

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Bachelor of Divinity

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

4-1-1929

The Apostolic Succession of the Episcopal Church

W Poehler

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_poehlerw@csl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv>



Part of the [History of Christianity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Poehler, W, "The Apostolic Succession of the Episcopal Church" (1929). *Bachelor of Divinity*. 720.
<https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv/720>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bachelor of Divinity by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

THE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
AN EXERCISE FOR THE DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF DIVINITY

Read & approved by
Otto C. A. Bricker
W. Arndt.

THE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

"By this term (Apostolic Succession) is understood the claim made by most episcopally ordained clergymen and bishops (Anglican, Syrian, and Catholic churches) that they constitute links in an uninterrupted chain of similarly ordained persons, the first of whom were ordained by the apostles themselves. With this opinion is combined the view that only clergymen who are in the line of this spiritual succession are entitled to a pastoral office in the Christian Church, and that all others usurp the functions of the ministry.... the authoritatively commissioned ministry is the proper divine instrumentality through which Christ, the exalted invisible Head of the Church, who works by the Holy Ghost, communicates to His People His promised gifts of grace." (The Concordia Cyclopedia). This defines the term Apostolic Succession as it will be used in this paper. The apostolic Succession of the Episcopal church in its historic, its dogmatic, and its liturgic aspects, treated exhaustively and completely, would produce a treatise which would extend far beyond the set limits of this paper. And rather than treat the topic only in a general, vague, and indefinite manner, this shall be a discussion of a few of the salient points in connection with the apostolic succession of the Episcopal church. I shall attempt then to trace the origin of the doctrine of the apostolic succession; to show that the idea of apostolic succession was retained in the Ordinal of the Episcopal church; and briefly to refute the claims of those that hold the theory of apostolic succession.

THE ORIGIN OF THE THEORY OF APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

With the exception of 1 Tim. 3, 2; and Tit. 1, 7, where the office of Bishop is mentioned, all references to church officers in apostolic literature are in the plural. The names which are used are varied and interchangeable. This variety is explained by most scholars as due to the varied functions of officers of the same rank.

The first definite reference to an individual, who is definitely called ^{- ποιος} ἐπίσκοπος, is made by Ignatius in his letter to Polycarp where he addresses him as ^{- Πολυκάριπυ} Πολυκάριπυ ἐκκλησίας Σμυρναίων. However, it will be noted that the definite article is lacking in the designation here and it can hardly be held that here Polycarp was already looked upon as the head of the church at Smyrna. This view is strengthened when we see

Polycarp inscribing his own letter - Πολυκάρπος καὶ οἱ βυρ αὐτῶ πρεσβύτεροι

where he evidently uses the term- πρεσβύτερος as equivalent, at least in rank, with - ἐπίσκοπος . However, Ignatius knows nothing whatsoever of the Apostolic Succession

of these bishops. With him the Bishop together with the Presbyters and the Deacons are the head of the congregation, the center of unity. Thus in his admonition to the Trallians he exhorts them to obedience, not only to the Bishops but- ἑμοίως καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ

(ad Trall. XIII) and especially does he insist that- ἄνευ ἐπίσκοπου καὶ πρεσβυτέρου καὶ διακόνων ἡρώδων τι, οὗτος οὐ καθῆρος ἔσται τῇ βυρ εὐσεβείῃ.

(ad Trall. VII) In other places Ignatius calls the bishops types of God or Christ and the Presbyters types of the Apostles. (Seeberg Dogmengeschichte Vol. I, p. 30)

"Hegesippus does not give any title to the heads of the Roman church".

(Hatch "The organization of the early Christian Churches") "The words of Hegesippus do not touch the principle in dispute". (Wm Lefroy "The Christian Ministry" p. 409) Hegesippus in his reference to his visit to the Church of Corinth and to Rome says "In every succession, and in every city, the doctrine prevails according to what is declared by the law and the prophets and the Lord." (Quoted by Eusebius). But the succession of which Hegesippus speaks cannot be shown to refer to an apostolic succession, but rather to an episcopal succession, or rather to a succession of the office of the episcopacy.

Irenaeus calls Polycarp- ἰσχυρὸς καὶ ἀποστολικὸς πρεσβύτερος

(Epist. ad Florin. quoted by Eusebius) Polycarp was Apostolic insofar as he continued in the teachings of the Apostles. He was Presbyter insofar as he was entrusted with the spiritual care of his congregation as a shepherd is entrusted with the care of a flock.

During the lifetime of Irenaeus the Gnostic controversy raged and

he wrote much polemic material against the heretics. One of his strong arguments against the Gnostics was that the truth is to be found in the church founded by the apostles.

That the church which continued in the apostles' doctrine was the true church and no one should seek to find truth in other places. Thus he says "It is not necessary to seek the truth among others which it is easy to obtain from the Church, since the Apostles, like a rich man in a bank (depositing his money), lodged in her hands most plentifully all the things which are of truth, so that every one who wishes to use it, can take from her the

drink of life".(Tantae igitur ostensiones cum sint, haec non oportet adhuc quaerere apud alios veritatem, quam facile est ab ecclesia sumere, cum apostoli, quasi in depositarium divites, plenissime in ea contulerint omnia quae sint veritatis, uti omnis quicumque velit, sumat ex ea potum vitae"(Iron. Adv.Haer. III,c.4,1) If we consider the time and the conditions in which Irenaeus lived and wrote then we can also understand his next statement, "Ubi igitur charismata Domini posita sunt, ibi discernere oportet veritatem, apud quos est ea quae est ab apostolis ecclesiae successio, et id quod est sanum et irreprobabile sermonis constat. Hi enim et eam quae est in unum Deum, qui omnia fecit, fidem nostram custodiunt". "Therefore where the gifts of the Lord have been placed there it is necessary to discern the truth; among those(among whom) the succession of the church is, which is from the apostles, and that which constitutes what is sound and irreproachable in discourse. These also guard our faith which is in one God who created all things."(Irenaeus Adv.Haer. Book IV,c.45,1)These statements prove the historical continuity of the succession of the heads of the congregations from the times of the Apostles up to the time of Irenaeus. Irenaeus makes no statement regarding Apostolic Succession, that is the transmission of Divine grace from Bishop to Bishop, and originally from the Apostles."To represent Irenaeus as believing that bishops were 'the guardians also no doubt of the grace by which Christians live'((as Gore held in his "The Christian Ministry")) is an extravagant indulgence in the 'free use of unproved assumptions'"(Lefroy p.403"The Christian Ministry") Thus when Irenaeus says that the bishops have the charisma veritatis he does not say that they have received a charismatic transmission from the ordaining Bishop by the instrumentality of the laying on of hands, but he says they received "with the succession of the episcopate, the certain gift of truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father:"Qui cum episcopatus successione charisma veritatis certum, secundum placitum patris acceperunt."(Adv. Haer. Book IV,c.45,4)And this charisma was no more nor less than the doctrine of the apostles in contradistinction to the heresies of the Gnostics.

