

Teachers of the Church at *Antioch* must send or separate *Saul* and *Barnabas*, for the special work in which the Holy Ghost would imploy them, *Act.* 13, 1, 2. which seems to me, to be but a secondary Call to some special exercise of their former Office, one way rather than another. Thus also by mutual agreement their Provinces may be allotted and divided.

§. 33. 2. By the Magistrates appointment and command also, may this be done. Though he make not Ministers, yet may he do much in assigning them their Provinces, Seats, and Stations: and it is our duty to obey his Commands in such cases if they be not plainly destructive to the Church: much more if they are beneficial to it.

§. 34. 3. Also by a Ministers own discerning of a fit opportunity to do good, either by the Magistrates bare permission, the peoples invitation, or their willingness, or not opposing; or though they do oppose, yet some other advantages for the work may be discerned, or Hopes at least. Now though the *Call of Ordination* must be from the Pastors of the Church, and neither Magistrates nor people can make us Ministers, yet the *Call of Opportunity* may be from the people and Magistrate, more commonly then any. And he that is already a Minister, needs not alwayes another Call for the exercising of his Ministry, save only this *Call by Opportunity*. He had his *Authority* by that Call that placed him in the Office; which was done at first, and must be done but once. But he hath his *Opportunity and Station* for the exercise of that Authority by the people and Magistrates, and perhaps may receive it over and over many times.


§. 35. 5. This way of exercising the Ministry is not alike necessary in all times and places; but with great variety; it is exceeding necessary in some Countreys, and not in others, but useful in some degree in most as I conceive.

§. 36. If the Question be, whether such a Ministry be useful in these Dominions, or not? I have answered before, that in some darker and necessitous parts, where ignorance doth reign, and Ministers (or able ones at least) are scarce, there such an exercise of the Ministry is necessary: but in other parts it is not of such necessity: yet much work there may be for such, or for those in the next Chapter mentioned, in most Countreys: of them therefore I shall next speak.



CHAP. II.

Of fixed Pastors that also participate in the work of the unfixed.

§. 1.  T is not only the *unfixed* Ministers that may lawfully do the fore-described work, but the *fixed* Pastors of particular Churches may take their part of it; and ordinarily should do somewhat toward it: though not so much as they that are wholly in it.

§. 2. I shall here shew you, 1. What such may do. 2. On what terms. 3. And then I shall prove it. And 1. They may as Ministers of Christ, go abroad to preach where there are many ignorant or ungodly people in order to their Conversion. 2. They may help to Congregate Believers into holy Societies, where it is not already done. 3. They may Ordain them Elders in such Churches as they Congregate. 4. They may oft enquire after the welfare of the Neighbour Churches, and go among them, and visit them, and strengthen them, and admonish the Pastors to do their duties. 5. They may instruct and teach the Pastors in publick exercises. 6. They may exercise any acts of Worship or Discipline upon the people of any particular Church, which giveth them a due invitation thereto. 7. They may publicly declare that they will avoid Communion with an impious or heretical Church or Pastor.

§. 3. But 2. As to the mode or terms, it should be thus performed. 1. No Pastor of a single Church must leave his flock a day or hour without such necessary business as may prove his Call to do so. We must not feign a Call when we have none;

or pretend necessities. He that knows his obligations to his particular charge, and the work that is there to be done, methinks should not dare to be stepping aside, unless he be sure it is to a greater work.

§. 4. And 2. No Pastor of a Church should be busie to play the Bishop in another mans Diocess, nor suspect or disparage the parts or labours of the proper Pastor of that Church, till the sufferings or dangers of the Church do evidently warrant him, and call him to assist them.

§. 5. 3. No Minister of Christ should be so proud as to overvalue his own parts, and thereupon obtrude himself where there is no need of him (though there might be need of others) upon a conceit that he is fitter then other men to afford assistance to his Brethren. When the case is really so, he may judge it so : especially when his Colleagues or fellow Ministers judge so too, and desire him to the work : but Pride must not send out Ministers.

§. 6. 4. A Minister that hath divers fellow Presbyters at home, to teach and guide that Church in his absence, may better go out on assisting works then other men. And so may he that hath help that while from Neighbour Presbyters, or that hath such a charge as may bear his absence for that time, without any great or considerable loss.

§. 7. 5. And a man that is commanded out by the Magistrate, who may make him a Visiter of the Churches near him, may lawfully obey ; when it would not have been fit to have done it without such a command, or some equivalent motive.

§. 8. 6. A man that is earnestly invited by Neighbour-Ministers or Churches, that call out to him, *Come and help us*, may have comfort in his undertaking, if he see a probability of doing greater good then if he denied them, and if they give him satisfactory reasons of their Call.

