therefore it is most improbable, that any of their customs should be generally imitated by other nations. Not to say that it has already appeared, that the dedication of tenths was ancients than the jewish nation.

Others object, that though all, or most nations afford examples of the dedication of tenths, neither all persons paid tenths in any nation, nor any person paid them out of all the things he possessed; and therefore, they say, there was no universal tradition for it. To which it may be answered: First, that this cannot be proved, and that the contrary is rather manifest from the forementioned examples. Secondly, that supposing it to be true, we can no more conclude that men were not obliged to dedicate all their tenths, because they did not do so; than we can infer from the universal corruption of manners, which overspread the whole world before our Lord's incarnation, that men were not then bound to be just, good and temperate: but on the contrary, we ought rather to conclude, that as the marks of religion and morality, which are found in all nations, however degenerate, make it probable, that our first ancestors delivered the general notions of good and evil to their posterity; so the general agreement of most nations in this proportion of tenths, must be traced from the same original. And this argument

seems to hold more strongly for the tradition concerning tenths, than that of any general duty of religion, or morality : for this latter may be thought to be discoverable by the light of reason, without any tradition ; whereas men can scarce be supposed to have universally agreed in this exact proportion of tenths, which is a thing in its own nature wholly indifferent and undetermined, without some positive tradition to direct them.

It remains only to be inquired, whether the dedication of tenths was confirmed by our Lord or his apostles ? Now it must be owned, that though they have fully asserted the clergy's right to maintenance, and the necessity of dedicating some part of our substance to God in general, they are wholly silent as to the proportion of tenths. For this several reasons may be given : as, first, that the jewish priests were then in possession of the tithes, and it would undoubtedly have raised great commotions, and very much hindered the progress of the gospel, if the christian ministers had claimed that, to which others had a legal title. Secondly, their practice would have seemed inconsistent with their doctrine, if they had settled a constant maintenance for themselves, whilst they persuaded others to sell their estates for the service of the church and the poor. Lastly, in that age the devotion of christians was generally so great, that they very much exceeded the proportion of tithes in their contributions to the church. Many of them sold their whole estates, and gave the price to the apostles.¹ In the next century, Justin Martyr,

¹ Acts ii. 44, 45. Acts iv. 34, 35.

describing the great change which christianity made in men's manners, hath these words: "they who before were delighted with nothing so much as getting money, now bring what they possess to the common stock, and impart to every one, who is in want."* Irenæus observes, "that whereas the jews consecrated a tenth, they who live under the liberty of the gospel, give all to the Lord's use."† And in another place, where he explains, how Christ did not destroy, but fulfil the law, he says, "that instead of tithes, Christ commanded that men should divide all they have among the poor."‡ And Tertullian, who flourished in the latter part of this century, affirms, "that christians in his time used all things in common, except their wives; and that, being joined to one another in heart and soul, they had never any dispute with themselves, about communicating what they had to one another."§ So that hitherto there was no occasion to fix a certain proportion for the clergy's maintenance, whilst men contended who should give most, and were ready to dedicate all they had to pious uses. But when the first love of christians abated, the proportion of tithes

* Apolog. I. cap. xvii. pag. 25. Edit. Oxon. *Χρημάτων δε καὶ κληματων οἱ πόρους παντός μᾶλλον στέργοντες, νυν καὶ ἃ ἔχομεν εἰς κοινὸν φέροντες, καὶ παντὶ δεδομένα κοιτανούντες.*

† Lib. IV. cap. xxxiv. p. 325. Edit. Oxon. *Illi quidem decimas suorum habebant consecratas: qui autem perceperunt libertatem, omnia quæ sunt ipsorum, ad Dominicos decernunt usus.*

‡ Lib. IV. cap. xxxvii. *Pro eo quod est decimare, omnia quæ sunt pauperibus dividere.*

§ Apolog. cap. xxxix. *Ex substantia familiari fratres sumus—Itaque qui animo anima que miscemur, nihil de rei communicatione dubitamus. Omnia indiscreta sunt apud nos, præter uxores.*

came to be insisted on. Cyprian, who was Tertulian's scholar, complaining of the corruptions which had crept into the church in his age, has these words: "They (meaning the first christians) sold their houses and lands, and, in order to lay up for themselves treasures in heaven, offered the price to the apostles, to be distributed among the poor; but we now scarce give the tenth of our estates; and whereas our Lord has commanded us to sell, we rather buy and increase."* Whence it is manifest, that in this father's opinion, as well as the judgment of the christians before him, the tenth of every man's possession, at the least, ought to be dedicated to God. And though he laments the growth of avarice among christians, it appears, that in the church of Carthage, when he was bishop there, the contributions were very large, and the clergy enjoyed a plentiful maintenance. For he severely reproves their intermeddling too much in secular business, for this reason, because they had a competent allowance from the oblations of the church; and he compares them to the Levites, who received their maintenance from tithes, without being put to the trouble of ploughing and sowing:† and we find, that he contributed at one time, out of the church's stock, a hundred thousand Sestertia, toward the relief of christian captives, which remained above what was expended for the clergy's maintainance.‡ Origen explain-

* Lib. de Unitat. Eccles. pag. 85. *Domos tunc & fundos vendebant, & thesauros sibi in cœlis reponentes, distribuenda in usus indigentium pretia Apostolis offerebant. At nunc de patrimonio nec decimas damus, & cum vendere jubeat Dominus, emimus potius & augetur.*

† Epist. I. ‡ Epist. LXII.

ing the eighteenth chapter of Numbers, where the jews are required to offer to God their first fruits, for the use, and by the mediation of the priests, has these words, “ No man can lawfully use the fruits of the earth, or of the cattle, till he has first offered the first fruits of them all to God, that is, to the priests. This law, I think, is now necessary to be observed according to the letter.” Afterwards he proceeds thus ; “ Our Lord said in the gospel, wo unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, who tithe mint, cummin, and anise, and pass by the weightier things of the law : ye hypocrites, these ought to have been done, and the other not to have been left undone. Observe diligently, how our Lord prescribes the doing of the weighier things of the law, and also will not allow the literal performance of the other things here mentioned, to be omitted. But if you say, that he spoke this to the pharisees, and not his disciples, hear again what he says to his disciples : except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. What therefore he prescribes to be done by the pharisees, he would have fulfilled by his own disciples much more abundantly. How then does my righteousness exceed theirs, if they dare not taste the fruits of the earth, till they have first offered the first fruits of them to the priests, and the tithes to the Levites ; and I, doing neither of these, apply the first fruits of the earth to my own use, without acquainting priest or Levite, or imparting any share of them to the altar :” hence he concludes, “ that the precept concerning first fruits stands in force ac-

ording to the letter.”¹ In the apostolical canons,² the proportion of tithes is not spoken of, but there is express mention of the people’s offering to the bishops and presbyters, their first fruits of honey, milk, and other liquors : as also of birds and cattle, of corn, grapes, apples, and other fruits, for a maintenance to them, and to the rest of the clergy. And in the apostolical constitutions it is ordered, “ that the first fruits of all things be carried to the bishop, the presbyters, and deacons, for their maintenance : and that the tenth of all things be offered for the maintenance of the rest of the clergy, the virgins, the widows, and the poor.”* In another place of the same work, it is said, “ that though Christ has delivered us from the ceremonial law, he has been so far from freeing us from the payments to the priests and the poor, that in these, what he said concerning the pharisees must take place, except your righteousness exceed, &c.”³ St. Jerom has these words in his commentary on the third chapter of Malachi : “ What we have said of tithes and first fruits, which in ancient times were given by the people to the priests and Levites, must be understood of the christian people, who are not only required to give tithes and first fruits, but to sell all they have, and give to the poor, and to follow our Lord and Saviour. If we are not willing to do this, at least let us imitate

¹ Homil. xi. in Numer.

