

For superiority of power may be either above them or upon them, in regard of whom it is termed superiority. One pastor hath superiority of power above another, when either some are authorized to do things worthier than are permitted unto all, [or] some are preferred to be principal agents, the rest agents with dependency and subordination. The former of these two kinds of superiority is such as the high-priest had above other priests of the law, in being appointed to enter once a year the holy place, which the rest of the priests might not do. The latter superiority, such as presidents have in those actions which are done by others with them, they nevertheless being principal and chief therein.

One pastor hath superiority of power, not only above but upon another, when some are subject unto others' commandment and judicial controlment by virtue of public jurisdiction.

Superiority in this last kind is utterly denied to be allowable; in the rest it is only denied that the lasting continuance and settled permanency thereof is lawful. So that if we prove at all the lawfulness of superiority in this last kind, where the same is simply denied, and of permanent superiority in the rest where some kind of superiority is granted, but with restraint to the term and continuance of certain actions, with which the same must, as they say, expire and cease; if we can shew these two things maintainable, we bear up sufficiently that which the adverse party endeavoureth to overthrow. Our desire therefore is, that this issue may be strictly observed, and those things accordingly judged of, which we are to allege. This we boldly therefore set down as a most infallible truth, "That the Church of Christ is at this day lawfully, and so hath been sithence the first beginning, governed by Bishops, having permanent superiority, and ruling power over other ministers of the word and sacraments."

[2.] For the plainer explication whereof, let us briefly declare first, the birth and original of the same power, whence and by what occasion it grew. Secondly, what manner of power antiquity doth witness bishops to have had more than presbyters which were no bishops. Thirdly, after what sort bishops together with presbyters have used to govern the

churches under them, according to the like testimonial evidence of antiquity. Fourthly, how far the same episcopal power hath usually extended, unto what number of persons it hath reached, what bounds and limits of place it hath had. This done, we may afterwards descend unto those by whom the same either hath been heretofore, or is at this present hour gainsaid.

IV. The first Bishops in the Church of Christ were his blessed Apostles; for the office whereunto Matthias was chosen the sacred history doth term *ἐπισκοπήν*, an episcopal office. Which being spoken expressly of one, agreeth no less unto them all than unto him. For which cause St. Cyprian¹ speaking generally of them all doth call them Bishops. They which were termed Apostles, as being sent of Christ to publish his gospel throughout the world, and were named likewise Bishops, in that the care of government was also committed unto them, did no less perform the offices of their episcopal authority by governing, than of their apostolical by teaching. The word *ἐπισκοπή*, expressing that part of their office which did consist in regiment, proveth not (I grant) their chieftly in regiment over others, because as then that name was common unto the function of their inferiors, and not peculiar unto theirs. But the history of their actions sheweth plainly enough how the thing itself which that name appropriated importeth, that is to say, even such spiritual chieftly as we have already defined to be properly episcopal, was in the holy Apostles of Christ. Bishops therefore they were at large.

[2.] But was it lawful for any of them to be a bishop with restraint? True it is their charge was indefinite; yet so, that in case they did all whether severally or jointly discharge the office of proclaiming every where the gospel and of guiding the Church of Christ, none of them casting off his part in their burden² which was laid upon them, there doth appear no impediment but that they having received their common charge indefinitely might in the execution thereof notwithstanding

¹ "Meminisse diaconi debent, 65. p. 113, ed. Baluz.]
"quoniam apostolos, id est, epi-² Rom. ii. 14, 15; 1 Cor. ix. 16;
"scopos et præpositos, Dominus John xxi. 15, 16.
"elegit." Cypr. l. iii. ep. 9. [al. ep.

