

sorrows, and its heathenisms; prayers which are the utterance of our awful and royal priesthood unto God, not as ordained ministers, but as Christian souls; prayers which know that they ask according to His will, and therefore that He heareth them, and therefore that they have the petitions which they desire of Him.

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### *THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.*

IN the Epistles of St. Ignatius we have a perfectly clear picture of the organization of the Churches of Asia in the first quarter of the second century; every city has its bishop, who is surrounded by a spiritual crown of presbyters, and they have deacons to minister to them. Apparently any believer, at least with the sanction of the bishop, is still competent to celebrate the Eucharist; but the hierarchy, though it has not yet finally reserved the exclusive function of acting in the name of the community, is already completely organized on the lines that are to persist for centuries. After the investigations of the Bishop of Durham, it cannot be doubted that the letters which have come down to us in the name of the saint are, to say the least, full of his phrases and full of his spirit; so the picture is trustworthy as well as clear.

When we turn to St. Clement's letter to the Corinthians everything seems obscure; the one point clear is, that a strong party was eager to do something which the writer regarded as a grievous wrong to the whole body of presbyters; and this wrong is to be inflicted in the interests of one or two. It seems to be commonly supposed that the Church of Corinth, if not the Church of Rome, was then under a board or college of coequal presbyters; it is no objection to this that the "presbyters" or "seniors" are

twice (cc. i., xxi.) contrasted with *ἡγούμενοι* and *προηγούμενοι*, for in both passages they are also contrasted with the young. In a model community leaders or superiors (who include no doubt any resident prophets or teachers) are obeyed, the old are honoured, the young are trained. But if there was a college of coequal presbyters, what was there to fight about? Why could not the partisans of the "one or two" be pacified by adding them to the college? If the Corinthians wanted to have a bishop like their brethren at Smyrna or Ephesus, that was no reason for getting rid of the presbyters, though they might have felt themselves slighted at having a bishop put over them. But the writer speaks as if they were not only slighted but wronged, as if the party had deprived some of them of a rank, all of them of a right.

My impression is, that every presbyter at Corinth had a vested right to succeed to the bishopric in his turn, or that at most the community had a voice as to which presbyter should succeed; and that a party had arisen which said, Here is so-and-so or so-and-so, ever so much fitter to be bishop than any of these dull old presbyters. It may also be conjectured that, as the community in general was divided into "seniors" and "juniors," the dispute was the bitterer because the insubordinate party put forward a candidate from the ranks of the latter. Here are my reasons,—which do not strike me as decisive, nor does this trouble me, for there is no reason to measure the importance of questions by their difficulty; our duty to-day cannot vary as we know a little more or a little less of times of which we shall never know all or much,—such as they are, they are these: In the first place, St. Clement clearly admits that the presbyters were outshone by their rival or rivals. All that he has to say of the presbyters is, that they "offered the gifts holly and unblamably" (c. xliv.); on the other hand, we read (c. xlvi.) of the

rival or rivals, "let one be faithful, let him be mighty to declare knowledge, let him be wise in declaring of questions, let him be pure in his doings, for the more he seemeth to be great above others the more he is debtor to bear a humble mind." So again (c. liv.), "Who among you is generous, who is compassionate, who is fulfilled with love, let him say, 'If I am an occasion of sedition and strife and schisms, I depart.'" Obviously though the "one or two persons who occasion the schism" (c. xlvii.) are not equal to Paul, or Cephas, or Apollos, they are the ornaments of the Church of their time, and they are not necessarily more to blame for the indiscretion of their partisans than their greater predecessors. One cannot identify them with the actual authors of the schism who are rebuked in c. lvii., and bidden put away the vaunting and haughty conceit of their tongue. Next, it seems tolerably clear that the trouble arose about a contested election of some kind, and that St. Clement thought the Corinthians greatly to blame for flying in the face of the holy Apostles who had made wise arrangements to save the Church from such a trouble. Unless it is certain beforehand that presbyter and bishop are synonymous in all Christian writings older than St. Ignatius, it would seem that, whatever the relation between bishops and deacons on the one hand and presbyters on the other, St. Clement begins with bishops and deacons. He does not assume, as it is assumed in the *Didaché*, that the community appoints them by its own free action. In the beginning the Apostles, who themselves were evangelized by the Lord, appointed their firstfruits bishops and deacons of those who should believe (c. xlii.). They knew also by the Lord that strife would arise about the name of bishopric, *i.e.* the dignity of bishop; this was the reason that they appointed the first bishops and deacons themselves, this was why they made provision for a succession during the lifetime of the first incumbents. Neither the text nor the

