

NO EVIDENCE  
FOR  
DIOCESAN CHURCHES,

OR, ANY

BISHOPS WITHOUT THE CHOICE OR CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE,  
IN THE PRIMITIVE TIMES,

OR,

AN ANSWER TO THE ALLEGATIONS OUT OF ANTIQUITY FOR SUCH CHURCHES,  
AND AGAINST POPULAR ELECTIONS OF BISHOPS : IN A LATE VOLUME,  
ENTITLED, "THE UNREASONABLENESS OF SEPARATION ;"

SHEWING

THAT THEY DO NOT SERVE THE DESIGN FOR WHICH THEY ARE PRODUCED.

The episcopal men will hardly find any evidence in Scripture or the practice of the apostles, for churches consisting of many fixed congregations for worship, under the charge of one person, nor in the primitive church, for the ordination of a bishop, without the preceding election of the clergy, and at least consent and approbation of the people.—*Dr. Stillingfleet* *Iren.* p. 416.

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## AN ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE author would neither have begun nor ended this discourse so as the reader finds it, if he had at first designed it for public view, or been willing to engage himself in this unhappy contest. He was moved to examine the learned part of the Reverend Doctor's [Stillingfleet's] volume, because he found it not, at first view, agreeable to what, upon some converse with the ancients, he had long taken to be the sense and practice of the church, especially in the first and best ages. He was encouraged to pursue the inquiry, because the issue thereof, however it proved, could be no other than was very desirable. For he could not but count it an advantage, either to have his apprehensions rectified, if he were mistaken, or to be confirmed in his judgment, if it were right, and that by a person of such eminency, as he knows none of his standing superior to him for learning in the Church of England. So that what he aimed at, when he first undertook it, was his own private satisfaction; but some papers being got out of his hands, he found himself brought to these terms, that either he must publish them himself, or have it done by others; and had only the liberty to choose which of these he counted most tolerable.

Of what consideration the points here discussed are in reference to the main question under debate, may soon be discerned. If there were no diocesan churches, nor bishops without the choice or consent of the people, in the primitive times, then the

imputation of schism, with respect thereto, is not over-reasonably fixed on Dissenters. For with what reason can they be branded as schismatics for declining such churches, and not submitting to such bishops as the church in the best ages of Christianity either did not know, or would not own? In this case either we must be acquitted, or the primitive and universal church will be involved in the same condemnation with us. And the charge of schism is in danger to recoil here. It is counted on all hands, far more schismatical to divide from the universal church, especially in its primitive integrity, than from any particular church in degenerate times: and doth it not look very like such a dividing from the prime catholic church, when this is relinquished in matters of so great concern,—so that such churches are formed as were unknown to the Christian world in the first and best times, and bishops of those churches are only owned and set over them in such a way as was universally disclaimed, both then and in many ages after? If adhering to these churches, (and to none else but in dependence on them,) and resigning ourselves up to those bishops as our pastors, be made so necessary, that those are counted none of the church, or worthy to be cast out, who yield not thereto; we need not fear, in these circumstances, to let our accusers be judges, who are the schismatics, when they are under no temptation to be partial. “A church,” says Dr. St[illingfleet] “may separate herself from the communion of the catholic by taking upon her to make such things the necessary conditions of her communion which never were the conditions of communion with the catholic church. The being of the catholic church lies in essentials: for a particular church to disagree from all other particular churches in some extrinsical and accidental things, is not to separate from the catholic church, so as to cease to be a church; but still, whatever church makes such extrinsical things the necessary conditions of communion, so as to cast men out of the church who yield not to them, is schismatical in so doing; for it thereby divides itself from the catholic church: and the separation from it is so far from being schism, that being cast out of that church on those terms, only returns them to the communion of the catholic church. On which grounds it will appear that yours is the schismatical church, and not ours. Not only persons, but churches may depart from the catholic church; and

in such cases not those who depart from the communion of such churches, but those churches which departed from the catholic are guilty of the schism."<sup>a</sup>

Upon whom this sentence falls, and who are acquitted hereby, may be easily discerned, if there be no evidence that the churches and bishops in question, now made so necessary, were known or owned in the primitive times. And I know not from whom this evidence can be expected, if not from so excellent a person as Dr. St[illingfleet,] when he has made it his business to produce it. Whether he has done it or not, is left to the judgment of the impartial, upon the perusing of what follows.

<sup>a</sup> Rational Account, part ii. chap. iv. sec. iii. pp. 358, 359.

NO EVIDENCE  
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ETC.

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THE testimonies of the ancients which the reverend and learned Dr. [Stillingfleet] makes use of, concern two heads, and are alleged either for diocesan churches, or against popular elections of bishops. Before I come to examine the former particularly, let it be observed in general, that those reverend persons whom the Doctor opposes, make account that in the primitive times a regular church was but a *particular* congregation, and constituted of no more than might conveniently meet together for church-communion. Yet they deny not but there might be in after-times some heteroclitics, churches extraordinarily numerous, so as they could not ordinarily and with convenience hold personal communion in one place; but they find no instances hereof in the two first ages of Christianity, nor evidence for any number in the third, nor in the best part of the fourth for very many, compared with the rest which transgressed not the primitive and regular bounds. And this they judge will be no great prejudice to their hypothesis. He that shows three or four men (among many thousands) corpulent, overgrown, and of extraordinary stature; doth not thereby prove that the rest are not commonly of a regular proportion, more like men than giants. If those so numerous churches could be thought on that account to have been diocesan, yet could it not be from thence inferred that the ancient churches were commonly diocesan, unless we may draw a general conclusion from that which is very rare and extraordinary. But indeed it cannot hence be proved that those few churches, consisting of so very numerous members, were like the diocesan now contended for. It is just here as it is with our parishes in England; besides those of a common and ordinary size, there are some which are excessively numerous, containing very many thousand souls, some thirty or forty, or sixty, or more thousands; yet it would be ridiculous to account each of these parishes a diocese, when all know the largest

of them is but a small part of one. These parishes at first contained no more than could meet for worship in one place; being in some ages grown too populous to meet together, they should have been divided, so as to answer the ends of their first regular establishment; but continuing as they are, they pass still (as the lesser do) for single congregations, and these, with hundreds of others, make up but one diocesan church. The ancient churches are in these respects correspondent to these parishes. So that if the Doctor had brought us some instances of ancient episcopal churches as numerous as our great parishes, containing many more than could well meet together, yet this would not have proved them diocesan churches, no, nor more than some single congregations; but I think all that he produces amounts not to so much. This will appear by examining the severals<sup>a</sup> alleged.

<sup>b</sup> To prove that the church of Carthage in Cyprian's time was more than a single congregation, (and no less than a diocese, which is the thing to be proved,) he shows out of his epistles, that there were many presbyters in that church. But this will be no proof to those who consider, that it was the practice of old to multiply presbyters and other officers, beyond what we count necessary. Dr. Downham says, at first the number of Christians in cities were sometimes not much greater than the number of presbyters among them. His words are these: "Indeed at the very first conversions of cities, the whole number of the people converted, (being sometimes not much greater than the number of presbyters placed among them,) were able to make but a small congregation."<sup>c</sup> Such a number of presbyters would be far from proving a church in such cities to be more than a single congregation, much farther from proving it to be as large as a diocese. This practice, which the Bishop will have to be primitive, of making so many presbyters in one church, was followed in after times. Nazianzen tells us, in the fourth age, that sometimes the officers in a church did well nigh exceed the number of those whom they ruled, *εἰσὶ σκεδόν τὶ πλείους ἢ ὁπόσων ἄρχουσι κατ' ἀριθμὸν*.<sup>d</sup> How, then, can forty-six or sixty presbyters be an argument that the church where they were was as large as a diocese, or larger than the greatest congregation? Justinian, observing that officers in churches were multiplied beyond reason and measure, takes order that they should be reduced to the numbers at the first establishment; but in the great church at Constantinople, he would have the presbyters brought down to sixty. No doubt they were numerous in Constantine's time, who endeavoured to make that city in all things equal to Rome, *ἐφάμυλλον τῇ Ῥώμῃ*, and built two churches in it,

<sup>a</sup> Particulars.

<sup>c</sup> Defence, lib. ii. cap. i. p. 6.

<sup>b</sup> Part iii. sec. iv. p. 229.

<sup>d</sup> Orat. i.

says the historian.<sup>a</sup> Yet in the latter end of his reign, after the death of Arius, the Christians there could all meet together for worship. It is said expressly, that Alexander, bishop of that church, *συνάξεν σὺν πᾶσι τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ἐπετέλεσεν*,<sup>b</sup> “held a meeting with all the brethren.”

But there is one passage afterwards which may seem more considerable, page 230: “At Carthage we have this evidence of the great number of Christians, that in the time of persecution, although very many stood firm, yet the number of the lapsed was so great, that St. Cyprian saith, every day thousands of tickets were granted by the martyrs and confessors in their behalf for reconciliation to the church.<sup>c</sup> And in one of those tickets sometimes might be comprehended twenty or thirty persons, the form being, *Communicet ille cum suis*, ‘Let the bearer and his friends be admitted to communion.’”<sup>d</sup>

The numbers of the lapsed were great; it seems, by Cyprian’s expression,<sup>e</sup> they were the greatest part of his church, for he says, “The greatest part of the brethren denied the faith,” (*Maximus fratrum numerus fidem suam prodidit*,) at the first approach of the persecution, before they were apprehended, or so much as inquired after, besides those that fell when the danger was nearer, and the trial more sharp. Elsewhere he tells us, that this wasting persecution did almost unpeople his church,<sup>f</sup> and he mentions *numerosam languentium stragem, et exiguam stantium firmitatem*, “a copious slaughter of the unstable, and little of the firmness of stedfast professors;” signifying that those who fell were many, those that stood but very few.<sup>g</sup> Very many hundreds are not necessary to make a company numerous, and very few added to those (or to some thousands) will not make the church of Carthage so exceeding great as some seem to imagine it. However, the lapsed were not near so many as is here insinuated; for by this reckoning the lapsed Christians at Carthage will be more by many myriads than all the inhabitants of the city, Christians and heathens, together. For suppose these thousands of tickets were but two or three thousand, and every day amounted but to ten days; and the numbers in each ticket, reckoned sometimes twenty, sometimes thirty, were but one with another ten, the numbers of the lapsed will be 300,000; whereas all the inhabitants were not above 200,000, as we may well suppose, since the inhabitants of Antioch, a greater and more populous city, (as authors generally report it,) were no more, as Chrysostom, who well knew it, gives the account, *εἴκοσι μυριάδας*,<sup>h</sup> “twenty myriads.” Therefore the

<sup>a</sup> Soz. lib. ii. cap. ii.

<sup>b</sup> Lib. iii. Ep. v. [Aliter Cyp. Ep. xv.]

<sup>c</sup> Sermo de Lapsis, [ed. Paris. 1726, p. 183.]

<sup>d</sup> Ibid. ad finem.

<sup>e</sup> Theodoret, lib. i. cap. xiv.

<sup>f</sup> Lib. iii. Ep. xv. [al. Cyp. Ep. xi.]

<sup>g</sup> Lib. iv. Ep. iv. Initio. [al. Cyp. Ep. vii.]

<sup>h</sup> Orat. in Ignat. tom. v. Hom. lxx.

thousands here must pass, as is ordinary in all authors, for very many. So Eusebius says there were *μύριοι*, "thousands of bishops," in a synod of Antioch for the censure of Paulus Samosatenus.<sup>a</sup> And another ancient author speaks of thousands of bishops at the Council of Chalcedon,<sup>b</sup> whereas there was but about six hundred at the latter, and not so many by far at the former. Thus Theodoret, giving an account of his preaching at Antioch, saith it was known, that many myriads<sup>c</sup> (*πολλὰι μυριάδες*) did meet in one place to hear; whereas two or three myriads are more than can well hear any one preach. And then the tickets comprehending twenty or thirty (which multiply the numbers of the lapsed excessively) must be left out of the reckoning, for there was none such granted by the martyrs, as Cyprian declares in the epistle cited. Though there were some drawn up in such a blind form (*Communicet ille cum suis*) as might include twenty or thirty, yet says he, *Nunquam omnino à martyribus factum est*,<sup>d</sup> "This was never done by the martyrs." Thus the expression, Ep. v.<sup>e</sup> will amount to no more than this: "The martyrs were daily solicited and importuned to grant great numbers of tickets." So it cannot be hence concluded that the Christians at Carthage were more, or so many as are in some of our parishes. It is manifest by many plain passages in Cyprian, that his whole church, which in his style is, "The whole people—all the laity standing by—the whole brotherhood," (*Plebs univēsa—omnes stantes laici—tota fraternitas*), did frequently meet together, both for acts of worship, and other church affairs; which as they enforce the sense I have given of the expression alleged, on those who will have Cyprian consistent with himself; so may convince all, who weigh them impartially, that the Christians then at Carthage were nothing near so many as the Doctor supposes.

In the next head, p. 230, that which he would prove, if we may judge by his conclusion, pp. 231, 232, is that the power of discipline was not then supposed to be in the congregation, or that they were the first subject of the power of the keys, and that they thought it not then in the power of the people to appoint and ordain their own officers. But this Dr. O[wen] nowhere asserts, if I understand him, and so it might have been spared. However, he proves it; let us see how. "The presbyters and the whole church were under the particular care and government of St. Cyprian as their bishop."—p. 230.

The presbyters were then no ways under the government of the bishop, but as those that are joint rulers may be said to be under the government of one another. The whole church was not under the bishop's government alone, but was ruled jointly by the bishop and

<sup>a</sup> Hist. lib. vii. cap. xxviii.

<sup>b</sup> Vid. et Cæcrop. Episc. Sebastop. in Concil. Chalced.

<sup>c</sup> Epist. lxxxiii.

<sup>d</sup> Lib. iii. Ep. xv. [Al. Ep. xi.]

<sup>e</sup> [Al. Cyp. Ep. xv.]



elders. That the presbyters and bishop concurred in the government, is acknowledged by the best asserters of episcopacy amongst us, Dr. Field, Bishop Downham, Bishop Hall, Mr. Thorndike, Primate Usher, &c. Dr. St[illingfleet] doth not deny it; nay, he elsewhere asserts and proves<sup>a</sup> it by many ancient testimonies, Cyprian's particularly. "Thus Cornelius at Rome—thus Cyprian at Carthage, one who pleads as much as any for obedience to bishops; and yet none more evident for the presence and joint concurrence and assistance of the clergy at all church debates," &c. And to prevent the usual evasion, he adds, "That they concurred in governing the church, and not only by their counsel, but authority, appears from the general sense of the church, even when episcopacy was at the highest."

There is nothing in the passages here produced out of Cyprian, (pp. 230, 231, 233) that can be in the least serviceable to prove the sole jurisdiction of a bishop. The import of them is no more, but that in matters of discipline, the people and elders should do nothing without him; even as he declared that he would do nothing without them. How this sets the church of Carthage at any distance from Dr. O[wen]'s hypothesis, I understand not.

Nor can I apprehend how the third head (p. 232) crosses the Doctor more than others, or more than himself. That the pastoral authority for governing a church is of Divine institution, is not denied, but that the superiority or pre-eminence of a bishop above presbyters is of such institution, Cyprian says not, nor is it the sense of any of the ancients, as Dr. St[illingfleet] hath declared heretofore, (and retracts not here,) proving it by the testimonies of Jerome, Hilary, Augustine, Isidore, and a Council at Seville;<sup>b</sup> showing also how expressions in the ancient writers, which seem to be of another tendency, are to be understood.<sup>c</sup>

Page 233. "Let the reader now judge whether these be the strokes and lineaments of the Congregational way."

