



139  
2



BV 601 .C546 1812 v.1  
Clinch, James Bernhard  
Letters on Church government

# LETTERS

ON

## Church Government.

---

BY

JAMES BERNARD CLINCH.

---

PART I.

---

Dublin,

PRINTED BY GRAISBERRY AND CAMPBELL, 10, BACK LANE.

1812.







TO THE MOST REVEREND

*DR. JOHN THOMAS TROY,*

ARCHBISHOP

IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF

DUBLIN.

---

MOST REVEREND FATHER;

**I**F I consult my own gratitude and long settled veneration, I must admit, that there is nothing possessed by me, upon which you do not hold a principal claim. But the following work is singularly due to you. Its public appearance is owing to your concession  
and

and to your encouragement: its subject involves, along with your episcopal right, a disquisition affecting the essence of the new law; whether christianity has or has not been carried on by usurpation and misgovernment, since the disappearance of its Founder; a question, in which the Gospel truth itself is brought to issue, whether its hopes are groundless and its promises delusive.

This work I submit to you, Most Reverend Father, as to my Bishop, unreservedly. In proof of my sincere deference, I repress those sentiments, which I should esteem it base to have dissembled on any other occasion. But I will not praise my judge. That your humility has triumphed over resentments; that your zeal is not fatigued by age; that your paternal kindness is unceasing and unbounded; that your clergy flourishes in reverence, and your flock still prospers in doing good; that you have preserved the faith; these are good titles, but not demanded for my purpose. I appeal not to your personal claims, but to the lasting privilege of your ministry. Of the opinions expressed by me in this work, I approve.

prove or I disavow, such as your judgment shall declare to be worthy of acceptance or to be worthy of rejection.

I am,

Most Reverend Archbishop,

Your dutiful servant,

**J. BERNARD CLINCH.**



# C O N T E N T S.

---

---

**INTRODUCTION** . . . Page **i**

## LETTER I.

*Occasion of these letters.—Craft of Columbanus.  
—His undertaking goes to abolish all catholic  
authority, and to separate the priesthood from  
its vital source of episcopacy* . . . **1**

## LETTER II.

*On the first general council at Nicea.—Bishops  
alone the judges* . . . **32**

## LETTER III.

*On the general councils of Constantinople,  
Ephesus and Chalcedon.—Bishops alone the  
judges* . . . **57**

	Page.
LETTER IV.	
<i>On the manner of proceeding in Councils, as stated by Columbanus.—His perpetual mistakes on the subject.—On the second general council of Nicea, and fourth of Toledo</i>	74

LETTER V.	
<i>On provincial councils</i>	110
<i>Note. On the canons of the council in Trullo</i>	125

LETTER VI.	
<i>On the national councils of Africa, the Gauls and Spain.—The judicial authority exclusively possessed by bishops</i>	128
<i>Note. The preambles to the councils of Elvira and of Toledo I. proved spurious.—Bingham corrected</i>	158

LETTER VII.	
<i>On the councils of Rome under Miltiades, and of Arles during the popedom of Sylvester.—Cecilian of Carthage and the Donatists.—The</i> <i>bishop</i>	

*bishop of Rome patriarch of the West.—Learned arguments of Columbanus against this fact.—On patriarchal synods and authority . . . . .* 169

*Note A. The arguments of Valesius, that the δευτερο, θενος signified presbyterial dignity in the imperial letter to Chrestus, examined . . . . .* 301

*Note B. By what word was Ordination characteristically expressed in the third and fourth centuries? . . . . .* 306

#### LETTER VIII.

*On episcopal authority from the apostolic age to the reign of Constantine.—Columbanus refutes Doctor Poynter, and quotes scripture texts.—His refutation exposed.—His boldness in attempting to quote scripture, and in defaming the catholic doctrine.—His incredible ignorance and presumption.—The presbyters of saint Paul demonstrated to signify bishops.—Delineation of original Church polity.—Office of Peter.—On patriarchal churches.—What is the dignity of presbyters in the lasting church system? . . . . .* 308

*Note. On Confirmation.—Columbanus unacquainted with catholic theology . . . . .* 430

## LETTER IX.

- Diocesan synods.—Apocryphal council of Niceæ, to which Columbanus appeals.—The acts of this council proved spurious at length.—Misrepresentation of the Roman council under Hilarus.—Extravagant misrepresentation of saint Augustine, and of a council held under pope Symmachus.—Misrepresentation of Irish bishops, who have received coadjutors cum spe successionis.—True state of the question, and justification of those bishops.—New rules for episcopal elections invented by Columbanus, as ancient general canons . . . . .* 439
- Note A. On Boniface II. appointing Vigilus* 556
- Note B. On the council of Barcelona . . . . .* 562

## LETTER XI.

*Attempt of Columbanus to justify the Veto, by means of a new distinction, and from the practice of Arian kings.—Absurdity of the distinction.—Falsity of the alleged fact.—Warning against the Veto in the practice of those Arian kings.—The VETO and ARRANGEMENTS briefly explained: their consequences*



*as to national liberty and general society.—The catholic bishops in Ireland vindicated from certain slanders of Columbanus, regarding their treatment of the Irish priesthood . . .* 567

#### POSTSCRIPT.

*Review of the further arguments, given in the fifth letter, or second number of an Historical Address, by Columbanus . . .* 689



## INTRODUCTION.

---

THE following series of letters, having insensibly grown into the *evil* of a book, will be thought, of course, to stand in need of a preface. The first point, on which a reader will expect to be satisfied, I presume, is this; by what right I have interposed in a question of church government. I could answer, even by that right which every man holds, of repulsing an assault on the peace or morals of society: but I have a particular justification. I appear not un-called. I am permitted to interfere, by men, whose characters have been dragged to exhibition, that their tunics of office might be seized upon as perquisites; by the men, who are deers of the forest, under the asserted patronage of a certain power, and who are thus  
misused

misused by a pretended "Irish catholic priest," lest the assault on their function should want the merit of sacrilege, or the attack on their safety the recommendation of parricide.

I am encouraged to appear, not only by catholic bishops, but by men of that "*second order*," whom the pretended catholic priest would enlist. They are not unwilling to be defended against their self-titled compeer. They esteem the priestly vestment good robing enough, and the priestly reverence to be station high enough. They are not taken with the offer of paper mitres and cobweb pontificals, of bishops' scalps and pillaged buskins. By the *promotion* held out, they would gain little respect themselves amongst each other; their parishioners would not know them in the new fancy dress. Besides which, the carnival parade would not survive themselves; unless *Columbanus*, who bestows on them a right to *confirm*, will annex to his bull a right to *ordain*, in cases of extremity.

Let me now be suffered to add, that were I unfurnished with such reasons of defence, as I have alleged, there would still be found in  
these

these letters an ample store of excuse for my interference. When the honest reader shall have travelled a little way into the amazing untruths of *Columbanus*, I submit it to his principle and patience, whether a man, having knowledge of such enormous and uniform deception, and observing the deception to have the worst objects in view, was not bound by truth, as he must have been led by indignation, to break silence.

It will be asked, why I still term this man *Columbanus*, notwithstanding the avowal of a certain ecclesiastic, that he himself is the wearer of that name. This I have partly explained in my first letter. I shall now say further, that, when report began to settle the title of *Columbanus* on that ecclesiastic, I had already cast my refutation in its shape against *Columbanus*, and I was determined, as well by partiality as by justice, to persevere, notwithstanding the disclosure: by partiality, because I would remove, as far as possible, an ignominious achievement from a house of Irish veneration; by justice, lest I should betray, through personal feelings, a cause, which I had undertaken to defend against  
outrage

outrage the more shocking, as it calculates on the modesty of its victims for their silence, and on the strength of *penal* laws for its own impunity.

For *Columbanus* is not only aware, but *legally* tutored, that if he accused, under the description of *foreign influenced bishops* or of *Castabals*, all our bishops, not only of the misdeeds and villanies with which he plies them, but of open acts of high treason, or of poisoning, or of forgery, or of projected massacre; those bishops could not possibly seek for redress against him, without averring, that they were *bishops*, and reputed to be such *in our church*; and were appointed in such manner and by such ways, as the Roman catholic discipline ordains; whereby they would not only be put out of court, but expose themselves, at the very least, to the peril of an attachment. This is horrible doing. Lest this should be supposed an assertion of mere inference, *Columbanus*, having argued in favour of the statutes of *premunire*, of which the effect might be now applied to an English Vicar apostolical, and having in his last number attempted to overwhelm bishop Milner

by

in a torrent of leperous ichor, threatens Vicars Apostolical with the *law*, if *he* should be put out of communion, and dares Milner to bring an *action for slander*, without shewing his charter of appointment. I could not reconcile it with my sense of right, to couple a name, which still remains legible on the Milesian cenotaph of Irish royalty, with avowals of such a temper. I could not, on the other hand, dissemble many other more heinously aggravating circumstances apparent from the author's confession or his boasting. Such is my further exculpation; be its value what it may for others, it will be taken for sincere by MATTHEW O'CONOR of Mount-Druid, Esq; to whom I have alluded in the first of my letters.

The *duty* of an introduction is now gone through. The further reflections I am about to make, are not essentially connected with the scope of my letters; although, in some measure, they hold affinity with it; inasmuch as they characterize that spirit of destruction and havoc, which pointed the energies of *Columbanus* against the main props of christian authority. I do not mean to give a review of the multifarious curiosities, which our author

has embalmed and shelved up in his pantographical museum of five publications. His impeachment of Pius VII., as if this holy pontiff had *absolved* the French from their allegiance, and *deposed* the loyal bishops; his impeachment and falsification of the Irish meeting at Tullow; his charge against our bishops, that they did, at Tullow, recognize the pope's *deposing* power, are such things as I will not handle. MILNER has disposed of those questions, as well as of the charge against himself, that he abetted *Idolatry* in South Wales. As to the affair of saint Patrick, it is beyond my means of research. I cannot but admire *Columbanus* for his zeal about saint Patrick; and I will observe, that his discovery of the letters of Gregory of *Iberia*, is a mistake. The former to the letters in question is to *Istria*; the latter is to Ireland; and, by no possibility, could either have been addressed to *Iberia*. If bishop Milner erred, he did so with De Marca and with Usher. Further, I would offer my surprise to *Columbanus* at his discovery, that the letters of his valuable *fac simile* are *Irish* characters; unless *Irish* characters are those used also in Italy, between the

the



the seventh and eighth centuries. The anthem or *invitatorium* itself is *Nestorian*, on the face of it. With his *liber diurnus* of Garnier, and his exarchs of Ravenna I have nothing to do. His oath of popes *elect* is antedated. His assertion, that, until the end of the fourteenth century, deacons of the church of Rome, if elected, were consecrated bishops without *priestly* ordination, though stiled an *hierarchical fact*, by our author, in derision of the *Castabalas*, is not a *lay* fact. Two hundred years before the epoch assigned, Innocent III., writes his cotemporary biographer, being elected, when a *deacon*, 6. Id. Jan. 1197, his ordination to the *priesthood* was deferred to the Saturday IV. Temp. 9. Kal. Maij, and, on the following day, he was consecrated *bishop*. There is no authority for the *hierarchical fact*, but the mistake of Eneas of Paris. With his Irish synods, from Irish manuscripts, I have nothing to do. But I am almost compelled to deliver what follows.

The *Historical Addresses of Columbanus* have no drift, no meaning, unless ancillary to a conspiracy against Irish catholics. The writer is possibly a mere unconscious tool; but  
the

the effect and purpose are bloody. Over and above the *Theology*, which I have crushed, and the antiquarian diving, which I cannot plunge after; besides the maddened strain of irreverence to bishops, and the hyena-like springing at the throat of MINER, what else is to be found in the five publications? Truly, abuse of *popes*, without a syllable of encomium on the many admirable men, who filled the holy see; by whose uniform excellence of mind an ascendancy was gained in the *temporal* world, which some vile, but few occupants of that see, wielded basely and sacrilegiously, whose memories, on that account, are infamous amongst catholics. *Columbanus*, in his zeal against sin, impeaches the life of Alexander VI. What catholic defends Alexander VI.? But, in order to vilify, along with Borgia, the see itself, our enemy to vice unburies the skeleton of that wretch, after three hundred years. Now it happens, that Henry VIII. was king of England, and opposed the see of Rome, because affronted in his lust. It happens, that this monster butchered wives, bishops, friends, People; that he was the ultimate effort of wickedness; that he is hated by catholics, disowned

disowned by protestants, anathematized from the human species. What does *Columbanus* say of *this monster*, of *this pope*? Of his vices nothing. Of *his ecclesiastical primacy*?—That it was an innoxious and righteous measure. When the doting Paul IV., led astray by old age, constitutional harshness, obsolete ambition and the intrigues of foreign courts, behaved unworthily towards Mary of England, this pope is introduced by our *hidden saint* in the gestures of a superannuated actor. But what of *Elizabeth*, who murdered Mary of Scots, and who persecuted catholics? Nothing, but *good government*. What of the ministers of Elizabeth; of that knot of poisoners, forgers, privy-murderers and ribalds? He *praises* Walsingham, and he garbles a quotation from Cecil, in order to shew the *lenity* of that government; having first suppressed, as if he had had to do with *Scripture*, the acknowledgment of Cecil, that Roman catholics were examined *on the rack*. What of *Campion*, that most elegant scholar, and most affectionate loyalist to Elizabeth, for whose prosperity he prayed at Holbourn hill? That he was a leader of *gunpowder* plotters; as if

Campion

Campion had risen again from the dust, to blow up the parliament. What of that crowd of missionary priests, who suffered under Elizabeth, and with torments? He ridicules the book, which records their deaths. What of the discipline of the catholic church, since the reformation? It is low intrigue, tyranny, despotism, rebellion, bloodshed. What of the reformed church of England, during the same interval? It has preserved the old rules, and is free from arbitrary power. How can he, if a catholic, impeach the *catholic* discipline, as if Christ were not always the inseparable and living head of his church? I know not how to answer, if he be a catholic. But, how does he prove against the catholic church a corruption of discipline? By the testimony of enemies or convicts; although protestants have testified to the contrary. How does he plead for the reformed church? By quoting *its own* assertions, although negatived by protestant records, by Coke, by the long parliament, by Faulkland, by dissenters, by catholics, by quakers, BY THE REVOLUTION. What of Pius VII., who, from his prison, cries out, like John the baptist, against unlawful marriage?

marriage? Bishop *Milner* had called his holiness the *poor prisoner at Savona*. *Columbanus* echoes the words in mockery, as they, who heard ELI, ELI, became merry on the jest of *Elias*: he repeats the *poor prisoner of Savona*, and tacks to it an indictment of forsworn atrocity. Such is the historian. Such is the catholic. Such is the *priest*. Such is the man.

He had latterly indicted our bishops: he was informed, that their vindication would appear. If a catholic priest, should he not have been pleased to know, that the bishops would be defended by an advocate, from charges too foul for them to plead to, *viva voce*? So honest men might think. If a zealot for liberty, for justice, for English law, for *canon* law, ought he not to have cleared the way for their *advocate*? Surely; unless his object were to stab, not to reason. Instead of that, our zealot for *Gallican* liberties, our admirer of the constitution, our adorer of English *heavenly* sentiments of freedom, in the plenitude of power and in the fulness of heart, as soon as he knew, that a barrister had undertaken the defence, sits him down to abuse the *advocate*; to prepossess his special jury against the bishops, who would dare

dare to employ counsel; in all the pride of martial law, to declare the catholic emancipation lost, if any barrister could be so vile, so low, so cunning, so much a *devil's lawyer*, as to open the mouth in defence of his prey. I am that vile barrister, *Columbanus*. I am that *devil's lawyer*. You know, that the vulgar nickname imports an advocate employed at the pope's *mill*, to impeach *false saints*, set up by popular credulity, and advanced by railing, and by calling on the *Lamb of God*. You are *the hidden saint*; and of the *three* pretensions you are in full possession of the latter two. I enter now my claim upon you; and, before I finish, I shall restore *to the Devil his own*.

It is hardly credible, that an *addresser* of catholics who would manifest so indecently his bias for the anticatholic side, could have purposed to make on catholic readers any other impression than that of insult. But more is to be told.

In the years 1810 and 1812, *Columbanus* published his two *addressing* historical essays. His text was to shew the calamities occasioned by *foreign influence* in the nomination to *Irish*

sees; and his undertaking required, that he should faithfully adhere to the point, and not wander in gratuitous outrage, beyond *foreign influence* and Irish sees. Yet *Columbanus* introduces the English *Gunpowder* plot. Seeing, that the excursion could not be brought home, by natural connection, to the subject, he joins it by an optical synchronism; namely, by putting it in a note, where he is descanting on the violent acts of Irish catholics, after the accession of James. He informs us, that the *gunpowder* treason was the only *real treason* in that reign; and that Cecil had no hand in the plot. That it was a *real* treason, no man doubts, nor did the traitors deny the treason when about to die. But that Cecil had no hand in pushing forward the design, if not in planning it through the help of Tresham, is what no man will believe. The letter to Mounteagle is alone decisive of a mantrap. But what does our author say to the *pension* granted to Tresham's Widow? For the proofs of this treason he refers us to a book published in 1679. Did he forget, that, in this year, the plot of Oates was in full activity, and that, while the blood of catholics ran, the press was alert in keeping hot the spirit of killing

D

papists?

papists? What can be the meaning of *Columbanus* in drawing forth this tool from the rusty armory of Titus Oates; of brandishing it in Ireland in the glad view of Orangemen? Historical zeal; nothing less: besides historical zeal, the utility of an allusion, that he might be understood, when he tells the enemies of catholics, that episcopal synods may become *gunpowder plots*.

The burden of his song is the massacre of 1641; the coming of Rinuccini; the assumption of Rinuccini to appoint bishops; the misconduct of those bishops; the double breaking of faith with the king's deputy; their exclusive synods; their asserted collusion with Ireton and Cromwell; their offer of the kingdom to Lorraine; their abuse of excommunications, and the pretended consequent slaughter of inhabitants, and final destruction of the catholic cause in Ireland.

Taking all these assertions for truth; granting that each of the charges is a crime as deep and large as the words can imply; that all those crimes are without the excuse of ignorance and without the extenuation of anger; that in every leading circumstance, in every collateral incident they are all damnable crimes; what has the

the



the indictment to do with the present case of Ireland? No toleration was then allowed by law. Toleration has been granted by George III. to Catholics. No oath of allegiance could then be agreed upon. An oath of allegiance has sealed the conquest of Ireland. A temporal power over Ireland had been once legally vested in the popes, and was appealed to by the despairing natives. That power is now abjured and exterminated by oaths. The reformed religion was then in arms throughout Europe, and holding forth the gospel as its title to political independence. The Irish catholics thought their own *true* religion as good a title as the reformers' *true* gospel. At that time, it was a received and acknowledged maxim on both sides, that christians of the true faith are bound to assist by arms one another, against the oppressors of their common faith. This maxim was pushed to the very utmost in the treaty between Elizabeth and James VI. of Scotland; whereby the contracting parties bound themselves to *make war* on all princes denying the *free exercise* of the true religion, *any treaty of peace or amity notwithstanding*. Such political maxims are now dead and gone. The see of Rome was then the rallying point for catholic establishments

establishments in church and state, against the invading activity of the reformers. But now wars of religion have ceased throughout Europe. The *foreign influenced* bishops, according to *Columbanus*, wanted the temporalities of the sees and benefices. I am not surprised at that. For the dispossession was justified neither by prescription nor by law. I should not be surprised, if, in twenty years to come, some persons should be found claiming the *temporalities* of the late Gallican Church. But now our bishops have abjured that suspicion. At that time, foreign succour was the only hope of the natives against extermination. At the present, domestic concord, constitutional liberty, freedom of conscience, oblivion, forgiveness are the only preventives of subjugation from abroad. Even for *our church* the independence of the British empire is the best safeguard, under which we may hope, that the catholic system shall not be finally enslaved,

I have travelled beyond my studies, and am satisfied to have demolished the haunted castle of the *addresser*. A gentleman every way qualified for the task is to meet *Columbanus*

on the *historical* discoveries. *Doctor Curry* had written on the subject; it was easy for our addresser to have answered Curry, paragraph by paragraph. This would have brought the business to an issue. A more ingenious resource presented itself to our *Columbanus*; namely, to disparage that work, to nauseate at his stile, to inform the public, that they are about to receive from himself the substance of twenty *folio manuscripts*. Folio manuscripts! Of what hand, of what authenticity, by whom compiled? By the accusers or by the accused? On this he is silent. When *Columbanus* had *councils*, and every-day books to quote, he spares no mutilation, no interpolation, no falsification. Yet *Columbanus* expects credit for his substance of *twenty folio nameless manuscripts*, when he himself holds the Delphic sparrow in his hand. This is a good improvement on the law of criminal evidence. But has he not quoted strong texts? Yes; he has given the words of the *accusers*. Has he cited the defence? Not a syllable of that. Does he bring one text to shew, that the *foreign influenced* bishops were privy, or consenting

to

to the murders of 1641? Not a text. He even relates, that in 1643, the council of Kilkenny demanded an investigation of *all murders*. In 1812 he accuses those bishops. They are absent. They are dead.

Why, lastly, is the massacre of 1641, dressed up in 1812, and reproduced on the stage? The centennial jubilee had passed away, half a century since. The manners are changed. The social principles are consolidated. There is now but one faith of the common safety. The great and glorious BURKE may help us to the explanation. In 1790, at Paris, on the stage, and in compliment to the liberality of the times, the massacre of saint Bartholomew was acted: the Cardinal of Lorraine, by a daring *alibi*, was brought out in his robes, *blessing the daggers* and preaching up extermination. With the voice of a prophet *Edmond Burke* denounced, in that tragedy, the design, that afterwards darkened the face of Nature in September 1792; the massacre of bishops and priests. The people had been tutored to contempt, by songs and by caricatures: on the day next after, the Septembrizing deluge of  
 blood

blood, the *Moniteur* justified the act on the score of such dangers, as *Columbanus* has been repeating these two years past, in funereal yell. He too has brought up for the stage and for Irish Septembrizers, such there still are, the massacre of 1641; and he connects it with that of Bartholomew's day. What ensued in France from the revival of that play, we all know, and I shrink from writing. What is to ensue from the play of *Columbanus*? I know not. May God save the country, and may ill recoil on them, if any there be, who take delight in meditations of blood!

## ERRATA.

PAGE 3, line 18, *for* artificial *read* arithmetical.—p. 5, l. 23, *read* as it is the divine —p. 9, l. 1, *for* his *read* then.—p. 25, l. penult, *for* found *read* framed.—p. 29, l. penult, *for* authorities *read* authority —p. 31, l. 3. *for* his *read* its.—p. 37, l. 19, *dele* it —p. 90, l. 27, *for* with *read* and.—p. 93, l. 4, *for* at *read* of.—p. 139, l. 7, *read* councils for two.—p. 145, l. 3 *for* is *read* are.—p. 159, l. 1, *for* avry *read* vary. l. 23, *read* *προσισταί* —l. 26, *read* l be a .—p. 161, l. 15, *ερωτα* *ερωτων* —p. 176, l. ut *after* derision *add* &c.. Deputies from.—p. 231, l. 2 *read* the newly established.—p. 243, l. 7, *for* this See *read* this system, *ibid.* *del.* as—p. 248, l. 6, *dele* the.—265, l. 27, *read* *εγχεωω*.—p. 267, l. 2, *read* becom .—p. 316, l. 27, *for* this right, *read* the right.—p. 323, l. 13 *read* *ειδηρον*.—p. 348, l. 11, *read* revolution.—p. 379, l. 4, *read* later.—p. 392, l. 17, *for* not *read* most; *ibid.* *after* them *read* as well as.—p. 397, l. 16, *read* gained.—p. 417 at bottom, *add.* \* Polycarp. ad Philipp.—p. 428, transpose back the note to 427 —p. 455, l. 26, *read* Christo.—p. 506 l. 28, *read* resents.—p. 512, l. 20, *read* cause.—p. 519, Note, *for* on *read* no.—p. 527, note, *read* alluding.—p. 535, note, l. 3, *for* not only is *read* is totally.—p. 563, l. 10, *read*, Statuere.—p. 661, l. 9, *for* signpost, *read*, saintship.—p. 772, l. 14, *read* confirmetur.

ON

## CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

---

### LETTER I.

REVEREND SIR,

IN our late discourse on Columbanus, you professed yourself a convert to *my* opinion of that writer; you thought him to be mischievous; you judged that it would be meritorious to detect him. I answered, that the opinion of *mine*, to which you had lately acceded, was given about sixteen months ago; that it was no sooner uttered than slighted as the suggestion of a choleric, or officious man. For I was then informed that it would be a great misemployment of idleness to further Columbanus into partial notice, and thus to gratify an ambition, which courted celebrity by rioting on the highway. It was added, that wicked as the assault had been, the complexion of his hostility was such as not only to *atone* for the scandal with every man

who relishes decent English, but with the most uneducated of Catholics, to affix a heavy presumption of evil mind and evil dealing upon his Latin and Irish manuscript quotations.—I reminded you of those reasons formerly alleged to me, and that, in consequence, I did not press my opinion further.

You also mentioned in our last conversation, that you had seen a *second* and a *third* publication by Columbanus; to this my reply was, that I had read a *fourth* letter, and that, if left to my own judgment, I should decide, that Columbanus is a writer, *not* to be answered by *me*: because his fourth letter announces, that a fifth is about to see the light, nor is it possible to calculate in what ratio of exasperation this letter-writing malady will proceed, or at what distance of time it will betoken a crisis. I confessed myself inadequate to meet an adversary so gifted, and most unwilling to stake possibly the entire of my life against the continuance of his disease. This excuse I professed to hold in common with the *many*: but I also shewed a personal claim to exemption. I stated, that when first this author sallied forth, *Columbanus* was the *nom de guerre*, and nothing more, of an adventuring pamphleteer. It was every man's right at that time, to rally or to reprimand an incognito who abused the privileges of masquerade. On this footing I too was willing to challenge the feigned old hermit with the extemporary beard. Soon after, Columbanus was avowed as the motto of an Irish Roman Catholic, —of a priest,—of one possessing a family name, most popularly



popularly respectable in Ireland; and himself connected in the nearest degree of blood with a person I have long admired; to whose candour, ancient fidelity, and trusty patriotism, I bear a public testimony in honour to unambitious and uncommon virtue. When I stated this, I moreover declared, that although I am not to be deterred by private regards from assisting the cause of truth, yet, if I were to appear against Columbanus, I should be so far swayed by my anxiety and deference for such a brother, that the *right* would be compromised: I must relinquish all those topics which cannot be adverted to, unless with the weapon of severity and reprobation: I must level the answer to mere disproof, as if that falsehood, which attempts to scatter pestilence on the walks of society, were but a mistake in logic, or an artificial blunder.

You approved of my feeling, and insisted, at the same time, on *my* performing what I could, for the defence of truth, that had been assaulted, as I myself confessed, with incendiary malice. You predicted, that my silence would receive no other construction than that of flattery, if called on, as I allowed, by the duty of friendship, and by the voice of conscience I obeyed the former, and yet suppressed a testimony to what I *believed*.

This surmise I instantly determined to repel. This charge, at least, will be obviated in the present and the following letters. Whether I shall succeed beyond this point, others will determine; but your

judgment shall be enough for me. This however I will declare ; unless I shall have vindicated the best of causes, I will care nothing for the justification of my name. Well may reputation be entrusted to that, in which all our futurity is comprehended.

I shall begin, therefore with that assertion of *Columbanus*, which, if not the most alarming, is the most whimsical of his numerous discoveries in the province of Catholic religion. I mean his assertion, that “priests of the *second order* have a *right to sit in councils and to judge of faith and discipline.*” This doctrine he has continued to maintain, from the beginning, with a respectable courage and with no mean display of controversial tactics ; sometimes asserting the right to priests *generally*, (as we affirm it to be *generally* that of bishops ;) again, restraining it to *parish priests* ; at other times declaring it to be a *divine* right in priests ; and lastly, pronouncing, that “priests of the *second order in the cure of souls*, have the *right.*” for which he contends.

Although *Columbanus* may not now expressly term this right *divine*, as he formerly declared it to be ; yet his proposition either amounts to *this*, or all controversy on the subject is at an end, as I will shew hereafter. For the present, I will merely remark, that, even in this his *last* production,\* the arguments of *Columbanus* are either meant to shew this right to be *as divine in priests*, as in bishops, or that they have no meaning whatsoever.

It

\* *Columban.* 4th Letter p. 45—6.

It might appear disrespectful towards a Catholic bishop, were I to enter on this examination without mentioning the name of Doctor Poynter, who has already encountered the new *Columbanus* on this subject, and to whose short but demonstrative essay the last letter of *Columbanus* professes to reply. I entirely assent to the positions of Doctor Poynter, and, in a good measure, have followed his plan, as indeed was inevitable. Besides this acknowledgment, which I respectfully make public, I mean to enter into a minute review not only of the defence set up by *Columbanus* against Doctor *Poynter*, but also of such new matter as *Columbanus* has adduced, in vindication of this peculiar doctrine.

In truth I regret that Bishop *Poynter* should have restricted his labours to the narrow scope of this one topic. There exists not in the christian system a principle more solidly fixed, or more potently efficacious, or more favoured by all the social tendencies of this immortal system, than the legislative and judicial right of bishops. This chieftaincy is not the result of wealth, nor the offspring of ambition, but the necessary consequence of Unity, as well as the divine institution of the New Law. No antiquarian researches can affect this authority; nor can any revolution overthrow it, without overwhelming, at the same time, the secondary magistracy of the *Priesthood*. The experiment was made in France, and how it terminated we all remember.

To

To return to *Columbanus*. This gentleman avows himself to be a "priest of the second order," and it would appear, that he has resolved to prove his *divine right* of judging on *faith*, by a very *human* matter of *fact*. "Until I see," writes *Columbanus*, "that doctrine condemned by a *genuine* decree of the Catholic church, I shall hold the *contrary* to be *heretical!*"\*

This is falling to sword-work rather briskly. What! not even call a synod of *the second order of priests*, before he pronounced on the point of *faith*! Surely, if the *second order* has a *divine* right, or any *indefeasible* right of *judging* on *faith*, their single votes are severally as good as the single votes of bishops; so that, to gather a *council* is one of the easiest things imaginable, under the new spiritual commonwealth. But this severity, on the part of *Columbanus*, is one of the symptoms attendant on a shifting of the sovereign power. In self-defence we are therefore compelled to withstand the invaders of Episcopacy, until we shall, at least, have ascertained what *magna charta* they will grant, to secure us from extemporary maledictions.

I cannot however, be so unjust an adversary, as to refuse my humble tribute of admiration to the Fabian stratagem of *Columbanus*, in declaring as he does, that he will hold the *contrary* doctrine, as he terms it, heretical, until he can see a *genuine* decree of the church, condemning his own assertion. The stratagem is admirable: for it entitles *Columbanus* not only

\* *Columban*, 4th Letter p. 45.

only to stand at bay against all the Catholic bishops in the universe on *this* question, but on every *other* question of faith, to the end of time. Let us suppose a thousand bishops to have condemned the doctrine of *Columbanus*: Still, nothing has been done towards a *genuine* decree of the Catholic church, on a question of this nature. For, the *heresy* against which *Columbanus* proclaims war, is the *exclusive* prerogative of bishops to decide on points of faith; and it would be strange enough, if persons, not only excepted to, as *sole* judges, but accused on the very ground that they usurped the right of *sole* judges; it would be strange, I say, that those very men should *solely* pronounce a *genuine* decree for *Columbanus*, who denies their *sole* power to decree on any matter of faith.

But even suppose that the "second order of priests" has accepted, as *genuine*, the decree of these *thousand* bishops; would not this be decisive? With the world at large it might: but in the argument of *Columbanus*, this assent would be *heretical*. Why so? Because in *his* assertion, the "second order of priests" having a *divine* right to *sit* and *judge* in *council*, on the very point so decreed by the bishops, and every *divine* right including a *divinely* binding obligation, consequently the *acceptance* of "the second order of priests," importing a violation of their duty to "sit and judge," would be a manifestly null and irreligious act. Besides which, how many reasons could be adduced to shew, that their acquiescence had been venal, sycophantic, pusillanimous; or had been de-

termined

terminated by any other one of those very many low qualities, with which *Columbanus* compliments our Irish-bred priests, who notwithstanding have, according to *his* authority, a *divine* right of judging on faith; aye, on the faith of their bishops, in councils?

Still assuredly a *genuine* decree on the point may be obtained, if “the priests of the second order” and “exclusive,” bishops, will *consent to meet* in synod, and there to discuss the matter. Unhappily, we have here nothing but perplexity and desperation. For, in the first place, it is much to be apprehended, that the “exclusive” bishops would not compromise their *possession* of 1700 years, (whatever the right may be, because of the *right* we will treat at length) for the chance of obtaining a favourable *sentence* from the *Columbanian* judges. Secondly, because, if the “second order” affirmed the right to *themselves*, and the “exclusive” bishops disaffirmed that *genuine* decree of the “second order,” there would arise a case, not foreseen by Columbanus, wherein the *ignorant* Catholic, in *his* persuasion, that the kingdom of Christ cannot be overthrown, would rally under its first authorities. If, in the shock of the old authorities against the new, such an exasperation should be produced, as that those “exclusive” bishops, whose right to *judge* is a *little* better established than that of any others; if these bishops should unluckily condemn the *genuine* decree of their new colleagues; if they should proscribe it; if they went so far as to create a new “*second order of priests*,” in number  
equal

equal to, or surpassing his new *associates* by the grace of Columbanus: I am at a loss to know by what methods of defence the "second order" so superseded by the "exclusive" bishops, could, in this extremity, either maintain their "divine right," or perpetuate their claims.

Let it not be retorted, that the degradation of the "second order," which I suppose, would be a nullity, because the "care of souls" *could not* be lawfully transferred to the new generation of priests. I admit, that such an argument might be recurred to by the followers of *Columbanus*. But then the reply would be at hand, and would be this. "The care of souls is given to priests, either by bishops, or through the essential mediation of bishops. The bishops *alone*, even in the system of *Columbanus* are the judges of priests. The bishops *alone* can depose priests. Now the bishops have deposed their late competitors; and, by necessary inference, they have taken away from them "the care of souls."

The objection I have last refuted, being the only one which a man could allege without mockery in opposition to the authority of the bishops, if these latter were compelled to separate the "living from the dead;" I think it right to enlarge somewhat on this consideration, and to prove superfluously from a general principle what I am about to prove circumstantially, that the pernicious dream of an inherent right in priests "of the second order" to *sit in councils* and to *judge* on faith and discipline, gives the *lie*, to its very teeth, to christianity.

Let then the "second order of priests" be supposed to challenge a trial on the *lawfulness* of their deposition. What judges will they appeal to? Not I presume, to the laity, who are their subjects; not to the inferior clerks, who are their children; not to the subdeacons, who are deputies and ministers to the *deacons*; not to deacons, who, by most ancient and highly authoritative canons, are declared their *inferiors*. They must appeal to those *very bishops*, those "exclusive" bishops, with whom they are at issue. Is not this a strange catastrophe? Is not this a strange declension of a *divine right*? Again, as the pretension of this "second order" is entirely novel, the burden of proof will lie on the *priests*. But alas! no proofs are to be had of this right. No title, even possessory can be alleged. It remains, that they must fail in the trial, if they will challenge one. If they refuse a trial, they perish without a trial, and their posterity are cut away: for "woe to them who will perish in the revolt of Core!"\*

Lest I should be charged with omitting any possible termination of such a *council*, as alone would have *genuine authority* in the mind of *Columbanus* to decide on this subject, we will even grant, that the "second order of priests," sitting in council with the bishops or separately assembled in a council of their peers, has *judged and decided*, that the right of judging on faith belongs to the bishops alone. Such an event as this might be desirable indeed, after so extravagant

‘ a deliberation ;

\* Epist. Jud. v. 11.



a deliberation ; but the argument of *Columbanus* would not be impeached, much less could it be silenced, by this decree of “ the second order.” For although he asserts for priests the right of judging “ on faith,” he does not pretend that the judgment may not be very erroneous ; if erroneous, it cannot abolish the right of the “ second order,” however it may operate as a temporary cession to the bishops from the priests who had abdicated. Neither can such a decree receive any strength from, or add any authority to the “ exclusive” bishops, for these manifest reasons. First, because the bishops could not accept of a cession so made by men who never held judicial power in the church, as imparting to them any authority ; but would boldly stand on their old prerogative : secondly, because the declaration by “ the second order,” that the *priests* are neither judges of faith in councils, nor *the* judges of faith out of councils, would go merely to disclaim a title, but beyond this, could have no weight whatsoever in declaring amongst whom “ the real judges of faith ” are to be found. If it be a matter connected with faith to ascertain, *who are the judges of faith* ; and if the priests of “ the second order ” should have solemnly decreed “ that they themselves are not the judges of faith ; ” their own incompetency, beyond all doubt, is established, in every matter that regards the power of ultimate, unerring, or safe judgment, for the faithful. This incompetency being established by their solemn confession, by what authority will they next pretend to

direct christians to that, which is the *real* judicature on points of christian doctrine?

Thus, it appears, the priests “of the second order” by following the *angry* paradoxes of *Columbanus*, would not only commit themselves in an irreverent and miserable struggle, but would forfeit under the most favourable and honourable termination of their claims to rivalship, what they now possess justly, immemorially, and from apostolical origination, the *proximate* right to that of being the judges of Catholic faith and discipline. In the Catholic system their dignity is *only* less than that of governors of the universal church. Of ruling power they hold those departments, which are most sacred, most endearing, most popular, and most highly reverend. In the Catholic system, what christian does not venerate a priest? What christian would conceive an atom of reverence added to the priestly character, by the change of priest to “priest of the second order,” a phraseology raked up from the old ecclesiastical armoury of Greek and Latin, and, if faithfully translated into English, signifying those of the “secondary seat” and those of the “lower bench?”

Without supposing any *council* such as that looked for by *Columbanus*, I will suppose, all the priests in the christian world to be assembled on this very question, and, before they proceed to argue or to decide on the subject, that some one of their colleagues addresses them to the following purport.

‘ Reverend

‘ Reverend brothers! Before you take the station  
 ‘ of judges, to pronounce on your right of judging, as  
 ‘ opposed to the right of bishops: before you decree *for*  
 ‘ yourselves, or *against* yourselves, I beseech you to  
 ‘ consider, that in either alternative you must expend  
 ‘ all your authority on the experiment; and that, in the  
 ‘ event of your decree being in your own favour, you  
 ‘ will enact a *new* article as of faith, by a *new* au-  
 ‘ thority; to which authority the christian world is  
 ‘ yet a stranger, and you yourselves are strangers.  
 ‘ When you entered this place, I solemnly ask the  
 ‘ question, was any one amongst you conscious to  
 ‘ himself, that he held by inheritance or by conquest  
 ‘ the right of pronouncing decisively on this question?  
 ‘ Has any one amongst you ever decided as a judge  
 ‘ in any council, on any point of catholic faith?  
 ‘ Has any one seen that priest, or read of that priest,  
 ‘ who had sat in any council and pronounced as a  
 ‘ judge on faith in right of his priesthood? Not one.  
 ‘ If this be the fact, attend, reverend brothers, to the  
 ‘ *inferences*.

‘ The Catholic church cannot fail in justice, or in  
 ‘ judgment, or in truth, because the Paraclete Spirit  
 ‘ was promised, who judges the world on these things.  
 ‘ This Spirit has hitherto judged *without you*: you  
 ‘ have *heard his voice*, although whence he came, you  
 ‘ know not. If you entertain the question of *your*  
 ‘ right to judge, you impeach all the past decisions made  
 ‘ by episcopal authority; that is to say, you assail  
 ‘ the corner stones of gospel faith, in order to further  
 ‘ a pretension

‘ a pretension which to the great Many of christian  
 ‘ catholics will be matter of scandal ; which will be  
 ‘ matter of shame to the wise, as well as of derision  
 ‘ to the bad.

‘ Do I appear, reverend brothers, to betray the  
 ‘ honour of our class, when I speak thus freely ? From  
 ‘ *our* college many great lights of the world have  
 ‘ proceeded, I know ; but from the college of deacons  
 ‘ the first of martyrs came forth, powerful in words  
 ‘ and in prodigies. The question is not therefore a  
 ‘ question of deserts, or of grace, but of lawfulness  
 ‘ and of jurisdiction. It is not a question of mira-  
 ‘ culous gifts, or of occasional or extraordinary ho-  
 ‘ liness, but of evangelical and perpetual government.  
 ‘ Have the apostles left successors, or have they left  
 ‘ none ? If they have left successors, shall not *priests*  
 ‘ obey them ? If they have left no successors, then  
 ‘ the supplication of Christ who demanded a Com-  
 ‘ forter *the master of all truth*, to remain with his  
 ‘ *apostles* everlastingly, has fallen away ; and it will  
 ‘ be idle to treat of *our* rights, since the foundation  
 ‘ of all truth is said to be vain, and since the word of  
 ‘ *him* has passed away, who upholds all things by his  
 ‘ word.

‘ But with regard to our present meeting, of  
 ‘ which the object is to embattle this order against  
 ‘ the “ exclusive ” bishops, (for whatever the issue of  
 ‘ your *council* may prove, the attempt to deliberate  
 ‘ independently of them, perhaps *adversely* to them,  
 ‘ is an attempt to set your chairs against the twelve  
 ‘ thrones)

‘ thrones) I truly fear, that the more we seek or  
 ‘ affect an importance *separately* from them, or not  
 ‘ subordinate to them, the more we shall hurry to  
 ‘ our own extinction. It is allowed by us all, that  
 ‘ every bishop is a *priest*, as truly as each of us here  
 ‘ assembled as priests. Considering bishops as *priests*,  
 ‘ we should rather seek to exalt our common dignity  
 ‘ by reverence towards them, who are the depositaries  
 ‘ of all priestly function, than to cast off the nobility  
 ‘ belonging to our class, in attempting to put down  
 ‘ the supremacy of bishops. To put down this su-  
 ‘ premacy, we should call in the laity and inferior  
 ‘ clergy for auxiliaries: if by such aids our right were  
 ‘ established as *divine*, I should be glad to know, by  
 ‘ what aids we could afterwards defeat the claims of  
 ‘ the laity and of the clergymen now below us: for  
 ‘ they in their turn would certainly insist on *their* di-  
 ‘ vine right of judging. If they should insist that  
 ‘ there are scripture-texts to *prove* the church to be the  
 ‘ judge of persons and things; and, that *church* sig-  
 ‘ nifies congregation; if they should assault our ears  
 ‘ with the arguments of Quakerish and Anabaptistical  
 ‘ theologians, all taken forsooth from the *bible*; in  
 ‘ what way could we defend our *new* royalties against  
 ‘ these insurgents? Is it by urging that *their* claims  
 ‘ are without foundation in the practice of the chris-  
 ‘ tian or universal church? Could *we* have the face  
 ‘ to tender such reasoning to those very men, who  
 ‘ had seen *us* deride the same argument, when ad-  
 ‘ vanced against *our* revolutionary pretensions?

‘ But

‘ But then, “ the acts of the apostles are clearly on  
 ‘ our side,” as we are informed by some amongst *our-*  
 ‘ *selves*. The text, says one of my reverend brothers, is  
 ‘ so plain, that no rational person will gainsay it.—The  
 ‘ *text* declares, that, in the council of *Jerusalem*,  
 ‘ “ the *apostoloi* and *presbyteroi*” sat as judges, and  
 ‘ there can be no doubt that we “ priests” are the  
 ‘ successors of those “ *presbyteroi*.” Beware, reverend  
 ‘ brothers, of risking your authority on this text.  
 ‘ Beware of deciding, as a matter of faith, that the  
 ‘ *presbyteroi* were your predecessors, and were “ priests  
 ‘ of the second order.” If you should be so rash as  
 ‘ to decree this to be “ matter of belief,” you must  
 ‘ expect to be interrogated, by whom, and at what time,  
 ‘ and for what purpose, and by what ordination,  
 ‘ those *presbyteroi* were appointed “ priests of the  
 ‘ second order:” and your answer must be very cir-  
 ‘ cumspect, because the *acts* and the *gospels* are ut-  
 ‘ terly silent on these points, which however are es-  
 ‘ sential in your cause. But this is not all. You  
 ‘ will be required to demonstrate, that those your  
 ‘ predecessors, as we are told, were all “ priests of the  
 ‘ second order:” that not a bishop was to be found  
 ‘ amongst them. You will be teased to declare,  
 ‘ whether those *presbyteroi* were parish priests, or  
 ‘ priests at large, or a sort of *capitular body*, esta-  
 ‘ blished in the church of Jerusalem. You will be chal-  
 ‘ lenged to shew, that they were not the local suc-  
 ‘ cessors of those *apostles*, who had gone forth from  
 ‘ Sion, bearing the new commandment: and perhaps  
 ‘ you

‘ you will be asked, whether it is probable, that the in-  
 ‘ stitution of deacons being so distinctly related in the  
 ‘ *Acts* ; the institution of “priests of the second order”  
 ‘ should be totally omitted from the new testament.

‘ I have named but few of the many difficult pro-  
 ‘ blems, you will be importuned, my reverend brothers,  
 ‘ to solve, if now you shall think yourselves called  
 ‘ upon to decide as *judges* on this very important bu-  
 ‘ siness ; if you will persuade yourselves to be of  
 ‘ the number of those *judges*, whom the Judge of  
 ‘ the living and the dead has established, ordained,  
 ‘ consecrated, and deputed, to the end of time, as the  
 ‘ guardians of his oracular traditions. If they are  
 ‘ frail, let us not therefore doubt of *his* promise, for,  
 ‘ “ by the infirmity of man the mighty purpose of  
 ‘ Christ is accomplished.” If they are ignorant, (for  
 ‘ it seems to be my duty in this place, reverend  
 ‘ brothers, to assume, that we are all wise and  
 ‘ learned,) yet if God has sent them over us, shall  
 ‘ we not attend to Jeremiah the prophet, who pro-  
 ‘ fessing his ignorance and muteness, received this com-  
 ‘ mand : \* “ Say not, that thou art childish and in-  
 ‘ articulate ; for to every end whithersoever I will send  
 ‘ thee, thou shalt go ; and thou shalt utter every parti-  
 ‘ cular, which I shall speak to thee.” In conformity  
 ‘ with which precept, even HE who is the introducer  
 ‘ and the final accomplisher of our faith, enjoined his  
 ‘ apostles not to think in what manner they should speak  
 ‘ in times of peril, because the Spirit of his Father  
 ‘ should speak in them without human preparation.

‘ By what title have we gained admission to the  
 ‘ authority which we hold? by what pretext would we  
 ‘ attempt to mount the chair of judicial power? By  
 ‘ our *ordination* surely, or by no title. And what  
 ‘ *judicial* powers have we received through ordina-  
 ‘ tion? We have received the greatest in value,  
 ‘ though not the most ambitious in universality. We  
 ‘ have received those powers which Christ himself  
 ‘ during his earthly pilgrimage exercised, as the  
 ‘ powers of a *Saviour*; such power of loosing sins, and  
 ‘ so great a power of binding them fast, that the  
 ‘ doom of our humble ministry is confirmed above,  
 ‘ not by mere acquiescence, but in force of *his* im-  
 ‘ mortal compact with the church, who is the Lord  
 ‘ of both worlds. Is it not enough for us to hold this  
 ‘ transcendant power, which angels have not been  
 ‘ called to exercise? Must we also clamour to en-  
 ‘ force a right, for which we received no mission;  
 ‘ which was solely exercised by those who *sent* us;  
 ‘ and which if we now usurp, we will incur the peril  
 ‘ of lying to the Holy Spirit, whom we attested to our  
 ‘ faithful discharge of the *mission* to be imposed  
 ‘ on us?

‘ It may be said, that we are called on merely to  
 ‘ pronounce, that we “the priests of the second  
 ‘ order” have a right to sit along with the bishops, as  
 ‘ judges of faith; but that, on no other point of faith  
 ‘ do we pretend to be the sole judges. This I con-  
 ‘ sider, reverend brothers, as a sophism unworthy of  
 ‘ an honest man, and contemptible to a gross degree,  
 ‘ for



‘ for the rational christian. For, if we “ priests of  
 ‘ the second order,” assume the novel right of de-  
 ‘ claring, as sole judges, on our own privilege of as-  
 ‘ sessorship, have not the bishops *as priests*, a co-  
 ‘ equal right to judge that mere priests have not  
 ‘ a right to decide on this point? and have they not  
 ‘ also as governors, as the executive powers of the  
 ‘ catholic church at least, a presumptive right to with-  
 ‘ stand the consequences, which we would infer from  
 ‘ our own decision?

But a greater fallacy than that which I have  
 ‘ mentioned, still lurks under the assertion.—The  
 ‘ region of faith is one and undivided. He who is  
 ‘ *divinely* established as the ordinary judge on any  
 ‘ *one* point of faith, is divinely established as the  
 ‘ ordinary judge of faith universally. Why will  
 ‘ we pretend to be sole judges on this *single* point?  
 ‘ Because, it will be said, our rights are invaded. Our  
 ‘ rights! From whom received, by whom bestowed,  
 ‘ from what scripture, from what tradition, from  
 ‘ what practice? Is *our* existence necessary to the  
 ‘ Catholic church, unless for unity and for subordi-  
 ‘ nation? Would it be so very laborious for those  
 ‘ bishops to supersede us by consecrating bishops, and  
 ‘ by appointing *little districts* for episcopal government,  
 ‘ as in the beginning, instead of parish priests and  
 ‘ parishes? Our order became necessary, when it  
 ‘ became necessary that some should merely *perform*  
 ‘ sacerdotal functions, and that others *being priests*, like  
 ‘ us, should possess the fulness of priesthood, and the  
 ‘ authority of judging over the world at large. When

‘ this advantage of subordination ceases, our order  
 ‘ may well cease. It is an emanation from the pleni-  
 ‘ tude of apostleship. It has no generative energy  
 ‘ proper to itself. We pretend to *sit* as independant  
 ‘ judges on our catholic right to *sit* in councils. No  
 ‘ bishops, in the first ages, attempted this, without the  
 ‘ consent of a Metropolitan; as no synods, attempted  
 ‘ to legislate in any point of faith, without remitting the  
 ‘ ultimate confirmation to an apostolical see. We  
 ‘ are grown more independant than those early  
 ‘ bishops; and still are tempted to deliberate, whether  
 ‘ our right of independant judging is not to be de-  
 ‘ creed of *divine* authority; as if there could be  
 ‘ divine authority in the christian religion, without  
 ‘ the will of Christ, or as if his will could be found  
 ‘ without the records of the gospel, and without the  
 ‘ practice of the apostles, and without the acknow-  
 ‘ ledgment of the Catholic church, from the first, until  
 ‘ the present day.

‘ There will be found amongst you, Reverend  
 ‘ brothers, not a few of tender consciences, whom I  
 ‘ know to be assembled here under the lure of this  
 ‘ argument; “ We would have applied to the bishops  
 ‘ for a decree on this point: but knowing that *they*  
 ‘ would *not* consent, we have been forced to deli-  
 ‘ berate sole.” That the bishops, if applied to,  
 ‘ would have refused to decree that which you would  
 ‘ pretend to decide apart from them, I believe; more-  
 ‘ over I am certain, that, if “ our second order” had  
 ‘ applied in the earliest times, after the translation of  
 ‘ the

‘ the church of Christ to the Heathen, for such a  
 ‘ decree, not only a refusal, but a severe canon would  
 ‘ have been provoked by the application; just as might  
 ‘ have happened, if the order of *deacons* had applied  
 ‘ for the authority of consecrating the eucharist, or if  
 ‘ the laity had applied for the privilege, which Simon  
 ‘ wished to purchase, of bestowing the Holy Ghost by  
 ‘ the imposition of his hands. In either case, the  
 ‘ bishop would certainly have answered, “ You have  
 ‘ no partnership in this concern.”

‘ I will go further. If the bishops could be so weak or  
 ‘ so wicked as to accede to your demand, I would pro-  
 ‘ nounce them sacrilegious deserters. They are conse-  
 ‘ crated to the Holy Spirit for preaching the gospel, and  
 ‘ to them, as replacing the apostles, Christ himself con-  
 ‘ fides the authority of the gospel, and, with this trust,  
 ‘ he commends to them the keys of his own dominion.  
 ‘ The bishops are bound to guard the door: they are  
 ‘ sworn to preserve the oracles: they are consecrated  
 ‘ to rule and to guide all orders in the church. If they  
 ‘ should violate their trust, if they should abdicate their  
 ‘ mission so far as to admit *other* judges, not as con-  
 ‘ sulters, but as having authority to promulge or to  
 ‘ enact, in the name of Christ, any the slightest ordi-  
 ‘ nance, and to enact such ordinance independently  
 ‘ of their own episcopal authority they would commit  
 ‘ a crime in my mind, for which they should be  
 ‘ deposed by their lawful judges; and I do not think  
 ‘ that, in justice, they could retain their seats.

‘ In the primitive church, it is said, that every  
 ‘ thing was transacted by bishops *in council*;—we are

‘ told

‘ told, that no spirit of *exclusive* government was  
 ‘ known or allowed in those happy times ; that bishops  
 ‘ were then humble indeed, and disclaimed not to take  
 ‘ information from the assembly of priests. To this  
 ‘ moral reflection my answer shall be very brief, re-  
 ‘ verend brothers.

‘ The greatest virtue in a bishop is humility. In  
 ‘ the funeral oration of Ambrose on Theodosius the  
 ‘ emperor, it is expressed, that this emperor in *hu-*  
 ‘ *mility* had surpassed even bishops. But when we  
 ‘ speak of humility, we speak of condescension below  
 ‘ positive duty. We speak of what is perfection, not  
 ‘ of what is law. When therefore we recur to these  
 ‘ happy ages, when bishops disclaimed not to tran-  
 ‘ sact every thing by *council*, we revert to those  
 ‘ times, in which bishops stood not so much on the  
 ‘ right of government, as on their prerogative of ex-  
 ‘ ample. Even in those times it could not have been  
 ‘ a duty in bishops to refer all matters to a council,  
 ‘ much less could it have been a duty of *divine* enact-  
 ‘ ment, if this laudable conduct was a demonstration  
 ‘ of their *humility*.

‘ But I will allow the fact to be such, although I  
 ‘ am persuaded the fact was generally, not as stated.  
 ‘ This being granted, I say, that since those happy  
 ‘ times are changed as well for priests as for bishops ;  
 ‘ since “ our second order ” seems willing to cast off  
 ‘ that humility which they exact of bishops, and to  
 ‘ convert the precedent of condescension into an im-  
 ‘ perious claim of right ; it behoves the bishops to  
 ‘ resist with similar weapons, and to bear testimony

‘ to their own *divine* mission, which must be humble  
 ‘ to the humble, and must be authoritative against  
 ‘ the proud. For the place of episcopacy is not the  
 ‘ property of the incumbent: it is the chair of the  
 ‘ apostolic teacher. This chair, even the bishop, who  
 ‘ cannot *fill* is bound to *occupy* and to defend; for  
 ‘ though he himself be an unworthy occupant, it is  
 ‘ not the chair of Moses he possesses, but the seat of  
 ‘ Christ: which if he should surrender to rebellion,  
 ‘ he commits the greatest of all crimes, that of apos-  
 ‘ tasy from the sanctifying Spirit, and of surrendering  
 ‘ the weapons of divine mercy and justice. Little  
 ‘ does it matter into what hands he betrays the gospel;  
 ‘ and the gospel he betrays, when he gives up its au-  
 ‘ thorities into strange hands.

‘ Indeed, reverend brothers, I must be candid. In all  
 ‘ these allusions to *ancient humility of bishops*, in all this  
 ‘ dissimulation of *recent arrogance in certain priests*, I  
 ‘ see nothing of the spirit of Christ, which is peace, and  
 ‘ unity, and charity that “*exacts not its own.*” To flatter  
 ‘ men is not the province of a minister of the gospel.  
 ‘ Bishops may presume, and priests may rebel, on  
 ‘ both of whom the great Bishop of souls will pro-  
 ‘ nounce. But if we seek the things of Christ, instead  
 ‘ of exploring a fabulous and unsubstantiated claim, we  
 ‘ will be wise so as to be sober, and will consider, that  
 ‘ as long as bishop and priest are unanimous, the  
 ‘ authority descends *undivided* to the faithful, whereas,  
 ‘ if priest opposes bishop in point of episcopal right,  
 ‘ or bishop opposes priest in the salutary exercise of  
 ‘ his

‘ his priestly dignity, the Holy Spirit of peace suffers  
 ‘ anguish, and both bishop and priest lose a great  
 ‘ portion of reverence in the collision of titles. You  
 ‘ never can succeed in establishing your claim as a  
 ‘ *right*: you never will succeed in deposing bishops  
 ‘ from their succession, nor apostles from their master-  
 ‘ ship, nor Christ, their ordainer, from his empire.  
 ‘ You may be mischievous, but you cannot be suc-  
 ‘ cessful;—you may persecute, but you cannot replace  
 ‘ those men by persecution.

‘ Lastly, should you be resolved to decree for your-  
 ‘ selves on this point, as soon as you have passed your  
 ‘ decree, you will find yourselves reduced to confess its  
 ‘ absurdity. If you have any authority to decree, under  
 ‘ the law christian, you must also have some mean of  
 ‘ enforcing your decree, and of legalizing it amongst  
 ‘ christians. If you have no such resource, on *your* side,  
 ‘ while the “exclusive bishops” have every resource of  
 ‘ church authority for asserting *their* claims against  
 ‘ yours, think what your situation will be. You have  
 ‘ no right of cutting off a single Catholic from the  
 ‘ communion of the church. You have no rod for  
 ‘ punishing disobedience by inflicting spiritual dis-  
 ‘ abilities. We have no right, reverend brothers, nor  
 ‘ have we ever had the right of declaring the orthodoxy  
 ‘ of any catholic, beyond the sphere of our several  
 ‘ districts. If then you will *decree*, your sentence may  
 ‘ be disobeyed with safety; it will not be obeyed  
 ‘ with impunity. If you are prepared to swallow this  
 ‘ other “article of faith,” that the Author of religion  
 ‘ has

‘ has imparted to *our* class the right of judicature,  
 ‘ *without the power* of enactment, *without the sanction*  
 ‘ of penalty; whereas he has given to bishops not  
 ‘ only all the rights which we possess, but all the  
 ‘ weapons of jurisdiction which a spiritual kingdom  
 ‘ can employ; if believing thus, we can imagine,  
 ‘ that our *judgment* is not subject to be controuled or  
 ‘ annulled by theirs, whose judgment can bind our  
 ‘ persons; depend on it, my reverend brothers,  
 ‘ neither bishops will allow us to indulge in this ima-  
 ‘ gination, nor will the Catholic people give it any  
 ‘ great encouragement. I see nothing left for us, in  
 ‘ the desperate situation into which our decree, as-  
 ‘ serting as catholic doctrine, our right of judicature  
 ‘ will lead us;—I see no remedy but a pitiable re-  
 ‘ tractation, and I pray God that our venerable order  
 ‘ may never incur this humiliation. But, unless we  
 ‘ obviate the disease, we must submit ourselves to the  
 ‘ remedy, or else we must prepare to fight the epis-  
 ‘ copal sentence, with a sentence of our own against  
 ‘ bishops. If there are any amongst you, reverend  
 ‘ brothers, who believe in the right newly broached,  
 ‘ as of apostolical jurisdiction;—as ever known or  
 ‘ practised in the church, such persons will not be at  
 ‘ loss for shaping the judgment of *our* order against  
 ‘ the *tyrannical* bishops. For my part, I have looked  
 ‘ for precedents in vain. I know not in the name of  
 ‘ what God, or by the authority of what Christ, your  
 ‘ *dogmatical* censure of bishops could be found. This  
 ‘ however, I know, that, if you do make the attempt,

‘ you will abjure by the fact, your own ordination ;  
 ‘ you will have no mission through these bishops.  
 ‘ Will you take it then from the people ? I think not.  
 ‘ Will you derive it from Christ ? You cannot. Where-  
 ‘ fore I oppose the attempt of our order to sit, de-  
 ‘ liberate or decree on this point of your assessorship,  
 ‘ as without foundation in holy writ, without any  
 ‘ warrant from tradition, without an instance in  
 ‘ history, without any sanction from practice. I  
 ‘ oppose it, as I would oppose the attempt of a new  
 ‘ christianity, and I beseech you “ to hold fast what  
 ‘ you possess, lest any others gain possession of your  
 ‘ crowns.”

If in a council of priests “ of the second order ” a protest were entered to this effect, I think it would puzzle the agitators of the meeting to explain away those common and intelligible truths, which have been lately stated. But *Columbanus*, it will be said, has not argued in this *general* way. *Columbanus* brings text, and page, and line, in order to shew, that priests “ of the second order ” are judges of faith and discipline, in councils. I allow, that *Columbanus* does not argue in a *general* way. I admit that he has abstained very wisely from tendering any general principles, on this subject, or any principles whatsoever. I am therefore ready to prove, that *Columbanus* has not adduced any one text of authority to shew, that “ priests of the second order ” as such, have the right of sitting in councils as judges of Catholic faith, either by divine, apostolical or ecclesiastical institution.



To cut off all impertinent altercation on this subject, when I deny that “priests of the second order” have a right to sit in councils and to judge of faith and discipline, it is not the fitness of their presence, in any councils that I oppose, but the *necessity* of their presence: it is not their *speaking* in councils, nor their interference, when called upon by the bishops, I oppose, but their *right* to speak and to interfere in councils, independently of the call of the bishops, who are governors of the church. When I say that “priests of the second order” *have no right to sit and judge of faith and discipline*, I do not by any means exclude that *judgment* of opinion which every learned man is entitled to pronounce upon the subjects with which he is conversant; nay more, I do not exclude that superiority in priests, not only above all the laity, but above all other clergymen, save the bishops, to promulgate, defend, teach, and advocate the *established* doctrines of the Catholic church, and for those established doctrines to argue. These latter privileges are of old possession for the priests. What I deny as false and as foolish is the assertion, that the judgment of any priest, or of any number of priests, has a *binding* or *judicial* authority in the Catholic church. What I deny is, that the judgment of all the priests in the christian world has any right, in any *new* case, to affect the conscience of believers. In a word, I assert, that they have no *legislative* authority in matters of faith and Catholic discipline, but that the whole authority resides in the bishops, by virtue of

law, and in force of that, on which all ecclesiastical law is grounded, the promises in the gospel.

In undertaking the proof of these my assertions, I will pursue a method of demonstration somewhat different from the course, if indeed this term be applicable to the mere desultory warfare which *Columbanus*, ingeniously, as I think, has preferred. Had he rested his cause either on facts in ecclesiastical history, or on mere *critical* interpretation of certain passages in holy scripture, it would appear at once to the most ignorant men, that the facts, on which he relies, are not only too insignificant to become the basis of a system, but are too few to authenticate even a pretension to *judging on faith* on the part of the priests “of the second order.” It would appear, that the passages of holy writ, which *Columbanus* has displayed, as unequivocally decisive in *his* favour, are so far removed from unequivocal interpretation, and so intricately connected in part with the history of the christian mission, until the demise of the apostles, of which almost nothing remains on record, subsequent to the acts of the apostles, and partly with the manifold combinations of a government such as the new law of Christ was, exercised under all exterior opposition of temporal laws, of manners and of sentiments, that it must be the symptom of excessive incapacity, or of precipitate rashness to dictate to the christian world from the texts adduced by *Columbanus*.

To the man tolerably conversant in those ecclesiastical facts and texts of scripture, it would be immediately

diately manifest, that the historical facts of *Columbanus* are rather decisive against his theory, and that the scriptural texts he offers are those identical texts which have been the theme of perplexed controversy for these three last centuries: that *Columbanus* has done nothing more than state anew, and as *Catholic doctrine*, what the introducers of heresy and the outcasts from our church, had brandished as weapons of defiance or of impiety against the Catholic titles of this church.

To the zealous and enlightened Catholic it would be evident, that an attempt, in the *nineteenth century*, and under the auspices of a *veto-reformation*, (for which *Columbanus* appears a volunteer champion) to impeach those laws by which christianity has been administered, to a demonstration, during seventeen hundred years, and by which all heresies and schisms have been overthrown;—that an attempt to unravel this authority under the covert and gross pretences of a new statement of ecclesiastical facts, or of a new and unauthorized, not to say most ignorant allegation of scripture texts; it would be evident, I say, to the serious and well informed Catholic, that such an undertaking, at this day, involves nothing less than the attempt to set all christian principles afloat, to pull up all the ancient landmarks, to disease the Catholic commonweal with irremediable anarchy, by hooting down the authorities which have stood, as well as by undertaking to set up as authorities that, which neither has stood nor can stand.

If *Columbanus* had stated *apart* his proofs from history, as well as his presumptive proofs from scripture, the weakness of each, and the tendency of both would have appeared in the light I have now mentioned. With egregious skill *Columbanus* has kept aloof from the most natural, but to his project, most unfavourable path of argument. When he quotes scripture text, it is not enough for him to give to each word and phrase that signification, which he had resolved to find, nor to help out his translation by a supplementary gloss entirely his own; he expatiates on those his second and third-hand inferences, and bringing up another text, he adjusts it by a similar operation, so as to coincide, not even with his own gloss or his own translation of the former text, but with his parenthetic illustrations, which had nothing to do either with his gloss or with his text. This inaccuracy of reasoning and of citing may, with great probability be imputed to the ardour of an original theorist; but it must be also acknowledged, that it also has the effect of blindfolding his readers, and of persuading them, not only of the sincerity of his address, but of the fidelity of his quotations, in those very places wherein it would seem as if he had no other object in view, save that of metamorphosing in jest the passages he quotes most resolutely.

My plan shall be the reverse of that design. I will begin from that epoch, at which the profession of christian faith was relieved from the threats of martyrdom; when the interior polity of the christian system

system, (which as most particularly set upon by the heathen persecution, had been most guardedly kept secret hitherto) came forth, avowing his offices, departments, and jurisdiction; that is to say, from the peace granted by Constantine to the christian world. From this epoch I will shew, that the legislative and judicial authority in faith and Catholic discipline, not only was exercised by bishops *alone*, but was recognized in them, as a fundamental point of christianity. After this examination I will commence anew from that early period, which intervened between the apostolic Era and the accession of christian profession to liberty, when Constantine acceded to independent dominion. This period, affording fewest lights to critical research into church government, especially during its first half, is the privileged field for dealers in conjecture, for declaimers on pure religionism, for the visionary condenser of probabilities, as well as for the illiterate and levelling impostor. From the annals of this period, *Columbanus*, as I see, has quoted nothing of doubtful authority. He has relied on *scripture*: and I will promise nothing more, as against *Columbanus*, in this part, than to shew, that of all the suppositions entertained concerning the meaning of those texts, *his* interpretation is not only the most false, but is the most absurd; and that if even true and consistent, it would make nothing for the cause he would further.

I am, Reverend Sir, &c.

*On the first General Council at Nicea.*

---

LETTER II.

REVEREND SIR,

IF at this day, some bold *philosopher* should make his appearance in England, for the sole object of *rectifying* the British constitution on many points of importance, and should gravely publish and republish, that the authority of “judging on life and death” is the right of *apprentices in the law*, as much as of those who are the *judges* by writ, or by patent: if, to prove this assertion, he should argue thus; ‘*Exclusive* trials are unknown to all antiquity: the *lawyers*, from time immemorial, have sat in the courts, as well as the judges; they have *discussed* points of law; they have *given opinions* of the greatest authority: and, as to *character*, we well know, how a seat on the bench may be obtained.’ If the *philosopher* should next direct some few animated phrases to the people at large, and conjure them,  
by

by their Alfreds and their Arthurs, and their barons of Runnymede, and by the battle of Blenheim, not to suffer themselves to be imposed upon by those *exclusive* judges, whose domineering arrogance would corrupt the *bar*, and leave to the rising generation, a set of *low, sneaking, intriguing, syco-phantic* lawyers; —if this same philosopher, on being gently reprimanded by one of the *exclusive* judges, should instantly attack him with bad names, deny his authority of reprimand, and conclude with declaring, that, until he found *all the judges sitting in judgment with all the lawyers* or their proxies, and deciding *against his* assertion, he would continue to hold the *doctrines* of his lordship to be *treasonable*: let me ask, what could you do with the philosopher?

Again, if a judge in any one of the supreme courts, should deny the authority of a judgment in appeal by the lords, *because*, in fact, *he had not been present*, or because he was *shut out*, or, though present, was not consulted; whereas, by the *usage* of lords in parliament, he was entitled to be summoned, and “the *usage* of parliament is the *law* of parliament;” if this judge argued, that, from the most approved Anglo-saxon researches, the parliament is the convention of the *wisemen*, and of the nobles; which *wisemen* can be no other than the *sages of the law*; that the attempt to exclude the *judges* was an overt act against the constitution; that it betrayed a design of making *lawless* laws, and lack-learning ordinances: if our *judge* should lastly proclaim, that, until the *exclusive* com-

petence of the peers should be voted by *lords and judges sitting together*, he would treat the pretension of the former as usurpation, and resist every judgment so exclusively given by the peers; pray tell me, what would you do with such a reasoner as the *judge*? In *neither* case would it be possible to *convince*; for, no government peaceably established and recognized, will lay down, or indeed can lay down its sovereignty, during a perceptible instant, for the sake of discussing its own right to govern. No government can submit to domestic arbitration, between itself and its subordinate officers, on the point of its own *usurpation*, when that supposed *usurpation* is but a part of the established system. The *philosopher* and the *judge* cannot be refuted unless by *matter of fact*; that is to say, by the application of that authority which they deny.

But, although neither the *philosopher* nor the *judge* can be undeceived by arguments, it is not impossible to shew to a bye-stander, that they are both very much astray in mind. It is just so with the doctrines of *Columbanus*. To refute this author by *that* authority, which alone he declares to be *genuine* church authority, is totally impossible. No *general council* will appeal to the decision of the priests "of the second order," on the assertion of *Columbanus*, that these *priests* have a *divine* right or an *essential* right, to sit as judges of faith in councils. No bishops assembled can surrender their powers of government to arbitration; much less can they receive a new charter of their rights



rights from the declaratory sentence of those priests, over whom they are appointed teachers, and over whom they have exercised, since the earliest times of christianity, a teaching, judging, ordaining, deposing, and legislating rule.

Still however, although bishops cannot yield to have their titles decided upon by the very persons, *against* whose *right of deciding* their authority is armed, it is very easy to demonstrate, that what bishops now exercise they have always enjoyed, and that what *Columbanus* pretends to claim for the priests “of the second order,” has never been possessed, nor even demanded. For surely, no catholic will consider as a *demand* or as a claim by “the second order” of this right, the insolent and seditious defiance held out by anonymous pamphleteers in France, in order to recruit for a declining party. Nor will the *dogmatical* judgment of the Pistoiese synod, and its two hundred and forty *fathers*, levied in the Appennines and exhibited in antic shew along with the puerile bishop, serve for a *claim* duly, or seriously made. For not to mention, that this *synod* was reprobated by the national church of Tuscany; that it was condemned by the Pope; that it has been disowned by that very prelate who had suffered himself to be thrust into a chair of presidency; the fact is, that those *fathers* did not *claim* but *judged* for themselves. The *lay people* of course stepped in, as arbitrators uncalled, but yet as equally entitled to speak as those *Fathers* had been to *judge*: the laity declared against the *Fathers* as impostors: they decreed, by acclamation, that their bishop should

resign, and that a *Catholic* pastor should be given to them. A Catholic bishop succeeded, he annulled the entire of these parliamentary acts, and the *Fathers* very cheerfully returned to their proper and venerable station of *minor prelates*, in other words of parish priests.

In Doctor Poynter's examination of *Columbanus*, a very natural question was asked by the bishop, 'How did it happen that priests of "the second order," are not to be found exercising the alleged right of sitting, as judges of fact and discipline, in councils?' *Columbanus* well knew that the question required an answer: *Columbanus* had foreseen the objection, and formerly asserted, that the *first* attempt to exclude presbyters from councils was made by the *Nestorian* bishops in the *Latrocinium* of Ephesus.\* He also stated, that by the fourth council of Toledo, the priests "of the second order," have their *proper places* assigned to them in councils. As to this latter fact, the bishop observed, that the text restricts the *proper places* and the *admission* to such priests as *have business to be transacted there*, whereas *all* the bishops are to enter, without exception: that the passage consequently seems rather to decide *against* the *indiscriminate* right of priests. Of this observation *Columbanus* has taken notice only so far, as to repeat *his own assertion* against it, and to quote a *part* of the same text over again, in order to shew that priests have the right of judging in *general councils* †

have

\* *Columb. third Letter*, p. 22. † *Columb. fourth Letter*, p. 59.

As I mean to go through the general councils of the East and West assembled, before I meddle with those of local authority, I cannot say more in this place, on the fourth canon of Toledo IV., than that Columbanus, beyond a doubt, has not read this canon in its *own proper place*; because, whatsoever be the right of admission thereby given to priests, the right of sitting to judge on *faith and discipline*, is positively declared, by the council itself, to be out of the question. For, the *third* canon of this very council enacts, that “wherever *matter of faith* or of “*general concern to the church* shall require discussion, there shall be a *national synod* from Spain “and Gaul: but when *neither faith* nor matters of “*general concern* are to be treated, there shall be a “*special council of each province.*”\* In the *fourth* canon, the order of *provincial councils*,† namely of those which *shall not* treat of *faith*, or *general arrangements*, it is detailed at length. Yet it is from this *fourth* canon, ordering that *certain* priests shall be admitted to *provincial synods*, *Columbanus* has taken his demonstration of the right of *priests* to sit and

\* Tolet. IV Ex Can. 3. A nobis definitum est, ... ut concilium saltem vel semel (quotannis) a nobis celebretur: *Ita tamen*, ut si *causa fidei* est vel *alia quaelibet ecclesie communis*, generalis totius Hispaniae et Galliae synodus celebretur; *Si vero nec de fide nec de communi Ecclesie utilitate tractabitur*, speciale erit concilium uniuscujusque provinciae.

† Can. 4. XV autem Kal. Jun. congreganda est in *unaquaque provincia* synodus; hora igitur diei prima, &c.

and judge of faith and discipline, even in general councils.\*

Columbanus had also asserted that “according to Eusebius, the second order was so numerous in the council of Nice, that they could not be counted, and therefore he (Eusebius) omits them.” In reply to this quotation, as if it were truly from Eusebius, Bishop Poynter argued,† that undoubtedly many priests, as well as many deacons and lay persons might have been present in that council; but that it appears from Theodoret, that so many seats, and not more were prepared by the order of Constantine, as suited the number of bishops assembled. Again, Columbanus dissembles this authority. However he adduces two fresh proofs: first, that Constantine ordered each bishop to take with him to the council of Ailes two priests of the second order; second, that the same order was renewed to each bishop summoned to the council of Nice.‡

For the two assertions of fact last mentioned, Columbanus gives Fleury’s ecclesiastical history as his voucher. Now, it would seem to me, that, as Fleury wrote in the seventeenth century, his testimony can have no weight in facts of the fourth century, beyond the proofs he can muster. With regard to the council of Ailes, it is certain that Eusebius§ has given translations from Latin into Greek, (and of Latin, Eusebius understood little) of two letters from Constantine; one to Miltiades of Rome, and Marcus, as the text represents

\* Columb. 3d Letter, p. 22. † Examination, p. 34.

‡ Columb. 2th Letter, p. 57. § De Vit. Constant. Lib. 10. Ch. V.

represents it, the other to Chrestus of Syracuse; and that in this latter, there is contained a requisition to go to the council of Arles, and to associate to himself two certain ecclesiastics, whom Fleury, on the authority of a learned Greek scholar his cotemporary\* holds to have been *priests*. But, that the requisition mentions, “priests of the second order” is the sole discovery of *Columbanus*. As to the *Nicene* council, no such order as that pretended by *Columbanus* is to be found in any history.

What I have said in derogation of the authority of Fleury on this point was not intended as an evasion from the positive authority of *Eusebius*, as quoted by *Columbanus*, and as encountered by Bishop Poynter, that in the council of Nice “the second order” was so numerous, that they could not be counted, and that therefore *Eusebius* omits them. This you must bear in mind, is one of the proofs of *Columbanus* that ‘the second order’ has a right to sit and to judge of faith in councils. How admirable, that a number beyond counting and therefore omitted by *Eusebius* should have had seats and decisive votes in the council of Nicea; and on so awful a subject too! And for what purpose came this countless number? Surely, if they came to judge, and did act as judges, it was worth the while to have enquired into their names. And whence did they come? For as to those who came by the order of Constantine, two along with each bishop, *Eusebius*

himself

\* Henric. Valec. in not. ad Euseb. loc. cit.

himself would have been able to calculate their number to be exactly *double* that of the bishops. But lastly, did they *vote*? It was even worth the while to have recorded this fact *positively*; because, as their number was past counting, they might with one shout, have put down the bishops, unless indeed *their* majority could not *decide* the question, which is the point, that Columbanus will never allow.

