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Tolbert Fanning

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Ordain discussed

The Church of Christ

By Tolbert Fanning

BIOGRAPHICAL

When Tolbert Fanning was my teacher I believed he was the greatest man in all the world, and as I remember him in the field of his own personal activities, I am of the same opinion still. Physically he was a tall, strong, symmetrical, well developed and perfectly preserved giant, straight as Longfellow's Hiawatha or any other man, and I believe he was as great intellectually as physically.

As he was physically and intellectually, so he was oratorically. His oratory, however, consisted, not of fanciful, fictitious flights, but of a brave, manly statement of facts and of figures so as to carry conviction to both the heads and the hearts of his hearers. He had the courage of his convictions, and he expressed them fearlessly. I have met but one man who reminded me much of Tolbert Fanning. That man was United States Senator Daniel Voorhees, of Indiana, "the tall sycamore of the Wabash." I heard him plead three hours and twenty minutes for the honor, life and liberty of a man in the shadow of the gallows. He seemed to be neither for nor against the defendant in the case, but simply anxious for the law to be vindicated and justice to be done. His client was a free man, however, in twenty minutes after that great speech was concluded.

I believe Tolbert Fanning could have been as great a lawyer as Daniel Voorhees, but he chose what he believed to be a broader, better field. He was a great lawyer, however, notwithstanding he never practiced law. Soon after the war between the States, or sections, he went

to Lebanon, Tennessee, about forty miles from his home, to recover a horse that had been taken from him during the war. A lawyer was there to resist his claim. He had no lawyer. The lawyer in the case urged him to tell **how** he knew that horse was his. He declined to even try to do so, the wisdom of which decision is apparent to all. He said to the lawyer, "I know you are John Doe. **How** I know it, I do not know. I know this is my horse, but I cannot tell you **how** I know it. He stood pat on that, and when he went home his horse went with him.

He had a high sense of honor and proper appreciation of courtesy and propriety. Having accepted a challenge to debate with a prominent preacher on some important religious issues once, he was at the appointed place on time, ready and prepared to proceed with the investigation. The other preacher, whose name was Kelly, was there also, prepared to make the first speech, as he was on the affirmative side of the first proposition. When Mr. Kelley rose, with an air of supreme self-confidence, he faced the audience in impressive silence a few moments and then quoted from Cowper:

"I am monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute,
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute,"

pointing at Mr. Fanning as he said "brute" with significant, sarcastic emphasis. Mr. Fanning, with becoming dignity, silently rose, picked up his Bible and his hat and went home and that was the end of the debate.

He was strong and convincing on the all-sufficiency of Christianity. I heard him say, in a great sermon on Christianity, "Masonry is worth more than all the Methodism, Baptistism, Presbyterianism, Catholicism and Campbellism in the world, but Masonry is unnecessary, for Christianity is all-sufficient, condemning all evil, containing and commending all good." Then he added, "Our derelictions of duty, however, make Masonry seem

to be necessary, and Masonry does much that Christianity should do. If Christians would do their whole duty, there would be no work or place for Masonry."

He abominated fulsome flattery, and was very sparing of his praise. He said of me: "He will never depart from the faith or bring reproach upon the cause of Christ." Greater praise than that I never knew him to bestow upon any living man, and I believe it has been helpful to me from then till now.

Being of obscure birth himself, he naturally sympathized with the lowly. Some of his school girls were belittling a bride once because she was barefooted when he tied the nuptial knot. He remonstrated with them and warned them that some of them might some day reach a lower level than that, and I do know one of the prettiest of those pretty girls did reach that lower level, for I saw her when she was there!

Tolbert Fanning devoted both his time and his talent to elevating his race and saving souls, and he did not hesitate to risk his own life to save his fellowman. Indeed, that was the cause of his tragic death. An infuriated bull was in the very act of killing Brother Barfield, whom Brother Fanning had hired to help him on his farm. Comprehending the perilous situation at a glance, he caught the mad beast by the horns. The bull rushed Mr. Fanning furiously against a log stable and so crushed him that he died in a few days.

He died at the zenith of a glorious manhood, when all his powers seemed to be in a state of perfect preservation. The last time I saw him, only a short time before his death, he told me he still had all his teeth, there was not a decayed speck or spot on one of them, and, so far as he knew, his entire body was as sound as his teeth. Like Absalom, "from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him."

Such a man was Tolbert Fanning, than whom no greater gospel preacher may ever grace the pulpit or proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ in all the ages yet to come.

T. B. LARIMORE.

INTRODUCTION

Brother John E. Dunn opened a correspondence with Brother Elam for the purpose of finding the writings of T. Fanning on the eldership in order that he might study them. Brother Elam encouraged Brother Dunn and expressed a wish that these writings might be given to the members of the churches. Brother Dunn found this teaching of T. Fanning in a serial article which appeared in the Religious Historian 1872-1874. He mentioned this to Brother Showalter and all three—Elam, Dunn and Showalter—think this teaching by Tolbert Fanning under the caption, "The Church of Christ" should be given the very widest reading possible. Brother John E. Dunn furnishes this series of articles to the readers of the Firm Foundation.—Editor.

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Sometime back Brother E. A. Elam made some observations in commenting on an article which appeared in the Gospel Advocate by another brother in which the brother wrote to the effect that during the nineteenth century when peace, harmony and good will reigned among those disciples of Christ who were striving for the restoration of primitive Christianity—such men as A. Campbell, Moses E. Laird, Ben Franklin, J. W. McGarvey, Tolbert Fanning, D. Lipscomb, Dr. T. W. Brents, E. G. Sewell, Jesse L. Sewell, J. W. Harding and a host of others—brethren could disagree over the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and still be brethren in peace and love. This brother said Tolbert Fanning did not believe in eldership. He was giving his impression and not quoting verbatim et literatim.

One of Brother Elam's observations was, that we should be careful to quote any one correctly and that this brother's impression of what Brother Fanning taught was not correct; that Brother Fanning believed in a "God made eldership and not a man made eldership" for the churches of Christ. No man among us during the first quarter of this century has done so much teaching

on the eldership and so sorely deplored the destructive condition among the churches on the eldership. The ignorance and reckless disregard of Bible teaching on the eldership is deplorable.

The writer has been deeply interested in studying the "Eldership" of New Testament churches for more than a quarter of a century. He believes that a great deal of mischief is done to the churches because of the fact that we do not know what the New Testament teaches on the subject. He believes that a thorough study of the Word of God on this vital subject will yield a rich harvest for the cause of our Redeemer.

The writer recently came into possession of a discussion of "The Church of Christ" by Tolbert Fanning who lived in Nashville, Tennessee and died in 1874. During the eighteen seventies Brother Fanning edited and published "The Religious Historian" a monthly magazine devoted to the "The Restoration of Primitive Christianity." This Christian Magazine made its appearance to the reading public in 1872 and ceased its appearance with the death of Brother Fanning in the spring of 1874. The writer copied this discussion by T. Fanning and furnishes it to the readers of the Firm Foundation together with the earnest desire and prayer that all may read and study it with profound interest. JOHN E. DUNN.



THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Article One.

In examining the economy of grace, it is essential to success to keep constantly before the mind a few elementary truths as land marks and sign posts in the wide field of investigation that is before us. The slightest mistakes at the outset, can but prove fatal in our conclusions. We have seen that all systems and theories of "church polity", are of doubtful bearing, hence the endless failures in attempts to construct a perfect creed. All speculative views of church government but tend to dark-

en counsel, by words without meaning. We remind our readers that, the true organs of the spiritual body consist of the purified, sanctified, called and saved in heaven and upon the earth. All are but members of one family and are led by the same good spirit of our God. They are not only heirs of God but are the joint heirs of our Lord Jesus Christ. The members of Christ are "Living Stones, and constitute a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

We have seen that the first obligation which rests upon the world, is a full submission of soul, spirit and body, to God, in yielding obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not enough merely to have the heart changed, but the true convert is quickened and adopted into the spiritual household. In order to live as becometh saints, after submitting to our kind Creator, it is quite as important to

"Submit One To Another."

The Spirit taught, they "should be subject the one to another." Without this union of the materials of the body, it might still be said we are but "children, tossed to and fro, and are carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive." We have noticed that, when the first converts were baptized on Pentecost, "About three thousand souls were placed together," or put into living and working condition the same day. The saved were "placed in one," or so organized and set in the body, as to enable them to "continue steadfast, in the Apostles' teaching, in the fellowship, in prayer, and the breaking of bread from house to house." The next matter requiring attention, is to ascertain

The Scriptural Teaching Regarding the Increase of the Church.

Paul informs us that, "The whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the manner

of every part, maketh increase of the body in order to the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16). The members are to be fitly joined together, and compacted, or coupled—yoked, or tied together, in a manner to walk and work together, in a common cause. Every part of the body, in order to effectual working, is justly measured of God. With these directions, we can scarcely avoid the conclusion that,

The Disciples are all Divinely Set, or Placed in the Body

The members of the spiritual family, are ordained especially of God, to their work, for which each is best qualified. With this view, we can appreciate the statement that the Holy Spirit makes not only the Overseers, or Bishops of the churches, but particularly calls, sets and leads all classes into the legitimate work. God makes it the duty of the Seniors, or Elders for instance, to occupy the place of Shepherds of the flock—they are the Overseers, Bishops and Rulers, in the household. The young men are also divinely assigned the work to which they are called. The aged women are commissioned from above, ordained and set as the proper teachers of the young women. They instruct in daily business, in family matters, and in reference to all obligations of life. This brings us directly to the question, as to

Whether the Government of the Church is Official?

In the true Scriptural sense, every work of the church may be official, and every member under the Prince, may be a high official, with commission from heaven. Paul says, "We have many members in one body, but all members have not the same office" (Rom. 12:4). The word here for office is practice and the Apostle intended merely to say, that, we have many members in the body, but each performs best the work for which his measure qualifies him. The doctrine of official or non-official service, resembles somewhat the question,

“Is Communion Open or Close?”

If the subject of “communion” has reference to Christian duty, it is only necessary to determine the value of our obligations to God. If the work is Christian, then all Christians, we presume, are required to perform the service. If it is the work of, or for preachers, only or any particular class, then, it is to be confined to that class. Our reading leads us to the conclusion that all the saints—all the obedient believers—all who have trustingly yielded their hearts to God, submitted to His Son in baptism, and are leading blameless lives in the church, are exhorted to examine themselves and so partake. Others are “without”—that is they are out of the body, and therefore have no rights common with the saints at the table of the Lord or elsewhere.

We repeat that if any Christian service is official, all must be official. If any member performs his Christian obligations from the authority of official grace, all Christians likewise perform their service by special grace conferred. We notice that, some imagine that, the comparatively few officials, from their representative character, denote the church and many are disposed to assign all the labor of religion and all the honor to a small class. When, however, we examine the word of God, we shall see that, the inspired letters were addressed to the churches as collective assemblies fully authorized by the Divine Father to conduct the worship. If this is the Scriptural view, it is the birthright of the members, as the spiritual sons and daughters of the Almighty, to perform all the services of the household of the faithful. In its examination, to remove all doubts, there are various minor questions which require attention. It is said, for instance, that “What is everybody’s business, is nobody’s business.” This is merely saying that all are not competent to preach profitably, all are not equal in exhortation or possessed of equal ability as rulers, but it does not argue that if one cannot excel all his brethren in any particular department, he is therefore, at liberty to spend

his life in idleness—to abstain from all active service in the body. If physical labor is essential to a vigorous and healthful body and mind, spiritual service is much more important for growth in grace and the knowledge of the truth. Possibly the greatest religious error of the age is evinced by the prevailing ignorance in the church members, regarding the true Scriptural divisions of spiritual labor. If we have departed from the primitive usages, it should be our ambition to restore back to the church, the ancient customs. We deem it, at least, our duty to scrutinize closely, the current theories of official service.

