

A Defence of Moderate Non-Conformity
Part I

by
Edmund Calamy



A
DEFENCE
OF
MODERATE
NON-CONFORMITY.
IN
ANSWER
TO THE
REFLECTIONS
OF

Mr. *Ollyffe* and Mr. *Hoadley*

On the Tenth Chapter of the Abridgment of
the Life of the Reverend Mr. *Rich. Baxter*.

PART I

With a Postscript, containing some Remarks on a Tract
of Mr. *Dorringtons*, entituled, *The Dissenting Ministry
in Religion, Censur'd and Condemn'd from the Holy Scriptures*.

By EDM. CALAMY, E. F. & N.

LONDON, Printed for *Tho. Parkhurst* at the Bible
and three Crowns in *Cheapside*, near *Mercers-Chappel*;
J. Robinson at the Golden-Lion in *St. Pauls's Church-
Yard*; and *J. Lawrence* at the Angel in the *Poultry*. 1703.

IT is not our Boasting that the Church of *England* is the best Reformed, and the best Constituted Church in the World, that will signify much to Convince others: We are too much Parties to be believ'd in our own Cause. There was a Generation of Men that cried. *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord*, as loud as we can cry, *The Church of England, The Church of England*: When yet by their Sins they were pulling it down, and kindling that Fire which consum'd it. *My Lord of Sarum's Preface to his Discourse of the Pastoral Care*, pag. xxxii.

Ubi Controversis Dogmatibus annex a sunt Emolumenta, seu ubi ad Conservandam Potentiam ac opes quærendas Dogmata inventa, aut attemperata sunt, non est quod Credamus, Disputando ac ratiocinando illa posse everti; saltem apud eos quorum peculiariter interest; nisi singularis aliqua rerum Conversio intervenit, &c. Pusendorssii Jus Feciale Divinum: seu de Consensu & Dissensu Protestantium, &c. pag. 36.

THE PREFACE

THE Acceptance my Abridgment of the Life of the Reverend Mr. Baxter hath met with among Men of Temper of all Ranks and Denominations, hath so far exceeded my Expectation, that I can the more easily hear the Censures I have incurr'd. It no more moves me to hear one Call it an Infamous Abridgment; and find another representing it as a continu'd Libel against the Church and the Crown, than it did Socrates to be inveigh'd against as an Enemy of the Gods of his Country, because he had too large a Soul to countenance Popular Errors.

My Tenth Chapter, at which some have-been so much Offended, was drawn
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up with some Caution: For I was sensible it was of Importance. I acted however, but as an Historian, in reporting the Sense of the Ministers who were Ejected in Sixty Two, as to what was impos'd on them and their Followers. Had I misrepresented them, I might have been justly charg'd with a want of Fidelity or Care. But if I have given a just view of their Sentiments, no Impartial Person can forbear Acquitting me. For I have perform'd what I undertook. Had this been observ'd, I doubt not but some Reflections which have been liberally bestow'd had been spar'd; particularly by Mr. Ollyffe and his Brethren.

But since both Mr. Ollyffe and Mr. Hoadly, who have publish'd their Animadversions, are so Desirous to enter upon the Merits of the Cause; and represent those who so nobly Defended the Necessity of a farther Reformation among usy as Acting upon Principles that are not to be justify'd I am free that matters be Reconsider'd; which may be
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of Use to the Rising Generation. For if we have really no sufficient Reasons for persisting in our Dissent from the Church of England, according to its present Settlement; if things have hitherto been grosly mistaken, and our Constitution is so Happy, as that our insisting upon Amendments before we fall in with it, is but needless Scrupulosity; I think. 'tis High time we should in earnest think of Conforming. But if it can be made appear on the other side, that the Cause of those who sufferd for their Non-Conformity, in the main was Good; and that the Chief Principles that kept them out of the Publick Establishment, are so bottom'd on Truth and Charity, that they are not to be shaken, that there is the same need of Amendments now as formerly, and less likelihood of obtaining any, according to the Posture we are in, since another happy Opportunity after the Late Glorious devolution has been wilfully lost; and yet that there is more Encouragement than our Fathers had,

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as to Capacity of Service, while the Separation is continu'd, by the Liberty Legally granted us in the Last Reign, and continu'd under this; I hope our remaining Non-Conformists, may pass with equal Persons for a Discharge of our Duty, and a Piece of Service to the great Interest of Religion.

I am not insensible that I engage in a Cause that hath off been trampled on: But it hath been generally by those who have least understood it. It hath been often Doom'd to Deaths and yet it still survives. Moderate Non-Conformity to our English Establishment hath met with as many Reproaches, as Primitive Christianity: And yet as far as I can judge, putting all things together, it rather gains than loses Ground. And I dare be bold to Prognosticate, that nothing will be able to put a Period to it, as long as more is necessary to make a Man a Member of the Church, than is necessary to make him a Good Christian; or as long as Persons professing to Act by the same
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Authority with the first Council at Jerusalem, instead of imitating that Council, in requiring only a few necessary things, shall continue to require sundry Things both of Ministers and People, for which the best that can be said is, that they are Indifferent.

But these Indifferent things (if they may be justly call'd so) have now for above these Hundred Tears divided us; and yet many are as Fond of them as ever. An Argument is both ways drawn even from their Indifference. If they are but Indifferent, why then are they impos'd? says one side. If barely Indifferent (which by the way is not own'd by the Parties concern'd) why then are they not comply'd with? says the other side. This is one main Hinge of the Controversy between the Conformists and the Non-Conformists.

I have carefully perus'd Mr. Hoadly's two Books, and find his Suggestions Centring in this Point. He gives it not as his own Sense only, but of

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his Brethren also, several of whom he has consulted, that over and above the Necessary things which have been fix'd by our Blessed Saviour, there must be Ecclesiastical Regulations in things Indifferent, so impos'd, as that none should be own'd Members of the Church without complying with them: That Church Governors imposing such things as are not in themselves either Necessary or Expedient, are out of Conscience to be comply'd with, if the things requir'd are not Unlawful: And that a Separation on the Account of such things tho' it should be managed ever so Charitably, is an inexcusable Breach of the Peace of the Church: And the more so, supposng the Acceptableness of their Worship to God, should be own'd by Occasional Communicating in it, by such as ordinarily Separate from it.

For my Part on the Contrary, I am fully Perswaded, that tho' our Blessed Saviour, has left the Necessary Circumstances of his Worship to be determin'd

termin'd by Humane Prudence, he yet allows none to Act so Despotically, as to open the Church Doors or flout them, according as Persons either yield to, or refuse to comply with, any meerly Humane Determinations: That there lies no Obligation upon Conference to comply with such Ecclesiastical Regulations, unless they derive a Sanction, either from the intrinsick Reasons of the things requir'd, or the Circumstances that attend them: And that a Separation on the Account of such things may be for the Benefit of the Church in general, by preventing the spreading of an imposing Spirit, which for many Ages has done so much Mischief; the Checking which I take to be much more for the Good of the Church, than a Submission to such Impositions: And that such a Separation is the more safe, while such as engage in it, so manage themselves as to discover a Brotherly Affection towards those from whom they Separate: Which may be done by Occasional Communion, where it

will be rightly interpreted: Or may be done by other ways, without Occasional Communion, while those to whom a Brotherly Affection was design'd to be this way discover'd, appear resolv'd to misinterpret it.

These two Schemes I purpose in another Discourse to Compare together, with the different Reasons alledgd on each side; which being fairly offer'd to view, any Man may easily Judge and Choose for himself.

*But there having been a great stir made ever since the Bartholomew Ejection, about a Difficulty with Reference to Ministers, and the Validity of their Orders, I have considerd that matter in the following Papers. I have indeed taken a wider Compass than a bare Reply to my Animadverters made Necessary: But it was in Order to the fuller Justification of the Ordination of the Moderate Dissenters; which is a thing in which I look upon Ministers and People as nearly concern'd: And the more, because of
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the great Zeal of many of our Brethren in the Publick Church, to invalidate our Ministry; in which I am sorry to find some so concern'd to distinguish themselves, with whom, in other Respects there is a great Appearance of Moderation.

My Answer to Mr. Hoadly's Queries upon this Head, is put in my own Name only, which I tho't fittest, when I was expressing my own Sense. I am however allow'd by several of my Brethren to whom that Part was communicated, to signify that I have their concurring Sense, as to that matter: For that they Acted upon the same Principles.

I have not run things to Extremity, but endeavour'd to keep within the Bounds of Decency. Methinks it becomes Divines to weigh Maturely the Subjects they handle, and write with Temper. I am none of those that are for widening the Distance, between such as Heartily own one and the same Protestant Faith. Union upon Scripture Grounds is the thing I would ever aim at.

at. And if in any Particulars I have fallen into Mistakes, shall not be asham'd to own it upon Conviction. I am aware that I am not managing a Controversy with Enemies, but with Brethren. Hard Words and foul Language I have no Tatent in. I observe Passion is a Blind, and not a Guide. He that Writes in a violent Heat, hazardeth the Loss of that which is to the full as valuable as what he pretends to seek. For he seeks Truth, and endangers Charity. Whereas the Great Apostle tells us that Truth is to be sought in Love. And then it is most likely to be found.

In the Remarks which I have added in the Close, upon a late Book of Mr. Dorrington's, I must confess my Judgment would not allow me to write without a little Warmth. But I am perswaded it is no more than what Candid Persons, considering Circumstances, will Acquit me in. And this I can safely say; 'tis join'd with a most Hearty Good Will to his Person, and Labours.

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My Reply to what hath been Offer'd by both my Animadverters on the other Heads, will? if the Lord give Life and Health, in some time follow and I shall forward it, as far as my Circumstances and Occasions will allow. And tho' I should not one way Answer the Expectations of Mr. Hoadly, for want of Light to discern the Strength of those Arguments, in which he sometimes so much Triumphs; yet I hope to manifest to all impartial Persons, that 'tis neither Education, nor Prepossession; neither Prejudice, Fancy, nor Humour but Reasons that deserve Consideration, that make me continue a Non-conformist, till Catholick Christianity can be allow d to pass for the Publicity Standard. And this way I hope I shall be able sufficiently to approve my Self an Honest Man,

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Advertisement.

THE Reader is desir'd. to Correct the following Slips of the Press with his Pen. Pag. 3. for *unprofitable* read *unpardonable*. P. 38. L. 19. add *was*. p. 39. l. 14. r. *ἐυθέως*. ib. l. 31. for *appear'd* r. *approv'd*. p. 47. l. 19. r. *everlasting*. ib. l. 30. r. *themselves*. p. 53. l. 31. for *their* r. *your*, and again, *your* l. 33. p. 57. l. 19. r. *for any Service it does his Cause*. p. 72. l. 3. for *if* r. *is*. p. 74. l. 19. r. *Scripture Times*. p. 75. l. 34. r. *omitted*, p. 87. l. 29. between *was* and *Archbishop* insert *afterwards*, p. 99. l. 22. r. *Conferring*, p. 101. l. 13. r. *Canon*, *ibid*, in the Margin for *many* r. *may*. p. 107. l. 26. for *of* r. *by*. p. 140. l. 19. r. *agreeably*, p. 141. l. 25. r. *Religiously*. p. 149. l. 13. r. *valu'd*, p. 154. l. 15. leave out *do*. p. 156. l. 3. r. for the first *of* r. *the*. p. 173. l. 22, 23. r. *Damasus*. p. 197. l. 33. r. *Admission*.

A
DEFENCE
OF
Moderate Non-Conformity.

PART I.

*The Grounds of the Non-Conformity
of the Ministers who were Ejected.
Their Vindication of themselves, and
such as Adher'd to them.*

[Being the Tenth Chapter of the Abridgement
of the Life of the Reverend Mr. *Richard Baxter*.]

“IT is not to be suppos’d, that Two
“Thousand Men, pick them where you Sect. I.
“will, should be all of one Mind. A-
“mong the Excluded Ministers there
“was a Diversity of Sentiments. Some
“could have gone much farther than others
“in Compliance, with Authority: But as the
“Terms of *Conformity* were settled, they durst
“not yield; some upon one account, some upon
“another, and several upon many Reasons at
“once, fearing they should thereby have of-
“fended God. Many Eyes were upon them.
“Their Refusal was Puiblick. The Gap made
“by their Ejection wide and great. And the
“Consequences very Considerable. The Cen-
“sures which were afterwards past upon them
C “were

“were harsh and severe. And at length it became Modish to run them all down, as a Pack of unreasonable and humoursom Complainants. Posterity must and will judge in the Case, when Plaintiffs and Defendants are all in their Graves. For their Help and Assistance, I have here drawn up the Plea of those who were the Sufferers, which compar’d with the Arguments and Replies of the Aggressors, may help in passing an Impartial Judgment. I desire only it may be observ’d. That the following Abstract contains the Reasons of those who were the most Moderate, and least Fond of Separation.

“The Things impos’d upon them, if they would keep their Livings or Lectureships, or any Post of Service in the Establish’d Church were these Five. They must be *Re-ordain’d*, if not *Episcopally Ordain’d*, before. They must declare their *Unfeigned Assent and Consent to all, and every thing Contain’d, and Prescrib’d in and by the Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, together with the Psalter, and the Form and Manner of Makings Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, &c.* To which was Superadded an Equivalent Subscription. They must take the Oath of *Canonical Obedience*, and Swear subjection to their *Ordinary*, according to the *Canons* of the Church. They must abjure the *Solemn League and Covenant*: And they must also abjure the *taking Arms upon any Pretence whatsoever, against the King, or any Commissonated by him.* These things were all straitly Enjoin’d, without any thing to Qualifie or Soften them, or room for a Dispensation. So that if any Man Scrupled

“pled but one Point, and could have Com-
 “ply’d in all the rest, he was as certainly
 “Ejected, as if he had Scrupled all. And all of
 “them were indeed Scrupled by many, who
 “weighing them Maturely, could not Regard
 “them, (as Circumstances stood) as things
 “indifferent, or barely Inconvenient; but re-
 “fused them as flatly Sinful, according to the
 “best Light they could gain by their utmost
 “Enquiries. Il’e View them Distinctly, in the
 “Order in which I have Mention’d them.

The Two Gentlemen, who have tho’t it
 worth their while to make their Remarks, upon
 this Representation of the Reasons of the Ejected
 Ministers for their Non-Conformity, have join’d
 together in Pleading Self-Defence, against one
 who is not Conscious to himself of a Design to
 Assault them: But was only Desirous to trans-
 mit to Posterity, a short View of the Principles
 and Grounds of a sort of Men, whom he hop’d
 Future Ages, when Prejudices were worn out,
 would know how to Value. Mr. *Ollyffe* and his
 Neighbours were hereupon *so Aggrieved, that*
they met together to make their Complaints. Such
 is my Respect for them, that if they had Reason
 for it, upon my Account, I Profess I am hear-
 tily Sorry: And I wish they may never have
 greater Reason. Mr. *Hoadly*, also thinks it
 needful to *Vindicate the Conforming Clergy, and*
could not be Content to sit down, and suffer his
Practice to be Represented as a Complication of the
Blackest and most unprofitable Crimes. Would not
 any one that Observes how these Worthy Gen-
 tlemen are disturb’d, apprehend there must cer-
 tainly be some Considerable Provocation given?
 would not any Man Imagine that the Tenth Chap-
 ter of the Abridgement referr’d to, must be a
 bitter Invective against the Clergy, full of heavy

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Accusations, Censures and Reproaches Charging them boldly with the blackest Crimes? If it be so, I disclaim it; For I intended not the Offence of any; and dealt of all, of those who are Desirous of Union with their Brethren.

It was not only my Profess'd, but Real Intention, to give a Breviate of the Plea of these, who when cast out of their Livings, met with very hard Usage, for not complying with the National Establishment, and keeping up the Worship of God in separate Assemblies. That I might herein do them Justice, I Consulted their Extant Writings, and thence represented their Sense, as Briefly; but at the some time as Faithfully and Impartially as I was Able. And to the end, that none might charge me with mis-representing them, I quoted the Writers themselves in the Margin. Whether or no this could deserve the Clamor of such as concernedly Profess, *That they have had, and continue a great Respect and Reverence to the Persons of the Ejected Ministers*; Let any indifferent Person Judge. I was sparing of giving my own Sense in the several Parts of the Controversie. 'Twas my Aim, to let the World know what they had to say for themselves. And must not that be a most Profound Respect that wont allow Men, and after they have deeply Suffer'd too, to speak in their own Behalf?

But I am told, that my *whole Discourse on this Matter, from one end to the other, seems one continued Mis-represtataion of the Terms of Conformity*. A very hard Case I must needs Confess, that nothing should be rightly taken, but all be Misconstruction from one end to the other! Hitherto, I had tho't these Silenc'd Ministers had had Common Sense as well as their Neighbours: But if they had not, and Acted Hand
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over Head, without either. Fear or Wit, I see not how I could help it. It was not in my Power to make the Reasons they had Publisht, either better or worse: 'Twas eno' for me to Relate them as I found them. If their Reasons contain'd nothing but Gross *Mis-representations of the Terms of Conformity*, I must Confess they were very much to Blame: To Blame for Imposing upon themselves and others too. And their pretending Conscience in the Case, ought rather to be look'd upon as an Aggravation than an Excuse of their Fault. However, nothing can be more fit, than that their Fallacys should be Detected; that so the World at length may know they were only a Company of Mistaken Zealots, who lost their Livings and Livelyhoods, thro' *Prejudices* and *Preposessions*; and Sacrific'd, not only the Peace of the Church, but their own Capacity of Extensive Service, together with their Ease, Comfort and Liberty, their Reputations and Estates, to Groundless Fancys. To say nothing of their Honesty, they must certainly be a very silly sort of People, that they should without the least Occasion, *bind such heavy Bardens on themselves, by severe and rigid Interpretations, which the Law does not require; and against the plain Construction and use of Words.* What had they not so much as one Lawyer; one tolerable Grammarian amongst them all? Must they not be Eggregiously Weak, that they could not save both themselves and the Nation so much Trouble, by Distinguishing between yielding to be *declar'd Ministers* a Second time, and being properly *Reordain'd*? Between *Assent* and *Consent* to the *Use* and to the *Approbation* of Rites and Ceremonies? And between Obedience in *Lawful things*, and Obedience *According to the Canons*? I Profess such a sense-

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left, half-witted lort of Men, deserv'd to be Expos'd. The Attempting it needed no Excuse. I am not so well Vers'd in the Art of Complement, as to be able to call them *Excellent Persons*, upon such a Supposition. It was safe eno' to *intend a Reflection* upon them. No Mortal could forbear it, whenever they came in his way. Nay, and that *Great and Holy Man* too (as he is call'd) *Whose Book I Undertook to give the Summary of*, had as little Reason to be spar'd, as any in all the Company: Because he had a main Hand in these *Mis-representations*: And Particularly gave such an Account of the *Oath of Canonical Obedience*, as that Mr. Ollyffe Sticks not to declare. That *there is not so much as a Person to be met with, that ever had such a thing in their tho'ts, or at least, that ever Publisht such a Supposition, before he in his Old Age. (alias Dotage) Wrote a Book call'd Non-Conformity Stated and Argu'd; Which Book Viewed in this Light, would be more properly Stil'd, Conformity Mis-represented.* I can't Discern that there needed any Plea at all, for freely dispelling such a Mist. All the World must needs Justifie and Applaud it.

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But why I, who had but the Drudgery of bringing the Reasons of these Men within a narrow Compass, and so gave these Gentlemen an Advantage for Exposing them with the greater Ease, should fall under their Indignation, when I might rather seem to deserve their Thanks, is not so Manifest. Why should they in their Title Page, and throughout their Book, Charge those *Mis-representations* upon me? If they deserve that Name, they know very well they are none of mine. They belong to those Good Men, *for whose Memory they Sincerely Profess to have a very high Honour.* But instead of enlarging here, I'll leave them to their own Reflections

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If they have *from a clear Conviction of Conscience, been satisfied to Conform to the Establishd Church*; may they go on and Prosper. I can most heartily Pray, that they may have all the Success, their own Hearts can desire. I'm sure the most earnest Endeavours of all in their several Capacities, that are devoted to the spreading of Pure and Undeiled Religion, are not more than are needful. God forbid that I should Judge them to their own Master they stand or fall. Had I been in their Circuastances, and seen things in their Light, I don't Suppose but I should for the most part have Acted as they did. And tho' after comparing their Sense of things, with the Representation of the Ejected Ministers, I must Confess my self more inclinable in the main to fall in with the Latter, and I think, upon Grounds that are Good and Justifiable too; Yet I look upon these, as things about which 'tis very Possible for Conscientious Persons to have different Apprehensions. I can see no Reason, why we should on either side Affect to widen the Distance that there is between us. They may be Useful in the Establishd Church, and we out of it, for what I can as yet Discern. And 'tis Manifest, we have the same Common Enemies: And upon that Account should be the more Cautious.

There is one thing however, which I cannot but Applaud these Gentlemen for Especially at a Season when that dull Moral Vertue call'd *Moderation*, is on a sudden grown so unfashionable. 'Tis this: That they have so frankly Disclaim'd a *Stiff Adherence to the things In debate*; and Declar'd, that they would do nothing to obstruct an *Accommodation of Differences among us, by such Concessions as are Necessary for a Comprehension*. Nothing, that might have the

Ibid.

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least tendency to the Propagating or Encreasing of our Unchristian Breaches. I Rejoice in it and am only Sorry their number is not greater. Had the first Convocation in the Reign of our Glorious King *William*, been of that mind, our Divisions had not, I suppose, been still unheal'd. But since these Gentlemen remain thus dispos'd, 'tis manifest, that they and we have one and the same Design, and would have the Church freed of its remaining Corruptions, that so it may become more Safe and Settled; fix'd on a more Scriptural, and so a more Extensive, and a more lasting Bottom: And therefore let us not fall out, because, on one side, this, and on the other side, a different Method, is tho't most likely to Conduce to this End. Suppose they go into the Church to do what they can to Pave the Way for this; And we keep out of it for the same Reason: They think that their indifferently using or omitting Rites and Ceremoniess, tho' in Appearance rigorously Prescrib'd; and we that the utter Neglect of them, is the best way to promote their being left in their proper Indifference: Why should we Disagree, when our end is the same?

I must Confess, to me it appears of the two, more Frank and Ingenuous, more becoming the Freedom of an *English*, and the Simplicity and Godly Sincerity of a Christian Spirit, to disclaim a Compliance with Ecclesiastical Impositions, rather than Prosessing a Compliance with them, afterwards to Neglect them. Were they ever so much displeas'd, I can't help being of this Mind, till I have more Light: For what they have Suggested, has not Convinc'd me. The more I search into the Matter, the more Evidence I discover, that our National Constitution, which is bottom'd on the Authority

rity of the Church, which is Affected in. the 20th *Article*, join'd with the Power of the Civil Magistrate, leaves not a Judgment of Discretion, to those who comply with it, be they *Clergy* or *Laity*, in things by Authority already Positively Determin'd: And 'twas this made me say, that which I perceive has given Offence, that Dr. F. of *Whitchurch*, his Refusing to Baptize the Child of his Parishioner, without the *Cross* or *God-fathers*, was (in my Apprehension) *more Honest*, than for Persons, to pretend to dispense with themselves, when, they are under the most Solemn Bonds. And I must Confess, I cannot yet see how the Constitution has left any more Liberty to the *Clergy* to choose what Ceremonies, and how far, and in what Cases they'll use them, and when, and how far, and in what Cases they'll omit them, than it has to the *Laity*, to Judge what they'll allow or Reject, as far as they are Concern'd, upon their Enquiry into the Grounds of imposing them. A Latitude here, tho' highly Desirable in it self, is what I know not how to Reconcile with that *Uniformity*, which is the avowed Design of the Constitution. However, this has so disturb'd these Gentlemen, that they could not but think it a *Just Debt to their Christian Reputation*, to make it appear, that they were *Honest Men*, and that they do not make their *Living*s and *Preferments* the Rule of their *Minds* and *Consciences*. What an Insinuation is here! As if I charg'd them as Men of no Conscience! It was the Remotest thing in the World from my Tho'ts, nor can it justly be inferr'd from my Words: But still that *Honest Men* may Act upon Principles that wont bear Scanning, these Gentlemen can't I suppose pretend to deny, since 'tis the very thing they have attempted

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to Prove, upon our Ejected Ministers and their Successors. Now why should they be more incapable of Guilt than their Neighbours? But upon this Head these Brethren are exceeding touchy. What it springs from they best know. If there be any thing of this Nature at the bottom, that they can't endure that such as in their Judgment have weakly wav'd all the Advantages which a State of Conformity might have been attended with, should so much as seem *cum Ratione insanire*; if they can't bear they should seem to have a Shadow of Reason for their Refusal, least it should be a Reflection on them, whose Principles are Larger; 'tis left to their Consideration, whether they have not Cause to humble themselves before God for their want of Charity.

I must freely confess, that I find among Persons that I would hope are truly Conscientious, such different degrees of Latitude, that I can't allow my self presently to say, or so much as think, that that Man has no Conscience, who does not follow such a Particular *Measure*. He that will take the Pains to compare Bishop *Taylor's Ductor Dubitantium*, with other Protestant Casuistical Writers, will find that an Upright Confidence may Act upon Principles that widely differ. I should not dare to say, that he that apprehends we are under no Divine Obligation to the Sanctification of the Lord's Day, must be a Man of no Confidence, tho' I'm perswaded he's in an Error. Yet at the same time, I think it much more *Pious*, and more *becoming a Christian*, out of a regard to God, strictly to Consecrate that Day to Religious Purposes. I dare not say, he's a Man of no Conscience, that shall put his own Sense on a Solemn Oath or Declaration; and yet think
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it more *Honest*, either to refuse it, or to Act according to the Sense of the Imposers. And therefore 'twas upon Supposition that the Terms of Conformity were understood as the Generality of the *Conformists* themselves, as well as the *Non-Conformists*, have all along tho't they ought to be understood, that I us'd the word *Honest*; without Reflecting on their Integrity, who really apprehend they may safely be understood in a Greater Latitude. Tho' at the same time I must freely own, that were a like Latitude allow'd in many other Cases, I doubt we should be hard put to it, to know when Men are Bound, and when they are Free. But should I be as touchy as they, and make as great a Stir, about each of their Numerous Reflections, as they have done about one of mine, our Altercation might soon grow Voluminous, tho' I doubt it would prove as little to our own Comfort upon a Review, as to the Satisfaction or Profit of Lookers on.

The main thing I laid my Stress upon was this That as things appear'd to me, it seem'd a pretty Close Enquiry, how far Persons, when bound by their Solemn Engagements, which were design'd to secure *Uniformity*, could justify their Latitude, in altering, omitting, &c. even as if they were Free, and matters were left to their Discretion? In Defence of their *Honesty*, they Declare they are not so straitly bound, but that they may Baptize without the *Cross*, they may omit *Godfathers*, they may administer the Sacrament, without insiting upon *Kneeling*, to satisfy the Scruples of those Concern'd, without Violating their Engagements. Well, if it will be any Satisfaction to them, I declare. *If the Authority that has Appointed these things, agrees to it*, I'm contented: nay not only contented.

contented, but Highly pleas'd. I'm free they should have the same Liberty with their Engagements, as we enjoy without them: And I should be glad it were less Precarious than it must be, according to the present Settlement. But I have a much better Opinion of them, than to suppose *Living*s and *Preferment*s are their Rule. As to their *Living*s, I don't doubt but they enter'd upon them with a Prospect of greater Service, than they were (at that time at least) capable off in any other way. And I shall rejoice that they be allow'd to keep them, without any New Fetters, that should oblige them to an Approbation of the rigorous Imposing of such things as they seem at present to look upon but as just Tolerable. But as for *Preferment*s, I think verily they may for the present, set their Hearts at rest; their Consciences are not likely to receive any great Disturbance from that Quarter. For tho' they are in the Church, yet they can't but know Dr. *Hickman*'s distinction of Spirits in their Church; the Application of which cannot in this respect but be to their Disadvantage, after they have so frankly declar'd. That *as they had no Hand in the rigorous Impositions, so they have no Heart or Will to the Continuance of them, that some of them have done all they can to remove them: that they have Wrote, Preach'd, Discours'd, and Pray'd for Abatements in Conformity, and when any hopeful Means thereof: have fail'd, none have more Lamented and Mourn'd than they.* This is a right Christian Spirit I confess. I Admire it, and Applaud it, and only wish it were more common. 'Tis a shrew'd sign it did not much prevail, that our late Glorious Sovereign, could in Thirteen Years time make so little Advance towards that *Comprehension*, of
which

which he was so earnestly desirous. However this very Confession of theirs makes them as Obnoxious to a Set of Men, who ingross the name of *the Church* to themselves, even as the *Non-Conformists*, if not more, and therefore they need not be uneasy, we have no suspicion about them as to Preferments, if they keep but their Temper. But then at the same time, their offering to Cultivate a fair Correspondence with the Successors of the Ejected Ministers, is as Prudent as it is Kind; nay 'tis necessary: For this we may depend upon, that they and we shall stand or fall together.

Mr. *Hoadly* comes diredly to the Point; He tells us very fairly, that *he should judge it but an odd and very, unlikely way to win upon us, to represent the Terms of Conformity according to our Wishes, unless he could perswade us to believe, that they were truly what he represents them to be.* In which he and I are entirely of a Mind. As we are also, in the *sincere Desire of a greater Union among English Protestants than we are yet arriv'd at.* Tho' about the Means we widely differ. That *what he proposes* in order to it, *would not indeed be very agreeable to our Wishes,* he might easily eno' foresee. But that he should say, his *Method must be acceptable to us,* is but an indifferant sort of a Complement. But why must it? Oh the Reason's plain: His *Method must be acceptable to because we profess our selves ready to Conform, if our Objections be fairly remov'd.* Can a Man desire any more, than to have his Objections *fairly remov'd*? No truly. But then who must be Judge? He may think them *fairly remov'd*, while we may apprehend them to be in some Respects but more confirm'd: And *must* his proposal still be *acceptable*? Preface.

There

There are Two ways of dealing with the *Gordian Knot*. One is by untying it, and the other by cutting it asunder. There are Two ways to Union. One is by retaining all the Ecclesiastical Impositions, and bringing those that have hitherto stood back, at last to Crouch, under the Burden: The other by leaving the things impos'd in their natural Indifference, that there may be nothing left to cause a Distance. He is for the former way of Union: While others are every Day more and more convinc'd, that without the Latter Method, a Real Union will never be reach'd. If you keep the Cause of Division, and have an incurable Fondness for that, you may take what Pains you please in *fairly removing* the Complaints of the Injur'd; and yet you'll be as far from Union as ever. You may tell those that Complain, that they are not Injur'd, when they find and feel it that the Yoke is light that is laid upon them, and might be made much heavier: You may attempt to Perswade them that things are as they should be; and that the Removal of the Dividing Engines is needless; that it would open the Door to Confusion; that they are better as they are; and that 'twere more advisable to Acquiesce in the Judgment of others, than Judge for themselves, even tho' they were perhaps as Capable of it as those that would do them that Friendly Office: These things are *fair eno'*: Much *fairer* it must be confess'd, than Fines or Imprisonments. And yet if the Cause of Division be not remov'd, or at least agreed to be remov'd, a pretended *fair Removal of Objections*, is neither better nor worse than an imposing *fairly* upon us. Tho' I don't apprehend but this Author intends all for the best, and does verily believe that we should do very well
to

to yield that our Objections are fairly remov'd, yet there is one great Difficulty among others, which he has said nothing to, which is Unavoidable, unless the Exercise of the *Spirit of Imposition* be agreed to be wav'd. Suppose I could Conform, yet when I find that upon the lame Reasons as the *Cross* and *Surplice* are impos'd. *Holy Water*, and *Lights*, and a great many other Popish Ceremonies may be brought in at any time, when our Superiors are so dispos'd, it would mightily discourage me. Now what Security can be Given that they wont that way exert their Authority? Especially when * some have not Stuck to give it as their Sense, that we ought to have more Ceremonies rather than fewer; which was manifestly the prevailing Principle in the Days of K. *Charles* the First. As to Mr. *Hoadly*, he gives us fair words 'tis true: He is not for *Hang*, *Draw*, and *Quarter*, as some of his Brethren have been that have gone before him: But he seems as fond of all the Impositions that have occasion'd the Division, as those that fix'd them. He's for Union, indeed, by our Compliance with the Church in all things; but by his Good Will, he'd hardly part with a Pin out of the Tabernacle, tho' Union might be the Consequence. And for this Reason all his *fair* words wont make his Performance acceptable. I am not indeed insensible, how little 'tis in the Power of Men of his Rank, or even of those in Higher Stations in the Church, to make way for needful Abatements: But owning the want of Amendments, and justifying the Denial of them, are with me very different Indications. In plain Truth, he'd have been as likely to win upon us, by *representing the Terms of Conformity according to our wishes*, as by pretending the laid Terms are

as

*Dr. Gunning, at the Savoy Conference.

as Good as we could wish them to be; which they must be, if Amendments are needless. Such as consider and compare Things with any Observation, will as easily to the full be perswaded to believe *they are truly what they are represented to be*, in the former Case as in the latter.

But before I come to Particulars, I can't forbear taking Notice of a general Remark, with which Mr, *Ollyffe* begins his Defence: Which Remark elucidated by some Historical Passages which occur to my Memory, will help us to enter on the Present Debate with some Advantage. And in a Controversy which depends so much upon History as this, we should not take History and Argument apart, but consider them together, as having mutual Dependance, and reflecting a mutual Light. He tells us, *It is manifest, there have been, almost from the Beginning of the Reformation. Two sorts of Persons in the Church: One pleading high for the Imposition of the Ceremonies, and maintaining, the Expediency of rigorous urging Subscriptions and Declarations to the imposed Terms of Conformity, under very severe Penalties, tho' they allow'd many of the things impos'd to be in their own Nature indifferent. The other sort disliking the Imposition of several Things, especially. under such Penalties; yet being perswaded of the Lawfulness of the Things impos'd, have tho't it their Duty to Conform thereunto.* This is a Thing that can't be Contested: However, I think, it is not very Difficult to give good Proof, that the Cause in Debate is very much Chang'd on the Church side, from what it was at First, which must necessarily cause a Change also, in those who are against Rigorous Impositions, upon the same Principles with the *Conforming Puritans*. As there are many of us, who now Separate from the Establish'd Church, who should have Conform'd

form'd as far as they did, had we liv'd in their Times; and have been as much against Separation as they were; so I have very good Reason to believe, had they liv'd in our Times, they would have Separated from the National Establishment as well as we. Their Avow'd Principles at least would have led them to it. In the Process of this Debate, I Hope to set this in a clear Light. However at the Present, the following Brief Historical View may Suffice.

There has been *High Church* and *Low Church* among us, ever since the Reformation. In the Days of *Edward* the 6th, *Cranmer* and *Ridley* headed the one, and *Rogers* and *Hooper* the other: And by a good Token, the latter were bro't to Conformity, not by dint of Argument, but by Threats and hard Usage: But the Prospect of a Stake, where all Four Dy'd, and that in Defence of the great Truths of Religion, and not either for Ceremonies or against them, produc'd a Hearty Reconciliation between them. In the Days of Queen Mary, many of both Parties Fled into Foreign Countries for their Security. While they were Exiles, those of the Former sort stiffly Adher'd to the Ceremonies which they had been so forward to impose; while they, who were of the other Stamp, thinking themselves under no Obligation, took their Liberty to Neglect the Ceremonies, and grew the more indifferent about them. Which created no small Heat between the Two Parties while they were Abroad. Returning Home upon the Advancement of Queen Elizabeth to the Throne, each was in Hope of gaining their Point. One sort was Zealous for the continuance of the Ceremonies, and the other for their Abolitions. The former gain'd the Queen's Favour and

Hearty Concurrence, and so the latter were Disappointed. And yet for want of a sufficient number of Qualifi'd Persons, to fill up Vacancies, they were allow'd at first to Officiate in the Publick Churches, even, tho' well known to be Disaffected to the Ceremonies: And they were Conniv'd at in the Neglect of them for a time. Nay, being much Esteem'd and Honour'd on the Account of their Worth, and their Sufferings from the Papists, many of them were advanc'd to considerable Dignities: Thus, *Sampson* was Dean of *Christ-Church Oxon*, *Whittingham* Dean of *Durham*. Dr. *Laurence Humphrey*, Regius Professor in *Oxon*, President of *Magdalene Colledge*, and Dean of *Winchester*; Father *John Fox*, the Martyrologist, Prebendary of *Sarum*: And *Whitehead* might have been Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*. Queen *Elizabeth's* first Bishops, many of them shew'd themselves very Friendly to those who had been their Fellow-Sufferers in the *Marian* Persecution. But in Process of Time, some of these, join'd with others newly advanc'd to the Prelatical Dignity, became Zealous for a Strict Uniformity: And conceiving themselves empower'd by their *Canons* made in *Convocation*, An. 1563; Began to Shew their Authority, in urging the Clergy in their respective Diocesses, to Subscribe to the *Liturgy*, *Ceremonies*, and *Discipline* of the Church; and such as Refus'd, were Branded with the Odious Name of *Puritans*. The Famous *John Fox*, tho' a Man of considerable Latitude, yet refus'd to Subscribe to anything, except the *Greek Testament*; many others would not Comply. Some of the Resisters, tho' well Qualifi'd for Publick Service, were Ejected; while Sundry Scandalous and insufficient Persons were allow'd to continue in the Ministry which was a great Trouble

Trouble to the Sober People of the Land. Others were still conniv'd at, tho' they did not comply. And one great Reason of it, was, because the *Canons* made in the Convocation 1563, were not Confirm'd in Parliament, till 1572. After which, the Subscription was for some time urg'd Severely. And that it may be seen, that a Submission to the Constitution in General, with a reserve of Liberty in certain Cases, to Neglect or Omit the Ceremonies, upon one Account or other, would not Suffice I shall here Insert the Form of a Subscription I have met with, which was the next Year, *viz.* An. 1573, Impos'd by the Bishops on those who Submitted, after they had offended in such Capital Omissions, as the not wearing the Surplice, forbearing the *Cross* in Baptism, and *Kneeling* at the Communion. The Form ran thus. *Whereas I T. G. have in Publick Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, neglected and omitted the Order, by Publick Authority set down, following mine own Phantasy, in altering, addings or omitting the same not using such Rites as by Law and Order are Appointed: I acknowledge my Fault therein, and am Sorry for it, and humbly pray Pardon for that Disorder: And here I do submit my Self to the Order and Rites set down; and I do promise that I will from henceforth, in Publick Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, use and observe the same. The which thing I do presently and willingly Testify, with the Subscription of my own Hand.* As a farther Confirmation of the Necessity of an Universal Compliance, in order to that Uniformity which was aim'd at by the Constitution. I'll add, that *Feb. 20.* this Year, (1573.) one *Robert Johnson* was try'd in *Westminjter-hall*, before the Queens Commissioners. His Indictment had but Three Articles; the Two last of

them were these: That he had Married without the Ring; and Baptiz'd without the Cross; Leaving out the whole Sentence to that Purpose. And he was not only Censur'd, but Imprison'd for several Months.

In some Parts of the Land it must be own'd, things were not carry'd with so strict a Hand. Arch-bishop *Grindal* was a Man of great Mildness, and but a weak urger of Conformity, compar'd to some others. And the Earl of *Leicester*, who was the Queens great Favourite, setting up for a Protestor of the Non-subscribers, he by his Interest in many Places, procur'd their Quiet, and they were still conniv'd at. But Dr. *Aylmer*, Bishop of *London*, had no Mercy for such as did not Comply in every Punctilio. He summon'd the Ministers of the City together, in 1581, at which time several Injunctions and Enquiries were given forth; of which the Second was this: *None to refuse the wearing of the Surplice.* The third this: *That there be no diminishing or altering the Service.* The Fifth this: Enquiry to be made. *Who made Alteration in the Rites requir'd to be us'd in Baptism?* The Bishop (saith my Author) shew'd himself somewhat Earnest, and said he would surely and severely punish the Offenders in these Points, Or *I will lie*, said he, *in the Dust* *. Stripes The same Year an Order was made by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, among whom this Prelate was at this time a Principal Person, and most Acctive, that the Arch-Deacons Commissaries and officials should send their Apparitors from Place to Place every Sunday, to see what Conformity was us'd in every Parish, and to Certify accordingly. I so little like this sort of Employment, that I heartily wish it may never be Reviv'd,

* See Mr. Stripes *Life of Bishop Aylmer*, p. 82, 83.

Id. p. 90.

I have also met with a Petition, which was presented by several Gentlemen in *Suffolk*, An. 1582. to the Lords of the Council, on the behalf of their Ministers, who they Complain'd were almost at every assize Indicted, Arraign'd, and Condemn'd for matters, as they apprehended of slender Moment. Some for leaving *Holidays* unbidden; some for singing the Hymn *Nunc Dimittis* in the Morning, some for turning the Questions in Baptism concerning Faith, from the *Infant* to the *God-father*, which is but *You* for *Thou*; some for leaving out the *Cross* in Baptism; some for leaving out the *Ring* in Marriage, &c. whereunto (say they) neither the Law nor the Law-makers, in our Judgment, had ever regard. But the Bishops were of another Mind, and so were the Judges; and therefore the Sense of these Gentlemen could not obtain. And this is yet clearer after the Advancement of *Whitgift*, An. 1583. For he had the Archbishoprick of Canterbury bestow'd upon him; upon this Condition, that he should reduce all the Ministers in *England*, by their Subscription and Conformity to the settled Orders and Government. For the Queen told him she would have the Establish'd Discipline of the Church of *England*, to be duly observ'd of all Men, *without Alteration of the leaf Ceremony*: And accordingly in his Letters, of which Sir G. Paul hath given us the Abstract, he thus exprest himself. *I have taken upon me, by the Place which I hold, under her Majesty, the Defence of the Religion and Rites of the Church of England, to appease the Schisms and Sects therein, to reduce all the Ministers thereof to Uniformity, and due Obedience, and not to waver with every Wind, &c.* To make good his Word, he urg'd upon all admitted to Ecclesiastical Orders and Benefices,

Sir G.
Paul's
Life of
Archbi-
shop
Whitgift.

the Subscription of three Articles, *viz.* That they own'd her Majesties Ecclesiastical Authority: That there was nothing in the Book of Common-Prayer, &c. contrary to the Word of God; that it might lawfully be us'd, and that they would use it and no other: And that they allow'd of the Articles in Religion in 1562 and believ'd them Consonant to the Word of God. Upon the Refusal of this Subscription many Ministers were Suspended in *Kent*, and in *Suffolk*, and thereupon complain'd to the Lords of the Council. Several of that Honourable Board had favourable Thoughts of them, and wrote to the Two Bishops of *Canterbury* and *London*, signifying to them, that they had receiv'd Complaints from several Parts of the Realm; and that they understood that particularly in *Essex*, a great number of Zealous and Learned Preachers were Suspended, and that many of the Places from which they were Ejected, were left without any Ministry of Preaching, Prayers, and Sacraments; and that others of them were fill'd with Persons neither of Learning nor Good Name. And that while many worthy Ministers were molested, many Parsons notoriously unfit, thro' lack of Learning, and scandalous Immoralities, were quietly suffer'd. Whereupon they request them to take these matters into Consideration; to Censure and Correct the Scandalous, and not to deprive the People of their Faithful Pastors, because of their being doubtful in Confidence in some Ceremonial matters. The Archbishop told them in his Reply; That he hop'd the Ministers. charg'd with Immoralities might be innocent: But that as for the Suspended and Ejected, they were factious Persons, Contemners of the Ecclesiastical Laws, and Authors of Disquittness,
and

and such as he could not for his part, (doing his Duty with a good Conscience) suffer, without. their farther Conformity to exercise their Ministry. The Lord Treasurer *Burleigh* wrote also to the Archbishop about an Instrument of 24 Articles, fram'd at *Lambeth* in 1584, Upon which, Ministers were to be examin'd which this Great Man having read, declares he found so curiously penn'd, and so full of Branches and Circumstances, that he thought the Inquisition of *Spain* us'd not so many Questions to comprehend and intrap their Preys. Upon which he freely declar'd to him, that he thought this rather lookt like a Device, to seek for Offenders than to Reform them. The Archbishop in his Answer told my Lord Treasurer, That he chose this kind of Proceeding, because he would not touch any for Non-subscribing only, but for breach of Order in celebrating Divine Service, administring the Sacraments, and executing other Ecclesiastical Functions, according to their Fancies, and not according to the Form of Law prescrib'd: And that he had dealt with none but such as had given evident Tokens of Contempt of Orders and Laws; and if he should not be careful there, he should fail in his Duty, &c. However the warm Archbishop found many Difficulties in his way: For the Lord *Burleigh* was a constant Enemy to Rigour and Stiffness, and a Friend of Liberty: And so were Sir *Francis Walsingham*, Sir *Francis Knolles*, and many others.

This strict urging entire Conformity, with no small Severity on the Refusers, not only depriv'd the Church of the useful Labours of many Excellent Men but it exasperated some to that degree, that they new out against the Church, as entirely Romish and Antichristian,

and disclaim'd all Communion with her; they were call'd *Brownists*, from *Robert Brown* their Leader. For their sakes many Wise and Peaceable Men were the worse us'd; and many would take their Measures as to all that were against the Ceremonies, from the Principles and Tempers of Men of this Stamp: Altho' 'twas very Evident that they were to the full as different from the Puritans, as they from the Willing Conformists.

The Commons in Parliament attempted to give Relief once and again; and would willingly have made things more easy. They were for so tempering and explaining Things, as that no Conscientious Person should have needed to, fear being either enslar'd or disturb'd; but they could not prevail. Their Endeavours were defeated by the Industry of this Archbishop, and his Interest in the Queen. He was Deaf to all the Sollicitations of the Nobility or Commonalty, Ministers, or People: and in Opposition to all, went on, silencing Ministers that refus'd Subscription, and worrying them and their Adherents in the High-Commission, and Star-Chamber. In the Parliament in 1587, a Petition was presented by the Commons to the Lords, confuting of Sixteen Articles, among which these were some: That Ministers might not be troubled for Omission of some Rites or Portions prescrib'd in the Book of Common-Prayer: and that such as had been Suspended or Depriv'd, for no other Offence, but only for not Subscribing might be restor'd: and that the Bishops would forbear their Excommunication of Godly and Learned Preachers, not detected for open Offence of Life, or apparent Error in Doctrine. The Archbishop and his Brethren, in fear of a Storm, presented a Petition to the Queen, and
among

among other things signified to her, that the Method now propos'd, would take away the set Form of Prayer in the Church, and be the means to bring in Confusion and Barbarism: And they so fir prevail'd that nothing was effected, no softning Method could obtain Publick Allowance. For in this very Year, one *Cawdry*, who had been for Sixteen Years incumbent of *Luffenham* in *Rutland-shire*, was Depriv'd by the High-Commission, and afterwards Degraded. One grand Crime was this; that *he had not us'd the Common-Prayer-Book in that due Exactness that he should*. High-Church now carry'd all before them. *Udal* was Condemn'd, *Cartwright*, and many others, were Imprison'd in the *Fleet*; but at Length, after great Fatigues, set at Liberty, and allow'd to Preach, provided they did not inveigh against Bishops and Ceremonies. *Travers*, and others, could, have no Cure of Souls, because of their Non-conformity, and yet Preach'd frequently under great Discouragements. But in the latter End of this Reign former Rigours seem something abated, and all Eyes were turn'd towards the North, whence they expected the next Successor. And some comply'd with the Subscription requir'd, the more freely, because they conceiv'd the force of it would continue but a little while, and that they should afterwards have more Liberty.

Upon King *James's* coming to the Throne, such as either in the Church, or out of it, long'd for a farther and more Compleat Reformation, had great Hopes, and they that were for a Rigorous Uniformity had their Fears. A Petition was presented to the King, for laying aside Ceremonies and rigorous Impositions, sign'd by 750 Hands. It was not presented
till

Strypes
Life of Bp.
Aylmer,
Ch. 8.

till after the fruitless Conference at *Hampton Court*, in which the King was so Complailant to the Bishops, as to signify to the Non-Conformists, That *he would make them Conform themselves, or else he would hurry them out of the Land, or else do worse.* Which was folly Back'd by a strict Proclamation which he publish'd quickly after. The House of Commons now also interpos'd, to procure Abatements, but without Success. The Celebrated *Canons* were soon after fram'd in Convocation, (viz. *An. 1603.*) comprehending the former *Canons* of 1571, and 1597, with the Addition of many others; and by Vertue of these *Canons*, (which were not Confirm'd by Parliament neither) some Hundreds of Worthy Ministers were Suspended and Ejected. The life of the greatest Part of the Common-Prayer would not do: every Punctilio of it was inforc'd upon them, upon Pain of the heaviest Censures. Archbishop *Bancroft* was Stiff and Stern, and would not bate an Ace. Archbishop *Abbot* that succeeded him, it must be confess'd was not so Zealous; but other Bishops supply'd his Defects: So that such Men as *Hildersham, Brightman, Ball, Bayne, Parker, Ames, Bradshaw, Dod, Nicols, Paget, Hering, Langley, Sandford, Rogers, and Blacherby*, were restrain'd and curb'd, and sometimes laid aside, and Silenc'd: And no Petitions for settled Liberty to Preach, without their entire Conformity, could have any effect, unless by the Interest of some Particular Persons of special Note. And yet it must be own'd, that even then many Excellent Men comply'd with the Church for fear of Deprivation and among the rest Worthy Mr. *Sprint*, who gave the Reasons of his Compliance, (without approving or vindicating the Things impos'd) in a Book call'd *Cassander Anglicanus.*

Anglicanus. Tho' to speak my free Thoughts, I take that Book of his, to be rather a Defence of Occasional Conformity to the Church, in Evidence of Charity, while a Testimony is publickly born against its remaining Corruptions; than a Plea for entire Conformity. But I can't forget a Passage, which we have from one, whom I think we may safely Credit, especially when in he Reports it upon his own Knowledge. 'Tis this; that some, who in these Days were forc'd to Subscribe, openly Protested, That if it were but half an Hours Hanging, they would rather suffer it than Subscribe. But for them and theirs to lie in a Ditch, and be cast into a blind Corner like broken Vessels; yea, they and their Families to die many hundred Deaths, by extreme Misery, before they could come unto their Graves; this they were not able to undergo. This must needs be a sore Temptation.

But in the *Pontificate* of Bishop *Laud*, things were carried higher than ever: The *Conformable Puritans* were in his Time severely dealt with. If they did not Bow to, or towards the *Altar*, would not read the *Book of Sports*, or were but guilty of that Scandalous Crime of keeping Lectures, or even Preaching twice on the Lord's Day, 'twas eno' to bring them under Censures in the High-Commission Court; and after much Trouble and Charge, the Accused were generally Suspended. The Violence of these Times was so great, that many Thousand Families left the Land, and many Godly Ministers, Conformists, as well as others, were forc'd to fly and become Exiles; some in one Countrey, and some in another; and most in the remote *American* Parts of the World, Thither went *Eliot*, *Cotton*, *Hooker*, *Norton*, *Davenport*, *Sheppard*, *Allen*, *Cobbet*, *Noyes*, and

Dr. Ames
in his *Preface* to his
fresh Suit
against
Ceremonies.