§. 9. 7. Men of extraordinary abilities, should make them as communicative and useful to all as possibly they can : and may not so easily keep their retirements, as the Weak may do.

§. 10. 8. And lastly, No man should upon any of these pretences usurp a Lordship over his Brethren, nor take on him to be the stated Pastor of Pastors, or of many Churches as his special

cial Charge. It is one thing to do the common work of Ministers abroad, by seeking mens Conversion, and the planting of Churches, or else to afford assistance to many Churches for their preservation, establishment or increase : and its another thing to take charge of these Pastors and Churches, as the proper Bishop or Overseer of them. The former may be done; but I know no warrant for the later.

§. 11. That fixed Ministers may do all these forementioned works, with the aforesaid Cautions, I shall briefly prove. 1. By some general Reasons, speaking to the whole ; and 2. By going over the particulars distinctly, and giving some reason for each part.

§. 12. And 1. It is certain that a Minister doth not cease to be a Minister in general, nor to be an Officer authorized to seek the Discipling of them without, and Congregating them, by his becoming the Pastor of a particular Church : therefore he may still do the common works of the Ministry where he hath a Call, as well as his Pastoral special work to them that he hath taken special care of. As the Physitian of an Hospital or City may take care also of other persons, and cure them, so he neglect not his charge.

§. 13. 2. A Minister doth not lay by his Relation or Obligations to the unconverted world, nor to the Catholike Church, when he affixeth himself to a special charge. And therefore he may do the work of his Relations and Obligations, as aforesaid. Yea those works in some respects should be preferred, because there is more of Christs interest in the Universal Church, or in many Churches then in one ; and that work in which the most of our ultimate End is attained, is the greatest work : that in which God is most honoured, the Church most edified, and most honour and advantage brought to the Gospel and cause of Christ, should be preferred : But ordinarily these are more promoted by the Communication of our help to many (as aforesaid) then by confining it to one particular Church. The commonest good is the best.

§. 14. 3. Oft-times the Necessity of such Communicative labours is so apparently great, that it would be unmercifulness to the Churches or souls of men to neglect them. As in case of Reforming and settling Churches (upon which *Luther, Melancthon,*

lanchthon, Chytraus, Bagenbagius, Pomeranus, Calvin, and others were so oft employed.) As also in case of resisting some destructive heresies: In which case one able Disputant and prudent adviser, and person that hath interest in the people, may do good to thousands, even to many Countries, and more then multitudes of others could do. And God doth not set up such lights to put under a bushell, nor warrant any man to hide his talents; nor doth he bestow extraordinary gifts for ordinary service only, but would have them used to the utmost advantage of his cause, and for the greatest good of souls.

§. 15. 4. And it is not the taking up of another calling or *Species* of Ministerial Office: For the Ministry is one office (distinct from that inferiour sort of Ministry of Deacons) and containeth the power and obligation of doing all this, when we have particular Calls: It is but the exercise of the same office which we had before: We do but lay out our selves more in some parts or acts of that office, then more retired Pastors do.

§. 16. And 5. It belongeth to the Magistrates to take care of the Church and the right exercise of the gifts of their subject Ministers: and therefore if they command one man more labour then another, even the Planting, or Visiting of Churches, it is our Duty to obey them.

§. 17. More particularly: 1. That *a fixed Pastor may preach abroad among the unconverted*, I hope none will deny. It was the ancient custom of the fixed Bishops, besides the feeding of their flocks, to labour the Conversion of all the Countries about them that were unconverted: The example of *Gregory of Neocesarea* may suffice, who found but seventeen Christians in the City, but converted not only all that City (except seventeen) but also most of the Countries about, and planted Churches, and ordained them Bishops. And so have abundance others done, to the increase of the Church.

§. 18. And 2. That fixed Bishops may *congregate new Churches where there are none*, of such as they or others do convert, is in the foresaid constant practice of the Pastors of the ancient Churches, put past doubt. But so, as that they ought not to Congregate those Churches to themselves, and make themselves the Bishops or Archbishops of them, when they have a special charge already; but only settle them under Bishops of their own: And

this is but by directing them in their duties, and trying the person, and investing him that is to be their Pastor. Whether one or more must do this work, I have spoken already in the former Disputation.

§. 19. 3. And that such as thus convert a people, or Congregate them, may (according to the fore-mentioned Rules) Ordain them Pastors, by the peoples suffrages or Consent, is also sufficiently proved in that foregoing disputation: and therefore may be here past by.

