

*Eucharist. Why was this, but had not many places to celebrate in? and unless this were the case, it is alleged that a Schismatical Bishop was said constituere or collocare aliud Altare? and that a Bishop and an Altar are made correlatives? See S. Cyprian Epist. 40. 72. 73. de unit. Eccles. And thus perhaps is Ignatius to be understood in that forequoted passage of his *Ev. B. 1. c. 11. Unum Altare omni Ecclesiae, & unus Episcopus cum Presbyterio & Diaconis*] So far Mr. Mead.*

I hope upon the consent of so admirable & Critick and learned man, it will not be so much blame-worthy in me, if I speak somewhat the more confidently this way; and say, that I think that the main confusion and Tyranny that hath overspread the Churches, hath been very much from the changing the Apostolical frame of Churches, and setting up many Altars and Congregations under one Bishop in one (pretended particular) Church.

I had three or four passages ready to cite out of *Ignatius*, but these are so express, that I apprehend the rest the less necessary to be mentioned.

The next therefore that I shall mention shall be the forementioned words of *Justin Martyr Apol. 2.* cited by Mr. Mead, and by others frequently to this purpose: In which I observe all these particulars full to the purpose. 1. That they had but one Assembly each Lords day for Church communion for one Church. 2. That this was for reading and prayer and the Eucharist. 3. That the President (who is commonly by those of the Episcopal judgement said to be here meant the Bishop) did preach and give thanks and administer the supper: so that it was administered but to one Congregation as under that Bishop of that Church, for he could not be in two places at once. 4. That to the Absent the Deacons carried their portion after the consecration: so that they had not another Meeting and Congregation by themselves for that end. This is all so plain that I shall think it needeth no Vindication. So that were there but these two Testimonies, I should not marvel if Bishop Downham had extended his confession a little further, when he acknowledgeth (*Def. li. 2. cap. 6. page 104.* that [At the first and namely in the time of the Apostle Paul, the most of the Churches so soon after their Conversion, did not each of them exceed the proportion of a populous

populus Congregation,] (And then we are not out in so interpreting the words of *Paul* and other writers of the holy Scripture.) The next that I shall mention (whoever was or when ever he lived) is *Dionys. de Eccles. Hierarch. cap. 4.* where he tells us that the *Præfect* (who was the Bishop, if there were any) did Baptize those that were converted, and the *Presbyters* and *Deacons* did but assist him: And abundance of work he mentioneth which they had with all that they Baptized, and they called all the Congregation together who joyned in Prayers with the Bishop at the Baptism. All which shews that he was then the Bishop but of one particular Church, which ordinarily Assembled together for publick worship. For, 1. If he had many such Churches or Congregations under him, he could not be thus present to celebrate Baptism in them all. Nor would one only be mentioned as his charge. 2. Nor is it possible that one Bishop should with so long a way of Baptisme as is there described, be able to Baptize all the persons in a Diocess such as ours, or the twentieth part of them, much less in those times, when besides the Infants of Believers, the most eminent sort of Baptism, and greatest labour, was about the multitudes of Adult Converts, that by the Gospel were daily added to the Church.

Gregory Thaumaturgus was as by force made Bishop of *Neocesarea*: and yet his whole Diocess or City had but seventeen Christians in it at his entrance, though when he died he found upon enquiry but seventeen Pagans, so great a change was made by the Gospel and by Miracles: But by this Diocess of seventeen souls we may conjecture what the Churches were in those times (though we should allow others to be an hundred times as great, they would not be so great as the tenth part of many Parishes in England.) See the truth of this passage in *Greg. Nissen Oratio in Greg. Thaumatur.* twice over he recites it. And *Basil. Mag. l. de Spir. Sanc. c. 19.* And *Roman. Breviar. Die 15. Novemb.* And the *Menolog. Grec.* mentioned before *Greg. Neocesar.* works Printed ad *Paris* 1622. But I shall return to some before *Gregory.*

The next that I shall cite is *Tertullian*, that well known place in his *Apolog. c. 39.* [*Corpus sumus de conscientia Religionis & Discipline unitate & spei federe. Coimus in cœtum & Congregationem ut ad Deum quasi manu facta precationibus ambiamus orantes.*]

orantes. — Cogimur ad divinarum literarum Commemorationem
 — Certè fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiduci-
 am figimus, disciplinam preceptorum nihilominus inculcationi-
 bus densamus: ibidem etiam exhortationes, Castigationes, & cen-
 sura Divina: nam & judicatur magno cum pondere ut apud cer-
 tos de Dei conspectu; summumq; futuri judicii præjudicium est
 si quis ita deliquerit, ut à communicatione Orationis, & conventus,
 & omnis sancti commercii relegatur. *President probati* quiq; seni-
 ores, &c.] If I be able to understand *Tertullian*; it is here plain
 that each Church consisted of one Congregation, which assembled
 for Worship, and Discipline at once or in one place, and this
 Church was it that had Presidents or Seniors to guide them both
 in Worship and by Discipline. So that if there were any more
 of these Assemblies in one particular Political Church, then there
 were more Bishops then one, or else others besides Bishops exer-
 cised this Discipline: But indeed its here plainly intimated that
 Bishops were then the Guides of Congregations (single,) and
 not of Diocesses consisting of many such.