If the Doctor had thought fit to take notice of the strokes and lineaments of the Congregational way, supposed to be apparent in St. Cyprian's writings, he should have produced something out of him against these severals.<sup>d</sup> 1. That a church then was but a single congregation, consisting of no more than could meet together for personal communion. 2. That this church was not under the government of any other bishops or rulers besides their own bishop and officers. 3. That the concerns of this congregation were not ordered without the common consent of the people belonging to it. If it be plain in Cyprian that this was the state of the church at Carthage, it will be the more

<sup>a</sup> Irenicum, pp. 335, 336, 354, 355.

<sup>c</sup> Iren. pp. 314, 315.

<sup>b</sup> Irenicum, pp. 312, 313.

<sup>d</sup> Particulars.

considerable because the Doctor tells us, that Cyprian speaks of nothing peculiar to his own church, but what was generally observed over the Christian world.

I meet with no more out of antiquity to this purpose, till we come to page 245; there he offers two observables,<sup>a</sup> and fortifies them with ancient testimonies.

“Obs. 1. That it was an inviolable rule amongst them, that there was to be but one bishop in a city, though the city were never so large, or the Christians never so many.”

This was no inviolable rule. No rule at all in Scripture; none such [was] observed or known in Scripture times. Those that are for episcopacy in its greatest elevation, maintain, that there were more bishops than one in a city, particularly Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome, Ephesus, &c., in and after the apostles' times. Others, that proceed upon other grounds, find in one city more of those who in Scripture style are bishops, though not in the style of after times.—Phil. i. 1; Acts xx. 17, &c. Dr. St[illingfleet] himself must either hold that there were no bishops in Scripture times, or more of them than one in a city; for he acknowledges that in the apostles' times in one church there were more presbyters than one; and yet ascribes the superiority which makes the difference between a bishop and presbyters, not to Divine or apostolical appointment, or any act of the apostles; but to human institution, and an act of the church.

This rule might well be observed in cities where there were no more Christians than there are in a single congregation; and this is supposed to be the case of Carthage, and other churches, in Cyprian's time, and after: nor has Dr. St[illingfleet] brought anything sufficient to disprove it; and therefore Cyprian's testimony for one bishop might have been spared. Nor is there any ground to conclude that 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; Heb. xiii. 17, were not so understood by the African churches as they are by Mr. B[axter.] And Cyprian, who is so positive for *one bishop*, is as peremptory but for<sup>b</sup> *one flock*. *Esse posse uno in loco aliquis existimat aut multos pastores, aut plures greges?*<sup>c</sup> “Can any one imagine that in one place there should be either more pastors, or more flocks?” viz. more than one. But the diocesans now pleaded for may have many hundred flocks, and [yet] but one pastor.

When there were more Christians in a city than one bishop could perform the duties of a pastor to, this rule might afterwards be observed, though not inviolably and without exception; no, nor where Christians were less numerous. At Jerusalem, when Narcissus had the chair, not to mention those who were bishops there in his retirement, (Dius and

<sup>a</sup> Points for consideration,

<sup>b</sup> for but.

<sup>c</sup> De Unitate Ecclesiæ, [ed. Paris. 1726, p. 196.]

Germanicon,) Gordius was in the seat when he returned and resumed the bishopric; and Alexander was afterwards made bishop with him.<sup>a</sup> At Cæsarea, Theotecnus and Anatolius were for some time bishops together;<sup>b</sup> afterwards Macarius and Maximus were at once bishops in that church.<sup>c</sup> Epiphanius (alleged by Grotius<sup>d</sup> for this purpose) signifies that other cities had two bishops; and excepts but one. "Alexandria had never two bishops (ὡς αἱ ἄλλαι πόλεις) as other cities had."<sup>e</sup> His meaning cannot be, as a great antiquary would have it, that Alexandria was never so divided as that several parties in it should have their respective bishops there; for so it was divided, in the time of Epiphanius, when the Catholics had Athanasius, the Arians had Gregorius, and then Georgius; and afterwards the one had Peter, the other Lucius. And the Novatians had their bishops successively in that city, till Cyril's time.<sup>f</sup> But to waive other instances, let me only add one, yet such an one as is pregnant, comprising very many at once, and shows this was customary in the churches everywhere through the world. Valerius made Augustine bishop with him at Hippo, with the concurrence of the bishops in those parts, who assured Augustine that this was usual, and proved it by examples both in the African and transmarine churches, as Possidonius tells us.<sup>g</sup> And Augustine alleges nothing to hinder him from making Eradius bishop with him, when he designed him to be his successor, but only the prohibition of the Nicene Council.<sup>h</sup> That is the first rule we meet with against it,<sup>i</sup> and there it is not directly prohibited, but only by insinuation. Afterwards the bishops were more positive in forbidding it, having in time discovered a very cogent reason for it, assigned by a synod in the middle of the seventh age,<sup>k</sup> *Ne res ecclesie sævâ divisione debeant partiiri*, "Lest the church's revenues should be divided;" and so one bishop should not have all, which seemed a cruel thing to those fathers.

But to return to former ages: where the custom continued of having but one bishop in a city when the multitude of Christians in it required more, the practice of their predecessors was pleaded for it, when the case was quite altered, and the reason which had led them to it in better times was not extant. As if, in the behalf of some parishes amongst us, grown in time extraordinarily populous, so as some thousands of the inhabitants cannot meet at once in the parish church, it should be alleged, that they ought not to be divided into distinct rectories, because each of them was but one parish under one rector

<sup>a</sup> Euseb. lib. vi. cap. x. xi.

<sup>c</sup> Soz. lib. ii. cap. xx.

<sup>e</sup> Hær. lxviii. [u. vi. Meletian.]

<sup>g</sup> Vit. Aug. cap. viii.

<sup>i</sup> Conc. Nic. Can. viii.

<sup>b</sup> Euseb. lib. vii. cap. xxxii.

<sup>d</sup> De Imp. sum. Potest. lib. xi. sec. xi.

<sup>f</sup> Socrat. lib. vii. cap. vii.

<sup>h</sup> Ep. cx.

<sup>k</sup> Conc. Cabii. i. Can. iv.

at first, and for some ages since; when the reason why it was but one at first, and after, was because it contained not too many for one. If any offer to derive it from a higher original, and pretend it was from apostolical tradition, Dr. St[illingfleet] tells us, they did it upon a mistake, "judging of the practice of the apostles by that of their own times."<sup>a</sup>

Yet in cities so well replenished with Christians, where the bishop had assistants joined with him, each of which had and exercised the entire power of pastors, an honorary presidency only reserved to the bishop; M[r.] B[axter] will not say the instituted species of government is there altered: nor that this is like such a diocesan church, where there are many myriads of Christians, more than all the inhabitants of Carthage amounted to, all under one bishop as their sole pastor.

Page 246. "One of the greatest and most pernicious schisms that ever happened, might have been prevented, if they had yielded to more bishops than one in a city; and that was the schism of the Donatists upon the competition between Majorinus and Cæcilian."

I cannot conceive how yielding to more bishops than one in a city, might have prevented the schism of the Donatists, unless the ancient church had quite another idea of schism than Dr. St[illingfleet] has; for he counts those assemblies schismatical, which differ less both in opinion and practice from those he allows, than the Donatists did from the Catholics. The Donatists held that ordinations by *traditors*<sup>b</sup> were null and void; that Cæcilian, and many others, had no better ordination; and consequently those churches must with them be no true churches; their officers were to be re-ordained, and the people re-baptized: and this was their practice. Now I do not see any reason to think that Cæcilian's allowing the Donatists a bishop in Carthage would have made them quit their principles; for they presumed they might have a bishop of their own there, whether Cæcilian and his party allowed it or no; and notwithstanding any disallowance, had so actually, one bishop succeeding another, for a hundred years together.

Page 246. "Let M[r.] B[axter] reconcile these words<sup>c</sup> to his hypothesis, if he can."

If the church Cyprian speaks of contained no more than some single congregation, which let Dr. St[illingfleet] disprove, M[r.] B[axter] will not find any difficulty in reconciling what Cyprian says against

<sup>a</sup> Iren. p. 317.

<sup>b</sup> Traditors or betrayers were such as in times of persecution, surrendered the sacred books and utensils of the church to the heathen to be burnt.

<sup>c</sup> [Cyp. Ep. lii. n. 4, Et cum post primum, &c. &c. "Since there cannot be a second after the first, whosoever is made bishop when one is made already, who ought to be alone, he is not another bishop, but none at all."]

Novatian (for being chosen a bishop in that city, where there was one before) to his own hypothesis; for it amounts to no more than this, that there should be no more than one pastor in the same congregation; and till the former be disproved, those testimonies (pages 247, 248) are to no purpose.

I see not how it can be justly inferred from what is alleged out of St. Augustine, concerning the proposal of Melchiades, (page 248,) that "the best, the wisest, the most moderate persons never once thought that there could be more bishops than one in a city." What Melchiades proposes doth not signify that he thought there was a *necessity* for but one bishop, as if there could be no more; though he might think it not *expedient* where one was sufficient, and more were not like to agree together. St. Augustine himself, who applauds the proposal, thought there might be more. He was actually bishop of Hippo, as was shown before, together with Valerius; and he concurred afterwards with the rest of the African bishops in allowing it elsewhere.

I find no such rule on both sides in the conference at Carthage as he next tells us of: "But one bishop to be allowed of either side of a city or diocese." It is true both sides seemed unwilling to own that they erected new bishoprics, on purpose to make one party appear more numerous than the other: but none of them were disallowed upon this account, either as bishops or actors in that conference. All the Catholic bishops there, and St. Augustine with them, in their epistle to Marcellinus, there recited, offer the Donatists, that being reconciled, *nec honorem episcopatus amittunt*, "they should continue bishops." And afterwards in their greatest councils they allow that there might be two bishops in one place on several occasions; particularly if the Donatists' bishop was converted, then the place was to be divided between him and the other bishop. This the Doctor takes notice of, p. 251, and we shall do it further, when he leads us to it.

Sect. ix. Obs. 2, p. 249. "In cities and dioceses which were under the care of one bishop, there were several congregations, and altars, and distant places. Carthage was a very large city, &c. And there, besides the cathedral, were several other considerable churches," &c.

This was in the fifth age. Victor ends his history in the latter end of it, about the year 480. Now it is the *three first* ages principally, wherein it is said there were not more Christians than in some single congregation, nor more fixed churches than one in a city. In the fourth there might be more in some cities, but those cities were very few. Petavius could but name two in the latter end of that age. In the fifth age there might be more, but then the church was greatly declining, as appears by the complaints of Austin, Chrysostom, Isidore Pelusiota, Prosper, Salvian, &c. The ambition and other extravagancies of the

bishops promoted it. Chrysostom, in the violent persecution which ended in his ejection and banishment, says he feared none so much as the bishops, οὐδένα γὰρ λοιπὸν δέδοικα ὡς ἐπισκόπους.<sup>a</sup> And the bishops of those two cities, Rome and Alexandria, which first transgressed the primitive bounds of churches, are noted as the first that turned the government of the church into domination, and did it in that age.<sup>b</sup> But yet there is reason to believe that the case was not much altered at Carthage in this age; for though there were very many brought over to Christianity, yet great numbers of them were with the Donatists. In Carthage itself, they had their bishops in succession, Majorinus, Donatus, Parmenianus, Primianus, who was confirmed in the chair at Carthage by a synod of three hundred and ten bishops; Maximianus being declared bishop there at the same time, by two other synods; the one consisting of above fifty, the other of above a hundred bishops.<sup>c</sup> So that it seems that sect had two bishops at once in Carthage, in the latter end of the fourth age; and vying with the Catholics for numbers, they might have as many churches as they. *Rebaptizante Donati parte majorem multitudinem Afrorum*, "The Donatists rebaptized the major part of the Africans," saith Possidonius.<sup>d</sup> However, the number of their churches will not prove the thing in question. Out of the sermons *De Tempore* and *De Diversis*, which go under St. Austin's name, but are of uncertain authors, and so are of little account, he reckons eight churches; but there were more in Alexandria, when the Christians did all meet there in one place. And since, after the disturbance by Arius, the presbyters were not suffered to preach in Alexandria, either the people must meet in one place to hear the bishop preach, or be without preaching.<sup>e</sup> M[r.] B[axter] proved that they did meet in one place, and I think his proof is still satisfying,<sup>f</sup> notwithstanding what is answered. Nor doth it appear that all those churches were for communion; they might communicate with the bishop in the greater *basilica*,<sup>g</sup> and the rest might serve for other offices, as Damasus (or whoever was the writer of the popes' lives) says, 'The twenty-five or fifteen *tituli*<sup>h</sup> were erected at Rome by Marcellus, *propter baptismum et penitentiam multorum et sepulturas*, "for the baptisms, penances, and burials of the multitudes." Hence Dr. Taylor<sup>i</sup> infers, that at Rome there was then (viz. in the beginning of the fourth age) no preaching but in the mother church; and then not only at Alexandria, but

<sup>a</sup> Ep. xiii. p. 95.

<sup>c</sup> August. contra Crescon. lib. iv. cap. vi.

<sup>e</sup> Socrat. Hist. lib. i. cap. vi.

<sup>g</sup> One of the early names for a church.

<sup>h</sup> The *tituli* at Rome and the *λαῖραι* at Alexandria, seem to have corresponded somewhat to our modern chapels-of-ease.

<sup>i</sup> Episc. Asser. p. 297.

<sup>b</sup> Socrat. Hist. lib. vii. cap. vii. xi.

<sup>d</sup> Vita Aug. cap. vii.

<sup>f</sup> Satisfactory.

at Rome, in the fourth age, if the people met not in one place with the bishop, they could have no sermon: and the inference is altogether as just, that there was no eucharist but at the great church. So that those places (call them what you will, *tituli*, or *λαῖραι*, or *basilicæ*) seem to be but oratories, and not intended or used for celebrating the Lord's supper. And there are more of these in some one of our parishes than either at Alexandria or Carthage, and yet the people not so numerous, but they can and do communicate together.

Page 250, to show that there were more altars than one where Christians did communicate in a city (or bishopric, contrary to what he had asserted in his sermon,) he alleges a passage in the Conference at Carthage, where Fortunatus objects to Petilian, that in the town where he was bishop, the heretics had broken down all the altars. But this will be no good argument, that there were more altars for the eucharist than one in a town, to those who take notice that in Africa there were abundance of altars for other designs and purposes than celebrating the eucharist. Particularly, there were many erected as *memoriæ martyrum*, memorials of the martyrs, which appears by the fifth council at Carthage, Can. xiv. where those fathers take notice of such altars in the fields, the ways, and *ubique*, "everywhere;" and some of them they condemn, (viz. those *in quibus nullum corpus aut reliquie martyrum conditæ probantur*, in which neither the body nor the relics of any martyr can be proved to repose,) others they approve.

He shows, that places distant from the city were in the bishop's diocese, but these will not serve his turn, nor will what is alleged serve for proof. It is a canon in the African code, that no bishop should leave his cathedral church and go to any other church in his diocese, there to reside.\*

But suppose this cathedral church was in some village, it cannot hence be proved that any places distant from a city were in the bishop's diocese, viz., in the diocese of the city bishop. And this is no improbable supposition; indeed, there is near ten to one for it, since in Africa, for one bishop in a city, there might be ten in villages. And none will doubt of this, who know how many hundred bishops there were in Africa, and how few cities. Their cathedral churches (though the sound be big to those who measure them by ours) were all, but a few in comparison, village cathedrals; it may be some of our chapels of ease out-do them.