In a letter to the head of the Roman church in which we would expect him to use the title"Bishop" if that were current at the time, or if he recognized him

as such, Irenaeus speaks of the predecessors of Victor as - ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟΙ, - "οἱ πρότεροι πρεσβύτεροι of προβαύτερες τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν ὑμῶν ἱερῆς, ἡγέτων ἀρετῶν καὶ πίστεως κατὰ."

It is evident from the above that Irenaeus nowhere speaks of the

Apostolic Succession in the manner in which Anglican writers would wish him to.

Theodoret advanced the opinion which was adopted by many later writers

that the same officers in the church who were first called Apostles were later called

Bishops. He bases his argument on a passage in the Epistle to the Philippians where in

the opening of the letter the presbyters (ἐπίσκοποι) are saluted and where later on

in the body of the letter Epaphroditus is mentioned as an 'apostle' of the Philippians (ἀποστόλος)

). Bishop Lightfoot in "Dissertation on the Apostolic Age" completely

refutes this argument when he says "If 'Apostle' here had the meaning which is thus

assigned to it, all the three orders of the ministry would be found at Philippi. But this

interpretation will not stand. The true Apostle, like St. Peter or St. John, bears this title

as the messenger, the delegate, of Christ Himself; while Epaphroditus is only so styled

as the messenger of the Philippian brotherhood; and in the very next clause the expression

explained by the statement that he carried their alms to St. Paul (Phil. 2, 25). The use of

the word here has a parallel in another passage, where messengers (or apostles) of the churches

are mentioned. (2 Cor. 8, 23) "Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and

fellow-helper concerning you; or our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers

of the churches, and the glory of Christ." (ἀποστόλων ἐκκλησιῶν) It is not therefore to

the apostle that we must look for the prototype of the bishop."

Clement of Rome is advanced by many claimants of the Apostolic succes-

sion as a strong proof for their doctrine. Especially do they insist that a certain pas-

sage in Clement's letter to the congregation at Corinth indicates that the Apostles

immediately after the fall of Jerusalem instituted the Episcopal system with its succes-

sion, as the center of the unity of the church. The passage referred to is in paragraph

4 and reads: κατέστησαν τοὺς προεφημέρους καὶ μετὰ τὸ ἐπιτάμην δευτέρου ἡμερῶν, εἰς κοινὴν θῶβιν, δικασθέντες ἕτεροι δευτεροκλήμεις ἄνδρες τῆν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν.

They appointed the formerly mentioned and afterward gave an ἐπιτάμην (Rothe translates

so-called" which may or may not be correct. Possibly a corruption of the text obtains

are) how if they should have fallen asleep other approved men should receive their office."

From this Rothe concludes "These notices seem to justify the conclusion that immediately after the fall of Jerusalem a council of the Apostles and first teachers of the Gospel was held to deliberate on the crisis, and to frame measures for the well-being of the church. The center of the system then organized was Episcopacy, which at once secured the compact and harmonious working of each individual congregation, and as a link of communication between separate brotherhoods formed the whole into one individual catholic church." But Rothe altogether overlooks the purpose of Clement's letter. First it is to be noted that Clement does not write in his own name, nor in his own authority, but in the name and authority of the church at Rome. Secondly the historical connection in which the letter was written must be understood in order to correctly ascertain its possible worth in connection with the origin of the apostolic succession. The church of Corinth is being disturbed by a spirit of insubordination. Contrasting elements have crept into the congregation. Clement writing in the name of the Roman church attempts to correct these irregularities. He reminds his readers that the office of presbyters and deacons was established by the apostles and that the apostles also at the same time gave directions that when these presbyters and other officers died or in some other manner vacancies occurred in the church other men of character should fill these vacancies. Throughout the letter the term Bishop is synonymous with presbyter and no mention of episcopacy is made by Clement in the sense which Rothe takes it. Bishop Lightfoot in this connection aptly points out that the idea of episcopacy was a slow development extending through centuries and that a simple order given by a council consisting of apostolic teachers is insufficient to explain the phenomenon. (Lightfoot "Dissertation on the Apostolic Age")

In this connection it will be interesting to note just what the relation of the bishop to the rest of the community was during this period. "The earliest theory of the relation of the bishop to the community" says Lightfoot (ibid p106) was that the bishop stood in the place of the unseen Lord, entrusted with the oversight of his Master's household until he should return from that far country into which he had gone. "That the early Christians believed that Christ would soon return to judge the world is historical fact. To usurp anything resembling the position and the authority

of the Bishop in the Anglican church today would certainly not have been tolerated by the early Christians. This when Peter in the Clementine writings is made to entrust to Clement: τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τῶν λόγων καθέσθαι and afterwards speaks of him as : τὸν ἀληθεῖς προκεθεσθαι (Epistle of Clement to James c.2) this can only mean that to Clement was entrusted the responsibility to see to it that truth, that is the Word of God in distinction from error or the words of men was taught in the church of Rome. The Gnostic heresy certainly would necessitate some such arrangement in the church. And thus the early church fathers always refer to this fact that in their church the truth is taught so as it had been retained from the time of the apostles and Christ Himself. Thus Clement writes (Clementine writings Book III, 60) ἐνὶ τῆς κληρονομίας καθέσθαι καὶ ἀληθεῖς (II, 70) θρόνον οὐδὲ κληρονομία τῆς ἐκκλησίας The Bishop, acts in place of Christ or God, inasmuch as he teaches what Christ taught.

In a review of the evidence given us by the writers of the writers of the first two centuries their complete silence on the theory of Apostolic Succession is phenomenal in view of the many claims made to the contrary. Hatch describes the position of the bishop during this period as analogous to that held by a chairman to a committee in our day. These facts "do not account for the fact that the bishops of the third and subsequent centuries claimed for themselves exceptional powers and that the relation of primacy ultimately changed into a relation of supremacy" (Hatch "The organization of the early Christian churches" p.90.91) De Rossi in his "Bu lletino di Archeologia Christi." says "So late as the third century, the extant epitaphs of Roman Bishops do not give the title: ἐπίσκοπος ."