I shall put *Tertullians* meaning out of doubt by another place,
 and that is, *de Corona Militis* cap. 3. [*Eucharistie Sacramen-
 tum & in tempore victus, & omnibus mandatum à Domino, eti-
 am antelucanis ritibus, nec de aliorum manu, nisi præsentium
 sumimus.*] And if they received this Sacrament of none but the
 Presidents, (and that every Lords day at least, as no doubt they
 did) then they could have no more Congregations in a Church
 then they had Presidents. And (though *Pamelius* say that by
 Presidents here is meant also Presbyters, yet) those that we now
 dispute against, understand it of the Prelates. And if they will not
 so do, then may we will interpret the foresaid passage *Apol.* to be
 meant of the same sort of Presidents; and then you may soon see
 what Bishops were in *Tertullians* dayes. For we have no reason
 to think that they are not the same sort of Officers which he calleth
 Presidents, and of whom he there saith, *President probati Seniores.*

So in the foregoing words in *Tertullian*, *ibid.* its said [*Aquam
 adituri ibidem, sed & aliquando prius in Ecclesia sub Antistitis
 manu contestamur nos renunciare Diabolo, & Pompa & angelis ejus.*]
 Where it seems that there were no more thus initiated then the
Antistes himself did first thus engage in the Congregation; And I
 believe they take this *Antistes* for a Bishop.

And hereby the way let this argument be noted. Seeing its past doubt that the first sence of the word *ekklesia* is the *Catus* or holy Assembly it self, why should the *Meeting place* be so often called also *Ecclesia* in those times, in the *borrowed sence*, but only in Relation to the People there assembled? and its plain that it was but one Congregation and not many that assembled in that place: and therefore it was from that one that the Place is called *Ecclesia*. That it is oft so called, besides this place of *Tertullian* (which seems so to use the word) I refer you to Mr. *Meads* exercitation of Temples, who proves it distinctly in the several Centuries. That saying of *Theophilus Antiochenus ad Antiochum* seems to intimate the whole that I intend [sic *Deus dedit mundo qui peccatorum tempestatibus & Naufragiis iactatur, Synagogas, quas Ecclesias Sanctas Nominamus in quibus veritatis doctrina fervet, ad quas confugiunt veritatis studiosi, quotquot salvari, Deiq. iudicium & iram evitare volunt.*] So that the Churches of those times which were as *Noahs Ark*, and where safety was to be found for the soul, were Synagogues or Assemblies. So *Tertul. de Idololatr. c. 7. pag. (mibi) 171. Tota die ad hanc partem zelus fidei peroravit, ingenuū Christianum ab idolis in Ecclesiam venire, de adversaria officina in domum Dei venire.*—] See more places of *Tertullian* cited by *Pamelius* on this place num. 29. page 177. specially see that *de virg. Veland. cap. 13. p. 224*

* *Clemens Alexandrinus* hath divers passages to the purpose

[*Prohibeantur offerre, acturi apud nos, & apud confessores ipsos, & apud plebem universam causam suam*] And [*Hæc singulorum tractanda sit & limanda plenius ratio, non tantum cum collegis meis, sed & cum plebe ipsâ universâ*] And [*Vix plebi persuadeo, immo extorqueo, ut tales patientur admitti, & iustior factus est fraternitatis dolor, ex eo quod unus atq; alius obnitente plebe & contradicente, mea tamen facilitate suscepti, peiores extiterunt*]—] How the *universa plebs* of many Congregations or a Diocess like ours, should be consulted and hear and do any thing to admission or exclusion from Communion, and be advised with by *Cyprian* in all such affairs, is not easie to conceive. See his *Epist. 3. 6. 10. 13. 14. 26. 31. 27. 28. 33. 40. &c.*

Peruse all the citations of *Bloudwell de iure Plebis in Regim. Eccles.* and see whether they intimate not the smallness of their Diocesses. (Though I believe they prove no such thing as proper Government in the people.) Yet peruse all the Authors cited by him there to prove that *dñe Ecclesie Math. 18.* refers to the Congregation of Pastors and people together; and it will much confirm the point in hand. I shall not recite any of them, because you may there find them in the end of *Grotius de Imperio Sum. Potest.*

now

* Very many passages in *Cyprian* do intimate that then the Diocesses were small, perhaps having yet but unum Altare: As when he saith that [à primordio Episcopatus mei statuerim nihil sine concilio vestro & sine consensu plebis meæ, privata sententia gerere, &c. And

now in hand. *Stromat. li. 7.* in the beginning, he mentioneth the Church and its officers, which he divideth only into two sorts, *Presbyters and Deacons.* But I will name no more particular persons, but come to some intimations of the point before us from customs or Practices of the Church and the Canons of Councils.

