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ART. I.—*Discourses and Reviews upon Questions in Controversial Theology and Practical Religion.* By Orville Dewey, D.D., Pastor of the Church of the Messiah in New York. New York: C. S. Francis & Co. 1846. pp. 388. 12mo.

THE author of these discourses stands in the very first rank of Unitarian literature. As a pulpit orator, his reputation is distinguished, and the post which he occupies in our greatest city adds importance to whatever he may choose to utter. For these reasons, and because it is some time since a polemic volume has been produced, on the side of Anti-trinitarianism, we are disposed to subject it to a serious examination.

With a few exceptions, which shall be noted in their proper place, these essays are not chargeable with the usual offensiveness of controversial writing. Dr. Dewey possesses all the qualifications which are needed to give seemliness and polish to the form of his opinions. He shines more to our apprehension, in the gentle glow of sentiment, than in the conflict of reasoning. Nothing is more characteristic of the whole work, than a disposition to avoid bold statement of positions, sharp cutting of defin-

rance" of the grounds of proof,* and a fifth exhibits a "trifling and shallow sophistry."† These are only specimens of the rudeness with which he treats those who differ from him. He seems to have regarded himself as the champion to whose keeping the defence of the tenets of the Baptist church was committed. Three of the persons, whose works on baptism he professes to answer, reside in this country, namely Dr. Miller; Mr. Hall and President Beecher, at that time residing in Illinois. Our concluding remark is, that if Dr. Carson had possessed but a modicum of the charity for others, which he seems to have entertained for himself, there would have been no just ground of complaint on the score of bitterness, and the book, which he has written, would have been more creditable to his candour and Christian forbearance.

ART. III.—*The Eldership.*

IN various living languages, there are titles of honour and respect, the etymological origin of which is to be sought in the idea of old age or seniority. Such are *Sire*, as addressed to kings, and the cognate expression *Sir*, as used in common parlance, and also in the title of an English knight or baronet. Such too are the French *Sieur*, *Seigneur*, the Spanish *Senor*, the Italian *Signore*, with their various compounds, *Monsieur*, *Monseigneur*, *Monsignore*, *Messire*, &c., all which may be traced back to the Latin *Senior* the comparative of *Senex*. We find, however, that terms thus derived have been extensively employed, not only as expressions of personal respect, but also as designations of official dignity. This is the case with most of the words already mentioned, to which may be added *alderman* (elder man,) *senator*, *patres conscripti*, the Arabic *sheikh*, and many others.

This extensive use of words, which properly denote old age, to signify official rank, might possibly admit of explanation on the hypothesis, that what was first used to express a merely personal respect was afterwards employed to express the same feeling with respect to public or official dignity; that as any

* Mr. Hall. † Mr. Thorn.

respected person might be called a father or an old man, so a ruler or a magistrate might be so called by way of eminence.

But the usage now in question may be still more satisfactorily accounted for, by the fact, that as we trace the history of governments backwards, we find them all to terminate in the patriarchal system. It is this which exists in families among all nations. It is founded on the natural relation between parents and children. It has no concern with artificial theories respecting social compacts and equality. Among those races which have retained most of a primitive simplicity in their mode of life, this organization of society is still found. As the father governs his own household, so the head of the family, i. e. of the elder branch, governs the younger, and the head of the whole tribe governs both. This system lingers still among the Highland clans of Scotland, and continues in full force among the wandering Arabs. It existed also among the ancient Hebrews. Hence their minute regard to genealogy, which is still kept up among the Bedouin.

Under all the changes in the Hebrew form of government, this patriarchal system still remained as the substratum of the whole theocracy; and its peculiar phraseology is constantly recurring in the sacred history. As the natural heads of houses, families, and tribes, were the hereditary magistrates, the name זקני, *old men, elders*, was the common appellation for the rulers of the people.

The same usage of the term occurs in application to domestic arrangements. Eliezer of Damascus, Abraham's steward, is called (Gen. xxiv. 2) זקן גי'תו, not "his eldest servant of his house," as our translation has it, but "his servant the elder (i. e. ruler) of his house." So in Gen. l. 7, we read of "all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house," as well as "the elders of the land of Egypt." The *elders* here mentioned, and the *senators* spoken of in Ps. cv. 22, are identical in Hebrew. During the residence of Israel in Egypt, the patriarchal system seems to have been maintained, as one suited to every change of circumstances. Hence, when the people were to be delivered, the communications from Jehovah were made, not directly to the mass of the nation, but to the Elders, as their national and acknowledged representatives. When God commanded Moses (Ex. iii. 14:) "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I

AM hath sent me unto you," he immediately explained the way in which the command was to be executed, by adding: "Go and gather THE ELDERS of Israel together, and say unto them," &c., (v. 16.) "and thou shalt come, and THE ELDERS of Israel, unto the king of Egypt," (v. 18.) Again we read, (Ex. iv. 30, 31,) that Moses and Aaron "did the signs in the sight of THE PEOPLE, and THE PEOPLE believed." But immediately before it had been said (v. 29,) that they "went and gathered together all THE ELDERS of the children of Israel," which would be a nugatory statement, if it did not mean that the *people* who saw the signs, and believed in consequence, were the *elders of the people*.