"But it evidently proves that there were more churches in a bishop's diocese." And so are there many chapels, and some churches too, in some one of our country parishes. But this will be far from evidently

\* Cod. Afric. Can. lxxi.

proving any such thing, if the canon be rightly represented ; for there it is not *his* diocese, either in the Greek or Latin copies, but *a* diocese, and so may either be a church belonging to another bishop, or a diocese that had no bishop : for dioceses there were in that country which never had bishops, as appears by the second Council of Carthage, where it is decreed that dioceses which never had a bishop, should not have any.<sup>a</sup>

The word diocese, as it is most frequently used in ancient writers, denotes that which is either so much bigger, or so far less than a modern diocese, that he who argues from one to the other, may run into mistakes himself, and lead others with him. In the former acception,<sup>b</sup> it contains many provinces ; so Balsamon defines it, ἡ πολλὰς ἐπαρχίας ἔχουσα.<sup>c</sup> The whole Roman empire was divided into twelve or thirteen such dioceses, and Africa under the Romans was but one of them, Justinian reducing all the African provinces into one diocese.<sup>d</sup> In the latter acception<sup>e</sup> it is used for a country town or village, for a parish or part of a parish. Thus a presbyter is said *diœcesin tenere*, “to hold a diocese,”<sup>f</sup> and Pappolus is said *diœceses et villas ecclesiæ circumire* <sup>g</sup> “to make a circuit of the dioceses and villages of his church ;” where dioceses and villages seem to explain one another as dioceses and parishes do in another council.<sup>g</sup> So a diocese is put for a church or a chapel, which a man erects in his own ground ; thus a synod at Orleans orders,<sup>h</sup> that when any man hath, or desires to have, a diocese in his ground, he must allow competent land thereto, and provide a clerk for it. Like these were the dioceses mentioned in the African canons, and their bishoprics were answerable.

It is determined in several African canons, that the dioceses which never had bishops should have none. But this was decreed upon terms and with exception, [that] if the Christians in those places were multiplied, and they desired a bishop of their own, they were to have one with the consent of those in whose power the places were.<sup>i</sup> Now, when the people were numerous enough for this purpose, we may understand by the practice of those churches : there were divers bishops in Africa who had but one presbyter belonging to them, as appears by the case which Posthumianus puts,<sup>k</sup> of a bishop having but one presbyter. Hence Bishop Bilson concludes, that bishops oftentimes had but one presbyter.<sup>l</sup> So that the people were numerous enough to have a bishop, where they

<sup>a</sup> Can. v. Cod. Afric. Can. liii.

<sup>b</sup> In Concil. Chalced. Can. xiii.

<sup>c</sup> Conc. Agath. Can. liv. lv.

<sup>d</sup> Conc. Tolet. iv. Can. xxxvi.

<sup>e</sup> Conc. Carth. ii. Can. v. Cod. Afric. Can. liii.

<sup>f</sup> Perpet. Gov. page 256, cap. xiii.

<sup>g</sup> Acception.

<sup>h</sup> Novel. cxxxi. [cap. iv.]

<sup>i</sup> Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. vi. cap. v.

<sup>j</sup> Conc. Aurel. iv. [Can. xxxiii.]

<sup>k</sup> Cod. Afric. Can. lv.



were too many for the cure and inspection of one presbyter. And this was the sense not only of the African churches, but of the Eastern and Western also, as appears by the Council of Sardica, where the bishops both from west and east assembled. There those fathers, more careful than their predecessors, thought needful, lest bishops should be disparaged by having their chairs in small places, to decree,<sup>a</sup> that bishops shall not be made in little towns or villages, and there explain which they count little; *Cui satis est unus presbyter*, "such as one presbyter is sufficient for." But they add, Where the people are numerous, (viz. so as one presbyter will not suffice, as the contexture<sup>b</sup> shows,) desiring a bishop, let them have one. So that it was the sense of the ancient Church, both in Africa, Europe, and Asia, that in any place where there were so many Christians as that a presbyter needed an assistant, there a bishop ought to be placed. By this we may discern whether or no their bishoprics were like our parishes, especially considering that they thought it requisite to multiply presbyters far more than we do now; and judged too, that one of them was not sufficient for so numerous a flock as one hath now in charge. Their great number of presbyters in many places shows this. To go no farther than Carthage, where the Doctor finds but eight churches, great and small, yet the clergy were above five hundred; so many belonging to Carthage were banished by Hunnericus, as Victor tells us.<sup>c</sup> Jerome saith, the presbyters were multiplied so excessively that they became contemptible; *presbyteros turba contemptibiles facit*.<sup>d</sup>

"And where the Donatists had erected new bishoprics, the African Council decrees that after the decease of such bishop, if the people had no mind to have another in his room, they might be in the diocese of another bishop: which shows that they thought the dioceses might be so large as to hold the people that were under two bishops."—p. 250.

It was most common in Africa to have bishops in villages, and ordinary for the Donatists to have a bishop in the same place where the Catholics had one; which shows that they thought that the diocese need be no larger than that a village might hold the people that were under two bishops. The Catholics decree, that when a Donatist bishop was deceased, if the reduced people would have another in his place, they were to have one without consulting a council.<sup>e</sup>

"There were many canons made about the people of the Donatist bishops. In one it was determined, that they should belong to the bishop that converted them, &c. After that, that they should belong to the same diocese they were in before."

<sup>a</sup> Can. vi.

<sup>b</sup> De Persecut. Vandal. lib. i.

<sup>c</sup> Cod. Afric. Can. xcix.

<sup>d</sup> Context.

<sup>e</sup> Epist. lxxxv. ad Evag. [al. Evang.]

But if the converted people desired to have a bishop of their own, as they had before, then they were to belong to neither, as appears by several canons.<sup>a</sup> So that in this case, African bishops might be as numerous, and consequently as small, after the Donatists were reduced, as before; and so far enough from any resemblance of modern Diocesans, and as like our parishes as Mr. B[axter] would have them.

“But if the Donatist bishop were converted, the diocese was to be divided between them.”—p. 251.

Thus in a city, when there was both a Catholic and a Donatist bishop, (than which nothing was more ordinary) if the Donatist was converted, the town must be divided between them; and two bishops were to be continued in one city. In some places there were four bishops of one party, for one of the other. Verissimus, bishop at Tacara, saith, in his flock there were four other bishops, Datianus, Aspidius, Fortunatus, and Octavianus.<sup>b</sup> Suppose, where there were four Donatist bishops, they had all been converted, the place by this rule must have been divided amongst five bishops. And so in a village where there were two bishops, as there was at Mutagena, (and many other such places in Africa,<sup>c</sup>) the Donatist bishop being converted, the village was to be divided between them into two dioceses, and each diocese there had been no more than half a parish with us. Mr. B[axter] will not be much against such diocesans, nor troubled at any such proofs out of antiquity for diocesans of another kind.

He passes to Hippo, and in the country about it finds divers presbyters and deacons, whereby he would prove the largeness of that diocese. But he might there have found divers bishops also. That there were more bishops in the country which he would appropriate to St. Austin's jurisdiction, may appear by those very instances which the Doctor makes use of to show that he was the only bishop there, and the presbyters and deacons in those places all under his care and government.

Fussala is one of them, and this is acknowledged to have had a bishop, though it was but a castle, and so called more than once in the place cited.<sup>d</sup> The reason why it had a bishop no sooner is signified by Austin, when he saith, there were no Catholics at all in it; *In eodem castello nullus esset omnino Catholicus*, “In this castle there was not a single Catholic;” but multitudes of Donatists. Yet when some were gained to the church there, or in the parts about it, a bishopric was erected in it for the Catholics. The place being remote from Hippo, Austin was sensible that the charge was too great for him, extending further than

<sup>a</sup> Cod. Afric. Can. cxviii. Can. xcix.

<sup>c</sup> Ibid. n. 133, and n. 207.

<sup>b</sup> Collat. Carth. d. i. n. 121.

<sup>d</sup> [Aug. Ep. 262.]

it ought, and discerning that he was not sufficient for the diligence which in all reason was due to it, he took care that a bishop should be ordained, and placed there: *Me viderem latius quam oportebat extendi, nec adhibendæ sufficere diligentie, quam certissima ratione adhiberi debere cernebam.*

But the Doctor says, he was fain to resume it. What he understands thereby I do not well know, but if anything be meant for his purpose, it must be that this bishopric was extinguished. But there is no ground for this. It is true, Antonius, made bishop there, was upon some complaints put out of Fussala, yet *salvo episcopatu*, so as he retained the episcopal dignity ; but the place was not deprived of the episcopal chair, for though it might continue void for some time, yet a bishop is found there afterwards in the African notitia : *Melior Fussalensis* is reckoned amongst the bishops of Numidia. Hereby it is manifest that this holy bishop could not digest so great a diocese as the doctor assigns him. He had the wisdom and humility to think himself not sufficient for a charge so remote and extended ; and he had the conscience not to charge himself with that which he was not sufficient for. So when Fussala had a competent number of persons in it of their communion, he takes care (which was the general practice of the African bishops) to form a bishopric in that castle, and such a diocese, as so small a place and some other near it could make. And this about *anno* 420, when the generality of the people tainted with Donatism was reduced, and laws made for the banishment of their bishops and clergy, and the delivery of their churches to the Catholics ; and so, when it cannot be pretended that this schism was the occasion of a further multiplication of bishops.

“ It appears that a place forty miles distant was then under the care of so great a saint, and so excellent a bishop, as Austin was.”

It was under his care, not as one that intended to be their pastor, or as a fixed part of his bishopric, as places are which belong to one of our dioceses ; but only to make them capable of having a pastor, and to have one placed amongst them, as the event makes it evident. Hereby it appears that the Doctor might have forborne his queries. We need not guess what answer St. Austin would have returned them ; he has done it actually in this epistle, though it may be not to the Doctor's satisfaction. For the numbers at Fussala, he says, at first there was not one Catholic, afterward there were but few ; when there was more, they had a bishop of their own. And [as] for taking upon him the care of so distant a place, he says, he was not sufficient for it himself : the care he took was to have it committed to another. So that Mr. B[axter] sees no reason to tell Austin, that he understood not the right constitution of churches ; but he may see reason to tell others so, and thank St. Austin

for here discovering it. I might have alleged, that this epistle, which the Doctor makes such use of, is suspected by learned men, as is noted in the last edition of Austin's Epistles at Paris. It is not found in the more ancient and less suspected editions. The Papists (from whom we have it) are concerned for the credit of it. It helps them to an argument for the bishop of Rome's power about appeals from foreign parts. For Antonius, bishop of Fussala, being censured in Africa, appealed (it is said) to Celestinus, bishop of Rome, to whom this epistle is directed. But then it seems not likely that Antonius should have the confidence to do this, when the African fathers had so positively declared against such appeals; and Apiarius a little before had found the like attempt so unsuccessful. Nor is it probable that St. Austin, fortified with the decrees of the African councils, would be so much concerned (as this epistle would make him) to hinder Cælestinus from revoking the sentence, which all the authority of Africa had made irrevocable by any bishop of Rome. But there is no need to insist on this; whether it be supposititious or not, we have offered enough to render it unserviceable to the Doctor's design.

Another place he mentions for the said purpose, is *Municipium Tullense*, or *Tulliense*, as some editions have it. I meet with *Episcopatus Tullitensis* in a catalogue of African bishops. It may be that denotes this very place; the variation of one letter need not hinder, since it is so common with the African writers to vary so much and more, in the naming of their towns. Instances hereof might be given in abundance: take but this one. Donatianus, a bishop in the province of Byzacena, is styled from his bishopric *Telepieusis* in one council,<sup>a</sup> *Teleptensis* elsewhere,<sup>b</sup> with the change of the same letter that is in the instance before us. Whether it be so or not, there is no doubt but, if this town was stored with Christians, it had a bishop of its own; for it is scarce credible that when so many contemptible villages in that country had their bishops, there should be none in so considerable a corporation as this, which, as appears by Austin's description of Murca, the sick person, had its duumvirate and common council, answerable to the consuls and senate at Rome, and was honoured with the privileges and immunities of the imperial city.

However, Austin doth not say that this town had presbyter and clerks under his care and government. This is added without any ground that I can discern in the place cited, and without this addition the particular story which the Doctor recites does him not the least service.

<sup>a</sup> Conc. Milevit, Can. xvii.

<sup>b</sup> Collat. Carth. [n. exxi.]

Nor does St. Austin say to Cæcilian, the president, that he was bishop of that diocese, (which the Doctor represents as a region of large extent,) but only that he had *episcopalem sarcinam Hipponensem*, "the episcopal charge of Hippo."<sup>a</sup>

The third town which he speaks of as in Austin's diocese, is Mutigena, or Mutigena. But this also had its own bishop, or two for a need. In the conference at Carthage there is *Antonius episcopus Mutagenensis* for the Catholics, and Splendonius bishop there for the Donatists,<sup>b</sup> And thus it was even in Hippo itself; Austin was bishop there for the Catholics, and Macrobius for the Donatists, who succeeded Proculianus in the chair there.<sup>c</sup> So that Austin is so far from having all the region under his jurisdiction (this being parted amongst several other bishops), that he had not the whole town: the Donatists had a diocese there, such an one as those in Africa used to be, where one little town (and Hippo was none of the greatest) would serve for two dioceses. And in some places, where the Donatists had one bishop, the Catholics would have four; and they were served in the same kind by the Donatists, who in other places had three or four for their one; of which there are several instances in that famous conference at Carthage.<sup>d</sup>

Other towns might be added which had bishops of their own in that region, but there is no need of more. St. Austin himself signifies plainly that there were more bishops in the territory of Hippo, when he moved Januarius, the primate of the Donatists, that they would meet together with the Catholic bishops that were in that territory, and who there suffered so much by the Donatists.<sup>e</sup> *Ecce interim episcopos nostros qui sunt in regione Hipponensi ubi a vestris tanta mala patimur convenite.*

If the region of Hippo was so very large as the Doctor represents it, there is no doubt but there were many good villages in it. And Mr. Thorndike (whom none can suspect to be partial this way, his bias rather leading him the other) tells us, that in Africa bishops were so plentiful, that every good village must needs be the seat of an episcopal church.<sup>f</sup> And if, as the Doctor says, the notorious schism of the Donatists was the occasion of the multiplication of bishops in Africa, they must be most multiplied in Numidia, to which Hippo belonged; because the Donatists were there most numerous. He that finds betwixt an hundred and two hundred bishops in the province of Numidia, and makes the region of Hippo of more than forty miles extent, yet offers to prove there was but one bishop in that region, need not despair but he may make any thing probable.

<sup>a</sup> Ep. lx.<sup>b</sup> D. I, n. 133, et n. 207.<sup>c</sup> Ibid. n. 138, n. 201, Aug. Ep. lxxviii. n. 8.<sup>d</sup> N. [117,] 121, 65, 198.<sup>e</sup> Ep. lxxviii.<sup>f</sup> Right of Churches review, p. 53.