A countless number of priests was present *in* the council of Nice. So *Eusebius* attests, if we will take the words of the old *Eusebius* from a new *Columbanus*. If we will take the *inference* from *Columbanus* solely, those *innumerable* priests were in the council *by right*; they were present as *judges*. Be it so. Let us hear next.—Did these priests speak as judges? Did they pronounce any *sentence*? Did they declare and sanction any decree of *faith*? Has any author, Greek or Latin, or any Chronologist at any time, or on any curious occasion mentioned the name of any *one* judge, amongst those innumerable *judges* of the faith? That certain presbyters were *in* the council, we know. That Athanasius the *deacon* was *at Nicea*, and was employed by his bishop to dispute with the partizans of Arius, we are informed. But we are anxious to hear some few names of those priests who *in* the council, in the *act* of *judicature*, in the *critical* time of *Legislation*, were sitting, as judges *by right*, and who, if they judged, must have either pronounced some words, or used some gestures at least denoting authority and assessorship.

The

The *innumerable* judges were all dumb, in the luckiest of all possible moments for displaying their *right*. They were dumb indeed in presence of the *exclusive bishops*. Eusebius has not forgotten to number the *bishops*. Why so? Because they constituted the *authority*. The *priests*, says he, (at least *Columbanus* says so for him) *could not be counted*. Why so? Because whether they were few, or many, or innumerable, was not necessary to the purpose of legislating. From the acknowledgement of *Columbanus*, the priests were not reckoned nor named: if so, they were not called upon: if so, they were not known; if so, they did not *vote* in the council: if so, whether sitting or standing, they did not act as *judges* in the Nicene council. They formed an audience, if present; a worthy and reverend audience: but they could not be more than this, even for Eusebius, when he records them, (if truly he has particularly recorded them) as a *multitude beyond counting*.

It is now high time to give the *words* of Eusebius himself, which will at once settle the question. ‘But, ‘ in the festive Assemblage, of which I now treat, ‘ there was a company of bishops surpassing two hundred and fifty. And as to those who accompanied ‘ them, *presbyters* and *deacons*, and other *multitudinous attendants*, the number was incalculable.’\*

G

If

\* Euseb. de Vit. Const. L 3. Ch. 8. Ἐπι δὲ τῆς παρῆσης χρείας ἐπισκοπῶν μὲν πλεθὺς ἦν πενήκοντα καὶ ὄσ' ὑπερακονίζουσαῖ ἐπορευομένων δὲ τῆσι πρεσβυτέροις καὶ διακονοῦν, ἀκλ. ὑθινῆς πλείων ὄσων ἢ κτὶ ἀριθμὸς εἰς κλίμαξιν.

If from this passage (although it should be granted, that Eusebius had been relating the proceedings in the *council*,) it can be inferred, that priests “of the second order” either sat as *judges* or pronounced as judges on faith, I am at a loss to know what inference may not be drawn from any passage in any book that ever was written. But, what was this festive assemblage? Was it the celebration of the synod? Eusebius denies that. Eusebius will inform you, that it was some event previous to the synod of Nicea. What that event was, may be best conjectured from the following abridgment of his narrative.

‘Constantine, when he found that his interference  
 ‘had not restored peace to the church of Alexandria,\*  
 ‘and that the dissensions concerning the celebration  
 ‘of Easter still continued,† in order to subdue the  
 ‘demon of discord, undertook to assemble a general  
 ‘synod, inviting from all quarters the bishops, by  
 ‘letters full of respect. When they all had come to  
 ‘the same place’ (the city of Nicea) ‘the undertaking  
 ‘appeared visibly to be the work of God. Men es-  
 ‘tranged from one another in disposition, separated  
 ‘by countries far asunder, were now *congregating*  
 ‘*together*, and *one city* was capable of holding them  
 ‘all.‡ From all the churches, therefore, the choicest  
 ‘trophies and first fruits of the *sacred functionaries of*  
 ‘*God*, were now congregated, and *one sacred temple*, as  
 ‘if miraculously enlarging itself, received Syrians, &c.’  
 ‘The

\* Ibid. Ch. 4.

† Ibid. Ch. 5.

‡ Ch. 6.



‘ The bishop of the Imperial City, (Rome,) was not  
 ‘ on the spot, owing to his old age: but *presbyters*  
 ‘ *belonging to him were there and represented him.*’\*

Hitherto we find nothing of the *council*: nothing of  
 presbyters attending the *council*, or coming to Nicea  
 in *their own right*, but rather the contrary. We find,  
 that Eusebius has been describing the grand and  
 novel spectacle of the re-union of all Nations, in  
 one city, in one faith and communion, and even in  
 one house of prayer. We find, that the invitation  
 had been sent to the *bishops*, and that *bishops* were  
 entitled to send *presbyters* as *deputies*.

Let us still hearken to Eusebius. ‘ Such was the gar-  
 ‘ land which Constantine, the Emperor, having braided  
 ‘ with the fillet of peace wished to offer to his Saviour  
 ‘ as the pious votive tribute of his gratitude, after all his  
 ‘ victories: and thus he collected in our days, a festal  
 ‘ band, the representative of that which was seen in  
 ‘ the time of the apostles. For in *their* days also it is  
 ‘ recorded, that religious men from every nation un-  
 ‘ der heaven were congregated. But yet, that con-  
 ‘ gregation was inferior in one respect, that it did *not*  
 ‘ *entirely consist of sacred functionaries of the deity*;  
 ‘ whereas in the festive assemblage, which I relate, there  
 ‘ was a company of *bishops*, surpassing two hundred  
 ‘ and fifty. And, as to those, who accompanied them,  
 ‘ presbyters and deacons and other multitudinous  
 ‘ attendants, the number was incalculable, (or in-  
 ‘ conceivable

\* Ch. 7. The *sacred functionaries of God*, ἁγία Θεία λειτουργία, is used by  
 Eusebius always and *exclusive'y*, as the description of *bishops*.

\* conceivable.)\* Of those *functionaries* of God, some  
 ‘ excelled in wisdom, &c.’†

Do you see here any thing like Priests “ of the second order” sitting or *judging* in *council*, of faith, or of any other matter? Do you not observe, that Eusebius is comparing the assemblage at Nicea, which took place at Whitsuntide, with the account of the *Pentecost*, in the acts of the Apostles? And do you not see, that the religious men, who were assembled at Jerusalem, are contrasted, not to the presbyters, deacons, or attendants, but to the *bishops* the *sacred Functionaries*, of whom the assemblage *entirely* consisted.

Eusebius proceeds. ‘ But when, on the day fixed  
 ‘ for the *synod*, in which the controverted matters were  
 ‘ necessarily to be resolved, each person, composing the  
 ‘ synod, was arrived, those who had been invited‡  
 ‘ entered into a hall, which was the largest and was  
 ‘ midmost in the palace, and where several seats were  
 ‘ disposed to the right and left against the side walls  
 ‘ of the saloon. The council was seated and remain-  
 ‘ ed in silent expectation of the emperor’s coming.  
 ‘ When he entered they all rose. Constantine passed  
 ‘ through, and stopped at the head of the files. Be-  
 ‘ tween them a low stool of gold was set out for him.  
 ‘ Constantine would not be seated, until the *bishops*  
 ‘ intimated their will that he should.’§

Now

\* Ibid. Ch. 8.

† Ch. 9.

‡ ‘Οι κεκλημενοι So also in the address of the Fathers at Constantinople to Theodosius, ὡσπερ τοῖς κλησιωσ γραμμασι τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τῆμηντας,

§ Ibid. Ch. x.

Now unless we set down Eusebius for a desperate liar, it is impossible to reject his account of the opening of the synod; for not only he was one of the bishops present, but he himself as soon as the Emperor took his seat, delivered an oration in praise of Constantine.\* If the account of Eusebius can be relied on, we gather from it the following particulars.

First, that the synod had not assembled, nor was it alluded to when Eusebius related the immense crowd of presbyters, deacons, and attendants who accompanied the bishops, *summoned* or *invited*. Second, that the synod assembled in the great hall of the palace at Nicea. Third, that none *entered* but those who had been *summoned*; and, consequently, that no one of those *innumerable presbyters, deacons, or attendants* occupied, any of the *several* seats, unless they came as deputies for absent bishops. Fourth, that the *bishops alone* are mentioned, as constituting this synod, and exercising authority before Constantine.

Such is the account given by Eusebius. I have enlarged on this account, merely as a refutation of the slur attempted to be cast by *Columbanus*, on the common sense of the old Bishop of Cesarea. Had Eusebius used the words imputed to him, he would certainly have proved himself an idiot which is worse than an ignorant historian. For he would not only have contradicted all the ideas of christianity prevailing in that age, but would have given the lie to himself

\* Ibid. Ch. xi. and *in proem. ad vit. Const.*

self, as we shall see presently. I am very much tired of this single point, but having undergone so much fatigue in crushing a mere fabrication, I cannot quit without asking once more, whether Eusebius asserts, as *Columbanus* has pretended, that *in the Council of Nicea* the priests were beyond number, and were *therefore omitted* by him. Nor can I avoid reminding you, that the authority so borrowed, as we have seen, from the *name* of Eusebius, is the only authority, which *Columbanus* can bring or indeed any man can bring in support of the right of priests “of the second order,” to act as *judges* of the faith.

Let it not be deduced from Eusebius, much less from *me*, who pretend to no authority whatever in the Catholic commonweal, that, because no presbyters sat with bishops, in the *act of legislating*, at Nicea; or that because deacons, the inseparable ministers of bishops, did not interfere in the judicial acts of bishops when declaring the faith at Nicea; neither presbyters therefore, nor deacons took any part in those proceedings. It would be most silly to imagine, either that no wise, no learned, no inspired priests and deacons accompanied their bishops to this assembly, or that bishops, if seeking counsel or learning, or encouragement, through humility or possibly through comparative unacquaintance with science, did not apply to their attendant clergy as to friends, to christian teachers, to counsellors, who by calling, by dignity, by consecration, by assessorship *at home*, by an apparent right of successi-

on to their thrones, by authority of life, as well as by reverence of those purifying rites of christianity, which they exercised, were the fittest to be consulted, the most capable to counsel, and the best entitled *cæteris paribus* to be heard. What I would maintain is very different from such an opinion. I admire that humility which seeks advice. I admire that spirit of concord, in which our Saviour loves to dwell, not as in pomp, but as in daily and condescending intimacy. I know, that there is a woe prophesied against the *solitary man*, because if he fall he hath none to lift him. I know, that it is forbidden to *quench the spirit*, whether of knowledge, or of charity, or of peace; and that, in the church of CHRIST, every active part is entitled to minister, according as it hath received, according to the multiform grace of God. Lastly I am well aware, that the kingdom of redemption is not like a temporal government, in which *arbitrary will* is sovereignty, and in which to abstain from crimes is called beneficence, or even to be sparing of crimes. Whatever be the *authority*, which exists in the christian system, that authority, in its application, must be as different from the execution of worldly force, as it is superior in its origin.

To seek for parallels between the *genuine* idea of christian *polity*, and the several species of profane or human organization of force, I consider to be extreme absurdity. To defend the government of the church as a pure *monarchic* or as an *aristocratic*, or as a *republican* system, or as resulting from any temperament

perament of these three forms, must necessarily lead into error ; and so far, must estrange the mind from the whole of the salutary and everlasting purposes of the gospel, which except in the Catholic church, are either not known or cannot be realized. If it were lawful to circumscribe the christian state by any general name, it might more aptly be called a federal system ; because its essential compact is UNITY. How this UNITY is to be procured and upheld, is, though a necessary subject of investigation, yet not foremost in the gospel theory. Let *unity* be once allowed, as the essential character of the christian association ; the methods for procuring it are speedily to be found in the gospel. We shall find, in the gospel that as no unity can exist without order, nor order without subordination, nor subordination without a single directing and visible power, that there must be a chieftaincy derived from one to many, and yet the *property* of none of these, although a *station* to be defended by each of these. There is no *monarchy* in the christian church, but that of Christ: there is no *aristocracy*: there is no power of the *commons*. There are ministries and offices distinct, and there are subjects amenable to these offices. But the highest magistrate of spiritual things can only be the next representative of Christ for christians ; and Christ himself has declared, that he came not to have servitude performed unto himself, but to perform it, and to lay down his life as a ransom for multitudes.

You

You will grant now, that I exclude pride, and lordly and stern command, as well as the selfish feeling of proprietorship, from the Ecclesiastical order. You will grant, that I establish charity towards God, humility towards inferior offices, and modesty in all things, to be the duties particularly of bishops, whether sitting in council, or acting out of council. All this premised, I say, that in the council of Nicea, if priests even could be *proved* to have had seats, which is *disproved* from that very authority to which *Columbanus* appealed; if it were even proved, that priests had sat there to the exclusion of *deacons and attendants*, whom Eusebius mentions as having been present, as well as priests in the great celebrity, that preceded the synodical and judicial meeting: yet I assert that neither priests, nor deacons, nor any other than *bishops* enacted, declared, professed, confirmed, or could have enacted, declared, professed, or confirmed the faith published from Nicea, so as either to perform a judicial or legislative act by any profession of their faith, or to have bound the conscience of the christian people. My first proofs I take from this very history of *Eusebius*. Some difference will be found between my proofs and those of *Columbanus*. This last writer has attempted to prove by such inferences as you have remarked, that priests of the “second order” sat *as judges*; because, no doubt, priests, deacons, and innumerable followers were assembled on the occasion of the Nicene synod. I will shew, from Eusebius himself, who were the *judges* invited to this council,

and by what authority the Nicene profession was confirmed.

Hear the letter of Constantine to the churches concerning the Nicene synod. "Whereas it was not possible to ascertain or to re-establish the order of faith and charity, unless by the convening of all or of a considerable number of BISHOPS, a judicial examination were held on each subject appertaining to the most sacred religion; for this reason, a most numerous congregation having taken place, (I myself as one of you, was also present,) every point was fully examined, until one standard of opinion, pleasing to God, was brought to light, and unanimously agreed to. So that there no longer remained any thing to cause a doubt or dispute about faith."\* "Receive then cheerfully that which is divine grace, and truly is divine commandment: because *whatsoever is enacted in the reverend councils of the BISHOPS, holds correspondence with the pleasure of the Deity.*"†

From these extracts it appears, first, that in the persuasion of Constantine, the authority of *bishops* is necessary for ascertaining the faith. Secondly, that

\* De vi. † Const. Lib. 3. Ch. 17.

† Ibid. Ch. 20. παν γαρ ὡς δ' αν εν τοις αγιοις ἰων επισκοπων συνδροις πρατῆλαι, τῆλο προς την θεαν βωλησιν εχει την αναφοραν. for πρατῆλαι, as given by Valesius, we have πραχθη and επραχθη in the Tomes of Gelasius. The last is undoubtedly the truest reading, and could have been rejected only in the supposition, that it signified a *past* time, which is a mistake.



that the authority of *bishops* in council is the *highest* and the *ultimate* authority here below. No mention whatsoever is made, I do not say of the *votes*, but of the presence either of *priests* or *deacons* in the council. Lest however it should be argued, that where *Constantine* speaks of a most *numerous congregation*, the presbyters may be included, I refer to *Gelasius*, who in *his* edition of this letter, presents the reading thus: *a most numerous congregation of reverend BISHOPS in this city of Nicea.\**

Let us pass from *Eusebius* to *Socrates*, who has preserved the letter of *Constantine* to the church of *Alexandria*, giving an account of the condemnation of *Arius*. This document is omitted by the former, for *prudential* reasons.

‘ We all now worship *One* in name, and believe  
 ‘ him to *be* one. In order to accomplish this, by  
 ‘ the will of God, I summoned to<sup>†</sup> meet in the city  
 ‘ of *Nicea*, the greatest number of the *BISHOPS*.’...  
 ‘ *Three hundred BISHOPS and upwards* respectable for  
 ‘ their conduct and prudence confirmed, that there  
 ‘ was but one and the same faith; *Arius* alone was dis-  
 ‘ covered, &c.’.....‘ What has been agreed by *those*  
 ‘ *three hundred BISHOPS*, is no other than the decision  
 ‘ of the Son of God, especially whereas even the *Holy*  
 ‘ Spirit, brooding over the conceptions of such ex-  
 ‘ cellent men, brings to light the divine purpose.’ †

u 2

If

\* Πλειστων ὄσων ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ Νικαίῳ πόλει θεοφιλεσῶτων ἐπισκόπων. *Gelas.*  
 Chap. 35. *Labb.* II. 262. and *Hard.* I. 448.

† *Socr.* I. Ch. 9.

If Constantine wrote truly, it follows, that he summoned *bishops*, not *presbyters* to Nicea, for the purpose of confirming the faith, and that he rested on the agreement of the *three hundred bishops*, as upon the *authority* by which that faith was to be declared,

Lastly, how does the council of Nicea address the churches of Egypt, in notifying the condemnation of Arius? ‘The general and sacred council to the churches of Alexandria, &c. and to all the churches of the orthodox faith, the BISHOPS composing the *synod* at Nicea greeting.”\*

Were the argument resting on no other quotations than those which I have already given, I presume that no common sense of readers would hesitate in its decision. However let us proceed. In the great western Synod of Rome, held by Julius I. an epistle was framed in reply to the Oriental Bishops who persecuted Athanasius. In this epistle Julius asks; ‘Who are the men who disrespect synods? Surely they who slight the suffrages of the *three hundred*.’ Again, ‘If, as you allege, from the instances of Novatus and of Paul of Samosata, synodical decrees are not to be reconsidered, it was yet more fit that the decree of the *three hundred* should not be violated; it was fit that the general council should not be violated by the few.’† Again, in the synodical Epistle from the

\* Ibid. Ch. 19.

† Τινες εἰσιν οἱ συνόδον ἀτιμαζόντες; ὅχι οἱ τῶν Ἱεριακοσίων τὰς ψήφους παρὰ κτὼν ἐβίμενοι; . . . εἰσὶν ἅς ὡς γραφῆς ἐκ τῆς κατὰ Νόβαλον καὶ τὸν Σεμσατα Παύλου παραδείγματός τε τῶν συνόδων ἰσχυρεῖν δογματὰ χρηθεὶς πολλῶν μὴ λυθῆναι τῶν τριακοσίων τὴν ψήφον, εἰς τὴν καθολικὴν συνόδον ὑπο τῶν ὀλιγῶν μὴ ἀτιμασθῆναι Ex Athan. Apol. 2.

the western bishops with Liberius, the successor of pope Julius, to those of Greece: ‘ Our brethren  
 ‘ Sylvanus, Eustathius and Theophilus avow, that  
 ‘ you and they preserve and will keep to the end of  
 ‘ your lives the faith which was approved by the *three*  
 ‘ *hundred and eighteen* orthodox BISHOPS. Nor was  
 ‘ it by ordinary chance, but by divine inclination,  
 ‘ *this certain number* of bishops convened together,  
 ‘ corresponding to that *number* wherewith Abraham,  
 ‘ by faith, vanquished the many thousands of foes.”\*

Again, from the synodical letter of Pope Damascus to the bishops of Illyricum, in the cause of Auxentius of Milan. ‘ Some time ago, the Arian  
 ‘ blasphemy having begun to spread, *our predecessors,*  
 ‘ *the three hundred and eighteen* BISHOPS, along with  
 ‘ the delegates of his holiness the bishop of Rome,  
 ‘ held a council at Nicea and established as a ram-  
 ‘ part against the hellish invasion, &c.†

SECOND GENERAL COUNCIL. Canon I. ‘ Decreed,  
 ‘ that the faith of the *three hundred and eighteen*  
 ‘ *fathers*, assembled at Nicea, shall not be rejected,  
 ‘ but shall endure in full authority.‡ Does this  
 speak out? Does the council of Constantinople  
 accord

\* Socrates L. IV. Ch. XII. Eft. Vales. p. 222, and Hard. Concil. 1. p. 743. Labb. II. p. 757.

† Sozomen Lib. VI. Chap. 23. Ed. Vales. But the original Latin, as published by Holstenius, is also to be found Labb. II. 892. Hard. 1. p. 772. and bears evident marks of the stile of Saint Jerome.

‡ Concil. Constantinop. I. Ωρισαν μη αβιτειδαι την πισιν των Πατερων των τριακοσιων δεκα ακρω των εν Νικαια της βουγιας συνελευσινω, αλλα μιν εν εκεινη κυριαν. Can. I.

accord with the council of Damasus, in referring the authority of the Nicene council, that is to say, of the catholic faith, to the declaration of BISHOPS?

THIRD GENERAL COUNCIL at Ephesus, Session I. beginning with the examination of the faith of Nestorius. ‘ Juvenalis bishop of Jerusalem spoke. “ Before we proceed, let there be read the faith declared by the canonized fathers, who convened at Nicea, the *three hundred and eighteen* BISHOPS.”†

Does this speak out?

FOURTH GENERAL COUNCIL. ‘ Paschasinus and Lucentius bishops, and Bonifacius the presbyter, delegates of the apostolical see, by the mouth of Paschasinus the bishop, said; “ This sacred synod holds and pursues the rule of faith of the *three hundred and eighteen*.”—‘ The most honourable magistrates and the exalted senate spoke; for as much as we see, that your reverences have brought forward in view the holy gospels, may each of these here assembled, the BISHOPS, give information, whether the declaration of faith by the *three hundred and eighteen*.... accords with the epistle of the most Reverend Archbishop Leo? Anatolius bishop of Constantinople said: “ the epistle accords with the creed of the three hundred and eighteen who met at Nicca.”‡ One hundred and thirty six bishops answered

\* Αναγιγνωσθω. δε εν πρωτοις η εκλεβισα πισις παρα των συνελθόντων εν τη Νικαιων άγιωτατων πατερων & επισκοπων τροιακωσιων δεκα οκτω. Act. I. Concil. Hard. 2. p. 1364. Concil Labb.

† Labb. Conci. IV. p. 472 usque ad. p. 507. Ad finem actiois V.

answered distinctly, that the epistle accorded with the faith of the *three hundred and eighteen*: the others answered, "with the faith declared at Nicea," or "we all agree."

The same expression is repeated throughout the Acts, and occurs thrice in the decree concerning the faith. It is quoted formally in the dispute between the pope's legates and Anatolius, concerning the true reading of the sixth canon of the Nicene council;\* again by the council to the emperor Marcian, and in the edicts of the emperors, repeatedly. In short there can be nothing certain in history, if it be a doubtful point, that the whole and sole authority concerning faith, as declared at Nicea, resided in the council, and that this council was of *bishops*. What private discussion or consultation might have taken place, whether each bishop questioned his own deacon, or the deacon of any other; in short after what preparatory human means, the judicial authority was put forth is immaterial to the main subject. The christian church knows no other teaching tribunal than the *bishops*. If the *bishops* in general councils will decree without taking *advice*, although conscious of their incapacity, they do so at their peril; but the right and the authority is with them solely, and with them is the promise which was made, not to human learning nor to human investigation, but to weakness and to faith, and for the church.

Next

\* Ibid. p. 645, 659, 660, 674, 678, 679, 682 and 689. Ep. J. enal. Episc. Hieros.

Next after the councils of Nicea and the two Roman synods of the West, already mentioned, comes to be inspected the council of Sardica. What share the presbyters had, as *judges*, in that council, may be learned very easily. Each canon gives the name of the *bishop* proposing it. The *bishops* who spoke were four only. The *synod* answered, "we agree." If we would next wish to find out who composed the synod, the first canon, instead of "the synod" explicitly tells, "*all the BISHOPS* answered, we agree."\* We will find also in the letters from the council, that the persons, who had authority in the meeting were *bishops*, and from Athanasius† we learn even the names of the bishops who signed or adhered to it.

I am, Reverend Sir, &c.

\* Labb. C. II. 627.

† Athanas. Apol. 3.

## LETTER III.

---

### *On the General Councils of Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon.*

REVEREND SIR,

IN the next or SECOND GENERAL COUNCIL at Constantinople, were the priests of “the second order” sitting or judging of faith? Let the synod answer for itself.

Prefatory letter to the Emperor Theodosius. ‘The sacred synod of BISHOPS assembled from different provinces in Constantinople, &c.’ ‘On arriving here, we first re-established unanimity amongst ourselves: Next we pronounced brief definitions, concerning the faith of the Nicene fathers: lastly we enacted determinate canons for the discipline of the churches.’\* Not a word of their assessors! Those *exclusive* bishops presume not only to pronounce rules of faith *viva voce*, but even undertake of their own authority, to

I

enact

\* Labb. Concil. II. p. 945.

enact rules, stiff rules of general discipline. But hear a little more: observe how the canons begin.

‘ The BISHOPS assembled by the grace of God  
 ‘ from different provinces, according to the invitation  
 ‘ of the Emperor Theodosius, *define* as follows.’ And  
 thus they proceed to declare even a *creed*, which has  
 continued as the creed of the Eastern and Western  
 churches to this very day. Those bishops were only  
 one hundred and fifty; as appears from the general  
 council of Chalcedon, in its decree on the faith,  
 which declares, that it proclaims the symbol of the  
*three hundred and eighteen* fathers, and adheres to  
 the definitions of the *one hundred and fifty*, who set  
 the seal of confirmation on that same faith.\* Not a  
 word, you perceive, of the “second order” of judges  
 at Constantinople!

In the THIRD GENERAL COUNCIL at Ephesus we are  
 not forced to prove from circumstantial evidence that  
 a general synod means a convention of *Bishops*. The  
 imperial circular letter for assembling the council  
 will inform us of what persons it consisted, thus;  
 ‘ Theodosius and Valentinian, Emperors, to N. Me-  
 ‘ tropolitan BISHOP:’ ‘ Your reverence will take  
 ‘ care on the day of Pentecost next after the ensuing  
 ‘ Easter, to be on the spot in the city of Ephesus,  
 ‘ and cause to arrive there a few of the BISHOPS,  
 ‘ subjects

\* Act. 15 Hard. II. 452. ‘Ο δὲ ἔπειοικαμεν . . . το των τριακοσιων  
 δεκαοκτω συμβολων κηρυσαντες ἔως οικουσι επιγραφα μινουσι το τυλο το  
 συνθεμα δεξαμενου; οπιτερ εισι οι μεβα ταυβα εν τη μεγαλη Κωνσταντινουπολη  
 ενιλιθουλις εκατον πεντηκοιτα, ἔ αυτοι ενν αυτην επισφραγιταμενοι πισιν



‘ subjects of your province, in such number as you  
 ‘ shall judge fit; so that enough may remain at home  
 ‘ for the wants of the churches, and yet there may be  
 ‘ no deficiency in the synod of meet and proper  
 ‘ persons.’\*

The same is plain, from the letter to the council of Ephesus, introducing the palatine officer Candidian. ‘ Heretofore we wrote what was fitting, as  
 ‘ to a meeting of your reverences in the metropolis of  
 ‘ Ephesus. Now, Candidian our chamberlain has  
 ‘ been directed to proceed to your sacred synod, but  
 ‘ not to intermeddle with your discussions on matters  
 ‘ of religion; because *it is nefarious* that *any man not*  
 ‘ *of the ORDER OF BISHOPS* should interfere with ec-  
 ‘ clesiastical deliberations; but, in order to clear  
 ‘ away, by all means, from the city those *secular*  
 ‘ *men and monks*, who have either thronged thither,  
 ‘ or are likely to do so on the occasion.†

Is not this *exclusion*? It goes rather *beyond* the resolution of the *Irish bishops*, of which Columbanus deems the doctrine *heretical*: and this, you will recollect, was the doctrine concerning *general councils*, in the century which immediately followed that of the council of Nicea.

1 2

It

\* Labb. Conc. III. p. 437. recited also 451, 453.

† Ibid. 443, 444. Εντεταλται τοιουν Κανδιδιανος . . . αχρι της ἁγιας ὑμων διαδηναι συνοδῳ ἔ μηδεν μεν ταις τρει των δογματων γινομεναις ζητησεσι κοινωησαι· αδειμιτον γαρ τον μη τε καταλογη των αγιωτατων επισκοπων τυγχανοντα τοις εκκλησιαστικοις σκεμμασι επιμιγνυσθαι· αλλα της κοσμικης δε ἔ μοναζοντας . . . Της αυτης παντι τροπω χωρισαι πολεις.

It has been argued by *Columbanus*, that the absence of the names of the priests “of the second order” in the *subscriptions* of councils can be satisfactorily explained from the imperfection of the copies, which have come down to our times: that, if bishop Poynter had consulted the *best manuscripts*, and collated the *best authorities*, he would have found, that the *reason why the second order* are not mentioned in many councils, is, because the originals are lost, and the copies imperfect;—that in many instances the abbreviators omitted *all the debates and most of the acts*, setting down *only the decisions*, as noticed by Labbe.\*

That the *originals* of many councils are lost, is not to be questioned;—that the *subscriptions* are wanting in many councils, is evident from inspection, and is occasionally remarked by the several editors of national and provincial councils. As to *collating* at this day, the *best manuscripts* of councils, the work I fear is beyond the abilities of any individual, when I consider into what errors of fact, and misconceptions of the *original text*, certain learned men have been betrayed very lately. Without engaging therefore in a controversy concerning the *best manuscripts*, I must protest against the inference, as far as it applies to general councils.

I will admit that priests of “the second order” have *subscribed* in councils. Nay I will prove hereafter that

\* *Columban. 4th Letter, p. 57.*

that they have *been ordered to subscribe*. The great point in dispute lies not here. The question is, whether priests of “the second order” subscribed as *judges* or as followers and disciples. It requires no great stretch of mental faculty to perceive that one man may sign as *declaring his conformity*, and that another man may sign as *giving authority* to a declaration. In the church of England, it is required of those who hold stations ecclesiastical, to sign their *assent and consent* to the thirty-nine articles. This *signing* I take to be very different from that *signing* in both houses of convocation, by which the authority of those articles was manifested. In short there is a distinction between the *signature* which imposes an obligation on the subscriber himself, and the signature which establishes a rule and decision for other men; between the signature of that individual, who qualifies under the *test-act*, and the signature, by virtue of which that test-act may have been authenticated, as a law.

In the council of Nicea we have the authority of Eusebius, that *Constantine* having brought about a general agreement, concerning the faith and the celebration of Easter, “at length the *unanimous* “*decree* was *confirmed* with the subscription of each “one,\* and that the Emperor, on this being accomplished, considered himself to have gained another “victory over the enemy of the church.” The  
*subscriptions,*

\* Euseb., *de vit. Const.* Lib. III. Ch. 14.

*subscriptions*, here spoken of, are of those who met in the palace; of the *bishops*, as we have shewn. The signatures of those *bishops* were judged by Constantine to have given full *perfection* to the *decree*. If any presbyters afterwards set their hands to this same profession of faith, is it not manifest, that such written profession could have added no authority to the *decree*, already become authentic?

It matters then nothing at all in this controversy, whether any or innumerable priests of "the second order" subscribed the acts of councils; the main point being, not whether they subscribed, but whether, by so doing, they *gave an authority*, or *yielded and adhered to an authority*, residing in the *bishops* who had decreed. Whether presbyters did or did not sign the Nicene faith, or the creed of Constantinople was no concern of the Catholic church. The faith of Nicea was "the faith of the three hundred and eighteen bishops;" the faith of Constantinople was "the faith of the one hundred and fifty" as we have already seen. If presbyters did sign in either place, their names and numbers have been forgotten. Why so? For no other possible cause, than that their *numbers* could have added no authority to the *episcopal* decrees.

The fact however, although quite unimportant to the main question, as expressly recorded, happens to be this; that, in the council of Nicea, not a single priest, unless as an episcopal proxy, did sign or subscribe. "Constantine" writes St. Epiphanius, "convoked a synod of *three hundred and*

“ and eighteen bishops, whose names “ are extant.”...  
 “ As soon as those bishops subscribed, and condemned  
 “ the Arian heresy, the synod ended.\*”

The abbreviators, says *Columbanus*, in many instances omitted all but the decisions. How far this may hold true with regard to the council of Nicea, I have yet to learn. I doubt whether any notaries attended, unless for the canons and symbol of faith. In the second general council, the fathers declare to the Emperor, that “ they have defined *brief and determinate* canons, thereto subjoined:” in this meeting also I believe, that nothing was committed to writing, by authority, beyond the canons and the letters still extant, except the names of the bishops or of their proxies. But in the third council at Ephesus, which is the subject at present, we have the letter of summons in which priests of the “ second order” are expressly denied all rights of sitting as “ judges in council,” or of sitting even as disputants. How will this be got over?

No *collation* of *manuscripts* will avail here at least. Much less will *the imperfection* of copies explain away the important declaration. Of this council of Ephesus the *acts* have been preserved, in which the proceedings of each day are represented fully and circumstantially. The first session opens with the roll of the

\* Epiphanius. Arian. Hæc. xi. Petau's Edition 1622. p. 735 *ὑπογραψάντων*  
 τῶν ἐπισκόπων ἑ ἀναθεματίσαντων τὴν ἀρειομαντικὰ ἄρεσιν, ἕτοι-  
 γογενήσασιν.

the *bishops* assembled along with Cyril, to the number of one hundred and fifty-six. On the first question “whether the letter of Cyril to Nestorius were orthodox or not:” one hundred and twenty-six *bishops* deliver judgment *seriatim*, and the remaining *bishops* “already set forth on the roll” agreed.\* To the act of deposition of Nestorius the names of *one hundred and ninety-eight signing bishops* are still extant, and we have from the authority of Saint Cyril, who presided in this council, that the number of *bishops* assembled on the occasion was about *two hundred*.† In every session and in every argument the names of those who *discuss* or *judge* are given. All are *bishops*, or commissioners of *bishops*.

Nineteen years after this first and general council of Ephesus, another meeting was held in the same city in the cause of Eutyches, the priest and abbot.‡ This second meeting, which is better known by the appellation of the *Latrocinium* or club of malefactors, was headed by Dioscorus, who, in order to overawe the assembly, contrived that Barsuma the chief of all the Syrian monasteries should be summoned to the council. Barsuma came to Ephesus, attended by one thousand monks, and was allowed to sit and vote.

Concerning

\* Labbe III. p. 491. Και παντες οι λοιποι οι ε προταγεντες εν τη ρασει επισκοποι τα αυτα καταβινται.

† Cynill. ad Cler. et pop. Alex. Epheso.

‡ A slight error concerning the name and quality of this innovator appears in Columban. Letter 4th, p. 10. Eutyches is there mis-named Eutychius, and is styled bishop.

Concerning this *Latrocinium* at Ephesus the hasty pen of *Columbanus* has slipped into very comical blundering. *Columbanus* asserts, that it was a meeting of *Nestorian* bishops, whereas it was exactly on the charge of *Nestorianism*, that *Dioscorus* proceeded to depose *Flavian*, *Eusebius*, and *Theodoret*: he asserts that it was by *this* council, priests of the second order were first excluded; whereas it was by *this* council, priests of “the second order” not proxies for absent bishops, were first admitted, in the person of *Barsuma*, to associate with bishops. The precedent began and ended with him. *Barsuma* murdered the bishop *Flavian*.

The summons to each Metropolitan for this *Latrocinium* at Ephesus, is to be seen in the council of Chalcedon. It agrees with that formerly issued for convening the general council under *Cyril*, of which we have given the substance. The special invitation to *Barsuma*, was accompanied by letters to *Juvenalis* of Jerusalem and *Dioscorus* of Alexandria, recommending *Barsuma* to their protection. The summons to this latter, reciting, that the abbots in the East, but chiefly *Barsuma* himself had suffered persecution from some *Nestorian* bishops, declares it to be just, that he should have a seat along with the others, fathers and bishops, in the council, and be entitled to define along with them, as representative of all the oriental abbots.† *Barsuma*, although a priest of the “second order,” is not called, as such,

K

to

† Concil. Chalced. Act. 1. Labb. IV, p. 106.

to sit in the council; he is invited in reward of his pretended suffering for orthodoxy, and as a delegate for all the eastern monasteries. Whether the Emperor had a right to grant this privilege, or not, is another question. It is plain however, that the privilege was personal and was novel: that it was meant as an honorary distinction to *one* out of *many* supposed confessors of the faith. In the letters of *recommendation* by the Emperor to Dioscorus and Juvenalis,\* the zeal and sufferings of the Archimandrite are set forth as the cause of the privilege, to be bestowed on him, “of taking seat with the fathers assembled.† However so conscious is the Emperor of his incompetency to give Barsuma an authority to vote or judge *with bishops*, that he concludes with asking the matter as a bounty. “Your Reverence understanding, that “all my anxiety is for the sake of true faith, will “condescend to give kind admittance to the said “abbot, and to procure his being a partner in your “sacred synod.”‡ Barsuma accordingly was introduced into the *Lairocinium*; and after the reading of the letters last mentioned, he was admitted, on the motion of Juvenalis, to sit with the bishops, being the *only* priest who sat in the council, not proxy for an absent bishop.

\* Ibid. 105.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. Καλαξίνωσαν Ιωάννην ἡσυχαστήν ἐπεισεύσασα ὡς πᾶσα ἐκκλησία φρονεῖς περὶ τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως καθέστηκεν ευμένως τῷ τῷ τε προσηρμημένῳ ἀρχιμανδριτικῶν ἐποδοξασθῆναι καὶ παρασκευασθῆναι αὐτὸν τῆς ἱερατικῆς ἀγίας συνέθεσ κοινῶν ἔσεσθαι. *ibid.* p. 126. *ibid.* p. 115, 118, 119.



From the statement I have extracted out of the Acts, it appears first, that the *Latrocinium* of Ephesus was *not* the *first synod* to *exclude* priests from *judging*, but was the first to *admit* a priest, and abbot, by allowance of an imperial recommendation. Secondly, from the peculiarity of this favour, and the marked allowance in the council, of this privilege, it appears, that it was a new and unprecedented case. It is lastly manifest, that, if presbyters were entitled as such, or had been ever known to sit in councils, with *authority*, neither the Emperor would have recommended Barsuma on the score of sanctity and sufferings, nor as the representative of the Syrian abbots; nor would he have besought two Metropolitans to grant, in kindness, admittance to the man, or to *procure him* to become a partner with the bishops in council. When the cause of Eutyches was reheard in the *Latrocinium*, Barsuma declared, by an interpreter, that he received Eutyches as orthodox. When next the sentence of deposition was moved against the holy bishop Flavian, it would seem as if the atrocity of such an idea, as that which placed a presbyter in the seat of judgment on a bishop, had some effect to restrain the *privilege*. Barsuma said, “he followed his fathers” (the bishops); “that as they had condemned, he would condemn, because he *was certain* that they had *transacted every thing in the fear of God.*”<sup>\*</sup> However the disastrous precedent was but short-lived.

<sup>\*</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 318,

By the IV and VIII. canons of the general council of Chalcedon\* monks were ordered to refrain from all ecclesiastical concerns; and superiors of monasteries, though in orders, were restored to the jurisdiction of their bishops. Marcian the Emperor also condescended to inform the Archimandrites of Jerusalem, that they were not doctors of the church.†

Let us now, from the *Latrocinium* at Ephesus, proceed to the fourth *general council* at Chalcedon. Dioscorus had carried every thing, in the *Latrocinium*, by outrage and military oppression. Eutyches is acquitted; Flavian is struck down by the assassins of Barsuma, and is carried away in banishment, only to die: the legates of Pope Leo escape with difficulty. A new council is demanded by the Pope, and is agreed to by Marcian, who had succeeded Theodosius the younger. Passing over the several points of impeachment and reprobation, on which Leo the Great and his synod of the West, as well as the Emperor Valentinian and Placidia the Empress, adhering to the papal supremacy, annulled and abjured the Ephesian conventicle, we find the Emperors Valentinian and Marcian seeking of Leo I. as of the governor and chieftain of christian faith, that a general synod, under *his* authority, should be convened for restoring peace among the bishops,‡ where-soever he pleased.§ The summons to the Metropolitan

\* *Ibid.* 758, 759.

† *Labb.* IV. 855.

‡ *Labb.* IV. p. 62.

§ *Ibid.* p. 65.

politan bishops, is the same as that for the first council of Ephesus. After this was issued an imperial order to the governor of Bithynia to remove from *Nicea*, (where the council was originally to have been celebrated,) all *clergy*, even *those below holy orders, or degraded by their bishops* “unless they came by summons of the government, or *with the license of their BISHOPS.*”<sup>\*</sup> This latter intimation is somewhat *exclusive* of the right to “sit and judge,” which *Columbanus* asserts. It shews at least, that the term *general council* did not *essentially* include the attendance of the “second order.”

Of the FOURTH GENERAL COUNCIL, or COUNCIL of Chalcedon, the acts are in being, and are not only full, but prolix, as to the point in dispute. In the opening of the council, the senate and Palatines are first mentioned as assembled in the church of Euphemia: next “the *sacred and oecumenical council, that is to say Paschasinus and Lucentius*, and so forth.” In the enumeration of this oecumenical council, are there not *presbyters*, it will be asked. Undoubtedly there are; but unfortunately for the new theory, those presbyters are proxies for absent *bishops*, and were there expressly *in the right of bishops*, not in any right of their own “second order.” What is still more unfortunate, there are *deacons* on the catalogue, as well as *presbyters*, and those deacons are also the representatives of *bishops*. What is still more unfortunate, in the decree of the  
faith

\* *Ibid.* p. 69.

faith, bishops subscribe as *defining*, not only through the medium of *presbyters* and *deacons*, but through the intervention of their *subdeacons*, and *minor clerks* also.\* In the decree of faith at Chalcedon, as was also the case in the council of Ephesus, those proxies who had been admitted to sit in the council, signed by the names of their bishops, which they attested with their own. In the sixth Action of Chalcedon, the full roll of the synod is displayed, and read over for the Emperor. Its preamble is, “The sacred, “great, and oecumenical council, hath defined the “things following.” Next is the decree of faith, confirmed by the signatures. The signatures are of *bishops*. The proxy neither signs his own judgment or assent, nor appears in any other light, than that of an obedient instrument. The *bishop*, though *absent*, is he who judges, examines, and confirms. Accordingly as soon as, in the council, the long enumeration was gone over, the Emperor asks, “Let the reverend synod say whether the “definition, now read, was pronounced by the agree- “ment of all *the worshipful BISHOPS.*”†

Here

\* Labb. IV. 586. Αἰθιαῖος ἐπίστος ὀρίσας ὑπεγράψα δια τῶν ἐπιδοικωνι μῶ . . . Ἰωάννης ἐπίστος ὀρίσας ὑπεγράψα δια τῶν αναγινῶστων. i. e. “I John, “Bishop, defining, have subscribed through my *subdeacon* N: I John, “Bishop, defining, have subscribed, through my *reader*, N.”

† Ibid. from p. 590 to p. 605. This roll above alluded to, contains the names of four hundred and forty-eight bishops, of which number, the proxies, (not bishops or Chorepiscopi) for absent bishops were, presbyters, 17; deacons, 8; subdeacon, 1; reader, 1. The sum total

Here we might rest. We have seen by what spiritual authority, the faith was declared, and disciplinary laws were provided for the christian church in the first four general councils, which next after the Gospels are the four pillars of revealed truth. We have seen in the several declarations of those councils, as well as in the testimony which subsequent councils bear to those preceding; we have seen in the declaration of emperors, in the synodical professions of faith, and in the imperial letters, by which the two last of the four councils were expressly convened, that *bishops* composed those synods; that *episcopal authority alone* was competent to settle the faith; that *episcopal decisions* and *conciliary decrees* are synonymous; that not a presbyter, unless delegated by his *bishop*, had admittance to sit in such councils; and that, when empowered by his *bishop*, a deacon, or subdeacon (this latter office being then not a sacred order) was equally admitted. Against these facts, against the authority of such councils, against the *possession of bishops*, witnessed by that same authority which has witnessed and established our christian faith, against the persuasion and acquiescence of all the churches, one would expect to hear some better reason than a reason of arbitrary inference from an arbitrary interpretation of an obscure text. One  
would

total of *bishops* who signed before the dissolution of the council, and of those whose consent was virtually included in that of their *Metropolitans*, was six hundred and thirty.

would expect to hear some text, some authority, at least some explicit assertion, made in those times, that presbyters “had a right to judge in councils of “the faith, sitting with bishops.” But no such assertion has been discovered. No such assertion can be found. The very Arian bishops, when reproached with being the followers of Arius, reject the charge as *absurd*; “How is it possible that we who are bishops, should “be followers of a presbyter?”\* Arius himself, though excommunicated by Alexander his bishop, had the modesty to write, “The faith of our forefathers, “which we have also been taught by you, O Father “and Bishop Alexander! is as follows.”† The argument, for this pretended right, built on the authority of Eusebius has been proved erroneous. Over and above what was then adduced in refutation, it is time to observe that, if by councils, we will understand the multitude assembled, or the place of meeting, there were priests, deacons, and other clerks in the councils of Ephesus and of Chalcedon. The *acts* fully prove this; and yet it is equally certain, from the *acts*, that *bishops alone* were the judges of doctrine and of persons, and the enactors of discipline. How then were those others admitted? The acts will also inform you, that it was by the *authority* and for the service of *bishops*, or for the necessary purposes of a judicial meeting; that they were either proxies,

or

\* Ημεις; τίς ακολουθοί Αρείου γενοίμεν, πώς γὰρ επισκοποὶ οὐκ ἀκολουθοῦμεν πρεσβυτέρῳ; SOCR. I. 7.

† Epiph. Hæres. 69 VII.

or notaries, or apparitors, or witnesses, or petitioners, or persons accusing or accused, or spectators, or disciples who came to hear the truth of Gospel faith.

Reverend Sir,

I am, &c.

L

LETTER

## LETTER IV.

---

*Of the manner of proceeding in Councils, as stated by Columbanus.—Perpetual mistakes of Columbanus on the Subject.—On the second general Council of Nicca, and fourth of Toledo.*

REVEREND SIR,

IF the question of *right*, on which I and *Columbanus* are at issue, had been undertaken by my antagonist, with any shew of deference for the rules of honest warfare, I would not add a single word to the demonstration I have presented: I would close the evidence of episcopal right with the authority of the first four general councils, against which all opposition of literary men is folly, at the best. These councils were *episcopal*, in every sense of the word. They were convoked of *bishops* only. In these councils, as we have seen, *bishops*, or their delegates, spoke, judged, and decided; nor was the christian world disobedient to the apostles, whose  
authority



authority they contemplated in the episcopal succession. If the question therefore, whether *bishops* or *priests* are the doctors of faith and the legislators of discipline, had been discussed by *Columbanus*, with that liberal candour and in that temper of modesty, which truth exacts from its most zealous advocates; if his attempt to pluck down *usurping* bishops from their seats, had been conducted as an argument, not as an invasion; if the accuser had not also appointed *himself* to be the judge; if he had not so constructed the indictment against these bishops, as to afford the clearest presumptive proof, that his object was to pour contumely on the men, not to try the cause; if this indictment, so framed in the spirit of barbarity, had been addressed to *our* bishops, or to *our* priests, or to *our* catholic believing laity, instead of being shouted, as it has been, into the ears of their common enemy, as a justification of past cruelties and as a palliation for continuing oppressions; if, in short, the object of *Columbanus* had not been to criminate under the pretence of reasoning; to insult under the tricked up attitudes of maudlin enthusiasm, and to do irreparable mischief to the Irish Catholic church, while he deploras with ridiculous grimace, its servitude; I should have contented myself with establishing the point of right, nor would I have gone further into the exposure of that *learning*, by the pretence of which *Columbanus*, to speak most kindly, has deluded himself; and, to speak the fact, has attempted to deceive every man who will give

credence to his sincerity in *asserting*, and to his good faith in *quoting*.

From general councils, of which I have given the first four as the chief, and therefore, as the best instance, the natural progress of examination would be downwards, through *patriarchal* and *national* synods, to that most restricted convocation, which, in former ages, claimed the name of *council*. But, before I build up, I must clear away some rubbish. *Columbanus* has promised much and *minute* information on this subject, in a section of which you have the title below.\* I will not now expostulate on its departure from that which he had undertaken to establish, namely the right of *judging*: neither will I remind you, that the right of *subscribing* we have seen to be negatived to *priests*, as such, by the councils of Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. I will not so much as protest against the attempt thus made to confound every species of councils under one head, and therefore to delude rational men by a heterogeneous consolidation. But I will proceed at once, to his text and proofs.

“In the African councils,” says *Columbanus*, “next after the *Metropolitan* followed the *bishops*, “whose days of consecration were most remote.”† If by “African councils” be understood the councils of

\* *Columban. IV. Letter p. 58. Sect. 4. Of the precedence to be observed in councils, and of the right of attending, discussing, and subscribing.*

† *Columban. ibid.*

of the five African provinces,\* the bishop of Carthage did undoubtedly preside; but not as a Metropolitan.† If by “African councils” be understood, councils held for any of the six provinces, exclusive of Carthage, the senior bishop who convoked, was also president of the council. Now, all this premised, what has it to do with the rights of priests of “the second order,” to *sit and judge in councils on points of faith and discipline?*

“In the Eastern councils,” says *Columbanus*, “the priests and deacons who attended as proxies for absent bishops, had the same rank with the bishops whom they represented, as appears from the subscriptions to the two general councils at Nicea, the two at Constantinople, those of Ephesus and Chalcedon,‡ and several others.” Now, if all this were as true, as it is partially and inaccurately

\* i. e. Those named in the collections *Concilia Africana*.

† In the ecclesiastical language of the African church, after the reign of Constantine, the term *Metropolitan* signified what is now understood by the phrase *primate of the national church*; whereas the term *primus* or *senex* indicated the senior bishop in each of the six lately erected provinces, viz. the three Mauritaniae, Tripolis, Byzacena and Numidia, of which last, the *primus* or *senex* took precedency after him of Carthage. These *primates* or *senes*, were, *pro tempore*, *Metropolitans* in the meaning and for the purposes of the fourth Nicene canon. They assembled provincial synods, and authorized the ordination of bishops within their respective districts. At the same time, they were bound by usage to attend the national synods, to be convoked by the bishop of Carthage.

‡ *Columban. ibid.*

rately thrown out, how far can it help the assertion, that priests “of the second order,” are judges of faith and discipline in councils by *right*? “In the Western councils, those priests and deacons, who were *proxies for absent bishops*, signed in a *distinct column*, as in the council of Arles *and others*.”\* If even true, what is this to the purpose?

*Columbanus* proceeds. “In the council of Pisa, 1409, the cardinals sat on the highest seats;—the bishops and abbots on both sides of the Nave;—the deputies of chapters and monasteries, under these: the doctors and ambassadors in the *parterre*. This also is the order which *Campegius* followed.”†

Not so fast. From the council of Arles to the council of Pisa, is a right able skip of one thousand and ninety-six years. The chasm is too broad to be filled up by an *etcetera*, tacked to the council of Arles. Now this I do not take to be the *minute* examination promised by *Columbanus*. It is the minuteness that would strain at the gnat occasionally. Besides, I find here an entire change of plot. Hitherto we had learned how priests and deacons, *when proxies for bishops*, were treated in councils. Not a word of priests and deacons, *not proxies*, heretofore. In the twinkling of an eye, and by only annihilating a whole millennium and upwards, the *proxies* vanish into air: we have *cardinals* sitting highest; we have *abbots* on both sides of the nave; deputies from *chapters*

\* *Columban. ibid.*

† *Columban. ibid.*

*chapters* and *monasteries*; and we have *doctors* in the *parterre* of a general council, all *sitting* to a man! Is this council of Pisa alleged in proof of the right of *proxies for bishops*? No surely, for the *proxies* have disappeared. Is it quoted in proof of the right of priests “of the second order,” and having the care of souls, to judge on faith and discipline? No: for neither are those priests found sitting in this council of Pisa. What then can it prove? Is it that *chapters, cardinals, doctors* in universities, *abbots*, whether Benedictine, Cistercian, or Carthusian, priors of Franciscan, Dominican, and Carmelite houses, have the right of *sitting* in councils, as representing the *seventy two disciples*? Were those degrees and denominations, recognized by the first four general councils? If they were not, (and as they did not exist, they could not be recognized,) I hope it is rational enough to infer, that, if those doctors, abbots, priors, and deans or syndics are names and titles of recent and human creation, it is necessarily in consequence of positive law, that they came to sit in councils. If by positive human institution, it is equally manifest, that such institution can neither give, nor prove a *divine* right in those privileged persons; much less can it prove (as the argument of *Columbanus*, if it means any thing, must seek to establish,) a *divine* right in those *priests* “of the second order, having the care of souls,” who appear after all to have had no share in these new privileges.

“Such

“Such however,” says *Columbanus*, “was the order followed by *Campegius*. Cardinals, Archbishops, bishops, and *abbots*, occupied *the first rank of benches in a circle*. Next after and behind them was the *Corona Presbyterii* or second order of the clergy.”\* This is *not* the order, lately given from the council of *Pisa*.

“The manner of proceeding is regulated by the fourth canon of the fourth council of *Toledo*, which the author of the *Traité de l'Etude* justly observes is much more ancient.”† We have seen already, that the council of *Toledo* merely established a form for the opening of *provincial* councils, which entertained *no* discussions of faith, and enacted *no* new laws of discipline. Whether the observation from the book, called *Traité de l'Etude*, that this canon is far more ancient, derive much or any weight from the remark of *Columbanus*, that the observation is *just*, it is for you, or more idle speculators than *you* to determine. But again to *Columbanus*. “When the church was opened, the bishops entered first.”‡ True. You have only to add from the canon, “let all the bishops meet, and *enter together*, and take their seats according to seniority of consecration.”§

“Next

\* *Columb. ibid.*

† *Columb. p. 60. and in note. ibid.*

‡ *Columb. ibid.*

§ *Convenientes omnes episcopi pariter introeant, & secundum ordinationis suae tempora resideant.*

“ Next,” says *Columbanus*, “ *the priests entered, then the deacons, then the notaries.*” \* True enough. The priests entered *next*. But, *after* the bishops entered, and *before* the priests entered, is there not something more than the *mere delay* of a procession, headed by bishops? Does not the canon say, “ After the entry of *all* the bishops, and after they have been seated ” (which, I will presume to say, is equivalent to the phrase,—*After the synod has been constituted,*) then, and not before “ let *those priests* be “ *summoned*, whose introduction is warranted by “ *good cause*. Let no deacon force in amongst them; “ after them, let those approved deacons enter, “ whom the bench of bishops shall demand. Then “ let such laymen enter as shall have been privileged “ by the choice of the council, to be present; and “ LET THE DOORS BE LOCKED.” †

I can pass over in the *manner of proceeding*, as given by *Columbanus*, one or two small mistakes; as for instance, the substitution of *metropolitan, president, or preacher* for *metropolitan*; and the *exhortation to fear God, and not to swerve from truth*, which he has given in lieu of the *call to each person aggrieved, to state his complaint through the arch-*  
M deacon;

\* *Columb. ibid.*

† Post ingressum omnium episcoporum atque consessum, vocentur deinde presbyteri, quos causa probaverit introire. Deinde ingrediantur diaconi probabiles quos ordo poposcerit interesse. Deinde ingrediantur laici qui electione concilii interesse meruerint et obserentur januz.

deacon?"\* but I must not pass over in *Columbanus*, the fabrication that follows. "When the discussions terminated, *all who were present*, bishops, "priests, and deacons, signed the decision."... Does the fourth canon of Toledo say all this? It says no such thing; and we do not forget, that not only *some* priests, and *some* deacons, but also *some laymen might* be present. Thus far we can collect, from what precedes. Of course the order that all PRESENT should sign, would comprehend *more* than bishops, priests, and deacons. But the canon really says, "Let no person attempt to break up the council, "until all matters are finally decided: provided also "that the BISHOPS shall sign *individually* whatever "they may have finally adjudged by their deliberations "in common."† The text is below. The reader will judge whether *Columbanus* by adding *priests* and *deacons*, in his *minute* examination, has advanced the cause of truth: whether he has gained any decent pretext for his triumphant conclusion," "Were "these synods *secret*? were they *exclusive*."‡

\* *Metropolitani* episcopus concilium alloquatur dicens: ecce ..re-citatae sunt ex canonibus...sententiae de concilio celebrando. Si qua igitur quempiam vestrum actio commovet...proponat...Nam si aliquis concilium crediderit appellandum, ecclesiae Metropolitanæ diacono causam intimet.

† Concilium nullus solvere audeat, nisi fuerint cuncta determinata; ita ut quaecunque deliberatione *communi* finiuntur, episcoporum *sin-gulorum* manibus subscribantur.

‡ *Columb. ibid.*



What synods does *Columbanus* allude to? Is it to the synods for which he has *invented* a *manner of proceeding*, as if out of the *fourth canon of Toledo*?

With regard to such synods, it would be no easy matter to define what they were or were not. Does he ask concerning synods, formed on the basis of the canon of Toledo? If so, undoubtedly such synods *were* secret, and were *exclusive*. They were exclusive as to priests “of the second order;” because they did not permit *all* the priests, to enter along with all the *bishops*. They admitted *some* priests, and such priests came in *by invitation*, and upon *good cause shewn*, of which the *bishops* were judges. They admitted only such of the deacons, and such notaries as the bishops demanded, and such only of the laity, as the council thought proper.

Lastly *the doors were locked*. If *Columbanus* had not thought fit to dissemble all these circumstances denoting *selection*, and *exclusion*, and *secrecy*, how could he ask, “Were these synods *secret* or *exclusive*?” If he had not also *enriched* the text by the addition of “*priests and deacons signing the decision*,” how could he have appealed to this canon for their right of *attending*, *discussing*, and *signing*?

*Columbanus* next relates the *manner of proceeding* in the councils of *Constance*, of *Ferrara*, of *Trent*, as well as in the conventicle of *Basle*;\* that is to say, he refers to those times, when Universities, Abbots, General Ministers of Friars, and capitular deputies were

\* *Columb. ibid.* p. 61 to 66.

weren't present for the purpose of assisting at councils. Thus, in the 10th century, the council of *divine* right or right of the church decided in favour of Toledo.

"At the same time, Columbanus says, *Columbanus*, the pope's Legates invited the Emperor and Empress to sign. The patriarch presented them the book containing the definition of faith. . . . The Empress Irene signed first and then gave the pen to her son Constantine, who signed after her.—The Legates appear first in the order of bishops, then Tarasius, next John and Thomas, Legates from the *oriental apostolical* sees of Elia or Jerusalem and Alexandria; then follow bishops to the number of 377; next abbots, monks and priests of the second order, whose names were too numerous to be given."\*

Where did *Columbanus* find all this store of anecdote? If we can trust the Greek acts of the second Nicene Council, the decree of faith was published and signed at Nicæa and notified by a deputation from Tarasius to the Sovereigns.† This done, the Emperor and her son sent a precept to Tarasius, desiring that all the *bishops* should adjourn to Constantinople, which was obeyed. The two Sovereigns ordered this COUNCIL, namely *all the bishops* from Nicæa, to meet in the palace and to declare whether the

\* *Columb.* p. 66.

† *Action*, VII. *Labb. concil.* T. VII. 551. *ibid.* ex *lit.* Tarasii ad imp. p. 287.

the definition then read\* was *their common agreement*. This being answered in the affirmative with anathematisms, the patriarch Tarasius offered the *book of definition* to the Empress, who signed and passed it to her son to be subscribed by him. The book was then returned to the patriarch by an officer; upon which all the bishops threw out acclamations, and so forth.†

I will not quarrel about the metamorphosis of the *book* into the *pen*; or of *Tarasius* into the *Legates of the pope*. Neither will I dispute on the number of 377 bishops, though undoubtedly erroneous, or on the propriety of styling the new patriarchate of Jerusalem, the *apostolical see of Elia or Jerusalem*. I will fix on no mistakes, but such as capitally misrepresent, in order to establish “priests of the second order” as judges of the faith in councils.

When *Columbanus* tells you, “that the Empress “*signed first*, the definition of faith; then her son;” when he immediately adds, “the Legates appear “*first in the order of bishops, then bishops, next, “ Abbots, Monks, and priests of the second order,* “ whose names were too numerous to be given;” is it not plain that he asserts those *Abbots, Monks, and Priests* to have *signed* the definition of faith, and that moreover *Columbanus* relies on some historical document, stating the names to have been omitted, on account of the number?

All

\* P. 590, 591. Action. VIII. held at Constantinople in the palace of Magnaura. Πάντες συναινέσαντες υπεγραψαμεν. “We have all unanimously signed.”

† Ibid. 594.

All this is against the truth and the fact. Because first of all, as you have seen from the acts of the council, the definition of faith had been signed at Nicea by the *bishops*. Secondly, because *not a single Abbot or Priest* of the second order, saving proxies for bishops, and one\* priest, being a bishop elect, did sign, or is mentioned to have signed the definition of faith, and all these signed *amongst* the bishops according to the rank of their *places*. Thirdly, Abbots and monks representing abbots did sign a *declaration* in the *fourth* session, whose names we have in the acts; their number is one hundred and thirty-one.†

Of this second council of Nicea the occasion is well known. The Iconoclast Judaizers had continued for several years to persecute with marked and singular barbarity, the monastic orders, and lastly, in a false council, they proceeded to anathematize, in short, the entire of the christian world. Their violence and cruelty betrayed their impotence. In less than a year after this furious convention, another council is summoned by the orientals, but is dispersed by the Imperial guards through the practices of the Iconoclast bishops. At length a general congregation from the three ancient patriarchates is brought about, by Tarasius of Constantinople, to which the monks as zealots for the faith, attended their abbots. What privilege of *defining* in councils those monks assumed, will best appear from the very acts.

The

\* Labb. VII. 571.

† Labb. VII. 339 to 345.

The stile of this council, in recording each of its sessions, is as follows. “The *sacred and universal council* being convened in the Metropolis of Nicea, “that is to say, Peter the archipresbyter of the church “of Saint Peter in Rome, and Peter, priest and “and abbot, representatives of the papal see, Tarasius of Constantinople and these BISHOPS;” [names] “and these having taking their seats before the “chancel: there *being also present and listening*, “Petronas, Exconsul and patrician, John the chancellor and chamberlain, and the archimandrites, “abbots, and monks; and the holy Gospels being “set up in open view.”\*

Here, I think, there is a distinction very intelligibly marked, between the *council* and the hearers; between the *synod* and the officers and abbots: in short, between episcopal authority, and privilege of admission.

In the first session, the letter from Constantine and Irene is read. Its address is, “To the Reverend BISHOPS  
“convened

\* Labbe VII. 39 Act. 1. In Act 2. 95 instead of names at length, it runs, And the bishops with Tarasius and the legates with the addition of *all the monks* present and listening. In Act 3. 154. the same as in Act 1. so in Act IV. 195 In Act V. 346 in Act. VI. 390 in Act. VII. (the last held at Nicea, and that which *defined*) the same (p. 543.) as in the first session. The catalogue of bishops and proxies however, is considerably increased and amounts to 347. That this was very nearly the number, we have the authority of a discourse pronounced in the council in the seventh session by Epiphanius, from Sardinia (Labbe. p. 623.), who informs us that they were 350, the *successors* of the 318 who had met of old, in that city, Nicea.

“ convened in the synod at Nicea ;” \* its exhortation is, that they shall judge justly and without fear. Two penitent bishops are restored. The cause of seven other bishops is debated. Some abbots spoke, but declaring that they sought instruction ; † and although it was plain that they were averse to the restoration of their persecutors, insomuch that some of the monastic chiefs absented themselves from this first meeting, yet they declared they would abide by the judgment of the synod. ‡ The question being put, “ Are all agreed to receive these bishops ? The *sacred synod* said : “ All are agreed. The *monks* shouted : “ *We also* are content.” † Here also, I perceive that the *synod* is distinguished from the *monks*.

In the *second* session the cause of Gregory of New Cesareā, a principal of the Iconoclast bishops is commenced and adjourned, in order to give a reading to the letters from [the pope. This done, the legates interrogate first Tarasius, and then demand of the *synod*, whether they adhere to the faith declared. Tarasius separately, and then bishops and proxies, (in all two hundred and sixty four) pronounce in succession their adherence with anathematisms. The legates ask no further ; so that  
even

\* Ibid. p. 50, 67. Δεομιθεα δεσποια διδασκαλιας.

† Εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἀναμεινονῆτος αἰτίας ἡμῶν συνοδῶν δεχόμενα. p. 83.

‡ Ἡ ἁγία Σύνοδος εἶπε· σοιχεί πᾶσιν. Ὅτι οὐλαβ. μοναχοὶ ἐξεβόησαν. Καὶ ἡμῶν ἀρῆσκει. p. 86.

even those legates could distinguish the *council* from the *attendants*. But the *synod*, of its own accord, calls upon the *monks*. Attend to this passage, and observe how happily it coincides with the assertions of *Columbanus*. When the last bishop had delivered himself, “The sacred synod said; It is just that the monks “also should declare aloud: the monks said; If there “be any rule that even monks as we are, should “declare aloud; we will obey you. Tarasius the “patriarch said; The rule is, that *every person who “is on the spot*, where a synod is holden, shall “audibly speak out his confession of faith.”\* Upon this, Sabbas and all the other abbots (for all the monks had come to this second sitting) declared their assent and consent to the letters of Hadrian.†

What becomes now of the *divine* right? What becomes of the right of *judging*, for those abbots and monks? Tarasius allows just as much authority to monks and abbots, as to laymen. As to *priests and deacons*, we hear nothing about them from the acts, although they *appear* in the phrase of *Columbanus* to have *signed* after the bishops. There is something in the words of Tarasius, still more fatal

N

to

\* Labb. ibid. 151. Η ἀγια Σύνοδος, εἶπε· δικαίον ἐστὶν ἵνα καὶ οἱ εὐλαβ. μοναχοὶ ἐκφωνήσωσιν. Οἱ εὐλαβ. μοναχοὶ εἶπον· εἰ ἐστὶ λαξὶς αὐτῆ ἵνα καὶ οἱ μοναχοὶ ἐκφωνήσωμεν, ὡς κελεύεθε. Ταρᾶσιος δ' ἀγίωτ. πατρ. εἶπεν ἡ ταξὶς ἐστὶν ἑκάστων ἐυρισκομένων εἰς συνόδον, ἐκφωνεῖν τὴν ἑαυτῶν ὁμολογίαν.

† But without anathematisms. The addition, in the Greek, to the profession of Sabbas, καὶ προσκυνῶ, etc. is supposititious. It appears neither in the old version, nor in that of Longolius.

to the pretended right. He holds it for a rule, when a synod is holden, (and you will grant now at least, that the *synod* at Nicea, meant exclusively the *episcopal* authorities there sitting,) that every man who is on the spot, whether of the synod, or not, is bound to declare his creed. A layman for example, will not be suffered to call in his friends: a priest "of the second order," will not be privileged to quote his *own* works. The *synod* hears and finally determines all causes of faith, and in the *synod*, *bishops alone* are the judges in the last resort, as in the first instance.

In the third session the cause of Gregory is continued, and the case of the seven bishops, concerning whom it had been adjudged, that Heretics, not principals, converting to orthodoxy, should be received in their *orders*, is called on for final judgment. Against the bishop Gregory the outcry of the monks was chiefly directed: he was charged by common report, with active persecution; and he had been a leading prelate in the Iconoclast pseudo-synod. Tarasius inclined for his re-admission. The abbots argued, and then apologized for having argued: a compliment is paid them by Tarasius: "I commend you as zealots for the canons and "evangelical ordinances."\* The monks now remain silent, and Gregory, with the other bishops who had abjured the heresy, are installed by order of the *synod*, in their respective seats;† after which immediately,

\* Ibid p. 159.

† Ibid.



mediately, the council resumed the consideration of the letters from and answers to Tarasius, in his correspondence with the other patriarchal sees; that it might be decided whether this correspondence accorded with the letters of pope Adrian, which had been adhered to. It was agreed by the bishops, *viva voce*, in the affirmative; and thus the third session closes; the monks having adhered to the letters of Adrian, on the summons by the council to speak, having argued against the restoration of certain bishops, but professing their submission to the council, and finally having witnessed those bishops, against whom they had so argued, notwithstanding reinstalled by the synod.

Of the fourth session the greater part is taken up in the reading of authorities, long anterior to the Iconoclast impiety, and in the hearing of arguments superfluously alleged in vindication of the christian practice. In this respect the council was excessively condescending, perhaps wisely so. After a long hearing, in which few points are entitled to remark in this dispute, as it mainly went to convict the Iconoclast king-courting assembly, of gross suppression of the truth, and of grosser forgery, (the essential features, without which heresy is but pitiable misfortune in the *many*), a declaration of all that had been agreed in the synod, is framed; namely of the adherence to Hadrian's authority; the acceptance of the letters, to and from the other patriarchates, and the re-admission of repentant Icono-

clasts, which latter point the monks had warmly, but dutifully contested. This declaration containing nothing more than what had been decided in the first, second, and third sessions, was signed by all the *bishops* and *episcopal proxies* to the number of 336, of whom were *proxies* 35, that is, presbyters, 29, deacons 6.\* After these the abbots, as already mentioned, in number 131 subscribed.† In what meaning, whether of *judging* or of *acquiescing*, they so put down their names, Tarasius has already informed you in the second session.‡

In the fifth session, the doctrine of the Iconoclasts is shewn to be that of the great opposers of the Gospel. In the sixth session, the definition of the false Iconoclast convention, is refuted at length.§

In the seventh, the definition of faith is promulged and subscribed by all the bishops and episcopal proxies, each of these subscribing as a final judge; and in number 347 or 348, whose signatures remain extant.§ No other subscribed. No abbot, no presbyter

\* Labb. *ibid* from p. 322 to p. 339. † In sequent. *ibid*.

‡ In the eighth general council, held against Photius, and of which it is enough to say, that it was as *exclusive* as that of Ephesus, not only the bishops returning to the Catholic communion, but all the clergy of Constantinople were required to sign the declaration formerly ordered by Pope Nicholas, and revived by Adrian II. Not. Anast. ad Libel. Act. 1. Conc. CP. IV. Hardouin V. p. 775, and Labb. VIII. 920. see also the letter of Theodorus Studita. προς πρεσβυτέρων ύπεγραψαμεν against the Nicene council.

§ Gregory of Neocæsarea was appointed to read the *definition* of the mock council, in which he had been prominent. *Epiphanius*, on  
whose

byter, no deacon. Of course no other signature could appear. Of the eighth and formal session in Constantinople enough has been said at the commencement of this review at the second council of Nicea.

Every thing therefore alleged by *Columbanus*, under colour of any proceedings in this second council of Nicea has totally failed of support from truth. *Perhaps* the facts decide against him. Unless you think, with me, that they do *most evidently*, I give up this council. But I wish you to take notice that this general council is the first of all, in which heads of monastic orders were allowed to parley. The condition of those men had been advancing in importance, from day to day in the east, during four hundred years. At the period of this council, abbots were generally priests, and, when priests, received episcopal benediction, whereby they were privileged to ordain readers for the church service of their monasteries,\* thus replacing in some degree, the chor-episcopi.

Looking back to my pages in this letter, I tremble for your judgment on my tediousness. I had undertaken to go over the history of *provincial* councils: I was led by the subject to encounter the manifold errors of *Columbanus*, in his *minute*  
review

whose authority the number of bishops has been stated at 350, against *Columbanus*, read phrase by phrase, the refutation. *ἑπιστάς ὑπεγράψα. πρὸς τὸν*, from 538 (Labbe *ibid.*) to 575.

\* Nicen. II Can. XIV. Labb. *ibid* 607.

review of the *manner of proceeding* in councils; though loath to follow in the mazy track of a writer, who, always desultory, is never so without a drift, yet I cannot break off, at this point, without informing you that *Columbanus* after skipping from the council of Arles to that of Pisa, in 1409, and back again to the second of Nicea, jumps forward a second time from the eighth to the seventeenth century and alights on the diocesan council of Malaga,\* in proof of “the manner of proceeding” in councils. His next step is to the *Irish council* of Kilkenny.† I would if possible, save myself by protestation from intermeddling in the latter council: as to that of Malaga in 1674, let its authority go as far as the uttermost stupidity will tolerate on the present question. It remained only to quote the *council of 500*, when Buonaparte returned from Egypt. But *Columbanus* seems to hold *such councils* for decisive, and asks again, “were these *councils* exclusive? were they secret? were they held with locked doors?”‡ Other things he adds as explanatory of the Gospel of Saint John, Ch. xv. but as strangely misunderstood as unbecomingly misapplied.§ To the questions so

OR

\* *Columb.* p. 67.

† P. 69.

‡ P. 70.

§ *Ibid.* “The distinction made by *St. John* between the *Jewish synagogue* and the *christian church* is that the former *enslaved*, the latter *did not*; the members of the latter were not deprived of the knowledge of what passed in the *assemblies of their clergy*: every thing

“was *public*, every thing was *known*. Jam nou dicam servos, quia

“ *servos*

often repeated whether those *synods* were *exclusive*, or were *secret*, I have answered from the regulation of the fourth of Toledo, and from the practice of general councils. I have shewn, that the authority was *exclusively* the authority of *bishops*. I have placed this truth in meridian demonstration. With regard to *secrecy*, if, by this term, Columbanus would mean the practice of debating *confidentially* amongst the bishops, or with the admission of such only as *they* thought fit to associate, to the rejection of all others, I presume that such is the practice of every legislative body, and such is the right of every legislature.

But

“*servus nescit quid faciat Dominus suus. Johan. XV.*” These Latin words (which also are employed in the ordination of priests in the Latin church) mean: *No longer will I call you slaves, because the servant knows not the purpose of his master. Columbanus* informs us, that these words convey the distinction, *made by Saint John*, between the *synagogue* and the *christian church*. Saint John himself assures us, that they are the words of OUR LORD to *eleven* of his *twelve* apostles, after the institution of the eucharist. “No man can have greater love, than if one should lay down his life in the behalf of his friends: you” addressing the eleven “*are my friends*, if you will perform what I have enjoined you. No longer will I call you slaves; because the slave knows not the purpose of his master: but you I have entitled FRIENDS, because to you I have manifested whatever I have heard from MY FATHER.” Such is the passage which Columbanus, with surprizing levity and irreverence, quotes, 1st, as the observation of Saint John: 2nd, as furnishing a distinction between the *synagogue* and the *christian church*; lastly, as proving, that in the *assemblies of christian clergy*, *all is or was public*: whereas the very discourse is meant to impose a singular trust, and to declare an *exclusive* reliance on the *apostles*, and *their successors who are the BISHOPS*.

But “ the doctrine of *exclusive* synods,” says *Columbanus* “ is unknown to the scriptures ; unknown “ to the usage and tradition of apostles ; unworthy “ of christians, inasmuch as it would reduce our “ synods to *secret* conventicles, assimilating them to “ the dark tribunals of the *Holy Office*, degrading “ them to the intriguing and calumniating secrecy “ of the inquisition, and destroying the *noble* dignity, “ the candour, and the plain dealing of a religion, “ which *fears no inquiry*, which challenges the light “ of day, and looks not to cunning or to craft, but “ to the spirit of God for its preservation.”\*

So then, good and zealous *Columbanus* ! When *JESUS* ordered Judas to go out, although one of the chosen twelve ; when the apostolic meeting, delivered from the traitor, and presided by the Son of God, was admitted to the participation of the new mystery, and of the parting secrets of his heavenly kingdom ; when this same Lord took three out of his twelve select apostles, up to the mount, and there, on Thabor, disclosing the magnificence of begotten Deity, appeared in robes whiter than snow, and his countenance sent forth rays like the Sun ; when, in raising up the damsel, he cast forth all from the chamber, unless his three chief apostles and the father and mother of the young maid : when he explained *in secret*, all his parables to the twelve ; when he held discourse with Nicodemus in the night ;  
when

\* P. 54, 55.

when he hid himself not only from his sanguinary enemies, but from those whom you consider the founders “of the second order of priests;” when he charged Peter to be silent on his divinity; when he refused to declare his Majesty to the Jews; when, breathing again, after death, he manifested himself to the ELEVEN; when he concealed his youth from the world; is it true that JESUS *feared inquiry, and dared not to challenge the light of day*, on his life, his doctrine, his titles, his miracles? Is there no *secrecy* but that of impostors and tyrants? Is there no refuge, no asylum for innocence, for right, for any the most sacred things, against intruding boldness, against riotous effrontery, against Herodians, informers and sacrilegious spies? “Be on your guard,” says HE, “against mankind; for they will BETRAY YOU.”—“Cast not your pearls,” says HE, “before the swine.” HE wills not his doctrine to be hazarded upon these, who traffic in religious merchandize and parasitical liberality: HE *absconds* from the men, who, in *his* government, are ever ready to discover *treason against Cesar*; but who, in Pilate and in Herod, are ever prompt to recognize wisdom, and justice, and generous dealing.

You, *Columbanus*, are pleased to consider *exclusive* synods, (by which appellation, unless you mean *synods* not accessible to every christian of the same faith, you convey no intelligible meaning,) as resembling the dark tribunals of the Inquisition. Is it then your principle, that there can be no *confidence*, unless for the object of prejudging *the*

*absent?* The iniquity of that system which prevailed in the *Inquisition*, was, not that it proceeded to *arraign* on *ex-parte* evidence, (for such you know was the turn of the civil law in *public* crimes, and such is the borrowed *custom* amongst *us* of finding *bills* by inquest of grand juries); but that *it gave no redress to the party injured*, although an innocent was subject to the loss of liberty and to probationary *torment*, upon anonymous evidence. Now pray, *Columbanus*, in what *exclusive* synods have absent persons been arraigned or prejudged? Nestorius complained indeed that he had been condemned, though absent: Eutyches complained that he had been condemned though absent: Dioscorus complained that he was condemned, though absent: Arius himself complained that he was tyrannously condemned. These four impious men were the subjects of trial in the first four general councils. They were condemned, but they were cited; yet they were sentenced, though absent. In modern *exclusive* synods, has any *man* been arraigned or condemned? Have *you* been condemned? While *your* impunity bears witness to the forbearance of *exclusive* synods, how will you presume to compare the *reserve* imposed by the anti-catholic laws, or superinduced by the calamitous situation of our clergy, to the tribunals of the *inquisition*?