² Can. iii. and iv.

* Lib. VIII. cap. xxx. *Ετι προστάσσω πᾶσαν ἀπαρχὴν προσκομιζέσθαι τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ τοῖς διακόνοις, εἰς διατροφὴν αὐτῶν; πᾶσαν δὲ δεκάτην προσφέρεσθαι εἰς διατροφὴν τῶν λοιπῶν κληρικῶν, καὶ τῶν παρθένων, καὶ τῶν χηρῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν πηνία ἐξείαζομενων.*

³ Lib. II. cap. xxxv.

the jewish elements, by giving to the poor a part of the whole, and paying due honour to the priests and Levites.”* St. Ambrose observes, “that it is a christian duty for men to pay tithes of all their fruits and cattle, and other things every year, and that the Lord commanded us to do so; and, that since he has reserved the tenth to himself, it is not lawful to detain it.”† And St. Chrysostom affirms, “that Abraham, by paying tithes, is a tutor to all, to bring in their first fruits of all which God gives them.”‡ In another place, “what a shame,” says he, “is it, that christians should reckon that a burthen, which the jews did not think so? If it was dangerous to keep back tithes then, know it is much more so now.”§ And in another place, “I require,”

* Quod de decimis primitiisque diximus, quæ olim dabantur a populo Sacerdotibus ac Levitis, in Ecclesiæ quoque populis intelligite, quibus præceptum est, non solum decimas dare & primitias sed & vendere omnia quæ habent, & dare pauperibus, & sequi Dominum Salvatorem. Quod si facere nolumus, saltem Judæorum imitemur exordia, ut pauperibus partem demus ex toto, & Sacerdotibus ac Levitis honorem debitum deferamus.

† Serm. in Feriam. II. post Domin. I. quadrag. Non nobis sufficit, quod nomen Christianum præferamus, si opera Christiana non facimus: decimas nostras annis singulis de cunctis frugibus, pecoribus, &c. præcipit erogandas Dominus, &c. Ibid. in Fer. III. De omni substantia, quam Deus homini donat, decimam partem sibi servavit, & ideo non licet homini retinere illud quod Deus sibi reservavit.

‡ Homil. xxxv. in Genes. Δεκάτην αὐτῶ (Μελχισεδέκ) ἀφῴρισεν ἀπο πάντων ὧν ἐπέφερετο, ἐντεῦθεν ἤδη διδάσκαλος ἅπασιν γινόμενος — τὰς ἀπαρχὰς προσάγειν τῶν παρα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῖν παραχθέντων.

§ Homil. iv. in Ephes. Πόσης αἰχμνης τοῦτο γέμει, εἰ ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων οὐκ ἦν θαυμασμοῦ, τοῦτο ἐπὶ τῶν χριστιανῶν θαυμαστὸν ἐγένετο; εἰ τότε κίνδυνος ἦν τὸ δεκάτας ἀπολιπεῖν, ἐνόησον ὅσον ἐστι νυν.

says he, "no great matter, only let us, who expect heaven, pay as much as the jews, who were infants in religion; I say not this, as forbidding to give more, but let us not consecrate less than a tenth." It were easy to produce many more testimonies to the same purpose, but these, I hope, will be sufficient to show, that at least the tenth of what every christian possessed, was set apart in the primitive ages for the service of the church.

Whatever was given for the clergy's and church's service, was always looked upon as dedicated to God. He had the sole propriety of it, and the priests were his receivers and stewards. It is manifest that the jewish first fruits and tithes, were oblations to God, and that he bestowed them on the priests and Levites. And the tenth of tithes was again offered to God by the Levites, and received by the high priest. Whence Solomon, advising the jews to pay what was due to the priests, does it thus; "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thy increase."¹ And the keeping back of tithes is said by Malachi to be a robbing of God, for which sin he declares the whole nation of the jews to be cursed with a curse.² In like manner what was given to the apostles, was accounted given to God; and therefore when Ananias reserved to himself part of the price of his land, the whole of which he pretended to deposite at the apostle's feet, Peter told him, he had not lied unto men, but unto God, to whom he pretended to give a larger oblation than

¹ Prov. iii. 9. ² Mal. iii. 8, 9.

indeed he did.¹ St. Paul calls the collections which the Philippians sent him, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. And lastly, it appears from some of the forementioned instances, that the primitive Christians reckoned their contributions for the church's service, to be oblations to God. The manifest consequence whereof is, that the alienating or withholding of what is due to the church, must be accounted for as an injury done to God himself.

I should now proceed to the last head of this chapter, but that two objections remain to be answered; one of which is levelled against the clergy's right of claiming maintenance in the general: the other against the proportion of tenths.

First, It may be objected against the clergy's right of claiming maintenance, that the kingdom of Christ is a spiritual kingdom, and all the power which he has given his ministers, relates to spiritual things, as was formerly shown, and consequently must not be extended to any of the things of the world. To which it may be answered, that the kingdom of Christ, though it be not of the world, must for the present subsist in the world, and consequently the ministers of it may demand all such worldly things as are necessary to support it. The gospel cannot possibly be preached, without some place to preach it in; and the ministers of Christ cannot attend their duty of preaching, unless they have a competent maintenance to support them; and therefore to deny them these things, is in effect to destroy the institution of Christ. And if it be inquired farther, since

¹ Philip. iv. 18.

the clergy have a right to demand a place for the exercise of their function, and a maintenance for themselves, where the difference lies between their authority, and that of the civil magistrate? It may be answered, that the civil magistrate has authority to compel those, who will not pay him or any of his subjects what is their due, by civil penalties; whereas the utmost the church can do in such cases, is only to account the offender in the number of heathens and publicans, that is, to exclude him from her own society. This is the punishment which St. Paul required the Corinthians to inflict on the covetous, and the extortioner;¹ and which the church has often inflicted for this sort of covetousness, whereof we are now speaking. And if any thing beyond this is done for the recovery of the church's rights, it is wholly owing to the civil power.

