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ARTICLE II.

THE VALIDITY OF CONGREGATIONAL ORDINATION.

THE DUDLEIAN LECTURE, BY THE REV. WM. ELLIOT GRIFFIS, D. D., BOSTON, MASS., DELIVERED IN THE CHAPEL OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY, 1892.

THE grandfather of the founder of this lectureship was Thomas Dudley, one of the founders of Massachusetts. He was a Puritan who lived in the three homes of English-speaking Puritans, England, Holland, and America. He served as a soldier in that Dutch war for independence against Spain which was fought for the benefit of religious freedom everywhere. In his day the intercommunion of all the Reformed churches was the common fact and custom of Europe, not excepting the little island of Great Britain. Reformed and Lutheran ministers from the Continent, where Protestant, diocesan, or political episcopacy was unknown, were settled over English parish churches, or congregations of foreign refugees included in the English church settlement. English bishops presided over Presbyterian clergymen in Scotland, and sat, without claiming or receiving precedence, on equal terms with the Dutch and other pastors and professors of divinity, in the ecumenical council of the Reformed churches of Europe, at Dordrecht, in 1619. In that day there was no practical, no recognized distinction in non-Romish churches between episcopal and presbyterial ordination. Outside the Greek and Roman Catholic bodies, the mediæval notion of the so-called apostolical succession was little more than heard of beyond a British party. It was the boast also of the Church of England, that she was a true

Reformed church. Her ambition was to be equal in scriptural character to the Reformed churches of the Continent, whose scholars and scholarship, learning and writings, she so freely borrowed, that, in the Book of Common Prayer, probably two-thirds of what is not of Catholic origin, or from the Bible, is Lutheran or Calvinistic.

Towards the end of the one hundred years between the birth of Thomas Dudley and his grandson Paul, the situation changed. The sacerdotal tendencies, so persistently and successfully resisted everywhere else in Europe beyond the papal organization, prevailed in the one state church of England. Men holding a particular ecclesiastical theory, invented in times subsequent to the apostles, gained the seat of power, with the return of the Stuarts to the British throne. Henceforth, the sword, the prison, and the treasury supplied the basis for the dogma of the apostolical succession, which the Scriptures had failed to furnish. The close union of Anglican politics and religion had, as in so many instances since the time of Constantine, triumphed over the simple truth, and made a show of it openly. A dangerous innovation in Reformed doctrine was forcibly made orthodoxy and legal polity in the state church of England. It was decreed that only episcopal ordination was valid, that all dissenters and nonconformists should be ejected from the pulpits of the politico-ecclesiastical establishment, and that the doors of the universities should be shut to them and their children. Probably two thousand churches, and as many ministers, were thus branded as nonconformist or dissenting, so that the higher learning had to be sought beyond seas.

While the embers of the controversy were still hot, and the scars of the conflict visible, Paul Dudley was born. He was in Harvard College in 1689, during the stirring events culminating in the fall of the Stuarts and the accession to the British throne of the Dutch Stadholder William III. Then it was hoped that the mediæval notion of the sole

validity of episcopal ordination would, with other ideas inherited from a period subsequent to the apostles, be purged from the Anglican Church, which had called herself a true Reformed church. A commission of thirty was appointed for "the reconciling of differences." Among the concessions which Archbishop Tillotson was prepared to make, was the admission of those in presbyterial orders into the ministry of the Church of England by a conditional reordination. The English churchmen, however, distrusted the temper of the time, the commission failed to report, and the matter dropped.

In the same year that Paul Dudley was studying law at the temple in London, he saw the dominant sect of the country follow the errors of the Greek and Roman branches of the Holy Catholic Church. This error was, not in choosing episcopacy as a form of ecclesiastical polity, but in denying the validity of that general method of ordination practised in almost all the other Reformed churches in Christendom. Of the four lectureships established in Harvard University by him, one was for the exposure of errors in the Unreformed, or Roman, church, and another in defence of the truth against the particular error of the Church of England, made in reversing her own history. The words of the founder in stating our subject are sufficiently clear:—

"The maintaining, explaining, and proving the validity of the ordination of ministers or pastors of the churches, and so their administration of the sacraments or ordinances of religion, as the same has been practised in New England, from the first beginning of it, and so continued at this day. Not that I would any ways invalidate Episcopal Ordination as it is commonly called and practised in the Church of England; but I do esteem the method of ordination as practised in Scotland, at Geneva, and among the dissenters in England, and in the churches in this country, to be very safe, scriptural, and valid; and that the great head of the church,

by his blessed spirit, hath owned, sanctified, and blessed them accordingly, and will continue to do so to the end of the world. Amen."