rendering is quite certain, but this is nearly clear. If we read *ἐπινομήν*, the meaning will probably be, that the first bishops were the heirs, *κληρονόμοι*, of the Apostles; but that, in view of their death, the Apostles constituted *ἐπίνομοι*, remainder men, or granted a right of supplementary succession, that there might be other approved men to succeed to their ministry, *i.e.* that of the first bishops. If one reads *ἐπιμονήν*, the same meaning is expressed more clearly if less pregnantly: the translation will be, they provided for continuance. Any way it is quite clear that St. Clement says the Apostles were not content to appoint the first bishops; they did something more: and therefore the "other approved men" are other not than the Apostles but other than the first bishops, and it is to them that they succeed. And this system went on mechanically; "other men of high account" (? the apostles and prophets of the *Didaché*) continued to do what the Apostles in the strict sense had done; only these last seem to have felt that their action required "the consent of the whole Church," which has not been mentioned before. Whoever appoints, these persons are appointed precisely that when the bishopric is vacant there may be some one with a clear right to succeed. They are bishops expectant, and in the mean time they are colleagues and assistants to the bishop, they have a "ministry" to exercise, they "offer gifts." One can hardly doubt that as a rule they conduct the Eucharist. They form a body, the "elders" of the new Israel. It is to be noticed that they are independent of the bishop; whatever rights they have, they do not derive them from him: and yet his superiority to them requires no explanation; his authority is original and self-sufficing, they are associated with him though not by him in his dignity. St. Clement does not regard them as absolutely independent of the community. They seem in his view to hold office *ad vitam aut culpam*; and the community is the competent

judge of their faults. He asserts that they have always borne themselves "with humble-mindedness," as if even haughtiness might imaginably justify or excuse deposition. However, as there is no fault to find with them, it will be no small sin to us if we reject them from the bishopric (c. xlv.). The use of the first person in c. xxi. makes it more likely that here too the writer identifies himself with the Church of Corinth, than that he speaks judicially in the name of the Church of Rome. He goes on "Happy are the elders who finished their course before, forasmuch as their departure was fruitful and perfect; for they have no care lest any remove them from their established station. For we see that ye have removed certain of good conversation from the ministry they honoured by their innocency." It is to be remembered that it was not the aim of St. Clement to draw up a clear summary of the exact situation at Corinth, he wrote rather to edify his contemporaries than to instruct them, so that it is a good deal more hopeless to reconstruct the precise state of things from his letter than it would be to reconstruct the controversies of our own day from a stray charge of Bishop Thirlwall's some eighteen centuries hence. The one clear point is, that there was a faction at Corinth against the presbyters, and that some, not all, had been actually deposed; and even here one must be on one's guard. St. Clement is a better witness to what the Apostles and apostolic men had instituted than to the misdeeds of the Corinthians: he does not seem to have heard at first hand what the leaders of the faction had to say; he endorses discreetly the complaints of the presbyters. If we take his word that they were in the right on the whole, it does not follow that they did not exaggerate. Assuming, however, that some presbyters had been deposed, why not all? Can we guess that some of the presbyters had already served the office of bishop, and that these had no personal motive for

