

SHALL WE HAVE A BISHOP?

THE EPISCOPATE
FOR
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA



by
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(SECOND EDITION)

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NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.

To meet the demand for the pamphlet on the Episcopate a second edition has become necessary. Several notes have been added and a few changes and corrections made.

PREFACE

The subject of oversight and a better organization for the Lutheran Church in this country, has received considerable attention for some years. It is believed by many that the various interests of the Church could be much better promoted if the office of oversight over pastors and churches were instituted. Some have advocated a permanent presidency or superintendency; or that the President of Synod should be chosen for a term of years, or for life, and having no pastoral charge, should devote himself to the oversight and visitation of the churches in the Synod. The subject was brought to the notice of the General Council and of Synods. In 1875 the President of the Synod of Pennsylvania called attention to the subject in his report. And in the reports of the President in 1886 and 1891 the subject was brought to the notice of the Synod. In 1891 the Faculty of the Theological Seminary was requested to prepare for discussion at the next meeting, a statement of the principles involved in the office of oversight, etc. At a special meeting in January, 1893, the report of the Faculty was considered, and the result reached was that the provisions of the constitution in regard to oversight by the President be carried out. Conferences also gave some attention to it.

Some have advocated the Episcopate, as that which is in harmony with scripture, history, and our confessions, and as that by which the Church can best be governed and its various interests be best promoted. In 1873 and 1874, and in 1880 and 1881 articles appeared in *The Lutheran* on the subject. Since then the matter has received much consideration. Persuaded that the Lutheran Church needs a better organization, and that something should be done to bring it about, and to secure oversight and visitation, a number of pastors agreed to call a convention for the consideration of the subject. This convention met in 1883 in St. John's Church, Easton, Pa. A number of papers were read and discussed, two of which were published in pamphlet. No action was taken at this meeting, beyond providing for the holding of other meetings. Since then there have been several meetings of the friends of the Episcopate, at the time of Synodical Conventions, and one in the city of Lancaster, Pa. In the consideration and adoption of its new constitution, the Synod of Pennsylvania was led by the friends of better organization to consider the subject of oversight and visitation.

The movement to secure the Episcopate has been made by members of the Synod of Pennsylvania. But the desire for the Episcopate for the Lutheran Church in

America, is by no means confined to them. Members of other Synods, both in the General Synod and General Council, have expressed their sympathy with the movement, and their desire for an Episcopal government. The desire for the Episcopate has been expressed by laymen also. Nor do they want a superintendency, or any imitation of the Episcopate.

Repeated inquiries having been made for the articles, which appeared in *The Lutheran* on the question, "Shall we have a Bishop?" they are here presented with some changes and additions. Not in every instance, where the views of others have been used, can now the precise reference be given. Among the writers on the Church, the Ministry and Episcopacy, English, German and American, may be mentioned: Hooker, Palmer, Stanley, Hatch, Lightfoot, Goulburn, Kip, Krauth, Rothe, Stahl, Haupt, Zezschwitz, Lechler and others; also Christian antiquities, etc.

Fully persuaded that the Episcopate is scriptural, historic and Lutheran, and that with it the Church can best accomplish her mission, this is sent forth as a contribution to the study of church polity, and to aid in securing for our Lutheran church in this country an Episcopal government. J. K.

PART 1

God has a Church on the earth, founded, governed and preserved by Him. He instituted it for the salvation of fallen man. He called Abraham, made a covenant with him and his seed, and gave him revelations of His will. And when the descendants of Abraham were to be formed into an organized community, God called and commissioned Moses as the leader and Governor of His people, and through him gave to them laws and ordinances, and instituted the priesthood for their ministrations. And when the church was to be advanced to a fuller possession of truth and privilege—the fulfillment of what it had in type and promise—Jesus Christ came. “The word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” “He came not to destroy but to fulfill.” In Him, His incarnation, life, teaching, suffering, death and exaltation, all that was typical and prophetic, was fulfilled. He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. He chose twelve men to be His attendants and disciples, whom He commissioned after His resurrection, to preach the Gospel and to administer the sacraments, promising to be with them to the end of the world. The Church is a divine institution, an assembly which God has called and constituted. It is called the Church of the living God. It is the Pillar and Ground of the Truth. God has made it the depository of His truth, and in it He regenerates and saves sinful men.