It was not then the purpose of the founder, nor is it ours, to assault or deny the validity of that method of ordination, which among the Protestants and in Reformed Christendom was, excepting possibly the Moravians, purely local, peculiar, and anomalous, and which was forcibly and exclusively legalized in England in 1661. It must not, indeed, be forgotten that the action of the Anglican Church —dictated more by courtiers and politicians than by scholars and saints—did alarm the Reformers, and broke the harmony of Reformed Christendom. Yet our purpose is not to follow the Anglicans in following the Romanists, and deny to them what they deny to us. We heartily recognize the right of modern Christians to do what the first believers in Christ did, and to choose whatever form of polity or ordination they, as guided by the Holy Spirit, elect. We shall attempt to show that the form of ordination practised at Geneva, in Scotland, in the free churches of Great Britain and her colonies, and the United States, and pretty much all over the world (1) is, not only safe, scriptural, and valid, but (2) was also recognized as such by the political church of England, and in the Book of Common Prayer, until the revision of this manual in 1662, or until after the settlement of New England.

In adding the preface to the Ordination Service, in 1661, the limiting clause "or hath had Episcopal consecration or Ordination," and thus shutting out all ministers who had not been touched by the hands of bishops, and in rearranging the Scripture lessons in the Ordinal, the Church of England reversed her history and practice. She then introduced novelties in her doctrine and polity which, except in the old days of Romish dominion, in the breath of controversy, or in a distinctly dishonest translation of Acts xx. 28, were unknown to the one hundred ministers of New

England who had been ordained in the English Episcopal Church. These pastors and teachers in the English colonies in America did not, in the days of Paul Dudley, nor do they now, invalidate in any way Episcopal ordination. In this they have not returned evil for evil, but rather have they held consistently to the historic precedents of the Church of England, from the first Reformation to the time of Henry VIII.

Looking at the documents of the primitive church, in the New Testament, and reading them in the purest texts and with the light that patient scholarship, fresh research, and the resurrection of other ancient documents furnish, we find no such doctrine as that of the so-called apostolical succession ever hinted at, nor any ground for the denial of the validity of presbyterial ordination. The restricted succession of the Jewish priesthood, repeatedly and clearly and minutely enjoined in the Old Testament, has no analogy in the early Christian church, which took its organization out of the synagogue, not out of the temple. No hint of episcopacy is given by Jesus, nor any authority to any one to imitate the children of this world and to assume rank or lordship over his people. The apostles were chosen of Christ, and sent forth to preach the gospel; but they neither received nor gave priestly powers, nor did they claim to have received or to be able to give such power. After the defection of Judas, a new member of the apostolic college was chosen, and it is repeatedly and distinctly stated for what purpose he was selected—to bear witness of the resurrection of Christ. No sacerdotal pretensions were professed or hinted at. No notions such as were afterwards generated in the minds of the uncritical Cyprian, or the fathers of the churchcraft in later centuries, then disturbed the pure minds of the apostles.

How little the subject of ordination troubled the greatest of the apostles, how innocent he was of certain mediæval and modern notions still cherished, is shown by the fact that

he was never episcopally ordained. He was not ordained by the twelve apostles, or by any of them. Paul, who probably organized more churches than any of the twelve, and possibly more than all of them together, began, continued, and ended his work without, so far as we know, the laying on of hands or other ordination or tactual ceremony by the apostolical college. Repeatedly scouting the idea of the necessity of his being called, invited, commissioned, or ordained by the original twelve apostles, or any of them, he went on with his work. He tells us most, if not all, of the important events of his calling and consecration, and by emphasis and reiteration shows what he thought necessary to his apostleship, but never mentions his own ordination, or refers to the subjects which fill the volumes of modern controversy. This man, who under God gave Europe Christianity, wrote, or dictated, one-third of the New Testament, and formulated Christian theology, was ordained just as ministers are ordained in the greater part of Reformed Christendom to-day. In a word, Paul lacked apostolical ordination, and did not, in any sense, belong to the privileged clergy in the alleged close corporation of the twelve. The simple story is told in chapter xiii. of that first book of Christian church history called the Acts of the Apostles, and which in importance outweighs tons of belated tradition and invalid testimony. At Antioch, the prophets, preachers or exhorters, and teachers, Europeans, Asiatics, Africans, Jews, and Gentiles,—all simple Christians, but none of them an apostle in the college of twelve,—separated Paul to the work to which God had called him. For Paul, the priesthood of believers, and their power through the Holy Ghost to call, separate, and ordain him, was sufficient. Such a method, the prevailing method of Reformed Christendom to-day, was safe, scriptural, and valid for him, and should be for us who wish to preach, or minister the sacraments, at home or abroad.