Secondly, It is objected against the proportion of tenths, that this would make the clergy too rich, they being not near a tenth part in proportion to the rest of the people. To which it may be answered: First, that it is very unreasonable, and indeed can proceed from nothing but the want of religion, to make this an objection against the maintenance of the present clergy, which might as well have been objected against the priests of all other ages and countries, and yet was never urged with any success, either by the heathens, or the worshippers of the true God; and least of all by the primitive christians, whose example we ought chiefly to imitate. It may here be observed farther, that if the maintenance of

¹ 1 Cor. v. 11.

priests should be proportioned to their attendance and labour in the execution of their office, the advantage would lie very much on the side of the christian clergy. For whereas the attendance of the jewish priests was very short, and after long intervals of vacation,¹ that of the christian is constant and perpetual, and their labours in preaching the gospel, celebrating divine service, administering the sacraments, visiting the sick, and discharging the remaining duty of their function, especially where their cures are large and populous, seem vastly to exceed those of any other priests, of whom we have heard, or read. Secondly, this objection might in part be answered by lessening the cures, which in many places are far too great, and consequently increasing the number of the clergy. Thirdly, it is necessary, and has been so judged in all ages, that the clergy should have a plentiful maintenance. Without this it is scarce possible for them to secure themselves from the contempt of the people, who seldom have piety or consideration enough to distinguish their office and character from their outward condition in the world: and the contempt of the clergy will soon lead men to a contempt of religion, which always participates both of the good and bad fortune of those who are set up for the defence of it. And therefore the enemies of religion have in all ages made their first attempts upon the priesthood; plainly foreseeing, that if the priests once be taken out of the way, or, which is all one, brought under a general contempt, the people would

¹ Luke i. 5, 8. 1 Chron. xxiv. Nehem. xii.

soon become an easy prey to them. Lastly, without a plentiful maintenance the clergy could not have a sufficient fund to relieve the poor, and to promote other public charities, which is a duty wherein they are particularly obliged to be examples to their flocks.

IV. Thus I have endeavoured, with all the plainness and brevity I could, to explain and vindicate some of the chief of those powers which our Lord hath intrusted with the officers of his church : it remains now to be inquired, in what places the several officers are to exercise their respective powers, which was the fourth and last head propounded in the beginning of this chapter. In treating on this argument, I shall endeavour to show :

First, that the office and character of all persons who are admitted into holy orders, extends over the whole world.

Secondly, that nevertheless the ordinary exercise of their respective offices is limited to some particular district.

Thirdly, I shall inquire whence this limitation proceeds.

First then, it must be shown, that the office and character of all persons, who are admitted into holy orders, extends over the whole world. Now it is manifest, in the first place, that the apostles had a general commission to teach and baptize, and to execute all other parts of their office in all nations. And as the bishops of the church have been shown to succeed the apostles in all the parts of their office,

which are of standing and constant use in the church ; so we might reasonably conclude, though we had no farther proof of it, that the office and character of bishops, and consequently of inferior ministers, extends over all the world, because those of the apostles, their predecessors, did so ; since there is scarce any reason why the apostles' authority should be universal, which will not hold, at least in some degree, for the same extent of authority in the bishops, as will appear from some of the following considerations.

There is but one catholic church, whereof all particular churches are members ; and therefore, when any spiritual privilege, or character is conferred in any particular church, it must be understood to extend over the whole catholic church. Thus by baptism men are not only made members of the particular church where they happen to be baptized, but of the catholic church over the whole world ; and therefore whoever has been lawfully baptized in one church, has a right to partake of the Lord's supper, and other church privileges in all other churches, where he happens to come ; whereas if baptism only admitted men into some particular church, they must be re-baptized, before they can lawfully be received to communion in any diocese, where they have not been baptized already.

If it were not thus in holy orders, that they who have received them in one place, retain them in others, no minister could have authority to preach the gospel, or to administer the sacraments, or to exercise any other part of his function beyond the particular district, in which he was ordained : the

consequence whereof is manifestly this, that the faith of Christ must not be propagated, nor any churches erected in countries, where they have not stood ever since the apostles' times. For since there can be no ministers without ordination, as was before proved; either they who have been ordained in one country, may lawfully exercise their respective functions in others, where there are no ordained ministers already settled, or else those countries must remain for ever without ministers, and consequently without sacraments, and other public offices of religion.

It is manifest, that the offices of those ministers whom the apostles ordained, were not confined to any certain place, or church. For we find that Timothy, Titus, Crescens, and others, who are spoken of in the acts and epistles, travelled with St. Paul and other apostles, and sometimes without them, and exercised their ministerial functions in very distant parts of the world. In the next age after this Polycarp, St. John's disciple, and bishop of Smyrna, travelled to Rome, where Anicetus, the bishop of that city, out of respect to him, desired him to consecrate the eucharist; whereas, if Polycarp's sacerdotal character had extended no farther than his own diocese of Smyrna, he must have been re-ordained at Rome, before he could consecrate there. And for the same reason, whoever was justly excommunicated by his own bishop, was held excommunicated all over the world. An example of this, we find in the same age in Marcion, who being excommunicated by his own father, and bishop of Pontus, fled from his own country, and coming to Rome, was there

denied christian communion, as not being a member of the church which he had left. When any bishop turned heretic, the neighbouring bishops deposed him, and ordained another in his stead; and that because they, as officers of the catholic church, were in duty bound to have a general concern for the whole body of christians, as well as for their own particular districts: this is expressly affirmed by Cyprian: "There is," says he, "a large body of priests (whereby he meant bishops, though it would be all one to the present argument, if he had meant only presbyters,) cemented by the ties of mutual concord, and the bond of unity: so that if any of our (episcopal) college shall turn heretic, and waste the flock of Christ, the rest may come in to their assistance, and, as useful and merciful shepherds, restore the sheep of Christ to his flock.* Again, though," says he, "we are many shepherds, we feed only one flock; and it is our duty to gather and cherish all the sheep, which our Lord purchased with his blood; and not to suffer our brethren to be despised, and trodden under foot by some men's pride and presumption."† In pursuance of this principle, two bishops of Spain, who

* Epist. lxxviii. pag. 292. Copiosum corpus est sacerdotum concordiae mutuae glutino atque unitatis vinculo copulatum, ut si quis ex collegio nostro haeresin facere, & gregem Christi lacerare & vastare tentaverit, subveniant caeteri, & quasi pastores utiles & misericordes, oves Dominicas in gregem colligant.

† Ibid. pag. 293. Nam etsi pastores multi sumus, unum tamen gregem pascimus, & oves universas, quas Christus sanguine suo & passione quaesivit, colligere & fovere debemus; nec pati supplices & dolentes fratres nostros crudeliter despici, & superba quorundam praesumptione calcari.

had fallen into idolatry, were deposed, and others ordained in their stead by the neighbouring bishops, as may be seen in the same epistle of Cyprian, out of which the forementioned passages are taken. And three bishops, who ordained Novatian, the schismatic, were deposed, and others ordained to succeed them by Cornelius, bishop of Rome, whose proceedings in this matter were generally approved all over the world. And if we had no farther proof, that the power of bishops was thought to extend beyond their own dioceses, than this, that when any bishop died, the neighbouring bishops ordained another to succeed him, as hath already been shown, and will be further made out under the third particular, this alone would be sufficient : for they who can ordain ministers out of their own dioceses, may with the same reason confirm, consecrate the eucharist, and exercise any other episcopal, or sacerdotal act, when a just occasion is offered. And therefore, though many other arguments and examples might easily be produced, these I hope will be sufficient to convince all impartial men, that the office and character of men in holy orders, extends over the whole church.

Secondly, The ordinary exercise of their office is nevertheless limited to particular districts. For the catholic church, as was said in one of the forementioned passages of Cyprian, is divided into many lesser churches, every one of which is governed by its own officers; and if the bishop or clergy of one church, were generally allowed to exercise their office in other churches, where lawful ministers are already settled, the people would not know whom they should follow ; one would associate with Paul, ano-

ther with Apollos ; one with his old pastors, another with the new comers ; and so confusion and disorder will soon ensue : just as it happens in cities and kingdoms, where there are opposite pretenders to the sovereignty.