Another fact worthy of note in connection with this period is the "facility with which ordinations were made and unmade. When, in later times, the belief prevailed that ordination conferred exceptional spiritual powers, it was recognized as a necessary corollary of such a belief that the grace of ordination, even if irregularly conferred was inalienable" Thus Augustine in De Bono Conjugali Vol. VI p 394: Quammodum si fiat ordinatio cleri ad plebem congregandam, etiamsi plebis congregatio non subsequitur, manet tamen in illis ordinatis sacramentum ordinationis: et si aliqua culpa

quisquam ab officio removeatur sacramento Domini semel imposito non carebit, quamvis ad iudicium permanente."But the trifling reasons for which ordination was considered as being invalid from the beginning at this time indicate that an appointment to the office of Bishop was similar to the appointment to a civil office and that it did not confer exceptional spiritual powers. Hatch enumerates a number of reasons why an ordination was considered invalid: "If the person whom a bishop ordained belonged to another church, (or if the person ordained were not designated to some particular church, or if the ordainer and ordained stood in the relation of father and son, the ordination was invalid. These regulations reach a climax in a Gallican council of the fifth century, which enacts that all irregular ordinations are invalid except by arrangement. It is improbable, except upon an extreme theory of the close correspondence between the 'terrestrial and virlidylal hirtstwind,' that the grace of the Holy Spirit should so closely follow the details of ecclesiastical organization as to flow or not to flow, according as a bishop stood just within or just without the geographical limits of his jurisdiction" (Hatch "The organization of the early Christian churches" p.136)

Advocates of the Apostolic succession sometimes refer to the ordination of Timothy as the first case on record of charismatic transmission by the imposition of hands, but in 1 Tim. 4,14 the imposition of hands is an accompaniment and not a means of a transmission of grace. It symbolized that for which the elders in the congregation prayed namely that the Holy Spirit would fill Timothy with the power to carry out the duties of his calling. The preposition here used is: $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha$, not: $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$. Furthermore the word: $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$ has a wide latitude of meaning. It is best rendered by the German "Gnadengabe" and that has nothing to do with: $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma$ "Grace" or "Gnade." $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$ was used of every faculty and privilege which a Christian possessed. "To be a Christian was itself a Charisma; to be orthodox was a Charisma; and in the same way to hold office in the Church was a Charisma." (Hatch, ibid p.136 note)

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE IDEA OF CHARISMATIC TRANSMISSION THROUGH APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

The view that bishops and not the presbyters are the successors of the apostles appears for the first time in the claims of Zephyrinus and Callistus during

the Montanist controversy; They claimed to have the power of absolving penitents from sin, by virtue of their apostolic succession. "Ego et moechiae et fornicationis delicta poenitentia functis dimitto " Says Callistus(Tert.1). Hippolytus reports concerning Callistus: καὶ ἠρωτοῦν τὸ ἠρῶν τῆς ἡδονῆς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις συζητοῦν ἐκτροχῆν, λέγων πᾶσιν ὅτι δὲν δύνανται ἀμαρτίας (Seeberg, Dogmengeschichte I, 135)

These claims as can well imagined aroused quite a discussion in the church. They were not accepted without much and bitter controversy. Tertullian opposed these spurious claims most vigorously in his De Pudice. His argument is as follows: (p.99 Antenicene Fathers) "Exhibit therefore even now to me, apostolic sir (the epithet 'apostolic sir' is considered by the best authorities to have been used by Tertullian as an expression of sarcasm. Seeberg, however, inclines to the opposite view. (Dog. G. I, 135)) prophetic evidences, that I may recognize your divine virtue, and vindicate to yourself the power of remitting such sins. If, however, you have had the functions of discipline alone allotted to you, and (the duty) of presiding not impartially, but ministerially, who are now great are you, that you should grant indulgences, who by exhibiting neither the prophetic nor the apostolic character, lack that virtue whose property it is to judge?" Callistus then names his reasons for forgiving sins supporting it with Matt. 18 and Tertullian continues. "I now enquire into your opinion, (to see) from what source you usurp this right to "the church". If, because the Lord has said to Peter, "Upon this rock I will build my church, "etc." You therefore presume that the power of binding and loosing has derived to you, that is to every church akin to Peter, what sort of man are you, subverting and wholly changing the manifest intention of the Lord, conferring (as that intention did) this (gift) personally upon Peter?" Tertullian concludes his argument. "The church it is true will forgive sins, but (it will be) the church of the Spirit, by means of a spiritual man; not the church which consists of a number of Bishops. (et ideo ecclesia quidem delicta donabit, sed ecclesia spiritus per spiritalem hominem non ecclesia numerus episcoporum.) For the right of arbitrament is the Lord's not the servant's; God Himself, not the priests".

Tertullian maintains the universal priesthood of all believers: (Hare's Tertullian, p.211.) "It is the authority of the church which makes a difference between the

MEMORIAL LIBRARY
 CONCORDIA SEMINARY
 ST. LOUIS, MO.

order (the clergy) and the people- this authority and the consecration of their rank by the assignment of special benches to the clergy. Thus where there is no bench of clergy, you present the eucharistic offering and baptize and are your own sole priest--- therefore if you exercise the rights of a priest in cases of necessity, it is your duty also to observe the discipline enjoined on a priest, where of necessity you exercise the rights of a priest."

However, in spite of repeated rejection of this doctrine in its early stages of development, it gained ground. The terms, "pontifex maximus" and "Episcopus Episcoporum" were assumed by Callistus. To Hippolytus is ascribed the statement at this time: *εἰ ἐπίσκοπος ἀμάρτωι τι, εἰ καὶ πρὸς θάνατον, μὴ δεῖν κατὰ τὴν θέλησιν* by Seeberg. Seeberg sums up the stand of Callistus as follows: "Fortan ist die Kirche nicht mehr das heilige Gottesvolk, das dem Glauben teilt, es ist die Gemeinschaft der Menschen, die unter der Herrschaft des Bischofs stehen, die er in der Kirche duldet und zwar Kraft des ihm zustehenden göttlichen Rechtes Sünden zu vergeben und zu behalten. Wen der Bischof anerkennt, der gehört zur Kirche. Der Bischof ist der Herr ueber Glauben und Leben der Christenheit Kraft göttlicher Machtvollkommenheit. Kallist hat den katholischen Kirchenbegriff geprægt."