From
whence it
hath grown
that the
Church is
governed
by Bishops.

standing restrain themselves, or at leastwise be restrained by the after commandment of the Spirit, without contradiction or repugnancy unto that charge more indefinite and general before given them: especially if it seemed at any time requisite, and for the greater good of the Church, that they should in such sort tie themselves unto some special part of the flock of Jesus Christ, guiding the same in several as bishops. For first, notwithstanding our Saviour's commandment unto them all to go and preach unto all nations; yet some restraint we see there was made, when by agreement between Paul and Peter¹, moved with those effects of their labours which the providence of God brought forth, the one betook himself unto the Gentiles, the other unto the Jews, for the exercise of that office of every where preaching. A further restraint of their apostolic labours as yet there was also made, when they divided themselves into several parts of the world; John² for his charge taking Asia, and so the residue other quarters to labour in. If nevertheless it seem very hard that we should admit a restraint so particular, as after that general charge received to make any Apostle notwithstanding the bishop of some one church; what think we of the bishop of Jerusalem³, James, whose consecration unto that mother see

¹ Gal. ii. 8.

² Him Eusebius doth name the governor of the churches in Asia, lib. iii. Hist. Eccles. c. 16. [i. Θῶμας μὲν, ὡς ἡ παράδοσις περιέχει, τὴν Παρθίαν εἴληχεν, Ἀνδρέας δὲ τὴν Σκυθίαν, Ἰωαννὴς τὴν Ἀσίαν πρὸς οὓς καὶ διατρίψας, ἐν Ἐφέσῳ τελευτᾷ.] Tertullian calleth the same churches St. John's foster-daughters, advers. Marcion. [lib. iv. c. 5. "Si constat, id verius quod prius, id prius quod et ab initio, id ab initio quod ab apostolis; pariter utique constabit, id esse ab apostolis traditum quod apud ecclesias apostolorum fuerit sacrosanctum. Videamus quod lac a Paulo Corinthii hausert; ad quam regulam Galatæ sint recorrecti; quid legant Philipenses, Thessalonicenses, Ephesii; quid etiam Romani de proximo sonent, quibus evangelium et Petrus et Paulus sanguine quoque suo signatum reliquerunt. *Habe-*

mus et Joannis alumnas ecclesias.

"Nam etsi Apocalypsin ejus Marcion respuit, ordo tamen episcoporum ad originem recens in Joannem stabit auctorem. Sic et cæterarum generositas recognoscitur."]

³ "Jacobus, qui appellatur frater Domini, cognomento Justus, post passionem Domini statim ab apostolis Hierosolymorum episcopus ordinatus est." Hieron. Scrip. Eccles. Catal. ii. [al. De Viris Illustr. c. 2. t. ii. 815, ed. Vallars.] "Eodem tempore Jacobum primum sedem episcopalem Ecclesiæ, quæ est Hierosolymis, obtinuisse memoriæ traditur." [τότε δὴτα καὶ Ἰάκωβον, τὸν τοῦ Κυρίου λεγόμενον ἀδελφόν. . . πρῶτον ἱστοροῦσι τῆς ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἐκκλησίας τὸν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἐγχειρισθῆναι θρόνον.] Euseb. Hist. Ecclesiast. lib. ii. cap. 1. The same seemeth to be intimated, Acts xv. 13; xxi. 18.

of the world, because it was not meet that it should at any time be left void of some Apostle, doth seem to have been the very cause of St. Paul's miraculous vocation, to make up the number of the twelve again, for the gathering of nations abroad, even as the martyrdom of the other James, the reason why Barnabas in his stead¹ was called.

Finally, Apostles, whether they did settle in any one certain place, as James, or else did otherwise, as the Apostle Paul, episcopal authority either at large or with restraint they had and exercised. Their episcopal power they sometimes gave unto others to exercise as agents only in their stead, and as it were by commission from them. Thus Titus², and thus Timothy, at the first, though afterwards endued with apostolical power of their own³.

[3.] For in process of time the Apostles gave episcopal authority, and that to continue always with them which had it. "We are able to number up them," saith Irenæus⁴, "who by the Apostles were made bishops." In Rome he affirmeth that the Apostles themselves made Linus the first bishop⁵. Again of Polycarp he saith likewise⁶, that the Apostles made him bishop of the church of Smyrna. Of Antioch they made Evodius bishop, as Ignatius witnesseth⁷, exhorting that church to tread in his holy steps, and to follow his virtuous example.

The Apostles therefore were the first which had such authority, and all others who have it after them in orderly sort are their lawful successors, whether they succeed in any particular church, where before them some Apostle hath been

¹ Acts xii. 2; xiii. 2.