There are certain things which enter essentially into the constitution of the Church and are its distinguishing marks, and which are necessary to the accomplishment of its mission. These marks and essentials are the *Ministry*, the *Word*, and the *Sacraments*. God instituted the Ministry, He gave His Word, and He appointed the Sacraments, and where these are, there is the Church. The Church, under the old and under the new dispensations, has always had a divinely appointed Ministry and the Word and Sacraments.

A divinely appointed Ministry is *essential* to the Church. It is not enough to have the Word and Sacraments. There must be the Ministry to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments, to bring these means in contact with men, that they may come to a saving faith, and participation of the blessings of the Gospel. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” “How shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?” That men might hear and believe, our Lord not only gave His Gospel and instituted the Sacraments, but chose and qualified and commissioned the Apostles to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.” They went forth and preached; but as believers were multiplied and churches were planted, they ordained and sent others to preach. The authority to ordain and send forth others was contained in their own commission. Christ gave to His apostles His own mission, for He says: “As my Father has sent me, even so send I you;” thus empowering them to give to others the commission which they had received from Him. And those who received from the apostles the commission of Christ, received a similar power to transmit it to others, and in this way alone ministers of Christ were constituted. We know that they whom the apostles ordained, had a divine commission;

for of the elders at Ephesus it is said that the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. And as the apostles acted under the same commission which Christ had received from the Father, their institutions were His institutions. Hence the scriptures tell us that when He ascended up on high, "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

And thus we see, that the Christian ministry was instituted by Christ for permanent and essential objects. It is evident, therefore, that a true and lawful Ministry is essential to the Church, and that no society, or assembly of men without such a ministry is a church. Ignatius declares that without Christian Ministers there is no Church. And Jerome says that a society that has no clergy is no Church. And when it is said in the Augsburg Confession, that the Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught (purely preached) and the Sacraments administered according to the Gospel, it is taught that the Ministry is necessary for the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. "For the obtaining of this faith (justifying faith) the ministry of preaching the Gospel, and administering the Sacraments was instituted." "The original institution and office of the ministry is most ancient and from God himself; not a new, or human appointment. The Apostles ordained pastors and teachers throughout all churches in the world by the command of Christ; by whose successors, even to the present time, He taught and ruled the church." *Helv. Conf.*

The Christian Ministry is essential to the Christian Church. But it must be a true and lawful ministry, having a legitimate succession, a regular historic connection with the Apostles. He must be rightly called and set apart to the sacred office, who is to preach and minister in holy things. No man can of his own assumption become a true minister of the Gospel. Whoever claims to be an ambassador of Christ, and to speak to men in His name, must show that his authority comes from Christ—that he has a divine call, and that he has been commissioned by those who have a divine commission—given by Christ to His Apostles, and by them to others, and thus on down through the ages to the present time, in regular succession.¹ Men cannot appoint persons to preach the Gospel, to administer the Sacraments, and exercise discipline, unless they have a divine commission to do so. Church members cannot do this. There must be a divine vocation, coming in the order and manner which God Himself has ordained. Under the old dispensation such a call was necessary, and it is necessary under the new. "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So Christ also glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest." (**Heb. 5:4-5**). "The Spirit of the Lord was upon Him, and anointed Him to preach good tidings." (**Isa. 61:1-5**).

To the existence of the Church, then, a divinely appointed ministry is necessary—or a peculiar order of men, set apart and consecrated to the performance of certain duties, which belong exclusively to them. Before His ascension our Lord had given the

¹"There is a ministerial succession unbroken in the Church. The ministry of successive generations has always been inducted into office by the ministry preceding."—Krauth.

Gospel, instituted the Sacraments, and commissioned the Apostles to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Holy Trinity. Here were the Word, the written of the Old Testament and the unwritten of the New, the Sacraments and the Ministry. On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was given, the Apostles preached the Word, and baptized those who repented of their sins and believed the Gospel, and there were added to them three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. Here is the assembly or congregation of saints, having the Gospel purely preached and the Sacraments rightly administered by divinely commissioned Ministers. The Apostles, in accordance with their commission, continued to preach, and their labors were blessed in the spread of the Gospel and of the Church. And it thus appears that the Ministry, and the preaching of the Gospel are not only necessary to the existence of the Church, but precede its existence and development among men.