Parker;

Parker; with many more who deserv'd much better Treatment. The Rigour of these Times was one great thing that caus'd the Generality of Sober People through the Land, to side with the Parliament, in the Civil War that ensu'd.

When King *Charles* the Second was Restor'd, and the former Ecclesiastical Establishment with him, the Ministers who were then Ejected, would generally have submitted to a Moderated Episcopacy, and to a Liturgy which contain'd nothing but what the Scripture was plain in, or that all Parties agreed in, provided the Ceremonies had but been left in their natural Indifference: So that both Ministers and People might either have us'd or forborn them, according to their different Apprehensions. But this could not be endur'd. The Impositions must be continu'd and further strengthen'd; a Popish Interest was to be serv'd. And therefore a Politick Party behind the Curtain, made use of the *Resentments of the Bishops, and other Royalists*, to make the Terms of Conformity straiter than ever: partly by laying such a Stress upon the renouncing the *Covenant*, which is now out-dated; and partly also by the insisting on Re-ordination by Bishops; and adding the Publick *Assent* and *Consent* to the former Subscription, which is yet requir'd. And by this means many Conscientiously became Non-Conformists.

And apprehending upon the strictest Search, that their being Silenc'd by Authority, especially at such a Time as that, when (as Mr. *Olyffe* himself acknowledges) *together with the Courts there came in a Floud of Debauchery, and all Religion was Rail'd at as Fanaticism*: apprehending that their being Silenc'd, at such a Time especially

cially, would not be a sufficient Plea for their Abandoning their Ministry at the Great Day, they held on in the Exercise of it, as Opportunity offer'd; and were encourag'd in so doing by many, who tho' willing to maintain Charitable Tho'ts of the Establisht Church which they separated from, yet were apprehensive that their supporting fixt Corruptions, and maintaining Rigorous Impositions, bottom'd upon no Necessary Reasons, by their falling in wholly with the Publick Establishment, would be a turning their Backs upon that farther Reformation, which the Sober Part of the Land, has been so long praying, and waiting, and labouring for; and a strengthening the Hands of those, who in Defiance both of Arguments and Intreaties, were for keeping all things on the Old Bottom, for fear of Acknowledging Imperfection and Error.

On the other side 'tis undeniable, that Besides such as were for running-down and extirpating all that could not come up to their Pitch there was another Party, that tho't it would be Pity, that such as they, who were very capable of Publick Service, should so far promote the Popish Interest, as to lose their Opportunity for that Service, and yield to be kept out of the Church by Designing Men. They were of too Free a Spirit to approve of the Rigorous Imposing of such Needless Things; and yet tho't them not great eno' to stick at when impos'd, and finding themselves a little Grated on by some Particulars, they determin'd to take all things in their Own Sense: Tho' in thus adhering to these things, in such Circumstances as imply'd a Declaiming farther Amendments, they plainly Deserted the Principles of the Old Puritans. Some others also,
after-

afterwards Conform'd, urg'd by the Necessities of their Families and the Times, and the Difficulties either of Living or of being Serviceable: But it so unhappily falls out, that many of these New Converts, approach nearer to High Church, and are more Touchy and Narrow than those who were Born and Bred under the National Establishment: Nay, and many times they lose all Good Manners, Common Civility, and Gratitude after their Change; which is not in the Esteem of By-standers, much to the Credit of the Church that hath made them her Proselytes.

As the Silenc'd and Ejected Ministers among the Non-conformists dropt off, their Congregations which were form'd upon this grand Principle, of *the needfulness of a farther Reformation*, determin'd to keep together, and adhere to that Principle, till God in his Wise Providence should open a way for the Accomplishment of their Desire; and thereupon they chose others, who were for avowing that Principle, to Officiate among them; after their having been bred up for the Ministry, either at Home in private Academies, or Abroad, at *Geneva, Utrecht, Leyden, Edinburgh, or Glasgow*. Having for above Twenty Years held on Privately in this Course, a Door was opened them for more Publick Service. After the late Happy Revolution, their Liberty was granted by Law; by the Three Estates of the Realm, *Kings, Lords, and Commons*. It was much desir'd by many that this might be follow'd with a *Comprehension*. A vigorous Attempt was accordingly made, by the best of Kings, and several Eminent Divines of the Church, who were afterwards Bishops, for the enlarging the National Bottom, and Abating
Impositi-

Impositions. But it was the Sense of the Prevailing Party in the Church, that no Change was to be yielded to: And nothing could be found by that which was Esteem'd the *Church Representative* that needed Reformation. Whereupon the Rising Generation, both of Ministers and People, among the Dissenters, determin'd Modestly and Thankfully to make use of the Liberty Granted; and to wait in the life of it for that Happy Season, when the *Church*, or at least the *State*, shall come to be of another Mind, and yield to that farther Reformation, which so many that were Ornaments of both, have often own'd to be Necessary and highly Desirable.

These things I have the more freely Hinted, because they give the true Rise of this Controversy; and at the same time they may help to Satisfy Mr. *Olyffe*, that in my Search after the true Sense of the Terms of Conformity, I shall not lay so much Stress on the Judgment of this or that Particular Person, as on the Stream of the Proceedings about Ecclesiastical Affairs, ever since the full Settlement of the Present Constitution, in the Days of Queen *Elizabeth*; and the manifest Design that there was at the Restauration of King *Charles*, of supplying the Place of the High Commission Court, (the Revival whereof would have been so Difficult) by some farther Additions to the Terms of Conformity; which were to obviate those Inconveniencies opposite to the Uniformity aim'd at by the Constitution, for which that Court before provided a Remedy. And when I make it appear that the Sense given to Things on our Side, is the same in which they have been generally understood, by those to whom the Care of the Constitution has been intrusted from its first Foundation, I hope Mr. *Olyffe*, will for his
own

own fake be Cautious for the future, of stiling them *Extra-legal, and particular Sentiments.*

Sect. II.

“I. They must be Reordain’d, if not Episcopally Ordain’d before. This was plain in *the Act of Uniformity*, by which it was Enacted; that *from and after the Feast of St. Bartholemew 1662, no Incultbent, in Possession of any Parsonage, Vicaridge, or Benefice, that was not in Holy Orders by Episcopal Ordination, should enjoy the same, but be ipso facto depriv’d*; his Ecclesiastical Promotions being Void, as if he were naturally Dead, &c. Room indeed, was left for Receiving Episcopal Orders (if till then wanting) between the time in which the Act pass’d, and *Bartholemew Day, August the 24th.* But tho’ there could have been a Compliance in all other Respects, if Episcopal Ordination were then found wanting, they were by the Act *Ipsso facto* Ejected. This affected the far greater part of those, who came into the Ministry, after that *Diocesans* were put down in *England*, by the Power of the Parliament. For they were Ordain’d, by an Assembly of Senior Pastors, who were then in Possession of that Power: And, tho’ after due Examination as to their Qualifications, they were Solemnly set apart to the Sacred Ministry by Falling, and Prayer, and Imposition of Hands, and had the Blessing of Heaven for many Years attending their Sacred Ministrations, they must yet now be Doom’d to Silence, unless Re-ordain’d by *Diocesans.*

“This was what they could not Submit to, because it would in their Apprehension, be a Nullifying their past Ordination. This seem’d, not to them a Light matter, but
“very

“very.Momentous: In as much the Peace of
“their own Consciences,the Credit of the Re-
“formed Churches abroad, and the Good and
“Welfare of the People among whom they had
“Laboured, were adll very nearly Concern’d
“in it. Their Consciences would not allow
“them to play with Holy Things in Pre-
“tending to be *moved by tbs Holy Ghost to take*
“*upon them the Office of a Deacon*; when they
knew themselves already fixed Sufficently in
the higher Office of *Presbyters*. It appear’d to
them a taking God’s Name in Vain, Solemnly
to Pray to him for what they were Assured they
had already; and to seem to. be first invested
with a Sacred Authority, which they had Re-
ceived Long before. Neither durst they pour
such Contempt upon the Reformed Churches
Abroad, as their Submission in this Particular
would in their Esteem have carry’d in it: By
disowning them and their Ministers, who had
no other Ordination, than such as that which
they had before Receiv’d. And withal, they
durst not Invalidate their own past Ministrati-
ons, to the raising of Endless Scruples in such
as had been under their Ministry. It was In-
deed Urged by some for their Satisfaction, that
the Requir’d Episcopal Ordination was not in-
tended to Invalidate their past Ministrations,
but to Qualifie them for Service in the National
Establish’d *English* Church: That the Ordi-
nances they had before Administered were allow-
ed to stand Good; for that they to whom they
had Appli’d the Seal of the Covenant in Bap-
tism, were not Requir’d to be Rebaptiz’d. And
that the Prescrib’d Ceremony, by Imposition
of Episcopal Hands, might be Regarded rather
as a Recognition of their Ministerial Authori-
ty, and Investiture in it under the National

Establishment, than a Re-ordination. To which they easily Answered; That as for the forbearing to Rebaptize such as they had Baptiz'd before, it was no more then they would have done, where Children had in Extremity been Baptiz'd by meer Laymen, nay by any Dreaming Midwife, and therefore this was far from any Security with Reference to the Validity of their foregoing Actions as Ministers, which reffer'd to other Ordinances as well as that of Baptism. And as to the other Insinuation, that their Submission in this Particular might rather be regarded as a Recognition of their Ministerial Authority than a Re-ordination, they Answer'd, it looked like Double Dealing: Inasmuch as the Signifying so much in Express Words was so Peremptorily Refused; the same Form must be used in their Case, as if they were then to be first entred into the Ministry, without the least Variation; and their being then Ordain'd in the same manner, as if to be first entred into the Ministerial Office, was Requir'd bi those, who upon all Occasions Declar'd the being twice Ordain'd flatly unwarrantable. Whereupon they press'd them with this Argument: Either they were true Ministers before in their Esteem or not. If not, how could they venture upon a Recognition? And Acknowledge their Antecedent Right, by Confirming it with an Additional Formality? If they did own them for Ministers before, why should they be for Ordaining them in the same Manner as they would have done if they had been no Ministers, and so Contradict their own Profess'd Principle of the unwarrantableness of a Double Ordination: But in some Cases, to put the Matter beyond all Dispute, an Express Renunciation of the fore-going Ordination by *Presbyters*

byters was requir'd, before Episcopal Ordination could be had. To make it Appear, this is no Groundless Assertion, I have annex'd a Formal Renunciation, that was Requir'd in the Diocese of *Chester*, before Episcopal Orders could be Obtain'd. ★ And 'tis Reasonable to believe that this one Bishop had not a different Sense from the rest, tho' he Acted more openly, while others were more upon the Reserve. Being therefore Convinc'd that the requiring them to be Episcopally Ordain'd, who had been in a Regular way Ordain'd by *Presbyters* before, tended (and indeed was by the Generality Design'd) to Nullifie their past Orders, and invalidate their Consequent Ministrations, and at the same time to Reflect on "Foreign Church-
"es, who have no Episcopal Orders as Desti-
"tute of Valid Gospel Ministrations, they durst
"not Submit to it.

★ *Ego*
A. B. præ-
tensas me-
as Ordi-
nationis
Literas a
Quibus-
dam Pres-
byteris
olim ob-
tentas,
jam peni-
tus. Re-
nuncio, &
dimitto
pro vanis

Humiliter supplicans quatenus Rev. in Christo Pater & Dominus Georgius Permissione Divinâ Cestr. Episc. me ad sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem Juxta Morem & ritus Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, dignaretur admittere.

My Two Animadverters have given a Different Solution of this Difficulty, about the *Reordination* requir'd in the Case of the Ejected Ministers, and their Successors. Mr. *Ollyffe*, not calling the Validity of their former Ordination into Question, asserts the Lawfulness of Reordination; while Mr. *Hoadly* denys the Validity of their former Orders as irregular; and in his Apprehension *fairly removes* their Objection, by perswading to a submission to Episcopal imposition of Hands in the use of the Form prescrib'd, that they might become, *Regular* Ministers. One says if it be *Re-ordination*, 'tis not unlawful. The other declares 'twould not be

a *Re-ordination*, but a Regular Admission into the Ministry, which before was wanting. But as far as I can judge, they have left the Difficulty as great as they found it. I'll distinctly Consider what they have suggested.

1. Mr. *Ollyffe* and his Friends assert, the Lawfulness of Re-ordination in the Present Case. They fetch their Proof from Scripture Practice, and the Reason of the thing.

Their Scripture-Proof is first to be Consider'd. Here they assert, That all the Apostles had a double Ordination, and instance in *Paul* and *Barnabas* in particular.

That all the Apostles had a double Ordination, they prove from their Authoritative Mission, first to the lost Sheep of the House of *Israel*, *Matth.* 10. 6. Their other Mission to the *Gentiles*, and all Nations, *Matth.* 28. 19. And the Power, of Binding and Loosing, which was committed to them at divers Times.

Be it granted, that the Twelve Apostles were ordained to their Apostleship, *Mat.* 10. 1, 2. Be it also granted that they had an Authoritative Mission to the Lost Sheep of the House of *Israel*, *Mat.* 10. 6. And another which extended to all Nations, *Mat.* 28. 19. Nay let it be granted also, that they had the Power of Binding and Loosing committed to them at divers times. Tho' it is a matter of Dispute among Interpreters, whether the Two Texts mention'd, (*Mat.* 18. 18. and *John* 20. 21, 22.) are properly Parallel: Particularly if Dr. *Lightfoot* be consulted, 'twill be found, that he asserts that place in *John* 20. refers to a Miraculous Power of inflicting Corporal Plagues. However I wont stand out for small things. But still I don't see any good Evidence of a *double Ordination*.

For

Postscript
p. 125.

Harmony
of the N.
T. p. 271.

For an Authoritative Mission to a Place or People, does not infer a New Ordination. The Apostles might be sent by Christ, and therefore have an Authoritative Mission to several People, and yet not be Ordain'd as often as they were sent. Nor is it agreeable either to Reason or Scripture to suppose, they never discharg'd their Office to different People, without New Ordinations. Nor does any thing appear from the Amplification of their Commission, to enforce the Belief of any such thing. Were they not sent upon the same Errand to the *Jews* and *Gentiles*? Did they not Preach the same Gospel to both? Did they not Administer the same Sacraments? Were they not to exercise the same Discipline, and Ordain the same Officers? Why then should not one Ordination be sufficient? Nor was it ever Pleaded by a Minister of the C. of E. That a Minister may not remove from one People to another, but he must have a New Ordination. They are *Instituted* and *Inducted* indeed upon their Entrance into a New Living, but not Ordain'd. A motion of that Nature would be judg'd highly Preposterous.

Neither does the Discovery of the Will of Christ to his Apostles at several times, and his making known the extent of their Power, in different Degrees, infer a New Ordination. It was his usual way to reveal his Will to his Disciples as occasion requir'd, and to Instruct them gradually in the manner of their Administration in his Gospel Kingdom. It is certain that the Apostles were for a great while very Ignorant in some of the great Doctrines of the Christian Religion: As may be seen, *Luke* 18. 34. *Mark* 9. 32. and therefore our Lord often inculcates them. And what wonder then, if

he at several times repeats their Apostolical Power, in Binding and Loosing, &c. Besides, if the Apostles were Ordain'd once, according to *Mat.* 10. And as is urg'd again, *Mat.* 28. 19. then they had a Third Ordination, *Mat.* 18. 18. and a Fourth, *John* 20. 21, 22. But the plain Truth of the matter seems to be this. That the Apostles were at first Ordain'd to the Apostolical Office, and Invested with Apostolical Power; and afterwards call'd out more fully to the Execution of their Office, and Instructed more perfectly in the Exercise of their Power.

But they seem most to Triumph in their Instance of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, which it must be confess'd has been often urg'd in this Case. As to the First of these 'tis said, That he had a Potestative Mission from Christ himself to preach the Gospel to the *Gentiles*, *Acts* 26. 16, 17, 18. and afterwards Confirm'd in his Calling to the same Ministry by *Ananias*, *Acts* 22. 14, 15. and yet he had also afterwards another Ordination, by the Hands of *Lucius*, *Niger*, and *Manaen*, *Acts* 13. 1, 2, 3. And as to *Barnabas* 'tis said, he had a Mission from the Church at *Jerusalem* to preach at *Antioch*, *Acts* 11. 22. and yet he had another Ordination afterwards, together with *St. Paul*, by the same Hands. This being something Plausible, I think it needful to make some Remarks, to prevent Mistakes.

1. It is plain eno', that *St. Paul* had an Authoritative Mission from Christ, at the Time of his Conversion. For in the Account which he gave King *Agrippa*, of his miraculous Change from a furious Persecutor into a Zealous Convert; he certify'd him, that that Jesus whose Voice struck him to the Ground, told him that he *appear'd unto him for this Purpose, to make, choose, or ordain him a Minister*, *Acts* 26. 16.

Nay

Nay, in our Saviour's Discourse to him at that time, promising to deliver him from the *Gentiles*, These remarkable words were added, *unto whom now I send thee*, Ver. 17. Which words carry in them full Authority for the Apostolical Office. St. Paul satisfy'd of this, presently adds, Ver. 19. *Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not difobedient to the Heavenly Vision, but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the Coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, &c.* And agreeably to this we are told, Acts 9. 20. [*Straightway*] *he preach'd Christ in the Synagogues, that he is the Son of God.* This *Straightway*, or without any Delay, εὐθέως, intimates, that he deferr'd not till he obtain'd Humane Approbation or Warrant according to the Account he gives of himself. Gal. 1. 16. &c. where speaking of his Call by Revelation to preach Christ among the Heathen, he makes this Declaration; *Immediately I conferred not with Flesh and Blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem, to them which were Apostles before me but I went into Arabia, and return'd again unto Damascus. Then after three Years I went up to Jerusalem, &c.* Whence it plainly appears, that without any Humane Ordination, he was furnish'd with the full Apostolical Power by our Saviour, who appear'd to him, and sent him forth, as he had before done his other Twelve Apostles in the Days of his Flesh.

2. That he was Own'd, and Appear'd in his Calling to the same Ministry, by *Ananias*, is indeed plain, from Acts 22. 14, 15. But what has this to do with Ordination? A Minister may in the same Sense be Own'd and Approv'd many times over that is, he may be certify'd by such as are acquainted with the Mind of Christ, that he is design'd for considerable Ser-

vice: And yet it does not follow that he may he more than once Ordain'd. Some I know carry the Point further, and say, that *St. Paul* was *ordain'd* by *Ananias*, who we are told *Acts* 9. 17. *put his Hand upon him*. But at the same Time the end of that Imposition of Hands is there particularly exprest: 'Twas *that he might receive his Sight, and be fill'd with the Holy Ghost*, and receive those extraordinary Gifts that were then necessary for the Apostolate. But this could not be design'd for an Ordination, because it went before his Baptism; as is. plain from *Acts* 22. 16. Now tho' our Lord in an extraordinary way made him both a Christian and an Apostle, yet it is not supposable that his Officers should pretend to Ordain any Man before he was Baptiz'd: So that in this there was nothing of Ordination. And as for Approbation, if that be hence pleaded for, we are more ready to receive it from the Bishops than they to give it.

'Tis difficult to prove, that an Apostle as such, needed the Imposition of any Humane Hands to set him apart to his Office, *St. Chrysostom* and *Oecumenius*, indeed do assert, that *St. Paul* was at *Antioch* Ordain'd to the Apostleship; and that that is the sense of *Acts* 13. 1, 2. and from them *Bellarmino* * takes it, *Alapide* and *Clarius* are of the same Mind. *Dr. Hammond* also falls in with them; and so doth *Dr. Allestree* †. But our Modern Criticks do generally assert, that a Mission from God alone, without any Humane Intervention, and without

* De Rom. Pontif. Lib. 1. Cap. 23.

† See his *Consecration Sermon*, Jan. 6, 1660. on *Acts* 13. 2.

out the Ceremony of Ordination, was Essential to the Apostolical Function *. How far this will hold I leave it to others to enquire. But I think we may justly, in *St. Paul's Case*, lay Stress upon his own Affection, *Gal. 1. 1.* where he declares, he was *an Apostle, not of Men, neither by Man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father*. Which intimates, that Humane Hands had nothing to do in his Apostleship. But that it was the same in the Case of *Barnabas*, I assert not.

*Vide
Basuagii
Exercitat
Historico
Criticæ.
p. 264,
265.

That either *St. Paul* or *Barnabas* had any other Humane Ordination than this, cannot, I conceive, be prov'd. As for *St. Paul*, if *Ananias* did not Ordain him, (of which before) it cannot be suppos'd with any shadow of Reason, that he should have any Ordination from Man, excepting at the time referr'd to, *Acts 13. 1, 2.* As for *St. Barnabas*, he was indeed sent by the Church at *Jerusalem* as far as *Antioch*, *Acts 11. 22.* But we have no Evidence he was an Apostle before, or at all Ordain'd. When he was sent to *Antioch*, he does not undertake what *Peter* and *John* did at *Samaria* in the very same Case: For they *confirm* and *give the Holy Ghost*, *Acts 8. 15, 17.* But *Barnabas* does nothing but *Exhort*, *Acts 11. 23.* And we hear of no higher work done by him than bare Preaching (for which he was qualify'd as a Prophet, and one full of the Holy Ghost) till after this Separation, in *Acts 13.* And from this time we find him exercising Jurisdiction, settling Churches, and Ordaining Elders, *Ch. 14. 22, 23.* And if this were the only Humane Ordination, that either of them had, as far as we can certainly discern from Scripture, altho' it should be own'd a proper Ordination, yet I see not how it can be justly urg'd as a Warrant for Re-ordination.

There

5. There may be good Reason given for such a *Separation*, to such a Work as that intended by the Holy Ghost, in *Acts* 13. 1, 2. and yet no warrant for proper Re-ordination. *It might be for the more publick Acknowledgment of their Apostleship*: That they might thence forward be the more freely own'd in the Exercise of their Authority, by the *Gentile Churches*. But then it was not intimated as if they were now first called: Now mov'd by the Holy Ghost to take that *Office*, which St. Paul at least, had warrantably exercis'd long before. Says the Holy Ghost, Separate me Saul and Barnabas unto the Work whereto I have call'd them, *i. e.* Give them the Attestation of their foregoing Call, in such a Way for the greater Solemnity. Or *it might be for their Recommendation to the Grace of God, for Assistance in their Work*: This is favour'd by *Acts* 14. 26. Where after the finishing their Progress, it is said he Sail'd to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the Grace of God, for the Work which they fulfilled. Or else, *it might be intended as a President and Example to the Gentile Churches*. And this is the way that Dr. Lightfoot takes to explain it, *They were now* (says he) *separated for the Ministry among the Gentiles. A Mission that might not be granted but by such a Divine Warrant; considering how the Gentiles had always lain behind a Partition Wall to the Jews, For altho' Peter, in the Case of Cornelius, had open'd the Door of the Gospel to the Heathen, yet was this a far greater breaking down of the Partition Wall, when the Gospel was to be bro't into their own Land, and to their own Doors. When God saith separate them unto the Work whereto I have call'd them. It further confirmeth that it was determin'd, and had been known before, that they should be Ministers of the Uncircumcision.*

cumcision. — *This (says he) is the Second Imposition of Hands since the Gospel began, which did not confer the Holy Ghost with it: For these two were full of the Holy Ghost before: And this is the first Ordination, of Elders since the Gospel, that was us'd out of the Land of Israel. Which Rite the Jewish Canons would Confine only to that Land: Which Circumstances well consider'd, with the Employment that these two were to go about, and this manner of their sending forth, no better Reason, I suppose, can be given of this present Action, than that the Lord hereby did set down a Platform of Ordaining Ministers to the Church of the Gentiles in future Times.*

Upon the whole, either this in *Acts* 13. 1, 2. was a proper Ordination, or it was not: If it was a proper Ordination, it was the only Ordination we know off, which these Persons receiv'd from humane Hands: And therefore we can't from thence infer the warrantableness of a proper Double Ordination. Besides, 'twas manag'd by Inferiour Officers, and therefore it cannot be necessary that the Ordainers should be of a Superior Office to those whom they Ordain. If it was not a proper Ordination, because the Apostles (*Paul* at least, for as to *Barnabas* we are more in the Dark) were Ordain'd before, then should it not be urg'd on those who were Ordain'd before, to perswade them to be properly Ordain'd again. Or if in Conformity to this Precedent, a solemn Recommendation to the Grace of God, even after a foregoing Ordination, be represented as adviseable, it should be Consider'd that the Holy Ghost: here says, Separate me *Paul* and *Barnabas* to the Work whereto *I have call'd them*. When they were thus recommended, 'twas publickly own'd, that God had call'd, warrant-ed.

ed, Authoriz'd and Accepted them before: and therefore the requiring Persons that have been duly Call'd and Authoriz'd, to Submit to a Recommendation to the Grace of God, in such Circumstances as would but leave it Dubious, whether they were before call'd, to what they Transacted in his Name, and with Evidence of his Acceptance, can hence receive no Encouragement or Warrant.

What he Urges from the *Heads of Agreement*, Assented to by the *United Ministers*, (which are but oddly bro' t in, when he was Arguing from Scripture Practice) is quite besides the Mark. For nothing was more Remote from their tho'ts, than an Agreement that Reordination was Necessary or Fitting upon a Ministers Removal: But all that was intended, was that Persons that were before Ordain'd might enter upon the Exercise of their Office, with a new People by Prayer and Fasting if they Pleas'd, and be again Recommended to the Grace of God, and lay more or less Stress upon it, as their Inclinations led them, without running the hazard of a Breach of Communion. But.

p. 128.

2. He Argues also, from the Nature and Reason of the Thing. He says, that Ordination is the Investiture into this Office before Men, by a *Declaring or Publick Approving a Man to be a Minister*. I wont here Contest this Point, which will afterwards fall under Consideration: Tho' I can't tell whether the Opinion of an *Indelible Character* don't more prevail in the Church of which Mr. *Ollyffe* is a Member. As to what he Alledges concerning the Power of a *National Church*, I Answer: That tho' I am Heartily for a National Church, that will leave Miniiters and People Consider'd Separately and in Society, the Peaceable Possession of their Incontestable

p. 130.

Rights,

Rights, yet I can't suppose that any National Church has Power to divest the Officers of Christ of that Authority which he has committed to them: As it must have, if it can Null our Orders, which are Justifi'd by Scripture. He says, the Former Ordination is not properly Nullifi'd: *The Sufficiency of it, does not indeed appear to the National Church, and therefore* p. 132. *a New Mission is resolv'd on, to Declare and give Authority for the Execution of the Office, &c.* But if this really were all, I quæry, why such as have been Ordain'd by Presbyters, mayn't be Declar'd, Approv'd, and Authoriz'd, in a way less liable to Objection? Why might not a change in their Case, be allow'd in the Office? Why must it be put upon them Publickly to declare that they are *mov'd by the Holy Ghost to take upon them the Office of a Deacon*, for which, to be sure there can be no Occasion? And why must they now be declar'd Ministers in such a way, as plainly implies they were not Ministers before? Whatever are Mr. *Ollyffe's* Apprehensions, this is a Grating thing and Presses hard. When any are Ordain'd in the National Church, both the Current Doctrine of it, and the Office us'd, implies them not to have been Ordain'd before. Their Professing they were, is no Security, while all the World sees the Church holds the Contrary, by the Office it uses: which *ipso facto*, Censures their Former Orders as Null. And it is meer Collusion, to pretend the Contrary, till 'tis agreed the Office should be chang'd in their Case. This is so far from a *Stretch*, by a severe Interpretation; That 'tis the Obvious, Natural, and Necessary sense of the thing. For they that require our being Ordain'd by them, would be as forward as we could desire to disclaim any such thing, if they apprehended we
were

were Ordain'd before. They don't thus Use those whom they Acknowledge for Ministers. They are not wont in this way to Approve those Ministers who had been *Romish, Mass-Priests*. A Foreign *Popish Priest* turning Protestant, is not Approv'd to the Ministry by this Form; tho' Ministers of Foreign Churches Ordain'd by Presbyters are. Such a Priest certainly needs Approbation in the Ch. of *E.* as well as such a Protestant Minister. And why must not he also be Approv'd in the Use of this Form, if that be only to Express such Approbation in those who were before Ordain'd? But the Priest, because Ordain'd by a Bp. is in our Church Approv'd of Course; tho' one would, think something of a Peculiar Solemnity Requisite in his Admission: and therefore it cannot be Approbation but Ordination to the Office, that must be intended as to one known to have been Ordain'd by Presbyters. That it was Intended it should be so, by the generality of the Bishops after the Restauration of King *Charles*, I think I have Good Reason to Believe. Mr. *Ollyffe* seems very Angry at my mentioning the Formal *Renunciation* of Presbyterian Ordination that was then Requir'd in the Diocess of *Chester*. He says, they *mush depend upon my Authority for it*. To prevent any Uneasiness upon that Head, if he'll be at the Pains to Consult the Printed Life of Worthy Mr. *Philip Henry*, he'll find I Asserted it upon good Grounds. And with his Leave, I'll venture to say again, that 'tis but Reasonable to Apprehend, that this Bishop, (who was no other then the Son of the Excellent Bishop *Hall* of *Norwich*, and had been always kindly Treated by the Presbyterians in the fore-going Times) had not a different Sense from the rest; And that the Requiring Persons who were duly

duly Ordain'd before, to be Ordain'd afresh, tended, and was generally Design'd to Nullifie their past Orders. *In this* (he says) *I abundantly over-lash*. Having again Consider'd it. I'm so far from being Convinc'd that I am the more Confirm'd in my Apprehension. So that for what I see, here we are like to Differ. I can't in this Case conceive a fitter Man to Judge between us than the *Pious* and *Aged* Mr. *Humphreys*, whom he Cites under the Character of the *Moderate Non-Conformist*, and to whole Treatise in 12v. upon this Subject, he is pleas'd to refer us for Instruction. I am so Charitable as to believe that was the only Tract of his upon this Subject, Mr. *Ollyffe* had at that time seen: For had he Read his *second Discourse* upon the same in 4to. He would have found him complaining of the very thing, for supposing which he charges me with *over-lashing*. Perhaps it mayn't be amiss to give him a Passage or two. *It is truly an Irsome tho't sometimes to me*, (says Mr. *Humphreys*) *to hear how same of our Bishops do express that a Man should be not only Reordain'd, but that we should think our former Ministry to be Null too, till that he done. If this indeed were Personated only, it would vex a Man to the Heart, that ever any of us should yield to be so uningenuously dealt withal: But when we see the Confidence with which they carry it, so that for ought I see, they do believe themselves verily in it, in so much as some of them when they have done, have bid those whom they have Reordain'd, to Repent of their Ministring the Sacraments before, it may overcome our Indignation methinks into a melting Affection, or smile at the Conceit, and make us bear with them. As if indeed the Bishop's Name were distinguishedly in Christ's Charter for Ordination, as it is in the Canons of Men; or as if any should tell me in Earnest,*

p. 18.

*Second
Discourse
about Re-
ordination
p. 97.*

nest, that the Lawn were de essentia to the Ceremony, and the Hands avail'd not without the Sleeves on. Instead of making Remarks upon such a Passage, which I might Naturally eno' be led to, I'll add another, which I think comes home. In his Pathetical Address to My Lords the Bishops, he hath these Remarkable Words. It must be Acknowledg'd by you and by me, that this Reordination is ordinarily at least, (if not quite) against the Hair of the literate World, whether Councils, School-men, or Fathers: Infomuch that I must needs be afraid the Truth it self were it not for the Grand Necessity put upon us at this Season, would hardly bear me out in the Defence of it; it is so unusual, so unpleaded for by Divines, Ancient and Modern, so absonant to the Ears of your selves; that even you that require it, will not own it, but when you have done, would have us count our former Orders Null, lest it be Monstrous. And if any do defend the same, and are sure to be oppos'd by those that oppose you, yet unless we will come up to this, (which is to Acknowledge our selves Intruders and Usurpers of the Ministry all the time before) we cannot for ought I see, have any Refuge in you which is indeed so hard and injurious, that I cannot but bring my Complaint to you, and lay it at your Doors. Let Mr. Ollyffe then Judge, whether even the Pious, Aged, Moderate, Mr. Humphreys, to whom he Refer'd me as an Instruicter upon the Head of Reordination, does not overlash as much as I. But finding his Acquaintance with Mr. Humphreys to be but Slender, and not knowing but that may be the Case of some others too, who may hear of his yielding to Reordination, and Defending it, and not know the Consequence,, I think it not amiss to add, that this Affair Occasion'd that good Man that Concern and Trouble, as he
could

Ibid. p.
129, 130.

N.B.

could not get over for some Years: Which I think ought to be consider'd by such as weigh his Reasons, before they imitate his Practise. *I Confess* (says he) *I did not doubt it in the least when I did this (i. e. yielded to be Reordain'd) but that my former Ordination was valid; and in the taking this New upon me, I find it is like a double Garment, put on for the Fashion; and it Experiencedly proves uneasie to be worn. I must needs say, I could never Imagine, so small a matter would have run so in my thot'ts as this hath done: It is indeed methinks to me, like a heavy Rug upon my Bed in the Summer, that to be under it Makes me Sweat, and I cannot well go to my Rest, till I have fairly justled it of again.* And he adds in the same Discourse a very Warm and Affecting Latin Letter to his Brethren in the Ministry, declaring the Trouble of. his Mind, begging their Forgiveness and their Prayers, and to all Intents and Purposes Renouncing his Episcopal Orders, as design'd and tending to the Nullifying the Orders he had before receiv'd, agreeably to the Word of God from Presbyters, in which he was fully Satisfi'd. Which Letter deserves the Perusal of such as may at any time be perswaded to yield to be Reordain'd by Bishops, in such Circumstances as would pour Contempt on their former Ordination by Presbyters. Were it not that I am unwilling to Expatiate, I could tell these Gentlemen of some others, who were caat into great Trouble of Mind, by their yielding to be Reordain'd, by Bishops after King *Charles's* Restauration, upon this very Account, because they found it us'd to pour Contempt, on their former Ordination by Presbyters, which was Sufficiently warrant-, ed, by the Word of God. However, I'll mention one who was a Man Celebrated for his

Ibid. p.
96.

See Pag.
105.

Parts and Learning, and Ministerial Abilities. 'Tis Mr. *Nehemiah Beaton*, who was Minister first of *Ludgershall*, and afterwards of *Little Horsted* in *Sussex*. That which Decoy'd him into Reordination, was an Insinuation of some that Apprehended his Example, might have a considerable Influence on the Ministers in those Parts, that it should be only a Recognition of his former Ordination. But he soon found it otherwise; and that he had this way Encourag'd those who Represented the Ministrations of such as had only Presbyterian Ordination as invalid, which so Griev'd him, that his Spirit sunk under the weight of his Burden. Had Bp. *King* made his Visitation before the *Fatal Bartholomew*, he determin'd for the Ease of his Conscience, to have then Publickly deliver'd up his New Orders, to him from whom he Receiv'd them. But the Ejection coming first, he laid down his Living, and not long after his Life; carrying the Wound of his Spirit to his Grave, unless that may have been said to *have carri'd him thither*.

But to return to Mr. *Ollyffe*; I must not omit his Argument from Mr. *Baxter's* Concessions; *whose Name* he is pleased to say, *ought to carry Authority with me, in this Case, because I pretend to be his Abridger*. A Pleasant Fancy. As if because a Man is Respected, he must be an Oracle. But this I can Assure him, as much Respect as I have for Mr. *Baxter*, if I had seen a Necessity of such a Consequence, I had never been his Abridger. However in this Case, I don't see any need to recede from him. He allows indeed the Lawfulness of Hypothetical Rebaptization: and I see not what any Man has to say against it. He allows also of Hypothetical Reordination; and many of his Brethren herein Concurr'd with him. But as Mr. *Ollyffe* himself Observes, in the very Place in his Directory, † which he
 refers

Pag. 144.

† *Töm.* 3.
Qu. 21.

refers to, he distinguishes between entire true Ordination, and the External Acts, Words or Ceremony only. He allows indeed in. some Cases, of *the Repetition of the bare Words and Ceremonies of Ordination*. And One of those Cases, is, *when some Real or Supposed Integral Party was omitted, or is by the Church or Magistrate suppos'd, to be omitted, and then will not permit the Minister to Exercise his Office, unless he repeat the whole Action again, and make up the Defect*. But at the same time, he expressly Disclaims being *properly twice Ordain'd*. This he says, would *imply a Lye, be a Sacrilegious Renunciation of the Former Dedication to God, a taking the Name of God in Vain, a creating Confusion in the Church, &c.* and Mentions the very Reasons I Produc'd upon this Head, with the Addition of several others. His meaning, if I take him rightly, (and I think I have good Evidence I do so, by comparing what he has written upon this Matter in several Places) was this.

That Reordination was not simply Unlawful. That if ever a time should come when we should be so Happy, as to see other things Accommodated, and the just Grounds of Dissatisfaction in the Worship and Discipline of the Church remov'd, the Blame would lie on the side of the Dissenters, if they broke with Church and State, for the Ceremony of the Imposition of the Hands of a Bishop, provided, the Validity of their past Sacred Ministrations were Publickly secur'd; and the Words us'd in Ordination accordingly alter'd. And if this was his Sense, (as I verily believe it was) he has my Concurrence: Not by the force of his Authority, but by Vertue of the strength of his Reasons. But without this there is an Apparent Precipice, of which he has often

warn'd others, and that with Warmth and Freedom. And the Danger is indeed Obvious, to such as have Leisure and Inclination to consider and weigh things fairly.

But after all, since Mr. *Ollyffe* declares his *Postscript upon this Head is added out of a Charitable Respect to us*, and is only to offer as a helping Hand, For my Part, I am Thankful to him, not doubting his Sincerity. But if he will allow me so much Freedom, I should recommend one thing to his second Tho'ts. We know that he and his Neighbours have not been sparing in kind Motions of this Nature in Private, which they are now pleas'd to make Publick. Tho' they really Design to give a helping Hand upon their own Charitable Bottom, yet should they be Instrumental to help any of their Brethren into a Snare, by Perswading them to such a Practice, as should upon a review Grate upon their Consciences, and bring them into such Trouble as Mr. *Humphreys* and Mr. *Beaton* above Mention'd, met with; and so abate their Usefulness, or shorten their Lives: Would it yield them any Comfort? Would they not be apt to wish they had been more sparing in this sort of Charity? I leave it with them, and they may return an Answer to themselves at Leisure. But as for *Liberal Censures upon them*, they may be very Easie; provided they'll leave us at Liberty, to Think, and Speak, and Represent things, as they appear unto us; without supposing we Condemn them in that they differ from us, because we Justifie ourselves as far as we Apprehend we have Reason on our side. But.

2. Mr. *Hoadly* proceeds upon another Hypothesis. With him, neither those who were Ejected, nor those that Succeed *them*, are Authoriz'd

thoriz'd Ministers, and therefore he thinks there's very good Reason they should yield to become such. He Arraigns us all as Intruders into a Sacred Office, to which we have no Right and therefore Applauds the Zeal of the Church in insisting upon our owning our Irregular Intrusion, and our Contempt of Episcopacy, before we should be allow'd to enter her Inclosure. He charges us Point-blank with acting without a Commission, so long as Bishops do not Empower us: And therefore our taking our Commission from them, he thinks would not be Reordination, but a Necessary Compliance in Order to regular and truly valid Ministrations. In the Management of this Argument, his Frankness seems more Commendable than his Charity. Tho' if the strength of his Reasoning were but answerable to his Positiveness in Asserting, we should be quite Confounded if we should not comply with his Demands; and either wholly desist from the Ministry, or take Orders from a Bishop without Delay. But his Proof is far eno' from being Convictive. According to his own Representation, when he Summs up his performance upon this Head, 'twould not be easie for a Disinterested Person to see the Force of his Argument. When he combs to Recapitulate, he gives us this general Account. *In all that I have said (says he) I only take this for Granted, that Episcopal Ordination is the Regular Ordination, which their Reasonings under this Head, give me leave to Suppose. From whence it follows that their Ordination is Irregular.* He might, I must Confess well eno' Suppose, that we did not deny the Regularity of Episcopal Ordination. The rather, because the *Provincial Assembly of London*, ★ When things were at highest against the Prelacy, prov'd freely by

Page. 28.

★ Jus Divinum
Ministerii Anglicani. Ch.
2 p. 15.
&c.

many Arguments the Validity of their Ministry who were Episcopally Ordain'd, which. Argu'd their full Satisfaction that it was so far *Regular* not to be *Unwarrantable*. But why mayn't Presbyterian Ordination be *Regular* too? What Ground is there for this Inference, that if the Former is *Regular*, the Latter is *Irregular*? Mr. *Hoadly* says *it follows*, without Pointing us to the Ground of the Connexion, which is far from being *Visible*, and so by supposing the Inference which he might well, think we should utterly disown, till clearly Prov'd to Result from the Principle laid down, he only takes that for Granted, which is the main thing in Question. Had Episcopal Ordination indeed been the *only* *Regular* Ordination, the Inference would be Just. Presbyterian, or any other sort of Ordination, would plainly appear *Irregular*. But then Methinks the Word *only*, tho' a little one, should not have been left out, because the Inference drawn, wholly depends upon it. If therefore he takes no more for granted than his Words Express, I must deny his Inference, as bottom'd upon no Foundation. But if he has such a Fondness for his Inference, as to be unwilling to part with it, I must desire the word *only* may be added to his Assertion; which will then contain such a Concession, as cannot be taken for granted by any that don't Suppose us willing to drop the whole Cause in Debate. Besides, its a very odd Argument that is drawn from *the Regularity* of Episcopal Ordination to the *Nullity* of Presbyterian, which yet in the Course of his Reasoning he Infers. The *Regularity* of the Former, can at the most but Infer the *Irregularity* of the latter. But there is a great deal of difference between an *Irregularity* and a *Nullity*, which he seems to Confound. The
Civil

Civil Law allows many things to be done *rectè* which yet are not done *ritè*, *cum folennibm Circumstantiis*. And tho' we should grant an *Irregularity* in our Ordination, yet that would not justifie our Renouncing it, for that is an owning it *Null* and *Void*, for which there appears not the least Shadow of a Reason.

However, Let not our Moderation in this Case be abus'd. Let not those who condemn the *Romanists* in this Respect, imitate their Practice. The *Papists* often make use of the Charity of *Protestants*, in owning them capable of Salvation, which they deny of the *Protestants*, as an Argument in their Favour. Which Argument is deservedly Exploded. ★ Let not any then of the Establish'd Church, use such an Argument against: us, as this: *Yon grant our Orders are Regular, which we deny of yours, and therefore 'tis safest to fall in with us.* For besides that, there is no great ground for Boasting of our Concession, which supposes that their Diocesans are Presbyters, and not diverted of the Ordaining Power which attends the Presbyterate, by their acting under the Denomination of Superior Bishops, which deserves to be consider'd: Besides this, the using an Argument of such a Nature, would look as if it were really Apprehended that whatever different Parties in Religion agree in, is safest to be chosen. Which Principle would lead directly to Deism. Such Arguing would have justifi'd the *Donatists*, against the *Catholicks*. For the *Catholicks* Acknowledg'd the Baptism of the *Donatists* valid; while they disown'd the Baptism of the *Catholicks*, and therefore by this Reason the *Donatists* must have carri'd the Cause; because, by the Acknowledgement of both sides, their Baptism was Valid. And according to this Principle,

★ See
Arch-
Bishop
Tillot-
son's Ser-
mon, on
1 Cor. 3.
15.

'tis always safest to be on the Uncharitable side. So that I think I may safely say in this, as that great Man Arch-Bishop Tillotson, in the other Case. *This is so far from being a good Argument, that it is so intolerably Weak and Sophistical, that any considerate Man ought to be ashamed to be caught by it.*

But to go on with Mr. Hoadly. He thus Proceeds in his Account of the Substance of his Proof. *From hence I Argue, that as long as we are an Episcopal Church, and as long as we imagine your Separation, and your Irregular Ordination Unnecessary, we cannot (according to Mr. Baxter's Reasoning) Acknowledge your Ordination such as God approves of; we must not in Conscience give any Encouragement to Unnecessary Irregularities; and therefore hope we are not to blame, in insisting upon Episcopal Ordination.* But tho' they are an *Episcopal Church*, must they therefore be Uncharitable to their Brethren Abroad or at Home, who adhere to the Primitive Simplicity? Is that Essential to an *Episcopal Church*? By an *Episcopal Church*, I understand a Church, some of whose Bishops Concurring in the first Reformation from Popery, were for keeping their, Grandeurs and Dignities, and transmitting them to their Successors, with the Concurrence of the Civil Authority. In order to this, they among other things, were for confining the Power of Ordination, to Ministers of their Exalted Rank, when as our Saviour had left it open. In Common, to all that were in Possession of the Office. Are Ordinations out of, this Inclosure presently Invalid? I am at a Loss for the Consequence. They may still remain an *Episcopal Church*, and yet those Ordinations that are agreeable to Scripture, may be as much Approv'd of God, as theirs. But 'tis imagin'd our Separation and Irregular Ordinations are hereupon Unnecessary.

ry. Perhaps we more than Imagine the Contrary. But imagination on one side, and the other depends so much upon Custom, that wise Men don't use to lay any great Stress upon it. We have very good Reason for our Reparation, as things now stand: And while the Reparation Continues, are under a Necessity of such Ordinations as he calls *Irregular*, because not Conformable to Ecclesiastical Methods; but we *Regular*, because agreeable to the Rule of Scripture, which we take for the truest Standard. If he *cannot acknowledge our Ordination such as God approves of*, he must excuse us if we ascribe it to a vitiated Imagination, which hinders him from distinguishing between the true Primitive Simplicity, and an Ecclesiastical Custom, because 'tis of a long Standing. And as for Mr. Baxter's Reasoning, he might as well have dropt it, any the Service it does his Cause, as will appear in the Sequel. But we neither desire him nor others, *to encourage unnecessary Irregularities*. If we can't prove our Ordinations Regular in the Sense of Scripture, we desire no Quarter: And therefore whatever Reasons there are *for insisting upon Episcopal Ordination*, where Persons were not Ordain'd before, we cannot but look: upon it as an unreasonable Stiffness, so vehemently to insist upon it, where Persons were before Ordain'd, with due Care and Caution, in a way agreeable to Scripture, and the Practice of most of those Churches that have been Reform'd from Popery.

Having however seriously consider'd Mr. Hoadly's way of Reasoning on this Head of Ordination, which I look upon as a matter of no small Moment, I must freely confess it makes very little Impression upon me for several Reasons, which I think it not improper to mention.

1. Be-

I. Because 'tis so like to the Reasoning of the *Papists* against the *Protestants*. The Romanists have hardly had any more Popular Insinuation, wherewith to run. down the Reformed Churches, than this; That their Ordinations are Null, for want of Authority in their Ordainers. This way they have hop'd to gain the Cause at once: and therefore this has been their common Clamour, especially at first, till it was over and over Refuted. They have been apprehensive that the bringing this to the Trial, would put upon a Search into Antiquity, where the Populace are easily Confounded and Bewildred. And let there appear a Nullity in their Ministry, and you need not say much to perswade them to shift Sides. This Pretence hath drawn many into the *Roman* Camp. I hope its Success in their Case is not the Reason of its being Adopted by our Brethren. The Protestant Cause hath had many Learned Advocates. Among Foreign Divines, *Sadeel* ^(a) and *Voetius* ^(b) have strenuously defended the Validity of the Protestant Ministry, and that without any regard to Ecclesiastical Episcopacy. And our Ministry here at Home hath been nervously defended against the Papists, by *Reynolds* ^(c) *Jewel* ^(d) *Mason* ^(e) *Afaretort* ^(f) *Bedel* ^(g) *Bramhal* ^(h) and *Burnet* ⁽ⁱ⁾ And if the Dissenters have not much

(a) Respons. Ad Turriani Sophiimata.

(b) Desperata Causa Papatus.

(c) *His Conference with Hart.*

(d) *Against Harding.*

(e) *Of the Consecration of Bishops; and of the Ordination of Priests and Deacons.*

(f) *Apologia. Catholica.*

(g) *Letters to Mr. James Wadsworth.*

(h)

(i) *A Vindication of the Ordinations of the Church of England.*

much labour'd upon this Argument to vindicate their Ministry, in opposition to the Plea against them, which some of their Brethren have borrow'd from the Common Enemy, (as to which however, they have not been altogether silent *) it is because the same Reasons, in many Respects, that will Vindicate the *Protestants* in general against the *Papists*, will serve at the same time for their Vindication, against their Warmer Brethren of the Establish'd Church. And therefore I'm upon a double Account sorry to find Mr. *Hoadly*, and others that Applaud his Performance, whom I heartily Honour for their Worth and Usefulness, taking so much Pleasure in Nullifying the Ministry of the Moderate Dissenters; both because their Arguments are sharpen'd at the *Roman* Forge, and because many of the Principles, by which they must defend their own Ministry against the Papists, will equally serve for our Defence against their Insinuations. Say the Papists to our Establish'd Church, Your Ordinations are Irregular, we cannot approve them. They are Uncanonical. You vary from the orderly settled Method. You break the Chain, &c. Words may indeed be multiply'd: But our main Defence against them lies in adhering to Scripture, and true Primitive Antiquity, as far as we can certainly discover it. And therefore when our over-nice brethren, with whom we heartily concur in the same Protestant Faith, bring the same Objections against us, whom they force to
Separate

* See Baxter's *Treatise of Episcopacy*, Chap. 25. And his *Dispute of Ordination*; in his *Disputations of Church government*. Owen's *Plea for Scripture-Ordination And the Defence of it*. And Tongue's *Defence of the Enquiry into the Nature of Schism*.

Separate from them, we flie to the same Refuge for Shelter. But however a way of Reasoning that is borrow'd from the Common Enemy, and enervated by our Common Defence against them, neither seems so Candid amongst Brethren; nor will at any time so work upon us as more generous Treatment.

2. Mr. *Hoadly's* Arguments against the Validity of our Ordination, reflect on many of the suffering Witnesses of Christ, who have stood up in Defence of the Truth and Purity of the Gospel, against Popish Corruptions, and on most of the *Reformed Churches* at this time in Being. I must indeed do him the Justice to own, that he does not herein go so far as some of his Order. He does not with Mr. *Dodwel* (whom I could more heartily admire, if his Charity were of like Extent with his Learning) leave them to the meer *uncovenanted Mercy of God*. For speaking of the Reform'd Churches abroad, he thus expresses himself; *We think it no Presumption as we Censure not them, who in a Case of Necessity went out of the ordinary Method; so to expect they will not Censure for not approving Irregularities*. Why should we affect to widen the Distance between them and us? Has not that been done long eno' already? Why should we suppose they should be inclin'd to Censure the Church of *England*, for not approving *Irregularities*, when they only Desire her approving of what is *Regular*, and allowing that way of Ordination that is agreeable to Scripture? What room for Censure can there be, in the Case of those, who not so much out of *Necessity* as *Choice*, went out of the ordinary Method, that they might fall into one more agreeable by far to the Primitive Platform, than that winch before prevail'd in these *Western* Parts?