Following Paul's example, the missionaries called and sent by the congregations, and ordained in them by the prophets and teachers, do the same work for Christ and his church to-day. This nineteenth century, the greatest of all missionary centuries, as well as the three centuries of the church in these United States of America, demonstrate that the method was safe, scriptural, and valid, according to the test propounded by the prophet—to the law and to the testimony, and by Christ himself—"By their fruits ye shall know them." Little did Paul care for that invention of a corrupted church called the apostolical succession, for the notion that grace is conveyed by the act of ordination, and as little need we who regard the Scriptures above belated tradition, "apostolical constitutions," alleged epistles of Ignatius, mediæval breviaries, and modern prayer-books. In the light of Paul's writings, and of the other New Testament authors, we find that "bishop" and "presbyter" were convertible terms. The scholarship of the Reformation and the latest utterances of unbiassed men of research agree. All the vernacular versions of the Bible in Europe are at one in honest translation of the words "bishop" and "presbyter." It was only in King James' version, so-called, that an attempt was made to hide the naked truth from the people, and in Acts xx. 28 to cover the fact that each church had one or more bishops, and that a New Testament bishop is nothing more than a presbyter, elder, or pastor.

The first Christian churches taking form among the Hebrews, or under their influence, called their officers pastors, teachers, presbyters, or bishops; those among Greeks and Romans, or Hellenistic Jews, borrowed the forms of municipal and private societies, and called their officers inspectors, superintendents, overseers, bishops, or presbyters. Every church had one or more bishops, and so Paul addresses the saints at Philippi with the bishops and deacons, and Peter the churches as a fellow-presbyter. Even the

ceremonies of induction into office were those borrowed from the methods of synagogues or from municipalities, and from Greek and Jewish customs, both civil and religious. Even the laying on of hands was not a necessity. It was but the symbolical accompaniment of prayer. In a few generations, that is, in the second century, among the presbyter-bishops the presiding elder, or the bishop with precedence, because of character or ability, is officially called bishop. Such an episcopate was parochial, and not diocesan; and was for government, convenience, and order, not for sacerdotalism. For a hundred and seventy years, or more, after Christ's ascension, the bishop with a diocese of several parishes was unknown. Not until Cyprian, or well into the third century, did full-blown episcopacy, tinctured with sacerdotalism, appear. Gradually in the vernacular European languages the term "presbyter" became "priest," and "episcopos" became "bishop"; while altars and dioceses, with ranks and many orders and functions borrowed from the pagan and Jewish priesthoods, together with the political episcopate, came into use.

In this elevation of one above many, Christian society followed a development such has often been witnessed in other religions, and even in republics and democracies. In feudal Europe the story of the bishop's and abbot's power, in war and peace, is almost exactly paralleled in that of the mediæval Buddhist bishop and abbot in Japan. Not only does the Lassa priest become the Grand Lama, the ordinary ruler sultan, the pappa pope, the chief person among an uneducated people the parson, the successful missionary a titled master, with revenues and power, but even in our ultra-democratic Congregational churches men from time to time appear who seem born to be diocesan bishops, archdeacons, and cardinals in all but name. Despite the *theory* that the great system founded by Mahomet is an absolute democracy, and that the society of which Gautama Buddha was the master

spirit professed to be the same, the same phenomenon is witnessed. Its line goes out into all the world. In Asia, Africa, Europe, or America history tells the same story. The man with ability, who gives his mind, time, and talents to the special work necessary to be done, will become leader and commander. The man with a programme, alert, vigilant, resourceful, unsleeping, will ultimately hold the seat of power. Nor, when power is once won, will legitimists, makers of pedigrees, interpreters, exegetes, explainers away, and churchmen willing to translate dishonestly, be lacking. The state needing the church, and the church longing for the state, marry and become one, and Christ's kingdom, so-called, becomes of this world. Episcopates become diocesan and political. St. Augustine arises, and, holding a brief for the church as supreme, argues for the safety, and also the enlargement, of the "deposit" alleged to have come down as an inheritance from Christ. The so-called "Apostolic Constitutions" are written. The manufacture and elaboration of dogma continues, and with it more power is claimed. The forger and interpolator practise their industry, and the supply equals the demand. The extra-scriptural notion of the apostolical succession, of the tactual conveyance of grace through a close, self-elected, self-perpetuating corporation, is made the substance of Christianity, and enforced with the alternatives of acceptance or damnation, of torture or peace. The dogma of the supremacy of the pope moves in the groove at the end of which is infallibility. The living Scriptures are kept coffined in the dead languages. A mob of mediators are set up between the people and God, and religion becomes a monopoly of priests, to be dispensed for a pecuniary consideration. Corruption of morals and intellectual darkness abound; when again, as of old, according to God's law, light breaks from the East.