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Article Two.

Current Theories of Official Service.

The religious orders differ somewhat, as to the plans of making church officers; but all agree as to the conclusion that, all religious work is to be performed by a few authorized persons who act for the whole household. A few examples will answer for illustrating the subject.

Possibly, the ministers of Romish theology, and at least nine-tenths of the Protestant leaders, assume that, with the Apostles of Christ they, “are Ambassadors for Christ”, as though God did beseech the world by them, to be reconciled. The true Ambassadors of Christ preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and themselves as servants for Jesus’ sake. “For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” They had “this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of men” (2 Cor. 4:5-7). All the treasures of truth and all things necessary for the salvation of the world, were manifested through the Apostles of our Savior. This treasure was in earthen vessels, in the hearts of these holy and inspired men—and they,

as the Ambassadors of Christ, preached it to the world. Since their death, the treasure has not dwelt in earthen vessels, but in the sacred scriptures of truth; and as there has been no new proclamation and not the slightest addition to the old gospel of reconciliation, no additional Ambassadors have been needed; and all who have come in the name of Ambassadors, as Apostles of Christ, have proved themselves impostors and enemies of the cross of Christ. He who held the seven stars in his right hand, and walked in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, said to the angel of the church at Ephesus, "Thou hast tried them who say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." If the early Christians tried and condemned the pretenders, it is still the right of Christians to act in like manner. Christ needs no new Ambassadors, and none, since the Apostles fulfilled their mission in delivering their message of salvation to our race, have been honored with a divine mission. Hence, all modern Ambassadors are without divine authority and are really the ministers of Satan, transformed into the ministers of light.

Preachers Still Profess to be Called and Sent as Were the Apostles of Christ.

When Paul said to the disciples, "With the heart man believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," he asked the question, "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10: 14, 15).

It will be remembered that "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." By the ambassadors of Christ, the word of God was made known. Through them the words were spoken to a lost world and the whole plan of redemption was revealed and written by the finger of God in the New Testament. Before the revelation of the gospel was made known and before the New Testament was given, men were called to preach as the "Spirit moved them, or gave them utterance,"

but when the inspired teachers had revealed all that was necessary to life and godliness and it was written for our instruction, we have needed no repetition of it; and if an angel were to preach another gospel, Paul said, "let him be accursed."

the feet of them that preach (make known) the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (Rom. 10:16). Has any modern called and sent preacher been

The apostle quoted the prophecy, "How beautiful are able to utter a syllable of gospel, not written in the Scriptures? Has any one brought a word of "glad tidings of good things" to the world? All was brought by the inspired preachers, and modern apostles have added nothing to the divine message. Such called and sent preachers as Paul described, have not lived upon the earth for nearly eighteen hundred years. John was the last. We have seen not a few in our travels who professed to speak as they were moved by the Holy Spirit and assumed the right to make known good news to the lost. But it is quite sufficient to say that, "All truth—all religious light was fully revealed in the first century and all professions of divine missions or commissions of being called and sent of God, or officially endowed of the Father, to do anything in his kingdom, of so extraordinary a character, is without the slightest authority of truth. Ignorance and wickedness lie at the foundation of the whole corrupt system of official grace.

The Most Popular View of Official Authority.

We feel safe in assuming that, in the Romish and Protestant churches, there are two classes of members, the officers and the people who constitute the "hewers of wood and the drawers of water"—the workers who support the ministers of grace; or as the distinction is more commonly made, the church is composed of the "clergy and laity." While we have mentioned only Romanists and Protestants, who suppose all spiritual work is to be performed by a few officials, we are forced to admit, that

others, as Baptists and often disciples of Christ, are quite as decided, that all value is given to the ordinances of religion, by the grace of official hands.

Baptist teachers, in our acquaintance, are unwilling to admit that, baptism or the Lord's Supper is legally administered by a Romanist or Protestant; such as Presbyterians, Methodists, etc., and if any one from these orders should signify a willingness to associate with the Baptists at the Supper of the Lord, he is informed it cannot be suffered. If pressed, as to the reason for refusing fellowship at the table, he is promptly told that, "he is not a member of the true church and has not been baptized by a regularly ordained minister of the church." Thus while our Baptist brethren bravely oppose the clerical assumptions of Rome and England, they in fact, profess the same thing. They assume that their ministers have come in a regular line from the Apostles of Christ and therefore no one without the manipulation of Baptist hands, is authorized to partake with them of the Supper or administer a single ordinance of the Lord. But how much nearer the truth are those who recommend the Bible as the only authoritative creed, and yet, maintain that, ministers of religion are made by regular consecration to official authority? Call them Apostles, Evangelists, Preachers, Pastors, Bishops, Acolytes, Elders or Deacons—no one has the right to act, or the power to confer the grace of the church, who is not raised from the ranks of the body, called out from the church, to minister in holy things and dedicated to the work. We have known old and apparently wise men, among us, to travel hundreds of miles, to initiate others into what they called the "elder's office." The people too, love to have matters in this fashion and many imagine this is the true mode of conducting the affairs of the kingdom of heaven.

We will relate an incident, which sufficiently, illustrates the dogma of official grace. Years since, we were called to see a man of wealth and influence die. When we entered the room, Doctor L., a distinguished Episcopal preacher, was at the bed side. His words, to the man

who was fearfully trembling on the verge of another world with the full consciousness he was not ready for the solemn change, were: "I am a regular minister of the gospel, my authority to administer the sacraments has regularly descended to me from the Apostles of Christ, and if you will consent, I will administer to you the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and I believe that, by virtue of the grace that will flow to you through my sacred office, you will be willing to die."

While we have stated the occurrence plainly, the picture is by no means over wrought, and yet, any one must see that Mr. L. imagined that he was Christ's legate—was His Ambassador—and the whole grace of God was administered through his official hands. Not only do Romanists and Episcopalians tenaciously adhere to the opinion, that all spiritual blessings—that the salvation of the soul and eternal life—are promised through official administrators of the ordinances and the more modern sects, which claim official authority to minister in matters essential, substantially claim the same mystic power. There lies before us a little work of 82 pages by a distinguished Professor in our most respected "Bible College," on the "Eldership" in which the writer assumes that elders are officers made by certain ceremonies in the churches and the "Elders constitute a teaching and ruling board, one of whom is a preacher who lives of the gospel," while others bear their own expenses, in aiding to rule. This, the writer says, "Is scriptural and wise" (Page 67). These things bring fully before us, the doctrine of ritualism as held in the denominations.

Article Three.

The Doctrine of Ritualism as Held in the Denominations.

The ritualistic theory has recently taken many of the English clergy into the full embraces of Rome. Methodists, not a few, have doubted the validity of their ordination, and fled to the English and Romish churches.

There is, in fact, a strong tendency amongst us who profess to be governed by the Bible, to seek HIGHER authority for official power, in any church described in the Bible. The controversies, however, growing out of the theory of official grace and salvation, must continue to excite the religious mind, till the question is fully examined in the light of truth. Is the doctrine of God? Is it from heaven or is it of the earth and earthly? Does the New Testament teach that it is by virtue of an office possessed by men, spiritual blessings are enjoyed?

We desire not to dogmatize, and if we understand our true purpose, our sole desire is that the truth of God, as it was written by the Spirit, may shine in all lands. We claim, at least, honesty of intention, and we think we have enjoyed as favorable opportunities in studying the truth as our contemporaries. We give it as our solemn conclusion that the whole doctrine of "rituals," as taught in the Romish, English and other sects, is not in the Bible, in whole, or in part; that, it is the child of the wicked one, that it virtually subverts the authority of Christ, and while it prevails, the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be appreciated.

While we doubt not the truth of our conclusions, we are assured that we are fallible, and if in error, we would gladly receive correction. So far we have looked at the subject negatively; and yet, it will be respectful to all concerned to examine the whole question of clerical authority from a positive standpoint.

We are fully aware that the members of the church of Christ, in ancient times, were known as apostles, pastors, prophets, leaders, shepherds, bishops, evangelists, elders, deacons and ministers; and we are fully satisfied that the same distinguishing names are appropriate for the servants of God in the present age; but we stoutly maintain that such names are incidental, and characteristic of labor, and never were conferred by sacred authority, as official designations. We are satisfied moreover, that all elections and ceremonies of whatever kind employed to make officers in the church, are self-assumed, devoid of

scriptural authority, are the offspring of the great apostasy, anti-Christian in all their tendencies, and that any religious administration through such authority, is not of God, not spiritual, not from above, but is of this world, and altogether worldly.

In the course of our investigations, we think that, we shall be able to give substantial reasons for so sweeping conclusions. We protest against theories, and declare that, we have no pride to gratify in the advocacy of these things, and we faithfully promise to abandon any and every error which may be pointed out.

We propose to examine, historically and critically, the main titles which are pronounced official.

Apostles—Why?

The word apostle, literally, denotes one sent.

1. Our Savior is called an apostle because the Father sent Him. Paul said in Heb. 3:1: "Consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." The designation, we repeat, was incidental to his mission from heaven to earth; and certainly implies no investiture of authority.

2. The twelve disciples, when sent to preach the coming kingdom, were called "the twelve apostles of Christ." The word implied no particular work, and no authority to perform any service whatever. True, much service was performed by them in obedience to special instructions given, but they acted merely as the servants of Christ. They were seated on twelve thrones, as law-givers, and their names were inscribed in the twelve foundations of the temple of God.

3. Barnabas, who was sent with Paul, was called an apostle, though he was not among the twelve. He was doubtless considered the apostle of the church at Antioch and hence, with Paul, he returned and reported his success to the church which recommended him.

4. Epaphroditus was called the (messenger) Apostolon of the church at Philippi (Phil. 11:25). Others had Apostles—perhaps all had.

5. In 2 Cor. 8:23, we read of the (apostoloi) (Apostles as messengers of the churches; and hence, we conclude that not only the ancient churches had apostles but it is proper for all churches to support apostles in their service.

We presume the angels of the seven churches of Asia were apostles of the congregations, in the service of the brethren. In all these examples, we discover that the only condition of apostleship was being sent by Christ, by churches, or by a single church; but there is nothing indicative of official meaning in the word; and special instructions, as we have noted, were always given as to the work which engaged their energies. We call attention to the word "evangelist."

The Greek word "Evangelistees", rendered Evangelist which denotes a gospel preacher occurs only three times in the New Testament.

Philip, one of the seven placed to feed the Grecian widows at Jerusalem, was after his preaching at Samaria, and other places, mentioned as the "Evangelist" (Acts 21:8). This work gave to him the name. Timothy was exhorted by Paul to "Do the work of an Evangelist" (2 Tim. 4:5, and again, we have mention of extraordinary Evangelists in Eph. 4:11.

In all these occurrences, the word, evidently, is used merely to designate the person who preached the glad tidings, and had no reference whatever to official dignity.

We may derive profit by a brief examination of the history of preaching and preachers. While we have noted the preaching of the twelve apostles, we should not neglect to mention the preaching of the seventy disciples, who were sent out two-and-two, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. When they returned and said, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." He said unto them, "I beheld Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven" (Luke 10:17, 18), or "I beheld Satan fall, as lightning falls from heaven." From that date Satan's power was greatly curtailed on earth. It will not be re-

sumed. We have but little beyond the mere report that the seventy preached the name of Christ and wondrous things were achieved by their labor. Of their distinguishing titles we have nothing.