Parts? Why should we suppose that they are *irregular* in the want of that which cannot be made appear to be necessary? Why should we use a Plea for them, that won't hold, if it be Canvass'd? Might they not have Bishops if they desir'd them? ★ Suppose they had not the Lordships and Endowments of our English Prelates, they might yet easily have the some Officers, endu'd with the some Power, for all
Spiritual

★ Bishop Jeremy Taylor, in his *Episcopacy* asserted, p. 191. *Pol. is very Frank upon this Head. M. Du Plessis (says he) a Man of Honour, and great Learning attests, That at the First Reformation there were many Archbishops and Cardinals in Germany, France and Italy, &c. that join'd in the Reformation, whom they might, but did not employ in their Ordinations: And therefore, says the Bishop, What Necessity can be pretended in this Case I would fain learn, that I might make their Defence. For the Dutch Church, let the Celebrated Gisbert Voet be heard. Nos (says he) qui Ordine illo Episcoporum caremus, neq; etiant indigemus, ab Anglicanis, aut Germanicis Ordinationem in formâ petere semper potuimus; neq; illi negarent. De Desp. Causâ. Papatûs. Lib. 2. Sect. 1, p. 110. He says, they could have had Episcopal Ordination if they would, but that they needed it not; and therefore would hardly have taken it kindly of any one that would have pleaded for them, that they would have had it. if they could. For the French Church, Let Peter Du Moulin's Letter to Bishop Andrews be Consider'd; where excusing himself for not making the Difference between Bishops and Presbyters to be of Divine Appointment, he pleads; That if he had laid the Difference on that Foundation, the French Churches would have silenc'd him: Which doth not argue that concern among them for Bishops, as would be requisite before such a plea from Necessity were allow'd them. And I have been Credibly inform'd, that the French King was so earnest with them to admit Bishops among them, that the Protestants at Charenton gave this as a Reason why they durst not desire an English Bishop to Preach there, tho' they admitted him to Communicate.*

Spiritual Purposes. In what settl'd Church may not, nay must not Episcopacy be had, if it be necessary to valid Orders? How easily might the *French* Churches have sent some to us into *England*, to have been invested in the Episcopal Function? How easily may the *Dutch*, or any other Protestant Churches do it still? And shall they then be excus'd by a pretended Necessity, who can't find in their Hearts to do even thus much in order to their keeping up Regular Ordination among them? If the Validity of Orders, and God's approving them, depended so much upon the Episcopal Function' as Mr. *Hoadly* represents, it would be strange, that where Episcopacy is so much neglected, there should still be room for a Plea of Necessity. When therefore we are Reflected on in, such a way, as at the same times asperses not only the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, and Followers of *Wicleff* in former Times, but most of the Protestant Churches at this Day in Being, we find pur selves more inclin'd to wish our Censurers Charity, than to question the Grounds we go upon.

3. Mr. *Hoadly's* Hypothesis lays greater Stress upon a Nicety than upon the main Substance. Why should we strain at a Gnat, and swallow a Camel? Let us suppose the Hands of a Bishop to be desirable in Ordination, yet are there not other things much more necessary, and of vastly greater Importance? Are not the Qualifications of the Persons to be Ordain'd much, more considerable, than the Dignity of the Persons Ordaining? Does not the Doctrine of the Ordainers deserve a greater Stress, than their Dignity and exalted Station? Whence comes it then, that Persons manifestly incompetent shall be own'd Valid and Regular Ministers,

sters, if they had Episcopal Ordination, while such as are liable to no Objections as to their Qualifications, nay have many things to Recommend them, shall, tho' solemnly let apart to the Ministerial Function in a Scriptural way, be disown'd because a Bishop's Hands were wanting? 'Tis freely granted, the most eminent Abilities won't presently render a Man an Authoriz'd Minister: And yet they deserve much more regard when they are without the Ceremony of a Bishop's Hands, than that Ceremony can deserve without suitable Abilities. The generality of Sober People, I am apt to think, will be of this Mind, whatever could be suggested to perswade them to the Contrary: Neither is it easy to be accounted for, why the Ordination of the *Romanists* should be own'd, and that of Foreign Protestants disown'd * ? Why a Priest of the *Galilean Church* should be admitted as Ordain'd, and the Ministers of our poor Protestant Brethren, who have suffer'd for their Religion, should be oblig'd to be Re-ordain'd, before they be admitted to share in our Charity? Why should Orders among the *Papists*, with whom we well know are the grossest Corruptions, both in Doctrine and Practice, be own'd, and the Orders of *Protestant Dissenters* disown'd? Is the Episcopal Character of the Ordainers, tho' attended with the grossest Heterodoxy, to be preferr'd before a lower Character, with the Orthodox Protestant Doctrine? Shall they who own they derive their Power from the Pope (who is declar'd by the Church

* *This Monsieur Claude complain'd off, in his Second Letter to my Lord Bishop of London, dated April 16. 1681. — Oeuvres Posthum. de Monsieur Claude. Tom, 5. Lettre. 39. p. 267.*

* Homily
against
Peril of
Idolatry.

Church of *England*, to be Anti-christ ★) be encouraged, and such as appear heartily concern'd for purity, of the Gospel, be slighted and discountenanc'd? Shall they that spread Superstition and idolatry be own'd true Ministers of Christ, because they favour Episcopacy: And they that having the Qualifications the Sacred Scripture requires in Ministers, devote themselves to the spreading True Christian Knowledge, Faith, and Holiness, be Contemn'd, because not let apart to the Office by Bishops? What is this, but to condemn such as are Industrious to extinguish a Raging Fire, because they don't use the Publick Buckets? While many of those that have them, fill them with Oil, to encrease the Flame, and they are tho't worthy of Countenance and Encouragement? Is this agreeable to the Declaration, *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice?* Matth. 9. 13.

The Reason why Popish Orders are own'd by the Church of *England* is freely given us by Bishop *Barnet*; who after he hath, in Answer to his Anonymous Antagonist, prov'd that there were in the Church of *England*, all the Essentials of Ordination; and that therefore their Orders were Good and Valid, thus expresses himself: *And tho' we have Separated from many Errors and Corruptions of the Church of Rome, and in particular have thrown out many Superstitious Rites, out of the Forms of Ordination, that we might reduce these to a Primitive Simplicity; yet we acknowledge the Church of Rome holds still the Fundamentals of the Christian Religion, so we confess she retains the Essentials of Ordination, which are the Separating of Persons for Sacred Employments, and the Authorizing them with an Imposition of Hands, and a Prayer for the Effusion of the Holy Ghost; therefore we do not*
annul

Vindication of the
Orders of
the Ch. of
England,
p. 61, 62.

annul their Orders, but receive such as come from that Church, and look on them as true Priests, by the Ordination they got amongst them. If those mention'd by this Learned Bishop be the *Essentials of Ordination*, why mayn't we be own'd to have them as well as the Papists? We have been separated for Sacred Employments, and authoriz'd by Imposition of Hands and a Prayer has been made over us for the Effusion of the Holy Ghost: And why then must they be favour'd, and we be brow-beaten? Will Mr. *Hoadly* say, that we yet want something *Essential* to Ordination, because we had not a Bishop's Hands? Besides the Difficulty of proving that to be *Essential*, I appeal to Mr. *Hoadly* himself, whether the Pure Christian Faith and Worship be not more *Essential* in the Case, and of much more Consequence. The apprehending any other looks like preferring a Ceremony, before the great Substantials of Religion, which I hope we may be excus'd, if we don't approve of.

4. This way of Arguing would hardly be born if it were Retorted, and therefore, I think, should be us'd with Caution. Mr. *Hoadly* says, his niain Stress on this. That the Church of *England* is an *Episcopal Church*: Therefore all that are allow'd to Minister in it, must be Ordain'd by Bishops. This must arise From the Power of a National Church, to Limit the Exercise of the Ministry within it self. Suppose We then a *Presbyterian Church* to have as good a Conceit of its own Constitution, Ways and Methods, as the Church of *England*; and there-upon to Determine, that all that Officiate in their Church should be Ordain'd by meer Presbyters: Would it not be justifiable upon the same Principle? And yet would not this be look'd upon as unreasonable? Had it been in-

lifted on during the *Interregnum*, here in *England*? that all such as Officiated in the Ministry Should be Re-ordain'd, if they had only Episcopali Orders, would not Mr. *Hoadly* have tho't it defend'd an Inventive? Or should the Churches of *Holland*, or *Brandenburgh*, *Geneva* or *Switzerland*, deny our Clergy the Liberty of Officiating among them, till by taking new Orders in the Presbyterian way, they had in effect renounc'd their Episcopal Ordination, would it not be resented? And yet when the Power of National Churches is equally great and extensive, I see not why this might not be justify'd upon the Principle advanc'd. I'm well assur'd it would have been cry'd out upon, if all those who had been Episcopally Ordain'd in our Neighbouring Kingdom of *Scotland*, had at the last Revolution been declar'd incapable of exercising their Office there, until they were Ordain'd by a Classis of Presbyters. It would hardly have been reckon'd satisfactory for it to have been declar'd, either that that was a *Presbyterian Church*, and so 'twas necessary in Mr. *Hoadly's* way? or (as some others express it) that the Presbyters impos'd Hands, only to empower Persons in the Exercise of their Office, and not to give the Office it self. This would have been reckon'd but a poor Excuse, while they perform'd all the Outward Actions of Ordination; which are the Ordinary Means of conveying the Office. But if a valid Ordination would not in one Case be lawfully disown'd, neither would it in the other. All the Difference I can discern, is mainly resolvable into this Principle: That *it is natural to Men to be Partial in their own Cause*. But it being a matter of the highest Consequence, that those who are set apart to the Office of the Ministry

Ministry be duly Authoriz'd; and the Charge here brought against us as Intruders, being of the last Moment, both to us who pretend to Officiate as Ministers, and those who adhere to us, I shall freely open the Grounds we go upon; which are such as we need not be asham'd of. I'll be at the Pains distinctly to propose the main Arguments by which we defend the Validity of our Presbyterian Ordination: I'll afterwards Consider how far the Judgment of the Fathers concerning the matter, which is commonly urg'd against us, may be depended on; And then weigh Mr. *Hoadly's* Suggestions, with all the Candour that he himself could desire.

I think we can hardly, on either side, be too sensible of the Awefulness of the Work of the Ministry: An unwarrantable Intrusion into it, is certainly a Crime of a very high Nature. I should soon give Publick Marks of my Repentance, if I were herein Convinc'd of Guilt. We had need be well assur'd we are accepted of God, in engaging and Persisting in this Office. It cannot but cast a great Damp upon our Spirits in all our Ministrations, if we are but uncertain whether God sent us, or whether we are Usurpers. It may well startle us, if we should find any Reason to be apprehensive, that the Great God, in whose Name we now take upon us to Act, and that by Vertue of his Commission, would one Day say to us, who requir'd this at your Hands? Our Acting upon Grounds that will bear Scanning, is necessary to our Safety: And 'tis as necessary to our Comfort too. For our Calling is Painful. We are surrounded with Enemies. We have Discouragements more than a few among our selves. Endeavouring to approve our selves Faithful, we have so many Impediments to strive against,

that if we had not Divine Considerations to hearten us and bear us up, of all Professions and Callings that are, ours would be the most uncomfortable. We have many Scorn and unthankful Return from an unkind World, after all our Pains: And know not what Hardships we may meet with. And therefore if we have not good Assurance that we have God's Approbation, we are in a wretched Condition. Neither are those who sit under our Ministry, much less concern'd in this matter than we. For if we really are Intruders, and God does not approve our Ordination, I'll freely grant they ought to be Cautious how they encourage us. If God did not send us, they ought not to own us. It cannot but abate the Force of all our Ministrations among them, if they have real Reason to question our Authority: And therefore I agree that good Evidence is in this Case necessary, because the matter in Issue is vastly Important.

I can't but apprehend, we can upon much better Grounds satisfy our selves, and others too, in this Point, than many of the Church of *England*; according to whose Notions, it is necessary to the Validity of Sacred Ministrations, that there be *an uninterrupted Succession in the Ministry, from the Days of the Apostles to the present Time*. This is the sense of Mr. *Dodwel*, who hath many Followers. By which Principle, I can't see how it is possible for any Mortal, certainly to know himself to be a true Minister of Christ, or give Proof of it to the Satisfaction of others *. For how can any Man know that all the Predecessors of that Bishop that

* See this Point of Succession debated, in *Owen's Plea for Scripture Ordination*. Chap. 11, and *Tong's Defence* Chap. 3.

that Ordain'd him, were Canonical Bishops? That none of them came in by Simony, or err'd in Fundamentals, so as to be guilty of Heresy? That none of them lost their Authority, by involving themselves in Secular and Publick Administrations *, by bearing Arms; or by neglecting to Instruct their Flocks †, or by Ordaining, or being Ordain'd by a Bishop, out of the reach of his own Jurisdiction ||; which are so many Nullities in a Canonical Sense? And if this can't be prov'd, at what a Loss must they be, who lay the Stress of the Validity of their Orders, upon the clearness of the Line of Succession? And how wofully are those that sit under their Ministry bewildred. 'Tis a poor Evasion, to say. *Our Succession is clear, till 'tis disprov'd*. For certainly, if Confidence in any Case requires Positive Grounds for Satisfaction, it must in this Case, where there is so much depending. To make a mighty Noise and Stir about a Line of Succession, and at last Acquiesce in a Presumptive Title, is to make a strong Conceit supply the place of Proof: Which should it be done in our Case, would be derided as Ridiculous and I think not undeservedly. In reality, this of a clear Succession, which a late Author ^(a) (who perhaps may by some be the more regarded, for his running upon us with such a Vehemence) very pleasantly calls a *Manual Mechanical Succession*, is a confounding Notion. It ferves only to perplex Ministers and People with insuper-

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* Canon. Apostol. 6. & 81.

† Canon. 58.

|| Canon. 35.

(a) *Mr. Thomas Edwards's Discourse against Extemporary Prayer*, p. 115.

able Difficulties about their Acceptance with God; and to leave Christianity it self; upon such precarious Foundations, as it will be in the Power of every Critick in Church History to shake, if not to overturn. If we can't prove we stand upon a better Bottom than this, we must own our Ministry very Precarious.

If we can satisfy our selves as to the Grounds upon which we made Choice of the Work of the Ministry, as the Business of our Lives, I see not why it mayn't satisfy both our selves and others, that our Entrance on that Office was Justifiable: If we can make it appear that they who set us apart to this Sacred Function, are true Scripture Bishops and have an inherent Power of Ordination, by vertue of their Office and in separating us to that Office, exercis'd their Power in a way agreeable to the Rule of Scripture, and in such a manner as to answer all the Ends, that are necessarily to be aim'd at in Ordination. I see not how we are capable of fuller Satisfaction, than these things set in a clear Light amount to: Nor upon what grounds more should be infilled on, as needful, to make an Ordination Valid in the Sight of God. As to our own Personal Ends, we are Concern'd only with our selves. They Lie between God and our own Confidences. But I'll attempt the Elucidation of the other Particulars, to show the firmness of the Grounds we go upon.

That our Ordination therefore by Presbyters, of which Mr. *Hoadly* takes a Liberty to speak so Contemptibly, is to all Intents and Purposes (except that of gaining Church-Preferments) Valid, I prove by Four Arguments.

1. I argue from the *Identity of Bishops and Presbyters*. This Argument has been often teaz'd
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and worry'd, and yet 'tis far from being breathless. I'll put it in the words of the Learned Dr. *Whitaker* ★, who was the Celebrated King's Professor of Divinity in the University of *Cambridge*. *Duræus* challenging him to declare, How the Ministers among the Reformed came by their Call to that Sacred Office bids him tell him, if he could, who call'd forth *Luther*, and *Calvin*, and *Beza*, and the rest. Dr. *Whitaker* answers him. That as for *Luther*, and *Zuinglius*, and *Bucer*, and *Oecolampadius*, and many others of them, they were Authoriz'd Presbyters and Teachers in the Church of *Rome*, Ordain'd and universally Own'd among them: And that *therefore they being Presbyters and Presbyters being by Divine Right the same as Bishops, they might warrantably set other Presbyters over the Churches*. I make the same Reply to those who Enquire, how we came by our Call to the Ministry, who exercise that Office among the Dissenters: Many of those whom they, in 1662, tho't fit to call out off the Publick Churches, were Ordain'd in the Church of *England* by Bishops, and own'd for Ministers: And tho' others were not so, yet their Ordainers were and therefore *they being Presbyters, and Presbyters being by Divine Right the same as Bishops, they might warrantably Ordain other Presbyters, and set them over the Churches*. To make good this Argument Two Things are to be clear'd.

1. That Presbyters are by Divine Right the same as Bishops. And 2. That it thence follows, that Presbyters may warrantably Ordain other Persons Presbyters.

1. That Presbyters are by Divine Right the same as Bishops appears from hence That such as were solemnly let apart to the Sacred Ministry, and entrusted with the Keys of the

★ Contra
Duræum
Lib. 9.
Pag. 225.

Kingdom of Heaven, and Authoriz'd to Administer all Ordinances in the Church, to the Faithful committed to their Care, are in Scripture Stil'd Bishops and Elders or Presbyters, without any mark of Distinction. To be Convinc'd of this, a Man need but turn to the several Passages where they are mention'd; which I shall here subjoin with some Remarks,

Philip. 1.

St. *Paul* writing to the *Philippians*, directs his Epiltie to all the Saints in Christ Jesus at *Philippi with the Bishops and Deacons*. He mentions *Bishops* and *Deacons*, but no *Presbyters*. Had. there been any *Presbyters* distinct from *Bishops*, 'tis hard to give a Reason why they should be past over in Silence. 'Tis more Rational to Apprehend these *Bishops* were no other than the *Presbyters* of that Church: Which Sentiment is Confirm'd by the *Syriack* (which was one of the most Ancient Versions of the New Testament) which reads it. *Presbyters* and *Deacons*. There, could not be several *Bishops*, In the sense the Church of England gives that word, at *Philippi*. There could not be several Pastors of many Churches, in one such little place as that. They must be therefore Proper *Presbyters*, belonging to that Flock. We need not wonder to hear of many such in a Church, For we are told, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* Ordain'd *Elders* in every Church. And tho' Dr. *Hammond* is for rendring that Church by Church, i. e. in every Church one Elder or Bishop, yet other *Criticks* differ from him. And that Order that is given by St. *James*; If any Man sick let him send for the [Elders] of the Church; seems to intimate a Plurality of *Presbyters* in the same Church. This Notes (says Bishop *Bilson* ★) that there were in every Church, not one but many Elders, whose Office it was to Pray over the Sick, re-
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Acts 14.
23.

Jam. 5. 14.
★ Of the
Perpetual
Govern-
ment of
the Church
Pag. 126.

lease their Sins, and ease their Infirmities. But this Dr. *Hammond* could not reconcile with his Hypothesis; And therefore very Frankly owns, that what is in this place meant by *Elders of the Church*, is not easie to be determin'd. While a disinterested Person can easily Apprehend that that Passage in the beginning of the Epistle to the *Philippians*, and this of St. *James* Explain one another; and therefore Recommend me to Dr. *Maurice*, who, tho' in other things *Defence* hard eno' yet here deals very Ingenuously: Speaking of the Bishops at *Philippi*, He says, that *he could never find sufficient Reason to believe 'em any other than Presbyters, as the generality of* 27. *Fathers, and of the Writers of the Church of England have done.* Adding that, tho' he had great Reverence for the Name and Memory of Dr. *Hammond*, yet where he was alone, he tho't he might without any Imputation of Disrespect, take the common Liberty of leaving his Opinion to stand or fall, according to the strength of the Argument upon which it is Founded. And this, according to Dr. *Whitby*, is very inconsiderable. For whereas Dr. *Hammond*, to free himself from the Difficulty that would attend the Supposition of more Bishops than one in the Church at *Philippi*, makes that the *Metropolis of the Province of Macedonia*, and that being allow'd, says *there might be more Bishops than one there, even as many as there were Cities under that Metropolis.* Dr. *Whitby* tells us, that this Solution was unknown to the Ancient Fathers, *Chrysostom*, *Theodoret* and St. *Jerome*, who all contend that Bishops here must signifie *Presbyters*; and at the same time tell us, that *Philippi* was then under the *Metropolis of Thessalonica*, which was the *Metropolis* of all *Macedonia*: And that *Philippi* was not it self a *Metropolitan Church* in the first Six Centuries,

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cum p.
361, 362.

was long since plainly Prov'd by the Learned Bishop *Stillingfleet*. And therefore by *Bishops* in this Text, not *Provincial Bishops*, but the *Bishops* Resident in this City are to be understood, and they could be no other then *Presbyters*.

1 Tim. 3.

The same St. *Paul* writing his first Epistle to *Timothy*, lays down the Duties of *Bishops* and *Deacons*, and the Qualifications Necessary for both, without saying a word of *Presbyters*: Of whom it is hard to Suppose, he should upon such an Occasion have been altogether Silent, had they not been the same Persons whom he meant by *Bishops*. This Dr. *Hammond*, seems to have reckon'd an incontestible Proof of one of his darling Notions; that there were no proper *Presbyters* in Scriptures. * He Attempts to prove that there were no *Presbyters* distinct from *Bishops* in the Apostles times, because giving his Directory to *Timothy*, he mentions *Bishops* only, and not *Presbyters*. For which very Reason, I think we may upon good Grounds Assert, there were no *Bishops* then distinct from *Presbyters*. But that one and the same name comprehended all that were engag'd in the Office of the Ministry, and the oversight of the Flock of God. And tho' the Learned Dr. *Whitby*, (to whom I can't forbear returning my unfeigned Thanks for his Admirable Commentary on the New Testament lately Publisht,) hath tho't fit to pass this lightly over, yet I can't help thinking it very Considerable. I can Admire a Learned Performance without Concurring in every thing: And therefore with Submission to so great a Man, I cannot but Apprehend, that the Three different Opinions among the Ancients he hath mention'd, as to the import of the Word *Bishop* in this Chapter, fairly Consider'd, rather strengthen than weaken the

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* See his
Notes on
Acts 11.
30.

Argument drawn from hence by the Assertors of the *Identity of Bishops and Presbyters*. *Theodoret* says, that the *Bishop* whom *St. Paul* here Characterizes was a *Presbyter*, who was then indifferently call'd either *Bishop* or *Presbyter*: While at the same time, those who afterwards were call'd *Bishops*, were then usually stil'd *Apostles*. If this Opinion be Embrac'd, then is the Proper *Episcopal* Function, wholly overlook'd in this Apostolical Directory. And it is scarce supposable that that should be so very needful in the Church as some have Represented it, about which the Apostle *Paul* saw no need of giving upon this Occasion any Particular Direction. *Epiphanius* says, that in some places only *Presbyters* and *Deacons* were fixt by the Apostles, there being none worthy of the Office of a *Bishop*: While in other Places only *Bishops* and *Deacons* were settled, scarce any being found that were fit to be *Presbyters*, 'Tis hard to reconcile this Notion with the Miraculous Gifts, which were then very common in the Church. As great a Man as *Grotius*, calls this a Dream of *Epiphanius*. But supposing it not to want Foundation, if some Churches had *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, and others *Bishops* and *Deacons*, its plain here were three distinct Orders Design'd, and the Ground was even then laid, and therefore I'd fain know why two only should be here mention'd by *St. Paul*? and when the Qualifications of the lowest Order of the three are. distinctly Specifi'd, one of the two higher Orders, either of *Presbyters* or *Bishops* should be admitted? For which this Opinion gives not the least shadow of a Reason. The third Opinion mention'd by the Doctor, is that of *St. Chrysostem*, *Oecumenius* and *Hilary*, who Represent *Presbyters* as here Included, under the
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the name of *Bishops*, and only inferiour to them as to the Power of Ordination. This Opinion, I doubt, cannot be much to the Gust of some, who I believe would not much relish the Peculiar Power of Ordination, if separated from that of Jurisdiction. But according to this Opinion, we are secure of what this Chapter is Pleaded for; *viz.* That *Presbyters* and *Bishops* were not really distinct in Scripture times. And as for Appropriating the Power of Ordination to them, there is no room left for it In this Chapter, if the Apostle speaks to *Presbyters* and *Bishops*, under one Denomination. This must be owing to Ecclesiastical Custom of a later Date. But take the one Opinion or the other; Let St. *Paul's* Bishop here be a *Presbyter* and have an Apostle above him, or let him be a Bishop, and only have a Deacon below him, or let him be a Proper Bishop, and have a *Presbyter* under him, and still the Reason is to seek, if three Orders were by Divine Appointment to be of Perpetual Continuance, in the Church, why two only should be mention'd. However this Diversity of Senses, among the Ancients, and their running so far to fetch an Interpretation in a plain Case, where they found a Difference between. Scripture Times and their own, is Remarkable. We differ not so much from them, as they do from one another, in the Sense of this Matter.

Tit. 1. 5,
6, 7.

The same Apostle *Paul* writing also to *Titus*, giving him Direction about the Ordaining of Elders or Presnbyters in every City of *Crete*, tells him that *every such Person must be blameless*. He gives this Reason for it. For a *Bishop* (says. he) must be Blameless: A plain Evidence that *Bishops* and *Presbyters* were in his Sense one and the same; or otherwise instead of saying. For

a *Bishop* must be Blameless, he would undoubtedly have said for an *Elder* or *Presbyter* must be Blameless; because he was speaking of the Ordination of *Presbyters* and not of *Bishops*. Had *Bishops* then been Superiour to *Presbyters*, the Reasoning of the Apostle had had no Sense in it. And therefore 'tis Observable, this is Express'd in the *Syriack* Version: Where we have it thus; For a *Presbyter* must be Blameless. Dr. *Whitby* here Declares, it is the Sense of the *Greek* and *Latin* Commentators, that the same Person is call'd a *Presbyter* in the 5th, and a *Bishop* in the 7th Verse. And tho' he's Pleas'd to say, that it appears hence the *Names* were then Common; yet with Submission, I think here appears more than a common Name. For here is the same Character given to all to whom that name then belong'd the same Qualifications requir'd in all then Ordain'd to the Office, of the Ministry, and the same Work, for what Appears, was requir'd of all that were then Ordain'd, without any mark of Distinction. For as for such extraordinary Delegates as *Timothy* and *Titus* were, sent to supply the Place of the Apostle in settling of Churches, tho' it would be hard to prove it Unwarrantable to keep them up, yet we no where find any Intimation in Scripture that they were Design'd for Continuance. But the *Presbyters*, they Ordain'd in the several Churches, were proper *Bishops*. All Episcopal Characters were requir'd in them; and all Episcopal Work belong'd to them, (for any thing that appears to the contrary) as soon as such Extraordinary Officers left them. As for the Difference that afterwards was made between them, if it be resolv'd into Humane Prudence, for avoiding Divisions, tho' it be suppos'd very early, I have not the least

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Inclination to Gainsay: But if it is Asserted. under any other Pretence, good Proof to back the Assertion, and plain and positive Proof too, may very well be demanded.

Again: *St. Luke* tells us, that the same Apostle *Paul*, being at *Miletus*, lent to *Ephesus*, and call'd for the *Elders* or *Presbyters* of the Church: And when they were come, he thus addrest himself to them; *Take heed unto your selves, and to all the Flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you* [*Overseers*] or *Bishops*; *Επισκόπους*. I find this Text was order'd by the Church of *England*, to be us'd in the Office for the Ordination of *Presbyters* in the Days of *Edward* the Sixth. It may well be queried how it came to be alter'd? As also, why our Translators should in the rendring this Text, use the word *Overseers*, which is not to be met with any where else in the stead of *Bishops*? These things look a little Suspicious. However 'tis plain *St. Luke* here calls the very same Persons *Elders* or *Presbyters*, whom *St. Paul* stiles *Bishops*. 'Tis remarkable, that these *Bishops* to whom the Care of the Flock is committed, were *Elders* of the Church, *i. e.* of the Church of *Ephesus* most probably, whither *St. Paul* sent for them, to come to him at *Miletus*: And here is mention but of one Flock, or one Church which they are requir'd to *take heed unto*. And yet *Dr. Hammond* will have it that the *Elders* sent for, were all the *Bishops* of *Asia*, who were Summon'd to *Miletus*, by *Paul's* sending to *Ephesus*, which was the Metropolis. This Notion he supports by the Testimony of *Irenæus*, who lays. The *Elders* were call'd * *from Ephesus, and the rest of the Cities that were near*. To which *Dr. Whitby* hath given a sufficient Reply in two Particulars. 1. That *Chrysostom*, *St. Jerom*, *Theodoret*,
Oecume-

Acts 20.
17.
Ver. 28.

* Lib. 3.
C. 14.

Oecumenius, and Theophylact, knew nothing of St. Paul's sending to any Bishops, besides those of Ephesus: For otherwise (says he) they could not have argu'd its they do from this place, that these Persons could not be Bishops properly so call'd, (i. e. in the Ecclesiastical sense of that word in succeeding Ages) because there could be only one Bishop of one City. 2. Let it be granted (says he) that he sent to other Cities also, tho' it be plainly contrary to the Text, which mentions Ephesus only, yet is it Evident both from Irenæus, and the Text, that the same Persons are call'd Presbyters in the 17th Verse, who are called Bishops ver. 28. for from ver. 18. to ver. 28. inclusively he continues his Discourse to those Presbyters, whom he call'd. And then ver. 18. bids them take care of the Church, over which the Holy Ghost had made them Bishops. This is plain also from Irenæus for he saith expresly, That having call'd the Bishops and Presbyters, he gave them Charge of the Church, in which the Spirit had made them Bishops.

At this Meeting at Miletus, we may well eno' suppose Timothy himself was present, who is by some of the Antients stil'd Bishop of Ephesus. It appears at least highly probable, from Acts 20. 4. where he is said among several others, to have accompany'd St. Paul into Asia. This deserves a Remark. For if Timothy was at this Time fix'd Bishop of Ephesus, having the Presbyters there under him, it can hardly be suppos'd but St. Paul would upon such an Occasion, when he was taking his final Leave, have given them a Hint about Subjection to their Bishop, even tho' he had been Absent from them; at least if he had had any thing of Ignatius's, Spirit, he could not have forborn. But nothing can be more harsh, than to imagine, that Timothy should be upon the Spot, and St. Paul

treat

treat his Presbyters as in this Text. Who can Conceive he'd have given *them* the Charge of Feeding the Flock, which more properly belong'd to *him*; or that he'd stile them Bishops, before their Bishop's Face. For his part he is not so much as mention'd. Bishop *Timothy* is quite overlook'd, while the Care of the Church of *Ephesus* was committed to the *Presbyters* there. And this was when *St. Paul* took his last leave of them too: For, says he, ver. 25. *Behold I know that ye all, among whom I have gone Preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my Face no more.* This therefore, if ever, was the Time to fix a Bishop among them, or to signify at least his Intention to do so: As to which there is an absolute Silence. Bishop *Bilson* ★ asserts, *That at first the Apostles reserv'd the Chief Power of imposing Hands to themselves. That Bishops were not so needful for that Purpose, whilst they remain'd in or near the Places where they planted Churches: But that when they were finally to forego those Parts, then they began to provide for the Necessity and Security of the Churches; and left fit Men with Episcopal Power as their Substitutes.* According to which Notion this was the Time to fix an Ecclesiastical Bishop at *Ephesus*. But *St. Paul* makes no Provision. He tells them indeed, ver. 29. *That grievous Wolves should enter in among themt not sparing the Flock;* and yet he fixes no chief Shephard above the rest. He forewarns them, ver. 30. *That of their own selves Men should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them:* And yet he fixes no superior Bishop among them, to prevent Disorders; but leaves it to the Presbyters, whom he calls *Bishops*, to manage Ecclesiastical Affairs, and Ordination among the rest, as Occasion should offer, by common Concert among themselves.

He

★ *Perpetual Government of the Church*, p. 224, 227.

He leaves it to them, either to keep in their Parity, or to introduce a fix'd Presidency, according as they should judge most adviseable. As for the Plea of some, that *Timothy*, was after this fix'd a *Diocesan Bishop* at *Ephesus*, 'tis judiciously refuted By Mr. *James Owen* *, who also very plainly proves, that the 1st Epistle to *Timothy*, in which the Apostle recommends the Church of *Ephesus* to his Care, was written before this meeting at *Miletus*, in which he recommends the Flock of God there to the *Presbyters*, without any Notice at all of *Timothy*. And these *Presbyters* are not only call'd *Bishops*, but are said to be *made* such by the *Holy Ghost*; and they are so empower'd, as that there is no mark of Distinction left between them, and such, as were peculiarly call'd *Bishops* in after Times, saving that there is no intimation of any meer *Presbyters* under them.

* *Defence
of Scrip-
ture Ordi-
nation.*
ch. 3.

Again St. *Peter* writing to the Ministers of the scatter'd *Jews*, whom he stiles *Elders* or *Presbyters*, stiles himself a *Fellow Presbyter* with them; Συμπρεσβύτερος. [St. *John* also does the like at the Beginning of his 2d and 3d Epistles.] And he exhorts them, to feed the Flock of God, taking the oversight thereof willingly, &c. *Presbyters* who Acts 20. 28. are call'd Ἐπίσκοπος are here commanded Ἐπισκοπεῖν; i. e. to Act the part of *Bishops*. To perform all those Services in the Church which belong'd to the Episcopal Office which are, to Preach, Ordain, Govern, &c. If they were to discharge the Duties of *Bishops*, to be sure they must be entrusted with the whole Episcopal Power, and with the Power of Ordination in Particular, if that be a Branch of the Episcopal Power: And these *Presbyters* therefore, thus empower'd, must be the Supream Ordinary Church Rulers. Dr. *Hammond* will

1 Pet. 5.
1, 2.

have these Elders to be *Bishops*. We grant it. They were, he says, *Bishops* that had no *Presbyters* under them. We grant it. The Order of *Presbyters*, he says, was not yet in Being, but afterwards appointed by St. *John*. But he gives no suitable proof of it, that that Apostle instituted a New Order. But according to this Notion (says Dr. *Whitby*, the Names of *Presbyters* and *Bishops* were so far confounded, that a *Presbyter* in their Stile, did always signify one that was properly a *Bishop*. And if so, 'twould be hard, I think, to find a suitable Authority, that should afterwards make them Two Offices, necessarily and essentially distinct. Withal, (saith Dr. *Whitby*) *this Notion of Dr. Hammond's seems to make the Work and Office of a Bishop too great to be discharg'd by a single Person, especially in such great Churches as that of Jerusalem, where there were many Myriads of Believing Jews. For according to Dr. Hammond's own Concession, 'twas the Bishop's Office to be the Teacher of the whole Flock; to exhort, confirm, and impose Hands; to exercise the whole Discipline of the Church, by hearing all the Ecclesiastical Causes, inflicting Censures, and receiving Penitents, to take the principal Care of the Poor; and to visit the Sick, and Pray with them. Now, says Dr. Whitby, How one Bishop could perform all this to a Church, consisting of many Myriads of Persons, it is not easy to conceive. However, let it be observ'd from this Text, when Persons duly Ordain'd Presbyters do pretend Ἐπισκοπεῖν to Act the part of Bishops, they Act not without a Warrant, St. Peter's Charge will bear them out.*

Yet once more, St. *Paul* writing to *Timothy*, gives him this Charge; *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy, with the Laying on the Hands of the Presbytery. The great*

great *Daille* ★ (who was one of the most Learned Men that ever the Reformed Churches of our Neighbouring Kingdom of *France* had among them) apprehends, that there was in *Timothy's* Ordination much the same interposition of inspir'd Prophets, as we find mention'd in the Separation of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, Acts 13. 1, 2, 3. Some of them having by Divine Inspiration signify'd, that he was design'd by God for the Sacred Office of the Ministry, and for eminent and signal Service in that Office, *the Hands of the Presbytery were laid upon him*; i. e. the whole Company of the *Elders*, and Ministers of the Gospel, whom (saith *Daille*) the Scriptures call indifferently *Presbyters*, or *Bishops*, join'd together in the use of that solemn Rite of Consecration, by Imposition of Hands. The *Presbytery* here, *Πρεσβυτέριον*, must mean that whole Company of *Presbyters* that were present. For in that Sense only do we find that word taken in Scripture: as in *Luke* 22. 66. *Acts* 22. 5. which are the only places besides this Text, where this word is us'd. *This place*, says the Learned *Whitaker* against *Bellarmino* †, *serves our Purpose mightily: For from hence we understand, that Timothy had Hands laid upon him by Presbyters, who at that Time governed the Church by a Common Council*. Whereupon he falls upon *Bellarmino* and the *Romanists*, for denying the Authority of Ordaining to *Presbyters*, and confining it to *Bishops*. If this was right Doctrine in the Church of *England* in his Days, we are certainly much alter'd since., But thus much is plain, whether they were *Apostles*, *Evangelists*, or *Bishops*, that were concern'd in *Timothy's* Ordination, they acted as a *Presbytery*. And tho' some are unwilling to allow or any Inference drawn from hence in favour of *Presbyters*,

★ Sur L'E-
pitre. 1.
a. Timo-
thee.
Serm. 31.

† Con-
trov. 2.
Quæst. 5.
Cap. 5.
p. 509.

yet had it been express'd accommodately to their Mind; had the Apostle said, *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy, with the Laying on the Hands of the Episcopate*; we have little reason to question but that they would Triumphantly have concluded thence for the appropriating Ordination to *Bishops*, and have warmly inveigh'd against us, should we have offer'd to have disputed it.

2 Tim. 1. 6.

'Tis true, the Apostle elsewhere puts *Timothy* in remembrance, *to stir up the Gift of God which was in him, by the Putting on his Hands*. Some think that that imposing of *St. Pauls Hands*, was in order to the giving of the Holy Spirit; which could not be disprov'd; nay the following words, in *ver. 7.* seem to intimate it was a Gift of another Nature than for the Ministry that was intended. But taking it for granted, that the Apostle intends here to intimate the Concern he had in *Timothy's* Ordination, yet does he not say he Acted alone. Compare this with the other Text in the 1st Epistle to *Timothy*, and it plainly appears that *Presbyters* join'd with him; the rest of the *Bishops* present concurr'd, and made up a *Presbytery*. I can't for my Part discern 'tis of any great force, tho' it be own'd the word *Presbytery*, is by Ecclesiastical Writers sometimes us'd to signify the Office of the *Presbyterate*, which Bishop *Bilson* and others, so industriously prove. Be it granted, it is so us'd sometimes by Ecclesiastical Writers, does it follow it must be so intended by *St. Paul*? Where's the Consequence?

Bishop *Hall* referring to this latter place, thus expresses himself *, *St. Paul* (says he) *says, that his Hands, and no other, were impos'd on Timothy*. Our common Bible has no Hint of that Nature. But it's an easy thing for the best of Men

* *Episcopacy by Divine Right*, Part 2. Sect. 15.

Men to fancy they see what they much desire to see. Bishop *Bilson* also lays such a Stress on this intimation of St. *Paul's* Ordaining *Timothy*, that he will by no means allow any Concern of the Presbytery in it, tho' so plainly prov'd from the other Epistle to him: And he puts a Question in such a way, as if he tho't it would effectually confound all that were of another Mind *. *What Power* (says he) *had the Presbytery of a particular Church, as of Iconium or Ephesus, to give the Function or Vocation of an Evangelist?* To which it is no hard thing to give a sufficient Answer: For the Church of *Iconium* or *Ephesus*, or any other particular Church where *Timothy* might be at the time of his Ordination, had the same Power to separate him to the Office of an *Evangelist*, as the Church of *Antioch* had to separate *Paul* and *Barnabas*, unto the Work whereto God had call'd them. The Prophets which were at that Day in the Church, might in one Case as well as another, safely follow the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which was sufficient to bear them out. St. *Paul* therefore, and all the Company of Pastors (says Monsieur *Daille*) laid Hands on *Timothy*, at his Ordination. St. *Paul*, as President, and the rest as Colleagues, according to the Practice (says he) which obtains among us with whom 'tis usual for the Person appointed by the Synod, first to lay on Hands on him that is Ordain'd all the rest of the Pastors present, afterwards joining with him in laying their Hands on the same Person. Upon which, tho' he was generally esteem'd a Man of great Temper and Moderation, he so freely inveighs against the Friends of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, for absolutely confining the Power of Ordination to *Bishops*, which *Presbyters* had an equal Right to, that no Man that takes

* Bilson
of the Per-
petual Go-
vernment
of the
Church,
pag. 303.

Sermon
31. Sur
L'Épître
1. a Ti-
mothee,
p. 296,
297.

the Pains to read him, can think even the most extensive Charity, can allow him a Plea of Necessity, as an Excuse for his not having had Episcopal Ordination, to which he not only freely compares *Presbyterian Ordination*, but prefers this latter before it, as more agreeable to Scripture.

The *Identity* of *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, which appears in so clear a Light in Scripture, is with some I know of but little Account. They will have it that all that we can thence conclude, is only that that name which was afterwards Appropriated, was common at the first. But while that *name* was the same, 'tis hard to conceive how the *Order* should be divers. If the Fate of the Church depended upon the Episcopal Imparity, as some seem desirous we should believe, it is pretty strange that the Apostles should lay such a Temptation before us in Scripture, to draw us into an Opinion of the *Identity* of Order, by the Promiscuous Use of the Titles. The Principle therefore being clear'd; let us.

2. In the 2d Place look to the Inference: Which is this; that since *Presbyters* are in Scripture, and by Divine Right the same with *Bishops*, they may therefore warrantably Ordain other Persons *Presbyters*. Were there only an Agreement in the Name, the Inference might be disputed. For tho' the same Persons might at first be call'd both *Presbyters* and *Bishops*, yet if there was good Evidence, that the Superiority then pretended to be maintain'd by the *Evangelists* over fixt Pastors of Churches, was by Divine Appointment Necessarily to continue, if it could be made out that the Power of Ordination was so Appropriated to these *Evangelists*, as not to be convey'd together with the Ministerial Office to those fixt Pastors of Churches

Churches who were then call'd *Presbyters* or *Bishops* without any Distinction: I'll grant the *Identity* Asserted, would not Support the Inference drawn from it. But when the name of *Bishop* or *Presbyter* is us'd so Promiscuously, as to leave no Necessary Distinction of Office: When according to the Account given us in Scripture, it plainly appears there were as many *Bishops* as there were *Presbyters* in the several Churches Planted by the Apostles: When we cannot find in Scripture any one *Presbyter* that was not a *Bishop* any more, than we can a Bishop that was not a *Presbyter*: When we have not there the least hint of a Consecration of a Bishop by any of the *Evangelists* differing from the Ordination of a *Presbyter*: Nor any one Duty mention'd as charg'd upon a *Bishop*, which *Presbyters* are seclud'd from: Nor any Qualification requir'd in a *Bishop*, that is not requisite in every *Presbyter*. For any after all, to say that a *Bishop* and *Presbyter* differ'd Originally as to the *Power of Ordination*, is not to derive their Notions from the Sacred Scriptures, but to Accommodate them to their preconceiv'd Opinions.

To free this Opinion from the Imputation of Novelty, I'll add a few suitable Authorities, referring those who desire to see many more, to the Authors Cited in the Margin. Dr. *Bancroft*, who was Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, Preaching at *Pauls Cross* on *February 9th* in that Noted Year 1588, told his Auditory, that

H 4

Aerius

† Altare Damascenum. *cap.* 4. Jus Divinum Ministerii Anglicani. *p.* 56. &c. *Bishop Stillingfleet's Irenicum*, Part 2. C. 8. *Salmasij Apparatus ad Libros de Primatu Papæ.* Walo Messalinus. Mr. *Owens's Plea for Scripture Ordination*, chap. 2. Mr. *Tong's Defence of the Brief Enquiry into the Nature of Schism* Chap. 2.

Aerius was Condemn'd of Heresy with the consent of the Universal Church, for Asserting that there was no difference by *Divine Right*, between a Bishop and a Presbyter; and that the *Puritans* were condemn'd by the Church, in *Aerius*. The Famous Sir *Francis Knolls*, being surpriz'd at such Doctrine, to which they were not in that Age so much us'd as we have been since *, wrote to the Learned Dr. *John Raynolds*, who was Universally reckon'd the Wonder of his Age, to desire his Sense about the matter. The Doctor wrote him Word in Answer, that even *Bellarmino* the *Jesuit* own'd the Weakness of the Answer of *Epiphanius* to the Argument of *Aerius*. That *Austin* esteem'd the Assertion of *Aerius* Hæretical, meerly because he found it so Represented by *Epiphanius*, while he himself knew not how far the name of Heresy was to be extended, as he owns in his Preface to his Treatise of Heresys. But that *Austin* himself own'd that there was no difference between a Bishop and a Presbyter by *Divine Right*. (a) He Cites also Bishop *Jewel*, who when *Harding* had Asserted the same thing as Dr. *Bancroft*, Alledg'd against him *Chrysostom*, *Austin*, *Hierome*, and *Ambrose*. He adds from *Medina*, *Theodore*, *Primasius*, *Sedalius* and *Theophilact*. And farther adds himself, *Oecumenius* (b); *Anselm*, Archbishop of *Canterbury* on *Titus*; and another *Anselm* (c), *Gregory*, and *Gratian* (d) *It may be added* (says he) *that they who for these 500 Years have been Industrious in Reforming the Church,*
have

(a) *Epistle* 19.

(b) *In* 1 *Tim.* 3.

(c) *Collect. Can. Lib.* 7. Chap. 87. and 127.

(d) *Dict.* 39. and 95. &c.

* Alt.
Damas-
cenum.
p. 278.

have thought that all Pastors, whether call'd Bishops or Presbyters, have according to the Word of God like Power and Authority. He Instances in the *Waldenses* ^(e) *Marsilius-Patavinus* ^(f) *Wickleff* and his Disciples ^(g) *Huss* and the *Hussites* ^(h) *Luther* ⁽ⁱ⁾ *Calvin* ^(k) *Brentius* ^(l) *Bullinger* ^(m) and *Musculus* ⁽ⁿ⁾ and many Bishops among us; As *Jewels* and *Pilkington* ^(o): And many Professors in our Accademy; As Dr. *Humfreys* ^(p) and Dr. *Whitaker* ^(q): and other Learned Men; As *Bradford*, *Lambert*, and others of whom *Fox* speaks in his *Acts and Monuments*. And he afterwards avers it to be the common Opinion of the Reformed Churches, in *Switzerland*, *Savoy*, *France*, *Germany*, the *Netherlands*, *Hungary*, and *Poland*. This of Dr. *Reynolds's* is a very comprehensive Testimony.

I'll add another, which is an Attestation of the Protestant Churches of the *German Empire*. There was a meeting both of Princes, Statesmen,

(e) Eneas Sylv. *Histr. Bohem. chap. 35.* Pigh. Hierarchy. Eccles. *Lib. 2. cap. 15.*

(f) *Def. Pac. Part. 2. cap. 15.*

(g) Thomas Wald. *Doct. Fidei Tom, 1. 1. 2. cap. 60. and Tom. cap. 7.*

(h) Æn. Sylv. *Loco Citato.*

(i) *Adversus falso Nominat. Ordin. Ep. & adv. Papat. Roman.*

(k) *In Epist. ad Philip. 1. and Tit. 1.*

(l) *Apologia Conf. Wittenberg. Cap. 21.*

(m) *Decad. 5. Serm. 3.*

(n) *Loc. Comm. Tit. de Minist.*

(o) *Tractat. de Incendio Paulinæ Basilicæ.*

(p) *In Campian. & Duræum Jesuit. Part. 2. Rat. 3.*

(q) *Ad Rat. Camp. Rat. 6. & Constutat. Duræi Jesuitæ. Lib. 6.*

men, and Divines, that met together to Consult about the weighty Affairs of those times, in 1533. They at that meeting drew up those they call'd the *Smalcaldick Articles*: In which they strenuously Assert the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters, and their Equality by Divine Right in the Power of Ordination. And these Articles were Subscrib'd by Three Electors; the Prince *Palatine*, and the Electors of *Saxony* and *Brandenburg*. By 45 *Dukes*, *Marquesses*, *Counts* and *Barons*. By the Consuls and Senators of 35 Cities. And by *Luther*, *Melaachthon*, *Bucer* and *Fagius*, and many other noted Divines: Which makes it as Remarkable as any thing of that kind can well be suppos'd, as a Learned Man (r) has computed them, the number of Ministers who Subscrib'd it, was 8000. The Book in which these Articles are to be met with, is call'd *Liber Concordia*, which was Printed in 4to. at *Leipsick*, An. 1580. and in 8vo. at the same Place, An. 1612. This is what I Particularly Recommend to the Consideration of the Gentleman in *Buckingham-shire*, who hath lately (in Concurrence with his Neighbours no doubt) Publish'd two Letters of Bishop *Barlow's* concerning Justification. In the first of those Letters, this *Liber Concordiæ*, is pompously Cited, in a Doctrinal Point. I hope its Evidence will be allow'd to be as good in a matter of Government: And that that Gentleman may thence receive Satisfaction, that a certain *great and holy Man*, (who is there spoken of in the Preface, as well as in Mr. *Ollyffe's* Defence) did not in all things *Deviate from the receiv'd Opinion in the Reformed Churches*.

I'll only add, that the Arch-Bishops, Bishops, Arch-Deacons, and Clergy of *England* in their Book Intituled *the Instruction of a Christian Man*,
Sub-

(r) Vincent
Placc.
Syntag.
de Scriptis &
Scriptor.
Anonymis

Subscrib'd with all their Hands, and Dedicated to King *Henry 8th*, *An. 1537*. In the Chapter of *Orders*: And King *Henry 8th* himself in his Book Stil'd a *Necessary Erudition for any Christian Man*, set out by Authority of the Statute of 32 *H. 8. c. 26*. Approv'd by both Houses of Parliament; Prefac'd with the King's own *Epistle*? and Publisht by his Command, *An. 1543*. in the Chapter of *Orders*, expresly Resolve; *That Priests and Bishops by God's Law are one and the same; and that the Power of Ordination, and Excommunication, belongs equally to them both*. And as for the Opinions of those Bishops, who had the greatest Hand in our Reformation here in *England*. I refer to the Particular Account given by Bishop *Stillingfleet* in his *Irenicum*.

So that I conclude in the Words of the Learned *Whitaker*, with which I began. *Our Ministers being Presbyters, and Presbyters being by Divine Right the same as Bishops, they may warrantably Ordain other Presbyters, and set them over the Churches*.

Arg. 2. The same thing that appears thus plainly from *Presbyters* their being the same with *Bishops*, will as clearly result from the distinct Consideration of the Office of a *Presbyter*, which has a *Power of Ordaining* inherent in it, and inseparable from it. So that our next Argument is this. *Our Ordainers are by vertue of their Office empower'd to Ordain; and therefore their Ordinations, when manag'd Piously and Prudently, cannot be Null or Invalid, or unacceptable to God*. The *Connexion* here cannot be contested. For if the Power of Ordination be a necessary Attendant of the Office of a *Presbyter*, and inseparable from it; the Actual Ordaining, which is but an

Execution

See the Constitution and Discipline of the Primitive Church, Part 1. Chap. 4. p.83. &c.