In ch. xii. 3, the Lord says unto Moses and Aaron: "speak ye unto *all the congregation* of Israel;" but in executing this command "Moses called for all *the elders* of Israel," and gave them the necessary orders, (v. 21.) When Moses smote the rock by divine direction, it was "in the sight of the elders of Israel," (Ex. xvii. 5, 6,) as the representatives of the people, who were to be relieved and, at the same time, reprov'd for murmuring. When Jethro offered sacrifices, and made a feast, "all the elders of Israel" came, as a matter of course, "to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God," (Ex. xviii. 12.)

But a more remarkable instance of the Elders being taken for the people is in Exod. xix. 8, where it is said that "ALL THE PEOPLE answered together and said, all that the Lord hath spoken we will do; and Moses told the words of THE PEOPLE unto the Lord;" whereas in the verse immediately preceding it is said, that "Moses came and called for THE ELDERS of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded them." Another example of the same thing may be found in Deut. v. 23, where Moses, addressing the people, says: "Ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes and your elders."

In the Mosaic ritual, the Elders are recognised as the representatives of the people, not only by being joined with Aaron and his sons in the giving of the law respecting sacrifice, (Lev. ix. 1,) but in the solemn ceremony of imposing hands upon the victim as a symbol of the transfer of the sins of the whole people to the substitute, (Lev. iv. 15.)

The "seventy elders" (Num. xi. 25,) who acted as assistants to Moses and Aaron in certain cases, were not ordained to a new

office, but merely selected for a special purpose from a body of men already in existence. They are expressly called "seventy of the elders," (Ex. xxiv. 2,) "seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people and officers set over them," (Num. xi. 16.) Nothing could more clearly intimate the previous existence and official standing of the elders. In this case it is plain that the word "officers" is in apposition with "elders" and explanatory of it, a remark which admits of a very extensive and important application.

The use of the same term, in reference to other nations, if it does not prove that the same natural and simple organization obtained among them, proves what is more important, that the Hebrew writers were so perfectly familiar with this government by Elders, and this representation of the people by their Elders, that they naturally used expressions borrowed from it, to describe the institutions of other countries. In Num. xxii. 4, we read that "Moab said unto the Elders of Midian," which would seem to imply a difference of organization; but that *Moab* means the *Elders of Moab*, appears from v. 7, where we find the full phrase, "and the Elders of Moab and the Elders of Midian departed." In Joshua ix. 11, the Gibeonites describe their rulers by the name of Elders.

In the laws of Moses which have a prospective reference to the settlement of the people in the promised land, he mentions not only the Elders of Israel collectively (Lev. iv. 15, Num. xi. 16) and the Elders of the several tribes, (Deut. xxxi. 28, xxix. 10,) but the Elders of cities and districts, who are represented as the local magistrates or judges. (Deut. xix. 12, xxi. 2, 3, 4, 6, 19, xxii. 15—18, xxv. 7—9.)

The Elders are joined with Aaron in the receiving of the law and with Moses in the giving of it (Deut. xxvii. 1.) In like manner we find Joshua accompanied by the Elders in certain public acts, (Josh. vii. 6, viii. 10.) In those cases where the people *en masse* were to bear a part, the Elders still appear as their official leaders, (Jos. viii. 33, xxiii. 2, xxiv. 1,) though in some of the cases here referred to, it is doubtful whether any other assembling of the people was intended or possible than that of a representative nature. In Jos. xxiii. 2, for example, we may either read "the people and their elders," or "the people even (*viz.*) their elders."

That the government by Elders still existed after the conquest of the country is evident from history. When Gideon dealt with the people of Succoth, it was in the person of their Elders, (Judges ch. viii;) Jephthah's negotiations were with the Elders of Gilead (ch. xi;) and at the very close of the book of Judges, we find the "Elders of the congregation," i. e. of the whole church and nation, deliberating jointly on a matter which concerned their relations to a single tribe, (Judges xxi. 16.)

The local Elders seem to have been numerous. Those of Succoth were in number seventy-seven, as appears from Judges viii. 14, where Elders and Princes (i. e. rulers, chiefs) are in apposition, and descriptive of one office. The Elders of the congregation and the people are mentioned, Judges xxi. 16, Ruth iv. 4. The influence of the Elders in withstanding the progress of corruption, after the death of Moses and Joshua, is twice expressly mentioned (Josh. xxiv. 31, Judges ii. 7.)