The twelve apostles, after the resurrection of Messiah, though authorized to preach were prohibited from commencing, till the descent of the Holy Spirit to enlighten them, to lead them into all the truth, and enable them to open the door of salvation to a lost world. Their subsequent history is contained in the Acts written by Luke.

Who Are the Evangelists in This Age?

From the narrative given, the church is composed of "Living stones," as we have often quoted, "build up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 11:5). This Scripture seems to teach that Christians, in consequence of constituting parts of a spiritual house, and a holy priesthood, are fully authorized from their positions in the body, to exert their whole powers of body, soul, and spirit in behalf of the cause of Christ.

We see in the instance of the first church planted, where the members were driven from their houses by persecution, "They went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). In the proper meaning of the word "preaching," we consider it the privilege and duty of every Christian on earth, to preach the good news of life and salvation from the hour of entering the kingdom to the hour of death. It is true, we do not suppose it is the privilege of every member, male and female, black and white, old and young, to attempt religious orations, as is the current practice. Indeed, we are assured that sermonizing as now performed, was unknown in the Christian world in the primitive church. It is a modern invention. But surely, there has not been a time since the descent of the Holy Spirit, when it has not been proper, and altogether becoming, for any Christian to plead with the lost to receive Jesus Christ as the only Savior. Paul said, "Do I now persuade men, or

God?" Evidently, he persuaded not God because He was willing to receive the lost, but he prayed men, to be reconciled to God, to save themselves from this untoward generation.

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Article Four.

What Seems to Have Been the Course of the Primitive Churches Regarding Preachers and Preaching.

So soon as any number of believers submitted themselves unreservedly to the authority of Christ, it was proper, and necessary, to their growth in grace, and their usefulness in the world, to give themselves to each other, to be subject every one to his brethren. The rule which governed in this submission to each other, sprung from the intelligence and faithful life of each. Hence, Paul said, "I beseech you, brethren, you know the house of Stephanus, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, that you submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboreth" (1 Cor. 16:15).

In this instance, the disciples were exhorted to note the membership of the family of Stephanus, because they had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. If there was a spiritual ministration of the first saints in Corinth, should there not be a similar ministration of the saints in every congregation in our age? To the helpers and workers all were to submit and on no other ground was any one entitled to respect.

From this and divers other examples and intimations, we are not only satisfied that in the churches planted by the apostles, all were one, all were equal—there was neither "Jew nor Greek, male nor female, but all were one in Christ—all were the children of God, by faith in Christ." One was not to be respected above another in entering the church. All were authorized to work with the ability which God had given. But in the natural course of things, there could be mental differences,

and exist as wide differences in the performances of the various members. Some in every church possess greater intellectual powers than others; some are more active physically, mentally and morally than others. Of course, some, from natural and acquired fitness, would very soon excel others, as earnest teachers, exhorters and worshippers in every department. The result would be that, some would give higher evidence than others of ability to bear the message of salvation to the world. Such, in the primitive churches, were designated as the chosen of the churches, and went forth as apostles, angels, and ministers of the congregations, to sound out the gospel to the sinful sons and daughters of earth. Such, also, were helped on their way by the congregations that gave them to the work. When in foreign climes, the churches were in the habit "of sending once and again, to the necessities of their servants.

But wishing to be as specific as possible on the subject, we will attempt to answer a few questions which are usually asked in regard to evangelists,

Should Not Preachers Be Educated,

We are in favor of universal education. We would rejoice to see all the people of our time scholars in every department of learning. We regard education—classical, mathematical, scientific and metaphysical, of incomparable value to preachers. Yet, some of the most successful preachers among us can barely read in a becoming manner. Indeed, we have known several excellent preachers that could not read at all. They knew the facts of the gospel, believed that Jesus died for the sins of the world, were earnest and humble Christians, and really, were much more efficient in the cause of truth and righteousness than many college graduates. Still we are certain that every species of information should be made available to the ministers of truth. As to the true worth of what we usually call "Bible Colleges," we need give no opinions at present. In them, we doubtless may find

much to approve, If they are aids in qualifying the brethren for usefulness, we should bid them God speed. The period, however spent in "systematic theology," we presume is a great waste of time and money. We would, by all means, urge upon Christians, and especially upon the young men who determine to labor in word and teaching, to learn to articulate the English alphabet, to spell correctly, and to read, and speak and write intelligibly. This is the most important department of a literary course for a preacher.

We should also have preachers, if possible, to study mathematics, logic, rhetoric, psychology, history, natural science, chemistry, the classics and Hebrew. They should know everything; and yet they can be valuable laborers in the Lord's vineyard, in the possession of a good stock of common sense, an acquaintance with the truths of the Bible, and a fervent desire to honor God.

Who Are to Call Preachers to the Work?

In every congregation care should be taken to develop the whole talent of the membership and put it into useful exercise. Usually, the seniors of the congregations, whose mission it is to feed the sheep, to confirm the weak, and encourage all in the ways of the Lord, are the proper persons to call out the talent of the younger members.

There may be instances, when a quite different course would suggest itself. It is said of Saul that after he was baptized, received meat, and was strengthened, he spent certain days with the disciples at Damascus, and straightway preached Christ in the synagogue, that he is the Son of oGd. He increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who were at Damascus, proving that Jesus is the very Christ (Acts 9:19-21)..

This is an instance of an educated and strong man becoming a Christian, and beginning at once, without consulting any one, so far as we are informed, to preach Jesus Christ. He stated, that after his call to serve Christ and preach Him among the heathen, "Immediately

he conferred not with flesh and blood; but fled from persecution, and went into Arabia, and after three years ascended to Jerusalem to see Peter."

There is no evidence of any church action in regard to the entrance of Paul upon his labors as an evangelist. God called him to the work and He calls upon every Christian to labor to the utmost of his ability. We do not mean by this, that every one must act entirely upon his own judgment, or from his own impulses, regarding his work in or out of the church. All we have seen are to be subject one to another; and all Christians in apostolic times who went among strangers, bore letters of commendation from their brethren. One of the greatest evils we have encountered in this country, has been the lawless course of men assuming the right to preach, and ask pay for it, without the slightest sanction of the brethren. Many have thus acted, who, after being detected in wickedness, made their impious boast that they were not members of any particular church. Such wandering stars should be countenanced by no Christian people.

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Article Five.

Should Not Men Be Ordained to Preach?

If the enquiry is to the effect that preachers should have the sanction of their brethren in their efforts to preach, we would say, by all means they should be sent or recommended to the work. We have, however, no instance of what the churches now call "ordination," as a preparation, condition or qualification to preach. The practice of electing one to preach, and then attempting to consecrate him to the work, by prayer, fasting and the imposition of hands, is not found in the Holy Scriptures. Are we asked if the seven were not ordained at Jerusalem to feed the widows? There is no word in the Scriptures which means ordain in the sense of investiture of authority to perform any work. Men of certain

qualifications were needed to take care of certain Greek women in the church, and when Peter gave the requisite traits for the labor the brethren designated persons qualified and the apostles prayed and extended their hands to them. There is no evidence that by this course, the seven were made deacons, evangelists, pastors or other officials. One of them, we have seen, was called "the evangelist," but no one supposes it was in consequence of the prayer and the extension of the hands of the apostles.

Before closing our investigations of this department of our labor, we should notice with more care the practice of fasting, praying, and employing the hands, in placing Christians where they could work to the greatest advantage.

At Antioch, after Paul and Barnabas had been preaching at least ten years, it is said the seniors, "fasted, prayed and laid their hands on them and sent them away" (Acts 13:3). Still, no one imagines, we presume, that Paul and Barnabas were thus ordained to the ministry or became deacons, elders or preachers, by what was done. The sole purpose of the proceedings was to "commend them to the work," to which the Spirit had called them. That is to go to Asia Minor as preachers of the gospel of peace. But there is no such idea in the passage as making preachers or officers.

Regarding the ordination or consecration of preachers we beg leave to call attention to a few incidents which may throw light on the subject.

If we should be reminded that the Savior "ordained the twelve apostles," we would reply that he "selected or chose twelve, whom he called apostles, and sent them forth to preach the gospel (Mark 3:14). Another wrote that "These twelve, Jesus sent forth, and commanded them to preach, heal the sick," etc (Matt. 10:5-8). Again, it is said He called his disciples and chose twelve whom he named apostles" (Luke 6:13).

In these passages, we see nothing resembling in the

slightest degree, the practice of modern churches initiating into office. The creeds of the apostacy say, "Receive the Holy Ghost, for the office and work of a bishop now given to thee, by the imposition of our hands." We presume all parties have about the same view. They confer the Holy Spirit, or official authority; or they mean nothing, and the whole performance is but a ridiculous farce. Do the ordainers confer the Spirit or divine authority to do anything? If we are told that in the case of Judas, one was to be ordained in his place as a witness, we would reply that there is no word in the passage answering to ordain; but Peter said: "There should be (genes-thai) one with us—a witness of the resurrection." More cannot be discovered from the passage. Lots were cast and the lot fell on Matthias.

Years since, we were introduced to a preacher, who was a graduate of our most respected college, whom we invited to "open the services of the evening by singing and prayer." His sad reply was, "I cannot—I never performed such service." We asked him, "Are you not a preacher?" He answered, "I have license." The school had given him the commission, but he had not exercised his talent.

Were preachers made in this manner in ancient times? Not long since, an aspiring youth said to us, "I want to preach." We answered, "It is your privilege, if you possess the ability, have the consent of your brethren, and desire to honor your Maker." He soon after returned, and said, "I want to be ordained to preach." We answered, "Gospel preachers are not made in this manner." He went away and we saw him no more.

While it is an old saying that "An honest confession is good for the soul," we with shamelfacedness, freely confess the ignorance of our youth regarding the modern mode of becoming a preacher. We ardently desired to be initiated into the preacher's office, by ordination—by fasting, prayer and the imposition of many hands upon our head. At nineteen, we were ordained. When

we had seen our twentieth birthday, our older brethren thought that our growth required that we should be made an elder. Our locks were black, our cheeks were ruddy and our young blood regarded not the qualities of age and experience, but our brethren said, "You must be ordained an elder." The day was appointed, the fasting was endured, the prayers were offered, the many hands descended on our poor ignorant head, and from that day to this, we have been called elder. If asked what we think of the procedure, we would answer that we regard all such performances as the result of very great ignorance, for which there is no authority in the word of God.

Are we asked how preachers are made according to the Scriptures? We answer that we have found in the word of life no ordinance or ceremony by which one is qualified as minister, or inducted into the office of evangelist. Yet, we maintain that there is a clearly defined process in the word of God through which the saints rise to useful labor in the churches. Paul said, "By speaking the truth in love, we grow up into him in all things—even in Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every that all Christians are "Kings and priests," fully authorized in love" (Eph. 4:15, 16).

When the members of the body are properly fitted and joined in every part, each grows up into the Savior, in all things and in this manner the whole body makes increase by building itself up in love. How do feeble children become stout men and women? We have discovered no machinery by which infants can instantly be transformed into persons of age, experience and wisdom. The process may seem slow and tedious but by temperate living, suitable exercise, and proper nourishment, very feeble babes grow to be powerful men. In this manner alone are evangelists made. They are taught, and raised up in the church, are educated by church influences and

in time become efficient and useful members in Christ Jesus.

The hot bed system of making preachers by other influences besides those in the church, we consider of doubtful bearing, and we would therefore exhort parents, by all means, to train up their children in the instruction and admonition of the Lord; with the assurance that a child trained up as he should go, when he is old, will not depart from it.

The Scriptural Plan of Sounding Out the Truth

While we have shown beyond all reasonable doubt, that all Christians are "Kings and priests," fully authorized to offer acceptable sacrifices to God, and should be filled with all goodness and knowledge, and able to admonish one another (Rom. 15:14), and furthermore, that all saints are required as circumstances may offer, to preach Jesus to the world. We maintain that it was the custom of the ancient churches to send their evangelists, apostles, angels, servants or messengers, into different sections of the earth to preach Jesus Christ.