And it seems to me that the dividing of Parishes so long after (or of Titles as they are called) doth plainly tell us that about those times it was that particular Polical Church did first contain many stated Congregations. And though it be uncertain when this began (*Mr. Thorndike* as we heard before, conjectureth, about *Cyprians* dayes) yet we know that it was long after the Apostles, and that it was strange to less populous places long after it was introduced at *Rome* and *Alexandria*, where the number of Christians, & too much ambition of the Bishop, occasioned the multiplication of Congregations under him, and so he became a Bishop of many Churches (named as one) who formerly was Bishop but of a single Church. For if there had been enough, one hundred or fifty or twenty or ten years before, to have made many Parishes or stated Assemblies for communion in worship, then no doubt but the light of Nature would have directed them to have made some stated divisions before; For they must needs know that God was not the God of Confusion but of order in all the Churches: And they had the same reasons before as after: And persecution could not be the hindrance any more at first then at last: For it was under persecuting Emperours when Parishes or Titles were distinguished, and so it might, notwithstanding persecutions have been done as well at first as at last, if there had been the same reason. It seems therefore very plain to me that it was the increase of Converts that caused this division of Titles, and that in planting of Churches by the Apostles, and during their time, and much after, the Churches consisted of no more then our Parishes, who being most inhabitants of the Cities had their meetings there for full communion, though they might have other subordinate meetings as we have now in mens houses for Repeating Sermons and Prayer.

And as *Mr. Thorndike* out of *Nninus* tells us of 365. Bishopricks in *Ireland* planted by *Patrick*, so other Authors tell

us that *Patrick* was the first Bishop there, or as others and more credible, *Palladius* the first, and *Patrick* next: and yet the Scots in Ireland had Churches before *Palladius* his dayes, (as Bishop *Usher* sheweth de *Primordiis Eccles. Britan.* 798, 799, 800, &c.) *Johannes Major* de *gestis scholarum* li. 2. cap. 2. prioribus illis temporibus per *Sacerdotes & Monachos, sine Episcopis* Scotos in fide eruditos fuisse affirmat. Et ita sane ante *Majorem* scripsit *Johannes Fordonus* *Scotichron.* li. 3. cap. 8. [Ante *Palladii* adventum habebant *Scoti* fidei *Doctores* ac *Sacramentorum* *Ministratores* *Presbyteros* solummodo vel *Monachos, ritum sequentes Ecclesie Primitivae* (N. B.) Of which saith *Usher* [Quod postremum ab iis accepisse videtur qui dixerunt (ut *Johan. Semeca* in *Glossa Decreti* dist. 93. ca. *Legimus*) [quod in *Prima Primitiva Ecclesia* commune erat officium *Episcoporum & Sacerdotum*: & *Nomina* erant communia, & officium commune; sed in *secunda primitiva* caperunt distinguere & nomina & officia.] So that it seems that some Churches they had before; but *Palladius* and *Patrick* came into Ireland, as *Augustine* into England, and abundantly increased them, and settled withall the Roman Mode; So that it seemed like a new Plantation of Religion and Churches there. Yet it seems that the Bishops settled by *Patrick* (save that himself an Archbishop was like our Bishops) were but such as were there before under the name of *Presbyters*, saith *Fordon*, after the rite or fashion of the *Primitive Church*.

And saith *Usher* *ibid.* p. 800. [Hector *Boethius* fuisse dicere *Palladium* primum omnium qui *Sacrum* inter *Scotos* egere *Magistratum* à summo Pontifice *Episcopum* creatum: quum antea *Populi* suffragiis ex *Monachis & Caldeis* pontifices assumerentur. *Boeth. Scotorum Histor. lib. 7. fol. 128. b.*

And he adds the saying of *Balaus*, (*Scriptor Britanic. cent. 14. cap. 6.*) [A *Celestino* illum missum ait *Johannes Balaus*, ut *Sacerdotalem ordinem*, inter *Scotos* *Romano ritu* institueret. *Habebant* (inquit) antea *Scoti* suos *Episcopos* ac *Ministros*, ex *verbi Divini Ministerio* *plebium* suffragiis electes, prout *Asianorum* more fieri apud *Britannos* videbant: Sed hac *Romanis*, ut *magis ceremoniosis* atque *Asianorum* *osoribus*, non placebant] By these passages it is easie to conjecture whether they were Bishops of a County, or Bishops of a Parish that were there in those daies. For my part I heartily wish that Ireland had three hundred sixty five

five good Bishops and Churches at this day, even when the whole Nation profess themselves to be Christians, (which then they did not.)