In the time of Samuel, we still meet with occasional allusions to the Elders of cities (e. g. Jabesh, 1 Sam. xi. 3, and Bethlehem ch. xvi. 4,) the Elders of tribes (e. g. Judah, 1 Sam. xxx. 26,) and the Elders of all Israel, as the collective rulers of the nation, who made war and peace (1 Sam. iv. 3,) changed the external form of government (viii. 4,) to whom even Samuel listened with respect (ib.) and of whose contempt even Saul was afraid (xv. 30.) The circumstances attending the introduction of monarchy show clearly that the change was a general and formal one, and that after as before it the details of the government continued in the hands of the hereditary Elders.

During the reigns of David and Solomon, we find the most important questions of government (as for example who should be king) repeatedly referred to, and decided by the Elders of Israel, (2 Sam. iii. 17. v. 3. 1 Chron. xi. 3) and Judah (2 Sam. xix. 11.) When Absalom usurped his father's throne, it was by the connivance of the Elders of Israel (2 Sam. xvii. 4, 15.) When Solomon was about to remove the ark, he assembled the Elders of Israel, i. e. "the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel;" for these words are to be regarded as explanatory of the title *elders*, (1 Kings viii. 1, 3, 2 Chron. v. 2, 4.) The officers of David's palace are called the Elders of his house (2 Sam. xii. 17.) That the king was com-

monly attended by Elders as counsellors, &c., would appear from such incidental statements as that in 1 Chr. xxi. 16, xv. 25.

Solomon himself alludes to the organization when, describing the husband of the virtuous woman, he says, "her husband is known in the gate, when he sitteth among the Elders of the land," (Prov. xxxi. 23.)

Isaiah mentions the Elder, in enumerating the public persons who were to be removed from Judah (Isa. iii. 2, ix. 14.) He describes Jehovah's controversy with his people as carried on against "the Elders, even the rulers, of the people," as their representatives. In predicting the future glory of the church, or of Jehovah in the church, he says, "The Lord shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his Elders, gloriously." (Isa. xxiv. 23.)

After the revolt of the ten tribes the government by Elders still subsisted in both kingdoms. When Benhadad king of Syria, sent an overbearing message to Ahab king of Israel, the latter "called all the Elders of the land," and acted by their counsel, (2 Kings xx. 7, 8.) When the same king wished to obtain Naboth's vineyard, Jezebel procured the death of Naboth by her influence over "the Elders and the nobles" (or even the nobles) that were in his city," (1 Kings xxi. 8.) The practice of regarding the elders as the people, in all public acts, still appears in such expressions as "the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles that were in his city," (v. 11,) and in the statement that Josiah "went up into the house of the Lord, and ALL THE MEN OF JUDAH, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests and levites, and ALL THE PEOPLE, great and small," (2 Kings xxiii. 12, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30.) Strictly understood, this was impossible. It is not, however, a synecdoche or hyperbole. It does not mean that *some* of the people went up, which would not account for the strength of the expressions. The whole people, great and small, were really present, according to the principle of representation. They were present in the person of their Elders, for we read in 2 Kings xxiii. 1, (2 Chron. xxxiv. 29,) that "the king sent, and they gathered unto him ALL THE ELDERS of Judah and Jerusalem." The existence of local Elders, during this same period, may be inferred, not only from the case of Naboth above mentioned, but from the incidental statements, that "Elisha sat in his house, and the Elders sat with

him," (2 Kings vi. 32;) and that "Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel, the Elders," (2 Kings x. 1.) In this last case the identity of the *rulers* and *elders* is unusually clear from the omission of the copulative which shows that when the particle appears in other cases of the same kind, it is not distinctive but explanatory. The official existence and activity of Elders may be traced to the very end of the kingdom of Judah, as we find "the elders of the land," in the reign of Jehoiakim, interposing in behalf of Jeremiah." (Jer. xxvi. 17.)

One advantage of this presbyterial constitution was, that being founded upon natural relations, it could exist wherever families existed; and we find accordingly that, as it was maintained during the long sojourn of Israel in Egypt, so the Elders were still recognised, as a distinct order, in the Babylonish exile, as appears from "the letter that Jeremiah the Prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of THE ELDERS which were carried away captive," &c. (Jer. xxix. 1.) So likewise, when the exiles applied to Ezekiel for information as to the will of God, it was through their Elders (Ezek. xx. 3.) When he was transported in vision to Jerusalem, he was made to see the abominations committed by "the Elders of the house of Israel," (Ezek. viii. 12;) and at the very time when the trance fell upon him he was sitting, like Elisha, in his house, and "the Elders of Judah" sat before him, (ib. v. 1.)

And as the official rank of the Elders was still recognised during the captivity, so it re-appears after the return from exile. The decrees made were according to the counsel of the Princes and the Elders," (Ezra x. 8) or, as we have seen that this construction probably means, "the Chiefs, to wit, the Elders." The combination is intended to show that the chiefs referred to were not temporary or extraordinary ones, but such as held power under the ancient theocratic constitution. So in Ezra x. 14, where the Chiefs (or Elders) of all the congregation are distinguished from "the Elders of every city and the Judges thereof," the last phrase seems to be exegetical of the former, and intended to show that the Elders of each city were its local magistrates, which, as we have seen already, was the ancient Hebrew polity.