What is taught we may be asked, as to the procedure of the churches in giving their servants to the work? At Antioch, we have seen, when it became necessary to send Paul and Barnabas—both well tried and faithful ministers of the truth—into Asia Minor, the teachers and seniors "fasted and prayed and extended their hands to them and sent them away" (Acts 13:3).

The Spirit said, "Separate me, Barnabas and Saul." The Greek word "aphorise," set off by bounds, limit off or separate or set apart for a special work. The members of the church should be separated for every department of labor. The fasting and prayer are becoming and full of meaning and while we hesitate as to laying hands on the head, the ancient custom of extending the hands to each other, is not only full of meaning, but is also the token of all solemn covenants between friends, and especially the people of God. The words in the

Greek are "Epithentos tas cheiros autois," which we render, "They extended their hands to them." The pronouns in this verse and in Acts 6:6 are in the dative and should read, "gave their hands to them."

"When James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace extended to Paul, they gave to Paul and Barnabas, the right hands of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles, and the three others should labor still with the circumcision" (Gal. 2:9).

These passages indicate what seems to be the Scriptural practice with inspired men, in the employment of the hands on occasions of great solemnity; but we promise in another place, an examination of this subject.

The extending of hands conferred no authority so far as we can discover, but it was the act by which the early Christians expressed their hearty sanction to the cause of each other, and thus bade each other Godspeed.

The evangelists went forth in the full confidence that the Lord would feed and clothe them by putting it into the hearts of the brethren to give proper evidence of fruit. Hence, we read that the churches failed not to "Help the evangelists on their way," and to send often to the necessities (Phil. 4:13).

We have heard of preachers who say, "If the brethren do not pay, we will not work." Such, we think, ought not to preach. They might be classed among hirelings. True men make up their minds in obedience to their brethren, to give themselves to the work of the Lord, with the assurance their wants will be abundantly supplied. The brother who forsakes houses, and lands with friends and relations for Christ has the promise of houses, lands, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, and all he could ask of this world's enjoyments. We are further fully satisfied that should any preacher fail to receive a competency, it would be his own fault—he is not qualified for the place, and should direct his efforts into another channel. All the very earnest ministers we have seen failed to complain of want. Inde-

pendence in lovingly speaking the truth, fails not to insure earth's richest blessings.

While we have but little faith in modern missionary schemes, and new plans to save the world, we have an abiding confidence that if we properly teach the saints, and rely upon them for aid, we shall not be disappointed.

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Article Six.

“The Work of the Evangelist.”

Time and space fail us to fully show all that is required of the faithful steward of Christ.

1. It is the work of the evangelist to preach the gospel. This does not mean to deliver religious orations; but it signifies the labor of turning the hearts of the people from sin to God, by teaching the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. The modern revival plan of converting the people, by inflammatory or sympathetic speeches does, in our judgment, great harm. Persons led to make a profession in false ways seldom, if ever, stand firm in their position, but often become discouraged and feeling that they are ignorant and hypocritical their hearts become sickened and they frequently close their eyes to the truth. The purpose is to show the lost the love of God in the gift of His Son. When the heart is reached through the understanding and the soul is subdued by faith in the Christ, there is but little to fear as to final perseverance in the right. The preacher should be able to remove difficulties and instruct in the faith, repentance, confession, surrender in baptism, and rising to walk in newness of life.

2. When the converts are fully consecrated to God, the next work of the preacher is to place in one, the disciples, as circumstances shall suggest, in order that they may receive the sincere milk of the word, and grow up as calves of the stall. From the hour of submission

to God, and giving themselves to each other, in the fear of God, the evangelist is required to see that the disciples continue steadfast in the apostle's teaching, in prayer, in the breaking of bread, and in all the exercises of the Lord's people, both in a public and private character. Most unfortunately for the cause, many preachers have learned but little beyond the beginning lessons, and as Paul said, "When the converts ought to be teachers of others, they have need that one teach them again, the beginning of the oracles of God" (Heb. 5:12). Incompetency in evangelists for the work, is the main cause of the ignorance and want of spiritual life in the congregations. The mission of many seems to close, with the bare enlistment of the members. But feeble efforts are made to enable them to grow up into the Lord. The churches often fail to purify the heart, and educate the members up to the spiritual standard of the apostles. It is worse than useless to bring converts into the church, without enabling them to strengthen and grow in grace. We who preach are most at fault.

3. The evangelists are to set in order all things wanting in the churches and see that each member is occupying the place to which his qualifications assign him.

For this purpose, Timothy was left at Ephesus, and Titus in Crete. The first work of Timothy was to "charge some that they teach no other doctrine," nor "give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying." In the second place, he was required to see that the members were all working in their proper spheres. Some aspired to overlooking the flock, and while Timothy admitted it a good work, he so fully explained the qualifications of overseers or bishops, that likely not a few shrunk from the responsibility. In reference to placing members in their work, Paul exhorted to "Extend hands speedily to no one." That is to say—"See that all placed in very responsible positions, are fully competent for the labor. Prove them by their works, and to be slow in encouraging any one upon doubtful reports."

Titus was also exhorted to "properly (Katasteesees) place the seniors, or older persons, in every city." Hence he was instructed in reference to the work of elder men, the elder women, the younger women, and the younger men. This is a work almost wholly overlooked by modern preachers.

Paul and Barnabas thought not of bidding adieu to the churches in Asia Minor, without extending the hands to the seniors in every church. In this we find nothing in reference to choosing, appointing or making elders for the churches, but their mission was merely to wisely place the members in each church. In this way, they confirmed and strengthened the weak members. We beg to repeat that this is a department of evangelical labor, that has been imperfectly studied, and possibly more is to be gained by the preachers of this age in an earnest direction to the proper adjustment of the members of the body, than in any other work.

4. In the fourth place, the care of all the churches rests, to a great extent, upon the planters of the congregations, the setters in order of the things wanting, the confirmers of the saints, and the men who give their lives to the cause of the Master. They are the great workers of the world, and it is through their influence, mainly, that the churches and members grow strong in the Lord, and exercise a Christian influence on the world. They call forth the talent of the brethren, old and young, male and female, into full exercise and thus, through the living, working churches, the world becomes more and more leavened, and in the eternal state, true evangelists will rejoice in the salvation of themselves and the many they aided in their struggles to overcome the world, and gain the promised crown.

If we have been successful in suggesting the manner in which Christians become evangelists, and indicated but feebly their work and reward, the labor of showing the history of other co-operants, will be by no means difficult. We are prepared to hear the conclusion of others, who may think they do not agree with us.

The Support of the Ministry

From the very delicate nature of the subject of ministerial support, it should be treated with special reference to scriptural authority. In worldly matters, the most energetic and persevering are usually the most prosperous; but in matters spiritual, results are somewhat different. The most intelligent, devoted, and hard-working preachers of the gospel, frequently exhibit the poorest ability for accumulating or enjoying the goods of this world. Such men as Peter, John and Paul, possessed neither taste, leisure nor capacity for indulging in the gratification of the flesh. In modern times, however, many claiming to be ambassadors of Christ, are but slaves of their appetites; and their main studies are with reference to the things of time. In contemplating the difference between the course of the ancient and modern teachers of religion, it will become us to ascertain what the scriptures say regarding the living of the ministers of grace.

1. When our Savior sent out the twelve apostles he said, "Go, preach, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils, freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver, nor brass for your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat" (Matt. 10:7-10).

It will be remembered that these ministers of truth were to go among enemies—among people who would oppose the new religion, and yet, as God numbered the very hairs of their heads, as sheep among wolves, they were to rely upon their heavenly Father for food and raiment. Without the second coat, the second pair of shoes—without money, or even a sack in which to carry their treasures, they went forth, confiding in the Lord to supply them. During the three years and six months of the Lord's personal ministry, His servants were abundantly supplied and just before He suffered, He said to them, "When I sent you without purse and scrip, and shoes,

lacked you anything? And they said nothing." At this juncture, the Savior, for a short space, left the disciples to their own philosophy. He told them to "Take purse, scrip, and money, with swords, if they thought they could direct themselves." They did so, but from their speedy errors, they were soon satisfied that they were not sufficient for their work before them.

The leading thought, and at least the spirit of the apostolic mission, should ever dwell in the hearts of modern preachers of the gospel. They should remember that if they make no earthly sacrifices, if they suffer not for the cause here, their reward will be poor in the world to come. Whoever, therefore, preach for the loaves and fishes, for the ease and gain of earth, have their reward here, and should anticipate nothing good in the future.

2. The Lord afterwards "Appointed other seventy also and sent them two and two, before his face into every city and place into which he himself would come. Behold, said he, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse nor scrip nor shoes. Into whatsoever house you enter if the Son of peace be there, remain, eating and drinking such things as they give. For the laborer is worthy of his hire." (Luke 10: 1-7).

We notice again that these were to go in the faith that the Lord would sustain them. They were to be "As wise as serpents and harmless as doves," and were to act in so earnest and attractive a manner as to secure a living, even amongst strangers and opposers. Where received they were to remain, "eating, with thankful hearts, whatever was given to them," asking no questions. This living was called **misthos**—hire or reward.

It is enough to know that the seventy lived, did good service, and prospered in their mission.

In the apostolic churches, we have seen that the truth was "Sounded out" by the angels, messengers, and evangelists of the churches. Paul and Barnabas were helped on their way by the brethren of the church from which they were sent forth to the work. In Asia Minor, in

Greece, or elsewhere, the Lord opened the hearts of the people to assist them in the things needful. Churches planted by them "sent often" to the necessities of these humble servants of the Master. Phil. 4:15. We invite earnest attention to a few plain rules furnished by the Spirit. Paul said,

1. "The Lord hath ordained that they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. 9:14).

2. "The ox," under the law, "that trampled out the corn was not to be muzzled." Or in very plain words, the ox that did the work was to be fed; and the application is that the servant of the Lord who does the work;—not he that is seeking a place to give him bread;—should be amply supplied. The ox, however, that threshed no wheat, was to be given to the butcher, and the preacher who brings none of the lost sheep into the sheep fold, should be delivered to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, in order to the preservation of the spirit in the body of Christ.

3. Paul said, "if we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things," (1 Cor. 9:11).

From these and various scriptures, we can but conclude that there is no obligation of a more binding character than that of supplying the wants of the men who give their time and energies to the preaching of the gospel. There is no rule also for the government of Christians in the distribution of their earnings. "On the first day of the week, they were to lay by, or deposit in the treasury; as the Lord prospered them." 1 Cor. 16: 1-3. If we should he not promptly relieve him if in his power? As in raising means for the poor saints in Judea, but not intended to apply in the support of evangelists; we would reply, that the **manner** of doing the work has a general application. There are, to be sure, instances in which our benevolence is to be exercised in different ways. If one should find a poor man fallen among thieves, suffering and ready to die from cold and hunger, should he not promptly relieve him if in his power, As

to the manner, the wants of the sufferer suggest every duty. There is a general rule, however, given to direct our contributions for all purposes. Paul said, "He who soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly, and he who soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully."

4. "Every man, according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, as of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9: 6, 7). Christians should study as to the obligations that rest upon them, and then act, as their hearts, fully enlightened, may dictate.

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Article Seven.

The Manner of Contributing.