² Titus i. 5.

³ This appeareth by those subscriptions which are set after the epistle to Titus, and the second to Timothy, and by Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 4. [§ 2. Τιμόθεός γε μὴν τῆς ἐν Ἐφέσῳ παροικίας ἱστορεῖται πρῶτος τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν εἰληχέναι ὡς καὶ Τίτος τῶν ἐπὶ Κρήτης ἐκκλησιῶν.]

⁴ Iren. lib. iii. cap. 3. ["Habemus annumerare eos qui ab Apostolis instituti sunt Episcopi in Ecclesiis."]

⁵ [Ibid. § 3. οἰκοδομήσαντες οἱ

μακάριοι ἀπόστολοι τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, Λίνῳ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς λειτουργίαν ἐνεχείρισαν.]

⁶ [Ibid. § 4. Πολύκαρπος . . . οὐ μόνον ὑπὸ ἀποστόλων μαθητευθεὶς, καὶ συναναστραφείς πολλοῖς τοῖς τὸν Χριστὸν ἑωρακόσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑπὸ ἀποστόλων κατασταθεὶς εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν ἐν τῇ ἐν Σμύρνῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐπίσκοπος.]

⁷ In Ep. [adscript.] ad Antioch. [c. 7. μνημονεύσατε Εὐδοίου τοῦ ἀξιωμακωρίστου ποιμένος ὑμῶν, ὃς πρῶτος ἐνεχειρίσθη παρὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων τὴν ὑμετέραν προστασίαν ἢ καταισχύνωμεν τὸν πατέρα γενώμεθα γνήσιοι παῖδες, ἀλλὰ μὴ νόθοι.]

seated, as Simon succeeded James in Jerusalem ; or else be otherwise endued with the same kind of bishoply power, although it be not where any Apostle before hath been. For to succeed them, is after them to have that episcopal kind of power which was first given to them. "All bishops are," saith Jerome¹, "the Apostles' successors." In like sort Cyprian² doth term bishops, "Præpositos qui Apostolis vicaria "ordinatione succedunt." From hence it may haply seem to have grown, that they whom we now call Bishops³ were usually termed at the first Apostles, and so did carry their very names in whose rooms of spiritual authority they succeeded.

[4.] Such as deny Apostles to have any successors⁴ at all in the office of their apostleship, may hold that opinion without contradiction to this of ours, if they well explain themselves in declaring what truly and properly apostleship is. In some things every presbyter, in some things only bishops, in some things neither the one nor the other are the Apostles' successors. The Apostles were sent⁵ as special chosen eyewitnesses of Jesus Christ, from whom immediately they received their whole embassy, and their commission to be the principal first founders of an house of God, consisting as well of Gentiles as of Jews. In this there are not after them any other like unto them ; and yet the Apostles have now their successors upon earth, their true successors⁶, if not in the largeness,

¹ Hieron. ep. 85. [al. 101, § 1. "Omnes Apostolorum successores "sunt."]

² Cypr. Ep. ad Flor. [ep. 66. c. 3. ed. Fell.]

³ Theod. in 1 Tim. iii. [1. τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἐκάλουν τότε πρεσβυτέρους καὶ ἐπισκόπους· τοὺς δὲ νῦν καλουμένους ἐπισκόπους, ἀποστόλους ὠνόμαζον.]

⁴ "Ipsius apostolatus nulla successio. Finitur enim legatio cum "legato, nec ad successores ipsius "transit." Stapl. [Thomas Stapleton, 1535-1598, a famous Roman Catholic controversialist.] Doct. Prin. lib. vi. cap. 7. [Opp. i. 213.]

⁵ Acts i. 21, 22 ; 1 John i. 3 ; Gal. i. 1 ; Apoc. xxi. 14 : Matt. xviii. 19.