§. 20. 4. And that such may take care of all the Churches within their reach, so far as to do them what good they can, is plain in the Law of Nature that requireth it; and in the general commands of the Gospel seconding the Law of Nature; while we have time we must do good to all men; Especially to the household of faith. And its plain in the Nature of the Catholick Church and of its members, and in the nature of the work of Grace upon the soul. We are taught of God to love one another: and the End of the Catholick Society is, (as of all Societies) the common good, and the Glory of God: and the Nature of true members is to have the same care one for another, that so there may be no schism in the body, and that they all suffer and rejoice with one another, in their hurts, and in their welfare, 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26. It is therefore lawfull for Pastors to improve their talents upon these common grounds.

§. 21. 5. That such sett'ed Pastors may Teach or Preach to one another, is a thing not doubted of among us. For we commonly practice it at Lectures and other meetings of Ministers, as formerly was usual at visitations, and Convocations. And if it be lawful to teach Ministers, then also to do those lesser things before and after mentioned. Yet do we not preach to one another as Rulers over our Brethren, but as Ministers of Christ, and Helpers of them in the work of grace. As when one Physician healeth another, he doth it as a Physician, helping and advising a Brother in necessity: but when he cureth one of his Hospital, he doth it as a Physician performing his trust to one of his charge. So when a Pastor preacheth to Pastors, he doth it not as a private man, but as a Pastor obliged to help his Brethren: But when he preacheth to his People, he doth it as one

one that hath the charge of their souls, and is their guide to life everlasting.

§. 22. 6. *And that Pastors may exercise acts of Discipline and administer the Sacraments to other Congregations, upon a sufficient Call*, is evident from what is said already. If they may Preach to the Pastors themselves, they may help to Rule the flock: For, as is said, they cease not their Relation to the Church of Christ in general, by being engaged to one Church in particular. If general Ministers, such as Apostles, Evangelists, &c. might administer the Sacraments where they came in Churches that were not any of their special charge above others, then may other Ministers of Christ do it upon a sufficient Invitation, though the Congregation be none of their special charge: And in so doing, they act not as private men, nor yet as the stated Pastors of that flock, but as Pastors, Assistant to the stated Pastors, and Ruling *pro tempore* the people under them in that Assisting way: Even as a Physician helpeth another in his Hospital, when he is desired, and the neither as a Private Ordinary man, nor as Superiour to the Physician of the Hospital, nor as the stated Physician of it himself, but as the temporary assistant Physician of it. Or as a Schoolmaster helpeth another in his School for a few days in Necessity, as his temporary assistant.

§. 23. 7. And upon the same grounds it will follow that one Church or Pastor on just occasion may avoid Communion with another, and declare that they so resolve to do; and this without usurping any Jurisdiction over them, it being not the casting out or Excommunicating of a member of our charge, as the Rulers of that Church, but the obeying of a plain command of the Holy Ghost, which requireth us to Avoid such, and have no company or Communion with them, and with such no not to eat: And therefore it is a fond Argumentation of the Papists, that would conclude their Pope to be Head and Governour, as far as they find he ever did excommunicate.

§. 24. He that doubteth of any of this, must not first enquire, Whether a Minister have so much Power, but first Whether he may be obliged to so much work and suffering as his duty. And then he shall find that if there were no special examples or commands, yet the general commands, which require us to do good

while we have time to all, to be the servants of all, and seek their salvation, &c. do as certainly oblige us to particular duties, as if they were named.

§. 25. *Object. That cannot be: For, a General command of doing good to all, obligeth not a Minister any more then another man: But it obligeth not another man to Preach, administer Sacraments, &c. therefore it obligeth not a Minister. Answ. To the Major I answer, that* 1. *It may oblige to more, where it obligeth not more, as to the Essence of the obligation.* 2. *The General command obligeth several men to several acts according to their several Abilities, opportunities and capacities. If all be required to improve their Masters stock or talents, yet all are not required to improve the same talents, because they have not the same: But one hath Riches to improve, and the general command obligeth him to improve that talent: And another hath strength, another interest and friends, another wit, and another learning, and every man is bound to improve what he hath, and not what he hath not. The command of Doing good to all doth oblige a Physician to help to cure men, and a Magistrate to benefit them by Government, and a Lawyer by Counsell for their estates, and a Minister by the works of a Minister, for their salvation. If you should say that [this General command doth bind a Magistrate, or a Physician no more then another man: but it bindeth not another man to do good by Ruling or by Physick, therefore neither doth it bind them;] would not the fallacy be obvious? So is it here.*

§. 26. It being proved that such *Assistant Ministerial* works may be performed by a *fixed Pastor* to those about him, and within his reach, it will clearly follow that convenient means may be used to bring this to performance, and help the Churches to the actual benefit of such Assistance. And by the three forementioned wayes it may be done. As 1. If the Pastor and People of any Neighbour Church, or the people alone, where there is no Church, do invite such men to come and help them.