Our religion, you say, challenges the light of day. Its fundamental principles and its practical influence, I freely allow, defy the most malicious scrutiny.

But



But, *Columbanus*, we distinguish here in Ireland between the principles of a religion, and the special offices and confidential duties which it upholds. In our Catholic religion, we esteem *confession* to be of divine origination. Yet confession is made in such secrecy, that we hold the duties of secrecy and confession to be correlative; to be equally binding, and equally mutual. The practice is then *exclusive* in the highest sense. Shall we call this practice unchristian, because it *does not challenge the light of day*.

“The doctrine of exclusive synods,” you say, “is unknown to scriptures; is unknown to the usage and tradition of apostles.” With you, *Columbanus*, whom the four evangelists are as little able to withstand as the first four general councils; with you, who inform us\* that in *one* instance the apostles met *foribus clausis*, although the gospel to which you allude gives *two* instances† of such meeting within fifteen lines; with you, who can tell us that by *disciples*, Saint John meant others besides apostles, whereas Saint John perpetually calls them by this name and never once mentions the term *apostles*, in his gospel; with you, who, because the apostles were assembled, on the day of resurrection, with *their company*, whether of men, or women, or children, can infer not only that the said company was made up of the *disciples*, but that the meeting was a *synod*, or had resemblance to a synod; it is perilous, very perilous to argue

\* *Columban. 4th Letter.*

† *John xx. v. 19, and v. 26.*

argue on the things *known or unknown to the scriptures, and to apostolical tradition.* However, deferring to another time the inspection of your opinions concerning the priests “of the second order” in the council of Jerusalem, I will just beg to suggest an authority, first set forth *by yourself* as authentic, in your first Number. You will easily recollect those canons of the council of Nicea which you considered so unquestionable, as to ask whether the catholic bishops would resist a decree of that council “*as the pharisees opposed the miracles of our redeemer.*” The canons which you quoted so exultingly are *not* of the council of Nicea, I grant: the compilation was certainly not perfected before the eighth century; but *you* surely received as genuine what you quoted for the purpose of levelling our bishops to the character of antichrists.\* Look, *Columbanus*, at *this*. “Constitutions by the bishops  
 “at Nicea, chapter XII. On episcopal conferences  
 “or synods. Whenever bishops meet their metropo-  
 “litan, to treat, examine and duly to judge of any  
 “matter, let not the bishops decide without the  
 “chorepiscopi and archdeacons of the towns and  
 “hamlets. Let *neither priest nor deacon* be introduced  
 “to their secret discussions, unless on account of  
 “extraordinary learning, skill and religion, an indi-  
 “vidual be wanted.”—“But if it be a plenary synod,  
 “in which either the *metropolitans or bishops are par-*  
 “*ties*, in such case, it shall not be lawful for priest,  
 “*deacon*

\* *C. Lamb.* Letter 1.

“ *deacon, archdeacon, or chorepiscopus*, to be in the  
 “ session.”—“ As soon as all have taken their proper  
 “ seats a bishop shall stand up and cry aloud,—  
 “ Whosoever is no bishop is adjured and interdicted  
 “ by the living and potent word of God from tarry-  
 “ ing in this council; every man is similarly adjured  
 “ and interdicted from listening, at either doors or  
 “ windows, to what is uttered here. After this  
 “ proclamation, let *the doors be closed.*”\*

Again and again I repeat; that I do not allow this  
 compilation to be of the first Nicene council. I see  
 that it bears the evident marks of additions and  
 interpolations

\* Labbe. II. 353. In nova versione constitution. Arabic. Concil. Nic.  
 Cap. II. De Episcoporum collationibus seu synodis & conciliis. Quo-  
 ties conveniunt Epi ad suum Patriarch. vel metropolit. de aliqua  
 re in *illa* synodo facturi & ut oportet scrutaturi & judicium laturi,  
 nequaquam aliquid decident aut decernant archiepiscopi illi sine chor-  
 episcopis & archidiaconis qui sunt in iis regionibus, nempe pagis  
 & vicis. Nec eorum adsit *secretis ullus presbyter aut diaconus*, nisi *illo*  
 opus sit propter multam ejus scientiam doctrinam & religionem.—Porro  
 si synodus magna fuerit, in qua dispiciendum sit de metropolitanorum  
 & Episcoporum causis, nemini fas erit cum eis considerare, neque  
 presbytero, neque diacono, neque archidiacono, neque chorepiscopo:  
 sed consessionis præparato loco, et sedentibus singulis secundum suos  
 ordines, stet episcoporum unus & alta proclamet voce: Quicumque  
 episcopus non est, non liceat ei, per VERBUM DEI POTENTISSIMUM ET  
 VIVUM, in hoc magno commorari concilio, nec etiam cuiquam liceat  
 per idem potentissimum &c. ex portis aut fenestris auscultare [iis] que  
 in eo dicuntur.—The *illa* and *illo* I have set in Italics, as I conceive them  
 to be mere servile translations of the redundant *definite article*.

interpolations down to the eighth century. But I am still free to consider each of its canons, on its own distinct and special grounds of probability. I care not whether this collection have been, or not of authority for the eastern sectaries; for Nestorians, separated since the fifth century from the catholic church, as well as for Egyptians, separated in the same age. I will not argue on the coincidence of the regulation now quoted with the fourth canon of Toledo, as to *shutting the doors*; because, although *Columbanus* esteems this last mentioned canon as very ancient and of high authority, yet in his hurry to decry *exclusive synods* and *barred doors*, he omitted that part of the trusty *Toledo*, which directed *the doors to be bolted*. What I would suggest is mere common sense. A *practical* direction is given in the canon for holding synods: granting the canon to be a fabrication, as fathered on the first Nicene council, yet it is plain that every fabrication which goes to further a *practice*, has in view a practice still subsisting, or a party or an interest capable of being abetted. Now, in the east, the chorepiscopi were not a regular known class, even at the time of the council of Ephesus. In the beginning of the fifth century they were almost extinct in the east; in the sixth, they were completely so. When the western empire was revived in Charlemagne, *Columbanus* knows, what obstinate disputes prevailed in France on the office and powers of a chorepiscopus, which could not have taken place, unless the dignity so entitled, had  
already

already been extinct in those countries where it originally arose. This canon, pretended to be of Nicca, gives a rank in councils to the *chorepiscopus* as well as to the *archdeacon*. Of course we must grant, that *the former* as well as the *latter* of these offices, was surviving, at the time of enacting or of *forging* this canon; consequently, it is of twelve hundred years standing, and thus it is 500 older than that *Inquisition*, to the idea of which *Columbanus* now tells us the *exclusion* practiced in synods has brought down the honesty of the Christian religion.

“Four *apostolical synods*,” says *Columbanus*, “are mentioned in the Scriptures: in all these it will be found that the *second* order was present as well as the *first*. In the *third* of these, but *four* apostles were present: all the others were of the *second* order and of the *third*.”\*

Let us review those four synods. “The first was held for electing an apostle to replace Judas, and the second order was present as well as the first.” Mercy on us! an *apostolical synod convoked* before the descent of the HOLY SPIRIT! The “second order” was there, says *Columbanus*. The *Acts* inform us that many were there: that one hundred and twenty persons were † assembled in one upper story, awaiting the Paraclete, as our Redeemer had ordered. Now, adding eleven, the number of the faithful *apostles*, to seventy-two *disciples* (whom *Columbanus*, by main force was resolved to make priests

“ of

\* *Columb.*, p. 54, 56 and 57. † *Acts* I. v. 15.

“of the second order),” the total is exactly eighty-three; so that others, besides the *second order*, were present. Indeed Scripture informs us, that the Holy Virgin was also there; and the very instinct of christianity would have argued, what indeed is expressly mentioned in the text, from this fact, that other believing and devout females were of the number. If the argument of *Columbanus* proves for any system, it proves assuredly for that of the *Quakers*. But, really, it is bantering on a grave subject, to call such an assembly a synod holden for an election, as it is ridiculous to infer any right, from the description of persons then assembled. For the election of Matthias was the providential suggestion of Peter;\* and with regard to the persons there convened, it will be allowed by *Columbanus*, that the same principle of fear or of retirement, which led the defenceless troop to abscond from the public, in an upper room and in a close assembly, must have taught them to admit all whom they trusted, as well as to slout out whatsoever they feared.

The argument from the *second apostolic synod*, in favour of the “second order” is still more deplorable. The *Acts* inform us, that the number of *disciples* (i. e. converts) having increased, the Hellenistic murmured against the native Jews, as slighting their poor widows in the serving at table: that the apostles collected the *whole multitude* (i. e. of Jewish, and Greek converts) and directed them to present deacons, which was done:† as if to every

\* Acts vi. 1, 2, 3, 5

manifest the generous impartiality of that time, every one of the deacons is an alien.\* Not a syllable of the “second order.”

But what says the *third* apostolic synod? “This was held” says *Columbanus*, “for abolishing circumcision,—the *divine ordinance* of circumcision. “But *four* apostles were present; all the others were “of the *second order* and of the *third*.”

There must have been some *private* meetings, in this synod, as else I am at a loss to conjecture from what source *Columbanus* has derived his information. The *Acts* merely give us to know, that the object of this council was to discuss, whether *gentiles* coming to the faith were *bound to receive* the ceremonial law of Moses; and that it was decreed, that they *were not to be bound*, save in the points of abstaining from eating of sacrificial and strangled meats, and from eating blood.† This is very different from a decree to *abolish* circumcision. Again, where in the name of secrecy does *Columbanus* find the *third* order? I find, in the *Acts*, that, after a great contestation at Antioch, it was agreed, that Paul, Barnabas and others should be appointed to travel up to Jerusalem and consult the apostles and *presbyters* on this question. Let *presbyters*, for the present, be priests of “the second order.” Let *Columbanus* enjoy this concession for half an hour to come. Let even the “third order”

P

be

\* Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, Stephen, Nicholas.

† Acts xv. 1, 5, 20, 28,

be the third order of the *priesthood* if he will; in short be *the deacons*, whom an ancient writer stiles the third class in priestly function. Well; I still seek for those *deacons* at the *third synod* in Saint Luke, and I seek for them in vain. I find indeed *apostles and presbyters*, and church at large;\* but of *deacons* not a word. This is a bad symptom. No tricks are to be played upon inspired writ. *Deus enim non irridetur.*

So much for the assistance, to be derived from the third apostolic synod, for the judicial rights of “the second order” and against *exclusive* meetings of bishops. Let us see, whether perchance, in this same *third apostolical synod*, we may not discover something more, than *Columbanus* has been able to glean from the annals of *Baronius*. Open the epistle of Saint Paul to the Galatians, and begin with the first verse of the second chapter. “Then, fourteen  
 “ years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Bar-  
 “ nabas having taken Titus in my company”...“ and  
 “ I communicated to them my Gospel-belief which I  
 “ preach among the heathens. Next I communicated  
 “ it *apart* to the important persons there”...“ and  
 “ James and Cephas” (Peter) “ and John, who  
 “ were the acknowledged pillars, having being con-  
 “ vined of the grace bestowed on me, entered into  
 “ a treaty of partnership with Barnabas and me;  
 “ that we should be for the heathens, and they for  
 “ them



“ them of circumcision, with the only condition, that “ we should not forget the (Jewish) poor.”\* That this *private* conference with the three pre-eminent apostles of the Redeemer was held by Paul, when a delegate from Antioch, is the general persuasion of Catholic interpreters of Saint Paul. If *Columbanus* should disagree, so much the worse for himself; for then a *fifth* apostolical meeting will be established. But whether he agrée or not, we have got here, not only an *exclusive synod* between three of the original apostles and Paul with Barnabas, but an *exclusive* arrangement, without admitting, much less, consulting the “ second order.” Here is a meeting for you, *foribus clausis, alias*, with closed doors, without the excuse of *propter metum Judeorum*. Was Paul an *Inquisitor*? Were James, Peter, and John *Inquisitors*? We have not only a session on matters of faith, and an agreement, but even a compact and treaty, *unknown to the church of Jerusalem*. What is worst of all, is this. The very *Saint John*, who thus partakes of *exclusive* meetings, is he, to whose authority *Columbanus* had appealed for the maxim, that, in the christian church, as contra-distinguished from the synagogue, *every thing transacted by the clergy, in synods, is public*! † *Quid facias huic?*

The *fourth* apostolical synod, says *Columbanus*, is that mentioned in *Acts xxi*. Be it so. Let us only know what *Acts xxi*. record. Is it not, that when Paul came for the third and last time to Jerusalem,

\* Gal. Ch. ii. v. 1, 2, 9. † *Columb. 4th Letter, p. 70.*

he went in to salute James (Peter, ere this, had quit the holy city), “and all the *presbyters* were convened” thither? When this reverend meeting had heard of the wonders wrought amongst the heathens, “they glorified God, and said to Paul: “thou seest brother, how many thousands of native “Jews are believers, and zealously addicted to the “(Mosaic) law. Now they have had a report concerning thee, that thou teachest the Jews who are “amongst the heathens to break off from Moses, “affirming that they must not circumcise their children, nor conform to the rites.” On which they advise him to demonstrate, by a religious act, that he himself, as a Jew, “did observe the law.” Paul complied, was attempted to be murdered, was rescued by the Roman guards, and finally was sent off, as an appellant, to Nero.

Does *Columbanus* term this meeting a synod? I do not dispute the use or abuse of the term; but I wonder exceedingly, that *Columbanus*, with the text lying open before him (for surely he did not trust to Baronius for the *four* apostolical synods), did not correct his former erroneous assertion, that the apostles had in the third synod met “to *abolish* circumcision.” Again, if this should be a synod, I think *Columbanus* was bound to explain, why “the *third order*” was not present, as in the former council. Again, I doubt whether even this *apostolical* synod can be cleared, in the system of *Columbanus*, from that “ignoble craft which shuns the light of day.” Paul,

as every smatterer in holy writ knows, taught, being so inspired, the rapid declension of the Mosaic law: he had conferred *apart* with the three principal apostles on his *exclusive* doctrine. He had opposed and reprimanded Peter at Antioch for his shyness towards the converted Gentiles, and had declared that from the works of the Jewish law no man could derive justification before God.\* Notwithstanding this solemn profession, Paul confers *privately* with James and with the presbyters, and submits to the expedient of defraying the charge of four Nazarites depositing their hair, in order to convince the natives of Jewry that *he himself* observed the law. What would those converted Jews have said, if they had been admitted to this consultation? I fear that they would have been scandalized to a great degree. But, in the scales of *Columbanus*, the woe against them who scandalize the infirm, is nothing when compared with the *noble dignity of consulting*, on all church affairs, *in public*. He would not be so clamorous for publicity, I should suppose, if he himself were admitted to the *exclusive* secret.

I have done with the system of *Columbanus*, on “the manner of proceeding in councils;” that he has relied much more on topics of inflammation, throughout the whole, than on matter of proof, you have witnessed. What sort of proof he has been able to marshal, you have also seen.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Yours, &c.

\* Gal. Ch. II. v. 11, and 16, 18, 19, 21.

## LETTER V.

---

### *On Provincial Councils.*

REVEREND SIR,

AS, in *general councils*, the entire *judicial* authority and *legislative right* now appears to be that of *bishops*, so in all inferior synods, the right of propounding, deciding, enacting and proclaiming is that of *bishops*, and of no others. When I assert this *exclusive right* in *bishops*, I protest, at the same time, against the unphilosophical construction, which *Columbanus* has imposed upon the term *exclusive*, as applied to *right*. From *his* strain of argument, it seems, that by an “exclusive” right in *bishops*, he understands a right such as *must always* shut out all but *bishops* from every concern and partnership in ecclesiastical discussions; whereas, by an “exclusive” right, is to be meant, as I understand, not an *unsocial*, but an *independent* right; not a  
determination

to exercise the *right* evermore in *solitude*, but to claim and to hold it as inalienably *proper*, to the character of *bishops alone*. To speak precisely, an *exclusive right* is that which *excludes* and *supersedes every right*, that would affect to stand in competition with itself; not that right which excludes every *man*, or *any individual man*, necessarily, from a communication of its exercise. The *right* of the apostles was commensurate with their mission, and their mission was to all the nations. But this right, as he himself allows, (when he labours to reason against “exclusive” synods from the pattern of these meetings, stiled by him, *councils* in Jerusalem) was not exercised in solitude at all times. That the apostles, in exercising their authority did not always *finally* decide, at least, did not promulge after decision had amongst themselves, is evident from the sacred writings. To believe, at the same time, that their *unanimous* decision was the last and most sacred, and unappealable authority, in all causes of christian revelation, if perchance, or by an impossible supposition, the other disciples or converts should have been differently inclined, is, as I conceive, but an act of faith in CHRIST himself.

This distinction premised, I must revive your acquaintance with a good old author, who, as early as the ninth century, gave to the christian world a manner of proceeding in councils, as observed in *his country*, to which the advocates of the right “in the second order” are indebted for some countenance

tenance. This ancient sage is no other than *Isidorus*, surnamed *Peccator* or *Mercator*, the utterer of forged decretal epistles, the *repairer* of old councils, especially those of Spain, by interpolations, false dates, imaginary consulates, prefaces and signatures. This *Isidore*, in his compilation,\* sets out from the “manner of holding councils” in his native country.† His formula is transcribed from the *fourth* of Toledo, in all that regards the entry of the bishops, deacons, notaries, and laymen, and *the barring of*  
*the*

\* Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, in the beginning of the ninth century, advers. Hincmar, Eand. Cap. 24. informs us, that Riculfus of Metz had got possession of the (decretal) epistles collected by Isidorus from Spain, and had glutted those countries with them. This authority is very great in settling the *country* from which *Isidore* came forth, as well as in determining the *newness* of the collection. However, *Dicotti*, late a celebrated professor of canon law at Rome, in his *Institutiones Canonicae*, (second edition, Rome, T. I. p. 69, 1792.) after quoting the text of Hincmar above recited, writes thus “Hodie, inter omnes fere eruditos constat, eum fuisse, Gallicanum, seu Germano francum, sed quis hic fuerit incertum est.” That *Isidore* might have been a subject of the New Western Empire, is probable enough: that, however he was a native of Spain, will clearly appear from the exact correspondence between the manner of holding councils, which *he* gives, and the *latter* Spanish councils, to which I shall refer. Grossly as he mistakes the meaning of ecclesiastical terms, and of the purer Latin used in former times; yet he never once mentions abbots as *signing*, much less as *defining* in the councils of his *country*. And yet it will appear that he wrote after the *seventeenth* council of Toledo, the last upon record of Gothic councils.

† In principio vero voluminis hujus qualiter concilium *apud nos* celebretur, posuimus: ut qui *nostrum ordinem* sequi voluerint, sciant qualiter id agere debeant. Hard. I. 4.

*the doors.* As to presbyters, although he transcribes the very words, *let such presbyters be called in as shall be warranted by good cause to intervene*, yet in allowing the presbyters to sit, he adds, “such however as the *metropolitan* may have selected, for the purpose of *sitting with himself*, who must be persons by all means capable of giving a judgment and shaping a definition along with him.”\* On this addition I will only remark these points. First, that the gloss not only annuls all *divine* right in the “second order,” but abrogates the undoubted privilege of episcopal proxies. Secondly, that the ability required in those favoured priests of the metropolitan, is disingenuously stolen from the letter of Saint Avitus, of which I shall speak presently, concerning episcopal proxies.

“After prayers ended,” says Isidore, “and after the reading of certain canons, the metropolitan exhorts all to unanimity, invites each in the synod to state his doubts, and conjures them in *judging*, to shew justice without favour or strife.” It is from this authority, that *Columbanus* seems to have derived his information, that in councils the *metropolitan*, *president* or preacher, exhorted the assembly to *fear God*, and not to swerve to the right or left. The fact however is, that this exhortation is borrowed from the written speeches of the kings in the latter councils of Toledo, when addressing

Q

dressing

\* Quos tamen sessuros secum Metropolitanus elegerit, qui utique et cum eo judicare aliquid et diffinire possint. Ibid.

dressing *bishops and nobles*, as the *Comitia Regni*, on the impartiality to be maintained in determining the matters that would come before them.

After this exhortation, says Isidore, “*all priests, deacons, and other religious persons, shall enter to hear spiritual instruction.*” This text is somewhat unfavourable to the *divine right* of sitting and of *judging*, in “the second order.” On the fourth day, all those priests, deacons, and religious shall be excluded, “*some priests however remaining in the council, whom the metropolitan shall have thought worthy of being thus distinguished.*” \* “If any *priest, or deacon, or clerk, or layman* is minded to appeal to the council on any business, let the suggestion be made to the archdeacon, and the archdeacon notify to the council; whereupon such persons are to be admitted *one by one*, and to move their cause.† On the day for dissolving the council, let the canons established in council be read before the church, in the open space.”... “These being concluded, let each, *returning to the place where he had sat in the council*, sign the canons.” ‡

\* Sicque omnes, qui de Religiosis in retroactis diebus *pro spirituali instructione* interfuerant in Concilio, foras egrediantur, residentibus aliquibus presbyteris in concilio, quos Metropolitanus ordinaverit honorandos. Ibid. p. 8.

† Nam etiam presbyteros, &c. tunc illis et introeundi *singillatim* et proponendi licentia concedatur. Ibid.

‡ Item in die qua sanctum concilium absolvendum est Canones qui constituti sunt *coram ecclesia*, in *publico* relegantur...deinde *ad locum redeunte*



Such is the rule in Isidore for the holding of Spanish councils. On which it is to be observed, first, that it completely negatives all *right* in “the second order,” even to be present at councils, secondly, that it *compels all* the clergy to attend *for instruction sake*, and then orders *all* persons, even presbyters, to retire, except those, whom the archbishop may have thought *proper to distinguish*, or the council itself may have privileged. How far the regulation for *barring the doors*, and for admitting appellants, *one at a time*, to those ecclesiastical assizes, is *favourable to that publicity*, which *Columbanus* esteems the symptom of *plain dealing*; how far such regulations go to *condemn the inquisitorial darkness of exclusive synods*, and the *novel pretensions of episcopacy to judge for itself*, as well as for the *representatives of the seventy-two disciples*, (whosoever those representatives may be, if they exist, or have ever existed), it is now your business to ascertain.

What is a provincial synod? The answer of *Columbanus* is, that it is *not an exclusive meeting of bishops*; *not a meeting with closed doors*; for such meetings are inquisitorial, and fear the light of day. It is, according to *Columbanus*, a meeting, at which the priests of “the second order” have the right of assisting, discussing, judging, and signing :

Q 2

nor

*redeuntes, ubi in concilio resederunt canones ipsos subscribant. Ibid.* The rule here given as to *returning to sign in their places*, will appear to be derived from a misconception of a sentence in the council of Riez, of which hereafter.

nor is this right less than of divine authority, in *his* doctrine. Why so? because he holds the contrary doctrine to be *heretical*, which term, in plain English, implies a repugnance to divine authority. Hear now *my* answer, out of the doctrine of councils.

I. From the Canons called Apostolical, Canon xxxvi. “ Twice a year let there be a *synod* of the  
“ BISHOPS. Let *them* examine *one another* on the  
“ articles of christian religion, and let *them* deter-  
“ mine whatever dissensions arise in the church.”\*

II. From the First GENERAL Council of Nicea, Canon v. “ With regard to persons excommuni-  
“ cated by their bishops, let the sentence remain  
“ in force, according to the canon which forbids  
“ any rejected by one bishop, to be received by  
“ another. But let it be examined, whether the ex-  
“ communication may not have been imposed through  
“ fretfulness, contentiousness, or some such other  
“ unamiable quality in the bishop. For the purpose  
“ therefore of having this properly inquired into, the  
“ holding of *synods* twice a year, in each province,  
“ is decreed to be a laudable practice: that so, when  
“ *all the* BISHOPS of the province are met, those ques-  
“ tions may be examined, and thus the persons, who  
“ shall be proved to have offended their bishop, shall  
“ justly be judged excommunicated from all the others,  
“ until

\* Δευτερον ἅ ἐως συνόδου γίνεσθω ἡναι ἐπισκοπων, και ανακρινέωσαν  
αλληλους ἡν δογματα της ευσέβειας, και τας εμπιπύσας εκκλησιαστικας  
-ῆληθειας ἐπιλυετασαν.

“ until either the *body*, or the BISHOP *himself* shall  
 “ think fit to decree in mitigation of the sentence.”\*

III. From the Council of Antioch, Canon xx.  
 “ For the affairs of the church, and the termination  
 “ of controversies, it is decreed, that the holding of  
 “ synods of the BISHOPS in each province, twice a  
 “ year, is a laudable practice;...so that *priests, deacons,*  
 “ *and all who may think themselves aggrieved,* shall  
 “ *present themselves* before such synods, and from the  
 “ *synod* shall obtain a *final judgment.*”†

IV. From the Council of Laodicea, Canon xl.  
 “ BISHOPS when invited to synod, shall not slight  
 “ the call, but shall set out, either to teach or to  
 “ be taught, for the ordering of ecclesiastics and  
 “ others. A *bishop* who slights the intimation,  
 “ shall be his own accuser, unless kept away by  
 “ indisposition.”‡

V. From the Second GENERAL Council. Extract  
 of Canon vi. “ If any persons, (neither disqualified  
 “ from accusing by heresy, excommunication, or  
 “ former conviction, nor being accused,) pretend to  
 “ have charges of an ecclesiastical nature against  
 “ their bishop; this sacred synod orders, that in  
 “ the first instance they shall prosecute before the  
 “ BISHOPS

\* Labbe Con. II. 233.

† Και παρὰ τὰς Συνόδους επικρίσεως ἰυγχανειν. Labb. Con. II. 571,  
 572. επικρισις is a judgment in appeal, which even *Dionysius Exiguus*,  
 in other respects an incomparable translator, has misinterpreted, *et*  
*synodi experiantur examen.*

‡ Hardouin I. p. 787.

“ BISHOPS of the province, and establish the charge  
 “ by evidence against the bishop. But if it should  
 “ happen, that the provincials are incompetent to  
 “ give redress on the matters of accusation, let the  
 “ accusers in such case present themselves before a  
 “ greater *synod* of the BISHOPS of the *primacy* con-  
 “ vened together.”\*

VI. From the Fourth GENERAL Council. Can. xix.  
 “ We have received information, that in the provinces  
 “ the synods of the BISHOPS, enacted by the church-  
 “ rule do not take place, and that many affairs of the  
 “ church are thus left uncured. The sacred synod,  
 “ therefore decrees, pursuant to the canons of the  
 “ fathers, that twice in the year the BISHOPS of the  
 “ province shall assemble, whithersoever the metro-  
 “ politan judge fit, and shall rectify all matters that  
 “ may arise from time to time: and as to those  
 “ BISHOPS, who will not meet the appointment, but  
 “ will abide in their cities, being neither infirm,  
 “ nor prevented by indispenible occupations, let  
 “ them be rebuked fraternally.”†

VII. From the Canons, called of the Sixth GENERAL  
 council. “ Being willing that the decrees of our  
 “ Blessed Fathers shall universally remain in force,  
 “ we revive the canon, expressly ordering, that in  
 “ each year synods of the BISHOPS shall be held,  
 “ wheresoever the metropolitan shall think proper.  
 “ But

\* Const. p. 1. Labb. II. p. 950. εἰ τίνες, μὴτε ἀρεβέτικοι, μὴτε ἀκοινωνήτοι  
 εἴηεν κ. τ. λ. D.

† Council. Chalced. Labbe. Council. IV. 764.

“ But as, owing to the irruptions of the barbarians  
 “ and to certain other causes, the *governors of the*  
 “ *churches* cannot possibly meet in *their synods twice*  
 “ a year, it is decreed that once in each year, by all  
 “ means, a synod of the BISHOPS *aforesaid* shall be  
 “ held on account of the ecclesiastical causes which  
 “ naturally arise.”\* A *bishop* absenting himself to  
 be reprimanded, as in the canon of Chalcedon  
 last mentioned.

VIII. From the Seventh GENERAL Council, second  
 of Nicea, Canon vi. “ Whereas there is a canon  
 “ expressing, that twice a year in each province, ec-  
 “ clesiastical deliberations shall be managed through  
 “ a congregation of the BISHOPS ; and the fathers of  
 “ the *sixth* council defined, that, on account of the  
 “ laborious travelling, and the poverty of the persons  
 “ so to be assembled, the meeting should take place  
 “ once a year, by all means, and all excuses not-  
 “ withstanding, and that errors and excesses should  
 “ be thus corrected: this canon we re-enact. If  
 “ any temporal power obstruct such meeting, let him  
 “ be excommunicated.”....“ And whereas *the synod*  
 “ is convened for causes regarding the canons and  
 “ the Gospel, it behoves the BISHOPS assembled  
 “ to employ their care and meditation on having  
 “ the commandments of God observed.”†

IX. From the Eighth GENERAL Council, Canon  
 xii. “ We have received information, that no synod  
 “ can

\* Labb. Concil. VI. 1145.

† See Note at the end of this Letter.

“ can be held, unless the secular magistrate be present.  
 “ The divine canons no where enact, that temporal  
 “ rulers should intervene in synods, BUT SOLELY THE  
 “ BISHOPS: wherefore, neither do we find that such  
 “ have intervened, unless in general councils: neither  
 “ is it *lawful* that the secular powers should be *even*  
 “ *spectators* of the contestations that arise amongst the  
 “ *priests of God.*” i. e. bishops.\*

Such is the only description afforded by the oriental synods from the opening of the *third* century after CHRIST to the conclusion of the *ninth*. I have added nothing, as I have suppressed nothing. Do these quotations speak expressly, or not, that a *synod*, which in its native acceptation, means a *stated meeting*, in ecclesiastical use, means, solely and exclusively, a convention of *bishops*? Have you ever found a term so unequivocally explained in any book, or by any practice, as you have this term, *synod*, explained? And by what great authorities! Not from anonymous pamphleteers, not by parodists of Gospel texts, not by unauthorized virtuosi; but by the authorities of the christian church under persecution;—by the three hundred and eighteen at Nicea, through whose inspired agency it pleased God to fix the belief of all

\* Laube Concil. VIII. 1575. ἤλθεν εἰς τὰς ἡμερῶν ἀκοῆς, ἵνα μὴ δυνασθεῖαι ἀνευ ἀρχιεπίσκωπης παρυσίας συνόδον γενέσθαι. Οὐδαμῶς δὲ εἰ θεοὶ κανόνες συνεχῆσθαι κοσμικῆς ἀρχιεπίσκωπης ἐν ταῖς συνόδοις νομοθεσίαι, ΑΛΛΑ ΜΟΝΟΥΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥΣ. Ὅθεν καὶ πλὴν τῶν οἰκουμενικῶν Συνόδων, τὴν παρυσίαν αὐτῶν γεγεννημένην εὐρισκομένην. Οὐδὲ γὰρ θεμίλον ἐστὶ γενέσθαι Σεβαστῶς κοσμικῆς ἀρχιεπίσκωπης τῶν τοις ἱερέεσσι τῷ θεῷ συμβουλευτικῶν πραγμάτων.

generations, when the Monarchical DEITY was assailed by the gasping, desperate effort of polytheism;— by the fathers at Constantinople, who adhering to the faith of the West, proclaimed the SPIRIT, proceeding from the Father, to be SOVEREIGN, and quickening, and to be worshipped and glorified in TRINITY; —by the Fathers at Ephesus and at Chalcedon, whose ordinances affixed the seal to the revelation concerning the SON OF GOD; by the Fathers at Nicea, in the second council of that name, who holily and gloriously bound for evermore, in the shackles of malediction, those who satan-like would accuse the redeemed and everlasting church of Christ with *idolatry*, which is apostacy of heart from the living God; by the fathers of the eighth synod, the last general council held in common between the Oriental and Western churches, and the testamentary act of Eastern faith in charity, when about to yield itself to the demon of schism.

Those general councils, even *Columbanus* will grant to have possessed authority. He must therefore allow, that such provincial synods, as those councils ordained, and no other were holden. If so, the claim for “the second order” to sit in its own right, or to discuss or judge by divine right, even in provincial councils, is at once exploded in every church of the christian world, which adhered either to the decrees called apostolical canons, or to the canons and practice enacted and followed at Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus and

Chalcedon. The claim for the "second order" is exploded in every church, which admitted the decrees of Laodicea and Antioch, decrees, which in fact, were accepted throughout the East, in the fifth century.

It has been occasionally asserted by some writers on ecclesiastical polity, that every national church has the authority to frame its own discipline and ritual. The assertion has been lately thrown out by *Columbanus*, without qualification or restriction, and *Columbanus* declares himself a *Catholic* priest. In the rubric of the *common prayer*, which had for its authors men both grave and decent, I find a condition, which at the very least implies, that nothing be done so as to cause scandal. Here I acknowledge, that if there is not entire truth, there is condescension, and there is a disavowal of tyranny. The proposition however, even so chastened and limited, is opposite to the principles of a Catholic church. For, no national church, as such, has any claim to perpetuity: no national church, as such, has any higher or better warrant for the *Catholicity* of its discipline, than the acquiescence and ratification of the church at large. No part of the universal church can innovate upon its ancient landmarks, and dictate to the other local churches, or to any local church, that no scandal must be taken at the innovation. All difference between church and church in points of discipline is bad, unless immemorial and prescriptive; or unless induced by the manifest and incontrovertible

tible



ible necessity of *self preservation*, that is to say, of the preservation of christianity itself; or unless introduced to the church at large under that authority, and by that mediation, which the world of christians has recognized as the arbitrator, and pacifier, and chief of its federal system. In proportion as any local church will nationalize its discipline, without the previous conditions, which I have mentioned, in the same proportion does it become selfish and inhospitable; in the same proportion does it tend to overrate its own innovations, and to undervalue the blessing of *one heart and soul*, animating the world and owning kindred, in truth and in practice, with every true believer in CHRIST. I will not urge here, what it may be enough to hint, that all practices merely national gravitate to degeneracy; while, at the same time, the practices of confederated human nature necessarily advance towards perfection. But I say, that whenever a national or particular church hoists the standard of independence in discipline, and proceeds, by way of fact, to establish such independence, it is a vain and empty palliative for the mischief it must create, to declare that no scandal is meant to be given. The feeling of scandal is not to be stilled by words: this feeling is even exasperated by such declarations. The precedent will be opposed with violence, because it tends to the dissolution of the great body; and because in order to justify the precedent, new principles of faith, or new distinctions in morals will be either soon or ultimately

resorted

resorted to by the innovating church. At all events, charity will be extinguished.

If so great must the error be of a national church, attempting at this day to regenerate its discipline, by its own authority, what term will adequately suit the misdeed of a Catholic priest, who while he plays off the artillery of *ancient councils*, and those councils taught to say whatever he pleases, against Irish Catholic bishops, at the same time raises the signal of dispersion, and would lead us through anarchy and *Veto*, and re-establishment of *something like our ancient clans*, to a final secession and exile from Catholic faith, and that universal protection, which, in the travels of our fathers through the inhospitable desert, was a guiding cloud in the day, and in the night-time a fiery pillar; for GOD walked with his people, conducting them through fire and sea, and led them forth into a sabbath of rest !

I am, Reverend Sir,  
&c.

## NOTE to Page 119.

Labb. Concil VII. p. 602. It was through respect for this Canon, of the *second* of Nicea, I was induced to give, in this letter, the canon of the so called *sixth* general council, to which it refers. In deducing the signification of the words, *provincial synod*, I had been free to resort to all unsuspected authorities, nor could any question, on the *sanctity* or *wisdom* of the canons, called of the *sixth* council, be rationally stated in a mere philological disquisition. However, I feel no scruple in declaring, that those canons called of the sixth council, not only are *not* of that council, as even Tarasius granted (when he pretended that they were framed by the same bishops, five or six years after the sixth general council, Labb. VII. 234.) but that besides they manifestly betray, that they were compiled by a layman. Not to dwell upon the ignorant boldness with which the immemorial usages of the western churches are attempted to be suppressed or refined by an impudent Greek cabal, the doer of these canons receives in one breath the council of Sardica, which enacted, that the Pope, on appeal from a bishop might send judges *a lute*; and the African councils, which impugned this practice, erroneously no doubt, (because their primate *Gratus* had been in the council of Sardica) but yet perseveringly. As for the *signatures* to these canons, on the identity of which as a demonstrative argument, Tarasius relied at Nicea, the argument is worse than none. In the case of a *general* council, he who appeals after ninety years to the *identity* of hand-writing between two documents, *both* of which he has all along kept in his own possession, appeals to *private* evidence in a case of supposed notoriety, and gra-

tuitously assumes, either that no *forged* imitation of a genuine writing can be made, or that, whenever *two* writings correspond, *both* are necessarily genuine, though coming out of the same hands, and not possible to be confronted elsewhere. This, in *principle*, is a confession of falsity; in other words, is an acknowledgement, that the document so put forward, is unsupported by all evidence, and is liable to every presumption of fraud. But, in fact, the assertion of Tarasius is incorrect. The same bishops did *not* sign the definitions of the sixth council, and the pretended canons. For example, out of twenty-two bishops, of the name of *Theodore*, in the sixth council, of *three* only the names appear to the canons. Again, in the canons, the name of Justinian the younger, appears foremost, and before those of the bishops; whereas the emperors *always* signed *after* all the bishops, as Basilius declares in the eighth general council. Labbe Concil. VIII. p. 137. “The emperor Basil said: “Our Serenity copying after our predecessors, Constantine “the Great, Theodosius, Marcian, and the others, would “fain sign after the *subscriptions of all the bishops*: but “since you are pleased to grant us a precedency, we “will sign after the delegates,” (of the four great sees.) And, in the very sixth, of which we speak, it is expressly recorded, that Constantine signed after Theodorus, the last bishop in the council. (Labbe. VI. 1044.)

When in the second of Nicca, Tarasius stood up to read out of those canons, the abbot Sabbas asked, how it came to pass, that he read from loose papers, (Labbe. VII. p. 933.) and not from a volume. Tarasius answers, that he read from the original papers which the bishops had  
signed.

signed. This answer, if even satisfactory as to the hand-writing and signature was still extraordinary as to the *canons*. In councils, each bishop signed his own copy, as perfected by his notary. When the volume was engrossed, the signatures were either copied and attested, or were made anew. In either case the production of *loose* papers and sheets of signatures was foreign to the object of proving the genuineness of the canons which were disputed. To add with a curious fact, hitherto not remarked, Justinian the younger, in his letter to pope Sergius, mentions, that he had taken up all the copies which remained in Constantinople of the *sixth* council; by which if we understand the copies of individual bishops, we can easily account for the possession of the *hand-writing* in paper-sheets.

LETTER

## LETTER VI.



*On the National Councils of Africa, the Gauls, and  
Spain.*

REVEREND SIR,

LET us now proceed to inspect the “manner of proceeding” in national councils, throughout the West; beginning from the era of the establishment of christianity in the Roman empire. By *the West*, I would signify those portions of the empire which were colonized by Rome, and of which the municipal governments were assimilated to those of the parent country. Amongst national councils, those of Africa claim the foremost rank, whether we advert to the extension of that church, or to the number of its bishops, or to its sufferings, or to its great men, one only of whom, AUGUSTINE by  
genius,

genius, which in him was almost supernatural, and by goodness, which in him was only less than perfect, were great enough to ennoble any church or nation.

In the first council of Carthage the tenor of the acts begins;—"The *bishop* of Carthage, *Gratus*,  
 "having taken seat along with his *colleagues* from  
 "the several other provinces, namely, Felix, Fortu-  
 "natian, and the remaining, *whose signatures are*  
 "given herewith, *Gratus* said." The canons follow. These *expressly* mention, by whom proposed, by whom seconded, by whom enacted;—and all are *bishops*. When *Gratus* the primate moves a regulation, the council immediately declares; when any of the other *nine* bishops who spoke, introduced any canon, yet it is *Gratus* who seconds and recommends it to the council. In the last canon of this council, the bishop of Carthage speaks: "It only remains,  
 "that *you* confirm, by *your signatures*, what has been  
 "put in writing on *your own* agreement. "They"  
 (*i. e.* the bishops, as appears from canon I), "all said,  
 "The *acts of this council* shew that we were consent-  
 "ing; our consent shall moreover be declared by  
 "our *signing*: and *they all* signed."\*

S

From

\* Hard. Concil. I. 685, 688. Labb. II. 1822, 1827. Cum *Gratus* episcopus Carthag. in concilio *una cum collegis suis* consedisset qui ex diversis provinciis, &c. Felice Baianensi, Fortunatiano Capsitano, Crescente Bagensi, &c. et cæteris *quorum manus continetur*, *Gratus* epus dixit . . . Can. I. Ergo si vobis placet consideremus primum titulum rebaptizationis . . . universi *episcopi* dixerunt, absit, absit. Inlicitam enim *sancimus* rebaptizationem. Ad finem in Can. XIV. *Gratus* episcopus dixit, Superest iam ut placita *omnium vestrum*,

From this it appears, that *they only* signed, who decreed; and *they only* decreed who were *bishops*.

In the second council of Carthage “Geneclius (or “Genethlius), having taken seat with his *brother* “*bishops*, spoke.” In this council also, it is expressly recorded, that all who speak, propound, and decree, are *bishops*. In conclusion, the primate Genethlius says, “Therefore let *us* confirm, by our several “signatures, our common assertion. *The bishops* all “answered, Ordered, ordered: and they all signed.”

In the *third* council of Carthage, the *bishops alone* are seated; the deacons stand in waiting. *Bishops alone* speak, *alone* are called on to sign, *alone* are mentioned as signing. † So in the fifth, † (the acts of the fourth being lost, save as to one temporary ordinance), § and sixth, || and seventh, ¶ and eighth

quæ ad consensum vestrum sunt scripta, vestra quoque subscriptione firmatis. Universi dixerunt: Et consensisse nos, concilii hujus scripta testantur, & subscriptione nostra consensus declarabitur noster. Et subscripserunt.

\* Hard. I. 951, 954. Labb. ibid. 1832. Cum Genethlius episcopus nua cum Victore Abdiritano et alio Victore Puppiano & cæteris coepiscopis suis consedisset. Ad fin. in Can. XII. Omnia ergo quæ a cætu vestro gloriosissimo statuta sunt placet ab omnibus custodiri? Universi episcopi dixerunt; Placet, placet: custodiantur ab omnibus. . . Genethlius episcopus dixit: Gratulor, domino nostro præstante, quod pro statu ecclesiæ catholicæ cuncta nos salubri consilio servanda decrevimus. Et ideo quæ ab omnibus sunt dicta, propria debemus subscriptione firmare: Ab universis episcopis dictum est, fiat. fiat. Et subscripserunt.

† Hard. I. 960, 970. † In Cod. Can. Eccl. Afr. Hard. 894.

§ Ibid. || Ibid. Hard. I. 936. ¶ Ibid. 907, 911.



eighth\* councils at Carthage. In what remains of the ninth, *bishops alone* appear and sign.† In the eleventh the same:‡ and so until the invasion of the Vandals, in each of the councils in Africa, of which the style is preserved. In the others we have only so much of the *preface* as shews that the recited form was a thing of course. In the council of Carthage, under Boniface, of which we have the acts at length, beyond the first sitting, you will find no variance from the “manner of proceeding” under Genethlius; *bishops alone* sit in the council; the *deacons* attend; the *bishops alone*, and *expressly*, are called upon to *subscribe*, and do sign§ their common decrees.

The question, therefore, as to any right of *attending*, *discussing*, and *signing*, in “the second order,” is decided in the negative, by the old African church; nor will the *imperfection of manuscripts* retrieve the cause: the proofs are staring, and consist *not* of the names of bishops who signed, but in the explicit declaration,

\* Ibid. 911, 915.

† Ibid. to 918.

‡ Ibid. 919.

§ Hard. II. 1071. Labb. IV. 1629. Cum Bonifacius episcopus . . . cum episcopis suis . . . consedisset quorum nomina subscriptiones ostendant, adstantibus diaconis. And at the close of the first session, (Hard. 1081. Labb. 1640). *Episcopi dixerunt: Magna hæc et vere multo tempore utilis futura provisio quam subscriptione singulorum confirmari cupientes, manu propria nos consensisse profitemur. Bonifacius dixit, Quoniam dei &c. Nunc interim quidquid pro ecclesiarum generali utilitate recitatum est . . . ad perennem firmitatem propria, sicut ipsi quoque postulastis, subscriptione firmemus. Episcopi dixerunt; fiat. fiat, and subscribe.*

claration, that *bishops* who *alone decreed*, were those whose signature was demanded, in confirmation of *th. ir own laws*.

From the church of Africa let us retire homewards. The church of France stands second in the estimation of canonists, and, as long as it kept up the practice of synods, was, next after the patriarchal church of Rome, the exemplar of learned institutions and chaste practice in its ecclesiastical government. In the Gallican councils, at least, may we not expect to find this right of *sitting and discussing, judging and signing* either recognized formally in the "second order," or exerted in some manner? Let us try.

In the council of Turin there is not a word of the second order present. The subscriptions are lost, you will say. Granted. But the preface remains extant, in which the synod declares, that it had been convened *on the requisition of the bishops of Gaul,\** and addresses those bishops as *brothers*.

In the council of Riez, we have the preface, canons, and signatures. The first canon declares, that the *episcopal synod* was resolved to deal medicinally, not vindictively, with *Armentarius*, an intruding bishop. The sixth canon mentions the agreement of all *the bishops assembled.* † The conclusion is this, "As we have held this session in the name of Christ, so let

us

\* Hardon. I. 953. See *ibid.* Can. VI.

† *Ibid.* Concil. Rej. p. 1730. Can. I. Quia non uiscendi sed remediandi studium universorum pectora *sacerdotali concilio* insederat. Can. VI. In commune autem omnes qui convenerant *sacerdotes* censuerunt, *viz. not to interfere in a vacant see, unless as administrators sede vacante.*

us sign in our proper handwriting." *Thirteen bishops sign, and one presbyter,\* commissioned to be present, and to sign, as proxy for his bishop Constantine.*

In the first council of Orange, we have the signatures; sixteen bishops and one proxy. In the twenty-ninth canon it appears that they who met, and signed, and judged, were *bishops*. †

In the synod of Vaison we have neither preface nor signatures; however, even thus, from certain incidental words, we may infer, that the meeting was of *bishops* to consult and judge, ‡ and promulgate.

In the council of Anjou§ the preface is this;  
 “The BISHOPS having assembled in the city of Anjou,  
 “ for the ordination of a bishop, and all having taken  
 “ their seats, namely, Leo, Eustochius, and those  
 “ BISHOPS, &c.; it was considered and judged, that *they*  
 “ should commit to writing whatsoever *they had*  
 “ decreed

\* Sicut in nomine Domini consedimus *manu propria* subscribamus:—  
*last of all, Ego Vincentius presbyter episcopi Constantini, ab eodem ordinatus interfui et subscripsi vice ipsius, ibid. 1752. It appears, that Isidore, the compiler, built his rule, that the persons convened in synod should return to their seats, and there should sign, upon a mis-construction of the text; sicut in nomine domini consedimus.*

† Hardou, I. 1736. Hæc quæ subscripsimus cum eorum concordia, &c. De die ac loco conventus per *nosmetipsos* commonehimur.

‡ Hard. *ibid.* p. 1757. Concil. Vas. ex Can. VII. Placuit præterea ... etiam in *nostri ordinis* ..., ut se *Episcopus*, si quem, &c.

§ The canons, called of the second council of Arles, have no mark by which to ascertain at what time and on what occasion they were published or compiled.

“*decreed* by word of mouth.”\* The signatures are gone; but are they wanted after this preamble?

Of the third council of Arles we have the decree and pacification concluded by the *bishops*, in the cause of the abbot of Lerins. It favours of the odious *exclusive*, as you may see. “We having assembled within the sacristy of the church of Arles, after prayers ended, took our seats, *no person being admitted* to overhear from without, † in order to deliberate on a cure for the scandal that had arisen.”

In the synod of Tours, “The BISHOPS who *sign underneath*,” meet, and resolve to “*publish their decrees*.” So in the council of Vannes, the *bishops* decree, sign, and transmit to their absent colleagues for confirmation. ‡ So in the council of Agde, the synod consists of *bishops and their proxies*. Hilarius the primate signs thus, “I have subscribed to these *canons*, according as has been decreed by all my fellow BISHOPS who have signed with me.”§ So in the council of Orleans.||

Now to the council of Epon, which was summoned by Saint Avitus of Vienne, and Viventiolus of Lyons. We have not only this council in full, but even the circular letters sent by those two bishops throughout their

\* Hard. II. 778.

† Ibid. 779. Cum Arelate in secretario ecclesie convenissemus, premissa prece ad Dominum, nullo extrinsecus arbitrio interveniente, resedimus de remedio scandali. This decree is quoted as an authority in the *African* concert under Boniface.

‡ Hardou. I. 794, 795, 798. § Hardou. 1008. || Ibid. 1006.

their several districts. In that from Avitus to each bishop, there is a clause as to episcopal proxies. “ If, “ by any chance, which God avert, any *bishop* should “ be overtaken with heavy sickness, let him cause to “ appear before his *brothers, two presbyters* of highly “ respectable character, *furnished with his commis- “ sion, and to act for him.* But he will have the re- “ gard to select such persons, as by science, as well “ as by respectability, may be entitled to intervene in “ a council of BISHOPS; such men as BISHOPS may “ willingly discourse with. Men whose *appointment “ may be warrantable, if their selection be judicious, “ for the purpose of confirming and signing decrees, “ in the name of their BISHOP.* But let nothing less “ *than extreme necessity extort this substitution.*”\*

Did Saint Avitus, who thus limits the use of *proxies*, believe in any original right of the “second order” at large, to sit, or discuss, or judge, or sign in councils?

The circular of Viventius is addressed to “his “ brother bishops, to *all* the clergy, men of official “ rank, and proprietors in his district.” † He notifies, that

\* Sed si forte, &c. duos presbyteros magne & probabilis vite, mandati instructione firmatos, fratribus, pro se, presentare procuret; sed tales dignetur eligere, quos episcoporum concilio non minus scientia quam reverentia faciat jure interesse: cum quibus delectet summos pontifices conferre sermonem: quos ad definitiones p. o. episcopo suo sancendas subscribendasque, cum fuerit solertia eligi, sit auctoritas legi. Sed illud non extorqueat nisi summa necessitas. Hard. II. 1045.

† Fratribus & episcopis, universis clericis, honoratis, et possessoribus territorii nostri. ibid. 1046.

that a *council of BISHOPS* is to be held in the district of Epon, and proceeds, “Whither, as is expedient, “we strictly *order* the clergy to assemble, and permit the laity to be present; that even the people “may learn what shall be there *determined by the* “*BISHOPS ONLY*; and because it is just, that all catholics should wish to have exemplary clergymen, “we *give* free introduction to all, *that* they may accuse in such matters as are within their knowledge.”\*

Did Viventiolus believe, that *all the ecclesiastics* possessed the right (when he thus *orders them all* to assemble,) of sitting as judges in the council of bishops?

The first canon of this council expresses who were they that enacted and signed. “If any one of the “*bishops* who by *their signatures* have confirmed these “unanimous decrees, or of their successors, shall violate,” &c.†

Thus also in the *fourth* of Arles, *bishops* are those who meet, propose, decree, and sign.‡ In the second council of Orange, held, after the dedication of a church,

\* Ibid. Ubi clericos, sicut expedit, *convenire compellimus*, laicos permittimus interesse; ut quæ a *solis pontificibus* ordinanda sunt, et populus possit agnoscere. Et quia justum est ut omnes Catholici clericos bonæ vitæ habere desiderent, reprehendendi quod quisque noverit aditum omnibus aperimus.

† Ibid. 1051. Si quîs sanctorum Antistitum, qui *statuta præsentis subscriptionibus propriis* firnaverunt, &c.

‡ Hardon. II. 1070.

church, “The BISHOPS *ordain*, that the *illustrious* “*men*, who had assembled for the said dedication, “should *sign individually*, the EPISCOPAL decrees.” \*

Did this signing acknowledge in the laity any *right* of attending, judging, or confirming ecclesiastical causes ?

In the *fourth* of Orleans, and in the *fifth*, † I find *bishops* alone decreeing, and *bishops* or *their* deputies signing. So in the second of Auvergne; ‡ so in the fifth of Arles; § in the third of Paris; || in the second of Lyons; ¶ in the second of Tours; \*\* in the great council of Mascon; †† and so without exception, in every Gallican synod, which is not mutilated, until the great decline of ecclesiastical discipline in the eighth century, by the habitual intermission of synods. In no one of those councils is it even hinted, that priests of the “second order” have the *right* of sitting or judging. In *every* council that alludes to the *Right*, you have seen that the legislative authority is claimed *exclusively* by *bishops*.

If, in the revival of ecclesiastical discipline, if for encouragement or for a reward to learning or to virtue,

T

OR

\* Concil. Araus. IV. Et quia definitionem antiquorum patrum *nostramque*, quæ infra scripta est non solum religiosis, sed etiam Laicis medicamentum esse & desideramus & cupimus; *placuit* ut eam etiam illustres & magnifici viri, qui vobiscum ad præfatam festivitatem convenerunt, *propria manu subscriberent*. Hard. *ibid.* 1102.

† *Ibid.* 1436, 1441, 1443. ‡ *Ibid.* 1451.

§ Hardouin. III. 327, 329. || 337, *Preface* & Can. X.

¶ 354 Can. II. Si quid iuter fratres, *id est co-episcopos nostros*.

\*\* 357 *Praefatio*.

†† *Misc. Can.* II. Hard. 459, *præf. Can.* & *Can.* XV. XX.

or in addition to the splendour of episcopacy, or in order to brace and to extend at the same time the episcopal jurisdiction, certain dignities were invented, or if already in being, were ennobled by positive ecclesiastical laws; and if by such laws the newly favoured dignities were privileged with the ceremonious distinction of being introduced to provincial synods; if in consideration of present desert, or learning, or sanctity, the honour which had been gained by *abbots* and *presbyters*, was so redundant as to have passed, like an overflowing inheritance, to the societies which they governed, or to the class which they exalted in their lifetimes; the privilege was surely just, and its effects must have been salutary.

Let that ecclesiastical law be applauded as highly as you please, or that prescription, which has given to universities, monasteries, chapters, the right of sending deputies to councils provincial or national, not indeed as lawgivers (*this* was never submitted to, nor intended), but as entitled by privilege and favourable distinction, to speak,—and, in process of time, advancing from the right of speaking to the liberty of discussing and voting; let this right be strained to the very utmost: let it be termed the *right* of a definitive voice: still it is of human and recent, not of divine, nor of apostolical institution. It was from dust, and into dust it will go back again. The Right of rights is that which endures through all times, and to which every other is subordinate; which  
springs



springs ever new and full from the source of apostolical undecaying power. For “Yesterday was CHRIST, and to day he is; and for ever he is the self same:” who said “As my Father sent me, so do I send you:” “Receive you the Holy Spirit.”

We have deferred to the last the Spanish councils. For two reasons: the first, because those councils rank lowest of all in canonical estimation; secondly, because, from causes partly hidden, partly conjecturable, the records of those councils labour under the vehement suspicion of general inaccuracy; and in the parts, on which alone *Columbanus* might wish to rely, are tainted with the worst of all *critical* imperfections, I mean with fabrication.

M. *Simon*, as we are informed by *Columbanus*, describes the manner of holding Spanish synods, and says, that the Spaniards *never allowed any authority* to synodical constitutions, unless they were enacted *with the consent of the second order of the clergy*.\* I have long since forgotten the letters of *Monsieur Simon*, except as to one particular, on which I have made anxious but vain inquiries.† The quotation I do not wish either to collate or to depreciate; but, at this day, it is a *ruse de guerre*, which imposes on none, to quote the opinion of a *modern author* on an historical *ancient fact*, without either giving the reasons of that author, or pointing to the evidence which he had before him, when he pronounced

\* *Columb.* 4th letter, p. 67.

† The MS. Treatise of *Maldonatus de Trinitate*.

pronounced on their result. In the Spanish councils, down to the ninth century, not a vestige, not an iota is to be found of this *necessary consent* of the "second order." At the time when Isidore glutted the marts of Gaul and Germany with his wares, not a symptom of this *necessary consent* was visible. For as we have seen \* that Isidore, while he professedly gives the rule for "holding synods in his country," so far excludes the *necessary consent* of the "second order," as to make the introduction of *some* presbyters a matter of compliment from the metropolitan.

In not one of these Spanish synods, from that of Eliberis to the eighth council of Toledo, is there mention made of *presbyters* sitting in council. In no council during this period is it mentioned that they *judged* or even *delivered an opinion*. We will first review the other councils of Spain, and then consider those two councils, in which presbyters are represented as having had seats.

In the council of Saragossa, *bishops alone* meet, speak, and decree.† In that of Taragona, *bishops alone* sit, and enact, and sign. The last canon of this council is remarkable. "Let the metropolitan direct his circular letters to his *brothers*, so that they" (the bishops) "shall *summon the presbyters*, not only from the cathedral" (*i. e.* metropolitan) "church, but also from the diocesan" (*i. e.* suffragan) "churches

\* Concluding note to the preceding letter.

† Hard. I. 805.

“ churches to the council, and shall bring thither  
 “ with him some of the faithful laymen.”\* In the  
 council of Lerida, the *bishops alone* are present,  
 and are *consenting to the decrees*, by their signatures. †  
 So in the second of Toledo, most expressly. ‡ In  
 that of Barcelona, seven bishops meet and pass  
 canons. § In the council of Braga, the *priests,*  
*deacons, and all the clergy* were present, while the  
*bishops* sat, spoke, decreed, and subscribed *alone*. ||  
 In the second of Braga the same stile is pursued  
 faithfully. ¶ The *bishops*, moreover, demand, that  
 they shall all sign the decrees as an authority for  
 themselves and their successors. In the third of  
 Toledo, *bishops alone* appear. \*\* So in the councils  
 of Seville †† and Barcelona. ††† In the second of  
 Seville, the governor and treasurer, and the *whole*  
*body of ecclesiastics* were present. But the bishops  
 alone speak, enact, and confirm by their signa-  
 tures.

The

\* Hard. II. 1045. † Ibid. 1067.

‡ Ibid. 1139. See *preface and concluding canon*. Hujus institutionis  
 regulam, qui *subscribimus* irrefragabili auctoritate, &c. *ibid.* 1141.

§ Ibid. 1434.

|| Hard. III. 347, 352. Omnes episcopi dixerunt, quæcunque a  
 nobis communi consensu decreta sunt ... Quæ ut stabilem placitæ con-  
 stitutionis obtineant firmitatem, propria unusquisque his gestis *manu*  
*sua* subscribat; et post *episcoporum subscriptio* secuta est.

¶ Ibid. 885. per totum, et 316.

\*\* Ibid. 467. 474. A. & per totum.

†† Ibid. 523.

††† Ibid. 557. 568. and Can. VI. VII. IX.

The fourth council of Toledo was a national council. It has been already demonstrated, that the text, quoted by *Columbanus* from this council, speaks distinctly of *provincial* synods, and that consequently, it is foreign to the subject of priests of "the second order" discussing, judging, and signing on matters of *faith and general discipline*: it has been shewn, that it neither gives to presbyters, as such, nor recognizes, in the "second order," a right of sitting even in provincial synods: that it enjoins the *exclusion* of all but those, whom the *bishops* invite, or who are necessarily summoned for ecclesiastical trials: that it expressly orders *bishops*, and none else, to sign their synodical decrees. It remains only to observe, that in this very council, although clergy and laity were present at, and confirmed by word of mouth,\* the decree of the *bishops* concerning

\* Ab universo clero vel populo dictum est qui contra hanc *vestram* definitionem presumpserit. In the edition by Labbe, Concil. V. 1725. *vestra* is in the text, and *nostra* in the margin, as a false reading. Hardouin who copies servilely, in this council, the other readings of Labbe, has edited *nostra*; than which mistake nothing can better prove the gross negligence or incompetence of Hardouin. For the very outset of the canon is this, "Now that we have settled and decreed the matters of ecclesiastical rule and correction, our concluding resolution is, that we shall enact an *episcopal decree* for the strengthening of our kings (Hard. III. 593). This same form is repeated in the XVI. council of Toledo, (Hard. III. p. 1801. Ab universis *Dei sacerdotibus, palatii senioribus, Clero vel omni populo* dictum est. Qui contra hanc *vestram*, &c.) and the bishops themselves declare (1800), that they copy an ancient definition: *Qui nostra definitioni, &c.*

cerning allegiance, yet the *bishops alone enact*, and declare that *they subscribe*. In the fifth,\* and sixth† councils of Toledo the same; in the latter of which the nobles concurred in the law for a coronation oath.‡ In the seventh the same.§

In the Eighth Council of Toledo, not only bishops were assembled, but abbots, state officers, judges, and all the nobility, and all the orders of clergymen.‡ The decrees are signed not only by bishops and their proxies, but by the senior priest of the church of Toledo and by the governor of the minor clerks.§ From this “manner of proceeding” indeed, if a man were satisfied to find the *rule* in the *exception*, it might be argued that the *Eighth* of Toledo is the pattern for all councils. However it will not be amiss to remind you of some peculiar features in this council. It was in truth an assembly of the States, of which the bishops were the most powerful class. It was convened by the king himself for the reformation of all orders; for a remedy to the excommunication against rebels, decreed in the fourth of Toledo, and re-enacted in the *sixth* and *seventh* councils of that name; lastly, for establishing a law concerning the election of kings. The sovereign convenes a meeting for all these purposes, and declares, that he will maintain whatsoever the *clergy*  
*and*

\* In Can. III.

† Ibid. 623.

‡ Labb. 3. in decreto. Adeo ut p. 969. § Ibid. in subscript. 967.

*and courtiers* agree upon.\* This council was not more truly a *merely* ecclesiastical meeting, than it was a *mere* parliament of lords. It was *both* in appearance, and thus was not a precedent for *either*.

Yet in this very council, the exclusive right of *bishops*, in their *synodical* assemblies is proclaimed in words not to be mistaken. “The decrees of the “Fathers, in times past, have wisely appointed *synodical meetings* to be holden, that in such meetings, “wherein the holy spirit has collected the body at “large, all disputes arising from opposition of “opinions, may be terminated....We therefore, all “and one, decree, that whatsoever by universal “authority, *on causes of faith, or affairs of the “church*, either in the past or the present, or in “future regulations, is or shall be committed to writing by general authority, shall not be impugned “but must be obeyed. Now, whensoever either a “*sacred synod* is held, or pacifically any matters of “definition are concluded *amongst the BISHOPS*; if “*the minority*, through ignorance or obstinacy, will “dissent, let them, after admonition, yield to the “determination of *the greater number*; or retire in “confusion or disgrace from *their* body.”†

The

\* In commune jam vobis cunctis, et ex divino cultu *Ministris idoneis* et ex aula regia rectoribus *decenter electis* adjicio consentionis meæ purum verumque promissum, ut quodcumque, &c. Ibid. 955.

† Ibid. ex Can. XI. p. 965. decreta *præcedentium patrum*, ad jurgium penitus evellendum, *rite synodalem fieri censuere conventum*,

ut

The ninth of Toledo is a Metropolitan council\* of bishops; † consequently the signatures of *Bishops* out of the province of Toledo, is supposititious. This taints

ut *illie* de diversitate iudiciorum protensæ lites habeant terminum ubi S. S. *universalem* condinaverit cætum. Ab hoc ergo S. S. successi... plena decernimus unanimitate connexi, quæcunque pro *fidei* causis, ecclesiasticisque negotiis, aut præteritis in gestis, aut in præsentibus constitutis, aut futuris etiam in decretis vel sint, vel fuerint definitiones conscriptæ *universali auctoritate*, nullus his deinceps contradicere audeat, nullus non implere contendat. Nam si quis *ex religione*, contra hæc inobediens extiterit, gratiæ et honoris sui, et communionis sanctæ luceat amissione multatus. Quum vero quælibet SANCTA SYNODUS AGITUR, aut PACIFICE INTER PONTIFICES quippiam definiatur, *si pauciores* per nescientiam vel contentionem forte dissentiant; aut communiti sententiæ *plurimorum* cedant, aut ab *eorum Cætu* cum dedecore confusionis abscedant. In the confirmation of the canons a distinction is likewise made (Can. XIII.) between the matters enacted in *common*, and the mixt decrees from the ecclesiastical power solely. Nos autem omnes, &c. Cætera quoque decretorum nostrorum iudicia quæ *ab hac synodo*, &c. Without which distinction, it is scarcely possible to save the ecclesiastical authorities in that council from the entire assumption of political legislation. At the same time that I risk this observation, I am bound more by truth, than by antipathy and opposition of principle to the dictates of *Columbanus*, to notice, that the decree of the king, which mentions, that all the clergy in holy orders had agreed in calling for the there mentioned temporal law, is not to be found in the most ancient manuscript of Spanish councils, the *codex Lucensis*. But it is palpably written in the stile of Saint Idefonsus, who signs as abbot, though differing by many ages from the *Latin* of the canons.

\* Ibid. preface 972.

† 976, Can. XVII. ad fin. Antiquitatis dehinc, &c. Moreover the *prose .i. fidei* is omitted.

taints the whole list, in which, however, none but bishops, one proxy, six *abbots*, the archpriest and dean of the acolythes appear with the officers of the household. There is no question here of any right in "the second order."

Of the tenth council of Toledo we gather from the introduction, from the decree concerning Potamius, and from the signatures, that it was a canonical synod. The principal business transacted here, at least the most instructive on this controversy is the decree of the bishops in the matter of the bishop of Braga, who during the *pacific* part of the synod (namely the confidential sessions amongst the bishops on matters of faith and discipline), had been reported on his own confession, as guilty of immorality. This bishop was called before his brothers, and examined in the "exclusive" way, on this alleged confession. Not one, unless a *bishop* was suffered to overhear.\* Since we must travel to Toledo, out of the king's high road of *general councils*, I do not regret to have hit upon this instance of a "foribus clausis" synod; that *Mahometan* and *inquisitorial* vexation.

The next Spanish council is fiercely and exclusively episcopal in all respects.† One would imagine that it had been convened, not less than  
eleven

\* Ecce enim tractantibus nobis, in pace Dei, de ecclesiasticis regulis, delatum est conventui nostro epistolium confusæ confessionis, &c. Tunc sol-ta ie tantum, secretimque adunatis pontificibus Dei p-x-dictum episcopum adesse coram nobis fecimus. Ibid. 985.

† Ibid. 998.



eleven hundred and thirty years ago, against our modern *Columbanus*. The council of *Merida* decrees, that bishops shall enter into an *obligation* when ordained, or if you will so call it, a recognizance canonical, to live in chaste celibacy and according to rule.\* With regard to provincial councils, it requires that a bishop, absent through sickness, shall send, for his proxy, either his arch-presbyter, or one of his more accomplished priests, (but by no means a deacon) fully commissioned; and that such proxies shall *sit behind the bishops*, and *hear* what is resolved, and *sign*.† Not even episcopal proxies allowed to judge or discuss! This ordinance throws light enough on the fourth canon of the fourth of Toledo.

In the *eleventh* council of Toledo the canons speak as from *bishops*.‡ The signatures admit *abbots*, and the *archdeacon of Toledo*, as having a definitive vote. It gives no countenance indeed to the *right* of “the second order,” but it establishes the privilege of *favour* in the Metropolitan, by which favour alone, the *archdeacon* could have been allowed to have a decisive voice. On this instance I find the claim of *archdeacons* has been rested for many years: but

U 2

surely

\* Can. IV.      † Can. V. p. 1000.

‡ A provincial council. In the preface, p. 1018. (Hard.) *Convenientibus, &c. et quia non erat adunandorum pontificum, &c.* p. 1019. *Nos igitur per tot annos curvi ordinis nostri:* also Can. II. per. tot. p. 102½: also Canon. III. decree concerning abbots: also Can. XV.

surely no pretension can be more absurd, than that which from *favour* to the *individual* would draw a conclusion of *right* for the *class*. If the *usage* be such, in formal synods, the allowance of the church is its best support. The office of archdeacon is of high antiquity, and of immemorial consequence. But, as to *defining*, the thing was never known, until introduced by the precedent of this council. I may safely and without scandal avow, that I consider those supplementary signatures, not only to be a fabrication,\* but most probably that of Isidore himself.

In the twelfth † of Toledo, although abbots sign, and officers of court, yet they equally sign without intermeddling, nor does an archdeacon appear, save one proxy.

ledo

\* The last canon of this council, to which abbots are tacked as defining, has these words. "We therefore have added finally *our signatures* to these *our decrees*.....and as through our king the *dignity of our order* is improved, may he attain to the *dignity of the kingdom* to come, ut quia per eum *corona nostri ordinis* in melius restauratur, *coronam futuri regni* capiat." Ibid. *Corona* is the name of worship for bishops.

† Ibid 1715. *National, convened by the king, and consisting of bishops and governors and dukes in tomo regis. Ut quia præsto sunt, &c.* 1717. D. Capitul. I. Considerentibus *episcopis atque senioribus palatii* universis, determines the validity of the king's title, by the resignation of *Wamba*. So Canon VI....Placuit omnibus pontificibus Hispaniæ atque Galliciæ. In the law of *Hervigius*, Quod a venerandis patribus, et clarissimis palatii nostri senioribus est editum, defendatur. Note, it was in this council the bishop of Toledo was created primate of the national church.

In the thirteenth of Toledo\* we find that, besides seventy-five bishops and proxies, *five* abbots signed with the arch-presbyter, archdeacon, and preceptor of the minor clerks of the metropolitan church. This is true; but the act of signing, which is equivocal, (seeing that the dukes and generals sign also) is fully explained by the *declarations* in the council. “The king,” say the acts of this meeting, “entrusted his clement  
 “wishes to *this council* for its confirmation, to wit,  
 “presenting the book to “the Reverend BISHOPS.”—  
 “Upon which we thanked God, and gave our blessing  
 “to the king.” The book is addressed to the *most worshipful and most zealous followers of piety, the bishops*.† It states the king’s pleasure and then,  
 “To the wishes I have suggested, I pray you,  
 “Fathers, to lend the aids of your power. For it is  
 “clearer than the day-light, that whatsoever a SACRED  
 “ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS will decree to be observed,  
 “must, by divine grace, endure immoveably.”‡  
 Nor was the king singular in his opinion. The  
 council

\* Ibid 1735. *National*. Deinde religiosa vota suæ clementiæ, synodali conventui confirmanda commisit, offerens scilicet sanctis pontificibus tomum. Tunc nos gloriam dedimus Deo et eidem principi benediximus glorioso.

† Ibid. Ecce sanctissimi, religiosa pietate excolendi pontifices, et divini cultus instantissimi sectatores.

‡ Ibid. 1735. His votorum meorum insinuationibus allegatis quæso ut fortia paternitatis vestræ adjutoria prærogetis. Luce enim clarius constat quod aggregatio *sancti pontificum* quidquid censuerit per S. S. donum omni maneat æternitate perfixum,

council also informs us, that the king had willed the BISHOPS *assembled to make decrees* for the relief of his subjects.\* The council also confirms the decrees of the *twelfth* of Toledo, declaring, at the same time, that every matter, had their *unanimous and deliberate* consent. In the law of confirmation, the king informs his subjects, that the authority of synods is to be venerated and feared, wherein, by divine grace, the *multitude of bishops deliver one unanimous* judgment; † wherefore he enjoins all, as well clergy as laymen, to conform to the decrees of the council. ‡

What shall we think of the assertion of Monsieur Simon?

In the fourteenth of Toledo, if we look to the *signatures*, we find abbots and an archpresbyter *defining*. If we look to the acts and canons, we find the *definitive* right completely falsified. In charging with imposture those signatures of abbots *defining*, I do not rely on the absurdity of placing abbots, not episcopal proxies, before abbots commissioners, because this error may be accounted for. But when the synod expressly mentions, that it consisted of *the bishops of Carthagera, with the assistance of the deputies* from the above metropolitan sees, when  
it

\* Ibid. 1739. Ut in unum cœtum aggregati omnes Hispaniæ Pontifices illa *decernerent*, &c.

† Ibid. 1750.

‡ Ibid. 1751. Quamobrem sacræ hujus, &c.

it repeats this over and over again,\* I cannot but reject these signatures, or reject the *canons*, which stand in exclusion of the signatures so modelled.

In the *fifteenth* of Toledo an archdeacon signs *after* the arch-presbyter, amongst the simple abbots: so does a chief of minor orders.† Now the text speaks nothing but *bishops*, and *officers of the court*. To these alone does the king address himself; upon these alone does he call to examine the causes laid before them,‡ along with his prime nobles, and to judge.

In

\* *Ibid.* 1753. Can. I. Nos proinde Carthaginis provinciæ præsules. Can. II. In Cujus (Leonis P. P.) etiam gratioso epistolæ tractu ad hæc omnes præsules Hispaniæ invitati sunt, ut prædicta synodalia instituta nostri etiam vigoris manerent auctoritate suffulta. Can. III. Licet in unum generaliter colligi omnium Hispanorum præsulum societas nequivisset, sparsis tamen sedibus ... præfatas regulas pertractandas suscepimus. Can. V. Ideo nos primum Carthaginis provinciæ pontifices assistentibus nobis vicariis, iterato ea ipsa gesta (i. e. the acts of the sixth general council) probavimus. From these marks it is easy to perceive that the "*hæc gesta a nobis definita*," which is tacked to the *abbots and proxies* and the one *arch-presbyter*, is the addition of some very ignorant knave.

† 1771. This is another bull. The archdeacon always had precedence, as the necessary delegate of the bishop, before all the clergy and, before the council of Chalcedon, had *ordinary jurisdiction*.

‡ *Ibid.* 1759. Apud urbem Toletanam, omnis Hispaniæ Galliæque pontifices aggregati dum cunctis residentibus in aspectu singulorum, &c. adfuit idem princeps...quique in m. dis. pontificum positus, hunc-

que

In the sixteenth the *proceeding* is exactly the same. The council begins by declaring, that each of them took his seat according to seniority of *ordination*. The king addresses the *bishops alone*, compliments them on the etymology of their title, hopes for counsel from their *episcopal* wisdom, and prays *them alone* to attend to the settling of ecclesiastical causes.\* He concludes by conjuring the *bishops* and the nobles who serve in the council, either through his precept, or from the nature of business to be there determined, to confer and decide on such matters in equity.† The signatures to this council exhibit *abbots*, but not even an arch-deacon. Whether those abbatial signatures *as definitive* can be genuine, if the

que prostratus *sacerdotum Dei* se commendat orationibus...inde innexa tomo vota *Dei sacerdotibus* tradidit, relegenda... Ecce sublini, *patres*, et cœlesti jure honorandi *mihî pontifices, vestri ordinis ad eus actum, &c. vestris* (1760) hæc pertractanda sensilus, *vestrisque* judiciis *dirimenda* committo...contestans generaliter *omnes et vos sacrosanctos pontifices, et vos regalis aulae viros nobiles, ut in his omnibus, &c.*

\* Ibid. 1787. Ut quia Ecclesiæ sanctæ catholicæ, digna *spectatione* præstatis, votis meis fautores sitis; vestrique *pontificatus* meritis, in regendis populis, &c.

† Ibid. 1789. Hoc solum vos honorabiles *Dei sacerdotes*, cunctosque illustres, &c. In Can. X.I. p. 1802. the *bishops* declare *themselves* enacters of all the decrees, and *assume*, when congregated *unanimously* a *divine authority*. The thirteenth canon is in fact the royal edict of confirmation, and orders all to obey the *decree of the synod* enjoining *all the bishops* of the province of Narbonne to hold a council, and, after due investigation, to *sign* according to rightful precedency.

the canons and acts of the council are sincere, let every man judge according to his own measure of rationality.

The seventeenth of Toledo and last of the Gothic Spanish councils, has no signatures; nor is it probable that it had any. Its stile, however, is clear enough. "WE *the BISHOPS of Spain and the Gauls*, having assembled in numbers, and taken *our seats*, our king Egica made his appearance amongst *us*;" and so the acts proceed in the name of the *bishops*,\* as not only *enacting* but *consulting* amongst themselves.

x

From

\* Hard. *ibid.* p. 1810. Dum in ecclesia Gloriosæ Virginis...plerique Hispaniarum et Galliarum *pontifices convenissemus*, adfuit idem serenissimus princeps et in medio *nostris* consistens...sese benedici a *nobis* poposcit. ... His actis, Tomum manu propria *nobis* obtulit, inquires &c. Tunc unusquisque nostrorum suo in loco residens tomum ipsum reserari *precepimus*, & quæ necessaria erant, *alterna collatione* pertractare *curavimus*. This synod appears to have introduced the rule mentioned by Isidore in his "manner of proceeding," namely, that during the first three days of a synodical meeting, no laymen should be admitted, nor any business, except regarding faith or discipline, should be transacted. (*ibid.* p. 1812 Can. I.) *Opportune instituendum duximus*, and after p. 1818 *in the confirmation by the king*. I. De tribus diebus quibus in initio concilii nihil aliud agendum jubetur nisi tantum de fide ac de aliis rebus spiritualibus, nullo *secularium interposito*. These good old Gothic bishops imagined themselves secure in their chairs during *those three days*, by *keeping out the laity*. They little apprehended an insurrection within doors, or that a *bill of rights* could be moved by any one of the "second order" calling on them to *share*.