To this purpose runs the 14. Canon Concilii Agath. (and if it were so then, much more long before) [*Siquis etiam extra Parochias in quibus legitimus est ordinariusq; conventus oratorium habere voluerit reliquis festivitibus, ut ibi Missam audiat, propter fatigationem familie, iusta ordinatione permittimus. Pascha vero, Natali Domini, Epiphania, Ascensione domini, Pentecoste, & Natali Sancti Johannis Baptiste, & siqui maxime dies in festivitibus habentur, non nisi in Civitatibus, aut Parochiis audiant*] Here it appeareth that there was but one *legitimus ordinariusq; conventus* in a Parish; though they tolerated an Oratory or Chappell of ease. And that a Parish here is taken for a Diocess, or such a Church as had proper to it self a Bishop and Presbyterie, as it is probable from the ordinary use of the word by Eusebius and other antients in that sence, so also from what is further said in the following Canons of this Council: And so the word Parish here may be expository of the word *City*, or else denote a Rural Bishoprick. For Can. 30. saith [*Benedictionem super plebem in Ecclesia fundere aut penitentem in Ecclesia benedicere presbytero penitus non licebit.*] And if a Presbyter may not bless the people or the penitent, (when the blessing of the people was part of the work in every Solemn Assembly for Church communion) then it is manifest that a Bishop must be present in every such Assembly to do that part which the Presbyter might not do: and consequently there were no more such Assemblies then there were Bishops. And to prove this more fully mark the very next Canon of that Council, viz. the 31. [*Missas die dominico secularibus totas audire speciali ordine precipimus, ita ut ante benedictionem Sacerdotis egredi populus non presumat. Quod si fecerint, ab Episcopo publicè confundatur*] So that its plain that on every Lords day all the people (for here is no distinction or limitation) were to be present in the publick worship to the end, and the Bishop to pronounce the blessing (whoever preached) and openly to rebuke any that should go out before it. From whence it is evident that all such Church Assemblies for communion every Lords day were to have a Bishop present with them to do part of the work: and therefore there were

were no more such Assemblies then there were Bishops.

In the 38. Canon of the same Council we find this written [*Cives qui superiorum solennitatum, id est, Pascha & Natalis Domini, vel Pentecostes festivatibus cum Episcopis interesse neglexerint, quum in Civitatibus communionis vel benedictionis accipienda causa posites se nosse debeant, triennio communione priventur Ecclesie.*] So that it seems there were no more Church-members in a City then could congregat on the festival daies for Communion and the Bishops Blessing : therefore there were not many such Congregations : when every one was to be three years excommunicate that did not Assemble where the Bishop was.

Moreover all those Canons of several Councils that forbid the Presbyters to confirm by Chrism, and make it the Bishops work, do shew that the Diocess were but small when the Bishop himself could do that besides all his other work.

In the Canons called the Apostles, cap. 5. it is ordained thus [*Omnium aliorum primitie Episcopo & Presbyteris domum mittuntur, non super Altare. Manifestum est autem quod Episcopus & Presbyteri inter Diaconos & reliquos clericos eas dividunt.*] By which it appeareth that there was but one Altar in a Church to which belonged the Bishop, Presbyterie, and Deacons, who lived all as it were on that Altar.

And Can. 32. runs thus [*Si quis Presbyter contemnens Episcopum suum, seorsum collegerit, & Altare aliud exerit, nihil habens quo rebrehendat Episcopum in causa pietatis & justitie, deponatur quasi principatus amator existens— Hac autem post unam & secundam & tertiam Episcopi obsecrationem fieri conveniat.*] Which shews that there was then but one Convention and one Altar to which one Bishop and Presbyters did belong : So that no other Assembly or Altar was to be set up apart from the Bishop by any Presbyter that had nothing against the Bishop in point of Godliness or Justice.

And I believe if Bishops had a whole Diocesse of two hundred or three hundred or a thousand Presbyters to maintain, they would be loth to stand to the fifty eighth Canon which makes them Murderers if they supply not their Clergies wants : But let that Canon pass as spurious.

And long after when *Concilium Vasense* doth grant leave to the Presbyters to preach, and Deacons to read Homilies in Country Parishes

Parishes as well as Cities, it shews that such Parishes were but new and imperfect Assemblies.