By the preaching of the Apostles the Church rapidly increased and spread. To the Church in Jerusalem there were daily added such as should be saved. In other localities, churches were planted, and the Church was rapidly and widely extended. At first the Church was composed of members standing on an equality with one another, and the Apostles were the only Ministers and they exercised a directing influence over the whole; so that the whole arrangement and administration of the affairs of the Church, proceeded from them, and as circumstances and wants made it necessary, they appointed other officers in the Church. As the number of believers increased, other ministrations, besides those of the Word and Sacraments, became necessary, and that the Apostles might not be hindered by them from their appropriate work, they directed that seven men of good report, full of "the Holy Ghost and wisdom," be chosen, whom they appointed and ordained to the office of deacon. (**Acts 6:1-6**). And although it was the special duty of these deacons to receive and distribute alms, yet they also preached and baptized. (**Acts 8:5, 36, 38**). St. Paul also gives special instructions in regard to the duties of deacons.

It is not recorded when elders, or presbyters, were first appointed, but they are found very early in the Church in Jerusalem, (**Acts 11:30**) and wherever churches were gathered the Apostles ordained elders. The same name, Presbyter, was attached to an office of a corresponding nature in the Jewish synagogue, whence both the title and the office were derived. Christianity, acting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, laid hold of already existing institutions, if they were not alien to its spirit, and purified, exalted and conformed them to its own life and needs. It thus found already existing in the Jewish congregations the order of elders, and they were retained not only in the Jewish Christian congregations, with the Christian spirit infused into them (**James 5:14**) but they were also introduced into the congregations composed of Gentile Christians (**Acts 14:23**).

Of presbyters, or elders, it may be said in general, that they were the pastors and teachers in the congregations, having the oversight of the flock — preached the Word, administered the Sacraments, exercised government and discipline.² Unlike the Apostles, they were limited in their ministrations to defined localities, and did not journey from place to place to exercise the functions of their office. The Apostles, on

the contrary were not limited to any locality. They went into all quarters, and not only planted new churches, but exercised oversight over churches already established. They had the oversight of all the churches, and the whole arrangement and administration of the affairs of the Church proceeded from them.

In the New Testament, presbyters, or elders, are also called bishops, or *overseers*, the names being used as synonymous. Thus in the epistle to the Philippians, (1:1), we read, "Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." Here bishop is the same as elder. In other passages they are called elders. Later in the history of the Church, the term bishop was limited to chief, or presiding presbyters, or an order of Ministers who had the oversight of the churches. There were a number of elders in the churches of different localities, as in Jerusalem, in Ephesus, in Antioch and other places. The number of believers in these became so large, that it was necessary to have a number of ministers to supply them. In the time of Chrysostom, the number of believers at Antioch is said to have been one hundred thousand. Elders were associated with the Apostles in council for the consideration of matters pertaining to the interests of the Church. (**Acts 15:6**).

The Apostles had the oversight of all the churches. They not only preached the Gospel, established churches, ordained elders, but they also visited the churches, set things in order, and addressed letters to them. St. Paul said: "The care of all the churches was upon him." We find too that others were associated with the Apostles in the preaching of the Gospel and the government of the churches, though not having the same gifts and authority. The Apostles were inspired, and their authority was supreme. Those who were thus associated with them, are also called Apostles, as Barnabas, Timothy and Sylvanus. "But when the Apostles Barnabas and Paul" (**Acts 14:14**).³ The first epistle to the Thessalonians is from Paul, Sylvanus and Timotheus (**1 Thess. 1:1**.) To these may be added the name of Titus, who was appointed over the churches of Crete. From this circumstance, as well as from the fact that the Apostle Paul addressed Timothy and Titus differently from what he did the elders, it would seem that their position in the church was higher than that of elders. The elders of Ephesus, assembled at Miletus, are charged by the Apostle to remember how he had admonished them, to take heed unto themselves and unto the flock, over which the

²"St. Peter identifies the Presbyteral functions with the general commission to "feed the flock" which Christ had committed to himself (**1 Pet. 5:1-4**). St. Paul attributes exactly the same functions to the presbyters or bishops at Miletus: the "corporal works of mercy are indeed not forgotten" (**Acts 20: 33-35**), but the main stress is on "feeding the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood;" including the function of government, the whole spiritual oversight in fact.—Gore on Hatch.