After such plain evidence of the extent of dioceses, he would bring as clear proof of metropolitan provinces in the African churches. To me they are both clear alike, who can discern nothing of evidence in them. His proof is merely Cyprian's calling that part of Africa where he lived, *provincia nostra*, "our province," two or three times. Before ecclesiastical metropolitans were known in the world, Africa was by the Romans divided into provinces, as our kingdom hath been long into counties. Cannot one that lives in an English shire, call it "our county," but that must be a clear proof that he is the governor of it? Cyprian himself never dreamt of any such thing. He disclaims all authority over the bishops of that or any other province, *Neque enim quisquam nostrum episcopum se esse episcoporum constituit*,<sup>a</sup> "None of us makes himself a bishop of bishops." The great Casaubon, where he was concerned to speak as favourably of the English constitution as possibly could be, says, "It is most manifest that this superiority was of human constitution, and in the first and second ages, and a great part of the third, not known in the church."<sup>b</sup> And Dr. St[illingfleet] elsewhere tells us, "there was no difference as to the power of the bishops themselves, who had all equal authority in their several churches, and none over another." He not only says this, but brings for it clear proof indeed;<sup>c</sup> and finds no higher rise of metropolitical power or privilege, than the Council at Antioch, near a hundred years after. The great privilege of metropolitans, (after they were established by canon,) wherein all their authority consisted while the state of the church was tolerable, was their presiding in provincial synods; and there they had but a single vote, about ordinations, censures, or other affairs. In Cyprian's age, the bishop in the prime city did often preside in synods; but this honour they had not from obligation, but courtesy; nor had they it always, but others were chosen presidents, sometimes out of some other respect to the place, than because it was a metropolis, or the bishop of it a metropolitan. So in a synod in Palestine, Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, was joint president with Theophilus of Cæsarea, though Cæsarea, not Jerusalem, was the metropolis of Palestine.<sup>d</sup> Sometimes for the worth of the person; so Osias, of Corduba, was chosen president of divers synods, in places remote from his diocese and country: *ποίας γὰρ οὐκ ἡγήσατο συνόδους*, "Over what kinds of synods did he not preside?" says Theodoret of him.<sup>e</sup> Sometimes for their age, as Palmas, bishop of Amastris, was president in a synod in Pontus, upon this account expressly, *ὡς ἀρχαιώτατος*, "because the most ancient."<sup>f</sup>

<sup>a</sup> In Conc. Carth. [ap. Cyp. p. 229, ed. Oxon. 1682.]

<sup>b</sup> Exercit. xvi. p. 533, [n. 143.]

<sup>c</sup> Iren. p. 372.

<sup>d</sup> Euseb. lib. v. cap. xx. Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. [cap. lxxix.]

<sup>e</sup> Hist. lib. ii. cap. xv.

<sup>f</sup> Euseb. lib. v. cap. xxii.

And in Africa, long after, not he who had his seat in the chief city of the province, but he that was most ancient among the bishops, had the primacy in provincial synods,<sup>a</sup> and this settled by canon.<sup>b</sup> By which it appears that the pre-eminence of metropolitans was not established, either by rule or invariable custom, for the first three ages. And afterwards, when in the fourth age it was settled by canon, yet then it was not much any where; but less it seems in Africa than in some other parts, since there they were so jealous of the ambition lurking (and now and then appearing) in the thing, that the bishops there would not admit the names, but declare, that the bishop of the first seat should not be called the exarch of the priests, or chief priest, or any thing of like nature, but only the bishop of the first seat. Hence, Dr. St[illingfleet] concludes, "Therefore it hath been well observed, that the African churches did retain longest the primitive simplicity and humility among them; and when the voice was said to be heard in the church, upon the flowing in of riches, *Hodie venenum effusum est in ecclesiam*, "To-day is poison poured into the church," by the working of which poison the spirits of the prelates began to swell with pride and ambition, as is evident in church history, only Africa escaped the infection most, &c. So that however Africa hath been always fruitful of monsters, yet in that ambitious age, it had no other wonder but only this, that it should escape so free from that *typhus secularis*, "worldly phrenzy," (as they then called it,) that monstrous itch of pride and ambition.<sup>c</sup>

"Victor mentions one Crescens, who had one hundred and twenty bishops under him as metropolitan."—p. 253.

Under him; how? as one over whom he had jurisdiction, or to whom they swore canonical obedience? No such thing; but under him as an honorary president in their assemblies, who there could do nothing without them as to any matters of moment, but was still to be concluded by their votes, he having neither negative nor casting voice. Such a moderator he was as the reformed churches have in their synods or other assemblies; only he, after the fourth age, held the place and honour for life, as theirs always do not. But this makes no material difference, if Grotius mistake not, who says it is not *de re*, "concerning the possession," but *de habendi modo*, "concerning the manner of possessing it." A dictator made but for the dispatch of some present difficulty, was as much a king (in his account) as he that reigned during life. *Duratio naturam rei non immutat.*<sup>d</sup> "Length of time does not alter the nature of the possession."

<sup>a</sup> Aug. Ep. [ccxi.]

<sup>b</sup> Milevit, Can. xlii. Cod. Afric. Can. lxxxvi.

<sup>c</sup> Iren. p. 373.

<sup>d</sup> De Jure Belli, lib. i. cap. iii. sec. 11. [n. 2.]

Sect. 10. He passes to Egypt, and from what Athanasius says of Maræotis, he draws several observations, which seem not all current. He observes, first, that here were true parochial churches, because they are called churches; but so were the *tituli* at Rome called, yet were not better than oratories, or chapels of ease in many of our parishes, where all Divine offices were not performed. That they were all performed there, so as the people were not sometimes obliged to have recourse to Alexandria for some one, Athanasius doth not intimate, nor the Doctor affirm. He observes also, that they were so under the bishop, as that he had the whole government. But if he had the whole, those presbyters had none of it; and then he was such a bishop, and they such presbyters, as that age did not know. This the best asserters of episcopacy acknowledge, and Dr. St[illingfleet] hath proved. He observes, that "they were at that distance, that they could not have local communion with their bishop at Alexandria." But that the distance was not such as to hinder them from having communion with their bishop, is evident by an epistle of Dionysius, who being banished to Cephro, and troubled that afterwards the governor would remove him to Coluthion in Maræotis, the brethren encourage him, because this was so near Alexandria, that it might be reputed "but a remoter suburbs," *ὡς ἐν προαστείῳ*; and though the place was destitute of Christians, yet those of Alexandria might frequently have recourse to them, and make up a congregation.<sup>a</sup>

But further, not to insist more upon his observations but the scope of them, if Maræotis was well replenished with Christians when Athanasius was made bishop there, it had not been long so; for Dionysius, in his time, declares it to be "a desert as to Christians or any good men," *ἐρημον ἀδελφῶν καὶ σπουδαίων ἀνθρώπων*.<sup>b</sup>

It was the sense of the church (as I showed before) that where Christians were so multiplied in any place as to need more than one presbyter, and they desired to have a bishop, it was not to be denied them. If this was now the condition of Maræotis, Athanasius would not have hindered them from having a bishop; but indeed his adversaries were too quick for him, and made Ischyra bishop in Maræotis.<sup>c</sup> It is true, Athanasius was troubled at it, because Ischyra was a very bad man, and had this honour as the reward of an ill act; but not because it lessened his diocese, or impaired his revenues; (though country oblations, upon which, with those of the city, the bishop and clergy lived, being withdrawn from the city, were allowed to the country bishop, where a new bishopric was erected.) For he was well enough pleased with others that were deserving in the same circumstances,

<sup>a</sup> Euseb. lib. vii. cap. xi.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid.

<sup>c</sup> Athan. Apol. 2. p. 622.



particularly with Dracontius, who was made bishop in the same territory of Alexandria, ἐν τῇ Ἀλεξανδρίῳ χώρᾳ.<sup>a</sup> And more there might be, for in those parts, as in others, bishops were seated as little distant one from another as country towns are with us. To go no further than the country bordering upon this, in Palestine, Diospolis, or Lydda, an episcopal seat, was but six miles from Joppa; and Joppa some four miles from Jamnia; Rhinocorura four miles from Anthedon; and Anthedon not three miles (Sozomen says about twenty furlongs<sup>b</sup>) from Gaza; and Gaza twenty furlongs from Constantia (anciently Majuma.<sup>c</sup>) Strabo makes it little more than seven furlongs.<sup>d</sup> In Egypt itself, the cities, though there were bishops also in the country, were close together. Nicopolis was twenty furlongs from Alexandria, as Josephus,<sup>e</sup> or thirty furlongs, as Strabo;<sup>f</sup> and Taposiris, near Nicopolis, and Canopus, Heraclia, and Naucratis, not much further one from another. More instances hereof might be given in other countries, Syria, the lesser Asia, Greece, Macedon, and Italy, where there are divers cities but two miles distant, very many at three or four miles distance, abundance at five or six: I must not digress to give a particular account of them. Those who ordained every such city or town to have a bishop, were far from designing any such things as modern dioceses.

“But Mr. B[axter]’s great argument is, from the meeting of the whole multitude with Athanasius in the great church at Alexandria, to keep the Easter solemnity.”—p. 254.

And there is some weight in it, because nothing considerable can be said against it. It amounts to more than is said, if a just account be taken of it. He tells the emperor there were *τοσοῦτοι*, so many Christians at the paschal solemnity, as a prince that loved Christ would wish to be in the city, and that these desired to meet in the great church, that they all might pray there, *καὶ πάντας εὐχεσθαι*; and so they did, *ὅπερ καὶ γέγονεν*. Can this signify any less than that all the Christians in that city which adhered to Athanasius did meet and pray in one place? He says, that one place was capable of receiving them all, *δέξασθαι πάντας*. He says, the multitudes there met were such as at other times assembled in several other little places, *πῶς ἔχαιρον*, &c. “How,” says he, “did the people rejoice to see one another now, when before they met in several places?” Let any one view the whole passage, and I doubt not it will be plain to any impartial eye, that the main body of Christians, belonging to Athanasius, did meet in that one church. But by this I see nothing will be plain in antiquity to him that likes it not. Hereby the Doctor’s following questions are answered.—p. 255.

<sup>a</sup> Epist. ad Dracont.

<sup>d</sup> Lib. xvi. p. 522.

<sup>b</sup> Hist. lib. v. cap. viii.

<sup>e</sup> De Bello Judaico, lib. v. cap. ult.

<sup>c</sup> Soz. ibid. p. 336.

<sup>f</sup> Lib. xvii. p. 593.

It is no good argument, that because all the Christians in London cannot meet in St. Paul's, therefore all the Christians adhering to Athanasius in Alexandria could not meet in a great church. Alexandria was never, by far, so populous as London, much less at this time. The greatest part of the inhabitants of that city were at this time heathens or Jews. Of those who passed for Christians, it is like Athanasius had the lesser share. The Novatians, and other sects, the Meletians especially, and the Arians, did probably exceed his flock in numbers. It may be the Arians alone were more numerous, considering how many there were there at first, and what encouragements and advantages they had under such an emperor as Constantius; and therefore these cities are vastly different, in that very thing wherein they should agree, to make such reasoning good, either for proof or illustration. After this time Epiphanius mentions about twelve meeting-places in Alexandria; whether there were so many now, or whether the Catholics had them all, may be a question. However, Athanasius tells us, that all these save one were exceeding small, very short and strait places, τῶν τοίνυν ἐκκλησιῶν βραχύτατων οὖσαν.<sup>a</sup> And after, he says, they were μικραὶ καὶ στεναί,<sup>b</sup> "small and strait." There are as many or more churches and chapels, (it is like<sup>c</sup> as great as those in Alexandria,) in some one of our parishes in England; the parishioners assemble in the lesser places at other times, but at some solemnities they are wont to communicate at the chief parish church. Will any argue from such parishes for our dioceses, or that they could not meet in one place, because they had so many other little places to meet in?

There is no need for the serving Mr. B[axter]'s hypothesis, that Alexandria be shrunk into a less compass; nor doth Mr. B[axter] in the least attempt it. He gives the full dimensions of that city out of Strabo, as grave and judicious a geographer, and every way as unexceptionable, as any he could pitch on; who is so far from lessening it, that he calls it μέγιστον τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐμπόριον, the greatest mart town in the world. Yet he might have told us that Ausonius makes it inferior to Constantinople, to Antiochia, and to Carthage,<sup>d</sup> who may pass for as judicious an author as he that will have it ἀσύλληπτως, incomprehensibly great. But he, detracting nothing from the greatness of that city, offers as fair probabilities that the Christians in it, joining with Athanasius, might all meet in one place as can be expected in such a case;<sup>e</sup> but the Doctor thought not fit to take notice of them.

"To show the great number of Christians in Alexandria," he tells us, pages 255, 256, "long before the time of Athanasius, Dionysius

<sup>a</sup> Apol. [2,] page 531.

<sup>b</sup> De Ord. Magn. Urb.

<sup>c</sup> Page 532.

<sup>d</sup> Church Hist. pages 9, 10.

<sup>e</sup> likely.

Alexandrinus saith, in a time of great persecution, when he was banished, he kept up the assemblies in the city, and at Cephro he had a large church, partly of the Christians of Alexandria which followed him, and partly from other places ; and when he was removed thence to Colluthion, which was nearer the city, such numbers of Christians flocked out of the city to him that they were forced to have distinct congregations ; so the words *κατὰ μέρος* signify."

Cephro was a place in Lybia, at a great distance from Alexandria ; in the epistle cited it is a village near the desert, and that was no place for very great assemblies ; that which increased it was the recourse of Christians from some other parts of Egypt. However, it was greater than what they had or expected when removed to Marœotis, though so very near to Alexandria, as Dionysius and his friends there signified. But to encourage him, they tell him, as it afterwards fell out, that their meetings, though not so great, might be more frequent, Christians still coming to them from Alexandria, one company after another ; so that they might often have assemblies for worship and Christian communion at Colluthion, though in less numbers than at Cephro ; and that by the contexture of the discourse, seems to be the meaning of *κατὰ μέρος*, their assembling in parcels as they came, some at one time, and others at another ; not that such numbers flocked thither at once out of the city, as that they were forced to have distinct congregations. Indeed, a company not very numerous might be well thought too many for one assembly in their circumstances, in the paroxysm of a violent persecution, when Æmilianus, the governor, passing sentence of banishment on them, told them, it should be death to keep a meeting in the place to which they were banished, and that they should be narrowly watched in order to a discovery. And Dionysius says, he was on purpose disposed of in such a place, where he might most easily be apprehended. And therefore, if they had met in distinct congregations at the same time, this had been no argument to prove them so numerous as the Doctor is concerned to have them. Less than a thousand, yea, or five hundred, will more than satisfy the import of any passage in this epistle, which he makes use of to prove the great numbers of Christians in that city. However, as if his supposition had been proved, he proceeds upon it thus : "If there were such a number of Christians at Alexandria so long before, under the sharpest persecution, is it possible to imagine, in so great a city, after Christianity had so long been the religion of the empire, that the number of Christians there should be no greater than to make one large congregation ?"—p. 256.

The professors of Christianity greatly increased after this became the religion of the empire ; but the greatest part of those who professed it did not adhere to Athanasius ; both the Meletians and the Arians fell

off from his predecessors, and the breach continued all his time; so that the Catholics in Alexandria seem not to have gained much more by the happy alteration in the empire than they lost by those unhappy divisions. At the first breach Meletius had many more adherents than Peter, as Epiphanius tells us;<sup>a</sup> far most of the bishops, clergy, and people deserting Peter and cleaving to Meletius. Constantine granted them the liberty of their meeting, and Athanasius, who opposed them, was by him banished, and so continued many years, (twelve or thirteen;) under such encouragements as they had under him and Constantius, their numbers were not like<sup>b</sup> to be impaired.