Execution of that Office, cannot warrantably be call'd in Question as a Nullity. 'Tis the *Principle* that is advanc'd, *viz.* That *Presbyters* are by vertue of their Office empower'd to Ordain, that alone needs Proof.

In proof of that, I appeal to the grand Ministerial Commission: *Go ye and Teach all Nations Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have Commanded you: And lo I am with you always, even to the End of the World.* This Commission was design'd not only for the Apostles, but all their Successors in the Work of the Ministry, to the End of Time. This plainly appears from the Promise with which it is clos'd. This Promise, saith Bishop Hall, could not be meant of their Persons, but of Evangelical Successors. He was with them, not in the infallibleness of their Judgment, nor in the universality of their Charge; but in the effectual Execution of those Offices which should be perpetuated to his Church for the Salvation of Mankind. Such were the Preaching of the Gospel, and the Administration of the Sacraments, the Ordaining Church Officers, the ordering of Church Affairs, the infliction of Censures, and the Power of the Keys. Neither can I discover but that this Opinion obtains very generally, that Apostles, Bishops, and Presbyters, all Act by one and the same Commission. From hence I thus argue: Either this Commission does impower the Apostles to ordain Successors in the Sacred Ministry, or it does not. If it does not, it's an imperfect Commission, and insufficient for the Continuation of a Gospel-Ministry to the End of the World, according to the Promise annex't. If it did empower the Apostles to Ordain (as without doubt it must) then the *ordaining Power*,

Mat. 28.
19, 20.

Episcopæ-
cy by Di-
vive
Right, p.
177.

er, must be comprehended under *Discipling* and *Baptising*, and *Teaching to observe whatsoever he had commanded*. And the same Power must be convey'd together with the Ministerial Office, to all whom they invested in this Office, by vertue of this Commission. As for the Fancy of those, who would take the *End of the World* in this Text, to be no more than *till the Destruction of Jerusalem*, 'tis so absurd that it scarce deserves a Confutation *. But supposing the *Commission* to refer to the standing Office of the Ministry, till the End of Time, it empower'd the Apostles to *commit that Office to faithful Men, who were able to Teach others also*. And if they by this Commission were empower'd for this, then they also, whom by vertue of this Commission, they fix'd in the Ministry, were by the same Commission impower'd to Ordain others also. For as for those parts of the Office that were to continue to the End of the World, this Commission makes no Difference: Whomsoever it empowers to *Baptise* and *Teach*, it equally empowers to discharge all other parts of the Ministerial Function, which were design'd to continue in the Church. So that if this Commission warranted the Apostles to Ordain others to succeed them in the standing Work of the Ministry; and warrants Bishops to Ordain other Ministers, it warrants Presbyters also by vertue of their Office to do the like. Nay I'll add farther, that I can't see that this Commission warrants Bishops to Ordain, under any other Notion or Capacity, than as Presbyters. Bishop *Taylor* contests this, tho' his Sense is obscure. He says. *That Christ gave to the Apostles a Plenitude of Power: For the whole Commission was given to them, in as great and comprehensive Clauses as were imaginable. For by vertue*

* See Bp. Stillingfleets's *Irenicum* pag. 165, 166. and D. Whitby on the *Place*. 2 Tim. 2. 2.

Episcopacy asserted p. 126.

of

of it they receiv'd a Tower of giving the Holy Ghost in Confirmation, and of giving his Grace in the Collation of Holy Orders, and a Power of Jurisdiction and Authority to govern the Church: And this Power was not temporary, but successive, and perpetual, and was intended as an ordinary Office in the Church: So that the Successors of the Apostles had the same Right and Institution that the Apostles themselves had; and tho' the Personal Mission was not immediate, as of the Apostles it was, yet the Commission and Institution of the Function was all one. But to the 72 Christ gave no Commission but of Preachings which was a very limited Commission. There was all the Divine Institution of Presbyterate, as a distinct Order, that can be fairly pretended. But yet farther, these 72 the Apostles did admit in Partem sollicitudinis, and by new Ordination or delegation Apostolical, did give them Power of administering Sacraments, of absolving Sinners, of governing the Church in Conjunction and Subordination to the Apostles, of which they had a Capacity, by Christ's calling them at first in. fortem Ministerii; but the Exercise, and the Actuating of this Capacity they had from the Apostles: So that not by Divine Ordination, or immediate Commission from Christ, but by derivation from the Apostles, the Presbyters did exercise acts of Order and Jurisdiction in the Absence of the Apostles or Bishops, or in conjunction Consiliary, and by way of Advice, or before the Consecration of a Bishop to a particular Church. In which Passage there are so many things precariously advanc'd, that it may amaze a Man to think such improv'd Assertions should be at all regarded. According to him, the Apostles, and the Bishops as their Successors, had one Commission, and Presbyters another. But as for Proof, we are only referr'd to the 72 Disciples, in whose room he will have

have Presbyters to succeed, as Bishops in the room of the Apostles. But if this were the sense of the Church of *England*, it were well worth Enquiry how it should fall out, that this very Commission in *Mat. 28. 19.* should be appointed for *the Gospel* in the *Form of Ordaining Priests*? ★ For if that were only the Episcopal Commission, how could the Church apply it to Presbyters, by appointing it to be us'd, when they are Ordain'd and receiv'd into the Ministerial Office by vertue of that Commission? Besides, if Presbyters don't Act by vertue of this Commission, how come they to be empower'd to Baptize and Administer the Lord's Supper? 'Tis own'd the 72 had only a Commission to Preach: There is nothing in their Commission that implies a Power of Baptizing. And as for Administring the Lord's Supper, they could not be empower'd for that, because that Ordinance was not instituted till a considerable Time after their Commission was given them. Whence then have Presbyters this Power of Baptizing and Administring the Communion, added to that of Preaching? The *Bishop* says, this came not to them by Divine Ordination, but by Derivation from the Apostles. But where's the Proof? By what Authority do Presbyters now Baptize and Administer the Communion? I desire the Warrant may be produc'd: The Commission to the 70 gives no Warrant. The Bishop's saying in Ordination, *Take thou Authority to Minister the Holy Sacraments*, gives no Warrant, if there ben't a Divine Commission. And where is that to be found but in *Mat. 28*? And therefore 'tis thence that Presbyters in all Ages have justify'd their administring the Sacraments, as Well as Preaching; And, I think, upon very-
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★ Thus it was in the Form appointed in the Days of Edw. VI. tho' left out by the Convocation in 1662.

good Grounds, and if from this Commission they can justifie their Administring the Sacraments, they may also justifie their Ordaining others to the Ministry. For if they are under this Commission, and Act by Vertue of it, they must have the whole of that Office that was design'd to continue in the Church, thereby convey'd to them. For no difference is discernable, as to any parts of the Office, in the Commission. They that Succeed the Apostles in the Work of Teaching, Baptizing, and Ministerial Conduct, Succeed them in the whole of their Office, for which they were by this Commission empower'd, as far as they are Capable of being properly Succeeded by any. And therefore if by this Commission, Presbyters have a Warrant to Preach, and Baptize, they have also a Divine Warrant thence to Ordain fit and qualify'd Persons for the Ministry. In short: Either this Commission belongs to Presbyters or it does not. If it does not, then it would be hard to prove they have any Divine Commission at all; or any sufficient Warrant, for the chief parts of their Ministry. And 'twas ill done of the *Church of England*, to lead them into such a Deceit, by ordering this Commission to be Publickly read at the time of their Ordination. If this Commission does belong to Presbyters, then it as much empowers them to confer Orders, as to discharge any other part of their Ministry, when a fit Opportunity offers.

Neither does it at all alter the Case, that in the Church of *England*, the Bishop who is the chief Ordainer, says to the Priest to whom he gives Orders, *Take thou Authority to preach the Gospel, &c.* without any the least hint of a Power of Ordaining. Tho' the first Ordainers among the Dissenters, receiv'd their Orders in
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that way, yet cannot an Omission of him that gives the Investiture, make any alteration in the Power that is deriv'd from a Commission, 'Tis our Saviours Commission properly that gives the Ministerial Power, and not the Ordainers: And therefore if his Commission empowers all in the Office, to Ordain when their Call is clear, as well as to Preach or Baptize, or Perform any other Ministerial Work, the Omission of the Ordainer makes no Alteration; Any more than an Omission in the Investour of the *Lord-Mayor of London*, can at all abate his Power in his Office, which is deriv'd from the *Charter*, and not from those from whom he receives the Investiture. So that it appears front the Ministerial Commission, that Presbyters have an inherent Right of Ordination attending their Office.

The same thing is also other ways Confirm'd:

It hath been observ'd by many Learned Men, that the Rites and Methods of the *Christian*, were very much taken from the *Jewish Church*. This Notion gives us great Assistance under the Head of *Baptism*; and also as to the *Lord's Supper*, and *Excommunication*, and in many other Cases. The Learned *Seldein* * hath discover'd a Conformity in the whole Christian Ministry to the *Jewish*. In some things perhaps this may be carri'd too far; as I think we have very good Reason to think it is, by those who Represent Church Government among Christians as taken, from the Methods and Model of the *Jewish Temple*, when there is such an abundant Evidence

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that

* Vide Eutychii Patr, Alexandr. Eccl. Sux Origins: cum Com. Pag. 16.

that it was designedly suited to their *Synagogues* †. But however it is as to that, 'tis plain that Ordination by Imposition of Hands was taken from the *Jews* by the Apostles; and that there is a great Correspondency in our Presbyters to their Elders *. Now among them it was a stated Rule, that he that was Ordain'd, had the Power of Ordination. 'Tis true we are told that in the time of *Rabbi Hillel*, it was Resolv'd that none should Ordain, without the Presence of the Prince of the *Sanhedrin*, or his Licence. But this could not take away the inherent Power of Ordaining, which was consequent upon the Office of an Elder; it only laid a Restraint upon the Exercise of the Ordaining Power. *The same Distinction*, says the Learned Bishop *Stillingfleet* (in the Place Cited in the Margin) *may be observ'd under the Gospel in Reference to the fixed Officers of the Church. For we may consider them in their first State and Period as the Presbyters did Rule the Churches in Common; according to Jerome upon Titus. Before the Jurisdiction of Presbyters was restraidd by mutual Consent, in this instant doubtless, the Presbyters injoy'd, the same Liberty, that the Presbyters among the Jews did of Ordaining others by that Power they were invested in at their own Ordination. And afterwards, in the first Primitive Church, says he, the Presbyters all acted*
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† Grotius de Imp. summ. Pot. pag. 355. &c. Salmasii Apparat. ad Lib. de Prim. Papæ. Vitringæ Differentio Theologica de Officiis Veterum apud Hebræos Synagogæ Ministrorum.—Bp. *Stillingfleet's* Irenicum, P. 239.

* *Lightfoot's* Harm. Vol. 1. Pag. 612. Selden de Synedr. Chap. 14. Cunæus de Rep. Hebr. L. 1. Chap. 12. Vitringæ Differtat. Theolog. De Nom. & Orig. Episc. & de Officiis veterum Episcop. — *Stillingfleet's* Irenicum. Pag. 268. & 273. &c.

in Common for the well-fare of the Church, and either did or might Ordain others to the same Authority with themselves; because the intrinsecal Power of Order is equally in them, and in those who were afterwards appointed Governours over Presbyteries.

In the Christian Church, the Ministerial Office which is convey'd by Commission from Christ, thro' the Hands of his Inverting Officers, is at all times the same. It contains a Power of Preaching, Baptizing, Confirming and Ordaining. How generally soever it have been since agreed that Ordination should commonly be confin'd to Persons of such an Eminence, that cannot deprive those who arrive not at such Eminence, of their inherent Power. No, it remains still; ever attends the Office, and is inseparable from it. 'Tis the Exercise of it only is restrain'd: And such a Restraint may be broke thro' whenever the good of the Church requires it. And when at any time those who have been laid under such a Restraint, think themselves bound to assert their Right by Confirming Orders; such Orders cannot be invalid, because they are Confer'd by such as have an inherent Power by Vertue of their Office; which Power being divinely Confer'd, they can't be depriv'd of, by any Humane Compact or Settlement.

In some Parts of the Christian Church its not very Difficult to fix the time of this Restraint upon Presbyters, whereby they were kept from Conferring Orders, for which they were empower'd by Divine Commission. *St. Jerome* ★

★ Epist. 8 5: ad Evagrium.—Nam & *Alexandriâ* a. *Marco Evangelista* usque ad *Heraclam* & *Dionysium* Episcopos, Presbyteri temper unum ex se electum, in excelsiori gradu collocatum, Episcopum nominabant: quomodo si Exercitus Imperatorem faciat, aut Diaconi eligant de se quem industrium noverint, & Archidiaconum vocent.

tells us that for above 200 Years the Presbyters of *Alexandria*, chose and set apart their Bishop. Some would have it that the Presbyters in this Case only made choice of the Person: While the Ordination was perform'd by other Bishops. But says the Learned Bishop *Stillington* ★, they would do well first to tell us who and where those Bishops in *Egypt* were, who did Consecrate or Ordain, the Bishop of *Alexandria*, after his Election by the Presbyters. Especially while *Egypt* remain'd but one Province under the Government of the *Præfectus Augustalis*. He adds afterwards *this Election* in Jerome, must imply the conferring the Power and Authority whereby the Bishop acted. For he often attributes the first Original of what he calls exfors Potestas (the exalted Power) of Bishops above Presbyters, not to any Apostolical Institution, but to the free choice of the Presbyters themselves. Withal, it also appears that by Election he means conferring Authority, by the instances he brings to that Purpose. As the Roman Armies choosing their Emperours; who had then no other Power but what they receiv'd by the length of the Sword: And the Deacons choosing their Arch-Deacon, who had no other Power but what was meerly conferred by the choice of the Colledge. of Deacons. Now if Presbyters in this Church of *Alexandria* invested, and conferr'd Power and Authority on their Bishop, and the Validity of this Act of theirs remain'd Unquestionable, much more might they confer Orders on Presbyters, which Argument Mr. *Baxter* often tells us was esteem'd unanswerable, by as great a Man as Arch-Bishop *Usher*. It was not till the time when *Heraclas* and *Denis* were Bishops of *Alexandria*, (that is, not till almost 250 Years after our Saviours time) that Presbyters were under any Restraint in this

Respect

★ *Irenic.*
p. 274.

Respect in that Celebrated Church. And he that will be at the Pains to read the Learned *Blondel*, will find an Account of the Rise of this Restraint upon Presbyters in other Churches.

We may rationally eno' Conclude, that even after Presbyters and Bishops were generally distinguisht in the Church, it was yet no uncommon thing for meer Presbyters to Ordain Persons into the Office of the Ministry, from two Antient Canons *. The first, is the 12th Canon of the Council of *Ancyra*, which was Assembled about the Year of Christ 314. The Canons runs thus: *It shall not be allowable for Country Bishops to Ordain Presbyters or Deacons, no nor for City Presbyters to do it in any Parish, without the Command or Betters of the Bishop* †. The 2d to the same Purpose, is the 10th Canon of the Council of *Antioch*, which met together, *An. 341*; whereby it was decreed, *that Country Bishops should not Ordain Ministers and Deacons, without the Bishop's Privity*. These Canons plainly suppose it to have been usual in the times foregoing, for Presbyters in the several Cities, and for the Ministers of Country Towns or Villages, (who were call'd *Chorepiscopi*, and yet as the Episcopal Power encreas'd were esteem'd no more than Presbyters) to confer Orders from which they by such Canons as these were for time to come debarr'd. For as the several Canons and Confutations *, which Prohibited *many Bishops in one City; or that there should be Bishops in Castles, Villages, small Towns and Parishes, least the Dignity of Bishops should become contemptible*; manifest that in the times foregoing there were often more Bishops than one in a City or Diocess; and a Bishop in many little Castles, Towns, and Villages: So the Restraints laid by these Coun-

* Walo Messalinus, de Episc. & Presbyt. p. 300. &c.
 † They that would see this Canon vindicated from the corrections of some Modern Critics, manu consult, L'histoire de L'Eglise, par M. Basnage Liv. 1. chap. 5. § 4.
 * Concil. Laod. Can. 56. Concil. Sardicen. Can. 6.

oils of *Ancyra* and *Antioch*, on the Power of Countrey Bishops and Presbyters, are a plain Intimation, that before these Restraints, their Ordaining others to the Ministry was usual and common. And therefore I can't but desire it may be observ'd, that Bishops have not the sole Power of Ordination, by any Divine Right or institution, but only by Humane Canons and Constitutions, which were made by Persons who were themselves Bishops in the Ecclesiastical Sense; hugely fond of advancing themselves above Presbyters, in Honour and Power, Pomp and Dignity: and mostly by *City Bishops* too; who as their Grandeur improv'd, bore harder and harder upon the *Bishops of Country Towns and Villages*, who at last were forc'd to rest contented with what they would leave them, and in many Places to Officiate as their Curates. Were there any Divine Charter that conferr'd a peculiar Right on Bishops exalted over Presbyters, to give Orders, I'd be as free to own as any could be to desire it, that they were much to blame that should offer to Contest it: But when Christ's Charter leaves it open, I think the Reasons of the Confinement that is super-induc'd, may very well be enquir'd into; and cannot be such as to cause a Nullity, where there is an inherent Right in the Ordainers.

For instances of Ordinations by Presbyters acknowledg'd valid, even after Episcopal Government was settled in the Church, I shall refer such as desire to see them to Bishop *Stillingfleet* *, and *Blondel* †, who have also (in my Apprehension) given a satisfactory Account of the Affair of *Ischyras* and *Colluthus*, about which some have made such a Stir: And shall farther add, that even after Presbyters were debar'd from that, for which by vertue of their Office

* Irenic.
p. 379. &c.
† Apolog.
pro sen-
tent. Hie-
ron. p. 309.
&c.

Office they were sufficiently empower'd, the permtting them still to Ordain, with the Leave and Allowance of a Bishop, was a vertual Acknowledgment of their inherent Right and Power; and that by such as most zealously interpos'd to prevent the Exercise of it. This hath been yielded by those who have, carry'd the Prelatical Greatness to the utmost height. It is a receiv'd Opinion in the Church of *Rome*, abetted by the most noted Schoolmen and Canonists, that the Pope may by his Commission Authorize a Angle Presbyter, to Ordain. Presbyters. He cannot, say they, Commissionate a Lay-man for such a Purpose, but he may a Presbyter *. And it would be but agreeable to their Principles, for the Church of *England* to own, that a Bishops Licence would empower Presbyters to Ordain: Tho' a Lay-man could no more be empower'd by such a Licence to Ordain, than to Administer the Lord's Supper. This I apprehend some would not be backward to acknowledge. And upon this supposition Presbyters appear to have much the like inherent Power to Ordain, as they have to Preach: For as they may do the Former as well as the Latter with a Bishop's Licence, they cannot do the Latter any more than the Former without it.

If it be objected, that the Restraint laid upon Presbyters, since the conferring Orders has been confin'd to Bishops, has made their Orders Null, I borrow my Answer from the School-men and Canonists, and assert, † That *what belongs to a*

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Presbyter

* See Rosellus de Potest. Imperatoris & Papæ. Part 1. Cap. 16. Decretal. Greg. 9. de Consuetudine. Cap. 4. &c. Petrus Aureolus in Quart. Sentent. Distinct. 24.

† Thom, in Quart. Sent. Dist. 25. Qu. 1. Art. 2. Joan. Capreolus in Quart. Sent. Dist. 25. Art. 3. Vasquez in 3m. Part Thom. Disp. 243. Cap. 1.

Presbyter by vertue of his Orders, can't be taken away by any Ecclesiastical Prohibition. By this Maxim the School-men defend the Ordinations of Bishops, after they are Suspended and Prohibited, Depos'd or Excommunicated. And if Bishops may confer Orders after a just Suspension or Deposition, and yet their Orders be Valid, because of their inherent Right, 'tis difficult to, give a good reason why it should not be so in the case of Presbyters also upon supposition that they have an inherent Right. And that such a Right they have, has been freely own'd by many of our celebrated Writers; of whom I'll mention a few.

Bishop Carlton ★ says, *The Power of Order by all Writers that I could see, even of the Church of Rome, is understood to be immediately from Christ given to all Bishops and Priests alike in their Consecration.* And Dr. Field † arguing against *Bellarmino*, has what is much to the Purpose. The Cardinal thus assaulted the Protestants, and us among the rest. You have no True Church, because no Ministry. No lawful Call to the Work of the Ministry, and therefore no Ministry. They that Ordain'd you had no Power; and therefore you have no lawful Call to the Work of the Ministry, &c. To get clear of this Difficulty, the Doctor, among other things, examines, whether the Power of Ordination is so essentially annex'd to the Order of Bishops, that none but Bishops may in any Case Ordain. And after the laying down some needful Distinctions, he politely asserts, that the Power of Ecclesiastical Order is equal and the same in all Presbyters: And that 'tis only for Order sake, and the Preservation of Peace, that there is a limitation of the Use and Exercise of the same. He proves it from the plain Acknowledgments

★ *Treatise of Jurisdiction*,
p. 7.

† *Of the Church*,
Book 3.
Chap. 39.

ledgments of the Papists, in that a *Presbyter per Saltum* who was never Ordain'd a Deacon, may perform the Office of a Deacon: But a Bishop *per Saltum* who was never Ordain'd a Presbyter, cannot Administer the Lord's Supper, nor Ordain a Presbyter. And when 'tis Objected, that the Fathers make void all Ordinations made by Presbyters; he answers. It is to be understood according to the strictness of the Canons in use in their Time, and not absolutely in the Nature of the thing. So that he was plainly of this Mind, that the inherent Power remains, even after the Restraint. And lo also was Mr. Mason *, who declares, That *a Presbyter as he is a Presbyter, is indu'd with intrinsecal Power and Ability to Ordain; and was restrain'd from the Exercise of it, only by the Church for Disciplines sake: And that when the Power of Ordination was reserv'd to the Bishop, the Power of the Presbyter was not at that time utterly extinguish'd, but only restrain'd, as the Faculty of a Flying Bird when his Wings are ty'd.* And Dr. Forbes † Professor of Aberdeen (whose Discourse about Episcopacy very well deserves the Perusal of the Curious) declares. That *Ordination by Presbyters alone was Valid in the Antient Church; and that by Divine Right they have the same Power to Ordain, as to Preach and Baptize, tho'the Ecclesiastical Laws have restrain'd them.*

* See his Addition to his Defence of the Ministry of the Church of England.

† Irenic. Lib. 2. Cap. 11.

And altho' the Church of England has appear'd extreamly fond of keeping Presbyters under that Restraint, which for many Ages has been Customary, yet does the in effect own their Intrinsic Power of Ordaining, by still admitting them to join with the Bishop in laying on Hands in this Solemnity. This indeed is disown'd by some. They say the Presbyters impose Hands jointly with the Bishop in Ordination,

nation, only to testify their Consent and Approbation. But in the mean while they'd be hard put to it, to give an Instance of any one in Scripture times, who laid on Hands in Ordination, that had not an Ordaining Power. And therefore the moderate Aflters of Episcopacy do acknowledge, that Presbyters lay on 'Hands as proper Ordainers. Of this Mind is Dr. *Forbes* ^(a) the Archbishop of *Spalato* ^(b) and Dr. *Fulk* ^(c). And if so; if they still under the Restraint that has so long been laid upon them, act in Conjunction with the Bishop, as proper Ordainers, they must have an inherent Power to Ordain: And their Ordaining alone, without a Bishop, Cannot then be a Nullity, because it is but the Exercise of a Power that was conveyed to them together with their Office.

The Sum of the Argument is this. Since Bishops and Presbyters, even after their being distinguish'd in the Church, have but one and the same Divine Commission for all Ministerial Offices, they have one and the same Intrinsick Power to Ordain Persons to the Ministry; which Power, as properly agrees to all Presbyters in the Christian, as to all Elders in the *Jewish Church*. No Law of God hath restrain'd the exercise of it, while it is manag'd for the promoting true Piety, and the Edification of the Church: And tho' Ecclesiastical Laws have restrain'd the Exercise of it, yet they have not extinguish'd it: It may be reviv'd upon a fitting Occasion and therefore their Ordinations, when manag'd Piously and Prudently, cannot be Null: For they are but the Exercise of an inherent Power of our Lord's own conferring.

Arg. 3. Our Ordainers keep to the Rule the Scripture gives, and therefore their Ordinations
cannot

(a) *Irenic.*
l. 2. p. 163

(b) *De*
Rep. Eccl.
pag. 187.

(c) *On*
Tit. 1. §.2.

cannot justly be stil'd irregular: And if Ecclesiastical Canons are the Standard, I doubt it would be hard to make it out that the Ordinations and Consecrations of the Church of *England* are strictly Regular. We cannot but Esteem the Sacred Scriptures our safest Rule. If our Ordinations are prov'd to disagree with that Rule, none shall be more ready to disown them than, we our selves. But if they are every way agreeable to it, we think they run a Hazard who disown them, and pour Contempt upon, them; and that the rather, because our Lord has solemnly declar'd. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me.* Which tho' immediately spoken of the Apostles, yet is generally own'd to be Applicable to all that Regularly succeed them in the Office of the Ministry.

Luke 10.
16.

Consulting the Scriptures, We find God hath appointed the Ministerial Office, and impos'd that Office as a Duty upon those who are duly call'd to it; and to all such he gives Power by his Law and Commission. All that is there requir'd in order to a due Call, is, that the Persons singled out be duly Qualify'd; that being so Qualify'd, they be solemnly set apart for the Office of Fasting and Prayer, and Imposition of Hands; and that the Persons who thus set them apart in a way of Solemn Investiture, be such as are themselves Invest'ed and Exercis'd in the same Holy Office. As to each of these we meet with sufficient Hints in the Sacred Canon and cannot apprehend what Necessity we can be under, of having Recourse for any thing that is Essential to Ordination, or requisite to make it either Valid or Regular, to any Humane Constitutions whatsoever. Till it can be made appear, we in fome of these Particulars

ticulars vary from the Rule of Scripture, we cannot but think they run a Hazard of offending the great Lawgiver of the Church, who Censure our Ordinations as unwarrantable.

As to the Qualifications of the Persons to be Ordain'd, the Apostle is very Distinct and Particular, in his Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*: The Rule is here very plain. When Persons offer themselves to be Ordain'd, enquiry is to be made, whether or no they are qualify'd as the Rule given requires; and particularly whether they be *able to Teach others*. And in this respect I hardly suppose it will be so much as pretended that we are not ordinarily as Careful as the Church of *England*. However, if any Qualification that is absolutely necessary be wanting, if there be a real incompetency for the Work of the Ministry, we are free to own Ordination in such a case a Nullity. We can't conceive any Mortals endu'd with Power to Ordain such a Man. It is certainly against the Will of Christ, who only can give Power. But without Vanity or want of Charity, I think I may safely say, that our Ordainers are usually as Cautious in this respect, as My Lords the Bishops, or their Arch-Deacons. And yet even here we think a Conformity to the Rule sufficient, and can't see how it falls within the Compass of any Humane Authority to enlarge or add to the Qualifications requir'd. Our Blessed Saviour hath not left it to any Officers in his Church to determine, what Qualifications are necessary for a Minister as such. Their Business is to judge, whether the Persons propos'd have the Qualifications that he requires; or whether they are fit for the particular Charge to which they are call'd. But if they offer to
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add to the Rule given, they exceed the Bounds of their Commission. Thus we are sensible that 'twas with very good Reason insisted on by St. *Paul* in his Directory, that he that is set apart to the Ministerial Office, should *be apt to Teach*. But should a Provincial or National Assembly of Bishops; nay should a General Council make a Canon to this Purpose; that he should not be esteem'd *apt to Teach*, who was not vers'd in all the Niceties of Criticism; who was not a compleat Metaphysician, Mathematician, or Natural Philosopher, or who had not read over all the Fathers, and Councils, and Church-Historians, we could not but look upon them as straining too high, and should not apprehend we were oblig'd to regard them. For (saving their Authority) 'twould remain evident, that a Man may in the Sense of Scripture be *apt to Teach*, he may be fit to instruct a Flock committed to his Care, in all the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, tho' he were but moderately vers'd in these Parts of Learning; which yet we look upon as very valuable in their Places

1 Tim. 3. 2.

That Persons duly qualify'd should be set apart to the Office of the Ministry, by Falling and Prayer, and Imposition of Hands, is another thing we Learn from Scripture. We are there told that *Timothy* was Ordain'd by the Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, i Tim. 4. 14. And his Ordaining others is express'd by laying Hands upon them, 1 Tim. 3. 22. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were this way recommended to the Grace of God, when they went to settle Churches among the *Gentiles*, Acts 13. 1, 2, 3. And they, when gone forth, did in this manner Ordain Elders in every Church,

Acts

* Such as
would be
satisfy'd
as to the
true sense
of a word
χειροτονή-
σαντες,
us'd in this Text;
may con-
sult Bp.
Stillings-
fleet's Ire-
nicum, p.
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Acts 14. 23. ★ And this therefore is our common Practice, that our Ordination may be agreeable to the Pattern and Rule of Scripture: But should it be decreed by the makers of Ecclesiastical Canons, that the Fasting and Prayer upon this Occasion shall last for Ten or Twelve Hours; or that there shall be Ten or Twelve several Prayers put up; or that there shall be Ten or Twelve several Persons laying on Hands at the same time, (as was once actually propos'd in an *African Synod*) or else the Ordination shall not be Valid; we are not mov'd a Jott, till we have good Proof of their Authority, thus to add to the Rule: Which is sufficiently answer'd, if there be but Fasting and Prayer, and imposition of Hands, manag'd with Gravity and Seriousness, becoming such a Solemnity.

That they who thus let apart others for the Ministry, in a way of Solemn Investiture be duly Authoriz'd, is another thing that we also lay stress upon, that we may agree with our Rule; and we Esteem all that are in Scripture mention'd as Ordainers, to be of the Number of those who were duly Authoriz'd. We do not find that particular Description indeed in the Apostolical Canon, of the Persons that might Ordain, as we do of the Persons that might be Ordain'd; which looks as if *St. Paul* apprehended the latter to be of more Consequence than the former. But we see nothing that excludes any that are in the Ministerial Office from this Power: Nothing that Confines it to any particular Degree in that Office. Did *Timothy* and *Titus* Ordain Perions to the Ministry? So also did the Presbytery. 1. *Tim.* 4. 14. Of which before. Did *Paul* and *Barnabas* separate Persons to the Work whereto God call'd them in his Church? So also did *Simeon* call'd

Niger,

Niger, and *Lucias* of *Cyrene*, and *Manaen*. Acts 13. 1, 2. We have all the Orders that Christ instituted in his Church, reckon'd up by the Apostle, in *Ephes.* 4. 11. *And he gave same Apostles; and some Prophets; and same Evangelists; and some Pastors and Teachers.* They are Four in Number and find each of them concern'd, in imposing Hands, and recommending to the Grace of God in the Work of the Ministry: and therefore the Warrant by which any of the four Orders should be Excluded may very well be call'd in Question. The Doubt is only start-ed as to the last of the 4 Orders, *viz.* Pastors and Teachers: And yet we find some of that Order acting in the Separation of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, Adis 13. Bishop *Bilson* indeed Positively Asserts, that the Prophets laid Hands on *Paul* and *Barnabas*, the Presbyters did not. But the Text tells us that Prophets and Teachers were equally call'd upon. If Pastors and Teachers might lay Hands on *Apostles*, to separate *them* to special *Work* in the Ministry, I see not why they might not in the Case of Inferiour Ministers separate them to the *Office*. For the former carries more in it than the latter, considering the Eminency of the Persons Concern'd. And tho' it must be own'd they in this Case acted by Special Warrant from the Holy Ghost; yet it is very hard to suppose a Warrant should be given by the Holy Ghost in the first Foundation of the Church, for an Irregularity, without the least Necessity, which cannot be pretended. For if the imposing of Hands with Reference to the Ministerial Office and Work, had been out of the Sphere of the Teachers in the Church of *Antioch*, it had been but confining the separating *Paul* and *Barnabas* to the *Prophets*, that were there, to the excluding
Teachers,

Teachers, and there had been no danger of a Mistake.

The most plausible Pretence to a Scripture Confinement of Ordination to Persons Superior to Presbyters, that I have met with, is taken from St. *Paul's* Solemn Charge to Timothy, which is very awfully Express. *I give thee* (says he) *charge in the sight of God, who quickneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate, witnessed the good Confession; that thou keep this Commandment without Spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.* But taking it for granted, that by *the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ* here, is meant his coming to Judgment, which some have question'd; I desire good Proof, that *the Commandment*, that was requir'd to be *kept* till that time, referr'd to the Exercise of the sole Power of Ordination. It seems most Natural to suppose that all the several Orders contain'd in this Epistle, which was design'd to be of use to the Church to the end of the World, were Comprehended under *this Commandment*. And so 'tis all one as if the Apostle had said, let this Directory be perpetually observ'd: Let care be taken in the Church, that all admitted to the Ministerial Office be Qualify'd, and Ecclesiastical Affairs be manag'd as I have Directed. This being Suppos'd, I'm utterly at a loss to Discern, how St. *Paul's* charging *Timothy* to *lay hands suddenly on no Man*, gave more Power to one in the Church of *Ephesus* to Ordain Persons to the Ministry, than to another, or then to all in Office there, after *Timothy's* departure, who was an *Evangelist*, and so of a Superior Order; Nor can I Apprehend, how *Titus* his being left in *Crete* to *Ordain Elders in every City*, gave any of the Elders whom he Ordain'd, a Power,
of

1 Tim.
6. 13, 14.

1 Tim. 5.
22.

Tit. 1. 5.

of conferring Orders, above the rest of his Brethren after he had once left them. And yet this must be clear'd by those who pretend from Scripture to prove, that it is Necessary either to the Validity or the Regularity of an Ordination, that the chief Manager of it, be a Person Superior to a Presbyter, Pastor, or Teacher. Till this be clear'd, we conclude that we keep *the Apostolical Commandment without Spot, unremarkable*, and that as far as in us lies, even *until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ*, by keeping up Ordination, by imposition of the Hands of such as have been Faithful in the Ministerial Office. And therefore when Persons Assault us as Mr. *Hoadly* and others, and tell us our Ordination is Insufficient and Invalid, Because our Ordainers were not Bishops Superior to Presbyters, we give them the hearing indeed; but make allowance for their Prepossession, which is so visible in their equalling an Ecclesiastical Custom to an Apostolical Rule. Tho' it hath been enacted by Bishops and Councils, that Presbyters shall not be allow'd to Ordain (which has the appearance of an addition, to the Commandment, any farther than 'tis bottom'd on the Consent of Presbyters;) we yet cannot see, how their Prohibitions can invalidate a Sacred Action that hath all Scripture Requisites attending it.

And at the same time it hath but an odd Aspect, that they who pay such a Deference to Ecclesiastical Constitutions, as to disown Persons who are well Qualifi'd and useful, because they were not Ordain'd in the way they Prescribe, should so easily dispense with themselves and their own Church; where if Ecclesiastical Canons and Customs are the Standard, greater Irregularities may be easily found, than that

for which we are so freely Condemn'd, as Intruders into the Ministry. If a nice Conformity to the Ancient Methods that generally obtain'd in the Church, tho' they are not to be prov'd from Scripture, be so necessary in the Point of Orders, then the Friends of the Hierarchy had need look about them. I'll mention a Passage or two of an Antient Date, which may deserve the Consideration of those who bear so hard upon their Brethren for a Nicety. I believe 'twould be difficult to find any one thing under this Head of Orders, in which the Ancient Church more generally agreed, than this that there should be the Concurrence of Three Bishops at the least, in the Ordination or Consecration of a Bishop. This was determin'd by the Councils of *Nice* *, and *Antioch* †: And it was the matter of common Practice, infomuch, That || *Theodoret* declares, That *the Canons forbid the Ordination of any, without Three Bifshops were present at it.* 'Twere worth considering, what way must be taken to Reconcile with these Venerable Canons, and the correspondent Practice of the Ancient Church, the Practice of *Austin*, the Papal Apostle of this Island, who Ordain'd Bishops among us alone *, without any others to Assist him. And what shall we say to the two Archbishops of *Canterbury*, who were Consecrated successively by one *Ithamar* Bishop of *Rochester*, who pretended to Act therein alone, without any other Bishop †? And what must we do with

* Can. 4.

† Can. 19.

|| Hist. Ecclesiast. Lib. 5. Cap. 23. Vide etiam Justel. not. in Canon. Univ. Eccl. p. 140.

* Bed. *Eccles. Hist.* Lib. 2. Cap. 3.

† Bed. *Eccles. Hist.* Lib. 3. Cap. 20.

with those Bishops who were so instrumental in Converting the Northern Parts of this Island to Christianity, who were Ordain'd by the Abbot of *Hye*, without the Concurrence of any one proper Ecclesiastical Bishop ★? If we adhere to the Ancient Canons, they must be disown'd. If they are own'd, the Canons must be drop'd. Or is it not pleasant to hear Reformed Divines pleading a *Papal Dispensation* in these Cases, in Defence against a Nullity? Tho' these are Old Things they should not be forgotten, especially by those that are fond of the *Line of Succession*.

But take things in their present Posture, and our Church must have Grains of Allowance, if we seek for the Features of Antiquity. The Ancient Canons call'd the Apostles, which were confirm'd by the Sixth General Council at *Constantinople*, frankly depose all Bishops chosen by the Civil Magistrate: *Can. 29.* runs thus; *If any Bishop obtains a Church, by means of the Secular Powers, let him be depos'd, and separated from Communion, with all his Adherents.* Our English Bishops, if this Canon took place, were at once Discarded. According to the Ancient Canons, a Bishop should be chosen by the Presbyters and People †. In the Primitive Times every Company of the Faithful, either chose their own Pastors, or else had leave to Consider and Approve of those that were propos'd to them for that purpose. *Pontius*, || a Deacon of the Church of *Carthage*, says. That *St. Cyprian* being yet a *Neophyte*, was Elected to the Charge of

K 2

Pastor

★ See *Mr. Tongs Defence*, pag. 47, 48.

† See *Morton. Apol. Cath. Par. 1.* pag. 257. *Belarm. de Cler. L. 1. C. 9. Daille of the Use of the Fathers*, Par. 2. p. 162.

|| *Pont. Diac. in Vit. Cypt.*

Pastor, and the Degree of Bishop, by the Judgment of God, and the Favour of the People. St. Cyprian also himself tells us the same in several places. In one of his Epistles * speaking of Cornelius, he says. That he was made Bishop of Rome, by the Judgment of God, and of his Christ; by the Testimony of the greatest part of the Clergy, by the Suffrage of the People who were there present; and by the Colledge of Pastors or Antient Bishops, all Good and Pious Men. And in another place †, he says, That it is the People in whom chiefly is the Power of choosing worthy Prelates < or refusing the Unworthy. Which very thing (says he) we see is deriv'd from Divine Authority, that a Bishop is to be chosen in the Presence of all the People, and is declar'd either Worthy or Unworthy, by the Judgment and Testimony of all. And it appears clear eno' both out of St. Jerome ||, and by the Acts of the Councils of Constantinople *, and Chalcedon and also by the Pontificate Romanum, and several other Ancient Pieces, that this Custom continu'd a long time in the Church. I need not put the Question, whether or no our Bishops could prove their Title from such Precedents? I suppose it would be pleaded, the Law of the Land herein makes a Difference between our Case and that of the Ancient Church; and that the Methods then us'd were found to be inconvenient, which justifies the Alteration made

* Epist. 52.

† Epist. 68.

|| Hieron. Lib. 1. adv. Jovin. p. 57. Tom. 2. & Comm. in Ezech. p. 968. T.4. & Com. in Agg. p. 512. Tom. 5. & Com. in Ep. ad. Gal. p. 271. T. 6.

* Conc. Const. 1. in Ep. ad Damas. p. 94y, & 95. T. 1. Conc. Gener.

† Cone. Chalced. Act. 11, p. 375.

made by our Law. But as plausible as such a Reply might appear, I must confess, if the meer want of Conformity to Ancient Canons, Constitutions and Customs, makes our Ordinations invalid, I can't see how the Law of the Land can excuse the Church of *England*, unless that be suppos'd more effectually to dispense with Antient Customs than the Scripture it self. For if their Ordinations are therefore Valid, because agreeable to the Law of the Land, tho' different from Ancient Canons and Customs; and ours, tho' agreeable to Scripture, therefore invalid, because different from those Ancient Canons and Customs; then the Law of the Land is in these Cases plainly preferr'd to the Scripture as. a Rule. For which Reason, if I had the Honour to be a Member of the National Establishment, I should think it a point of Decency to be sparing in my Censures of Dissenters from it, as to their Orders, while they could not be justly charg'd with neglecting anything that could from the Scripture be made appear to be necessary. However, since we have a *true Regularity* in our Ordinations, by our Conformity to Scripture; and the Members of the Establish'd Church have but an *Imaginary Regularity* above us, in their Conformity to Antient Canons and Constitutions; in which they are at the same time so cramp'd by the Laws of the Land, as to be very defective: We conceive we have no great Reason to be mov'd by their Boasts, or disturb'd by their Clamours.

Arg. 4. The Ends of Ordination are as effectually Answer'd, where Senior Presbyters Ordain, as where Diocesane Bishops are the Persons that Officiate. Methinks to wise Men it should be eno', and sufficient to the Validity

of any Solemnity, to have the several Ends that are thereby aim'd at secur'd and compass'd. Were there any one End that were so necessarily to be Answer'd in and by Ordination, as that its Validity depended on it, which is not secur'd in our way, we must be unreasonable in pleading for Ordination by Presbyters. But as far as we can judge, we, in this Respect have firm Ground to stand upon. The Ends of Ordination I take to be these: The setting Men apart to the Office of the Ministry, by delivering the Commission, and investing with a Ministerial Authority; the Recommending a Man solemnly to the Grace of God for Assistance in the Discharge of his Duty; the preventing an Intrusion into this Sacred Office by unqualify'd Persons; and the Conciliating a Man that measure of Respect in the Church, as is necessary in order to his being useful in his Ministerial Capacity. These I look upon as the main Ends of this Institution. Ordination it self indeed is not so necessary, as that the Church. cannot be without it *: But where it can be kept up, those which I have mention'd are the Ends to be thereby Answer'd: And I know of none of them that may not be effectually reach'd and as far as is necessary, where Presbyters are the Ordainers. And if so, I think it must be the effect of Prejudice rather than solid Reason, for any to Assert their Ordinations to be invalid.

* See Mr.
Tong's
Defence,
p. 6, &c.

As for conveying a Ministerial Authority, I can't see wherein a few Senior Presbyters at all come behind the whole College of Bishops, since Christ has empower'd all in the Ministry to Act upon such Occasions, and 'tis only Ecclesiastical Canons and Customs that have given any peeculiar Power to Bishops. The delivery
of

of the Ministerial Commission, which consists of Authority for the Office, and Obligation to it, is not the more Authentick for the Degree or Dignity of the Agent. The most dignify'd Persons may in appearance deliver the Commission, where yet Christ conveys no Power, because of the Incompetency of the Subjects: And the meanest Persons that have been faithful in the Ministerial Office, may warrantably be instrumental in Authorizing others, by delivering the same Commission upon which they have Acted, provided the Persons are qualify'd according to the Mind of Christ. The Notions of some Persons about the Conveyance of a Ministerial Authority, would hardly bear scanning: The Fancy of an indelible Character which we have deriv'd from the Romanists, is apt to create Confusion. If we go to resolve this matter into its Principles, what does it amount to? The most I can make of it is this. Our Lord Jesus Christ hath in his Word particularly specify'd the Qualifications of those, who are to be Ministers in his Church, and who when inclin'd, shall be allow'd to Officiate in that Capacity. The Ordainers having search'd and examin'd, and found such and such Persons qualify'd according to the Rule given, declare thereupon, that they have a Right to the Ministry. They signify that it is indeed the Will of Christ that they should be Ministers *. 'Tis the signification of the Will of Christ as to these particular Persons, that is the main thing. Where this Will of Christ is *truly signify'd* to

K 4

any

* See Mr. Baxter's *Disputations of Church Government*, Disp. 2. Chap. 2. *Of the Nature and Ends of Ordination. Which Chapter well deserves the Consideration of those who are for just Notions of this matter.*

any Persons, that they should become Ministers, it is a Command to them. And a Command of Christ at any time gives Persons Authority to do what is Commanded. 'Tis necessary this Will of Christ be *truly signify'd*. Mens fancying it is the Will of Christ that they should enter the Ministry, or the Desire of a few weak and injudicious Persons, that they should. Officiate in that Capacity, gives not a sufficient Warrant They may still run, without being sent. But let it be signify'd by half a Dozen that have been Faithful before in the Work of the Ministry, that as far as they can judge, these Persons that offer themselves to be Ordain'd, are duly Qualify'd, and that it is the Will of Christ they should Officiate as Ministers In his Church, and it may be a sufficient Satisfaction both to them and to the Church, that this is truly the Mind of Christ. I must confess I see nothing of an Argument in that Maxim that is so often urg'd. *Nemo dat quod non habet*: No Man can give what he hath not. For the Ordainer does not properly give any Power to the Persobns whom he Ordains. 'Tis Christ who gives the Power by his Commission. The Ordainers only signify, that such and such Persons as offer themselves to the Ministry, are rightly Qualify'd for it, and therefore being willing to undertake it, and having Opportunity for it, are Commissionated by the Lord Jesus. They determine the Persons to whom Christ by his Commission gives Power. And what should hinder but that thowe who may determine the Persons, and judge of their fitness for the Office, may solemnize their Admittance into it, by an Investiture, in order to a more fixed Obligation and plenary Possession.

The recommending a Man solemnly to the
Grace

Grace of God for Assistance in the discharge of his Duty, is another End of Ministerial Ordination. But why the Interposition of Bishops superior to Presbyters should be necessary in order to the reaching of this End, I cannot imagine. The imploring a Blessing from Heaven upon a Mans Labours in such an Office at the time of his Entrance into it, is certainly very fitting. Such Prayers are desirable, and when serious and sincere, without doubt Beneficial. But that the Episcopal Character would add to their Efficacy, and that in our Case they would not be so Beneficial, because of the lower Character of Presbyters (tho' Praying upon such an Occasion belongs to them by vertue of their Office) does not appear so Evident as to be admitted without Proof.

The preventing the Intrusion of unqualify'd Persons into the Ministry, is a third considerable End of the Solemnity or Ordination: But what can Bishops do to secure this End, that Presbyters are incapable of? *That none take the Office of Preaching without a Call, nor go without sending;* for what I can discern may equally hold, whether a Bishop be the Ordainer, or Presbyters act with equality of Power. Mr. *Hoadly* seems not insensible of this, when he owns, *That possibly our way might prevent Intrusions and Abuses as well as theirs, were it the settled way.* If so, I think it plainly follows, that there is nothing in the Nature of the thing that makes Episcopal in this respect preferable to Presbyterian Ordination: Much less can there be such a Difference as should make their Ordination Valid and ours Null. Our Principles are as much against truly irregular Intrusions as theirs; and therefore they are as responsible for them as we: Nay perhaps they will appear more responsible

Heb. 5.4.
Rom. 10.
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Pag. 7.

sponsible for them than we, to one that considers how great a tendency, as Men are commonly dispos'd, a Violence in one extream, has to drive many into the contrary Extream. Should it be pleaded, that if we fell in with them Intrusions might be more effectually prevented, than is possible as things now stand: 'Tis easily reply'd, That we desire better Satisfaction, first, as to the Grounds they stand upon, than we have as yet receiv'd; and that the vehement infilling hitherto upon *Re-ordination*, whensoever any Attempt hath been made in order to a Coalition, hath given us but a poor Encouragement to look that way.

The conciliating Persons that measure of Respect that is necessary in order to their being useful in their Ministerial Capacity, was the last of the Ends of Ordination that I mention'd. This arises from the notification of the Will of Christ, that such and such Persons should be Ministers; which lays a Command of Obedience upon the People, and plainly makes it their Duty to submit to them, and receive them in their Ministerial Work. This may be consider'd, either with respect to the Church in General, or with reference to those among whom a Minister particularly Officiates. As to the Church in General, and more largely consider'd, we cannot see that any thing is wanting in our Case that is absolutely necessary. A Minister that is Ordain'd among us by Presbyters, shall be as freely own'd by the Reform'd Churches Abroad, if his Lot be cast among them, as another that had Episcopal Ordination. If he any where wants Respect, It will be only in the Church of *England*, and there only among a Party of them, who have had this Notion zealously inculcated by their

their Spiritual Guides, that the Hands of a Bishop are necessary to the Validity of the Ministerial Function. Were this Rigour abated, and the Stress rather laid on the Qualifications of Ministers, than on the Dignity of their Ordainers, (which in the Opinion of all indifferent Persons is of much smaller moment) no needful Respect could be wanting. But suppose some of the Church of *England*, thro' a mistaken Notion, won't own us for Ministers, for want of the Hands of an Ecclesiastical Bishop, does it therefore follow that our Presbyterian Ordination is Null? That would be strange indeed! Can their Apprehension alter the Nature of the thing? If it be laid, that their Satisfaction, as to our Orders, is necessary if we are ever taken into the National Establishment; and that that is not to be compass'd unless we are Re-ordain'd: I Answer, There are enough Sober and Understanding People in the Nation of all Ranks, that will own us for Ministers, if others won't. There is a sufficient Number of such to secure our Usefulness, whatsoever Changes may happen among us: 'Twill be Time eno' to consider either of laying down the Ministry, or getting our Authority farther strengthen'd, when we find the number of Men of Temper so far fails, as that we can be no longer useful upon our present Bottom. Our Respect is sufficiently secur'd by our present Ordination, with those among whom we now Officiate. And if the Establish'd Church will continue to require of us, what we could not justify when we had done it, before they'l own us for Brethren, they are chargeable with the Confluences of our Refusal to Coalesce with them. We leave them to Answer for the Disrespect they show us, another Day, to one that
will

will Judge impartially, and without Favour or Affection.

In the mean time, so long as we have been duly set apart to the Office of the Ministry, according to the Direction of the Sacred Scriptures; and have been invested with a Ministerial Authority, by such as were competent Judges of our Abilities, agreeably to the Mind of Christ, and by such as were Authoriz'd to signify his Will as to our Separation to that Sacred Function: So long as we have been solemnly recommended to the Grace of God for Assistance in the Discharge of our Duty, by such as have been remarkably Faithful in this Office before us, by such as have approv'd their Fidelity by Painful Labours, and Constant Sufferings: So long as we have been set apart to the Ministry, in such a way as sufficiently discovers our dislike of the Intrusion of unqualify'd Persons; and so long as we have that Measure of Respect among Professing Christians, as secures our Usefulness in this Office, upon supposition of our Diligence and Industry, and Careful Application, as to the several Duties of of it; We think the Ends of our Ordination are reacht as far as is necessary, to our Acceptance with God, or keeping a good Conscience; and thus long we are Safe and Easy. As for such as disown us, we pray God they may see their Error, and don't doubt but they will, if he ever thinks fit to call us out to more General and Publick Service. And tho' that should never be, we yet apprehend it may be worth our Brethrens while, seriously to Consider, the just Import, and true Extent of those two Maxims, that came from the Mouth of the Blessed Son of God himself; *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*. And, *He that is not against us is for us*,
These

These Principles are therefore the more deserving of their Consideration, because the former was dropt upon Occasion of a sort of Men, who laid more Stress upon a Nicety, than on the main Substance *; and the Latter was design'd as a Reproof to some of his own. Disciples, who seeing one call out Devils in the Name of Christ, were presently for forbidding him, *because he follow'd not with them*. Our Lord, without doubt, was as apprehensive of the mischief of Irregularities, as these Gentlemen; and yet he cries. *Forbid them not*. Whether therefore such as are for *forbidding* those that are so far from being *against them* that they are *for them*; heartily engag'd in the Service of the same Master, and in carrying on the same Design, in opposition to the Kingdom and Interest of the Prince of Darkness herein discover themselves of the some Spirit and Temper with him whom both they and we profess to follow, may deserve their serious Tho'ts, when they are most at Leisure.