resisting the faction, and the faction had no motive for proceeding to extremities against them. We do not know what the functions of a bishop in the first century were; but it is pretty safe to suppose that even then he administered the "alms" and presented the "oblations." Whether one supposes him the inspector of the common fund, of the common worship, of the deacons, or of the congregation, it seems as if the office was as monarchical in its nature as the consulate. A large number of colleagues would have left the work undone to save quarrelling how it was to be done. When one reads in an inscription of one of the cities of the Hauràn, that a certain tribe took the "bishopric," as in Athens a certain tribe took the presidency, we may be sure that the bishopric involved no practical business. Nor is there anything in the nature of the office to suggest that it must always have been permanent. If a bishop had a gift like a prophet, both might exercise the gift by turns. Was the office of deacon temporary when a man who "used it well" (and laid it down?) "purchased to himself a good degree"? Can we compare *οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι*, with *οἱ καλῶς διακονήσαντες* (1 Tim. iii. 13; v. 17), and translate, elders who *have* ruled well? We find that "rulers" both in Romans xii. and Thessalonians i. are *προϊστάμενοι* in the present, which is also used of the qualification of bishops and deacons. At any rate we are told, "If any man desire a bishopric, he desires a good work." Does this imply that he will not have to wait for a death vacancy; that there would be vacancies that it was no discredit to count upon, to be openly anxious to fill? In colleges there are offices which no one desires, and everybody who is fit is expected to serve; others which are desirable, which the holder is expected to vacate and make room for others.

Now, if we suppose a number of elderly men, each with a right to succeed to an important office, there would be

a strong mixture of motives tending to establish some more or less formal scheme of rotation which would make it practically certain that everybody entitled to succeed would live to do so, and depart with the feeling that his career had been "fruitful and perfect." Of course, things might have taken another turn; the acting bishop or bishops might after one or more successions have come down to be completely on a level with the other presbyters without the change being noticed; only then, how was it that by the middle of the second century all existing Churches which had changed in this way had changed back again without that being noticed either?

Possibly the conjecture that the episcopate was once a temporary as well as a local office may derive some support from the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians. St. Irenæus mentions such an epistle, and ours may very well be the same. If so, it is more likely than not that it had been in existence a good while when St. Irenæus quotes it, even if St. Polycarp did not write it; while it is also likely that whoever wrote in St. Polycarp's name wrote after his glorious martyrdom. Most of the letter tells us no more of the situation of its real or supposed readers than an average excellent sermon tells us of the situation of its hearers. We are to understand that St. Polycarp writes on the occasion of the kindness of the Philippians to St. Ignatius and his companions, apparently with the object of moderating their indignation against Valens, once a presbyter among them, who has defrauded the Church, which still has to take final action on his frauds. Unluckily the Greek of the passage about Valens is lost. The Latin runs: "Nimis contristatus sum pro Valente, qui presbyter factus est aliquando apud vos, quod sic ignoret is locum qui datus est ei." The description of Valens is puzzling. If the Latin were the original, *aliquando* might very well mean "at last," and it would make very good sense to sup-

pose that the writer regrets that Valens should have disgraced himself when he had just realized his ambition ; but one cannot imagine a Greek original with this meaning that would suggest *aliquando* to a literal translator. If one imagines the letter written some forty to fifty years after its assumed date, some readers who knew what had passed at Philippi in St. Polycarp's time would remember Valens ; most would need to be told or reminded who he was ; few if any who knew would stumble at the form of the reminder. Can the words be simply a gloss ? Whatever we have of or about St. Polycarp (except fragments in St. Irenæus and Eusebius) seems to have passed through the hands of St. Pionius in the third century, and Pioniaster in the fourth. Valens and his wife, if they repent, will be restored as members of the Philippian Church ; so we cannot guess that after being presbyter there he had gone away, and after an interval, which would be implied in *aliquando*, found some opportunity of defrauding the brethren there. If the letter is genuine and the text right, we might almost guess that Valens after having been presbyter had been bishop, and that St. Polycarp writes on the news of his behaviour, when the time came for him to give an account of his stewardship. If this were so, there might be some difficulty about a successor. If the bishopric at Philippi was vacant or disputed, or if the bishop who had been a presbyter would on ceasing office be a presbyter again, it would be intelligible that where St. Ignatius, writing to the Magnesians, speaks of concord under the presidency of the bishop, who represents God, and the presbyters who represent the synedrion of Apostles, St. Polycarp speaks of obedience to presbyters and deacons.