§. 27. And 2. The Neighbour Pastors may agree together for the perswading of the fittest men among them to undertake such Assistances: as is usual in the setting of Lectures; and as in this County we have successfully for above these two years used the help of four Itinerant Lecturers, that have taken their
several

several circuits, one Lords day in four, (which was every Lords day among them all) to help their neighbours.

§. 28. And if the Invitation of a People, or the Agreement of Pastors may do this, no doubt then but the prudent Government of a Magistrate may do it. And he may appoint Certain Pastors their bounds and Circuits, and appoint them to afford convenient assistance to the Pastors and people within those bounds. And thus he may make them *Visitors of the Churches and Country about them*, in which visitation, they may Teach and do other Ministerial offices by Consent; and may by the Magistrates command, take notice whether the Churches be duly Constituted and Governed, and may acquaint the Magistrate how things are; and may fraternally Reprove the Negligent Pastors and people where they come; And also may provoke them to Reformation, both of Church-constitution and Church-administrations; And these visitors may give notice to the neighbour Churches, of such Pastors as they find unfit for the Ministry, that by consent they may be disowned by the rest.

§. 29. And though one Pastor have not of himself (as a Pastor) so much Power over any of his Brethren, as to require him to come to him to give him an account of his wayes, yet

1. The Associated Pastors may desire him to appear among them to give them satisfaction, when there is matter of offence: (For one may better travail to many, then many to one.) And
2. The Magistrate may lawfully command Ministers to appear before such Pastors as he hath appointed to be Visitors; and then it will be their duty in obedience to the Magistrates command.

§. 30. Yet Magistrates must take heed that they put not the sword into the hands of Ministers, nor enable them with coercive power, by touching mens bodies or estates: We do not only forbear to claim such a power, but we *disclaim* it, yea and humbly and earnestly beseech the Princes and Senates of Christian Common-wealths, that they would keep the sword in their own hands, and not put it into the hands of any Ministers, and then we could better bear the claims and usurpations, not only of Exorbitant or transcendent Prelates, but of the Pope himself. Let them come unarmed, and have no weapon but spiritual, the word of God, and then we shall less fear them. The Divisions, and tyranny!

tyranny, & bloodshed through the Churches hath been by trusting coercive Magisterial power in the hands of Ministers of the Gospel. Though I confess I think it not a thing unlawfull in it self for a Minister to be a Magistrate also, yet I think that nothing but necessity can warrant it; and so much as hindereth him from the work of his calling (which requireth a whole man) without this Necessity, is utterly unlawfull. Were there a Country that had no other persons tolerably fit, I doubt not but the same man that is a Minister or Pastor, might be a Justice of Peace, Parliament man, or a Prince: But while there are others that are capable of bearing these burdens, he is not worthy to be a Minister of the Gospel, that would wish the least of them upon his shoulders. Either Magistracy or Ministry is enough for one. Had the English Prelates been armed with none but spiritual weapons, they had never appeared so terrible or so odious.

§. 31. It seemeth a course that suiteth with the state of the present Churches among us, to have in every County, three or four such able, faithfull Pastors to be by the Magistrate made Visitors of the rest, not giving them any power of meddling with mens bodies or estates, but joining with them a Magistrate as a Justice or Commissioner, that *one may persuade, and the other constrain*, as far as the Sovereign Power shall think fit. This is not to set up any *New office* or the least part of an office in the Church. As it is merely accidental to the Being of a Physitian, whether he be tyed to a City, or to an Hospital, or to a County, or to no place, but practice as he findeth opportunity; these being but the various modes of using the same * Office and works; so may we truly say of the Ministry.

§. 32. Yet is there no such *Necessity* of this appointment of Visitors or Superintendents, or Assistants by the Magistrate, or by agreement of Ministers, or any such course, as if the *Being*, or the welfare of the Church were laid upon it. For without any such Elections or Appointments, the Graces and Gifts of the Spirit of Christ will shew themselves, and be communicative for the Edification of the Churches. We see by common experience, that where no one man is commanded or commended by the Magistrate to the care of many Churches, above his brethren, yet some men are as diligent and faithfull in doing good to all within their reach, as if they had been chosen and nominated to the

* The Jesuits and Fryars do not take the Generals or Governors of their Orders to be men of another Order, though they have a Power of Ruling, and that Tyrannically.

the work. Many able painfull Ministers of Christ, that thirst for mens salvation, do go up and down among the ignorant, or weak, and preach in season and out of season, notwithstanding the burden of their particular flocks, which they faithfully bear.