From this review of Spanish councils, I trust, it is no longer to be doubted, that whether priests of the “second order,” or abbots, or field-officers, or kings were present or absent, the right and authority in all causes ecclesiastical, of propounding, discussing, enacting, sanctioning, and *confirming* by *subscription*, is recognized in *bishops alone*; and that if allowed to any persons, not being bishops, the concession must have been free, must have been occasional, and subject to resumption, whenever *bishops* should judge it necessary to do so.

In the case of an authority, such as that which bishops lay claim to, of divine institution, there may be *voluntary* partnership between individual bishops, and individual kings, or individual *priests*, whose dignity in the christian law is above that of kings; but there can be no transfer, nor alienation of such authority; there can be no prescription of *use*, there can be no bar *from disuse*, there can be no title either in the allowance, or in the canons even of general councils, against the everlasting foundations of the gospel. If the spectacle of high priests assembled with all their inferior dignities around, is more pompous than those *private* and slandered congregations of *bishops* alone; let it not be forgotten, that HE who established the apostles, is ever presiding where *even two or three*, with HIS authoritative *name are assembled*. If the appearance of a *council*, in which all the gradations of hierarchy are displayed, is more imposing, more affecting, as it surely is,  
than



than the homely conference of prelates; if such a display, like the vision of Jacob, in which angels were seen ascending and descending, will also force the beholder to cry out "How awful is this spot! "verily it must be the dwelling of God, and the "gate of heaven!" yet it must be recollected, that were this array of spiritual offices even possible to be revived, after so many years of intermission, without any danger of rivalships or pride, or of jealousies from without; still as long as it is insisted on, as an *essential* right, so long must it be postponed by those, whose office it is to preserve the *undoubted* right, from the issue of an unsparing and clamorous onset. I hope to see that day when *councils* may safely be held, on the plan of the most ancient and general synods, which I have quoted: but I know it to be more essential *now*, that apostolical *authorities* should be safe from levelling assault, than that priests of the "second order" should sit *behind a circle* of bishops, or that doctors should sit in a *parterre*.

I should even suppose that in Ireland, the priests of the "second order" neither feel complimented by this uncouth appendix to their stile, nor do they sigh with any great impatience now, for the practical restoration of the *fourth canon* of Toledo. They are pretty much aware of two things; the one, that if such meetings should be brought about, *in consequence of this new attempt* to cry down episcopal authority, the bold and disorderly, and most unserviceable in their class would be *lords of the articles*,  
and

and would trample down their own unambitious titles, as well as those of the fathers of the Irish church. The second point is this: Whereas, by the jargon of “*old canons*,” and “*exclusive domination*,” and “*inquisitorial tribunals*,” the bishops could be, *ad libitum*, trodden into dirt, at the same time, that what *Columbanus* terms “the *egis of law*,”—of *liberal, veto-giving, anti-popish* law would be resorted to, in case the bishops should attempt to rebuke their persecutors according to *any* canons scriptural or ecclesiastical: the rallying point of christian aggregation would become a nullity, and the *benignant law* would soon interfere to *abate the nuisance* once called, the CATHOLIC CHURCH OF IRELAND.

Jacet ingens litore truncus,  
AVULSUMQUE HUMERIS CAPUT, ET SINE NOMINE CORPUS.

I have kept for the last the *council* of Eliberis, and the *first* of Toledo. Is it because these councils give to presbyters the right of *discussing, judging, or signing*? No such thing. In the council of Eliberis the *bishops alone speak*; in the *first* of Toledo, the *bishops alone speak and decree*; so that, if the claim of a right to *discuss* or to *vote*, were to be tried by the test of those councils, not only *Monsieur Simon* in his *select letters*, but *Columbanus* himself, in his rattling *Marseillois*, would find a sufficient answer. In the preambles *suited* to those councils by the Isidorian manufacturers I find presbyters mentioned as *sitting*. That such presbyters were *proxies*,  
if

if really sitting in council, is evident from the things proved: that proxies *may* have been in those councils, is not improbable. Why then do I boggle at the preambles to those councils? Mercy for this: because the preambles are forgeries: because the *suppression* of the patent, by which those presbyters, if assisting, were introduced, may have been ancillary to the fraud of those, who from such suppression of fact have argued to the right of presbyters; and thus the detection of a forgery, otherwise contemptible, becomes important. I say then, that in the council of Eliberis, the phrase expressing the *sitting* of presbyters, as it stands, is forgery; I say, that in the first of Toledo, the phrase, that presbyters were *sitting together*, is forgery. Whether I am wanton in these assertions or not (for the question is already so settled, that I cannot be supposed to stand in need of this superfluous proof), is a critical problem of no difficult solution for any scholar; indeed of such elementary cognizance, that I will not lower my text, by giving room to the paltry conviction of barbarous interpolation. You may peruse the note,\* or you may believe in those preambles as genuine, or if you will, you may think nothing further on the subject.

I am, Reverend Sir,

&c.

\* See note to this letter.

## NOTE to Page 157.

In the preamble to the council of Eliberis we have this stile. *Cum consedissent sancti et religiosi episcopi in ecclesia Eliberitana, hoc est, Felix Episcopus Accitanus, &c. Residentibus etiam viginti et sex presbyteris adstantibus diaconis et omni plebe, episcopi dixerunt.* In this description there are four decisive marks of imposture. First, the addition of *sancti et religiosi* to bishops, is taken from the council of Ephesus, which was held about one hundred and twenty years after the supposed date of the council of Eliberis, and is purely and solely the *Greek* ceremonial. Secondly, the *hoc est* is a grecism, ἡδεστὶς, copied from the roll of the council of Chalcedon, and introduced into Spain by St. Martin of Braga, a Greek, late in the sixth century. Thirdly, the contrast between *considentibus* and *residentibus* is borrowed from the fourth of Toledo, through the ignorance of the fabricator, as to the import of the latter term, which he thought to signify *sitting behind*, whereas it means either *sitting* or *taking a station*. Fourthly, as to the term *adstantibus*, the fabricator being ignorant, that in the age to which this council belongs, the deacons acted as door-keepers and apparitors to synods, and that such duty was expressed in Latin by *adstare*; that, of consequence, *adstantibus diaconis* signifies, not that *deacons were present*, but that they were *in waiting as officers*; the fabricator, I say, not being aware of this, has given us *deacons and all the laity turned into officials*.

The manuscript copies, as we are told by the editors of

the

the Spanish councils, avry as to the number of bishops present. One copy cited by Hardouin, I. 149, 250, gives the names of twenty five *presbyters*. By comparing these names with those of the bishops assembled in the council of Carthage under Saint Cyprian, it will be easy to discover whence the Spanish compilers stole the great proportion of their *recruits*. The others are either barbarous attempts at Greek nomenclature, or borrowed from the council of Arles.

A similar inspection will demolish the interpolation in the first of Toledo. “*Convenientibus episcopis in ecclesia Toletō, id est Patruinus, &c. omnes decem et novem isti sunt, qui et in aliis gestis adversus Priscilliani sectatores, libellarem direxere sententiam, considentibus presbyteris, adstantibus diaconis & ceteris qui intererant concilio, congregatis.*”

Observe, first of all, the *id est*, instead of *his*. Secondly, the *ecclesia Toletō* (for as to the false Latin of *Patruinus, &c.* I pass it over): Thirdly, the *omnes decem & novem isti sunt*: Fourth, the *libellaris* sententia, a phrase which I do not find explained by the commentators. Know then, that as in the Latin translation sent into Africa, by Atticus of Constantinople, the ending of the Nicene, Can. I. ἡς ἰουδαίας ἢς κληρον προσηλῆα ὁ ΚΑΝΩΝ, is rendered, hos tales ad clerum applicat Regula; because, forsooth, *κατανοζεν* is *ad regulam applicare*; just so the manufacturer of this parenthesis, having found in some glossary *καλων libella, κατανοζεν ad libellum dirigere*, invented the elegant *quid pro quo*, of *libellarem direxerunt* sententiam, for *canonice statuerunt*. Fifth, the omission of the bishops taking their seats. Sixth, the knavery of the general and indistinct *cæteris, qui intererant, congregatis*

*gatis*. Seventh, the introduction of *Patruinus, who was dead* when this council was held. For in the interpolated preamble, *Patruinus* is made to say, “*Mihi autem placet constituta primitus concilii Niceni esse servanda;*” whereas Innocent the first, writing to this very council (Hard. I. 1024), and referring to this very dictum, § VI enjoins the fathers to examine the cause of *Gregory*, who had succeeded the blessed *Patruinus* deceased. § V. Consequently the whole preamble from *id est, Patruinus*, to *Patruinus dixit*, is a fraudulent addition.

Bingham, in his *Origin*, Eccles. I. 7. ch. 3. § 13. asserts, that in the fifth age, abbots did subscribe in councils; relying on the signatures to the seventh session of the synod of Constantinople under Flavian. It happens notwithstanding, 1. that the *stile* of those very signatures demonstrates those abbots to have signed *not in the council*. For the subscriptions run either thus, “*I — have subscribed to the deposition of Nestorius,*” or, “*to the deposition of Nestorius, late presbyter and Archimandrite.*” (Labbe. IV. 230) 2. The acts of the synod testify the presence of *bishops only*, and of those ecclesiastics, who acted as reporters or officials, as having had a part in its proceedings. (ibid. 151, *παραστων δε*, besides *bishops*, και των τας αναφορας κομισαντων κληρικων). In the petition of Eutyches himself to the lawless convention of Ephesus, it is stated as a grievance, that Flavian had circulated through *the monasteries the sentence of his deposition*, and had compelled *even monks to sign their conformity*. a thing, says Eutyches, without precedent, even in the case of avowed heretics. (ibid. 143.

και καθυπογραψαν τα ΤΕΝΟΜΕΝΗΙ κατ' εμει ↓ ηφφ καταναγκασει

ΜΟΝΑΣΤΗΡΙΑ, εδεπόσε τοιαύτης συνθήκας, εδε κατὰ ἁγρείφων κρῆ-  
 τισσας). 4. Amongst other charges against Eutyches,  
 was that of his having, while under citation, drawn up and  
 sent off through the several monasteries, a profession of  
 faith, *to be signed by the archimandrites*, of having stirred up  
 the abbots to make common cause with him against Fla-  
 vian their bishop, and of having warned them to beware of  
 subscribing the declaration, which Flavian was providing  
 for them. (ibid. p. 198, 199.) The synod, upon this, dis-  
 patched clergymen to investigate the fact. The abbot  
 Martin declared, that Eutyches had applied for his signa-  
 ture; but that he had refused it, saying, that it was not  
 his province to sign doctrinal professions, but that it  
*was the exclusive province of bishops*. This, by the by,  
 is explicit enough. (εἶπων μὴ εἶναι τοῦ ὑπογραφεῖν, ἀλλὰ τῶν  
 ἐπισκοπῶν μόνων ibid. 210.) Faustus the abbot de-  
 clared, that he and his monks were children of the  
 church, and next after God, esteemed the authority of  
 their bishop (ibid. 212). The abbot Job declared, that  
 he had received no written formula from Eutyches, but  
 merely a verbal communication, that, within some few  
 days, the bishop was to direct a written test to him,  
 and to be on his guard against subscribing, (ibid. φασιν  
 ὅτι ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις ἴσμεν εἶχει σοὶ ἀποσείλαι ὁ ἀρχιεπι-  
 σκοπος ὡς ὑπογραφεῖν καὶ μὴ πεισθῆναι). The abbots Ma-  
 nuel and Abraham had received no message nor declara-  
 tion from Eutyches. Now these five abbots, who until  
*the fifth session of the council*, appear to have remained  
*within their cloisters*, are amongst the foremost, who sub-  
 scribe the act of deposition which took place five days  
 after

after. The ancient Latin translation of this synod under Flavian, gives the subscription of each abbot—in *depositione* Eutychetis subscripsi; which is accurately that termed by *Eutyches* καθυπογεγραμει, i. e. to testify conformity. As in the acts of the council of Aquileia (Hard. I. 831. Labbe II. 987), Saint Ambrose interrogates Attalus the Arian presbyter, “Attalus subscribed the declaration of faith of the Nicene council. Let him speak whether he subscribed the declaration of faith of the Nicene council. As a presbyter he has the privilege to speak.” Ambrosius episcopus dixit: Attalus in tractatu Nicæni concilii subscripsit: Dicat hodie utrum subscriperit in tractatu Nicæni concilii an non. Attalus presbyter, licet inter Arianos sit, tamen habet auctoritatem loquendi: libere profiteatur, utrum subscriperit in tractatu N. C. sub episcopo suo Agrippino an non. The critical remark of Hardouin on this passage is even amusing. Being unacquainted with the meaning of *tractatus* as well as of the *subscribing* here expressed, and supposing that Attalus is said to have subscribed *during the discussions* at Nicea, he observes, that Attalus must consequently have been then *at least 90 years old*. He forgets however, that in this council, Sabinus the bishop also declares that he himself and others were able *to bear testimony* to the fact. (ibid.) In the fragment of the letter of St. Damasus to Paulinus of Antioch (Labbe II. 864, 865.) which accompanied the profession of faith by the Western bishops, the rule for admitting to catholic communion is spoken of. Fidem nostram misimus non tam tibi quam iis qui in ea subscribentes, tibi voluerunt sociari. Quapropter si filius meus Vitalis & qui cum eo sunt, tibi voluerint aggregari,



gari, debent *in ea expositione* fidei subscribere, quæ apud Nicæam pia Patrum voluntate *firmata est*. So that this sort of *signing* excluded the *right of judging*, and left the mere alternative of *obeying* or *disobeying*. In short, this *signing* was the condition imposed by a prior authority, not the evidence of any right in him who signed, to disagree.

LETTER

## LETTER VII.

---

*On the Councils of Rome in the time of Miltiades, and of Arles during the Popedom of Sylvester. Cecilian of Carthage and the Donatists. The Bishop of Rome, Patriarch of the West. Learned arguments of COLUMBANUS against this fact. On Patriarchal Synods and Authority.*

REVEREND SIR,

**H**OW often do we find occasion to lament the miserable ignorance of ancient times, which now must appear to have conspired against the genuine catholic doctrines of Columbanus! In every shape of council, and in every nation; in national as well as in provincial councils; in Africa, in the Gauls, in Spain, we have perpetually detected those hateful usurpers, the BISHOPS, in the very fact of judging and legislating, with as exclusive an air, as if they really believed

believed their own authority to be supreme and above contradiction. As yet, however, a portion of my task remains unaccomplished; that of reviewing *patriarchal* councils, as certain synods must now be termed in deference to the ecclesiastical language prevailing since the beginning of the sixth century; and amongst patriarchal councils, of adverting particularly to those which were held by the bishops of Rome.

There are *two* arguments to be disposed of, before I commence this review; the one from *Columbanus*, and adverted to formerly by me, that “Constantine “in his *encyclical letter*, which is still extant, ordered “that *each* bishop should take *two* priests of the second order, in the same public carriage, in which “he was conveyed himself.”\* The other argument was lent by me, in aid of *Columbanus*, and brought forward the authority of Henry Valois, a most learned Grecist,† that the Marcus (to whom conjointly with Miltiades of Rome, the Emperor Constantine referred the matter of Cecilian in the first instance), was a *presbyter* of Rome, and was he who held the chair of that city after Pope Sylvester.

This latter argument I will first dispatch, and briefly. Marcus was a *bishop*; Valesius was prejudiced so far, on this his favourite idea, as to commit unpardonable violence on his text in the shape of comment. The very letter of Constantine declares him

\* Colum. 4th letter, p. 57.

† In my 2d letter, p. 39.

him to have been a *bishop*. Take this for certain, and read my note at your leisure.\*

Now

\* In the beginning of this chapter in Eusebius, the readers are apprized that the *original* rescripts, of which he either publishes, or attempts translations, were in *Latin*. This observation I wish *my* reader will keep in mind for the letter to Miltiades now under consideration, as well as for that to be shortly considered, from the Emperor to Chrestus of Syracuse. The letter to Miltiades is addressed "to Miltiades bishop of the Romans, and to *Marcus*, και Μαρκῶν." Valesius assumes, that one and the same letter contained the address to *both*, and, as but one bishop could be then bishop in Rome, he was led to infer, that Marcus must have been a presbyter within the same church. Now the supposition of Valesius is certainly gratuitous, and shall be proved thus a mistake. First of all, the concluding salutation in the manuscripts, is "Most Reverend Sir, ἡμιοντάδης," which Valesius, on the sole authority of Nicephorus, changed to ἡμιοντάδοι, *Most Reverend Sirs*, against that elementary rule of arbitration of readings, which suggests, that no transcriber will substitute an obscure and unintelligible solecism for a plain and consistent reading, but rather that every transcriber is prone to err by preferring an easily apparent *meaning* to an obscure one. Secondly, the text itself proves, that the letter to *Marcus* was not the identical letter sent to Miltiades, but varied from it in the particular of *place*. "I have resolved," says Constantine, that Cecilian shall go by water to Rome, in order that you, Sirs, being *assembled thither as well as Reticus, Maternus and Marinus, your Colleagues*, whom for that purpose I have enjoined to hasten (from Gaul) to Rome, &c." ἵνα ὑμῶν ΕΚΕΙΣΣΕ παρούτων, ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ Ρηίτικῶν καὶ Ματέρων καὶ Μαρίνων κολληθῶν ὑμῶν.—It is plain therefore, that he, to whom this part of the letter was addressed, had to *travel* to Rome: of consequence this phrase was not in the letter to Miltiades; and necessarily, if *both* Miltiades and Marcus were summoned, it must have been by *two distinct* Imperial letters.

Thus

Now, “to the *encyclical* letter of Constantine, “which is still extant, ordering that each bishop shall take *two priests* of the second order, in the same public carriage, in which he was conveyed himself;” I fear I must be prolix, but indeed the subject is meritorious. Indulge me in time and with your patience. I undertake not only to make you wonder, but to make you smile at the acuteness of our new antiquary.

The only letter in existence, from Constantine, on the subject, is that to Chrestus, bishop of Syracuse, whereby this latter is summoned to a council of bishops

Thus the whole foundation of the hypothesis, on which Valesius had built up his conjecture, is gone.

All this granted, it does not appear as yet, some one will say, that Marcus was a *bishop*. Constantine however asserts it: he informs Miltiades and Marcus, that Reticius, Maternus and Marinus were their *colleagues*, and these three latter were bishops. The term *colleague*, of which Eusebius has preserved the Latin word, was the known title of a bishop to his compeer, and had been established at least from the age of Cyprian, as *συνεπιθρονος* in Greek. If any doubt could remain on the subject, the Emperor has intimated in this very same letter, that he employed the word in its proper meaning.

“It is related, that Cecilian, bishop of Carthage is impeached on several counts by some of his COLLEAGUES: and it seems grievous to me, that the multitude should be almost in a state of sedition, and that BISHOPS should be in litigation amongst themselves, &c.”

Αναφέρεται Καικιλιανόν τον επισκοπόν. . παρα τινων ΚΟΛΛΗΓΩΝ αυτε εν πολλοις πραγμασι ενθυνοσθαι και γετο μιν βαρυ σφοδρα δοκει. . οχλον ευρισκεσθαι ωσαντι διχοστατηντα και μεταξυ ΕΠΗΡΚΟΠΟΥΣ διαφορας εχειν.

bishops to be convened at Arles in Gaul, concerning the schism in Africa. This second council on the one subject was improvidently granted by Constantine, after a decision pronounced in the synod of Rome, which decision as well as the intervention of Pope Miltiades is related in the letter of summons now to be examined, from the Emperor to the Sicilian bishop. The important words of this letter are these, as exactly as they can be rendered, and as favourably to *Columbanus* as is possible, without falsifying the text. "Whereas I" Constantine "have ordered a vast number of *bishops*, from all "imaginable quarters *to assemble in the city of Arles*,  
 " no

There is yet a difficulty in the text of Eusebius where "*the assembling thither of you*" is expressed with *you* in the plural number. The difficulty, in fact, is founded on a misapprehension. The words, *καταβλήσων ὑμῶν*, are not addressed to Miltiades and Marcus *jointly*, but to *either*, considered along with Cecilian and his train, when arrived from Carthage.

The Bishop *Marcus*, to whom a letter was thus directed, is, in all likelihood, the *Marcus* of Calabria, who attended and signed, (ten years after the council of Arles), in the great council of Nicea. The error of throwing into one the separate letters to this latter bishop and to Miltiades, in this posthumous work of Eusebius, is accounted for, either from his having taken an extract from the Imperial Archives, to which he had free access, and in which all the persons addressed for the same purpose, were registered *at once*, or from the chance, that Eusebius, when at Nicea, obtained from Marcus a copy of the letter addressed *to himself*, and the information, that another letter of the same import had gone to the Bishop of Rome.

“ on or before the first day of August, I have  
 “ thought fit to write to *thee also*, that so *having re-*  
 “ *ceived from Latronian governor of Sicily, the state-*  
 “ *conveyance, associating also to thee of those be-*  
 “ *longing to the after-chair, any two*” (but not more),  
 “ *whom thou of thine own wish shalt think meet to*  
 “ *select, and moreover bringing for that purpose,*  
 “ *three servants, such as shall be sufficient to attend*  
 “ You on the journey, thou be at the place of ap-  
 “ pointment on or before the said day, in the afore-  
 “ said city, to the end that, by the aid of thy wor-  
 “ ship and through the cordial and unanimous agree-  
 “ ment of *the others assembled*, this obstinate ill...  
 “ may be reduced to true religiousness...and fra-  
 “ ternal concord.”\*

You have now the document before you. As yet I refrain from questions of criticism, or of the most humble erudition. I would ask but these plain questions. Is there any thing in this extract (and besides this extract, there is not a particle of ancient history,) to palliate the rash assertion of *Columbanus*, that this letter was *circular*? Were the bishops in the north

Z

of

\* Eus-b. X. Ch. v. επειδη τοιουν πλεισθς εκ διαφορων και αμυθητων  
 πωλων ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥΣ εις την αρειθαλσειων πολιν εισω Καλανδ. Αυγουστ.  
 ΣΥΝΕΛΘΕΙΝ εκειλευσαμεν, και Σοι γραφαι ενομισαμεν ινα λαδων παρα  
 τη λαμωσοτ. λαβωσιανη δημοσιον οχημα συζευξας σεαυτω και ΔΥΩ ΓΕ  
 τινας των εκ τω δευτερω θρονω υς αν ΣΥ ΑΥΤΟΣ επιλεξασθαι κρινης, αλ-  
 λα μην και τρεις παιδας τωσ δυνασομενης υμιν καιη την οδον υπερετη-  
 σασθαι παζαλαδων, εισω της αυλης ημερας επι τω προειρημενω τωσω  
 απαντησης, ινα δια τε της σης σεβροτητος και δια της λοιπης των  
 ΣΥΝΙΟΝΤΩΝ δημοφυχη και δημοφρονος Συνεσεως. κ. τ. λ.

of Italy, were the bishops in the west of Spain, were the bishops of York and of London, were the bishops in the Gauls to apply to the *governor of Sicily* for a state-conveyance, (or a *public carriage*, as *Columbanus* happily gives it, forgetting that even Sicily is vulgarly talked of as an island,) to drive them, with “two priests of the second order” to the city of Arles? Again, supposing that by those of “the second chair” we must understand “*Priests of the second order;*” admitting for the present moment, that the bishop is *ordered* to take with him those two priests, was it possible for *Columbanus* to have singled out a more crushing text against the *divine* right of “priests of the second order” to *attend, sit, and discuss* in councils, than this text wherein Chrestus, the bishop, is informed that “any two, such as *he himself shall think proper to chuse,* “shall accompany him?”

But, to come to the serious issue, *Columbanus* has misunderstood, with his usual felicity, the entire of the Emperor's direction. The *state-conveyance* mentioned in the letter, was not, as he supposes, a *public carriage*, but the patent and privilege of conveyance at the expence of the state;\* which patent, containing the number and quality of persons so privileged, and the duration of their privilege, was liable to be examined by the officers of the highways.†

Now

\* Vid. Cod. L. XII. De cursu publico, tit. 2.

† Eisdem Tit. 3. *Evectiones* ab omnibus.



Now Chrestus having been summoned by the Emperor's letter to Arles, is desired to apply to the governor of Sicily, for an *evectio* of this kind, comprising the list, called *series evectiois*, of persons not to exceed six, namely two persons "of the second chair," (of the meaning of which words we shall see hereafter,) and three male attendants. Instead therefore of this direction being an *order* to the bishop, to take with him "two priests of the second order," it is an indulgence to Chrestus, that he shall take as many as *two*, but not more, for companions in the patent, and as many as, but not more than three servants.\* Valesius, who has maintained against Sirmond and Baronius, that the "two of the second chair" meant "priests of the second order,"† yet in his dissertation on the schism in Africa, writes expressly, that Constantine, by the words, "associating" and so forth, gave permission to Chrestus ‡ to bring with him as *companions*, two persons of the second order. Thus far, I presume, we have made some impression on the two strong points of assertion in *Columbanus*, namely, that the letter was *circular* to the bishops, and that it *ordered each bishop* to take with him, in the same public carriage

\* This is perfectly clear in the Greek of Eusebius καὶ σὺζευξάς ἐοικέναι γέ.

† In annotat. ad Libri X. Cap. 5. ἵνα ἐκ τῶν δευτέρων θροῶν.

‡ De Schism. Donat. Ch. 9. Extat certe epistola Constantini ad Chrestum, qua Constant. ei permittit, ut duos secundi loci comites sibi adsumat. Nec tamen Chrestus oblata sibi facultate uti voluit.

*riage* in which he himself was conveyed, two priests of the second order. *Who* in reality may have been those two companions, alluded to by Constantine, is now a mere matter of antiquarian curiosity. I do not think that priests were intended by the designation.\*

Let us suppose that *priests* had been meant. Was the pretended *order* obeyed by Chrestus of Syracuse? Did Chrestus take along with him to Arles “two priests of the second order?” It appears not. He went off to Arles with a single deacon. This is strange. What, if not one amongst the bishops, who assembled thither in council, had as companions “two priests of the second order?” And yet the signatures to the council and epistle prove this to have been the fact. Out of *thirty-three bishops*, only four are accompanied by “the second order;” that is to say, each of those four by a single presbyter. Marinus himself, within whose diocess, and in whose city the council was held, brought with him *one* presbyter. Yet *deacons*, *lectors*, and *exorcists* were taken by bishops in the same “*public carriages*” with themselves, notwithstanding the *encyclical order* of Constantine, and did sign the letter to Pope Sylvester, with the canons subjoined, although the *bishops who alone* speak in that letter, have the assurance to mention nothing more than the summons *to themselves* from Constantine.

However, it may be argued, although the Emperor did *not order* any bishop to take “two priests

\* See Note at the end of this Letter.

priests of the second order" to the council, yet he considered, that these were accustomed to sit as judges in such meetings, and therefore that they held at least a prescriptive authority for sitting in judgment, along with the bishops.

Let Constantine himself speak. The council at Arles had declared Cecilian innocent, and rightfully ordained: the Schismatics appealed from the synod to the Emperor. Hear the words of Constantine *to the Catholic-bishops*. "They demand of me to pronounce judgment: of me, who await submissively that Christ shall pronounce his judgment. For I affirm this to be real truth: the Sentence of the PRIESTS," i. e. bishops "is to be considered as if uttered by our Lord sitting in judgment; for they cannot entertain a thought, nor make a decision, different from that which they are fully taught by the dictation of Christ."\* These expressions perfectly coinciding with those of the same Emperor to the churches, after the Nicene decision,† will excite at least, a moderate degree of surprise in those, who find *Columbanus* seeking from the mouth of Constantine, (for whom *episcopal* authority was first and last, and all,) a side-winded quotation for the judicial right of the second order.

Saint

\* In Hard. I. 268. Meum iudicium postulant, qui ipse iudicium CHRISTI expecto. Dico enim, ut se veritas habet: SACERDOTUM iudicium ita debet haberi, ac si ipse Dominus residens iudicet, etc.

† Letter 2nd, p. 50. In the same letter of Constantine, I find the *αναφορα προς τον θεου βουλησιν*, expressed by *caelestis provisio*.

Saint Augustine has repeatedly urged against the Donatists, the judgment of the bishops at Arles, and the reverence manifested by the good and great Constantine for episcopal *exclusive* right. Speaking of the unconquerable effrontery of those schismatics, in calling for a council of bishops in the first instance, which council was held at Rome under Pope Miltiades; and when this council decreed against them, in demanding a council of review; again, (when the bishops of Arles confirmed the former decision,) in appealing to the Emperor: “They” the Donatists “had the audacity,” says he, “to impeach the authoritative *sentence of BISHOPS,*” (assembled at Rome) “not before others, the *colleagues of those judges,* but before the Emperor. He granted them another trial at Arles, *that is to say, of other BISHOPS;* not because it was any longer necessary, but in meek concession to their wrong-headed obstinacy; and desirous as he was, by all possible means to put a stop to their abandoned importunity. For, *being a christian,* the Emperor did not presume to make himself so far a party in their rictous and fallacious criminations, as to erect himself into a *judge on the judgment of the BISHOPS* who had sat in Rome: but, he appointed as I have said, other BISHOPS; and yet from these they appealed a second time to the Emperor.”\*

I would

\* Augustin. Ep. CLXII. *Judices enim ecclesiasticos tantæ auctoritatis episcopos, non apud alios Collegas sed apud imperatorem accusare ausi sunt, quod male judicavit. Dedit ille aliud Arelatense judicium, aliorum*

I would fix your attention on this schism of the Donatists, and lead you back from its fatal termination to its first arts of discord. This intestine war, after filling Africa with murders, exposed that province to Vandalic invasion, to the cruelty of Arians, and to the expulsion of more than four hundred bishops. When, by the arms of Justinian, the country was regained to the empire, the schismatical fury revived. All discipline had been ruined during the interval, nor was Africa pacified, until the crescent of Antichrist arose in bloody mist over the setting sun of Christianity. The dominion of that country is now shared between the beasts that kill, and the infidelity that depopulates. Thanks, many thanks does the Spirit of extermination owe to the rebellion against episcopal supremacy; and to the substantial and *respectable* laity of that capital, who conspired with the disappointed clergymen, Botrus and Celacsius! *Cecilian* had been elected to the see of Carthage which held the primacy of all Africa; and to preclude the intermeddling of wealthy agitators, he was ordained by one of the bishops sojourning in the capital, whereas the usage had been, that the senior bishop of Numidia should ordain him of Carthage.

The

*aliorum scilicet episcoporum; non quia jam necesse erat, sed eorum perversitatibus cedens et omni modo cupiens tantam impudentiam cohibere. Neque enim ausus est Christianus Imperator sic eorum tumultuosas et fallaces querelas suscipere, ut de iudicio Episcoporum, qui Romæ sederant, ipse iudicaret, sed alios, ut dixi, episcopos dedit, a quibus tamen illi ad ipsum rursus Imperatorem provocare maluerunt.*

The conspirators immediately send off to exasperate the Numidian bishops, and to invite them to hold a synod on the spot. Cecilian, though ordained and recognized by his flock, is cited by the Numidians his inferiors, and excommunicated for contumacy; an administrator of the see is appointed, whom the populace is said to have made away with, and Majorinus, who held some employment or other in the household of the lady Lucilla, is ordained, in schism, bishop of Carthage. The province soon after voluntarily submitted to Constantine, upon the fall of Maxentius; and, from motives of policy as well as of goodness, the misconduct of the schismatics was tolerated, until it rose to wild anarchy. At length the Donatists applied to have a trial before the bishops of Gaul. The Emperor summons the chief Gaulish prelates to hold a council in Rome under Miltiades the Pope, who gave judgment for Cecilian, but allowing those of the Schismatical clergy, who would return to Catholic peace, to retain their orders. From this council, the first appeal was to Constantine, on the grounds which you shall learn from his letter to the governor of Africa: “ I  
 “ hoped, that an end would have been put to the  
 “ seditions and quarrels of those men. I now find  
 “ from your letter, that they are equally regardless  
 “ of their own safety, and of the fear of God, while  
 “ they persevere in a conduct, which redounds to  
 “ their own infamy, and moreover, supplies the ad-  
 “ versaries of our religion with matter for derision  
 “ and

“ that party have appeared before me, asserting  
 “ Cecilian to be unworthy of officiating in the  
 “ way of christians. I replied, that the allegation  
 “ was idle, whereas the cause had been decided at  
 “ Rome by wise BISHOPS; to which they answered  
 “ without yielding, that the cause was *not fully*  
 “ *heard*: but that A FEW BISHOPS HAD SHUT THEM-  
 “ SELVES UP IN PRIVATE, AND HAD JUDGED AC-  
 “ CORDING TO THEIR OWN CONVENIENCE.” \*

See you, that *there is nothing new under the sun*?  
*Columbanus* is not the inventor of the charge against  
*exclusive* synods: he is not the first to call upon  
*liberal statesmen* to hold out *the egis of protection*  
 against *arbitrary episcopal dictation*, against *foribus*  
*clausis* decrees. The Donatists also, those sticklers  
 for pure discipline, while they could forgive every  
 breach of discipline in their own sect; who nicknamed  
 catholic bishops *persecutors*, while they stirred up

2 A

massacre

\* Speraveram quod omnibus omnino seditionibus & contentionibus  
 finis debitus fuisset impositus: sed cum dicationis tuæ scripta legissem  
 evidenter agnovi, quod neque respectum salutis suæ, neque, quod est  
 majus, Dei omnipotentis venerationem ante oculos suos velint ponere;  
 siquid in ea agere persistunt, quæ non modo ad ipsorum dedecus infamiamque  
 pertineant, sed etiam iis hominibus dent facultatem, qui  
 longe, &c. Nam id quoque scire te convenit quod ex iisdem venerunt  
 adserentes quod minus dignus, &c. Et contra id quod iisdem respon-  
 deram, frustra eos id jactare, cum res fuissent apud urbem Romam  
 ab idoneis episcopis terminatæ, pertinaciter respondendum æstimaverunt,  
 quod omnis causa non fuisset audienda; sed pauci quidam episcopi quodam  
 loco se clausissent, et prout ipsis aptum fuerat, judicassent. Const. Imp.  
 ad Ablavium. V. A.

massacre against christians; who abominated all *traitors* to the faith, while they herded with the Arian banditti of drowners of bishops, and quarterers of young females. Those Circumcellions also could profess their suspicions of *private episcopal meetings*, when the result of such meetings chanced to be unfavourable to their complaint. Unluckily for their age, no *inquisition* existed, to which they might apply for a parallel. Enough of the council of Arles.

With regard to *Patriarchs*; to begin from the church of Rome, we are informed by *Columbanus*, that “as *patriarch*, the pope’s jurisdiction *did not* interfere “with that of the *patriarchs* of *Milan* or of *Aquileia*; “so that they who have *dubbed* him *patriarch* of *all* “the *western world*, are quite ignorant of ecclesiastical history.”\* There is a *naivetè* in this jocular turn, that much more than atones for its neighbourhood to coarseness. I doubt whether any mortal men, accustomed to speak the *English tongue*, have saluted the pope or talked about him as *patriarch* of *all the western world*. That he has been considered, that he has been stiled the *patriarch of the west*, that is to say, the *only patriarch residing in the west*,† in the ninth century; that three hundred years previous,‡ he was considered as the first of the *five patriarchs*, four of whom are in the *east*; that in the council of Chalcedon, the title of the *patriarch* was given by the fathers

\* Columban. Lett. 3. p. 111.

† *Ἦν ἐκ δυσεως πατριάρχων.* Theodor. Studit.

‡ Namely, in the time of Justinian the first.



fathers to Pope Leo\* (as it was given to him by the imperial letters relating to that council, †); and that, before the era of this council, the title is not to be met with, (unless we admit for genuine the interpolated acts of Saint Clement I. ‡) as applied to christian bishops, we had already known.

At

\* Hard. II. 257. In reading over the acts of the *Latrocinium* at Ephesus, when the secretary came to the following passage, “Dioscorus said: We therefore, in confirmation of the synodical acts of our fathers, pronounce Flavian and Eusebius deposed ... Flavian said, I appeal from thee: Hilarus deacon of the Roman church said,” (in Latin) “*κλήρωδικήν*” i. e. “the appeal is cast.” The orientals at Chalcedon, cried out *by acclamation to the words* “*επεσόσαν*, anathema to Dioscorus...Holy Lord, now vindicate thyself” (i. e. Leo, whose supremacy had been slighted). Many years to Leo! many years TO THE PATRIARCH. *ἀγίε Κυριε συ σαυτον εκδικησον Δεινός πολλα ἴα εἶη· ΤΟΤ Πάτριρχυ πολλα ἴα εἶη.*

† Ibid. p. 39. Litt. Theodos. Imp. ad Placidiam. Also in Litt. Marcian. ad Archimandrit. p. 672, and in the petition of Theodorus to Leo and to the council against Dioscorus (p. 322); of Ischyron (325). of Athanasius to the same (321); of Sophronius to the same (332). In the latter of these petitions to the pope and council, the title of *universal* is equally applied to the *patriarch* and to the *synod*; and it is to be remarked, that Saint Cyril, the great predecessor of Dioscorus, is merely stiled *archbishop* (which was equivalent to *primate*) by the petitioning clergy of Alexandria, and by *Athanasius* who was his nephew.

‡ Inter. P. P. Apost. Cotelerii. Le Clerc's edit. I. p. 804. In the *Acts*, David is called by Saint Peter *ὁ Πάτριρχης*; which term could have signified nothing else than *chief* or *founder*, with relation to all such persons of the other tribes, besides that of Juda, as acknowledged the supremacy in Sion.

At the same time it is manifest, that the term *patriarch*, when given to Leo by the fathers of Chalcedon, was meant to convey a singular and solitary pre-eminence: that it was neither more nor less in signification, than *the chief of the catholic church*, and bore no immediate, nor indeed any relation to *special* episcopal, or metropolitan, or primatial authority. It added nothing to the right of the pastor of all christians, nor did it even mean to add a tittle to the jurisdiction. The style was not accepted by Leo or his successors, although the bishops of Constantinople, in order to give a colour to their usurpations by the medium of this epithet, seized on it without delay, and without shame.

When the bishops at Chalcedon entitled Leo *the patriarch*, and called on him, as such, to vindicate his own superiority, slighted by Dioscorus, it is clear that they attributed to him, as *the patriarch*, some power and some pre-eminence above that of *Dioscorus*. But, in that acceptation of *patriarch*, on which *Columbanus* argues, Dioscorus was a *patriarch* as much as the bishop of Rome; so that those bishops, if they understood by the term, what *Columbanus* does, would have been guilty of outrageous nonsense in passing the compliment.

If then we, who are *entirely ignorant of ecclesiastical history*, should be asked how the pope came even to be *dubbed a patriarch*; we answer, it was by the *fathers of Chalcedon*; and that so *ignorant were they of ecclesiastical history*, as to have *dubbed* him not merely

merely patriarch of *the entire western world*, but of *the entire christian world*, and nothing more.

*Columbanus* must not resent our pointing to some circumstances of this synod; which, even to the *ignorant of ecclesiastical history*; even to the *fanatical and separatist* opposers of the *enlightened Veto*, of the *enlightened* politicians, and of the *enlightened* antiquarians; in short, of all the galaxy of illumination, will demonstrate the emphatical meaning of the fathers in the council, when they called on Leo as *the patriarch* to avenge himself by sentencing Dioscorus, who had superseded an appeal to *the patriarch*. *Columbanus* shall have a *gloss*, as ancient as the text, that is to say, of the fifth century.

*First*.—"To Theodosius, the victorious and perpetual sovereign, his father, Valentinian the emperor. On the day after my arrival in Rome, to do homage to the Deity, when I advanced to the shrine of Peter the apostle, after the sacred vigil of his anniversary, I was requested at once by the bishop of Rome, and by others, whom he had convened from different provinces, to write to you concerning the faith, which is said to have been disturbed. This faith we have received from the tradition of our ancestors, and are bound to vindicate with due devotion; as well as to maintain in our age against violation, for the blessed Peter the dignity of his reverence; so that HIS HOLINESS THE BISHOP OF ROME TO WHOM THE ORIGINAL TIMES (of christianity) YIELDED THE PRIESTLY POWER  
" OVER

“ OVER ALL, may have scope and facility to JUDGE  
 “ OF THE FAITH AND OF BISHOPS, *by virtue whereof*  
 “ *the bishop of Constantinople, according to the usage*  
 “ *of synods, appealed to him in due form, and*  
 “ *writing.\**”

Second.—From the letter of Placidia the empress to the same Theodosius. “ It being our care, as soon  
 “ as we entered this elder city, to pay our devotions  
 “ to Peter the blessed apostle, at the worshipful altar  
 “ of the *Martyrium*; Leo the bishop, intermitting  
 “ prayers, bewailed to us the condition of catholic  
 “ faith, and attested us by the chief of the apostles,  
 “ from whose presence we had come back. He was  
 “ thickly escorted by a multitude of bishops, whom  
 “ by the *commanding power and prerogative of his*  
 “ *see he had congregated from the innumerable cities*  
 “ *of Italy.*†” ... “ The great mischief of the trans-  
 “ action ”

\* Labb. IV. 52. Τῶ δεσπότῃ Θεοδοσίῳ κ. Γ. λ. Νικητῆς Ουαλεντινίας  
 κ. Γ. λ. παραγενομένῳ μὲν ἐν τῇ πόλει Ῥώμῃ ἐξέμμενισασθαι τὸ Θεῖον, τῆ  
 ἐπισητῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐν τῷ ευκλήριῳ τῷ ἀποστόλῳ Πέτρῳ προσήλθον, κακείσε μὲν τὴν  
 σέβασμιον νυκτὶα τῆς ἡμέρας τῆς ἀποστόλου, ὑπο τῆς τῆς Ῥώμης ἐπισκοπῆς ὑπο  
 τῆς εἰεραγῆ αὐτῶ ἀμα ἐκ διαφορῶν ἐπαρχιῶν συνηγμένων ἠξιώθη γραφαὶ περὶ  
 τῆς σιτισῆς. κ. Γ. λ. ἦν σφειλομέν μὲν τῆς προσήκησῆς καθοσιώσεως Ἐκ-  
 δικεῖν καὶ τῆς ἰδίας εὐλαθείας τὴν ἀξία τῷ μακαρίῳ ἀποστόλῳ Πέτρῳ ἀγαθόν  
 καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἡμέτεροις χρόνοις φυλατῆιν· ἵνα ὁ μακαριώτατος ἐπισκοπος τῆς  
 Ῥωμαίων πόλεως ΩΙ ΤΗΝ ΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΝ ΚΑΤΑ ΠΑΝΤΩΝ Η ΑΡΧΑΙΟΤΗΣ  
 ΠΑΡΕΣΧΕ χωρατ καὶ ευπορίαν εχῆ περὶ τε πίσεως καὶ ἱερέων κρεινῆν—  
 τῶν γαρ χαρὶν κατὰ τὸ εθος τῶν Ῥωμῶν καὶ ὁ τῆς Κῆπολεως ἐπισκοπος  
 αὐτὸν ἐπεκαλεσατο δια λιβέλλῳ.

† Labb. II. 54. ὀπνηκῆ ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ εἰσοδῷ τῆς ἀρχαίας πόλεως κ. τ. λ.

“ action ” (at Ephesus) “ is, that the rule of catholic religion which had been preserved since the time of our ancestor Constantine, the first christian sovereign, should be disturbed by the assumption of one fellow, \* who is said to have assailed Flavian the bishop, by the introduction of soldiery, on account of his directing his appeal in writing to the *apostolical throne and to the bishops in these regions.*” † “ May your majesty command the truth of catholic religion to be preserved, so that according to the *decision and definition of the apostolical chair, which we always worship as the leading chief,* ‡ the cause of Flavian may be translated to the *council of the holy see, in which he, who first was so exalted as to receive the keys of heaven,* apparelled and ordained the episcopacy” (governing power) “ *of supreme priesthood.*” ‡

It

ἡ εὐλαβέστατος ἐπίσκοπος Ἀλεων ὀλίγον ἐπισχῶν ἑαυτὸν ἀπο τῆς εὐχῆς, ἕνεκα τῆς καθολικῆς πίστεως πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀπωδύρατο, αὐτὸν τε ὁμοίως τὸν κορυφαίων τῶν ἀποστόλων, ὃ καὶ ἐναρχὸς προσπειμὲν μαρτύρα συλλαβόμενος, περιεσχισμένως τε ΠΑΠΗΘΕΙ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΩΝ ἕς τινὰς ἀπο ἀναριθμητῶν πόλεων ἐν τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ συνήγαγεν ΤΥΠΟ ΤΗΣ ΑΡΧΗΣ ΤΟΥ ΙΔΙΟΥ ΤΟΠΟΥ καὶ ΤΗΣ ΑΣΙΑΣ. κ.λ. λ.

\* Ibid. Οὐ μικρὰ γὰρ ἐκ τῶν γεγενημένων ζημία τὴν ἰουδαίῳ χρονοῖς φυλαχθεῖσαν τῆ καθολικῆ κανονοῦ πίστιν... ἐναρχὸς τέτραρχθαι πρὸς ὑπόληψιν ἕεις ἀνθρώπων κ. τ. λ.

† δια το ΛΙΒΕΛΛΑΟΝ στείλαι πρὸς ἀποστολικὸν θρόνον κ.λ. λ.

‡ Ibid. ἵνα κατὰ τοῦ τυποῦ καὶ τοῦ ὄρον τῆ ἀποστολικῆ θρόνον ὃν καὶ ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ὧΣ ΠΡΩΤΟΥΜΕΝΟΝ ἀρισκινώμεν... ἐν τῇ συνόδῳ τῆ ἀποστολικῆ

θ. γ. κ.

It was in separate answers to these two letters, Theodosius twice entitled Leo, *the patriarch*, alluding (for he could not have slighted the argument used by the two empresses) to the singular and superlative possession of sacerdotal authority, which Dioscorus had set aside with military outrage.

Let us see how Marcian addresses Leo: for, Marcian also, after the council, termed Leo the *patriarch*, as already mentioned.

“The emperor Marcian, to Leo of Rome. We have arrived at the imperial station, by the grace of God, and by the choice of the senate and armies; whence, in honour to the catholic religion of christians, we have thought it just amongst the first employments of our accession, to address your holiness by our imperial letter as the *bishop*” (governor) and *ruler* of our divine religion.”\*

#### Fourth.

Ἦρονε ἡ δίκη παρὰ παμφύσειν ἐν ᾧ παρῶς; ἐκεῖνος ὁ ἴσας ἔρανε κλεις ἀξιώθεις ὑποδεξασθαι τὴν ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΗΝ ΤΗΣ ΑΡΧΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΣ ἐκσμορσε δηλαδὴ.

Comparing the text of this letter with that from the same empress (ibid. 56.) to Pulcheria Augusta, which appears in the original Latin, and is perfectly elegant, the phrase above quoted, ἐπισχωῶν ἑαυτὸν ἀπο τῆς εὐχῆς, although I have rendered it as it stands in the Greek and in the old translation, is faulty. It should be read, ἐπισχωῶν ἑαυτὸν ἀπο τῆς ΛΥΤΙΗΣ not εὐχῆς, as in that last mentioned to Pulcheria; *vicit tamen constantia sapientis sacerdotis, ut lachrymas paululum teineret, et causam violatæ fidei, tanquam hujus vindicæ, manifesto sermone proferret.* Here also we have the first idea of ἄγιε κυριε, ἐκδικησον σεαυτὸν.

\* Ibid. 62. Οὕτω ὑπερὶ τῆς ἐνλαπῆς καὶ καθολικῆς θρησκείας τῆς πιστῶς

*Fourth.*—In the signatures to the definition of Chalcedon, the papal legate *Paschosinus* styles himself representative of Leo of Rome, BISHOP OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH: Laurentius another legate subscribes, as delegate for Leo of Rome BISHOP OF EACH AND EVERY CHURCH: Bonifacius the presbyter and third legate, signs as the first.\*

*Fifth.*—In the letter by the fathers of the council to Leo, the pope is recognized expressly to be the *head of their body*, (then assembled to the number of five hundred and twenty) and the guide and chief: † to be that very one to whom *the Saviour entrusted the care of his vineyard*, whom Procorus notwithstanding in the extreme *phrenzy of wickedness*, had dared to excommunicate, ‡ to be their *common father*: § and they avow, that if he will grant privileges to the see of Constantinople, he could grant them, from the

2 B

abundance

των χριστιανων...των τε την ἀγιωσυνην ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΕΟΥΣΑΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΧΟΥΣΑΝ  
ΤΗΣ ΘΕΙΑΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ ἱερεις γρ μιμασιν εν σωτοις δικαιοις κηρησμεθα  
προσειπειν.

\* Labb. IV. 580 581. Πασχασινος επισκοπος επερχων τον Ἰσπου ἦθ  
δισωδη με ἦθ μ καρδιατα και αποσολικη της οικουμηνικης εκκλησιας  
επισκοπος πολεις Ρωμης Λεοντος ὑπεγραψα. Ασκησιος επερχων κ. τ. λ.  
τω ανδρος πασης εκκλησιας επισκοπος πολεις Ρωμης Λεοντος ὑπεγραψα.

† Ibid. 833 ὡν συ μεν ὡς κεφαλη μελων ἡγημεμευες.

‡ Ibid. 835. και προς τυτοις ακουσιν ἔτι δε κατ' ΑΤΤΟΥ ἦθς αμπελω  
την φυλακην .Ι. αμπελωνος ΠΑΡΑ ΤΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ επιτετραμμενη  
λεγομεν δη της σης ἰσοτητος, την μανιαν εἴετανης και ακοινωνησιαν. κ. ἦ. λ.

§ Ibid. p. 838. from C to E.

abundance of his generosity and out of that *which is his own*.\*

Now considering that Dioscorus in the *Latrocinium* of Ephesus had not only pronounced an unjust judgment, but had usurped the authority of judging, by virtue of an imperial rescript, and had made such usurpation available, by the introduction of soldiers and prize-fighters; considering that the supreme dignity of the apostolical see had been violated by such proceedings, and that in order to establish the iniquity of the sentence against Flavian *even in the form*, it was necessary to vindicate the supremacy of Saint Peter's chair, to which Flavian had appealed: recollecting that in the imperial letters this supremacy is thrice inculcated; for this purpose is thrice claimed by the papal legates, in their signatures, is insisted on for this end, at the very opening of the council, † and in the legatine sentence on Dioscorus; and is recognized as a point of fundamental christianity by the fathers: if we combine all these circumstances with the occasion on which the title of *patriarch* was given to Leo by the *orientals*, that is to say, by those who adhered

to

\* Ibid. περιεισμενοι ως της αποστολικης, κ. τ. λ.

† Labb. IV. 94, 95. "Paschasinus said, we have the precept of Leo the bishop of Rome, *who is the head of all the churches*, that Dioscorus shall not sit in the council, and if he should attempt to sit, that he be expelled. Let him stand a trial for the judgment he gave. He usurped the character of a judge, and presumed to hold a council *without the commission of the apostolical see*, which never was done; which never is it lawful to do." See also the judgment for Theodoret. Act. VIII.



to Flavian's memory and appeal; it would betray, great contempt of the reader's understanding, if I should argue more at length, that the title of *patriarch* meant, at the time it was bestowed, nothing different from *head of the christian body*, of its bishops and of its people, in all causes of religion. In short, *Leo* was *the patriarch* for all who saluted him by this name; for *Maximus of Antioch*, who was also a *patriarch* in the later acceptance of the title; for *Anatolius of Constantinople*, whose successors, from a grant of ordaining certain metropolitans, made in this council, assumed the style of *universal patriarch*; for *Dioscorus*, whom, before the synod, *Leo* had disqualified to sit as judge: and yet *Alexandria* was then the second of those sees, afterwards stiled *patriarchal*, to denote their superiority of privileges.

So much for the original signification of the title, when it was first addressed exclusively to a bishop of Rome. As it then was meant to express the headship ecclesiastical, so it was after employed to denote the five principal sees, Rome, Alexandria, Theopolis or Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople. Of these sees the three former had been recognized as holding a peculiar jurisdiction, by the Nicene council in the seventh canon, of which I shall treat shortly. *Jerusalem* also (a name revived in *Elia* after the building of the *Anastasis*) had been established by the fathers of Nicea, in a mere honorary precedency, of which, however the rank cannot be ascertained from the words of that seventh canon. The council of Chalcedon

don ratified a compromise between Jerusalem and Antioch, whereby the former city came to hold what in after times were called in the east *patriarchal* rights. As for Constantinople, it had been the suffragan of Heraclea, until raised into ecclesiastical consequence by Saint John Chrysostom. This great man, perhaps from the necessity of the times, perhaps from the authority of the see of Antioch, perhaps from zeal combining with that importance which he derived from his transcendant virtues and eloquence, and station in the imperial city, though a suffragan bishop, without any canonical authority save that of the synod of Nectarius, deposed fifteen bishops, and ordained a bishop in Ephesus. Theophilus of Alexandria alarmed at this increasing power, was easily prevailed on to hold a synod in Constantinople, (which was beyond his primatial jurisdiction,) and in that synod to summon Chrysostom and to depose him, though protesting against the competency of his judges. John appealed to Rome, but died in exile before the appeal could serve him. Pope Innocent I. however, after examining the cause of John, interdicted the bishops of Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople, from his communion.

The cruelty of Theophilus towards the incomparable John Chrysostom had the effect of lowering the importance of the *first* see in the east, which had endured in great reverence, notwithstanding the Arian innovations, from the times of Dionysius and of Paul of Samosata. Nestorius, when impeached by Saint Cyril

Cyril of great blasphemy, retorted, that Cyril was desirous of acting once more the tragedy of Theophilus against John. Pope Celestine at length appointed Cyril his vicar in the council of Ephesus, and the bishop of Constantinople was deposed. From the authority thus regained to Egypt, Dioscorus presumed to hold a second *council of Ephesus*, emboldened by an imperial missive, procured through the influence of Chrysaphius the eunuch, for whom Eutyches had stood sponsor in baptism. In the fourth council of Chalcedon therefore the chieftaincy of Saint Peter was at issue with all episcopal pretensions, as well as with all secular authority. This was really the *cardo causæ*; the *disturbance* of the immemorial *faith*, as Valentinian, Placidia, and Marcian term the original and immutable law of ecclesiastical œconomy.

In this council of Chalcedon I have already shewn that no bishop of the other chief sees was complimented by the fathers with the title of patriarch. When Ibas, metropolitan of Edessa, was questioned, whether he did not formerly consider Cyril as excommunicated, he answered; “ I then adhered to my “ *primate*” (*exarch*) “ I said, unless he explained him- “ self, and unless the oriental college of bishops re- “ ceived him, that I with my primate and the oriental “ college would disown him.”\* The *primate* or *exarch* of

\* Act. X. ἐξηκολούθησα τῷ ἐξάρχῳ μου· εἶπον ὅτι εἰ μὴ αὐτὸς ἐαυτὸν ἔρμηνυσαι, καὶ διζῆαισιν αὐτὸν ἡ ἀνατολικὴ συνάδος κατὰ τὴν ἐξάρχῳ μου καὶ τῆς ἀνατολικῆς συνόδου ἀθηναῦμαι αὐτὸν.

of Ibas was the bishop of Antioch, and consequently was one of those to whom the stile of *patriarch* would have belonged, if then merely significant of what it afterwards imported. The same title of *exarch* had been used in the council of Ephesus by Philip the presbyter and legate of Celestine, but in a meaning somewhat different. "It is undoubted," says he, when about to deliver judgment on Nestorius, "it is manifest from age to age, that PETER the "EXARCH" (chief) "and head of the apostles, the "pillar of faith, was entrusted by our Redeemer with "the keys of his kingdom, and that to him has been "imparted the authority of binding and loosing: and "he, to this day, and for ever, lives and judges in his "successors."\* This *exarchate* of Peter is exactly that dignity first named *patriarchal* at Chalcedon. The latter title, I grant, became afterwards common to the four eastern sees; I grant, that during the long disunion of Constantinople from Rome, that is to say, from Acacius to Epiphanius, it was given to the bishops of the imperial city, who had entirely subdued the independence of the sees of Alexandria and of Egypt. It appears to have been given to John,† and to Epiphanius, his successor, by some orientals, and when first assumed could have meant nothing less than the

\* Act. III. Concil. Ephes. Οὐδὲν ἀμφιβόλον ἐστὶ μακρὸν διὰ πᾶσι τῆς αἰῶσιν ἐγνωσθῆ, ὅτι ὁ ἅγιος καὶ μακαριωτάτης Πέτρος ὁ ἐξάρχος καὶ κεφαλὴ τῶν ἀποστόλων, ὁ κίων τῆς πίστεως κ. τ. λ. ὅστις ἕως τῆς νῦν καὶ αἰ ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῦ διαδοχαῖς καὶ ζῆ καὶ κρινεῖ.

† Concil. C. P. sub Menne, Act. V.

the pretension to supremacy in the church. Pope Hormisda notwithstanding restored communion to Epiphanius professing his return to the faith of Rome, and appointed him his vicar apostolical in the east. Thus the title of *patriarch* came, in the west, to mean a principal bishop placed over metropolitans, as in the second council of Maseon, the bishop of Lyons is so named. In the east it was confined to the five sees, recognized by Justinian the emperor, as the pre-eminent chairs in the world, Rome being their chief: in which signification Gregory I.\* writes, that he had sent his profession of faith to his brothers the *patriarchs*. After this extension of the title the see of Rome remained still, in the sense of the council of Chalcedon, the *patriarch* of all bishops, and the bishop of all *patriarchs*.

It is evident, from what has been stated, that in the original use of the word *patriarch*, no *local* jurisdiction was referred to; and that from the subsequent use or abuse of it, no bounds of *special* jurisdiction can be ascertained. It is not less manifest, that as the see of Elia from the mere honorary precedency it had obtained at Nicea, grew up into such importance as to gain by compromise from Antioch some metropolitan sees; as that of Constantinople, by the mean of an honorary rank, *said to have* been granted by the second general council, rose to such importance as we have seen: so, the church of Rome, even supposing that it had not been the governing and truly *patriarchal*

\* *Epist.* Lib. I. 25.

*archal* church, as we have proved; though it had not been *specially the head of the western churches*, as I am going to demonstrate, yet might lawfully and canonically have grown up into those privileges, which *Columbanus* will not vouchsafe to grant to the pope.

But who are those *most ignorant men* who have *dubbed* the pope the patriarch of the west, of the *entire west*? One of these men was *Sirmond*,\* whom the protestant GROTIUS as well as the catholic VALESINS considered as the glory of his age: another of those men is THOMASSIN, whom *Columbanus* has recommended † as one of the *most learned authors* on the catholic hierarchy and on the *rights of the different orders of clergy*. The former of these, in his refutation of Saumaise and Gothofred, had overturned the several arguments from Rufinus and the *Notitia*, which *Columbanus* gives anew, as *irrefragable*. He proved, that even the *oriental churches* considered the bishop of Rome as the patriarch of the western churches. The question then in dispute was not, whether the *patriarch of the west* would have had thereby a right to confirm all his subordinate bishops. Even Saumaise was not so eccentrically litigious, as to argue from the resources of etymology against the public and established church laws or usages of the west in his own day. The object of Saumaise was to shew, that, in *the fourth century*, the jurisdiction of the pope was confined

\* De Eccles. Suburbic. In Censura et Propempticis. Tom. V. Edit. Venet.

† Columb. Lett. 1. p. 127.

confined to a part of Italy. In the attempt to prove this, he failed. *Thomassin*, that other ignorant man, not only asserts the *patriarchate of the west* to the bishop of Rome, but is foolish enough to imagine, that the immense extent of this *patriarchate of the west* appears the true reason, why the bishops of Rome did not keep in their hands the ordaining of bishops, beyond Italy and the islands adjacent; whereas the bishops of Egypt and Alexandria continued to ordain all their subordinate bishops. For “these two sees” writes he, “presided each over but one *diocese*.” (*i. e.* collection of metropolitans.) “The bishop of Rome “ was the governor of very many *dioceses*; whence it “ was even impossible that during the times of perse- “ cution, the prelate of Rome should ordain bishops “ for Africa, for the Spanish and Gallic provinces, and “ for the *dioceses* still more remote.”\*

The name of *patriarch* being therefore an invention of the fifth century, but modelled since that age, so as to signify a certain highest jurisdiction, yet less than that of the popedom; if *Columbanus* denies to the pope this local jurisdiction, he will in kindness to the ignorant, explain away the passages and facts I am about to mention.

First,—In what other sense did Basil the great call

2 c

the

\* *Thomassin Vet. et Nov. Discipl. p. 1. Lib. 1. ch. 8.*

† XIV. Unum addam occasione *Dioceseorū complurium* quas uni patriarchæ Romano paruisse diximus: non abludere a vero id causæ fuisse quamobrem episcoporum ordinationes non retinuerint sibi Romani pontifices, nisi in Italia et circumpositis Insulis, quas *sub-æthiopicas* provincias vocat *Ruffinus*, &c.

the bishop of Rome the *prime leader of the western bishops*? \*

Secondly,—In what other sense did Saint Augustine deem Innocent I. to be the *governing prelate of the west*? †

Thirdly,—In what meaning did Saint Jerom profess to know of no *churches*, but the three, of Egypt, Antioch, and Rome? ‡

Fourth,—In what other meaning did Saint Cyril at the council of Ephesus, as soon as the letter of Pope Celestine was read, pretend to say, that it contained the judgment of all *the west*, and go so far as to have this assertion written to the emperors in the name of the council? §

Fifth,—In what other meaning did Hilarus the deacon (who was also the successor of Leo the great) write to the empress Pulcheria, that the *said pope, with all his western council*, reprobated the proceedings of the Ephesian *latrocinium*? ||

Sixth,—When Pope Vigilius declared to the bishops deputed to invite him to the second council of Constantinople, that the *eastern* bishops were in great numbers, and those along with him were few; in what meaning did those deputies reply, that in the  
four

\* *Ἰὼν ὁ βίσιαν κορυφαίον.* Basil. Epist. 239. edit. Maur. 1730 T. 2.

† *Contra Julian. Lib. I. cap. 4.*

‡ *Contra Vigilant. tom. 2. p. 389. edit. Vallars.*

§ *Labb. III. p. 609.*

|| *Ibid. IV. p. 57. Vestra igitur veneranda Clementia cognoscat a præfato Papa cum omni occidentali concilio reprobari omnia, &c.*



four general councils there had been no great number of bishops from the west; that on this occasion there were bishops from *Italy*, from *Africa*, and from *Illyricum*?\*

Seventh,—In what other meaning did Pope Agatho write to the emperor Constantine, as president of the bishops of the west: “Agatho with all the episcopal COLLEGES APPERTAINING TO THE COUNCIL OF THE CHIEF SEE OF ROME?”† Why does the synodical letter declare, that the members of their body are in *Sclavonia*, *Lombardy*, *France*, *Spain*, and *Britain*? Why do they inform the emperor that they have sent those ambassadors to state to him “their common principles of faith, that is to say, the principles of all the bishops in the northern and western parts of the world?”‡ How ignorant was this synod of all ecclesiastical history! What is worse than ignorance, the patriarch of Aquileia, “with whose jurisdiction” (*patriarchal* no doubt) “the bishop of Rome could not interfere,” is one of the subscribing bishops to the

\* Concil. C. P. II. Collat. 2. Labb. V. 430, and p. 433. Primasius the African bishop refuses to attend, unless the pope will be present. *Papa non presente, non venio.*

† Labbe, VI. 677. συν πασαις ταις ανηκουσαις τῆ συνοδῶ τῆ αποστολικῆς θρονῆς.

‡ Ibid. 686. και μαλιστα επειδη εν μεσω των ιβνων των τε σκλαβων και λογγοβαρδων, εμην αλλα και φραγκων Γοθων και βρεττανων πλεισοι εκ των συνδουλων ημων ειναι γνωριζονται. ibid. p. 687. τα δε προσωπα, κ. τ. λ. οφειλοντα προσαγαγειν την αναφοραν ΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΗΜΩΝ, τωτεσιν, ἁπαντων των ΚΑΤΑ ΤΑ ΔΡΕΤΩΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΔΥΤΙΚΑ ΚΑΙΜΑΤΑ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΩΝ.

the declaration, that the *bishops* of the *west* appertain to the *local council* of the pope. The *patriarch* of *Milan* also, another of these patriarchs in the *west*, is guilty of the same blunder. \* In short the bishops of the *west*, in the *seventh century* appear to have laboured under the same *ecclesiastical blindness* as Hilarus the deacon, in the *fifth*, when he mentioned the *western council of Ico*, or as Valentinian the emperor, when he *mistook* the *western council* mentioned by the fathers at Ephesus, for the council of Pope Celestine.

Perhaps now, if we should travel back to the beginning of the fourth century, we shall find, in the year 314, this *local* jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome acknowledged, and distinguished not only from his primacy over all bishops, as head and governor of the body, but also from the primacy in Italy, of which I will treat hereafter. In the first council of Arles were present Merocles of Milan and Theodorus of Aquileia: *Patriarchs* these were, according to *Columbanus*. Besides these, there were bishops from London and York, from the Gauls and from Africa. There were deputies from Spain. From Rome also two presbyters and two deacons, commissioned by Pope Sylvester. The council then addressed the bishop of Rome informing him, that, owing to his absence, a less severe judgment had been given against the schismatics: that, however, it was not possible for Sylvester to quit Rome, where the *apostles* were hold-  
ing

\* Ibid. 700. Mansuetus of Milan. 704. Agatho of Aquileia. 697.  
Wulfstan of York.

ing judgment every day: \* that they had decreed certain rules to be observed in their several provinces, namely the provinces from which they had assembled: † they send to him the copy of their decrees, resolving, that Sylvester should intimate them *to all, as he held the most extensive dioceses.* ‡ In that age a *diocese* meant unquestionably a district, containing several provinces, subordinate to one governor. § In ecclesiastical stile, it signified the department of a primate to whom metropolitans were obedient. Where shall we find those *primacies* in the *metropolitcal* jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome? Neither are they to be found in Italy alone. They included the Gauls at least, and the most distant tracts of Spain, as we shall see. These bishops also from Britain concur in desiring, that the bishop of Rome should intimate the decrees even to their churches. It seems then, that as far as Britain, the correspondence and communication with Rome was kept up. This, however, it may be said, does not prove a jurisdiction throughout the *west*. I answer, that it proves jurisdiction, as far as it acknowledges in the bishop of Rome

\* Sed quoniam a partibus illis recedere minime potuisti, in quibus apostoli quotidie sedent.

† Sed et consulendum *nobisipsis* censuimus, et cum diversæ sint *provinciae* ex quibus advenimus, ita et varia contingunt quæ nos censemus *observare* debere.

‡ Placuit etiam per te potissimum qui *maiores dioceses* tenes omnibus insinuari.

Rome the possession of most extensive dioceses. If those *dioceses* were commensurate with what now is called the *western patriarchate*, the pope, even then, possessed a *special* jurisdiction in all this department: if, on the contrary, the western division was more ample than those *dioceses*, the council of Arles *encreased* his *local* jurisdiction, when it appointed him to intimate those rules, and consequently to superintend their observance; and this, whatever it was, the bishops of the council are expressly led to do, on account of his *general primacy*, which they had acknowledged, when justifying his absence; and accounting for their having deliberated, notwithstanding his absence, on points of regulation, not comprized in the imperial summons.\*

Let us go forward. The first canon of Arles is this. “First of all decreed, concerning the observance of Easter, that it be kept at the same time and on the same day *by us*, throughout *the whole extent of our regions*, and that *you*” (Sylvester) “are to address your letters to all, *according to usage.*” †

The

\* Sed quoniam recedere a partibus minime potuisti, in quibus et apostoli quotidie sedent, et cruor ipsorum sine intermissione Dei gloriam testatur; non tamen hæc sola Nobis visa sunt tractanda, frater carissime, ad quæ fueramus invitati.

† Primo loco de observatione Pasche dominici ut uno die & uno tempore per omnem orbem a nobis observetur, et juxta consuetudinem ad omnes Literas tu dirigas. Hard I. 263. It is unnecessary to remind the scholar, that *totus orbis* does not signify the *entire world*,

but

The council of Arles, by this canon, informs us of two points. First, that the *western* churches, whose prelates *only* were called to this council, thought themselves competent to legislate for all their territory. Secondly, that *this territory* was accustomed to receive immemorially the letters of the bishop of Rome, and to conform thereto, with regard to the celebration of Easter.

Let us pass now to the first council of Nicea. In this synod *Vitus* and *Vincentius*, presbyters and delegates from Rome, writes Photius, were present; with *whom was associated Hosius* of Corduba.\* On the breaking up of the council, Hosius, Vitus, and Vincentius are the persons who intimate the decrees to the churches of *Rome, Spain, Italy, and to all the nations more remote as far as the ocean.*†

Afterwards, when Pope Julius summoned the Orientals to a general council, in order to review the sentence passed on Athanasius by the synod of Antioch, he was upraided by the Arians with attempting to legislate *singly* for the eastern churches. Julius answered: “ Although I *alone* wrote, yet I

wrote

but a certain compass of regions, limited variously, (as the subject matter will tell.) by government, nationality, language, or practices.

\* Ad Michael. *περι οἰκουμεν. συν. οἷς ἐ ὁ κορθουθης ὄσιος συνεπιτακῆν.*

† Gelas. in Tom. Ch. 28. *τοῖς κατὰ Ρωμην καὶ Σπανικην καὶ Ἰταλικὴν ἀπασαν, καὶ ταῖς ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσι τοῖς ἐπειδὴ κατεχουσιν (not καὶ εἰμι ἔσιν as absurdly printed) ἕως τῆς Ωκεανοῦ ἀγίας τῆς Θεοῦ ἐκκλησίας.*

“ wrote not my solitary decision, but that of *all the bishops in Italy and in these regions*. But I did not wish to make them all write, lest they should be annoying from their number.”\*

In the letter from the council of Sardica to Julius, although the supremacy of the see of Rome over all bishops, is openly professed,† yet the Pope is solely asked to have the canons promulgated in Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia.‡ Here the Pope is considered as a *national primate*.

In

\* Ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐμὲ μόνον ἐστὶν αὕτη ἡ γνώμη, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντων τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ἰταλίαν καὶ τῶν ἐν ἰσθμοῖς τοῖς μερῶσιν ἐπισκοπῶν· καὶ ἐγὼ οὐ θέλω πάντας οὐκ ἠθέλησα ποιῆσαι γραφαὶ ἵνα μὴ πρὸς πολλῶν το βάρους ἔχωσι. In Labb. II. 502 and in Hard. I. 610, the last seven words preceding, are rendered by the former, *ne a multis onerarentur*, by Hardouin *ne a multis gravarentur*; in both the mistake is similar. The original Latin text, out of which the Greek translation was made at Rome, was probably couched in some such terms as these. *Verum ego nolui facere ut singule ab omnibus literæ darentur, ne a pluribus molestiam inferrent*. The translator having turned idiomatically *Literas dare* into *γραφαί*, the reference back, from *a pluribus* to *literæ*, was obscured in the Greek version. At the same time *ἔχωσι* appears erroneously substituted for *ενεγκῶσι*.

† Hoc enim optimum et valde congruentissimum esse videbitur, si ad CAPUT, id est *ad Petri Apostoli sedem, de singulis quibusque provinciis Domini referant Sacerdotes*.

‡ Tua autem excellens prudentia disponere debet, ut per tua scripta, qui in *Sicilia*, qui in *Sardinia*, in *Italia sunt* Fratres, quæ meta sunt, et quæ definita cognoscant.

In the synod of Rome under Liberius, we find this pope addressing the Orientals, as *president of the bishops of the West*.\*

These few matters of fact, I humbly think, are such as *Columbanus* should have explained away, before he charged with *ignorance of all ecclesiastical history* those, who have *dubbed* the bishop of Rome, *patriarch of the entire west*.

With the exception of Agatho, all the instances lately adduced, are prior to the introduction even of the word *patriarch* into ecclesiastical nomenclature. *Columbanus* should have taken notice of these instances, though it had been for the purpose of ridiculing them. The *few* mistakes he has slipped into, when pronouncing this interlocutory sentence, are very easily accounted for, on the score of an understanding pretty much confused, and of an excessive zeal against the ignorance of his neighbours. First, he avoids defining the term *patriarch*. This seasonable reserve may be owing to his antipathy for *scholastic distinctions*, and to his regard for *clear perspicuous discussion*. Still it holds this important advantage over the old *pedantic* and *technical* methods, so very justly condemned by him, that it supplies a controversial writer with the means of demonstrating a *patriarch* to signify every thing or nothing. The term itself may signify a prerogative, exercised and

2 D

understood

\* Λιόβριος επισκοπος Ιταλίας και ὁι κατα Δυσω επισκοποι. See the letter throughout.

understood long prior to the age, in which it was first adopted: again, the term *patriarch* may have been introduced, in order to express an *original* prerogative, enhanced by additional extent of jurisdiction, or enlarged by an annexation of territory: the *term* may have been originally demonstrative of an *apostolical* authority, or of an *ecclesiastical* pre-eminence. It may have conveyed in one age, the idea of a greater or less portion of effective power, than in another age. Of course, the attempt to fix the limits of its inherent privilege, or of its nobility, in the Catholic church, by arguing from a few desultory instances, may perchance be sagacious enough, or, more than perchance, may be silly and idle gossiping.

I have already demonstrated, that the title of *patriarch*, when first addressed by churchmen to a bishop, was given to LEO of Rome, and that when so employed, it solely and exclusively indicated the recognition of his primacy over all the Catholic church, as the head of its priesthood, of its doctors, and of its judges in causes ecclesiastical. In *this* acceptation of the term, I hope it will not be thought unpolite to hint, that the remark of *Columbanus*, “that Pope Benedict XIV *himself* acknowledges, “that the pope’s powers as *bishop*, *metropolitan* and “*patriarch* are very distinct, and that *each* extends “no farther than the *ordinary* powers of other “*bishops*, *metropolitans*, and *patriarchs*, so as not “to clash *with each other* ;”<sup>\*</sup>—it will not be unmannerly,

\* *Columb.* Letter 3. p. 121, 122.



mannerly, I repeat it, to suggest, that this observation, even if it were reconcilable with *clear discussion*, and clear grammar, goes somewhat wide of the mark.

There is however a *distinction*, according to *Columbanus*, between the powers of the bishop of Rome, when acting as a *metropolitan*, and when acting as a *patriarch*. So far we have gained not very much indeed, but something. Let us try to extract from our *clear discussor*, in what the distinction lies. *Columbanus* goes on thus.

“ The sixth canon of the council of Nice is *too clear to admit of a controversy*, and the words of *Rufinus*, a *contemporary author*, would suffice to remove all doubt, if any there were.”\* For the present, I beg you will observe, that *Rufinus* has placed *beyond all doubt* the distinction between the *metropolitan* and *patriarchal* rights of the bishop of Rome. Again to *Columbanus*.

“ In point of fact, the *Metropolitan* jurisdiction of Rome extended no farther than the civil jurisdiction of the *Ficarius Urbicus*. The limits of this civil jurisdiction are defined by the *Notitia Imperii*, a work of the fifth century, and those limits might be circumscribed by a radius of 100 miles.† This is evident from the *incontrovertible* authority of *Rufinus* on the 6th canon of Nice.”‡

Here again you must remark, that *Rufinus* will also make it *evident*, that the *metropolitan* jurisdiction

\* *Columb. ibid.* † Same Letter, page 2.

‡ *Ibid.* in the note.

dition of Rome was *circumscribed by a radius of 100 miles*; if you should affect not to understand what it can be to *circumscribe by a radius*, I will take it to signify, that the *metropolitan* jurisdiction of Rome was bounded by a circle described with a radius of 100 miles. Therefore attend to *Rufinus* on the sixth canon: his words are these: “ They also decree, &c. “ Canon vi., that as well at Alexandria, as in the “ city of Rome, the ancient custom be adhered to; “ so that as well the former have the care of Egypt, “ as the latter that of the *suburbicarian churches*.”