The "Elders of the Priests," who are occasionally mentioned, (Isa. xxxvii. 2, 2 Kings xix. 2,) appear to have been the heads

of the several branches of the family of Aaron, the same who in the New Testament are called Ἀρχιερεῖς or Chief Priests. In Jer. xix. 1, they are distinguished from the "Elders of the people," i. e. of the other tribes.

This organization was for religious as well as civil purposes. Hence the Psalmist says: "Praise him in the assembly of the Elders," (Ps. cvii. 32.) Indeed the whole organization of the Hebrew commonwealth was for a religious purpose. The nation was the church. The same chiefs who presided over secular affairs, presided over sacred things, except that what related to ceremonial matters was entrusted to the chiefs of a single tribe exclusively. Sacrifice and all that pertained to it was under the direction of the Priests at the tabernacle or temple; but when the people met elsewhere for spiritual worship, it was under the direction of their natural and ordinary chiefs, the Elders. These meetings were in later Greek called συναγωγαί, a name which was afterwards extended to the houses, in which they were held.

This view of the matter relieves the question as to the antiquity of synagogues from much of its difficulty. The common opinion is that they arose during the captivity when the people had no access to the temple. But the temple-service and that of the synagogue were totally distinct. The one could not be a succedaneum for the other. If the want of a local spiritual worship was felt during the exile, it must have been felt centuries before. It seems incredible that during a course of ages, those who could not attend the temple were without any stated worship. The argument urged in favour of this doctrine is, that synagogues are not mentioned before the captivity. But this proceeds upon the supposition, that the ancient synagogue was a distinct organization within the body politic, an *imperium in imperio*. The difficulty vanishes as soon as we assume, that it was nothing but the stated meeting of the people, under their national organization, for a particular purpose, viz. the worship of God. It was a civil organization used for a religious purpose, or rather, it was one organization, used both for a religious and a civil purpose; as in England the *parishes* are both ecclesiastical and political divisions of the kingdom. The same state of things would exist among us, if the townships met statedly for public worship, under the same moderators and

committees who are charged with the conduct of their secular affairs. These officers would answer to the Jewish Elders. Under such a system, church and state would not only be united but identified, as they were in the Hebrew commonwealth. The Jewish church was the Jewish nation, and the same persons were church-officers and magistrates. The instruction of the people, and perhaps the conduct of religious worship, were probably entrusted to the Levites who, when not on actual duty at Jerusalem, lived dispersed among the people. From this tribe probably proceeded most of the Scribes, Lawyers, or Doctors of the Law, which seem to have been titles, not of an office, but of a profession, the business of which was to expound the scriptures, and perhaps to take the lead in public worship. But the legal authority, in these as well as other things, resided in the Elders of the several communities, who, in relation to their spiritual functions were called *Elders* or *Rulers of the Synagogue*.

This state of things still continued when Christ came. The people were still governed by their Elders, both in civil and religious matters. Collectively the Elders are called *Elders of the People*, (Matthew xxi. 23, xxvi. 3,) and *Elders of the Jews*, (Luke vii. 3,) and are continually joined with the *Chief Priests* (or Elders of the Priests,) in all the public acts with reference to the arrest, trial, condemnation, and crucifixion of our Lord, (Matt. xvi. 21, xxvi. 47, 59, xxvii. 1, 3, 12, xxviii. 12, &c.) Peter and John were arraigned before the *Elders of Israel*, (Acts iv. 8, 23;) Stephen was condemned by them, (Acts vi. 12;) Paul was persecuted by them, (Acts xxiii. 14,) and by them accused before the Roman governor, (Acts xxiv. 1, xxv. 15.)

There seems to be no doubt, then, that the government by Elders, which we have seen to be coeval with the commonwealth, and to have survived all political changes, continued until the destruction of the temple and dispersion of the people.

Our Lord began his ministry by exhorting men to repent because the kingdom of heaven was at hand. In this he was preceded by John the Baptist, and followed by the twelve disciples whom he sent out for the purpose, whom also he called *Apostles*, (Luke vi. 13.) That which they all preached or proclaimed was *the gospel of the kingdom*, (Matt. iv. 23, ix. 35, xxiv. 14; Mark i. 14,) i. e. the good news that a kingdom was about to be established. That this new kingdom was not to be merely inward and spiritual, is clear from what is said as to the personal