Some may think it adds plausibility to this attempt to reconstruct the situation shadowed out in the documents, both of which must be very ancient, while the most ancient is almost certainly genuine, that the transition from the



situation we are imagining to the situation attested in the letters of St. Ignatius would be so very simple. We should only have to suppose two changes, both which might very well pass unnoticed, as they would naturally go together ; one would be, that the episcopate became permanent, another would be, that the bishop should ordain presbyters himself, instead of leaving this to travelling "apostles" or "prophets." Both would happen, of course, when a strong man became bishop at forty and lived to be seventy.

Next we may ask if St. Clement was right in saying the Apostles established bishops and deacons everywhere. If we are right in supposing that such bishops, whether temporary or permanent, were sole administrators of their Churches, are we to suppose that the presbyters only came in by an afterthought? What again was the original unit of Church organization? How many Christians were there between the days of St. Paul and the days of St. Polycarp in Corinth, or Philippi, or Ephesus? Did they all make a point of meeting to break bread every Lord's day? Could they command anywhere the weekly use of any building or inclosure that would hold five hundred? or three? or two? No doubt the picture ap. St. Ign. *Ad Magn.*, c. vi., of the bishop with his presbyters round him and his deacons before him, and all the people orderly and obedient, is impressive; it suggests something like a public meeting in the townhall of a market town. Was such a sight to be seen every week or every month? Was it the custom to meet in the private houses of the brethren who were not quite so poor as the rest? If so, was each congregation an unit, managing its temporal affairs by its own bishop and deacons, while the spiritual affairs of the local Church were managed by the joint action of the bishops as elders? If we rate the numbers of believers high, we shall answer this question one way; if we rate it low, another. On St. Clement's theory, Stephanas (since he and his household

were the firstfruits of Achaia) would have been the first bishop of St. Paul's converts at Corinth, and some unknown person of St. Peter's, if he visited Corinth and made converts too. According to St. Jerome,—who may *perhaps* have had some other authority than the First Epistle to the Corinthians,—the rule of one bishop for each city came in to put an end to schisms, because each presbyter asserted his personal claim to the allegiance of those whom he had baptized. St. Epiphanius in one place informs us that it was the singular privilege of the Church of Alexandria, that from its foundation it had never had more than one lawful bishop at a time. If we could cross-examine him this might or might not be an important clue. Another "find" like the *Didaché* might throw light on such a text, or receive light from it. Another text of the same tantalising Father is less enigmatical. He tells us (*Hær.*, § 75) that if Aërius had fallen in with the deepest researches (? the works of Hegesippus) he would have known that in the apostolic age there were some Churches with presbyters and no bishops, others with bishops and no presbyters. St. Epiphanius, and probably his ancient authority, give a rather far-fetched reason for this: in some Churches there was no one fit to be bishop, others were too small to furnish presbyters. It would be a simpler guess that the episcopal and presbyterian organizations were originally independent. It may be significant that the Acts, which say nothing of "bishops and deacons" do say something of "elders" (though this might be an accident, if it is to be assumed that "bishops" and "elders" are convertible in the apostolic age). When Paul and Barnabas took their last journey together, we read (xiv. 23) "they ordained them elders in every Church." We are never told again of St. Paul's ordaining; he tells us himself that he hardly ever baptized. It is significant that Titus is left behind in Crete, to supply what was lacking, as if it lay outside

St. Paul's vocation to work out the material organization of the Church.

Can we guess that while St. Paul worked with St. Barnabas with the full sympathy and authority of the Church at Jerusalem, they like other Apostles established local boards of discipline, which were a sort of parallel to the local synedria aimed at by contemporary Judaism; but that after St. Paul withstood St. Peter to his face at Antioch, there was no such organization among his converts?