Now, that you have the entire of the passage before you, let us grant *suburbicarian* churches to signify those placed within a circle of any *radius*. I implore your help for the right understanding of this *incontrovertible* and *evident* authority, an authority so manifest, as to suffice for *removing all doubt*, if any there were, concerning the meaning of the sixth canon of Nice, which canon *is too clear to admit of a controversy*. The demonstration of *Columbanus* stands thus *mathematically*. The bishop of Rome, according to *Rufinus*, had or has the care of the *suburbicarian churches*: therefore it is *evident* from *Rufinus*, that the *metropolitan* and *patriarchal* powers were *distinct* in the pope. Truly, truly I see nothing of all this in *Rufinus*. I see no mention of *patriarchal*, or *metropolitan* rights. And how can I discover a contrast, where but *one* species of rights is expressed? But let us state the other piece of demonstration. “ It “ is *evident* from *Rufinus*, that the *metropolitan* jurisdiction

“jurisdiction of Rome extended no farther than the “civil jurisdiction of the *vicarius urbicus*.” Neither do I comprehend *this* discovery. Rufinus mentions indeed *suburbicarian* churches, but there he stops. *Saumaïse* inferred from the term *suburbicarians*, that Rufinus *intended* to denote the limits of the papal jurisdiction, by analogy to the sphere of the *vicarius urbicus*. How grossly *Saumaïse* was mistaken, we shall see presently. But, if in fact, the *suburbicarian* comprised the *metropolitan* jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome, where shall we find the *patriarchal*? Was *patriarchal* synonymous with *metropolitan*? *Saumaïse* indeed was of that opinion; and he relied upon those very words of *Rufinus*, as demonstrative of its truth. He was consistent at least; for whatever be the authority implied in *the care of the suburbicarian churches*, the authority is either general or special, but cannot signify both at once, and each distinguished from the other. On the other hand *Columbanus* maintains the office of *patriarch* and *archbishop* to be distinct: he informs us, that this distinction is *clearly evinced* from the words of *Rufinus*: the words are merely “to “have the care of the *suburbicarian* churches.” To crown this accumulative nonsense, he finally declares, that the *suburbicarian* churches made up the *metropolitan* province of Rome!

*In point of fact*, however, the metropolitan jurisdiction of the *bishop* of Rome, as such, extended, in the age of *Rufinus*, not only to the southern extremities of Italy, but comprehended Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica.

The *radius of 100 miles* will not reach to Cape Passaro; no, not half way. I would ask, whether this actual extent of jurisdiction was denoted by Rufinus, in *the care of the suburbicarian churches*. If it was *not*, Rufinus stands convicted of intolerable fraud: if it *was* meant by Rufinus, then, in the first place, the analogy attempted to be raised by Saumaise, and rashly urged by *Columbanus*, between the limits of the *episcopal* and *vicarial* jurisdiction of Rome, fails of all support from the term *suburbicarian*. But I have another question for *Columbanus* himself. Since, according to him, the *metropolitan* jurisdiction of Rome was bounded by a circle of one hundred miles distance, what sort of jurisdiction was that, exercised by bishops of Rome, in Sicily and the other islands adjacent? *Patriarchal*, he *must* answer; because he lays it down for certain, that between the powers of the Roman bishop as *metropolitan*, and as *primate* of the catholic church, there is but one intermediate degree, namely that of *patriarch*. Very well. However this was not the former *theory* of our author. “Barbarus  
 “bishop of Benevento,” said he on a former occasion,  
 “was visitor of the church of *Palermo*, *in behalf* of  
 “S. Gregory, as *metropolitan* of *Sicily*.”\* From this incoherence of talking I seek to derive no advantage. It is but a symptom of that, to which we all are liable; when, resolved to take a sudden plunge at authorship, we read what we cannot well understand,

\* *Columb. Lett.* 1. p. 47.

stand, and write what we very properly forget as soon as written.

Of this fatality *Columbanus* is pleased to multiply the instances. “As *patriarch*,” says he, “the pope’s “jurisdiction did not interfere with that” (namely, the *patriarchal* jurisdiction) “of the *patriarchs* of “Milan and Aquileia.”\* Does *Columbanus* find in the incontrovertible authority of Rufinus, or in the “*Notitia Imperii*, a work of the *fifth* century,” that the *sixth Nicene canon* either made or recognized the bishops of Aquileia or of Milan, as *patriarchs*? We, who have had no access to the *best manuscripts*, did simply imagine, that the title of *patriarch* was first assumed by the bishop of Aquileia, *in the sixth century*; and in *schism*, not only from the church of Rome, but from the catholic churches of the east: that this title was afterwards allowed by the popes, on the return of Aquileia to orthodox communion: that it was afterwards shared with the see of *Grado*; that the *patriarchal* title of *Grado* was translated by the pope to Venice, and that about seventy years ago the nominal *patriarchate* of Aquileia was *abolished* even by the bishop of Rome, Benedict XIV. This was a strong *interference*, and possibly, in the mind of *Columbanus*, was a daring usurpation on the *incontrovertible* authority of Rufinus; but how can we help it? I think, however, that it would not have been amiss in our opponent, to specify those *patriarchal* rights of Aquileia, with which the *patriarch* in Rome, as such, could

\* *Columb. Lett.* 3. p. 111.

could not interfere. I am at a loss to discover them.

As to the *patriarch* of Milan, “with whose jurisdiction, as such, “the patriarch of Rome could not “interfere,” we are left in the same deplorable gloom by our author, as to the nature and substance of this other *patriarchate*. The second oldest see in the Italic regions, was most probably that of Milan; and from the letter of Eusebius of Milan to Leo the great, we find that, in the middle of the fifth century, there were nineteen bishops suffragans to that metropolitan.\* In the Arian persecution, it was parted, for a time, from the orthodox churches attached to Rome; it was reunited by Saint Ambrose, the champion of the prerogative of the Roman see over the bishops of all Italy and the Gauls, even during those two periods, when the right of Pope Damasus was contested, or his character was slandered.† Besides this second rank in precedency, I look in vain for any of those marks, which, either before or after the council of Chalcedon, were esteemed characteristic of a right superior to *metropolitans*. But there is a little fact, in the case overlooked by *Columbanus*. The bishop of Rome confirmed the election of the bishop, *alias* the *patriarch*

\* In Labb. Con. III. p. 1324.

† Namely, when opposed to the factions of Ursicinus, of the Luciferian bishop, Gregory, and when falsely accused by his deacons Callistus and Concordius. See Letter I. of the council of Aquileia to the three Emperors. Labb. II. 928, and of the council of Rome to Gratian and Valentinian. *ibid.* p. 1001.

*arch* of Milan. The bishop of Rome received the instrument of his election, and in due form decreed one candidate, if he approved of him, *to be ordained*, in consequence of a *peculiar privilege* from the see of Rome, by the provincial bishops.\* In short, the bishop of Rome held rights upon the metropolitan see of Milan, as this latter held prerogatives over his subordinate bishops. The *radius of one hundred miles* will not arrive *northward* to Milan from Rome; as in the opposite direction, towards Sicily, it fell short by more than two thirds of the distance. What becomes now of the *Milanese patriarchate*?

The next argument of *Columbanus* is truly formidable. “De Marca clearly shews, that the bishops of “ the *transalpine* countries of Spain and Gaul ordained “ their own metropolitans, without any *patriarchal* “ interference, without any authority or consent of

2 E

“ the

\* Gregorius P. P. ad Mediolanenses concerning the election of a successor to Constantius, Lib. 8. Ep. 65. Omnino gratè suscepimus, quod Deus dedit diaconum vestrum ad Episcopatus officium vos unanimes elegisse, &c. Et si subtiliter requirentes, nihil est ei quod ex antea vita, &c. divinitatis gratia suffragante, eum presentium scriptorum auctoritate *solemniter decernimus ordinari*. So also concerning the election of Constantius ad Joannem subdiaconum. Eum a propriis episcopis, sicut *antiquitatis mos exigit*, solatiante et auxiliante domino, facias consecrari: quatenus, hujusmodi servata consuetudine, et *apostolica fedes* proprium vigorem retineat, et a se concessa aliis jura non minuat. Lib. 2. Ep. 30. part 2. And in the next following, ad Roman. Exarch. Ital. Necessè fuit pro *servanda consuetudine*...dirigere qui eum...a suis episcopis, sicut *vetus mos exigit*, cum nostro tamen assensu faciat consecrari.

“ the bishop of Rome, and that this right is one of  
 “ the *fundamental articles* of the *liberties* of the Gal-  
 “ lican church.”

Whether de Marca has attested all this, I know not; nor would I lose an hour in ascertaining the fact, of what *de Marca* has either *asserted* or undertaken to shew. I merely would express my wonder at the innocent credulity of him, who could believe all this. A *fundamental liberty* of the *Gallican church*, that its *metropolitans* should be ordained without any patriarchal interference, and without *any consent* of the bishop of Rome! Did the *fundamental liberty* exist in France in the time of *de Marca*? I recollect that, even then, there existed a *concordatum*, by which that *fundamental liberty* was negated. But it will be said, that the *concordatum* was an usurpation on the freedom of canonical elections. I grant that, if any guarantee could have been had for the canonical sincerity of elections. But I must remark, that what was then understood by *canonical* election, was equally an usurpation on the primitive liberty of choosing prelates. Let us take a step higher up than the *concordatum*, and come to the pragmatic sanction. Did the bishops of France, or the divines of that country at Basle reclaim or re-enter upon this pretended *fundamental liberty*? It appears that they did not. It appears, that they did establish, as a previous requisite to episcopal ordination, that the bishop of Rome should have been made acquainted with the election, and should have given his assent. Let us go up higher still. Did the council  
 of



of Constance, when it held the papal power in commission, or did the French divines in that council, or did Gerson, their spokesman, ever hint at this *fundamental* liberty? It appears not. The council, at a time when it was all powerful, never thought of abridging, nor did the Gallican divines think of opposing the established law of the western churches, which required the previous knowledge and solemn consent of the pope to the installation of bishops. Where has this *fundamental liberty* been hiding during the last six hundred years? Whereabouts does it contain itself now? Scarcely a year has elapsed since the most powerful man in the world, and the most inflexible in his designs, attempted to realize in practice, but under the plea of temporary necessity, that idea which *Columbanus* assures us exists in the *fundamental liberties* of the *Gallican church*. The now *Gallican church*, in all that regards the matters in controversy on the jurisdiction of Rome, is not only as free as was the Gallican church when de Marca wrote, but is *more free*, and was lately solicited to emancipate itself still farther. You will not be so unjust as to imagine, that I mean any comparison between the ecclesiastical system now *tolerated* in France, and the magnificent hierarchy which subsisted in the age of Louis XIV.; or that, by the most distant allusion I would identify even the pretended assertions of de Marca with the avowed purposes of the French emperor. I barely insist, that as far as the exclusion or neglect of the interference of the bishop of Rome, in the

the

the appointment of French *metropolitans*, can be termed a *fundamental liberty* in a national church, so far were the bishops, not many months since convened at Paris, invited to restore their church to its *liberty*. He who invited them to do so, was known to *command* when he invited: yet, strange to think! those bishops durst not sanction what *Columbanus* esteems to be the *fundamental right* of the Gallican churches. I thank God that *our Irish polemic*, with such a temper as he has displayed on this question, is not likely to hold the sword of Bonaparte over the head of any pope or any bishop.

Leaving the fact of what de Marca has said to the candour and veracity of our author, I am rash enough to maintain, that, until the days of Hincmar, who seems to have considered himself as a patriarch *minorum gentium*, not a text will be found to palliate the assertion, that it was either a *fundamental right* or a *fundamental liberty* of any church in the Gauls to ordain *metropolitans* in the full exercise of that power, without any authority or consent, directly or indirectly given by the bishop of Rome; so that the alleged usage, if real, was not a *fundamental liberty*, but an *acquired*, or at most an early *privilege*. Again I assert, that whether *privilege* or *liberty*, this usage did *not* contradict the *patriarchal* supremacy of the bishop of Rome in the West. Again, I say, that the discipline, which either restored, or granted, or yielded to the bishop of Rome the *confirmation* of *metropolitans*, has extinguished that supposed or ancient custom,

tom, so that it has, neither in right nor in claim, any shadow of existence. Lastly, I maintain, that this latter discipline was necessarily induced by the abuse of a privilege, resembling that which de Marca is related by *Columbanus* to have defended as a *fundamental liberty*. When I mention *abuse*, I do not charge with any crime or odium the Gallican church itself; I allude to a combination of political and moral causes, from which the *liberties* of christianity were rescued by this later discipline, and from which the same liberties cannot be saved unless by upholding it; for these political causes *still endure*.

That *metropolitans* in *ancient Gaul* and in *Spain*, were ordained without any *confirmation* by the bishop of Rome, is most ably and learnedly argued by *Thomassin*,\* whom no admirer of goodness and science can name without veneration. On the other side, that those metropolitans were *confirmed* by the *patriarch* of Rome, first by express allowance, and afterwards by the sending of the *pallium*, is asserted by *Henry Valesius*.† But on the present question the authority of *Valesius* is likely to weigh little with *Columbanus*: This Greek scholar, alas! comes under the malediction of *total ignorance of church history*, pronounced against those, who have *dubbeä* the bishop of Rome *patriarch of the entire west*; although, by the  
by,

\* *Thomassin Vetus & Nova Eccl. Disciplina* P. 2. L. 2. ch. xix. § 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

† In dissertatione de patriarchæ contra Launojuin. In Appendic. ad Notas in Socrat. Hist. Eccles.

by, this *aulicus Romanus* was himself the celebrated translator of Greek church historians. Let us then attend to the arguments of Thomassin, which, in brief, are these :

“ No man,” writes Thomassin, “ will think of  
 “ defrauding Peter and his successors of the glory of  
 “ having founded the churches of Milan and Aquileia.  
 “ Hence was purchased the right of ordaining bishops  
 “ there.” This authority of the bishops of Rome  
 “ over Italy and the circumjacent provinces was more  
 “ ancient by two or three hundred years than the  
 “ *Notitia Imperii*.\* However, to return to France;  
 “ the second council of Orleans, in 533, decreed, that  
 “ according to the ancient form, each metropolitan  
 “ should be ordained in the congregation of all the  
 “ provincial bishops. In the third council of Orleans,  
 “ in 538, it was resolved, that each metropolitan  
 “ should be ordained by a metropolitan, in the pre-  
 “ sence of the provincial bishops. Here,” argues  
 Thomassin, “ there is not a word to raise even the  
 “ suspicion, that metropolitans of Gaul were to be  
 “ confirmed by the pope.”

“ I grant,” he thus continues, “ that, as appears  
 “ from Gregory of Tours, three metropolitans ap-  
 “ pealed to the pope, and by him were restored to  
 their

\* The reader will take notice how far this doctrine is favourable to the discovery of *Columbanus*, or more truly that of *Saumaise*, that the meaning of *subi beati in churches* is to be demonstrated from the *Notitia Imperii*.

“ their sees. But this had nothing to do with the  
 “ *confirmation* of metropolitans.”

Hitherto the reasoning of Thomassin is undeniably just.

He continues thus. “ It would be more nearly  
 “ approaching to the point of proof, to cite the same  
 “ Gregory of Tours, when he relates, that Gatian  
 “ the bishop of Tours was sent thither by the  
 “ bishop of Rome ; and to appeal to his authority,  
 “ where, elsewhere he records, that under the reign  
 “ of Decius, not only *Gatian* was sent to Tours,  
 “ but *Trophimus* to Arles, *Paul* to Narbonne, *Sa-*  
 “ *turninus* to Toulouse, *Dionysius* to Paris, *Austre-*  
 “ *monius* to Auvergne, and *Martial* to Limoges.  
 “ For although he does not expressly mention that  
 “ all these had their mission *from Rome*, yet it is *most*  
 “ *highly probable that such was his meaning.*”

It is indeed *most highly probable*, that such was *his meaning*. Above one hundred and seventy years before Gregory wrote his history, pope Zosimus reprehends the bishop of Narbonne for usurping the right of ordaining in that province, “ whereas the right, by  
 “ most ancient *regulation*, has been *granted* to the see  
 “ of Arles; inasmuch as *Trophimus*, of blessed memory,  
 “ having been sent a missionary to the *city of Arles* by  
 “ the see of Rome, first displayed in those regions  
 “ that reverend dignity,” (of apostolical mission)  
 “ and transmitted it to his successors.”\* The same  
 declaration

\* Epist. 4. ad Hilarium Narbon. Labb. II. 1570. Nam Sanctæ  
 Memoræ Trophimus, sacerdos quondam urbi Aretatensi ab sede apos-

declaration is made to pope Leo I. by the bishops subject to Arles, when requesting that the pope would restore to Ravennius, who succeeded Saint Hilary, those prerogatives, which Leo had adjudged over to the metropolis of Vienne. Those bishops also derive the primacy of Arles from the mission of Trophimus to the city of Arles.\* Now, if *two* out of those *seven* missionaries were confessedly directed from Rome, it is not *most probable* merely, but it is incontrovertible, that the *seven* had their mission from the pope. The words of Gregory of Tours will bear no other construction.†

To return to Thomassin. “Innumerable controversies,” says this author, whose words I give, “have arisen between learned men on this question. For my part I ask no more than this. Although all the  
“Gallican

*tolica transmissus, ad illas regiones tanti nominis reverentiam primus exhibuit, et in alios non immerito ea quam acceperat auctoritate transfudit ... neque æstimes pontificatum de ordinandis sacerdotibus vindicandum, cum hoc videas Arelatensis episcopo civitatis et per apostolicam sedem et per sancti Trophimi reverentiam & per veterem consuetudinem, et nostra recentis evidentissima definitione deferri.* The same account of the mission of Trophimus is given by the pope in his letter to the bishops of the provinces, Viennensis and Narbonens. Prima. Epist. 3. *ibid.*

\* In Labb. C. III. 1440.

† Hst. Fran. Lib. I. ch. 30. Hujus (Decii) tempore *septem* viii episcopi ad prædicandum in Gallias *missi sunt*...Hi ergo *missi sunt*, Turonis *Galianus* episcopus, Arelatensibus *Trophimus* episcopus, &c.

“ Gallican churches should acknowledge their origin  
 “ from the church of Rome, and indeed it is conceded  
 “ by all, that several of them were so founded; yet  
 “ from this fact, no inference can be drawn to warrant  
 “ an assertion, that the *ordination* of metropolitans  
 “ was *reserved* to the see of Rome.” I state the text  
 below, lest I should misapprehend the sense, where  
 the argument begins to grow momentous.\*

I most reluctantly dissent from my betters in erudition; and unless I acknowledged Thomassin to be such in every particular of discipline regarding the western churches, I should consider myself to be worse than a fool; in short, to be an impudent man. Yet I will say, without disparagement to the learning of this writer, which, on a thousand points, I have found incredibly comprehensive, and, on most points, to be not only correct, but scrupulously faithful; I will say, in the name and under the invocation of Truth, that seldom or never he narrows or enlarges his inference, unless where his patriotism, or his zeal to defend the received and favoured ideas of Gallican *liberties*, and to conciliate these recent *assumptions*, as they are called by some catholics of an opposite persuasion, or *usages*, as they might be termed in liberal controversy, or singular and necessary *privileges*, as I would rather

2 F

denominate

\* Unum quippe nobis sufficit, quamquam omnes Gallicanæ ecclesiæ primigeniam originem suam A. R. Sedi acceptam referrent, quod de plerisque eorum omnes, ut opinor, assentiuntur; nihil tamen inde argumenti derivari posse, ut affirmetur Metropolitanorum *ordinationem* ejusdem sedi fuisse reservatam. Thomassin, part 2. lib. 2, ch. 43.

denominate them, with that rule of *devolution* to the apostolical see, whereby this author explains and justifies the several changes of discipline in the western church, and accounts for the variance between the prevailing rules of the sixth century and those which began to sway in the twelfth, when the *confirmation* of metropolitans by the pope came to be *insinuated* as necessary, in those decretals, which, from that century, have held paramount authority.

With this express protestation I will beg to make free with the lately-quoted observation of Thomassin, that “although it is agreed by all, that the holy see “founded originally *several* of the *French churches*, “yet the inference cannot be drawn that it *reserved* “the *ordination* of bishops.”

If the question were to be debated before heathen judges, very possibly the reasoning would appear demonstrative. No heathen judge could understand how a claim of *ordaining bishops* could result from the supposition of having *sent* to *found a christian church*. But in truth and in fact, Thomassin is favourable though adverse in appearance. He had argued, that the holy see had *purchased* the *right* of ordaining bishops for Milan, Aquileia, and the surrounding provinces, by having founded in those quarters a christian government of religion: he allows, and for the honour of the Gallican churches it should not be doubted, that several of the Gaulish churches were founded by missionaries from the apostolic see of Rome. Therefore,

at



at least in the churches thus instituted, the *right of ordaining bishops* was purchased by the fact: and consequently, if in such churches *the right of ordaining* (he ought to have written of *confirming*) metropolitans, was not *reserved*, this cession being against an inherent right, should have been proved either in express words, or by an exclusive prescription. Now, as to express words, no such are even pretended to have been used, or could have been used, by the see of Rome, which was at the same time the president of catholic communion. As to an *exclusive* prescription, the very idea which these expressions would convey, is condemnatory of the system of every local christian church, saving those churches which were founded by apostles, and which remained evermore in the univ-  
 ersal doctrine and communion. An *exclusive prescription* in any mode of government not divinely founded, when alleged in contradiction to an authority of unquestionable divine foundation, is worse than nonsense in speech. It is antichristianism. This is manifest. But in the christian system a *fundamental liberty* in *eventual* derogation of an immortal and salutary divine right, stands in contradiction to the supremacy of that immortal right, so far as it pretends to be *fundamental* and *essential* to a local and derivative government. Therefore, this *liberty* of the ancient Gallican churches, when it subsisted, if it did at any time exist, must have subsisted not as a fundamental liberty, but as a concession or a privilege; at all events, as subordinate to the higher  
 duties

duties of every national church towards that apostolical source from which it had derived the faith, and which at the same time was the source of catholic christianity.

To continue, however, from Thomassin. It is undoubted, says he, that Augustine had his mission into England from Gregory the great. Now Augustine was directed, as soon as the entire nation were converted, to ordain two metropolitans, each of whom in turn should *ordain and confirm the other*, without tarrying for a confirmation from the see of Rome. If Gregory could determine so in an age, when it was the received usage that every *metropolitan should be confirmed* by some *primate*, what shall we think of the popes of those earlier ages, when the *distance of place* and the *fury of persecution* did generally preclude the communication between bishops? Pope Honorius confirmed anew the regulation of Gregory concerning the two metropolitans; to the end, writes Honorius, that it *shall not be requisite* to journey across seas and countries of vast extent, for the ordination of a bishop, to Rome. Such, observes Thomassin, were the *laws* of the churches first instituted, such was the character of their founders. It was not by an impotent desire of rule, but by a spirit of charitable protection, those apostolical popes were determined to keep in their own hands somewhat more of jurisdiction over the neighbouring, than over the more distant churches. The good of the churches required that distinction; and the advantage and good of each particular

ticular church was for the universal pastor the greatest consolation and the brightest glory.\*

When we recollect at what a critical period Thomassin argued in this manner; that France at this conjuncture was at the zenith of renown in arts and arms, and bounded its ambition only by the limits of universal command; that considerable exasperation prevailed between the advocates of the so called *Gallican liberties* and the defenders of what, in France, was nicknamed the *ultramontane* system; in which system the former affected to comprise not only the sticklers for an indirect power in temporal matters, but even those who stood fast to an *efficacious* supremacy in the church: if we recollect that on the side of innovation, all power, and pride flushed with conquest, and eloquence, and fashion, were arrayed against feeble defenders, envied privilege, antiquated sanctimony, and provoking disdain; we will congratulate the respectable memory of Thomassin, who could, in such an age, give so much to decency, and so little to the times.

In truth, from his line of argument, and from his  
very

\* Thomassin, *ibid.* § xi. *Eæ fuere conditarum primum Ecclesiarum leges, ü primorum fundatorum amores. Non dominandi libidine, sed consulendi charitate urgebantur Apostolici illi Pontifices, ut plusculum sibi jurisdictionis retinerent in ecclesias eas quæ proximiores essent quam in remotiores: quod id ipsa flagitaret ecclesiarum charitas utilitasque: Pastorum vero universalium gaudium afflueret longe maximum, et gloria splendidior ex utilitate ecclesiarum particularium.*

very address in conducting it, he gives up a *fundamental liberty*, when he pleads for an *original grant*, and that grant to be explained from the separation of bishops, by distance of place or by angry persecution. That those apostolical popes consulted the advantage of every local church which they instituted, I allow. I say more, that when bishops of Rome founded distant churches, they could more safely enlarge the privileges of such new christian establishments, than could any other primate of apostolical districts; because the Roman see would yet hold such churches adhering to itself by the necessary law of communion. The bishops of Rome could grant much and could acquiesce in much more, than the bishops of Alexandria. The question of *independence*, of *fundamental* and therefore *essential* independence, is very different from the question of a charter. The advantage of particular churches may at one time, as in persecution, require an instantaneous self-renewing power; because in persecution, the existence of each church may at one and the same time be assailed. The advantage of each church, in other times, may demand, that the process of renovation, or of succession, shall be conducted in a more deliberate form. In either case the *desire of rule* may be equally applicable or equally impertinent to the merits of the system.

The instances quoted of Gregory I. and Honorius, prove, as far as they can be applied to those earlier times, that no *fundamental liberty*, but a positive and conditional grant, gave subsistence and lawfulness to the

the

the pretended usage of the Gallican churches. The renewed concession by Honorius would alone demonstrate, that the privilege granted to Saint Augustine had been temporary. But we will presently return to the letters of these two popes, inasmuch as they furnish us with certain *data*, of which Thomassin has not taken any notice, and whose concluding argument is this.

It remains only to see, whether the necessity of confirmation of metropolitans by the pope, may not be derived from the papal delegation, anciently imparted by bishops of Rome. In committing this office to the archbishop of Thessalonica, for the Illyrican diocese, Saint Leo I. expressly orders, that his delegate shall have the power of confirming or refusing confirmation to metropolitans elect. But certain as it is, that such power was exercised by the bishops of Thessalonica throughout Illyricum, it is equally certain, that as to the Gallican churches, the vicars apostolical *refrained\** from the exercise of any such authority. We have as yet extant five letters of pope Vigilius, reclaiming all the rights of apostolical delegation. Not  
a word

\* The words of Thomassin are, *Tam certum est vicarios apostolicos, in ecclesiis Gallicanis, eo jure abstinuisse.* As a literal translation, namely, *that they refrained from that right,* might appear to take advantage of the studied ambiguity in the text, and to force Thomassin, against his wish, to profess that the right existed in the see of Rome, but was liable to be affected by the higher duties of condescension and kindness, which eminently attach to the chief bishop, I have rendered these words as in the text.

a word of having metropolitans *confirmed* by the bishop of Arles. So in the epistles of Pelagius to Sapaudus, and of Gregory to Virgilius of Arles, and to the bishops of the Gauls: lastly, of pope Zachary to Saint Boniface, when he named him his delegate for life, through the Gauls and Bavaria. And surely, how is it to be supposed, that popes delegated to their vicars an *authority* over the Gaulish metropolitans, which they themselves *had never exercised*? \*

So argues a good and most learned man; perhaps not convinced of the soundness of those reasons, which, in deference to *national* feelings, or to fashionable sentiment at least, which was still more imperious in his day, he found it expedient to mention.

Let us begin by confronting Thomassin with himself.

\* The Latin of Thomassin, which is of the author's own version, has it, *Enimvero qui potuissent eam Romani Pontifices suis seu Legatis seu Vicariis conferre in Metropolitanos Gallos potestatem, quam ne ipsi quidem unquam exercuissent.* There is a slight Gallicism in this Latin translation, which I have endeavoured to throw off in the English. *Comment auroient ils pu deleguer,* signifies equally *how could they have the power* of delegating, or, *how can it be imagined they would delegate.* The Latin means exclusively a denial of the *power*, which Thomassin does not deny but tampers with. This observation might be deemed trivial, if I had not to do with *Columbanus*, who having popped upon a text of Fleury, that the king's consent was required *dans les elections les plus canoniques*, verbally, in *the most canonical elections*, and idiomatically, in *elections undoubtedly canonical*, or, *as canonical as any other*, swelled out his *cornucopie* of travestied authorities, with these five words of French set in Italics. But of this hereafter, in the proper place.

self. Who would have conjectured, that this very same writer in the same book, and in the title, “*On the confirmation of bishops elected during the first five centuries,*” had used the following words ; “ I will not in this place dwell particularly on legates and vicars of the apostolical see, who *before the year 500* were appointed *by the pope over metropolitans*. I will barely observe, that of those the primate of Thessalonica was the most ancient : that the *others resembled him very much* ; that the *Gallican church obeyed those papal legates*, who presided even over metropolitans ; and that this is sufficient to demonstrate, that the bishops of Rome not only held, but exercised anciently no inconsiderable authority over *the ordinations of all the bishops of the Roman patriarchate.*” Is it credible, some one will say, that the same author would assure us, that the popes *controlled all episcopal elections* within their patriarchate by means of *their vicars apostolical*, and should also pretend, that those vicars apostolical had *nothing to do* with the *confirmation* of metropolitans ; as if he who chuses *before consecration*, does not in reality *confirm* and ratify that ordination, to which he himself had been a party ? It is scarcely credible, I confess ; but it is true.—Read.\*

2 G

But,

\* Thomass. same part and book, ch. 8. Non hærebø hic in Legatis et vicariis apostolicis, qui *supra metropolitano* a papa collocati sun', ante annum Christi quingentessimum. Unum adnotabo, inter eos antiquitate sua excelluisse Thessalonicensem, ei *cæteros persimiles fuisse* ; paru-

But, says Thomassin, until the year 800, popes did never by themselves exercise the authority of *confirming metropolitans*. Never? What then is the meaning of these expressions? “Leo to the bishops of the “province of Arles. Since you have unanimously “consecrated our brother Ravennius, according to “the wishes of clergy, magistrates, and people, in the “city of Arles, we *confirm with our authority* your “good deed.” \* This is the Leo who had informed the bishops of Vienne, that he never meant to keep in his own hands the ordinations of those provinces, but solely to resist innovation upon their rights.† If Leo thought it his right to *confirm* the election of Ravennius to Arles, there is more than a probability, that he but followed the established rule. If not, the case becomes stronger. For then it would appear, that Leo considered himself entitled in right of his primacy or of his patriarchate, to introduce the precedent of *confirming metropolitans* in the Gallican churches.

The

*isse ecclesiam Gallicanam his papæ vicariis, qui metropolitans etiam pracerant; idque omnino argumenti satis esse, ut evincatur, in ordinationes episcoporum omnium patriarchatus Romani, Romanos pontifices jus non mediocre jam olim non obtinuisse tantum, sed et exercuisse.*

\* In Ep. C. VI. Quod in Arelatensium civitate fratrem Ravennium secundum desideria cleri, honoratorum et plebis unanimitè consecratis, bonum fraternitatis vestræ opus nostro judicio roboramus.

† In Epistol. 89. §. ult. Non enim nobis ordinationes vestrarum provinciarum defendimus, sed vobis per nostram sollicitudinem vindicamus, ne quid ulterius liceat novitati.



The letters of Gregory I. and of Honorius having been employed to shew, that the see of Rome in the more early times was not likely to insist on confirming *metropolitans*, I am called upon to prove, that these letters supply an evidence overlooked by that great man, whose reasoning I oppose. The argument, with regard to primitive times has likelihood: I apprehend notwithstanding, that it builds on two suppositions, of which neither has solidity: first by assuming that the metropolitan sees in the early Gallican churches were *numerous*; whereas it is most likely, that the bishop in each city remained for many years without a suffragan: the second assumption takes it for granted, that when in the reign of Decius the seven missionary bishops were directed into the Gauls, they were either strangers to one another, or merely united by the bonds of charity and co-operating zeal, without any plan of church government in common, without any rule of subordination, and without any provision for communicating with the parent see. From all I have been able to collect, I am persuaded, that, Italy apart, there were not more than four or five metropolitans in the sense of the canon of Nicea, in the entire western church, even so late as the beginning of the fourth century. Again, from the very letters of Gregory I. and Honorius concerning the new church of England, it appears, that not only succession but subordination is provided for. When the fury of persecution is urged as an argument of probability, that no *confirmation*, or *recognition*, or *acceptation*, (for I care nothing about

about the *manner* of associating metropolitans in a partnership with the governing power of the church of Rome) was used, it seems to be forgotten, that persecution went farther than to prevent the free intercourse of bishops: that it went occasionally to *banish* and to *kill* them. In this latter case the privilege of appointing *metropolitans without a confirmation* by the apostolic see, could be of little service. It would be requisite, that each bishop, at least that each metropolitan bishop should have had the power of replacing an outlawed or martyred compeer, as speedily as possible: in short, that each metropolitan should have acted as a primate now and then. Such, I do believe, was the fact; but such a state of things was manifestly a dissolution or suspension of all positive church law, and could not even serve for a precedent, when times of peace were allowed.

In the second letter of Gregory I. to Augustine, the following passages are those alluded to by *Thomassin*, but not stated. “ Seeing, that by the abundant goodness of heaven, and with your exertions a new church of English has been conducted to the favour of God, we grant to you the use of the *pallium*, merely during the celebration of mass on greater festivals, that *so you may ordain twelve bishops in twelve districts*, to be subordinate to your ecclesiastical province; so that, for evermore, the *bishop of London shall be ordained by his own synod*, and may receive the *pallium* of” (metropolitan) “ *dignity from this holy see*, of which, by divine providence,

“ dence, I am the minister. We also desire, that you  
 “ will send to York a *bishop* to be appointed by your-  
 “ self, to the end, if that city and the surrounding  
 “ districts shall receive the gospel, that *he likewise*  
 “ *may ordain* twelve bishops, for the *purpose of his*  
 “ *enjoying the dignity of a metropolitan; because to*  
 “ *him also, we propose, with God’s blessing, to impart*  
 “ *a pallium, if we shall live so long.*”\*

There is little need of arguing on this passage. The pope expressly declares, that the conferring of the pallium to Augustine was the giving a metropolitan right of exercising jurisdiction in a province: he declares, that the successors of Augustine, in London, shall be consecrated by *the bishops of his province*, and yet, *after consecration*, shall take, from Rome, the pallium: he declares, that the church of York shall, on a certain eventual condition, rank as a *metropolitan see*,  
*because*

\* In Epistol. xv. Lib. XII. Quia nova Anglorum Ecclesia ad omnipotentis Dei gratiam, eodem Domino largiente et te laborante, ... usum tibi *pallii in ea*, ad sola missarum solemnia agenda concedimus, *ita ut* ut per loca singula duodecim episcopos ordines, qui tuæ ditioni subja- ceant, quatenus Londoniensis episcopus civitatis semper in posterum *a synodo propria debeat consecrari*, atque *honoris pallium* ab hac sancta et apostolica, cui Auctore Deo deservio, sede percipiat. Ad Eboracam vero civitatem te volumus episcopum mittere, quem ipse judicaveris ordinandum; ita ut si eadem civitas cum finitimis locis verbum Dei receperit, ipse quoque *duodecim episcopos ordinet*, ut *metropolitani honore fruatur*, quia ei quoque, si vita comes fuerit, *pallium tribuere*, Domino favente, proponimus.

because he purposed to send a *pallium* to the bishop of York also. He plainly distinguishes the election and consecration to a metropolitan see from the exercise of a jurisdiction reserved to that see; and unequivocally informs us, that the sending of a *pallium* was the *confirmation* of metropolitan power; in other words, was the recognition or allowance, in a bishop, of the rank or dignity of a fellow-primate with the chief bishop of Rome, and his holding a subordinate portion of the authority of Peter, to preside over an apostolical college of regionary bishops.

It being essential to place beyond a doubt, that the primary, leading, and express purpose of giving the *pallium*, was to adopt into the society of Peter's governing care those, who held a title to pre-eminence over bishops, but that title founded on a church canon, which was necessarily becoming weaker in its force, because grown equivocal in its application with the lapse of time; I will give this other authority from a letter of the same Gregory I. to the bishops of Illyricum." "Having learned that your unanimous consent  
 " and the assent of the Emperor have concurred in  
 " the election of John, our brother bishop, we felt  
 " exceeding great joy. Wherefore, according as you  
 " desire and demand, we confirm him *in the rank of*  
 " *priesthood*, in which *he has been established*, by the  
 " *superior force of our assent*; and *by sending to him a*  
 " *pallium* we indicate, that we recognise his consecra-  
 " *tion.*"

“*tion.*”\* This was written concerning the established metropolitan see, Justiniana Prima.

When pope Honorius, at the solicitation of king Edwy, enlarged the privilege of the bishops of Canterbury and York, by empowering the survivor of the then two bishops, to ordain a successor to the other, he intimates the concession to the king in these words. “The privilege you have hoped for in behalf of your bishops, we by provision have granted heartily, and without hesitation, in regard to that sincerity of faith, which has been fully represented to us by the bearers of these presents. We have sent to each of the two metropolitans, a *pallium*, that so when it shall happen to either to depart, the other may ordain a successor to him by the authority now bestowed. This concession we have been invited to make, as well in return for your zeal, as in consideration of the vast distance at which we are placed from one another.”† To the two bishops above-mentioned

\* Lib. IV. Ep. 5. Quia ex epistolis, &c. in persona Joannis fratris et co-episcopi nostri consensus omnium vestrum & serenissimi principis cognovimus convenisse voluntatem, magna nos exultatio habuit... Proinde juxta postulationis vestrae desiderium prædictum fratrem et co-episcopum nostrum *in eo in quo est sacerdotii ordine constitutus* nostri assensus auctoritate firmamus, *ratamque nos ejus consecrationem habere, dirigentes pallium, indicamus.*

† In Honorii P. P. Epist. 5. ad Edwinum Regem. Ea vero quæ a nobis pro vestris sacerdotibus ordinanda sperastis, hæc pro fidei vestrae sinceritate quæ nobis multimoda relatione per præsentium portitores

mentioned he writes on the same subject thus.  
 “ Hereby, as well at your request, as at the  
 “ asking of your kings, our sons, we, on the behalf  
 “ of Peter, the chief of apostles, give you authority  
 “ by this our regulation, that whensoever the kind  
 “ providence shall summon one of you, the sur-  
 “ vivor shall have to ordain a successor to the de-  
 “ parted. For which purpose we have even sent off  
 “ a *pallium* to each of you for the solemnizing of  
 “ such ordination, that by the power of our com-  
 “ mission you may be enabled to perform religiously  
 “ and worthily the said rite. We have been com-  
 “ pelled to incline to this, on account of the immense  
 “ tracts of sea and land travel, which form an obstacle  
 “ to our correspondence.”\*

In this letter the sending off a *pallium*, amounts  
 even

titores laudabiliter insinuata est, gratuito animo attribuere illis sine  
 ulla dilatione providemus. Et duo pallia utrorumque metropolitano-  
 rum, id est, Honorio et Paulino direximus, ut dum quis eorum ex hoc  
 seculo ... fuerit accersitus, in loco ipsius alterum episcopum ex hac  
 nostra auctoritate debeat subrogare.

\* In Epistol. 6. Et tam juxta vestram petitionem, quam filiorum  
 nostrorum Regum, vobis præsentem nostram præceptionem, vice B. P.  
 apostolorum principis, auctoritatem tribuimus, ut quando unum ex  
 vobis divina ad se jusserit gratia vocari, is qui superstes fuerit alterum  
 in loco defuncti habeat episcopum ordinare. Pro qua etiam re, singu-  
 la vestrae dilectioni pallia pro eadem ordinatione celebranda direximus,  
 ut per nostræ præceptionis auctoritatem possitis Deo placitam ordi-  
 nationem efficere: quia ut hæc vobis concederemus, longa terrarum  
 marisque intervalla, quæ inter nos ac vos obsistunt, ad hoc nos condes-  
 cendere coegerunt.

even to more than the confirmation of metropolitan rank; it is giving *pro hac vice*, a contingent primatial rank. But it is so far from excluding the primary signification of the *pallium*, that it supposes the recognition of metropolitan rank, as bestowed by saint Gregory, and on this it accumulates a special honour.

In the age of saint Gregory, therefore, the *pallium*, as well in the case of newly erected sees, as in that of ancient *metropoles*, testified the acceptance by the see of Rome of the person elected or consecrated, into a jurisdiction over bishops. When Honorius I. appointed Primigenius to the bishopric of Grado, he sent him with his *pallium* to be consecrated by the provincials, enjoining them to proceed canonically and to render *sincere obedience to their chief*.\* Beyond this point, the rights annexed to the *pallium* had been uncertain, until the time of Gregory I. During his pontificate and thenceforward, a papal delegation usually accompanied the gift.

Amongst the original proofs, alleged by *de Marca* in support of his *fundamental liberties*, I perceive the invention of a Gallican *pallium* as contradistinguished from that of Rome. Thomassin has exploded the

2 II

fiction

\* In ejusdem Honor. Epistol. 2. Primigenium itaque subdiaconum *Episcopali ordine cum Pallii benedictione*, direximus consecrandum. Oportebit ergo fraternitatem vestram, juxta legem ecclesie cuncta disponere, *capitque vestro sinceram obedientiam exhibere*. Labb. V. 1681.

fiction, yet without following up his advantage, owing, no doubt, to prudential reasons. The text on which *de Marca* founded his reverie is the sixth canon of the first of Mâcon. Ut archiepiscopus SINE PALLIO missas dicere non præsumat. De Marca, as appears, mistaking archiepiscopus for *metropolitan*, whereas it signified *primate*; and considering that, at the time of holding this council, only the principal metropolitans took the *pallium* from Rome, and were restricted in the use of it to certain great festivals, inferred that the Gallican metropolitans had a *national pallium*, which they were accustomed to wear, as often as they appeared in function. Thomassin observes, that *archiepiscopus* was then the title of the primate of Arles, and adds, that those bishops imposed the law on themselves, not to *enter on the exercise of their metropolitan authority, until they had received the pallium (from Rome)*.\*

I agree with Thomassin in two particulars: first, that *archiepiscopus* unquestionably meant a bishop holding rank above metropolitans. Secondly, that *sine pallio* is neither more nor less than *being unprivileged with a pallium*. I dissent from his assertion, that the form was applied by the makers of this canon to the

\* Thomassin. Part 1. Lib. 2. Ch. 54. Hoc sibi ipsi episcopi præscribere, ut donec pallium acciperent ab *omni se* metropolitanae potestatis exercitio abstinerent. Sic enim Concil. I. Mâcon. An. 581. sancit, ut *archiepiscopus sine pallio missas dicere non præsumat*. Solus tunc metropolitana Arelatensis pallium et archiepiscopi nomen obtinebat.



the bishop of Arles alone. One fact disproves his assertion. The bishop of Arles was *not* present, nor assenting to this council. Of the elder Gallican or apostolical sees, the only bishops concerned with it were those of Lyons and Vienne. If then the bishops imposed this law on themselves, and the bishop of Arles was *not* present, nor imposing the law *on himself*; of course he was not *solely*, nor *at all* within the contemplation of this canon, as explained by Thomassin.

Moreover, Gregory I. was bishop of Rome in less than ten years after this council, and to him the bishops of Lyons and Vienne apply for the *customary pallium*. It would argue great effrontery in those good bishops to have made such a demand without any foundation.

Again, the word *præsumat* overthrows the supposition, that this canon was introduced by a self-denying spirit. Its exclusive import is, to *usurp* on the jurisdictional rights of a see, and principally of a metropolitan see. Now a canon against *usurpation* does not exactly go to the *surrender of a right*.

But here is a more serious objection. The expression *missas dicere* is assumed by Thomassin to signify the exercise of metropolitan jurisdiction. Now, metropolitan jurisdiction consisted in the power of assembling synods in one province, and of ratifying, at least, the election of every provincial bishop. This jurisdiction is reserved expressly by Leo I. to the metropolitans subject to Thesalonica, as apostolical vicar,

vicar,\* even while the latter is empowered to confirm or to disaffirm episcopal elections; and in this respect I am surprised that Thomassin should argue from *the saving of metropolitical rights*, in the letter of Hormisda to his delegates in Spain, that the confirmation of metropolitans was not included in those appointments.† Can it be supposed that *missas dicere* alludes either to provincial synods or to the ordaining of provincial bishops? Certainly not. *De Marca*, I grant, took it into his head that *missas dicere* was literally *dire la messe*, and from such an interpretation he inferred, successfully enough, a *Gallican pallium*, worn every day by metropolitans. Thomassin, as infinitely more learned, dissembles that blunder. The only admissible conjecture on this text, is that, seeing *missas dicere* was never to *celebrate mass*, nor can signify to exercise metropolitan jurisdiction, nor *any thing else*, the wording is vicious, and should be restored, *missas indicere*, taking *missa* for synaxis or congregation, and that thus the signification shall be, “that no primate “ unless authorised with a pallium shall attempt to summon” out of the provinces “ to general meetings.”

The

\* Leon. Ep. 54. ad Anastag. Thessalonic. Labb. III. 1384. §. II. Metropolitanos singularum provinciarum episcopos, *jus traditæ sibi antiquitus dignitatis intemeratum habere* decernimus.

† Thomassin. P. 2. L. 2. Ch. 19. §. xiii. Adde quod Hormisda ... non meminerit juris hujus metropolitanos confirmandi; quin immo declaret eo primatæ jure novo nil decerpi de *prisco jure metropolitatorum*.

The general purport however of this canon is more easily proved, than any correction of its vitiated text can be established, to the satisfaction of a reader. It is undoubted, that the practice disallowed by the council was a practice of *usurpation*: it is certain that in the west, the name *Archiepiscopus* both then, and until the reign of Pope Zachary, was the title of him who had gained a share of apostolical primacy: lastly it is plain, that no exercise of metropolitan jurisdiction by a metropolitan bishop, could have been termed *usurpation*. From these intelligible *data* it follows, that it was some exertion or other, or *affectation* of *primatial* power, which the canon sought to interdict; nor does any species of that power appear reconcileable with the vestiges of the text, unless that which was the foundation of every other, namely the *jus evocationis*, or of summoning bishops to council from the different provinces. This power is expressly given by Pope Vigilius to the bishop of Arles. You see, that, in opposing Thomassin, on this point, I am doing away a principal authority for the confirmation of *Metropolitans in Gaul* by the Pope, especially when you take into account, what confusion existed for many years in the west, concerning the construction of *Metropolis*, when applied to ecclesiastical jurisdiction. But to seek the truth is of greater importance, than to seek for the *confirmation* of metropolitans.

In the letter of Vigilius to Auxanius of Arles, the latter is constituted Vicar Apostolical through the Gauls. As Thomassin has found nothing in this appointment, from which the *confirmation* of metropolitans can be inferred, it will be right to state, that Auxanius is empowered to convoke synods, to judge therein on all disputed matters between bishops, to give attestations of rank, without which no ecclesiastic is to travel into any foreign parts. All questions of faith and greater causes, (namely those tending to the deprivation of bishops, as we may collect from the rules of Leo I.) are reserved for the ultimate decision of the pope. In the notification of this appointment to *all the Gallican bishops, as well those within as without the ordination of Arles*, Vigilius declares, that in all matters of contention, the primate is empowered to collect a sufficient number of bishops, and there to decide according to the canons and rules of the holy see. Moreover, that whenever the said primate *shall judge it expedient* to convoke them all together, his summons shall be obeyed, and the said deputy shall *enact and define*. Causes of faith, and episcopal crimination are reserved; and the right of attesting to rank, as in that of the pope to Auxanius.\*

In

\* In his 6th letter, Vigilius receives from Auxanius the account of his consecration to Arles, and congratulates him on the *regularity of his election according to the canons and to the rules of the Popes*: defers granting the *pal. om.*, until he shall have apprized the Emperor.

Scrip'ta.

In the letter of Pelagius I. to Sapaudus of Arles, Thomassin finds nothing to warrant the suspicion, that those delegates, or vicars apostolical had to do with the *confirmation* of Metropolitans. “ We give  
“ you

Scripta de ordinatione caritatis vestrae, Joanne filio nostro presbytero, sed et Terentio diacono deferentibus, cum animi spiritali gratulatione suscepimus, Domino gratias referentes, quia hoc in ecclesia Arelatensi factum est, quod et canonibus et decessorum nostrorum regulis conveniret... De his vero quæ caritas vestra tam de usu pallii quam de aliis quæ sibi a nobis petit debere concedi, libenti hoc, etc. In Epistol. 7 ad eundem Auxanum. Si quæ ergo inter fratres et coepiscopos nostros, in locis præsentia auctoritate vestræ caritati commissis...dissensiones emergerint, adhibitis vobiscum sacerdotibus numero competenti, causas canonica et apostolica æquitate discutite, ea modis omnibus pro lato judicio finituri, quæ Deo placitis decessorum nostrorum possint regulis convenire. Si qua vero certamina aut de religione fidei, &c....totius veritatis indagine diligenti ratione discussa, relation's ad nos seriem destinantes apostolicæ sedis terminanda servate...Nullus ergo de pontificibus...in longinquis quibuslibet locis audeat proficisci, nisi solemniter...formatam vestræ caritatis acceperit. Idem epistola 9. ad episcopos Galliarum, tam qui sub potestate gloriosissimi filii nostri regis Francorum constituti sunt, sed et is, qui ex antiqua consuetudine ab Arelatensi consecrati sunt vel consecrantur episcopo. Auxanio...vices nostras caritas vestra nos dedisse cognoscat, ut si aliqua, quod absit, fortassis emergerit contentio, congregatis illi fratribus et coepiscopis nostris, causas canonica et apostolica auctoritate discutens (from which term *æquitate* in the former letter is to be corrected *auctoritate*) Deo placita Aequitate definiat. Contentiones vero si quæ in fidei causa contigerint, aut emergerint forte negotium, &c. ad nostram discussa veritate perferat sine dilatione notitiam. Et quia necess est, ut aptis, Deo propitiante, temporibus Arelatensis episcopus nostra auctoritate

“ you, Reverend Brother,” writes the Pope, “ this charge, that, being instituted the vicar of our see, you are to hold the place of primate in the Gauls, in our representation, and to dispense in the fear of God, and adhering to the rules of the fathers, and the decretal rules of the holy see, whatsoever is necessary to be performed, for the government and management of the ecclesiastical state.”\*

If those vicars had the authority of convoking councils generally, as well as of deciding all matters in dispute; if they were bound to see, that the rules of  
the

*toritate fungatur, quoties judicaverit expedire, ut pro facienda conlatione (not consolatione, as printed), communi, episcoporum debeant congregari personæ, nullas inobediens forte ejus mandatis sit: quod si fuerit, a congregatione suspendatur, nisi sit corporalis infirmitas, &c. Labb. V. 320, 322, 326. The same authority is given by Vigilius to Aurelian the successor of Auxanius. To each it was bestowed on the special recommendation of King Childebert. To the latter, Aurelian, the vicarship was imparted less than two months before Vigilius was carried off by Justinian's order. Aurelian presided in the fifth council of Orleans, in the reign and territory of Theodebert, who was at war with the Romans, and of the destruction of whose invading forces in Italy and Sicily, shortly after the date of this council, there is a memorandum in the addition to the *Marcellini Chronicon*.*

\* Hinc est quod et nos fraternitati tue curas injungimus, ut sedis nostræ Vicarius institutus ad instar nostrum in Galliarum partibus primi sacerdotis locum obtineas, et quidquid ad gubernationem vel dispensationem ecclesiastici status gerendum est, servatis Patrum Regulis, et Sedis Apostolicæ constitutis, divini judicii consideratione dispenses. Labb. V. 309.

the apostolical see were adhered to, which see had established a form and conditions for all episcopal elections; it would be somewhat strange, that their authority should not extend to taking cognizance of metropolitan elections when contested, of taking information of them whether contested or not, and of acquiescing, by some exterior act, in those elections at least, which were the most important, namely in those of metropolitans.

That no metropolitan elections could take place without the *knowledge* or *connivance* of the primate, is plain enough. As for a *previous* consent to proceed to election, that was implied in the very decretal rules of the see of Rome, which it was the office of the *primate* to enforce. Whether the name of the person elected was to be *notified* to the primate before consecration (even where the election had been canonical), as was directed by Celestine, and by Leo in the case of bishops and of metropolitans elect through the diocese of Thessalonica,\* I esteem a point

\* In Leonis Ep. ad Anastas. concerning metropolitans elect. De cujus nomine ad tuam notitiam provinciales referant episcopi impleturi vota poscentium, si quod ipsis placuit, tibi quoque placuisse cognoverint. Sicut enim *justas electiones nullis dilationibus volumus fatigari*, in a nil permittimus *te ignorante* præsumi. From this direction it is evident, that Leo did not allow to Thessalonica a power of choosing metropolitans, nor even a general power of withholding confirmation. The election was to be notified to the primate, the primate's assent was to be returned, in order to preserve subor-

point comparatively inconsiderable. From the distant provinces, I do not believe that it was so notified, or was required to be so notified before consecration; not that I think the power and authority of the primate

ordination, but when the election had been *canonical*, the pope declares, that it *shall not be harassed by any dilatory means*. De Marca, whom I have looked into this moment, pretends (Lib. 6. Chap. 5. Sect. 5. and Baluze in the apology for this opinion which is thrown into, Lib. 5. Ch. 20.), that the bishop of Thessalonica was of old the exarch of all those metropolitan sees, and that he held the right in question, not in quality of papal delegate, but of immemorial possession. In support of this assertion, not an iota of evidence is adduced by de Marca, or by his editor, except that, by the council of Nicea, the bishop of Thessalonica (as *Gelasius writes*,) was appointed to notify its decrees throughout Macedonia and so forth. If this authority were conclusive, then beyond a doubt the bishop of Rome, whose legates were ordered (as *Gelasius also writes*,) to notify those same decrees throughout Rome, Italy, and thence throughout Spain and to the ocean, would be proved to have equally held the ordination of *metropolitans* in those countries. Baluze, however, gives up Gelasius as a bad authority, and relies on other authorities still more absurd. In opposition to all this shew of mock authorities, I set the words of Celestine to the bishops of that diocese: “*We have committed to Rufus our vicarship throughout your province: so that all causes are to be rendered to his cognizance. Let none be ordained without his advice: let no person without his knowledge usurp the province committed to him. Cui vicem nostram per vestram provinciam noveritis esse commissam, ita ut ad eum quidquid de causis agitur referatur. Sine ejus consilio nullus ordinatur; nullus usurpet eodem inconscio commissam illi provinciam.*” Read in the Concil. Roman. III. under Boniface 2. Labb. IV.



mate did not reach to exact so much ; not that I conceive metropolitan rights, properly speaking, would have been done away by a concurrent exercise of a *primatial* with a *metropolitan* confirmation ; but because I have observed, that in the Latin churches, wherein the system of canonical election originally was enacted by the holy see, this see guaranteed, as as of *divine choice*, the unanimous elections of bishops, if made honestly. But at the same time, the primate did naturally take information of all such elections, because he was empowered to summon bishops from every province. In what manner, or by what form of *congratulation*, or of *correspondence* he notified his acceptance of and communion with metropolitans elected and not consecrated by himself, is a matter of pure hypothesis.

To consider this question apart from the cumbrous obscurities, which have been multiplied by party spirit on either side ; by well meaning zeal in those who advocated the divinely founded privileges of the chief bishop, without sober reflection or science ; or by those, who, in the fullness of national enthusiasm, or of mercenary courage, or of parasitical craft, or from the best motives, have endeavoured to reduce to a certain factitious standard, the compass of papal authority, I think, that as to the *confirmation* of metropolitans and of bishops in the western patriarchate, before any formal method established for authenticating or giving this confirmation was fully realized by the laws of the church of Rome, which prescribed the

the

the method of election, and which were received, as binding and authoritative by those western churches, and by the subsequent communication of bishops and metropolitans with the see of Rome; this see always took it for granted, until complaint alleged, that the bishops with whom it communicated in the west, had been advanced according to its laws.

There exists not, I suppose, one man amongst those most addicted to the see of Rome; not one, I believe, amongst those whom *Columbanus* denominates the *court* theologians of an aged, beggared, imprisoned old man; not one of the flatterers of this *formidable* sovereign, who will maintain, that, when the see of Rome has declared a *general* regulation, the same see ought to vary that regulation, without a cause expressed or pretended. On the other hand, there is not a Catholic man, who will not agree, that concerning fitness and admissibility into ecclesiastical rank, that man is the first to be consulted, who is the teacher of all priests; that he is the most authoritative in legalizing ecclesiastical rank, from whose communion the *best*, because the *Catholic* authority of episcopal power, cannot be disjoined, and by the existence of whose chief office, the second, and the following stations of hierarchy are realized, not degraded.

It is true, that in those ages and countries wherein the utmost energy of the social principles of christianity was required to preserve the system from extinction

tion, the confirmation of bishops in distant places was little else than the spiritual communication with them. *Every church*, said Irenæus more than sixteen hundred years ago, *must communicate with the church of Rome, on account of its pre-eminent chieftaincy.* The very churches of the east, for the instruction of which Irenæus wrote, were not exempted from this law, although not founded by the church of Rome. With regard to the western churches, in which Africa was comprehended, their *voucher* for orthodoxy was Rome; and this parent church not only introduced, but maintained in all its colonies of the faith, the greatest possible scope of freedom, as long as that freedom remained unassailed by the passion of separate independence, and untampered with by secular domination. With regard to metropolitan churches, the Nicene rule was not intended for the west. It was adapted to the west by pope Siricius, and after it was admitted into the Gauls and Spain, it betrayed, on almost every occasion, its unfitness for those countries. The synod of Turin adjudged a primatial right to Vienne, as being a civil metropolis. The diocese of Arles appealed from this decision to Rome, and by Rome it was annulled. Leo I. took away from saint Hilary a portion of his diocese, and transferred it to Vienne. The see of Arles obtained from after-popes a compensation for this loss by an apostolical delegation. The bishop of Lyons next set up for the primacy, as being successor to Irenæus. In the mean time the ancient civil boundaries are shifted by the introduction of foreign

foreign princes, and the metropolitan power, which originally had meant primacy, being divided against itself and undermined by time, required helps from that authority, which alone remained confessedly the first. That *the delegation* granted in the Gauls did necessarily interfere with metropolitan pretensions, is evident from the followers of de Marca, who ascribe the decline of metropolitan power to this interposition. It would have been well, if they also took into account, that no other way remained of calling national councils, unless through the uncertain medium of secular authority. It would have been also candid, if they had remarked that when saint Boniface was sent a vicar into France, all the metropolitan sees had been kept vacant during seventy years, by the intermission of this vicarial interference. By this failure, the metropolitan privileges were gone in a civil point of view, and, as to an ecclesiastical title founded on any construction of the canon of Nicca, were completely destroyed. A similar misfortune, in the beginning of the same century, had befallen the Gothic churches in Spain, by the inroads of the Moors.

Although Thomassin has guardedly expressed himself, concerning the papal right of confirmation until the year 800, when he is satisfied with maintaining, that the bishops of Rome abstained, in the Gallican and Spanish churches, from *the exercise of such a right*, although he relies on an immemorial positive law of *concession*, not on *fundamental liberty*, for the source of the exemption set up during the period  
above-

abovementioned; yet, he has omitted the following important considerations, in stating the boundaries of papal delegation. First, that a vicar apostolical was exempted from the jurisdiction of that episcopal college over which he presided. Secondly, that he was charged with the enforcement of the decrees of the see of Rome, and amongst these with the safeguard of metropolitan powers; so that in fact, *his* acquiescence in the election of metropolitans, or in the jurisdiction assumed by a metropolitan, amounted to a confirmation in law, by the see of Rome, which was bound by its own decrees. When a successor to Judas was to be appointed, and when the election was referred to providence by casting lots, the apostles had imposed on themselves a rule for the election. The lot fell on Matthias, and he immediately *took rank with the eleven*. For any man, who does not implicitly follow the superficial gloss of Beza, it will be plain, that Matthias was confirmed in his rank by virtue of the preceding regulation, and that his admission by the eleven to the apostolic college, was but an acknowledgment of the rule, not a new display of authority.

The chief resource of those, who have written against a *confirmation* of *metropolitans* in Gaul by the see of Rome during the first eight centuries, is to shew, that no such special confirmation was demanded or bestowed, as by the now prevailing discipline is become requisite: that no *confirmation* in form of canon law intervened between the election and consecration, such as in after times it was deemed necessary to provide.

On the other hand several of those, who maintain that the authority of the see of Rome did at all times extend to the *ordination* of metropolitans in the west, have vainly embarrassed themselves by seeking to prove an identity of form, or a correspondence in the external application of this power, between the two periods entirely dissimilar in ecclesiastical administration. I have proved, that the delegates of Rome *must* have chiefly attended to the regularity of ordinations pursuant to the *canons* and the *decrees of the apostolical see*. The only questions remaining to be asked are, whether those delegates performed their duty? whether they could be excluded from taking informations, at least of metropolitan elections? and, if they could not be excluded, whether their approbation or acquiescence did not sufficiently declare such election to be good, according to the canons and rules, which they were authorised to see well kept? whether their communicating with the metropolitan so chosen and ordained, did not amount to a consummate act of allowance? These questions have but one short answer,—*Certainly.*

In looking over the letters of popes, who, after the fury of Arian persecution was spent, having reclaimed their superintendence over Illyricum and the provinces confining with it, established in the metropolitan see of Thessalonica the vicarship of Rome, I find not only the proofs, but the best explanation of what has been advanced hitherto, both as to the meaning of the word *confirmation*, and as to the peculiar charge of

of

of vicars apostolical to take cognizance of episcopal elections.

From the letter of Damasus to Acholius of Thessalonica, A. D. 380. “I advise your reverence, that as I  
 “ am informed a council is meant to be held in Con-  
 “ stantinople, you will use your exertions, that for  
 “ the said city, a bishop shall be chosen so qualified,  
 “ as to be above exception ... Besides I give you  
 “ warning, that you must not suffer any one, in con-  
 “ travention to the decrees of our forefathers, to be  
 “ translated from city to city, and to desert the flock  
 “ entrusted to his care.”\*

Here I find Acholius not only directly charged in his own district with the execution of the Nicene canon against *translations*, but even admonished generally as a vicar of the holy see, to superintend, in the oriental council at Constantinople, the election of a bishop for that city.

From the letter of Siricius, the successor of Damasus, to Anysius, the successor of Acholius. “Some  
 “ time back I sent to you, by the bishop Candidian,

2 κ

“ now

\* Recitata in Concil. Romano III. sub Bonifacio 2. Commoneo sanctitatem vestram, ut quia cognovi dispositum esse C. Poli concilium fieri debere, sinceritas vestra det operam, quemadmodum prædictæ civitatis episcopus eligatur, qui nullam habeat reprehensionem... Illud præterea commoneo dilectionem vestram, ne patiamini aliquem contra statuta maiorum uestrorum de civitate alia ad aliam transduci, et deserere plebem sibi commissam.

“ Now with God, a letter enjoining in substance, that  
 “ no person should usurp in Illyricum the province of  
 “ *ordaining bishops without your previous allowance.*  
 “ I have not heard whether that letter has reached  
 “ you. For many instances have occurred in the  
 “ ordinations there, of a spirit of rivalry amongst  
 “ bishops, as you must know better than I do. Your  
 “ *delegation* must be prompt in crushing this bold-  
 “ ness, as well as your holy zeal. If you can in person,  
 “ you should go, or such bishops as you shall autho-  
 “ rize by written proxy, should be sent by you, for  
 “ the purpose of ordaining as catholic bishop in the  
 “ room either of one deceased or one deposed, a  
 “ meritorious clergyman, according to the *statutes of*  
 “ *the Nicene synod, as well as those of the Roman*  
 “ *church.*” \*

From this letter I infer, that the ordinations in  
*Illyricum,*

\* Ibid. Anysio Siricius. Etiam dudum, frater carissime, per Candi-  
 dianum episcopum qui nos præcessit ad Dominum, hujusmodi literas  
 dederamus, ut *nulla licentia esset sine consensu tuo*, in Illyrico episco-  
 pos ordinare præsumere, quæ utrum ad te pervenerint scire non  
 potui. Multa enim gesta sunt illic *per contentionem ab episcopis in*  
*ordinationibus faciendis*, quod tua melius caritas novit...Ad omnem hu-  
 jusmodi audaciam reprimendam *vigilare debet instantia tua*, spiritu  
 in te sancto fervente: ut vel ipse si potes, vel quos judicaveris  
 episcopos idoneos cum literis dirigas dato consensu, qui possint in  
 ejus locum qui defunctus vel depositus fuerit, catholicum episcopum  
 et vita et moribus probum, *secundum Nicænæ synodi statuta vel ec-*  
*clesiæ Romanæ*, clericum de clero meritum ordinare.



*Illyricum*, a district containing at that time New and Old Epirus, Achaia, Thessaly, Crete, both Daciæ, Mœsia, Dardania, and Prævalis, were put under the controul of a vicar apostolical *for the first time*; and that this vicar was empowered not only to ordain himself, but to depute to sufficient persons his authority of *assenting to ordinations*. What had become of the *fundamental liberties* of those countries?

From a letter of Pope Boniface I. to Rufus of Thessalonica concerning Perigenes elected to Patara, there repulsed by the populace, and afterwards elected by the Corinthians, to their *metropolis*. “The Corinthians, (a people rendered famous by the panegyric of Paul the apostle;) whose petition I think it better to annex than to relate, wish not so much to *gain* Perigenes for their bishop as to *keep him* their bishop.”\*

From another letter of the same to the same. “Perigenes has nothing wanting *for the full confirmation of his episcopacy, save that I have not addressed him in his rank as yet.*”†

From these two passages I infer, that the election of Perigenes to Corinth, required the confirmation  
of

\* Ibid. Corinthii enim beati Pauli prædicatione laudati, quorum preces subdendas esse magis credimus quam narrandas, Perigenem non tam accipere quam retinere desiderant sacerdotem.

† Cui (Perigeni) ad plenitudinem confirmationis episcopatus sui hæc solum residet quod nostros in honore suo necdum suscepit affatus.

of the bishop of Rome; and that such *confirmation*, though expressly denied by the pope to be a dispensation, as the townsmen of Patara had refused to admit Perigenes, was most fully to be performed by the pope saluting him as a bishop in Corinth.

What becomes now of the phantasmagoria of arguments derived from the confirmation *sub annulo piscatoris*, and with the precision of *laudamus* or *confirmamus*, or with a leaden or even with a golden bull? The metropolis of Corinth was clearly under the ordination of the see of Rome; and yet the trivial ceremony of writing to Perigenes is esteemed a *plenary confirmation* of his new rank by the pope. Pray, might not the trivial ceremony of a bishop of Arles, *the representative of the pope*, writing to a metropolitan in France, be equivalent to a *plenissima confirmatio* of his estate, if he were either formally or perchance in summoning him to council, or after informations taken of his canonical election, *saluted*, as the bishop of a certain metropolis? Now the establishment of vicars apostolical in those distant countries was exactly for the purpose of performing all that the pope himself was supposed willing, though not able to accomplish. The jealousy of a new kingdom is offered by Avitus of Vienne\* as an apology for his not attending in Rome,

to

\* Nothing can better shew the depressed state of the Gallican churches at the end of the 5th and commencement of the 6th cen-

to acquit himself of *divine* and *human* duties. This jealousy did *not* exist in the time of Boniface I. So that with regard to the Gallican churches, from the sixth century and thenceforward, the *vicarial power* was necessarily larger than in the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth centuries, when Damasus, Siricius and Boniface wrote these letters. It had obstacles to encounter in the Gauls: this I allow. It had to encounter the new-born wish of independence under a novel government. It must have been employed cautiously. Most certainly it was, or should have been so employed. I add, that it ought to have been used with the utmost tenderness, not only towards  
the

very than the complaint of Saint Avitus, that neither he himself was allowed to go to Rome, nor *could the Gallican bishops meet*, owing to the new circumscription of kingdoms. Epistol. xxxi. Fausto & Symmacho Senatoribus urbis. Primum fuerat talis status rerum considerandus, ut ipsi per nos, urbem orbi venerabilem pro dependentis divinis humanisque expeteremus officiiis. Sed quia istud *jemdudum*, per rationem temporis fieri posse cessavit, velimus, quod fatendum est, vel eo securitatis accedere, ut quæ in causa communi supplicari oportet, amplitudo vestra congregatorum Gallix sacerdotum relatione cognosceret. Sed quoniam *hujus quoque nos voti* non potes reddi provincia, *præfixis regnorum determinata limitibus*; quamprimum supplicii prece posco, ne...pagina hæc moveat, quasi ab uno dicta: a fastidium, quoniam a *cunctis Gallicanis fratribus meis*, ad hoc ipsuum non minus per mandata quam per literas oneratus, quæcumque a vobis omnes ambimus unus suggerenda suscepit. Ex Editione Operum Aviti per Simonduum. p. 47. Extat et in Tabl. C. T. IV. 1262.

that portion of Roman spirit, which as yet lingered in the Gallican colonies of the falling empire of the west, but even towards the barbarous tribes, which had peopled the transalpine frontier. The standard of national worth is often slowly ascertained: but a nation, of which the worth has been once recognised, is always slowly disgraced from its acquired reputation. The Gallican churches, composing one synod with that of Rome, had thus swayed the other churches in the west, and had been most worthy of bearing that ascendancy. In the great struggle against Arianism, the bishops of Gaul had suffered, and combated. No church in that day, with the exception of the church of Rome, to which the Gauls adhered, had gained such renown; nor, generally speaking, could any national church, from the age of Silvester to the pontificate of Leo, contend with that of Gaul, in zeal, in constancy, in superior mind, and in the uniform production of great men, its pastors. It would be most unworthy in the bishops of Rome, to have dealt with so great and so faithful a church, in any other tone than in that of fraternal superiority, mitigated by the expression of trust; or to have aggravated the sweet yoke of the gospel, where all breathed unity, and peace, and attachment.

When the province of Gaul had received a new race of possessors, the jealousy of Greek emperors, to whom even Theodoric and his successors professed a  
 sort

sort of feudal deference,\* was alarmed at the connection between the see of Rome and the churches of Gaul. Of the many instances of this jealousy I will but mention, that it was held suspicious even to give the pallium to a Gaulish primate, without the emperor's consent. From this some writers have inferred, that the pallium has been originally an *imperial* ornament, and was worn by the popes from a concession of the sovereign. The more natural inference would be, that as it was the badge of a high dignity, existing in the *Roman* empire, namely of a primatial dignity, it was feared, lest the establishment of the invaders of Gaul might gain a new title in the West, through a participation of that ecclesiastical importance, which the *pallium* denoted. I will mention also, that after Vigilius had been carried off to Constantinople, he was charged by Justinian, amongst other matters, with *writing into France*; that in the instructions from the church of Rome to the French ambassadors, it is mentioned, that Vigilius was forced to send into the Gauls a *false account of the dispute concerning the three great questions*: that the apprehension of a *Gothic* influence, was succeeded by the  
fear

\* By a sort of feudal deference I mean, that the friends and enemies of the emperor should be the same for Theodoric. That this latter should hold Italy and his conquests beyond it, as fiduciary for the empire. In other respects Rome was entirely imperial. It divided the consular authority with Constantinople; its senate was that of the emperor.

fear of *Gaulish* influence, and that the bishops of Rome observant of the duty of allegiance, beyond all that modern times would allow to be even rational, were harassed on account of this latter influence, by the most impious and contemptible sovereignty that ever existed; until human nature, in the name and by the organ of the men of Italy, abjured at once, the bad, fraudulent, and piratical authority of eastern lords.

The separation of governments, as well as the inferiority of cultivation in ancient Spain, (for as to the territorial division called Spain, Burgundy, or Gaul, in the new establishment, it is of no use in this place, unless to advert to the destruction of that principle, upon which *metropolitan* sees were privileged), combining with the predominance of Arian heresy, the most political of all former antichristian sects, had reduced the communication with Rome, as with a hostile country, to the most precarious and unsettled scale. However, even during that persecution, the ecclesiastical rules were derived from the authority of Rome, notwithstanding the influx from Africa, out of which the christian belief of the southern provinces of that country seems to have been derived, and notwithstanding the confluence of Greeks, of whose communication with Spain there are multiplied instances. The consequence of this alienation was the most deplorable ignorance of the Gospel, in the remoter tracts, of which the Spanish prelates themselves complain. This very  
same

same church, so humbled, has yet obtained the encomium of *Columbanus* for its adherence to ancient discipline until the Moorish invasion. From the pontificate of Hilarus to that of Hormisda, it would appear, that no direct intercourse was allowed by the Goths with Italy. This latter pope through the medium of the bishop of Tarragona, revived the correspondence between Rome and Spain.\*

In about seventy years after, the king of Spain, Reccared, brought over his nobles and Gothic bishops from Arianism. On this event pope Gregory I. imparted an apostolical vicarship to Leander of Seville, and certain instructions by Cyriacus the monk, of which the particulars are unknown. † The king also sent deputies to Rome with presents, and an account of what he had ordained. From the speech of this king, at the opening of the third council of Toledo, we learn, that the catholics, until his time, had been held in miserable slavery. After this conversion the Gothic line ruled in Spain, for less than a hundred and twenty years. Cinthila the king expelled the Romans, and made Spain an independent sovereignty, which he procured to be recognised in the fourth, fifth, and sixth councils of Toledo. From the year of the assembling of this last council, until the pontificate of Leo II. and the meeting of the thirteenth

2 L council

\* Hormisda, Epistol. 24, 25, 26. Labb. V. 1465, 1466, 1468.

† Epist. 125, 126. Lib. 7.

council of Toledo, which took place about thirty years before the Saracen invasion, we have not a single letter extant from popes to the Spanish churches or princes; so that either no communication was kept up, or it was carried on in such a manner as to elude the vigilance of the Greek tyrants.

In the sixteenth of Toledo, three bishops are *translated*, two of them metropolitans, *without any application*, says Thomassin, *to the bishop of Rome*. This, in his opinion, demonstrates, that *bishops in that synod considered themselves possessed of sufficient authority for the purpose*.\* Perhaps they did. But, in spite of their opinion, it is possible that they *had not sufficient authority*. It is possible, that the exercise of a power on *one* occasion, does not prove, that on *other* occasions much less that on *all* occasions the same power may be exercised. Those Toledo fathers, it is certain, *did* confirm the translations of three bishops. But they expressly declare, that they had translated them *canonically*, at the instance of the king.† They expressly declare also their adherence to the *Nicene decrees*, and these decrees *prohibit* translations. They must have known, that the bishops of Tarragona had formerly thought it necessary to seek the confirmation of pope Hilarus for the translation of a bishop, and that the request was denied. It remains then, either that their trans-  
lation

\* De veteri, &c. p. 2. Lib. 2. ch. xix. §. 13.

† I.abb. VI. 1349.



lation was uncanonical, or that they or their king had had some understanding or agreement with the bishop of Rome, on the subject. The latter is improbable, and therefore the act was probably *uncanonical*. The ruin of their national church, which ensued not many years after this, has deprived us of any further documents, which could explain this seeming assumption.

But not even pope Zachary, writes Thomassin, in creating Boniface his vicar for life, delegates to the latter any authority for confirming metropolitans. And how can it be supposed, that popes would delegate a power over the metropolitans of Gaul, which they *themselves had never exercised?*

This is puerility, not argument. The popes might have *always delegated this power*, and thus have *never exercised it personally* with regard to the metropolitans of Gaul. Again, although the popes had never exercised, until the time of Zachary, the power of confirming individually and formally, yet the inconvenience arising from a former practice, and the impossibility of confirming all metropolitans in the new manner, would decide the see of Rome to impart to delegates that part of their duty, which unless through delegates they could not adequately discharge.

Let us now attend to the fact. Zachary, it is most certain, in enlarging during the life of Boniface his apostolical delegation, does merely, in general terms, appoint him to visit and correct according to the canons.\*

nons.\* Now, if it should appear, that by virtue of such commission, this very Boniface had *ordained metropolitans* in Gaul, and asked a *pallium* for each from the pope, what shall we think of the whole reasoning? In the very letter alluded to, these expressions stand foremost. “You have informed me in your letter, that with God’s help, and with the consent and by the authority of Carloman, you held a council and suspended from office unworthy clergymen. You also state, that *you have ordained three archbishops*, in three chief cities, namely *Grimo in Rouen, Abel in Rheims, and Artbert in Sens*. The latter came to us, bearing letters from you, Carloman, and Pippin, desiring that we would address to them three *palliums*, which we have granted for the reuniting and reforming of the churches.” †

This papal letter was written *before* the year 800. It was not a mere function of *consecrating, sede vacante*, which Boniface had been empowered to execute;

\* Labb. VI. 1505.

† Ibid. 1504. Indicasti quod et Concilium, adjuvante Deo, & Carlomanno præbente consensum et contestante, factum est; et qualiter falsos sacerdotes... a sacro munere suspendisti, et quia tres Archiepiscopos per singulas metropoles ordinasti, id est, Grimonein, &c. qui et apud nos fuit, et tua nobis et Carlomanni et Pippini detulit scripta, per quæ suggestistis, ut tria pallia tribus prænominatis metropolitans dirigere deberemus, quæ et largiti sumus pro adunatione et reformatione Ecclesiarum Christi.

cate; although even this would be in derogation of the alleged *fundamental liberty*: neither does the legate first ordain provincial bishops, and relinquish to them the ordination of their metropolitan. No; he enters at once into the ecclesiastical department, and gives a new institution and being to the metropolitan sees. He gives to metropolitans a new derivation of title, namely, through the name of *archbishop*, which did not rest on any ancient privileges of the see, nor upon any secular greatness of the city, but on the vigour of apostolical primacy.\* Through this mean, the

\* As in the letter of Gregory III. Zachary's predecessor, to the same Boniface, constituting him *archbishop* without any fixed see. Epist. I. Labb. VI. 1463. Hinc jure tibi sacri pallii direximus munus, quod beati Petri Apostoli auctoritate suscipiens induaris, atque inter *Archiepiscopos unus*, Deo auctore, *præcipimus ut censearis*. It was owing to the renovation of *metropolitan*, by this communication of *papal* authority, that *Archbishop* came to be used for *Metropolitan*, generally in the West. In a record published by Garsias Loaisa (and copied into Labb. V. 876) as of a Royal decree, promulged by Wamba Anno D. 666, the metropolitan sees are termed *Archiepiscopal* in this meaning, which certainly was not the received signification of the word, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. "Hæc sunt sedes harum duarum hispaniarum octoginta, sub *Domino* (read *dominio*) Gothorum, tam *archiepiscopales*, per quas nobis ministratur verbum Dei; quæ a Romano Pontifice accipiunt *Communionem Catholicæ veritatis*," (read *veritatis*, namely, *auctoritatis*;) ut secundum traditionem et doctrinam sanctorum Patrum animas sibi commissas valeant gubernare. What gives probability to this document is, that, although it came out of the archives of the church of Toledo, yet no primacy over Spain is mentioned; as, in fact, the right of calling national councils was given

the principle of subordination and unity was established in all the newly converted kingdoms; and thus, even in the meaning attributed by *Columbanus* to *patriarchal* jurisdiction, the bishop of Rome became the *patriarch of the West, of the entire West*, or, if the title be more significant and intelligible, of the *entire western world*.