* See the
Protestant
Reconci-
ler, Part
1. Ch. 3.
pag. 45.

Thus I have dispatch'd the Argument? by which our Presbyterian Ordination may be defended. They are not many; but weight is certainly far preferable to number: They are fetch'd both from Scripture and Reason; and are not to be born down by meer Authority. I know very well, that our Plea, tho' thus back'd, is with many over-rul'd by the Testimonies of the Ancient Fathers, that are usually alledg'd against us. Tho' this is pretty odd, to set up Humane Testimony for Proof, in a case where Divine Testimony is necessary to support an Hypothesis: And tho' it be no easy thing to fasten a Conviction, where that sort of Proof is Applauded as Cogent and Satisfactory, which they are forc'd

forc'd to take up with by meer Necessity, to supply the place of a Scripture Bottom: Yet that it may'nt be said we turn our Backs upon any thing that looks like Evidence against us. I'll venture to pursue the Argument, as it is manag'd against us, in a way of Retreat, from the Scriptures to the, Fathers. *When Men* (to use the words of, the Learned *Stillingfleet* *) *are by the force of the former Arguments driven off from Scripture, then they presently run to take Sanctuary in the Records of succeeding Ages to the Apostles. We follow therefore the Scent of the Game, into this Wood of Antiquity, wherein it will be easier to loose our selves, than to find that which we are in pursuit of.* However, I think, we have that to suggest which may be sufficient to satisfy such as are unprejudic'd, that tho' it should be own'd that a very considerable part of the Writers of the Ancient Church was against Ordination by Presbyters, yet it does not therefore follow that it is insufficient or invalid: And yet much left that a Re-ordination must be submitted to, where Persons were solemnly Ordain'd by Presbyters before. And here I shall take the Liberty of using that way of Reasoning, which I find us'd to my. Hand by that Excellent and Learned Person Monsieur *John Daille*, who was a prime Ornament of the Protestant Churches in *France*. This Great Man, who was by the Noble Lord *Falkland*, stil'd our Protestant *Perron*, observing what life was made of the Fathers by the Romanists in their Controverlial Writings, publish'd a Learned *Treatise of the Right Use of the Fathers*, on purpose to shew, that the Appealing to their Writings was not a sufficient means to decide the Differences between the Papists and the Protestants, or certainly to find out Truth in the things in which they differ'd.

* Iren.
p. 294.

differ'd. Many of the Considerations he has there enlarg'd on, to shew to how little purpose the Fathers are appeal'd to in the Controversies between those two contending Parties, are, equally serviceable in the Contest between the Church of *England* and the *Moderate Dissenters*, concerning Ordination. I shall select some of his Considerations, together with the Instances by which he has illustrated them, accommodating them to our Case: And shall add some farther Instances and Remarks that have fallen within the Compass of my own Observations.

But before I proceed, I desire it may be well observ'd, that we stand our Ground, nay gain our Point, if it can't be made appear from Scripture, that it is necessary to a Valid Ordination, that it be manag'd by a Bishop superior to Presbyters. This of Ordination is very material thing, and needed a fix'd Regulation. 'Tis hard to suppose any thing should be necessary to make it Valid, that is not mention'd as such by Christ or his Apostles. And therefore in a such a case, we may say to those who urge the Fathers upon us, as the Great *Whitaker* did to Cardinal *Bellarmino*, when he was pleading from the Ancient Christian Writers for the Necessity of a clear Apostolical Succession. *We may war-*
rantably eno' reject all the Humane Testimonies al-
ledg'd, and insist upon some clear Scripture Testi-
mony. For this is the constant Sense of all the Ca-
tholick Father that nothing is to be received or
 approv'd in Religion, which is not bottom'd on the
Testimony of Scripture, and can't be prov'd and
confirm'd out of those Sacred Writings: And very
deservedly, since the Scripture is an absolute and
sufficient Rule of Truth. Let the Fathers say what they will, we desire Proof from Scrip-

Whita-
ker
against
Bellar-
mine,
Controv. 2.
Qu. 5.
Cap. 6. p.
506.

ture.

ture, that he that Ordains must be a Bishop superior to Presbyters. The great Proof alledg'd is this: *Timothy* and *Titus* who are charg'd to Ordain Presbyters, were superior to Presbyters; and therefore all that Ordain must be so too. But upon the most diligent Search we can find no such thing in Scripture: No Confinement of the Power of Ordination to Persons of their Rank and Abilities. An Injunction indeed there is given to those Holy Men, who acted as the substitutes of the Apostle to Ordain; but nothing like an Appropriation of the Ordaining Power to them, and them, only or only to such as were of their Order. They say 'twas confin'd, we say 'twas not. Our *Negative* is as good as their *Affirmative*. *Timothy* and *Titus* say they, were left to Ordain Elders at *Ephesus* and *Crete*: 'Tis granted. What then? Why then say they, they must be Bishops, because none but Bishops could Ordain. We deny it. We assert that others might Ordain as well as Bishops in their retrained sense. How do they prove the contrary, that none but such Bishops could Ordain? Why, they were Bishops, and they alone did Ordain. Is not this a pleasant Circle! They affirm in a Round, but the Proof is to seek.

'Tis hard to forbear Smiling, to see how small a matter shall serve for Proof, in so important a Cause as this, when the Affections are once engag'd. There is a very plain Passage in the beginning of *St. Paul's* first Epistle to *Timothy*, which an indifferent Person would be apt to think carry'd nothing of a Mystery in it while others by the help of a strong Imagination, can make strange Discoveries by it. *St. Paul* tells *Timothy*, That he besought him to abide still at *Ephesus*, when he went into *Macedonia*. A disinterested

interested Person would be apt to think that all that was hereby intended, was that *Timothy* was desir'd by the Apostle to remain there for a Season, to supply his Place, and prevent those Disorders that might be apt to arise in such a Place as that, upon the first settling of a Christian Church. But this is too Jejune for those whose Minds are stock'd with pompous Ideas of Ecclesiastical Grandeurs. If Dr. *Hammond* may be believ'd, (whose Dissertations against *Blondel*, are represented by Mr. *Hoadly* from Mr. *Chillingworth*, as so strong, that they never were answer'd and never will) *St. Paul's*, beseeching *Timothy* to abide at *Ephesus*, implies, that he establish'd him *Bishop* of that Church; nay and *Metropolitan* too, or *Archbishop* of the Province, and even *Primate* of all *Asia*. Who can forbear admiring the fruitfulness of an *Ecclesiastical Genius*, that in a few such plain words shall be able to discover such mighty Mysteries. *Where is the Man* (says the Learned *Daille* on the place) *who only using his natural Understanding, without the Fire that is given to it by Affection, would ever have found so many Mitres, as a Bishops, an Archbishops, and a Primates in these two words I besought thee to abide at Ephesus. Who without the Assistance of an extraordinary Passion could ever have divin'd a thing so fine and rare? Or have imagin'd, that to beseech a Man to abide in a City, imply'd the settling him the Bishop of it, Archbishop of the Province, and Primate of all the Country? Without exaggerating, the Cause of our Hierarchical Gentlemen, must needs run very low, that they should be forc'd to have recourse to such pitiful Proof. For my part* (says he) *viewing things without Passion, from the Apostles saying, that he be fought Timothy to abide at Ephesus, I should rather conclude on the contrary, that he could*

Pag. 109.
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not be Bishop of that place. For to what purpose is it to beseech a Bishop to abide in his Diocess? Is not that begging a Man to abide in a Place where he is stak'd down? I should not, says he, think it strange at all, that he should need to be besought to go from thence, if his Service vias elsewhere needful. But to beseech him to stay in a place where he is fix'd by his Charge, and which he could not quit without offending God and failing in his Duty: to speak the Truth, this is a Bequest that is not very obliging: For it evidently pre-supposes, that a Man does not lay his Duty much to Hearty when he needs to be entreated to do it. But however 'tis as to that, 'tis very certain, that beseeching a Man to abide in a Place, does not signify the making him the Bishop of the Place. If that had been the Apostles tho't, without doubt he would have express'd it; he would, have plainly said that he had settled Timothy Bishop of Ephesus, and left him there to Exercise that Charge. Neither can we justly lay any great Stress upon the word abide; as if that intimated, that Timothy must pass all his Life there, and thence forward reside there the rest of his days, as a Bishop in his Diocess. For the Scripture often uses that word to signify, an Abode that is not perpetual, but for a short Time only, &c. They that are desirous to see Instances, may consult that Author himself. The main of Dr. Hammond's proof in those Points, upon which the Hinge of Controversy turns, lies in surmises of this Nature; freely advanc'd without any solid Bottom to support them. For which Reason I can't wonder that his most darling Principles should be deserted by many Eminent Men in the Church of England, and particularly more lately by the Learned Dr. Whitby. Such sort of Proof will sooner betray a Cause than support it.*

But

But whether it be defensible from Scripture or not, it is still warmly averted, that the Hands of a Bishop superior to Presbyters, are necessary in Ordination. And the Fathers are produc'd in Proof. We are not without a just Value for the Fathers, and yet think it no real disrespect to them to assert, that the Scripture alone must determine a Point of this Nature. But let us see what our Brethren can Gain by the Fathers. All that can be pretended to be produc'd out of their Writings, must be either Proof that they have alledg'd from Scripture, to strengthen their Assertion, of the Necessity of the Concurrence of an Ecclesiastical Bishop in Ordination; or their Judgment in Concurrence with Our Brethren, without Proof to support it, or their Assertion as to Fact in the several Ages they liv'd in. And if these are consider'd distinctly, we shall not find their Testimony in the Case very formidable.

As for real Proof bro't by the Fathers out of Scripture, of the Confinement of the Power of Ordination to Bishops superior to Presbyters, and accordingly alledg'd out of their Writings, we know of none. Were such Proof produc'd, we would receive it, if it were weighty and solid; because tho' it was Collected by the Fathers, yet it would be Scripture Proof still. But here we are at a Loss. The Scripture Pleas, that bid the fairest, have been before consider'd, and the just Sense of the several Passages of those Sacred Writings that are most usually alledg'd, hath been fix'd: So that no room is left for this Pretence, unless it be made appear that the several Passages consider'd have been mis-interpreted. If this were evidenc'd, for my Part, I have no such fondness for any set of Nations in these matters, as could hinder me

from being open to Conviction. But if instead of good Proof, that the Passages of Scripture consider'd are misunderstood, the sense of the Fathers should be urg'd upon us, as if we were bound to acquiesce in it Right or Wrong; we must be excus'd if we are not immediately convinc'd. For should Ten Thousand Persons affirm a matter of Fact is clear in Scripture, while we could not find the least Footstep of it; tho' we should think it became us to be suspicious of our selves least Prejudice and Prepossession might blind us; yet if after our utmost desire to lay aside unbecoming contrary Impressions, and to view things nakedly as they are, we could still see no Evidence of what so many advance as certain, the positiveness even, of such a Number would not amount to a Conviction. If our Brethren can be content with Spectacles, or satisfy'd to see with the Eyes of other Men, we hope they will excuse us if we rather choose to use our own Eyes, in a matter which depending upon Fact nakedly related, is as liable to our Apprehension as it was to others that went before us. The Judgment of the Fathers in the concurrence with our Brethren, without suitable Proof to support it, is with us of no force, to satisfy us that such a thing is in Scripture as we can no where find there. Their Attestation as to Fact, in the several Ages they liv'd in, we admit, provided they had means of being certainly acquainted with what they Report, and nothing to warp or prejudice them, or incline them to a Misrepresentation: Which sort of Temptations for what we can discern, are not so confin'd to the *Moderns*, as not to have taken place too often even among the *Ancients*. But whatever Report they make us, we have our last resort
to

to Scripture, where we have the firmest Grounds, and the fullest Satisfaction, that we are out of Danger of being misled.

The most that can be certainly gain'd from the Fathers, that I know of, is Evidence that in their Times, the Hands of a Bishop superior to Presbyters were requir'd in Ordination. This may be very true, and yet there be no such thing requir'd in Scripture. And yet till such a Confinement can be made appear from Scripture, our Ordination cannot be prov'd invalid in the Sight of God, even tho' all the Writers for the last 1600 Years, were against us as one Man. Our Ordination, I say, cannot be prov'd invalid in the Sight of God, and as to Spiritual Purposes. For tho' it cannot be deny'd but that in some Cases the Silence of Scripture is a good Evidence of Lawfulness, yet there must be a Command in Scripture of what is necessary. And the weight of this matter of Ordination is such, as that it had need be a clear Command, and not liable to be mistaken by any such as are open to Divine Light, and free to submit to the Divine Lawgivers Authority, that should here Convince of a fiat Necessity. Now we can find no such Command in Scripture, Express or Virtual, that Bishops, superior to Presbyters, shall always be the Ordainers, as there must be if this be really necessary valid Orders. Humane Injunctions cannot make a Necessity. All the Bishops and Councils in the Universe, all the Fathers that ever liv'd, can't hinder God from accepting, confirming, and owning the Ministrations of such as keep to the Rule of Scripture, can't hinder such from being able to approve themselves to God both now and hereafter, tho' they never had the Ceremony of a Bishops Hands. And therefore

let not any think, that what has hitherto been advanc'd in our Defence, is at one dash overthrown, by alledging the Fathers against us. For to what purpose is it to heap up Citations out of Ancient Writers, in proof of Irregularity and Invalidity on our Part, for want of that which has never been made appear from Scripture to be necessary. If our Brethren pursuing this Method, have upon calling up their Accounts, this Satisfaction, that they do not wholly stand alone: We at the same time have a Satisfaction arising from our adherence to the Sacred Scriptures, which is vastly Superior to what it would yield us to have all the Fathers on our side.

However since such a Stress is laid upon their Testimony, I'll fairly consider it, and see whether by their means our Brethren gain that entire Victory over us in the Point of *Orders*, which they so often boast of. I doubt it will appear they run the matter too high. By that time we have well consider'd the Circumstances of the Testimony produc'd from the Ancient Writers of the Church, we shall find that for any *real Evidence* produc'd to the contrary, our Ordination may be as Acceptable in the Sight of God as theirs, and as Valid to all Christian Purposes. There are several Things with reference to this sort of Testimony which are very Considerable, which when weigh'd by an unprejudic'd Mind, will be found to leave no great Cause of Triumph, unless things be greaten'd by the help of a Magnifying Glass, which cannot be suppos'd in such a Case to help to so just a view as the naked Eye.

1. The Church of *England* her self has not that Confidence in the Fathers, as there is an Appearance of, in the usual Arguing of her Dutiful

Dutiful Sons, upon this Head of *Orders*. 'Tis hard, if in a matter that must be Originally deriv'd from positive Divine Institution, we must be run down by the Testimony of such Persons, as neither we, nor they that urge them, believe to be infallibly true, and entirely to be depended on. Yet thus stands the Case in this Part of the Controversy. The most Dutiful Sons of the Church pour Contempt upon our Orders, which as far as we can judge are agreeable to Scripture. The grand Plea against us is this Ordination by Presbyters is condemn'd by the Fathers and Episcopal Ordination among them is generally represented as necessary. They therefore giving their Vote against us, we must be condemn'd. Well, if it must be so, who can help it? But if we must; upon that Account be condemn'd, we are like to have good Company. For then all that go against the general Sense of the Fathers in any Case, must be condemn'd too. And that will take in a good round Number. But then they who upon this Account are forward to condemn us, should look to it, that they fall in with the Fathers in every thing in which they are found generally to have concurr'd: Or else they are inconsistent, and Self-condemn'd. For if we are to be Censur'd for going against the Fathers, and they that are most Liberal in bestowing Censures upon us, shall at the same time reject the Expositions and Opinions of the Fathers, even when Common and General, and derivable from the most Early Ages: If appealing from their Writings to Scripture can't be allow'd us, by those who in other Cases are forc'd to take that Method themselves, to preserve themselves from Error; we have plain Reason to cry out upon their *Partiality*, in

that they make use of different Measures according as it falls out that either they themselves, or others are concern'd. Let us have but fair dealing, and we are Contented. Either the Fathers that are so warmly urg'd upon us, have a sufficient Authority to determine in such Cases, or they have not. If they have not a sufficient Authority to determine, then why are they urg'd upon us with so much Vehemence, as if our varying from them were alone sufficient ground to Censure and Condemn us? Or if they have sufficient Authority to determine such matters, then how can our Brethren satisfy themselves in going in a great many things against their general and current Decisions and Determinations? Either way there is a manifest Absurdity.

Was there but a Collection made of the Reflections of Learned and Leading Men in the Church of *England*, upon the Fathers and their Writings, it would be plain enough that they make no more Account of them than we do. In their late Controversies with the Papists, (which we can heartily join with them in Applauding; though at the same time we can't Apprehend, their refusing to Licence, or allow the Publication of Tracts on those Subjects that were written by such as were out of the Ecclesiastical Inclosure, was much to their Honour). How often do we find them declaring, that they did not consult the Ancient Writers, as thinking they were bound to believe what they had written, meerly because they had written it? And that in things where the Fathers were to learn from the Scriptures, their Testimonies were to be interpreted and expounded by the Scriptures, and not the Scriptures by them? And why are not such Maxims as Valid in our
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Dispute with them, as in theirs with the Church of *Rome*?

Besides, if there were that Respect for the Fathers as they are willing to make appear, when they are making Opposition to us; whence comes it about that so many Observations and Customs that were heretofore usual in the Church, are now laid a side? How comes there to be such a discernible Variety, both in *Doctrine*, *Ceremony* and *Discipline*, between the Ancient Christian Church, and the Church of *England*? This will fall hard, if meer Dissenting from the Ancient Church and its Doctors, be such a Crime, as exposes to Condemnation.

The diversity in *Doctrines* is very Plain. It was a current Notion among the Fathers that the Souls of Men after they departed this Life, were shut up in a certain subterraneous Place, there to remain till the Day of Judgment: And that the Heavens were not to be open'd to the Faithful till the end of the World. This was the Sentiment of *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian* and *Lachantius*; and indeed of the greatest part of the Ancients as well as of the present *Greek Church*. To the end of the Sixth Century, and afterwards it was generally believ'd, that the *Eucharist* was as Necessary to Salvation as *Baptism*: And that it was to be Administred to Infants. Thus taught St. *Cyprian* and St. *Austin*, with the stream of Ancient Writers. The Opinion of the *Chiliasts*, that Christ would Reign a Thousand Years in *Jerusalem*, before the Resurrection would be perfectly Accomplisht, prevail'd among most of the Ancient Fathers. It was publisht for an Apostolical Tradition by *Papias*, who Profess'd to have it from St. *John*. It was strenuoufly Asserted by *Justin Martyr*, who says it was commonly

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P. 2. c. 6.

Id. Part 2.
chap. 4.

monly believ'd by the Christians in his time. *Irenius* and *Tertullian* were of the same Perswasion: and so were *Lactantius*, *Victorinus*, *Severus* and *Apollinaris*. *St. Jerome* indeed as freely oppos'd this Chiliastical Notion, as he did the other Opinion, of a Difference between Bishops and Presbyters by Divine Right: But at the same time he manifestly discovers he tho't he ran a hazard; which is a plain Evidence of the Prevalence of the Opinion he oppos'd. In these things, and a great many more, the Ancient Church has been deserted by the Church of *England*. These Opinions tho' they were spread by the Fathers, are rejected with Contempt. Now 'tis worth while to enquire, why they who are not to be believ'd when they speak of the State of the Soul after Death, of the Necessity of Administring the Eucharist to Children, and of the future Reign of Christ for a Thousand Years, should presently become Infallible, when they speak of the confinement of the Power of Ordination by Divine Authority unto Bishops Superiour to Presbyters? If they have a Right to differ from the Fathers, so have we. But if the meer Authority of the Fathers should Determine us, I know not why it should not do so in one Case as well as another. To say the Ancients are in the Right in one Case, and there to be adher'd to; but in the wrong in the other Instances, and therefore to be deserted, is far from solving a Difficulty. For whence I pray does it appear, that the Fathers are in the Right in exalting Episcopacy, by a confined Power of Ordination, deny'd to Presbyters, in which we vary from them? I Suppose the only thing that can be alledg'd, is that herein they agree with Scripture. And how does it appear that that which they give

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is the true sense of Scripture? Why the Fathers Assert it? A most unanswerable Argument! Must not his Head be oddly turn'd, that is not Convinc'd? But whence does it appear they are in the wrong in the other Opinions? Is it not because they differ from Scripture? If so, to be sure their Sense of Scripture is not to be intirely depended on. If they are Erroneous in such things as these, to be sure they are fallible. And if so, it does not follow that we are in the wrong in the Point of Ordination, meerly because we differ from them. We may be in the Right and differ from them here, as well as the Church of *England* in those other Particulars, where their common Sentiments are rejected. But for our Brethren with so much Assurance to depend upon them in one Case, while they assert a Divine Confinement that is not to be met with in Scripture; and in the other Particulars to Reject them, tho' they deliver their Opinions with equal Positiveness: For them to represent them as Infallible, in a Case where their sayings serve as Weapons against us while they own them liable to the same Failures with other Men, in things that are not to their own Gust, looks too like the studying to serve their Interest, to do any thing towards our Conviction.

Neither is the Diversity less Remarkable as to *Rites* and *Ceremonies*. For what is become of the *Milk*, the *Honey*, and the *Eucharist*, which the Ancient Fathers were us'd to Administer unto all immediately after Baptism? How comes it to pass that we now hear nothing of the *Paschal Taper*, and the *Albs* or white Vestments that Persons who were newly Baptiz'd were us'd to wear all *Easter Week*? I might ask why these might not as well have been retain'd

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149.

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as the use of the *Cross*? And how comes it that we have so contentedly laid aside the Custom of mixing Water with the Wine in the Communion, which was so Ancient and so prevailing a Practice in the Church? How can they pretend to so mighty a Veneration for the Fathers, who can, without Concern, drop things so Ancient as these were? And how can they while this is well known and beyond the reach of Denial, Condemn us for not being determin'd by the Judgment and Practice of those very Men, whom they themselves in these other things have so freely deserted. Methinks if we could not be determin'd by them in such small matters, we should not be so wonderful Zealous in applauding their Sense or Practise in the Business of Ordination, as to proclaim Persons no Ministers of Christ, because not set apart to that Sacred Office agreeable to their Methods, while yet the Rule of Scripture hath been duly observ'd. In the Ancient Church, it was all along Lawful for any of the Faithful to take borne with them the Holy *Eucharist*, which they might keep in any private Place, to take it afterwards when they pleas'd alone. If the Church of *England*, doth indeed bear so great a Respect to the Fathers as they would make us Believe, why is not this Custom retain'd? Why should that which was heretofore very Ordinarily Practis'd, and that not in later Ages only, but even from the Primitive Times, be now dislik'd and disallow'd? Anciently it was a general Custom throughout all *Christendom*, not to kneel either upon the *Lord's Days*, or upon any Day between *Easter* and *Whitsunday*: And if we consider the Antiquity of it, or look upon the Authority of those who Practis'd this themselves, and recommended it to general
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Observation, we shall hardly find any Custom more venerable. The Author of the Questions and Answers attributed to *Justin Martyr* speaks of it, and proves from *Irenæus*, that it had its beginning in Apostolical Times. 'Tis mention'd by *Tertullian*, *Epiphanius*, and *St. Jerome*. Nay it has the Authority of the Famous Council of *Nice*: And was reviv'd and explain'd in the Council of *Constantinople in Trullo*, towards the end of the 7th Century. With what Face, can they that have by their Canons injoin'd Kneeling at the Communion, at all times of the Year, without any regard to this Custom of the Fathers, or these Canons of Ancient Councils, at the same time bear so hard upon us, for taking leave to differ from them, where we apprehend after the strictest search they differ'd from Scripture? If the Fathers must be follow'd, why not by them as well as by us? And why not in one thing as well as another? We are inform'd by several Hands, that the Command of *abstaining* from *Bloody* and from *things Strangled*, was for a long time observ'd in the Christian Church. It appears Evident eno' that it was most Religiously observ'd in the Primitive Times, both by the Testimony of *Tertullian* and *Eusebius*. And the Council of *Constantinople in Trullo*, Excommunicates all those of the Laity, and deposes all those of the Clergy that shall offend herein. And yet tho' here both Antiquity and Universality may be pleaded, this Custom is quite vanish'd; and they are ridicul'd who attempt to revive it. Is not this plain Partiality?

As to *Discipline*, the Church of *England* yearly Confesses a Fault. 'Tis own'd in the *Communion*, that *in the Primitive Church, there was a Godly Discipline*, but there is something substituted

Id. pag.
158, 159.

tuted instead thereof, *until the said Godly Discipline may be restor'd again, which thing is much to be wish'd, &c.* I have often wondred this Passage was not expung'd in 1661. This is a fair Confession: But must we stay till the Lay-Chancellors Courts produce a general Reformation? What is become of the strictness of the Ancient Church, in punishing Sinners for their Offences, or bringing them back into Communion? Is it not vanish'd? What have we left of it, more than a bare Description in the writings of the Fathers? Where are the several *Degrees of Pennance* that were heretofore so usual, while some Offenders were to bewail their Sins without the Church; some might stand and hear the Word among the *Catechumens*; and others were to call themselves down at the feet of the Faithful? Where are the Eight, the Ten, the Twenty Years of *Pennance* that were sometimes impos'd? Are there any Footsteps of them to be trac'd in the Church of *England*? What signifies their Yearly Acknowledgment of their *Non-Conformity* to the Ancient Church, as long as there is so just Ground given for that Observation, of the Excellent Bishop *Burnet*, who is himself so bright an Ornament of the Church of *England*; that *while in their Offices they lamented the not having a Publick Discipline in the Church, as it was in the Primitive Times; they have either made no attempts at all, or least very faint ones for restoring it.* Nay, and I may add, have most difcountenanc'd from time to time the Persons that have been most Zealous for the reviving it.

Now for Men that in these and many other Instances have freely slighted the *Belief Ceremonies*, and *Discipline* of the Ancients, by changing and altering at Pleasure, still to cry up the
Fathers

Fathers in Opposition to us, and place them upon the seat of Judicature, and make them decisive Judges of the Difference between them and us, is I must Confess a little Peculiar. I enquire not how far they may be Justifi'd in their Dealings with the Ancients. Be it as it will as to that, this is plain, that by this their Proceeding, they have given us a sufficient Testimony, that they lay not such a stress as is pretended upon their Authority. And why then should they urge their Authority upon us, as if we were bound to abide by it? Why should we be bound any more than they? Suppose then (without granting it) it be made appear the *Fathers* generally held Bishops to be Superior to Presbyters by Divine Right, and that Presbyters had no Inherent Ordaining Power, it is but to very little Purpose, that the Dutiful Sons of the Church Urge their Authority upon us. By your Favour Gentlemen, if you have found their Belief so Erroneous about the State of the Souls of departed Saints, about the Millenarian Reign, and the Distribution of the *Eucharist*; and have tho't your selves at liberty to alter the Rites and Ceremonies that they most generally practis'd, and entirely to discard their Discipline, why should you offer to impose upon us a Necessity of Subscribing to what they hold concerning the Divine Right of Episcopacy, and the confinement of Ordination to Superior Bishops by Apostolical Authority? Why must our Ministry be Nullified, for want of a Conformity to their Practice, in a Case where the Scripture is far from being clear on their side? Certainly the Laws of Disputation ought to be equal. And therefore if you upon examining such Opinions and Practices of the *Fathers*, as those above mentioned by Reason
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and Scriprure, find them Erroneous and to be rejected, why mayn't we have leave to try. what they say about Ordination the same way? How can you think to perswade us to believe their naked Affirmation, that that Ordaining Power which was Communicated to *Timothy* and *Titus* was confin'd to Persons of an exalted Rank, of which in Scripture we find no Foot-step? Why mayn't we have a Licence to differ from the Fathers as well as you? I Profess 'tis hard to suppose our Brethren are in Earnest in their crying out *the Fathers, the Fathers*, in Opposition to us, after they have taken such a liberty, to admit or reject them at Pleasure. But,

2. Suppose the Church of *England* had in all things Manifested that Regard to the Fathers, that would become those who should pretend to urge their Authority upon us; yet it is no easie thing, to discover the true and real Sense of the Fathers in this Debate about *Ordination*, which Account the Argument drawn from them must needs be very uncertain. The Writings of such of them as liv'd within the three first Centurys, must to be sure have deser v'd the most Regard: But of them there are very few now Extant. Many have been lost thro' the injury of the Times; and many made away by the Malice of Men, who have made bold to Suppress and Smother whatever they met with, that was not wholly to their Gust. Had the Works of *Papias* and *Hegesippus*, who were early Writers of Ecclesiastical Antiquities remain'd among us, we might either have had farther Evidence of the Fondness of the first Successors of the Apostles, for Ecclesiastical Grandeurs; or of their retaining the Original Simplicity, to the preventing the Noise that has been since made about the Epistles

stles of *Ignatius*. But when more of the Ancient Writers are lost than remain, how can we judge of the real Sense of those who next succeeded the Apostles? As the Epistles ascrib'd to *Ignatius* seem to exalt Episcopacy beyond Measure; (tho' I can't see but they may be Accounted for, upon a very different Hypothesis, from that which is so industriously sought to be thence establish'd) so 'tis not improbable but *Papias* and *Hegesippus* might, if they had been extant, have confirm'd the Sense of St. *Jerome*, and made it farther appear, that it was no Divine Constitution, but a Humane Device to prevent Schism, to exalt Bishops above Presbyters.

Again; the Writings which go under the Names of the Fathers, are not all truly such: a great part of them are *supposititious* and *forg'd*, either formerly or more lately. St. *Jerome* rejects many Books as spurious, that were publish'd under the Names of St. *Peter*, *Barnabas*, &c. They that would be thus Sawcy with the Apostles themselves, as to make use of their Names, would hardly stick to make as bold with the Fathers. This has been the matter of common Complaint from Age to Age. Who then can certainly tell when he reads a Writing that bears an Ancient Name, whether he is Conversing with a Father or an Alien, a Friend, or an Enemy? The Writings of the Ancients, till the Art of Printing was Invented, lay at the Mercy of a sorry sort of Creatures who were employ'd to Transcribe and Copy them out. They by their *Negligence* and *Boldness* together, corrupted many Ancient Writings, and forg'd new Ones. These Forgeries were often gainful, by helping them to Vend their Copies the Faster and the Dearer; which to those that look'd no higher than the

Id. Part.
1. Ch. 3.

making the most of their Pains they could, was no small Temptation. Thus some pitiful Transcriber (as *St. Jerome* says) put the Name of *Tertullian*, a reputable Author, to *Novatian's*, Tract of the *Trinity*. And how easily might one of the same Craft, to augment his Gain, - clap the Name of *Ignatius* to another Man's Epistles; only taking Care to insert the Passages that were quoted out of *Ignatius* his real Epistles, to hinder the Forgery from being detected? The meer *Ignorance* of these Wretches hath produc'd a great many spurious Pieces. Upon likeness of Name, Stile or Subject, they often fancy'd an Anonimous Piece the Work of an Ancient Author; and immediately Copy'd it out as such, and transmitted it under his Name to Posterity. Some also out of a sottish *Ambition* have been for venting their Conceptions under the Name of the Fathers; choosing rather to be receiv'd and honour'd under a false Habit, than slighted under their own true one. Some out of a particular *Affection* to such a Person or Opinion have set themselves to write of the same, under such an Author's Name. We have an Instance of this in the Priest who publish'd a Book, entitled. *The Acts of St. Paul and of Tecla*: Who being Convinc'd of his being the Author of it, in the Presence of *St. John*, frankly confest that the love he bare to *St. Paul*, was the only Cause that mov'd him to it. And in later times *Erasmus* gives us an Account of a Discovery he made of one of these Knaves, whose common Practice it was to lay his own Eggs in another Man's Nest, putting his own Fooleries on *St. Jerome* particularly, and *St. Austin*, and *St. Ambrose*. It's true many Modern Writers have publish'd whole Volumes, to assist in distinguishing between the-
Genuine

Genuine and Spurious Writings of the Fathers: But who can assure us they have been exact? How often do they differ? Some letting that pass for pure Mettal, that others throw by for Dross? May, it not be suppos'd some have imitated so Artificially the Fancy, the Stile of the Authors whose Names they have assum'd, as that there can be no discovering them? Or suppose any one chose to imitate an Ancient Author, whose Name only was remaining; we having no Account of his Stile, manner of Discourse or Opinions, to guide us in our Examination; the Forgery can't well be detected; On which Account that Fellow did not want for Cunning, that wrote under the Name of *Denis* the *Areopagite*: Because there being no certainly Legitimate Piece of that Author extant, the Discovery must needs be Difficult: And it would have been more so, had he but us'd a more Modest, and less swelling way of Expression. On these Accounts, 'tis hard to Discover among the infinite Number of Books that are ascrib'd to the Fathers, which are Genuine, and which are Spurious: And therefore to be sure it cannot be easy positively, and certainly to assure us, in many Cases, what their real and true Opinions were.

Besides: The very Legitimate Writings of the Fathers have been in many Places corrupted by Time, Ignorance, and Fraud, and that both Pious and Malicious, both in former and later Ages. Had we separated their Genuine Writings from the Spurious, our next work would be even in the Legitimate, to distinguish what is the Author's own, from what has been foisted in by another hand; to restore what has been taken away by Time or Fraud, and Lopp off; whatsoever has either, of those ways been Without this, when a Writing

Daille,
Part 1.
Ch. 4

has pass'd thro' a Variety of Alterations, it would be very hard to say we have gotten the true Sense of the Author we have in our Hands. This altering of Writings has been Very Ancient. *Epiphanius* tells us, That the Catholicks blotted that Passage out of *St. Luke*, that *Jesus wept*, for fear the Hereticks should abuse it. Who then can wonder if they should blot out of the Writings of the Fathers, what did not agree with their own Opinions? Thus *Origen* was serv'd by *Ruffinus*. And it may have been the Lot of many others. It was indeed a common Practice, with many of those whom we now call Fathers, to leave out of the Writings of such as went before them, what was disagreeable to the Opinions and Customs receiv'd in the Church, in the Times they liv'd in, and to add what seem'd wanting; of which Modern Criticks give us many Instances. Many a kind lift may not improbably have been this way given to the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy; the support of which most certainly would appear a sufficient Reason for any such Alterations. On which Account I am so far from wondring to find among the Remains of Antiquity, so much in Favour of Prelacy, that I rather wonder that all Passages in Favour of the Primitive Parity, and the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters, are not quite expung'd. As the World hath chang'd, so has it been tho't requisite that what remain'd of Antiquity should suffer its Alterations also. Our Artists have apprehended it but reasonable, that these Books should in some measure accommodate their Language to the Times, as they fuppos'd the Authors would have done if Living. To render them the more acceptable, they have imitated some old Men, new colour'd their Hair
and

and. Mustachioes, cutting off the rude and scatter'd Hairs, they have Polish'd their Skin, and given it a fresh Complexion, and taught them to speak with a new Voice; having chang'd also the Fashion of their Habit. So that it is much to be fear'd, we oftentimes do but loose our Labour, when we search in these disguised Faces and Mouths, for the Complexion and Language of true Antiquity. Let those therefore who refer us to the Fathers in the Point of Ordination remember, that from the beginning of the 6th Century, no Scruple has been made of cutting off from their most valid Writings they had among them whatsoever was not agreeable to the Gust of the Times. And had we no more against them than this, it were a sufficient Reason to move us to go on warily and keep a stiff Rein. This being suppos'd, upon what Grounds can any Man be positively assur'd, that he has the true Sense of Primitive Antiquity any farther than he finds it in the Sacred Scriptures. And the *Romanists* have herein out done all that went before them. To support their Corruptions both in Doctrine and Practice, and particularly the Papal Omnipotence which Sprang out of the Hierarchy gradually: improv'd and exalted, they have made Alterations in Fathers and Councils without Number; and many Ancient Writings they have wholly abolish'd. It need not at all seem strange, if by such means as these, the Monuments of Antiquity should be so embroil'd and perplex'd that it should be difficult to make any clear and perfect Discovery of what is sought for out of them.

But supposing a Man, after a great deal of Pains, to find some pieces of the Fathers, that are not only Legitimate but Uncorrupt; he will not presently be able to be allur'd he's Ma-

Id. Ch. 5.

ster of their Sense, because of their *Obscurity* Which is such, as that its harder to understand them rightly than the Scriptures themselves: They multiply differences, rather than determine them and often serve as a Retreating Place to both Parties. Nothing's more common in the Writings of the Ancients than Rhetorical Flourishes, and strong Figures. Who can prove that their High Flights in Praise of Episcopacy, and magnifying it above the Presbyterate, was not rather design'd to secure the Submission of the People to a Prudential Constitution, than to express their true and real Sense, as to a Divine Original? They often seem to affirm or deny things absolutely, when their Intention was only to deny or affirm them Comparatively, and with reference to some other things which they had in their Eye. Who can assuredly say it was not thus as to the Affair of Ordination? Who can prove, that when they intimate a Presbyter must not Ordain; their meaning may not be, that he must not make it a main part of his Business, like an Ecclesiastical Bishop? Or that when they say it belongs to Bishops only to Ordain, their meaning may not be, that they were in an especial manner call'd to it, after that the exercise of the Ordaining Power was by Custom chiefly committed to them? I doubt we must go as far as this comes to in many Cases, to make Sense of the Sayings of the Ancients, and reconcile them to Truth. A Man that finds St. *Cyprian* * asserting, That *Bishops only ought to Baptize*, might at first be apt to imagine that it belong'd not to the Office of Presbyters: And yet I suppose our Brethren would not disclaim this part of their Office, for a hundred such sayings of the Fathers. It was also very
usual

* *Epist.*
73.

usual with them to be vehement in their Assertions: And in many such Cases, we must take the Opinion which they oppose for the Rule and Measure of what they affirm or deny, or we shall misunderstand them, *Some*, as the Learned Bishop *Stillingfleet* ★ has it, *would do well to consider, that every Hyperbolical Expression of a Father will not bear the weight of an Argument: And how common it was to call things Divine, which were conceived to be of excellent Use, or did come from Persons in Authority in the Church. One would think that should meet with Θεῖον γράμμα in the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon it could be rendered by nothing short of the Scriptures; whereas they mean no more by it, but only the Emperor's Letters to the Council.* When they dispute against the *Valentinians* or *Manichees*, a Man would believe them to be *Pelagians* if he did not know their way. And when they were' contesting with the *Pelagians*, he'd be as apt to fancy they defended the Opinions of the *Manichees*. When they disputed against *Arrius*, one would think they favour'd *Sabellius*: And again, when they oppose the *Sabellians*, they may be safely taken for *Arrians*. Their thus seeming to bend to one extremum in opposing another, is by a Figure call'd Dispensation, as *Athanasius* says in the Case of *Denys* of *Alexandria* his Predecessor; which is a Figure that must be well understood by such as would reach the Sense of the Fathers. Some flights in their Writings concerning the Episcopal Power and Authority, must be explain'd by the help of this Figure, or there is no Account can be given of them. *Ignatius* in particular (if the Epistles ascrib'd. to him are Genuine) might for what I know magnify the Power of the Bishop above that of a Presbyter, as *Divine*, Opposition to those

Iren. p.
315.

who might perhaps represent any such Difference in Degree fixt by Humane Prudence, to promote Peace and Order, as *unlawful*. If this were his View, I'm as much of his Mind, as many that are Zealous for his Epistles. But if some such way be not taken to soften him, I envy no Man the Honour of defending him and his Epistles: For I could not help reckoning a Modern that should use such Language as is sometimes to be found in him, either for one out of his Wits, or a Blasphemer.

Id. C. 6.

Or let us suppose a Man to reach the Sense of the Expression us'd by the Fathers in their Writings, he may still remain a Stranger to their real Opinions. St. *Jerom*, who has been always Esteem'd one of the most Celebrated Commentators among them, tells us very frankly that their Commentaries were usually a Rhapsody of different Opinions, tumbled together in a heap, without so much as intimating, which is either good or bad: Probable or Necessary: to the Purpose, or not. A strange way of Writing Commentaries on Scripture, wherein a Man having jumbled other Mens Notions together in his Brain, by a kind of Lottery draws out what comes next to hand, without any choice! And yet this Course, he intimates was taken by the generality of the Fathers in their Expositions. So that if we find an Opinion in any of their Writings of this sort, we must not presently conclude it theirs. Perhaps it was the Opinion of some other Man; it may be of some Heterodox Person, or Heretick. For such came in; and without any mark of Distinction too. They deliver you the Opinions and Words, of other Men, just as if they were their own: And yet will not be bound to warrant them for good and-

and found. This makes the Assertions seemingly advanc'd dubious, how clearly and expressly soever they are deliver'd. And if we Converse with their Polemick Writings, we shall be often tempted to apprehend that they look'd upon it as Lawful in the Management of a Controversie, to say or use any thing that would advance their Cause, altho' it were light or trivial, or contrary to what themselves believ'd: And to Conceal and Reject, whatsoever might Prejudice their Cause, tho' it were otherwise true and allowable. I think we may very well demur as to the admitting Persons thus dispos'd for our Judges: For we cannot tell when we have them.

Besides; the Fathers advanc'd gradually. in Knowledge, like other Men: continuing Id. cap.7. Diligent and Industrious, they ripen'd by little and little, in Proportion as they grew in Years. So that their Writings cannot be all of the same Worth and Value. St. *Austin* advanc'd many things in his younger Years for Truths, which he afterwards renounc'd in his Book of *Retractations*. And *Origen* before him in an Epistle to *Fabian*, Bishop of *Rome*, Confess'd that he repented of many things he had taught and written. We have no Reason to question but some such thing happen'd to many of the Fathers. They saw Reason to disallow what they formerly believ'd as true. This creates a new Difficulty. For when an Opinion is urg'd upon us as theirs, who shall assure us that this was their constant Sense, or their ripest judgment; or that they confirm it to us by their Perseverance in it, according to the Rule of *Vincentius Lirinensis*. Who knows but among the Fathers alledg'd against us, some may have retracted what is urg'd for our Conviction?

viction? or chang'd their mind without publick Retracing it? If this Consideration does not break the force of the Allegations but of them, it may yet well eno' cause a Hesitancy because of the uncertainty we are left in, whether or no we have their true Sense, at the time when they were fittest to pass a Judgment.

Id. c. 8.

Withal; it is Necessary, and yet very hard to discover how the Fathers held their several Opinions whether as necessary, or as probable only, and in what Degree of Necessity or Probability, they plac'd them. Suppose it should appear they were many of them for Ordination by an Ecclesiastcal Bishop; they might be mov'd to do it upon probable Reasons only: And so even in their Sense, Ministrations might be valid, without the hands of such a Bishop. Or if some went so far as to hold such Episcopal Ordination Necessary, it does not follow that many, or that the generality of them, and much less that all did so. This Observation is therefore the more Necessary, because it was usual with many of the Ancients when they would recommend to us such things as they accounted Profitable, to speak of them as if they had been Necessary: And to divert from things which they held to be simply False or Unprofitable, they often represented them as the most Pernicious (and Detestable things that could be. He that observantly reads *Tertullian*, *Ambrose* and *Jerome*, will find them so eager for the side they took to, be it what it would, that they'd be apt if they did not know their usual Custom, to take all whom they commended for Angels, and all whom they speak against as perfect Devils. They'd be tempted to apprehend, that they lookt upon whatever they maintain'd as the Very Foundation and Ground-work of the Christian

stian Religion, and whatever they refuted, as meer Atheism, and the highest Impiety imaginable. Now how easily may such Persons be mistaken? How easily may they be apprehended to have look'd on. Such things as Necessary, which they regarded only as desirable; or at most as preferable? And how unavoidable is a mistake of this Nature, unless we use the utmost Caution?

Once more; The weight of the sayings of the Fathers that are alledg'd, proceeds from hence, that they are reckon'd so many Testimonies of the General Sense and Judgment of the Church, in a Particular Age, or from one Age to another, so as to make up an Universal Testimony. Before therefore we can justly lay any great Stress upon them, we had need be well assur'd, that their Sayings are Conformable to the belief of the Church in the time they liv'd in. Hence arises a new Difficulty. For how can we learn whether the whole Church in the Days of *Ignatius*, or the other Zealous Asserters of Ecclesiastical Episcopacy, were of the same Mind? We find the Fathers commonly vented their own private Opinions in the same manner as they did those which were publickly receiv'd. Nay, sometimes they recommend rather with a greater eagerness, what they Conceive'd and bro't forth themselves, than what was generally current. Who knows but this might be the case of *Ignatius*? How strangely would this abate the force of the Testimonies Alledged from him? And what have we left of his Age, by which we can judge that his Notions were generally entertain'd? Or suppose we are clear, as to this or that particular Age, yet how Vain is it to assert that such or such a thing has been held by the Church Universally, because the Fathers

Id. c. 9. &
10.

fathers appear Unanimous in their Report? Who can say this of Episcopacy, or the confining of Power of Ordination to a Superior Order? The Fathers have pass'd by in silence many Opinions of whole Companies, as well as particular Persons, which they rejected: And sometimes when they have mention'd them, have cloth'd them with a contempt they no way deserv'd. Many might be against the current Notions, that were design'd for supporting the Ecclesiastical Grandeur, and yet be unwilling to expose themselves by publishing their Sentiments: Or they may have done it, and yet their writings be lost, or remain conceal'd. The Ancient Church might have its *Cassanders* as well as the Moderns, and yet we not hear of them. They might Oppose and not Write; or they may have written, and their Writings have been devour'd by time, or suppress'd out of Interest, for fear the traces, of the Primitive Simplicity should be discover'd.

Let but all these things be duly weigh'd, and I think it will appear, that he must have something very Particular in his Make, that shall after all be Confident, that he can gather out of the writings of the Fathers, so much light as is Necessary to full Satisfaction, in this positive Determination, that Episcopal Orders are so Necessary to a valid Ministry, that where they may be had, Presbyterian Ordination is a meer Nullity. But,

3. Were we fully clear as to the sense of the Fathers; were we assur'd we understood them rightly; and had we waded through all the Difficulties forementioned; I yet query with what Satisfaction we can depend on their Report, when we find them Guilty of so many Mistakes, and so often Contradicting one another. It

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extreamly abates the Credibility of Witnesses in any Court of Judicature, to find them tripping in what they positively assert, or confus'd, and contradicting each other, in some of the most material parts of their Evidence. Hardly any Jury in *England* (that were not grosly biass'd by Interest) would bring in a Verdict upon such Evidence. And yet of this sort is the Evidence bro't against us from the Fathers. We are told that Episcopacy as Superior to the Presbyterate, with the sole Power of Ordination and Jurisdiction, had its Rise from the Apostles; and that it was settled by their immediate Successors in all Christian Churches without Exception. Could this be prov'd, it must be Confess'd it would go very hard with us. We should deserve many of the Reflections cast upon us, if we stood out. It is attempted to be proved from the Fathers. But it so falls out, that they have Father'd so many things upon the Apostles without just Ground; and so often contradicted one another in the Particulars relating to this Settlement, that we can't suppose any impartial Person, will barely upon their Evidence give the Cause against us. I hope it won't be so much as pretended, that the bare Assertion of the Fathers, is a sufficient Proof of a true Apostolical Tradition. It can't be allow'd for Proof, because it has been Asserted on both sides, by contending Parties, in matters that have been Contested; and that in the early Ages of the Christian Church. *Eusebius* ^(a) gives us to understand that *Papias* reported the Thousand Years bodily Reign of Christ on Earth, for an Apostolical Tradition, and it was taken for such by many, and that very generally after him; and yet was at length rejected. But we have the most famous Instance in the Controversie

(a) *Lib. 3. cap. 39.*

(b) Euseb.
Lib. 3.
Cap. 23,
24,

(c) Socrat.
Hist.Eccl.
Lib. 5.
Cap. 22.

* Irenic.
pag. 317,
318.

verity about *Easter* (b) between the *Asians* and the *Romans*; whether it should be kept with the *Jews* on the 14th Moon, or only on the Lord's Day. In this Debate, there was a great deal of unreasonable Heat on both sides, and a mighty Confidence, that on either side they had Apostolical Tradition. The *Asians* (c) deriv'd their Custom by Tradition from St. *John* and the *Romans*, with their Adherents, deriv'd theirs from St. *Paul* and St. *Peter*: So that here there were Fathers against Fathers each with the highest Pretence against their Opposites—The Censure of the Learned Bishop *Stillingfleet* * upon Occasion of this Affair, is so remarkable, that I can't forbear transcribing it. *How can we* (says he) *fix upon the Testimony of Antiquity, as any thing Certain or Impartial in this Case? When it hath been found so evidently Partial in a Case of less Concernment than this is. A Witness that has once betray'd his Faithfulness in open Courts will hardly have his Evidence taken in a Case of Moment, especially when the Cause must stand or fall, according to his single Testimony. For my part* (says he) *I see not how any Man that would see Reason for what he does, can adhere to the Church for an unquestionable Tradition receiv'd from the Apostles, when in the Case of keeping Easter, there was such Heat and Confidence They had herein all the Advantages imaginable, in order to the knowing the Certainty of the Thing in Question among them. As their nearness to Apostolical Times, being but one remove from them: Yea the Persons contending pleaded Personal Acquaintance with some of the Apostles themselves; as Polycarp with John, and Anicetus of Rome, that he had his Tradition from St. Peter, and yet so great were the Heats, so irreconcilable the Controversy, that they proceeded to dart the Thunderbolt of Excommuni-*
cation

cation, in one anothers Faces, &c. But (says he) if we must stand to the Judgment of the Fathers, let us stand to it in this, that no Tradition is any farther to be embraced, than as it is founded on the Word of God. The Reasonableness of which he freely dilates on in what follows. Neither is the Censure of another Great and Learned Man of the Church, upon this Occasion, less remarkable. If (says he) the Discretion of the chiefest Guides and Directors of the Church, did in a Point so trivial, so inconsiderable, so mainly fail them, as not to see the Truth in a Subject, wherein it is the greater marvel how they could avoid the sight of it; can we, without the imputation of great Grossness and Folly, think so poor spirited Persons, competent Judges of the Questions now on foot?

