

WHY I AM AN EPISCOPALIAN.

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I HOPE that I may be able to answer this question without aggressiveness and without extravagance. A man may surely be convinced in his own mind without resenting or condemning the opposite opinion of his neighbor. Truth is many-sided and "God has *many* bests."

It is more than possible that my reasons for being an Episcopalian may seem entirely inadequate on the side of defect to my fellow-Episcopalians, as well as on the side of excess to those who belong to other religious communities. Be it so. A man must say what he thinks, and not trim his sails to every passing gust of the popular breeze. When Phocion was once accidentally applauded during the delivery of a speech, he turned round to a friend in surprise and asked: "Have I said anything *wrong*, then?" When Rostopchin, the Governor of Moscow, was told that he was growing very popular, he exclaimed: "*Mon Dieu!* what blunder have I committed?"

There are two common ways of winning general approval, or, at any rate, of escaping the penalties of arousing antagonism. One is by assuming a strong party position, and answering according to its idols the particular audience which you wish to conciliate. By doing this a man can always secure the support and enthusiasm of vehement partisans. The other way is by never asserting even the most incontrovertible proposition without securing yourself by the assertion that "you do not mean to exclude its contradictory," and by "steering through the channel of no-meaning between the Scylla and Charybdis of 'yes' and 'no'." He who takes the latter course, says Cardinal Newman, will be regarded as "your safe man and the hope of the church." On the other hand, we know the fate of him who goeth about to persuade a multitude that they are in the wrong. Be that as it

may, all my readers, be they partisans or moderates, be they hostile or favorable, may at least rest assured of this: that no amount of theological hatred or ecclesiastical opposition, no fear of persecution and no hope of reward, will ever make me deflect the tenth part of an inch from the statement of anything which I hold to be true, or will ever tempt me to the support of anything which I hold to be untenable or false.

Let me begin, then, by saying that, though I am a convinced Episcopalian, I hold the question of church organization to be altogether secondary and subordinate, and in no sense essential to morality or salvation. I consider episcopacy to be in most cases the best, the most authorized, and, in its rudiments at least, the most ancient form of church government; but I do not regard it as one of the necessary notes of a true church, nor do I consider it to be at all indispensable for the *esse*, or even for the *bene esse*, of any church. The Thirty-nine Articles define "the visible church" to be a "congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." The Prayer-book, in its most solemn service, speaks of Christians as "very members incorporate in the mystical body of Christ, which is the blessed company of *all faithful people*." Neither here nor in any document of the Church of England is episcopacy insisted on as a thing indispensable. Abraham Lincoln used to say: "Whenever I find a church which inscribes upon its portals the two rules, 'Thou shalt love God with all thy heart' and 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,' to that church will I belong." If that be thought altogether too vague a note of unity, shall we be contented with the rule of Irenæus, "*Ubi spiritus ibi ecclesia*"? or with that of William Penn, "The humble, meek, merciful, pious, just, devout souls are everywhere of one religion; and when death hath taken off the mask they will know one another, though the divers liveries they wear here make them strangers"?

Or, to bring the question more closely home, do we or do we not believe that there is a church of the redeemed in heaven? And is there a human being who supposes that the soul of any man which is admitted into that beatific communion will be questioned whether on earth he accepted or not an episcopal government? Let us avoid the arrogant nonsense of extremes. Let us shun

the pompous platitudes which can only be saved from intolerant and extravagant absurdity by first being emphatically asserted, and then ridiculously explained away. Such a platitude is that which first identifies the church with one of its component bodies, and then says with St. Cyprian, "*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus.*" The assertion sounds very grand, very orthodox, very faithful; but when you come to question even the Romish casuists, they are constrained to admit that even Jews and Pagans may be saved, so that, unless they stretch the significance of the word *ecclesia* till its whole meaning cracks, their platitude becomes an empty phrase. Churches will not be estimated hereafter by the boastful arrogance of their claims or the narrow and bitter exclusiveness of their champions, but by the fruitfulness of their works and the beauty of their holiness. The revival and exaggeration of Romish principles in Reformed churches may make these views appear lax to some; yet they are almost *totidem verbis et litteris* the views of some of our most honored divines. Hooker, for instance, has been regarded for three centuries as the most eminent and judicious champion of High-Church principles; yet Hooker says, as William Penn says, that the unity of the church consists in owning one Lord, professing one faith, and being initiated by one baptism; and "in whomsoever these things are, the church doth acknowledge them as her children; them only she holdeth for aliens and strangers in whom these things are not found."