⁶ ["Omnia Dei dona quæ fuerunt in Apostolis et Evangelistis "proprie erunt inspicienda, ut scia-

mus, quid Apostolis eorumque "temporibus fuerit peculiare, quid "commune futurum sit cæteris omnibus Ecclesiæ ministris, usque "ad consummationem sæculi. Primum quod in Apostolis nobis est "considerandum, est vocatio illa "extraordinaria, quæ proxime a Deo "est facta : deinde, legatio nullis "circumscripta finibus : tertium, "quod in iis omnibus quæ ad ipsorum spectabant officium, infallibilem habuerunt directorem, Sp. Sanctum, qui suggestit ipsis quæcunque prius a Domino audiverant, et omnia quæ ad hominum salutem et ecclesiæ ædificationem erant necessaria, adeo ut in ipsorum potestate non fuerit a veritate deflectere. Postremum est ipsius "apostolatus potestas. "Priora illa tria fuerunt necessa-

surely in the kind of that episcopal function, whereby they had power to sit as spiritual ordinary judges, both over laity and over clergy, where churches Christian were established.

V. The Apostles of our Lord did according unto those directions which were given them from above, erect churches in all such cities as received the word of truth, the gospel of God. All churches by them erected received from them the same faith, the same sacraments, the same form of public regiment. The form of regiment by them established at first was, that the laity or people should be subject unto a college of ecclesiastical persons, which were in every such city appointed for that purpose. These in their writings they term sometime presbyters, sometime bishops. To take one church out of a number for a pattern what the rest were ; the presbyters of Ephesus, as it is in the history¹ of their departure from the Apostle Paul at Miletum, are said to have wept abundantly all, which speech doth shew them to have been many. And by the Apostle's exhortation it may appear that they had not each his several flock to feed, but were in common appointed to feed that one flock, the church of Ephesus ; for which cause the phrase of his speech is this², *Attendite gregi*, "Look all to that "one flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops." These persons ecclesiastical being termed as then, presbyters and bishops both, were all subject unto Paul as to an higher governor appointed of God to be over them³.

"ria ponendis fundamentis ecclesi-
"arum super quæ aliis superstruerent,
"quæ nisi certam conjunctam Sp.
"Sancti haberent firmitatem, labas-
"ceret quicquid ab aliis postea su-
"perstructum fuit. Edendi miracula
"gratiam prætereo, quod illa
"data sit non Apostolis tantum
"aliisque Ecclesiæ pastoribus, sed
"quibusvis ut Deo visum fuit fide-
"libus, ut de fide in Filium Dei
"certam et indubitam fidem face-
"rent. Ex omnibus his donis nihil
"successibus communicare poterunt
"præter evangelii ministerium :
"quod cum Apostolicæ potestati
"conjunctum sit, eam simul ad pos-
"teros transmiserunt : utpote quæ
"non tantum propagandis, verum
"etiam conservandis ecclesiis sit
"necessaria. Sine verbi Dei præ-

"dicatione, et sacramentorum usu,
"ac ecclesiastico regimine, nulla
"ecclesia recte potest subsistere.
"Quemadmodum prædicatio verbi
"Dei, baptismus, et cæna Domini
"non sunt data Ecclesiæ, ut tantum
"servirent temporibus Apostolorum,
"sed etiam futuris sæculis usque ad
"Domini adventum ; sic etiam regiminis forma quæ ab ipso Domino
"fuit instituta, et ab Apostolis tra-
"dita, et usu patrum confirmata,
"permanere debet. Illa autem ha-
"buit inferiores et superiores pas-
"tores : ergo id in Ecclesia Christi
"retinendum est." Saravia de Div.
"Ministr. Grad. c. 14. p. 33.]

¹ Acts xx. 36, 37.

² Acts xx. 28.

³ As appeareth both by his sending to call the presbyters of Ephesus

[2.] But forasmuch as the Apostles could not themselves be present in all churches, and as the Apostle St. Paul foretold the presbyters of the Ephesians¹ that there would "rise up "from amongst their own selves, men speaking perverse things "to draw disciples after them;" there did grow in short time amongst the governors of each church those emulations, strifes, and contentions, whereof there could be no sufficient remedy provided, except according unto the order of Jerusalem already begun, some one were endued with episcopal authority over the rest, which one being resident might keep them in order, and have preeminence or principality in those things wherein the equality of many agents was the cause of disorder and trouble. This one president or governor amongst the rest had his known authority established a long time before that settled difference of name and title took place, whereby such alone were named bishops. And therefore in the book of St. John's Revelation² we find that they are entitled angels.