It was observed in one of the former chapters, that the apostles themselves, though every one of them had universal authority, for the most part confined the exercise of their authority to the particular provinces, which they had converted ; and when particular apostles interposed in the churches converted by others, whilst they were alive, it was usually by way of advice, rather than of authority and command, as was also before shown. It may here be added, that when they had enlarged the empire of christianity, as far as they judged convenient, they generally fixed in some certain place. St. James was made the fixed bishop of Jerusalem, before the apostles left it ; and St. John resided for the most part at Ephesus, after he returned from banishment : and in the same manner the rest of the ministers of that age, having ended their travels, commonly settled in particular churches. Mark the evangelist fixed at Alexandria, Titus in Crete, Timothy at Ephesus, where he is supposed to have suffered martyrdom before St. John's arrival there after his banishment ; and the rest in other places.

And if we descend to the next ages, there will scarce be found any testimony for episcopacy, which does not prove, that bishops were limited to a certain district in the ordinary exercise of their office. It was a maxim universally received, that there must be only one bishop in a city. On this, as was be-

fore observed, they founded the schism of Novatian, who set himself up to be bishop of Rome, against Cornelius, who had been lawfully chosen and ordained to that dignity: and hence the confessors, who left the party of Novatian, and returned with penitent hearts to the church's communion, are said to have lamented their schism, acknowledging, "that as there is but one God, one Christ the Lord, and one holy Spirit, so there ought to be but one bishop in any catholic church."* Neither can any one example be produced, where there were more bishops than one in any church at the same time; unless in places where the bishop being unable to execute his office, another was appointed to be his coadjutor. An example of this we find in the church of Hippo, where St. Augustin was coadjutor to Valerius; and before that, Alexander was coadjutor to Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem,† about the year of our Lord CCXII. which is the earliest instance of this kind.

From these two principles, namely, that the character of every bishop extends over the whole church of Christ; and, that every bishop has a particular district, over which he presides under Christ, it appears, that the church of Christ is one body, distinguished into lesser bodies, every one of which is a member of the church catholic. Which was thus expressed by Cyprian, "There is but one catholic

* Cyprian. Epist. xlix. Nec enim ignoramus, unum Deum esse; unum Christum esse Dominum, quem confessi sumus; unum Spiritum Sanctum; unum Episcopum in Ecclesia Catholica esse debere. Conf. Cornelii epistola apud Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. xliii.

† Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. VI. cap. xi.

church, says he, divided into many members, through the whole world; and one episcopacy, diffused in many bishops agreeing with one another.”* And in another place thus: “There is one episcopacy, an entire part whereof is held by every bishop.”† Whence, as was before observed, whoever becomes a member of any one part of the catholic church, is a member of the whole church; and on the contrary, whoever is separated from any sound part of the church, by wilful schism or just excommunication, is by that means separated from the whole church. Just as we find in natural bodies, that in one body there are many members, and whatever is united to any of these, is thereby united to the whole body: as, on the contrary, whatever is cut off from any member, does by that separation lose its union with the whole body. Neither can there be devised any way to be united to any body, whether natural, or civil, or of being separated from it, but by adhering to some of its members, or being cut off from them. Whence appears the necessity, which every christian lies under, of maintaining communion with the particular church wherein he lives, in order to his communion with the church catholic, and with Christ the head of it.

Thirdly, It remains to be inquired, whence the limitation of church officers, or their designation to particular districts, proceeds? And the best method

* Epist. lv. A Christo una Ecclesia per totum mundum in multa membra divisa. Item Episcopatus unus, Episcoporum multorum concordie numerositate diffusus.

† Lib. de Unitate Eccles. Episcopatus unus est, cujus à singulis in solidum pars tenetur.

to find out this, will be to inquire into the matter of fact, by whom and by what means the first ministers and their successors had their several districts assigned; And it is manifest, in the first place, that our Lord, the great king and high priest of the church, was invested with an universal dominion by God the Father, who promised long before his conception in the virgin's womb, that he would give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession.¹ The apostles were sent by our Lord to teach all nations, whereby it was not meant, that every apostle should travel over the whole world, and preside over the whole church; but that all of them together should have supreme authority over the church, and when they were dispersed, each of them should have his particular province: and their respective provinces were appointed, sometimes by the Holy Spirit's express direction, sometimes by agreement among themselves, and when neither of these hindered, every apostle seems to have been guided by his own judgment, as was before shown in the third chapter of this discourse. But then it remains to be inquired, concerning such officers as were appointed by the apostles and their successors afterwards.

And here we must carefully distinguish between the ordination of ministers, and their designation to particular districts: for these are things wholly different, though they often went together; it being manifest that one may be a bishop or priest, where he has no authority to exercise his office; which is the

¹ Psalm ii. 8.

case not only of those who are ordained to convert heathens, without any title to a particular church ; but of all others, who travel beyond the limits of their own district. For a priest who comes into a foreign country, where other lawful ministers are settled, still retains his sacerdotal character, and yet has no authority to take upon him the ordinary exercise of his office there.

It was shown in the former part of this chapter, that the power of conferring holy orders was always appropriated to the apostles and bishops ; but the designation of persons ordained to particular districts, will appear to be a thing of a mixed nature, in which the laity, and inferior clergy, commonly had a share, as well as the bishops. In the first age of christianity, the Holy Ghost sometimes gave directions for the appointment of bishops and other church officers. The bishops of Ephesus, are said by St. Paul to have been made overseers of that church, by the Holy Ghost.¹ Clemens of Rome affirms, that the apostles chose bishops and deacons, having a perfect foreknowledge of them, and having tried them by the spirit.* And in the passage of Clemens of Alexandria, cited in the last chapter, St. John is said to have ordained such for the service of the churches through which he passed, as were signified to him by the spirit. Sometimes the apostles seem to have constituted church officers by their own authority ; for so St. Paul appointed Titus to take care of the church in Crete. And in the following ages, the clergy of some churches

¹ Acts xx. 28.

* Epist. I. cap. xlii. and xliv.

chose their own bishops. Thus it was in Alexandria, where from the time of Mark, the evangelist, till Heraclas and Dionysius, who lived about the middle of the third century, whenever a vacancy happened in the episcopal chair, the presbyters elected one of their own number to fill it.* And in other places, if Hilary, the deacon, or whoever is the author of the commentary falsely ascribed to Ambrose, may be credited, it was once customary for the eldest presbyter to succeed upon any bishop's death without a formal election; but afterwards this method was found to be inconvenient, because the eldest was not always the most worthy, and then it was changed into an election.† But we find, that even in the earliest times, there was often a concurrence both of the clergy and people to the designation of church officers. For when a place was vacant in the apostolic college by the apostacy of Judas, the apostles and other disciples being assembled together, appointed two candidates for it, out of which it pleased God to choose Matthias, by directing the lot to fall upon him.¹ Yet it must not be thought, that the whole multitude of disciples were concerned for this election: for the whole number

* Hieronymus Epist. ad Evagrium: Alexandriae a Marco Evangelista usque ad Heraclam & Dionysium Episcopos, Presbyteros semper unum ex se electum in excelsiori gradu collocatum, Episcopum nominasse.