In the Council of *Laodicea* the 36. Canon is [*Non oportet Presbyteros ante ingressum Episcopi ingredi Ecclesiam, & sedere in tribunalibus, sed cum Episcopo ingredi: nisi forte aut agrotet Episcopus, aut in peregrinationis commodum abesse constiterit.*] By which it seems that there was but one Assembly in which the Bishop and Presbyters sate together: Otherwise the Presbyters might have gone into all the rest of the Churches without the Bishop at any time, and not only in case of his sickness or peregrination.

The fifth Canon of the Council of *Antioch* is the same with that of *Can. Apost.* before cited, that no Presbyter or Deacon condemning his own Bishop, shall withdraw from the Church and gather an Assembly apart, and set up an Altar. By which still it appears that to withdraw from that Assembly, was to withdraw from the Church, and that one Bishop had but one Altar and Assembly for Church Communion.

So *Cencil. Carthag.* 4. *Can.* 35. which order the sitting of the Presbyters and Bishop together in the Church: And many decrees that lay it on the Bishop to look to the Church lands and goods, and distribute to the poor the Churches Alms, do shew that their Diocesses were but small, or else they had not been sufficient for this.

All the premises laid together me thinks afford me this conclusion, that the Apostolical particular Political Churches were such as consisted of one only Worshipping Congregation (a Congregation capable of personal communion in publick worship) and their Overseers; and that by little they departed from this form, each Bishop enlarging his Diocess, till he that was made at first the Bishop but of one Church, became the Bishop of many, and so set up a new frame of Government, by setting up a new kind of particular Churches. And thus was the primitive Government corrupted, while men measured their charge by the circuit of Ground, thinking they might retain the old compass when they had multiplied converts, and therefore should have multiplied Churches and Bishops. *

To all this I add these observations. 1. That the very Nature of Church Government tells us that a Governour must be present

* And it seems the Churches were not so large as some imagine, even at the sixth General Council at *Trul. in Constantinop.* when Canon 78: it was ordered that no the fifth day of the week the Baptized were to say over their Belief to the Bishop or the Presbyters: And it was not such Diocesses as ours that this work could be thus done for.

upon the place, and see to the execution: For God hath made us the Laws already, and Synods must in way of Union determine of the most advantageous circumstances for the performing of the duties which God imposeth: And particular Bishops are to guide their particular Congregations in Gods Worship, and in order thereto; Their guidance is but a subservient means to that worship: And therefore they must Rule the Church as a Captain doth his Company in fight, or a Physician his Patient, or a Schoolmaster his School, by his own presence, and not at many miles distance by a Surrogate.

2. The doctrine which makes the first particular Political Church to consist of many stated Worshipping Churches like our Parishes, doth set on the saddle, if not also hold the stirrup, for a Diocesan Bishop to get up, to head those prepared bodies.

3. Seeing the Presbyterians do confess that it is not Necessary (but lawful) for a particular Political Church to consist of many Worshipping Churches, and say, *It may consist only of one:* Common Reason and experience will then direct us to conclude that *its best ordinarily take up with that one:* seeing people that know one another, and live within the reach of each other for common converse, and ordinarily meet and join in the same publick Worship, are most capable of the ends of Church Policy; and a Pastor capable of guiding such, better then other Parishes that he knows not.

4. He that makes the Pastor of one Parish the Ruler of the rest adjoining, doth lay upon him much more duty then sitting in a Presbyterie to vote in censures. For those censures are a small part of Church Government, comparatively (else most Congregations in England have little or no Government, for they have little or none of these Censures.) Yea indeed true Church Guidance or Government contains a great part, if not most of the Pastoral work, which a man would be loth to undertake over too many distant unknown Congregations: Though he may well undertake in Synods to promote Unity, and to do the best he can for the whole Church of Christ. If therefore those of the Congregational way, were as neer us in other things, as in this before insisted on, (especially if they would renounce* that great mistake of the Peoples having the Power of the Keys or Government, and take up for them with a *Judicium Discretionis*, and

* As many of them do in sense, when they hold it in terms, of which see what I have said in the Preface to the Reformed Pastor; And even in this while they confess that Pastors are Rulers and the People must obey according to the express words of the text, Heb. 13. 17. 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 12, &c. They grant us what we plead for. and

and just liberty) we need not stand at so great a distance.