It will perhaps be answered, that the angels of those churches were only in every church a minister of the word and sacraments. But then we ask, is it probable that in every of these churches, even in Ephesus itself, where many such ministers were long before, as hath been proved, there was but one such when John directed his speech to the angel of that church? If there were many, surely St. John in naming but only one of them an angel, did behold in that one somewhat above the rest.

Nor was this order peculiar unto some few churches, but the whole world universally became subject thereunto; inasmuch as they did not account it to be a church which was not subject unto a bishop. It was the general received persuasion of the ancient Christian world, that *Ecclesia est in Episcopo*³, "the outward being of a church consisteth in the "having of a bishop." That where colleges of presbyters were, there was at the first equality amongst them, St. Jerome

before him as far as to Miletum (Acts xx. 17) which was almost fifty miles, and by his leaving Timothy in his place with his authority and instructions for ordaining of ministers there (1 Tim. v. 22); and for proportioning their maintenance

(ver. 17, 18); and for judicial hearing of accusations brought against them (ver. 19) and for holding them in an uniformity of doctrine (ch. i. 3).

¹ Acts xx. 30.

² Rev. ii.

³ Cypr. iv. Epist. 9. [al. ep. 66. c. 6.]

thinketh it a matter clear¹; but when the rest were thus equal, so that no one of them could command any other as inferior unto him, they all were controllable by the Apostles, who had that episcopal authority abiding at the first in themselves, which they afterwards derived unto others.

The cause wherefore they under themselves appointed such bishops as were not every where at the first, is said to have been those strifes and contentions, for remedy whereof, whether the Apostles alone did conclude of such a regiment, or else they together with the whole Church judging it a fit and a needful policy did agree to receive it for a custom; no doubt but being established by them on whom the Holy Ghost was poured in so abundant measure for the ordering of Christ's Church, it had either divine appointment beforehand, or divine approbation afterwards, and is in that respect to be acknowledged the ordinance of God, no less than that ancient Jewish regiment, whereof though Jethro were the deviser², yet after that God had allowed it, all men were subject unto it, as to the polity of God, and not of Jethro.

[3.] That so the ancient Fathers did think of episcopal regiment; that they held this order as a thing received from the blessed Apostles themselves, and authorized even from heaven, we may perhaps more easily prove, than obtain that they all shall grant it who see it proved. St. Augustine³ setteth it down for a principle, that whatsoever positive order the whole Church every where doth observe, the same it must needs have received from the very Apostles themselves, unless perhaps some general council were the authors of it. And he saw that the ruling superiority of bishops was a thing universally established, not by the force of any council (for councils do all presuppose bishops, nor can there any council be named so ancient, either general, or as much as provincial, sithence the Apostles' own times, but we can shew that bishops had their authority before it, and not from it). Wherefore St. Augustine knowing this, could not choose but reverence the

¹ Hieron. epist. ad Evag. [101. ad Evag. "Cum Apostolus perspicue doceat, eosdem esse presbyteros, quos et episcopos. . . . Quod autem postea unus electus est, qui cæteris præponeretur, in schisma-

"tis remedium factum est, ne unus quisque ad se trahens Christi ecclesiam rumperet."]

² Exod. xviii. 19.

³ Ep. ad Januar. [108. al. 54. c. i. t. ii. 124.]

authority of bishops, as a thing to him apparently and most clearly apostolical.