distinctions and diversities of ranks which were to have place in it, (Matt. v. 19, xi. 11, xviii. 4.) If the kingdom of heaven merely meant an inward state, in what sense could one be greater than another as a subject of that kingdom? Such expressions necessarily imply that it denotes an outward state of things, and that not merely a condition of society but a society itself. It was called a kingdom, not merely because the hearts and lives of men were to be governed by new principles, but because they were to be brought, even externally, under a new *régime*, an organized government. True, the spiritual nature of this government is also asserted. Christ himself declared, that his kingdom was not of this world, (John xviii. 36,) and Paul tells the Romans that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," (Rom. xiv. 17.) Our Lord himself, on being asked when the kingdom of God should come, answered "the kingdom of God cometh not μετὰ παραίτησέως," in a striking and sensible manner; "for," he adds, "the kingdom of God is within you," (Luke xvii. 21.) All these expressions were intended to guard against the opposite extreme of considering the kingdom of God as something *merely* external, and to direct attention to those spiritual changes which were necessarily involved in the true doctrine of the kingdom. The very design of its establishment was spiritual. It was to exercise authority in the hearts of men. Hence, unless it did affect their hearts, it mattered not what outward signs of its approach were visible. Unless it was within them, it could not possibly exist without them, or rather they could have no part in its advantages. It did not follow from this, however, that it existed only within them, any more than it followed, from the necessity of faith to give efficacy to sacrifices, that there was no need of the outward rite at all. The kingdom of God was an outward institution for a spiritual purpose. It was to be as really a kingdom as the kingdom of David or of Herod. Was it then to take the place of the old system as of something wholly different in kind? Not at all. It was merely to succeed it, as the end succeeds the beginning, as maturity succeeds infancy and youth. The Jews were already under a theocracy. God was their king in a peculiar sense. He did not merely rule them, as he does all nations, with a providential sway. He filled that place in their political system which is filled in other

states by human sovereigns. Jerusalem was his capital, and the temple there his palace. This was still the case during all the outward changes in the form of government. But this system was a temporary one. It had been predicted, that the time was coming when God should reign, not only over the Jews, but in all parts of the earth, not under the forms of any national organization, but independently of the kingdoms of the world. The restrictions of the ancient theocracy were to be done away. This was the kingdom which our Lord announced, and for which he called upon the people to prepare by reformation and repentance, an organized system of government distinct from all secular establishments, in other words a *church*.

The Jews who used the Greek language were perfectly familiar with the word *ἐκκλησία* from its constant occurrence in the Septuagint as an equivalent to *קָהָל*, one of the Hebrew terms denoting the whole congregation of Israel. It was not merely a collective name for many dispersed individuals having a common character or faith or practice, but a defined body, a distinct society, *called out* from the world at large, *called together* for a special purpose, and possessing within itself an organization for the attainment of that purpose. Such was the church of the Old Testament. The Jewish nation was set apart for a peculiar purpose, and received a peculiar organization with reference to that purpose. The identity of this church with the church of the New Testament may be argued from the identity of their design, which was, in either case, to preserve and perpetuate divine truth, to maintain public worship, and promote spiritual edification by means of discipline, mutual communion, and a common participation in the same advantages. These ends were attained in different ways under the two systems. What was prospective in the one was retrospective in the other. Christ was the end of the law and the beginning of the gospel. Both pointed to him, though in different directions; but as to their main design and fundamental principles, they were the same. Our Lord came not to destroy but to fulfil. He came not so much to institute a new church, as to give a new organization to the old, or rather to prepare the way for such a re-organization; which did not take place and was not meant to take place, during his personal ministry.

This is evident, 1. from the absence of any intimation, ex-

pressed or implied, of such organization. There is no account given in the gospels of the formation of societies, or the creation of any officers, except, the twelve and the seventy, who were sent out with precisely the same powers. The only difference is this, that we hear no more of the seventy, from which we may infer, that they were appointed for a temporary purpose, viz., to spread the first annunciation of the kingdom more extensively than the twelve could do it, although the latter body was sufficiently numerous for all its ulterior functions.

2. The appointment of these ministers does not imply an actual organization of the Christian church, because they were originally appointed, and during their Lord's presence upon earth employed, as the announcers of a state of things which was still in prospect. We have seen that our Lord and his forerunner called men to repent, because the kingdom of heaven was at hand. To provide assistants and successors in this great work of announcing the new state of things, he began to select persons who should attend him for that purpose. Of the persons thus gradually gathered, six are particularly mentioned in the course of the narrative, viz.: Andrew, Peter, James, John, Philip and Matthew. When the number amounted to twelve, they were formed into a body and invested with official powers. The remaining six were Bartholomew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Lebbeus or Thaddeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot. These twelve are expressly said to have been appointed "that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth," (Mark iii. 14.) Their duties then were twofold, to be with Christ that they might learn, and to go from him that they might teach. In the one case they were *μαθηταί*, in the other *ἀπόστολοι*. They first remained with him as disciples, and then went forth as apostles. Hence they are sometimes called "the twelve disciples," (Matt. x. 1, xi. 1, xx. 17, 4, xxviii. 16; Mark xi, 14; Luke ix. 1,) and even the indefinite expression "the disciples" sometimes means the twelve exclusively, (Matt. xii. 1, xiii. 10, 36, &c.) One of these states was preparatory to the other. They were disciples in order that they might become apostles. They remained with Christ to learn how they must act when they should go forth from him. When they did go forth, it was to announce the approach of the new dispensation, the re-organization of the church, or, as they expressed it, the coming of the

kingdom of God. This was their office, to which their other powers were subsidiary. Their preaching was not so much doctrinal instruction as the announcement of approaching changes. Their work was to excite attention and direct it to the proper object. To aid them in so doing, and to attest the authority by which they acted, they were empowered to work miracles of healing. They were also inspired, at least for purposes of self-defence when publicly accused. They were thus commissioned as co-workers with their Lord in the work of introducing the new dispensation and preparing for the re-organization of the church. But these very facts imply that it was not yet re-organized.