³"Those only were called emphatically the Apostles, who had received their commission from the Lord Himself—including the eleven who had been chosen by Him while on earth, and St. Mathias and St. Paul, who had been selected by Him after His ascension. " Holy Ghost had made them overseers, to feed the Church of God, and as grievous wolves would enter among them, not sparing the flock, and men would rise up among themselves, speaking perverse things, they were to watch over themselves, their

perverse things, they were to watch over themselves, their doctrine and their conduct, and guard their people from those who would teach strange doctrines. To Timothy he speaks quite differently, and in the singular number. "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy." He was to preach the Word, to ordain men to the ministry, and to exercise oversight and discipline. "The things which thou hast heard of me, among many witnesses, commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (**2 Tim. 2:2**). He was to lay hands suddenly on no man. (**1 Tim. 5:22.**) "That thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (**1 Tim. 1:3**). "Against an elder receive not an accusation. but before two or three witnesses." "Them (elders thus accused) that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear." "I charge thee that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality" (**1 Tim. 5:19-21**). He was also instructed in regard to the qualifications of elders and deacons. We see from these passages that Timothy preached the Word, ordained men approved faithful to the ministry, saw that sound doctrine was taught, exercised discipline, and thus performed all the duties that pertain to the office of oversight, or to the episcopal office. And that he held this office there can be no doubt. "That he was a bishop appears by St. Paul's writing this to him: 'Lay hands suddenly on no one.'"—Chrysostom.

To Titus St. Paul said: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." (**Titus 1:5**). Here functions were to be performed which pertain to the episcopal office. "What then were Titus and Timothy but bishops, *i.e.* overseers, appointed by the Apostle, over the churches of certain districts, the former in Crete. the latter in Asia Minor?"—Haupt. For a time Timothy was Bishop of Ephesus.

It appears then that there were men associated with the Apostles, not only in the preaching of the Word, but also in the oversight and government of the churches, and who, we may justly infer, continued the oversight of pastors and churches after the death of the Apostles, and thus in a certain sense were successors to the Apostles. Hatch says: "There were cases in which the oversight of a community had been specially entrusted by an Apostle, to some one officer."

From the New Testament we learn that there were three offices in the church — the Apostolate, the Presbyterate and the Diaconate—and thus three classes or orders of ministers, Apostles, elders or bishops and deacons. (**Phil. 1:1**). To the Apostolate belonged peculiar powers and functions, which were limited to it, and could not be communicated or transmitted.—Krauth. To it also belonged powers and functions which were transmissible and to be perpetuated; as the preaching of the Gospel, the administration of the Sacraments, the ordination of others to the ministry and the exercise of oversight, discipline, etc. Of these functions, ordination, oversight and discipline, if not already, very soon, were limited to the Episcopate.

We find then, that the Episcopate very soon came into existence, and, like the Diaconate and Presbyterate, grew out of the necessities of the Church. We have already seen that Timothy and Titus were appointed to the oversight of churches, and exercised the functions of the Episcopate, and there is good reason to believe that, before the death of the Apostles, others, besides these, held the episcopal office. There were

churches in some cities and localities, which had a number of presbyters, and very soon there came to be a chief presbyter, one who was chosen to be over the others, presided over the council of presbyters, and had the care of the whole Church, and thus unity and uniformity were secured and maintained. It is claimed for some of these, that they were consecrated to their office by Apostles, as Polycarp and Ignatius. To these chief presbyters, the title of Bishop was specially applied, as expressive of the duties of their office.

From the accounts which St. John has given of the seven churches in Asia, we have additional proof that the episcopal office existed in the time of the Apostles, and is rooted in the Scriptures. Each of these churches is represented as under the government and ministrations of one, termed an angel, signifying in the Greek the same as apostle, or messenger, (**and in Malachi 2:7**), applied to a minister. The angel, or messenger of each of these churches is addressed as a chief pastor, and is responsible for the religious state of the church over which he was placed. In the Church of Ephesus there were already a number of elders or presbyters, when St. Paul visited it. (**Acts 20:17**). The star, or angel of this church must then have been one, who had the oversight of the elders and the church, or, in other words, was their Bishop. In each of the seven churches, there is only one angel, whilst in Ephesus, in Smyrna and in other places, there were a number of presbyters. The fact that they were called stars, shows that they were persons of superior dignity and authority. Star is the symbol of highest dominion. What then could the angel be but a Bishop? This was the opinion of the Fathers, and is the testimony of history.

Polycarp was Bishop of Smyrna. He was a pupil of the Apostles, and according to the testimony, both of Ireneus and Tertullian, was consecrated Bishop by St. John. In A.D. 107 Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, on his way to Rome, visited Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna.