*Mr. Hales
of Eaton,
of Schism.*

One that is at all Conversant with the Fathers, can hardly forbear observing, that whatsoever was Ancient, they usually reckon'd an Apostolical Tradition. When the Heathens had any thing that they knew not whence it came, they usually call'd it *Διοπετὲς*, as tho' it came immediately from Heaven. So the Fathers, when Traditions were convey'd to them without the Names of the Authors, and they found them prevail by Custom, they concluded they could have no other Fountain but the Apostles. Thus St. Jerome * delivers to us for an Apostolical Tradition, that Custom which they had in his Time, of not suffering the People to depart out of the Church upon *Easter-Eve*. St. Austin † also, supports that Custom of administring the Communion to Infants, which prevail'd in his Day, upon an Apostolical Tradition, that Communicating at the Lord's Table was absolutely necessary to Salvation. And *Epiphanius* assures us, that the Church

* Com. 4.
in Matth.
p. 121.

† L. 1. de
Peccat.
Mor. &
remiss.

Church held by Apostolical Tradition, the Custom it had of meeting together thrice a Week for the Celebrating of the Eucharist; which yet *Petavius* ★ himself makes evidently appear, not to have been of Apostolical Institution. When this therefore was the common Plea among the Ancients, for every thing they were fond of, we have no Reason at all to wonder if we find it Pleaded for the confining Ordination to Bishops; which is a thing for which many were mighty zealous, that they might the better support their Grandeur. But when it was so often pleaded without Ground, we need not be disturb'd at its being barely pleaded against us in this Case. 'Twill be time eno' to be affected with it, when we see it well prov'd.

They that so often blunder'd about Apostolical Tradition, may be well eno' suppos'd to have made many other unhappy Mistakes †. But without attempting to trace them in other Points, I shall set my self to shew how Confus'd. and Inconsistent they are, in their Account of the Settlement of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, about which we might well expect all imaginable Clearness, when we meet with so much Positiveness.

Eusebius, who to us is the first spring of Ecclesiastical Storys after the Acts of the Apostles, tells us in the very beginning of his Narrative, That *one thing he principally had in his Eye, was to give us an Account of the Apostolical Succession*. It must be own'd his Design was Noble. And could he have distinctly satisfy'd us, as to the Settlement made by the first Planters of Christianity in the World, he'd have done us a considerable piece of Service. But least we should raise our Expectations too high,
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★ Petav.
in Epiph.
p. 354.

† See Daille of the
Right of
the Fa-
thers,
Part 2.
Chap. 3.

Eccles.
Hist. Lib.
I. Cap. I.

he very fairly tells us, that this was a *new Work*; where he could trace no *Footsteps of others point?* before him, except in a few particular *Narratives*. This was *Honest*. And if after such fair *Warning*, we'll take all he says for *Gospel*, 'tis we that impose upon our selves, not he that deceiv'd us. For he plainly told us before hand, of the uncertainty of the *Reports*, whence his *Narrative* was drawn. He often drops hints of this *Nature*. He tells us, that all the *Account* he can give of the *Apostles*, who went about the *World* publishing the *Christian Faith* is this; That it was reported by those that went before him, that *Thomas* had *Parthia* for his *Lot*; and *Andrew*, *Scythia*; that *St. John* had *Asia*, where he for the most part continu'd, and, dy'd at *Ephesus*; and that it was most likely that *Peter* preach'd to the *Jews* dispers'd in *Pontus Galatia, Bithynia, and Cappadocia*; and that *Paul* preach'd from *Jerusalem* round about to *Illyricum*. This is but a poor *Account* of the *Travels* of all the *Apostles* and their *Fellow Labourers*! He cannot so much as certainly let us know where it was that they *Preach'd*, much less can he certify us what *Methods* they took to settle *Churches* in the several *Countries* they *Preach'd* to. *Bishop Stillingfleet* hath given us good *Reason* to believe that they did not take the same *Method* in all *Places*. He asserts they varied according to the several *Circumstances* of *Places* and *Persons* which they had to deal with. What room then for the mighty *Boasts* of our *Brethren*; when as to the very *Apostles* themselves we are so much in the *Dark*? But perhaps the *Historian* may make us some amends for this, by a clear and distinct *Account* of their immediate *Successors*. Let any one judge that hears what he afterwards

Euseb.
Lib. 3.
Cap. 1.

Irenic.
Chap. 6.
pag. 322.

declares as to therfu *Who they mere* (says Eusebius) *that imitating these Apostles* (meaning Peter and Paul) *were by them tho't worthy to Govern the Churches which they Planted, is no easy thing to tell, excepting such as may be Collected from St. Paul's own words.* Let Bishop Stillingfleet here speak, and if I mistake not, what he has suggested deserves Consideration. If the Successors of the Apostles, by the Confession of Eusebius, are not certainly to be discover'd, then *what becomes* (says he) *of our unquestionable Line of Succession of the Bishops of several Churches, and the large Diagrams made of the Apostolical Churches? with every ones Name set down in his Order, as if the Writer had been Clarencieux to the Apostles themselves? Are all the great Out-cries of Apostolical Tradition? of Personal Succession? of unquestionable Records? resolv'd at last into the Scripture it self, by him from whom all these long Pedigrees are fetch'd? Then let Succession know its Place? and learn to vaile Bonnet to the Scriptures; and withal, let Men take heed of over-reaching themselves, when they would bring down so large a Catalogue of single Bishops, from the first and purest Times of the Church, for it will be hard for others to believe them? when Eusebius professeth it is so hard to find them.* 'Tis true, Eusebius tells us a little after. That it was reported that Timothy was first Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus of the Churches in Crete: But what he hinted just before, of the uncertainty we were left in as to the Successors of the Apostles, is a plain intimation, that this was but a Report of common Fame, and not to be certainly depended on. And this may be also easily concluded from his not having mention'd any Ancient Author to vouch this Report, according to his usual Custom. Would it not tempt a Man to wonder, after this, to
find

find such a stir made about the *Tables of Succession*, in the several Churches, from the time of the Apostles, as a plain Proof that Diocesan Episcopacy had its Rise from them? Alas, ‡ the Head of Nile is not more obscure than the first Part of these Tables. It cannot indeed be deny'd, but we hear of them often among the Fathers; they frequently urg'd them against Hereticks, and represented the several Bishops that came one after another in each Church, as Successors of the Apostles. And they were so, as to their Doctrine. But I see not how they can be urg'd against us in Point of Order. For they might succeed one another, as Deans of the Colledge of Presbyters, till such time as Episcopacy, with the distinct Power of Ordination and Jurisdiction, became superior to Presbyters, for any thing these Tables can certify us to the contrary. However, to shew how little ground there is to depend upon them in the present Case, I'll give a brief View from the Representation of the Ancients, of the strange Confusion of the first part of the Tables, of the three most celebrated Churches, of *Alexandria*, *Antioch*, and *Rome*.

The Church of *Alexandria* has been generally represented as founded by St. *Mark*, and yet *Eusebius* speaks of it but as an uncertain Report. *They say it was so* *, says he. But he does not tell us who said so, nor upon what Grounds. And we have the less reason to depend on this his Report, because of his representing the Egyptian *Therapentæ*, which we have very good Reason to believe, were the *Jewish Essenes* †, as the Converts of St. *Mark*: Tho' in another Part of his Works, he himself owns them to have been *Essenes* ||. However, after him many others have ventur'd to say and af-

‡ I would recommend the Perusal of Bp. Stillingfleet's *Irenic*. pag. 300. &c. to those that are fond of an exact Succession.

* L. 2. C.

† L. 2. C. 17.

|| Preparat. Evan. L. 8. C. 10.

firm it. That *St. Mark* was the Founder of this Church; tho' with this difference: Some say he was there with *St. Peter*, others that he was sent thither by *St. Peter*: Some that he was there but once: And others, that he visited *Rome* after his first being there, and return'd again. But even the Church of *Alexandria* (than which none was more scrupulous about Chronology) can neither tell us the Year of its Foundation, nor of *St. Mark's* arrival, nor the certain Duration of his Ministry among them. *St. Clement*, who was afterwards the famous Catechist of this Place, might be as likely to be well inform'd about these things as any Man: But he is intirely silent: And who then can think Modern Authors deserve much regard. *Euty chius* that liv'd near 900 Years after, writing the Original of this Church, (his Account of which was publish'd by the Learned *Selden*, with Notes) tells us, That *St. Mark* settled twelve Presbyters, and a Patriarch over them. But what Power this President of the Colledge of Presbyters, who in succeeding Ages was stil'd a Patriach, had allow'd him by the Original Settlement, who can tell us? The next Successor to *St. Mark* in this Church, has several Names given him. And as to those that come after, there are very different Representations. And after all, tho' the Succession is clearest in this Church of any, yet a long Lift of Names, (to say nothing of the Difference as to the Years assign'd them) proves nothing of a peculiar Power deriv'd from the Times of the Apostles. For the other twelve Presbyters, for what can be prov'd, had the same Power as to Ordination and jurisdiction, with the President himself, who was afterwards stil'd a Patriarch.

Valerius

Valerius ★ says, that *St. Mark's* Throne was preserv'd here ★, and 'tis said, 'twas of polish'd Ivory too: And that he wrote his Gospel in it: and that *Peter*, one of his Successors, tho' often press'd, never durst fit in it, being afrighted with a dazzling Light. These, with a great many other pleasant Tales, are told to greater our Ideas of this Church and its Founder: But what Satisfaction they can afford such as search for the Primitive Establishment, I can't imagine. Where things are at best so uncertain, one would think it but a modest Request, that People would avoid Boasting, of the clearness of their Light, and the firmness of their Grounds.

★ Vide
Vales.
Not in
Euseb.
p. 319.

As to the Church of *Antioch*, we have such an Account in Scripture, that one would imagine we could be at no great loss there. Tho' if we launch out into the Fathers, I doubt we shall find our selves Confounded. *Eusebius*, *St. Chrysostom*, *St. Jerome*, *Pope Leo*, *Innocent*, *Gelasius* and *Gregory the Great*, all tell us that this Church was Founded by *St. Peter*. Let us see how this agrees with Scripture. We are told, *Acts* 11. 19. that *they which were scatter'd abroad upon the Persecution which arose about Stephen, traveled as far as Phænice and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the Word to the Jews, &c.* 'Twas upon this Occasion, then, that Christianity was first Planted in *Antioch*. The Christian Doctrine being thus Publish'd there, they needed one to confirm them in the Faith, and settle a Church Order among them. The Apostle *Peter* was not fix'd on for this Purpose, but *Barnabas*. He was sent thither by the Church at *Jerusalem*, ver. 22. and much People was added to the Lord. ver. 24. *Barnabas* finding he needed the assistance of an Apostle, did not apply

himself to *St. Peter*, but to *St. Paul*; sought him out, and bro't him thither. *ver. 26.* and we are told, *it came to pass, that a whole Year they assembled themselves with the Church, and taught much People.* So that *St. Paul* was rather the Founder of this Church than *St. Peter*, and we may well suppose that in a whole Years abode there, he could not but regulate all that was Necessary in order to their Settlement. Sometime after, this Church tho't fit to Contribute to the relief of their Brethren in *Judea*; and what they Collected was carry'd to *Jerusalem* by *Paul* and *Barnabas*, *ver. 29, 30.* upon their return from thence, *Paul* and *Barnabas* were by Divine Appointment separated from the rest of the Ministers in that Church, to go abroad for the farther spreading of the Gospel, *Acts 13. 1.* And by this time we may conclude that this Church was well settled, and yet we hear not a jott of *St. Peter's* appearing; we have not so much as his name mention'd. What shall we then say to Pope *Leo* call'd the Great, who positively Asserts that 'twas at *St. Peter's* first preaching that this City was Converted *? However as little of truth as there was in his Assertion, he having ventur'd to assert it, we need not wonder that his Successors should take the liberty to say it after him.

When *Paul* and *Barnabas* return'd to *Antioch*, they found the Church disturb'd, by some that taught that Circumcision was Necessary among the Disciples of Christ, *Acts 15. 1.* Hereupon they two went up to *Jerusalem*, where a Council was call'd, and the Matter debated; and they return'd back again with *Judas* and *Silas*, with the Determination of the Elders. But not a word do we hear all this while about *St. Peter* with reference to this Church; even as
if

* Leo. 1.
Serm. 1. in
Nat. Pe-
tri. P. 79.
& Epist.
53. pag.
131.

if he was over-look'd designedly. At last indeed, some-time after the Council at *Jerusalem*, we hear of St. *Peter's* being at *Antioch*, but I Can't perceive he acquir'd much Honour there. His *Judaizing* with what attended it, carries in it a fair Probability of an Evidence, that he had not the footing here, which some assign him. For St. *Paul* observing the Scandal he gave by his Dissimulation, withstood him to the Face, and so maintain'd the Rights of the Church which he had Founded there, of which 'tis not unlikely a considerable, if not a major part were *Gentiles*. Methinks 'twas a little Insolent in St. *Paul*, to Confront a Bishop in his own See! 'Tis pretty much if after all this, St. *Peter* should be the first Founder of this Church of *Antioch*! and yet St. *Chrysostom* * positively Asserts that he was a long time Bishop here. Some Modern Criticks have determin'd that long time to Seven Years. But *Nicephorus* says, he continu'd there but Two Years. This I doubt will hardly answer St. *Chrysostom's* long time. *Baronius* to clear himself of Chronological Difficulty, is willing eno' to drop St. *Peter's* Bishoprick at *Antioch*: But then he says, he erected one there by his Authority. According to this Model, St. *Paul* must be St. *Peter's* Vicar here. At the same time St. *Chrysostom* is left in the Lurch, who so positively Asserts that St. *Peter* was a long time Bishop there, and substituted *Ignatius* as his Successor. And who can reconcile this, with the Account of *Eusebius* *, who Asserts that *Euodius* was first Bishop of this great City after the Apostles? Dr. *Hammond* undertakes it; and thus accommodates the Matter †. He says that St. *Peter* was Bishop of the *Jews*, and St. *Paul* of the *Gentiles* in this City. But what then becomes of the

* Hom.
42. in
Ign. T. I.
p. 503.

† An. 39.
N. 16.

* Eccl.
Hist. Lib.
3. c. 22

† Hamm.
Dissert.
5. cap. 1.

Unity of the Episcopate? And how could it be suppos'd that *Ignatius*, who immediately succeeded in this See, should lay such a stress upon one Bishop in a Place, even as if a plurality of Bishops in a City, would have destroy'd all Order, and been the over-throw of Religion there? Can it be imagin'd he could so soon forget the Instance of the 2 Apostles, whom he so directly Succeeded? But this is a Modern tho't lately pitcht on by some few Patrons of Episcopacy, while by many others of them it is much dislik'd. Let us see then what certain Light we can get as to the Apostolical Succession in this Church. *Baronius* assures us the Apostles left behind them Two Bishops, One for the *Jews*, and the other for the *Gentiles*. That afterwards *Ignatius* wholly gave place to *Euodius*, and took it again after his Death; the *Jews* agreeing to join with the *Gentiles*, and make but one Body with them. The Reason of the Conjecture, is because on one hand, *Eusebius* says expressly that *Euodius* was the first Bishop of *Antioch*, and that St. *Ignatius* Succeeded him; while on the other side, St. *Chrysostom*, *Theodores*, and, the Author of the *Constitutions*, say 'twas St. *Peter* and *Paul* that laid hands on St. *Ignatius*; and yet St. *Peter* dy'd before *Ignatius* was Bishop there. To solve the Matter, Two Bishops are suppos'd there for a time, who afterwards Succeeded one another. But do any of the Ancients Assert this? Or if they do, do they alledge good Authentick Proof? The story of the *Martyrdom* of *Ignatius* as it is related with all its Circumstances, did not to the Learned Bishop *Stillingfleet* * seem any of the most probable. And for this device of settling the first Succession in this Church, there is yet much less can be alledg'd. Is it not pretty

Baron.
An. 45.
N. 13.

* Irenic.
p. 298.

pretty strange the Ancients mould leave it to our Moderns first to make this discovery? How should it come about that St. *Chrysostom* who to be sure search'd all the Archives of this Church, should be wholly silent about this Matter? However let this Scheme stand, tho' Difficult to be prov'd. Let St. *Peter* and *Paul* be at once Bishops of *Antioch*, and have two distinct Flocks of *Jews* and *Gentiles*. And let it be the like as to *Euodius* and *Ignatius* after them. But then I'm hard put to it, to suppose that in those times they had the same Apprehensions as to *Order* and *Uniformity*, that are so current in our Days. For where was *Order* Consulted, if one of the Prime Diocesses in the Universe had two Heads, both Supreme, for so many Years together? Must not this needs create Confusion, upon the Hierarchical Bottom? And What became of *Uniformity*, where Doctrine and Worship so much differ'd, as among the *Jews* and *Gentiles*? I suppose 'tis for these Reasons among others the Division is as much shortn'd as may be. We are told in the time of *Ignatius*, all ran in one Channel. 'Twould be hard I must Confess to make any thing of his Epistles if 'twere otherwise; nay, if they are genuine, they leave it very improbable, it should be otherwile before. St. *Chrysostom* * tells us *Ignatius* sate in the Throne of St. *Peter*. Who can tell us what became of the Throne of St. *Paul*? They must both have Thrones there, if both were Bishops. And St. *Pauls* Throne was likely to be more Stately of the two, because the *Gentiles* were more numerous at *Antioch* than the *Jews*. I hope it was not carelesly thrown by in a Corner.

But the same difficulty returns, as to the first Settlement of the Church of *Rome*; and it deserves

* Chrysost. in Ign. T. I. pag. 503.

serves to be particularly consider'd, because 'tis hardly conceivable how any thing can be more embarrass'd. For some say this Church was Founded by *St. Peter*; others by *St. Paul*; others by both; and others by neither. Some with great Zeal make *St. Peter* the founder of the Church of *Rome*. And they can tell us the several Journeys which he took, and the Miracles he wrought in his way thither: And assure us he had a combat there with *Simon* the Magician. But the worst of it is, their Account has so Romantick an Air, that few have the Heart to credit it. About the date of his Martyrdom, there is a wide difference. *St. Jerome* (a) says 'twas A.C. 69. An Ancient Catalogue (b) of the Bishops of this City, says 'twas in the Year 55. A Learned Modern (c) says 'twas in the Year 65. And while some are earnestly endeavouring to compromise this Difference, *Salmasius* and others question whether ever *St. Peter* was at *Rome* at all. This touches the Romanists in their most tender Part; and therefore we can't wonder at their exclaiming. And if Protestants out of concern that truth should take place, give them a helping hand, where's the harm of it? Our Learned Bishop *Pearson* engages in the Quarrel, and Strenuously sets himself to prove, that *St. Peter* was at *Rome*, and there suffer'd Martyrdom (d) He lays a great stress on the report of *Papias* of *Hierapolis*, as cited by *Eusebius* (e). But who
can

(a) Euseb. Chron. Hieron. Interpr. pag. 162.

(b) Catal. Pontif. Rom. apud Bucher, pag. 269.

(c) Pagi, Critic. Baronii. An. 67. pag. 54.

(d) Deserie & Successione, Prim. Rom. Episc. Diss. Cap. 6, & 7.

(e) Lib. 3. Cap. 15.

can depend upon the Credit of *Papias* which runs so low? Besides *Eusebius* quotes the *Hypotyposes* of *Clement* for it, the Authority of which is very uncertain, because we know not who that *Clement* was. The Bishop therefore waving him, lays his stress upon *Papias* whom *Eusebius* mentions as a Witness; adding at the same time that this *Papias* reported that St. *Peter's* first Epistle was written from *Rome*, which place is stil'd *Babylon* in the close of it. But here the Learned Bishop can't fall in with him, and frankly owns ★ that the Figurative Interpretation which represents *Rome* as meant by *Babylon* could by no means please him. But if *Papias* his Authority be to be depended on, why not in one Point as well as another? The Bishop quotes also, *Denis* Bishop of *Corinth*, *Irenæus* of *Lyons*, who was Scholar to *Papias*, and took the hint of *Peter's* being at *Rome* from him, as well as his *Millenary* Notion. He adds *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Eusebius*, *Athanasius*, and *Epiphanius*. And when all's done, the Report for what appears, may center Originally in *Papias*, who in Conjunction with his Scholar *Irenæus*, might be easily able to spread it both in East and West, and yet we not be able certainly to depend upon it. But be it suppos'd that St. *Peter* was at *Rome*, notwithstanding there is so much to be laid against it; tho' it is so hard to reconcile it with his supposed Stay at *Antioch*, or with St. *Paul's* utter silence about him, in the Epistles which he wrote from thence: Yet still we have plain assurance from Scripture that St. *Paul* was there too. And therefore I query, which of the two was Bishop? St. *Paul* was there first; and on that very account is preferr'd by many of the Ancients. And in the Seal of that Church, St. *Paul* is on the

Pag. 48.

Right

right Hand, and St. *Peter* on the Left; which for that Reason *Baronius* very pleasantly will have the more honourable of the two. But who was Bishop? To accommodate the matter, so as that there may be no Disagreement between them, both are made Bishops. But what becomes of the Unity of the Episcopate in the mean time, a thing is Sacred? Why should it be so common and general a Cry of the Fathers afterwards, that it was absurd, preposterous, irregular, nay intolerable, to have more than one Bishop in a Place at once? Or what need is there that this Suggestion (in which however they as generally agree as in any one thing) should at all be minded, when it was so plain a variation from the Sense of the Apostles? Either then the Apostles did found two Episcopal Sees at *Rome* for themselves, and their Successors, or they did not. If they did not, why is this Pleaded to serve a Turn? If they did, why then should two Bishops in a Place be reckon'd so absurd in the Ages following? And why was there less Confusion in it then than now? Since the Nature of the thing was the same then as now, tho' they had then the Happiness of better Tempers to manage it; if it were really in it self disorderly, it must be so at one time as well as another.

But be it as it will as to that, how shall we clear the Succession? Here we find Ancients and Moderns strangely divided: Some will have *Cletus* expung'd out of the Table, as the same with *Anacletus*; and so *Linus* is fix'd at the Head of the Succession, and follow'd by *Anacletus* and *Clemens*. Thus *Irenæus* * represents it. At the same time in some Ancient Catalogues, *Anacletus* is excluded; and he is not at this Day to be found in the Canon of the Mass: And yet

* Lib. 3.
Cap. 3.

yet the *Roman Martyrology*, speaks distinctly of *Cletus* and *Anacletus*, and gives a very different Account of their Birth, Pontificate, and Martyrdom. *Epiphanius* mentions *Cletus*, but omits *Anacletus*. He puts the first Bishops of *Rome* in this Order. *Peter* and *Paul*, *Linus*, *Cletus*, *Clemens* and *Euaristus*. In *Bucher's Catalogue* they stand thus. *Linus*, *Cletus*, *Clemens*, and *Anacletos*, and many Ancient Catalogues agree; and three are left out, viz. *Anicetus*, *Eleutherius* and *Zephyrinus*. And what shall we do with the Famous *Clement*? Does he stile himself Bishop of *Rome*? Or how came he to forget his Title? 'Tis said by some, that after he had been St. *Paul's* Companion, and chosen by St. *Peter* to be Bishop there, he gave-place to *Linus*. While others assert, That *Linus* and *Cletus* were Bishops at the same time; and others *Linus*, and *Clemens*. *Tertullian* and *Ruffinus*, and some others place *Clement* next *Peter*. *Irenæus* and *Eusebius* set *Anacletus* before him: *Optatus* both *Anacletus* and *Cletus*: And *Austin* and *Damascus* make *Anacletus*, *Cletus*, and *Linus*, all to precede him. So that the Learned *Stillingfleet* † had good reason to say, that the Succession is here as muddy as the *Tiber* it self; and that if the Line fails us here, we have little, cause to pin our Faith upon it, as to the Certainty of any particular Form of Church Government which can be drawn from the help of the Records of the Primitive Church. If such Confusion reigns here, where one would apprehend the matter to be clearest, how weak is it to place our whole Dependence on these sort of Tables? How poor a Foundation do those Gentlemen choose to build upon, who lay their main Stress on their Derivation from the Roman Table, in proof of their Ministerial Authority?

† Irenic.
p. 322.

thority? Were it not a thousand times more Candid and Ingenuous to confess we are in the Dark, and left at uncertainty, than to make pompous Boasts; the Grounds of which examin'd, vanish from under us? These sort of Pretences to *Apostolical Right*, and *Apostolical Tradition*, back'd with the Tables of Succession in the several Churches, make, I confess, a mighty Noise, and may dazzle the Eyes of the Weak, and pass for a Justification with those that have the Civil Authority on their side, which may seem to give them a Validity: But they disappear whenever they are examin'd in cold Blood, and view'd naked, as they are in themselves. When we make the best of them we can, *Eusebius* is the main Author that we have to depend on, for the Credit of these Tables. And his Account of the Succession in the several Churches, is made up mostly of Conjectures, at 300 Years distance from Apostolical Times, vouch'd by uncertain Authors. And where he hath left Vacancies, *Nicephorus Callistus*, and *Simeon the Metaphrast*, and other such *Historical Tinkers*, as Bishop *Stillingfleet* pleasantly calls them, have taken effectual Care to fill them up. Methinks it may pass for a modest Request eno', if (to use the Expression of the Learned Bishop of *Worcester* *) we desire those Gentlemen who discover such a Fondness for the *Line of Succession*, not to argue from the Authority of such Writers, especially not in a matter of such Importance. *Whosoever will not grant us this Request, must give us leave to believe, that either he is not in good Earnest, or he does not know what he says, when he writes himself a Hater of false History.* He that from the blind, broken, and uncertain Tables of Succession, that are transmitted to us in the Records of Antiquity,

can-

* At the Close of his Preface, to his *Historical Account of Church Government, in Great Britain and Ireland.*

can infer the Necessity of Episcopal, and the invalidity of Presbyterian Ordination, must either have a strong Faith, or a predominant Fancy. If they cannot be clear'd, 'tis vain to argue from them: But if they can, they'll serve us as much as they will them. But farther,

4. To find some of the Fathers representing the questioning the Difference between a Bishop and a Presbyter as a *Heresy*, will signify little with such as know, and have leisure to consider for how small a Thing a Man was in the Ancient Church, often cry'd down as an Heretick; and for what Trifles they were many times then Excommunicated. It has made a great Noise, and not a little affected some unthinking People, that *Epiphanius* and *St. Austin* should represent *Aerius* as an Heretick, for asserting, That a Bishop and a Presbyter were Originally the same. And even as great a Man as *Dr. Maurice* seems to have tho't the Wound this way given us, to have been much too deep for us ever to recover it. In the mean time he would have done well to have taken notice how the Argument was answer'd before by the Learned *Stillingfleet* *. It is a degree of Respect to the Church, either Ancient or Modern, I could never yet arrive at, to suppose they never Condemn'd unjustly. He must know nothing of the Church after the time of *Constantine*, that is not sensible how forward they were in their Censures, where their Grandeur was touch'd, or their current Opinions canvass'd, which was always reckon'd to imply a Reflexion. The prevailing Maxim was this: Αἱρετικός [[ὅστις πᾶς μὴ ὀρθόδοξος]]: *Whoever is not Orthodox is an Heretick*

* Irenic.
pag. 277.

* Balsamon in Collect. Constit. Eccl. ex Lib. 1
Cod. Tit. 5. L. 12. p. 1286.
Phot. in Nomo-can. ex Constit. 12. Tit. 5.

Heretick *. According to this Principle Heresies are easily multiply'd. For the prevailing party will seldom fail of confining Orthodoxy to self. But were every Man a Heretick who call'd so in a Passion, the Number of the Orthodox would be so despicable, as to be soon overpower'd. *Epiphanius* it must be confess'd was a formidable Adversary. St. *Chrysostom* found him so, as well as *Aerius*. But the latter is no more to be condemn'd upon his bare Word than the former. He that says stress Upon his Testimony in this Case, when he has consider'd it, scarce deserves to be argu'd with. Poor *Aerius* is indeed condemn'd by *Epiphanius* under his 75th Heresy: But he that considers how the Charge against him is supported, would he unwilling to lie at the Mercy or such a Judge. *Aerius's* Charge is made up of four Articles. The first is this; That he held a *Bishop and Presbyter was the same*. I doubt the Church of *England*, both at the time of the Reformation, and for a considerable while afterwards, must pass for Heretical, if holding this be a sufficient Proof. One Argument that was urg'd by *Aerius* in Proof of his Assertion, was this: *Because their Office was the same*. An Argument that ought to be well answer'd, before a poor Man is condemn'd for an *Heretick*. *Epiphanius*, as Doctor in the Chair (which is a great Advantage) replies upon him; It is not the same in all Respects; for the Effects are not the same. *For a Bishop begets Fathers of the Church, while a Presbyter only produces Sons*. A very emphatical Expression, I must confess, to signify that they were thus far different, that the one might Ordain, but not the other. But what satisfaction does it give, how it came about that one should have more Power to Ordain than

than another? Is Hot this a full Confutation of an Assertion, which implies, that all Presbyters had a Power to Ordain as well as to Baptize Originally inherent in their Office; and that the Alteration was but a Novelty? Certainly this *Aerius* must be a strange Fellow, that he was not convinc'd of his Heresy, by such an Argument as just amounted to a Denial of his Assertion! Waving the rest, the 4th Article of the Charge against him was this; That *he deny'd the warrant ableness of Prayers for the Dead*. And certainly we may very safely depend upon his judgment, who condemns a poor Man upon this Account, for an *Heretick*! But let's hear the Point argu'd. *Aerius* gave this as one Reason, why Prayers should not be made for the Dead *because they were unprofitable*. An Argument that won't very soon be Answer'd. *Epiphanius* shews they might be profitable to some Purposes, tho' not to all: They might be a Testimony of our Faith, that the Saints live with God; they might be of some use to such as were Sinners, tho' they did not wholly take away their Sin; and they might help to distinguish Christ from the Saints, in as much as when these may freely be prayed for, he alone is to be prayed to. A second Reason of *Aerius* was to this purpose. *If Prayers profit the Dead, a Man has no need to be Pious: 'Tis but getting Friends to pray for him, that he may endure nothing in another World; and he may do well eno'*. *Epiphanius's* Answer is this, That Prayers may Profit them, tho' they don't wholly take away their Sin. Admirably advanc'd! And much like a Man that was immovably fix'd in the Conclusion! Was he not an excellent Judge, and Convincer of Hereticks in the mean time! Another Reason of *Aerius* was this: Prayers

for the Dead are not warrantable, because *bottom'd upon no Authority of Scripture*. *Epiphanius* grants it; and instead of *Scripture* appeals to the *Tradition* of the Church, which no Man must flight. And now the Mystery's out. This Hint lets us in to the Secret; and discovers to us *Epiphanius's* Notion of a *Heretick*; and that is, one that is rather for adhering to the Sacred Scriptures, than Ecclesiastical Customs: One, that if he can't keep to both, will much rather quit the Latter than the Former: One, that tho' he agrees with Scripture, goes against the Tradition of the Church, which is one of the most uncertain things in the World. Is not a Charge of Heresy thus supported, very formidable? And what tho' *St. Austin* comes in to back *Epiphanius* in this matter? That's no distinct Charge; 'tis but a Continuation of the same. For it's a general Observation of our Criticks, that *St. Austin's* Treatise of Heresies contains scarce any thing but what is taken from *Epiphanius* and *Philastrius*. And after all, *Mr. Hales's* Observation takes place. *Heresy and Schism are Theological Scarecrows*. And they were so with the Ancients as well as among Moderns. Many have been condemn'd by the Rulers of the Church in an Heat for *Hereticks*, who, I doubt not, have been accepted of God: And many have been call out of the Church by Excommunication, whom Heaven hath receiv'd. The *Asian Churches* were Excommunicated by *Victor Bishop of Rome*, because they were Non-conformists in the *Easter Controversy*. And it was Decreed in the Council of *Constantinople in Trullo* *, That whosoever should be found to Fast either upon the Lord's Day, or on Saturday, (excepting only one Saturday) if he was a Clergyman he should be Depos'd, but if of the

* *Can. 55.*

the Laity Excommunicated. And poor *Origen*, who undoubtedly was one of the greatest Men among all the Fathers, actually was Excommunicated by his angry Bishop, (who envy'd him his great and spreading Reputation) for taking Priests Orders in another Diocess, when he properly belong'd to *Alexandria*. But as such things have made *Excommunication* (which when rightly manag'd, is one of the most awful things in the World) to be much less dreaded in the Church, than it had otherwise been; so has the bringing in the Charge of Heresy where it has not been deserv'd, made the Charge much the less regarded, and in reality prov'd it to be for the most part a meer word of Course. But a thousand such Charges need not move us, so long as we keep close to Scripture: And we have good Reason to believe, that we have the Apostles, and their first Successors, for Companions in our Heresy. But

5. Lastly, To put a Period to our general Remarks concerning the Testimony of the Fathers, there are a great many Passages to be met with in their Writings, which laid together, may abate the Triumph of our Brethren, if they'll weigh them impartially. The Learned *Blondel* *, who was perhaps as great a Man as any the Protestant Churches has produc'd, has so strenuously defended our Cause, even from the Fathers, as to leave no great room for Boasting, to such as will be at the Pains to consider his Allegations. Dr. *Hammond*, who it must be own'd was a great Man too, has made his Remarks upon a few Leaves of *Blondel's* Collections, leaving the rest untouch'd. But the Doctor's Answer runs mostly upon explaining the various Texts of Scripture that have been us'd in this Controversy, where his fond-

* Apologia pro Sententia Hieronymi, de Episcopis & Presbyteris. Amstel. Qu. 1646.

ness for two Notions that were peculiar to himself, (concerning the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and *Antichrist*; and the early Activity of the *Gnosticks*, whom he so industriously traces thro' all the Apostolical Epistles;) has caus'd him to differ from most Interpreters, Ancient as well as Modern: So that for for what I can perceive, his Hypothesis is generally reckon'd undefensible, even in the Church of *England*. And tho' Mr. *Hoadly*, from Mr. *Chillingworth*, represents Dr. *Hammond* as unanswerable, yet I have that Apprehension of the Openness, Candour, and impartial Judgment of Mr. *Chillingworth*. as to believe, that if he had liv'd to have seen Bishop *Stillingfleet's Irenicum*; he would hardly have reckon'd the Doctor needed any farther Answer. But be it as it will as to that, they that will consider the Fathers as Men like themselves, and view their Writings with their naked Eyes, and not look through a Magnifying Glass every time they meet there with Bishops and their Appurtenances, Rights, and Preheminence, will see Cause to conclude, that it was not without Reason that the Second Council of *Sevil*, which met in the Year of Christ 617, thus express'd themselves; *Let the Presbyters know, that the Power of Ordaining Presbyters and Deacons, is forbidden them by the Apostolical See, by vertue of Novel Ecclesiastical Constitutions, and to bear up the Dignity of the Bishops.* This truly is ingenuous, and the most that the Cause will bear.

For any to say after all, that it is scarce supposable the Ancient Church should so generally have fallen in with Episcopacy, and asserted a peculiar Power both of *Ordination* and *Jurisdiction* as belonging to it, if it had not its Rise from the Apostles, or Apostolical Persons, tho' it may

Concil.
Hispal.2.
Canon 7.

may seem a plausible Objection, yet has no great force in it. For this Notion being once Parted, the Fathers may be easily suppos'd to have taken it from one another, as they did the *Chiliastical* Opinion; while yet there might not be any better ground to ascribe it to an Apostolical Original, than there was as to that Opinion which so much prevail'd. And should it be farther urg'd, that the Church in the Ages following condemn'd the Notion of the *Chiliasts* as Erroneous; while they still maintain'd the Episcopal Preheminence both as to Ordination and Jurisdiction, we are not at a Loss for a sufficient Reply. For this condemning the expectation of the Bodily Reign of Christ on Earth for a Thousand Years, as Erroneous, after it had prevail'd so generally in the Primitive Church for several Centuries, is a plain intimation, that 'tis no new thing for the Churches in succeeding Ages to acknowledge, that the Joint Consent of many, nay of the Generality of the Fathers, and that for some Hundreds of Years together, touching one and the same Opinion, is no solid Proof of the Truth of it. And if it is not in one Case, neither is it in another. This is the very Principle we build on in the Controversy about Ordination, when the Fathers are brought to urge that upon us, which cannot be made appear to be necessary from the Holy Scriptures. Let but this Principle be granted us, and the Controversy about *Re-ordination* would soon be at an end. For tho' many of the Fathers may represent Ordination by Presbyters as irregular, because it was their Capital Rule in these matters, to be careful to support the Grandeur of their Bishops, yet it does not therefore follow that it really is Irregular. Whosoever asserts it is so, unless

he invalidates the Proof before alledg'd from Scripture, must with *Epiphanius* equal Ecclesiastical Customs and Traditions to that Sacred and Authentick Rule. And that with us is more than a bare Irregularity.

I have been the larger on this Matter, because I take the stress of the Debate about *Re-ordination* to lie here. The two main Pleas for it, are *Ecclesiastical Custom*, or the *sense of the Fathers*; and the *Law of the Land*. As to the *Law*, I cannot understand, that that made Episcopal Ordination Necessary, before the *Act for Uniformity*. Till that took place, a Man might be admitted Incumbent of any living in *England*, tho' Ordain'd by Presbyters only, without any hazard from the Law. And what has been, may be again, were the Law but alter'd. As for *Ecclesiastical Custom*, and the *Sense of the Fathers*, I have therefore the more freely canvass'd that, because 'tis most Boasted off, and has generally more stress laid upon it than it deserves: And I was at the same time willing that any that would go about to argue with us upon that Head, might know how little we are affected with it, and upon what Grounds.

I should reckon my self injur'd, should any from hence represent me as an Enemy to *Episcopacy*. For I could with freedom Submit to it as a prudential Institution, even tho' I remain unconvinc'd that it has an Apostolical Foundation. That is a new Notion even in the Church of *England*: Where at the first Reformation, and for a long while after, it was generally apprehended that the difference of Order in the Sacred Ministry, was Founded on the Constitution of the Civil Magistrate. And there it has firmer footing, than either in the Word of God or the Genuine Traditions
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of the Apostles. For any to flie so high without better Proof, shews their good Will indeed, but don't much serve their Cause with Lookers-on. For 'tis grown so common, to be dunn'd with the Noise of *Divine Institution*, and *Apostolical Right*, *Absolute Necessity*, and *only Regularity*, which are in the Mouths of the several contending Parties, that at length the World is generally come to that pass, that they look upon such Pretences as words of Course. And indeed but too much Reason has been given for this Reflection, while Debates about Ecclesiastical Matters have been so manag'd, as to leave it Visible, that Interest and Affection easily Bribe the Judgment, even in those things where higher Views most certainly ought to Govern. And methinks that is a very good Remark of Dr. Maurice's*; that *when learned Men speak without Book, about distant matter of Fact, their Authority is but small. For then they do not speak from their Knowledge and Learning, out their Affection*. The Historian observes that this was the Temper of *Brutus* and *Cassius*, *ubicunque ipsi essent, prætexentes esse Rempublicam*. Many are so like them, that they think the Church can never be preserv'd, but in that Vessel they are Embarqu'd in. I'm sorry to find Mr. *Hoadly* discovering so much of such a Temper. A more Catholick Spirit most certainly must prevail, before ever our Breaches come to be heal'd. There's but little hope of that at present; and therefore all we have to do is to Vindicate our selves: And manifest that our Proceedings are not so unaccountable as they are Represented.

To proceed therefore to Mr. *Hoadly's* reasoning upon this Head: He's very willing to have it tho't that the confining the Power of

Pag. 4.

Ordaining to Diocesan Bishops, had its rise from the Apostles; but as for Proof, he's very sparing. *We think* (says he) *we can demonstrate that in the Primitive Times, the Administration of Ecclesiastical Affairs was in the hands of Bishops, who had Presbyters Subject to them.* But the *Primitive Times* take so wide a compass, as to leave us in uncertainty about his sense in this matter. If he thereby means the times of which we have an Account in the Sacred Scriptures, a real Demonstration that Ecclesiastical Affairs were then manag'd by Bishops with Subject Presbyters under them, and by no others, would, do good Service to his Cause: For hitherto 'tis wanting. But if he means the succeeding Times, from the middle of the second Century forward; tho' I wont positively Assert that What he says mayn't be true, yet I can't tell if he were put to it, whether he would find it so easie to give a Demonstration of it, as he may imagine at a distance. In Scripture Times Mr. *Hammond* himself over and over confesses there were no Subject Presbyters. In the times that follow'd, all must confess the Bishops were generally ready to improve all Opportunities, of making themselves as Great and Considerable as they could.

Another thing he thinks he can *Demonstrate*, is *That as the Apostles maintain'd a Superiority over the Presbyters of the Churches they Constituted, so upon occasion of their absence, they settled others in this Superiority.* That *Evangelists* were made use of by the Apostles in the Churches they planted, and that they were Superior to Presbyters or Bishops I freely grant: But that this was a fixed Settlement, necessarily to be continu'd in the Church in all succeeding Ages, is not yet so Demonstrated, as to be put past questi-

questioning, among many Persons of Worth and Sense. However, the great use of *Evangelists* in the days of the Apostles, in a Superiority to fixed Bishops, makes some the more Reconcilable to *Arch-bishops*, who should be general Superintendents of Congregational Bishops, with their respective Flocks. But what it makes for *Diocesane Bishops*, who have Presbyters under them that are not Bishops, but are absolutely depriv'd of a part of what the Divine Commission they act by, empowers them for, we are yet to seek: And need the help of Mr. Hoadly's Demonstration.

A third thing which he says he thinks he can Demonstrate, is. *That as these thus succeeding the Apostles had the Power of Ordination committed to them, so their Successors in the following Ages, claim'd this. Power as their Right, and look'd upon Ordination to be their Office in the regular course of things.* By the Persons he mentions as succeeding the Apostles, that had the Power of Ordination committed to them, he means either *Evangelists* or *fix'd Bishops*. If he means *fix'd Bishops*, I utterly deny that they were proper Successors of the Apostles, under that Notion. For the Apostles were general unfix'd Officers—And if he means *Evangelists*, whom some have call'd *Secondary Apostles*, he will not find the matter without its Difficulty neither. That they indeed had it particularly in charge to Ordain Elders, the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus* wont suffer us to doubt: But that the Power of Ordination was committed to them exclusively of others; and that Ecclesiastical Bishops only are their Successors, is more easily asserted than Demonstrated. That they did indeed in the following Ages, claim a peculiar Power of Ordination as their Right, I freely own: But whe-

whether they had a Right to make that Claim, is another Question. And Mr. *Hoadly* must demonstrate that, if he'll gain his Cause. The Question between him and me, is not whether Ordination by such Bishops be warrantable, or whether Ordination by meer Presbyters be Necessary; nor indeed whether or no, (provided Peace may be that way settled in the Church), the Power of Presbyters to Ordain may not warrantably be restrain'd by Consent; their Radical Power, which is not limited by any Divine Law, being own'd: But whether those once Ordain'd by Presbyters, should be Re-ordain'd by Bishops? And if he'll give us good Evidence on the Affirmative side of the Question, we'll bate him the Form of a Demonstration, according to the Rules of Art He Adds; *No wonder then that we require all that come into the Ministry, to come in at this Door, which we think open a for them by the Apostles.* That the Door was open'd for Ordination in the Church by the Apostles, we freely own; and as far as we are able to judge from Scripture, we came in at the very Door, which was of their opening; For we can't suppose that Variation in a Formality makes the Door different, where the Orders of the great Master of the House are punctually follow'd. We are as hearty in our Desires that this Door may be carefully watch'd even as our Brethren: But if they'll clap a Padlock upon it, and keep the Key to themselves, they must not be Angry, if we desire to see their Warrant: The Apostles of our Blessed Saviour open'd this Door 'tis true: But whether they did not set all *Presbyters* at the Door which they open'd as well as *Evangelists*, or general Superior Officers in the Church? Whether the same sort of *Door-keepers* are Necessary for all Ages, Times, and Places?

Places? And whether the succeeding *Door-keepers* have Authority to add new Bars and Bolts, or are not bound to keep the *Door* as open as the Apostles have left it? These are different Questions. Questions, which I see not how the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus* help us to decide, with that Degree of Assurance in the Point, which Mr. *Hoadly* seems arriv'd at. At least I should desire that *Prinnes* Discourse of the *Unbishopsing Timothy and Titus*, should be soberly consider'd, before our Brethren think the Day their own.

It has I must Confess a little Surpriz'd me, to find the great Stress generally laid by the Assertors of the Necessity of the confining the Ordaining Power to Superiour Bishops, upon the Epistles to *Titus* and *Timothy*. Bishop *Bilson* ★ frankly owns, *if this of Timothy and Titus fails, Bishops may claim their Authority by the Custom of the Church, but by any Divine Precept express'd in the Scriptures they cannot.* Bishop *Hall* also falls in with him, and declares †, *That if the special Power of Ordination, be not clear in the Apostles Charge to these two Bishops, Timothy and Titus, he would yield the Cause.* One would think where the Dependence is so great, in a Cause that is so Capital, the Evidence should be clear. Let us see then how 'tis prov'd. Bishop *Bilson* proves the directory in the Epistle to *Timothy* refers not to him only, but his Successors. *The Power of Ordaining* (says he) *must be perpetual.* The Commandment must be kept until the appearing of Christ. *Therefore his Power and Function in this behalf must not fail before the day of Judgment.* Very true: 'tis granted. But how does it appear that this Power must necessarily be confin'd to Bishops exalted above Presbyters? Truly as to that, we must be contented, and reckon it eno', that *Timothy was a Bishop: and so*
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★ Of the perpetual Government of the Church
 Pag. 300.
 † Episcopacy by Divine Right.
 Part. 2.
 Sect. 4.

this Epistle was directed to him, and *all* other Bishops in him. And Bishop Hall is in the same Strain. Farther Evidence I can find none. 'Tis asserted by great Men it was so; and therefore it must be so. But for what I can discern; for any thing that occurs in any of the Three Epistles, it might have been otherwise: Presbyters might have manag'd Ecclesiastical Matters, and the Affair of Ordination in Particular, with equality of Power, without having any settled difference of Rank or Order among them, had the Church tho't it convenient. It can't easily be prov'd from thence, that the Church had Sinn'd, if it had continu'd without Superior Bishops. If so; What becomes of the Necessity, to be prov'd from these Epistles? Why mayn't the conveniency of the thing, justly limited, be a sufficient Argument? And there it would be found many would join Issue, who cautiously stand back, while more is pretended to, than they can find Prov'd. Besides, 'tis not so Evident, *Timothy* was a proper Bishop. *Eusebius* tells us indeed it was said so, but brings it in as a vulgar Report only: Which can't be much depended on, by such as observe how common it was in the fourth and following Ages of the Church, to represent the Affairs of the Primitive Times, according to the Methods of their own, without any great Niceness in canvassing the Grounds upon which they did so. And if *Timothy* was a Bishop, he was an Arch-bishop: a Bishop of Bishops. And therefore *Theodoret* * calls him Bishop of *Asia*. And upon this bottom, it may as well be argu'd that the Power of Ordaining both Bishops and Presbyters should be confin'd to Arch-bishops' as that the Power of Ordaining Presbyters should be Necessarily confin'd to Bishops. 'Till there-

* Præsat.
ad Prim.
Epist. ad
Timoth.

therefore we have full Proof, we have a License from two as great Men as Bishop *Bilson*, and. Bishop *Hall*, to ascribe all the peculiarities of Bishops above Presbyters to the custom of the Church only. But as that is a thing in its own Nature very changeable; so is it very improperly pleaded against a Warrant from Scripture.

Mr. *Hoadly* says he does not find any of the *Objections I urg'd*, signifie that Ordination in the regular Course of things ought to be Adminifired without Bishops. 'Tis very true: Ought and must and any such words as intimate Necessity, I think should be us'd with Caution. We have been apt eno' to run into Extremes on all Hands: and 'tis high time to consider the Grounds we go upon, before we are Positive; in matters of Importance especially. But besides; I don't see what occasion there was for running such a length, even tho' my Principles would have born me out. 'Tis sufficient to the Purpose aim'd at, that Ordination by Presbyters be *Valid*: For then it cannot warrantably be Reiterated, in such Circumstances, as should leave so much as ground for a Suspicion of its *Invalidity*. And as long as we who came into the Ministry since the Restoration of Episcopacy, whom he is pleas'd particularly to call upon, are upon good Grounds satisfy 'd as to the *Validity* of our Orders, we can't help his wondring that we are not willing to submit (to be Re-ordain'd by Bishops) to make some Recommence for our notorious Neglect put upon the Episcopal Office. Tho' we heartily Honour my Lords the Bishops, and admire the Wisdom of our late Glorious Sovereign in Advancing such Persons to that Dignity, as are the Glory of their Office; yet we hope their Lordships cannot esteem it any disrespect to them, that we are backward either
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Pag. 6.

by Word or Actions, to acknowledge our selves to be no Ministers of Christ, while as far as we can judge, we are upon good Grounds satisfy'd that we have been duly Authoriz'd. And if he will still wonder, *that others should he prepar'd, and Ordain'd to the Ministry* among us, who can help it? He need but suppose we are in Earnest in our Adherence to a Cause which we think is very Defensible, and desirous that a *farther Reformation* may be insisted on, till it is obtain'd, and he has the true Ground we go upon. It has been Debated here in *England*, whether we should stop where we are, or make a farther Progress, ever since the Reformation. Both Parties have at Times taken different Methods. Those that have been against any farther Advance, as thinking our Constitution liable to no Objections, but what all things under the Sun will ever be expos'd to have been sometimes for Severity, and at other times for Lenity, towards those of other Sentiments. They who think themselves oblig'd to insist upon a farther Conformity to Scripture, in order to an Happy Settlement; and look upon the *Spirit of Imposition* as an unhappy Remnant of Popery wherever it is to be found, have some times been for *Passive Conformity*, and sometimes for keeping up Separate Assemblies. But why should it be wondred, that they, who after haying Experienc'd the Fruitlessness and Unsuccessfulness of all other Methods, think they can, upon good Grounds, justify their Worshipping God in Separate Assemblies, should be desirous of a Succession in the Ministry, that So their Worlhip may not cease, nor serious Religion die among them; nor their Principles want some to Defend them? And since the People in this Case must have Ministers, and
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are in a Capacity of obtaining them agreeably to the Rule of Scripture, tho' in a way a little Different from the Ecclesiastical Custom, where is the great matter of Wonder, that this should be encourag'd by such, as tho' they desire Union, yet are not Ambitious of it, that they may be capacitated to join in, in bearing hard upon others; and desire it no farther, than Purity, and true Christian Liberty and Charity may be thereby promoted and advanc'd? And since we are for keeping up a Ministry in a separate State, till Providence opens a way for such a Union, I hope it can't be wondred that we are more Desirous the Rising Generation of Ministers among us should have a Polite and Learned Education and after their Acting for some time as Probationers, be Regularly admitted into that Sacred Office, than that our People should fall into the Hands of inefficient Mechanicks. If he and his Brethren *can't think this Practice agreeable to that Desire of Peace and Concord we oft' express*, we have no Remedy but Patience under their Censures. Tho' this I can with Assurance advance towards the preventing their Misunderstanding, and (if it may be) their Censure too; that we shall be much nearer Peace and Concord, when the Happy Juncture that shall give that Temper which is necessary in order to it shall arrive, by the Care of keeping up a Learned and Regular Ministry among us, than if for want of this Care, our People fell into the Hands of Mechanicks, as a great part of them most certainly would. But if he will still say that this rather looks as if we *desir'd to prevent Union, unless it could be wholly bro't about in our own way*, he must excuse us if we apprehend, that a little more. Charity might do him no diskindoefs, 'Twere
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easy eno' for us to Recriminate. We could tell him, that their Concern about our keeping up a Regular Ministry among us, seems to look as if they were more desirous of a Perpetual Settlement on their present Bottom, than an Happy and Lasting Union, upon the Removal of the Grounds of the Difference that hath continu'd in the Church, ever since the Reformation. But I don't see what Good such Charges tend to, on either side. As to the *way of Union we are for*, to prevent Mistakes, I think it may not be amiss to intimate, that we Affect not a Settlement of the narrow Distinguishing Principles of one Party or other: But an Agreement upon such a Catholick Bottom, as should bear Hard upon none who are capable of being Useful, a Model of which, that was well approv'd of by our Late Excellent Queen *Mary*, hath been Publish'd to the World, by an Ingenious Gentleman of the Long Robe *. I know of no way of Union we are for, but this: *In Necessariis Unitas, in Non Necessariis Libertas in omnibus Charitas*. If ever we do Heartily Unite, it must be in the Belief and Practice of things Necessary; leaving Liberty in things not necessary, and using Charity in all †. How our careful keeping up a Succession
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* *Catholicism without Popery: In Octavo. Printed by John Lawrence, at the Angel in the Poultry.*

† *We are still of the same Mind with the Ministers concern'd in the Conference at the Savoy; who in their Petition for Peace, thus express'd themselves. Grant us but the Freedom which Christ and his Apostles left unto the Churches; use necessary things as necessary, and unnecessary things as unnecessary: and Charitably bear with the Infirmities of the Weak, and tolerate the tolerable, while they live Peaceably, and then you will know when you have done.*

of Ministers among us, tends to prevent Union upon these Terms, I can't imagine. Tho' there would be little Hope of our ever fixing on such a Bottom, should a Ministry among us come to fail: Yet whenever our Brethren are pleas'd publickly to signify their Agreement to it; or the State shall think fit to approve it, it will soon be found an Union will endue, tho' our Ministers were ever so numerous.