There was certainly none at Corinth, where he complained that "brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers." At Thessalonica there were already (1 Thess. v. 12) *προϊστάμενοι*, who hardly seem to be appointed or elected, they are commended to the grateful and deferential recognition of the community; they took more pains than others to make converts and instruct believers. Perhaps where "gifts" were less exuberant than at Corinth, they were soon recognised as leaders in worship. We learn from Romans xii. 28 that they had a special gift, and this laid on them a special obligation to "diligence"; is it fanciful to remember the qualification of the "reader" in the *διαταγαὶ* "*ἐν ταῖς κυριακαῖς συνόδοις πρῶτος σύνδρομος*"? Can we guess again that when the need of formal organization was felt in Churches which the original organization under elders had not reached, a new organization under bishops and deacons arose, also not without apostolic sanction, and that these originally independent schemes of organization had completely interpenetrated each other in Consular Asia in the time of St. Ignatius, and were on the way to do so in Corinth in the time of St. Clement? This guess has the incidental advantage that it explains the contrast between the position of St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp. St. Ignatius is Bishop of Syria, there is no neighbouring bishop to comfort the Church of Antioch; St. Polycarp is only Bishop of Smyrna. Why? Because in Antioch, and in the cities

of Syria, the faithful had originally been organized under elders, as they were in Jerusalem ("the Lord's brother" is commonly assumed to have been the first diocesan Bishop of Jerusalem; it seems at least as likely that he presided over the elders of the true Israel as a prince of the house of David, just as, according to the Talmud, Hillel, also of the house of David, presided over the elders of Israel according to the flesh). Then St. Ignatius, and apparently St. Euhodius before him, were set over the faithful in Syria, just as St. Titus and St. Timothy were set for a time over the faithful in Crete and Asia. St. Polycarp appears in St. Ignatius' letters as a diocesan bishop. St. Ignatius himself, like St. Titus and St. Timothy, seems more like a "vicar apostolic." It is a subordinate difference, that his commission is permanent, theirs temporary. Was the commission of St. Euhodius permanent? Did St. Ignatius succeed without an interval? Exactly the constitution which existed then in Syria seems to have perpetuated itself in Egypt well into the third century. Here we have an alternative explanation of the singular fact stated by St. Epiphanius about Alexandria. St. Clement (*Strom.* vi. 14) is almost singular, especially for his age, in coupling elders and deacons. One is tempted to guess that in his idea the bishop is too distant, too exalted, to be exemplary. He does not say that the true "Gnostic" can become the true bishop, but that true Gnostics may become true elders and true deacons.

If what has been said so far seem credible, we may approach the First Epistle to Timothy and the Epistle to Titus from a new point of view. If we begin our inquiry with them, we have to ask how the distinction between bishops and presbyters ever arose; but if we suppose that before they can have been written the presbyterian and episcopal organizations were both in existence and beginning to overlap, we are prepared for ambiguous language.

A great deal of course depends upon the degree of authority which we can attribute to the Pastoral Epistles. Suppose, for instance, Marcion really knew of a collection of St. Paul's letters which did not include them. What then? Marcion professed—in good or bad faith—to believe that the orthodox of his day appealed to an enlarged interpolated canon or quasi-canon. This makes it more likely than not that the writings he rejected already existed when he began his controversy. The Second Epistle to Timothy bears very strong “internal evidence of genuineness”; as to the other two, there are three possible hypotheses: (a) St. Paul dictated them; (b) somebody (? the editor of the Second Epistle to Timothy) knew of such letters, and had seen them or had fragments of them—(how long would a letter in cheap ink on inferior papyrus remain legible throughout to an average reader?)—or at any rate thought he knew St. Paul's views of Church organization, and put his view on record in that form; (c) somebody of whom it would be quite impossible to approve had views of his own upon Church organization and fathered them upon St. Paul. Nobody would suppose that the picture of Church organization in the *Clementines* exactly reproduces what existed in the circle in which the author or authors moved. It represents his or their theory of what St. Peter instituted. The same observation applies to the Pastoral Epistles if we were reduced, which we are not, to choosing between hypotheses *b* and *c*. It is true, and not very strange, that the most unscrupulous person we can imagine, guessing as late as we can imagine in the second century at St. Paul's ecclesiastical arrangements, was in a better position to be right than we. It is quite possible that somebody trying to make a fair copy of half legible letters some forty years old might be substantially right. It is also possible (nay probable on hypothesis *c*) that in such an enterprise an editor or a writer may have got confused between what he