Much more definite and hierarchical are Cyprian's statements regarding the office and the power of the bishop. "Scire debes" he says, "episcopum in ecclesia esse et ecclesiam in Episcopo, et si quis cum episcopo non sit, in ecclesia non esse." (Epistle 56) So that if one is not under the supervision of the bishop he is eo ipso out of the church of Christ. For the bishop is now conceived to be the indispensable channel of divine grace, as well as the bond of unity for the church. He claims divine authority for his position. "Expectanda non sunt testimonia humana, cum præcedunt divina suffragia" (Epistle 38). And "Non humana suffragatione sed divina dignatione conjunctum" (Epistle 39). "He pleads a direct official inspiration which enables him to dispense with ecclesiastical custom and to act on his own responsibility" (Lightfoot, Dissertation on the Apostolic Age) Cyprian writing against Novatian says (Antenicene Fathers, Cyprian, page 389) "For since in baptism every one has his own sins remitted, the Lord proves and

declared in His gospel that sins can only be put away by those who have the Holy Spirit. For after His resurrection, sending forth his disciples he speaks to them and says "As the father sent me so send I you; whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted, whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained. In which place he shows that He alone can baptize and give remission of sins who has the Holy Spirit.... therefore those who baptize heretics or schismatics must answer us whether they have or have not the Holy Ghost....It is plain that remission of sins cannot be given by those who, it is certain, have not the Holy Ghost..... This these men(Novatian and his followers) are now doing who divide the church and us rebels against the peace.... assume the primacy and claim the right of baptizing and of offering."The successors of the Apostles are the Bishops, who were placed as "praepositi" or "pastores" of the church(Ep.8,1;19,2;20,3;27,3;28,1; 13,1;59,14).Every bishop is placed intohis office not only in an "ordinatio succedanea/(59,5) but through divinum iudicium, de eius sententia(59,5). However, the prayers and the sacrifice of the individual Bishop is effective only if accompanied with a blameless conduct. Epis.65,4: Fratres ab eorum fallacia separare.... ab eorum contagione discernere, quando nec oblatio sanctificari illic possit ubi sanctus spiritus non sit, nec cuiquam dominus per eius orationes et preces prosit qui dominum ipse violavit.To criticize the actions of a bishop is to criticize the God and Christ and to rebel against the bishop is rebellion against Christ. The very fact thatthey are bishops makes them eo ipso worthy of the office. Hoc est in deum non credere, hoc est rebellem adversus Christum et adversus evangelium eius exister, ut quum ille dicat:nonne duo passeret etc(Matt. 10,29)... tu existimes, sacerdotes dei sine conscientia eius in ecclesia ordinari. Nam credere quod indigni et incesti sint qui ordinantur, quid aliud est quam contendere quod non a deo nec per deum sacerdotes eius in ecclesia constituentur?(66,1) Cyprian founds the church on the bishop and says that it should be governed by him according to Matt. 16,18:Inde per temporum successionem vices episcoporum ordinatio et ecclesiae ratio decurrit, ut ecclesia super episcopos constitutatur et omnis actus ecclesiae per eosdem praepositos gubernetur.(53,1)The various bishops form a collegium, the episcopatus. On the episcopate the unity of the church is dependent. Episcopatus unus est,cuius a singulis in solidum

pars tenetur; ecclesia una est, quae in multitudinem latius incremento fecunditatis extenditur. (de unitate ecclesiae 5) Although Cyprian rests the highest ecclesiastical authority in the episcopate, the statements that are fallaciously attributed to him, where he speaks of the primacy of Peter, are known to have been interpolated by friends of Rome.

Although the above statements of Cyprian seem to indicate that the hierarchy of the bishops and their apostolic succession is well established at this time, yet a statement by the same man, such as the following would seem to indicate that there was yet some doubt in his mind as to the absolute tenability of the theory. In his "De lapsis" Cyprian makes this statement: Nemo se fallat, nemo se decipiat: solus Dominus misereri potest. Veniam peccatis, quae in ipsum commissa sunt, solus potest ille largiri, qui peccata nostra portavit, qui pro nobis deluit, quem Deus tradidit pro peccatis nostris. Homo Deo esse non potest maior; nec remittere aut donare indulgentia sua servus potest, quod in Dominum delicto graviore commissum est; ne adhuc lapsos et hoc accedat ad crimen, si nosciat esse praedictum: 'maledictus homo qui spem habet in homine'. Dominus orandus est."

In the seventh council of Carthage (343 A.D.) The following statement of Clarus of Mascula was subscribed to by the various bishops assembled there, Cyprian among others. "Jesus Christ is again when he sent his apostles and accorded to them alone the power given to Him by His Father; and to them we have succeeded, governing the Lord's church with the SAME POWER, and baptizing the faith of the believers." (Ante-nicene Fathers, "Cyprian")

The main source of information on our subject during the fourth century is Augustine. Augustine's doctrine of the Church and church-government is somewhat involved. He insists that Extra ecclesiam nulla salus est, but that only because in the Church alone the truth, and the Spirit of God is found. Seeberg says (Dogmengeschichte, ²⁹¹ I, 291) "Diese Aussage Augustinus von der Kirche ist nun aber nicht hierarchisch motiviert, sondern ruht letztlich auf dem Gedanken, dass nur in der katholischen Kirche Geist und Liebe den Menschen gegeben werden. Aber die Heiligen sind nur in der katholischen Kirche vorhanden. Augustin hat in diesem Zusammenhang den Gedanken: extra ecclesiam nulla salus nicht minder festinnst als Cyprian verfochten, aber mit wegen des andersartigen Gegensatzes nicht minder bestimmt als Cyprian verfochten, aber mit wegen des andersartigen Gegensatzes

—weniger hierarchisches Interesse gezeigt als Cyprian. Auch der Gedanke des römischen Primates ist von Augustino nicht weiter ausgebildet worden. An der allgemeinen Anerkennung des principatus apostolicae cathedrae fehlt es nicht (Ep. 43, 70 aber von einer besonderen Autorität des Petrus oder seiner Nachfolger weiss Augustino nichts.....Die infallible Autorität des Papstes in der gesammten Kirche war ein Dogma, an das die Päpste allein glaubten. Dogmatisch war man über den Standpunkt Cyprians nicht hinausgekommen."