It naturally follows that, though episcopacy seems to me to have the divine *sanction*, I do not in any sense regard episcopacy as a thing of immediate divine *institution* or universal obligation, any more than I regard monarchy. A state may be blessed and flourishing without kings, and a church may be blessed and flourishing without bishops. I do not believe that our Lord, in founding upon earth a divine society, meant also, of necessity, to establish an unvarying organization. He left us an eternal revelation; he reconciled us to the Father; he saved us from the power of sin and death; he set us an example, that we should follow his steps. His work was quite infinitely more transcendent than the mere establishment of a particular model of church government. He gave his Holy Spirit to them that seek him, and under that guidance it was and is perfectly competent for every nation and every separated community of Christians, under the stress of circumstances, to adopt that form of church

government which was or is best suited to its needs. Even to the truest members of his true church—even to the *ecclesiola in ecclesia*—Christ said: “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be”—not one FOLD (*αὐλή*), but—“one FLOCK (*ποιμνιον*), and one shepherd.” There is but one *flock*; there are, and to the end of time there always will be, many *folds*.

I neither affirm nor deny what is called the doctrine of “Apostolical Succession.” Even Archbishop Laud, the *beau ideal* of the High-Churchman, in his controversy with Fisher the Jesuit, ventured to say no more respecting it than that “it is a great happiness where it may be had visible and continued, and a great conquest over the mutability of this present world. But I do not find any one of the ancient fathers that makes local, personal, visible, and continued succession a necessary mark or sign of the true church in any one place.” As an historic fact, I consider it highly probable—indeed, almost certain—that our bishops hold their office by the laying-on of hands, either of presbyters or bishops, from the days of the Apostles. But I do not believe for a moment that the continuity of spiritual gifts is exclusively dependent on these mechanical transmissions; for, as Hooker says, “Men may be extraordinarily yet allowably . . . admitted unto spiritual functions in the church . . . when God himself doth of himself raise up any whose labor he useth without requiring that men should authorize them.” I believe that not a few of the best and greatest servants of God in the Christian dispensation have been anointed only by the hands of invisible consecration. If, therefore, it could be shown that there were broken links in the chain of episcopal ordination, it would make no sort of difference to my view of the grace of ordination. Knowing, as we do, that much of the divinest work in all ages has been done by men who were neither priests nor bishops, and often in deadly antagonism to the vast majority of those who were both; and knowing also that “the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every man that is born of the Spirit,” our notes of the true church are not the Romish ones of Cardinal Bellarmine, but rather those of Pearson and Field and Hooker and the Reformers and the Articles of the Church of England. And while all of these more or less accepted and valued episco-

pacy, none of them insisted on it as an indispensable and essential requisite for true membership of the church of Christ.

Having spoken thus plainly, I may add without suspicion that I regard the episcopal government of churches as very ancient; as having been in some churches primitive; as being in entire accordance with the example of the Apostles; as being, with all its necessary and serious imperfections, the best and wisest form of church organization in most churches, and, apart from overwhelming difficulties, in *all* churches. With our most learned Elizabethan divines, I hold that episcopacy is lawful in its use and primitive in its origin; but I do not maintain for it any indefeasible divine prescription, nor do I regard the bishop as being of an essentially different order from the presbyter, but only as a president among presbyters, endowed with one or two special functions, and with a limited, but neither absolute nor infallible, authority. No one with the least pretence to honesty can any longer deny that in the New Testament "bishop" and "presbyter" are *interchangeable*, though not always or necessarily *identical*, terms; and that the Apostles St. Peter and St. John are quite content to call themselves "presbyters." In the church of Ephesus the same men (Acts xx., 17, 28) are called "bishops" and "presbyters." Paul and Barnabas ordained "presbyters" in their churches. In the church of Philippi we are only told of "bishops" and deacons; and the "presbyters" whom Titus is told to ordain are also called "bishops." The assumption that Christ founded an episcopal organization during "the great forty days" is a mere hypothesis destitute of the shade of a shadow of proof. The church ought to say quite as clearly as Sir Isaac Newton, "*Hypotheses non fingo*." Bishops are unknown to the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" and to the "Epistle of Barnabas." In St. Clement of Rome "bishops" and presbyters are still interchangeable terms. Ignatius exalts episcopacy in language which would be both unscriptural and extravagant unless it were regarded as being of local and temporary significance; yet he knows nothing of diocesan bishops, nothing of irresponsible and independent bishops, and does not represent bishops as either instituted by the Apostles or as successors of the Apostles. Ignatius writes to the church of Rome without even alluding to any bishop of Rome, any more than St. Paul does in his Epistle to the Romans. St. Polycarp and St. Clement write to the churches of