It is then evident that before the death of St. John episcopacy existed, or that there were men who occupied the position of Bishops, having the oversight of churches in certain districts, who ordained men to the ministry, and exercised discipline. Though the terms Bishop, and Presbyter, are used in the New Testament as synonymous, yet it was not long until the term Bishop was applied exclusively to those who held the office of oversight. We believe then that the organization of the Church was already in the age of the Apostles essentially what it was afterwards. The organization was gradual, was a growth, but before the death of the later Apostles it was a clearly defined growth and development. It has been said that the appointment of a Bishop, or making one of the Presbyters Bishop, arose from the necessities of the Church. But did not these necessities already exist in the times of the Apostles? There was a necessity for the Diaconate, and it was instituted—there was a necessity for the Presbyterate, and it was instituted—there was a necessity for some ministrations of a minor character, and these were provided for. And it was necessary that there should be oversight over all. This was exercised by the Apostles. And was oversight necessary then, it was in necessary afterwards. And for the continuance of oversight, provision was made by the Apostles. They appointed men who not only preached the Gospel, and administered the Sacraments, but who also ordained men to the ministry, exercised discipline, and set

things in order—or, in other words, performed functions which pertained to the Episcopate. Some of these men, as we have seen, were associated with St. Paul in his work, and were also called Apostles. They were indeed not equal to the Apostles, for these had gifts and authority which pertained to them exclusively. But it is evident that the men who had been associated with the Apostles, and who had oversight of churches, as Timothy, Titus and others, continued in the oversight of churches after the Apostles were dead, so that the office of oversight has always been in the Church. The Christian Church, then, in its gradual development, soon assumed an Episcopal organization. And this form of church government is apostolic and historic, and best adapted to provide for the wants, and to promote the interests of God's Kingdom among men.

If we now turn to the Fathers, and to the history of the early Church, we learn that the Episcopate already existed in the time of the Apostles, and that Bishops are spoken of as a distinct order of ministers in the Church, having the oversight of pastors and churches.

And, first, we learn that James, the Just, and brother of the Lord, was Bishop of Jerusalem. There is much difference of opinion in regard to the persons bearing the name of James in the New Testament. But James, the Lord's brother, was not one of the twelve, and is to be "distinguished from the two Apostles bearing that name."—Rothe. By his strict godly life, which agreed with the Jewish notions of legal piety, he won the universal esteem, not only of Christian Jews, but of the better disposed Jews generally.—Neander. He was a man of great excellence of character and influence. After the death of James, the son of Zebedee, he became the chief person in the Mother Church in Jerusalem. (**Acts 12:17 and 21:18**). Unlike the Apostles, his residence and labors were confined to one locality. And though he is not called Bishop in the New Testament, he had the oversight of the Church, and performed the functions of the office of Bishop, in the ordinary meaning of the term. He became a pillar of the Church. He also presided over the Council of Apostles and Elders, at Jerusalem. (**Acts 15**).

The fact that the first Christian Church—the Mother Church—had a chief pastor, or Bishop, who had the oversight of the Church, its ministers and people, furnishes a strong proof of the necessity and usefulness of the Episcopate, and that it is best adapted to meet the wants of the Church, and to promote its prosperity and extension. The Church at Jerusalem was the pattern after which the churches among the Gentiles were organized—as of Antioch, Smyrna, and others. Of Antioch, Ignatius was Bishop from A.D. 70 to 107. And Polycarp was Bishop of Smyrna.

Clement, a companion and fellow laborer of St. Paul, whose name is in the Book of Life, (**Phil. 4:3**) was Bishop of Rome. A.D. 100. This office he held nearly ten years, until his martyrdom. In his epistle, he says: "It will behoove us, (Christians) looking into the depths of Divine Knowledge, to do all things in order, whatsoever the Lord has commanded us to do. He has ordained, by His supreme will and authority, both where and by what persons His services are to be performed. For the Chief Priest has His proper services, and to the priest, their proper place is appointed, and to the Levites appertain their proper ministries; and the layman is confined within the bounds of what is commanded to laymen." "So, likewise, our Apostles knew, by our Lord Jesus Christ,

that there should contentions arise about the name of the Bishopric. And, therefore, having a perfect knowledge of this, they appointed persons, as we before said, and then gave direction how, when they should die, other chosen and approved men, should succeed in the ministry."