There are two modes of giving revealed in the scriptures. The first, consists in contributing to be seen of men. This may be in public subscriptions, and especially when ostentaciously made with speculative purposes, lurking in a stingy heart. Some of the close-fisted men we have known, have been ready subscribers, on a large scale, when their benevolence was to find passage into the newspapers through the country. Were the Savior speaking, He would say, "They **have** their reward." In Christian benevolence, however, every step should be taken in the presence of, and in the fear of God. "The left hand is not to know what the right hand does. The alms are to be in secret,—our good deeds should not be intended for the public eye and our Father who sees in secret, will reward thee openly and abundantly.

We should inquire in reference to

Hirelings—Who Are They?

Jesus said, "He that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. An hireling fleeth, be-

cause he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep." (John 10: 10-12). It is quite plain, the hireling is he who makes a profession of the ministry for the sake of the living that is in it. He says, "I will not preach without a salary." He gives notice that he will hold protracted meetings, if called, but is careful to settle the terms of service by the day, week, month, year, or trip, and come what may, the stipulated hire must be forthcoming according to contract. The mercenary view of the preacher's calling may lead many idle, inefficient, irreligious, and worldly men into the preachers' vocation. The notion of making preachers by **wages, hire or salary**, and respecting them for **office**, does not seem to accord with the scriptural rules. We presume, at least, that the New Testament ministers were of a different class. Finally, we should inquire as to the true ground of respect due

The Preachers of the Gospel

With disciples of Christ, it is scarcely necessary to mention the high sounding titles often assumed by preachers. If we mistake not, there are not a few who are so weak as to glory in being called "Reverend, Elder, Deacon, Bishop, Pastor, Parson," etc., all of which, to say the least, when used officially, are assumed titles, and not at all becoming to the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. Even the truth of God becomes a lie, when perverted from its scriptural application. The notorious Joseph Smith, Sen., of Mormon memory, feeling conscious of his exceedingly sinful life, often expressed astonishment that the Lord should honor him with so important **offices** in the church.

When the members of the Romish mother are told that several of their popes were noted for their crimes and impunity of life, they have freely admitted the facts, but they take consolation in the opinion that the **office** was preserved in all its purity, notwithstanding the corruptions of the agents. We have seen men in the various denominations who freely admitted the wickedness of

their officials, but they plead earnestly for the validity of the offices, even in bloody hands. From this view, it is not difficult to see with what cheerfulness men can reverence the presumed office-bearers in the churches.

In the scriptures we find no authority for reverencing either men, officers or offices. All, from the least to the greatest, are measured by their individual personal worth. "By their fruits," by what they really are, and not by deceptive rules, are they known. "Grapes do not grow on thorns, nor figs on thistles."

Are we reminded that Paul exhorted the brethren to "Remember them who have the rule over them?" We reply that the passage is thus quoted to sustain a theory. Paul never exhorted any people to respect merely an officer, or ruler, but earnestly besought the brethren to properly regard the **workers** in Zion. It should read, "Remember your laborers, (the leaders among you,) who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation—Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, and today, and forever." (Heb. 12: 7, 8).

The brethren were to respect them because they had preached the truth,—were chief men in the labor requisite, and because of their daily conversation in regard to Jesus Christ. Morning, noon and evening, their words were with reference to the crucified and risen Savior. The same thought is suggested by Paul in the words, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, (or Proistamenous) are superiors in the Lord, and admonish you. And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (1 Thes. 5: 12, 13).

Ministers of religion, from the scriptures, are to be honored on account of their work,—their real worth, and upon no other ground. As the Lord said of His people, "By their works you shall know them." The faithful minister of Christ should be amply supported, loved, and honored, for his self-denial, his devotion to the Master, and his achievements in the cause of truth.

Article Eight.

The Church of Christ

In treating of evangelists, we called attention to the most of the Scriptures bearing upon the subject, with the view of presenting as correct a history as possible, of a true minister of the gospel. We consider it proper next to invite special attention to a few of the most obvious conclusions which may be drawn from the authority submitted.

In the first place, we think, it can not be doubted that it is the privilege and duty of every member of the body of Christ to teach, exhort and labor to the utmost of his ability, to advance the interests of the cause of the Savior. All servants of God are styled by the Spirit "Kings" and "Priests," and as "Living Stones" in the spiritual edifice, are by birthright and their position in the body fully authorized to "offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." The service was required of all and hence, the disciples at Troas "Came together on the first day of the week to break bread" (Acts 20:7). Paul exhorted the Hebrews "Not to forsake the assembling of themselves together but to exhort one another to love and good works." To the Roman brethren he said, "Ye are full of all goodness and knowledge—able to admonish one another." We have also noticed that when the thousands of God's people were driven by persecution from Jerusalem, "they went everywhere preaching the word." Through their influence mainly the cause spread throughout the country of Palestine. Hence, the "Body, by union with the head, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increased with the increase of God" (Col. 2:19). In this manner "Was sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia," but in the various countries the faith was spread abroad (1 Thess. 1:8).

Secondly, there can be no question that the truth was

spread abroad in all lands, through the labors of the churches of the saints. As disciples of Christ, as Christians as members of the one family of God on earth it was the duty of each and all to exert all the power of the body in spreading the light of truth. In our sketches of the history of the Jews, in our first volume, we were particular in specifying that the members of one of the twelve tribes were set apart to teach and direct the worship. None but the members of the family of Levi were permitted to sacrifice on the altars or attend to the sacred rites. They were the priest's teachers, rulers and superiors in all the departments of the national administration. But a better order was promised. Some six hundred years before Christ, God said, "I will make a new covenant," with the people, "I will put my laws in their inward parts and write them in their hearts; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them, unto the greatest of them" (Jer. 31:33). In the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, "All, from the least to the greatest, are to know the Lord." All are to know for themselves, so perfectly, that inspired teachers to sound new truth in their ears, are not necessary. Furthermore, all are to teach, exhort; instruct, admonish, encourage and spread the light of truth, according to the ability of each.

We showed in the third place that certain members in the primitive churches, from various influences, became more intelligent, more active and more successful in the cause of truth than others, that members were not equal in their growth in grace. Some were slow in passing their state of childhood, while others soon became masters of every department of spiritual service. Philip, for instance, was first known at Jerusalem as a Grecian Jew, only qualified to distribute bread to the widows of his country; but by persevering in his acquisitions and his rapid growth in the knowledge of the truth, we find him in a few years, a noted "evangelist, in Caesarea, with four daughters, who did prophesy." Not only did Philip

rise to the position of evangelist, but he enabled his daughters to become efficient teachers (Acts 21:8, 9).

We think the Scriptures, we have examined, show very clearly that the members of the church, "grow up into their head, in all things" (Eph. 4:13). They grew into their active positions.

In the fourth place, we conclude that if the members "grow" into useful lives, the modern practice of the denominations in making preachers, officers, etc., by elections, ordinations or otherwise, is without divine authority. For more than a third of a century, we have doubted the authority of the practice of making preachers, evangelists, pastors, shepherds, elders, bishops, deacons and the like, by the ceremonies employed in the churches, such as elections, appointments and imaginary ordinations. We have also very fully shown that the designations of the most efficient members of the church, arose in ancient times, from the peculiar labors performed by each. Philip was an evangelist in consequence of the labor he performed. His daughters prophesied and were justly entitled to the distinction of such names as their labors indicated. John was "The Baptist" because he baptized, and if he had sprinkled, he would have been called the "Sprinkler," as certainly as Simon was called "The Tanner," because of the nature of his work. Simon and his brothers were fishermen but afterwards their employment gave them other designations. Simon, in fact, from his uniform firmness, was called "Rock," just as Herod was pronounced by the Savior "That Fox." Inasmuch as in our studies we have been led to doubt the truth of elections, appointments and ordinations in the denominational sense of making church servants, we wish to state clearly, the doctrine to which we really object, and our reasons, at least in part for so doing.

We have already mentioned apostles, messengers, elders, bishops, pastors, deacons, and others as members of the church of Christ; but as the designations are now employed in the various church orders we have been led to doubt the truth of all official authority in the church,

and especially do we distrust the authority of modern bishops, elders, deacons, preachers and others claiming spiritual commissions. The episcopacy of the Romish and Protestant churches, we consider an assumption and being very confident, hold substantially the same views, we are free, to pronounce the whole doctrine of the prelacy, the entire episcopacy or official authority of the age, the grossest usurpation. Let us look at it.

The system as stated by Mr. A. Jacob, D. D., a distinguished teacher in the church of England, in his treatise on "Church Polity," a very learned work recently published, runs as follows, viz.: "That all men who have a right to be considered ministers of Christ, have received a commission from Him, in a direct line from the Apostles, through ordaining priests, by virtue of which they alone have the right to administer the Christian ordinances. so that there can be no true church and no validity in the ordinances, except where there are ministers duly ordained" (Pgs. 418, 419). He says again that the system assumes "A mysterious power is transmitted thru an unbroken chain of ordinations, to make them Christian ministers" (Page 346). In the "Canons of the Holy Apostles," set forth by the church of Rome, it is said, "The sacred offices are conferred by the laying on of hands of the bishops, who are the keepers of the word, the mediators between God and the people, in the several parts of divine worship." It is by virtue of this mysterious authority, Roman officials profess to have the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed by virtue where-shut the doors of the kingdom at will.

In the Presbyterian Confessions of faith, all of them—chapter XXXI, it is said, "The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His church hath therein, appointed a government in the hands of church officers. These officers, the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed by virtue where-of they have the power respectively to remit and retain sins, to shut the kingdom against the impenitent and open it unto the penitent by the ministry of the gospel

and by absolution from censures as occasion shall require."

In the Methodist churches the authority to govern and to attend to the ordinances is professedly conferred by the laying on of the hands of the bishops. In the discipline the formula runs, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work now conferred by the laying on of our hands." A similar view is taken of the subject of ordaining officers for religious service, in all Baptist parties in our knowledge. Hence, the ministers of these respective sects, consider no one authorized to minister the supper or baptism unless regularly ordained by officials of Baptist orders. These things lie upon the very surface of the denominations. The assumption of official authority indeed seems to have found firm footing, even among the disciples of Christ who profess to take the Bible alone as the only rule of action. Many among us maintain the authority of ordination or appointment in some way to office, with a tenacity which differs not essentially from the respective denominations. The brethren either mean to say the right to preach and administer the ordinances is conferred by what they call ordination, or it is not. If Christians as such are not fully ordained from above, to study the word of life; to teach it to others to meet with each other as children of God, exhort, break bread, baptize, sing and pray together as the servants of God, and in a word to attend to all the service of the Lord, it should be clearly shown from the Scriptures. We notice that distinguished preachers travel hundreds of miles to ordain men to office and we need only say it is either scriptural or it is not. If it is requisite, or necessary in one church, it is necessary in every church. If it is not positively required, it is one of the most dangerous phases of popery.

We are quite free to say that while we desire to humbly bow our neck, in all circumstances to the yoke of our beloved master, we are candid to admit that we have not the least respect for the hierarchy of Rome, Protestantism or others. It rose gradually from wilful and ignor-

ant departures from the order of the New Testament, and while it prevails in the world, the Christian Institution will find in it the most dangerous enemy. These proud officials profess to stand as mediators between God and his people and all the grace of the blessed religion of Christ is suspended upon mystic touch. We regard it becoming and necessary to give briefly in plain contrast what we consider the New Testament "Church Polity."

Article Nine.

The New Testament, "Church Polity."