But Mr. *Hoadly* proceeds to give an Account why *Re-ordination* is insisted on, and to Answer the Objections brought against it. I'll consider him under both Heads. The grand Reason (he says) of insisting upon *Re-ordination* in the Case under Consideration, is because *Episcopal Ordination is the Regular Orderly Ordination settled in the Church of Christ*. But before he could well suppose this, which is his Darling Principle, should have the force of a Reason with us, he should have signify'd by whom it was that this way of Ordination was *settled in the Church of Christ*, exclusively of any other. If it was settled by Christ or his Apostles, and this can be clear'd by sufficient Evidence, then I'll grant it may be asserted, that this is the *only Regular Orderly Ordination*; otherwise not. I here put in the word *Only*, because the way of our Author's reasoning implies it, tho' he has not tho't fit to express it. Tho' the Fathers have *settled* this way, yet we are not (for the Reasons above given) convinc'd by their Authority, that Ordination by Presbyters is not equally Regular according to Scripture and as agreeable to the Mind of Christ. 'Twill not be an easy thing to bring us to venture the Issue of our Cause, Upon any other than Scripture Evidence. And methinks it cannot be look'd upon as unreasonable to expect, that our Sacred Records should

afford some Evidence of such an Obligation, as all Ages are suppos'd to be under, in a matter that depends meerly upon positive Institution. But instead of any Proof from thence, of this Capital Proposition, which his whole Discourse is built upon, our Author argues with us from Mr. *Baxter*. What his Aim might be in this Artful Contrivance, I'll not pretend to guess. But for our part, I think verily we are not so senseless, as to give that Authority to Mr. *Baxter*, or any other Moderns, which we deny to the Body of the Fathers. Had our Author been better acquainted with us, he would presently have concluded, we should have been for examining all that he could urge, from whencesoever it came, by Scripture. Had Mr. *Baxter* ever so positively asserted this Proposition, it would not have convinc'd us without good Proof; and when back'd with that, we should as freely receive it from Mr. *Hoadly*, or any one else, as from Mr. *Baxter*; as much as we Respect and Value his Memory.

But what if after all Mr. *Hoadly* hath mistaken Mr. *Baxter*? What becomes of his Argument then? I'll not give it a hard Name. I'll leave that to himself, whom it will better become, by a free Acknowledgment to shew his Candor, than it would me, to drop any thing that might look like insulting, upon occasion of a Mistake, which I would believe was Innocent. He refers to Mr. *Baxter's* Deputation with Mr. *Johnson*, the Sum of which is contain'd in my *Abridgment*: I have not only carefully consider'd that, but all that I know of, that Mr. *Baxter* hath written relating to the Affair of Ordination; and upon the whole must declare, that I can't find the least ground for alledging his Judgment in proof of our Author's
Principle

Principle that *Episcopal Ordination, is the [only] Regular, Orderly Ordination, settled in the Church of Christ.*

The Case in the Dispute referr'd to, was plainly this. Mr. *Johnson* was warmly pleading for an uninterrupted Succession in the Ministry, and that with this view that that being necessary, and not to be had by a recourse to Presbyters, Bishops must be apply'd to, for Ordination with a clear Succession. Mr. *Baxter* on the contrary asserted, that such an uninterrupted Succession could not be prov'd in Fact; and that besides it was not needful; and that Persons might as warrantably and safely therefore be Ordain'd by Presbyters as by Bishops. Mr. *Johnson's* main Argument to prove the Necessity of such a clear Succession was this: That *without it we that are Ministers cannot be said to have our Authority from Christ.* This Mr. *Baxter* deny'd; and asserted, that Ministers as such, have their Authority and Power convey'd from Christ, whenever his will is *truly signify'd* that they should be Ministers. This will of Christ he intimates might be signify'd various ways, by *Superior Ministers*, when Bishops Ordain; or, by *Equals*, when Presbyters Ordain. If both fail, *Magistrates* might do it. And if they also fail, the *People* might do it by their Election. He adds. That *God hath made Ecclesiastical Officers* (i. e. Presbyters, who with an Eye to the Rule of Scripture, act in one and the same Capacity, whether the *State* advances some to a Superiority above others, or leaves them in their Original Equality) *the Ordinary Authoritative Judges of this Question* who shall be Ministers: And yet, that *God hath not given all Churches the Opportunity of Regular Ministerial Ordination.* We are fully of his Mind. It be-

longs to the Ministerial Office to Ordain; and yet where there are none to exercise that Office, People must choose the fittest they can find, to Officiate as Ministers among them rather than have none. But still 'tis more Regular, to be set a part to the Office, by such as were before in the Ministry: And therefore it is not to be omitted where there is opportunity for it. Mr. *Baxter's* Sense in this Affair, as far as I can gather it from his Writings was this: That it was Regular to have a Ministerial Investiture; and highly requisite where it could be had: But that where it could not be had, Persons were not left wholly Destitute. That we should beware of running things to extremity: For that there's no absolute Necessity of Ordination it self; and much less of an uninterrupted Succession, by deriving it thro' such and such Hands. And herein we concur. As far as I can judge, what Mr. *Hoadly* Ascribes to Mr. *Baxter* was very remote from his Thot's. And whether He or I mistake him, must be left to the Judgment of indifferent Persons.

But our Author is so willing to be tho't to agree with Mr. *Baxter* upon this Head, that it goes a little against me to Rob him of his Imagination: And yet we often find such Confusion arising from Persons mistaking each others Language, that I cannot but think all are bound to do what they can to prevent it. And therefore I shall add, that our Author here presents us with one of the oddest sorts of Agreements that a Man shall ordinarily meet with. 'Tis an Agreement that leaves a difference but in every Article of the Debate. If Mr. *Baxter* is for going to an *Ecclesiastical Officer for Ordination, rather than to a Magistrate, because God hath appointed him for Order sake*: Mr. *Hoadly* presently thinks him-

himself *obliged to seek Ordination from a Bishop rather than from Presbyters, because God hath appointed him for Order sake.* But where's the Affinity of their Sentiments? One is for a Minister of Christ, rather than a Magistrate in Ordination: The other mighty Zealous for an Ecclesiastical Bishop, exclusively to all other Ministers of Christ. The one can prove that God hath really appointed his Ministers the ordinary investing Officers: The other may warmly Assert, but would find it hard to prove, that God hath given any peculiar Authority to Bishops above other Ministers. Methinks any two Persons might agree upon as good Terms as these! An Argument drawn from such an Agreement as this, must needs be mighty strong! But he goes on, and will *think with Mr. Baxter, that necessity only can answer for the irregularity of Ordination.* And thereupon he Argues that we having no *Necessity*, cannot be Justify'd. But we should run too raft if we should imagine, that Mr. *Baxter* and he are of a mind, in the Sense of that Principle. Mr. *Baxter* by an *irregular Ordination*, intends no more than an Ordination manag'd without any Ministerial Investiture; which can only be justify'd by Necessity. While Mr. *Hoadly* calls an Ordination *Irregular* if there be not the hands of a Bishop. Admirable Agreement; where tho' the same Words are us'd, the sense is known to be so different! Once more: He is of Mr. *Baxter's* Judgment in this also, that *Persons are to seek an orderly* Pag. 8.
Administration, and make others the Judges of their Qualifications. In which all that know us, will bear us Witness that we Concur both in Judgment and Practice. But then Mr. *Baxter* reckon'd it an *orderly Admission*, if Presbyters were Concern'd: Whereas Mr. *Hoadly* will have it

that Superiour *Bishops* are Necessary. He says they *imagine their Method to be the orderly and settled Method from the Primitive Ages*. I can't but observe a considerable fall, from *Demonstration* to *Imagination*. He says, they *dare not think that God allows so great a Neglect cast upon the Order settled in his Church*, as they must do should they own us for Ministers. We desire Proof that the Order we Neglect was of God's settling, exclusively of any other Method. This shall be no sooner prov'd, then they'll find us ready to put them out of their Pain. In the mean time we hope they'll excuse us, if we question whether 'tis within the compass of a Humane Authority, to nullifie a Solemnity that is manag'd agreeably to the Rule of Scripture. But our Author *dares not in Conscience give any encouragement to a Method which has disunited a whole Nation from their Bishops*. *Dares not in Conscience?* That carries the Point far. I might naturally eno' be led to put him in mind of what hath been reply'd by some of his Church, upon those that pleaded *Conference* in their Dissent, but Will forbear and only say this, that no more in the Nation are Disunited, than the *Bishops* at King *Charles's* Restauration, and their Adherents, tho't fit to throw out of the National Establishment: Which instead of taking in all that might be useful and serviceable, was purposely design'd to exclude many because their Consciences were not exactly of the same Size and Dimensions with their Neighbours. Tho' methinks 'tis pretty much, it should be intimated that a whole Nation is disunited from their *Bishops*, by our Means, at a time of Day, when the number of those who separate from them is commonly represented as so contemptible; and when many of those who do separate
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from them discover a greater Respect and Honour for my Lords the *Bishops*, on the Account of their Eminent Piety, and Learnings Integrity and Candour Zeal for the true Protestant Interest, and Concern for the Publick Peace, even than many of those who Profess a Subjection to them. This I look upon as one of the Peculiarities, for which our Age will hereafter be remarkable. Our Author farther thinks that the *encouraging of us, would be in-effect an Acknowledgment that God approves of irregular Ordinations, upon no Necessity*. But this is a groundless fear, if our Ordinations can be prov'd *Regular* upon a Scripture bottom. And whereas he thinks that the owning us, would *tend to introduce more and more irregular Ordinations, whenever any Necessity should be pretended*: I could assure him, if it might be any Satisfaction to him, that as indifferent tho'ts as some are pleas'd to entertain of us, it would upon Tryal be found, that as backward as we are to encourage an *Ecclesiastical Pound*, we have yet so little Fondness for a *Wild Common*, that we should readily join with our Brethren in declaring our dislike of any Ordinations' that can from Scripture be prov'd to be Irregular.

But we have not yet done with Mr. *Baxter*. For our Author will have it to have been *his* Pag. 9.
Opinion, (the' as plain as it is, I can find nothing of it in the *Paper he refers to*) *that nothing but Neceffity can excuse those who neglect Episcopal Ordination; and that their irregular Ordination when there is no Necessity for it, is not approv'd by God*. Had Mr. *Hoadly* considerably weigh'd what Mr. *Baxter* hath written upon this Argument, not only in his Debate with Mr. *Johnson* (in which however, 'tis not very likely, he should argue against the very Hypothesis he was main-

* *His Disputations of Church Government. And his Treatise of Episcopacy.* Cap. 25.

Pag. 10.

taming and supporting) but in his other Writings *, I can hardly suppose he would have represented this as his Principle. However, if it was his Principle, we once for all disown it 'till it is prov'd, and therefore hope he may be at length dismiss'd from farther Concern in this Debate.

But upon this Occasion our Author will Argue with us about our *Necessity*. Tho' I must confess I don't much labour about it, having clear'd our Grounds from Scripture, yet I'm free to follow him. He very pleasantly tells us, that *if we can prove an apparent Necessity of having recourse to irregular Methods*, he will then be so Condescending as to believe that God approv'd our Ordination, and does approve it, as long as that *Necessity lasts*. He is extremely Obliging I must: Confess. But we know of no *irregular Methods* relating to our Ordination, nor any *Necessity* in our Case, of what the Rule will not Justifie: and therefore are unconcerned Persons. We are satisfy'd both as to our *Regularity* and as to *God's Approbation*. If he hath any thing to say to us, we are ready to give it its due Consideration: And when he becomes Acquainted with a *Catholick Spirit*, Doubt not but his *Brotherly kindness* will be more Extensive. In the mean time since he puts a great many Questions to us, I'll return him a free and candid Answer, as far as I am my self Concern'd. And if my Answer contains more of my self and my own particular Sentiments or Circumstances, than it was Necessary for all the World to know, it must be charg'd upon the lifting Nature of our Author's Questions. I the rather choose to Answer in my own Name, because I can be better satisfy'd I express my own Sense than anothers. And I keep my Answer in the very
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Words of our Author, as much as may be, for his better Satisfaction.

I never doubted but *that very many Conscientious, Useful, Judicious, Pious, Excellent, Laborious Men, have conform'd to the Church of England as Ministers.* And I could heartily wish that the number of those to whom these Characters belong was yet greater. But several even of this Stamp, have look'd upon the *Terms of Ministerial Conformity* as *unreasonably impos'd*; and freely declar'd upon Occasion that there was good Reason for an Alteration. And at the same time there have been others as Conscientious, Useful, Judicious, Pious, Excellent, Laborious Men, who have refus'd to Conform as Ministers *, and tho't themselves oblig'd, for the sake both of themselves and others, to avoid the ensnaring Bonds they must have come under in Conforming. And having carefully made my Remarks, upon the Conduct of the one and of the other; upon their declared Principles; the influence of their several Principles upon, their Practise; their Tempers, Aims and Views; their several Writings, and their differing Actions, with their Tendencies and Consequences; I seem to my self to have to the full as much Reason to fall in with the latter, as Mr. Hoadly can think he has for adhering to the former.

I am far from thinking *any means Necessary to the Peoples Salvation wanting in the Church of En-* Pag. 11.
gland.

* *They declare plainly, (says the charitable Author of the Conf. Plea for the N. Q.) and truly, they cannot Conform to the present Constitution: Who should best know that, they or we? Will it follow, we can, therefore they may? Or that good Men have, therefore all good Men can?*
1st Plea. Pag. 45.

gland: Else I should look upon my self as oblig'd to warn all to leave it upon pain of Damnation, Than which hardly any tho't can be more Remote from me. And tho' I often think a stinted *Liturgy* hath so many Inconveniencies attending it as put in the Ballance with its Conveniences, leave it uncertain which is greater, if the thing be consider'd in the General: Yet I own the *Liturgy* us'd in our Church to be as to the main of it *Pious* and *Useful*: I take it to have been a considerable advance towards a Reformation of our Worship, when first it was Publish'd, with a design to have been carry'd afterwards much farther: But it has since been too much Magnify'd and even Idoliz'd. And there are many things in it, which I should admire to see defended and pleaded for by Men of Sense, were I not aware of the force of Education, and Prepossession.

That *Chapter out of God's Word may be every-day read*, must be acknowledg'd: but that other Writings of a vastly inferiour Authority, should be read also, to the encouraging some to equal them with the Word of God, is much to be Lamented. That *the whole will of God may be declar'd to People* in the Church of England, I cannot contradict. But that the Authority of the Church is generally rais'd to an higher pitch than the Word of God will justifie, is what I am concern'd at: And that that part of the *Will of God* which relates to the spirituality of his Worship, the Forbearance, he requires in things that are not Necessary, and the Discipline that is requisite to preserve the Purity of his House, with other things of Importance, are so rarely and sparingly insisted on, as that a Man becomes Obnoxious, by opening himself about them, with that freedom which the Holy Scriptures

Scriptures would warrant; is a Lamentation. That *there is nothing* in our Establish'd Church. *in the Administration of the Sacraments, contrary to the main Design of the Gospel or destructive of Salvation*, I freely own: But at the same time cannot see how the imposing such Additions as are made to the Sacrament, under such a Penalty as is fix'd, can ever be justify'd. The requiring any thing as a term of Church Communion, which is not Necessary to an acceptance with God now, or an entrance into Heaven hereafter, be it one party of Christians or another that is concern'd, is what I look upon my self as oblig'd publickly to discover my dislike of, in such ways as are consistent with Charity; which I would still be careful to maintain.

Were there any *Duty of a Minister* absolutely *Necessary to the Preservation of a Church, or the Salvation of Mankind, that a Minister in the Church of England could not legally do*; I see not how their Ministers could be able to approve themselves to God: And yet their not being in so high a degree Condemn'd, is but a poor Commendation of a Church that is applauded, as coming little short of Perfection. The Law may allow a Minister to do every thing that is absolutely *Necessary to preserve a Church, and save its Members*, and yet leave such Disorders remaining, as Ministers may be oblig'd openly to declare against and both Ministers and People in their several Stations, and according to their differing Capacities, to endeavour to get Reform'd. That a *Minister* in the Establish'd Church may *Exhort, Reprove, be instant, Instruct, and Admonish in Private and in Publick*, I can't gain-say: But I wish it were done so generally, as that none might have the Face to represent
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those that are herein exactly careful, as any thing singular. I'll add, a Minister *may refuse the Holy Communion to any scandalous Christians* too; and be teaz'd and worry'd for it when he has done, in a sort of *Courts* call'd *Ecclesiastical*; where all the World knows the Gain of the Officers is more consider'd than the Purity of the Church. This is a Corruption, that demands the *restoring the Ancient Godly Discipline*.

Bating things *convenient*, as to which I suppose Mr. *Hoadly* himself would hardly Contest, but that their Ministers are much Confin'd, should I insinuate as if there were any thing that *could not be done, that is so necessary as that the state of Christianity, and the Salvation of the People depended on it*, I should unchurch them, and be as uncharitable to them, as many of them are to us. This is a Temper which I so little like in others, that I dare not allow my self in it. For I can rejoice in their Usefulness, at the same time as I desire to be thankful, that there are so many of us that are capable of some Service, upon a more Catholick Bottom, than that of the National Establishment. I never *tho't my self oblig'd to be Ordain'd, after an irregular manner, to make my self capable of this Service*. I am as well satisfy'd in the Regularity of my Orders, and the Divine Approbation of the Method I proceeded in, as Mr. *Hoadly* himself can be in his own Case. I no more *put my self into the Ministry*, than he, or any of his Brethren. According to the Rules given by our ablest Casuists by which to judge of a clear Call to that Office, I find my self abundantly Justify'd in My Choice of that Employment, rather than any other; and in my Separation to it, I'm as well satisfy'd in following

ing a Divine, as he can be in following a Humane Authority. That there is *Occasion for our Help* may be allow'd to be one great *Reason* for our entering the Ministry. Had not I been satisfy'd as to that, I should have had little Heart to look that way. And yet it doth not necessarily follow, that I must therefore think *there are very few in the Church of England that take any Care of Souls*. I rejoice that there are so many in the National Church that *do take Care of Souls*: I could wish there were many more of them that truly did so: But if all whom the State thinks fit to encourage by a Publick Maintenance were ever so Diligent and Faithful, I can't see Reason to apprehend that their Number (compar'd with the Souls to be look'd after) would be so great, as to render the help of other Faithful Persons in the same Office needless *. And when these Supernumeraries while they are endeavouring to do what Good they can, can contentedly depend upon Divine Providence, and the Benevolence of such as think fit to make use of their Labours, without being burdensome to the State, ingenuous Persons will think they rather deserve to be Applauded than Discountenanc'd. To his Question, *Why I Officiate, where there is no Occasion for me, where no want of the means of Salvation can be pretended?* I answer; That I think 'tis fittest to eye the Conduct of Divine Providence in a Variety of particular Circumstances,

* This is frankly acknowledg'd by the Author of the *Conformists Plea for the N. C.* There is (says he) eno' for us and for them to do, if there were the greatest Union of Minds and wisest Distributions, according to each Mans Abilities, *Pres. to his 1st Plea.*

stances, in order to a determination of the Place where we should Officiate as Ministers. And if it will be any Satisfaction to him, I can assure him, that as far as I was able to judge upon a serious weighing Circumstances, it appear'd to me to be my Duty in Particular, to fix in this my Native City. Herein I look upon my self as the less likely to be Biass'd, because my Inclinations led me pretty strongly another way. And tho' (Blessed be God) the means of Salvation are not wanting here, yet I am fully perswaded, that all the Ministers both in our Churches and Meeting-Houses, are not sufficient to take a due Care of that vast Number of Souls, that is to be found in this City and the Out-Parts. I'm sure I preach in the Neighbourhood of a Place, that contains many Thousand Souls, who are at a great Distance from their Parish Church, which if ever so Crouded, would be able to contain but a small Moiety of the Parishioners. As for our Ministers in the Countrey, I believe few will be found in Villages, where the Publick Provision is tolerable: Or if there are some such, 'tis rare but they Officiate at different Hours from the Ministers in the Publick Churches. But in Market-Towns, the Number of Ministers, for whom the State has provided a Maintenance, is generally too small for the Necessities of the Souls of the Inhabitants. And why in such cases, is there not as real Occasion for our Assistance, as for the Erecting Tabernacles, in our larger Parishes in and about the City? And tho' our Author insinuates, *this Plea will be ever us'd by the most unqualify'd, and give Occasion, whether we will or no, to the greatest Irregularities imaginable, without any stop, if any thing be allow'd to justify, besides absolute Necessity:*

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Yet I don't see that this Suggestion has all the Force in. it that he seems to apprehend. For if we were Responsible for all possible Consequences of our Actions, I can't see how any Mortal could hope for any Ease or Peace: And if when present Duty is clear, we can't leave Events to Divine Providence, 'tis not to be expected we should ever act without Embarrassment. However, when Persons that are really *unqualify'd* make use of such a Plea, that they must Officiate as Ministers because there is Occasion for their Help, they may very safely be Rejected; not because their Plea is not good, but because they are *unqualify'd*. I plead for no such, because the Scripture gives them no Warrant. But then I think those that are duly Qualify'd are not to be despis'd, because others that are not so, may sometimes offer their Help. Let us but *stop* at the Qualifications which the Scriptures require, and I see no such formidable Danger of any such Irregularities, as need Discourage us from letting our selves to do all the Good we can to Souls, even tho' the *State* does not think fit so far to encourage us, as to give us a settled Maintenance. And I am enclin'd to Believe, should our Ministry drop, and not be continu'd, the Publick would remarkably suffer; both in the loss of all Hope of any considerable Amendments, which will never be despair'd of, as long as a Body are kept together upon our Principle of *the Necessity of a farther Reformation*: And also in a visible careflessness of many of the Publick Ministers, in the Discharge of the several Parts of their Office, who are at present under a Necessity of Diligence and Care, for fear of loosing their Hearers. This Consideration strengthens the Argument drawn
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from the Occasion that there is for our Help. But as for the Occasion there is for any of us in particular Places, it depends upon Circumstances which ought to be weigh'd by any Man that pretends to pass a Judgment. This I must needs say, take the matter in the General, and I think our Brethren of the Establish'd Church are as much in Danger of fixing Irregularly as we. There are so many little Arts and Fetches, to secure the Good Will of a Patron, or his Steward, or any such as have the Ascendant over him, in order to a Settlement in a good Living, (which are things that we know nothing of) that were we to go round the Kingdom to the several Places where there is a Conformist Preacher and a Non-conformist, I don't much doubt but if a Candid Answer were to be return'd by each to this Question, how he came there? the Latter might be able, many times, to give an Account that should be as satisfactory to an unbiass'd Person as the Former. Our Author therefore should not confine his Concern as to *Irregularities* wholly to our side: for he may find some as Considerable among his own Friends: Not that the *Irregularities* of one side can really justify those of the other side: And yet in any case it makes Tragical Complaints about *Irregularities*, less Decent. However, tho' we must not do Evil that Good may come, yet I can't see that our not being able to do Good with all the Advantage we might desire, can annul our Obligation to do Good as far as we are able. As for the *Mischief of Irregularities*, which he talks of, it must be charg'd upon those who are the real Caule of those *Irregularities*. For my own part, I hope I might not have been wholly useless, in a private *Capacity*, had I remain'd a *Lay-Man*;

Man; and yet I conceive I am. now in a much greater Capacity of Service, by my Endeavours to promote Holiness, Truth and Peace: The prospect of which (I think I can truly say) was one considerable Inducement to me, to ingage in a Work, in which I had Reason to expect a great many Difficulties, and more Diccouragements than I should have needed to fear in a more private Station. As for *dividing Principles, Heats, Uncharitableness, and Indecencies*, I would be as fearful of *encouraging* them as any Man: If *whether I design it or no*, they are propagated by my *Non-conformity*, in which it is my Endeavour to keep within such Bounds as the Word of God will warrant. Let them look to it, who forc'd me to be a *Non-conformist*. For tho' words may be multiply'd, yet it appears very evident, that the *Encouraging and Propagating any dividing Principles, Heats, Uncharitableness, and Indecencies*, there are among us, is much more owing to the Imposers and Justifiers of things unnecessary in the Church, than to me and others who would gladly fall in with the Method us'd by the Apostles of our Blessed Saviour, who left things *Indifferent* as they found them; without making them Terms either of Church Communion, or of Admission into the Ministry.

That I had in offering my self to *Ordination* some regard to those who ordinarily worship Pag. 13.
God separately from the Church or *England*, I freely own: Tho' not indeed so much to those *who cannot submit to the Administration of the Sacraments, according to the Use of the Church*; As to such as are of a Catholick Spirit, and charitably Dissent from the National Establishment, waiting in Hope of the Removal of those dividing Engines, of which their Fathers have been

been freely complaining, ever since the Reformation. But I know of no real Irregularity I was this way *forc'd* to; nor can I see Reason to be at all disturb'd at our Author's imagining me to be *Irregular*, which may easily arise from his viewing things through a deceitful Medium. And tho' I have laid it down with my self for a Rule, and fix'd my Resolution to be Cautious in my Carriage towards the *Church of England*, yet *pressing Conformity to it*; that is *constant Conformity*, to the excluding Communion with other Societies of worshipping Christians that are among us, is what I am not convinc'd is my Duty; and I believe never shall, till I find it evidenc'd, that the Church of Christ in *England*; is as narrow as the National Establishment; which is too uncharitable a Principle to have my Approbation. *Prejudices, and groundless Scruples*, however, I have never encourag'd, but often endeavour'd to remove, and sometimes with Success. And so far I am for *Persons tolerating what they can't amend*, as to wait God's time, and use his Methods only: And yet I think. I should do more than I could justify, should I pretend to encourage the Approbation of real Corruptions, or do any thing that I might foresee would Confirm those who plead for them, and openly declare against their removal. But as for *receiving none, but such as have invincible Objections against Communion with the Church*, I cannot but look upon it as an uncharitable motion. For as our Afsemblies are true Churches of Christ, I think they ought to be own'd as such, as well as those that are Bottom'd upon the National Establishment. And to refuse any, that will so own us, is not only to Condemn our selves, but to encourage their
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want of Charity. Had we all along acted upon this Principle of Our Authors, we might more effectually have secur'd the Interest of our Party, than by the Method that has been taken; but at the same time we had disserv'd the Cause of Charity. As for *Countenancing a Contempt of all Ecclesiastical Authority*, 'tis a high Crime, as far as that Authority is *Scriptural*: And so far it has been, and will be my endeavour to keep my self and others free from Guilt? and I can't find that I am obnoxious to Censure: But any farther, and as the pretended Authority is *purely Ecclesiastical*, I must confess my Opinion of it runs but low; and I am not able to blame others for being of the same Mind, till I have receiv'd farther Light, to which I desire to be always open. But the *encouraging such as Separate with rank Uncharitableness, and Rail at the whole Worship of the Church as Idolatrous, Antichristian, and Popish*, I am satisfy'd I shall be charg'd with, by none that know me. So far am I from a *Fondness of adding Life and Continuance to Uncharitable Prejudices*, that I take all Occasions to discover my Dislike of them. It has been, and I hope always will be, my hearty Prayer, and earnest Endeavour, as far as I am able to Contribute, that Truth, Purity, and Love, may be jointly pursu'd among us.

The Grand Question of my Catechist is yet Behind. And that is. *What Necessity there was of my Ordination to the Ministry?* An answer to this Question in his own Case, would have help'd me to Answer it in mine. I don't know what degree of Necessity he may expect in the Case of particular Persons, as to the Employment of their Lives, by influencing in the Choice of which. Divine Providence serves great and considerable Purposes in the World. For my part, I never

imagin'd but that the World might have been continu'd, and the Church preserv'd, tho' such a one as I had never been; or had been confin'd to a remote Corner, so as never to have been heard of: I should not have fear'd that the Interest of God among us should have fail'd, tho' Twenty, nay a Hundred of us that now are Ministers, had kept in a more private Station. And yet I think, that as well as the rest of my Neighbours, I was oblig'd to do something to answer the End of my Production and Sustentation. I had an Inclination to *Learning* from a Child; which Inclination was encourag'd not only by my Dissenting Friends and Relations, but by several of the Church of *England* also; and particularly, after my Father's Death, by my Uncle, to whose Judgment, I suppose, Mr. *Hoadly* may pay some deference. Once I well remember in a private Conversation with him, when he had made a Tryal of my Improvement, he was particularly enquiring into my Inclination: And when I signify'd my Tho'ts of the Ministry, he very much encourag'd me. He generously offer'd to have maintain'd me at Cambridge, and to have improv'd his Interest (which was not inconsiderable,) in order to my Preferment, as I became capable. I was very sensible of his Kindness, but freely told him, that Travelling Abroad would suit me better, and as I apprehended, have some Advantages attending it, which I could not look for in a Domestick Education. Tho' I could discern he would have been better pleas'd if I had gone to one of our Universities; yet he afterwards often encourag'd my Inclination to *Learning* and the *Ministry*. When I tho't my self of that Age, as that I was capable of Judging for my self, upon a serious weighing of Circumstances.

Dr. Benjamin Calamy.

stances, as to the several Learned Professions, I could not find any way by which I was so likely (as far as I could apprehend) to answer that which ought to be the *great End*, as by Devoting my Self to the Service of God and his Church in the Work of the Ministry. And accordingly I principally bent my Studies that way. Having spent several Years in Preparatory Studies, I tho't it highly Necessary to enter into the Controversy betwixt the *Conformists* and *Non-conformists*, that I might Determine for my self upon mature Deliberation. This I pursu'd at *Oxford*, where I spent some time. And can hardly suppose, that in such a Place it can be tho't likely I should be prejudic'd against the *Church of England*. I heard their Sermons, I attended their Publick Exercises, I frequented their Libraries, particularly the *Bodleian*, and had free Conversation with Gentlemen and Scholars of all Ranks, and must own, that I met with all imaginable Civility in that Learned University. But having Read the chief Authors on both sides, and made my Remarks and Observations, I at length came to this Issue, that it was my Duty to adhere to those who insist upon a *farther Reformation*. Having the Attestation of such Ministers as were competent Judges as to Capacity; and their Encouragement; I preach'd as a Candidate as Opportunity offer'd, either among Church Men or Dissenters. And after four Years Tryal, I desir'd to be Regularly invested with a Ministerial Authority, but determin'd that I would do no Violence to my Conscience in order to it. This I tho't *necessary*, that I might conform to the Rule of Scripture. I should freely have taken Orders from a Bishop, that none of my Countrey-men might

have had so much as a Scruple as to the Validity of them, could I have found any one that would not have demanded a Subscription and Engagement to Conformity, and a Subjection to the present Ecclesiastical Government; which Subscription and Engagement would to me have been a Snare. And therefore I apply'd my self to Presbyters, who I found were free to Ordain me, without any Embarrassing Clogs, upon my giving them Satisfaction as to my being qualify'd as the Word of God requires. And I bless God upon a Review, both that I am in the Ministry, and that I am hitherto free from any ensnaring Bond. It was *necessary* therefore that I should fix upon some Calling that I might not be wholly Useless. I was under no *Necessity* indeed of fixing on the Ministerial Calling, but rather chose it than any other, as hoping that I might be most useful in it. Having fix'd upon the Ministry, I judg'd my Ordination *necessary*, to my having the Authority, and my Regular Discharge of the Duty of a Minister. And it was so far *necessary* that I should be Ordain'd by Presbyters, as that I could not have been Ordain'd otherwise, unless I had yielded to that which I was not Convinc'd could warrantably be requir'd of me, or done by me. My Labours in the Church were call'd for, by such as wanted Help. I had no Reason to think any other, than that I might be useful, with the Divine Blessing. It was *necessary* I should be Ordain'd, that I might be capable of Discharging all the Parts of the Ministerial Function among them. So that upon the whole, tho' I pretend no such *absolute Necessity*, as if my Post might not as well, or better, have been fill'd up by Others: Yet here is as much of *Necessity*

sity as I desire, in order to my own Satisfaction, in my Proceedings, or my Justification with Candid Persons. And tho' Mr. *Hoadly* will after all, put me upon *considering, whether such unwarrantable Ordinations as Ours, do not tend to the Contempt of all Institutions and Ordinances*, yet I think very needlessly; when I plead for no Ordination that is not warranted by Scripture.

Thus having *consider'd his Questions*, according to his Desire, I have endeavour'd to *Answer them with all the Seriousness the Subject requires*. What Satisfaction my Answers may give I know not; but must declare, *the Account this way given, why Episcopal Ordination is so insisted on*, in the Case of the Ejected Ministers and their Successors, gives me no Satisfaction. For I cannot see that any thing suggested, proves me no true Minister of Christ; and much less proves it to be my Duty to own I am not a Valid Gospel Minister, while I am convinc'd that I am one. Nor yet, is it prov'd that I ought not to be own'd as such, if I have such Qualifications as the Scripture insists on: As to which, I am ready to give my Superiors, whether in *Church or State* satisfaction, whenever I am call'd upon. And if due care was taken on all Hands, that all unqualify'd Persons were disown'd, and no Persons duly qualify'd for the Ministry rejected, I see no great Danger of any mighty Irregularity: And I am sure the Credit of Religion in General, and of the Ministry in Particular, would be more consulted this way, than by insisting on Niceties and Formalities.

Our Author says, he *judges it very hard that this of Re-ordination should be number'd amonst the unreasonable Terms of Ministerial Conformity;*

Pag. 15.

but I am notable to see any great ground for it, ilnce renouncing our Orders, (and yielding to be Ordain'd by Bishops in our Case, according to his own Account, implies no less) which are agreeable to the Word of God, would be a flat Sin. As to what he proposes to Consideration, of Our *argning for Ignorant Mechanicks, by arguing against his Assertion, under the general Name of Dissenters*, I can't see there is any thing in it. He might as well say, we argue for the Quakers, who also are Dissenters.

Pag. 16.

What he advances as to our Elder Ministers, who were Ejected on *Bartholomew-day*, would be something to the Purpose if it were prov'd. He says, *Their Ordination by Presbyters, after that Bishops were put down, became Null when the Bishops were restor'd*. He'd find it hard to reconcile this with the Act of Parliament in Sixty One, which Declar'd and Confirm'd them Ministers to all Intents and Purposes, However if it was *Null*, and Ordination upon that Account necessary, what becomes of Mr. *Ollyffe* and his Brethren, that look upon the accounting Re-ordination in their Case, to be an Acknowledgment of that *Nullity*, a Misrepresentation? But what has been advanc'd in the foregoing Discourse, proves their Ordination Valid. And if it was ever *Valid*, I'm at a loss to find out how it should become properly *Null*. Upon this Occasion he again Dilates upon the Head of *Necessity*, and from Mr. *Baxter* too: But as I don't find our Elder Ministers look upon themselves as at all concern'd in it, so I know none of our Younger Ministers that argue for themselves, with a Train of Tho'ts like that over which he Triumphs.

P. 20,21.

But the Account he gives of *the Blessing of Heaven attending the Sacred Ministrations* of our Worthies,

Worthies, must not be over-look'd. He says, *we seem to speak too often of it*. We remember time was when the Apostle *Paul*, who was a Pattern of Modesty and Humility, yet did not think Boasting unbecoming or needless, while God had the Glory. If we speak upon good Grounds however, we may be the better born with. This I dare Assert; it would be hard to find any set of Men since the Primitive Times, (unless the first Reformers of these Western Parts from Popery should be excepted) whom God more signally own'd in their Sacred Ministrations, for the spreading of Real Piety, than those Ejected Ministers, who have since been so contemn'd. May we that come after them but have like Success, and it will help us to bear Slights and other Difficulties much the more chearfully. But this he intimates *is no Argument, of God's approving Ordination*, either in their Case or ours. I could wish he had express'd the matter more softly. I hope he he hath left room for second Tho'ts. For tho' I'll own the Consequence he urges on one hand against an Argument drawn from *Success*, deserves to be consider'd, yet is there much also to be consider'd on the other hand, before all regard to *Success* should be intirely disown'd. I should be as loath to *Patronize* real *Irregularities* as Mr. *Hoadly*: And yet should be also afraid of despising such, as God is pleas'd signally and remarkably to own and succeed in, their Endeavours in a Ministerial way for the good of Souls. And I am apt to think our Author if he well consider'd the matter, would find it difficult to prove that that Ministry is not in the main approv'd of God, which he is pleas'd ordinarily to Bless, for the spreading of real Vital Religion. What God may in some cases

cases do, by way of *reward to the honesty of well meaning People*, tho' they are deluded, I cannot say. But when there are among any People, two different Sets of Ministers, each pretending to be sent of God, and that upon the same Errand, *viz*, to bring Souls to Christ, in the Method propos'd in the Gospel, and afterwards train them up for Heaven? the one saying that they and their Brethren too may be sent of God; and the others that they alone are sent of God, and that the rest tho' ever so well qualify'd for the Office, and ever so Serious and Diligent in it, come of their own Head, and without a Warrant: I know not how in such a case to suppose, that God should as evidently and remarkably (to say no more) Succeed the one sort as the other, if they were not as really of his sending. To me I most Confess, the greater Charity of the one sort of these Ministers than of the other, would appear to carry in it something of a Divine Signature. And the *Success* if but equal, I should think, spake something in their Favour. For 'tis hard to imagine God should be as ready to own the Ministerial Labours of such as set themselves to work without being sent, as of those who really acted by vertue of his Commission. And this is to me so much the less conceivable, because I look upon the saving Effects of any Ministry, as owing to a special Divine Influence. And to suppose this ordinarily afforded, in the case of Persons whom God never sent, is to represent God himself as contributing to the subverting of Order and Regularity in his Church. I find the sacred Scriptures also hinting that about this matter, which deserves to see consider'd. When God was speaking of pretended Prophets among his Ancient People, whom

whom he neither *sent nor Commanded*, he declares that therefore and on that very account, *they should not profit the People at all*. Why the case should in this respect be tho't alter'd under the Gospel, may deserve Mr. *Hoadly's* Enquiry. As also why we may not have some regard to the Success of Ministrations now, in Proof of a Divine Mission, as well as at the first Rise of Christianity. This Argument was then urg'd by no less a Person than St. *Paul*, and that when his Commission was call'd in Question too. He proves his Ministry Warrantable, Divine, and approv'd of God, from the Success it had on the Hearts of the *Corinthians*. He calls them *his work in the Lord: and the seal of his Apostleship*. He intimates that God hereby set his Seal to his Apostolical Commission. Certainly then there must be something in Divine Effects, to argue a Ministry Divine. And therefore to speak my own sense freely, let Mr. *Hoadly* make as light of this matter as he pleases; May I be able to prove my self sent of Christ, by the Success of my Ministry in the Conversion of Souls to God, and I shall never fear his disowning me, tho' I had not near so much to alledge in Defence of my Ordination, as is contain'd in these very Papers.

Jer. 23.
32.

1 Cor. 9.
1, 2.

But says our Author, *if this may be allow'd as an Argument that God approv'd your Ordination, all Partys in the World will claim it, and the most Irregular will plead it, and patronise under it, the greatest irregularities imaginable*. Be it so; I don't discern we are therefore oblig'd wholly to set it aside. If *all Partys do claim it*, 'tis rather a sign there is something, than an Argument there is nothing in it. For all don't use to agree in a Principle that has nothing of a Foundation. In some cases we commonly re-

present

present it as a confirming Evidence of the truth of a thing, when even the Erroneous themselves are forc'd to agree to it, and urge it on their own behalf. And yet because this is an Argument which may be very easily abus'd; and all that *Success* that may be pleaded is not real; I am not for taking it alone, but in Conjunction with other things: And I am for using an Argument of this kind with Care and Caution, but can't see why it must therefore be quite discarded. A thing may be very good, tho' some abuse it: Or otherwise I know not what would become of our beloved Ceremonies. Are *Miracles* no Proof of a Divine Mission, because they may be pretended where they are not Real? Or is the Doctrine of *Free Grace* to be conceal'd, because some may take occasion from thence to confirm themselves in Licentiousness? If Mr. *Hoadly* would calmly consider the matter, he would not find the harsh Consequences to be on one side only: He would soon see, that there is not so much danger in using an Argument from *Success*, with just Limitations; as there is in denying it to carry in it any thing of an Argument. And therefore I recommend it to his second Tho'ts.

Having thus consider'd his Reasons why Reordination is in the present case insisted on? I stand where I did: Nay am the more confirm'd in this, that we Dissenters are not the only Persons in the World, among whom the want or decay of Charity and Humility is to be lamented. But how can I over-look his closing *Request*; which is no other than this, that we would not by proceeding to Ordain Persons in our way, *Go on to lay an unnecessary Bar in the way of others?* He seems to think we may very well comply with them, in such a small thing.

It

It is no more than this; that we would be content as Ministers drop off among us, to fall into the hands of Lay-men, 'till we could comply with the *Church of England*. But if he apprehends this would promote the Credit or Interest of Religion in general thro' the Nation, or be the way to put a stop to Irregularities, he must excuse me that I can't agree with him. For I have as good Evidence to the contrary, as I can have in any thing of that Nature. If the keeping up Ordination among us be a *Bar of Union* upon Scripture Terms, (and other Union we have no great Reason to be fond of) 'tis the stiffness of the Church that makes it so. And therefore he would have much more Reason on his side, if as Opportunity offers, he would make it his *Request* to his Superiors both in Church and State, to Sacrifice a Point of Honour to the Peace of God's House, and own those as Ministers, whom, it cannot be prov'd Christ does disown.

He next proceeds to answer the Reasons alledg'd against *Re-ordination*. Here he says, he is not *for perswading* the Ejected Ministers, *to act against their Consciences to prevaricate or play with Holy Things*: For he supposes he has prov'd them *wholly unqualify'd to act as Ministers*, without Episcopal Ordination. But this his Supposition appearing from the Premises to be Groundless, it remains plain, that if either they, or we, that come after them, should yield to be properly Re-ordain'd, when duly Ordain'd before, there would be a gross *Prevarication*. For if the disowning a Regular Ministerial Investiture, in the Validity of which there is full Satisfaction, upon good Grounds, and the solemn calling upon God now to give that Authority which he was believ'd and known

Pag. 24.

known to have given long before, would not be Prevarication, 'tis hard to say what would deserve that. name. How could I declare to a Bishop, as I must do, if I am now Ordain'd by him, that *I am mov'd by the Holy Ghost to take upon me the Office of a Deacon*, while I am satisfy'd I need no such Office, but am by Authority deriv'd from Christ, already fix'd in the higher Office of a Presbyter? As light as some make of this, it appears to me such gross *Prevarication*, as that I can't wonder that such should have their Peace disturb'd, as comply with it.

He seems to think he sufficiently solves the Objection, taken from the Slur cast by *Re-ordination* on the Reformed Churches, by allowing them a Plea of Necessity; to which I have spoken before. Page 60, 61. And as to what he adds, that *they shall judge that we pay not that Deference to the Reformed Churches, we would seem to pretend, till we remove, alter, and reform every thing among us* according to their Platform; 'tis an Insinuation that takes too wide a compass for any one to be able to make a suitable reply, unless he had more particularly exprest his meaning. I pretend to a little Acquaintance with the State of the *Reformed Churches* abroad and tho' I am far from apprehending them Compleat and Perfect, yet I cannot but esteem the Method they have taken to be vastly preferable to that of the *Church of England*, because they have left much more Latitude in things indifferent, and among the rest, as to the Degree of Ordainers whether they should be Bishops or Presbyters. And whereas *he thinks we would not allow it a good Argument for insisting upon Re-ordination, if they could produce Reformed Churches abroad of their Opinion*; I am not so fond of Contradicting him as to pretend I should look
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upon it as a concluding Argument: and yet can't forbear thinking it would be the matter of much Triumph among them, if they could produce any such Evidence in their Favour; and that it would be as good an Argument, as any he has tho't fit to alledge in the Case.

Whereas it was farther Urg'd, that *Re-ordination* would create endless Scruples in the Minds of People, as to the past Ministrations of such as yield to it, he asks whether *we'll allow it a good Argument on their side; that if they should admit its into the Ministry without it, it would raise endless Scruples in the minds of many of their best and most understanding People, to see Men admitted as Ministers, who wilfully sought irregular Ordinations?* Which is a thing that if he'd forbear exaggerating, I should not be backward to own would deserve a Parly. Let him instead of representing those that are most Scrupulous upon this Head as the *most understanding People* on their side, which might prove a Temptation to some to join themselves to them, suppose them to be People of but a moderate Under Handing, like the rest of their Neighbours; and to have a considerable Ecclesiastical Tincture in their Composition: And let him instead of supposing us younger Ministers, (on whom I suppose he here has his Eye) *wilfully to seek irregular Ordinations*, but be so Candid as to believe that we act with full Satisfaction as to the regularity of our Method, as far as we can judge; and I am ready to own his Plea will deserve to be consider'd. 'Tis but fitting their Real Scruples should be put in the Ballance as well as ours: And let it but be in the even hands of Persons wholly disinterested, and we are not afraid of the Issue. We could trust such another Man as Sir *Matthew Hale* to hold
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the Scales. Let but the Validity of Past Sacred Ministrations. be secur'd, and it satisfies one Party. And let but the respect to the Episcopal Dignity be secur'd, and the other, Party is easie. And why mayn't this be done by the *Confirmation* of Persons that are found duly qualiify'd, without *Re-ordination*? Our Author seems to suppose that our Ministers *have influence enough to perswade People against unreasonable Scruples* on our side: And why mayn't we suppose the same as to the Ministers also on their side? I don't see that he can advance any thing against us upon this Head of Scruples, which may not be retorted upon him.

But Mr. *Hoadly* will have this Argument on our side, fetch'd from the Scruples of the People to be produc'd only for Form sake; and he alledges as a Proof, the Affair of *Occasional Communion*, whence he takes an opportunity of Triumphing over us, and seems to think he has so urg'd it upon us, as to leave us utterly Confounded. This *Occasional Communion* is most certainly a strange sort of thing, that High Church, Low Church, every one that Writes, must have a fling at it. 'Tis Modish to give it hard Words; and our Author was not willing it seems to be out of the Fashion. He makes most Tragical Exclamations about it. And says *it has fil'd People with Amazement and Uneasiness, so as that they have not known which way to turn themselves, and perhaps have been induc'd to stretch their own Consciences, and furnish themselves with distinctions against they should have occasion for them, &c.* But when our Author is a little cool, and at leisure to consider matters Calmly, I don't know whether he'll find it easie to make it Appear that any *sober Dissenters*, have been more *amaz'd* and *uneasie* about the

Business

Business of *Occasional Communion*, than many Worthy and Pious Persons of the *Church of England* have been and still are, about the different carriage of that Church to an *Idolatrous Romish Mass Priest*, and an Orthodox Dissenting Minister. I could be as Tragical in my Exclamations on this Head, as he is on the other; if I tho't it likely to answer any End. Nay I doubt *Constant Conformity*, whether as Ministers or Lay-men, hath been a greater inducement to many to *stretch their Consciences, and furnish themselves with Distinctions*, than *Occasional Conformity* hath ever been. But not to insist on these things; if he judges of any Body of Men, by a few Particular Persons, he'll be in great danger of doing them wrong. What if some few have been disturb'd and perplext by means of this *Occasional Communion*, is that an Argument that it was generally Scrupled? Whereas the *Re-ordination* of our Ministers would create universal Scruples, as to their foregoing Ministrations. For if it be own'd their Ministry was not Valid, then their Baptisms were not Valid. And therefore we must all be Re-baptiz'd. The generality of our Younger Ministers must be Re-baptiz'd before they are Ordain'd. And many Thousands of all Ranks thro' the Kingdom must be Baptiz'd, or they can't regularly come to the Lord's Table. Would not this create dismal Confusion all thro' the Nation? Is there any thing like it in the case of *Occasional Communion*? Let the most be made of the Disturbance that has created, it lies only in the dissatisfaction of some Particular Persons, who have still had the liberty of acting according to their own Light, without being influenc'd by the Practise of others, any farther than they faw good Reason for it. Whereas in this case I can see no Salvo. A Man

that observes him that Baptiz'd him, owning that he was no Minister, naturally concludes that then he was not rightly Baptiz'd, and therefore must be Baptiz'd a-new: And this way a Gap is open'd for incredible Disturbance. Let Mr. *Hoadly* but shew me, how he'll reconcile the Validity of our Baptism, with the Nullity of our Ministry, and so take away the Scruples upon that Head; and tho' I wont with him *undertake to remove all Scruples on the other Account, and make the matter as plain as the Light*: Yet I'll undertake to suggest what may satisfie such as are not hinder'd by weakness of Judgment, or Prejudice, from taking the force of an Argument, that *Occasional Communion may be a Duty, where Constant Communion would be sinful*. But I forbear enlarging now. In hope it will shortly be Perform'd by a better hand. However, I don't think Mr. *Foe* had so many followers or Abettors among the Dissenters, as our Author seems to apprehend. If he would judge rightly how the Body of them stand affected to *Occasional Communion*, He would do well to observe their Carriage and great general Concern, while the *Late Bill* about it was depending. This was such, as that whoever took Notice of it, and had occasion to observe it among the several sorts of Dissenters, could hardly think it so mightily *Scrupled* among them as Mr. *Hoadly* Represents. And since the dropping of that Bill thro' the vigorous Interpolation of so many Noble Lords, who were aware of the unhappy Consequences it would draw after it, how grateful a Sense may be observ'd among the Dissenters, of their Generous Opposition? How universally is the Courage and Candour of my Lords the Bishops Applauded among us? And the Noble English Bravery, of so many Temporal Lords, who Con-

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curr'd to item the Tide, when it swell'd so high as that no Banks seem'd capable of setting any Bounds to it, what Encomiums hath it met with; Where are those Dissenters that are not sensible how highly we are indebted to their Lordships? And that are not zealously Studious for fitting Expressions of their Gratitude? And does this look as if the *Scruples* upon this Head so mightily prevail'd, as some reckon it for their Interest they should betho't to do? But suppose there were a number of the Dissenters that were Scrupulous about *Occasional Communion* to that degree as our Author intimates; I hope he can distinguish between an unreasonable *Scruple* & a just one: Between a *Scruple* that might be *remov'd* by more Charity, and a *Scruple* bottom'd upon Scripture: Between a *Scruple* as to the Lawfulness of a thing which while it is *Scrupled* may be easily forborn; and *Scruples* as to the Validity of the Application of the Seals of the Covenant, by such as should own themselves to have been no Valid Ministers. In the one case the most Scrupulous can only question the Lawfulness of what we do, but may still keep on their way according to the Dictates of their own Mind: In the other case, condemning our selves, we should condemn them, and put them under a Necessity of repeating the solemnity of Baptism, as to themselves and their Children, and all without any Valid Grounds or Reasons. For tho' our Author with many others (I know) seem of another Mind, yet I can't see how our Baptisms can be own'd, if our Ministry is disown'd: or how our applying the Seals of the Covenant can be Valid, if we act without a Commission. Whatever may be said as to well meaning People, and God's acceptance on the account of their Integrity, where any are taken

out of this World, before the Error is discover'd; Yet whenever such a Publick Conviction should be given of the Invalidity of the Ministry of such as pretended to Officiate out of the Ecclesiastical Pale, as the Submission of the Ministers to proper Re-ordination would carry in it: I can't see how the Laity that sate under their Ministrations, can do any less in Testimony of their Regard to Publick Order, than yield, that both they and their Children should be Re-baptiz'd, by such as were Authoriz'd by Bishops for that Purpose. Which is a thing that as light as Mr. *Hoadly* makes of it, will be found to carry in it matter of just *Scruple* both to Ministers and People, till he does them the kind Office *fairly to remove* it.