I will return to this subject, before I conclude my letter. But as the first Nicene council, and the *incontrovertible* authority of Rufinus have been repeatedly inculcated in opposition to this western *patriarchate* of Rome, I must dispatch both the council and authority in a tedious parenthesis.

We have the *incontrovertible* authority of *Columbanus* himself,\* that the book called the ecclesiastical history of Rufinus, “was approved of by the pope “Gelasius I. and was appealed to as orthodox by “the second council of Nicea; was received, as “stated by Hincmar, into the *catalogue* of the apostolic see;” and Cyril in his epistle to the African bishops is also referred to.

I have seen, over and over and over again, all those authorities, and the reader shall hear of them. For the present, what is it, *Columbanus*, you would infer from the incontrovertible authority of Rufinus?

Is

given to that see in the twelfth synod of Toledo, some years after the supposed date of this edict. However, if genuine, it demonstrates, that there existed more than an intercourse between the churches of Spain and Rome, and that the Metropolitans received *confirmation* from the Pope, in some way or other.

\* Fourth Letter, page 111, Note.

Is it not, that the *metropolitica*, which you confound with the *patriarchal* jurisdiction of Rome, did not extend above *one hundred miles* from the capital, in as much as the *vicarius urbiens* could not take cognizance, beyond that distance; and because as those provinces in the civil jurisdiction, were called *suburbicarian*, so, in order to express an *ecclesiastical* jurisdiction of the same extent, the term *suburbicarian* was employed by Rufinus in denoting the churches subordinate, not in virtue of Catholic supremacy, to the pope?

Your argument was this, and your argument has been answered as to historical fact. You have been taught, that the diameter of what you call *suburbicarian* jurisdiction was not of *two hundred*, but of *seven hundred miles*; so that if you complete the Circle by sweeping round the Italian and Sicilian sees, you have miscalculated by eleven twelfths of the surface contained. You ought to have learned, even from the confessions of Saint Augustine, that Simplician, the presbyter of Rome, was sent up to baptize the great Ambrose in Milan, and that he remained with the holy bishop, or *patriarch*, (if you will stand upon titles of your own gift,) as an instructor:\* you have seen, that bishops of Rome did *confirm*, in the most formal manner, the election of Milanese bishops, as well as of your other *patriarchs*: so that if Rufinus did really assert what Saumaise, and

\* Confession. Lib. 8, Cap. 1, 9.

and de Marca state, he would have dishonoured himself in the eyes of his contemporaries by seriously broaching an absurd lie, which is much more than recent authors could suffer, when they argued from scraps of etymology on a point of obsolete importance.

Did you read throughout, *Columbanus*, the version of the Nicene canons of Rufinus? Did you read his *original* translation? Suffer me to borrow, in an honest way, your triumphant interrogatory to bishop Poynter. You quoted the observations of Petau on Epiphanius, in *his edition of Cologne*, 1682, and you demanded with surprise, which in substance was a delicate sort of contempt for gross inerudition, whether the English *vicars*, meaning the vicars apostolical, *read the originals*.‡ It cannot be doubted that *you, Columbanus*, had read this *original* edition of Petau; but, really, considering that the man was *dead just thirty years*, before the republication of his observations at Cologne, those *vicars* might have been dealt with more sparingly, inasmuch as they had no opportunity of inspecting wonderful manuscripts.

We are then to try the sincerity of Rufinus in translating the canons of Nicæa by what you have declared to be the *genuine* decrees; those, I must suppose which were sent from Constantinople and from Alexandria by Atticus and Cyril to Aurelius of Carthage and his synod. I will ask you here, whether you have read those *originals*, for two reasons: the  
first

\* *Columb.* 4th letter, p. 22.

first, because I observe, from your manner of quoting, that you borrowed the quotation of *Cyriil. Epist. ad P. P. Afric. Concilior. T. 2. Col. 1148*, from some book published before Hardouin's edition, since which time the prior edition of Pere Labbe, to whom your reference corresponds, has always been expressly and distinctly quoted: secondly, because, in the Greek letter of Cyril, not a syllable nor iota of the genuine canons is given. The profession of faith is, indeed, subjoined to the letter from Atticus, but nothing else is extant, even in that genuine Greek of this letter. Now, prithee, *Columbanus*, to which of these letters did you refer, for the confirmation of the *incontrovertible* authority of Rufinus as to *Suburbicarian* churches?

Let us take it in this way. The genuine canons of Nicea shall be those Greek canons, which we have in all the editions; those, in short, which were translated by Dionysius, Isidore, and lastly by Herveus. In particular, the sixth canon, on which our controversy goes, shall, in the *genuine* text, be such as it was read from the archives of the church of Constantinople, in the sixteenth action of Chalcedon, in opposition to the representatives of Leo I.\*

Let us begin with the first canon. Of this, Rufinus has given but the latter half, and while the canon universally speaks, *εἰ δὲ τις ὑγαιῶν ἐκείνων ἐξέτιμα*, thus confirming the ancient rules, called the xx and xxi apostolical canons, Rufinus in order to save Origen, against whom that former canon had been

\* Labb. iv. p. 312.

entered in the first instance, foists in, *Ne quis ex his qui seipsos, impatientia libidinis.*

Let us now to the penultimate canon in Rufinus. The Greek text speaks of Paulianists. Rufinus abridges that prolix canon in these seven words, “*Et ut Paulianistæ, qui sunt Photiniani, rebaptizentur.*” Pray, *Columbanus*, was the *Photinian* heresy in being and condemned in the time of the council of Nicea?

The last genuine canon at Nicea is against kneeling on the Lord’s day; and *Columbanus* knows well, that in that age, genuflexion being a penitential observance, it was thought fit to interdict this expression of mourning in honour to the Saviour’s resurrection. Pray, *Columbanus*, what has become of this canon in your *incontrovertible* voucher?

These few instances were enough, in all reason, to raise a doubt as to the scrupulous accuracy of Rufinus in rendering those canons. But his interpretation of that, which I am about to give, is so grossly ignorant, that it places our *incontrovertible* below the footstool of the meanest translator. “Canon the “eighth” in the Greek.\* “Concerning those, who “occasionally

\* Περὶ τῶν ὀνομαζόντων μὲν αὐτοὺς καθαροὺς ποτε, προσερχομένων δὲ εἰς καθολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν, εἶδοξε τῇ ἁγίᾳ καὶ μεγάλῃ συνόδῳ, ὡς χειροπέτμητους αὐτοὺς μὲν εἶναι ἐν τῷ κληρω. πρὸ πάντων δὲ ταῦτο ἐμολογῆσαι αὐτοὺς ἐγγράφως προσήκει, ὅτι συνήσονται καὶ ἀκολουθήσουσι τοῖς τῆς καθολικῆς καὶ ἀποστολικῆς ἐκκλησίας δόγμασι ταῦτ' ἐστὶ καὶ διγαμοῖς κοινῶν, καὶ τοῖς ἐν τῷ διωγμῷ παραπεπλωκοῖσι, ἐφ' ὧν καὶ χρόνος τετακται καὶ χρόνος ὄρισται, ὡς αὐτοὺς ἀκολουθεῖν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς δόγμασι τῆς καθολικῆς



“ occasionally stile themselves Cathari, if they be-  
 “ came proselytes to the Catholic church, it is decreed  
 “ by this sacred and great council, that receiving  
 “ imposition of hands” (i. e. confirmation,) “ if of the  
 “ clergy, without further process they shall remain  
 “ such. But previously to all, they are to *confess in*  
 “ *writing* their agreement and conformity to the  
 “ decrees of the Catholic church; *that is to say,*  
 “ *that*

καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐνθά μὲν ἄν πάντες εἰσαίεν καμῖς, εἴτε ἐν πόλεσιν αὐτοῖς  
 μόνοι εὐρεθῶσι χειροῖονθῆντες, οἱ εὐρισκόμενοι ἐν τῷ κλήρῳ εἶναι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ  
 σχηματι. εἰ δὲ τῷ τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐπισκοπῆς ἢ πρεσβυτέρῳ ὄντος  
 προσέρχονται τινες. προδήλον ὡς ὁ μὲν ἐπίσκοπος τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἔξει τὸ ἀξιωμα-  
 τικὸν ἐπισκοπῆς. ὁ δὲ ὀνομαζόμενος παρὰ τοῖς λεγομένοις καθαροῖς ἐπίσκοπος, τὴν  
 ἰὴν πρεσβυτέρῳ τιμὴν ἔξει. πλὴν εἰ μὴ ἄρα δοκοῖη τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ τῆς τιμῆς τῆ  
 ὀνοματὸς αὐτὸν μιστεῖν. εἰ δὲ τῷ αὐτῷ μὴ ἀρεσκῶι, ἐπινοῆσει τόπον ἢ  
 χωρὶς ἐπισκοπῆς ἢ πρεσβυτέρῳ, ὑπὲρ τῶ ἐν τῷ κλήρῳ ὁλως δοκοῖεν εἶναι, ἵνα μὴ ἐν τῇ  
 πόλει δύο ἐπίσκοποι ᾖσι. Isidore, or whoever made up the compilation  
 which Isidore uttered, has, like *Rufinus*, take *χειροθετημένους* for  
*receiving ordination*. Now, at the time of the council of Nicea,  
 there was no more an idea of giving a new ordination to schis-  
 matics deriving under a contested election, than there had been  
 in the council of Rome under Miltiades, of re-ordaining Donatist  
 bishops. The council of Nicea, in its letter to the church  
 of Alexandria, requires the clergy ordained by Meletius to  
 be reordained, but, in this very letter, it marks the dis-  
 tinction between *χειροθεσια*, which was a general term, and  
*χειροτονια*. The council decrees, that those who had had  
 ordination from Meletius, should be admitted to communion, and  
 to the exercise of their functions, *μυσικωτέρα χειροτονια ἐξαιωνέντας*;  
 and that Meletius himself shall neither *ordain* nor *perform imposition*  
*of hands*, *μηκε χειροτονειν. μηκε χειροθετειν ἐξαιωνέντας*.

“ that they hold communion with persons twice mar-  
 “ ried, and with those who had fallen in persecution.  
 “ Concerning these Cathari a time and season has  
 “ been defined, for their conforming to the decrees  
 “ of the Catholic church. Wheresoever it shall hap-  
 “ pen *either in vills or in cities*, that the only persons  
 “ *there ordained* shall be of this description, those in  
 “ clerical rank shall preserve their rank as before.  
 “ But wherever there is a *Catholic bishop or presbyter*,  
 “ and such persons come over, it is provided unequi-  
 “ vocally, that the Catholic bishop shall hold as the  
 “ bishop, the first rank ; the titular bishop, amongst  
 “ the Cathari, shall possess the dignity of a pres-  
 “ byter, unless the bishop should think it right to  
 “ share *with him the honour of his title* : if he should  
 “ not so please, he will contrive for him a place  
 “ either of a *Chorepiscopus* or a *presbyter*, (so as that  
 “ this latter by all means may have the estimation of  
 “ a clergyman), lest in one and the same city there  
 “ should be two *bishops*,” i. e. independent and  
 supreme ecclesiastical governors.

This canon distinctly provides concerning the Ca-  
 thari, first, that, when reconciling themselves to the  
 Catholic church, they shall *not* be subjected to pe-  
 nance, a certain time being prefixed for the indul-  
 gences declared herein : second, that their clergy  
 having received *imposition of hands*, (which, exclusive  
 of penance, herein distinctly excluded, and of *re-  
 ordination*

*ordination*, which is out of the question, meant solely reconciliation and confirmation by the church,\*) should without further process, continue in their several estates; but, before reconciliation, should especially abjure their schismatical tenets in writing: third, that if in any *vill*, the *only presbyter* had been a Novatian; if in any city, the *only bishop* were a Novatian, no other bishop or priest should be appointed for the original Catholics of those places: fourth, that if in a city there should have been a Catholic as well as a Novatian bishop, the latter should resign his pretensions to the stile and prerogatives of a chief governor, the Catholic prelate being however allowed to share with him the titular dignity; and otherwise being obliged to make out a presbytership in a *vill*, or the employment of a Chorepiscopus over many vills; lest by the refusal of the Catholic bishop to *do either*, one city should be found with two persons, rivals of each other, in the claim to episcopacy. Attend now to the doleful massacre, which the irrefragable Rufinus has committed on this canon.

Canon IX. “Decreed also, that the Cathari, if, as  
 “*penitents they should be converted to the church,*  
 “*after a confession of the church doctrines,* should be  
 “*received in their rank; but, after ordination given,*  
 “*if their bishop should come to our bishop,* that the  
 “*former must sit in the class of the presbyters; while*  
 “*the*

\* See note B, at the end of this Letter.

“ the name of bishop shall abide with him alone,  
 “ whoever held the Catholic faith, unless willingly  
 “ he exalt the other with the title: or if he please to  
 “ *seek out for him a vacant see*, he is authorised to  
 “ do even this. Canon x. Decreed, that there shall  
 “ not be two bishops in one city.”\*

Is not the authority of such a translator to be most highly respected? Shall I look over the other canons? for I confess I have taken notes of his insincerity. You will insist on my coming to the *sixth*, that regards the *patriarchate of the West* and the *suburbicarian* churches. I shall do so.

The sixth canon, according to the version of Rufinus, was this; “ Decreed also, that the ancient *customs*  
 “ be preserved at Alexandria and in the city of Rome,  
 “ that as well the *former person* have the charge of the  
 “ churches of Egypt, as the *latter* of the churches  
 “ which are suburbicarian.” † If any meaning can  
 . be

\* Rufini Can. ix. Et catharos, si forte poenitentes ad ecclesiam revertantur, confessos ecclesiastica dogmata clericos ordine quidem suo suscipi debere. Sed ordinatione data, sane si episcopus ipsorum veniat ad episcopum nostrum, debere eum in presbyterorum loco sedere; episcopi vero nomen manere apud illum solum, qui Catholicam semper tenuit fidem, nisi sua voluntate ipse eum tali nomine honorare voluerit: vel si placuerit, ut quærat ei *episcopi locum vacantem*, hoc sit in ipsius potestate. Canon x. Et ne in una civitate duo episcopi sint.

† Et ut apud Alexandriam, et in urbe Roma *vetusta consuetudo* seruetur, ut vel *illæ* (without any one referred to), *Ægypti*, vel *hic* suburbicariarum

be collected out of this ungrammatical and incoherent phrase, does it not assert, that it was *decreed* at Nicea, that some person in Rome should continue to hold the charge of those suburbicarian churches? Now what does the Greek text, as read at Chalcedon declare? “ Let the immemorial usages prevail, which “ exist in Egypt; so that the bishop of Alexandria “ shall have general authority there, because such is “ the usage with the bishop in Rome.”\* To this enactment the Greek adds a decree concerning Antioch which is entirely left out by Rufinus; and another of the necessary consent of each metropolitan to the ordination of bishops within his province, which Rufinus has parcelled out between his fourth and seventh canons.

From the Greek it appears, first, that *no confirmation* was given, at Nicea, to the usage of the church of Rome: that on the contrary, the usage of Alexandria was confirmed, because it had the authority of Roman  
usage

bicariarum ecclesiarum sollicitudinem gerat. It is scarcely worth the while to observe, that *Ægypti* is probably a false reading for *επισκοπιας*, that has disappeared from the text: in this supposition both *Alexandria* and *Rome* would have *suburbicarian* churches.

\* τα αρχαια εθη κρατειτω τα κατα Αιγυπτον (common edit. τα εν Αιγυπτω και Λιβυη, Gelasius Λιβυαις, και Πενταπολει) ωσε τον Αλεξανδρειας (Gelas. εν Αλεξανδρεια) επισκοπον παντων (Comm Ed. & Gelasius add τωτων) εχεις την εξουσιαν, επειδη και τω εν Ρωμη επισκοπω παντα εν αυτη εστι. The common reading παντων τωτων εχειν κ. τ. λ. signifies throughout all these districts.

usage. Secondly, it is equally plain, that no boundaries are either marked, or alluded to, within which the Roman bishop exercised that general authority, which the fathers had in view. Therefore the version of Rufinus, as to the former of these points is fallacious; and in the latter is arbitrary, if *suburbicarian* have been used by him to define a certain space; if by that certain space was intended a circle described at the distance of one hundred miles, the version would be not only false but ridiculous, or merit, perhaps, a harsher epithet.

Is it true, however, that *suburbicarian churches* were the churches, within the limits of the civil jurisdiction of the *vicarius urbis*, “which are defined by the *Notitia*, and of which the limits may be circumscribed “by a radius of one hundred miles?” I fear some little mistake has crept in here also. The *præfectus urbi*, we all knew, had not any power of cognizance beyond that distance, as appears from Ulpian on the appointment of Chilo by Septimius Severus.\* As to the *vicarius urbis*, it appears from *this very notitia*, that his

\* De Offic. P. V. ff. L. I. §. xii. 4. Ulpian. Si quid intra C. Miliarium admissum sit, ad P. V. pertinet; si ultra ipsum lapidem, egressum est præfecti notionem. The reason of this contracted sphere of power appears to be derived from the antiquity of the office, which formerly comprehended the entire of those districts enjoying the Roman law. Quotiens proficiscuntur Magistratus, unus relinquitur qui jus dicat. Is vocatur P. V. qui præfectus olim constituebatur; postea vero Latinarum feriarum causa introductum est, ut quotannis observetur. Pomponius in Enchirid.

his jurisdiction extended over Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia, as well as the southern extremities of Italy. By what authority *Columbanus* has made the prefect and the vicarius interchange their powers, I dare not ask. But I would consider it unfair to charge upon Rufinus a blunder, of which he could not possibly have been guilty.

It is somewhat curious to observe, how this piece of bad Latin has been worked up, and cried up, in order to *vex the pope of Rome*. Gothofred, who first broached this *suburbicarian* discovery, took some pains to assure the learned world, that Rufinus was a perfect master of the most elegant Latin; though Rufinus himself acknowledges, and his works bear ample testimony to his confession, that his stock was poor enough. After his encomium of Rufinus, Gothofred proceeded to argue, that *suburbicarian* was elegantly used by Rufinus to denote the district of the city prefect; then, it being undoubted, that the city prefecture did not trespass beyond one hundred miles from Rome, it was evident, *from the authority of Rufinus*, that in the fourth century, the pope's jurisdiction had the very same limits. Sirmond, in answer to this *charlatan*, demonstrated, that the term *suburbicarian* was introduced, when the office of *vicarius urbicus* was created, and was applied to quite other districts than those of the city prefecture. Saumaise came to the aid of Gothofred, but without doing him service. He boldly maintained, that the bishop of Milan was a *patriarch*; that the bishop of

*Justiniana Prima* was another *patriarch*; was scandalized, that Sirmond should employ the authority of Greek *schismatics* to establish the patriarchate of the West, whereas the bishop of Rome was head of the catholic church; and said nothing more to the purpose. Neither of these writers, however, had the presence of mind of *Columbanus* to allow, that *suburbicarian* alluded to the territory of the *vicarius urbicus*, and, in the same breath, to maintain that this jurisdiction was circumscribed by a radius of one hundred miles; much less to cite the *notitia* as favouring that paradox.

*Columbanus*, you will grant, has argued inconsistently; but you will expect, that, after shewing the jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome to have extended beyond that of the prefect; that besides proving it to have reached the islands, as did that of the *Vicarius*, I should over and above make it palpable, that *suburbicarian* churches, in the meaning of *Rufinus*, were not the churches situated within the precincts of *vicarial* authority.

As to that point, it shall be settled at once. The Nicene canon wills, that immemorial usages be guarded: it vindicates, as such, the prerogatives of Alexandria: and by what test does it examine those prerogatives? By the usage of the see of Rome. Consequently the usage of this latter was for the Nicene fathers, *immemorial*, beyond all exception. Now, when was the office of the *vicarius urbicus* instituted and by whom? In that very fourth century,  
and



and by the very Constantine who was present in the Nicene council. It was Constantine who created deputies in Italy, for the office of the *Præfectus Prætorio*, the deputy in the capital or *vicarius urbicus*, the other for the northern parts of Italy, and called the *vicarius Italiæ*. Therefore, either the *immemorial usage* of the bishops of Rome, with regard to *suburbicarian* churches, is not to be explained according to the novel division of Italy by Constantine: or, if it is, the consequence will be, that the Emperor was so *devout* as to model the temporal administration of Italy according to the *old* usages of the *Roman church*, in propagating and settling the christian faith. This latter alternative is tolerably ridiculous.

The term, *suburbicarian*, did not at any time *directly* mean *subject to the vicarius urbicus*: it meant, generally, subordinate to a jurisdiction residing in Rome, which jurisdiction was exercised, in fact, by the *vicarius* living there. What then does *suburbicarian church* signify? Plainly a church subject to a *jurisdiction existing in Rome*, and the version of Rufinus amounts, after all, but to this: let the bishop of Alexandria continue to hold the superintendence of the Egyptian churches, and the bishop of Rome that of those churches which immemorially have acknowledged his jurisdiction, as deriving christianity from the see in that capital. Even in this unfair version, by Rufinus, no new right, no additional jurisdiction is pretended to be granted either to Alexandria

andria or to Rome, in the council. To mention in the canon the precise number of miles belonging to the ecclesiastical territory of Rome would have been impertinent to the purpose of those oriental fathers, if ever they could be supposed acquainted with all the mile-stones within the *circle*. They confirm to the one bishop a general authority, which they mark by natural boundaries. It is not to be supposed that in mentioning the other and more distant bishop, they would run to perches and poles, or that without the smallest necessity or colour, they would in the single instance of Rome, describe ecclesiastical jurisdiction by a reference to the *new*, rather than the established and old criterion of parent churches.

It is probable, writes Valesius, that by the council of Nicea, the entire of the West was recognized as the patriarchal diocese of the bishop of Rome. The Greeks, he adds, who are competent witnesses to the fact, agree in this point, although it is displeasing to the Romans. It is certain, I answer, that the popes have never accepted of the title of *patriarch of the West* from the Greeks, because, when so given, it was craftily applied to shut out the primacy of Rome from its visitatorial right over Constantinople; and because the popes have ever disclaimed deriving any authority, help, or privilege whatsoever, from the Nicene council to their own see. Yet the Nicene council may have taken notice of a *fact*, namely, that in the West there was a special authority exercised by the bishops of  
Rome

Rome, without attempting to confirm that, which, at the time, was not disputed by any.

*Columbanus* in his angry effort to dispossess the pope of a *western patriarchate*, and to attain of gross ignorance all those who would thus stile him, urged, that *de Marca* clearly proves, that metropolitans were ordained in Gaul and Spain without any *patriarchal* interference, and without any consent or authority of Rome. I have said enough on the proposition, as supposed to be *de Marca's*. Yet while it is true, that *de Marca* shews from strong negative proofs, that no actual previous consent of the bishop of Rome was sought, for the ordination of metropolitans in Gaul, between the sixth and the ninth centuries, he most expressly declares the bishop of Rome to have been the *patriarch of the West* at the time of the Nicene council; and that besides his *ordinary patriarchate*, in which he ordained the greater number of the metropolitans of Italy, his *care* extended over all the *metropolitan sees of the West*.\* *De Marca* is himself one of those ignorant men, who would *dub* the pope. He maintains, on the supposed authority of two of the novels, that the ordinary *patriarchal* jurisdiction of Rome was restricted to those bishops, whom the pope ordained, and therefore summoned to his council; inasmuch as the right of ordaining, and the right of calling to synods were essentially connected.

The

\* *De Marca Concord. Lib. VI. §. 6. p. 187.*

The Novel cxxxvii. on which de Marca builds his argument, does not support it. In the first place, the novel alleged was made for the eastern empire: again, the term patriarch therein is constantly used for *ex-arch* or *primate*: lastly, Justinian does not merely require those bishops to meet their patriarch, *who are ordained by him*, but expressly adds, *and who ordain no bishops*: so that the purport of the regulation is not a *patriarchal* nor a *primatial synod*, but a stated *provincial synod*. I allow, that the right of ordaining and that of calling to the synod of the ordainer were essentially connected. From this I infer, that wherever there existed a right of calling to synod, and such right antierior to the council of Nicea; again, wherever there existed a right of directing bishops in distant countries to meet in their local synods, and to examine a given subject according to rules prescribed, or to subscribe to decrees sent out to them; the existence of these rights in an ancient see demonstrates, that there had originally been exercised an *ordaining* power over those distant tracts, of which the mere disuse cannot establish for the subordinate churches a title of independence.

This last-mentioned principle would be true in all cases, were the question to be determined on the general axioms of christian exterior government. If applied to the case of a prime ruling church, such as that of Rome is, above all other churches, it is a principle of common intuition. The authority of  
episcopacy

episcopacy presupposes a *catholic* partnership. Vainly would a bishop either bless or absolve, or reconcile, unless he did so in the virtue of the catholic church: and most vainly and impiously would he affect this, if he were not able to prove himself a joint governor in that church, and that he was associated duly to that episcopal college, of which Peter is the chief, if Peter can be ascertained in his successors. By disuse, I acknowledge, a positive grant or privilege is waved: a custom springs up, first in supplement, next in derogation, and ultimately in apparent exclusion of a privilege: and such, I grant, might be the case of the ancient Gallican churches, if they had been originally christianized by Alexandria; which was not supreme even in times of peace; which was not that ocean, into which all rivers come again, when they have performed their fertilizing circuit of travel.

But, considering that the supposed Gallican privileges (if any customs of France were ever thought to be such, before the age of Hincmar of Rheims) had their origin from a parent church, which at the same time was the chief over all churches; considering that Gallican episcopacy derived its whole authority\* from that primeval and indefeasible episcopacy which abided in the bishop of Rome; it is nonsense at the best, to pretend, that the particular church of Gaul (illustrious as it has been in its beginnings, in its restoration, and

most

\* *Alcimi Avit. Epistol. ad Faust. & Symmach.*

most renowned as it has been in its recent struggle,) or that any church, similarly circumstanced, shall talk of *fundamental liberties*, to the exclusion of a parental right, kept evermore vigorous by a divine authority, as long as the continuing proof of original foundation survives. The distance of regions I will allow to be a fair argument for sufferance and for compromise, unless this distance be assumed as the title for a *birth-right* of *self-legislation*. The distinction of kingdoms, the jealousy of borderers, the fear of persecution, the repugnance of civil usages, the strangeness of tongue, the exaltation of national pride may afford motives for tolerance of the outward shew of a *domestic* establishment of *catholic* religion; which however bears on its forehead the stamp of falsity and decay. But although to every estate in the one catholic church there appertains essentially the sovereign right and the duty, in all ages, and paramount to all ecclesiastical canons, of saving itself from the dissolution of its life-giving properties; it is still a ground of christianity, that so soon as the persecution of men or the interdict of circumstances is removed or can be surmounted, nothing short of a free concession from the supreme authority in the church, can give *catholic* subsistence to the temporary and occasional *independence* of those churches, which had been anteriorly bound to the everlasting see, by the proximate title of filiation, as well as by the inevitable controul of chief episcopacy over all bishops. Within his own patri-  
archate

archate, at least, the pope has none to appeal to: he must therefore act as the executive authority of the church at large in making good his own local rights, which are the evidences of the gospel succession. If forced to yield them as patriarch, he will reclaim them as pope.

I have not forgotten the occasion, from which I was led to amplify this principle. De Marca lays it down as a principle, that the two rights of *ordaining* and *calling a synod*, go together. I will not lose time in searching now, or in recollecting, how it is that de Marca vindicates a *patriarchate of the West*, in the fourth century, to the bishop of Rome, seeing that he explains to the *home jurisdiction* the sixth canon of Nicea. The man was good; a tolerable civilian in Latin stile, a smatterer in Greek, and a bishop *twice* translated at the recommendation of the court. He must have been most serious in his attachment to *ancient* canons. I think that the western *patriarchate* is proved not by any canons of general councils, but by cardinal facts. To demonstrate this I must degrade into a note, for which I ask your forgiveness, my refutation of the proofs advanced by *Columbanus*, of the *orthodox* and *incontrovertible authority* of Rufinus.\* The note is long, but the text is shortened.

The

\* The authority of Pope Gelasius is first to be examined, who, in enumerating authors, in part *good*, in part *bad*, expresses himself thus of Rufinus. “*Item, Rufinus the monk published very many books of church proceedings, and explained some parts of scripture:*

The first proof of a *western patriarchate* consists in an explanation of the terms; that there existed in the fourth

“ but, whereas the holy Jerome has censured him in certain points, “ as to free will, we coincide in the *opinion of the said Jerome not only concerning Rufinus*, but concerning all others, whom he has *blamed*.” This is a strange way of *adopting a book into the catalogue of the see of Rome*. Gelasius refers to Saint Jerome. Let us see how Saint Jerome *adopts Rufinus*. In *Epitaph. Marcellæ*, he informs us, that in translating one work, the *καπι αρχων*, he had *mutilated, interpolated, and transformed*; and terms his translation *infamous*. This observation occurs to me from Sirmond’s Annotation on Sidonius, Ep. 9. Lib. 2. I have not time to recollect the other occasions on which Rufinus is *adopted* by Saint Jerome, in language rather strong. Need we go farther than this very council of *Nicea*, of which the part, confirming the privileges of Antioch, is put out, and that at a time, when the bishop of Jerusalem, the favourer of Pelagians, was attempting to encroach on the rights of that apostolical see? Socrates also, in the beginning of his second book, informs us that, trusting to the authority of Rufinus, he had almost written out his history; but that on discovering how much he had been led astray, by the inventions of Rufinus, he was reduced to compose his work anew. For other witnesses to the candour of Rufinus, I give H. Valesius, John Le Clerc, and every editor of ecclesiastical antiquities, who has named him, without taking part in the *subbicanian* discovery. What makes it singularly whimsical to disprove, as *Columbanus* has done, a *patriarchate* from the text of Rufinus, and to prove the credit of Rufinus from the authority of Gelasius, is, that this latter *positively ridicules* the pretensions of Acacius as bishop of an imperial city, by asking whether *Ravenna, Milan, Treves, or Sirnium* had ever *raised their authority above the immemorial level*, in consequence of having been imperial stations. Epistol. xiii. Labb. IV. 1207. *Risimus autem quod prærogativam volunt*

Acacii



fourth century and before, a distinct authority in the Latin church; that this authority embraced all matters of discipline and ecclesiastical ordinations; that it was exercised by the bishop of Rome as the chief of those churches, which had been founded by the apostolic see: and that the west composed one college of bishops, subordinate to and joined with the bishop of Rome, as their *metropolitan*.

The proofs are negative, but final. Until the fourth century not a syllable is to be met with of any metropolitan power exercised in Italy, Spain, or the Gauls, or of any synod convened either as provincial or national, unless at Rome.\*

Again,

Acacio comparari quia Episcopus fuit Regiæ Civitatis. Nunquid apud *Ravennam*, apud *Mediolanum*, Sirmium, Treviros, multis temporibus non constitit Imperator? Numquidnam *harum urbium sacerdotes*, *ultra mensuram sibi antiquitus deputatam*, quippiam *suis dignitatibus usurparunt?*

As to the second council of Nicea, it never appealed to Rufinus in any manner. A passage was read from his history, translated into Greek, and preserved in the episcopal library of Constantinople. But no particular stress was laid on his authority, nor had the passage in question the most remote connection with any canon of the Nicene council. It would be most absurd to suppose, that whoever translated Rufinus into Greek, when giving the Nicene canons, would translate them out of the *pretended translation* by Rufinus, rather than exhibit the original phrase. But here again it happens unluckily that this second Nicene council, in which Rufinus was quoted, did imagine the *catholic church at large* to be represented by the *patriarchates*.

\* Eusebius *l. V. ch. 24*, mentions the letter, *των κατα Γαλλιαν*

Again, in arguing from the succession of bishops, as was repeatedly done from the second century, the succession of the church of Rome is alone pointed out in the West, from the age of Irenæus to that of Eusebius. Therefore during this period no metropolitan local authority was known in those regions. Even in Africa the earliest national synod pretended was of the third century.

In the synod of Turin, held at the close of the fourth century, when the bishops of Arles and Vienne contended for the primacy, reserved or supposed to be reserved, by the Nicene council, the cause was adjourned until *either should make out, by proof, that his see was metropolitan*. Siricius annulled this interlocutory decree, and explained primacy to mean the right attached to an *apostolical*, or original and missionary bishopric. After the death of Saint Hilary Pope Leo declared, that Vienne had proved the metropolitan right to have been formerly shifting. The fact demonstrates, that no local primacy had existed before that age in the Gauls.

In

*παροικίων ἁ; Εἰρηναίος ἐπέσχετο*; which Valesius translates, “Of the churches of Gaul, over which Irenæus presided.” Two words are wanting here; viz. *as bishop*; and it is to be remarked, that Eusebius pointedly distinguishes the *paroeciae* in Gaul, from the synodical meetings elsewhere. That after the death of Pothinus, no bishop remained in the Gauls, and that Irenæus was sent by the confessors to Eleutherius of Rome to be consecrated, see Massuet in *Dissert. prævia. secund.* p. lxxxī lxxxlii. lxxxiii.

In the same age, Siricius, in his general decree for the churches of Spain, appoints as his deputy for notifying the decree throughout the provinces, Himerius of Tاراcona, as being the *senior bishop*. Of course there was no *national primate* at least in Spain, then seventy years after the Nicene council; and the decrees sent from Rome were the standard of discipline for those western churches.

The churches of Gaul, therefore, composed one *synod* with the churches of Italy even before the Nicene council.\* The judgment of Rome, of the bishops of Italy, and of the *neighbouring bishops* was equivalent to the judgment of the *entire West*.†

After the Nicene council, the ecclesiastical acts of the papal synod were sent throughout the west; local councils were directed to be summoned, for the purpose of taking information of rules of discipline, as well as of assenting to doctrinal professions.

Not one of the first four general councils attempted to enact for the western church, in any point of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, or to circumscribe the authority of the bishop of Rome, or to intermeddle directly or indirectly with the organization of the western patriarchate. The fewness of bishops from the West in those

\* Ex Epistol. Concil. Aquileiens. ad Episcopos Provinciae Narbonensis et Vienn. prim. & sec. Gratias agimus, quod in fidei, &c. omnium nobis presentiam vestram contulistis, simul *præcepta majorum sequentes, pondus addidistis sententiis nostris.*

† In epistola Concil. Ital. ad Theodor. Imp. Libb. II. 1003.

those councils, at which however the deputies of the pope were presiding, is full evidence, that the discipline of the West was left to the settlement of its primate. That Rome was for the West, what Alexandria was for Egypt, is plain, even from the identity of manner as to attending those general councils.

If then we are to gather any thing from the sixth canon of Nicæa, as to a western patriarchate, it was not either to *suburbicarian* churches, or to a right of *ordaining* bishops, or *confirming metropolitans*, the council directed itself, when it reasoned from the practice of Rome to that of Alexandria; but to the superior jurisdiction of calling bishops together, of originating disciplinary laws, of speaking the foremost by words of *enactment* on questions of faith, and of regulating the conditions and requisites for holding stations in the church.

I must now prove this to have been meant by the *καθολικῆ ἐξουσιᾶς*, or *general authority*, of the sixth Nicene canon. My witness is of the fifth century, and is a provincial synod at Rome certifying an immemorial usage to the Orientals. “Once more we  
 “are anxious to point out to you the *usage which*  
 “*evermore* has prevailed in these our quarters.  
 “Whenever bishops are assembled within Italy for  
 “ecclesiastical causes, especially causes of faith, the  
 “*usage is retained*, that the prelate, for the time being,  
 “of the apostolical see, according to the charge ap-  
 “pertaining to him of all the churches, shall *order all*,  
 “as representing in one, the total of bishops of the  
 “entire of Italy; and as being the head of all bishops

“ virtue of these words of the Redeemer to Peter, &c.  
 “ In deference to which words, the three hundred  
 “ and eighteen, convened in Nicea, yielded to the Ro-  
 “ man church the *confirmation and authority*” (i. e.  
 origination) “ of (ecclesiastical) matters ; *both of which,*  
 “ all succeeding bishops, until our age, continue to  
 “ observe.”\*

The Bishop of Rome is here said to order *all*, as virtually representing *all the Bishops of the Entire of Italy*. This entire of *Italy* was, in fact, the entire of the Western Church, because the Bishops of the Gauls and of Africa formed a part of that Italian Synod. In the letter from the Council of Aquileia, lately quoted, the words *Italian and neighbouring Bishops* are used as synonymous with the *Bishops of Italy and all the West*. In the Imperial Letter for the holding of a Synod at Aquileia, the neighbouring *Bishops out of Italy* are only

\* Labb. IV. 1125, 1126. Unde causa Antiochenæ Ecclesiæ apud B. Petrum Apostolum collecti, rursus dilectioni vestræ morem qui apud nos SEMPER OBTINUIT properavimus indicare. Quotiens, *intra Italiam*, propter ecclesiasticas causas, præcipue fidei, colliguntur Domini sacerdotes, consuetudo retinetur, ut successor præsulum sedis apostolicæ ex persona eunctorum *totius Italiæ* sacerdotum, juxta sollicitudinem sibi omnium ecclesiarum competentem CUNCTA CONSTITUAT, qui caput est omnium ; DOMINO ad B. Petrum Apostolum dicente : TU ES PETRUS, ET SUPER HANC PETRAM ÆDIFICABO ECCLESIAM MEAM, ET PORTE INFERTI NON PREVALEBUNT ADVERSUS EAM : QUAM *vocem sequentes CCCX et VIII* S. Patres apud Nicæam congregati, *confirmationem rerum atque auctoritatem sanctæ ecclesiæ Romanæ detulerunt : quam utriusque usque ad Ætatem nostram successiones omnes, Christi gratia præstante, custodi-* ant. A D. 484.

only mentioned; yet Deputies from the Gauls and African Deputies are found sitting in the Council. So also in the Synod of Rome under Pope Hilary we find Gaulish and African Prelates. The Orientals, at no great distance of time, adopted a term still more restricted than *Italy* for expressing the Western Patriarchate, namely *Romania*. But it is manifest, that when the Roman Synod explained to the Orientals the practice of Italian Councils, it was understood, that the Italian Synod, for the Orientals, was the *Synod of the West*; and the only point of doubt was, whether the Pope *appearing to act singly in the Cause of Acacius, and Peter of Antioch*, had delivered the judgment of *the Western Church*.

This *auctoritas* of the Roman Synod, or right of originating decrees, extended even to the East; as Pope Julius reminds the enemies of Athanasius :\* the same

\* Εδει κατα τον εκκλησιαστικον κανονα...γραφηναι Πασιν ημιν, ὡς ἕως παρα παλιν ἱρισθη το δικαιον...η αργοιτε ὅτι εθες ην ΠΡΟΤΕΡΟΝ γραφειθαι ἡμιν, και ἕως εθεν ην ἰζιζεσθαι τα δ.καια ει μιν τι τοιαυτον ην ὑπεπτευθεν εις τον επισκοπον τον εκει, εδει ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗΝ ΕΝΤΑΥΘΑ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΝ γραφηναι. No words can add to the clear demonstration, which this letter affords; first, that Julius, in reply to the orientals, who had reproached the *western church* with interfering in their concerns, speaks as vindicating the *western church*: secondly, that he insists on the superior *right* of the western church to be made acquainted with the capital causes of apostolical sees: thirdly, that an *auctoritas* from the West was to precede: fourthly, that writing to the *church of Rome* was writing to the *West*: lastly, that the bishop of Rome had the authority to make the other western bishops write; and that all these points were of a usage anterior to the council of N<sup>icea</sup>, held but a few years before, in the pontificate of Sylvester.

same Pope justifies his writing to them in his own name, while delivering the judgment of *all the Bishops of Italy and the Western Regions*, in the words already given in a former part of this letter. In the Council of Arles, which preceded the Nicene Council, there is a strong allusion to the same prerogative. “Would to God, our brother, it had been worth your while to be a party in this great Representation: *undoubtedly a much severer sentence would have been pronounced.*”\* In the Council of Chalcedon we find the proof, that such was the Egyptian practice. Dioscorus of Alexandria being deposed, the Egyptian Bishops protest, that they cannot, without their chief, make any declaration concerning Faith: they appeal to Anatolius, who had been in the employment of Dioscorus, for the truth of their assertion; and propose that the Council shall itself appoint a successor to Dioscorus, *after whom* they will profess.

Looking over all the Synods held in Rome, whether of the Bishops and Presbytery immediately subject to the Pope, or of the Prelates of Italy, or of a Western Council, the Pope uniformly *propounded* and *enacted*. In the Synod for the absolution of Misenus, both Bishop and Priests call upon Gelasius to exert the authority of Peter, which *was his*. In the Synod of

2 P

Gregory

\* Et utinam, frater carissime, ad hoc tantum spectaculum interesse tanti fecisses: profecto credimus, quia in eos severior fuisset sententia prolata. In Epistol. Concil. Arlat. ad Sylv. strum Ep. Urbis.

Gregory I. concerning the order of interring Popes, the formal sanction of each rule accompanies the proposal. "If any person contravene this *my* decree." So in the Council under Hilary: so also in the grand Lateran Council under Martin I.

I may forget, if I should defer the refutation of one of the *genuine* proofs of *Columbanus*, that the Priests of the *second order* were judges and pronounced sentence in Synods. The proof is derived from the following words of the Letter of Pope Siricius to Ambrose of Milan, concerning Jovinian. "Having convened  
 "the Presbytery, it was made out clearly that the writ-  
 "ing was contrary to the Law Christian.—Where-  
 "upon one unanimous sentiment was raised from our  
 "presbyters, deacons, and the clergy, one and all, that  
 "Jovinian, &c. after being condemned by the divine  
 "authority and by *our* sentence, should evermore be  
 "banished from Catholic communion." Such is the text, as well as I am able to render it. *Columbanus* indeed has made it speak differently: by what course he has succeeded in this, I will not explain, unless in a note.\* However, his good intentions and critical  
 dexterity

\* *Columban.* third letter, p. 134. note. "Pope Siricius says, that  
 "Jovinian's heresy was condemned by him, and by all his clergy of Rome,  
 "assembled in synod. Facto ergo presbyterio omnium nostrum tam presby-  
 "terorum et diaconorum, quam eorum totius cleri, unam sententiam fuisse sen-  
 "tentiam, ut Jovinianus & coeteri divina sententia et nostro iudicio in  
 "perpetuum damnati extra ecclesiam remanerent, Siricii P. P. Ep. 3.  
 "Tom. I. Collect. Hardouin. Col. 552." It would have been strange  
 enough



dexterity are frustrated by a document, of which he did not take heed; by the reply of Saint Ambrose with his Bishops to the papal Letter, from which it comes

enough in Siricius to inform *Ambrose*, (who against the very emperors had signalised himself in maintaining episcopal prerogative,) that he, *the Pope*, along with his *presbyters, deacons, lectors, and doorkeepers*, had pronounced *sentence* on Jovinian's heresy. *Columbanus* most adroitly sinks those *minor orders* in the words, *clergy of Rome*; and this he does, while attempting to establish the right of the "*second order of priests*" to give *judgment*. I have had occasion so frequently to expose the unscrupulous artifices of *Columbanus* in calling upon ancient authorities, that I need not express my *regret* on this occasion, when I find him *jacking* a quotation. His *facto presbyterio omnium nostrum tam presbyterorum*, and so forth, was well enough for the purpose of drawing the favourite inference, that the decree was *common*: yet, though I most willingly forgive his mistake, in supposing *una sententia* to be *one sentence*, whereas in latin, it is *one sentiment*, I will protest against the patchwork he has made of one authority, out of the fractional muster of these two following distinct periods, in the real text. "*Facto igitur presbyterio, constitit doctrinæ nostræ, idest christianæ legi esse contrariam: (sc. scripturam, not contraria, as edited) unde apostolicum secuti præceptum, quia aliter quam accepimus annunciabant, omnium nostrum tam presbyterorum et diaconorum quam etiam totius cleri una suscitata fuit sententia.*" The rest is as given by *Columbanus*. Again, I forgive *Columbanus* the adopting of the reading, *omnium nostrum, of us all*, instead of *omnium nostrorum, of all belonging to me*: he is the more excusable in this respect, as he appears not to have read the reply of saint Ambrose to this papal letter. But I must blame him for having given as Hardouin's text, *unam scitote*; which is one of the readings thrown by Hardouin into the margin, and therefore discredited. The

conjectural

comes out that Siricius, *presumptuously*, no doubt, called his own individual sentence, *our sentence*. The words of Saint Ambrose are these: "As concerning Jovinian

conjectural readings on this passage are *unam scitote, unam constat*, and by Holstenius, the pensioner of cardinal Barberini, *una lata fuit sententia*, which, of the three, is the most impudent.

The fact is, that unless *totius plebei* or *plebis* be restored in the place of *totius cleri*, there is no resource for saving the authenticity of this letter. In the Roman *presbyterium*, priests alone *could speak*, either to answer, or to join in acclamation, or to deprecate, or to petition. The deacons, grand as they were, had neither seat nor voice. Sub-deacons, even in the age of saint Gregory, that is to say, in the sixth century, were not amongst the *honores* of the Roman church. And what shall we think of the ministerial inferior orders? Pope Gelasius, about a hundred years after Siricius, interdicted the usurpation of deacons to sit in the *presbyterium* during *ecclesiastical consultations*. All the Roman *presbyteria* extant most emphatically mark this distinction.

Lest it should be imagined, that in restoring *cleri* for *plebei*, in an Isidorian document, (and therefore tainted with the presumption, that attaches to every document edited by that scheming character,) I have relied upon a general prejudice rather than on special grounds, I subjoin here the words of an author, who wrote about forty years after the supposed date of this papal letter, and who gives a particular account of the condemnation of Jovinian, when returned to Rome under Anastasius, who succeeded Siricius in that year, which deprived the world of saint Ambrose. Hyginus de hæres. 82. *Jovinianistæ a Joviniانو... Contra hunc suscepit S. Ambrosius Mediolanen. Episcopus, quique edidit librum ad destruenda omnia commenta adinventionum ejus. Quo lecto in media Romana, id est, ecclesia Lateranensi, una voce et populus Rom. et sacerdotes in eisdem Jovinianistis et ipso Joviniano anathema dixerunt, in ipso initio quadragesimæ, sancto Anastasio antistite. Denique in ipsa authentica hebdomada paschæ inventi sunt epulantes, et*

*porcorum*

“ Jovinian and the others, whom *thy* holiness hath sentenced, be pleased to understand, that by us they have been condemned, in conformity with *thy* sentence.”\* That superlative, but ignorant *Aulicus Romanus*, AMBROSE, was not sufficiently enlightened to comprehend from the letter of Siricius, that *Presbyters, Deacons,*

*porcorum carnibus trahentes convivia: ita ut assum porcum, quem in mensa eorum invenerant, populi collo ejus (sc. Joviniani) suspenderent, et ita eum per totam civitatem facerent circuire.* From this narrative it may be well inferred, that no previous condemnation of Jovinian by the see of Rome was *known* to the writer: again, that the *bishops* (sacerdotes) and *people* cursed Jovinian *by acclamation*, to which the *una sententia suscitata* literally corresponds.

I must add, before I have done, that in the letter said to be of Siricius, there is an allusion to the fact of the detection of Jovinian and his party in holy week. The demon of this heresy, writes Siricius, *crudelitibus pascitur, abstinentia puniendus.* This *crudelitibus* Hardouin would fain correct to *cruditalibus*, whereas *αμαρτοβωρῆς παχυνεται*, if we will so render it, is the very *arvina*, or food of gladiators. To conclude: in this supposed letter of Siricius, I must take notice of two passages more. 1. Nos enim nuptias non aspernanter accipimus, quibus *velamine* intersumus. The plain correction for *velamine* is, *velanicè*. 2. The words, *quia aliter quam accepimus annuntiabant*, is plainly taken from the *anathema* by saint Paul, and gives great probability to the account of Hyginus. In truth, there is not a phrase in this letter, to which, if supposed to have been from Siricius, I do not find objections. What is more, the answer to Siricius, which from its launty, elegance, and energy, challenges all suspicion, takes notice of points not even hinted at in the pretended letter, to which it is given as a reply.

\* Domino dilectissimo fratri Siricio Ambrosius et cæteri... Itaque Jovinianum, Auxentium, Germinatorem, etc. quos *sanctitas tua* damnavit, scias apud nos quoque *secundum judicium tuum* esse damnatos. Labb. II. 1026.

*cons, Acolythes, and Doorkeepers*, were a fraction of the Pope's own *Judicial self*. Poor man! He resembled those Catholics, who, *in times not favourable to explanation*, misapprehended the *orthodox* drift of Elizabeth's *headship in the Church*; and who being so hanged and quartered, had all the merit of their simple faith, notwithstanding their error, as *Columbanus* is pleased to let us know.

When the practice of convening Synods in Italy was interrupted by invasion at the extremities of the Roman Empire, and by frequency of innovations on the Christian faith, the course was, that the Bishop of Rome ordered local Synods to be held, and appointed Bishops to convoke them. Now, with the exception of those Synods, held in the time of Ambrose, and when Pope Damasus was under false accusations, you will find that neither in Aquileia, nor at Milan, nor at Ravenna, a Synod on Faith was ever held. Yet *Columbanus* talks of such *Patriarchates* in Italy; although it was the very essence of *Patriarchal* Power to hear *causes of Faith*. In the Pelagian cause, I allow, a Gallican Council was held: but the confirmation of its Acts was demanded of the Pope. In the anarchy of Church tradition and Rules, induced by the successors of Constantine, and suggested by the crafty, bloody, forsworn, and abject Bishops of the Arian sect, local synods on points of faith had been compulsively assembled, and in unusual places: again, local Synods of orthodox Bishops convened themselves, as they

they were well warranted to do, in vindication of the faith once canonized at Nicea. But, as to interpretation of the faith, in cases of novel impression, I believe, that no point is more evident, from the annals of Christianity, than that no local or National Synod, *without Patriarchal authority*, presumed to interfere by declaratory sanction. The very National Councils of Spain, which carried the privileges, gained by jealousy of independence, by temporal ambition, and by considerable ignorance, to the *ultima linea* of arrogation, were content to limit their doctrinal authority by the profession of faith, as settled in General Councils, and as declared by the Decretal Epistles of the Bishops of Rome. Such was the Church government until the ninth century.

Of those Councils, ordered to assemble and to follow the *auctoritas* of the Roman see, you have instances in the Epistles of Leo to the Churches of Gaul and of Spain; in the papal appointments of their Vicars for the district of Thessalonica, for Gaul, and for Spain; in the letters of Gelasius I., and in other documents so numerous, that it would be labouring in common place to pursue them further.

If we will revert to propriety of Language, the *ἐξουσία* ratified at Nicea for Alexandria, and taken notice of as exercised by the Bishop in Rome, is that which I stated at the outset of my definition,—*an independent and unfettered power*. It is not the *κρῆσις* or authentic confirmation belonging to Metropolitan Sees;

nor the *πρωτοεια* guaranteed to Antioch, nor is it directly an *auctoritas*, but *the original Principle of self-legislation*, to which the *prerogativa*, or *auctoritas* was connected. In matters of Canonical arrangement, the Bishop of Rome was recognized independent, within the sphere unoccupied at the time by any other coeval authority. The occasion, which had called for the Nicene decree concerning Alexandria, was the usurping authority of Meletius, who not only had aimed at independence, but even established new Churches as Episcopal, within his intended Metropolis. This usurpation was at once overthrown by the words of the sixth Canon: the whole of Egypt was restored to the *authority* of Alexandria. No man surely will infer from this act of restitution, that the Alexandrian Bishops, if they should afterwards judge it expedient to establish new, and even Metropolitan Sees within their Jurisdictions, were forbidden to do so.

Thus far of the Western Patriarchate, as existing in substance from the beginning of Christianity, and as exercised in that sphere, until the resuscitation of the Hierarchy of France by Boniface the Martyr. In going over this subject I have dissented with regret and with reverence from the opinion of Thomassin. If in the dissent there was boldness, it has been compensated by that humility, which led me to combat such an authority as that from Rufinus. With the former I have agreed, that the distant Churches of France, at a period more early than the fourth century, did hold the  
 privilege

privilege of domestic Ordinations : but that no *recognition* of those ordinations, directly or indirectly, was expected from or given by the Bishop of Rome, I deny, as neither proved nor susceptible of proof at this day. I deny that at the epoch of the Nicene Council any *Metropolitan* authority, such as that understood in the Nicene Canons, and referable to ancient Missionary Sees, was either firmly established or generally recognized within the Churches of Gaul or of Spain. I allow, that from the end of the fourth century, when the *metropolitan* Right grew up to be something local and real in the Gauls, until the seventh century, when the same Right was extinguished, no *confirmation* of Metropolitans was formally and immediately given by the Popes : but I have shown, that every purpose of *confirmation* was answered by the consideration, that the Laws of Election were the Laws of the See of Rome, and that the authority of this See guaranteed by anticipation, the Elections to be made unanimously according to its Rules. I have shown, that it must have been a primary object of the Vicars apostolical, to superintend and examine Episcopal Ordinations. I withheld an express instance of this charge given by Hilary, the successor of Leo ; as I also forbore to mention, that every instance of Vicarship, bestowed by Popes, either expresses the devotion of the person appointed, to the established rules of the Fathers and holy see, or takes notice of the report made by the Vicar, of his own previous Canonical Election and

adherence to the great parental authority of the Church of Rome.

The principal truth I wished to impress was this; that the reason of Metropolitan establishments being either to preserve in lofty view the certainty of Episcopal succession, or to advance and guard the essential principle of Unity; whenever and where-soever this reason failed, the Metropolitan authority must have fluctuated necessarily and declined. Such was its fate in the West, notwithstanding the bold and vigorous efforts of Hincmar to fix the wheel of time. The provinces and provincial titles of the old Roman Empire were disappearing: new Kingdoms sprung up, and new centres were appointed for the residences of government: new and contrasted tribes of men were rushing into the *Ager Romanus*, and effacing all the antique landmarks. In this confusion of titles and inebecility of claims, the metropolitan dignity became an idle boast, or a mere cause of disquietude and faction, until its tottering dotage was propped up by the staff of the chief shepherd, and its spirit was revived by an infusion of that energy, against which the oblivious gates of death cannot be victorious. Thus a distinct and *formal* confirmation of metropolitan power was sought for and bestowed by the giving of the *pallium* to metropolitans indifferently, whereby its possessor acquired an indefeasible title to superior jurisdiction. Such was the state of the Hierarchy, when the eighth general synod was held; which also enacted, *in pursuance of the first Nicene council*, that metropolitans receiving  
either



either ordination from their patriarch, or *confirmation by means of the pallium*, should attend his synods, when called upon.

But a new cause tended to hasten the assimilation of all the western churches. The gospel had been pushed forward in every direction. Great and barbarous nations were reclaimed, and were entitled to the hierarchical dignities, which could not be done unless by the participation of archiepiscopal or apostolical powers. In Spain, this authority was renewed by the popes alone: so in Portugal. By popes it was set up in England and Ireland; in Scotland long after; in Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, in the missionary conquests of Boniface. There exists not in Europe a metropolitan, not deriving through papal authority, any more than in the Philippines, or in Mexico, or at Goa, or in federal America.

Such being the estate and *optimum jus* of the Hierarchy; such being the sacred basis of all catholic government in the church, it is scarcely rational, and I doubt whether it be kindhearted, to seek to communicate the *influenza* of discontent and mutiny amongst Christians, by telling such stories, as that in Transalpine Gaul metropolitans were ordained, once upon a time, without any consent of the see of Rome: that the *right* of appointing bishops has reverted, or can revert, to the heads of Irish clans, as *its original proprietors*: that the pope, the successor of Peter, is, in the church, what *the Speaker is in the House of Commons*,

*nous*, a person appointed to preserve rules, but not authorised to make any. Such doctrines are not perfectly sober. Were it even exactly true, that when Peter was appointed, he was appointed in the way of a speaker to the *House of Commons* of the twelve apostles; that is to say, appointed *never to speak*, but when those *twelve* were subject to be called to order; it would have become the *philosophy* of *Columbanus*, who, for the sake of peace, has declared himself willing to submit to much *notwithstanding his own acquirements*, to pity an *erroneous* opinion, by the strength and might of which, the *western patriarchate* has been reclaimed to *the glorious Gospel*.

I remain, Reverend Sir:

&c.

## NOTE A. to Page 172.

It has been shown in the passage referred to, 1. that the letter to *Chrestus* did *not require*, but merely authorised him to take in his company *two certain persons* of his own choice; 2. that no bishop went to that council with *two* presbyters, and that but *four* bishops came even with a single presbyter; 3. that the letter to *Chrestus* was not encyclical, but special: it remains as a question of mere erudition (for the argument of *Columbanus* has been exploded), to see whether those *two certain persons* were meant to be *bishops*, or to be *priests*. Sirmond and Baronius are persuaded, that *bishops* were intended. Henry Valesius argues at length that they were *priests*. It is possible, that Valesius has hit on the fact: but his arguments do not prove it to be such.

His first and second arguments state, that Optatus and Facundus Hermianensis stile presbyters *secundi ordinis sacerdotes*; *priests of the second rank*. This I grant. His third argument,—that saint Jerome calls them *sacerdotes inferioris gradus*; *priests of the lower degree*. This also I grant, and for the present merely say, that they prove nothing. His next argument is from the verses of saint Gregory of Nazianzum, wherein that saint expresses the violence used by his father and bishop, to make him a presbyter or priest, by κληρονομήσας εἰς τὰς θρόνους τῆς δευτέρας. The next reason is, that Eusebius himself, in his oration delivered for the dedication of the church of Tyre, assigns the *thrones* near the altar to the *bishop* and *presbyters*, and the *benches* to the attending clergy. Again, Gregory of Nazianzum describes

cribes the *bishop* as seated on an *eminent throne*, the presbyters seated next him on *lower chairs*, and denotes presbyters by the words, *those who come next in rank* after the bishop. The other arguments of Valesius have no sort of connection with the subject.

If Valesius had recollected the following passage of saint Epiphanius, he would have abridged his work of inferences, and thought the matter finally settled. *Acrius*, in order to prove that bishops and priests are equal, used this argument. καθιζέται ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος· καθιζέται καὶ ὁ πρεσβύτερος. (Petau's edit. I. 908.)

Now to the arguments from saint Gregory. The expression of *second thrones*, whereby his station of presbyter is intimated, happens to fail in two essential points: *the one*, in arguing back from the age of saint Gregory, when christian religion was established in outward pomp, to the beginning of the half century, when christianity had but lately breathed after martyrdom: *the other*, in arguing on a poetical metaphor taken from *chariotteering*, and really a bad metaphor, as those of saint Gregory *in verse* happen usually to be. The line amounts to this, "he by main force" (like a rider) "made me turn into the second stands," where *θρονος* is plainly used for *διξος*. Again, that Gregory describes the bishop as *seated above*, and presbyters as seated *below*, is true: but Valesius wisely avoided giving the Greek, in which this unfortunate *θρονος* or *throne* is not to be found. The question was not whether the presbyters were *seated*, but whether they were *seated on thrones*.

The

The argument from Eusebius would be decisive, if truly quoted. If Eusebius has called the seat of a presbyter, *θρονος*, the term should in fairness be also explained to this meaning, in his translation of the letter to Chrestus. At the same time, it should be remarked, that, in such abuse of the term, he would stand single, because *θρονος* was as exclusively the *bishop's chair*, as *εθρονισμος* was *episcopal installation*, or as *επισκοπος* is *bishop*. The words of Eusebius are these: "In this temple are also *thrones*, and seats without number, and resting stools...But in the chief of all," (Paulinus of Tyre) "we may imagine that Christ resides entire: "in those who rank *next after him*, in proportion as each can contain a share of the mightiness of Christ and of the holy spirit." Hist. Eccles. Lib. X. ch. iv. p. 386.

Such is the text, from which Valesius infers, that the *presbyters* had *thrones* near the altar. The inference is certainly precipitate, even supposing the passage to be solitary. Now what shall we say of the argument, if it should appear, that those *thrones* were *episcopal seats*, and that Eusebius himself declares them to be such in this very oration?

In the ecclesiastical district of Antioch, the first of the metropolitan sees was in the city of Tyre. Its title down to the ninth century was *πρωθρονος*, or first *throne*, so that even the other metropolitans ranked after it as *δευτεροθρονος*. Paulinus, the bishop of Tyre, and the friend of Eusebius, invites his brother *bishops* to the dedication of his church. A vast concourse of presbyters and laity attended the *Encænia*, and every one of the bishops, in turn, delivered a panegyrical discourse. Eusebius, when describing the apparatus of this metropolitan church, says, that the bishop

had

had fitted it out with the *thrones* aloft, for the dignity of the *prelates*. *θρόνοις τε τοῖς ἀνωτάτοις ἐν τῶν ἱερῶν πρεσβυτέρων τιμῆν ἕκαστην ἕκαστος.* Whether Eusebius by these *prelates* meant presbyters or *bishops*, will be sufficiently declared by a parallel quotation from his second book, ch. 17. on the Esseni (p. 57) *πρὸς τοῖς γραφεῖν...καὶ τὰς ἐπιπέπασιν ἈΝΩΤΑΤΩ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗΣ ΠΙΡΟΕΔΡΙΑΣ.* The *thrones* therefore built up in the church were for the *bishops* subordinate to the metropolitan church, and their chief or *Ἀρχῶν* was Paulinus, the archbishop.

The argument of Acrius against episcopal superiority, proves demonstratively, that in each church there was but *one θρόνος* or chair with a *ὑποπόδιον*. Acrius compares the functions performed by the *bishop*, and of which, in that age, the bishop was the ordinary minister, with the functions performed by the presbyter, *in the bishop's absence*. The bishop, says Acrius, imposes hands; so does the presbyter: the bishop baptizes; so does the presbyter: the bishop takes his seat *on the throne*; so does the presbyter.

The argument from Optatus and Facundus, that presbyters are termed priests of the second rank, *secundi ordinis*, is strangely impertinent. *Deacons* are also called *tertii ordinis sacerdotes*; would this justify a translator from Greek to render *ἱεὺς ἐκ τῶν ἱερίων θρόνων* by *deacons*? No man has ever denied, that presbyters are priests of the *second* rank, or *lower* degree.

The arguments of Valesius, thus closely inspected, appear to have little weight. On the other hand, there is a double probability (exclusive of the appropriation of the term), in favour of the opinion, that *bishops* were meant by

Constantine

Constantine. First, the council of Arles was obtained by an *ex-parte* application to the emperor: and in Africa the *primæ sedes* were literally *πρωτοθρονοι*, and all junior bishops were *δευτεροθρονοι*. It is probable, at the same time, that the Emperor, from the fact that Syracuse was the *civil* metropolis, imagined Chrestus to be necessarily a metropolitan; or perhaps he knew him to be in that island the senior bishop. The second probability is derived from the words in the letter itself, "Whereas I have summoned a vast number of bishops, &c." But an argument higher than probability is derived from the after practice of summoning the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, the former of which was held in the century following. The letter of summons went to the *metropolitan*, as we have seen.

## NOTE B. to Page 269.

The peculiar term for *ordination*, as now understood, and as regarding the function performed *by bishops* over the elect, was *χειροτονια*. Canon Apostol. 1. 2. 27. 34. 35. 77. Concil. Ancyrr. 10. 13. In this first Nicene council, Can. 4. 15. 19. In the last of these Canons it is contrasted to *invalid* ordination. So in Concil. Laodic. Can. 5. *in the Greek*; or 4. *in the Latin*. So in the first of Constantin. Can. 4, and in the letter to the Western bishops, concerning the ordination of Nectarius. So in Constitut. Apostol. Lib. 3. Chap. xi, Lib. 7. Ch. xlvi, and throughout the whole of the 8th book. On the other hand, *χειροθεσια* occurs twice only in these Nicene Canons, viz. concerning the Novatians, and in Can. 12, where the *χειροθεσια* of any foreign *clergyman*, in a church. without the consent of that bishop. *whose clergyman he had been*, is declared null. Here *χειροθεσια* is plainly *naturalization*, or *incardination*, not *ordination*. In short, *χειροθεσια* signified indifferently the blessing of admission or reconciliation of penitents, Catechumens, Neophytes, and Clergymen. In the Constitut. Apostol. Lib 8, chap. 30, you have the formula of the *morning χειροθεσια*, which was, in fact, the blessing of the congregation by prayer. I would save Rufinus, if possible, from the disgrace of an error, which appears the more inexcusable, as it went in contradiction to the notorious usage of the Catholic church in his age (Siricii P. P. Ep. ad Himerium Tarraconens.) Whatever the MS. in the Bodleian may pretend, the text may



may have been *oratione data* ; in English, by giving *benediction* to the Novatians. In *vita Vigilii P. P.* when this Pope was arrested and carried to the ship from the church of saint Cecilia, the crowd and people followed him, *acclamantes ut orationem ab eo acciperent, crying out that he should give them the benediction ; dataque oratione respondit omnis populus. Amen.* Still there will be difficulties remaining : first, that the idiom of the *sixth* century is not a good warrant even for the fact, that these Canons were translated by Rufinus in the *fourth* ; secondly, that *dare orationem* was not that sort of benediction, which Siricius describes, as *per invocationem septiformis spiritus, episcopalis manus impositione.*

LETTER

## LETTER VIII.

---

*On Episcopal Authority, from the Apostolic Age to the Reign of Constantine. On Patriarchal Churches. What is the dignity of Presbyters.*

REVEREND SIR,

I promised, and I recollect the pledge with a most irksome feeling, that I would resume the discussion of the right of “the second order” to *judge* in councils, from the higher period of the apostolic age, and thenceforward to the fourth century. The *council of Jerusalem* cannot, indeed, be passed over; that “*first of councils*,”\* says *Columbanus*, “and the *model for all the rest*, according to *Fleury* ;”—that “*third of apostolical synods*” says *Columbanus* again,† “for  
*abolishing*

\* *Columbanus*, third letter, p. 92. † Fourth letter, p. 54.

“*abolishing circumcision :*” that council, on which bishop Poynter took *Columbanus* very much by surprise, and drove him to run to the *late Militia Act* ; to pit Irish honesty against all the *fine* virtues of all the *fine* nations of the globe,\* and to discover on the Bishop, that he had *shaken hands* with him, at the funeral office of the *Senor Duque D’Albuquerque*, although *privately* employed in writing against his *third* letter.

“ When the question,” says *Columbanus*, “ was agitated in *Asia*,† whether circumcision, which was a divine ordinance, *should be abrogated*, Paul and Barnabas were deputed, not to an *exclusive* synod, but to consult the apostles and *priests*, and the apostles and *priests* came together to consider of this matter ; and after there had been much *disputation*, the final decision was made by the apostles and *priests* ; and the letter to the Asiatics was written in the *name of both*. (Acts xv. 2, 6, 7, 19, the Doway translation *very properly* translates *presbyteros*, priests.)”

In opposition to this statement, bishop Poynter‡ appealed to the *New Testament* ; wherein the letter alluded to is recorded, bearing title “ the apostles, presbyters, and brethren,” and “ therefore,” adds doctor Poynter, “ even supposing *presbyters* to mean *priests*,

\* *Columbanns*, fourth letter, p. 28. † *Columb. Letter 3*, p. 21.

‡ *Theological Examination*, p. 34.

“ *priests*, if *Columbanus* contends, from the *names* in  
 “ the letter, that all those named sat as judges by  
 “ *divine right*, he must allow this right to the laity  
 “ also.” A very fool might have seen, that *Colum-*  
*banus* had taken a false step, when he relied on the  
 letter being written in *the name of both*. If *Colum-*  
*banus* had had common reflection, he would have sur-  
 rendered this argument as untenable, and have re-  
 treated to some stronger point. What does he? He  
 cries out, “ *miscrable resource!*” and tells you, that  
 “ he had argued from the dispute being referred to  
 “ the apostles and *priests*,” (i. e. presbyters) “ verse  
 “ 2, and from the apostles and *priests* coming toge-  
 “ ther, to discuss and *judge* of it, v. 4;” (*Columba-*  
*nus* prudently foists in *judging*; although, in the ar-  
 gument, which bishop Poynter took up, *Columbanus*  
 had called it *disputation*; which *is* in scripture, but  
*judging* is *not* in the passage quoted;) “ whereas doc-  
 “ tor Poynter flies to verse 23, where he finds, that  
 “ the letter was written *after the discussion and deci-*  
 “ *sion*, in the *name* of the whole church.”\*

Now, *Columbanus*, it would not be fair, that you  
 escaped with this. You had relied on the letter be-  
 ing written in the *name of both*: you had quoted, only  
 two pages before this very bad retort, some phrases of  
 Bellarmine, of which you should have availed your-  
 self prudently; especially where he informed you,  
 that

\* *Columban. Letter the fourth, p. 49.*

that Paul and his companions, during their apostolical tour, “gave to\* the faithful to be observed the dogmata adjudged by the apostles and presbyters.” Whether this happened from your not exactly knowing, that the words quoted by Bellarmine from the vulgate, “quæ decreta erant,” are in the Greek, *the things adjudged*, or whether you fancied the *seniores* in the vulgate would not look well, if translated *priests*, although those *seniores*, or senators, are the very *presbyteri*, whom you will have *priests*, as an article of faith; you must not get away with saying, that the Bishop flies off to that verse, which mentions the letter to have been written *in the name* of the whole church, *after the discussion and decision*.

I allow, that the letter, promulgating the decision, was, very naturally, written *after* the decision completed; but I see more in the letter itself than the introduction of the *laity* in the *twenty-third* verse. There is also a *twenty-fifth* and a *twenty-eighth* verse in the same chapter and letter. The former, “we being assembled together, have *agreed* to appoint and depute persons to you, in company with our most dear Barnabas and Paul:” the latter, “for it hath *been decreed* by the holy spirit, and by us,” (the apostles, *presbyters*, and *laity*,) “not to impose  
any

\* In the vulgate Acts, xvi. 4. Tradebant eis custodire dogmata quæ decreta erant ab Apostolis et senioribus qui erant Hierosolymis.  
παρέδιδαν αὐτοῖς φυλάσσειν τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκριμένα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ

“any burden on you, more than these necessary “things.” How, in the name of wonder, can this be eluded by *Columbanus*? The letter was written *after the discussion*, no doubt: but the letter contains *truth*; and, therefore, *apostles, presbyters, and laity*, did *decree*. How nimbly the author of the *Traité de l'étude*, and *Columbanus*, can jump over *these* verses, and how manfully they take their stand at the *presbyteri*! This council is the *model of all councils*, say they. Why so? Because they see *presbyters* mentioned, and *presbyters* must be *priests*. The presbyterian will see *brethren* also in the letter. True, says *Columbanus*, but the letter was written *after judgment*. Granted: but, if so, it must, therefore, have been penned with the consent of *the apostles*; and could *apostles* have been capable of writing, that the decree was *common*, if really confined to themselves and to the *presbyteri*? *Columbanus* will do well to mistrust his guide of the *Traité*. The subject, he has taken up so very confidently, had exercised, for almost three centuries, the ingenuity of the learned species; yet he enters the lists, as unfurnished with knowledge of the subject, as if his bald and hackneyed quotations were just fallen out of the sky.

Bishop Poynter also contested the point, assumed by *Columbanus*: namely, that the *presbyteri* in the *acts* were priests “of the second order;” for “the term “*presbyteri*,” he observes, “is applied to Bishops in “several passages of the new Testament (2 Ep.

John

“ John I. Pet. I. C. ult. 1): again, if these *presby-*  
 “ *teri* were not *bishops*, it would follow, that *no*  
 “ *bishops* sat with the apostles in this council, which  
 “ is very improbable.”\* *Columbanus* terms this a  
 mode of *trifling with the sacred text*, † because, “ if  
 “ *presbyteri* be rendered *bishops*, the text is nonsense ;  
 “ for it will run thus: Paul and Barnabas were sent  
 “ up to the *bishops* and *bishops*—and they were re-  
 “ ceived by the *bishops* and *bishops* : and finally, the  
 “ *bishops* and *bishops* decreed, &c.”

Not so, *Columbanus*. You weigh the argument in  
 double scales. The words of the text are *apostles* and  
*presbyters* : the Bishop contended, that *presbyters*  
 were most probably *bishops*, and thus you were justi-  
 fied in substituting *bishop* for *presbyter*. Of course,  
 the text would run, that Paul and Barnabas were sent  
 up to the *apostles* and *bishops*, which is *not* nonsense.  
 Why, then, would you take a false weight out of  
 your pocket, and substitute *bishops* for *apostles*? We  
 all know, that the apostles were *bishops*, and *more*  
*than* *bishops* : that they were *priests*, and something  
 besides ; that, in short, they were *apostles*, and that  
 no *bishop*, as compared with them when living, could  
 term himself *an apostle*. In this very letter, PAUL is  
 not stiled *apostle*. Would it be nonsense to say, that  
 Paul had been deputed to the *archbishops* and *bishops*  
 in Jerusalem? Would it be fair to argue, that *arch-*  
2 8
*bishops*

\* Examination, p. 22 33

† Columb. Letter 4. 4§.

*bishops* and *bishops*, meant *bishops* and *bishops*? Yet, strange to tell, this term *presbyteri*, which, according to our reasoner, excludes *bishops*, is so very elastic, as to let in *deacons*: *fiet avis et cum volet arbor*. “There were but *four* apostles present” says *Columbanus*, “in this council: all the others were of the “*second* order and of the *third*.”\*

“Lastly, supposing” writes bishop Poynter, “that “those *presbyteri* were *priests*: to show that they sat “and judged *jure divino*, *Columbanus* must prove, “that they acted by the same right as the apostles, “and not by concession from these latter: particular- “ly he must prove, that they judged the matter in “dispute.”† *Columbanus*‡ quotes this argument, and answers it, having first omitted in the statement, the sitting and judging by divine right, which was the main point to be encountered, in his reply. The answer of *Columbanus* is, that “the *onus probandi* “lies on the bishop, who is so anxious to prove the “contrary:” (this is certainly a novel rule in the laws of evidence, that he who denies a gratuitous assertion, or denies an illogical inference, is bound to establish the contrary;) that “there is not the least appearance “of any concession from the apostles,” and that “the “text speaks for itself: the apostles and *priests* came “together to consider of this matter.”

Unluckily

\* Same letter, p. 56. † Theological Examination, p. 34.

‡ Same letter, p. 43.



Unluckily for *Columbanus*, he had not the *greek* of the 16th chapter before him, already quoted; in which, the matters decreed are expressed to have been adjudged by the apostles and *presbyters*. But does the text speak for *itself*, that there was no *concession*? If the *silence* of the text is decisive for the right of the *presbyters*, how shall we get rid of the right of the *laity*, who *adjudge*, in company with the apostles and *presbyters*, and without *any appearance of concession from either*? In this case, the scripture is as *silently* speaking, as in the momentous demonstration for the *presbyteri*. When *Columbanus* proves *any thing*, he usually proves the very thing, which he had not intended; thus carrying the Socratic method of *irony* to a beautiful extreme.

I say, that, whether the *presbyteri* were *deacons*, or *priests*, or *bishops*, the *presbyteri* did *not* decide this question, nor was their authority found sufficient, nor was it attended to.

The controversy had begun at Antioch. Certain *teachers* had gone down from Jewry, inculcating amongst the converts from heathenism, the necessity of circumcision, whom *Paul and Barnabas* were not able to silence. It was *agreed*, that *these* should go from the one party, and others from the opposite party, to consult the apostles and *presbyteri*, on the question. The *persuasion* of the apostles in Jerusalem had been already fixed on the matter, from the time of the conversion of *Cornelius*, about sixteen  
years

years previous; so that this new reference was in itself a matter of governing condescension. The apostles and *presbyteri* meet for the discussion. The converts of the Pharisaic sect oppose the *toleration* of Gentile usages: the dispute becomes violent, and Peter the apostle stands up. He reminds them of the calling of the Centurion: that God had decided the question by the evidence of the Holy Ghost, and upbraids them with attempting to put God to trial, and to endanger the apostatizing of the converts to Heathenism back again. Upon this, the whole assembly, say the Acts, *became silent*. Not a *presbyter* attempted to reply to Peter, or to discuss, by *divine* or *human* right, any further. Paul and Barnabas are now attended to, while they prove, from the wonders of their mission, that the heathen world was called to obedience, not to bondage. Next, the apostle James delivers his judgment. The letter is agreed on by all, and consists of the recommendation of their ambassadors; of the proof taken from the evidence of the holy spirit (εδοξε τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι καὶ ἡμῖν), as urged by Peter, and of the moral and ceremonial practices judged fit by the apostle James, to be declared binding on all.