The Mongol invaders of Europe having already established in Asia an empire, which for splendor of civilization

shamed the Christendom of that day, bring the art of printing to Europe. For centuries the use of paper books and of block printing had been known in China; for a hundred years or more before movable types were seen or used in Holland or Germany, the Chinese and Coreans had employed them for the printing and publication of their literature. Who knows but that some Corean trader or soldier, in the Mongol army, taught in Europe the secret of that alleged European discovery of "the art preservative," whose name, whether Dutch or German, the unrevised encyclopædias give, but whom the profoundest experts, scholars, and men of research cannot yet name? Manuscript Bibles, even when translated by Wycliffe, could not get into the hands of the people on account of their cost (the price of one Bible would build two arches of London bridge), but the types put a copy at five crowns each, and a New Testament for a week's wages, into the hands of ploughboys.

Printing broke forever the monopoly of the priests. Besides the Greek text and new Latin version of Erasmus for the scholars, the people at large learned the facts and the truth from the numerous translations made even before Luther, or Calvin, or Zwingli. England, far behind the continental nations in enlightenment, popular education, and general culture, had long to wait, while France, Spain, Italy, and Holland had printed Bibles in the vernacular, for king and prelates shut out of England the printed word of God. There had been numerous Dutch versions of the whole Bible, probably as many as twenty-four editions of the New Testament and fifteen of the whole Bible, printed in the Netherlands, while in Germany seventeen editions of the Scriptures were printed and widely circulated even before Luther was known, and all before one Bible was printed in England, where no Bible left the presses until 1538. Hence in this one country the prelates got ahead of the people, or, in a sense, pre-vented them. It is true, indeed, that some

of Tyndale's Bibles were smuggled by Dutchmen a little before this time, but it is also true that the common people of England were far behind the people of the Continent in biblical knowledge, and did not discover the facts revealed by the New Testament until long after the Swiss, Dutch, and Germans. The Reformation on the Continent was largely a popular movement, and directly connected with the reading of the Greek Testament by the scholars, and of the vernacular Bibles by the common people. In England the movement was too much political, and led by the king and courtiers, the clericals and office-holders. The outward rupture was made with the pope before the internal separation had been completed. Hence England was still semi-papal long after the churches on the Continent had been Reformed. Hence, also, the method of Reformation was different from that on the Continent. In Germany, Switzerland, and Holland the people were far more familiar with the Scriptures than were their English brethren, and hence their more thorough rejection of unscriptural claims.

This initiation of the common people into a knowledge of the New Testament writings, this direct contact with the original doctrines of the primitive church, wrought one result. Almost to a man in Northern Europe, and despite the Inquisition and the auto-de-fe in the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, the people began at once to protest against the errors of the Greek and Roman forms of the faith. Deserting what was the larger of the two churches, both claiming to be the true and only "Catholic" church, they reformed their own polity and doctrine. A large and miscellaneous body of Christians stigmatized as Anabaptists were among the first to leave the state churches and to begin their missionary career as Protestants and Reformers.

What was their first step? It was to do exactly what the New England churchmen or Puritans did when, at Salem in 1630, they reduced their clergymen to the ranks, and pro-

ceeded to ordination on the New Testament basis. These Anabaptists, so-called, separated religion and politics, rejected the political episcopate, and reaffirming and emphasizing the priesthood of believers, formed true churches on the apostolic models, according to the Congregational polity. Driven out by persecution from Switzerland, they overran most of the countries of what is now Protestant Europe. Before the doctrines of Zwingli or Luther had permeated the masses, or Calvin had given them logical shape, the Anabaptists had established their position. They were the reformers among the common people, and mightily did they leaven the minds of the vulgar in Germany, the Netherlands, and Great Britain. These humble people were all the more able, because of their lack of erudition, and because unsaturated with pagan philosophy and scholasticism, to understand Christ and the founders of the primitive church, who were mostly mechanics, laborers, and the commonest of common people, like themselves, the larger part of the biblical narratives being about plain and obscure folk.

The Anabaptists read the New Testament without prepossessions or worldly rewards in view. They had no subtlety by which to explain away the facts which lay on the surface, nor had they mental reservations to neutralize their acceptance of the apostle's teachings. Having no connection with politics, preferments, or worldly honors, they could not see in the texts what was not there. They took Jesus and the apostles seriously. They found in the Gospels no trace of bishop, presbyter, deacon, or metropolitan patriarch and pope, no trace whatever of seven orders or seven sacraments, nothing of state churches or diocesan bishops, or political or geographical episcopates. In the documents of the primitive church they could not find even as many as three orders in the ministry, or any account of the institution of the clergy as a distinct class. They discovered no foundation for the claims of power made by the official

monopolists of religion in the state churches. They saw that the Christian societies of the first century had no connection whatever with political systems, forces, honors, or rewards; that the choice of officers and power of ordination resided in the congregation of believers; that this choice was made by the people, with or by a show of hands; that the officers of the primitive Christian societies were those who taught or ruled, called indiscriminately bishops and presbyters, and those who served, deacons. Beyond these two kinds of church officers, for government or teaching and for service, they found no others. As in St. Paul's day, their churches were made up of "saints, with the bishops and deacons."