And lastly, If Ministers of the Gospel would tenderly weigh the greatness of their work and charge, and the dreadfulness of their account, the worth of souls, the power and prevalency of sin, the rage of all the Churches enemies, and the multitudes of them, they would sooner tremble to think of the difficulties in Governing or guiding one Congregation in the way to heaven, than grasp at more, and think themselves able to be the guides of many, and draw such a heavy burden on themselves, and prepare for such a reckoning. Lest they be offended with my words, I will say the like in the words of *Chrysostom* (or whoever else was the Author of the Imperfect work) on *Matth* 20. Hom. 35. pag. (mihi) 901. [*Si hac ergo ita se habent, secularem quidem primatum desiderare, etsi ratio non est, vel causa est: quia etsi justum non est, vel utile est. Primatum autem Ecclesiasticum concupiscere, neq; ratio est, neq; causa: quia neq; justum est, neq; utile. Quis enim sapiens ultro se subijcere festinat servituti, labori, dolori, & quod majus est, periculo talis ut det rationem pro omni Ecclesia, apud justum judicem? nisi forte qui non credit iudicium Dei, nec timet, uti abutens primatu suo Ecclesiastico seculariter, convertat eum in Secularem. Sed ne forte qui talis est in appetendo primatum, profectum pietatis pie prætendat, dico, Nunquid qui in ordine prior est, jam & meritis est melior?]*

And of the Ministerial honours he saith (ibid.) Deniq; ipsi honores in Christo in prima quidem facie videntur honores, revera autem non sunt honores diversi, sed sunt diversa Ministeria: ut puta honor oculi videtur, quia illuminat Corpus: Sed ipse honor illuminandi non est ei honor sed Ministerium ejus. —]

So much to prove the Proposition, that the late English Episcopacy is not to be restored, under any pretence of Order or Peace.

Wherein I have purposely forbore the mention of its Abuses, and doleful consequents, because they may suppose that Abuse to be separable from the thing.

Consequents of that which is already Proved.

TO save the debating of many great Controversies that break the peace and destroy or diminish the Charity of many, I may abbreviate the work, by giving you some of the true sequels of what hath been sufficiently proved.

Conf. I. The taking down of the English Episcopacy was (*as to the thing*) so far from being evil, and deserving the Accusations that some lay upon it, that it was a matter of Necessity to the Reformation and well being of the Churches of Christ in these Nations. It was no worse a work in it self considered, then the curing of a grievous disease is to the sick, and the supply of the necessities of the poor in their indigence. What guilt lieth upon that man, that would have all the sick to perish, for fear of injuring one Physitian, that had undertaken the sole care of all the County? or that would have all the County to have but one Schoolmaster: Or an hundred Ships to have but one Pilot, and consequently to perish: How much greater is their guilt, that would have had the forementioned Episcopacy continued, to the hazzard of many thousand souls, and the abasement and ejection of holy Discipline, the pollution of the Churches, and the hardening of the wicked, and the dishonour of God? I mention not this to provoke any to dishonour them, but to provoke the persons themselves to Repentance. And I intreat them to consider, how sad a thing it is, that without any great inducement, they should draw such a mountain of guilt upon their souls. The Bishops had the temptation of Honour and Riches: but what honour or gain have you to seduce you, to choose a share with other men in their sin and punishment?

I meddle not here with the *Manner* of demolishing Episcopacy, but with the *Matter*: because I would not mix other Controversies with this. But I am confident those men that usually own the late Episcopacy, and revile them that demolish it, shall one way or other feel ere long, that they have owned a very unprofitable cause, and such as they shall wish, they had let alone, and that it made not for their honour to be so much enemies to

to the welfare of the Church, as the enemies of the abolition of that Prelacy will appear to be.

- Conf. 2.* *Conf. II.* The matter of that clause in the National Covenant, which concerneth the abolition of this Prelacy before mentioned, was so far from deserving the Reproaches and Accusations that are bestowed on it by some, that it was just and necessary to the well being of the Church.

In this also I purposely mean the Civil controversie about the authority of imposing, taking, or prosecuting the Covenant, and speak only of the *Matter* of it : (to avoid the losing of the truth by digressions, and new controversies) They that by reproaching this clause in the Covenant, do own the Prelacy which the Covenant disowneth, might shew more love to the Church and their own souls, by pleading for sickness, and nakedness, and famine, and by passionate reproaches of all that are against these, then by such owning and pleading for a far greater evil.

- Conf. 3.* *Conf. III.* Those of the English Ministry, that are against the old Episcopacy, and are glad that the Church is rid of it, are not therefore guilty of Schism, nor of sinfull disobedience to their spiritual superiours.

If any of them did *swear obedience* to the Prelates (a tyrannicall imposition that God never required, nor the Primitive Church never used) that's nothing to our present case, which is not about the keeping of oaths, but the obeying or rejecting the Prelacy in it self considered. It is not schismatical to depart from an usurpation that God disowneth, and the Church is endangered and so much wronged by, and to seek to pull up the Roots of Schism, which have bred and fed it in the Churches so long.