Ignatius, a friend and disciple of St. John, and Bishop of Antioch, from A.D. 70 to 107, wrote thus to the Church at Magnesia: "I exhort you, that you do all things in a divine accord, your Bishop presiding." "Wherefore, it will become you, also, not to use your Bishop too familiarly, on account of his youth, but to yield all reverence to him, according to God the Father, as also I perceive your holy Presbyters do." "Study, therefore, to be confirmed in the doctrine of our Lord and of His Apostles, that so whatsoever ye do, ye may prosper, both in body and spirit; in faith and charity; in the Son, and in the Father, and in the Holy Spirit; in the beginning, and in the end; together with your most worthy Bishop, and the well wrought spiritual crown of your Presbytery; and your Deacons, which are according to God. Be subject to your Bishop." To the Church at Philadelphia: "Let no man do anything of what belongs to the Church without the Bishop. Attend to the Bishop, to the Presbyters, and to the Deacons."

"There is but one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup in the unity of His blood, one altar, as also there is one Bishop, together with his Presbytery, and the Deacons, my fellow servants, that so, whatsoever ye do, ye may do according to the will of God." He speaks of "Damas, your most excellent Bishop, and your worthy Presbyters." In an epistle to the Church at Smyrna, he says: "I salute your very worthy Bishop, and your venerable Presbytery, and your Deacons."

Next we have the testimony of Ireneus, a pupil of Polycarp, and ordained by him Bishop of Lyons, about A.D. 170. "Polycarp was not only taught by the Apostles and conversed with many who had seen Christ, but was also by the Apostles appointed Bishop of the Church in Smyrna." Ireneus says: "We can enumerate those whom the Apostles ordained to be Bishops, in the several churches, and who they were that succeeded them down to our times. . . . For the Apostles desired to have those in all things perfect and unreprouable, whom they left to be their successors, and to whom they committed their own apostolic authority. We have the succession of Bishops, to whom the Apostolic Church, in every place, was committed."⁴

⁴Episcopacy is so necessarily interwoven with all the traditions and belief of men like Ireneus, and Tertullian, that they betray no knowledge of a time when it was not. Even Ireneus, who had probably grown up before the middle of the second century, seems to be wholly ignorant that the word Bishop had passed from a lower to a higher value. The same is true of Clement, of Alexandria. Nor is it unimportant to observe the positive, though indirect testimony they afford. Their silence suggests a strong negative presumption that, while every other point of doctrine and practice was eagerly canvassed, the form of church government scarcely came under consideration."—Lightfoot.

About A.D. 168, Hegesippus came from the East to Rome, and his history states that he had "conversed with many Bishops on his journey." He says: "The Church of the

Corinthians remained in the sound faith, even to the Episcopate of Primus, in Corinth, with whom I conversed, when journeying to Rome, and spent many days at Corinth." He mentions that after the martyrdom of James the Just, "Symon, the son of Cleopas, was appointed Bishop, whom, being a relation of the Lord, all preferred as the Second Bishop." (Eusebius).

Tertullian, who flourished A.D. 200, in answer to certain heretics, said: "Let them set forth the origin of their Churches; let them recite the order of their Bishops, one by one, as they succeeded each other, that we may see whether their first Bishop had any of the Apostles, or any Apostolic person, who persevered with the Apostles, for his ordainer and predecessor, for thus Apostolic Churches are wont to bring forth the evidence of their estates—or of their succession. Thus the Church of Smyrna had Polycarp, whom the Apostle John did consecrate; the Church of Rome had Clement, who was in like manner ordained by Peter; and so the other churches can produce those constituted in their Bishoprics by the Apostles."

According to Jerome the Church of Alexandria had a regular succession of Bishops from the time of St. Mark, who was its founder. Of the several officers of the Church, he says: "That which Aaron, and his sons, and the Levites were to the temple, let the Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons be in the Church."