Persecuted by every political church in Europe, the roll of "Anabaptist" martyrs soon became more numerous, perhaps, than even that of the primitive church under the Roman emperors. In England, as many of these people as were not too soon burnt by the church, in the name of God, leavened with their doctrines, especially those eastern and southern counties, out of which a large majority, possibly three-fourths, of the settlers of New England came, and thousands of their descendants were among the founders of Connecticut and Massachusetts. In the city of London, where skilled working-men were in demand, these foreign refugees, and the English apprentices whom they had taught, were especially numerous. They were found by hundreds in the trades guilds, to which belonged nearly all the members of the first Congregational churches formed in 1592, and promptly clapped into prison.

Day by day, as the increasing light of research falls upon the origins of the English Congregationalists, Baptists, and Quakers, the fact is made clear that the Anabaptists, so-called, were the spiritual ancestors of these three denominations of Christians, by whom our own Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania were first set-

tled, and who are now so numerous all over the United States. The Anabaptists, of whom there were as many degrees of enlightenment and orthodoxy as there are among their distant offspring, did in some instances degenerate into bigotry, license, and fanaticism. In so doing, this minority only imitated, in a rude way, what kings, queens, nobles, and bishops had been doing for ages. Because of the Münster episode, historians, mostly ecclesiastical and partisan, have raised a cloud of dust, and blinded the minds of the average Christian concerning these people of God, who were first recognized as such, and tolerated, by William the Silent. In thinking of the Anabaptists, the common reader associates them with Utah Mormons and Chicago Communists. As a matter of fact, however, the Anabaptists as a rule were plain, quiet, peaceable, non-resistant Christians of the primitive sort.

The Anabaptist movement was to the Christian religion, then so corrupted by priestcraft, churchcraft, and patronage, what the American Revolution was in politics. It recalled the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; it cleared the air and purged the vision, and made some hoary institutions, including kingcraft and priestcraft, very unsafe. The Anabaptists were the forerunners of the American republic, where conscience is free. They denounced that union of priest and magistrate which brings Christ to the cross and lets Barabbas go free. They shook down the dogma of close corporationism in the clergy. They reasserted the rights of the people. They made the congregation supreme. They dug the grave in which the divine right of a particular form of church organization lies side by side with the divine right of kings to reign.

In a word, the beginnings of the church in the Reformation of the sixteenth century were normal and biblical. The mighty movement opened and proceeded as Christianity itself in the first century. The common people, who

did not write books, or furnish literary or archæological material for controvertists and book-makers of later ages, heard gladly, believed, and acted. As before Tertullian there were Christians and churches in Rome, as before Ignatius there were Christians at Antioch, and as before Clement and Origen there were tens of thousands of Christ's scattered little ones; so before Luther, the bookman and friend of princes, and Calvin, the maker of libraries and director of a municipal republic, both of them believers in national churches, or the union of church and state, there were tens of thousands of common folks who heard, read, and believed honestly the New Testament, and rejected not only the so-called apostolical succession, but the notion of national or state churches. For this assertion of their faith they fed the martyr fires, lighted alike by Protestant and Catholic hands, and with fuel both Roman, Anglican, Lutheran, and Reformed.

Yet, when the Reformation was further carried on by the learned and by princes, adopted by the universities, and carried on in the persons of illustrious figures which delight and impress the historian, the same doctrine as to the validity of non-episcopal ordination was the one accepted as fully conformable to Holy Scriptures. Wherever the Reformation movement was democratic or republican, as in Switzerland, Holland, and Scotland, the Congregational, or Presbyterian, form of church order prevailed; wherever the initiation and procedure was conducted by kings, as in England, it was Episcopal; where directed by nobles, as in Germany and Scandinavia, the method was Lutheran. Except this one country of England, the manner of ordination was practically the same in the whole of Reformed Christendom. The same emphatic protest against clerical close corporationism was uttered by the learned.

The arrogant claim of the clergy was denied wherever the Bible was freely read, and we repeat that, during the

making of church polity, it was less freely, widely, and popularly known and read in England than it was in Holland and Germany. The priesthood of believers, and the inherent right of the congregation to ordain its ruling, teaching, or ministering members, borrowed directly from the New Testament, became substantially the theory of Bible Christians everywhere, except with one party in the Anglican Church. Though greatly modified in details by the various sects,—Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, Quaker, etc.,—non-episcopal ordination was chosen as being safe, scriptural, valid, and non-prelatical. In the Reformed churches of Germany, Italy, France, Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, the Netherlands, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, England, Spain, and Switzerland, the system of church polity and ordination was presbyterial. Wherever the Lutheran churches were formed,—in the German Empire, Scandinavia, Russia, or the Netherlands,—though their polity was settled much later than their doctrine, the priesthood of believers was a central doctrine, the parity of the clergy was declared, and ordination at the hands of bishops claiming superior authority rejected. In short, there was one point on which all Protestant Christendom, or the church reformed on a biblical foundation, was fully agreed, and that was, in declaring the validity of non-episcopal ordination, and in rejecting the purely local and English semi-political notion as a relic of Romanism. The continental fathers of the Reformation looked upon their insular brethren as holding to something which had grown up in times later than the apostles, and they feared this insular peculiarity as a doctrine that might endanger the Reformation.