3. The same thing is evident, from the omission of the name by which the body, after its re-organization, is invariably called. This word (*ἐκκλησία*), which according to Greek usage signifies an aggregate assembly of the people for municipal purposes, is the term applied, as we have seen, in the Septuagint version, to the whole Jewish church or congregation. In the New Testament it is applied (with some apparent reference to the peculiar use of *καλέω* and *καλῆσις* in the sense of calling so as to elect and qualify) to the original body of believers at Jerusalem, and then to the whole body of believers in the world, considered as forming an organized society, and also by a natural synecdoche to bodies of Christians in particular places, as integral parts or subdivisions] of the whole church. In all these senses the word is familiarly employed in the Acts and Epistles, whereas in the Gospels it occurs but twice, and then, as it should seem, in a prospective application. The first is in the memorable address to Peter: "Thou art Peter and on this rock will I build my church," (Matt. xvi. 18.) Without adverting here to the vexed question whether Peter was the rock, and if so, in what sense the church was to be built upon him, it is plain, from the very form of the expression, (*οἰκοδομήσω*) that the founding of the church is spoken of, as an event still future. The other case is in our Lord's directions as to the proper mode of dealing with private offenders. "If thy brother trespass against thee, tell it to the church," (Matt. xviii. 17.) If this means a Christian body then in existence, why is it nowhere else recognised or called by the same name in the gospel history? If not, it must either mean the Jewish church then in existence, or the Christian church as

an organization yet to be affected. From this it would seem to be at least highly probable, that there was no re-organization of the church during the gospel history.

4. The same thing is evident from the many instances in which our Lord tells his disciples what *shall be* in the kingdom of heaven, as a state of things still future.

5. It is evident from the manifest ignorance of the apostles as to the details of the re-organization, their gross mistakes, and their frequent inquiries, often betraying an entire misconception of the nature of Christ's kingdom.

6. Closely connected with the proof just stated 'is the consideration, that the twelve, though qualified to be the announcers of the kingdom, were as yet unqualified to be its rulers. Their notions, as to their Lord's character and person, were confused and erroneous. Their views were narrow; they were full of Jewish prejudices; they were slow of heart to understand and believe the scriptures; they were selfish and ambitious; they were envious and jealous. This is the picture drawn by inspiration, and among the pens employed were two of their own number. The whole account is that of persons in a state of pupilage, set apart for a work, with which they were only partially acquainted, and for which they were yet to be prepared. Witness their consternation and amazement when their Lord was taken from them, and the various instances in which it is recorded that the simplest truths were understood by them after his resurrection from the dead. Nor is this unfavourable view contradicted by the fact of their inspiration, which appears to have been limited to a special purpose, as we know that their power of working miracles was not a discretionary power. (See Matt. xvii. 16.) When our Lord rose from the dead, his first address to the eleven was in the language of rebuke, (Mark xvi. 14.) He then reassured them and enlarged their powers. He gave them indeed no new powers, but commissioned them to exercise those which they possessed already on a larger scale. At first they were commanded to go neither to the Greeks nor the Samaritans, but only to the Jews. Now they are commissioned to go into all the earth and preach the gospel to every creature, (Mark xvi. 15.) At first they were sent out to announce the coming of God's kingdom to the Jews, now to the Gentiles also. The removal of this restriction marks the beginning of the new dispensation. As long as the gospel

of the kingdom was sent only to the Jews, the old economy was still in force, and there was no room for a new organization.

7. The commission to baptize, (Matt. xxviii. 19,) was not a new one. This they had done before, (John iii. 26, iv. 1, 2,) as an expression of readiness, on the part of the baptized, to take part in the kingdom of God, when it should be set up. But that this rite was not considered as implying that the kingdom was set up already, is clear from the anxious question, asked by the eleven, at the very moment of their Lord's ascension, "Lord, wilt thou, at this time, restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts i. 6.) It is clear from this inquiry, that they had not even formed a just conception of the nature of the kingdom, in which they were to be rulers; how much more that they had not already witnessed its erection.