Philippi and Corinth, and say nothing of the existence of any presiding bishop in those churches. Everything points to the conclusion of St. Jerome that episcopacy did not arise from any *dominica dispositio*, but rather *consuetudine ecclesiæ*.

Yet the positions of St. James at Jerusalem, of Timothy at Ephesus of Titus in Crete, and perhaps of the "Angels" of the seven churches in Asia, offer a sufficient analogy to episcopal government to enable us to say, without the aid of effeminate and fantastic fictions, that episcopacy may claim apostolic sanction. And that sanction is more than sufficiently confirmed by the almost immemorial practice of the church. The church which may in all serious matters claim the living presence and continual guidance of the spirit of God neither needs to invent dubious revelations, nor to manufacture disputable history, nor to place herself at the mercy of archæologists, nor to depend on

"Critics who dissect the sacred page
Till God's gifts hang on grammar, and the saint
Is weaker than the sage."

For her maintenance of episcopacy it is sufficient that she can claim the highest antiquity and the sacred wisdom learnt from continuous experience, as well as adequate analogies from the history of the Apostolic church.

And without urging any other reasons "Why I am an Episcopalian," I should feel it enough to say that the episcopal form of church organization, while it is most in accordance with that which has been all but universally adopted since the age of the Apostles, is also best adapted for the peace, order, and progress of the church's work.

One principle on which we rest the benefit of episcopacy was laid down by Homer many centuries ago. It is *οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίῃ· εἰς κοίρανός ἔστω*. "Lords many" are an evil in any community, and the church early discovered that the limited independence of one presiding authority was her best bulwark alike against the prevalence of internal schism and the attacks of external heretics. Institutions, like men, must always have "the defects of their qualities," and there was never an age in which prelates might not be tempted to be inflated and violent, worldly and luxurious, tyrannical and unjust. But these dangers may equally occur in any other form of ecclesiastical polity, and in presbyteries also there may be a domineering Diotrophes or an heretical Hymenæus. It may, I think, be laid down as a gen-

eral rule, without fear of contradiction, that, other things being equal, a church will gain by episcopal organization in unity, in vigor, in progressiveness, in power of discipline, and in purity of doctrine. I would point to two conspicuous illustrations—the church of America and the episcopate in the British Colonies.

As regards the church of America, I am told that alone, or almost alone, of the religious communities on the western continent, it is steadily, if but slowly, adding to its numbers, lengthening its cords, and strengthening its stakes. No one, I think, can fail to see that, in the history of that church, the consecrations of Bishop Seabury by two Scotch bishops at Aberdeen, in 1784, and of Bishop White by Archbishop Moore at Lambeth, in 1787, are epoch-making events. Bishop Seabury was a moderate High-Churchman, and Bishop White a Broad-Churchman of the school of Tillotson; but the vigorous understanding of the former and the large-hearted wisdom of the latter, during his forty-years' episcopate, gave an impulse to the Episcopal Church in America which it could hardly have received had they been nothing but leading presbyters. As to the colonial episcopate of England, the number of bishops in the last century has increased from one to seventy-five. Is it but a hundred years ago since Dr. Charles Inglis was consecrated Bishop of Nova Scotia, and now there is no single colony or dependency of Great Britain, of any size or importance, which is not under special episcopal supervision. No one acquainted with the facts will deny that these bishops, *as bishops*, and in virtue of the authority thus specially conferred upon them, have powerfully aided the preservation of the faith, and given an incomparable impetus to the evangelization of the world.