saw in the present and what he remembered or conjectured of the past. Such an one living in an age mainly episcopal, and remembering an age that by contrast might seem mainly presbyterian, would disguise the transition by his efforts to throw himself back to a point before it.<sup>1</sup>

If we suppose, as is still most probable, that the epistles in question are genuine in the strict sense, we shall suppose that Titus is to ordain elders with all the qualities a bishop ought to have, because each of them may be called upon to act as bishop. We might perhaps conjecture that there was a time during which the Church at large knew of presbyters while the bishops and deacons were hardly known outside the Church or congregation to which they ministered. From this point of view it is imaginable that as there can hardly have been more than one Christian congregation in most Cretan cities, the elders in their corporate capacity were elders of the Church of Crete, while each was bishop of his own city; while at Ephesus, where the faithful were certainly more numerous, the elders of the Church may have been, for all we can guess, bishops, each of his own congregation. Was it so at Philippi, or did the Church there start with more bishops than one, like the pagan guilds, which *perhaps* furnished the pattern for the organization of bishops and deacons?

Wherever and whenever there was a single bishop with deacons under him and a board of presbyters beside him,

<sup>1</sup> One is tempted to suspect a confusion of this kind in a well-known and enigmatical passage of "St. Ignatius," *Ad Smyrn.* xiii. The writer salutes "the virgins who are called widows." The writer knew that there was a body of widows in every Church in the days of St. Ignatius; he knew that in his own day there was in many Churches a number of virgins, some of whom took brevet rank as widows. He knew perhaps that it would have been an anachronism to make St. Ignatius salute the virgins as such at all; certainly it would have been to make him salute them and not the widows, and so he makes him salute those virgins who had taken rank as widows. One cannot suppose he wrote late enough to salute widows as persons who, in a higher judgment than man's, took rank as virgins, for this would imply that the new order of virgins already overshadowed the older order of widows.

the bishop and deacons were rather like the magistrates, and the elders rather like the senate of a provincial municipality; and no doubt one of the strongest points of resemblance was, that elders and senate had, and were meant to have, a certain power of control. This appears even in the Apostolic Ordinances, which in their original form stipulate for two presbyters (? as an irreducible minimum). But by the time of St. Cyprian the presbyters were much more like the assessors who formed the *consilium* of a Roman proconsul. The change is not surprising. If we can trace the distinction between bishops and elders back to the apostolic age, it will follow that in Churches founded afterwards the bishop was the first Church officer appointed. As time went on, and the number of believers increased, he ordained elders and other officials. One wonders whether the office of reader was invented for one or other of the brethren whom the party which St. Clement rebukes had vainly tried to elevate *per saltum* to the bishopric. This would give a point to the exhortations to subordination in the homily, which certainly seems to be by a reader, that has been annexed to St. Clement's letter.

A few words may be added on the question of "succession," and on the theory that the surviving Apostles, or St. John, instituted some new thing, after the fall of Jerusalem or before the end of the first century. The theory of succession was put forward by the Tractarians as a theory of ministerial competence. In St. Irenæus it appears in quite a different connexion. In every apostolic Church there has been a succession of regularly placed and settled ministers, each of whom knew all that his predecessors knew of Christian truth; so that their consent was a perfect guarantee of apostolic doctrine. This still implies,—which was the important point for the Tractarians,—that the first non-apostolic minister of an