8. In reply to the question just referred to, Christ does not tell them that the kingdom was restored already, but tacitly admits that it was yet to come. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in his own power. But ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth," (Acts i. 7, S.) Here we have at once the removal of those restrictions which, as we have seen, were inseparable from the old economy, and the promise of that influence by which the twelve were to be qualified to organize the new one. This seems to fix prospectively the date of the actual coming of the kingdom of God, and the organization of the Christian church. Until the day of Pentecost, the Apostles and brethren were merely waiting for the kingdom; and it ought to be observed, as a significant coincidence, that the day appointed for the public entrance of the Holy Ghost into the Christian Church, was the same that has been signalled by the formal constitution of the Jewish church in the promulgation of the law from Sinai.

9. The last proof to be alleged, in favour of the proposition that the church was not re-organized until the day of Pentecost, is furnished by the subsequent change in the character and conduct of the twelve apostles. We are too much accustomed to transfer to an earlier period associations which belong to a later one. If we read the gospels by themselves, without interpolating facts drawn from the later books, we shall easily see that the

twelve are there described as wholly unfit to be the supreme rulers of a church already organised; whereas after the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, they appear as new men, clothed with every intellectual, spiritual and miraculous endowment that was needed for the right administration of that kingdom which was now indeed set up externally, as well as in the hearts of all believers.

It is now for the first time that we begin to read of a "church," distinct from the old organization, and consisting of the apostles "and other disciples," to the number of one hundred and twenty, who had assembled together in an upper room until the day of Pentecost, when "there were added unto them about three thousand souls," who "continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers," (Acts ii. 42.) Here we have a society stately assembling for prayer, praise, preaching, and communion, i. e. a church, and we accordingly find it stated in the same connexion that "the Lord added to THE CHURCH daily such as should be saved," (Acts ii. 47,) and afterwards that "great fear came upon all THE CHURCH," (Acts v. 11,) evidently meaning all the members of the body which had thus been gathered, and which is thenceforth usually called "the church," (Acts viii. 1, 3,) until the establishment of other churches "throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria," (Acts ix. 31,) after which the original society is distinguished as "the church that was in Jerusalem," (Acts viii. 1, xi. 22,) the indefinite expression being thenceforth used to designate the whole Christian body, of which "the churches" were component parts, or rather subdivisions, (Acts xii. 1, 5,) except in cases where the context evidently limits the application of the term to a local society or congregation. But with these distinctions the word *church* is, in the latter books, employed with a frequency which forms a striking contrast with the total silence of the four evangelists respecting any new organization.

We have seen that Christ came to establish a kingdom and re-organize the church. We may now add that this organization was to be essentially the same with that which had before existed. This is deducible from several obvious considerations. 1. As the Christian church was to be essentially identical with the Jewish, all that was permanent, even in the organization of the latter, would of course be retained in the former. The

kingly, priestly, and prophetic offices were thenceforth to be filled by Christ alone. The union of Church and State was to be done away by the extension of the church beyond the limits of a single nation. But the government of the people by elders, local and general, was wholly independent of these temporary institutions, and survived them all. It was therefore natural to expect, that it should be continued in the Christian church. 2. It was intrinsically suited to every variety of outward circumstances, in all ages; and all parts of the world. Being originally founded upon natural relations, and the family constitution, which is universal, it was well suited, by its simplicity, for general adoption, and by its efficiency, for the attainment of the ends proposed. 3. The intention to retain it was implied in our Lord's conduct with respect to the Jewish organization. He frequented the synagogues, or meetings of the people for public worship, in the towns or neighbourhoods where he chanced to be, and especially in the region where he was brought up. He complied with the usages of public worship, and exercised the privilege, which seems to have been common to all worshippers, of expounding the scriptures to the people. This respectful compliance with existing institutions he continued to the last; and his example was followed by his disciples. When they went abroad to preach, they availed themselves of the facilities afforded by existing institutions and arrangements. They always, if they could, preached in the synagogues. The first preaching, even to the heathen, was in synagogues. It was only where they found no synagogues, or when they were shut out from them, that they began to form separate societies. 4. When a separate organization did take place, it was on the ancient model. The first Christian church, as we have seen, was at Jerusalem. Now the organization of this "church that was in Jerusalem" is entitled to particular attention upon two accounts, first, because it was the mother church, from which the other churches were derived by propagation; then, because all the twelve apostles were, for a time, members of it. So far then as apostolical practice and example can be binding upon us, the history of this church must be highly instructive, in relation to the local constitution of the early Christian churches. Now at an early period, when a communication was made to the church at Jerusalem from one abroad, it was made to THE ELDERS, (Acts

xi. 30,) and on a subsequent occasion to "the Apostles and Elders," (Acts xv. 2, 4, 6, 22,) who united in passing a decree on an important question of faith and practice, (Acts xvi. 4.) It seems, then, that even while the Apostles were in intimate connexion with the church at Jerusalem, that church was governed by its Elders; and, what is particularly worthy of attention, we nowhere read of the original creation of this office in that church. We can trace the office of Deacon and Apostle to their very origin, whereas that of Elder runs back far beyond the organization of the Christian church, and appears in the history as an arrangement, not springing out of a new state of things, but transferred from an old one.