But before I dismiss this Head of *Ordination* and *Re-ordination*, I shall take the Liberty to propound to Mr. *Hoadly* a few Questions, which to me appear material. I wont plead my Frankness in returning to his Queries, as an Obligation on him to be as open in a Reply to mine: But beg he will afford them a place in his retired Tho'ts; and if he'l but so far gratify me, I am not without hope he may for the future be less in Danger of being drawn in, by those who are so forward to condemn the Ministers among the *Moderate Dissenters*, as no Ministers of Jesus Christ. I have endeavour'd to express my self as inoffensively as the matters touch'd on would bear: And as to what may appear Reflecting, let but the Notoriety of Fact, on which such Queries are founded be consider'd, and I shall not much fear Censure. For I can't see how it can be desir'd, that such things should be excluded Consideration, in a case of this nature.

Quest.

Question 1. Is it not as Dangerous to disown those Ministers whom Christ approves, as to approve those to whom he has not given a Commission? And is not the Honour of our Redeemer the Order of his House, and the Success of his Gospel, as really concern'd in the former Case as in the Latter?

Quest. 2. How can it be made appear, that Christ does not approve such as he has furnish'd with Ministerial Abilities Such as underhand the Scriptures in their Originals, and are able to expound them and at the same time are furnish'd with other useful Learning? Such as themselves believe, and are fitted to instruct others in all the great Truths of our Holy Religion, and are willing and desirous to serve in the Gospel of Christ? And will promise to Administer all the Ordinances of the Gospel as Christ enjoyn'd them, and the Apostles settled them in the several Churches they planted in the World? Have we any Reason to suppose that our Blessed Lord would have forbidden any such? Would he not rather have sent them out to Preach, with his Benediction? Would not the Apostles have given such the right-Hand of Fellowship? Would not St. *Paul* have rejoic'd that the Gospel was preach'd by such? Could he that *rejoic'd* * that *Christ was preach'd*, tho' it was *of Envy and Strife*, have been against those that *preach'd him »f Good-Will*, when they were duly qualify'd for it? And have not they then Cause to suspect that something or other may mislead them, who are for discouraging such as would have been own'd as Ministers in the first Ages of the Church? Ought not all those to be receiv'd and own'd whom Christ hath Qualify'd with Abilities, and made wil-

ling, and that have dedicated themselves to his Service, and are solemnly set apart by Fasting and Prayer, and Imposition of Hands? Will any Humane Law justify the disowning such? Does that Law that is pleaded against them, require no other Terms than Christ (by whom Christian Magistrates Rule) hath directed them to make for all that shall enter into the Ministry? If it is an Addition to his Direction, was not our Lord Defective in his Settlement? If it be no Addition to it, but warranted by his general Direction, is it yet so Necessary, that the Church should rather loose the Help of their labours, and precious Souls the Benefit of them, than they be own'd in their Labours without it? If it were, why should not our Saviour be more express in his Order about it? Or where hath he made the Pleasure of Governors, either in Church or State, the exact measure of Ministers? So as that without Conformity to it, their Ministrations should become either *Irregular* or *Null*, tho' no other requisite be wanting?

Quest. 3. Did *Saul* forbid *David* to go against *Goliath*, because he could not go harness'd against him in his Armour? Was his Killing that Giant with a Sling and a Stone, a Crime, because he had not the Formalities of a Champion? Why then should a Dissenting Minister, who is desirous to contribute his Help to throw down the Kingdom and Power of Satan, be Discourag'd, meerly for want of Episcopal Investiture?

Quest. 4. *Whether it be a sufficient Reason to refuse to admit able and worthy Men, because they cannot Subscribe, Swear, and Declare, what a few Men, without asking Counsel and Direction of God. by solemn Fasting and Prayer, or by Deliberations*
with

with the fairly and equally chosen Representatives of the whole Church, did resolutely carry on, by Ways and Instruments of their own procuring? And whether Rulers should wholly reject such Men as are duly Qualify'd with Gifts necessary for the Office of the Ministry, who refuse no Catholick, but Conditions dubious in their Sense, and unnecessary in their Mature and Kind? I put this in another Character, as an intimation, that 'tis not of my wording; but propos'd by a worthy Gentleman, who liv'd and dy'd a Minister in the Church of England, in his third Plea for the Non-conformists, pag. 93. who also in the same Page, farther pursues the matter, in such material Queries as these. What Harm or Danger can come to precious Souls, by the Profitable and wholesome Labours of Learned, Judicious, and sound Christian Ministers, endow'd with the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Catholick Church? Why should not they preach the Word? Why may not People hear them? Or why should not we accept their Help, and repute them our Fellow Labourers, and rejoice in their Success? He further goes, on putting Queries that might serve for the Vindication of the Ministers who were Ejected; and afterwards thus argues on the behalf of those who succeeded them in the Ministry among the Dissenters, in pag. 35, 36. Tho' they have not Episcopal Imposition of Hands; if they have Imposition of Hands of Presbyters, and are set apart by Fasting and Prayer, are they not more than Laymen or private Believers? They who say they are but Laymen, have no better Reason than the Romanists had, who call'd our Reform'd Bishops, no true Bishops nor Priests. Anthony Champney dedicated, or rather directed his Book of the location of Bishop, &c. to Archbishop Abbot, with no higher Title, than to Mr. George Abbot,

See Mr.
F. Mason.
§ 7, 9.
*Defence of
Ordinati-
on.*

Dr. Jo.
White's
Works:
*way to the
true
Church.*
§ 53.
p. 211.

called Archbishop of Canterbury. *And the most eminent Defenders of our Protestant Religion, tho' they asserted a Power of Ordination to rewide in the Bishop as without whom there was no Regular Ordination; yet they justify'd the Calling of Foreign Divines and Churches by Presbyters without Bishops, and the Reasons they us'd to vindicate them, will serve to vindicate those among us that have no other. And when as he (the Jesuit) saith they (Luther and Calvin) succeeded no Apostolical Works: Bishops, neither had any Calling to preach that new Faith; I Answer, says Dr. White, That for the external Succession, whereof we have spoken, we care not. It is sufficient, that in Doctrine they succeeded the Apostles, and Primitive Churches. Again; It is the Custom of the Catholick Church, Ut Episcopi legitime Ordinent; sed si quis a Presbytero Ordinatus fuerit. Ordinatio illa etiam vera est, ex ejusdem Ecclesiæ Catholicæ a Judicio* ★, saith the Reverend Bishop Carlton. *And Bishop Bilson, that Learned Defender of Bishops thus answers Philander. Phil. the Apostle's Commission we know, but yours we do not know. Theop.* You cannot be ignorant of ours, if you know theirs, so long as we teach the same Doctrine which they did, we have the same Power and Authority to Preach which they had, &c.

Now (says Mr. Pierce) if these Answers of the Learned Defenders of the Protestant Cause, are not True and Catholick, they are not good nor sufficient: If they are good against the Papists? they are strong for our Protestant Dissenting Preachers; who if they
be

★ See Dr. Field of the Church. Book 3. C.39. Consens. Eccles. Cathol. contra Trident. Prælect. c.11. de Eccles. p. 289. Bishop Bilson of Subjection. Par. 3. p. 535. 40.

be but Lay-Men should be Ordained: But the very word Re-ordination doth imply an Ordination. And Ordination is not to be repeated, altho' it be disorderly and out of course, any more than Baptism in the Catholick Church, saith the same Reverend Bishop Carlton.

Prælecti-
on. de
Ecclesiâ
cap. 11.
p. 283.

I Query who is in the Right, Mr. Hoadly or Mr. Pierce? and the Authors he quotes?

Quest. 5. Is it a fair Treatment of Foreign Protestants, who have fled their own Country for their Religion, and taken Shelter among us, to force them to submit to Re-ordination, and in effect renounce their Orders, before they shall partake of your Charity? And has not this been the Course taken with the French Refugees? While a Popish Priest embracing our Religion, shall without any Scruple about his Orders, be hugg'd in our Bosoms? Is this the way to weaken the Popish Interest? Was any such Method as this taken with our Ministers of the *Church of England*, by the Protestants in *Germany*, when our Confessors fled thither in the time of the *Marian* Persecution?

Quest. 6. Is it Candid and Ingenuous to bear hardest upon such as come nearest to you? And to represent those as most unreasonable, who are most careful to support the Cause of Charity, because they will be Cautious of encouraging the Imposing Terms of Communion; while yet they are desirous to avoid Extremities. Would it not be wiser, and safer, and more for the Publick Good, to take Persons as far as they can go, than while they are approaching as near to you as they judge they can do with safety, to Reflect on them because they come not exactly up to your own Dimensions?

Quest.

Quest. 7. Is not an Honest, Serious, Dissenting Minister, who comes to fix in a Place, upon the urgent Invitation of a Number of the Inhabitants, as likely to be sent thither of God, as he that comes there by the Interest of a Patron, or of the Court, (where all the World knows the best of People have not always the Ascendant) without any Knowledge or Consent of the People among whom he is to Officiate? Is not a Person that is duly Qualify'd for the Ministry, and is invited by any People to take the Charge of their Souls, more likely to be own'd in his Work, than one that obtains *Institution* and *Induction*, without the Content, or sometimes so much as the Knowledge of those whom he takes the Charge of?

Quest. 8. Are not Ignorance, Prophaneness, and Simony, (things of which we find some of the Reverend Bishops have freely taken notice in their several Charges to their Clergy) much more dangerous both to Religion, and the Ministry, than a Separation of Qualify'd Persons to that Office by inferior Ministers? And whence then is it, that so much more Stress should be generally laid on the Latter smaller *Irregularity* (if it indeed deterves to be call'd so) than on the Former more Gross and Pernicious Corruption?

Quest. 9. Is it not a visible Benefit to any Parish, to have a Dissenting Minister open a Meeting in it, where instead of one Hasty Sermon in a Week or Fortnight, the Parishioners' shall from that time forward, besides the Labours of such an Assistant in Publick and Private, have also two well study'd Sermons every Lord's Day in the Publick Church?

Quest. 10. Can it be suppos'd that God who so often intimated he would *have Mercy and not Sacrifice*,

Sacrifice, should at the great and awful Day of judgment, own one as a Minister of his sending, who minded his Interest or his Pleasure more than the Good of Souls; and disown another Minister, whom he made an Instrument of the Conversion of many because the former had the Hands of a Bishop in his Ordination, and the Latter not?

Quest. II. Is not a truly Pious Person, that visibly makes Conference of his Words and Ways, and has a tolerable share of Learning, more likely to be mov'd by the Holy Ghost to take upon him the *Office* of the Ministry (which is the very Question that is propos'd in the *Office for Ordination*) than one that Gapes for Preferment, Neglects his Cure, Converses most with the most Dissolute in his Parish, and Discourages such as are the most Conscientious?

* *Quest. 12.* Why should our Brethren deal more hardly by us, than the Ancient Church with those Hereticks and Schismaticks against whom they inveigh'd most warmly? I don't find the *Arrians* themselves were requir'd to be Re-ordain'd. And tho' some do assert that the *Novations* were, yet I think there may such Evidence be given, as makes the Contrary at least very probable. But as for the *Donatists* all agree, that their Orders were acknowledg'd, upon their Union with their Brethren; and Re-ordination not at all insisted on, even tho' the Laws of the Countrey, and the Customs of the Church were as directly Violated in their Case, as they can be pretended to be in ours. And I might add, that the Number of Bishops both on the side of the *Catholicks* and *Donatists* *,
makes

* *In the Conference held at Carthage An. 411. there were present, no less than 278 Bishops of the Donatists, and 286 of the Catholicks.*

makes it probable, that Orders were not always Conferr'd amongst them by Persons Superior to Presbyters. Many of those Bishops could be no more than Parish Ministers; And who can say that none such Ordain'd Persons to the Ministry? Especially among the *Donatists*, with whom there were much greater *Irregularities* then this can be suppos'd to have been? But the Church was then so desirous of Peace, that they wav'd Formalities; and own'd the Ministers of the separating Party without Demur? Now I'd fain know what should make us incapable of the same Favour, if there were but the same Spirit?

Quest. 13. Do not those who to clear our *Line of Succession*, derive it from the Tables of the *Roman see*, own the Orders that have been conferr'd by all in those Tables, thro' whose Hands they derive their Succession? Now why should the Orders that were Conferr'd by many of those Monsters of Vilany and Impurity that have late in the Pontifical Chair, (as they have many of them been represented by *Baronius* himself, and other Eminent Writers of their own Church) be own'd, and never call'd in Question; and Orders Conferr'd by Faithful Gospel Ministers be requir'd to be renounc'd?

Quest. 14. Why should our Brethren of the *Church of England* deal more hardly by us, than the *Church of Rome* does by the *Grecians*, *Maronites*, *Nestorians*, and *Jacobites*, and other Christians, whose Orders they own, as *Morinus* hath clearly Evidenc'd? Do we differ more from the Establisht Church, than these several Christians do from the *Roman Church*? Or must we send our Brethren even to *Rome* it self to learn Charity?

Quest.

Quest. 15. Why should we be dealt with more hardly here in *England*, than, ever our Brethren have been in *Scotland*? To pass by the *Affair Arch-Bishop Bancroft*; let it be remembred that my Lord of *Sarum* tells us that *★ the Bishops of Scotland never requir'd the Presbyterian Ministers there, to take Episcopal Ordination; they requir'd them only to come and act with them in Church Judicatories: Even Arch-Bishop Sharp himself, when he was to be Consecrated Arch-Bishop of St. Andrews, stood out for some time here in England, before he would submit to take Priests Orders. And his Lordship adds; No Bishop in Scotland during my stay in that Kingdom, ever did so much as desire any of the Presbyterians to be Re-ordain'd.* Now why should they who have generally been willing to be esteem'd more mild than their Neighbours in *Scotland*, affect in this Case to out-do them in Rigour?

★ *The Bishop of Sarum's Vindication*, pag. 84, 85.

Quest. 16. Were not many during the *Interregnum*, before King *Charles's* Restoration Ordain'd by an *Irish Bishop* in the City of *London* ★? *Agadoensis* was the Title given him: Tho' I can't say who it particularly was. Now was not this Uncanonical? And yet do we ever hear it was infilled on, that those who were thus irregularly Ordain'd should be Reordain'd? And why not they as well as we?

★ *See Conformists third Plea for the Nonconf.* p. 36, 37.

Finally: Tho' a *Regular Mission* be a valuable thing, yet have not the generality of Mankind always tho't, that Truth has a sufficient Authority, to oblige Men both to receive and publish it. How doubtful soever the *Mission* of him that brings it may seem to be? Now supposing this were a mistake, yet when all Parties

ties have pleaded it, (the *Church of England* not excepted) why mayn't we have the Benefit of it as well as others?

When. Mrs. *Hoadly* has consider'd these Queries, with all the seriousness the Subject requires, if he'll think fit to be at the Pains to read two Tracts of *Auxilius's* upon the head of Ordination that were publish'd by *Morinus* *, he'll see that supposing we were not able to prove our Ordination to be strictly Regular, we may yet have very good Reason to refuse to submit to proper *Re-ordination*. And therefore I should advise him to take *Gamaliel's*, Counsel. *Refrain from these Men, and let them alone: For if this Counsel or this work be of Men, it will come to nought. But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; least haply ye be found even to fight against God.*

But should he and his Brethren after all that we can say, still slight and disown us, pour Contempt on our Ministry, and endeavour to set Others against it, and to obstruct our Success; We lodge our Appeal in a higher Court, where no place will be found for Partiality or Interest. We are content to wait for the Judgment of the Great Day: Not doubting but if God is pleas'd so far to Honour us now, as to use us as Instruments to *turn many to Righteousness*. He will hereafter own and Reward our Service; advance us *as Stars*, and cause us to *shine as the brightness of the Firmament*: Which the most plausible Pretences that now are bro't against us will not be able to prevent.

POST-

* Morini
Com-
mentari
us de
sacris
Ecclesiæ
Ordina-
tionibus
Fol. An-
twerp 1605.
Acts 5
38. 39.

Dan. 12.
3.

POSTSCRIPT.

WHEN I had finish'd this first part of my Reply to Mr. *Ollyffe* and Mr. *Hoadly*, I met with a small Tract just Publish'd with this Formidable Title. *The Dissenting Ministry in Religion Censur'd and Condemn'd from the Holy Scriptures.* By *Theophilus Dorrington, Rector of Wittersham in Kent.* I a little wondered to hear our Ministry in the General, pretended to be condemn'd by Scripture, by which we have always been willing to be try'd. But when I observ'd who it was that set himielf up for a judge, and pretended to pass Sentence upon us, it did not much Surprize me to find we were *Condemn'd*. For he has too publickly proclaim'd his Enmity against us, both from the Press, and in Conversation, and too often bid us Defiance, to leave us any room for Hope of equal Treatment, where he has the Chair. However; I read the Book with a Resolution to yield to Conviction, if the Grounds produc'd for the Sentence Past, were at all able to Support it. For I should never dare to attempt a Defence of what the Holy Scriptures are found to Condemn. But having Perus'd his Discourse, and found it as weak, as it was bitter and virulent, (as far as they are concern'd, whole Ministry these Papers were design'd to Vindicate); I tho't it might not be amiss, to add a few Reflexions upon it: Partly for the Author's sake, whom I cannot but heartily Pity on the account
of

of his *Intemperate Zeal*; and partly also for the sake of such (if there are any really so weak) as may be liable to be misled by his *Furious Invective*.

In his *Preface*, he represents himself as *endeavouring to cure the unhappy Dissention from the Establish'd Church*. Attempting to cure Dissention either in the Church or out of it, is a good Work most certainly: but for which all are not alike Qualify'd. For he that pretends to go about to heal a Breach, with an enraged Spirit, is like a Man that pours on Oil to extinguish Flames. But our Author would be tho't to *endeavour this Cure, by representing plainly and fairly, the Mistakes and Errors on which the Dissention is Founded*. Very Good. All will agree this is much the best way. For railing against a People right or wrong; and charging them with things to which they are utter Strangers, will never convince them while the World stands. *Unity* and *Peace* are very Charming things: But the sound of them ever so oft repeated makes no Impression, if in the same Discourses in which there is an appearance of a mighty Zeal for them, Persons revile, and bear false Witness against their Brethren. But then if Mr. *Dorrington* has in this case acted agreeably to his Pretention; if the account He has given be a fair Representation of the Principles and Practises or the Dissenters, I can conclude no other than that I have pass'd away my Life in a Dream. I had tho't I had been Born and Bred among the Dissenters, and was one of them my self: Whereas neither of them can be true, if his Account be Credited. For I am sure I am no Friend to those Principles and Practises which he exposes; and as to many of them, I Know; none that are.

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But perhaps the Dissenters in his Neighbourhood are of a peculiar Make. I'll suppose it; and that some of them may be really chargeable, with sundry of those Absurdities which he inveighs against: Yet still as it is far from fair dealing, hereupon to charge the Dissenters in General, with what the Body of them are as free from as the *Church of England* it self; so he that is so forward to condemn People in the Lump, is not I think verily, much to be depended on, as to the *fairness* of his Account, even of his nearest Neighbours. For his Spleen against them, may be apt to transport him beyond all Bounds.

He mentions some, *that make it their interest to deceive others*: I should be as glad as he could be, there were none that either made it their Interest to deceive or reckon'd it for their Interest to represent others as deceiv'd. For it is not a greater *Injustice and Wrong to deceive and lead Men into Error*; than it is to charge them falsely with Deceit and Error. Tho' he that undeceives a Man, *with-holds from him nothing that he has a right unto*; yet he that would make the World believe, that such as serve God in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity; and make it their main Buliness to spread Holiness, Truth and Love, are deceivers, does them the greatest Injury imaginable, in attempting to rob them of their good Name: And at the same time he injures the Publick in obstructing their usefulness as far as his Influence can extend.

But our Author professes herein to have *exercis'd Great Charity*. No Man that Converses with his Writings however will suppose him to Err on that Hand. And as to his present Undertaking, it will be time eno' to consider his *Charity*, when he hath made out the *Truth* of

all he has Asserted. 'Tis hard to suppose that Man overcharitable, who condemns the Innocent with the Guilty. He says *many take upon them the Office of Ministers of Religion, who are neither in any measure fit or qualify'd for this Work, nor have any Right or Title to the Office.* That they have no Title to the Office, if they are in no measure qualify'd for the work of it, I can easily grant him. But then I doubt if he would use an impartial Eye, he might find many such in his own Church, as well as among the Dissenters. So that if this make a Body of Men liable to Condemnation, I doubt his own Church must fall under it as well as we. But then he says, *the greatest part of the Dissention by far are in this Error.* That's pretty much I Confess, if it were well made out. Were a Prudent Man in any case to express three parts in four, he would hardly say more than *the greatest part by far.* Nay I hardly know whether such an Expression will leave room for an exemption of so much as a fourth part. And does Mr. *Dorrington* really believe, that above Fifteen in Twenty of the Dissenting Ministers, became such *without Education and Learning?* If he hints this, without being able to give good Evidence of it, I would advise him for the future to be silent as to his wonderful Charity. But if he can make it good, I'll own him much better acquainted with the State of the Dissenters than I am, or any I Converse with: And if he will give me good Evidence, that this is really the State of their Case, he may for any thing I know make a Convert of me. For I have that Respect for the Office of the Ministry, and that sense of the danger of encouraging unqualify'd Persons, that I could not be satisfy'd to adhere to a People, that
were

were so Corrupt, as that Scarce one in four, of those that were own'd for the Guides of others, were any thing tolerably Qpalify'd. But I am something at a Loss, how he'll make his Calculation. As to the *Quakers*, they are a considerable Body indeed: But I am not so much acquainted with them as to be able certainly to say, whether they have any Ministers or no. I can't see any great need they have of them, when they deny both the Sacraments. But if he'll rank them with the rest of the Dissenters in his Calculation, he would do well to take in the *Romanists* too, who also Dissent from the *Church of England*: Among them he knows Ministers abound, and such as his Church owns too for Ministers, tho' we dare not. But if he desires our Conviction, he must confine himself to those who are stil'd the *United Brethren*, and the *Anabaptists*. As to the *Anabaptists*, there are some among them that are Men of good Sense and Learning. Our Author I believe would hardly deny that Character to Mr. *Tombs* formerly: or to Mr. *Stennet* and Mr. *Piggot*, and some others, at the Present, if he were acquainted with them. But whatsoever Remains there may be of the Ancient Aversion to Humane Literature, among those of this Denomination, in that dark corner of the Country which Mr. *Dorrgton* is endeavouring to enlighten, it is far from prevailing among those of this Perswasion in other Parts. They are generally convinc'd of the necessity of Learning in the Ministerial Office and as an Evidence of it, have determin'd in their General Meetings, to train Persons up in order to the Ministry, and give them a polite Education. And many have been learnedly bro't up, that are now in the Ministry among them. As to the *Independants*, tho'

I have not one word to say in excuse of those among them, who have encourag'd raw and unfurnish'd Persons to enter into the Ministry, yet I am well assur'd the Body of them are so far from discouraging Education and Learning, that they are Zealous for it. And as to those call'd *Presbyterians*, (who are far from being such a contemptible Handful as Mr. *Dorrington* represents them) I can't think them by what I have observ'd, generally speaking, less careful as to the Qualifications of such whom they own and encourage as Ministers, than the *Church of England* it self. And where then he'll find his *far greater part of the Dissenters, that receive and follow such as Ministers that are not in any measure qualify'd for their Work*, I can't imagine. His Fling at *Liberty* as giving rise to *Popery*; and other declamatory Insults in his Preface I pass by: And shall only touch on his closing Strain in which he tells the World, *he believes what he presented in his Treatise, was very fit and proper to cure the great Evils he had been mentioning*. As to which I shall only say, that his Imagination was pretty fruitful, in supposing that a general condemning Sentence which his Title carries in it, should be submitted to, when he has only bro't the most inconsiderable and obnoxious part of those whom he supposes Criminals to the Bar, to try them. But we Authors are commonly apt to promise our selves greater Fruits and Effects, of our over-valu'd Pains, than the Event usually verifies.

His Introduction as to the former part of it, I meddle not with. But I can't over-look his Aphoriam, *Pag. 5. Those that are not indeed and truly Ministers of Religion, are not Ministers of Religion*. Had his whole Discourse been made
up

up of Assertions of as undoubted Truth, I can't suppose he would have had any one to gain-say him. But what he adds in the same Page, that *those who rely upon the Administrations of such as do unjustly take upon them this Sacred Office, must be defeated of the Ends and Benefits of a Ministry*, is short even of Mr. Hoadly's Charity; who gives us leave to suppose that God may make allowance for the honesty of well meaning People.

Pag. 6. He mentions a sort of People, as to whom he seems to be under a mighty Concern; a People that have no true Ministers; a People that are in a great deal of Danger on that Account: And by his Title and the strain of his Discourse, they should be *Dissenters*. Well: What hath Mr. *Dorrington* to say to his *Quondam* Friends? Why really it grieves him to see upon what *false Pretences* their Ministers offer them their Service, and are receiv'd. But what are these *false Pretences*? Truly for Brevity sake he'll mention but three. He'll *confine himself to these at Present*. Then it seems he has more in reserve. Perhaps he tho't this way to bind us to our good Behaviour. But he has forgotten his Old Friends, if he thinks we are so easily Cow'd as that comes to. However I'll take him as far as he goes.

He says. *Some pretend to mighty Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and to be fitted and qualify'd for this Ministry by Gifts*. What he may mean by *mighty Gifts of the Holy Spirit* I cannot say. If he means such as the Apostle reckons up, 1 *Tim. 3.* the more there is of them the better. The more *mighty* any Persons are in them, and the more visible and apparent such Gifts are, the clearer and the more undoubted is their Call. Neither are

we asham'd to own our selves desirous, that Persons should *be fitted and qualify'd for this Ministry by Gift*: Nay we insist upon it that they should be so. We can't conceive how Persons can have a Title to the Office of the Ministry, unless they are fitted and qualify'd as the Rule requires. How can Mr. D. say, that 'tis a false Pretence of any, that they are qualify'd as the Rule requires, unless he has had the examining them? But *some*, he says, *pretend that they are herein sufficiently call'd and Commission'd, in that they are Gifted for it*. This, I must confess, is not Orderly; in as much as it naturally tends to encourage Intruders: But if they really are Gifted by God for the Ministry, 'twould be hard for Mr. D. to prove that they are not call'd to it, and bound to take up their Commission. However some few such I'll own there are among the Dissenters. I have known some such, on whom God hath conferr'd considerable Ministerial Gifts, and whom he hath own'd in the use of those Gifts, who have never taken up their Commission. Now there are many of us, who tho' we can by no means approve of this Neglect; yet dare not condemn such Persons in the Exercise of their Gifts, at least when they have given themselves wholly to. that Work. And perhaps Mr. D. would not be so forward to do it, if he well consider'd either the Practice of the Primitive Church, or this Passage of our Saviour; *He that is not against is for us*. But,

Some, he says, *besides their Gifts pretend to be call'd to the Ministry by a secret Impulse and Motion of the Holy Spirit of God: That is, to have an immediate Call from God himself to it*. Who he here Reflects upon he best knows himself: I find the *Church of England* indeed asks the

Question

Question of all that are Ordain'd Deacons or Presbyters, whether they are *mov'd by the Holy Ghost to take Orders*; and an Affirmative Answer is requir'd before the Bishop proceeds to Ordination: But I never heard of any Dissenters that ever put such a Question. Let him look to it then how he will Answer this Reflection to his own Church. A Call of God indeed is Necessary: But this is to be judg'd of by Fitness, Inclination, and attending Providential Circumstances. An *immediate Call* to the Ministry, I shan't apprehend any of the Dissenters will lay a stress upon, till I know of some among them, that hold *Immediate Revelation* to be reviv'd. Again,

Some, he says, *pretend to be call'd and Commission'd Ministers of God by the People*. This is what I know some of our Congregational Brethren are for. I say some of them only, because I have had Opportunity of knowing the Sense of some of Note among them: Who tho' they have been for an inherent Right in the Body of the Church, to send forth Persons into the Ministry, have yet been zealous for making Ministers the Judges of the Persons to be sent forth; and tho't it the Duty of all sent forth, after giving sufficient Evidence to proper Judges of their Abilities, to yield to Ordination by Imposition of Hands, as an investing Sign *.

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* Dr. Owen in his *Disciplinary Catechism*, p. 125. asserts, that unto the due Consutation of an Elder, Pastor, or Teacher of the Church, it is not only requisite, that he be Called and Chosen by the Suffrage and Consent of the Church; but also, that he be solemnly set apart by Fasting and Prayer, and Imposition of Hands; and that by the Presbytery too, as follows in his *Explanation*, p. 135,

If Mr. D. will take the Pains to consult Monsieur *Claude's* Historical Defence of the Reformation, he will find that Celebrated Author, strenuously defending; this Principle, that the Body of the Faithful, have the Ministerial Power lodg'd with them in the last resort for the good of the Church. And he gives such Evidence of it, as deserves to be consider'd, before the Principle is exploded as so ridiculous.

But these, he says, are the Pretences upon which most of the Dissenting Ministers set themselves up. It should seem from this, that Mr. D. therefore left the Dissenters, because he did not understand their Principles. Those that know them better will give a quite different Account of them. However he is so fully perswaded of this, that he verily thinks, *Pag. 7.* That if he once prov'd *these Pretences condemn'd by Scripture, he might justly pretend to Censure and Condemn from thence the Dissenting Ministry in general.* Admirably suggested! Like an equal judge! And a Pattern of Charity! This would be much the same, as if I should run to some remote parts of the Land where all must own it would be too easy to find in our sorry Livings, such Incumbents, as were remarkably Defective some in their Intellectuals, some in their Morals, and some in both; and because I find there are several such, should conclude the far greater Part were such; and because I can easily prove, that such Persons are not to be Justify'd from Scripture for taking the Ministry upon them, should pretend from thence to Censure and Condemn the Ministry of the *Church of England* in the General. Would not this be Cry'd out upon as egregiously Weak, and grosly Uncharitable? And yet this is Mr. *Dorrington's* way!

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A ready way to convince most certainly!

But he seems to have some small Kindness left for those *who are distinguish'd by the Name of Presbyterians*. 'Twas among these he had his Education, and therefore it might be expected he should be best Acquainted with them: Tho' really by his Account any Man would be apt to think he had either never been among them, or designedly misrepresented them. He owns indeed, that *they do in their Principles require that their Ministers be Qualify'd by Education and Study; and to have them Call'd and Commission'd to their Office by Ordination of those who are themselves Ordain'd Ministers*. 'Tis well we can have any thing that is good among us. This certainly might deserve his Commendation. Why might it not have been worth his while for their sakes, to have alter'd his Running Title? He can't condemn this. Why then must they be condemn'd with others, for things of which they are not Guilty? What follows is to give an Account of it. He says. *This Sect are but a small part of the Dissention consider'd apart; they are perhaps fewer in Number than any other Sect besides: They are certainly fewer than some others alone, and especially than all the rest taken together: And those who take upon them the Ministry in the other Sects, are much more numerous, &c.* Suppose all this were true, yet still the Innocent should not be condemn'd with the Guilty, by an Impartial Judge. But sure our Author overshot himself in what he here asserts! I know many that the World commonly calls Presbyterians, that are of no Party. But as to Ministers, I am well assur'd it would be found that those that were Ordain'd by Ordain'd Ministers (which is Mr. *Dorrington's* own Criterion) are far Superior in Number to those who Act

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as Ministers without Ordination, both among Presbyterians and Independents. 'Tis so in and about the City of *London*. 'Tis so in *Lancashire* and the Northern Parts. Nay I'm perswaded upon Examination, it would be found so in our Author's own County of *Kent*. I believe I could name him, if need were, above 30 Ordain'd Ministers among the Dissenters in that very County; besides Candidates, who will be Ordain'd as soon as they undertake any Pastoral Charge. And I know not whether there be so many by half in the whole County, of different Principles. And excepting *Essex* and *Bedfordshire*, I scarce think there is a County in the Land, where our Author's Observation will at all hold good. And tho' many that pass for Presbyterians and Independents too, care little what becomes of the Interest of a Particular Party, yet some that know the World much better than Mr. *Dorrington* seems to do, can with Pleasure observe, that those, (whether in or out of the Establish'd Church,) whose Principles and Spirit are against narrowing or straitning the Terms of Christian Communion, by adding to what our Lord has plainly appointed, are a very Considerable, and an encreasing Number. Let such Persons be in the Church, nay, and Dignify'd in it too, and they shall yet be call'd Presbyterians. And this makes their Interest much the more Considerable. But, says our Author, *It must be further known, that the Presbyterians themselves do in their common Practice mightily depart from their Principles in this matter.* He knows not how to draw their Picture without Dirt and Soot. All that I can say to the matter is this: If they did so while our Author was among them, they are mended since. For I can assure all whom it may Concern? that now 'tis
other-

otherwise. 'Tis their great Endeavour to keep up Regular Ordination; and they look upon Persons but as Probationers till they receive it. He adds. *They admit a great many very meanly qualify'd to this Office and Work, and upon very little Education and Study: And this they are betray'd into, by their undue and indigested Notions, concerning Gifts of the Spirit of God.* This is wretchedly ill natur'd. I won't give my self leave to guess at the Spring of it. Perhaps the good Gentleman was misinform'd. But then he should not be hasty to turn Accuser. I hope he won't say that those among us, who were heretofore his Fellow Students; or those whose Companion he once was in carrying on an Evening Lecture in the midst of the City, were meanly Qualify'd. And I can assure him there are many who since that have had a Foreign Education, who neither wanted for Natural Parts, Advantages for Learning, or Care to improve them. And as to our private Academies, we have had some come from them, who are now useful in the Ministry, of whom neither of our Universities would have needed to have been asham'd. And tho' I am not so possess'd with a Spirit of Contradiction, as to say that all who have been admitted into the Ministry, have been qualify'd as it were to have been wish'd, yet the too early Entrance of such upon the Ministry, was much more owing to the straitness of their Circumstances, than to *indigested Notions concerning the Gifts of the Spirit*, as to which I am at a Loss for his Intention. But I can't perceive that our Author hath held that Correspondence with his old Friends since he deserted them, as that his Intelligence concerning them is much to be depended on. And after all, he that knows how easy a thing it is
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for a Man to get Orders in the *Church of England*, will hardly think it becomes them to reflect on us, for *admitting many that are meanly qualify'd to the Office and Work of the Ministry*. But our Author goes on with a farther Charge; and tells us, *There are not only several Private Families of the Party, but also some whole Congregations, who content themselves with the Ordinary Ministration, of those who are not Ordain'd, as by their Principles they ought to be; and this they do for several Years together*. That some such there may be, I won't deny: But if he thinks them numerous, upon farther Enquiry, he would find he was misinform'd. That this is not strictly Regular, I freely own: But the utmost that can be inferr'd from it is this; that we have some Irregularities among us, and need Amendments, as well as our Neighbours. But if we must thereupon presently be Condemn'd, then all that have as great or greater Irregularities must be Condemn'd too: And then what would become of our Author's admired Church? where so many remarkable Disorders are own'd by others who Conform as well as he; tho' he can't discern the least Spot or Blemish? But he goes on: *And as some of their more numerous Congregations have more than one to Officiate in them, 'tis common that but one of them however is so Ordain'd*. Here again he is grosly impos'd upon by his Informers. In the Country there are but few Congregations that have more than one Statedly to Officiate: But where there are, 'tis very rare but both are Ordain'd. And in the City, among those that pass for *Presbyterians*, of 15 Congregations in which there are two that Officiate as Ministers, I know not above Four in which the Assistants are Unordain'd Persons; and they if I mistake not, are under the Age
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of four and Twenty; which is the usual time for Ordination. It must be confess'd we think it but fitting that Persons should, after they have pass'd their Tryals as to their Abilities, Officiate for some time as Candidates; that they may have the Opportunity of passing a Judgment, whether they can comfortably fix on the Ministry as the Employment of their Lives? and whether they are likely to have that measure of Acceptance, as is necessary to a Rational Hope of Usefulness and Success. But when they are clear, as to these things, by a few Years Trial, 'tis very rare for any to live without being Ordain'd; and it abates their Respect both with Ministers and People if they should. And more cannot be said. For a Persons offering himself to Ordination ought to be his own free Act. 'Tis eno' to Acquit the rest, if as Opportunity offers, they admonish him to be Ordain'd. But as to what follows in our Author, 'tis so gross, that I hardly know what name to give it. *'Tis true*, he says, *these Ministers are not allow'd perhaps to Administer Sacraments among them*: He might have spar'd his *Perhaps*; for I defy him to give an Instance of any one Person that was Un-ordain'd, that was allow'd among those call'd *Presbyterians*, (who are the Persons he is here speaking of) to administer either of the Sacraments. *But then*, he goes on, *they bring themselves to be contented with this Disorder by a mean Opinion of the Necessity of the Sacraments, whereby they content themselves without them certainly more than they ought to do*. Does Mr. Dorrington-think, because he has deserted us, he may have a Liberty of laying any thing of us? Let him consult his own good Father, of others of his Relations and Acquaintance that frequent our
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Assemblies, and he'll find that he has herein been a false Accuser. For we press the Necessity of the Sacraments as far as the Scriptures will warrant, as freely as any Men, and we. Administer the Lord's Supper Ordinarily once a Month, both in City and Country. He adds, *Even these* (meaning the Sacraments) *are disparag'd among them under the Name of Ceremonies, as the Quakers despise them, in a like manner under the Name of outward and Carnal Ordinances.* He might as well have said we had Horns and Hoofs; we reviv'd the Ancient *Bacchanalia*, or were of the Race of the *Pygmies*. But to be serious; Give me leave. Sir, here to tell you, that this is so groundless a Fiction, and so false a Charge, so unbecoming a Christian, and a Brother in the Ministry, that you have much to Answer for on this very Account. I pray God give you Repentance. I hope others will take warning by you, how they imbibe that which Dr. *Hickman* calls the *Spirit of the Church*, which is so widely different from the Spirit of God. If any particular Ministers have *preach'd of the no Necessity of Baptism*, as meaning that it might be slighted and neglected without Hazard, they very much differ'd from their Brethren: But if they asserted only, that Baptism was not so Necessary, but Persons might be Sav'd without it, where they had not Opportunity for it, it should have been prov'd an Error, before it was exclaim'd against. If any Persons that our Author knows have *needlesly hazarded the Dying of their Infants without this Sacrament*, they are the more to blame: But if I was in Mr. *Dorrington's* Case, I should think I was under a mighty Hardship, if so Confin'd by my Ecclesiastical Engagements, as that I must rather let them
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Die without Christian Baptism, than be able to Baptize them without the scrupled Humane Additions which being omitted, I suppose, he might gladly have been allow'd to Baptize them, rather than the Parents would have run a Hazard, for want of one of their own Ministers. But this is not all neither. *Their Neglects too of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper are very notorious, tho' under the Pretence of a mighty Reverence, and awful Regard to it.* What sort of People among the Presbyterians Mr. D. keeps up Acquaintance with I know not: But those that I Converse with, equally endeavour to prevent a Neglect, and a Profanation of the Lord's Supper: And while they do what they can to promote such a Reverence as may prevent a Profanation, they also earnestly press Communicating as a Duty, and warn of the Danger of Neglect. But *thus* (he says) *they come to satisfy themselves to attend Ordinarily for a long time together, the Ministrations of those that are by their own Principles no Ministers of Religion, and at the best but Gifted Brethren, against the Ordinary or Constant Preaching of whom they have formerly disputed the Independants.* His meaning seems to be this; that their Neglect of the Sacraments, makes them neglect an Ordain'd Ministry. But if they neither generally Neglect the Sacraments, nor an Ordain'd Ministry, then what is Mr. D? But if he would know the true Cause, why some remain in Country Places Un-ordain'd; 'tis because they have not Encouragement to enter into a Pastoral Relation in such Places: While yet they may for some time Officiate there as Candidates, till the Providence of God opens a way for their Settlement with a form'd Congregation, at which time they are Ordain'd. This

I know is the Case of several: And yet it does not necessarily follow, that the People that hear these Ministers must neglect the Sacraments. For one Ordain'd Minister may administer both the Sacraments to Three or Four such Places if they are not too far Distant. And yet such Persons as ordinarily preach among them for some time may be more than Gifted Brethren: in as much as they may have solemnly given up themselves to God for the Work or the Ministry, fixedly designing to make it the Buiness of their Lives; and may only wave Ordination till they fix in a Pastoral Relation, to a particular People. *Thus Errors are Connected and Multiply*, says our Author. And how should it be otherwise, when such Persons as he, pretend to become Censors of others, to whose Ways and Methods they are as great Strangers, as if they had liv'd in another Land? However, he says, *so far as these People do thus, they also are concern'd, and Condemn'd in his Undertaking*. Very well! Condemn'd it seems they must all be; and our Author thought fit to make a Crime for those whom he found less obnoxious, rather than they should escape? He'd make an Excellent Ecclesiastical Commissioner! But that he may have the Opportunity of seeing his own Face, I'd fain know what he would think of one of us, that should publish a Discourse under this Title; *The Ministry of the Church of England Condemn'd*; and should fasten upon some in the Ministry among them that are Scandalous and Insufficient; others that admit either Infants, or Persons known to be disorderly to stand Sponsors in Baptism; others that give the Communion statedly to such as are Notorious for Lewdness and Profaneness; others that
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forge their Orders, &c. and should thereupon say, that tho' there are some others in the Church that are not so bad as these; yet as far as the best of them do thus, they also are concern'd and condemn'd in our Undertaking: Let but our Author consider, what would be his Thoughts in such a Case, and he'd have a clear Idea of the Thoughts of impartial Persons, concerning his Proceeding in the present Undertaking.

He afterwards considers the fore-mention'd Pretences distinctly. His first Chapter contains a Plea for Education, Study, and Learning, to qualifie for the Ministry. And if there be any, that need to be convinc'd of the Necessity of this, I shall never be their Advocate. And yet in this Plea of our Authors, there are some things to be Remark'd. Mentioning the Qualifications Necessary for a Minister, he says, *He that has not a good measure of Knowledge in Divine matters, is not qualify'd or fitted for the Ministry.* Very true: And he would have done well to have consider'd how many that Officiate in his own Church, he must by this Rule condemn. It follows. *To this must be added a skill to use and apply fitly his Knowledge in Divine Matters, in framing and ordering his Addresses to God in the name and behalf of the People of the Church.* I'm glad to hear that one so qualify'd can have room in the Church, after he has been so publickly * stigmatiz'd and represented as having the *Devil in the Head*; and thereupon had a *Mittimus* given him to the *Hospital of Bethlehem*,
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and

* See Mr. Thomas Edwards, M. A. late Chaplain of Christ-Church Oxon. his *Discourse against extemporary Prayer*. Printed by R. Clavel. 1703, Pag. 114.

and the *Stall of Oliver's Porter*, that he might Pray his fill. *This Skill and Ability is known* (our Author says) *among these People, under the name of the Gift of Prayer.* But why *among these People* Good Sir? Has not a Bishop of your own. Church, and one of the best Bishops that ever adorn'd any of our Episcopal Chairs, written an excellent Treatise upon the matter, with that Title? But if this Gift be a Necessary Qualification for a Minister, what must become of many in the Ministry in the Establish'd Church! I doubt some of our Author's Brethren will give him no Thanks, for dropping this Hint. I should think it a very fit way for our Author to show his Zeal, in drawing up a Supplication to the Famous University of Oxon, to show her Detestation of such a Book as that cited in the Margin, which is most; certainly as deserving her Censure as some the hath tho't fit to take Publick Notice off. Could this be compass'd, 'tis possible it might be tho't by such as enter hereafter into Orders, that a *skill in framing addresses to God in the name and behalf of the People of the Church*, was something of a Qualification for the Ministry: But this can never be imagin'd by such as entertain the Notions of that Book. As for us Dissenters, our Author may be pleas'd to know that we are as far from expecting to be *inspir'd with these and other the like qualifications*, as himself or his Brethren. If any are so Enthusiastical, either in the Church or out of it, we pity them, but no more encourage them than the Church it self does.

His 2d Chapter, relates to the Necessity of a Commission or Call from God, in order to Persons Officiating in the Ministry, wherein I don't see that we are at all concern'd: Having prov'd, in the foregoing Papers, that we have
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our Commission from God, as truly as those who were Ordain'd by Bishops.

His 3d Chapter is design'd to prove that over and above Gifts to qualifie for the Ministry, there must be a Ministerial Authority conferred, on such as warrantably take upon them the Office. In which our own Practise evidences we are unconcern'd. Tho' at the same time if we find God remarkably owns any Persons that he has qualify'd for Preaching the Gospel, and makes use of them to Convert Souls from Sin to Holiness, we are not altogether so forward as our Author to condemn them: And yet cannot approve of their Irregularity in not taking up their Commission for that Work, for which God has qualify'd them.

In his 4th Chapter he sets Himself to prove that an immediate Call of God to the Ministry, has been wont to be attended with a Miraculous Proof. Which we as freely own as our Author himself.

In his 5th Chapter he attempts to prove that a Mediate call to the Ministry cannot be given by the People alone. His Principle here I heartily approve, *viz. That they must be themselves Ministers, who may Ordain others to be Ministers of Religion.* But then I should add one Limitation, *viz. That Ministers are to be concern'd where they can be had: But that where their help cannot be had, the People may set Persons apart for the Office themselves, rather than Live without Ministers.* And as far as I can judge, whatever Notions were heretofore entertain'd, this Principle now prevails very generally among the Dissenters: tho' yet at the same time they don't make so light of the Election of the People as our Author. But what an invidious touch is that, *pag. 119!* He

charges those that *pretend the Unlawfulness of Re-ordination, with Symbolizing or Agreeing with the Papists*. As to the Point it self, and how far Re-ordination can be justify'd, from what he alledges, has been consider'd in the foregoing Treatise. As' for our herein agreeing with the Papiits, 'tis a taste of his Kindness. But be it as it will as to that, if our Author's Church had not been for Symbolizing with the Papists much more than we, the Engines of Division had not been so long continu'd, but the Superfluities that have been so much complain'd of, had been laid aside.

At the close of this Chapter, he lays. *He thinks he has made it very manifest, that the far greater part of the Dissenting Ministers, are no Ministers of Religion*. But he must give others leave to think he has rather manifested, the narrowness of his Spirit, and the Uncharitableness of his Temper; his unfitness to be a Judge, and his forwardness to Condemn, many that as light as he makes of them, will appear another day better Men than himself. His concluding Advice does not much concern us. He warns to avoid *meer Pretenders*, and so do we: And at the same time we warn to avoid *Uncharitableness, Bitterness, rash Censures, and unjust Sentences of Condemnation*, on all Hands. But whereas he tells the People, (pag. 134.) *That some for a show, and because the Law requires it, pretend to subscribe to some Articles of a Form of sound Words, they are known to Contradict themselves in the Principles which they hold and teach you*; I cannot but look upon it as an unhappy Stumble; in that he has thereby pointed at the Guilt of so many in his own Church. Whether they or we are herein the Guilty Persons, we leave to the World to Judge. But methinks one that had
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been among us should not talk of *Jesuits and Priests among us in Disguise*, unless he could give some Evidence of it upon his own Knowledge and Observation: Nor should one concern'd for the Honour of his Church, have charg'd the Dissenters with *coldness in their Zeal against Popery* in the late Times, unless he could vindicate their hindring divers Tracts of the Dissenters from Passing the Press, upon the disputed Points, that so they might secure to themselves a Ground of Boasting over us. And when he insinuates (*p. 136.*) as if the Dissenters *readily fell in with and Assisted the Methods us'd to ruin the Establish'd Church and the true Protestant Religion among us, when the Secular Power was in the Hands of a Prince reconcil'd to the Church of Rome*: He not only does Violence to Charity and Truth, but flies in the Face of several Learned Bishops and Eminent Divines of his own Church, by whom the Body of the Dissenters have been publicly clear'd in that Respect. The Truth of it is, our Author seems ready upon all Occasions, Right or Wrong, to blacken us, and bring us under a Popular Odium: Our *Liberty* seems his Eye sore; and our Respect his great Trouble and Grievance. But if he this way serves either Religion or his Church, I shall not be the only Person by many that will prove mistaken. And should he this way secure Preferment, (which yet for what I can perceive, is seldom the Lot of *New-Converts*) I doubt it will neither Contribute to his Peace now, nor his Comfortable Account hereafter.

FINIS.

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