§. 33. And the parts and graces of these men do win them audience and respect where they come, without any Humane Authority to awe men. In almost all parts of our Countrey we have either settled or movable Lectures: and when do we see a thin Congregation before a lively rowling Minister, or any man of great ability in the work? No, but we see the Temples crowded; and find that the people reverence and hearken to such men as these, in whom the Spirit of God appears.

§. 34. Yea and the Ministers themselves will *consult* with the *Wise*, and *Love* the *good*, and *learn* of those that are *ablest* to *teach* them: and imitate the ablest preachers as neer as they can. So that I may truly say, that there is a certain kind of Natural, or rather, spiritual Episcopacy every where exercised in the Church. A great light that burneth and shineth above others, will draw the eyes of many to it: and if it be set on a hill it will hardly be hid. *Calvin* was no Prelate; and yet his Gifts procured him that Interest, by which he prevailed more then Prelates for the conformity of the minds of many to his own. There is scarce a Country but hath some able judicious Minister, who hath the *Interest* of a Bishop with the rest; though he have no higher an office then themselves. Gods Graces deserve and will procure respect, Even in Civil Councils, Courts, Committees, we see that some one of leading parts, is the Head of the rest though their authority be equal.

§. 35. And indeed the conveniences and inconveniences are such on both sides, that it is not an easie matter to determine, Whether appointed *Visitors* or *Superintendents*, be more desirable then these *Arbitrary Visitors* that have the *Natural Episcopacy* of *Interest* procured by their *meer abilities*. On the one side, if Magistrates appoint such Visitors, the people, yea and many Ministers will the more easily submit, and hear, and obey, and more unanimously concur, then if we offer our assistance without any such appointment: Thats the convenience: But then heres the inconvenience: The Magistrate may choose an unworthy man, and then

then he may be *feared*, but not *honoured* nor loved; but greater lights will be greater still, let the Magistrate set the lesser on never so high a Candlestick: And then the Ministers and people will measure their esteem of the man according to his worth, and that will irritate his displeasure; For when he is lifted up he either looks to be valued by his *Height*, and not his *Light* or *Worth*, or else that his *Light* should be judged of by his *Height*. And as this will turn to heart-burnings and divisions, so the esteem that is procured by humane Constitution, will be more humane, and ordinarily less Divine than the calling and work of a Divine requireth. On the other side, if none be appointed by the Magistrate, but every man go forth in the strength of his zeal and Abilities; we are like to be cast on many disadvantages with carnal temporizing men, and to have less unity among our selves: But then that unity, and peace, and respect, and success that we have will be more voluntary and pure.

§. 36. The best way then, if we could hit it, seems to be the joining of both these together. To have such Magistrates as will appoint only the most judicious, able, faithfull Ministers to be Visitors of the Churches, that shall go forth both in the strength of the Spirit of Christ, with eminency of gifts, and also in the strength of the Magistrates Commission. But if this cannot be attained, I shall not long for constituted Visitors or Superintendents; but shall be content with the Holy Ghosts appointment.

§. 37. It is therefore the most Christian course to lay no greater stress on these modes and forms of Ministration then they will bear; and therefore to live obediently and peaceably under either of them; obeying such Visitors as are appointed by the Magistrate, and honouring the graces of the Spirit, where there is no such appointment; and not to think the Church undone when our conceits about such things are crost.



CHAP. III.

*It is Lawfull for the several Associati-
ons of Pastors to choose one man to
be their President, durante vita, if
he continue fit.*

§ 1.



Come next to speak of a third sort of Ministry, which hath a greater resemblance to the ancient Episcopacy, then any of the rest: Yea indeed is the same that was exercised about the second or third Century after Christ. And that is, the fixed Presidents of the Presbyters of many Churches associated. In the first settlement of Churches, there was either a single Pastor to a single Church; or many Pastors, in equality, at least of Office: And whether from the beginning or afterward only, one of them became the stated President, is very uncertain: of which anon. But when the Churches encreased in magnitude, and many Congregations were gathered under one Presbyterie, then that Presbyterie also had a stated President, as the Congregational Presbyteries perhaps had before. And thus he was an Archbishop under the name of a Bishop, that awhile before was either unknown, or else must needs be esteemed an Archbishop.

§ 2. That these men should take the Pastoral charge of many Churches, or that they should suspend the Governing Power of

the Presbyters, upon pretence of a Presidency, or superiority, is I think, a matter not warrantable by the word of God.