Nor was this adoption of the eldership a mere fortuitous occurrence, much less a local peculiarity of the church in Jerusalem. It was extended, as a thing of course, to all affiliated churches. When Paul and Barnabas planted churches in Asia Minor, they ordained them Elders, (Acts xi. 23.) Paul sent from Miletus for "the Elders of the Church" at Ephesus, (Acts xx. 17.) He directs Timothy how to treat Elders, (1 Tim. v. 1, 17, 19.) He commands Titus to ordain Elders in every city of Crete, (Titus i. 5.) James speaks "the Elders of the Church" as of a body of men, which was not only well known to his readers, but which would exist, of course, in every Christian congregation, (James v. 14.) Peter enjoins submission to the Elders, (1 Peter v. 5,) and classes himself among them, (v. 1.) John calls himself an Elder in the title of his second and third epistle.

All this seems to show that the office of Elder was regarded as essential to the organization of a local or particular church. As to the mode of introducing it, we have no explicit information. The most probable hypothesis is one which we shall here state in the words of an eminent living dignitary of the Anglican church. "It appears highly probable—I might say morally certain—that wherever a Jewish Synagogue existed that was brought, the whole or the chief part of it, to embrace the gospel, the Apostles did not there so much form a Christian church (or congregation, ecclesia,) as make an existing congregation Christian, by introducing the Christian Sacraments and Worship, and establishing whatever regulations were necessary for the newly-adopted Faith; leaving the machinery (if I may so speak) of government unchanged; the rulers of synagogues, elders, and other officers

(whether spiritual, or ecclesiastical, or both) being already provided in the existing institutions. And it is likely that several of the earliest Christian churches did originate in this way, that is, that they were converted synagogues, which became Christian churches, as soon as the members, or the main part of the members, acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah. The attempt to effect this conversion of a Jewish synagogue into a Christian church, seems always to have been made, in the first instance, in every place where there was an opening for it. Even after the call of the idolatrous Gentiles, it appears plainly to have been the practice of the Apostles Paul and Barnabas, when they came to any city in which there was a synagogue, to go thither first and deliver their sacred message to the Jews and 'devout (or proselyte) Gentiles;' according to their own expression, (Acts xiii. 16,) to the 'men of Israel and those that feared God,' adding that it was necessary that the word of God should be first preached to them.' And when they founded a church in any of those cities in which (and such were probably a very large majority,) there was no Jewish synagogue that received the gospel, it is likely they would still conform, in a great measure, to the same model."*

In so doing, they would of course fix upon the natural elders, i. e. heads of families, as answering most nearly to the hereditary elders of the Jews. That the genealogical or patriarchal constitution was at once or by degrees disused, is not at all at variance with the supposition, that the Jewish eldership was transferred to the Christian Church, because one of the advantages of this organization is the ease with which it can adapt itself to any state of manners or condition of society, all that is really essential to it being the official preference of those who have a natural priority derived from age and family relations. Under the present constitution of society, as under that which was predominant in apostolic times throughout the Roman empire, the same ends which were answered in the old theocracy by granting power to the chiefs of tribes and houses, are accomplished by entrusting it to those who sustain an analogous relation to society, that is, to men of mature age, and especially to actual heads of families. In either case the great end is

* *The kingdom of Christ Delineated.* By Richard Whately, D.D., Archbishop of Dublin. pp. 84—86, (American edition.)

accomplished of bringing the church under the same influence that rules the families of which it is composed. Whether all the heads of families were clothed with this authority, or only some selected for the purpose, is a question of detail, not at all affecting principle, and one which might perhaps admit of a solution varying with local and other unessential circumstances. One thing, however, appears certain, as an inference from all the facts which we have been considering, viz. that while some features of the Jewish polity were laid aside as temporary, the government by elders was retained as a permanent principle of organization in the Christian Church. And here we meet with the only explanation of the fact already mentioned, that the creation of the office of Elder is nowhere recorded in the New Testament, as in the case of Deacons and Apostles, because the latter were created to meet new and special exigencies, while the former was transmitted from the earliest times. In other words, THE OFFICE OF ELDER WAS THE ONLY PERMANENT ESSENTIAL OFFICE OF THE CHURCH UNDER EITHER DISPENSATION.

- ART. IV—1. *The Directory for the worship of God in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, as amended and ratified by the General Assembly, in May, 1841.*
2. *The Book of Common Prayer, and administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.*

WE resume, from our last number, the consideration of Forms of Worship, for the purpose of adding a few thoughts on Public Prayer.

Of the exercises of the Christian Assembly, the one most nearly conformed to the natural and true idea of worshipping God, is prayer. It is taken for granted in the New Testament, that if Christians unite in the worship of God at all, they will unite in prayer.

United prayer is an unailing condition of divine favour. The agreement of even but two or three in a common petition en-