† In Ephes. iv. Primi Presbyteri, Episcopi appellabantur, ut recedente eo, sequens ei succederet.—Sed quia cœperunt sequentes Presbyteri indigni inveniri ad primatus tenendos, immutata est ratio, ut non ordo, sed meritum crearet Episcopum, multorum Sacerdotum iudicio constitutum.

¹ Acts i. 15, 23, 26.

of those who were present at it was but one hundred and twenty, whereas there were many more disciples at this time ; for our Lord appeared after his resurrection to above five hundred brethren at once ;¹ and therefore they who were present at the election of Matthias, seem only to have been the eleven apostles, and some of the principal disciples. Afterwards, when deacons were to be made, the apostles said to the multitude, “Brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, whom we may appoint over this business.” Accordingly the multitude chose seven men, whom they set before the apostles, who ordained them by prayer and imposition of hands ;² so that the choice was made by the multitude, but the apostles directed this whole affair ; they prescribed both the number and qualifications of the persons to be chosen, and ordained them when choice was made. When Timothy was to be ordained, ἐμαρτυροῦντο, he had the testimony of the brethren at Lystra and Iconium.³ Yet the same person is said in another place to have been ordained in obedience to the prophecies which went before of him.⁴ It may be, these passages may be meant of his admission into different orders, and then the first must relate to the lower, the second to some higher order. However, it appears that in one of them at least, the disciples signified their approbation. But the whole affair of choosing and appointing bishops and deacons in Ephesus and Crete, was intrusted by St. Paul, to Timothy and Titus. Neither are they once directed to ask the consent of any other

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 6. ² Acts vi. 3—6. ³ Acts xvi. 2. ⁴ 1 Tim. iv. 8.

person whatever; but for any thing which appears to the contrary, all was left to their judgment. And in succeeding ages, the primitive bishops sometimes appointed, as well as ordained church officers by their sole authority. Thus Numidicus, Celerinus, and Aurelius, were appointed to minister in Carthage by Cyprian in the time of his banishment: yet in the epistles which he wrote to his church on this occasion, he tells them, “ That however he might sometimes have reason to do otherwise, it was his custom in the ordinations of clergymen, to consult them beforehand, and to examine the manners and merits of every one with common advice.”* So that then it seems to have been the common method for bishops to ask their church’s advice before they proceeded to ordination; however sometimes, for special reasons, they thought fit to vary from it. This rule was derived from the practice of the most early times. There is a remarkable passage in Clemens of Rome to this purpose, in which he tells the Corinthians, “ That the ministers who had been ordained by the apostles, or afterwards by other honourable persons, the whole church giving their consent, ought not to be deposed from their office, whilst they behaved themselves unblameably in it.”† Whence it is manifest, that even in this age, the people’s consent was commonly obtained, before any person was ordained to be their

* Epist. XXXVIII. XXXIX.

† Epist. I. cap. xliv. Τοὺς οὖν κατασταθέντας ὑπ’ ἐκείνων (Ἀποστόλων) ἢ μεταξὺ ὑφ’ ἑτέρων ἐλλογίμων ἀνδρῶν, συνἑυδοκησάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης, καὶ λειτουργήσαντας ἀμέμπτως, τούτους οὐ δικαίως νομίζομεν ἀποβαλλέσθαι τῆς λειτουργίας.

minister. This custom was so notorious among heathens, as well as christians, about the year of our Lord CCXXX. when Alexander Severus was emperor, that he imitated it in constituting governors over the Roman provinces: “ he published the names of those, whom he designed to ordain governors, or presidents, or procurators of provinces, and exhorted the people to allege any crime against them, which they would undertake to prove at the hazard of their lives, if they could not make it out: for he said it was unreasonable, that when the christians and jews published the names of their priests before they were ordained, the same should not be done in appointing rulers of provinces, to whom mens’ lives and fortunes are committed.”* A few years after this, upon the death of Anteros, bishop of Rome, “ when all the brethren were met together in the church to choose a new bishop, and many eminent and illustrious persons were thought of for that office; on the sudden a dove lighted upon the head of Fabianus, whom no man had thought of before: whereupon all together with one accord, as it were, moved by the same divine spirit, cried out, he is worthy; and without any farther delay, placed him

* *Ælius Lampridius vita Alex. Severi, cap. xlv. Ubi aliquos voluisset vel rectores provinciis dare, vel præpositos facere, vel procuratores, id est, rationales, ordinare, nomina eorum proponebat, hortans populum, ut si quis quid haberet criminis, probaret manifestis rebus; si non probasset, subiret pœnam capitis: dicebatque grave esse, quum id Christiani & Judæi facerent in prædicandis sacerdotibus, qui ordinandi sunt, non fieri in provinciarum rectoribus, quibus & fortunæ hominum committerentur & capita.*

in the bishop's throne."* Tertullian alludes to this practice in his apology, where he says, "that in christian churches approved elders preside, who have obtained that honour, not by bribery, but testimony;"† By which, without doubt, he means the public testimony and approbation of the church. Origen taking occasion from Aaron's consecration, which was performed in the face of the congregation, to describe the appointment of a bishop, says, "that the presence of the people was necessary at the ordination of a priest, that all may know and be satisfied, that he who is chosen, is the very best, the learnedest, the holiest, and the most eminent for all sorts of virtue, of any in the church. And this is done in the presence of the people, that no objection may be made against the choice, after it is over."‡ Cyprian makes the same application of Eleazar's

* Eusebius Eccles. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 29. *Τῶν γὰρ ἀδελφῶν ἀπάντων χειροτονίας ἔνεκεν τῆς του μέλλουτος διαδέξασθαι τὴν ἐπίσκοπην, ἐπὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας συγκεκροτημένων, πλείστων τε ἐπιφανῶν καὶ ἐνδόξων ἀνδρῶν τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐν ὑπονοίᾳ ὑπαρχόντων, ὁ Φαβιανὸς παρῶν, οὐδενὸς μὲν ἀνθρώπων εἰς διάνοιαν ἔει' ὅμως δ' οὖν ἀθρόως ἐκ μετεώρου περιστερὰν κατὰ πτῶσαν ἐπικαθεσθῆναι τῇ αὐτοῦ κεφαλῇ μνημονεύουσι, μίμημα ἐνδείκνυμεν τῆς ἐπὶ τοῦ σωτήρα τῶν ἁγίου Πνεύματος ἐν εἶδει περιστερᾶς καθόδου. ἐφ' ᾧ τὸν πάντα λαὸν ὡς περὶ ὑφ' ἑνὸς πνεύματος θεοῦ κινηθέντα ὁμοσε, προθυμία πάσης καὶ μιᾷ ψυχῇ ἄξιον ἐπιβοῆσαι· καὶ ἀμελλήτως ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον τῆς ἐπίσκοπῆς λαβόντας αὐτὸν ἐπιθῆναι.*

† Apol. cap. xxxix. *Præsident probati quique seniores, honorem istum non pretio, sed testimonio adepti.*