§. 3. But that such *Associations* of the Pastors of many Churches should ordinarily be, for the sake of Union and Communication; as also that it is lawfull for these Associated Ministers to choose one among them to be their *President*, is granted by all.

§. 4. But all the question is, *Whether these Presidents should be only pro tempore, or durante v. ta*, supposing that they forfeit not the trust? I shall not say much of the point of *convenience*; but I affirm, that of it self it is *lawful* to choose a President that shall be fixed *durante vita, si tam diu bene se gesserit*. Yea it is *lawfull now in England*, as things stand.

§. 5. And 1. It may suffice for the proof of this, that it is nowhere forbidden in Nature or in Scripture; directly or by consequence: and therefore it is lawfull: Where there is no law, there is no transgression: They that say that it is a thing forbidden, must prove it from some word of God; which I think, they cannot do.

§. 6. 2. If it be lawfull to choose a fixed President for half a year, or a year, or seven year, then is it lawfull to choose and fix such a President for life (on supposition still of a continued fitness) But it is lawfull to choose such a one for a year, or seven year: therefore also for life.

§. 7. The Antecedent is granted by the Presbyterian, Congregational and Erastian party, (which are all that I have now to do with:) For all these consented that D. *Twiss* should be President of the Synod at *Westminster*, which was till his death: or else was like to have been till the end; And so another after him. And ordinarily the Provinces and Presbyteries choose a President till the next Assembly. And I remember not that ever I heard any man speak against this course.

§. 8. And then the Consequence is clear, from the parity of Reasons: For 1. Seven years in contracts is valued equal with the duration of a mans life. 2. And no man can give a Reason to prove it Lawfull to have a President seven years, or a quarter of a year, that will not prove it Lawfull in it self to have a President during life. And Accidents must be weighed on both sides, before you can prove it *Accidentally* evil: And if it be
but

but so, it may be one time good, if by accident it be another time bad. The weightiest accident must preponderate.

§. 9. 3. Order is a thing lawful in Church Assemblies and Affairs: the stated Presidency of one, is a stated Order in Church Assemblies: therefore it is lawful that all things be done in Order, is commanded, 1 Cor. 14. 40. And therefore in general Order is a *duty*, which is more then to be *Lawful*. And though the particular ways of Order may yet be comparatively indifferent, yet are they *Lawful*, as the *Genus* is necessary.

§. 10. And that this Presidency is a point of Church Order, is apparent in the nature and use of the thing: and also in that it is commonly acknowledged a matter of Order in all other societies or Assemblies, though but for the low and common affairs of the world: in a Jury you will confess, that Order requireth that there be a Foreman; and in a Colledge that there be a Master: and that an Hospital, a School, and all Societies, have so much Order at least as this, if not much more. And why is not that to be accounted Order in the Church, that is so in all other societies?

§. 11. 4. That which maketh to the Unity of the Churches or Pastors (and is not forbidden by Christ) is both lawful and desirable: But such is a stated Presidency: therefore, &c. The Major is grounded 1. On nature it self, that tells us how much of the strength, and beauty, and safety of the Church, and of all societies doth consist in Unity. The Minor is apparent in the Nature of the thing: 1. That Presidency makes for Unity, is confessed by all the Churches that use it to that end. 2. And the continuance of the same makes somewhat more for Unity then a change would do: there being some danger of division in the new elections: besides other and greater inconveniences.

§. 12. 5. The person that is most fit (*Consideratis Considerandis*) should be chosen President: But one and the same person ordinarily is most fit *durante vita*: therefore one and the same person should be continued President. God doth not use to change his gifts at every monethly or quarterly Sessions of a Classis or Provincial Synod. Either the President chosen was the fittest at the time of his choice, or not: if he were not, he was ill chosen: if he were so then, its like he is so still, at least for a long time. And a mans ability is so great and considerable a qualification

cation for every employment, that it must be a very great accident on the other side that must allow us to choose a man that is less able. A change cannot be made in most places, without the injury of the Assembly and of their work. The worthiest person therefore may lawfully be continued for the work sake.

§. 13. 6. That way is lawful that conduceth to the Reconciliation of dissenting and contending Brethren (supposing it not forbidden by God.) But such is the way of a stated Presidency, *durante vitâ*: therefore, &c. Though the Major be past doubt, yet to make it more clear, consider, that it is 1. A Learned party (as to many of them) with whom this Reconciliation is desired: and therefore the more desirable. 2. That it is a numerous party: even the most of the Catholike Church by far. All the *Greek Church*, the *Armenian*, *Syrian*, *Abassine*, and all others that I hear of, except the Reformed, are for Prelacy: and among the Reformed, *England* and *Ireland* had a Prelacy; and *Denmark*, *Sweden*, part of *Germany*, *Transilvania*, have a superintendency as high as I am pleading for at least. And certainly a Reconciliation, and as near a Union as well may be had, with so great a part of the Church of Christ, is a thing not to be despised; nor will not be by considerate moderate men.