- Conf. 4.* *Conf. IV.* Those that still justifie the ejected Prelacy, and desire the restauration of it, as they needlessly choose the guilt of the Churches desolations, so are they not to be taken for men that go about to heal our breaches, but rather for such as would widen and continue them, by restoring the main cause.

- Conf. 5.* *Conf. V.* If we had had such an Episcopacy as Bishop *Usher* did propound as satisfactory, (and such men to manage it,) Episcopacy and Peace might have dwelt together

together in *England* to this day : It is not the the Name of a Bishop that hath been the matter of our trouble, but the exorbitant *Species* introducing unavoidably the many mischiefs which we have seen and felt.

Conf. VI. Ordination by the ejected Prelacy, *in specie*, is not of necessity to the being or well-being of a Presbyter or Deacon. *Conf. 6.* If the *Species* of Prelacy it self be proved contrary to the word of God, and the welfare of the Church, then the Ordination that is by this *Species* of Prelacy, cannot be necessary or as such desirable.

Conf. VII. A Parochial or Congregational Pastor, having *Conf. 7.* assistant Presbyters and Deacons, either existent or in expectance, was the Bishop that was in the dayes of *Ignatius, Justin, Tertullian*, and that Dr. *Hammond* describeth as meant in many Scriptures, and existent in those dayes. I speak not now to the question about Archbishops.

Conf. VIII. The Ordination that is now performed by these Parochial Bishops (especially in an assembly, guided by their Moderator) is, beyond all just exception, Valid, as being by such Bishops as the Apostles planted in the Churches, and nearer the way of the Primitive Church, then the Ordination by the ejected *Species* of Prelates is. *Conf. 8.*

Conf. IX. As the Presbyters of the Church of *Alexandria* *Conf. 9.* did themselves make one their Bishop, whom they chose from among themselves, and set him in a higher degree (as if Deacons make an Archdeacon, or Souldiers choose one and make him their Commander, saith *Hierom ad Evagr.*) so may the Presbyters of a Parochial Church now. And as the later Canons require that a Bishop be ordained or consecrated by three Bishops, so may three of these (Primitive) Parochial Bishops, ordain or consecrate now another of their degree. And according to the Canons themselves, no man can justly say that this is invalid, for want of the Consecration by Archbishops, or of such as we here oppose.

Conf. X. Those that perswade the People that the Ordination of those in *England* and other Churches is null that is *Conf. 10.* not by such as the English Prelates were, and that perswade the people to take them for no Presbyters or Pastors, that are not ordained

dained by such Prelates, and do make an actual separation from our Churches and Ministers, and perswade others to the like, upon this ground, and because the Ministers have disowned the English Prelacy, and withal confess that Church of *Rome* to be a true Church, and their ordination and Priesthood to be just or true, are uncharitable, and dangerously Schismatical (though under pretence of decrying Schism,) and many waye injurious to the Church and to the souls of men and to themselves. This will not please; but that I not only speak it but further manifest it, is become Necessary to the right Information of others.

FINIS.

The Second
DISPUTATION:

VINDICATING

The Protestant Churches
and MINISTERS that have not
Prelatical Ordination, from the
Reproaches of those Dividers that
would nullifie them.

WRITTEN

Upon the sad complaints of many
Godly Ministers in several parts of the
Nation, whose Hearers are turning Sepa-
ratists.

By *Rich. Baxter.*

L O N D O N,

Printed by *Robert White*, for *Nevil Simmons* Book-
seller in *Kedermister.* 1658.

The Preface.

Christian Reader,

If thou be but for the interest of Christianity, more than of a party, and a Cordial friend to the Churches Peace, though thou be never so much resolved for Episcopacy, I doubt not but thou and I shall be one, if not in each Opinion, yet in our Religion, and in Brotherly affection, and in the very bent of our labours and our lives: And I doubt not but thou wilt approve of the scope and substance of this following Disputation, what imperfections soever may appear in the Manner of it. For surely there is that of God within thee, that will hardly suffer thee to believe, that while Rome is taken for a true Church, the Reformed that have no Prelates must be none: that their Pastors are meer Lay men, their Ordination being Null: and consequently their administrations in Sacraments, &c. Null and of no Validity. The Love that is in thee to all believers, and especially to the Societies of the Saints, and the honour and interest of Christ, will keep thee from this, or strive against it, as nature doth against poyson or destructive diseases. If thou art not a meer Opinionist in Religion, but one that hast been illuminated by the spirit of Christ, and felt his love shed abroad in thy heart, and hast ever had experience of spiritual communion with Christ and his Church, in his holy Ordinances, I dare then venture my cause upon thy judgement: Go