The only thing that we know definitely regarding Augustino's theory of church-government and authority in the church is that although it is to be ruled by the bishops, yet these do not have the power to transmit divine grace to their successors by means of the imposition of hands. Augustino did not believe or teach charismatic transmission. In his "De Trinitate", Lib. 15, c. 25, he writes "Quomodo Deus non est qui dat Spiritum Sanctum? Imo quantum Deus est qui dat Deum? Nequi enim aliquis discipulorum ejus dedit Spiritum Sanctum. Orabant quippe ut veniret in eos quibus manus imponebant, non ipsi eum dabant. Quem nunc in suis praepositis etiam nunc servat ecclesia. Denique et Simon Magus offerens apostolis pecuniam, non ait, date et mihi hanc potestatem, ut dem Spiritum Sanctum: sed cuiusquam imponere manus, ut accipiat Spiritum Sanctum. Quia neque Scriptura prius dixerat, Videns autem Simon quod apostolorum darent Spiritum Sanctum, sed dixerat, Videns autem Simon quod per impositionem manuum apostolorum daretur Spiritus Sanctus....Nos autem super alios non utique possumus, sed hoc fiat, Deum super eos a quo hoc efficitur, invocamus? How a God is not he who gives the Holy Spirit, rather how great a God is he who gives God? For neither anyone of his disciples gave the Holy Spirit. They prayed that he would come on those on whom they placed their hands, not they themselves gave Him. This custom the church observes even now in its prelates. Finally also Simon Magus offering the apostles money did not say 'give also to me the power, that I may give the Holy Spirit: but on whom I shall lay my hands that he may receive the Holy Spirit. Because neither had Scripture before said' Simon seeing that the apostles gave the Holy Spirit' but had said' for Simon seeing that through the imposition of hands of the apostles the Holy Spirit was given. We indeed may receive this gift in our small way: to pour it out on others we certainly cannot, but we call on God over them, by whom this is effected, that He may do this.

Morinus twelve centuries later commenting on this passage of Augustine on speaking of the ordination ceremony and the words used in ordaining says: Hoc tam luculentum St. Augustini testimonium a formula loquendi tam Scripturae sacrae quam ecclesiae petunt, mendacii et imposturae statim convinceretur, si illius aevi episcopi ordinantes dicere solebant, Accipe Spiritum Sanctum. Quibus enim verbis evidentius et efficacius testari possunt episcopi se Spiritum Sanctum dare quam illa formula loquendi, Accipe? Ac proinde luculentissimis et quotidianis testimoniis falsi convinceretur tam confidens St. Augustini asseverantia, ecclesiae prepositos Spiritum Sanctum non dare, sed Deum orare ut ad eos veniat quibus manus imponunt.... Imperativus enim, accipe, non solum denotat rei alicuius traditionem, sed re istius traditionem cum potestate et auctoritate conjunctam. Ideo nunquam legas in ritualibus cum instrumenta traduntur, do, vel trade tibi, sed accipe: quia simul cum ista traditione duplex immitur potestas, tradentis instrumentum, sive ordinantis, et ea quam ordinatus ab ordinante accipit." (Morinus, De Sac. Ord. III)

This is so clear a testimony of St. Augustine from the form of speaking both of Holy Scripture and of the church, that if the bishops in his time ordaining, were accustomed to say 'receive the Holy Spirit,' he would at once have been convinced of lying and imposture.

more

For with what words could the bishops 'evidently and effectively testify that they gave the Holy Spirit than with the formula of saying 'receive'? And accordingly the so confident assertions of St. Augustine that the prelates of the church do not give the Holy Spirit but pray God that he would come to them on whom they placed the hands, would be convicted of falsity by the clearest and daily testimonies..... For the imperative, 'receive' not only denotes the handing over of anything, but the handing over of that thing with power and authority combined. Therefore never you read in the rituals when the instruments are handed over, I give, or I hand over to thee, but receive: because at the same time with this handing over a double power is intimated, the handing over of the instruments, or of the ordaining one, and that which the ordained receives from the ordaining one.

This is sufficient evidence to show that Augustine neither held the theory of apostolic succession as far as transmission of the Holy Spirit by the mechanical imposition of hands from the Bishop who ordained, to the bishop who was ordained, nor does it seem that the ritual used in ordaining was at this time already the concerned, nor does it seem that the ritual used in ordaining was at this time already the

words of Scripture: "Receive the Holy Spirit" etc.

Thus we see in summarizing this period of the history of the Church that although there were evidences of individuals claiming to be descended directly from the Apostles, and to having received their power to forgive sins, and a special grace through their ordination, such as Kephyrinus, Clarus, Victor, Callistus; others just as insistently rejected their claims; Tertullian, Augustine, Cyprian. However, the idea began to grow. The growing importance of the church at Rome, especially of its Bishop injected into this theory the doctrine of the Petrine primacy. This latter doctrine somewhat relegated the idea of charismatic transmission to ALL bishops by virtue of their succession to the Apostles into the background. But although the succession of the individual bishops is not so clearly brought out during the fifth and sixth centuries, yet in the growth of the theory of the Petrine primacy it is always implied. As the Bishop of Rome received authority, special grace and power by virtue of his succession from Peter, so the other bishops also received special grace by virtue of their succession from the apostles. The successor of Peter was outstanding only insofar as he was considered the head of the other apostles. However, in considering the theory of apostolic succession during this next period it will be necessary to consider it in connection with the idea of Petrine primacy, especially as it developed at Rome in the occidental church.

The two men who finally advanced the idea of apostolic succession to the position which it holds in the Anglican church today were Leo the Great and Gregory the Great.

Of Leo I., Thomsius writes (Dogmengeschichte Vol. I, 564ff) "Der ganze Organismus der Kirche schien ihm durch goettliche Anordnung darauf angelegt, dass die bischoefliche Kuehle, von Stufe zu Stufe hoeher steigend, in dem Apostel Petrus, als dem Haupte der Kirche, ihre hoechste Spitze hatte, von welcher die ganze Regierung der Kirche ausging. (563) Was naemlich die Auslegung der Stelle Matt. 16, betrifft, so hatten die griechischen und lateinischen Vaeter unter dem Felsen teils den Glauben des Apostels, teils Christum selbst verstanden. Auf den Roemischen Bischof und auf dessen Amtsnachfolger wurde sie erst seit dem funften Jahrhundert und zwar von diesen selbst bezogen; mit voller Bestimmtheit zuerst von Leo." Thomsius gives the following excerpt

from the writings of Leo I. "Obwohl die Würde des Priesterthums eine gemeinsame ist, muss es doch innerhalb derselben Unterordnungen geben (Bischöfe, Erzbischöfe, Metropolitane) per quos ad unam Petri sedem universalis ecclesiae cura conflueret et nihil usquam a capite suo dissideret.... Hujus muneris sacramentum ita Dominus ad omnium apostolorum officium pertinere voluit, ut in beatissimo Petro, apostolorum omnium summo, principaliter collocaret et ab ipso, quasi quodam capite, dona sua velit in corpus emanare, ut exortum se mysterii intelligeret divini, qui ausus fuisset a Petri soliditate recedere. (Ep.14;10)"Here Leo clearly indicates that although Peter is to be the head of the church yet his power, received from the Lord, pertains to all the apostles and of course their successors, the bishops..