‡ Homil. vi. in Levit. *Licet ergo Dominus de constituendo Pontifice præcepisset, & Dominus elegisset, tamen convocatur & synagoga. Requiritur enim in ordinando sacerdote, & præsentia populi, ut sciant omnes, & certi sint, quia qui præstantior est ex omni populo, qui doctior, qui sanctior, qui omni virtute eminentior, ille eligitur ad sacerdotium, & hoc astante populo, ne qua postea retractatio cuiquam, ne quis scrupulus resideret.*

consecration, which Origen does of Aaron's : " the people, says he, have power to choose worthy priests, and to refuse the unworthy. Which we find to be of divine appointment, that the priest should be ordained in the people's presence, to the end that one may be constituted, who has been approved by public testimony and judgment." Then having instanced in the consecration of Eleazar before the congregation of the jews, and the forementioned elections of Matthias, and the seven deacons, he proceeds thus : " wherefore according to the divine tradition, and the practice of the apostles, it is almost universally observed through all the provinces, in order to the regular celebration of ordinations, that when any bishop is to be ordained, the bishops of the province should come together to the vacant church, and a new bishop should be elected in the presence of the people, who best know every man's life and conversation. And we find this was observed by you in the promotion of Sabinus, whom all of you appointed by your suffrages, and the bishops, who were present, approved ; whereupon the episcopal dignity was conferred on him, and he was ordained by imposition of hands, into the place of Basilides."* Cyprian himself was constituted

* Epist. lxxvii. Quando ipsa (plebs) maxime habet potestatem, vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi, quod & ipsum videmus de divina auctoritate descendere, ut sacerdos, plebe præsentate, sub omnium oculis deligatur, & dignus atque idoneus publico iudicio ac testimonio comprobetur. Paulo post : Propter quod diligenter de traditione divina, & Apostolica observatione servandum est, & tenendum, quod apud nos utique, & fere per provincias universas tenetur, ut ad ordinationes rite celebrandas, ad eam plebem, cui præpositus ordinatur, Episcopi ejusdem provin-

bishop of Carthage in the same manner he has there described: for we are told by Pontius, one of his deacons, “that when he was but a novice, he was advanced to the sacerdotal office, and the episcopal dignity, by the judgment of God, and the people’s favour.” And he adds, “that when Cyprian hid himself, to avoid the great trust they intended to lay upon him, great multitudes of the brethren beset his doors, and searched all the passages, lest he should escape from them.”* Hence in one of his epistles to his people of Carthage, he speaks of some disobedient presbyters, who conspired against his own episcopacy, and their (the people’s) suffrages; † that is, against the episcopal dignity, to which he was advanced by the people’s recommendation. In another place, he says that Cornelius, his cotemporary, bishop of Rome, was advanced to that station “by the judgment of God, and his Christ, the testimony of almost all the clergy, and the suffrage of the people, and by the college of priests, that is,

cixæ proximi quique convenient, & Episcopus deligatur plebe præ-sente, quæ singulorum vitam plenissime novit, & uniuscujusque actum de ejus conversatione perspexit. Quod & apud vos factum videmus in Sabini collegæ nostri ordinatione, ut de universæ fraternitatis suffragio, & de Episcoporum, qui in præsentia conven-erant, quique de eo ad vos literas fecerant, judicio, Episcopatus ei deferretur, & manus ei in locum Basilidis imponeretur.

* Pontius vita Cypriani: *Judicio Dei & plebis favore ad officium sacerdotii, & Episcopatus gradum adhuc neophytus, &, ut putabatur, novellus, electus est. Mox addit: Obsederat fores domus copiosa fraternitas. & per omnes aditus sollicita caritas circuibat.*

† Epist. xliiii. *Contra Episcopatum meum, imo contra suffragium vestrum.*

bishops.”* And he founds the schism of Novatian upon this, that he set himself up in opposition to one, who had been thus approved and constituted ; “ Because,” says he, “ when a bishop is once made, and approved by the judgment and testimony of his colleagues and the people, another can by no means be appointed.”† And there is a remarkable passage in Cornelius’ epistle to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, concerning Novatian’s admission to be a presbyter, where he tells him, that he having been baptized upon his bed in a fit of sickness, was incapable by the canons of the church, of receiving orders; nevertheless the bishop was desirous to ordain him presbyter, and “ when all the clergy, and many of the laity opposed it, the bishop intreated them to suffer him to ordain only this one.”‡ Many more examples might be produced, especially in the following centuries, where the accounts of ecclesiastical affairs are more large and particular, than in the first ; but my design being chiefly to describe the practice of the three first ages, I shall only set down one later testimony from the apostolical constitutions, where Peter is introduced making the following decree : “ I, Peter, do affirm, that a bishop must be ordained,

* Epist. lv. Factus est autem Cornelius episcopus, de Dei & Christi ejus judicio, de Clericorum pene omnium Testimonio, de plebis quæ tunc affuit suffragio, & de sacerdotum antiquorum, & bonorum virorum collegio.

† Epist. xlv. Episcopo semel facto, & collegarum ac plebis judicio comprobato, alium constituti nullo modo posse.

‡ Eusebius Eccles. Hist. lib. VI. cap. xliii. Διακωλυόμενος υπο παντός του κλήρου, ἀλλὰ καὶ λαϊκῶν πολλῶν ἐπεὶ μὴ ἔξον ην τον ἐπὶ κλήνης διὰ νότον περιχυθέντα, ὡσπερ καὶ οὗτος, εἰς κλῆρον τινὰ γένεσθαι, ἠξίωσε συχρηθῆναι αὐτῷ τοῦτον μόνον χειροτονῆσαι.

as was appointed by all of us before, one who is blameless in all things, elected by the people for his eminent merit. Such a person being named, and content to undertake the office, let the people assembled on the Lord's day, with the college of presbyters, and such of the bishops as are present, approve him; let the chief person of the assembly ask the college of presbyters and the people, whether this be the person whom they desire to have for their ruler? Then let him ask, whether they do all attest, that he is worthy of this great and eminent principality? whether he has been pious towards God, and just to men: has managed his own house well, and has been of an unblamable conversation? Then the people having all attested this of him, let them be asked a third time, whether he is worthy of this ministry? And if they do all assent the third time, let them be desired to hold up their hands, in token of their approbation? Which being readily done," he directs the bishops to proceed to his ordination.*