In the performance of this labor we should, in the first place, endeavor to free ourselves from the bewildering influence, as the Savior says, of "The Princes of the Gentiles." It has always been most difficult for the people of God to act independently of surrounding nations. In the days of Samuel 1120 years before Christ, the people wished "To be as the nations," and asked for an officer—a king—"to go before them and fight their battles for them." While their request was granted the step was most fatal. In following the wisdom of the nations they rejected God as their King. Israel was never restored to the service of the Father. The Jews are still in the furnace. The Savior said to his disciples, "You know that the princes of the Gentiles (nations) exercise dominion over them; and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister" or "Whosoever desires to be first among you, let him be your (doulos) servant." "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:25-28). From the beginning it has been difficult for Christians to resist the influence of the surrounding world. The creeds, customs and fashions of the people of the world can but exercise a bewitching influence unless we keep our eye steadfastly upon "the mark for the prize of

the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." While the saints were persecuted and humble they grew in grace but no sooner was the church taken under the direction of the Roman emperor than was her apostacy sealed, and the hierarchy which we are combatting was fully inaugurated. The only hope is to turn from the wisdom of the world and be governed in all religious conclusions by the spirit of God. In the present age we find our most wily foe in the

Traditions of the Apostacy

We have inherited from our fathers the nomenclature of Babylon to such a degree that we can not well understand each other. We are in no condition to comprehend fully the language of Canaan. While it has been impossible to conceal the whole truth by a Babylonish translation of the Scriptures, we have been brought up under the influence of a version which to say the least, has come to us with many features of the beast and the false prophet, standing prominent on its pages. While we hope to write nothing calculated in the slightest degree to weaken confidence in the Sacred Oracles, we are fully satisfied that there is scarcely an important subject which has not reached us veiled and mutilated. Instead of the servants of Jesus Christ being known by names significant of their labor and true character, we have to encounter a sea of troubles in reference not only to the ministers of the gospel but in regard to all the prominent actors in the household of the faithful and even touching the form of Christian government set forth in the Bible. Regarding the evangelist we have possibly indicated with sufficient clearness what we think is his true character to enable the reader to the better satisfy himself by a closer examination of the word of life. While we are aware that some of our statements regarding official government in the church may seem somewhat novel to many of our readers and being anxious to furnish sufficient reasons for our conclusions, we deem it

proper to consider well both sides of every question bearing upon the subject. We therefore invite attention next to the

Church Eldership

There are at least two important questions involved.

Who are the Scriptural elders

What work is required of them?

Although no one need affirm with mathematical certainty that he knows the Bible is true all Christians rejoice in the belief that the writings of both Testaments are the word of God and what is contained in the Divine Volume, forms our boundary of spiritual intelligence. Angels may perhaps possess greater light but mortals of earth need nothing beyond and in the present sphere could not appreciate higher developments. Still all should be so familiar with the Scriptures as to be able to affirm that they know what they teach. We gravely ask "What does the word 'elder' mean"?

Grammatically considered the word elder is the comparative of old and necessarily means older, usually written elder. Thus it is correct to speak of old, older and oldest with reference to men or other living creatures and we are pleased to think that no person of intelligence questions for a moment the meaning of these very familiar words.

The Hebrew verb "Zah-kehr", preterite tense, in the Old Testament is used twenty-four times to denote old as old man, old prophet, etc. In the future tense, it is used three times "waxed old", or to grow old. The adjective "Zah-kehr", is employed forty times to denote old—old as applied to any animal or object. It is translated eldest once. It is elder one hundred five times in the Old Testament. It is rendered ancient or ancients thirteen times; aged, three times; senators, once; and old women, once. We read of the "elders of Israel", "elders of the City of Gilead", "elders of the congregation", "the people of Jezreel", "of Judah", "of the

priests," "of the land," "of the daughters of Zion," "ancients of Gebal," "of Moab," "of Midian," etc., etc.

There can be no doubt as to the meaning of "elder" in these varied applications and yet we see nothing indicating an official signification. No one, to be sure, doubts that old men and women, the aged, senators and ancients, in olden times, were presumed worthy of respect and honor. In the law of Moses the people were commanded "To rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of the old man" (Lev. 19:32). In the New Testament "old men" or elders are to be regarded as "Fathers and young men as brothers" (1 Tim. 5:1). In all ages and among all cultivated people, the aged or elder persons, other things being equal, have been entitled to high regard and often to deep veneration. In Greek, the word translated elder is "Presbuteros" and is found in the New Testament sixty-seven times. It is the comparative of "Presbus" and is rendered generally elder or elders. Hence we have "the tradition of the elders," "Things of the elders," "Elders of the people," "Scribes and Elders," "Elders of the Jews," "Elder Son," "Beginning at the Eldest," "Old men shall dream dreams," "Rulers and Elders," "Elders of Israel," "Elders in every church," "Elder women," "Elders obtained a good report," "The Elder," and various other forms employed.

"Presbuteros" is translated old man (Luke 1:18); "aged men," (Titus 2:2) and the "aged" as Paul, the aged (Phil. 9). "Presbutidas" is but once found, rendered, "aged women." The word "Presbaia" is translated ambassage, (Luke 14:32), and ambassage (19:14). We have the word "Presbeuomen" once in our Scriptures translated "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor. 5:20). It is rendered here as a noun whereas it is a participle for the equivalent of which meaning we have no English word. The nearest we can later ambassage, (Luke 14:32), and message (10:14). Christ," or, "We are bearing messages of peace to the world in the name of the Lord."

Finally we have in Greek the word "Presbuterion" to denote an assembly of older persons. The first occurrence is in Luke 22:66: "The elders of the people, the chief priests, and scribes came together." The reference here is to the Jews whose age and other qualities had given them prominence. It is said the reference was to a "Jewish court or council called the Sanhedrin"; but this is conjecture. The aged are expected to be wise and hence, they are always appealed to for advice and instruction.

We read of "All the estate of the elders" (Acts 22: 5). The words were spoken by Paul from the steps of the castle at Jerusalem in the Hebrew tongue and in our Greek of the passage, there is no word for "estate," but the verse may be translated, "I persecuted this way unto death, and the high priest doth bear me witness (Kai pan to Presbuterion) and all the force, company or assemblage of the eldership." The word is but once applied to the eldership of Christians. Paul said to Timothy, "Neglect not the gift in thee which was given thee by prophecy, in laying on the hands of the presbytery" (1 Tim. 4:14). The reference is merely to the act of the elders or seniors or the older Jews. If we mistake not we have now shown the meaning of the word under consideration as used in Hebrew, Greek and English and the signification seems, in every instance to be elder, to refer to the aged, or older persons. That older men or seniors had special work to perform, we have not doubted; but whether the word ever signified an officer, or that any one was entitled to his eldership, by investiture, is the question. That any elder was necessarily an officer we have failed to discover. We think there is no proof.

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Article Ten.

The Word "Elder" as Applied in the New Testament

We will first notice passages, in reference to the meaning of which, we think, there can be no doubt. Paul to

1 Tim. 5:1 said "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father," and the younger men as brethren. The older women as mothers, and the younger, as sisters with all purity." In these verses, it must be seen that Paul alluded to the characteristics or qualities given by age and experience. The older men were to be as fathers and the older women as mothers. This is a sentiment deeply implanted in the human heart and has existed among all people and in all time. If there is a good natural impulse of the soul it is that which prompts younger persons to look up to parents and elders for advice and assistance. Hence, in the Jewish as well as in the Christian religion, the sentiment of regard for the aged was inculcated. In all well ordered families the seniors are the natural guardians of the younger members; and hence, the necessity of the older persons in every family acting in such a manner as to command the esteem and love of the younger members.

The Apostle with the keys wrote, "The elders who are among you, I exhort who am also an elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ: "Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight not by constraint; but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but ensamples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise ye younger submit yourselves unto the elder. Yes, all of you, be subject one to another" (1 Peter 5:1-5). It may be well to examine this passage with care. What are the distinctive points in it

1. Peter, in calling himself an elder, applies the word to others in the plural to designate merely aged persons.

2. He uses the word younger in plain comparison with elder as denoting younger persons.

3. From the simple fact, some were older than others, the younger members were exhorted to "submit to" or place themselves under the seniors. Another thought in this connection is that all are to be subject one to another. While Sir Isaac Newton demonstrated that the sun

is the great central force in the physical world he also proved that every other body from the least to the greatest attracts others with a force in proportion to the quantity of matter and distances from the center of each. While, therefore, the seniors in the congregations are set forth and ordained of heaven as the rulers and governors of the younger members, even the latter are to exert an influence on their superiors in proportion to their natural and acquired force of character.

4. From the fact that Christ is here denominated, "The Chief Shepherd," it is clear that the elders are divinely appointed, inferior shepherds. They are the living and active shepherds or pastors over all the flocks of the Master's sheepfold. Hence, the idea of stripling pastors, as shepherds over the Lord's sheep, is but solemn mockery of the Father's purposes. While novices may be useful, they cannot be pastors rulers over the aged members of the spiritual household.

5. The business of these pastors was to "feed the flock of God among them, not by constraint, but willingly; not for earthly gain, but from a cheerful mind; not as lords over the people, but as ensamples to the flock."

6. Were these seniors officers in the sense of having had authority given by any church ceremony as a qualification for performing service? If we say that Peter was an official elder we must conclude that he had been inducted into this and divers other official positions which he occupied. But the idea of induction by ceremonies into offices, as apostle, evangelist, deacon, elder, pastor, overseer, etc? is certainly foreign to the Bible, and yet, Peter was an apostle, evangelist, bishop, elder, deacon and servant. Possibly he was entitled to every title indicative of valuable labor in the cause of Christ.

7. We conclude that the experienced, aged and wise members of the church were the regular shepherds, pastors, feeders, teachers, rulers, bishops, and superintendents of the sheep among them.

Finally, we must refer to John "The beloved disciple," who styles himself, "The Elder," in writing to the "Elect

lady and her children." We presume, no one will maintain that he had reference to any official power or honor with which he had been invested by officials at home, or from a distance as a qualification for any Christian service. Again, in addressing his third epistle to his friend, Gaius, he styles himself "The elder." He was merely stating what was really true in regard to himself. He was a venerable man of God whose right it was to address others as his children and himself as their senior and father, especially in the gospel.

We are told that it is freely admitted the word "elder" in Hebrew, Greek and English denotes an older person and that in the passages of Scripture we have recited the literal meaning prevails but in other passages, the word has a different signification." We are, in fact, told that "The official signification differs widely from the literal meaning." In all the Hermeneutical canons from Ernesti to our youngest scribes, we have found no eminent scholar, who would take the responsibility to assert that literal and figurative meanings of any word could be contradictory. Richard Wately said that "Figurative meanings are to be explained by the literal." If words are really the signs of ideas, the branch meanings always conform to the root ideas of words. No form of the word to sprinkle, for illustration can mean to dip and vice versa. All confidence in critical rules and really in language is lost when we attempt to make "Presbuteros" denote in one passage an older person than another and in another, something widely different. But we will cheerfully hear all that can be said and consequently we are ready to examine the Scriptures which are supposed to denote official elders.

There are but two passages upon which there is much reliance placed.