As for the Arians, if we may take our measures of the people by their officers, they were more numerous than the Catholics in this city; for of nine[teen] presbyters and deacons which the church of Alexandria had, as Theodoret reckons,<sup>c</sup> eleven embraced Arianism.<sup>d</sup> Constantine, if he did not favour them, would not oppose them, but was severe against those that did; against Athanasius particularly. Constantius, his successor in those parts of the empire, was both zealous and industrious in promoting Arianism. In these circumstances the Arians might well outvie the followers of Athanasius in numbers; and these declined as the other increased; the numbers which these lost being gained by those. Alexander, his immediate predecessor, assembled the main body of his adherents in Theonas,<sup>e</sup> a church not quite finished, as (Athanasius did afterwards in another, and pleads it in excuse of his own act;) this church is reckoned among the other churches that were small and strait, though something greater than the rest. Now is it probable that the Catholics there should be so much increased, upon such revolts, and under such discouragements, as that those who could meet together in an ordinary church with Alexander, should be too many to assemble in a very great church with Athanasius? Let the impartial judge who they are that build theories upon strange improbabilities.

The Doctor proceeds to what he thinks plain enough of itself to show the great extent of diocesan power: it is that of Theodoret, where it is said he had the charge of eight<sup>f</sup> [hundred] churches.<sup>g</sup>

This might be dismissed, as out of the bounds we are concerned for, being beyond not only the three first, but the fourth age: for this epistle, if it be Theodoret's, was writ about the middle of the fifth age, when all was tumbling into confusion and degeneracy; only thus in

<sup>a</sup> Hær. lxviii. n. 3.

<sup>b</sup> likely,

<sup>c</sup> Hist. lib. iv. cap. xx.

<sup>d</sup> Soz. lib. i. cap. xiv.

<sup>e</sup> Athanas. Apol. 2, page 513.

<sup>f</sup> He who compares the epistle whence this testimony is taken with Theodoret's eighty-first epistle, will, perhaps, be inclined to suspect that the reading here should be with a very slight alteration of the present text, ὀκτω ὁσίων (not ὀκτακοσίων) ἐκκλησίων, "eight holy churches."

<sup>g</sup> Epist. cxlii.

brief. The passage insisted on runs thus : In eight [hundred] churches I have been pastor, for so many parishes hath Cyrrhus. Cyrrhus here is but capable of three accep[ta]tions ; it must be taken either for the city alone, or both for the city and the region, or for the region alone without the city. Against this last there is an unanswerable exception : the word is never thus used in these epistles, or elsewhere. Nor, I think, can an instance be given where the proper name of a city, as Cyrrhus was, signifies the country alone, and not the city itself. The second the Doctor rejects, and is concerned so to do, seeing, if he admitted it, it would entangle him in a difficulty that seems inextricable. If the first be admitted, it must be granted that Theodoret was not the author of this epistle, or at least of the passage insisted on, as here expressed. For he who described Cyrrhus to be a desolate place, *ἔρημος οὖσα καὶ ὀλίγους οἰκήτορας ἔχουσα*, having few inhabitants, and those poor,<sup>a</sup> and elsewhere mentions *πολίχνης ἐρημίαν*, signifying it to be a small town in a manner desolate,<sup>b</sup> would neither say nor dream that there were eight [hundred] parishes in it. But there is no need to insist on this or other probabilities, that this epistle is spurious, or this passage corrupted. That which the Doctor delivers in his discourse upon it is enough to show that it will not serve his design, nor is pertinent to the scope he proposes. He tells us, in that province (called Regio Cyrrhætica) there was a metropolitan of Hagiopolis, which by the ancient *notitiæ*<sup>c</sup> appears to have been then one of the names of Cyrus or Cyrrhus.—p. 258.

If this be so, then Theodoret must be a metropolitan ; and himself seems to think no less, when he tells us he ordained Irenæus a bishop.<sup>d</sup> For though others were wont to concur with the metropolitan in ordaining a bishop, yet the act is still ascribed to the metropolitan, (being chief therein,) as if he alone did it. So that when but one ordainer of a bishop is mentioned regularly, that one must be taken for a metropolitan. He tells us also, that the reason of his confinement, alleged in the imperial order for that purpose, was because he was still convocating synods,<sup>e</sup> and that in those times is taken to be the privilege of a metropolitan. But there needs no other proof of it ; for since it is plain by the *notitiæ*, and acknowledged by the Doctor, that Cyrus was a metropolis, none will question but the bishop of it was a metropolitan. And if Theodoret was a metropolitan, these eight [hundred] churches will show not the extent of diocesan, but metropolitan power. None ever doubted but Theodoret was bishop of this city Cyrus : he himself declares it plainly and frequently. It is said he was confined to Cyrus,

<sup>a</sup> Epist. xxxii.<sup>b</sup> Epist. cxxxvliii.<sup>c</sup> The *notitiæ* are detailed accounts of the civil and ecclesiastical divisions of the empire.<sup>d</sup> Epist. cx.<sup>e</sup> Epist. lxxix. lxxx lxxvi. lxxxii. Concil. Antioch, Can. xix xx.

being bishop of that city,<sup>a</sup> and that he was confined to his own home by the emperor's law, forbidding him to go out of the bounds of that city.<sup>b</sup> He says, this city was committed to his charge,<sup>c</sup> τὴν ἐγχειρισθείσαν ἡμῶν πόλιν; and since he was the bishop of the city Cyrus, that being a metropolis, Theodoret must be the metropolitan. For if he was only bishop there, but another and not he there metropolitan, there will be two bishops in that city; which must in no case be admitted against the Doctor's inviolable rule.

How this will be avoided I know not. But the Doctor will have the eight [hundred] churches to be in Theodoret's diocese; and why so? Because Theodoret mentions the metropolitan he was under. But so might any other metropolitan in those parts do, without danger of losing his province. For all the metropolitans in the diocese of the Orient, (wherein, according to the *notitiæ* of the empire, there are fifteen provinces, but by the ecclesiastical *notitiæ* many more metropolitans and archbishops, though divers of them pass as *αὐτοκέφαλοι*) were under him of Antioch, which city Jerome calls the metropolis of the Orient; *Ut Palestinæ metropolis Cesarea sit, et totius Orientis Antiochia,*<sup>d</sup> and Zozimus,<sup>e</sup> *πασης τῆς Ε῰ας μητρόπολιν*. Theodoret says that (having ruled that church committed to him at Cyrus twenty-six years<sup>f</sup>) he had preached six years under Theodotus, bishop of Antioch; thirteen years under John; and it was now the seventh year since Domnus was archbishop there.<sup>g</sup> But that he was under any other metropolitan of Cyrus (or elsewhere) he never says nor intimates, and when the Doctor has inquired fully into it, I doubt not but he will find it a groundless imagination.

Since Cyrrhus is acknowledged to be a metropolis, and thereupon it can no way be denied, but Theodoret the bishop of it was a metropolitan; this might be improved further for our author's satisfaction, if we could know certainly how many bishops were in this province; but for anything I can yet discover, we must be content with conjectures. The Doctor tells us from Victor, that Crescens had one hundred and twenty bishops in his province: in that of Zeugitana it is said there was one hundred and sixty-four bishops, afterwards reduced to three, by the severities of Gensericus the Vandal.<sup>h</sup> In other African provinces there must be as many or more, to make up the account we have of the many hundred bishops in Africa. If the bishops under the metropolitan of Cyrus, were so many as in one of these provinces, and these eight hundred churches distributed amongst them, the

<sup>a</sup> Epist. lxxx.

<sup>d</sup> [Epist. lxi. ad Pammach.]

<sup>e</sup> Epist. lxxxviii. vid. Epist. lxxxi. cxiii.

<sup>b</sup> Epist. cxix.

<sup>f</sup> Hist. lib. i. [page 15.]

<sup>h</sup> Victor. de Persec. Vandal. lib. i.

<sup>c</sup> Epist. xxxvii. xlii.

<sup>g</sup> Epist. cxiii.

share of each bishop would scarce be more than some one of our parishes. Or if the bishops there were supposed to be fewer, yet would their bishoprics be more like some parishes, than modern dioceses.

"By Cyrus, therefore, we understand the region about the city, which was under Theodoret's care."

He means the region, and not the city. But I suppose none else will see any reason so to understand it, since it cannot be found, that Cyrus is ever any where else so understood; nor that the name of any other city doth signify the country and not the city. It is as if it should be said, by London we understand Essex, but not the city of London. Cyrus was the proper name of the city, (as some think, because it was built by Cyrus, and it is called by others, Cyropolis,) but the country about it had another name, and [is] called by Theodoret, *Cyrrhestica Regio*,<sup>a</sup> as the Doctor himself observes; besides, this makes Theodoret, not to have been bishop of the city of Cyrus, but only of the region about it, which contradicts Theodoret in many plain passages, wherein he declares expressly that he was bishop of that city. Of which before.

"Theodoret himself sets down the extent of it, wherein he says it was forty miles in length, and forty in breadth."

But how doth it appear that this was the extent of Theodoret's diocese, and not of the province? That is it which is questioned, and should have been proved. Seeing there were many considerable cities in that province, if each of them had a diocese of such dimensions, (and no reason to think that Cyrus exceed them herein,) this one province will be far larger than all Syria besides.

"He saith in another epistle, that Christianity was then so much spread among them," &c.

What he says concerning the spread of Christianity, respects not that region peculiarly, but concerns the Christian world, (as will appear to those that view it,) though whether it do or no, is not material. That which he seems to think of more consequence for the overthrowing of Mr. B.'s hypothesis, he thus delivers: "That these villages had churches and priests settled in them under the care of the bishop, appears from a passage in the life of Simcon, where he speaks of Bassus visiting the parochial churches," &c.

Theodoret speaks not of Bassus visiting parochial churches, but villages: his words are, "He then perambulated many villages, inspecting the sacred persons (or priests) there." Bassus, the visitor who made this perambulation, was a monastic, and a rector of monks. Theodoret in the same place tells us, his sodality consisted of above

two hundred, which he calls his proper flock, *οἰκείαν ἀγέλην*, and gives an account of the rules prescribed. But suppose Bassus was a bishop, either these villages which he perambulated were in Theodoret's diocese, or no. If they were in his diocese, then was there more than one bishop in one diocese. If they were not in it, how does this serve in the least to prove the extent of Theodoret's diocese, which he is here designing to manifest? Nor will this prove Bassus to have been a diocesan, wherever those villages were which he visited. There are rectors in England, who have many villages in their parishes, and presbyters in them, whom they may visit when they please, yet none take them to be diocesans.

“He saith he had brought ten thousand Marcionists to baptism.”

It is, as he expresses it, more than ten thousands, but this in all reason must be taken indefinitely, for very many, seeing in his epistle to Leo, it is but *πλείους ἢ χιλίας*, “more than a thousand.”<sup>a</sup> And this is more like to be the number in eight villages, (which being tainted with the heresy of Marcion, he reduced to the truth,) than many myriads;<sup>b</sup> unless he will have each village to be more populous, than the mother city itself. However Theodoret doth not say that these eight villages were in his diocese; and he might think himself concerned to reduce them, though they were but in his province.

“And we find the names of many of the villages in his lives, as Tillima, &c., which are sufficient to show that Theodoret had properly a diocesan church,” &c.

It doth not appear in the places cited that all these five were in his diocese, but if there had been more than these five, or more than the eight forementioned, it would not be sufficient to show that Theodoret had properly a diocesan church, unless there be sufficient in several of our country parishes, (containing as many villages,) to show that they are properly diocesan churches. Some other writings than Theodoret's Epistles or Lives must be made use of, if he hopes to make good a diocesan episcopacy, like ours, in the ancient church.

The other point, wherein the Doctor makes use of ancient authorities, is about popular elections. He seems willing to maintain, that the people in the ancient church had not the power to choose their own bishops, but only to give testimony of their good or bad lives. I was something surprised at this undertaking, and having seen so clear and full evidence for the people's privilege herein, as hath convinced many learned papists and others, whose interest swayed them the other way; I was ready to think, that those who would contradict it, might be suspected, either to want acquaintance with the ancient records and

<sup>a</sup> Epist. cxiii.

<sup>b</sup> Epist. [lxxxix.]



usages of the church, or fidelity in reporting them. The learned and ingenuous Doctor is not to be suspected as either of these: only persons of singular learning and other accomplishments, may venture sometimes to defend a paradox, and run against the stream; and if they can with cogent arguments, detect a vulgar error, the more common it is, the more excellent service will they do. But if they bring only straws against a torrent, or show themselves resolved to serve a particular interest, rather than to use impartial judgment, and yield to evidence; though they may prevail with some that are weak and prepossessed, yet they will scarce thereby advance their reputation with the truly judicious. However, the best that can be looked for in this cause, may be expected from the Doctor; and what it is, is now to be considered.

He lays down several observations. "The first of them is this, That the main ground of the people's interest was founded upon the apostles' canon, that a bishop must be blameless and of good report."<sup>a</sup>—pp. 312, 313.

This rule of the apostles was one ground, upon which the people's interest in the choice of their bishop and other officers was founded; but it was not the only ground. Cyprian, Chrysostom, and others, conclude it from other places of Scripture. But this might be sufficient, if there were no other, to found their right or power in elections. For the testimony required, was not only of their good or ill behaviour, which a heathen might give, but such as signified that they judged them fit and worthy to be, and so desired them for, their officers; which is not a mere declarative testimony, but such as is elective. And this will be cleared by the authors which the Doctor cites afterwards.

Page 314. "And there is a very considerable testimony in the epistle of Clemens to this purpose, where he gives an account how the apostles, preaching through cities and countries, did appoint their first fruits, having made a spiritual trial of them, to be bishops and deacons of those who were to believe."

By the apostles' appointing may be meant, either the instituting of those offices, and then it is not for the Doctor's purpose; or else their fixing those officers in particular places. That they fixed officers in any places where there were no Christians, is an imagination which he doth not seem to own; and where there were Christians, Clemens tells us afterwards, how their officers were appointed, viz., with the approbation or choice of the whole church.

"Here it is plain they were of the apostles' appointment, and not of the people's choice."—Ib.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 2, 7.

This is no way plain; an hundred instances might be produced of officers appointed for people, and yet chosen by them. But there needs no more than the Doctor helps us to in this very page. Immediately before these words, he mentions the first choice of deacons, and there it is plain and express by the text, that they were chosen by the people, and yet appointed by the apostles. And in the words of Clemens, cited presently after, bishops are to be chosen, and yet also appointed by the apostles, or other eminent men. The Doctor thus renders his words: "Therefore foreseeing these things perfectly, they appointed the persons before mentioned, and left the distribution of the offices with this instruction, that as some died, other approved men should be chosen into their offices."<sup>a</sup> How and by whom they are to be chosen, the next words express, *συνευδοκησάσης πάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας*, "the whole church having approved them," i.e. having signified that they thought them worthy, and most fit to be their officers, which includes a desire that they be appointed or set over them. This declared either when they are proposed by themselves or others, is the choice we are concerned for. Here it is manifest by Clemens, that this was the apostles' practice, and that they left order, that in after times bishops should be thus appointed, and thus chosen.

The Doctor makes some observations upon this testimony of Clemens, p. 315. 1. "That these officers of the church were not chosen by the people, but appointed by the apostles, or other great men according to their order."

Whereas by Clemens's words it is plain to the contrary, that these officers of the church were both chosen by the people, and appointed by the apostles, and that according to their order. They ordained that their own practice in appointing officers should be followed in after-times, viz. that as some died, others should be chosen, the whole church approving them, into their office, and appointed thereto by other eminent men. This is the plain import of Clemens's words.