And if proof be required of the blessedness of an episcopal organization in the church of Christ, may we not appeal to the long annals of eighteen hundred years? Was it not found, even in the second century, that episcopacy was the great centre of unity, the great safeguard of faithfulness, the great bulwark against heresy? In those early days of Christianity how many of the martyrs were bishops! How often—as in the see of Rome, where, of the first thirty bishops, it is said that all but two were martyred—did that humble spiritual preëminence mean only the prerogative of death! What might not have become of the seed-

* The writer here ventures to repeat a few words used in a sermon in Westminster Abbey at the consecration of the Bishop of Tasmania.

ling of the faith in the second and third centuries had there been no St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, to face the wild beasts in the Colosseum; no St. Polycarp, Bishop of Lyons, to brave the flame in the amphitheatre of Smyrna; no St. Cyprian, to bend his noble head to the flashing axe at Carthage! Think of the noble simplicity, combined with powerful eloquence and deep learning, of St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. Gregory of Nyssa in the fourth century; of how St. Chrysostom carried to the throne of a patriarch the asceticism of a hermit; of how St. Augustine, declining to wear the splendid vestments which were given him, sold them to give to the poor; of how St. Basil and St. Ambrose, St. Martin and St. Hilary, stood before kings and were not ashamed. Think how in the fifth and sixth centuries the bishops were the true and almost the sole defenders of the state. Think how Attila the Hun recoiled before the unarmed majesty of St. Leo; how Odovakar was overawed by St. Severinus; how Theodoric the Ostrogoth was softened by respect for St. Epiphanius; how the brave Totila was impressed by the holiness of St. Benedict. Then think of the bishop-missionaries—of St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany; of St. Augustine of Canterbury; of Bishop Otho of Pomerania. Why need I continue the story, as I might do from age to age, of all those saintly prelates whose brows have been mitred with Pentecostal flame? Why need I pause to mention such holy and humble men of heart as Bishop Bedell and Bishop Ken amid the moral waste of the seventeenth century? or what need is there to point to the sweet and saintly figures of Bishop Thomas Wilson and of Bishop Berkeley, to whom the satirist attributed “every virtue under heaven,” during the torpor of the eighteenth century? Is it not enough to show that during all these centuries Wisdom has been justified of her children, and that in our age also they have maintained their spiritual nobleness?

And not only at home, but no less in foreign lands the humble bishops have placed themselves in the very fore-front of toil and peril, and have done a work which it is only possible for bishops to achieve. We think of India, and we recall the fair spirit of Reginald Heber, the quiet wisdom of George Cotton; of Newfoundland, and we recall the apostolic labors of Bishop Field for thirty-five years; of New Zealand, and the image of Selwyn seems to rise before us; of Sierra Leone, and we know how three English bishops died there in seven years, each stepping where his prede-

cessor had fallen. Nor have they all passed away to join the more in number. How many a true servant of Jesus Christ, how many a brave and self-denying standard-bearer of the cross, did we see when the bishops of the Lambeth Conference met last summer in Westminster Abbey! We saw that saintly and beloved old man, the Bishop of Minnesota, who has won the proud title once borne by the lion-hearted missionary, John Eliot, of "the Apostle of the Indians"; we saw the calm and wise bishop who, from his home in the stormy Falkland Isles, has charge of many a scattered congregation through all the vast regions of South America; we saw the bishop of another race, once a slave boy, once bartered for a horse, twice for rum and tobacco; his spirit then so broken that he tried to commit suicide; sold to Portuguese traders, rescued by an English vessel, converted, educated, meeting and converting his parents after twenty-five long years,—the first negro bishop whom the world has seen. And among the prelates of England and Australia and the West Indies and America, there was one—the Bishop of Moosoonie—who has planted the Rose of Sharon in the sub-Arctic wastes, and through whose blessed ministrations the word of the Gospel of Peace has come to many a poor Indian tribe, once degraded and cannibal, in their wigwams on the bleak shores of Hudson's Bay.