§. 14. And it is very considerable with me, that it is the future and not only the present Peace of the Churches that we shall thus procure. For it is easie to see that Episcopacy is neither such an upstart thing, nor defended by such contemptible reasons, as that the Controversie is like to die with this age: undoubtedly there will be a Learned and Godly party for it, while the world endureth; unless God make by Illumination or Revelation some wonderful change on the Sons of men, that I think, few men do expect. And certainly we should do the best we can to prevent a perpetual dissention in the Church. Were there not one Prelatical man now alive, it were easie to foresee there would soon be more.

§. 15. Yet do I not move, that any thing forbidden by God should be used, as a means for Peace or Reconciliation with men. It is not to set up any Tyranny in the Church, nor to introduce any new Office that Christ hath not planted: it is but the orderly disposal of the Officers and affairs of Christ, which is pleaded for.

§. 16. Object. But (some will say) your Minor yet is to be denied ; for this is not a way to Reconciliation. A stated Presidency will not please the Prelates that have been used to the sole Jurisdiction of a whole County, and to sole Ordination. *Ans.* 1. We know that the moderate will consent. 2. And some further accommodation shall be offered anon ; which may satisfy all that will shew themselves the Sons of Peace. 3. If we do our duty, the guilt will no longer lie on us , but on the refusers of Peace : but till then, its as well on us as on them.

§. 17. 7. That which is lawfully practised already by a Concurrence of judgements, may lawfully be agreed on : But the Presidency (or more) of one man in the Assemblies of Ministers, is in most places practised (and that lawfully) already : therefore, &c. There is few Associations, but some one man is so far esteemed of by all, that they give him an actual or virtual Presidency, or more : why then may they not agree expressly so to do ?

§. 18. 8. Lastly, The so common and so antient practice of the Churches, should move us to an inclination to reverence and imitation, as far as God doth not forbid us, and we have no sufficient reason to deter us ; of which more anon.

§. 19. Yet are not they to be justified that raise contentions for such a Presidency, and lay the Churches Peace upon it. I see not yet but that it is a thing in it self indifferent, whether a man be President a moneth, a year, or for his life : and therefore I plead only for condescending in a case indifferent, for the Churches peace : though accidentally order may make it more desirable in one place : and jealousies, and prejudice, or danger of usurpation, may make it less desirable in another place. But none should judge it necessary or sinful of it self.

§. 20. If you ask, *What Power shall these stated Presidents have ?* I answer, 1. None can deny, but that it is fit that in every Association of Churches, there should be a certain way of Communication agreed on. And therefore that some one should be chosen to receive such Letters or other matters that are to be Communicated, and to send them, or notice of them unto all. This is a service, and the power of doing such a service cannot be questionable while the service is unquestionable.

§. 21. 2. It is meet that some be appointed to acquaint the

rest, as with *business*, so with *times* and *places* of meeting : the nomination of such times and places, or the acquainting others with them when agreed on, is a service that none can justly question : and therefore the lawfulness of the power to do it, may not be questioned.

§. 22. Object. *But what's this to Government ? this is to make them Servants, and not Governors.* An'w. It is the more agreeable to the will of Christ, that will have that kind of greatness sought among his Ministers, by being the servants of all.

§. 23. But 3. He may also be the stated Moderator of their Disputations and Debates : this much I think will easily be granted them ; and I am sure with some (as I shall shew anon) this much would seem satisfactory. The Principal President or Master of a Colledge is thought to have a convenient precedency or superiority, though he have not a Negative voice. And why the President in an Association of Pastors should have a greater Power, I see as yet neither necessity nor reason.

§. 24. But 4. If Peace cannot otherwise be obtained, the matter may be thus accommodated, without violation of the Principles or Consciences of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Congregational party. 1. Let it be agreed or consented to, that no man be put to profess, that it is his judgement, that Bishops should have as *jure divino* a Negative voice in Ordination. This was never an Article of Faith : it is not necessary to be put among our *Credenda*. It is only the *Practice* that is pretended to be necessary, and a *submission* to it. Seeing therefore it is not to be numbred with the *Credenda*, but the *agenda*, let Action without professed Belief suffice. 2. Yea on the same reasons, if any man be of a *Contrary* judgement, and think himself bound to declare it modestly, moderately, and peaceably, let him have liberty to declare it, so his practice be peaceable. 3. This being premised, *Let the President never Ordain, except in case of necessity, but with the presence or consent of the Assembly of the Associated Pastors.* 4. And let the Pastors never Ordain any, except in cases of *Necessity*, but when the President is there present, nor without his Consent. And in Cases of *Necessity* (as if he would deprive the Churches of good Ministers, or the like) the Episcopal men will yield it may be done.