In Gregory the Great the doctrine of the apostolic succession finds its consummation. He claims that the salvation of the laity is entrusted to the Regentes and subditi (Reg.Past. II,6;VI,2,31).The clergy possess the power of the keys and utrum iuste an iniuste obliget pastor, pastoris tamen sententia graui timenda est (Ev.IIc.26,5ff). In other words the bishop by virtue of his office has the power which is ascribed to him. The power comes to him from above not from the congregation. The "Religious Encyclopedia", quoting Gregory says (Vol.V,57)"none but the officiating 'regents' in this church administer the necessary 'boons' to the attainment of salvation." Seeberg in summarizing the theology of Gregory I says (Dogmengeschichte Vol.II 12)"Vergleicht man Gregors Christentum mit dem Aug., so kommt man zu einem sonderbaren Resultat. Fast Alles bei Greg. hat seine Wurzeln bei Aug., und fast nichts ist wirklich augustinisch. Das Unaugustinische in Augustin ist die Kraft dieses Semi-Augustiners. Die Grundstimmung Aug. ist verflogen, die Superstition ist uebermächtig geworden. Alles ist gerebe geworden, fester und gewöhnlicher. Nicht der Friede des Herzens, das Ruhe findet in Gott ist das Leitmotiv, sondern die Furcht der Ungewissheit, die Sicherheit zu erlangen trachtet durch die Institutionen der Kirche. Sic namque sancta ecclesia fidelibus suis de pietate et iustitia redemptoris in praedicationis serie sepe miscet et metum, quatenus nec incante de misericordia confidant nec desperate iustitiam timeant (II.XX 5,15) .Es fehlt nicht an Lichtblicken in diesem Gedankengebilde.... aber das Vulgarchristentum verdrängt sie mit seiner Sakramentsmagie, dem wuesten Wunderspuk, der Priesterherrschaft, dem flachen Verstaendnis

der Saende usw."

That in brief is the origin and development of the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession as held in the Episcopal Church. The points that the writer has attempted to make and hold on the basis of patristic writings are that the idea of Apostolic Succession in its modern form was unheard of during the first two centuries of the Christian era; that the idea originated in the third and fourth centuries, during the Montanist and similar controversies in the church, though opposition to the theory was quite strong and general to the idea; and that first during the fifth and sixth century was the final stage in the development reached under Leo and Gregory.

In the second part of this treatise the writer will attempt to show that the theory of Apostolic Succession was retained in the Ordinal of the Episcopal Church.

THE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

PART TWO.

Under the reign of Henry VIII the Church of England came into existence.

Henry did not establish a new church. All he did was to take over the existing Roman church, exclude the authority of the Pope and place himself at the head of the Church as the highest temporal and spiritual authority. Thus he took over with the other practices and doctrines of the Roman church also the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession as it had been developed in the preceding centuries from the time of Leo the Great and Gregory the Great. "All that Henry really accomplished by his dominating character and absolute authority as King, was the support which he gave to setting the Church completely free from all control of Rome, something which, though representing thoroughly the mind of the English people, could not then have been done without his powerful help." (Walker Gwynne- "Primitive Worship and the Prayer Book) "In doctrine the King wished to remain a good Catholic, and for this end passed in the Parliament of A.D. 1539 the law of the Six Articles, which made any contradiction of the doctrines of transubstantiation, the withholding of the cup, celibacy of the clergy, the mass and auricular confession, a capital offense."

(Kurtz Vol.II,314)

Ten years after Parliament had passed this law of the Six Articles,

under the reign of Henry's Successor, Edward VI a convocation appointed by Parliament, consisting of six prelates of the Church and six others, under the presidency of Granmer, the first "Book of Common Prayer" was compiled. In 1550 the Ordinal was added.

This "Book of Common Prayer" was compiled from the following books which had been in use up to this time:

1. The Portiforium. 2. The Legenda. 3. The Antiphonarium. 4. The Graduale. 5. The Psalterium.
6. The Proprium. 7. The Ordinale, Pica, or Pie. 8. The Sacramentary. 9. The Missal. 10. The Manual. 11. The Pontifical, a book of offices for the use of Bishops, containing services for Confirmation, Ordination, etc.

We are chiefly interested in the form used for ordaining priests, Bishops, etc. at this time. The Pontifical gives this information. The form for ordination of Priests as given by Guynee is as follows:

"Presentation by the Archdeacon of ordinands for the priesthood (sacerdotes) and "Take heed, etc." (caueatur, etc.) with address (short in Sarum, long in Winchester) by the Bishop.

9. Silent blessing by the Bishop while he and all Presbyters present (Omnes presbyteri presentes) hold their hands over the heads of the ordinands, the Bishop "With one hand touching," but "Saying nothing" (nihil eis dicente, et una manu tangente—pp 204, 205)

10. Brief address followed by prayer for candidates, after which the Bishop turns the stole as it hangs down the deacon's back, placing it over his right shoulder, and crossing it over his breast, while he says "receive the yoke of the Lord: for His yoke is easy, and His burden light....."

11.....

12. The giving of the paten and chalice containing unconsecrated bread and wine, with the words, "Receive power to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate mass, as for the living so also for the dead. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.".....

13. The eucharistic service then proceeds, the newly ordained "Priests" (sacerdotes) communicate (in one or both kinds is left uncertain) and not until then does the Bishop lay his hands on the head of each one separately (singulorum), saying, "Receive the Holy Ghost: whose sins thou shalt remit, they are remitted unto them: and whose sins thou shalt

retain, they shall be retained." (Gwynne- Primitive worship and the Prayer Book p.405)

This then was the original from which the later forms of the Anglican Ordinal resulted. That the form of the Ordinal in the Edwardine prayer book was the same as the Pontifical as far as contents are concerned is indicated by Gwynne in his list of the portions of the extant books which the revisers used and retained in their "First reformed book."