Yes, and more even than this. If the blood of martyrs be the seed of the church, is it nothing that, even in a century of such luxury and such materialism as this, we have seen the aureole of martyrdom shining softly round the brows of bishops whom we have known? In the last twenty-two years no less than three such martyrs have been taken from the ranks of the colonial episcopate. In 1862 a dying man, ministering to the dead under an acacia-tree in feverous swamps of Africa, read as much as he could of the burial service, in the deepening gloom of a tropical twilight, over the body of Bishop Charles Mackenzie. That martyr had died, but thirteen months after his consecration, delirious, fever-stricken, on the malarious banks of the River Shire. In 1870, floating, under the burning sunlight, over the blue waves of the Pacific tide, a boat bore from the shores of Nukapu the lifeless body of Bishop Coleridge Patteson, stabbed with five wounds, the knotted palm-branch on his breast, a smile as of heaven upon the pallid lips. In 1885 died in Equatorial Africa a young man in the prime of life and strength, full of fun, full of

vigor, full of high spirits. He had given up home and all its wealth and happiness to be a messenger of heaven through those dreary and horrible regions. He had been often lost in the jungle; often starving; stung by swarms of bees; in constant peril of wild beasts; advancing alone and unarmed to face men whose venomous arrows were poised and trembling upon the string, ready in an instant to smite him with a death of agony; in the midst of savages brutal and revolting; holding not his life dear unto himself, and all for the love of Christ. Yet "so full was my trust in Christ that I laughed amid the very agony of my situation." I have had in my own hands the little *Churchman's Almanack* in which the young martyr wrote his last words from day to day. On October 29 he wrote: "I can hear no news, but I was held up by the 30th Psalm, which came to me with great power. A hyena howled near me last night, smelling the sick man, but I hope he is not to have me yet." The ink was scarcely dry on those last words when, singing hymns, he was led out of the filthy hut in which he had been imprisoned, to die for his Master's sake. Yes, thank God, even the life of this nineteenth century has been redeemed and ennobled by the imperial purple of martyrdom. "We still ring true," says a great writer, "when anything strikes home to us, and though the idea that everything should pay has infected our every purpose, there is still a capacity of noble passion left in the heart's core of Englishmen, and there is hope for the nation while this can be said of it."

Such in age after age, has been the episcopate, and above all that which corresponds most nearly in its conditions to our episcopate in the colonies. Nor can God have given it a nobler mark of his blessing than in putting into the happy hands of so many bishops the palm of martyrdom.

Against other forms of ecclesiastical organization I have nothing to say, but I cannot agree with Pope in the view that

"That which is best administered is best."

If we are to choose the form which, apart from exceptional circumstances, is ideally and absolutely the best, I believe that form to be episcopacy. I am an Episcopalian because I believe that the church acted under the guidance of the Spirit of God in early and finally adopting the rule of bishops as a rule which would best promote the advancement of the kingdom of Christ and the integrity of the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

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THE VALUE OF INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS.

BY THE HON. JOSEPH R. HAWLEY, UNITED STATES SENATOR
FROM CONNECTICUT.

THE United States is about to hold another international exhibition. Several times, in varied forms and different places, the proposition has been made and has met ineffectual responses. But now it seems to have passed the stages of "suppose" and "why not?" and become a definite purpose. The city of New York is to take the lead. Its press has spoken vigorously, and a great number of its prominent citizens, for themselves individually, or in behalf of organized interests, have signified their hearty approval and promised their labors.

New York is able, and it is a good work at a good time. In 1892 sixteen years will have elapsed since the Centennial Exhibition—a time sufficiently long to make it useful and pleasant to measure again our progress in comparison with older nations. In 1876 our population was about forty-five millions; in 1892 it will be sixty-nine or seventy millions—a growth of nearly 55 per cent. in numbers and more than that in wealth and power. The world has gained in science, invention, and art, in skill and productive power, in an accelerated ratio from year to year. The international exhibition has justified itself as an institution by its fruits, and it will undoubtedly continue to appear. The intervals must be regulated by the business world's public opinion, but a too frequent recurrence would be checked by the unwillingness of exhibitors. They are the real supporters of exhibitions; their investments and expenditures are heavy and voluntary; they cannot be coerced. France is this year conducting a splendid affair, but, by reason of its political significance, it fails to reach a full international character. We hear of no purpose to invite an exhibition in 1890 or 1891; so 1892 is a fit time, and the nations will be likely to respond cheerfully. The United States is a vigorous competitor and a rich customer.