From what has been said, it appears to have

* Apostol. Constitut. lib. viii. cap. 4. Ἐγὼ Φημί Πέτρος, ἐπισκοπον χειροτονεῖσθαι, ὡς ἐν τοῖς προλαβοῦσιν ἅμα πάντες διελαζάμεθα, ἐν πᾶσιν ἀμεμπτον, ἀριστίνδην ὑπο πάντος τοῦ λαοῦ ἐκλελεγεμενον. οὐ ὀνομασθέντος καὶ ἀρίσαντος, συνελθὼν ὁ λαός, ἅμα τῷ πρεσβυτεριῳ, καὶ τοῖς παροῦσιν ἐπισκόποις, ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κυριακῇ, συνένδοκείτω. Ὁ δὲ πρόκριτος τῶν λοιπῶν ἐρωτάτω πρεσβυτέριον καὶ τὸν λαόν, εἰ αὐτός ἐστιν, ὃν αἰτοῦνται εἰς ἀρχονία καὶ ἐπινευσάντων, προσερωτάτω, εἰ μαρτυρεῖται ὑπο πάντων ἄξιός ἐστιν τῆς μεγάλης ταύτης καὶ λαμπρᾶς ἡγεμονίας, εἰ τὰ κατὰ τὴν εἰς Θεὸν αὐτῷ εὐσέβειαν καλιάρθεται, εἰ τὰ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους δίκαια πεφύλακται, εἰ τὰ κατὰ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ καλῶν ἀκονήματα, εἰ τὰ κατὰ τὸν βίον ἀνεπιλήπτως. καὶ πάντων ἅμα—μαρτυρησάντων τοιοῦτον αὐτὸν εἶναι,—ἐκ τρίτου πάλιν πυθέσθωσαν εἰ ἄξιός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς τῆς λειτουργίας—καὶ συνθεμενων αὐτῶν ἐκ τρίτου ἄξιόν εἶναι, ἀπαίεσθωσαν οἱ πάντες συνθημα. καὶ δόντες προθύμως, &c.

been the most general practice, for bishops and other church officers to be approved, both by clergy and people, before they could be ordained. Nevertheless there are examples, where the people's concurrence in the choice of their ministers was not asked. Beside those which were before mentioned, we find it plainly supposed in the apostolical canons, that bishops were sometimes promoted without the people's consent: for it is there decreed, "That if the people of any city should refuse to accept their bishop, he shall remain bishop; but the clergy shall be excommunicated, for having instructed them no better in their duty."* And in the council of Ancyra, which was held ten years before the great council of Nice, there is also mention made of bishops constituted over dioceses, which would not receive them: † which manifestly implies, that they were ordained without the consent of those dioceses. In many of the forementioned instances, where the people are said to concur, it seems to have been done more for the sake of their testimony concerning the behaviour of those, who were to be ordained, than that their consent was thought necessary on any other account. And it deserves to be observed, that Alexander, the emperor, who publicly propounded the names of those whom he intended to set over provinces, in imitation of the christian

* Apost. can. xxix. *Εἴ τις χειρολονηθεῖς ἐπίσκοπος—μὴ δεχθεῖν—παρὰ τὴν τοῦ λαοῦ μοχθηρίαν, αὐτὸς μὲν ἔστω ἐπίσκοπος, ὁ δὲ κλήρος τῆς πόλεως ἀφοριζέσθω, ὅτι τοιοῦτου λαοῦ ἀνυπόλακτου παιδεύεται οὐκ ἐγένοντο.*

† Concil. Ancyran. Can. xviii. *Ἐπίσκοποι καλισταθέντες, καὶ μὴ δεχθέντες ὑποπαροικίας.*

election of priests, reserved the nomination wholly to himself, allowing the people nothing farther, than the liberty of alleging crimes against them. And Aaron and other jewish priests, whose consecrations before the congregation are produced by some of the fathers, as examples for the christians to follow in making bishops, were not appointed to their office by the people, but by God. So that one of the chief ends, for which the people were present at the promotion of church officers, was to attest the piety and good behaviour of the persons to be promoted. In places where the people had a share in electing their bishops, their election was void, unless it was approved, not only by their own clergy, but by the neighbouring bishops. For when Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, withdrew himself from his diocese, we are told, that the bishops of the neighbouring cities agreed to ordain Dios in his stead. Some time after this, Narcissus returned from the wilderness, where he had concealed himself, and was reinstated in his bishopric by the consent of all parties; but he becoming, through his great age, wholly unfit to execute his episcopal office, the christians of Jerusalem prevailed upon Alexander, bishop of Cappadocia, to undertake the care of their church, as the coadjutor of Narcissus, during his life, and afterwards to be their sole bishop: but this was not done, till the bishops of the neighbouring cities had first consented.* Sometimes the churches of greater cities elected for their bishops, those who were bishops of lesser cities before: yet such persons were

* Eusebius Eccles. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 10.

not allowed to change their dioceses, unless it was judged to be for the public benefit of the church *κρίσει πολλῶν επισκοπων*, by the judgment of many bishops, as we find decreed in the apostolical canons.* So that the neighbouring bishops at this time had authority to disannul the elections made by the people and clergy of any city, even when the bishop elect wanted not ordination. But at other times, where mere presbyters were elected, it is manifest, the bishops had power to make the election void, because they could refuse to ordain them. The same may be said of priests and deacons, that how far soever the people had an interest in choosing persons to be admitted into those orders, what they did was never of the least force without the bishop's concurrence, because it was wholly in his power to ordain them, or not. In the sixth canon of the council of Nice, cited in the last chapter, it is ordered, "that bishops shall be elected by the majority of voices, and if two or three dissent from the rest, they shall be concluded by the majority." Who were the electors here meant, is not expressed: but it seems not reasonable to think, they were the people of the vacant diocese, because there could never be the least colour to pretend, that any two or three private men should vacate the election of a whole church, which would have made elections almost impossible; and therefore it is not likely any canonical provision should be made against it. So that we may reasonably conclude, these electors were the bishops of the province, where the vacant

* Apost. Can. xi.

diocese lay: especially since it is decreed by this canon, that the Metropolitan should have a negative voice in the appointment of all bishops within his province. And it is ordered by the fourth canon of this council, "that when any bishop was to be ordained, all the bishops of the province where the vacant diocese lay, should come together to ordain him: and if some of them could not come, at least three should ordain him, and the rest signify by their letters, that they approved the person, and that all should be ratified by the Metropolitan."* Whence it is manifest, that the consent of the Metropolitan, and the majority of the comprovincial bishops was then required to the appointment of any bishop, before he could be ordained. And in the following ages, when the popular elections of bishops occasioned tumults, which sometimes ended not without open acts of violence, and even bloodshed; to remedy this inconvenience, in some places the clergy, in others the emperors named bishops. From all which together we may conclude, that the power of appointing bishops and church officers to exercise their functions in particular districts, is a thing of a mixed nature, and has never been wholly and constantly appropriated to any one sort of men, whether clergy or laity: but was lodged sometimes in one hand, and sometimes in another, as the times and other circumstances would best bear.

* Concil. Nicæen. Can. iv. Ἐπίσκοπον προσήκει μάλιστα μὲν ὑπο πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ ἐπαρχίᾳ καθίστασθαι· εἰ δὲ δύχερες τὸ τοιοῦτο, ἢ διὰ τὴν κατεπίγουσαν ἀνάγκην ἢ διὰ μῆκος ὁδοῦ, ἐξ ἁπάντων τρεῖς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ συναφομενοὺς, συμπλήρων γινομένων τῶν ἁπαντῶν καὶ συνλιθεμένων διὰ γραμμάτων, τότε τὴν χειροτονίαν ποιῆσαι. τὸ δὲ κύριος τῶν γινομένων δίδοσθαι καθ' ἐκάστην ἐπαρχίαν τῷ Μητροπολίτῃ.

ERRATA.

Page 93, for *evangelists*, the first word in the first line read *pastors*. And for *pastors* in the same line read *evangelists*.