apostolic Church was established by an Apostle or Apostles. We may test this by the Third Epistle of St. John. If John the elder be other than John the Apostle, it may be a question which wrote the letter; but it is a genuine though minor monument of the close of the apostolic age. The writer is in close relations with a certain Gaius, who is apparently remarkable for his hospitality to travelling "Apostles," and still in a position to influence a Church controlled by a certain Diotrophes, who will not recognise the writer, and will not allow any member of his assembly to show hospitality to travelling brethren recommended by the writer, who still hopes that, if he comes in person, he will be able to rebuke Diotrophes to some purpose. He has written to the Church, but feels that this is rather waste of time. Obviously the writer rates his authority high, and more than half suspects he has outlived it. But for this, one thinks Gaius might have been upheld in the position which Diotrophes has usurped, though the writer does not take the usurpation very seriously. At worst Diotrophes is an evil-doer, who has not seen God; there is not a hint that he imperils the salvation of his adherents. The impression one gets is, that Diotrophes wished the "Church" that he more or less controlled, and Gaius more or less influenced, to keep itself to itself, not to allow outsiders to sponge upon it or meddle with it. Such an attitude deserved to be rebuked; and yet it might be tolerated in one who taught nothing false or wrong, as the writer to the Hebrews seems at once to rebuke and tolerate the faint-hearted believers who in time of persecution were disposed to give up regular attendance at Christian worship. In the time which is represented by the letters of St. Ignatius, membership of an organized community is the one guarantee of sound faith and morals; as late as Tertullian it is no more. When a Christian finds himself alone, he is still his own priest; he is not dependent upon



a clergyman who comes round once a month or once a quarter. If there are three laymen, he is priest, not for himself only, but for the Church; though elsewhere Tertullian is sarcastic on the irregularities of heretics, who let the same man fill one office one day and another the next. Nor can one be sure that it is more to St. Ignatius. The famous passage about the Eucharist might be compared with the directions of the *Didaché*. Unless the liturgiologists are right, who say the *Didaché* tells us nothing of the Eucharist, that document prescribes a particular rite to everybody but prophets. So one is inclined to ask whether, according to Ignatius, the validity of the Eucharist is guaranteed, not by the rite, but by the authority of the minister; but it hardly follows in either case that the Eucharist is null without the prescribed guarantee.

As soon as there were false teachers in any place as attractive and influential in themselves as the teachers of truth (and unless we are very paradoxical, the Apocalypse proves that this came to pass before the close of the apostolic age) it became urgent for the surviving Apostles, who were mostly too old to travel often or far, to assure each community that they would be sure of the truth if they kept fellowship with the one of their members who had the confidence of the Apostle to whom the Church looked up as its founder. In this way the principle of one bishop in one city might come to be established, if it needed establishing. It would follow that every here and there the principle would be applied late, after all the Apostles had departed; and then it would happen that in course of time the convert of the first generation who had most of their confidence counted as the first bishop, though "monarchical episcopacy" had been introduced later. If Gaius had been connected with a sufficiently important Church, it is probable that when the fashion of reckoning

up "successions" came in (Hegesippus was familiar with it: he says, "I drew up a succession," as though the word already had a technical sense), he might have counted for the first bishop, in which case we should have lost the letter to him, which, as it was, seemed hardly worth collecting. However this be, if we suppose that in the larger and older Churches there was ever anything like a college of co-equal presbyters or bishops, there are two possibilities, not to say probabilities, with which we have to reckon. One is, that they were designated to succeed the original bishop; the other is, that men knew or remembered that in many cities there had been some one person (?like the true yokefellow of Phil. iv. 3?) through whom the apostolic founder had kept up his intercourse with the local Church,—who had been, so to speak, commissary apostolic,—which gave him a certain measure of authority even when other brethren spake with tongues and prophesied. At first, no doubt, every such authority was in the background; the foreground is filled by the gifted members of the Churches, or of the Church universal. When the gifts were withdrawn or were forfeited, then those who had managed the temporal business of the Church came to the front. When the rule of faith and morals came to be in peril, even a constructive apostolic commission was of growing weight. Even in St. Clement's day, it was possible to insist on the Divine right of a positive order which is strong enough to impose delay upon the most legitimate personal ambition founded upon a sense of a Divine selection and confirmed by public recognition.

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