Such is the history of this *model for councils*, as taken from the unsophisticated and venerable spring-source of evangelical truth. It was a trial on a *reference*; it was a discussion on a point, on which this *right* had been settled. The apostles and presbyters were referred to: the presbyters were divided, and the apostles,

ties, who had allowed the reference to go on, at last interfere; and without taking any notice of any argument or objection on either side, they pronounce. Their decision is followed by all without a murmur.

To understand the greatness of this docility on the part of the native Jews, we have only to reflect on the ambitious expectation they universally cherished, that the world was destined to be governed from Sion. This hope even apostles had avowed. Even Peter, after the resurrection of his Lord, inquires of him, *when will he re-establish the kingdom of Israel*. Even this Peter, after the miraculous descent, seems to allude to that hope of a general *restoration*:\* and Stephen is falsely, but fatally accused of maintaining, that the *traditions of Moses would be abrogated*.† The *charity* of the Jewish christians could not have been put to any severer test, than that of being taught to yield up the hope and pretensions of subduing all those, who had received a Saviour of the seed of Abraham, to conform to the federal rite, which God had prescribed as the evidence of his own great oath. It was painful to yield up such hopes, and to allow the Heathen to *supplant* them, as it were, in the *blessings*, and to be freed, at the same time, from the *duties*; especially from that duty, which would have extended the interests of the Jewish family, and have combined their national independence with the increasing and prodigious might of Christianity. By yielding

\* Acts iii. 20. 21. † vi. 14.

yielding up their claims on the heathen, they saw, that they were still to remain insulated, as a people, from those, with whom they held spiritual affinity, and to whom they had imparted (although repiningly) the gospel benefits. The question therefore agitated in this *first council* was not a solitary abstract question of *faith*: it involved most ardent and most justifiable feelings, religious, as well as *national*; nor would it have been wise in the apostles to have refused the discussion, and to have drawn upon themselves the entire assault of mistaken zeal, and fiery patriotism. It was during this visit to Jerusalem, that Paul conferred his gospel with Peter, James, and John, *apart*. On which circumstance it has been remarked\*, that the subject of this private conference was the emancipation of the Jews themselves, from the Mosaic law, which was a matter *unfit to be declared publicly*. Perhaps even this reflection will assist *Columbanus* to understand, why the question was discussed anew, and why the apostles did not interfere, until the contest amongst the presbyters threatened to end in division.

But

\* Estius in Cap. II. ad Galatas. SEORSUM AUTEM HIS. Apparet Paulum cum Apostolis aliquid privata collatione egisse, quod cum ceteris non egerit in Conventu publico. Nam publice quidem ita conulit, ut ostenderet gentes non debere circumcidi et servare legem Moysi; unde nata erat quæstio: *privato autem et secreto colloquio cum Apostolis habito, placuit ipsos quoque Judæos ab observantia Mosaicæ legis esse liberandos, quod publice declarari nondum oportebat, ne Judæi fideles qui legem Mosaicam invidius sibi retinendam putabant, offenderentur, atque a fide Christi resilirent.*

But did not the presbyters judge? Undoubtedly, as between the contending parties of Antioch, who had referred the controversy to their examination, they did judge; it was certified, that they had *discussed and agreed*: as between the Apostles and themselves, they yielded and must have yielded. The dissentient presbyters were silent as soon as Peter had spoken. Suppose that *Columbanus* had been on the spot to ask them, why they gave up to *Peter*, and not to their fellow presbyters; their answer must have been such, as would go to make the *quietus* of all his lucubrations on “the second order.”

“Doctor Poynter’s grand *scriptural* argument” says *Columbanus*, “for the exclusive right to judge of all matters relating to faith and discipline\* is founded on the Acts xx. 28. which he quotes thus, *Spiritus Sanctus possit Episcopos regere Ecclesiam Dei*; the holy Ghost has established *Bishops* to rule the Church of God! And so confident is he of this text in his favour, that he has inserted it as a motto prefixed to his examination of *Columbanus*, giving the word *Bishops* in capital letters, (this is also the grand palladium of Doctor Milner, as in his elucidation of the Veto, p. 34 and 48), to render it the more conspicuous, and so substituting his own *exclusive language* for the language of *inspiration*!”

Before we hear from *Columbanus*, what this language  
of

\* Fourth letter, p. 29.

of *inspiration* had been, it is very proper to remind him, that this is his *second* commission of a former act of insincerity. Doctor Poynter, in his examination, (p. 18,) gave the authority of Cyprian the Martyr, that *heresies* and schisms arise in the Church, from the *irreverence which some shew to their Bishops*. *Columbanus*, of course, *refutes* this assertion; first, by representing it as Doctor Poynter's *own*; next, by falsifying the words; and lastly, by telling us, that the assertion is false, and *must* be so. Why so? Because *Bellarmino* says, that all the Heresiarchs were either Bishops or *Priests* !\*

The second fault is of a deeper tinge. Doctor Poynter, it is true, has put a word in capitals, but the word is, EPISCOPOS, *without any translation*, in his title

\* *Columbanus* IV. p. 10. te. " Doctor Poynter informs us, that heresies and schisms, are owing to nothing else than the contempt and disobedience, which some shew their Bishops. But that man &c. *Bellarmino* says: Hæreses ab optimatibus potius quam a plebeis hominibus excitantur. Certe Hæresiarchæ fere omnes aut *Episcopi* aut Presbyteri fuerunt." *Columbanus*, who objects to *capitals*, has set *Episcopi* in italics, while he spares, in text and in gloss, the presbyteri. Then he tells us, that " the Donatists and *Eutychi*ans and Nestorians derived their *heresies* from Donatus, *Eutychi*us and Nestorius, who were Bishops. As to the *Lutheran* heresy and those who branched from it, they are all owing to Leo the 10th's *simoniacal* abuse of indulgences," says *Columbanus*. If *Luther* and all those other heretics should chance to meet *Columbanus* hereafter, there can be no doubt, that they will express their obligations to him for this posthumous *amende honorable* to their characters. I fancy still, that the Priests of Ireland will not feel greatly flattered by this way of complimenting their order.

title page. *Columbanus* translates *Episcopos*, *Bishops*, and thus, not knowing what he is about, confesses, that *Episcopos* and *Bishops* are synonymous. He also charges his antagonist with substituting his own exclusive *language* for the *language of inspiration*. Now this *exclusive language* of Doctor Poynter, is no other than the authoritative and supreme declaration of the Council of Trent; that “ Bishops are *successors to* “ *to the Apostles*, and that they are placed, as the “ *sanz* apostle saith, by the *holy Ghost* to rule the “ church of God: and that they are superior to “ *Priests*: that they impart the *sacrament of Confirma-* “ *tion*; ordain church ministers, and have power to “ perform *several other things*, over which the inferior “ *functionaries* have no power.” (Sess. xxiii ch. iv. quoted by Doctor Poynter, Examination, p. 43). Let then the charge of *corrupting holy writ*,—let the indictment of *substituting exclusive language* for that of *inspiration*, be sent home, where it ought to strike. Let the *council of Trent* be the *misinterpreter* of the *language of inspiration*, and let this charge be known to proceed from an author, who pretends to be a *catholic priest*, and who admires the *VERO*.

Although for a catholic man, the authority of the Church of Christ is the highest evidence of what is the *language of inspiration*, I will not, under shelter of this protestation, deprive you of the *argument*, which *Columbanus* tenders as the inspired sense of scripture. He thus continues. “ But what is the truth? The

“ truth, as noticed even by the Roman court Theo-  
 “ logians, with whom Doctor Poynter ought to be  
 “ better acquainted ;—as noticed by *Bellarmino* and  
 “ *Baronius*,”—I stop the current of *inspiration*, mere-  
 ly to object to the *fortieth* repetition of that shallow  
 trick, of pretending to quote an authority, and vouch-  
 ing, in the same breath, for its *credit*. I object to all  
 authority of the Roman court Theologians, *Baronius*  
 and *Bellarmino*, on this question ; because *Columbanus*  
 sets them up and puts them down, when he pleases.  
 But the argument, about to come forth, if theirs, shall  
 not escape a whit the better. Let us go on.

“ The truth is, that St. Paul, addressing the *priests*  
 “ of Ephesus, Acts xx. v. 28. says, take heed there-  
 “ fore to yourselves, and to all the flock over which  
 “ the holy Ghost hath made you (*priests*), *ἐπισκοπους*,  
 “ i. e. overseers, to govern (or rather to *feed*) the  
 “ church of God !”

Is this then the *truth*, *Columbanus* ; the inspired  
*language of Truth* ? If so, then you will be gratified,  
 if I should put to this *Truth*, through the medium of  
 an apostrophe to yourself, some few questions ; first,  
 concerning your acquaintance with *Greek* ; secondly,  
 as to your acquaintance with *Scripture* ; thirdly, as to  
 your *intimacy* with common sense. The *Truth*, you  
 know, can never be *shamed*.

To begin from the last,\* “ to govern or rather to  
 “ feed

\* *Ναμείν*, from the *ἐπισκοπεῖν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ*.



“ feed the church :” In what *Troparium* of the sixth century, in what *Clavis Homerica*, or brief manuduction to Greek of Leusden, did you find, that ποιμαίνειν, when applied to mankind, signifies to feed, not to govern? Really, *Columbanus*, you have puzzled the whole Greek Septuagint, whose *Greek* the author of the *Acts* thought good enough. ποιμαίνειν, for those old people was so *truly* and so *exclusively* to do *all the work of a governor*, (although in Hebrew, the expression denoting to *tend* as a shepherd, was no doubt originally derived from their pastoral habits), that, in the second psalm and ninth verse, “ Thou shalt *govern them* with “ a rod of iron,” is, ποιμαίνεις αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥαβδῷ σιδηρεῖα. Try *feeding* here, and make the lawgiver “ rather feed” them with his *iron rod*. Will the stomach bear such a *philological* stretch of power? The mistake however is very easily accounted for.\* The ideas of *pastoral* office and *governing* power are not only joined, but identified in the elder Testament. God is the *king* and the *shepherd*; and both titles concur in one, declaring careful providence, controul, correction and separation. In the new Testament the same coincidence is perpetuated. Our Saviour declares himself the *right good* shepherd: he knows his flock and he defends them: he leads them forth into pasture; he goes before them, and they follow

\* In the mistake of *βοσκα*, which refers to animals, and *ποιμαίνω*, which includes every species of governing direction, when applied to rational beings.

follow him and obey at his call.\* This same Redeemer has elsewhere conjoined the province of the shepherd, with the most awful demonstration of sovereignty. He will part them from one another, as the shepherd “assorts the sheep from the kids; and he will station the sheep on his right, and the kids on his left hand; then will the KING pronounce to them who shall be at his right hand: COME HITHER!”

I have done with your *feeding*, *Columbanus*; and now I would fain salute your “Overseers.” In what part of scripture have you found *επισκοπος*; signifying “an overseer:” I trust you will not answer, that you have found it in this passage under dispute: you will not say so, now that we have settled the “feeding;” for, when you changed “govern” to “feed,” you seemed aware, that if “govern” were allowed to stay, the “overseers” would not *match* it.

Let us then go to Acts I., where the election of an *Apostle*, to replace Judas, is proposed by St. Peter; “For it is written in the book of Psalms; Let his mansion be desolated. (Ps. 68). Again, “Let another take his *επισκοπον*” (Ps. 108 in the vulgate: 109 in the 70 and Hebrew). The *vulgate* translates this term, *Episcopus*, *Episcopatus*: the translation of the church of England renders it *office* generally. In the same chapter the *Episcopatus* or *office* is called by the Apostles, in their prayer to CHRIST, the *ministry and apostleship*,

\* Joan. x. Math. xxv. 31, 32, 33, 34.

*apostleship*, from which, or, by the opportunity of which, Judas had worked his crime.

Let us see of what rank was the *Episcopatus*, mentioned in the Psalm. It was the place of Achitophel, the prime counsellor and arch-traitor to king David, who proposed to attack his Sovereign *in the night-time* with twelve thousand men, and whose advice, until that time, was considered as the voice of an oracle.\* This man was surely not an *overseer* : he was a judge, and a director in the government. So had Judas been, and to *this* second Achitophel, as holding apostolic rank, it had been promised, that, in the *regenerated*, or Christian world, he should possess one of the twelve *thrones*, as one of the governors and judges over the nation of Israel. Such *ministry* and *apostleship* was not surely the place of an “*overseer*,” by any possible debasement of the *Episcopatus*, or *office*.

The term, rendered by the Septuagint, ἐπισκοπῆς, and by the Vulgate, *Episcopatus*, is, in the original, the office of *visitation* ; that is to say, of *charge*, and *cognizance*, and *command*. The *visitors* are the *captains* and the *chiefs*, and are rendered so, as well by the Septuagint, as by the Vulgate, and by the church of England version.† After so many *Jubilee-years* of  
controversy

\* Kings 2. xv. 12. 31. 34. xvi. 20. ad fin. xviii. 1. 2. 16. 23.

† As in Numbers III. 22, the Septuagint has it ἀρχαίης ; the Vulgate, *principes* ; the Church of England version, *chief*.

controversy on this word *Episcopus*; after so many attempts to resolve the office into a *supervisorship*, by anatomizing the etymology and composition of the word; the fact remains undisturbed, that, as well in the Greek of the Septuagint, as in the language of original Scripture; in the time of the apostles, as well as in the time of *Cicero*, *Episcopus* meant a *person charged with a government and administration*; that the term was of relation not to *employment*, but to *polity*; that its significancy was not narrowed to the special attendance about one object of commission, nor to one class of men in a given society, but was bounded as other *governments* may be: that it was not a deputyship of mere force, nor was it mere ministerial ordering, but imported superiority, as well as trust and command. To enlarge on this topic would be shameful in any one, who either possesses or pretends to information.

But even so much as I have written, was not required in the present case. No knowledge whatsoever of Greek or Latin was wanted, to put down the assertion of *Columbanus*, that the *presbyteri* of Ephesus were *priests* of the second order, and being such *priests*, were stiled *Episcopi*, that is, *overseers*, by saint Paul. His own *datum* is sufficient, coupled with a supposition, that *saint Paul was a rational man*. The business, in ACTS xx, was the following. Paul, the apostle, was going off to Jerusalem out of Macedonia,

don. On his arrival at Miletus, he resolves not to lose time in travelling up to Ephesus, where he had founded a church of Christians. At the same time, being forewarned by God, that he should never behold them again, he sends for *the presbyters of Ephesus*, tells them that they are *about to be parted for ever from each other's sight*: that great disasters are prophesied against *him*, if he should enter Jerusalem: that he knows not his destiny, but is prepared for martyrdom. After this moving preface, he *discharges his soul*, by a solemn adjuration, from all that may happen to the *Ephesians*: he *resigns the church* to the charge of those presbyters; and foretelling that, after he is gone for ever, the *wolves* will make havoc in the fold, (which was fulfilled in the Cerinthian heresy), "Be attentive," says Paul, "to *yourselves*, and to *all the fold*, inasmuch as the *Holy Spirit* established *you Bishops*" (or charged you with the administration), "to govern the church of *GOD*, which *he* purchased with his own proper blood."

The only *essential* difference between a priest and a *bishop*, according to *Columbanus*, is, that a *bishop* holds exclusively the *power of ordination*. This premised, look to the *language of inspiration*, according to *Columbanus*. The Apostle is taking his last farewell of the church of Ephesus. He is providing against evils to *arise after his death*: he predicts that he is to return never more. And, after all, to whom does he *give up the charge* of the church, according

to *Columbanus*? Why, truly to the *priests*, who have no authority to *ordain a priest*, and who consequently may all be dead, and the Ephesian church dispersed, *before the wolves* come in. He founds a *city*, without the hope of posterity; he builds a church, with the labour of three years; goes off to *die* for Christ, if called, but professedly never to return to Ephesus: yet the *wise architect*, Paul, for thus has saint Paul stiled himself, leaves this church to expect a miracle for its continuance, and clears himself of all *responsibility*, by reminding the *priests*, that they were appointed “overseers” to govern or “rather to feed” the church of God! Such ratiocination as this, is, no doubt, point blank *against* Doctor Poynter. But still it is too powerful for the muscles of a Stoic.

To proceed however with *Columbanus*, “Baronius” observes, that in the apostolical times, *priests*, in the care of souls, were indiscriminately named *presbyteroi* and *episcopoi*, or overseers; as in Paul to Titus, ch. 1, in the Epistle to the *Philippians*, v. 1, and *in this very passage*, Acts xx, 28, and *repeatedly elsewhere.*”

This is another specimen of *invincible demonstration*. I do not mean as to the prodigious *finesse* of quoting *this very passage*, which is the matter in controversy, but as to the *observation* in general. *Columbanus* had assumed, that the *presbyteroi* in the Acts were priests of “the second order.” Doctor Poynter on the contrary maintained, that they were more probably

probably *bishops*, and he referred to texts, in which men called *presbyteroi* evidently were *bishops*. In reply, *Columbanus*, taking it always for granted, that *presbyteroi* must mean *priests*; but finding *presbyteroi* named also *episcopoi*, settles the question, by assuring us, that *episcopoi* meant “overseers,” and was as much the title of *priests*, as *presbyteroi*. This he proves from *Scripture*; that is, by making *presbyteroi* *priests*, and those *priests* “overseers.” Whereby he has demonstrated more than he was aware of. He has completely exterminated *episcopacy* from the New Testament, and left us only *apostles*, and *overseers*, being *priests of the second order*. For, in the new Testament, an *episcopus* is uniformly either coupled with *presbyter* as synonymous, or stands in lieu of *presbyter*. This *presbyter* for *Columbanus*, is solely and exclusively a *priest*. Consequently not one mere *bishop*, in the unlearned signification of the word, is to be found in holy *Scripture*; and therefore neither is the *office* to be found.

Looking separately to the other texts lately referred to, the first is from the *Epistle* to *Titus*, when left in *Crete*, by saint *Paul*, for the purpose of establishing churches in that island. “I left thee in *Crete* for this end, that thou shouldst finally arrange what is yet wanting,\* and establish *presbyters*, in the several  
 2 U Cities,

\* Ch. 1. v. 5. ἵνα τε λειτουργία επιδιορθώσῃς καὶ καθάρσῃς καὶ πολλὰ  
 μείωσῃς ἔργα.

“*Cities*,—because it is meet, that every *episcopus* (“overseer,” according to *Columbanus*; *bishop*, as others presume to render it), should be blameless, as *the Steward of God*.” In the same Epistle, at the end, “As soon as I send to thee Artemas and Tychicus, *come without delay to me, at Nicopolis*, for I have resolved to *pass the winter there*.”

From these scraps of quotation we learn, 1. that as yet there had been no *church* in the island of Crete, and consequently no *bishop* to ordain *priests*: 2. that the mission of Titus, as Vicar Apostolical, was to arrange *ultimately a church government*, and therefore to establish a *permanent system*: 3. that the *presbyters*, here spoken of, were the *first order* in this system, and were required to act as *Stewards of God*, a term applied by saint Paul to his own apostolical commission: 4. that Titus was not to *reside* in Crete, but to quit it at the first warning. Now I ask any rational man, whether those *presbyters* could be any other than persons appointed with authority, full and perfect, to *uphold* and to *extend* the mission in Crete, after the departure of Titus? In short, must they not have had, as *stewards of God*, the power of ordaining *priests*? Add to this, that saint Paul terms them *episcopi*, the *only* name to be found in the new Testament for a *bishop*. Is this text settled?

The next attempt of *Columbanus* to establish that “priests” have been stiled “*episcopi*,” is taken from the Epistle to the Philippensians, which is addressed



to that church with its *episcopi* and *deacons*. These *episcopi* must be *priests*, it is said. Why so? Truly because more than one *bishop* could not be in *one* church. The argument was unanswerable, if *bishop*, in the apostolic times, meant, what it most generally signified in the fourth century, namely, a *sole* and chief spiritual governor in one city. If applied to the apostolic age, it is entirely without foundation. As long as the apostles remained in Jerusalem, they surely governed there, and *were bishops*, in that *local* jurisdiction. If there be authority in the text, quoted from saint Jerome by *Columbanus*,\* the presbyters of Alexandria, until the middle of the third century, *ordained* their own *bishop*, by *enthroning* him. Saint Epiphanius, who wrote *after* the Nicene council, mentions as a peculiarity or distinction in the church of Alexandria, that it never had had more than *one bishop* at once.† Saint Augustine himself testifies expressly, that, when he was ordained to be *joint bishop* of Hippona, neither he nor *Valerius* were aware of the Nicene prohibition. The bishop of Carthage also, who authorised the intent of *Valerius*,

seems

\* Columbanus, first letter, p. 32. Jerome, Ep. 85. Alexandriae a Marco usque ad Heraclam et Dionysium episcopus presbyteri semper unum ex se electum in excelsiore gradu collocatum, episcopi (read episcopum) nominabant.

† Hær. Meletian. 722. ε γαρ ποτε Αλιξανδρεια δυο επισκοποι εσχεν  
 εις αι αλλαι πολεις.

seems to have been equally ignorant of its illegality. From the declaration of Saint Augustine, this at least is plainly to be inferred, that no rule or church law, save a Nicene decree, had come to his knowledge, as interdicting the practice.

There is another circumstance to be weighed in the address of the apostle Paul to the *Episcopi* and *deacons* at Philippi: the deacon was an *attendant* on the *bishop* or *bishops*. The Council of Nicea reminds deacons, (who, infatuated by the popularity and consequence derived from their stewardship of ecclesiastical revenues, had audaciously pretended, in certain quarters, to dispense the Eucharist from the bishops to the presbyters), that *deacons* are the *servitors* of the bishop;\* and that presbyters are their *bettors*: “ A *bishop*, says Epiphanius, *cannot be without his deacon*†. If the Nicene Council delivered truth: if Saint Epiphanius is a competent witness for the persuasion of his own age, that is to say, of the fourth century, there must have been either *many bishops*, or at least *one bishop* at Philippi: and the principle, no *deacon*, no *bishop*, must have been fully established before the reign of Constantine. If, at Philippi there was but one bishop, why is he not mentioned? If mentioned, by what words is he to be identified? If there were *many bishops* in that city, the point I contend for is determined

\* In Can. 18. Εμμένεσθαι οὖν οἱ διακονοὶ τοῖς ἰδίοις μετροῖς εἰροῦσις ὅς τοῦ μ.θ. ἐπισκοποῦ ὑπηρετῆται εἰσὶν, τὰν δὲ πρεσβυτέρων ἐλαπίους πῶγχανουσι.

† Epiphan. Aetian, p. 908. Ἄγιος δὲ διακονεὺς ἐπισκοπῆτος ἀδυνατῆσαι εἰσῆσαι.

mined. If *no bishop* was there, the fathers of Nicea knew nothing, while *Columbanus* knows *something* about primitive church government. This conclusion is pacific enough, perhaps flattering. *Derideri te putas: nunc demum intelligo te sapere.*

In the whole process of his demonstration, *Columbanus* not only assumes, that the presbyters in the *Acts* and *Epistles* are “priests of the second order,” commonly known by the title of priests, but he manfully translates the word presbyters, *priests*, which stile exclusively belongs in English to the class next to Episcopacy. This assumption is worse than gratuitous. It stands in contradiction to that scripture, from which he would establish his whims. Timothy, beyond all question, was a bishop: he had the essential mark, according to *Columbanus*, of Episcopacy in the right and power of ordaining. Saint Paul is a good voucher to this, when he instructs Timothy to what characters he is to impart Ordination. Now, the very Apostle Paul directs this Timothy to revive within himself the gift, which had been imparted to him, *by the ordination of the assembly of presbyters*. Of necessary consequence therefore those *presbyters*, to whom Saint Paul referred, *ordained bishops*; at all events they ordained either *bishops* or *priests*. Were such presbyters priests of the second order,” who, according to the doctrine of *Columbanus*, are *solely* but *essentially* excluded from ordaining to holy orders?

Again

Again ; Saint Peter, in his first epistle, addresses presbyters as his *colleagues*, each in his department of governing. He applies to them the words *tending* and *having the charge*, exactly as Saint Paul had used them to the presbyters of Ephesus. “The *presbyters* “ amongst you, I conjure as *their fellow presbyter*. “ Tend you (ποιμαναίτε) the flock of God, which is with “ you, holding charge of them (επισκοπουμίτες), not from “ necessity...nor lording it, in your several allotments, \* “ but making yourselves the pattern for the flock; and, “ when the chief shepherd shall appear, you will receive “ the unfading crown of glory.” †

In the same epistle the dominion of CHRIST over our souls, is expressed in the same terms, which Paul applied

\* ου κυριευούσας εν τῷ οὐκ κληρονομίᾳ. The simplicity of this figure in which each vicarious shepherd holds his allotted and separate portion, under one chief shepherd, appears to have perplexed translators; some referring it, in a moral sense to the *inferior Clergy*. Amongst these translators, *Columbanus* deserves regard. He quotes it (Letter 1). as the text of *Saint Paul*, thus robbing *Peter*, according to the proverb. In his fourth letter, he gives it back to its owner, not in the original, nor according to the vulgate, but according to the translation of the church of England, which renders the particular passage last mentioned, “not lording it over the *Lord's heritage*,” a merely conjectural interpretation.

† τον αμαραντινον της δόξης σεφανων. The English version has rendered this simply and beautifully “an unfading glorious crown,” in analogy to his *glorious name*, and such expressions. I apprehend, however, that the import of the term, *glory*, is mistaken. The δόξα or glory is more probably an *ornament for the head* in this place, which bears evident allusion to Ecclesiastic. Chap. 32. 1, 2, 3, 4, and Chap. 45, v. 14. 22. II. Corinth. Chap. iii. v. 7.

applied to the charge held by the *presbyteri* in Ephesus. “ You have returned to the shepherd and *Episcopus* “ of your souls.” I scarcely imagine, that the greatest amateur of parody could relish the change of the terms, in this passage at least, to “ feeder and overseer.”

To conclude: in no part of the new Testament are the *presbyters* mentioned as a distinct class from the *Episcopi*. In no one text, is it even hinted, that those original *presbyters* had not the power of *ordination*; and moreover, in one text, they are expressly said to *have ordained*. Lastly, wherever *presbyters* alone are mentioned, it is proved from the circumstances, that they were entrusted with the entire ordinary church government. When *presbyters* alone are mentioned, *Episcopi* are *not* mentioned, or are mentioned as holding one and the same office. On the other hand, when *Episcopacy* is mentioned, it is mentioned as the station of *presbyters*.

*Columbanus* winds up his *invincible* demonstration in these words, which I regret being forced even to copy. “ Doctors Pointer and Milner have *therefore* *cor-* “ *rupted* the Sacred Text, *wresting* it to *their* *favourite* “ maxim of *exclusive* uncontrollable power, and incul- “ cating the *Hindoo* and *Mahometan* principle, that “ priests of the second order are not to *judge of*, or “ *examine* the doctrines, which, *by* *divine* mission, they “ are bound to *preach* to the nations of the earth, “ Luke x.”\* I will not dispute against *Columbanus*, whe-  
ther

\* Columban, fourth letter p. 28.

ther the *Hindoos* and *Mahometans* held exactly the tenet, that “priests of the second order” are bound not to examine the doctrines, which they are bound to preach. Most probably *Columbanus* has fathomed those learned systems, with as great research, as he betrays unacquaintance with the homely dispensations of the Gospel. Since he talks of *corrupting* scripture, we, who have no opportunity of *collecting* the *best manuscripts*, beg to know in what Gospel, *called of Saint Luke*, the *priests of the second order* are mentioned. We are curious to learn, in what Gospel “priests of the second order” are talked of, as bound by *divine mission* to preach to the *nations of the earth*. In the 10th Chapter of Saint Luke, it is unquestionably recorded by him, that after the election of the apostles; our Lord appointed other *seventy-two*, whose office it was to go forth two and two, preparing the several towns and districts, whither Christ was to follow after, for the reception of his doctrine and person; and that those messengers were endued with healing powers and a delegation from Christ. But in no *printed* Gospel or book, (*Columbanus* always excepted), has it been pretended, that the mission of those seventy-two was other than temporary, and confined to the travels of the Redeemer. Nay more, the very Evangelist, Saint Luke, (if we can depend on *printed* copies), gives us to understand, that those seventy-two completed that mission of theirs, and *returned back* to our  
Lord;

Lord ;\* and from the four gospels, which we have in *print*, it is almost evident, that they were not further employed during his mortal life. Their office therefore, as received in Luke x. 17., having expired, it is fair to ask of *Columbanus* some further illustration on the subject ; especially at what time, and from whom they received, as a body distinct from the other *disciples*, the *divine mission* to preach to the *extremities of the earth* ; by what process the “ second order” has succeeded, *pro indiviso*, to this same very extensive *diocese* ; and by what authority they have been all dispensed with in the point of *universal residence*. The scope, indeed, of so great a missionary title, notwithstanding the *subsequent* introduction of *bishopric* and *parish*, is as magnificent, as it was admirably contrived to have it kept a secret, from the days of Saint John the Baptist until Saint Patrick’s day, in 1811. I fear however, that, as the claim was never prosecuted by the *seventy-two* for themselves and *successors*, nor, indeed, properly explained to them, until *Columbanus* arose ; the Irish priests of the “ second order”

2 x

will

\* Saint Epiphanius, In Haeres. xx. S. 4: Petau’s Edition, does surely assert, that our Lord, *after his ascension*, appointed the *seventy-two*, as well as the apostles, to preach to the ends of the Earth ; but so little did he suspect them to have been presbyters, that according to him the seven *deacons* were appointed out of them. Matthias also and Mark, Luke, Justus, Barnabas, Apelles, Rufus, Niger were, according to Epiphanius, of that number. It would be unseasonable to remark on the concluding assertions in this authority.

will demand at least a *genuine* bull from our interpreter of Saint Luke, before they unhouse themselves, to adventure for so very *old an estate*.

A truce with texts as from Scripture. The matter, from which we diverged in compliment to method, is grand. We are to return to the question of episcopal birth-right, and to dispute against great human authorities: but these I respect without fearing. I fear much more to incur the reproach of temerity, in pretending to investigate *causes*, which are too deeply fixed, to allow of inspection. *Ubi eras quando ponebam fundamenta terre? Indica mihi, si habes intelligentiam, super quo bases illius solidatæ sunt? Aut quis demisit lapidem angularem ejus?\**

If the essential and incommunicable power of episcopacy consists in giving holy orders, the proof is full, as we have seen, that in the first propagation of Christianity, the *presbyters* were truly *bishops*. This result appeared to Petau so undeniable, that, when arguing against Saumaise, he declares, that the most ancient *presbyters*, beyond a doubt, possessed not only the *title*, but the *truth* and *authority* of episcopacy. This state of things he limits to the short period, within which the gospel continued to travel with such rapidity, that every church required to have a number of bishops ready for the mission.† He  
qualifies

Job, xxxviii. 4. 6.

† De Episcop. dignitate et jurisdictione. Lib. I. Cap. 2.



qualifies this avowal, I observe, by explaining his mind to be, that *all or very many of those presbyters were so ordained, as to gain at once the station of presbyter and of bishop.*\* The explanation and the avowal do not well stand together. If, from the passages of Scripture it is manifest, as it is, that *presbyter* and *bishop* were synonymous in the period alluded to, Petau might with equal consistency have said at once, that those *bishops, or very many of them, held the power of ordaining.* Again, if *generally, or most frequently the presbyters, ordained in new churches, held the episcopal, as well as the secondary power, by one ordination,* it would not have been easy for the new converts to discriminate the double rank enjoyed by their bishop; much less to understand what was that authority of a *presbyter,* which they had not witnessed separately, as yet, in any church-governor. That these two orders were afterwards distinct, even in the apostolic age, is undoubted: that Catholic *episcopacy,* as now understood, existed even then, I know: but I deny, that the *power of ordaining* was then the *exclusive* mark of *episcopacy,* as now understood. I deny, that the original *presbyters* were the ancestors of modern *presbyters:* I hold the rank of both to be of *divine authority.* Nay, I think, the rank of the later presbyter to be, all things considered,

\* Ibid. Existimo presbyteros, vel omnes vel eorum plerosque, sic ordinatorum esse, ut episcopi pariter ac presbyteri gradum obtinerent.

considered, more important than that enjoyed *originally* under the same name; even allowing to presbyters of the first succession, the power of ordination.

In treating this question, it has been the uniform practice, to take notice of what was written by saint Jerome, concerning *presbyters*. The expressions of this great and emphatical writer are adduced by Calvin, and by all those, who have advocated his church system, as decisive against bishops: while, on the other hand, the followers of episcopacy, both Catholic and Protestant writers, have undertaken to reconcile the assertions of the holy and learned man, to what he himself had written elsewhere, as well as to their respective persuasions of what is orthodox in principle, or probable in fact. He asserts, that *presbyter* and *bishop* were the names of one and the same office, in the early government of the church. In proof, he gives those texts of the apostles, Peter and Paul, on which I have been remarking; namely, the instruction to Titus, the omission of *presbyter* in the directions to Timothy; the address to the *presbyters* of Ephesus, and the salutation of the *bishops* at Philippi: from saint Peter he quotes the words, “The *presbyters* amongst you *I* beseech, *who am their fellow presbyter.*”

Thus far the opinion of Jerome is unequivocally delivered, and thus far it can scarcely admit of a question. The matter of controversy lies not here, but in the *cause* and the *epoch*, which he seems to assign for the

the

the introduction of *sole episcopacy*. “Before parties,” writes saint Jerome, “sprung up in the Christian administration; before such expressions as these were uttered amongst the faithful, *I belong to Paul, I to Apollo, I to Cephas*; the churches were governed by a common council of their *presbyters*. But, when it came to pass, that each individual, (presbyter) “looked on those whom he had baptized, to be an acquisition for himself, not for Christ; every where (*toto orbe*) it was decided, that one *presbyter* should be chosen, and placed over the others, and that to him the care of the church at large should appertain, thereby to remove every principle of schism.—These instances,” (namely, from the *Acts* and the *Epistles*,) “I have brought, to show that *presbyters* and *bishops* were, for those of old, one and the same; but that *by degrees*, the government was restricted to *one*, in order to do away the possibility of dissentions in future. As therefore, *presbyters* should know, that, in virtue of the church usage, they are submitted to their prelate, whosoever he may be; so let *bishops* understand, that they themselves *are greater than presbyters*, more from a *usage* than from the *primary ordinance* of the Redeemer, and that it is their duty to govern their churches *by joint deliberation*.”\*

I have

\* Hieron: in Cap. I. Paul. ad Titum. Antequam instinctu diaboli studia in religione fuerent, et diceretur in populis, Ego sum Pauli, ego

I have begun with this quotation, as furnishing the ideas of saint Jerome concerning episcopacy, in a more authentic way, than his celebrated letter to Evagrius. His declared object, in writing to Evagrius, was to put down the competition of certain ignorant *deacons* with *presbyters*; and this object did naturally admit of an emphasis of words, and a colouring of facts; it allowed the introduction of mere probabilities, and a certain address in combining them, which saint Jerome would not tolerate, much less employ, in a doctrinal and tranquil exposition, such as his commentary on Paul to Titus was meant to be. However, from this passage, it has been argued by the enemies to episcopacy, that, *according to the divine institution*, there was no difference between a *bishop* and a *presbyter*: that, of consequence, there was no such clergyman, as we now stile *priest*; that *episcopacy*, as now understood, is the result of an

Apollo, ego autem Cephæ, communi presbyterorum consilio ecclesiæ gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos, quos baptizaverat suos putabat esse non Christi; in toto orbe decretum est, ut unus de presbyteris electus superponeretur cæteris, ad quem omnis ecclesiæ cura pertineret et schismatum semina tollerentur.....Hæc" (scilicet ex N. Testam. argumenta) "propterea, ut ostenderemus apud Veteres eosdem fuisse presbyteros quos et episcopos; paulatim vero, ut dissensionum semina evellerentur, ad unum omnem sollicitudinem esse delatam. Sicut ergo presbyteri sciunt" (not *sciunt*) "se ex ecclesiæ consuetudine ei, qui sibi præpositus fuerit, esse subiectos; ita (et) episcopi noverint se magis consuetudine quam dispositionis dominicæ *toti te* presbyteris esse majores,

an ecclesiastical law, and of a general regulation, subsequent to the apostles; that, in short, the exclusive rights, and separate functions, now attached to the *episcopal* class, have, at the utmost, their sanction from human enactment: that they are either the inheritance of presbyters by *divine right*, or cannot be of divine right, if not equally belonging to all presbyters.

It would not be an easy task to reconcile the stress laid by anti-episcopalians upon the authority of Jerome in this one instance, supposed favourable to their own practice, with the indifference or contempt manifested for his testimony on most other occasions. When bearing witness to any of the unacceptable tenets of Roman Catholic religion, the voice of Jerome is but the cry of an unenlightened, morose ascetic: when he happens, as in this place, to deliver his *own opinion*, and to draw *his own inferences*,\* the oracle of Jerome is the trusty interpreter of Peter and Paul, and of the *Saviour!* Why so? Because his supposed opinion stands as a mediator between the Scriptures and *their* system.

But Catholics hold a different course. Although for them no individual authority of a teacher is of weight, when standing adverse to the living authority,

OR

\* *Ibid.* Putat aliquis *non Scripturarum, sed nostram esse sententiam* episcopum et presbyterum unum esse, et aliud ætatis, aliud esse nomen Officii? Relegat Apostoli ad Philippens s verba, &c.

or when teaching apart from the fixed and canonized persuasions of the church; yet the cause of Jerome is always treated with a zeal for his honour, whenever these and similar expressions concerning episcopacy are fastened upon. It has been repeatedly demonstrated, that the inferences, ascribed to saint Jerome, are overcharged. It has been proved, over and over, especially by Natalis Alexander, when this controversy was thought important, that from the very concessions of the Saint it follows, that episcopacy was of divine institution. In truth, saint Jerome has explicitly informed us elsewhere, that there were `sole bishops at a very early period indeed. “*James was ordained Bishop of Jerusalem by the Apostles,\** “without delay, after the death of the Redeemer, and “continued thirty years, the ruler of that church.” Whether the ordination of James was in consequence of an *established usage* in the Christian church, then some few days old, or in consequence of any *parties raging* in that church, or because any *presbyters* imagined those whom they baptized to be *their own acquisition*, I may safely remit to any judge who is able to read. Whether *James* was *elected* and *set over his fellow-presbyters* by virtue of a *general decree* subsequent to a *primary* institution, I will not even ask; because

\* In Catalog. Scriptor. Ecclesiastic. post passionem Domini statim  
 ab Apostolis Hierosolymorum episcopus ordinatus.....Triginta itaque  
 annos Hierosolymis rexit ecclesiam.

because I must not suppose any *reader of mine* to be a natural fool.

Saint Jerome, therefore, was aware, that, in Jerusalem at least, a *bishop* was *ordained* as a *chief governor*, in the very first weeks or months of the Christian church, and when all the authorities of the new law were concentrated not only within a single city, but perhaps within one single place of meeting. He was aware that *no schisms* were possible in the church at that period, when all the believers had but *one heart and one mind*: that, consequently, the ordination of James was not *secondary* to a *divine* institution of *presbyters*, but was of *divine* right; and was supplementary, by *divine* right, to the *divine* institution of the twelve Apostles. If this James was really one of the *twelve*, (as the prevailing opinion of later times, countenanced by an expression of saint Paul, and by the assertion of Clement of Alexandria, esteems him to have been,) the office of *episcopacy* imparted to him must have been something higher than the rank of a *presbyter*, as this was understood in the age of saint Jerome. If James was *not* one of the *twelve*, and yet is ranked by Paul with Cephas and John, as a pillar of the church in Jerusalem; and, in the council, is alone recorded to have spoken and *judged* after Peter: it is equally manifest, that the *episcopal* rank of James was associated with the apostolic dignity, and that even, *for those of old*, a *bishop* at Jerusalem was superior to *presbyters*, not merely by

the force of a usage; although such *presbyters* should have exercised, (as I am certain that they exercised) the power of *ordaining*.

This mode of dealing with the argument, raised from the words of saint Jerome, may to some readers appear to be evasion, not opposition. It may be retorted, that the sentiments of Jerome cannot be so fairly gathered from a chronicle, which he did little more than translate, as from his own declarations, when professedly treating the subject of episcopacy: that, notwithstanding the very many explanations given of the passage in question, the words are such as no man would use at this day, unless against the *apostolical* origin of Bishops: lastly, it may be urged, that the true method for combating the inferences drawn from the authority of so great a man, would be to encounter the passage itself, as if it had been written in the fourth century by an *anonymous* commentator, and therefore not privileged, like Jerome, a doctor of the church, to be always understood in the best meaning, although not the most obvious, and to be defended from the irreverence of censure, even where his words may be negligent.

In this way I do not fear to set upon the quotation. Let the words be of an unknown author, or, better still, let them have been given, by a modern, as his own gloss on the first chapter to Titus. Now the *modern* and *anonymous* commentator must be content



to bear with some freedoms of speech, concerning this same gloss.

Could any thing be more unlucky than the choice of such a text? The *gloss* informs us, that *presbyter* and *bishop* were one and the same in the earliest times; and this no man questions: but the *gloss* says moreover, that, *until parties sprung up in religion*, each church was governed by a common council of its *presbyters* (or *bishops*): this might have held good in churches, that possessed several of those first-rate presbyters; but how does this apply to churches, that had only *one presbyter, or bishop*? Above all, how does it happen to be applied to the churches in Crete, whereas, *in this very letter, and in this very text* so glossed upon, the Apostle charges his deputy to ordain *a presbyter for every city*? Were these *presbyters* of Crete, *elected* by virtue of any general decree, from *amongst their fellows*? If not, if, on the contrary, they were directly and immediately appointed *governors* of that new Christian church, with what meaning could it be said, that *such presbyters* were superior rather by *ecclesiastical usage*, than by the *primary* institution of the Saviour, to the presbyters “of the second order,” whom they may have afterwards ordained? With what consistency is it to be pretended, that, in Crete, the government of each church was, *by degrees*, restricted to one?

Again, the manner of the alleged change in the ecclesiastical government is here related in two  
different

different ways. It is *first* laid down for positive fact, that, by a *general determination* throughout the Church, it was resolved, that *one presbyter* should be chosen and placed above the others: it is *afterwards* declared, that *by degrees*, the government was restricted to one presbyter. To which of these assertions are we to trust; the *former* of which apparently goes on the supposition, that, at some one time, the Christian Churches were, either all or generally, in a state of anarchy, and dissociation: while the *latter* assertion pretends, that the resolution was effected by *degrees*, and consequently may have established itself at different times, in different Churches?

The *cause* however assigned for the introduction of sole Episcopacy, is, the selfish and profane dissensions excited by those early *presbyters*. The Churches, it is said, were governed in common, until the expressions, *I belong to Apollo*, and so forth, were broached amongst the faithful. From this it may be inferred, that, so soon as party feelings were excited in any local church, the cure for that mischief was, to restrict the government to one presbyter. But the fact says not so. It was at Corinth, as we learn from Saint Paul, these party feelings and dissensions were first stirred up; wherein one called himself belonging to Apollo, another to Cephas, a third to Paul himself:\* yet, we do not find, that, in Corinth, any one *presbyter*

\* Corinth. Chap. I. v. 13.

*ter* was set above the others by the apostle. Timothy was sent to reclaim the parties, and to him the Corinthians are enjoined to pay obedience: the Corinthians are besought to return to peace, and unanimity, and charity: the refractory are threatened with a visitation, in apostolical power.\* But not a word of restricting the government.

Whether we suppose the change to have been simultaneous or gradual, the difficulties are insurmountable, or the argument is vain. If the change was made at once, and in cure of a general mischief,—what a horrible idea! it presupposes, that the *original* arrangement of the Redeemer proved not only ineffectual for the government of his Church, but pernicious. If the change was made by *degrees* and *partially*, the difficulty starts up, by whom was it effected in each several church? was it by the contending *presbyters*? was it by any higher authority? and if by an authority higher than that of local presbyters, was the authority divine or human? was it competent to enact for all future times?

In the ascertainment of these points, the whole merits of the cause are involved, and these, the only important points, are entirely put out of sight, in the argument. Let us suppose, that the decision, which took from *presbyters in common* the government of the Church, was enacted by competent authority. What follows

\* *Ibid.* Chap. iv. v. 14, 15, 16. Chap. xvi. v. 10, 11.

follows from this? Surely, that the spiritual mission and jurisdiction, which had been given to several, was withdrawn from the many, and was bestowed on a single *presbyter*: consequently, that the mission of this single *presbyter* was enlarged, although his title remained as before: that the mission of his former colleagues was superseded in the government of the Church, although *their* title continued as before. This being evident, the next step is to ask, when sole Episcopacy was thus rightfully established, did the sole bishop, who afterwards ordained men to the office of *presbyters*, communicate to them, (when the class of presbyters became a distinct order from the class anteriorly known by the same title), any of the powers anciently held with the title, but rightfully taken away from the many and conferred on himself by competent authority, and for the safeguard of the Christian Church? If he did not, the new presbyters were not the successors of the old: they came in by a new and different mission: if he did, he attempted a nullity, because he falsified his own Episcopal mission.

Now observe how ill the argument hangs together. Presbyters it seems formerly were *bishops*, that is to say, they *formerly governed in common*: this order of theirs was abolished, and the *care of each Church* was entrusted to one person. What is the true inference? That the *ancient presbyters* are now to be recognized in the bishops who have succeeded them. Far from inferring

ferring this, we find the passage under examination concluding, that *even now*, that is to say, after the *common Council* has been abolished, the bishop *should govern* his Church by joint Council. To joint Council I do not object, but rather wish, that it were always practicable: to the inference I object, because it is a mere contradiction to the premises.

When Saint Jerome is made to remind bishops, that they are superior to the *presbyters of the new order*, (according to this theory), more by ecclesiastical usage than from the primary institution of the Redeemer, I repeat it, that I do not object to the concluding recommendation; but even here I do protest against the assertion which precedes it. In what part of the new Testament is a word, or a syllable recorded of a *primary* institution of mere *presbyters* by the Redeemer? Not a word of such *presbyters* in the Gospel; not a word of their primary institution by the Redeemer, in the Acts or Epistles. If they came in by succession to an original institution, to whom did they succeed? To the seventy-two *disciples*? This is folly, but let it pass now. Did the seventy-two from *original institution* receive any power of Church Government, or govern in *common* any church, whereas their mission was to travel *two and two*? Let the *presbyters* have succeeded the *original* seventy-two, and thus derive under the institution of Christ: again, I repeat it, the idea is absurd; but, if *presbyters* succeeded *disciples*, who were they that succeeded *apostles*, either by individual representation,

representation, or by general survivorship? Beware of saying, that the apostolic power died with the original apostles. CHRIST has decided that question, when he promised to build his *everlasting* Church on *one apostle*; when he promised to be the ally and companion of his apostles to the end of the world; when he promised, that the Spirit, which he would send down, should abide with them perpetually. And observe, what authority he imparted to the eleven before he went up on high. AS MY FATHER SENT ME WITH POWER, EVEN SO DO I SEND YOU...Καθως ΑΠΕΣΤΑΛΑΚΕ με ὁ Πατήρ κτλ. &c. Do you not see here the first link of succession in *apostolic* rank? By what words did the Redeemer announce his own divine mission in the synagogue of Nazareth? Read the words of Isaiah, to the fulfilment of which, in his own person, he bore testimony;\* compare that mission, in its authority, and its benefits with the apostolic mission given to the twelve,† and doubt, if you can, that the twelve had the power and the obligation, or that some one amongst them had the special obligation of perpetuating that rank, which they had gained in common, when their Lord was about to ascend; of giving injunctions to them, whom they should *select in the Holy Spirit*, as they had been enjoined by him, in consequence of their own selection in the Holy Spirit.‡

During forty days, say the Acts, he conversed with them

\* Luc. ix. 11. 19.    † John xx. 21. 22.    ‡ Acts 1, 2.

them, the twelve, on *the Kingdom of God*; that is to say, on the establishment of the Gospel. In this document I find no mention of presbyters; much less do I find, that the apostles were taught to deliberate, *in common with presbyters*, on the affairs of that Kingdom.

What was the most important act of the apostles, before the day of Pentecost? The election of a *successor* to an apostle. A new apostle was declared necessary to be elected, by Peter; and by virtue of this election, a disciple takes the place of Judas. Yet Christ himself had promised to the *twelve*, when Judas was present and included, that they should be seated on *twelve thrones*. Does not this seem strange? Matthias not only succeeds to the rank, which the traitor had possessed, but gains the effect of a promise, which, when made to Judas, was to be made good to his successor, coming in by posthumous election.

Perhaps, it will be said, this election had been directed by the Redeemer himself. *Perhaps* so: *perhaps* it is idle to conjecture on the subject. But if it was directed, that would only prove superfluously against the quoters of St. Jerome, how vain it is to argue concerning *original* institutions, where the nature of the directions, according to which they were founded, and the time, during which they were to prevail, are concealed from us by the Gospels, and perhaps to Evangelists themselves were not made known. It is a great matter for reflection, that the Church system

was permanently settled, at times and by matter of enactment, of which neither the special dates, nor minute process of establishment can be explored; yet the effect proclaims, that *the divine finger* was there.

Lest any tender mind should be hurt by what I advance; that certain points of divine instruction, concerning the establishment of the Church, may possibly not have been communicated to Evangelists, I beg to remind you, that Paul conferred *secretly* on his Gospel with the three *pillars* of the faith. I beg to suggest, what John the Evangelist records, that after the question put thrice to Peter, and the solemn gift and confirmation by the Redeemer to him, of his great pastoral charge; after the prophecy of his glorious martyrdom *in imitation of Christ himself*, even Peter is called *apart*, nor is John suffered by our Lord to accompany him: lastly, that the mysterious expressions of Christ both to Peter and to John, were not understood by the others present, and are explained by John himself, who had survived the destruction of Jerusalem, according to that prophecy.

If it be lawful to intrude with suppositions of probability on that memorable interview and consultation, is it not most natural to think, that the imposition of so great a charge, and the prediction of Peter's death in old age, but still holding that charge, followed by that invitation to private Council, all unite in raising the presumption, that Peter was then  
directed



directed to hasten the establishment of the Church, whenever his death should be near, and that this establishment was to be made conformable to that, which Christ himself had originated amongst the apostles; that, in short, the *apostolical* rank was to be diffused and established in succession, under primacy, and with certain rules for its proof and recognition? This is certainly a probable conjecture. The Scripture has informed us moreover, that CHRIST revealed to Peter, in his old age, that *his death* was near.\* Does not this intimation from the Redeemer, seem like a correspondence with the former prediction, and with the charge formerly assigned, and the commandments given to Peter in secret? Was it not like an order to *arrange his house*? At the same time, Peter, strong in prophetic wisdom, anticipated the dangers about to encompass the new world of believers, when he should be gone. He foresaw persecutions even to death ready to commence against the name of Christian.† Is it to be supposed, that he did nothing for perpetuating that class, of which he was the chief? Nothing for strengthening, against the winds and inundation, that Church, which was to be founded distinctly upon his own name and confession; nothing for preserving that gradation, which CHRIST himself had established amongst his apostles, when the flock

was

\* Peter Epist. ii. Chap. 14.

† Epist. i. Chap. iv. V. 14, to 18.

was scanty, and when he presided himself over all? It is not to be supposed; although we were left to conjecture as to the manner, by which the supremacy of apostolical rank was actually settled for continuance. A substantive change *must* have taken place at this Epoch, or must have been *prepared*. In either case, if Episcopacy was the object of that change, *sole Episcopacy* must have been of *original* institution, preordained by Christ, though a temporary system had preceded it. It is an abuse of speech to term the scaffolding the *original* design of the architect, because it has been the first erection. For us, who have had the continuance of a Christian Church on earth realised, and thus the assurance to Peter realised; it would be absurd in idea, and impious in consequence, to argue, that the *original* institution of Christ, if enacted for all times, had been notoriously superseded during seventeen hundred years. But of this more at large hereafter.

Enough, however, has been said to manifest the inaccuracy of such words, as *original arrangement* or *primary institution*, when applied to the ultimate establishment of the Christian Church, and to that form, under which it has pleased the Founder of christianity to render its benefits perpetual. Enough has been adduced to meet and to explode the inferences, attempted to be drawn from this quotation, in favour

of

of a *divine equal right* in *presbyters*, as now understood, with *bishops*. At no period whatever, from the earliest organization of the Church, did this pretended equality subsist. Amongst the very apostles there was inequality, because there was an *order* declared by their Master. Again, these apostles were declared superior to all other disciples ; they were the perpetual companions of the Redeemer, and to them alone had been promised the supreme dignity of judges, when he himself should be enthroned as King. While these apostles lived, they were undoubtedly the first, by what name soever they might have stiled themselves. If this subordination of offices was established by Christ himself, as the rule and model for his Church, it would be strange, that the apostles should have inverted the order of divine institution, and bequeathed an equality, which, by those, who urge the quotation from Saint Jerome, must be allowed to have brought the Church to the verge of ruin. But above all it has been shewn, that the passage in question labours under a two-fold and incurable defect ; by omitting to state, at *what time* or by *what authority* the care of each Church was taken away from the *presbyters*, and by arguing notwithstanding from the identity of *name*, possessed by later as by *original* presbyters, that the office of both, or the *original and divine* institution of both, is one and the same.

So much for the commentary on Paul to Titus. The letter to Evagrius, written avowedly against the boldness of certain deacons, who set themselves above presbyters, has been also cited by every foe to bishops. It has been explained or defended by almost every Catholic writer on the Christian hierarchy, and, amongst protestants, by Beveridge and Pearson. In this letter, the course of proof, that *bishops* and *presbyters* were indiscriminate epithets of one and the same class, is resembling that of the commentary on Saint Paul: the Scripture texts are in substance those already quoted. The material difference, in words at least, is to be found in these following expressions: “As to the  
 “ Election of one” presbyter “to be placed above the  
 “ others, it was meant as the remedy for schism, lest  
 “ each by dragging to himself the Church should rend it  
 “ asunder. For even at Alexandria, from Mark the  
 “ Evangelist until the Episcopacy of Heraclas and  
 “ Dionysius, the presbyters uniformly chose one from  
 “ their own body, and, installing him in the lofty chair,  
 “ entitled him *bishop*; just as if an army should create  
 “ its own General, or as deacons might elect and  
 “ stile *Archdeacon* one of themselves of approved suffi-  
 “ ciency. For, *ordination* excepted, what does a  
 “ bishop perform, which a presbyter may not per-  
 “ form?”

From this authority, Saumaise inferred, that, at Alexandria, the Presbyter elect became a complete  
 Bishop,

Bishop, by virtue of the election solely: from this authority, coupled with the *Alexandrine Chronicle*, it was insisted by Blondel, that the episcopal rank was merely the station of oldest presbyter, to which an honorary superintendence was joined. Selden, the Editor of that Chronicle, maintained, that the Alexandrian presbyters *ordained* their Bishop. Amongst the Catholics of that day, Petau was the foremost to combat the new discoverers: he exploded the *Alexandrine Chronicle* by documents more ancient.\* The leading arguments of Petau were afterwards copied by Pearson into his *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ*, but without any sort of acknowledgment to their first proprietor.†

It is unnecessary to remind you, that the avowed object of saint Jerome, in writing to Evagrius, was to lower the insolence of deacons, who, in some church or other, had dared to place themselves before presbyters. The letter is therefore of that sort, which he himself has elsewhere termed *gymnastic*; which, as he informs us, allows full liberty to argue, without committing the disputant for the opinions or facts alleged: which, in short, speaks differently from what it intends.‡ If it be worth the while to deliver my persuasion on the subject, Jerome solely had in view

\* Petav. De Episcop. Dignitate &c. Lib. i. chap. 1, also, de Hierarch. Eccles. Lib. i. ch. 9, and 12. Lib. ii. ch. 4, 5, 8. Lib. v. per tot.

† In *Vindiciæ Ignat.* Part. i. ch. 11. ‡ *Apol. cont. Ruf.* Lib. II.

view to establish, that *deacons* were not any class or portion of the *sacerdotal* body : that bishops and presbyters formed one priestly order. In proof of this, he goes over the texts formerly enumerated, and adds the history or story concerning the usage of Alexandria ; where, until the middle of the third century, the presbyters not only were the *sole* electors, but elected uniformly *from amongst themselves*, as if the title to episcopacy was confined to their order. Saint Jerome, indeed, pushes the phrase to an extreme, when he likens the election of the Bishop by those presbyters, to the election of a general by an army, or of an *archdeacon* by his fellow deacons. His object had been to inculcate, that the election of a bishop was the exclusive concern of *presbyters* ; but his words exposed him to the suspicion of having insinuated, that, if *presbyters* have a right to elect their bishop, as an army chuses its general, it would follow, that *presbyters* can completely make a bishop, and therefore *ordain* one. He escapes from this difficulty, and secures his retreat by asking, *what can* the bishop do, except *ordination*, which a presbyter may not do ? thus guarding his words from an inference, otherwise not improbable to be made by his readers, yet leaving in force the generality of his assertions.

Such, I am persuaded, was the object which he had in view. But I will not urge for argument my own individual conviction. I will suppose, as when  
lately

lately examining the *original institution*, that a modern writer has alleged the same words, and the Glosses, whether of Selden or of Saumaise, as one historical document. Let the name of Saint Jerome be removed.

If those ancient *presbyters* of Alexandria made a bishop without further ordination, those presbyters were *bishops* in the present acceptance of the term, and the bishop, whom they so made, was a *Metropolitan*. The synod of Alexandria was then resembling the Episcopal synods of Jerusalem. If the presbyters merely enjoyed the right of selecting always *from their own class* a presbyter *to be ordained* by bishops, it would only prove, what no person doubts, that the dignity of presbyter, as it stands nearest, so is naturally the most worthy of pretending to the Episcopal succession, and that the presbyters, being sole Electors, gave the preference to their own class. In either supposition a great chasm has been left. If those presbyters of Alexandria were, in fact bishops, what became of that *episcopal* body? Was it broken up at Alexandria and sent into different parts of Egypt, in order to establish local Sees? If so, the presbyters who succeeded them at Alexandria, were in fact, a new class. Was it reduced at Alexandria to its later rank? If so, by whom was this abdication effected, of which no ancient writer of Alexandria has given an account? Again; if, until the days of Heraclas and Dionysius, the presbyters merely elected one *out of their own class*, and this was the known usage from the apostolic

times, by what force, or by what law, or by what *decree* was the usage varied? In each supposition, all is darkness and incoherence.

The bishop *Heraclas* was cotemporary with Fabian of Rome. From the account of the election of the latter it appears, that to elect and instal in the episcopal chair, was not to *ordain*. Fabian was a layman, and attended by chance at the election. The people, excited by what they considered a miraculous intimation, cried out, that he was deserving, and placed him by force on *the episcopal throne*.<sup>\*</sup> Here we have a layman seated as *bishop*. Are we to infer that he was never *ordained*?

The bishop *Dionysius* lived in the time of Cornelius of Rome, and when the Novatian schism commenced. To this Dionysius the Roman bishop addressed a narrative of that schism. From the synodical letter of Cornelius to the bishop of Antioch we learn, that Novatian was followed by five Roman presbyters: but still so essential was it esteemed in that age, that a presbyter (for such Novatian was), should be ordained a bishop by *bishops*, that Novatian had recourse to three simple men of episcopal rank, and living in obscure places, invited them to Rome, as arbitrators on the contested Election, and made them drunk on the road, in order to obtain the colour of an episcopal ordination. The words of Cornelius are, that “ he  
“ procured

\* Eccl. b. II. c. 6. Ch. 29.



“procured those three bishops to be shut up by means  
 ‘of his agents, at a late hour, and when heavy with  
 “wine and surfeit, and violently compelled them to  
 “GIVE HIM EPISCOPACY, by means of an unsubstantial  
 “and ineffectual consecration.”\* Would Cornelius  
 have even argued against the claim of Novatian, if this  
 latter had procured the five Roman presbyters of his  
 side, to GIVE HIM EPISCOPACY, at any hour or with any  
 the greatest solemnities? and yet the presbyters of  
 Rome were as highly privileged in that day, as the  
 mere presbyters in Egypt had ever been.

If those Alexandrian presbyters *ordained their*  
 bishop from the days of Saint Mark, those presbyters  
 must themselves have been ordained *in succession* with  
 the *express power* of ordaining the bishop of Alexan-  
 dria, and thus have been *bishops*. Again; if without  
 any new ordination, the *presbyter* elect was bishop of  
 Alexandria; this presbyter and his fellow presbyters  
 must have been ordained *bishops*, from the apostolic age.  
 That the latter was the case is what saint Jerome, at  
 least, seems to insinuate. In either supposition  
 the argument comes to this. At Alexandria, Cler-  
 gymen called *presbyters* were, in fact, *bishops* until the  
*middle*

\* Euseb. H. E. I. 6. C. 40. Επισκοπους ἴδεις, ἀνθρώπους ἀγροίκους  
 καὶ ἀτλούσατους συγκλησιασθέντας ὑπο τινῶν ὁμοίων αὐτῶ πεταγμένων ἀνθρώπων,  
 ὡρῆς δικατη μὴδυντας καὶ κραιπαλῶντας μετὰ βίας παραγκάτεν ἐπιτοκή σιν  
 ναὶ μετὰ χριστιανισμῶν Επισκοπὴν αὐτῶ δοῦναι.

*middle of the third century*: therefore no distinction or small difference was established, by the *original institution* of Christ, between the two orders, which, in the age of Jerome, were distinguished by the name of *bishop* and *presbyter*. Let us match this reasoning with a parallel. In the *first* century, one Peter was a *presbyter*, and one John was a *presbyter*, and they stiled themselves such, but were in fact apostles also: in the *fourth* century one Jerome was a *presbyter*: therefore it came rather from *ecclesiastical usage* than from the *original institution* of Christ, that the *presbyters*, Peter and John, were superior to such *presbyters* as Jerome.

From what source, or from what hearsay information, Saint Jerome procured the fact concerning the presbyters at Alexandria, can, at this distance of time, be only conjectured. That he relied on assertion, rather than on historical proof, is to be inferred from the vague reference to the age of *Heraclas and of Dionysius*. But even with regard to his assertion, that either in the time of Heraclas or of Dionysius, the elections were made at once by the presbyters without the intervention of the people, it is discountenanced by an authority, which Saint Jerome himself translated into Latin, namely by that of Origen, whom Heraclas, before his Episcopacy, *succeeded* in the school of Alexandria. Origen represents the appointment of bishops, in his day, as requiring the presence of all the people,

to

to the end, that each person may attest or acquiesce in the superiority of the person elected, and be ever afterwards barred from disputing the ordination.\*

Nor is it on the score of reasoning alone that this illustration from Alexandria would be assailable. It moreover is subject to some curious doubting. For example; were there any *presbyters* in Egypt, *without* the city of Alexandria, from the time of Saint Mark, to the age of Heraclas and Dionysius? If there were, how came it to pass, that those good men, who by the *original institution*, were all equal to the presbyters in the capital, and equally entitled to *rule the Church in partnership*, were notwithstanding excluded at so early a period from appointing, or perchance from *ordaining*, the bishop of Alexandria? What! did the city presbyters, by force of an *original institution* attached to their rank of *presbyter*, create their bishop, as an *army creates its general*, and yet disfranchise the *presbyter* in the *suburbs*?

There are answers possible to be made to this difficulty; first, that in the ancient churches, beyond Alexandria, it is improbable that more than a single *presbyter*, generally speaking, was attached to each: secondly, that wherever a rural or provincial church had several *presbyters*, these also elected their *bishops*, as was practised in the city. These answers will soon  
 prove

\* Hemil. 6. ad 3 Levitic. as cited in the Decret. 2. Caus. 8. qu. 15.

prove their indiscretion. Such single *presbyter*, being equal to *bishops*, and having the care of an entire Church, should have been stiled a *bishop*, according to Saint Jerome's reasoning: yet he *could not* have been called a *bishop*, according to his historical proof. At Alexandria, the name of *bishop* was appropriated to a *presbyter*, chosen and established by his *colleagues* to rule themselves. Therefore the *single presbyter* was *not* a bishop according to the usage and *original institution* in Egypt. Neither could this single presbyter *ordain*. The usage of Alexandria forbade that. What then was this solitary presbyter? Neither more nor less than "a priest of the second order."

As to the other supposition, that, wherever several presbyters were attached to one provincial church, they elected their *bishop* as was done in the capital; it stands contradicted by undoubted history. The bishop of Alexandria ordained *all* the bishops of his district until the end of the third century, when Meletius, in schism, assumed the independence of a Metropolitan.

Thus the *history* and the *reasoning* would undermine one another, at least from that age, when christianity ventured to establish itself, at the distance of one day's travel from Alexandria. But something more important is yet to come. The title of *senior*, in Latin, was used by *bishops*, and continued to be given to *bishops* until

until the *fourth* century ;\* whereas, beyond a doubt, the title of *Episcopus*, in Greek or in Latin, was never given to “priests of the second order” after the *first* century. The title of *πρεσβυτερος* in Greek, is given to the bishops of Rome by Saint Ireneus,† who has so strongly inculcated the necessity of an *episcopal* succession, and who enumerates those bishops down to his own age, in the last years of the second century. If in the age of Ireneus the words alluded to had been written, they would not afford the shadow of an argument, either for the equality of all *presbyters*, or for the pretended *original* institution. The death of Ireneus coincides with the period, when Demetrius, the predecessor of Heraclas, was appointed to Alexandria. Demetrius continued bishop for almost half a century ; so that, if any change took place in the ordination of bishops for the capital of Egypt, from the accession of Demetrius to the accession of Heraclas, it must have been effected, or have established itself as a new rule, when this latter was *ordained*. Supposing therefore, that, between the commencement of Episcopacy in Demetrius and the installation

\* Tertull. in Apol. *President probati quique seniores*. In Concil. Agrippin. Contra Ephratam. Labb. ii. p. 616, Valerianus Episcopus dixit. Etsi non omnes *conseniores* hic...convenissemus, suffecerat a quinque Episcopis &c.

† Ad Florin. Euseb. H. E. Lib. v. ch. 20. Ad Victor Episcop. Romae, ibid. ch. 24. Contra Haeres. Lib. iii. ch. 2. et *ubique*

installation of Heraclas, the term *presbyter* was reduced at Alexandria, to the precise meaning which it bears at this day, which it bore in Egypt, in the time of Dionysius, and at Rome in the time of Cornelius, the consequence will be this; that, owing to some causes not hitherto explained, the resident *episcopal* college of Alexandria was discontinued; that no *presbyters* were any longer ordained there, with *episcopal* powers; so that the provincial *synod* of the bishop of the chief City, was cantoned into various towns of his province, and developed into an apparently new system; inasmuch as those presbyters had gained thereby the dignity of supreme governors within their local spheres, and yet retained the *ordination* of their Metropolitan.

The first years of Demetrius of Alexandria were remarkable in Egypt by the persecution of Severus. The slaughter is described as immense: the most illustrious for piety throughout the districts of Thebais and of Egypt *proper*, were brought into Alexandria and butchered,\* amongst whom was the father of Origen. In the city itself the persecution was so fearful and obstinate, that the Catechistical School, which had long flourished there, and had been successively governed by Pantenus and by Clement the presbyter, was entirely abandoned.† It is not improbable, that the Alexandrian presbyters, who took refuge without the city, were appointed bishops of the places, in which they resided.

\* Euseb. H. E. L. vi. ch. 1.      † Ibid. ch. 2.

resided. That their absence from the city was of considerable duration, is to be gathered from the fact, that Leonidas had been brought up to Alexandria, and was under sentence, when his son Origen was a mere boy;\* that Origen was eighteen years old, when he undertook the Catechetical lecture, and that during the intervening time of perhaps five years, the schools had remained closed.† Another circumstance gives weight to this probability. The Chronicle of Eutychius, published by Selden, relates, that in Egypt there was no bishop but the Patriarch, until Demetrius ordained *three*; that the presbyters of Alexandria, until the fourth century, were accustomed to constitute and *ordain* their Patriarch. This piece of information was cried up by Selden, as an invaluable discovery: he was convinced, that Eutychius, (who wrote in the *tenth* century), had availed himself of the *genuine records* of the *church* of Alexandria; nay, Selden was persuaded, that the *three* bishops of the creation of Demetrius, were ordained for the express purpose of crushing Origen. Pearson ridicules the idea of *genuine records* in Alexandria, two hundred years after the *public library* had been destroyed. Selden indeed had not alluded to the *public library*, but to the *church registers*. However, Pearson gives multiplied proofs of the ignorance of Eutychius, and demonstrates, that bishops were in *Egypt* before the age of Demetrius.

3 B

trius.

\* Ibid. ch. 2. Οριγενειος ε ι κομιδη παιδος υπαρχοντος. † Ibid. ch. 3.

trius. Selden therefore and Eutychius are both mistaken, if both assert, that no *bishops* were in all *Egypt* until Demetrius. At the same time, as to that district of Egypt, which was adjacent to Alexandria, and in which Marcotis lies, and Hermopolis, and the other *paracise*, which, in the fourth century, were the peculiar object of superintendance for Alexandria, Pearson has adduced neither an instance nor a probability to shew, that these districts had local *bishops* before Demetrius. The notion indeed of Selden, that *three* bishops were created with a view to ruin Origen, is ridiculous, inasmuch as Demetrius had all the other bishops within his jurisdiction; but the general coincidence of the epoch, assigned by Eutychius for the establishment of *bishops*, with the loose assignment of dates by Saint Jerome for the usage of Alexandria, seems deserving of attention. Eutychius is grossly mistaken, when he continues the Episcopal authority of the presbyters of Alexandria, to the fourth century, and when he asserts, if he does unequivocally assert, that in *all the Egyptian patriarchate*, but one bishop was existing until Demetrius. Yet the particular mention of *Demetrius*, joined with the circumstances of persecution alluded to, and with the considerations, which I will subjoin, do intimate, at least to my suspicion, that, under Demetrius, a change took place in the ecclesiastical government of that church.



It would be injustice to Eutychius, were I to suffer my reader to think, that he asserts, that the presbyters at Alexandria, as presbyters in the modern sense, did ordain the chief bishop. Far from this, *Eutychius* relates the usage as expressly derived from Saint Mark. “The Evangelist,” writes he, “established “Ananias” (Annianus) “Patriarch, and twelve “presbyters, who were to reside with him; so that, “whenever the patriarchal See became vacant, the “twelve should elect one of themselves, whom the “remaining eleven should consecrate by imposition of “hands and create the patriarch; and next should “elect to the vacant place amongst the twelve, some “distinguished man.”\* This prerogative of Alexandrian presbyters, he erroneously asserts to have lasted until Alexander, who was conspicuous in the Nicene Council. What does the evidence amount to? Namely, that Saint Mark, when living, appointed his own coadjutor and successor; that he ordained twelve other bishops with the chance of succession, but until then, to be of the council of the chief bishop; that, while the patriarch lived, he represented Christ with his

\* Constituit Evangelista Marcus una cum Hanania patriarcha xii presbyteros qui nempe cum patriarcha manerent, adeo ut cum vacaret patriarchatus, unum e xii presbyteris eligerent, cuius capiti reliqui xi manus *imponentes*, ipsi benedicerent et patriarcham crearent, deinde virum aliquem insignem eligerent, quem secum presbyteram constituerent, loco ejus qui factus est Patriarcha.

his apostles; that on the patriarch's decease, the best was to succeed. If, instead of appointing those twelve, the Evangelist had ordained, in twelve neighbouring towns, as many men *called presbyters* with the power of ordaining their bishop, it would have been exactly the institution of a Metropolitan and Suffragans, as I have already observed. Now it happens, that the Episcopal College was established for a large tract in one chief city, as had been the case with Jerusalem. From this city, the faith is to be disseminated in every quarter, and, until it has gained a settlement abroad, the missionary authorities are organized in the parent Church. That man must have a robust constitution for *dreaming*, who will infer from such a text, either that those twelve were presbyters *of the second order*, or that no presbyters of the *second order* were of Apostolical institution. Was the Evangelist authorised to ordain his own successor? Undoubtedly he was. Again; was he empowered to ordain as many eventual successors, as he judged fit and necessary for so large a mission, and to provide against the dangers of mortality and of persecution? Undoubtedly he was. Pray then, if no churches were as yet established beyond Alexandria, what would you wish him to have done with those bishops, unless what he is represented, by Eutychius, as having done? Suppose, that in the fourth century, all the bishops of a province had been driven by persecution into the metropolis, and

and that the province itself had been seized upon by Infidels. In such a state of things, suppose the Metropolitan to have died. Who is to chuse his successor? The Nicene Council answers, *All the bishops of the Province, if possible.*\* Suppose one of the suffragan bishops to have deceased. Who, again, is to appoint his successor? The same Council answers, 'The other bishops, but *with the consent and authority of the Metropolitan*, without which consent, it is *provided always, that the ordination shall be void.*† Now, is there any remarkable difference between the case of all the bishops of a province, being hunted into the metropolis by temporary persecution, and all the bishops destined for a province being kept within the metropolis by temporary persecution, or by temporary impossibility?

If then we will allow the testimony of Eutychius or his Chronicle to have any weight in ascertaining the more ancient discipline of the Church at Alexandria, there were men, called presbyters, ordained by Saint Mark, with the express power of ordaining their chief bishop. In other words, there were several bishops, (in the more recent acceptation of this term), ordained by the Evangelist; bishops however, whose powers were limited, by their original institution, to the keeping of the place of their superior, or *primate*, always full. Combining the passage, quoted from  
saint

\* Can. 4. † Can. 4, and 6.

saint Jerome, with the evidence of Eutychius, there was *inequality* in the time of Saint Mark, and, from his day to the age of Dionysius, between the man called *Episcopus*, and the men called *presbyters*, in Alexandria. If we will trust to Eutychius alone, those presbyters were *bishops*, and their chief was an *archbishop* or primate. If we are content with the obscure hints thrown out by saint Jerome, still it is manifest, that, not only immediately after saint Mark, but even during his government, there was a supreme single governor of the churches in Egypt; namely, the Evangelist himself. Thus in either way, the *original* equality is cut up root and branch. Neither must it be forgotten, that this Evangelist departed from life several years before the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, and very many years before the death of the beloved apostle, John.\* There were sole *bishops* consequently, namely, *primates* in Alexandria, during the lives of those three apostles, and, beyond a doubt, with their knowledge, confirmation and sanction. I am at a loss to discover, in what rational sense those *primates*, with the care of the entire church, could have been thought to hold their authority by virtue of an *ecclesiastical* usage, rather than by a title coeval with the introduction of the gospel, and coequal, because associated, with the authority of the apostles.

I have said, that supposing the words of Saint  
Jerome

\* Euseb. H. E. Lib. 2. cap. 24.

Jerome to have been copied from an author coeval with Heraclas or with Demetrius, and to have been written originally either in Greek or in Latin, they could not have afforded the shadow of an argument; inasmuch as, when the episcopal and priestly offices were most clearly distinguished, the title of presbyter was continued as the *property* of the bishop. To the instances, adduced in proof of my assertion, I will subjoin one further, as it appears to me decisive with regard to the mode of expression at Alexandria, and in an age preceding that of Heraclas and Dionysius.

Clement of Alexandria was a distinguished presbyter before the end of the second century, namely in the first years of Commodus.\* As a writer he must have been known for several years before the death of Ireneus, who had seen Polycarp, ordained bishop of Smyrna by the apostle, John. Clement was also the preceptor of Origen,† as this latter was of Heraclas,‡ *during* whose Episcopacy, or after whose death, it is pretended, that the Alexandrian presbyters ceased or were disqualified to elect a bishop from amongst themselves. This Clement, relating the conversion of a robber by saint John, declares the history to be matter of fact and preserved in memory. He states, that the apostle, being released from exile by the overthrow of Domitian, went back to Ephesus: that, from that city he would travel, when invited, into the bordering nations

\* Euseb. *H. E.* lib. 5. cap. ix. and x.      † *I. b.* vi. cap. 6.

‡ *Ibid.* cap. 15.

nations, at one time for the purpose of *ordaining bishops*; at another, of *organizing churches in all respects*: and occasionally to adopt into the clergy some individual person, made known to him by divine revelation. On his arrival *in a city* not far distant from Ephesus, he gave in charge, writes Clement, *to the bishop ordained there*, and in the presence of the whole congregation, a youth to be instructed and preserved. The *bishop* undertook the trust. As soon as the apostle departed from the city, the *presbyter* took to his home, instructed, and finally baptized the youth *entrusted to him*: after which, relaxing in his care, the convert was depraved by society, and became a murderer and the captain of a band of robbers. The apostle, some time after, returning to that city, demanded from the *bishop* the trust confided to him in the presence of the entire congregation, over *which he presided*.\*

Such is the introduction to a narrative delivered by a presbyter of Alexandria, who flourished about half a century before Heraclas was bishop, and more *than two hundred years* before saint Jerome, a foreigner to the ecclesiastical usages of Egypt, wrote his account of the early practice at Alexandria.