This one departure from the general view of biblical or Reformed Christendom, in England, was by one party among a less civilized people, in a country in which a king had taken the place of the pope, or czar, or mikado. Long afterwards, the doctrine of the necessity of episcopal ordi-

nation was made both politically and ecclesiastically compulsory. It was done at a time when the despotic head of an arbitrary government, and reactionary lords of the church, who were also politicians, had joined hands. The doctrine stereotyped in the Anglican Church in 1662, though an eccentricity in Protestant Christendom, was not even that set forth in 1550, in the single and opening sentence of the preface to "The Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating Bishops, Priests, and Deacons," found in the Book of Common Prayer. This ordinal for the Reformed English Church was the work of eleven of the twelve bishops and learned men appointed by King Edward VI. The mass had been changed into a communion, and the seven orders and the seven sacraments, invented in the Roman Church, reduced to two orders and two sacraments, yet the Roman idea of hierarchy was not utterly given up. It is to be noticed that though the preface of the Ordinal says: "It is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scriptures and ancient Authors, that from the apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church,—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons," yet that neither the idea nor the statement is found in the Ordinal or elsewhere in this noble manual of devotion.

The Prayer-Book is not committed to the imaginative theory still held by a section of Episcopal churchmen. Even this one sentence in the preface, when critically read, does not assert that the episcopate is historic even to Christ's time, but only to that of the apostles. Nor is there any declaration that the reader of Scripture and ancient authors can deduce the doctrine of apostolical succession from the apostles themselves. Still further, there is no suggestion of an argument that, being from the apostles, the dogma is therefore from Christ, and since from Christ, then so essential that apart from it no valid ministry and no true church can exist. What the commissioners had in view in 1550

was just what the German and Swiss Reformers and Cranmer, who borrowed materials for the Prayer-Book so liberally from Lutheran and Calvinistic sources, had in view, and what they opposed was the Roman notion of the seven orders; namely, bishop, presbyter or priest, deacon, subdeacon, acolyth, exorcist, and reader. Yet even in the view of the Roman Church, the rank of presbyter and bishop was the same until the Council of Trent, when the change was made and stereotyped. "Bishops, being the successors of the apostles, are placed by the Holy Spirit, to govern the church of God, and to be superiors to their presbyters. If any one affirms that bishops are not superior to presbyters, let him be anathema"—a malediction for which the Bible reader cares as much as for the alleged and proverbial tinker's. In other words, the only churches that explicitly and officially hold to the notion of the so-called apostolical succession are those whose centres are in Rome and Moscow.

The Ordinal does not govern the whole Prayer-Book, which has nothing whatever to say on the subject of the so-called apostolical succession, neither does it condemn or deny the validity of non-episcopal ordination. The Prayer-Book does not say that episcopacy is so essential that without it the being of a church is impossible. The preface states an opinion which was not meant ever to touch the controversy as to presbyterial *versus* episcopal ordination, but to controvert a Roman Catholic and mediæval dogma, first shadowed forth by Tertullian, formulated by Peter Lombardus, and confirmed by the Council of Trent. Even this opinion, as stating the theory of the three orders, is discredited with every year of research, with every advance in scholarship, with every recovery of ancient documents.

To prove further that no such view as that of the doctrine of the apostolical succession, so-called, was in the minds of the framers of the Ordinal,—a doctrine which

broke with the Protestantism of Reformed Christendom, we have but to notice the articles of religion set forth in 1563. These, borrowed in substance from the German Reformers, leave out entirely a doctrine so important and fundamental as that of the so-called apostolical succession, while Article XXIII. is incompatible with, if not contradictory of it. Article XIX., adopted from the German verbal form, having defined the visible church of Christ as "a congregation of faithful men," Article XXIII. declares that the preachers and ministers of the sacraments are "lawfully called and sent which be chosen and called to their work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers in the Lord's vineyard."