1. In the King's translation, it is written, "When they had ordained them elders in every church and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23). The translators intended to construe the language to signify that Paul

and Barnabas made elders for the brethren in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. But we have shown that, in other places, members of the church grew into the eldership, or became elders by time and experience in well doing. Men in the denominations profess to constitute, ordain, or make elders, "by fasting, prayer and the imposition of hands," but in the passage under examination, according to the theory the elders were first ordained or made by imposing the hands, afterwards the apostles prayed with fasting and commended the officers they had made to the Lord." But, we respectfully suggest that the Greek word "Cheirotonee-santees" literally signifies to extend the hand or to stretch out the hands but there is no authority to translate the clause, "Ordained for them elders." The word rendered here ordained is found three times in the Greek Testament. Paul mentions one "Who was chosen of the churches to travel" (2 Cor. 8:19). Why was the word not rendered chosen in Acts 14:23 instead of ordained? Paul says, "God raised up his Son and showed him openly not to all the people but to witnesses 'Cheirotoneemenois,' chosen of God." Did God choose or ordain witnesses by imposing His hands upon their heads, as men are now wont to do. No one thinks so but how shall we understand the word? It is composed of two words "Cheir", the hand, and "Toneoo", to extend, or stretch out. Tropically, it means, to choose, designate or place; but never can it signify to ordain, appoint to office, or induct into any office or position whatever. Writers, to be sure have supposed that the operation might have been by lifting or extending the hand, as it is said, men voted by holding up the hands. Light may be thrown upon the passage by reference to other Scriptures. Paul exhorted Timothy to "Neglect not the favor which was given by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery" (1 Tim. 4:14). Notwithstanding, prophecy, conferred upon Timothy a gift right or privilege the hands were afterwards imposed laid upon him extended or placed for some purpose. Paul said "Extend hands hastily to no one" or

“lay hands suddenly on no one.” It is plain from these Scriptures that hands were employed in some manner and for some purpose in the direction of special work required. Perhaps this is a suitable occasion to very briefly call attention to the employment of the hands in religious service. This will be taken up in the next article.

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Article Eleven.

The Employment of the Hands in Religious Service

A full and exhaustive examination of the subject would require much more space than we can spare; and therefore, we can do little more than express a few of our conclusions on the subject.

1. In the Old Testament, Abram swore by lifting his hand in promise (Gen. 14:22).

2. Men swore by putting their hands under the thigh of superiors (Gen. 24:2 and 47:29).

3. Moses implored the protection of God by lifting his hands (Ex. 17:11).

4. The people put their hands upon the Levites in token of their submission to them, but not to consecrate them (Num 8:10).

5. Consecration was by filling the hands (Lev. 8).

6. The people put their hands upon the heads of the sacrifices to designate them as suitable for the purposes contemplated.

7. Covenants between individuals were confirmed by extending hands to each other (2 Kings 10:15) or as we say by “shaking hands.”

8. Inferiors submitted to superiors by extending their hands to them (1 Chron. 29:24). The extension of the hands was the token of loyalty.

9. The people of God evinced their love and submission to God by “Lifting their hands” towards heaven (Neh. 8:6).

In the New Testament we often find the hands employed for religious purposes.

1. The ruler said to the Savior, my daughter is dead, but come and "lay thy hands upon her, and she shall live." "The Lord took her by the hand and she arose" (Matt. 9:18, 25).

2. "Jesus touched the leper and immediately he was cleansed" (Matt. 8:3).

3. The Lord "touched" the "hand of Peter's wife's mother and she arose" (Matt. 8:15).

4. He touched the blind eyes, and they were opened (Matt. 9:29).

5. The woman touched his garment and was made whole" (Luke 8:44).

6. They besought the Savior to "put his hand upon the deaf man," "and he put his fingers into his ears, and spit, and touched his tongue, and looking up said, 'Ephatha,' and his ears were opened, and he spoke plainly" (Mark 7:31-35).

7. He put his hands upon his eyes, and he was restored" (Mark 8:25).

We have thus submitted seven instances of "the laying on of hands," or of putting hands upon the afflicted, by one who understood the subject; and the idea, in every instance was that of touch or the extension to the party, to the afflicted part of the part of the body. In these instances we find no meaningless or merely formal imposition of hands upon the heads of the afflicted. Are we not to understand all cases of laying on of hands by these that are positively known? Are we told that the Apostles consecrated the seven at Jerusalem by laying their hands upon them after they had prayed. The scriptures do not thus speak. Luke says, "When they had prayed," "Epetheekan autois tas cheiras", they extended their hands to them" (Acts 6:6). We appeal to the scholars of the age for the accuracy of our rendering. The pronoun "autois" is dative and the usual sign is "to."

In giving Paul and Barnabas to the work of preaching to the Gentiles, the elders of Antioch, "When they had

fasted and prayed, and extended their hands to them, they sent them away", Epithentes tas cheiras autois apalusen (Acts 3:5). We most certainly believe this is the best translation of the Greek that can be given, and that, the unprejudiced will at once admit this rendering is literal.

We finally submit an example which requires neither translation nor criticism:

"When James, Peter and John understood the grace of God given to Paul, they gave to him and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship to go to the Gentiles, but they continued with the circumcision" (Gal. 2:9).

Here is an example of aged and experienced ministers of truth consulting together with regard to the relative delegations of each, and when it is perceived that Paul possessed eminent qualifications for laboring with the philosophical nations, the five brethren extended to each other "the right hands of fellowship tat James, Peter and John should work among their countrymen—the Jews; and Paul and Barnabas should go to the Gentile lands."

In this instance, we certainly have the only plain case in the Scriptures of giving the right hands of fellowship, laying on or extending hands for the express purpose of performing missionary work in different circumstances. This was co-operation in labor, manifested by affectionately giving their hands to each other.

We think that we can see a beauty and feel a moral power in the extension of the hands of our aged and wise brethren in the divisions of spiritual work in the salvation of our race.

In conclusion we challenge scholars or others to show from the word of God that elders, preachers, deacons or bishops were ever made by fasting, prayer and laying hands on the heads of candidates for office.

With these respectful suggestions we feel better prepared to close our remarks in reference to the imaginary making of lders by Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Pisidia. We art reminded that Horace said, "Poeta nas-

citur non fit"—“A poet is born not made”; and we are as free to assert that no elder was ever made by the manipulations of church officials. In the very nature of things, youths grow into age, young men grow into seniors or elders; and every attempt to create, make, appoint or consecrate striplings into elders, is a violation of the simplest rules of language, and an outrage upon the Oracles of God and the laws of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The idea of making, creating or even appointing, is not in the Greek word *Toneoo*. Its meanings are to stretch, extend, draw, tend, relate, designate, place and refer. A fair reading of the passage would be, “in extending the hand they designated to them the seniors in each congregation and praying with fasting, commended them to the Lord into whom they had believed” (Acts 14:23).

It was and is the peculiar province of the preacher of the gospel who plants a church to place the members in working order. We have an example to the point, in the apostles placing seven approved brethren in the special and important service of supplying the Grecian widows in the church at Jerusalem. If the seven were at the time officials they were not made so by anything the apostles did. Their works had proved who they were and for what work they were at least qualified; and when the necessary information reached the apostles they placed them in the work required and for which they were qualified.

The second Scripture usually quoted to prove that ministers are initiated into office or working position by a special act called ordination (instead of being trained up in the work) in the King's version reads, “I left thee in Crete that thou shouldst set in order the things wanting and ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee” (Titus 1:5).

This translation with the rendering of Acts 14:23 suggests the necessity of a brief notice of the word “ordain” or “ordination.”

Possibly with a correct translation of the word of life we would not have the word ordain in the Bible. and if we are not greatly at fault in our information, there is no word in English or Greek in the New Testament, answering to the idea of commissioning one with perpetual authority to administer sacred rites, as held by the denominations (so called church of Christ included—Ed.). We take this occasion to introduce to our readers the learned Episcopal critic, G. A. Jacob, D.D., who gives in a neat volume an able production on "ritualism." He says, "The word 'ordain' is used for any kind of appointment, or regulation, being applied indifferently to persons or things. It is given as a translation of no less than twelve Greek words of very different force and meaning but all implying some kind of causation."

We submit the examples for the examination of the thoughtful:

1. Gignomai, "Must one be ordained to be a witness" (Acts 1:22).
2. Graphoo, Jude 4: "Before of old, ordained to this," etc.
3. Diatassoo, 1 Cor. 8:17, "So ordain I." Also 1 Cor. 9:14; Gal. 3:19).
4. Etoimazoo, Eph. 2:10, "Hath before ordained."
5. Kathisteemi, Titus 1:5, "And ordain elders" (Heb. 5:1).
6. Kataskeuazoo, Heb. 9:6, "these things were ordained."
7. Poieoo, Mark 3:14, "He ordained twelve" (made—Poieoo.)
8. Tassoo, Acts 13:4j, "Were ordained to eternal life."
9. Titheemi, 1 Tim. 3:7, "I am ordained a preacher" (John 15:16).
10. Krinoo, Acts 16:4, "The decrees that were ordained."
11. Orizoo, Acts 17:31, "Whom he hath ordained."
12. Cheirotoneoo, Acts 14:23, "Ordained them elders"

We doubt whether, with all these authorities before us, a Greek scholar can be found who will say that any one of these twelve verbs conveys the idea of investing with office or that there is a word in the Greek Testament which signifies to initiate into authority to perform any religious work. The word employed in Titus 1:5 is "Katasteesees" from "Kathisteemi, and should be rendered to arrange or place, but it cannot be correctly translated to make. The business of Titus in Crete, was "to finish the things left incomplete and to wisely arrange the members in every city. It may be said that "the priests under the Old Testament were made or initiated into office by ordination; and that ministers in our day should be clothed with authority by a similar proceeding. Before the giving of the law God ordained that "the first born of every family" should act as priest; but afterwards, the Lord said "The Levites, or sons of Levi, from 30 to 50 years of age, shall go into do the service of the congregation" (Num. 8:15 and 3:3). Thus it is clear that both before the law and afterwards, the priests were born and not made priests by ordination. It is true also that before they engaged in the service, they were washed, purified and properly clothed for the service (Num. 8:21). But there is no example of initiation into office in the Old Testament.

In the church of Christ as we have mentioned all the saints are priests by birth and by virtue of heirship are fully authorized to offer acceptable sacrifices to God. Their souls, bodies and spirits should be washed, cleansed and purified before entering the service. Under the law, "The whole assembly of the congregation put their hands upon their priests, or possibly extended their hands to them and we should be pleased to see all the members of the churches extending their hands to their servants, in engaging in the solemn duties of their calling.

There was a special "charismatos", grace or favor, given to Timothy through prophecy in placing the hands of the presbytery (1 Tim. 4:14). This favor, however

was not an office or in the nature of an investiture. Paul exhorted him to "neglect not this gift," but stir it up, by exercise, to "meditate" upon it and give himself wholly to the things communicated, that his profiting might appear to all (1 Tim. 4:15). This was a blessing bestowed upon Timothy, long after he became a companion of Paul and all must see it was not to constitute him a preacher. He had acted as evangelist for years. Paul again exhorted him, "To stir up the gift or grace which was in him by his hands" (2 Tim. 1:6). This blessing Paul mentions again in the exhortation "That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Spirit which dwells in us" (2 Tim. 1:14). "That good thing, "paratheekeen", deposit or trust, Timothy was exhorted to guard by the Spirit." While we know it was to Timothy as a grace to be cultivated and improved in blessing others and dwelt both in Paul and Timothy, we pretend not to affirm what it was. It was a special grace through prophecy.

We must not omit to remind the reader that ten years or more after Paul and Barnabas had become successful preachers of the gospel and active planters of churches, they were the occasion of the "fasting, prayers and extension of the hands" of the presbytery at Antioch, before leaving on their new mission, into Asia Minor. No one supposes that Paul and Barnabas were made, constituted or ordained preachers by what was done for them at Antioch. It is the duty of those who maintain that preachers and other officials were made by prayer, fasting and imposition of hands in the days of the apostles, to give a clear example, setting forth the fact, or cease to maintain its divine authority. More upon the subject of ordination, we can scarcely consider necessary at present and therefore we return to the most direct history of elders.

Article Twelve.

History of Elders.