It is thus evident that the Episcopate existed in the Apostolic, and subsequent ages of the Church; it was also the general tradition that the Episcopate is of apostolic and divine institution. Ignatius says: "It becometh you not to take advantage of the Bishop's age, but according to the power of God the Father, to pay him all reverence, as I know your holy Presbyters do, not considering his age, which to appearance is youthful. It will, therefore, befit you, with all sincerity, to obey your Bishop—in honor of *Him whose pleasure it is that ye should do so.*" Clement of Alexandria, says: "There are precepts in Scripture, without number, which concern in particular capacities; some of which relate to Presbyters, others to Bishops, and others to Deacons." Cyprian speaks of Episcopacy as provided in the divine law. Athanasius says: "If the government of the Churches do not please you, and you think the office of a Bishop has no reward, thereby making yourself a despiser of our Saviour, who did institute it; I beseech you, surmise not any such things as these, nor entertain any who advise such things, for that were not worthy of Dracontius; for what things the Lord did institute by His Apostles, those things remain both honorable and sure." Chrysostom says: "Paul saith in his epistle to Timothy. 'fulfill thy ministry,' being then a Bishop; for that he was a Bishop appears by Paul's writing thus unto him, 'Lay hands suddenly on no one.'"

From the testimony of the Fathers, we see that the Episcopate universally prevailed in the early Church, and that it was instituted by the Apostles. We have also seen the traces of it in Scripture. There is, indeed, no direct command for Episcopacy, just as there is no direct command for some other things, which we believe to be scriptural, and which we practice. We may justly claim for it the authority of Scripture, as well as of history—as "it is the only system that falls in *naturally*, and *consistently*, with both the inspired and uninspired history of the early Church." Dr. Stahl says: "If we refer to the original Constitution of the Church, and as it is presented in the Scriptures,

we find that it is the Episcopal, and not the Presbyterian." "It is also the ancient Apostolic order."

So strong is the testimony for the Episcopate, that non-episcopal writers freely acknowledge it.

The learned Grotius says: "Of the Episcopate, that is, the superiority of one pastor above the rest, we first determined, that it is not repugnant to divine law. If any one think otherwise, that is, if any one condemn the whole ancient Church of folly, or even of impiety, the burden of proof, beyond doubt, lies on him. The very ministry, instituted by the Apostles, sufficiently proves, that equality of ecclesiastical offices, was not commanded by Christ. We, therefore, first lay down this, which is undoubtedly true, that it, the Episcopate, neither can, nor ought to be, found fault with, in which we have, agreeing with us, Zanchius, Chemnitius, Calvin, Melancthon, Bucer, nay, even Beza." He might also have mentioned Luther.

"That Episcopate of which we treat, was received by the universal Church. This appears from all the Councils. All the Fathers, without exception, testify the same. The testimony of Jerome alone is sufficient."

Again: "The Episcopate had its commencement in the time of the Apostles. The catalogues of Bishops in Ireneus, Eusebius, Socrates, Theodoretus, and others, all of which begin in the Apostolic age, testify to this. To refuse credit in a historical matter, to so great authors, and so unanimous among themselves, is not the part of any but an irreverent and stubborn disposition." Again he says: "The Episcopate is of Apostolic institution, because it appears that Bishops were ordained, or approved, in some Churches by the Apostles. What the whole Church maintains and was not instituted by Councils but was held, is not, with any good reason, believed to be handed down by any but Apostolic authority."

Grotius admits that Timothy was Bishop of Ephesus, that Titus was Bishop of Crete, that Ignatius was Bishop of Antioch, that the Angels of the seven churches were Bishops of these churches, that the chief of the Presbyters was first called Apostle, and finally that the title of Bishop was given to him before the death of Peter and Paul, and about forty years before the death of St. John.

Peter Moulin, an eminent French Reformed divine says: "Truly, this Episcopal form of government, all churches received presently after the Apostolic times, or even in their times."

John Calvin said: "The Episcopate itself, had its appointment from God. The office of Bishop was instituted by the authority, and defined by the ordinance of God." He was also anxious to be consecrated a Bishop. (Richardson, in Randall).

Richard Rothe, Professor of Theology in Wittenberg, in his *Anfänge der Christlichen Kirche*, maintains that the original Constitution of the Church is Episcopal, and that the Episcopate was established, about the year 70, by the Apostles then living. He holds that soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, the surviving Apostles organized the Christian Church, by means of the Episcopate—that prior to this period there were only separate congregations, which were now brought together into organic union, and that the Church, in its proper sense, began at this period, and in this period the introduction of the Episcopate occurred. (p. 393 and 523).