It appears from this quotation, that *Clement*, who as a *presbyter* of the original form was one of those, who are pretended to have been equal to bishops, was  
however

\* Euseb. Lib. iii. cap. 23. from the treatise, *πρὸς τὸν πρῶτον κληρικόν*. afterwards published in the Bibliotheca Patrum.

however persuaded, that John the apostle did actually ordain a *single bishop* in a *city*, as governor of the Church, and without any fellow presbyters: it appears, that the *name* of *bishop* in the meaning of Clement, was not indicative of a *presbyter* set over his fellow presbyters by election, nor was the creation of a single bishop an *ecclesiastical usage*, or an *after-thought*, but was the first idea and simple cast of apostolical government: lastly, it is plain, that this sole *bishop* of the city was called the *presbyter* of the city.\* Yet this Clement is one of the writers, who have borne unequivocal witness to the gradations of *bishop*, *presbyter* and *deacon*. When I argued, that whatever change took place in the ecclesiastical department at Alexandria, and about the period loosely given by saint Jerome, must have been realised in the ordination of Heraclas; when I suggested as probable, that if, until the persecution of Severus, any *presbyters* in name, but *subordinate bishops* in fact, resided in or near the capital as within one chief government, such presbyters on being driven from the capital, retreated

3 c

to

\* Ελθων ενν και επι τινα των ου μακρην πολων... επι πασι τω καθεστωι προσβλιψας ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΩ, νεανισκον.. ιδων, τουτου εφη, σοι παρακατατιθιμαι επι της εκκλησιας και του Χριστου μαρτυρος.... Ειτα ο μιν απηρην επι την εφισον ο δε ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟΣ αναλαβων οικαδε τον παραδοθεντα νεανισκον εστρεψε. κ τ λ. Χρονος εν μισω και τινος επιπιστευσης χρεσιας ανακαλουσι τον Ιωαννην... ο δε αγεδη φησιν, ω επισκοπε την παρακαταθηκην αποδος, ην ιγνωτι και ο Χριστος παρακατιθιμιθα επι της εκκλησιας, ης προκαθηζη, μαρτυρος.

to and stationed themselves in the provincial towns as local bishops; it was not my meaning to assert, that no bishops had been resident out of Alexandria, until that persecution, in the provincial towns of Egypt. I merely stated, that granting the Metropolitan See of Alexandria to have held, until then, its *synod at home*, and to have kept a large district near the capital, under the visitation of a standing Episcopal council, with the chief bishop at its head; yet the violence and obstinacy of that persecution, which after depopulating the adjacent districts, finally hunted the old *presbyters* from the city, would sufficiently account for the hypothetical change in the rank of Alexandrian *presbyters*.

It is singular, that saint Jerome, when alleging the early practice in Egypt, should have dissembled the sources whence he derived his knowledge: but it is not less singular, that Eutychius records the usage of the Alexandrian *presbyters ordaining their patriarch*, to have subsisted until the bishop Alexander. Silly as this latter assertion is, and contradicted as it is by evident history, still, as no collusion existed between Jerome and Eutychius; I suspect, that both of these writers had one and the same fact, as the ground of their several and apparently opposite assertions. The nature of this fact would justify the reserve of saint Jerome. In short, when Alexander was bishop, a *presbyter* named Coluthus was deposed by him for *blasphemy*. Coluthus, *without any new ordination*, assumed the functions of a bishop and ordained  
 “priests



“priests of the second order.” His pretensions to Episcopal authority, were examined in a synod held at Alexandria, and he was declared to be a *presbyter* in the latter signification and no more: all his ordinations were declared a mockery.\*

Here we have got a presbyter of Alexandria usurping the rank of a bishop, as late as the period, marked by Eutychius for the usage of consecrating the patriarch by the presbyters: from this *attempt* of Coluthus obscurely remembered, it is more than possible, that the *practice* was erroneously inferred, either by Eutychius himself, or by those writers whom he copied. But it is highly improbable, that Coluthus would have made the attempt, in open contradiction to the Catholic usages of his day, without some plea or some colour of justification, derived from the peculiar or original constitution of the church at Alexandria. Whatever his defence might have been, it was overruled, and his party disappeared in a very short time. But he could not possibly have alleged any practice within memory; first, because such practice would have come down to us from some writer of the third century: secondly, because the appeal of Cornelius of Rome, against the ordination of Novatian, to Dionysius of Alexandria and to the bishop of Antioch implied, that the necessity of an Episcopal consecration was a fundamental law of the then Catholic Church:

\* Athanas. Apol. 2. Synodic. Alexandrin. Concil. Extat etiam in Harduin. Conc. I. p. 582. c.

Church: thirdly, because if Coluthus himself had received a formal ordination resembling that of a bishop, his case would have resembled that of Meletius, whose presbyters however were not absolutely rejected: but, principally, because the enemies of Athanasius and of the Nicene Council, (which generally enacted the Metropolitan to be ordained by *all* the bishops of the province), did not impeach the ordination of Athanasius on any other ground, except, that it had been effected, by a *minority of the provincial bishops*.\* Athanasius regularly succeeded Alexander, and the false accusation alone would be a sufficient refutation of Euty chius, as to the duration of the supposed establishment in Alexandria.

Every truth, said Athenagoras, a primitive defender of christianity, has a lie or falsity springing up near its stock. I have endeavoured to ascertain, whether the Church of Alexandria had, at any time, the same constitution as the primitive churches of Jerusalem or of Rome; namely, the constitution of a missionary church of apostolical presbyters, centered in one spot, occasionally sent out upon episcopal visitation, and, when at home, subject to one chief, called the governor or *bishop*. The only authors, whom Eusebius has quoted, concerning the first establishment of christianity in Egypt, are Hegesippus, and Clement of Alexandria.† Of the former of these writers

\* In eadem Synod. *ibid.* p. 574 E. † Euseb. *ad finem tabulæ Lib. 2.*

writers we have little or nothing extant : of the latter we have no more of the work about to be cited, than Eusebius himself has given ; but from the manner of quotation it would appear, that both concurred in relating, that saint Mark being sent by Peter as a missionary into Egypt, “ *established churches, first of all, of (or belonging to) the city of Alexandria.*”\*

This text is most important, inasmuch as the phrase is singular, even in Eusebius. We have indeed, in the epistles of saint Paul, the mention of a church assembled in the house of an individual ; but neither does this last church contradict the natural explanation, which occurs, concerning those Alexandrian churches. The Evangelist Mark was primarily directed to the Jews established in that capital, and he is supposed by Eusebius, (who professes to have collected his second book from ancient writers, and in this particular undoubtedly from Clement), to have chiefly addressed himself to the Jews. But, besides Jews, there were heathens to be converted ; and I hold no point to be more certain, from intrinsic evidence as well as from comparing the several authorities of scripture, than that no converted Gentiles were set over converted Jews as pastors, during the apostolic age. A church of *gentiles* must have been also established at Alexandria, and this church would rather demand for its

\* Lib. 2. Cap. xvi. ΤΟΥΤΟΥ ΔΕ ΜΑΡΚΟΥ ΦΑΣΙΝ...ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΠΡΩΤΗ ΕΠΙ  
 ΣΤΗΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΕΙΑΣ ΣΥΣΤΗΘΗΚΕ.

its governor a converted heathen. As long as the Evangelist lived, these churches were equally under his controul as apostolical delegate, and as primate of those two *presbyters* or *bishops*.

Let me be suffered, in the next step of explanation, to avail myself of the work called *apostolical constitutions*. That the book has been dreadfully interpolated, will not admit of a doubt: that it was a very ancient work in the age of Eusebius, who, justly refusing to it the authority of scripture, yet classes it with the most ancient book of Ilermas; that it was admitted by Athanasius as ordained by the *venerable ancients* to be read; that, in the time of Epiphanius, it contained the accurate proceeding of ecclesiastical regulation, is equally undoubted.\*

It inculcates the necessity of episcopal ordination, in order to become a bishop,† as it gives a ritual for the ordination of bishops and of presbyters. But here it should be remembered, that a capital perplexity awaits the defenders of original equal right. When it is alleged, that bishops and presbyters were made by *one ordination*, we may well ask, by what species of ordination. No part of the New Testament has informed us of this essential matter. In no canonical record, if we abstract from the ever-living authority of the church, is there to be found a precedent of words or of gestures for the ordination of a *presbyter*:  
and

\* See the testimonies in Cotelier.

† Lib. 3. cap. xi. et xx.

and yet, if the office be necessary in all ages, the rule should be undoubted in every time. The learned Beveridge, a protestant writer and afterwards a bishop of the church of England, saw this, and has anticipated the necessity of proofs by me, that the perpetuation of the Hierarchy was finally modelled *after* the completion of the books of the New Testament, thus surrendering to *tradition*, ay, to tradition! the continuity of gospel efficacy, and the certain succession of functionaries with apostolical mission.

In the so called apostolical constitutions the first bishop is said to have been consecrated by Mark: the second bishop by Luke the Evangelist.\* On this I rely no farther than to infer, that when those constitutions were put together, it was not known, that *presbyters* ordained the bishop of Alexandria from the days of saint Mark, and that the bishop ordained by Luke, himself a convert from Heathenism,† must have been also supposed a convert from Idolatry.

To return to Eusebius; this writer, upon more ancient authority, not only relates, that christian churches were established beyond Alexandria by saint Mark, but goes so far as to pretend, that in the description

\* Book 7. chap. 46. The eighth book of the constitutions is not quoted or alluded to by any ancient writer. The interpolations, which degrade the work itself, are taken from Heresies subsequent to the age of Constantine.

† Ad Colossens. cap. iv. v. 10, 11. Salutet vos...*qui sunt ex circumcissione* v. 12. Salutet vos Epaphras. v. 14. *Lucas.*

scription of the Therapeuts given by Philo, the system of christian government, as prescribed by saint Mark to the believing Jews of Egypt, with deacons, *presbyters and bishops*, and as practised chiefly in the districts round Alexandria and beyond the Marcotis, is exactly described.\* From this I infer, that, in the persuasion of Eusebius and of his ancient vouchers, there were *bishops* as distinct from *presbyters* as from *deacons* established by saint Mark in the vicinity of Alexandria, at least of the baptized Jews.

On the other hand, in recording the succession of bishops to the four great Sees, Eusebius apparently distinguishes the church of Alexandria from the others. From saint Mark to Julian the predecessor of Demetrius, each succeeding bishop is mentioned as governing the *paroecia* or *district*, and *one* bishop as governing the church of Alexandria. Julian is the first, whom he states to have acceded to the episcopal government of the *churches belonging to that capital*. The same expression is used with regard to Demetrius his successor.† If any weight is to be allowed to this observation, it may be inferred, that about the first year of Commodus, some new local and resident bishops were appointed, subordinate to Alexandria.

It would remain to be enquired, whether any thing can be gleaned from Eusebius, as to the anterior constitution of the Alexandrian church. Now I think, that

\* Euseb. H. E. Lib. 2. cap. 17. † l. b. v. cap. 9, et 22.

that the following passage, hitherto unobserved, is sufficient to demonstrate, that it preserved the missionary form, until the age of Julian. During the episcopacy of this latter, according to the historian, Pantenus flourished, a convert from the stoical sect. Such was his zeal, that he was *created an Evangelist to the eastern nations*, and actually travelled as far as the Indies.\* This Pantenus of course must have been ordained a bishop. But more. Eusebius adds, that even in that age there were several men *ardent imitators of the apostles and evangelists, of whom this Pantenus was one.*† Lastly he informs us, that Pantenus, after his mission, was appointed doctor of the catechetical school of Alexandria.‡

We have thus found a rural bishop in rank, and more in apostolical precedency than a bishop, returning to hold the station of a presbyter under Julian; which cannot be surprising to him, who will recollect, that the Nicene council willed, that the Catholic should admit the Novatian *bishops*, when reconciled, at least to the station of presbyter. The continuance of an evangelical spirit, of which Eusebius speaks, must naturally be referred to the church of Alexandria in the first instance.

Enough of this disquisition, to which nothing less than the name of saint Jerome could have bestowed the slightest interest, and of which the result is perfectly

3 D

fectly

\* Ibid. chap. 10. † *ibid.* ‡ *ibid.*

fectly a matter of indifference to Catholics. If the early practice of Alexandria was such as is pretended by the anti-episcopalians, then, beyond a doubt, such practice was an exception to the practice of the other Catholic churches, and was privileged or was erroneous. But if the practice was merely, that the presbyters not only excluded the people and inferior clergy from *voting*, but also kept all, except presbyters aloof from the chance of episcopacy, (and this, to a certainty, is the utmost of saint Jerome's assertion as to the matter of fact), the Alexandrian usage of those days has as little to do with the *divine* right of episcopacy, as the election of a pope would have to do in modern times. The pope, when once elected by the cardinals, and from amongst their body, although he should not be even a sub-deacon, is proclaimed *bishop* of Rome; is enthroned and worshipped as such, and performs acts of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, before he is consecrated. All that saint Jerome has related of the ancient Egyptian usage, has, at the very least, a parallel in the modern Roman usage; in which, notwithstanding, the consecration of a bishop of Rome must necessarily be performed by bishops. Upon the whole I fix the sacred anchor here. The presbyters of Alexandria were either synodical *bishops*, as Euty chius informs us, (that is to say, were empowered to ordain *sede vacante*, yet not qualified on any other occasion to ordain, without the *auctoritas* of their  
 their



their chief), or they were presbyters of the more recent appellation, or they were a class of men at present unknown, and therefore extinct in the Catholic church. In this last case they were not of *divine institution* for the universal church; because the universal church cannot possibly forfeit or abolish any divinely instituted function of the new law. If they were presbyters *not* bishops, that is to say, if they received *no express mission to ordain*, they of consequence did not ordain, or else their ordination was void, and would have been disallowed by the other churches, which appears not to have been the case; and therefore no mere *presbyters* at Alexandria did ordain. The ultimate consequence is this, that those, who by Eutychius are stiled presbyters of Alexandria, were in the modern sense bishops, and that those, who, according to saint Jerome, *elected the bishops* until Heraclas and Dionysius *did not ordain*.

Let me again impress on your mind, that, from the selection of the twelve *apostles*, there was inequality amongst the *disciples* of Christ: that, from the preference given to Peter and to the sons of Zebedee, in the manifestation on Thabor, and from the secrecy enjoined them, there was inequality, as to trust and confidence, amongst the apostles themselves: that, after the Resurrection, when Peter received the charge of every member of that fold, which belonged to his master, there was inequality between him and the sons of Zebedee; and that the question  
put

put to him by the Redeemer, “ Lovest thou me, *more than these do,*” went to justify the pre-eminence about to be imparted.

Even CHRIST appoints his successor : yet the twelve were compeers in rank, in authority amongst the disciples, in universality of mission, in representation of Christ, in all salutary powers. The twelve had succeeded by express appointment to the heavenly mission of the Redeemer, and by the communication of his breath and spirit. When therefore that ulterior commission, was given to Peter, its great use was, not to controul an equal apostleship in his brothers, but to be a model and precedent, and a fundamental rule in that church, which was to outlive the apostles. The twelve were to be parted from each other, and to preach in regions widely distant. But a promise and assurance had been given to Peter, that the peculiar church of Christ was to be built upon *him*, and that this church *on Peter* should endure. Again ; to Peter is entrusted the government of the fold, at the very same time, when it is predicted, that John is to survive him. Yet to John no eventual charge of the church of Christ is given. To any man, catholic or protestant, who will coolly reflect on these points, I would not hesitate to put the question, whether the *point of sight*, in the view of those gospel promises, is not determined in Peter, as the foundation stone of a church to be recognized by his name, and to the vicarial

carial government of which he succeeded, not by votes, nor by survivorship, nor by desert alone, but by the prophecy of Christ before his death, and by the proclamation of Christ after his resurrection ?

Again ; what was the peculiar church of Christ, or where was it to be founded ? Let the universal church reply. It was to be the church of the Gentiles and to be founded amongst them. Let the fact answer. No other church has Christ built, as his own ; because his own was to last for ever, and the christianity engrafted on Jewish observances was able to save the believer, but not to relieve the system from its doom. The church of CHRIST was to be the church of CHRISTIANS, and, in fact, the name of *Christian* was first used to denominate a Gentile converted to the gospel\*. The great church of Christ was to be a conquest upon heathenism:† and as soon as this church should be founded by the preaching of the gospel throughout the world, the consummation of the Mosaic establishment was to follow,‡ and of every establishment, which held from the Jewish dispensation, or associated with it beyond the necessary points, whereby the titles of christianity were derived through the evidence of the oracles of God, and through the promises, made and recorded in those oracles, of the approach, majesty, disguise, sufferings and other properties of the CHRIST ; with his rejection by that Jewish church, and with the  
reprobation

\* Acts xi. 26.

† Matth. xi. 42, 43.

‡ *ibid.* xxiv. 14.

reprobation of that Jewish people for their act of denial, when this Messiah was surrendered by them to the heathen power.

When I say, that the peculiar and prophesied church of Christ was to be built upon the site of Hea-thenism, let me not be understood to assert, that the congregation of Jewish believers, at Jerusalem, who were the first to receive the gospel and the Paraclete, did not constitute a church of Christ. Far from such an opinion, I distinctly say, that as long as the centre of apostolical residence and government abided in that city, its church was not only the parent, but the principal and governing church. What I deny is, that this church possessed an organization other than temporary. What I deny is, that it was empowered, or was constituted to keep within itself either the chief authorities or the promises of the gospel. I deny, that it was the church *never to be overthrown*; or that it was destined to be the ever visible chief of christian churches, and therefore never to be overthrown, though always to be open to assault. For it was overthrown and annihilated, and yet *the Church* exists and will exist.

It is certain, however, that to all the apostles individually and collectively was imparted a coequal authority of preaching the gospel: that to all the apostles, at least collectively, was given the right and charge of replacing their own grand mission, and sovereign rank. At the same time it is undoubted, that  
a general

a general trust, and a certain office, regarding the permanent establishment of the church, was assigned to one apostle by name. If therefore the Apostolic college and supremacy of mission was intended to be represented in perpetual succession, (and that it was so intended is manifest, if the christian polity was intended to be perpetual), it follows, that not only the *general* mission of the twelve should be transmitted, but that the peculiar office of that individual apostle should be kept up, which consolidated and gave form to the collective authority of his colleagues; in other words, that no apostolical succession can be true, unless perfectly corresponding, in all that is of divine institution and of obvious necessity: that therefore the successors of the apostolic college cannot be without a successor to the chief of that college.

But when, and where, and by what appointment did the apostles at large constitute their successors? To these questions, if one peremptory answer should be required, we must briefly say, that we know not. In return, we have a right to ask, upon what cause it is taken for certain, that *all the apostles* did appoint successors, each for himself. Concerning the twelve apostles, properly so called, (namely, the original Eleven and Matthias), we learn from the new Testament, that they remained at Jerusalem after the martyrdom of Stephen, and notwithstanding the persecution which ensued: that one of them, James, the  
brother

brother of John, was slain by Herod: that, at the synod and consultation regarding the ceremonies of the old law, Peter and John were present, and James, (if we will suppose *this James* also to have been of the twelve); and here closes all our explicit information concerning the stations or missions of these apostles, excepting only Peter and John. During the period, in which those apostles are recorded to have been in Jerusalem, it appears, that to Peter was yielded the *auctoritas* or right of originating and propounding all matters of general concern and of new emergency.\*

It is probable, that, when Cornelius was baptized, some of the apostles had departed out of Jerusalem and were stationed in Judea, as governors of the circumjacent churches. The office of bearing witness in Jerusalem, and *throughout the entire of Judea and Samaria*, was not expressly committed to them, as that of going forth to *teach all nations*, and was to precede, in order of time and dispensation, the more general mission. What therefore is written in saint Mark, that they (i. e. the original Eleven) went forth† evangelizing every where, is to be most probably referred to that later period, when the apostles, convinced that the Jewish malice was not to be appeased, and forced to consult their own safety, were led to determine on withdrawing from Palestine altogether.

Such

\* Acts. iv. 15. et sequ. ii. v. 14. et sequ. v. 37. 38. iii. 12. iv. 6. v. per tot. viii. 19. ix. 52. x. per tot. xv. 7.

† Marc. Cap. ult.

Such is exactly the period assigned by Eusebius\* for their dispersion. Besides which obvious reflection, it is manifest, that James of Zebedee had never gone out from Judea, and that James, the brother of the Lord, if one of the twelve, had habitually, until his martyrdom,† resided in the capital. Thus, with the exception of two at the utmost, we know not either the names or the number of those apostles, who may have survived James the just, or may have gone forth to preach to the nations.

However the ancient tradition in the time of Origen was, that Thomas went into Parthia, and that Andrew went into Scythia. Of the final destination of the others, or of any special successors ordained in churches, possibly founded by them individually, nothing is known, and nothing has survived. All the christian churches now existing, or that have existed, during these many ages, trace their origin to disciples, or to John, or Peter, or Paul.

Whatsoever may have been the destination of those apostles, it is certain from the scripture, that as long as Peter lived, the chieftaincy of pastoral rank, the universality of pastoral charge, and the support and foundation of the church of Christ were attached to

3 E

his

\* H. E. Lib. iii. chap. 5.

† I say habitually; for, that afterwards he and other apostles visited, at least, the churches in Judea and Samaria, which were of the circumcision, seems to be probably inferred from Cor. i. chap. 9, v. 5.

his person: that, as long as he lived, he held the *keys* and power of ordering, by direct commission; and that, if even it so happened, that all the original apostles had suffered martyrdom without organizing a single church, Peter was competent to institute and to ratify, with the authority of Christ, such a government and such orders in the christian polity, as would be exclusively *the church*, and would exclusively hold the promises, truth, and substance of redemption. Now, did the apostles, before they separated, establish any uniform rule for demising their trust? If they did, such rule must have had the concurrent authority of Peter. Did they, when scattered, individually and by the apostolic power vested in them, appoint successors, or chief governors of the churches they had founded? If they did, those churches were subject to Peter's arrangement, after the deaths of the founders.

There are but two suppositions, which could admit of a doubt; the first, whether, if Peter had died, leaving the apostolic college entire in Jerusalem, the nature of his office would have devolved to the apostles as a body; the other, whether, if Peter appointed a successor, not an apostle, that successor was under the authority of any surviving apostles. Of these difficulties the former was provided against by the author of christianity, and will afford matter for consideration shortly: the other difficulty shall be taken into account at the same time. But let us collect some facts.

When



When Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem for the great consultation, saint Paul conferred his gospel in secret with the *principal* governing men in the parent church; and therefore there was a marked superiority in some few persons there, as to the giving or withholding missionary powers. But there is much more still. *Three persons* at Jerusalem, namely Peter, John and James, entered into a compact of *partnership* with Paul and Barnabas, that these latter should evangelize the Gentiles, and those three should evangelize the Jews and Israelites. Here is a *partition*, temporary I acknowledge, but formal and solemnly made of the entire missionary world, between Paul and Barnabas, (neither of whom were original apostles), for the Gentiles, and the three already mentioned for those of circumcision. At this time therefore, the paramount functions of organizing the christian system, and of accrediting apostolical rank, was either restricted or surrendered to *three*, of whom two only are undoubted apostles of the original nomination; of these two, one, namely Peter, had been ordained the general pastor of the church, and the strengthener of his brother apostles; the other had been, from the first, the companion of Peter, and, from the day of the resurrection, his secondary associate. Such are the facts; and brief and few as they are, they overturn all the plausibilities of an original equality in the church government, by one undoubted practical

practical instance. For I would ask once more, were the other surviving apostles on the spot, when Paul and Barnabas were thus associated by the *three*? were the other apostles absent? were they dead, or not expected to return? If they were *on the spot*, it follows, that the three persons, named by saint Paul, exercised a right of examination *apart* from their brethren, and held, distinctly from them, a principal authority. If the other apostles were *absent*, it is plain, that the chief and most authentic power of the new law abided in the council at Jerusalem, and resided pre-eminently in three persons belonging to that council; that to this authentic synod, even Paul found it necessary to recur, lest all his exertions should prove vain. Lastly, if all the other apostles were deceased, or were not to return to Jerusalem, it appears, that these three principal men were competent to bestow a partnership in apostolical rank; to give and to withhold the *exterior* confirmation of doctrine taught, or of church system ordained by Paul himself.

Thus even the supernatural vocation of Paul, and the *charismata*, which placed his mission beyond a doubt, were recalled to the standard and principle of Unity. Without these new credentials he could not have identified his gospel with that of the original *eleven*, to whom in general had been authoritatively and irrevocably entrusted the supreme mission, and the spirit of pardon and peace and truth. Much less  
could

could he have reconciled his preaching *independently*, with the acknowledgment of that individual directing power, which had been established in Peter. His miraculous energies, his incomparable zeal, his supremacy of genius and his burning eloquence might have divided indeed the whole house of Christ against itself; but, great as they were, they could not have wrested either from Peter his prerogative, or from the apostles their commission, or from the believers, or those, who were destined to believe, the natural and necessary persuasion, that he came in as an auxiliary, and that his titles might be either temporary or might be lasting, as they should be recognized by them, whose titles were more ancient and were immoveable. In order to obtain this recognition, Paul considered it enough to have gained a *partnership* with Peter, James and John. This partnership he obtained jointly with Barnabas, but in consideration of his own extraordinary claims.

At this epoch having found, that the exercise of a highest authority was apparently possessed by a few out of the twelve; we may discuss, as an abstract question, whether the special province assigned to Peter was such, as the other apostles, surviving him perchance, could have succeeded to; or whether it was necessary before the decease of Peter, to detach the office, superadded to his apostleship, from the co-equal powers of all the apostles as such.

I think

I think, that the special charge of Peter could not have been taken up by any surviving apostles, for these reasons. First, because it was necessary, that the lasting or gentile church, to be built upon Peter, should distinctly refer its constitution to him, and should avail itself of the prediction and affirmation thus made to the son of Jona. Consequently, the principle of union and of consolidation in the church should be established for ever, by Peter himself. With what consultation this was to be done, I do not presume to conjecture. But if upon his decease any one of the apostles took up this office, by his right of apostle, the two principles, which had been clearly and separately introduced by the Author of religion, would have been confounded. The claim of survivorship would have applied to every apostle, until you came to the last. Here would begin the immense chasm. If the church, at this time, and not before, were built up for perpetuity, the church in fact and truth would have been built up, not *partially*, but *universally* on the last of the apostles. I cannot see how this could stand with the divine assurance, which rendered it necessary for the church to be able to say with truth, that it was built upon Peter.

Secondly, the peculiar office of Peter was the original, and the justification of a visible uniting and  
reconciling

reconciling agency in the church for ever. This office was derived, *not* through the apostles to him. It was *collateral* to their individual equality, but necessary for replacing the members of that class, by the introduction of mere disciples, and of the converts of disciples. If this office of Peter upon his decease were transferred to other apostles, the inequality between the powers of government in the church, before and after, the death of all the apostles, would be so great, as, humanly speaking, to produce mere anarchy, when the apostles should have departed: whereas by detaching the charge of Peter from the apostles, and by transferring it to the supplementary functionaries of the church, the dignity of the surviving apostles would sufficiently protect them from the controul of such functionaries, and, as soon as those apostles were extinct, the new church of Christ would be ready to succeed universally and uniformly, with a government bearing within itself and in all its parts the principles of unity, order, communication, life, and reproduction. The new church thus arranged and quickened would be the CATHOLIC Church.

If you insist upon my declaring, by what means this gradual change could have been effected, I answer; first, by rendering the apostolical authority *local*, and by giving territories or allotments (*κληρονομιαι*), for the exercise of that authority: secondly, by appointing coadjutors to each apostle in the rule of such  
 allotments

allotments. Again; if you ask, by what means the peculiar office of Peter could be transmitted to *an inferior*, as long as the other apostles survived, I answer; by rendering the allotment of Peter the point of communication in faith and charity for all those local churches. If you ask, by what means this church of Peter could be founded, so as to gain, over the other apostolical churches, the same *auctoritas*, which Peter had enjoyed, and might have expressly, but *must* have virtually transmitted, I answer; by constructing that church of Peter so perfectly in its form, and so finished in its members, by marshalling its spiritual offices and its social powers so well for missionary conquest, or for virtuous advancement, or for daily martyrdom; by raising it to such highest point of knowledge, of zeal, of charity, of hospitality; by teaching it so fully to consider itself as the great church of the Gentiles; that in proportion as the personal dignity of apostles, (if any survived Peter), should pass away, and, as soon as the church of circumcision was seen to totter under the heavy-descending judgment, all other churches should naturally conform their polity to that of the best and most finished church; should confederate under that form, and necessarily allow the precedency and pastoral care of Peter, to have rightfully and by divine provision descended upon his successors in that local jurisdiction. If doubts should arise, in process of time, whether that

that church inherited the *confession* of Peter; if those doubts should be answered by the fact, that by that church signally all assaults on his confession had been repulsed; whoever would believe in the prediction, would be persuaded of its fulfilment, in such a manifest shape, as corresponds with the greatness of the Promiser.

Now, if I must return to the difficulty I lately suggested, whether the successor of Peter would be subject to the controul of apostles surviving; I beg to ask, whether, after the compact, between Paul and the *three*, that those to be converted by Paul and Barnabas from the Gentiles, should *not* be under the controul of the church of Jerusalem, this church, notwithstanding the compact, would have intermeddled with Paul's recognized authority? That partnership, it may be objected, was temporary. Undoubtedly; but, in relating it, saint Paul sufficiently declares, that, according to *his* gospel, the Gentiles were to be removed from under the controul of those, who were zealots for the Mosaic law. The apostles beyond a doubt were the highest authority, when assembled: when dispersed, they were *undoubted* authority for all who approached them. But after a division of missionary departments, and when their jurisdiction became stationary, it is not to be conceived, that they would ordinarily controul the functions of local churches, beyond their several spheres. We have

learned from Clement of Alexandria, that saint John was wont to travel beyond Ephesus, *when besought* to organize churches or to appoint bishops. In the Apocalypse we also observe, that he mentions only the bishops within the Asiatic district. From other observations, with which however I will not load this letter, I consider it plain, that no *apostles*, after the breaking up of the council at Jerusalem, interfered with the churches instituted primarily amongst the Gentiles by Peter or by Paul, except John, as above mentioned.

The difficulty I stated, being generalized in its form and assayed by the test of fact, will now appear so trivial, as scarcely to apologize for its introduction. For my part I should regret to have been the first to start, or to answer such a doubt. You will recollect, Reverend Sir, as my excuse, that this very difficulty, narrowed into a polemical question, and debated with great subtilty, pother, and bustle, nay with pious jealousy, has occupied many notable and demure writers. The laborious anglo-german Editor of saint Ireneus, J. Ernest Grabe, discovered, more than a century ago, that in his author's persuasion, James the just, bishop of Jerusalem, was a *chief above Peter*. Such indeed was not the persuasion of Herod, when he seized on Peter, nor was it the idea of Paul, when he went to Jerusalem in order to obtain his acquaintance. But Herod was not an *Editor*, nor was Paul an Ebionite. Before Grabe, Henry Dodwell, a native of our Dublin, and a man who irritated an extraordinary



traordinary sagacity from nature into a delirious temperament of paradox, had written, and attempted to prove as much. He maintained, that after the death of this James, the kinsmen, according to the flesh of our Redeemer, were the primates of all the churches. All this he proved chiefly from Hegesippus, whose credit had been attainted by Scaliger in a most contemptuous refutation, and whose words moreover, were misconstrued by Dodwell; from Polycrates of Ephesus, in his answer to Victor of Rome; although Polycrates mistook Philip the deacon for Philip the apostle, and mistook John the evangelist for a *Levite*, and for one entitled as a Levite to wear in Ephesus the *diadem*, which, by the bye, none but the high priests could wear. These ideas our fellow Dublin-man, in his treatise *De nupero schismate anglicano*, dedicated alike to the *professors of the gospel*, i. e. protestants and *papists*, for the double purpose of reclaiming the latter, and of interesting both descriptions to consider as null the ordinations of those, who had been put in the room of the dispossessed *non-jurors*. To skip back over three hundred years, Wickliffe had anticipated the *lights* of Dodwell: Near one thousand years before Wickliffe, Rufinus had *seriously* (he was most serious in his predilection for every thing not genuine), *given back*, as he terms it, to the Romans, that is to say, translated and interpolated a fabricated work, entitled

titled the *Recognitions* of Clement,\* in which Peter is said to have been enjoined by James of Jerusalem, to send him a report of his mission. Rufinus also translated a pretended epistle, from the same Clement, who was bishop of Rome, or from Peter himself (for the same forgery bore the names of either), wherein James is stiled the *bishop of bishops*. I will not honour such fabrications by attempting now to shew at what time they were invented. I will be content with mentioning, that in their rude state, they were the attempts of the second century to recruit the expiring Judaic church, with auxiliaries from the great church of the Gentiles. Two brief proofs I will give of this truth. The name *christian* is never used for a believer in Christ, in any of the works falsely attributed to Clement, but *Jew* solely. Again; Peter is introduced condemning Paul the apostle, not by name, but by most exclusive designation, as a revolter from the ceremonial law. Could Clement, a disciple of Paul and successor of Peter, have written thus? For what purpose

\* So called from the mutual discoveries made by Clement, his father and mother. The *Recognitions* we have only from the translation of Rufinus. The same subject however is given in the Greek *Clementine Homilies*, a work apparently *completed* towards the end of the third century, and, to do it justice as a romance, a most splendid performance for stile, plan, and argument. The vestiges however of Judaism are apparent from the inconsistency between the parts corrected, and the scope of some principal arguments, which did not admit of verbal investigation.

pose could this have been written, unless for that of subjecting the disciples of Christ to the servitude of Moses.

In shewing, as I have done, by what natural process a certain church might be instituted, to which, even during the life-time of apostles, would appertain by succession the function of Peter, and the inheritance of his leadership, however this leadership might be necessarily qualified or locally suspended, by the personal and temporary authority of apostles; it was not my purpose to enter into the question regarding papal primacy. My immediate object was, to manifest the vanity of an objection, which, like the *Achillean* argument to disprove the existence of motion, seems intricate, because it falsely divides a plain idea, and omits *change* in the enumeration. As to the elements of that natural process in the *translation* of church authority, I have only to mention, that they are partly taken from the recorded instances of apostolical practice, partly from the most authentic histories, or from the testimony of the most eminent protestants. As I am not on controversy now, but in mere explanation, I will add one or two instances, from which it will appear, that an office had been given by divine authority, and yet subsequently received an apparent confirmation from men.

The promise of leadership and of renown amongst  
his

his brothers and of command, until the arrival of Him, who was to be the expected of the Gentiles, was made to Judah by his father. Yet Saul of Benjamin is appointed the first king of all the tribes. To those who witnessed the subsequent reign of David, it was plain, that the reign of Saul was but the preparation of Judah's throne. But by what progression does Saul himself enter into that dignity? First of all, he is chosen by a divine revelation made to Samuel, who is expressly ordered to anoint him as king.\* Next he is chosen by lot and declared king by acclamation:† thirdly, he gains a battle and is solemnly inaugurated.‡ To those, who merely witnessed the election of Saul, it would appear, that providence had then, for the first time, declared his title. If they also witnessed the defeat of the Ammonites, they would be persuaded, that this was an evidence and confirmation of divine interference in the election. But for Samuel, at that time, and for those who afterwards came to learn the original appointment of Saul, not only this victory, but that election was but the developement and consequence of the private choice.

Again; while Saul is yet king, by Samuel also a new king is anointed, and the divine title is transferred to David.§ Yet Saul continued outwardly the  
Sovereign,

\* 1 Kings (as in Vulgate and lxx; of Samuel with the Jews), ch. ix. v. 16, 17. ch. x. i.

† Ibid. v. 19 to 24. ‡ Ibid. xi. v. 15.

§ Ibid. xvi. v. 1. and 13, 14.

Sovereign, and David professed and proved loyalty to him. Upon the death of Saul, the tribe of Judah anoints David for *their* king.\* Lastly, when, more than seven years after, the son of the former monarch was assassinated, the remaining eleven tribes chose and anoint David as their king, remembering his achievements under Saul, and *yielding to the prophecy which had named him to reign.*†

To recapitulate what I have lastly argued; the Jewish church of believers was not possessed of the forms, nor could it appropriate the chief authorities of the lasting church: the precedency enjoyed by the Jewish church must have been plainly temporary, because its abdication was an essential feature in the predicted establishment of the Gentile church of *christians*: the inauguration and ordering of this latter church was assigned to one apostle by name; and, in all reason, although his function of primacy might be transmitted, yet his personal and marked office, superadded to his chieftaincy, namely, the office of organizing the church of Christ, was to be performed in his life-time. I therefore now conclude, that a lasting mode of church government was resolved and enacted in the life time of Peter, and with his authority; and that, if this mode was agreed upon before the dispersion of the apostles, it amounted to a compact, that *all* should recognize those established as  
governor.

\* II Kings (or Samuel) ch. ii. v. 4. † ch. V. v. 1. 2. 3. 5.

governors by *each*. If it was agreed upon by the principal men, with whom Paul concluded the treaty for himself and Barnabas, or lastly, if, after the death of James the just, it was the joint consultation of the three apostles, Peter, John and Paul, the truth is still the same, viz. that the power of the keys, in other words, that the fulness of divine authority gave effect to this transmission of power.

But does it appear from undoubted history, that the apostles, or any of them, established the mode of episcopal succession? It does. Clement of Rome, the coadjutor of Paul, and ordained by Peter and by Paul the bishop in Rome, reminds the Corinthians, who also boasted of Peter and Paul as their teachers, and who had fallen into schism amongst themselves, that “*our* “*apostles*” (i. e. Peter and Paul), “*knew, through* “*Christ, that contentions would arise on account of the* “*title of episcopacy: for this reason they, having re-* “*ceived a perfect foreknowledge, ordained the persons* “*already mentioned, and gave the appointment of* “*those, who were to be put in their stead.*” The authority of apostles to appoint bishops and deacons, Clement had justified by their mission from Christ, as well as by the evidence of prophecy. This document was in the age of saint Jerome, the most ancient, next after the new testament: it is perhaps coeval with the gospel of saint John, but was written at least before  
his

his death.\* It is most likely, that in *the commentary by Jerome on Titus* either the saint himself, or those from whom he compiled, had the letter of Clement in view, and the second schism in the church of Corinth, which the commentary identifies with the first schism. To the former disturbance Clement adverts: he terms it excusable in comparison with the latter. You formerly divided, urges he, on account of Cephas and Paul and Apollo; the two former were apostles of fame: Apollo had the sanction of both. But now the stable and *original* church of Corinth is shamefully reported to be in sedition against its *presbyters* (bishops) owing to one or two pretenders. Saint Clement, however, fully vouches for the apostolical institution of episcopacy, as an object of ambition, and as a title of pre-eminence.†

Peter therefore and Paul established the rule for appointing bishops, at least in the church of Rome

3 G

and

\* Ad Corinth. i. P. P. Ap. Cotelier. Edit. Ie Clerc. i. p. 174, ὁ Ἀποστολοι ἡμῶν ἐγνώσαν δια του κυριου ἡμων ιησου χριστου, ὅτι εἰς εἰς ἐπι του ονοματος της επισκοπης, δια ταυτην ουν την αιτιαν προγνωσιν εὐληφοσει, τελειαν, κατισησαν τους προειρημενους και μεταξύ ἐπινομην δὲ δακασι.

† In the letter also to Evagrius, the passage, *et ut sciamus traditiones apostolicas sumptas de veteri testamento*, appears plainly borrowed from this letter of saint Clement, §. xl. wherein he proves the necessity of subordination from the division of functions in the temple. Still in that to Evagrius there is one capital variance or omission; namely, that Clement urges the right of apostles to organize the church, as equally divine with that of Moses.

and of Corinth. The episcopacy of Alexandria is also owing to Mark, the disciple of Peter. The episcopacy of Antioch was first held by Peter, whom Evodius succeeded, and then Ignatius. The martyrdom of Ignatius took place about eight years after the decease of John the apostle, whose disciple the holy martyr had been. In the letters of this martyr, acknowledged genuine by every man not fanatically ignorant, not only sole episcopacy is inculcated as of the authority of JESUS CHRIST, but is distinguished as supreme in the church, over the offices of presbyters and deacons.\* *Sole episcopacy* indeed is clearly mentioned in the apocalypse; so that the authority of Ignatius is not wanted on this point. However, that the three classes of the hierarchy were then drawn out and arranged throughout Asia, *as having divine authority*; that the voucher for the divine authority is one of the greatest of martyrs; that this man should appeal to Him, as he does, for whom he was about to suffer, that he was enjoined by the Divine Spirit to inculcate every-where the *necessity of adhering to the bishop*, is for christians a demonstration, that the government by bishops is essential and fundamental in the church.

If we take into consideration, that these letters were written after the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, as well as after the death of the apostles; that this epoch is the beginning of the manifestation of the  
church

\* Ad Philadelphien. vii. Le Clerc's Ed.



church of the nations, enfranchised from the slavery of its parent ;\* that it became necessary at this time to extend to all the local churches, that system of church government, which, as I maintain, had been originally and permanently founded by Peter and Paul in the greatest Gentile church ; the inference will at once present itself, that it was in the shape and with the attributes of this continuing and perfect government, the church of *christians* was born to independence ; that, as soon as the authorities of the gospel devolved to the Nations, those authorities manifested themselves at once, as they still are displayed and for ever will persevere.

The name of *Catholic* church is first to be met with in the writings of saint Ignatius : that however it was even then a term of sacred import and of well known acceptation, is plain from the manner, in which he employs it.† The term therefore is preserved to us from a tradition anterior to Ignatius, in that *symbol* or *contesseratio*, stiled the apostles creed, wherein to *Catholic church* is immediately subjoined the PARTNERSHIP OF SAINTS. As long as the apostles lived, it is probable, that all the converted Jews yet persevered in communion with Jerusalem, as possessing the new hopes, which they embraced, and the old authorities,

\* Paul. Ad Galat. iv. 22. et sequ.

† Ad Smyrn *ὅπου ἂν φανῆ ἑπισκοπος εἰκει το πλῆθος εἶσαι, ὡςπερ ἴπαι:*  
 ἐν ἡ Χριστῶς ἱπρους, εἰκει ἡ ΚΑΘΟΛΙΚΗ ἐκκλησία

rities, which they would not forego. By the destruction of the temple this centre of communion was translated, or disappeared for those of circumcision. From Titus to Adrian, when the Jews were interdicted from coming into their once sacred city, the Jewish christianity of Palestine had been decaying; so that, after the building of Elia, we hear of no more christians of that denomination. That few of the *Gentiles* converted, from Cornelius the Centurion until the death of Paul, went up to, or held *direct* communication with Jerusalem, is next to a certainty. The term, *Catholic*, must have sprung up and been sanctioned, in order to embody the church of *christians*, when all the Gentile churches, recognizing each other, became One in confederation and partnership; when, in asserting their unity with each other, they claimed identity with the establishment of Christ, and vindicated to themselves, as One, to be the depository and the home of all the salutary powers, which the Redeemer had confided to mankind. This term, *Catholic*, did not primarily mean *extension*, but *indivisibility* and *reciprocal property* of heart, of faith, of titles, of authorities, wherever *Catholic church* existed. Thus Polycarp, the disciple of saint John, is entitled, in the original acts of his martyrdom, the bishop of *the Catholic church* of Smyrna; and it is there recorded, that after his arrest, he prayed for all classes of men, *belonging to the Catholic church* throughout the world.

Thus

Thus the *state* of christianity became entirely removed from the Jewish soil and titles.

But this partnership and unity could not be realized, unless by simplifying in each church the authority, through which it corresponded or was destined to correspond with all the rest. No local church could have entered into a system of unity with all churches, if within that given church, plural authorities existed, coequal with each other, and liable to be at variance. Nor could this unity be realized, if, within any local church, the chief government were temporary or precarious. Thus the catholicity of the church at large required a sole and uniformly active chieftaincy, in each principal church, to which was annexed an undivided portion of the Catholic supreme governing efficacy, and this subject to the laws of Unity alone. Lastly; the act of every such local governor, when rightfully performed, was the authentic act of the church at large, and bound all his compeers by the force of confederation and indivisible government, as well as all the faithful by the necessity of adhering to their pastors, in each of whom the *Catholic* Unity abided. If any one of those principal churches were willing to establish a perfect local church within its province, the principle of uniformity demanded, that, in imparting the powers of Catholic government, it should consult the principle of Unity.

The sole governor, whom now we shall call the  
*bishop*

*bishop*, thus came to preside in each church, not merely as the teacher of his flock, nor as merely representing this or that individual apostle or apostolic delegate, to whose establishment he might have succeeded: to the *Catholic* church at large the *bishop* was at once the voucher for the orthodoxy of his flock, and the mean, through which his flock communicated with the Catholic Totality. Again; to his own peculiar flock the same *bishop* was the highest authority and evidence for the belief, and for the necessary discipline of the Catholic church; because, in right of his office, he was a governing partner in that confederation, as well as the chief at home. In this manner, as *Catholic* church would have necessarily introduced sole episcopacy, (even if this had not universally co-existed, as it has, with *christian* church), so, in turn, this episcopacy would naturally have produced that sacred and next order, called by us the *priesthood*, by the expansion of its missionary powers, so as to meet the domestic wants of the christian people,

But what is the rank and dignity of a *priest*? A *formal* answer to this question may be expected from *me*, who have demolished those grotesque ornaments, by which *Columbanus*, while professing to beautify, made a hideous shew of this venerable character. The *divine right to judge and legislate* on points of *faith and discipline* is, by this time, pretty well ascertained. Upon of the whole of that discussion, I would appeal

to the rational man, catholic or protestant, whether, amongst all the claims set forward by puerile weakness, and hypocondriac inflation, he has met with any more absurd or more indecent than those, which I have combated. To the *Catholic priests* it must have appeared, that, while a *divine right* of legislating was nominally claimed for *them* against *bishops*, it was, in fact, an unscrupulous privilege of *abusing bishops*, that *Columbanus* exerted for *himself*. It must have appeared to the *Catholic priesthood*, that the gravity and reverence of their order had been committed in a revolutionary speculation; whether dictated by revenge, or suggested by an atrocious distemperature of intellect; or, as I would rather say, the consequence of mental exhaustion, induced by the fatigue of that grand historical work, which *Columbanus* has long taught us to hope; by his laborious equations of the *Cycles of saint Patrick* with all the other periods (whereby the mathematical gentry will, in due time, gain hidden treasures of science), and by the very compass and sketch of an undertaking, in which the utmost energies of invention were to be expended, to make up for the silent waste of so many ages.

Let the cause of this hostile exhibition be what it may, the spectacle is dishonouring. It affects to conjoin the undoubted rights of the *priesthood* with a lawless piracy on *episcopal* rights: it usurps the collective good name of *priests* for an example and display of sacrilege: it provokes a collision

sion of titles, consecrated to the same Altar, and the same CHRIST, and the same Gospel; of which titles the one *must be sacred*, and the other *must be everlasting*. That title, which *receives* the mission, must be sacred: that, which not only holds, but which alone can give or retain it, must be perpetual, and cannot therefore be overthrown, and is perilously insulted.

What then is the *rank* and *dignity* of a *priest*, as compared with a *bishop*? I answer; if the estimation of rank be made on the comparative *holiness* of *offices* common to both, I can find no difference between the bishop and the priest: because the most salutary offices regarding the *christian man* are exercised with the same validity by the one as by the other. In the communion of *sacerdotal* power the priest is *the successor of apostles*. This is Catholic truth.\* If he were not, he could not sanctify the elements. And what more is a *bishop* in this holiest vocation? In using the power of the keys, the priest acts so expressly by the authority of CHRIST, that the intimation and claim of this authority accompanies the formal remission of guilt to the penitent. What higher authority does the bishop claim, or what diviner representation, than that of CHRIST, AS A SAVIOUR?

Is not this dignity enough? Surely it is enough to command reverence, as well as to make its possessor tremble.

\* Council. Trid. Sess. xxiii. c. i.

semble. On the basis of this *priesthood, instituted by divine ordination*, we are informed by ancient and excellent authorities, that to the class of presbyters appertain the duties of arbitrating and peace-making amongst the faithful; of inspecting the wants of the flock; of being the patterns of the faithful and the spiritual parents of the laity;\* that to them belongs the station of domestic colleagues and bosom friends of their bishop. No bishop, deserving the name, can treat a priest but with the consideration of a father. No Catholic bishop can look upon his priest in any other light than in that of his fellow labourer in the peculiar inheritance assigned to himself, and of his *joy and his crown*.

At the same time, *episcopacy*, as the source of *mere priesthood*, is superior to this latter rank essentially, and even in this single respect is entitled to duty and veneration. That episcopacy, in the fulness of its apostolic representation, controuls and props the subsequent titles of *mere priesthood*, is evident to common understanding: because no *mere priest* can derive a title from any predecessor of his own order, and, consequently, unless there be allowed to episcopacy *at large*, the undoubted succession to apostolic right, no priest, who has been in the world these seventeen hundred years past, can or could pretend to exercise any spiritual function, with efficacy or with calling.

To pursue the subject of *Catholic* episcopacy, it is most likely, that in the first century of the christian church, the intercourse was managed between the chief bishops of nations,\* and through this medium was derived to their subordinate churches. As to the principal churches of *nations*, it is known that they were three; namely, of Rome, of Alexandria, and of Antioch; and that those three churches, not only were the most conspicuous, but had the largest and most varied missionary districts of any, centered within the Roman empire. From these causes may be derived the comparative importance of the city presbyters, especially in Rome. As the bishops, who issued from Rome to preach the gospel, must have been chiefly of the Roman clergy, and as it was probably more difficult to arrive at the station of a presbyter in Rome, than to gain a foreign ordination; as the daily and infinite occupations of this church would not admit of the delays attending an episcopal synod; as the Catholic church in Rome was not only populous above comparison, but was consisting of several tongues; it became necessary to entrust the presbyters of Rome with the power of holding congregations of the faithful, and with the privilege of *deliberating*, in the nature of a synod, on emergent causes referred to that church

\* See Can. Apostolic. xxvii.



church.† To enact laws, even of discipline, they had

† *Columbanus*, in his 4th letter, p. 73, 74, 75, has obliged us with far more minute information on this subject, than is to be gained elsewhere. Having informed us, that *cardinal bishops* are not more ancient than the tenth century; that "it is certain," that in the original import of the name, the *cardinals* were the *parish priests* of Rome, and the *Ex-Cathedra* council of the holy See: "that the See" (which means the chair) "of a bishop is composed of the diocesan clergy, and that, from a neglect of this last mentioned principle, the discipline of the church has been reduced to low and petty intrigue: after these momentous hints, in which a spirit of tender duty towards the Catholic church struggles for the palm with the spirit of historical research, he is pleased to declare, that "as is remarked by *Holstenius* on the *third council of Rome*," (he should have said, the third under *Boniface II.*) "in all matters of importance, the popes convened a council, not only of the city clergy, but also of the country curates, who constituted the *diocesan Synod* of Rome: frequently he called a *provincial* or *metropolitan Synod*, of the *cardinal bishops* of the metropolis of Rome, who were called *cardinal* or *principal* bishops with regard to the ten *suburbicarian provinces*, and constituted the *annual Synod*."

Let him who has ears, receive the intelligence with thankfulness: it is certainly connected and satisfactory. *Cardinal*, in its original import, signified a *parish priest* of Rome. Very well: but what was the original import of *cardinal*, when applied to the *deacons* and *subdeacons* of Rome? Was a *cardinal subdeacon* a *parish priest* and an *ex-cathedra* counsellor? Again, *cardinal bishops* are not more ancient than the tenth century; yet something or other is remarked about them by *Holstenius* in the sixth century. After all, by what words does *Holstenius* convey this information? "Vel leviter in *Historia Ecclesiastica* versati sciunt, moris fuisse antiqui, ut quoties de gravioris momenti negotio ad apostolicam cæterasque majores sedes referretur, non solum *clerus urbicus*, sed etiam *episcopi in comitatu commorantes* ad consilium commune deliberationemque convocarentur." i. e. Persons even slightly acquainted with church

had no power. They disclaim such authority in their  
letter

church history are aware, that whenever a cause of great importance was reported either to the *holy see*, or to the other principal sees, by ancient usage, not only the *city clergy* but the *bishops abiding in the Comitatus* were summoned to joint deliberation. How in the world did Columbanus extract *country curates* and *cardinal bishops* from those words? I answer, very readily; by not understanding one word, and by mistaking another word. In the first place, *Comitatus* should not have been mysterious to one, who reads the *originals*. Without travelling into the *Code*, he might have learned from church history, that *Comitatus* was the *imperial or kingly head-quarters*. So Constantine to the council of Arles wrote, that he had ordered the refractory Donatists to be brought to his *Comitatus...qui eosdem infandos deceptores Religionis ad Comitatum meum perducant*. So in the fragments of Gelasius I. Peter and Felix are accused of going off to the *Comitatus* of Theodoric. *Petrus et Felix clerici ad comitatum filii mei regis putaverunt esse properandum*. So the council of Sardica forbids bishops, especially from Africa, to go to the *Comitatus* (can. 8.), as the council of Antioch had previously interdicted the oriental prelates from going to the Emperor, (Can. xi.) and the fourth council of Africa prohibits going off to the *Comitatus* without letters from the bishops of Carthage or of Rome. (In Cod. Eccl. Afric. Can. 105). This premised, Columbanus, by turning *Comitatus*, *headquarters*, into *ten suburbicarian provinces*, and *eccomorantes* or *making some stay*, into *cardinals*, has instantaneously created the *annual synod of Rome*, which, at most was called *frequently*. If you will ask, how did he find out *country curates* in *city clergy*, *clerus urlicus*? I answer, that he took them *in*, because he found them *out*. Poor Holstenius would resent, could he but feel the wrong done to his memory, if not in the above *misquotation*, at least in the suppression of his words, that *the bishops of Rome even then had full power, without any such consultation*, to make obligatory decrees. *Etiamsi per se soli auctoritate rerum pollerent, &c.* In Not. posthuma, ad. synod. 3. Bonif. ii. Iabb. iv. 1723.

letter to Cyprian of Carthage.\* Hence it followed, that, in councils held at Rome, especially when the subject regarded the papal See, we find the Roman presbyters sitting, and sometimes *promulgating* the papal decree, by acclamation.

In Alexandria likewise, the presbyters appear to have been assembled by the bishop to his episcopal synods: by the presbyters, I mean those appertaining to the city. If any person would wish to know, whether this distinction gave to the presbyters of Alexandria an equal right of *discussing* and *judging*, let him attend to this formal address of Alexander, who was afterwards a principal in the council of Nicea, to his presbyters and deacons. “ To his beloved brothers, “ the presbyter and deacons of Alexandria and Mareotis, now present, greeting. Although you have “ already subscribed to the letter I addressed to Arius “ and his party, exhorting him to abjure his impious “ tenet and yield to the sound catholic faith, however “ as I have written a letter for all my colleagues, regarding that party, I have judged it necessary, to “ collect *you* the clergymen of the city, and to summon you out of Mareotis, (especially as Chares and Pistus, who were presbyters of your number, and Sarapion, Pasammon, Zosimus and Ireneus, the deacons, have gone off with that party, and have “ been

\* Inter Epistol. Cyprianic. xxx. (Fell 58) et inter Op. Novatiani. Oxon.

“been content to be deposed); in order that you may  
 “be *made acquainted* with what I have written, and  
 “*may render public* your agreement therewith, and  
 “may declare your assent and consent to the *deposi-*  
 “*tion* of Arius and of Pistus. For it becomes you  
 “all to know what I write; and it becomes each to  
 “guard it, in heart, as if written by himself.”\*

As to the church of Antioch, we know not of any more primatial synod convened by its bishops, during the four first centuries.† Its certain jurisdiction comprised the *eastern* churches. From the remaining signatures to the councils of Ancyra and Neocæsarea, holden before that of Nicea, *Vitalis* of Antioch presided in Synod over some Metropolitans, out of the dioceses of *Pontus* and of *Asia* likewise. So it happened likewise in the struggle between John of Antioch and Cyril. That church had not learning sufficient for its rank; and its very principles, recognized by the Nicene Council, were soon disfigured and then undermined.

So much for *patriarchal* synods before the Nicene council. By *patriarchal* I solely mean those appertaining to the three great churches already mentioned, in each

\* First published by Cotelier (P P. Ap. i. p. 415 Le Clerc) and republished by Hardouin, as from the same manuscript. I. 310.

† For with regard to the *synod* of Antioch, held by Meletius, upon the accession of Jovian, it appears to have been an extemporary congregation; and as to that *supposed synod*, wherein the orientals received the profession sent by Damasus, it is not certain, that it was a local convention.

each of which concurred the marks of apostolical establishment, of episcopacy originating from Peter the apostle, of a manifest succession, and of a most comprehensive missionary district, assigned from the beginning.

Of *National* synods, until the fourth century, we have nothing extant beyond certain synodical letters preserved to us in the works of saint Cyprian,\* and the *preamble* and brief decisions of almost ninety bishops, assembled from the entire of Africa, concerning the *baptism given by heretics*.† In the introductory part of this *preamble* those bishops are said to have met, *along with presbyters and deacons, the greatest part* (or, a very great proportion) “*of the laity being present*.”‡ This introduction might give not a little help to the *divine right* of *sitting and judging* in presbyters and deacons, as well as to the *divine right* of the faithful to *overhear*, were it not that, in this council, neither *priests* nor *deacons* open their mouth. The acts, it will be objected, are imperfect. I answer, that no mutilation appears, and that no mutilation could possibly have been committed on the *divine right* of presbyters, for two reasons: the first, that the council was convened by *Cyprian*, who believed and taught, that

\* Hard. Conc. I. p. 134, 147, 149, 154, 157. et int. opera Cypriani (Feli) Ep. 57, 64, 67, 72.

† Hardouin *ibid.* p. 159. Fell. Part. i. p. 229

‡ *Ibid.* Cum in unum Carthagini convenissent Kal. Sept. Episcopi plurimi ex Prov. Africa, Numidia, Mauritania, cum *presbyteris et diaconibus, præsente etiam plebi: maxima parte.*

that "CHRIST ordained apostles, that is to say, bishops, to govern his church:" the second reason, that in the opening address of the blessed martyr to his *colleagues*, he informs them, that "their business is now to deliver their several judgments openly, *as being bishops under JESUS CHRIST, who alone and exclusively is the appointer of governors to his church;\** and alone therefore can judge of their official conduct." Will *Columbanus* abide by the doctrine? If he does, I will bestow him the *precedent*. Let *him* urge, that in the council of Carthage, the *presbyters and deacons* were assembled. I will urge, that a great proportion of the faithful was also there; and as those presbyters, if they

\* Ibid. *Collegae dilectissimi*...Superest ut de hac ipsa re quid singuli sentiamus, proferamus...Neque enim quisquam nostrum *Episcopum* se esse *Episcoporum* constituit...quando habeat omnis *Episcopus* pro licentia libertatis et potestatis suae arbitrium proprium, tanquam *judicari ab alio non possit*...Expectemus universi *judicium D. N. I. C* qui unus et solus habet potestatem et proponendi nos in *Ecclesiae* suae gubernatione et de *Actu nostro* judicandi. See also *Epist.* 52 ad *Lapsos*, and the above quoted synodical letters. Lastly, *De unitate Ecclesiae*. On the foundation of the Cyprianic principles a masterly and crushing demonstration of the nullity of the Civil Constitution of the clergy of France, was written before the King's murder by Doctor La Hogue, then of the Sorbonne, and now the ornament of Maynooth College: a work, which requires nothing more than readers capable of appreciating its excellence. From the same author has lately appeared a Latin treatise on the church, which has been put into my hands, while this letter was at press. Of this I will only say, that it possesses more learning, argument and perspicuity than bulky volumes on the subject, and has besides a moderation peculiar to itself.

they did argue or discuss *on the spot*, must have argued only with the *laity then present*, I also claim my *African* right, to argue with *Columbanus*. When we shall have tired out one another, in debating with the farcical assumption of *divine right*, or of *learning*, or of *very great zeal*, some one will part the combatants, by reminding both, that Cyprian did not allow to presbyters the smallest particle of a *divine right* to judge or to govern; that he has even complained of the brutal irreverence of some amongst his *presbyters*; and, that it appears, that he resolved to consult the feelings of the *laity*, on the introduction of every new case of discipline. A contentious layman will infer from this, that the great martyr sought a counterbalance in the affection, and gratitude, and religion of the faithful, to the overweening and factious misbehaviour of some,\* who held the next place to the bishop of Carthage. To a suggestion of this kind I, for my part, will make no reply: *Columbanus* can make a thousand replies, in every key and step of exclamation, ecstacy, self-panegyric, and antiquarian irony. His greatest and best retort however would be, to declare Cyprian at once a heretic: and why not? The *bishop* would not allow even the baptism administered by *schismatics* to be valid, although *baptism*, in that age, was administered occasionally by *presbyters*. *Columbanus*, who has declared

3 I himself

\* Cyp. r. Ep. 45. (F. II).

*himself a schismatic* against the modern Catholic church, asserts to presbyters in schism the right of administering *confirmation in cases of necessity*.\*

Here we find *two very great men* in opposite extremes. Cyprian will not allow even the sacrament of baptism, which is of ordinary necessity, to be validly administered by a *schismatic*, or separatist from the Catholic unity of government. *Columbanus*, on the other hand, having declared a holy war against *one pope* and all episcopal possession and pedigree, claims for "priests of the second order" the right of confirming *in cases of necessity*: yes, surely; for priests of his own church; for the *Columbanian* judges, successors to the seventy-two. But did those *seventy-two* confirm? Let *Columbanus* answer that. He has come in as a conqueror, and let him defend his own gospel. I merely suggest, that the eloquent martyr and bishop of Carthage, and the new Elias of Ireland, who has started up from his trance of twelve hundred years, are very much in opposition to one another.

Of synods, greater than *patriarchal*, we have but one recorded instance before Constantine, in the second council of orientals held at Antioch against Paul of Samosata, and in the age of Aurelian the Emperor. Of this synod, nothing has come down to us beyond the extracts of the synodical letter, as given by Eusebius.

\* See note at the end of this letter.



bis.\* A meeting had formerly convened of bishops *with their presbyters and deacons* against the same blasphemer; but without effect.† The letter of this second convention is addressed by the oriental bishops in their own names and in the representation of the “bishops, priests, deacons and *churches*” (i. e. laity) “of the *confining districts*, to Dionysius of Rome, “Maximus of Alexandria, and to all their *colleagues, the bishops*, throughout the world, to priests, deacons and “to the entire Catholic church,” (i. e. laity) “from “end to end.” This council also was held in the age of Cyprian, and was afterwards referred to, as we have seen, by the Arian bishops, as a precedent, why the western church, conducted by Pope Julius, should not interfere in the concerns of the orientals. The Arian policy, at that time, was to destroy all ancient landmarks, and all apostolical precedency, recognized by the Nicene council. But, even in the case of Paul of Samosata, the prerogative of the western church *did* interfere. Paul, although excommunicated by the christians, maintained possession of the episcopal residence: he was moreover a *Ducenarius*, or Imperial agent, a wealthy villain, and a protected one. The Emperor, when applied to by the christians, adjudged the bishop’s house at Antioch to be surrendered to that person, in whose favour the bishop of Rome and

the

the bishops of Italy should declare, by letters of communication.\*

Thus concludes the review of exterior christian polity from the apostolic age to the reign of Constantine. I have sought, perhaps with a wish to discover the truth, but of this no man is a competent witness to himself; yet I have sought with anxiety, not merely on this occasion, but oftentimes on others for the proofs within this period of that *divine right*, which *Columbanus* has attempted to revive in the way of a Sicilian vespers. I have found nothing to warrant such pretension. I have found union between bishops, priests, deacons and people most strongly recommended; in the case of divisions by schism, I have found the right acknowledged to remain with the established governors; and in the case of heresy, I have found, that the appeal was ever made to the *Catholic succession of bishops*. But perhaps *Columbanus* feels invited by some extraordinary call to take the Catholic church under his protection. If stable judgment and learning were sufficient recommendations for the noble office, we could hardly refuse, after the instances we have witnessed, to acknowledge him as the founder and head of his own church. But will the *foolish* christians receive him? I fear not. They are too far gone in superstition. They believe in CHRIST, and absolutely do think the Church, as it

i,

\* Euseb. H. E. Lib. 7. c. 27. et 23.

is, to be rather suffering, than outlawed. Those christians are squeamish, and will not receive for divine gifts, or divine eloquence what, to their unenlightened habits, carries the stamp of unforgiving anger, comical self-sufficiency, exploded and puerile learning, uttered in a style of the rankest vulgarity, and a diction equally barbarous and indecent.

I remain, Reverend Sir,

Sec.

## NOTE to Page 426.

*Columbanus* informs us, (Letter iv. p. 82) that Doctors *Poynter* and *Milner* seem not to know, that saint Jerome expressly declares, that confirmation is administered by bishops not from any exclusive episcopal right, essential to the validity of that sacrament, but from the honour and respect due to the episcopal order, and from usage introduced into the church. "This," observes *Columbanus*, "is what Doctor *Milner* seemed not to know, when he asserted, that a bishop is a clergyman, who exclusively administers two sacraments, confirmation and holy orders, (*Milner's* elucidation of the "Veto, p. 36)." *Columbanus* holds it for certain, that, in cases of necessity, a priest may administer confirmation.

Let us first attend to the express declaration of saint Jerome, whose words are these : Quod si quaeris, quare in Ecclesia baptizatus nisi per manus Episcopi non accipiat Spiritum Sanctum, quem nos asserimus in vero baptisate tribui; discce hanc observationem ex ea auctoritate descendere, quod post ascensum Domini Spiritus S. ad apostolos descendit; et multis in locis idem factum reperitur, ad honorem potius sacerdotii quam ad legis necessitatem. i. e. "Again; if you will ask, why a person, after he has been baptized in the (Catholic) church, receives the holy spirit exclusively by the episcopal imposition of hands, although we maintain the holy spirit to be imparted in genuine" (i. e. Catholic) baptism; know, that this observance is deduced from that first precedent, that, after the ascension, the holy Spirit came

“came down to the apostles, and in many places” (i. e. of the new Testament) “the same practice is found, rather to shew a prerogative in episcopacy, than a necessity for the Law.

Is it so indeed, that saint Jerome expressly denies an exclusive right, when he informs us, that, although in catholic baptism the holy spirit had been imparted, yet the apostolic imposition of hands was never performed unless by a bishop? Is it so, that saint Jerome encourages the claim of priests to confirm in cases of necessity, when he asserts, that the observance is rather to demonstrate the apostolic prerogative of bishops, than because the law of confirmation is necessary, like that of baptism?

Well; though saint Jerome expressly denies the two points, which, according to Columbanus, he expressly declares, perhaps Baronius will give some aid in this extremity and forced conscription of holy fathers. The good Baronius has also mistaken this text of Jerome, and Columbanus, very naturally, terms the childish blunder, a complete and invincible demonstration (same Letter p. 83 . The remark of the good man on the passage above cited is thus given by our Author. Cum igitur dicat Hieronymus potius ad honorem quam ad necessitatem eam Episcopi functionem pertinere, intelligere potes non adeo esse de sacramenti essentia, ut jubent eponifice non possit impleri per presbyterum. i. e. “Whereas  
 “Jerome asserts, that that function, being performed by the  
 “bishop, appertains rather to his honour than to necessity,  
 “we may infer, that it is not so essential to the sacrament,  
 “but that, under a papal commission, it may be fully per-  
 “formed by a priest.” Baronius mistakes honorem for ho-  
 nour

our or respect: Again; he absurdly refers *necessitatem* to *episcopi* and omits *legis*: from such premises he infers, that the words *potius ad honorem sacerdotii quam ad legis necessitatem*, may signify exactly what they would, if transposed by contraries, thus, *potius ad legis necessitatem quam ad honorem sacerdotii*. Such is the *invincible demonstration*,

But here is more of it, and better. "In 541," says *Columbanus*, *ibid.* p. 82. "Pope Gregory the great wrote to Januarius bishop of Cagliari, to put an end to the practice, which had prevailed of administering confirmation by the ministry of the second order, as appears from the ninth of his epistles to Januarius (Epist. i, 3. Ind. 12)." Whether it was from those *Cycles* of saint Patrick, which *Columbanus* defies bishop Milner to riddle; or from mere *inadvertence*, our Author has favoured us with a letter from saint Gregory in 541, and that two of the *twelfth indiction*, I leave to Chronologers. The pope however has a right to speak for himself (in *Iabb.* v. p. 1141). *Presbyteri baptizatos infantes signare sacro in frontibus chrismate non præsumant; sed presbyteri baptizatos ungant in pectore; ut episcopi postmodum ungere debeant in fronte. i. e.* Let *presbyters* not assume the right of *signing* with chrisms baptized infants on the forehead: but let the presbyters anoint the baptized on the breast, that the *bishops* may afterwards have to anoint them on the forehead." This *chrismation* on the forehead, *Columbanus* takes to signify *confirmation*. I deny it: so let us hear out all the case.

"Afterwards however," proceeds *Columbanus*, "hearing, that this order of his was *strongly resented* and *opposed* by  
the

" *second order*, as an *innovation*, he wrote a second letter to " Januarius, retracting his first, and desiring, that *the ancient discipline should be restored.*" Ibidem.

This "*second order*" possesses a strange ubiquity of insurrection, in the historical view of our Author. At Rome, under Boniface, we have seen them turn out the sojourning bishops. At Nicea, they insist, although *innumerable*, on having seats in the Emperor's hall, and on *discussing*. In Spain, they would attend to no canons, unless such as they *had concurred in framing*; and, I should suppose, did not observe any canons whatsoever, as *the doors there were canonically barred*. Last of all, we have them now, in Sardinia, in holy rebellion against Gregory, because they are not allowed to confirm infants; and we have the pope too striking his colours, and *retracting*. Wisely, however, as usual, *Columbanus*, instead of giving the pope's expressions, claps down a long extract from Baronius, of which we have lately tasted the quintessence. The words of Gregory are these (Epistol. xxvi L. 3); *Pervenit ad nos, quosdam scandalizatos fuisse, quod presbyteros chrismate tangere in fronte eos qui baptizati sunt prohibuimus. Et nos quidem secundum usum veterem Ecclesie nostrae fecimus. Sed si, omnino, hac de re aliqui contristantur, ubi episcopi desunt, ut presbyteri etiam in frontibus baptizatos chrismate tangere debeant, concedimus.* i. e. " I am informed, that some persons took scandal at my forbidding presbyters to touch " with Chrism the foreheads of the baptized. For my part, " I acted in pursuance of the ancient usage of this church" (of Rome). " But if, *right, or wrong*, any persons are hurt

on

“ on that account, I grant to presbyters the function of  
 “ anointing the baptized *even on the forehead*, where *bishops*  
 “ *are not to be found.*”

Is there a word in this passage of *opposition* on the part of the *second order* ? Is there a word about *confirmation*, or about *restoring ancient discipline* ? Does the Pope *retract*, when he professes to *grant*, and when he qualifies that grant by the condition of *bishops not being to be found* ? Now, is such quotation excusable in any man pretending to understand what he writes ?

*Columbanus*, no doubt, reads *originals*. Of course he has read those two letters of saint Gregory to Januarius, and must have observed, that, in the former of these, the Pope forbids *signing* with the Chrism, and in the latter permits *touching* with it, on the forehead, *Columbanus* also, as being a reader of *originals*, must have read the letter of Innocent I. to Decentius, wherein that Pope declares, that, although priests may *anoint* with Chrism (blessed however by the bishop) the Neophytes, even in their bishop's presence, yet they may not *sign* the forehead with the same composition, which it is the province of *bishops alone* to do, *when they are imparting the Paraclete Spirit*. *Columbanus* is aware, that the *signing* of Innocent means the  $\sigma\phi\rho\epsilon\gamma\iota\zeta\mu\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , or *sealing*, of Cornelius the martyr, in his letter to Fabius of Antioch. Again ; *Columbanus* knows, that this *signing on the forehead* with chrism, although, by the Roman practice, reserved to *bishops*, and always accompanied by the imposition of hands and the  
 imparting



imparting of the PARACLETE, was yet, in former times, *not* the sacrament of confirmation.

He must have learned as much from the text of saint Jerome quoted by himself; wherein *that alone* is reserved to the bishop, which was performed by the apostles first in *Samaria*, before the name of *christian* had been introduced, and consequently before the use of a sacramental element of chrism. He *must* have learned the same obvious fact from the said letter of Innocent I., in which, in one and the same regulation, the Pope teaches the unlawfulness of *priests signing* the forehead with Chrism (which shews, that the attempt had been made), and declines to mention the sacramental words used by *the bishops*, lest he should betray them by writing; which shews, that the words were not known as generally as the Chrismation was practiced, or might have been attempted. *Columbanus* also *must* have known, that in the seventeenth century a discussion took place between Sirmond, the incomparable Editor of the Gallican councils, and the well known Author, calling himself *Petrus Aurelius*, on the subject of a Canon of the first council of Orange, in which it is decreed, that but *one chrismation* shall be used; and that, whenever a person, not already chrismated by the priest (or deacon) in baptism, shall be presented to the bishop *for confirmation*, that circumstance shall be intimated to *the bishop*. In reading over the *originals* of that dispute, *Columbanus* must have observed, that *Tertullian*, that *Cyprian*, that *Optatus*, that *Augustine* are alleged by Sirmond, as clearly distinguishing between the *chrismation* (although performed by the bishop), and *the imposition of hands*; and that

that saint Jerome himself allows to priests and deacons the practice of *Chrismation*, while he vindicates to *bishops*, the apostolical privilege of imposing hands. I will not affront the *reader of originals*, by telling him, that this discussion is to be found in the fourth volume of Sirmond's works, and under the titles *Antirrheticus*, I. and II. But I will *presume* to remind him, that, when Gregory forbade the unction on the forehead, he called it *signing*, and most probably supposed it to be accompanied by an imitative *episcopal confirmation*, from which the same ceremony was indivisible in the Roman Church; that, when he concedes the practice, he omits the term *signing*, and uses that of *touching*, having most probably been made acquainted, during the interval, that those presbyters intended but a rite compleatory of baptism. I would also remind *Columbanus*, that in the *first* of Toledo, that is to say, at the beginning of the fifth century, it was decreed, that *no deacon* should perform *chrismation*, which implies, that *deacons* until then, had used or usurped that function. I cannot bring myself to think, that *Columbanus* would claim for *deacons* the right of confirming.

I grant, that in the western Church, a presbyter may, by papal privilege, administer the sacrament of confirmation: moreover I grant, that, in the Eastern Church, the chrismation by presbyters, as immemorial delegates of their bishops or patriarchs in this respect, is good and sacramental, because recognized by the Western Church, and by the first of all churches. I grant all this, because I cordially submit to that authority, which *decides*, when probabilities conflict, and when reason totters between opposite consequences. But that priests, as such, are ministers of *confirmation*, in cases

*necessity*, as *Columbanus* pretends, is so great an insult to common sense, arguing upon *catholic* hypothesis, that I beg to lengthen out this note, in order to shew its effrontery.

The council of Trent has in the most authoritative manner declared, that no priest shares *in common*, or *in partnership* with bishops, the *known* episcopal functions. If so, no priest has any greater intrinsic right, as such, to *confirm* in supposed cases of necessity than to *ordain*. Now, to ordain he has no pretension; and yet for a *people*, the want of the priestly functions is infinitely more disastrous than that of confirmation. Consequently, the *priest* has no claim, under *any supposed necessity*, to *confirm* by virtue of his character. Again; no doctrine can be more self-evident in the catholic system than this; that, whatsoever sacrament may be *lawfully* and *validly administered* by a given person, *in the case of necessity*, the same sacrament will be *validly administered*, *out of the case of necessity*, without exception. To baptize was originally the peculiar commission of apostles, as truly as to *preach the gospel*; yet, in the progress of vicarious delegation, that ministry has been so generalized, that the Catholic church stands sponsor for the efficacy of a baptism, administered in the sacramental words and with serious intention, by *every christian*, *in the case of necessity*. It would be sacrilegious presumption in a layman to baptize an adult not at the point of death, if the ministry were accessible: yet, even in this case, the baptism would be *valid*, as it is in that of infants. In the case of *ordination*, we know, that a priest or bishop, when sequestered from office respectively, cannot perform jurisdictional acts: yet the acts of *order*, which they

\*

perform

perform, are always valid; and with regard to those, who may be ignorant of their suspension from office, certain acts of *jurisdiction* are allowed. If then the priest, as such, can *lawfully and validly* confirm in *cases of necessity*, as he cannot do so in virtue of *jurisdiction*, he must do so in virtue of *his order*; and thus *confirmation* by a priest, would in all events be *valid*; scholastically speaking, it would impress a *character*; or, in common speech, it would station the person confirmed in a specific class of spiritual pretension, which could neither be forfeited, nor be given a second time. The assertion therefore of *Columbanus*, that *priests may confirm in the case of necessity*, (which by the bye with regard to individuals cannot exist, in fact, as to this sacrament), amounting to the assertion, that *in necessity* it is *lawfully* received, as well as *lawfully and validly* imparted; and, by necessary inference, implying, that at all times, a priest may *validly* confirm, if it should even escape the Tridentine Anathema, about which *Columbanus* thinks little in appearance, does practically tend to the assertion of Wickliffe, that “*confirmation* has been reserved to the pope and the bishops, in the view of worldly gain,” or as the energetic stile of *Columbanus* might express it, through *the lust of money*.

END OF PART I.

2/20/01



1 1012 01003 8810