Many express surprise that there were elders in the church at Jerusalem while there is no mention of their appointment. Paul and Barnabas with certain others were sent from Antioch to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about the question of circumcising the Gentile converts. The apostles, elders and the whole multitude came together to consider the matter and when they understood the law as read by James, it pleased the apostles and elders with the whole church to send messengers to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, bearing the conclusions at which they had arrived. It is said, "as they went through the cities they delivered the decrees to keep that were ordained of the apostles and elders (Acts 15:1-22 and 16:4). This narration, brief as it is, affords conclusive evidence that the elders were, at least, active and efficient laborers in the congregations. It may be well to add to this example that when the contributions were sent from Antioch to the starving saints in Judea, they were sent to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 11:30). This shows that the elders of the churches were reliable workers and to be preferred to all others in the custody of the contributions and the distribution to the suffering. From this instance we should learn a valuable lesson regarding the management of the "fellowship."

We next call attention to the elders of Ephesus.

"From Miletus, Paul called the elders of Ephesus and when they were come," he delivered to them most instructive and impressive lessons, regarding the Christian life. He reminded them of the manner of his life, since forming their acquaintance and declared that he "had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. Take heed, therefore, to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers to feed

the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:27, 28).

What are the lessons contained in these exhortations?

1. Paul addresses the elders as the shepherds of the flock as the pastors and feeders of the tender lambs.

2. The elders are considered as the overseers or (Episkopoi) bishops of the churches.

3. We learn also that the overlookers or visitors were to minister to or feed the church of God.

4. That the elders were constituted, placed, ordained or made overseers or bishops by the Holy Spirit. The word is "etheto" from "titheemi", to place. As much as to say that God's spirit places, designates, points them out, or makes the seniors the shepherds of the flock.

These points, we presume, require little or nothing said for the purpose of confirmation.

God has made, constituted, ordained and placed the men of age, experience, wisdom and goodness as the teachers and guardians of the younger members of the family and of the inexperienced and less favored universally.

If the elders were the overseers, bishops, shepherds or pastors in the church of Ephesus, are they not equally bishops and shepherds in other churches? Is not this a divine arrangement? Is not every agency ordained of God? Does not this view completely overthrow prelacy? episcopacy? the hierarchy or a church government by men made officers, as advocated by the denominations of the age?

Furthermore, if the Holy Spirit made, placed, appointed or ordained these seniors at Ephesus, as the overseers, pastors or bishops of the church, should we not "hasten leisurely" in our blind zeal to make officers after the fashion of modern pastors, We are assured that God works through the church as his sole agency.

We are told that this Scripture proves that the elders and bishops are identical as to office. It says not a word about office or officers. It simply teaches that weighty responsibilities rest upon the senior members of every

congregation—upon the first converts—and that when they feed the tender lambs of flock, they are the shepherds or pastors; and when they look over the straying sheep, they are the overseers or bishops just as Paul was a “tentmaker,” from his avocation.

But we can not notice all the good things set forth in Paul’s address to these venerable brethren, called to hear lessons for the last time from his lips.

Bishops and Deacons at Philippi.

Paul and Timotheus addressed an epistle “To all the saints in Christ Jesus who were at Philippi with the bishops and deacons” (Phil. 1:1). This Scripture shows conclusively that there were bishops and deacons both in the church at Philippi; and we can see no ground to doubt that in all worshipping assemblies of Jesus Christ on earth, bishops and deacons necessarily exist as God’s consecrated leaders and directors in the service.

We must notice what is said by Paul to Timothy on the eldership.

Not many months since a worthy brother asked us, how we dispose of usch passages as, “If any man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work?” We replied that there is no such a passage. While the translators made Paul say, “The office of a bishop,” there is no authority in the Greek Testament, for any one of the five words: “The”, “Office”, “Of”, “A”, “Bishop.”

Paul, in writing to his son, said, “If any one desires a good work” but there is not a word in regard to an office or officer (1 Tim. 3:1). The word is found but four times in the Sacred Oracles.

1. It is employed (Luke 19:44) with regard to the visitation of the Lord to the Jewish nation.

2. It is applied to the service of Judas (Acts 1:20).

3. Paul uses the word as we have quoted (1 Tim. 3:1).

4. Peter exhorted the brethren to “glorify God in the day of visitation” (1 Pet 2:12).

“Episkopee” is the noun form of the verb, “Episko-

peoo"—“Epi”, over, and “skopee”, to look and the rendering of the verbal noun conveys the idea of overlooking, inspecting, overseeing or visiting. Possibly visiting is the most expressive representation in the English language.

The apostle further instructed his son that the “visitor” or overseer, must be blameless, a married man, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, but patient, mild, liberal. One who rules his house handsomely having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man cannot rule his own house, how can he take care of the house of God? Not a novice, (new convert) lest being lifted up with pride, he call into condemnation of the devil. “Moreover he must have a good report of them without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil” (1 Tim. 3:1-6).

From the tenth verse we learn that the overlookers were to be proved faithful, tried, and well reported, by the members of the church and the world without. But how was Timothy to proceed in the performance of the services assigned by Paul? We discover no election, no voting, no appointment to make officers, either by the church or the visiting evangelists. Again, it is evident that no one without trial, could give assurance he was blameless, had a wife, was vigilant, sober, of dignified bearing, hospitable, apt to teach, etc., etc.

But suppose Timothy had found a brother with all these excellent qualities, and was well reported of by the world, as a mild, companionable and reliable gentleman, what next? The evidence is clear that he has long been teaching, overlooking, etc., and it certainly would be most unsuitable to make a man what everybody would say he was already. Hence, the idea that Timothy was commissioned to make officers—bishops and deacons—in Ephesus, is not in the Scriptures and such a proceeding would have contradicted the charge given by Paul. Timothy was not left at Ephesus to make officers but to regulate the members who were already in service. He was to see that they who desired to perform the service of over-

looking or watching after the flock, were fully qualified. Hence, if we look closely at the instruction we discover that it was not so much his business to see that there were men laboring as overseers as to prevent the incompetent from attempting to perform work for which they were not fitted. Paul said, "I beseech thee to abide in Ephesus that thou mightest command some that they teach no other doctrine nor give heed to fables, rather than godly edifying (1 Tim. 1:3, 4). It evinced great wisdom in Paul to leave his son at Ephesus to be assured from all the available sources of information in the church and out of it that the active members were of the proper character. His chief work was to counteract the influence of false teachers and to encourage the saints to perform faithfully the labor committed to their hands. False men he was to rebuke before all that others might fear. Finally when Timothy should find all co-operating, all fitly joined, and compacted, he was to extend to the saints in every department, the approving hand. This, however, was not to be done hastily (1 Tim. 5:22).

Article Thirteen.

The Work of Titus—The Evangelist.

It is reported in our version of the Scriptures that Paul "left Titus in Crete to set in order the things wanting and to ordain or appoint elders in every city as he had been appointed" (Titus 1:5).

The translators of Rome and England, with the settled theory in their minds, that the government of Jesus Christ is official, prelatical or episcopal, in a sense not revealed in the Bible, could not well avoid giving a rendering which would constitute Titus, a maker of officers for the churches. If, however, we were to admit that Paul left Titus expressly to ordain or make officers for the churches, and upon examination of the epistle, we could not discover another word on the subject, would we not have

room to doubt the genuineness of the passage? Should not this verse at least conform in meaning to the character of the labor of Titus. When we examine carefully what he really did in the congregations, we can have no doubts as to the varied obligations which Paul placed upon him. Not a word is said about making elders or officers of any grade.

The Greek word "Katasteesees, translated to ordain, in the passage literally translated, means to place, arrange or regulate, and in no passage in the Bible to ordain in the sense to make elders. The truth is that the attempt to change the meaning of the word elder, older, or one more wise and experienced than another into a suddenly created officer is a complete subversion of the meaning of a plain Greek and English word. It stifles all rules of language, all common sense, and converts the scriptures into contradictory and untrustworthy compositions. When our scribes tell us that "There are official or technical meanings to the words of the Bible, differing widely from the literal and common meanings," they uproot all true grounds of faith and leave the world in hopeless conjectures, regarding the truth of matters most vital.

Titus was fully authorized, as we have stated, to properly place or regulate the seniors in the congregations. Their work required that each bishop should be "blameless, having a wife with faithful children, not riotous or unruly." "For" said Paul, "a bishop (visitor overseer) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, or given to wine; not hasty, nor devoted to unjust gain, but a lover of hospitality, of good men—sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he might be able, by sound teaching, to convince the gainsayers." These were the main matters after which Titus was to look in the churches. Every one possessing these qualifications was God's chosen and approved worker in the church. The idea of making such, elders or bisops is a burlesque on the Christian institution.

The apostle gave him instructions as to the characters of pretenders he would have to encounter and how he was to dispose of them. Said he, "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially of the circumcision; whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." "One of their own prophets," wrote Paul, "said the Cretans are always liars, evil beasts slow bellies."

It was with the view of silencing such teachers as that Titus was left in Crete just as Timothy was left at Ephesus to look after unsound teachers. Their mission was identical. Paul assured Titus that "The evidence was true, wherefore (said he) rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith. They profess that they know God; but in their works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work, reprobate" (Titus 1:5-16).

Just such teachers as Timothy and Titus are now greatly needed to send into all the churches. We need able and good men to regulate the leaders, pastors and unauthorized persons, who are assuming to teach and govern the saints. We need faithful men to "rebuke" such teachers "sharply" and to "stop their mouths."

For the proper regulation of the teachers, elders and leaders in the churches, Paul gave specific directions as to the character of teaching for each class. Said he to Titus, "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." This was not to appoint or make officers as a custom but his mission was to teach "old men to be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given much to wine, teachers of good things. That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, home busied, good, obedient to their husbands."

"Young men likewise, he said, exhort to be sober-minded," and to "show themselves a pattern of good

works, in doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned."

He told him "To exhort servants, to be obedient to their masters, and to please them in all things" (Titus 2:1-10).

Finally he was to "Put the saints in mind, to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to avoid foolish questions, contentions and strivings about the law." The very last item was "To learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they may not be found unfaithful." (Titus, 3rd chapter).

We have not discovered the slightest allusion to "making elders" or officers, but we have found ample instructions, in regard to regulating elders, male and female, young women, young men, and also servants and all the members of the spiritual family.

We deem it proper also to notice the oft-repeated statement among writers that "Elders and bishops, according to Paul and Titus, are identical as to office." There is not, we repeat, a word written in the Bible about the office of either elders and bishops. We doubt not every elder was capable of overseeing or looking after the sheep. Every judge is a lawyer but every lawyer is not necessarily a judge. Some might be both seniors or elders and overlookers, but not all elders are able to teach or watch the flock. We have known men who were lawyers, preachers, farmers and school masters, but it would betray sad deficiency of plain common sense, to affirm this fact, that all lawyers are preachers, farmers and school managers.

But for the present, we must close our examination of the eldership by submitting a few most obvious conclusions.

1. The elders in the churches were the first fruits or converts in the congregation or the older, wiser and more experienced members. From these qualifications, they were the legitimate teachers and pastors.

2. The obligation rested upon them to feed the flock of God willingly, not for gain, but as the steward of God whose work was clearly pointed out.

3. The Holy Spirit made or designated the elders, the overseers or bishops in all the congregations of the saints. They were also the pastors as we have seen or shepherds of the sheep.

4. The members of the churches were to consider the seniors as the first fruits everywhere and to submit, especially to such as ministered to the saints, hoped and believed in the Lord (1 Cor. 16:15).

5. The intimations in our version (King's version) of the New Testament in regard to making elders or bishops in the churches by elections, ordinations or appointments are authorized and should not be tolerated by the people of God.

6. The mission of Timothy and Titus was to regulate the various classes in order that all might grow in grace and knowledge of the truth.

7. The theory of parties which sustains the hierarchy, prelacy, episcopacy or church government by officers especially ordained, elected or appointed by men for the work, affords most conclusive evidence of the great apostacy from the simplicity and spirituality of the divine volume.

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