It is manifest, therefore, that the claim of apostolical succession is not yet the doctrine of the Church of England, nor of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the British colonies and the United States of America. Indeed, for a hundred years after the publication of the first English Book of Common Prayer, and for eleven decades after the Reformation or Protestantizing of the Ordinal, there was no denial in the Anglican Church of the validity of non-episcopal ordination. The highest preferments in that church were open to men on whom no chrism, butter, or bishop's hands had been laid. Nor only were the Reformers from the Continent welcomed, both as equals and teachers, and invited to assist in making the Church of England a true Reformed church, but large portions, probably two-thirds in all, of the form and language of the Book of Common Prayer, are borrowed directly from the creeds and confessions of both Calvinistic and Lutheran churches, in which episcopal ordination was unknown, and looked upon as an unreformed relic of popery. The Statute of Queen Elizabeth, in 1570, only required those who had received ordination "in any other form of Institution, Consecration, or Ordering than that of the Church of England to subscribe to the Articles of Religion," no objec-

tion whatever being raised as to the validity of such ordinations, not even to the settlement of men ordained on the Continent over English churches.

Indeed, those who have studied the influence of Luther and Calvin in the making of the English standards, formularies, and Prayer-Book would wonder how there could be any objection to the continental types of Christianity or to their exemplars in the ministry. Cranmer and Miles Coverdale, and the men who compiled the Book of Common Prayer, who translated or adapted page after page and sentence after sentence from Luther's Catechism and sermons, from Melancthon's writings, from Osiander, from Brandenberg-Nuremberg Kinderpredigten, from the Cologne Archbishop Herman's Consultations, from John Brentz's Liturgy, from the books of Calvin, Bucer, and A'Lasco and from the Strasburg Liturgy, would have smiled at the idea of excluding from the Church of England those to whom they were so much obligated. It would have been like the debtor assailing the character of his creditor, or denying the quality of the gold he borrowed. Hooker, the champion of the Anglican Church, practically surrendered the whole question, and joined with Cranmer, Luther, Calvin, Bucer, A'Lasco, and the common opinion of Reformed Christendom, when he said, "There may be sometimes very just and sufficient reason to allow ordination made without a bishop."

In a word, all English history, from the first beginning of the Reformation until the time of Charles II., bears out the argument that the dogma of apostolical succession, or the necessity of making a diocesan bishop's hands the channel of divine grace was, by most Protestants, regarded as a survival of Romanism in Reformed Christianity, and that the non-reception of ministers in Presbyterian or other non-episcopal orders, after 1662, points to the necessity of episcopacy as a form of ecclesiastical government, and not to the transmission of sacerdotal power through bishops.

How came it to pass that all the Reformed churches reached practical unanimity on this important point of ecclesiastical polity? For although during the first century or so of the Reformation, the English polity of episcopacy was eccentric in Protestantism, and the islanders, separated as they were from the great stream of European civilization, humanizing influences, and effects of continental and biblical learning and scholarship, held to an antiquated and exploded notion, yet they were not so unscriptural as to deny the validity of ordination by the congregation or presbytery. Nor, when intelligent English Christian men drank for themselves at the fountain of revelation, and came in contact with the vitalizing stream of the continental Reformation, did they fail to accept and adopt the method practised at Geneva and elsewhere. In the same British church, the two methods of ordination were acknowledged. Why, we repeat, did all Reformed Christians see eye to eye on this point, though differing widely on other matters of doctrine and polity? Why also did the English-speaking people and ministers coming to New England, the Huguenots, Walloons, and Dutchmen settling in New Netherland, the Scandinavians colonizing New Sweden, reject the episcopal form of ordination? Why even did the English Puritans, coming directly out of the state church, their hundred ministers ordained within her pale, and all still loyal to the British throne, deliberately dispense, when on these shores, with bishops or a superior order? Why, almost as soon as they landed at Salem, did they at once reject episcopacy, reduce their clergymen to the common ranks, and proceed to elect and ordain by the calling and setting apart by the congregation?

The general consensus of scholarship that is science, and not sentiment, as well as of modern history, when unbiassed by state churches and political rewards, gives but one answer. The reason for the practical unanimity of Re-

formed Christendom lies in the fact that the Scriptures got into the minds and hands of the people. They found in the archives of the primitive church a flat contradiction to the Romish theory of the three orders of the ministry, of the sacerdotal power of the bishop, and of the apostolical succession as a necessary channel of grace. The verdict of the unlearned but simple-minded common folk called Anabaptists—the real precursors of the popular Reformation—the preponderant weight of subtle, profound, and comprehensive scholarship, and the practical agreement of Reformed Christendom, is one and the same. The common people in the first and the sixteenth century heard Him gladly, and heard Him understandingly, who founded the Christian church, for both times he spoke in a tongue understanded of the people.