In the revision of the Edwardine Book of Prayer in 1552 the words used in the Ordinal, during the imposition of hands for the transmitting of the power of binding and loosing to the priesthood are "Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained; and be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of God and of His holy Sacraments" and the words that were spoken while the Bible was being deliver to the candidate "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God and to minister the Holy Sacraments in the Congregation where thou shalt be appointed." In the case of the episcopate it was "take the Holy Ghost and remember that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of hands for God hath not given us the spirit of fear but of POWER and love and of soberness." (as quoted by the "Catholic Encyclopedia" Vol.I.-.492) At the accession of Mary in 1553 this form of the prayer book together with the Ordinal was discarded and the Pontifical resumed. However, in 1553 it was restored at the time of the accession of Elizabeth. (Catholic Encyclopedia Vol.Ip.492) However, the Prayer Book of 1552 was not accepted by the majority of the people. "It was drawn up by a few Bishops and clergy, appointed by the Council of State, and only possessed the authority of a Parliament which had been carefully packed for the purpose" (Gwynne p.109) The reason for its rejection by the people according to Gwynne was that it inclined too much toward Puritan and Reformed and Lutheran ideas. However, he admits that in some points and especially regarding the Ordinal it heightened if anything the idea of the power of the priest due to his ordination, over the conception of that power as expressed in the Book of Prayer of 1550. "While it is true that the general character of the changes in the Second Book were bad, some things were added which were far from being of the Puritan order. Such are the Absolution that

speaks of "power and commandment" given to the Priests "to declare and pronounce absolution and remission of sins." (Note p.113 -Primitive Worship etc)

"The Prayer Book" was again revised in 1662. Regarding the Ordinal in this new revision the changes that were made were: In the case of the priesthood (after the words, "Receive the Holy Ghost") "for the office and the work of a priest in the church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands". And in the case of the Episcopate (after the words, "Take the Holy Ghost") "for the office and work of a bishop in the church of God now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands" (Cath. Ency. Vol.I, 492)

"The Prayer Book of 1662 marks the close of the long liturgical struggle, just as the Savoy Conference marks the close of the long political struggle.... By it, in worship, just as in doctrine and discipline, the church.... reiterated and to the best of her power enforced her claim to be the Catholic Church of Christ in England.

"The assertion of these principles necessarily involved the enactment of unordained ministers from all benefices of which they held possession. It was manifestly impossible that a Church which taught THAT THE POWER OF THE PRIESTHOOD COULD BE TRANSMITTED ONLY BY THE HANDS OF A BISHOP COULD ALLOW THOSE WHO HAD NEVER RECEIVED EPISCOPAL ORDINATION STILL TO RECEIVE ENDOWMENTS OF CHURCH BENEFICES AND ATTEMPT TO ADMINISTER THE SACRAMENTS..... On that day (St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662) two thousand Independent, Baptist, and Presbyterian ministers, who were either unable in conscience to use the Prayer Book or were unwilling to submit to Episcopal ordination, were obliged to leave their benefices etc. (Wakeman "The Church and the Puritans," p.198,199)

"Since 1662 no change has been made in the English Prayer Book. An attempt at revision in 1689 which would have toned down the Church's teaching, happily failed. The corporate action of the Church was stifled by Crown and Parliament until 1852 when the Convocations were permitted to meet again for business. But even thus the state has so hampered the Church that no effort to enrich her services, and adapt them to modern conditions, has proved successful, with the exception of that for a revised Lectionary, and more freedom in the use of the Book, which was approved by Act of Parliament

in 1852." (Dr. S. Hart, Book of Common Prayer, p.5) The attempt at a reform or a revision of the Book of Common Prayer in 1927-1928 by the Anglo-Catholic party in the Church of England, which was squashed by the House of Commons had to do mainly with the doctrine of the Eucharist, namely the reservation of the host and did in no wise touch on the throy of Apostolic Succession.

It remains now only to show that the doctrine concerning the Apostolic Succession as contained in the Ordinal of the Edwardine Book of Prayer and its succeeding revisions up to the year 1562 is retained and sanctioned in the Common Book of Prayer in use in the Episcopal churches to day, in order to have proved the premise of this portion of this treatise.

In the "Book of common prayer and administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church according to the use of the Church of England together with the Psalter or Psalms of David pointed as they are to be sung or said in Churches and the form and manner of making, ordaining and consecrating of Bishops, priest, and Deacons" (The Mussen Book co., Ltd. for the Church Bible and Prayer book society, inc. 1898, Toronto Canada) page 354 under the general heading "Articles of Religion" "Article xxvi Of consecration of Bishops and Ministers", the following statement is found: "The book of Consecration of Archbishops and Bishops, and Ordering of Priests and Deacons, lately set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth, and confirmed at the same time by authority of Parliament, doth contain all things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering: neither hath it any thing, that of itself is superstitious and ungodly. And therefore whosoever are consecrated or ordered according to the Rites of that Book, since the second year of the forenamed King Edward unto this time, or hereafter shall be consecrated or ordered according to the same Rites; we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered." A clear statement sanctioning the doctrine contained in the Edwardine ordinal. If we now turn to that portion of the Book of Common prayer pertaining to the "Ordering of Priests and Deacons".... and "The consecration of Archbishops and Bishops", we will find that the Edwardine Ordinal has been retained *ipsisssimis verbis*. Page 337 of the above-mentioned edition of the Common Book of prayer we read under

the caption "The ordering of Priests"; "When this prayer (a sort of preparatory prayer) is done, the Bishop with the Priest present shall lay their hands severally upon the head of every one that receiveth the Order of Priesthood; the Receivers humbly kneeling upon their knees, and the Bishop saying,

Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church and the Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of his holy Sacraments: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

"Then the Bishop shall deliver to every one of them kneeling, the Bible into his hand, saying,

"Take thou Authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy Sacraments in the Congregation, where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto."

Page 341 of the same book under the caption: "The consecration of Bishops", the following is found:

"Then the archbishop and Bishops present shall lay their hands upon the head of the elected Bishop kneeling before them upon his knees, the Archbishop saying,

"Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Bishop in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. And remember that thou stir up the grace of God which is given thee by this imposition of our hands: for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and soberness."

Surely these words are precise, clear, and to the point; they need no long involved exegesis. "The grace of God which is given thee by this imposition of our hands"...That is charismatic transmission pure and simple. As to whether all Anglican bishops believe these words and understand them as they read, that is a different question and beyond the point under discussion. The Episcopal Church incorporated into its confessional writings and specifically into its Ordinal the idea of Apostolic Succession at its very origin under Henry VIII and Edward VI and it has officially retained the idea upto

the present time, in spite of all the internal conflicts within the church between the High Church, the Low Church and the Broad Church elements. Anyone taking the time to peruse the sources from which the above quotations were excerpted cannot but arrive at that conclusion.

In the next and final portion of this treatise the writer shall attempt to refute briefly the claims of those that hold the Apostolic Succession.

THE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

PART III.