[4.] But it will be perhaps objected that regiment by bishops was not so universal nor ancient as we pretend; and that an argument hereof may be Jerome's own testimony, who, living at the very same time with St. Augustine, noted this kind of regiment as being no where ancient, saving only in Alexandria; his words are these¹: "It was for a remedy of schism that one was afterwards chosen to be placed above the rest; lest every man's pulling unto himself should rend asunder the Church of Christ. For (that which also may serve for an argument or token hereof), at Alexandria, from Mark the Evangelist, unto Heraclas and Dionysius, the presbyters always chose one of *themselves*, whom they placed in higher degree, and gave unto him the title of bishop." Now St. Jerome² they say would never have picked out that one church from amongst so many, and have noted that in it there had been bishops from the time that St. Mark lived, if so be the selfsame order were of like antiquity every where; his words therefore must be thus scholied: in the church of Alexandria, presbyters indeed had even from the time of St. Mark the Evangelist always a bishop to rule over them, for a remedy against divisions, factions, and schisms. Not so in other churches, neither in that very church any longer than *usque ad Heraclam et Dionysium*, "till Heraclas and his successor Dionysius were bishops."

[5.] But this construction doth bereave the words construed, partly of wit, and partly of truth; it maketh them both absurd and false. For, if the meaning be that episcopal government in that church was then expired, it must have expired with the end of some one, and not of two several bishops' days, unless perhaps it fell sick under Heraclas, and with Dionysius gave up the ghost.

Besides, it is clearly untrue that the presbyters of that church did then cease to be under a bishop. Who doth not

¹ Ep. ci. ad Evagr. [ad Evan. § 1. "Nam et Alexandriae a Marco Evangelista usque ad Heraclam et Dionysium episcopos, presbyteri semper unum *ex se* electum, in excelsiore gradu collocatum, episco-

"pum nominabant."]

² T. C. lib. i. p. 82. "It is to be observed that Jerome saith, it was so in Alexandria; signifying that in other churches it was not so."

know that after Dionysius, Maximus was bishop of Alexandria¹, after him Theonas², after him Peter, after him Achilles³, after him Alexander: of whom Socrates⁴ in this sort writeth: "it fortuneth on a certain time that this Alexander in the presence of the presbyters which were under him, and of the rest of the clergy there, discoursed somewhat curiously and subtilly of the holy Trinity, bringing high philosophical proofs, that there is in the Trinity an Unity. Whereupon Arius, one of the presbyters which were placed in that degree under Alexander, opposed eagerly himself against those things which were uttered by the bishop." So that thus long bishops continued even in the church of Alexandria. Nor did their regiment here cease, but these also had others their successors till St. Jerome's own time, who living long after Heraclas and Dionysius had ended their days, did not yet live himself to see the presbyters of Alexandria otherwise than subject unto a bishop. So that we cannot with any truth so interpret his words as to mean, that in the church of Alexandria there had been bishops endued with superiority over presbyters from St. Mark's time only till the time of Heraclas and of Dionysius.

[6.] Wherefore that St. Jerome may receive a more probable interpretation than this, we answer, that generally of regiment by bishops, and what term of continuance it had in the church of Alexandria, it was no part of his mind to speak, but to note one only circumstance belonging to the manner of their election, which circumstance is, that in Alexandria they use to choose their bishops altogether out of the college of their own presbyters, and neither from abroad nor out of any other inferior order of the clergy; whereas oftentimes elsewhere the use was to choose as well from abroad as at home⁵, as well inferior unto presbyters as presbyters when they saw occasion. This custom,

¹ [Euseb. E. H. vii. 11.]

² [Id. vii. 32.]

³ Socr. E. H. i. 5.

⁴ [Ibid. Καί ποτε παρόντων τῶν ὑπ' αὐτὸν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν κληρικῶν, φιλοτιμότερον περὶ τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος, ἐν Τριάδι Μονάδα εἶναι φιλοσοφῶν, ἐθεολόγει. Ἄρειος δὲ τις πρεσβύτερος τῶν ὑπ' αὐτὸν τατομένων, ἀνὴρ οὐκ ἄμοιρος τῆς διαλεκτικῆς λέσχης . . . γοργῶς ὑπήντησε

πρὸς τὰ παρὰ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου λεχθέντα.]

⁵ Unto Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, Hero a deacon there was made successor. [Euseb. E. H. iv. 36. 3. Ign. ep. adscr. ad Heron. t. ii. p. 108, ed. Coteler.] Chrysostom, being a presbyter of Antioch, was chosen to succeed Nectarius in the bishopric of Constantinople. [Soc. vi. 2.]