2. He observes, "That they took this course on purpose to prevent the contentions that might happen in the church about those who should bear office in it."

The course he means is the appointing of officers, without the choice of the people. But this appears to be a mistake, and if it were not so, the universal church, both in the best ages and many after, did run counter to the order of the apostles, made on purpose to prevent contentions in the church.

3. He observes, "That all that the people had to do, was to give testimony, or to express their approbation of those who were so appointed."

<sup>a</sup> [Clem. i. s. 44.]

But Clemens speaks nothing of a bare testimony. He speaks expressly of all the people's approbation as requisite by the apostles' order, and this we have shown imports no less than the people's choice; and this in the constant sense and practice of the church was previous to the settling of any pastor over them. Yet he adds: "For he could not allow their power of choosing, since he says the apostles appointed officers to prevent the contentions that might happen about it."

But it doth not appear that they appointed officers to prevent the contentions in elections; nor can it appear by anything Clemens says, but rather the contrary, since he tells us, officers were both to be approved (or, which is all one, chosen) by the people, and appointed by the apostles. And this leaves no ground for his following supposition, that "the cause of the disturbance made by some men in the church of Corinth, was because their officers were appointed by others, not chosen by themselves." What pretence could there be for this, when, according to the apostles' order, (to which that church was conformed,) no officer was appointed without the approbation of the whole church?

Page 316. "And this is plain even from St. Cyprian, where he discourseth of this matter, &c., for the force of what St. Cyprian saith, comes at last only to this—giving testimony."

But what if, in Cyprian, the people's giving testimony be no less than choosing by suffrage? The clergy had no less interest in the election of a bishop than the people, yet he expresses the clergy's concurrence in the choice, by their testimony; and the people's, by their suffrage.<sup>a</sup> *Factus est Cornelius episcopus . . . de clericorum pene omnium testimonio, de plebis quæ tunc affuit suffragio*: "Cornelius was made bishop by the testimony of almost all the clergy, and by the suffrage of the people that were present." And in the same place he saith, "Cornelius was ordained both by the suffrage of the clergy and the people." In the very next passage cited by the Doctor out of this blessed martyr, there is an intimation of a testimony in the people's presence, but the suffrage of all is expressly mentioned, as requisite, "that the ordination may be just and lawful." Take it as the Doctor offers it, (p. 316,) that by "their presence either their faults might be published, or their good acts commended; that so it may appear to be a just and lawful ordination, which hath been examined by the suffrage and judgment of all."

To this he adds, "The people there had a share in the election; but it was in matter of testimony concerning the good or ill behaviour of the person."

It is as plain as one would desire it should be spoken, that the

<sup>a</sup> Epist. lii

people had such a share in the elections as that they were carried by their general suffrage; and this was so necessary, that the ordination of a bishop could not "appear to be just or lawful without it." If their giving testimony amount to no less than the people's choice by suffrage, the popular elections which are in question are granted; but if it be less, and Cyprian be said to allow the people no more, violence is offered to his words, plainly expressed, and more than once repeated.

The original of this practice, (the people thus choosing their bishop,) and the universal observance of it, is next expressed. He had said before, that it did *de Divinâ auctoritate descendere*, "descend to them from Divine authority;" that it was *secundum Divina magisteria*, "according to Divine edicts." Here he says it is of Divine delivery and apostolical observance, and as such to be diligently kept and upheld. And for the extent of it, he says it was observed almost through all provinces. He speaks modestly, for there might be some provinces which he was not acquainted with, or some where Christianity did not yet prevail. The Doctor renders his words thus: "And therefore, he saith, it was almost a general custom among them, and he thinks came down from Divine tradition and apostolical practice, that when any people wanted a bishop, neighbouring bishops met together in that place, and the new bishop was chosen, *plebe præseunte*, "the people being present," not by the votes of the people.

"The people being present, not by the votes of the people," as the Doctor notes. But Cyprian had said a little before, that it was *omnium suffragio*, "by all their votes;" and he says it again in that period, and the very next words to these which the Doctor translates, though he thought not fit to add them. And "this was observed in the consecration of their fellow bishop, Sabinus," (so far the Doctor, but Cyprian goes on)—*ut de universæ fraternitatis suffragio*, "that by the voices of all the brethren, and the judgment of the bishops that were present, the bishopric might be conferred on him, and hands laid on him instead of Basilides." And he says it in divers other epistles besides this. He declares Cornelius was made bishop *de plebis suffragio*, "by the votes of the people," and that he was ordained *cleri et plebis suffragio*, "by the suffrage of the clergy and the people."<sup>a</sup> He tells his own people, "that those who were against his being bishop, were against their suffrage, (which he elsewhere<sup>b</sup> styles, *Divina suffragia*) and against the judgment of God."<sup>c</sup>

"Where he doth express the consent of the people, but he requires the judgment of the bishops."

He expresses the consent of the people declared by their votes, as

<sup>a</sup> Ep. lli.

<sup>b</sup> [Ep. xxxviii.]

<sup>c</sup> Ep. xl.

previous to the ordination, and the way whereby Sabinus came to be bishop. And whereas the Doctor seems to intimate, that judgment was more than consent; if it was more, yet was it not thought too much for the people. In this epistle it is said to be of Divine authority, that the bishop be chosen in the presence of all, and approved by the public judgment as worthy and fit for the office; and afterwards, that the ordination may be just and lawful, he says it is to be examined by the judgment of all.<sup>a</sup>

“St. Cyprian and the African bishops, who wrote this epistle to the people, say that it belonged chiefly to them to choose the good, and refuse the bad; which is the strongest testimony in antiquity for the people’s power.”

It is a strong and clear testimony, and in truth all the Doctor’s attempts to weaken it have made it appear stronger to me than it did before. There is no fear but it will stand firm and unmoved, whoever would shake it, when the attacks of a person of such excellent learning and other abilities can make no more impression on it.

But let us view the particulars he thinks fit to be considered.  
“1. It was in a case where a bishop had voluntarily resigned.”

But the rule laid down by Cyprian and his colleagues, is general, asserting the power of the people in all cases, “for choosing such as were worthy, and rejecting the unworthy.”

“2. Another bishop was put into his room, not by the power of the people, but by the judgment and ordination of the neighbour bishops.”

It is as plain as can be spoken, that Sabinus was put into the room of Basilides, not only by the judgment and ordination of the bishops, but also by the power of the people’s votes, *de universæ fraternitatis suffragio*, “by the suffrage of the whole brotherhood.” Nay, the African fathers determine, that “the people have most of all this power,” *plebs maxime potestatem habet*, &c.

“3. They had the judgment of a whole council of African bishops for their deserting him.”

And we have in this epistle the judgment, not only of Cyprian, but of a whole council of African bishops, both for the power and manner of the people’s choosing; the Divine authority for it, and the universality of the practice; and also for their power of deserting those bishops which deserved it. The names of above thirty of those bishops are prefixed to this epistle.

“4. For a notorious matter of fact, viz. idolatry and blasphemy, by his own confession.”

The rule of the African fathers is general, and not confined to this

<sup>a</sup> Vide Ep. xli.

particular case, nor the grounds of it, but extends to any other wickedness which may render bishops unworthy to be owned.

"5. All the proof which St. Cyprian brings for this, doth amount to no more than that the people were most concerned to give testimony as to the good or bad lives of their bishops."

Cyprian and the council of bishops with him, prove what they say concerning the power of the people in this matter; and they say not only that the people are to be present when a bishop is to be ordained, and to give testimony concerning his good or ill deportment; but also that their consent is requisite; [that] their judgment is to be interposed in examining and approving such as be offered; and that they have the greatest power in choosing and rejecting bishops; and that elections are to be made by their concurring votes and suffrage, that so the ordination of a bishop may be just and lawful; and judge [that] they are led to this by Divine authority. This is evident by the synodical epistle and the premises. Now let any that are impartial, and are not willing to be led into mistakes, judge whether this amount to no more than only the people's giving testimony concerning the good or bad lives of their bishops. This is no more than the heathens had liberty to do in the ordinations of bishops; and can any one imagine that all the expressions in this epistle, concerning the power and privilege of Christians in the choice of those pastors who were entrusted with their souls, amount to no more than what infidels might challenge in reference to Christian bishops? In another case one would be apt to think, that he who thus represents ancient authors did not take the course to be trusted in reporting matters of antiquity. But in this case, I would not give way to such a thought, but honour the Doctor more than he hath done himself in this business.

Bishop Bilson, a very learned prelate, who was little more a friend to popular elections than the Doctor, (and had produced as much against them as any, Bellarmine not excepted, if not all that others have made use of since,) yet was so ingenuous as to yield that in antiquity, which cannot modestly be denied. "The fullest words," says he, "that the Greek authors use for all the parts of election, as to propose, to name, to choose, to decree, are in the stories ecclesiastical applied to the people." And afterwards thus: "So that in the primitive church, the people did propose, name, elect, and decree, as well as the clergy; and though the presbyters had more skill to judge, yet the people had as much right to choose their pastor, and if the most part of them did agree, they did carry it from the clergy,"<sup>a</sup> &c.

Alexander Severus, in proposing the names of his officers to the

<sup>a</sup> Perpet. Govern. of the Church, cap. xv. pp. 359, 360.

people, to hear what they had to object against them, did but imitate part of the Christians' practice, and a small part of it too, and what was not the peculiar privilege of Christians; for heathens had the like liberty, and their objections might be heard in reference to the candidates for church offices. And, therefore, it is no wonder, if no man can hence imagine that the people had power to make the governors of Roman provinces. But if the people of these provinces had obtained as much power to choose those governors, as the Christians had to elect their bishops, and the emperor could have no more declined whom they had chosen in one case, than the ordainers could in the other; the former might as well have been said to make their governors, as the latter are said to make their bishops. With Chrysostom they are τοῦ δοῦναι κύριοι τὴν τιμὴν,<sup>a</sup> "authorised to confer the office." And in Epiphanius, οἱ λαοὶ—ἐπισκόπους ἐαυτοῖς κατατάξαντες,<sup>b</sup> "they make bishops for themselves."

Origen hath nothing, either in the words as they are cited,<sup>c</sup> or as indeed they are in the Homily, against elections by the people *de jure* or *de facto*; nor anything which signifies that the people of Christ had no more to do in the choice of their pastors, than merely giving a declarative testimony, such as the heathen were allowed to give, and, therefore, I waive it.

"The 2nd Considerable<sup>d</sup> is, that the people upon this assuming the power of elections caused great disturbances and disorders in the church."

The people assumed not the power of elections at any time which can be assigned after the beginning of Christianity; they had it at first. If the people took to themselves any power herein, which was not their proper right, they usurped it, and the usurpation is to be charged, not upon the people alone, but the whole church; for both clergy and people concurred in those elections, and made account they had apostolical warrant for it, and were taught so to do, by Cyprian, and others of the ancients. That it was the practice of the church every where for the people to choose their own pastors, is evident by those instances which are here brought against it; for there could be no disturbances or disorders in their choice, if they did not choose. And the disturbances and disorders objected, when duly weighed, can raise no prejudice against the universal practice of the church, nor will be any just occasion to deprive the people of that power which was by them exercised; and is acknowledged by the ancient church to be their right for so many hundred years, without any attempt to divest them of it; though

<sup>a</sup> De Sacerdot. Orat. iii.

<sup>c</sup> [Hom. vi. in Levit.]

<sup>b</sup> Hæc. lxxiii. Num. 28.

<sup>d</sup> Point for consideration.

they were well acquainted with any disorders that fell out in the exercise thereof.

There is evidence that this was the practice of the church for above a thousand years after Christ; there are about ten instances of disorders therein, great and small, for so many ages. Now if every order and usage, though of apostolical institution or allowance, should be exploded, because of some disorder happening about it once in a hundred years, what would be left us that is primitive or ancient?

But here we have but four instances of any disturbance or disorders about popular elections that are considerable in this case; the rest he thinks not worthy of much notice, or fit to be insisted on; and so they are huddled up without giving us the words of his authors, or sufficient direction where to find divers of them. As for the four which he makes and gives more account of, there are some mistakes about them, (such as I never observed the Doctor to be liable to in any other cause,) which set right, the instances will not be serviceable to his purpose.

He begins with the disorders at Antioch thus, p. 318: "Eusebius represents the disorders at Antioch to have been so great in the city, upon the choice of a new bishop, by the divisions of the people, that they were like to have shaken the emperor's kindness to the Christians, &c.; and after much trouble to the emperor, and many meetings of bishops, at last Eustathius was chosen."

Eustathius was not chosen at the end of those troubles, but being chosen peaceably long before, his deposition was the beginning of them; nor was he ever after there chosen or restored. He was deposed by a synod of Arian bishops at Antioch, under a pretence that he was a Sabellian, (as the Arians were wont to brand those who opposed their heresy,) so Socrates.<sup>a</sup> Those of that faction in the town would have chosen (in the place of Eustathius, wrongfully ejected) Eusebius Pamphilus, then bishop of Cæsarea, whom they took to be of that persuasion; and so violent and irregular were their proceedings therein, not only to the disturbing of the civil peace, but violating the constitutions of the church, (offering to choose one who was bishop of another place, as the emperor signifies,<sup>b</sup>) that all the disturbance may be justly imputed to them, as aggressors, thrusting out him who had the right, and striving to force in him who could have none. Now is it fair, to make use of the violent attempts of the Arians, enemies of the church and the common faith, to derive odium upon the practice of the Catholic church?

"The next is at Cæsarea. Gregory Nazianzen sets forth the mighty

<sup>a</sup> Lib. i. cap. xxiii.

<sup>b</sup> Euseb. De Vita Constantini, lib. iii. cap. lvii.



unruliness of the people of Cæsarea in the choice of their bishop, saying, It came to a dangerous sedition, and not easy to be suppressed," &c.—pp. 318, 319.

We find two hot contests in elections there, one immediately after the other: whether of them he means, he lets us not understand. The first was about the choice of Eusebius. Nazianzen (who alone is said to complain of the mighty unruliness of the people) says no worse of it in the issue than this, that they proceeded indeed not very orderly, *οὐ λίαν εὐτάκτως*, but very faithfully and zealously,<sup>a</sup> and thereby signifies how horribly seditious it was in his account. And his father, the senior Gregory, bishop of Nazianzum, justifies the action, in letters to the governor, as regular, and acceptable to God, and defends what they did as *ὀρθῶς καὶ δικαίως*, done rightly and justly.<sup>b</sup> The other contest was in the choice of Basil, and he, justly styled a person of incomparable worth, carried it, though with some difficulty, (the rulers and the worst of the people joining with them, making some opposition.) There was no need to have reckoned these among the most dangerous seditions; they might have been passed by, but only that Nazianzen complains so much of the inconvenience of popular elections, that he wished them altered, and the elections brought to the clergy, as the Doctor tells us. Some observe that Nazianzen had sometimes wishes, which would now be counted odd and untoward. Once he wished that there were no episcopal pre-eminence, no *προεδρία*, by which that pre-eminence is most commonly expressed, both by himself and others.<sup>c</sup> Another time he was ready to wish there were no synods of bishops, and was resolved, for his part, never to come at<sup>d</sup> any, having never seen any good issue of them. But he was a very excellent person, and should not be wronged. He did not wish, what is here said, that elections might be brought to the clergy, (that is, the clergy alone; that must be the meaning, or else he is made to wish for that which he had already,) he would not have the power lie in them only, but in them and the select and more holy part of people: *τῷ ἐγκρίτῳ καὶ καθαρωτάτῳ*, neither in both these only, but in them only, or chiefly, *ἢ ὅτι μάλιστα*.<sup>e</sup>

The third instance hath no less of mistake in it, or rather more, such as renders it wholly impertinent. "It is a sedition at Alexandria. Evagrius saith, The sedition at Alexandria was intolerable, upon the division of the people between Dioscorus and Proterius, the people rising against the magistrates and soldiers who endeavoured to keep them in order; and at last they murdered Proterius."—p. 319.