"The phrase 'Apostolic Succession' is essentially absurd and self-contradictory. Strictly construed, it can only mean that the apostles have had a continuous line of successors to the present time. But an apostolic office was sui generis, and by its very constitution confined to the first incumbents. This is clear from the two inherent qualifications of the order itself, not to mention others." (Mc Clintock and Strong, Encyclopedia of Biblical, theological, and ecclesiastical literature." Vol. I, -5) "For a bishop to succeed to the power and the office of an Apostle, he must be an apostle himself, for if I want to succeed to the President of the U.S. I must succeed to his power, his authority, in short to his office; I must become President of the U.S. An "Apostle" in the scriptural sense was an eye-witness of the Lord (Mark 3,14) And He ordained twelve, that they should BE WITH HIM, and that he might send them forth to preach; Acts, 1,32, "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us ALL THE TIME THAT THE LORD JESUS WENT IN AND OUT AMONG US BEGINNING FROM THE BAPTISM OF JOHN UNTO THIS SAME DAY THAT HE WAS TAKEN UP FROM US,"); he directly received his appointment at His hands (Mark 3,14). On this fact Paul bases his apostleship (Gal. 1,1 "Paul an apostle (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead"; v. 12: "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Thus the office of an apostle was in its very nature incapable of transmission, for to be an apostle was to have received appointment directly from the Lord Himself and to have been an eye-witness of His. When the eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word appointed by Christ died, then the office of Apostles ceased.

Special gifts of healing and casting out of devils were given the apostles by Christ (Mark 3, 14-25, "And he ordained twelve..... to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.") When the original apostles died these miraculous manifestations soon ceased and have never been renewed.

Thus the first proof that the claimant to Apostolic Succession must give us in substantiation of his claim, is that Christ directly and immediately appointed him Apostle; that he possesses special gifts such as the Apostles possessed of healing sickness etc., for as was stated above, to succeed to the office of the apostles is to become an Apostle, and that not only in name, but in very fact. I may claim to be president of the United States, but my claim is preposterous and fictitious until I prove that I have the authority and power of the President; that I have been appointed in the same manner to the office of President as the President of the United States has been appointed, by regular election of the people, not by a committee of three or by the imposition of hands or by the recitation of some formula over me, stating, "now you are President".

The claim that the Apostles handed over their peculiar powers to successors, who in turn handed them over to their successors up to the present time is unscriptural and unhistorical. The Apostles appointed presbyters, deacons, elders in various congregations, but not Apostles. When Matthias filled the place of the suicide, Judas, it was not the apostles that appointed and chose him, it was Christ Himself (Acts 1, 24, "And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, ~~SHOW~~ WHETHER OF THESE TWO THOU HAST CHOSEN"). Matthias was the last chosen Apostle of Christ. All other officers in the Church following the twelve apostles lacked these essentials, the direct appointment of Christ; the special powers bestowed upon the Apostles by Him.

But "Even the claim of an uninterrupted clerical succession is incapable of proof. All the modern churches of Europe and this country, which set up this claim, trace their lineage ultimately through the Roman pontiffs. But the records of the early popes are irrecoverably lost. It is not certain that Peter ever was in Rome, much less that he ever acted as bishop there. All efforts to make out the asserted suc-

cession thus fail at this initial point. Many other links in the chain are historically wanting. The lineage is a myth or at best a mere string -out of probabilities by vague and late traditions. This is now candidly admitted by the best and most careful Protestant scholars. The title is indefensible."I am fully satisfied says Bishop Hoadly,"that till a consummate stupidity can be happily established, and universally spread over the land, there is nothing that tends so much to destroy all due respect to the clergy as the demand of more than can be due them; and nothing has so effectually thrown contempt upon a regular succession of the ministry as the calling no succession regular but what was uninterrupted; and the making the eternal salvation of Christians to depend upon that uninterrupted succession, of which the most learned must have the least assurance, and the unlearned can have no notion but through ignorance and credulity."(McClintock and Strong Vol.X p.5)

To advance the argument that Christ instituted the Christian ministry, guaranteed His Presence and power to His Church and that in virtue of that Presence and in accordance with his institution of the ministry the special power of the Apostolic Succession is possessed is not sufficient and will not bear investigation."For" says Lefroy"to such pleading it would be sufficient to reply, The claim you make is individual. It is derived through individuals, through all the ages of the recent and remote past. It is, as such, independent of the society, even though Christ instituted it. To vindicate an individual claim by referring to the fact of the Divine origin of the society is to abandon the principle contended for. It is to admit the origin of the office in the society. It is to establish the claim on the basis of powers given to the society by Christ. But this destroys the individual character of the claim which is set up."(Lefroy"the Christian Ministry" p.548)

Cardinal Newman who turned Catholic during the Oxford movement in order to Romanize the Anglican church says,"That the Anglicans can claim to have God's Ministers among them depends directly and solely upon the validity of their orders; and to prove their validity, they are bound to trace their succession through a hundred intermediate steps, till at length they reach the apostles: till they do their claim is in abeyance.If it is improbable that the succession has no flaws in it, they have to bear the brunt of

the improbability; if it is presumable that a special Providence precludes such flaws; or compensates for them, they cannot take the benefit of that presumption to themselves; for to do so would be claiming to belong to the true Church, to which that high Providence is promised, and this they cannot do without arguing in a circle, first proving that they are of the true Church because they have valid Orders, and then that their Orders are valid because they are of the true Church.

"Nor is the apostolic descent of her priests the direct warrant of their power in the eyes of the faithful; their warrant is her immediate present, living authority; it is the word of the Church which marks them out as the ministers of God, not any historical or antiquarian research, or genealogical table." (Essays, Vol. II p. 89)

Thus to conclude, the claim to Apostolic Succession can be held neither on grounds of Holy Writ, nor on the basis of history, nor through the subtle use of logic in attempting to create an unbroken clerical succession. To base one's assurance of forgiveness of sins on the presumption that one's bishop has received the right of binding and loosing by direct succession from the Apostles through the imposition of the hands of his predecessor and the recitation of a certain formula is a monstrum incertitudine which if consistently held must certainly burden the heart of the Anglican and cast a deep shadow on the certainty of his being in a state of Grace with God through the merits of his Savior. But as in the case of the other errors of the Episcopal church, so also here the simple Christian layman will through a happy inconsistency in the last analysis base his hope of salvation, not on what the Bishop or priest tells him by virtue of his Apostolic Succession, but on the merits of his Savior, which he has accepted through faith. And with this thought this exercise on the "Apostolic Succession of the Episcopal Church" has been brought to a close.