§. 25. If some think the President *Must* be one, and others only

only think he *May* be one ; it is reasonable, if we will have peace, that our *May* be yield to their *Must* be. For so we yield but to what we confess lawful : but if *they* should yield, it must be to what they judge to be sinful. If it be not lawful to hold their *Must*, that is, that a Bishop hath a Negative voice, yet is it lawful to forbear *de facto* to Ordain till he be one, except it be in case of Necessity.

§. 26. If in an Association there be a company of young or weak Ministers, and one only man that is able to try him that is offered to the Ministry, as to his skill in the Greek and Hebrew tongues, and his Philosophy, &c. is it not lawful herefor all the rest to consent that they will not Ordain any, except in cases of Necessity, but when the foresaid able man is one? Who can doubt of this? And if it be lawful in this case, it is much more lawful, when both the ability of the said person, and the Peace of the Churches doth require it : or if it be but the last alone, I think it may well be yielded to.

§. 27. *But (the Episcopal men will object,) if every man shall have leave to Believe and Profess a Parity of Ministers, the President will but be despised, and this will be no way to Peace, but to Contention.* *Ans.* You have but two remedies for this, and tell us which of them you would use. The first is, to force men by Club-law to subscribe to your Negative voice, or not to hold the contrary : The second is, to cast them all out of the Communion of the Churches, that are not in judgement for your Negative voice, though they be Moderate, Peaceable, Godly men. And he that would have the first way taken, is a Tyrant, and would be a Cruel Persecutor of his Brethren as good as himself. And he that would take the second way, is both Tyrannous, and Schismatical, and far from a Catholike peaceable disposition ; and if all must be cast out or avoided by him, that are not in such things of his opinion, he makes it impossible for the Churches to have peace with him.

§. 28. But they will further object : *If in Necessity they shall Ordain without the President, this Necessity will be ordinarily pretended ; and so all your offers will be in vain.* *Ans.* Prevent that and other such inconveniences, by producing your weightiest reasons, and perswading them ; or by any lawful means : but we must not have real Necessities neglected, and the Churches ruined,

ruined, for fear of mens unjust pretences of a Necessary: that's but a sad Cure.

§. 29. But on the other side it will be objected, *This is but patching up a peace. If I think that one man hath no more right then another to a Negative voice, why should I seem to grant it him by my practice?* *Ans.* As when we come to Heaven, and not till then, we shall have perfect Holiness; so when we come to Heaven, and not till then, we shall have perfect Unity and Peace. But till then, I shall take that which you call Patching, as my Duty, and our great Benefit. If you think one man have not a Negative voice, we neither urge you to say that he hath, nor so much as to seem to own his claim. You shall have leave in the publike Register of the Association, to put it under your hand, that [*Not as owning the claim of the Presidents Negative voice, but as yielding in a Lawful thing for Peace, you do Consent to forbear Ordaining any without him, except in Cases of Necessity.*] This you may do, without any shew of contradicting your Principles, and this is all that is desired.

§. 30. *Quest.* And may we not for peace sake, grant them as much in point of Jurisdiction, as of Ordination, and Consent to do nothing without Necessity, but when the President is one, and doth Consent? *Ans.* Either by Jurisdiction you mean Law making, or Executive Government. The first belongs to none but Christ, in the substance of his Worship; and the Circumstances no man may Universally and Unchangeably determine of: but pro re nata, according to emergent occasions, the Magistrate may make Laws for them, and the Pastors may make Agreements for Concord about them: but none should determine of them without need: and therefore here is no work for Legislators (the Usurpers that have grievously wronged the Church.) And for Executive Government, either it is over the People, or over the Pastors. To give a Negative voice to the President of an Association of the Pastors of many Churches, in Governing the People of a single Church, is to set up a new Office (a fixed Pastor of many Churches) and to overthrow Government, and introduce the noxious sort of Prelacy, which for my part, I intend not to be guilty of. And for proper Government of the Pastors, I know none but God and Magistrates that have that Power. Every Bishop, saith Cyprian, and the Council of Carthage, hath Power