But this sedition was not raised at the election of Proterius, who

<sup>a</sup> Orat. xix. p. 308.

<sup>d</sup> to.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid. p. 310.

<sup>e</sup> Orat. xix. p. 310.

<sup>c</sup> Orat. xxviii.

succeeded Dioscorus, but after he was installed, and confirmed, by the common suffrage of a meeting at Alexandria.<sup>a</sup> No part of the tumult but was some time after this; but the most tragical part, when Proterius was murdered, was five or six years after. And shall popular elections be decried upon the account of a sedition whereof nothing appeared at the election? Besides, those who moved sedition and committed the said outrages, were enemies of the Council of Chalcedon, and of the faith then maintained against Eutyches. These were the chief actors, and the incendiaries were Timotheus Ælurus, some bishops and monks, who, upon that account, had separated from the Catholic church, as the Egyptian bishops and clergy show in their narrative sent to Leo the emperor.<sup>b</sup> Now shall the people who adhere to the common faith suffer in their power or liberty, because some heretics in opposition to them do act outrageously?

“He proceeds to another at Rome upon the choice of Damasus, which came to bloodshed for several days, and is particularly related by Ammianus Marcellinus,” &c.

Ammianus, in the book cited, discovers the rise and ground of that outrageous action to which it may be truly ascribed, and without which the election might have been as orderly and innocent as in other places. After he had described this church tragedy, in which a hundred and thirty-seven persons were slain, he adds, I cannot deny, considering the pomp and bravery at Rome, but those that aspire to that (bishopric) should, with all their might, strive to attain it, since having compassed it, they will be at once enriched *matronarum oblationibus*, with the oblations of matrons, carried abroad in chariots, speciously attired, and faring so deliciously, that their feasts are more than princely, so that the riches, state, and pleasures, wherewith the chair at Rome accommodated those bishops, incited them to make their way to it, with all the force they could engage, though they could not pass but through blood and slaughters. Then he subjoins, They might have been happy (and so avoided this and other miseries) if despising this grandeur, they would have imitated the bishops in the provinces, whose poor fare, and mean habit, and humble, lowly carriage, commended them both to God and good men. The smallness and poorness of the bishoprics in other places secured them from such scandalous proceedings, and temptations to them. We hear no complaints of any outrages or irregularities in elections to such bishoprics, nor to any that were of the ancient and primitive form and state. Not one instance is brought, for three hundred years after Christ, of any such disorders in the choice of bishops. But as bishoprics transgressed the ancient

<sup>a</sup> Evagr. lib. ii. cap. 5.

<sup>b</sup> Idem ibid. cap. viii.

bounds, and swelled bigger and bigger, distempers increased accordingly, and had their paroxysms now and then, such as this at Rome. These are not natural to elections by the people, their order and innocence for so many ages show it, but accidental and occasional; and when the disorders are ascribed to their true and proper causes and occasions, these elections will be acquitted. When the world was let into the church, and the church cast into the model of the empire, no wonder if the church-men acted where they had temptations, and would have others act like the men of this world.

“But are these tolerable inconveniences?” The worst of them are no ways in the nature of the thing, but occasioned by accidents foreign to it, and such as may fall out in the best institutions the church has and observes; and how intolerable soever they may seem, the ancient church thought it more intolerable to exclude the people from the liberty of choosing.

What is alleged out of Chrysostom, Jerome, and Origen, with some reflection upon the people, I need not examine, unless it were of more moment. If it be not applicable to those who succeed the people in this power, yet did not these excellent persons think it a sufficient ground to decry the current practice and sense of the church, by which popular elections were upheld and maintained, both in their times and long after.

Come we to the third thing he will have us consider, page 320. “To prevent these inconveniences many bishops were appointed, without the choice of the people, and canons were made for the regulation of elections. In the church of Alexandria the choice of the bishop belonged to the twelve presbyters, who was to be chosen not only out of the twelve presbyters, but by them.” For this Jerome, Severus, &c. are cited.

But Jerome did not say that the bishop was chosen by the presbyters, but out of them, *Unum ex se* (not *à se*) *electum episcopum nominabant*,<sup>a</sup> “They nominated as bishop, one chosen from amongst (not *by*) themselves.” Nor doth Severus, as he is cited, say that it belonged to the presbyters alone. And if there be no evidence that they did it alone, we need not be solicitous about what Elmacinus saith concerning its original or continuance. The alteration which Hilary speaks of concerns not those who were to choose, but those out of whom the bishop was to be chosen. Formerly one of these presbyters was to be elected, but now the most deserving person might be chosen, whether of that body or not. So he not speaking of any change made as to the electors, for anything he says, the same persons who did choose in his time did so before; and

<sup>a</sup> Epist. ad Evagr.

the electors in that age were not only the presbyters, but both clergy and people; not in other churches alone, but this particularly of Alexandria, as appears by the election of Athanasius, Peter, and other bishops there made, *ψηφῶ τοῦ λαοῦ παντὸς*.<sup>a</sup>

But though that of Jerome, on whom the rest cited depend, will not serve to prove the sole power of presbyters to choose; yet it may be a proof of their power to do something greater, viz. to ordain their bishops. And this use is made of it by very learned persons, and particularly (not to mention the most excellent primate Usher) by Dr. St[illingfleet],<sup>b</sup> whom we may see arguing it, like himself, with learning and judgment.

He seems not unwilling that what the counterfeit Ambrose speaks of the bishops dying, and the next in course succeeding, should pass for a particular conceit of that author; and with more reason may it so pass, if he would have the next succeed, though not worthy; or the people no way to interpose their judgment concerning such unworthiness. But of this he expresses nothing.

He proceeds, page 321. "We find the bishops consecrating others in several churches, without any mention of choice made by the people."

But this is no tolerable arguing; there is no mention of any, therefore there was none. Otherwise, where a bishop is said to be made, and no mention made of any ordination, but only of election by the people, it might be concluded that a bishop had no ordination. As when Nazianzen speaks of Athanasius's coming to the chair at Alexandria by the votes of all the people, without mentioning his ordination,<sup>c</sup> and when Jerome speaks of a bishop elected by the people, without any mention of his ordination,<sup>d</sup> would it be thought tolerable to infer from hence that a bishop was made without ordination? Or when one is said to be constituted bishop of a church, without mention either of election or ordination, doth it follow that he was made bishop there without either? An hundred instances hereof may be found in Eusebius, the author cited; but we need go no further than the very place which the Doctor makes use of. Eusebius says, that Germanio succeeded Dius in the bishopric at Jerusalem, and after him Gordius, in whose time Narcissus returned;<sup>e</sup> he mentions no ordination or election of either. And Alexander was settled bishop there by the desires and importunity of the people, encouraged therein by revelation, but no mention of his ordination; only, it is said, the people did it with the common consent of the bishops thereabouts.<sup>f</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Naz. Orat. xxi. [p. 377.] Theodor. lib. iv. cap. xviii.

<sup>c</sup> Orat. xxi. p. 377.

<sup>e</sup> Euseb. lib. vi. cap. x

<sup>b</sup> Iren. page 273.

<sup>d</sup> In Ezek. lib. x. cap. xxxiii.

<sup>f</sup> Cap. xi.

“Severus, bishop of Milevis, in his life-time appointed his successor, and acquainted the clergy with it, but not the people ; great disturbance was feared thereupon,” &c.

For a bishop to appoint his successor was both against the ordinary practice and rules of the ancient church. It is prohibited by divers synods, and particularly by that of Antioch.<sup>a</sup> But Severus committed another error, not acquainting the people with it, and this was like to be of dangerous consequence, thereupon great disturbance was feared. St. Austin himself shows his dislike of this omission ; *Minus aliquid factum erat, unde nonnulli contristabantur*, “Something was neglected, at which divers were grieved.” And what was that ? *Ad populum non est locutus*, “He spake not to the people of it.” But Austin coming amongst them took care to make up this defect, by prevailing with the people for their consent and approbation, as himself tells us ; otherwise Severus might have been defeated of his designed successor. St. Austin would not run into such a mistake, but when he desired a successor calls the people together, propounds Eradius, and obtains for him a fair election by the people, with their subscriptions, signifying their approbation of him, and that they willed and desired what Austin propounded, as appears by divers expressions in that epistle.<sup>b</sup>

“So Paulus, the Novatian bishop at Constantinople, appointed his successor, Marcianus, to prevent the contentions that might happen after his death, and got his presbyters to consent to it.”

But the designed successor was neither ordained nor admitted till the people had declared their desire and approbation of him ; that is, till they had chosen him. For three days after the death of Paulus, the paper wherein he expressed his desire that Marcian should succeed him, being opened before the people, (a great multitude,) they all with one voice declare aloud that he was worthy ; which amounts to no less than an unanimous choice of him.<sup>c</sup> And after this, Marcian being found out, he was ordained and installed. So that the Novatians, though on another account they pass for schismatics, yet are not found, no, not in this singular instance, (of a bishop’s designing his successor) to vary from the practice of the Catholics, in admitting the people to choose their own pastor.

Thus far we can find no evidence that, either for the preventing of supposed inconveniences or other accounts, any bishop was settled in a church without the choice of the people. Let us next see what canons were made for the regulation of elections, so as to bereave the people of this privilege, or diminish their power.

<sup>a</sup> Can. xxiii. in Cod. cii.

<sup>b</sup> Epist. cx.

<sup>c</sup> Socrat. Hist. lib. vii. cap. xlvi.

"The Greek canonists are of opinion that the Council of Nice took away all power of election of bishops from the people, and gave it to the bishops of the province."

Those canonists (if any beside Balsamo) were herein greatly mistaken, as most learned men judge and prove; nor do I think the Doctor is of another mind. If he had thought the reasons of this conceit to be of any force, he would have produced them. That this council was far from excluding the people from the power of choosing their bishops is apparent enough by their synodical epistle to those of Alexandria and Egypt, where they declare their judgments, that if any bishops decease, others reconciled to the church may be admitted in their room, if they be worthy, *καὶ ὁ λαὸς αἰροῦτο*, "and the people do choose them."<sup>a</sup>

"It is apparent from the Council of Antioch that bishops were sometimes consecrated without the consent of the people, for it doth suppose a bishop after consecration may not be received by his people."

The question is not whether the election went before the ordination or followed, but whether any bishop might have the chair, and be possessed of the bishopric without the people's consent. This canon doth not suppose that he might, but rather on the contrary; it plainly signifies that the people might refuse a bishop after he was consecrated; and in that case by the canon he may retain the honour and office, but the place he comes not at. For that was a rule in the ancient church religiously observed, and the violation of it counted intolerable; *Sicut antiqui canones decreverunt, nullus invitis detur episcopus*,<sup>b</sup> "As the ancient canons have decreed, let no bishop be offered to the people without their consent." Such ordinations of bishops whom no church desired were not usual, but by the Council of Chalcedon they are plainly forbid, and declared to be nullities.<sup>c</sup>

Out of another canon he would show that the consecration of a bishop was not then performed in his own church.

It was so by ancient custom, as Cyprian<sup>d</sup> declares, and also by later canons the bishop was to be ordained among his own people.<sup>e</sup> Whether it be so or no by this canon is not material, since elections by the people are not at all concerned in it.

"Gregory subscribed at Antioch, as bishop of Alexandria, before ever he went thither."

The way wherein Gregory proceeded to that bishopric, is utterly condemned by the most eminent bishops in all parts, that were not Arians; particularly in the west by Julius at Rome,<sup>f</sup> in the south by

<sup>a</sup> In Socrat. lib. i. [cap. ix.]

<sup>b</sup> Conc. Aurel. v. Can. xi.

<sup>c</sup> Can. vi.

<sup>d</sup> Ep. lxxviii. [al. lxxvii. ad Frat. Hisp.]

<sup>e</sup> Conc. Aurel. iv. [Can. v.]

<sup>f</sup> [Julius, Ep. ad Oriental. tom. i. p. 749.] apud Athanas. Apol. ii.

Athanasius of Alexandria,<sup>a</sup> in the east by Nazianzen.<sup>b</sup> It was an irregular and turbulent act of the Arians; such were they who at Antioch made Gregory bishop, and then sent him with military power to Alexandria, to take possession by force of arms, and expel the great Athanasius. If instances had not been very scarce, this would have been waived.<sup>c</sup>

“So St. Basil mentions his consecration of Euphronius to be bishop of Nicopolis, without any consent of the people before.”

If St. Basil did constitute Euphronius without the previous consent of the people, which was not usual, yet he did not offer to settle him in the chair, till he had gained the consent and approbation of the synod and people, as the Doctor’s words, “but he persuades the senate and people to accept of him,” do plainly signify. But indeed St. Basil doth not say that his consecrating of Euphronius to be bishop of Nicopolis, was without any consent of the people before, (though the Doctor would have it so;) nor find I any thing in that epistle to prove it. Basil there signifies the contrary, when he saith, “The people judged him worthy, and the bishops consented,” *ἄξιον εἶναι καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐδοκιμάσατε, καὶ ἡμεῖς συνεθέμεθα*; which imports that the people first declared their approbation and desire of him, and thereupon the bishops consented to ordain him. “It is true,” he saith, “what the governors do in church affairs have their confirmation (*βεβαιοῦνται*) from the people, and so wishes them to receive the bishop given them.” But a bishop was ordinarily given them, i.e. ordained for them, upon their antecedent desire to have it so. This the Doctor knows, and signifies in the next words.

“If the people did agree upon a person to be bishop, their way then was to petition the metropolitan and his synod, who had the full power either to allow, or refuse him.”

The usual way was, after synods were settled by rule, (as they were in the fourth Age,) for the people, when they wanted a bishop, to meet together, and choose one whom they thought fit, by unanimous consent, or the major vote of the clergy and people; and then to draw up a writing with the subscriptions of the electors, called by the Latins *decretum*, and by the Greeks *ψήφισμα*; and sending this to the synod, thereby signified whom they had chosen, with a desire that he might be ordained; which done, the consecrators, metropolitan or other bishops, had no power at all to refuse the person elected, if he was duly qualified; and in case he was not, they had no power to put another upon them, but only to advise them to proceed to the choice of another,

<sup>a</sup> Epist. ad Solit. [Ed. Col. 1686, tom. i. p. 844, B.] et Epist. ad Orthodox. [tom. i. p. 943, D.]

<sup>b</sup> Orat. xxi.

<sup>c</sup> Socrat. lib. [ii.] cap. x. xi.

as might be made manifest by unquestionable authorities.<sup>a</sup> Yea, such deference had they for elections by the people, that if they had chosen one who was incapable by the canons, if the incapacity could any way be removed, the election was allowed, and the ordainers proceeded upon it. This is evident in the election of Eusebius at Cæsarea, and Nectarius at Constantinople, and Ambrose at Milan, who were chosen by the people to be bishops in the places mentioned, not only before they were ordained, but before they were baptized; yet the elections stood good, and being baptized first, and after<sup>b</sup> ordained, they were admitted to those bishoprics.