When, therefore, the English members of the Church of England left their old home and church to begin on these shores a new life, they reverted nobly to things ancient and to things scriptural. In their political procedure they began anew on primitive Teutonic ideas and institutions, preferring, according to deliberate choice, the Germanic, to the Roman, civilization. In religion they turned to the fountains, and having inquired of Christ and the apostles, of the Scriptures, and history, they proceeded with the courage of their convictions. They knew that the Roman and sub-Anglican claim of the "apostolic succession" and the sole validity of episcopal ordination were figments of priestcraft. On the authority of the New Testament they laid their cornerstone on Christ, and rebuilt the church. They, therefore, at once levelled their clergymen with the ranks, and then, in the name of God, the congregation called and ordained bishops and deacons. They followed the example of the first Christians, and of the Bible readers of the sixteenth century. They rejected the diocesan episcopate because it

was not historic, being unknown in the first two Christian centuries, even as it has been rejected during the last three.

The Congregational churches in these United States have come of age, and are able to digest strong meat. The milk so carefully skimmed and diluted by mediæval nurses is no longer necessary for men able to read, who have their senses exercised to discern between the word of God and the inventions of men. They can judge between genuine ancient documents and interpolations, false translations and the cunning sophistries of the mob of those who, alike in heathendom and Christendom, claim to be sole representatives of Deity. As their fathers discriminated between Charles Stuart, malefactor and traitor, and the *Rex Brittanorum dei gratia*, so their children put difference between scriptural and imaginative theories. The world knows too much about ecclesiastical and political fictions to be longer deceived or won by bait. The day of kings reigning by the grace of God, of popes, mikados, shahs, sublime portes, and pharaohs clamoring to be hailed as vicars of God, is over, and with their day belongs that of bishops professing to be exclusive conduits of the Holy Ghost. There may be those who attempt to be neither Protestant nor Romish, who hold tenaciously to the doctrine of a corrupted church, but they are not the spiritual sons of Reformation. They may decline to be Protestant or Reformed; we do not. They may thank God that Luther and Calvin had nothing to do with their making, forgetting that "salvation is of the Jews," and that the Prayer-Book is heavily debtor to both; but we are not ashamed of Calvin and Luther, nor even of the martyrs and the godly Anabaptists.

The churches of New England, and of the United States, who follow the faith of the first Christians, and of those born in that light of the sixteenth century when "the Greek language rose from the dead with the New Testament in her hand," are satisfied with the test proposed by

Christ himself, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Until new scriptures or a new revelation from God be given; until history gives different answers to the inquiring student; until a better foundation for the historic episcopate, so-called, is furnished, they prefer to abide in their own lot.

The "historic episcopate," so named at Lambeth and Chicago, lacks terminal facilities. It cannot deliver what the manifest calls for. It is the glory of the English church that she so early put the forms of her service in "a tongue understanded of the people." Never before in the history of English-speaking Christians was there greater need of honest speech than now. It is no mess of pottage that can bribe us, nor will the quick finding in the field of history of fourteen centuries of goat's flesh serve in lieu of nineteen centuries, or even one first century, of the required venison. We are not yet too blind to discern between Jacob's and Esau's voice. We have felt the hand, we know the voice, of the churchcraft that still impotently claims the power to curse or bless us and all men. Under whatever name it hides, we recognize it. The martyr fires of Norwich and Smithfield still give us light to read; nor are the prisons and torture rooms yet silent. Our fears are not quieted, nor our alertness relaxed, because the adjective chosen is that of "historic." We demand to know what the words mean. Ecclesiastical pretensions are nothing; we require that the claims of "churchmen" be brought to the bar of the New Testament and of historical science.

Let us not be misunderstood. For our fellow-Christians who prefer the Episcopal form of church life, who love beauty, order, sublimity in vestments, architecture, and parliamentary procedure, who enjoy written and rigid forms of prayer and public worship, whose church has so nobly beautified England and partaken in the war and victory over the pretensions of Rome, who are our helpers and teachers in good taste, we have only love and fraternal regard. It is

the church of our distant ancestors. We love the Episcopal Church; we pray for her peace; we wish her prosperity. Undoubtedly for the Episcopal churches in English-speaking Christendom, there is the power and opportunity of a great reconciliation, and one looking toward that unity of his people for which our one Lord and Master Jesus Christ prayed. May the Christians who hold to Episcopacy ever provoke us to love and good works. The Manual of devotion which Episcopalians call their own, and which belongs to them as truly, yet in the same limited sense, as the Old Testament writings belong to the Jews, is a mighty invitation to, and an argument and power for, union. The Book of Common Prayer is a collection of elements from nearly all religions and theologies known to Semitic, Hebrew, Christian, and European history, and in its composition is as mixed as is the blood of the British people; but it has been made homogeneous, and is a precious heirloom to all who use the English tongue. More than all else it is the standing bulwark against priestcraft, and that figment of caste and ecclesiastical snobbery called the apostolical succession. For the life and prosperity of our brethren we shall ever pray. For the intercommunion of all the churches, for the decrease of sects, for the unity of the children of God, for the triumph of the kingdom of Christ in all the earth, let us all hope and work, live and pray.