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among them that unchurch our Churches, and degrade our Ministers, and perswade all people to fly from them as a plague, and try their doctrine, their spirits, their publick worship, their private devotion, and their whole conversation; and when thou hast done, come into our Assemblies, and spare not, if thou be impartial, to observe our imperfections: judge of our Order and Discipline and Worship, together with our Doctrine and our lives: and when thou hast done unchurch us if thou darest, and if thou canst. We justify not our selves or our wayes from blemishes: but if thou be but heartily a friend to the Bridegroom, offer us then if thou darest a bill of divorce, or rob him if thou darest of so considerable a portion of his inheritance. Surely if thou be his friend, thou canst hardly find in thy heart to deliver up so much of his Kingdom to his Enemy, and to set the name of the Devil on his doors; and say, This is the house of Satan and not of Christ. If thou have received but what I have done (though, alas too little) in those Societies, and tasted in those Ordinances but that which I have tasted, thou wouldst abhor to reproach them, and cut them off from the portion of the Lord.

Remember it is not Episcopacy nor the old conformity that I am here opposing. (My judgement of those Causes I have given in the foregoing and following disputation:) But it is only the New Prelatical Recusants or Separatists, that draw their followers from our Churches as no Churches and our Ordinances of Worship as none, or worse then none, and call them into private houses, as the meetest places for their acceptable worship. Who would have thought that ever that generation should have come to this, that so lately hated the name of separation, and called those private meetings, Conventicles, which were held but in due subordination to Church meetings, and not in opposition to them, as theirs are! Who would have thought that those that seemed to disown

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Recusancy, and persecuted Separatists, should have come to this? Yea that those that under Catholick pretences can so far extend their charity to the Papists, have yet so little for none of the meanest of their Brethren, and for so many Reformed Protestant Churches? Yea that they should presume even to censure ut out of the Catholick Church and consequently out of heaven it self. I have after here given thee an instance in one, Dr. Hide, who brandeth the very front of his Book with these Schismatical uncharitable stigmata. The senseless Queres of one Dr. Swadling, and others run in the same channel, or sink. If these men be Christians indeed, me thinks they should understand, that as great (that I say not greater) blemishes, may be found on all the rest of the Churches, as those for which the Reformed are by them unchurched: and consequently they will deliver up All to Satan; and Christ must be deposed: And how much doth this come short of Infidelity? At least me thinks their hearts should tremble least they hear at last, [In not loving the e you loved not me: in despising and reproaching these, you despised and reproached me.]

And yet these men are the greatest pretenders next the Romanists, to Catholicisme, Unity, and Peace! Strange Catholicks that cut off so great and excellent a part of the Catholick Church! And a sad kind of Unity and Peace which all must be banished from, that cannot unite in their Prelacy, though the Episcopacy which I plead for in the next Disputation they can own. The summ of their offer, is, that if all the Ministers not Ordained by Prelates, will confess themselves to be meer Lay-men and no Ministers of Christ, and will be Ordained again by them, and if the Churches will confess themselves No Churches, and receive the essence of Churches from them, and the Sacrament and Church Assemblies to be Null, invalid, or unlawfull till managed only by Prelatical Ministers, then they will have Peace and Communion

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nion with us, and not till then. And indeed must we lay your Communion so deer? As the Anabaptists do by us in the point of Baptism, so do these Recusants in the point of Ordination. You must be Baptized saith one party, for your Infant Baptism was none. You must be Ordained saith the other sort, for your Ordination by Presbyters was none. The upshot is, We must be all of their Opinions and parties, before we can have their Communion, or to be reputed by them the Ministers and Churches of Christ. And on such kind of terms as these, we may have Unity with any Sect.

If really we be not as hearty friends to Order and Discipline in the Church as they, we shall give them leave to take it for our shame, and glory in it as their honour. But the question is not, whether we must have Church-Order? but whether it must be theirs, and none but theirs? Nor whether we must have Discipline, but whether it must be only theirs? Nay, with me, I must profess, the question is, on the other side whether we must needs have a Name and shew of Discipline thats next to none, or else be no Churches or no Ministers of Christ? The main reason that turneth my heart against the English Prelacy is because it did destroy Church Discipline, and almost destroy the Church for want of it, or by the abuse of it, and because it is (as then exercised) inconsistent with true Discipline. The question is not, whether we must have Bishops and Episcopal Ordination. We all yield to that without contradiction. But the doubt is about their Species of Episcopacy. Whether we must needs have Ordination by a Bishop that is the sole Governour over an hundred, or two hundred, or very many particular Churches: or whether the Bishops of single Churches may not suffice, at least as to the Being of our office? I plead not my own cause, but the Churches, For I was ordained long ago by a Bishop of their own with Presbyters. But I do not therefore take my self to be disengaged from Christianity or Catholicism, and