“It is evident from the twelfth canon of Laodicea, that although all the people chose a bishop, if he intruded himself into the possession of his see, without the consent of a provincial synod, he was to be turned out or rejected by them. Which shows how much the business of elections was brought into the bishops’ power in the eastern parts.”

I find nothing of this in that or any other canon of that synod; but there is some such thing in the sixteenth canon of the Council at Antioch, and the reason of it was, lest an unworthy person should intrude into a bishopric, the synod was first to be satisfied of his sufficiency: but then if he was found qualified according to the canons, the synod had no power to withhold him from those by whom he was chosen, nor to choose another for them if they judged him incapable. Thus the business of elections was no more brought into the bishops’ power in the eastern parts, (where he intimates their power herein was greatest,) than the business of ordinations was brought into the people’s power; for if the bishops could put him by who was unworthy, though the people had chosen him; so the people might refuse him whom the bishops consecrated, if they were not satisfied in him; nay more, for the bishops’ power was limited to the case of the candidates’ insufficiency; but the people might refuse a person commended by the bishops as sufficient, if they did not like him on other accounts. The consequence of ordaining one for the people, or putting one upon them whom they desired not, was intolerable in the judgment of the ancient church. Leo, a bishop of greatest reputation in his time, thus expressed it: *Nullus invitis et non petentibus ordinetur*, “Let no bishop be ordained for those who are unwilling, and do not desire him.” And the reason wherewith he enforces it, is very considerable;<sup>d</sup> since it is not only an argument for those times, but extends to all ages, and leaves it not tolerable at any time, *Ne plebs invita episcopum non optatum aut contemnat, aut oderit, et fiat minus religiosa quam convenit, cui non*

<sup>a</sup> Greg. lib. vi. Ep. xxxviii. lib. vii. Ep. xxxiv. lib. viii. Ep. xl.

<sup>b</sup> afterwards.

competency.

<sup>d</sup> worthy of consideration.



*licuerit habere quem voluit*,<sup>a</sup> “Lest the people not consenting, do either condemn or hate a bishop whom they desire not; and become less religious than they should be, when they may not have such a one as they would have.”

Let me only add, that those who have any respect for modern bishops, such as get possession of their sees without regard either of the people's choice or the consent of a provincial synod, ought to beware of this canon; since it leaves them no more title to any episcopal chair, than Bassianus and Stephanus had to that at Ephesus, when upon this account, they were ejected by the sentence of the fathers at Chalcedon, and the greatest council that the ancient church ever had.

“By the law of Justinian, the common people were excluded from elections of bishops, and the clergy and better sort of citizens were to nominate three to the metropolitan, out of which he was to choose one.”

The law of that emperor enjoins, that the clergy and better sort of citizens do draw up the electing decree, (*ψηφίσματα ποιεῖν*), but doth not enjoin that the other citizens be excluded from concurring in the election, or to make any without their liking. In the code we have another of his laws, where it is enacted, That the choice be made, *παρὰ τῶν οἰκούντων τὴν πόλιν*,<sup>b</sup> by the inhabitants of the city, in general, without any discrimination. Nor doth the former constitution oblige them precisely to choose and present three; they have liberty by it, if they find not three sufficient persons, (and none appointed to be judges thereof but themselves) to name two or but one.

“By the canon of Laodicea, the common people were excluded from the power of choosing any into the clergy, for they were wont to raise tumults upon such occasions.”

That canon, in Bishop Bilson's judgment, concerns only presbyters;<sup>c</sup> the meaning of it is this, that it is not fit elections should be left to the rabble (*ὄχλοις*) only or chiefly, without the clergy and better sort of the people, who may keep the rest in order, and prevent tumults. The import of the words *ἐπιτρέπειν* and *ὄχλοις* leads us thus to understand it; and the sense and practice of the church every where at that time, expressed in the councils and the best writers of that age, wherein the synod was held, will not suffer us to take it in any sense, exclusive of the interest of the common people in the choice of their pastors; unless we will have it to be a singular *capriccio*<sup>d</sup> of a few bishops in this assembly, in opposition to the common sentiments of the Christian world.

<sup>a</sup> Ep. lxxxiv. cap. v.

<sup>c</sup> Perpet. Gov. cap. xv. p. 342.

<sup>b</sup> [Lib. i. Tit. iii.] De Episcopis. Lex. xlii.

<sup>d</sup> caprice.

"The second Council of Nice restrained the elections only to bishops."<sup>a</sup>—p. 323.

The third canon of that council determines, that the magistrates' appointing of bishops is a nullity; confirming it by an ancient canon, (one of those which passed for apostolical.) But that clause whereby Bellarmine and others will have elections restrained to bishops is mistaken, ordinations being thereby intended, not elections; which is apparent because they cite for it the fourth canon of the first Council of Nice, in which episcopal ordinations are appropriated to bishops, but nothing expressed, or intimated concerning elections. Thus is this passage alleged by the Doctor understood by Bishop Bilson;<sup>b</sup> and thereby all advantages are cut off which others would make of it, against elections by the people.

The eighth Council of Constantinople might as well have been spared, confirming neither the former, nor anything else for the Doctor's purpose, though it be said the people are here excluded with an anathema. It is well the curse came no sooner, than towards the latter end of the ninth age. But what if that synod never anathematised any such thing? The canon cited for it is the twenty-eighth, which in other Latin copies is the twenty-second, but the Greek edition hath but fourteen in all; and the Greek church (whose council it was) owns no more; so that this canon looks no better than a piece of (some Latin's) forgery.

I need not add that this synod was ten years after condemned, by a far more numerous council at the same place. Baronius gives a full account of it, though with such reflections upon Photius and his adherents, as is suitable to his usual partiality. But it seems there is great scarcity of evidence when this canon, and that of the second Nicene Council, cited immediately before, must be made use of: seeing this leaves the way of making bishops now used amongst us, under a curse; the other makes our bishops, however consecrated, to be no bishops, and will have those debarred from communion who communicate with them. And this is considerable,<sup>c</sup> as grounded upon an ancient canon. Indeed it was the sense of the ancient church for many ages, if we may judge thereof by councils or writers in those ages, not only that bishops ought to be chosen by the people, but that none ought to be owned as bishops who were not so chosen.

"The fourth thing he would have considered is, That when there were Christian magistrates, they did interpose in this matter as they judged expedient."

<sup>a</sup> Can. iii.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid. p. 369.

<sup>c</sup> worthy of consideration.

He brings many instances ; I shall begin with those which seem less pertinent, and so proceed to the rest.

“After the death of Alexander, bishop of Constantinople, the people fell into parties; some were for Paulus, and others for Macedonius: the emperor Constantius coming hither puts them both by, and appoints Eusebius, of Nicomedia, to be bishop there.”

The Arians were so hot and violent for the promoting of their party, that they transgressed the rules, orders, and usages of the church, trampling on all that stood in their way. This did Constantius, and his design was utterly to subvert the Christian faith in that main fundamental of it, concerning the eternal Godhead of Christ.<sup>a</sup>

In order hereto, he thrust out those who, according to the rule and order of the church, were duly chosen by such who adhered to the true faith, particularly Paulus ; and gives the chair to Eusebius, of Nicomedia, the *antesignanus*,<sup>b</sup> of the Arians, and one who, by his great interest, subtile counsels, and mischievous actings, did more propagate Arianism, than Arius himself: and afterwards gives order that Paulus be banished, and that Macedonius, one as bad or worse than Eusebius, should have the chair, not according to the rule of the church, but by the will of the governor, as the historian notes,<sup>c</sup> and his way is made to it through the death of three thousand one hundred and fifty of the people. Now this is scarce a proper instance, for that was proposed to be given in Christian emperors ; but the Arians were not counted Christians. Athanasius proves that they ought not to be so called in divers orations,<sup>d</sup> and Constantius was an Arian, indeed a great zealot for promoting of that heresy, and suppressing the true faith. He banished the orthodox bishops, saith Theodoret.<sup>e</sup> He made a law for the utter demolishing of their churches, says Socrates.<sup>f</sup> He commanded Athanasius to be killed, and proposed rewards to those that would assassinate him ; and raised a general persecution against the professors of the true faith, much like to those under the heathen emperors, says Sozomen.<sup>g</sup> What such a prince did against the rule and practice of the true church, and the rights of the faithful people in elections, will rather commend them, than be any prejudice to them.

“When Athanasius was restored, Constantius declared it was by the decree of the synod, and by his consent ; and he, by his authority, restored likewise Paulus and Marcellus,” &c.

But to what purpose is this alleged ? Is there no difference between choosing and restoring ? How did Constantius interpose for the

<sup>a</sup> Socrat. lib. [ii.] cap. vii.

<sup>b</sup> Standard-bearer, ringleader.

<sup>c</sup> Socrat. lib. [ii.] cap. xvi.

<sup>d</sup> Orat. i. [ed. Col. 1686, tom. i. p. 296, A. ;] Orat. ii. [tom. i. p. 316, ed. Paris, 1627 ;] Orat. iv. [ed. Col. 1686, tom. i. p. 481, A.]

<sup>e</sup> Lib. ii. cap. xv.

<sup>f</sup> [Lib. ii. cap. xxxviii.]

<sup>g</sup> Lib. iv. cap. xlii. xiv.

hindering of the people's elections, by restoring those bishops who were before duly chosen by the people? Their choice hereby is rather countenanced and confirmed. I can discern no reason why it is made use of against it. There seems to be neither proof nor pertinency in these instances.

"After the death of Sisinnius, the emperor declared, that, to prevent disturbance, he would have none of the clergy of Constantinople chosen bishop there; and so Nestorius was brought from Antioch."

But his being brought from Antioch is no proof that he was not chosen by the people; for Chrysostom was brought from the same place, and was none of the clergy of Constantinople more than Nestorius, yet was called thither, and placed in the chair by the votes of the people, as will appear presently. And why should it be thought Nestorius was not chosen by the people? Doth Socrates, cited as giving this account of him, say he was not? No, "but he doth not mention his choice." Nor doth he speak a word of his ordination: shall we therefore conclude that he was neither elected nor ordained? If this were an argument, there are hundreds that we must account bishops without either ordination or election. But though there be no reason why we should think that Nestorius was not chosen, yet there is apparent reason why the choice should not be mentioned. For an unanimous choice by the people was an honour, and wont to be put among the encomiums of worthy bishops. But Nestorius, after he got the chair, answered not their expectation, but showed himself worthy of an ill character, both by his actions and judgment; and so in fine was condemned as a heretic by a general council at Ephesus, and banished by the emperor. Thereupon the historian might think himself concerned to waive that which was much for the honour of one who so little deserved it.

There are three or four instances which seem more pertinent and considerable,<sup>a</sup> which I have therefore taken the liberty to put together; but indeed there is some mistake in them, I would not say they are misrepresented.

"So Constantine did in the church of Antioch, when there was great dissension there upon the deposition of Eustathius; he recommended to the synod Euphronius of Cappadocia and Georgius of Arethusa, or whom they should judge fit, without taking any notice of the interest of the people."

But how doth it appear that Constantine took no notice of the interest of the people? No otherwise, but because Sozomen speaks not of it. Of what weight this argument is, we have seen before. But what if another author declare that he did take notice of it? Eusebius, who knew

<sup>a</sup> worthy of consideration.

the whole matter as well and better than Sozomen, being particularly concerned therein, tells us plainly that Constantine did, in his letters to the people of Antioch, take notice of the people's interest in the choice of their bishop. For, says he, the emperor advises them not to desire the bishop of another church, (in reference to Eusebius, whom they had a mind to, though he was then bishop of Casarea,) but, "according to the custom or decree of the church, to choose one to be their pastor," as the common Saviour did direct them, *θεσμῶ ἐκκλησίας τοῦτον αἰρέσθαι ποιμένα*.<sup>a</sup> And in the emperor's epistle there are divers expressions which signify no less.

"When Gregory Nazianzen resigned the bishopric of Constantinople, Theodosius commended to the bishops the care of finding out a person; who, recommending many to him, the emperor himself pitched upon Nectarius, and would have him made bishop," &c.

If this will any way serve the purpose for which it is alleged, the emperor must pitch upon Nectarius, so as to have him made bishop without any previous choice of the people; but there is no ground for this, nay, there is clear and unquestionable evidence against it. For the general council at Constantinople, in the latter end of their synodical epistle to the western bishops, declared that Nectarius was chosen by the suffrage of the whole city. We have, say these fathers, ordained Nectarius, with the unanimous concurrence of this œcumenical synod, all the clergy and all the city giving their voices for it, *πάσης ἐπιψηφισομένης τῆς πόλεως*.<sup>b</sup>

"When Chrysostom was chosen at Constantinople, the royal assent was given by Arcadius, the election being made, saith Sozomen, by the people and clergy; but Palladius gives a more particular account of it," &c.—p. 324.

About the choice of Chrysostom to Constantinople, Sozomen says, the clergy and people having voted it, *ψηφισομένων δε τοῦτο τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ κλήρου*, the emperor gave his consent. Socrates says, that by the common decree (*ψηφίσματι κοινῷ*) of the clergy and people, the emperor sent for him to Constantinople.<sup>c</sup> "But Palladius gives a more particular account;" says he—Yet in that account, and the works cited for that purpose, there is nothing at all which denies that Chrysostom was thus unanimously chosen by the people. Now, shall we believe that Chrysostom was not thus chosen, upon the testimony of Palladius, who doth not deny it, against two credible witnesses, who positively and expressly affirm that such was the choice? To these might be added the writers of the life of Chrysostom, particularly George, patriarch of Alexandria,

<sup>a</sup> Euseb. De Vitâ Constant. lib. iii. cap. lvii.

<sup>b</sup> In Theodor. Hist. lib. v. cap. ix.

<sup>c</sup> Lib. vi. cap. ii.

who, as Photius declares, made his collections out of Palladius, among others.<sup>a</sup>

“So that there was no antecedent election of the people, as Sozomen says; but whatever there was, was subsequent to the emperor’s determination.”

Sozomen is here contradicted, without ground, and to little purpose. Whether the election was antecedent or no is not material, since the emperor’s determination was neither against nor without the people’s choice; yet evidence is produced for the election as antecedent, and none at all against it.

“Maximianus being dead, he gave order that Proclus should be made bishop before the other’s body was buried.”

Maximianus being dead, the emperor (ἐπέτρεψεν is the historian’s word) permitted Proclus; so that, if he was not chosen, the emperor interposed not there by positive order, but by permission only. But, indeed, Proclus, in an election before, had the voices of the major part for him, and so had carried it, but for a groundless suggestion that the canons did forbid it.<sup>b</sup> This being but about two years before, the place was again void by the death of Maximianus, and the sense and desires of the people for Proclus being sufficiently known by their late suffrages, a new election was not needful, but he admitted to be installed without more ado.

Thus we have made it manifest that all these instances are not sufficient to show that any one truly Christian prince did, from the first, think fit, upon any occasion, to make use of their authority, either to deprive the people of their power in elections, or to obtrude any bishops upon the churches without the people’s choice. As for Constantius being an Arian, the ancient church did not esteem him a Christian; Hilary makes bold to call him antichrist. And what he did to the prejudice of the people’s privilege herein, since it was done to promote Arianism, and for the subversion of the Christian faith, is little more to be regarded, or drawn into example, than if Julian had done the like in favour of heathenism.

The two last heads concern only the usages of later times, which I had no design to take notice of.

<sup>a</sup> In Chrysost. tom. viii. page 483.

<sup>b</sup> Socrat. lib. vii. cap. xxxv