VALUABLE BOOKS,

Just published, and for sale by

S. POTTER & CO.

BOOKSELLERS, No. 115, CHESNUT-STREET, PHILADELPHIA :

Among which are

BISHOP BROWNELL'S FAMILY PRAYER BOOK, accompanied by a general commentary, historical, explanatory, doctrinal and practical, compiled from the most approved liturgical works, with alterations and additions, accommodated to the liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, 1 vol. 4to. large type. Recommended by the bishops of the Episcopal Church.

WHEATLY ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, improved by notes drawn from a comparison with Shepherd, and other writings on the liturgy, adapting them to the present state of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, without any alteration of the original text, 1 vol. 8 vo.

D'OYLY & MANT'S FAMILY BIBLE, prepared and arranged under the direction of the society for promoting Christian knowledge, and recommended by the house of bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, complete in 2 vols. 4to.

BISHOP WHITE'S MEMOIRS OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH, from its first establishment to the present time, 1 vol. 8vo. This work should be in the hands of every member of the church.—*Churh. Mag.—Chris. Jour.*

DR. BEASLEY'S SEARCH OF TRUTH IN THE SCIENCE OF THE HUMAN MIND. This is an able production, and has been favourably noticed by the learned professors of Gottingen, and others, in our own country, 1 vol. 8 vo.

BISHOP WHITE'S LECTURES on the Catechism of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1 vol. 8vo. As also, **COMPARATIVE VIEWS** of the controversy between the Calvinists and Armenians, by the same Rt. Rev. Author, 2 vols. 8vo. The

characters of the above works are too well known and highly appreciated to require comment.

COMMON PRAYER BOOK, royal, with engravings. The style of execution may be gathered from the following extracts.—“The *paper*,” says the editor of the D. Press, “is very excellent, the *type* beautiful, the *ink* clean and black, and the press work good—The *binding* is above all praise, it is rich, neat and beautiful, and the *engravings* numerous, and in Kearney’s best style ; the book does credit not only to the publishers, but country ; it remains with the country to remunerate them.” In speaking of the above work, the editors of the Philadelphia Gazette, say—“Its execution in every respect, does credit to the artist and workmen employed—the typograph, the binder, and engraver, have united all their powers to render it a most superb volume.”

MUHLENBURG’S CHANTS of the Morning and Evening Prayer and Communion Service of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, 1 vol. folio.—The above work is accommodated to parlour use : Episcopalians have now an opportunity of practising the Chants in their families, and of being better enabled to unite in this pleasing part of Divine worship.

ABERCROMBIE’S MOURNER COMFORTED, comprising a selection of extracts on the death of relatives and friends, from the writings of the most eminent divines, with prayers suited to the various instances of mortality, 1 vol. 8vo.

The extensive circulation of, and increasing demand for this work, are the best evidences of its utility.

JOURNALS OF THE GENERAL CONVENTION of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, from its first sitting in 1784, to the present time, inclusive, in 2 vols. 8vo.

BEAN’S FAMILY WORSHIP, being a course of morning and evening prayers, for every day in the month ; to which is prefixed a Discourse on Family Religion. The editors of the Christian Observer, say, “We would particularly recommend the above work to the serious attention of all who are negligent of the performance of religious duty in their families, or anxious to obtain further information respecting them.”

BISHOP WILSON'S PRIVATE MEDITATIONS AND PRAYERS, in which we meet with the purest sentiments of Christianity. The above work bears ample testimony to the uniform piety and excellency of his understanding.

COMMON PRAYER BOOK, pocket edition, with several fine engravings by Kearney, in his best style. This is the most beautiful pocket edition ever offered to the American public.

LOCKE'S COMMON PLACE BOOK, with illustrations, 1 vol. 4to. To those who have been accustomed to the use of a Common Place Book, the advantage of a convenient repository of the kind is well known, and to those who have not, its utility must be sufficiently obvious, without further comment.

MUHLENBURG'S CHURCH POETRY, being portions of the Psalms in verse, and Hymns, suited to the festivals and fasts of the church, compiled with a view to their introduction into the Book of Common Prayer, in place of the psalms and hymns now used, on which subject a committee of the general convention has been appointed.

BURNET'S HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION abridged by the Rev. Benjamin Allen. The above work has been favourably reviewed in several periodical publications, and strongly recommended for general use by Drs. Wharton, Jarvis, and many other eminent divines.

MRS. SHERWOOD'S STORIES on the Church Catechism, have gone through five editions, within the last nine months. no other evidence of their merit is deemed requisite.

MRS. SHERWOOD'S HISTORY of Henry Milner.—This is a beautiful little work, calculated to attract an interest in the minds of youth, and to soften them, to receive those impressions which are of great importance in the establishment of sound principles, and an early regard for religion.

THE SPANISH DAUGHTER, edited by Mrs. Sherwood, whose sole object in compiling the work, appears to have been to point out the only true source of human excellence, which is, such a faith as is described by the apostle, whereby divine wisdom and divine strength, are in some degree transferred to the human creature, and fallen, corrupt, and weak mortals are enabled to walk forward in the way of holiness without fainting, and through all the various and changing scenes of this life, in youth and in age, in prosperity and adversity; to preserve a blameless conduct—and in weakness to produce the fruits of strength.

Owen on the Lord's Supper,
 Dwight's Theology, 4 vols. 8vo. gilt,
 Butterworth's Concordance,
 Boston's Body of Divinity, 3 vols. 8vo.
 Paxton's Scripture Illustrations, 2 vols. 8vo.
 Burkitt on the New Testament, 1 vol. 4to.
 Gill's Tracts and Sermons, 3 vols. 8vo.
 Controversial Tracts against Popery, 3 vols. 4to. cap.
 Chapman's True Christian Defence, 1 vol. 8vo.
 Traill's Throne of Grace, 1 vol. 12 mo.
 Nautical Essays, or a Spiritual View of Maritime Affairs.
 Allix's Scripture Reflections, 1 vol. 8vo.
 Beveridge's Thesaurus Theologicus, 2 vols. 8vo.
 Burder's Family Expositor, 4 vols. 4to.
 Butler's Bishop Works, 2 vols. 8vo.
 Cruden's Concordance, 1 vol. 4to.
 Flavel's Theological Works, 6 vols. 8vo.
 Henry's Commentary, 6 vols. 4to.
 Hannam's Pulpit Assistant, 4 vols. 12 mo.
 Guyse's Paraphase, 6 vols. 8vo.
 Hedric's Lexicon, 1 vol. 4to.
 Jenning's Jewish Antiquities, 1 vol. 8vo.
 Parkhurst's Greek and Hebrew Lexicon,
 Robinson's Scripture Characters, 4 vols. 12 mo.
 Stackhouse's History of the Bible, 3 vols. 4to.
 Wickliffe on the New Testament, 1 vol. 4to. bds.
 Vanderhooght's Hebrew Bible, with and without points,
 Newton's Rev. John Works, 6 vols. 8vo.
 Mosheim's and Milner's Church History, 5 and 4 vols.
 Marsh's Lectures on Systematic Divinity, 1 vol. 8vo.
 Chapman on the New Testament, 1 vol. 8vo.

These, together with a great number of others not here enumerated, are constantly for sale; also a constant supply of such text books as are used in the Theological Seminaries of the Protestant Episcopal Church, to which has been added an extensive collection of standard theology, well adapted to supply libraries either for the clergy or laity, who are respectfully invited to call and examine the same.

July, 1824.



•