Of the Bishops in Asia Minor, whom St. John is said to have consecrated, there can be no question in regard to Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, as appears from the testimony of Ireneus, Turtullian, Eusebius, and Jerome. "According to all these facts, it certainly appears very probable that the properly so-called Episcopate, owes its fixed establishment especially to St. John. Under these circumstances, the assurances of the Fathers, that the Apostles established the Episcopate, is not, the fable of some one in the interests of hierarchy, as some still regard it. (p. 431). It is also shown that by the year 100, the Episcopate was a fixed institution in the Church, and was generally accepted. It is further maintained that the Episcopate is a perpetuation of the Apostolate, that Bishops were the successors of the Apostles. (p. 499— 515).

Whatever we may think of Rothe's view, in regard to the beginning of the Christian Church, this is clear, that the Episcopate was a fixed institution in the Church before the death of St. John. This is especially true of Asia Minor, which became the adopted home of more than one Apostle, after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the Episcopate could not have grown and become a fixed institution in a Christian community, of which St. John was the living centre, without his approval, and before the close of the second century the Episcopate prevailed in the whole Church.

It is thus evident that the Episcopate was in the primitive Church, or, in other words, that there was an order of men in the Church, who had the oversight of pastors and churches. While they lived, the Apostles had the care and oversight of the churches, and they provided for the continuance of such care and oversight in the Church. For before the death of St. Paul and St. Peter, we find Timothy, and Titus, and others, exercising the functions pertaining to the Episcopal office. They not only preached the Word, and administered the Sacraments, but set things in order in the churches, ordained elders, and exercised discipline. The history of the primitive Church leaves no room for doubt, that on the death of the Apostles, and even earlier, "one amongst the Presbyters of each church, was selected to preside over the rest, as at Antioch, Ephesus, Smyrna, and others—and to him was applied emphatically, the title of Bishop or overseer, which had previously belonged equally to all; thus he became in reality, (what he was sometimes called), the successor of the Apostles, as exercising in a lower degree, the function of government which had formerly belonged to them." (Life and Ep., of St. Paul, vol. 1.) The Apostles embodied the Episcopal element into the Constitution of the Church, and from their days to the time of the Reformation, or, for 1500 years, there was no other form of church government anywhere to be found. "In all ages and times, down from the Apostles. and in all places, through Europe, Asia, and Africa, wheresoever there were Christians, there were also Bishops, and even where Christians differed in other points of doctrine or custom, and made schisms and divisions in the Church, yet did they all remain unanimous in this, in retaining their Bishops."

This fact deserves serious consideration. There evidently were good grounds for that which so universally, and so long prevailed, without being called in question, and without any departure from it. And, though there was a departure from Episcopacy in the Reformation, it was not willingly, or of choice, on the part of Lutheran Reformers; nor was it general, for in a number of countries, where the Protestant faith was

received, Episcopacy was retained, as in England, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and in other countries, and for a considerable length of time in parts of Germany.

PART 2

In the Reformation there was a departure from the Episcopal form of church government, in several countries and principalities, and there came into existence, other forms of organization. The Lutheran Reformers did not desire the abolition of the Episcopate, but simply wished it divested of the Popish additions. They said: "We are most willing to assist, in maintaining the old ecclesiastical regulations, and Episcopal government, provided the Bishops would tolerate our doctrine, and receive our Priests." Luther said: "The Church can never be better governed, and preserved, than with an Episcopal government after the pattern of the Apostolic and primitive Church." But, notwithstanding the desire, on the part of the Reformers, to retain the Episcopate, it disappeared from some Lutheran states. The Bishops did not receive the doctrines as taught by the Reformers, refused to visit their churches and ordain their priests. Soon the necessity and usefulness of oversight and visitation were so much felt, that princes were urged to make provision for the temporary visitation of the churches, or, until the ancient order could be restored, and Bishops be regularly chosen and set apart. And in the preface to the Saxon visitation articles, Luther sets forth, very clearly and forcibly, the necessity and usefulness of the Episcopal office—or office of oversight, visitation and government. "What a divine and wholesome work the visitation of ministers and congregations is, both the Old and New Testament testify. For we read that St. Peter passed through all quarters (**Acts 20:32**), and St. Paul, with Barnabas, revisited all the places where they had preached the Word of the Lord (**Acts 15:36**). And St. Paul, in all his epistles, shows how solicitous he was for all the congregations and pastors, wrote to them, and sent his disciples, Timothy and Titus, etc—and also went himself. So, also, when the Apostles heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them St. Peter and St. John (**Acts 8:14**). And in the Old Testament we read how Samuel visited from place to place, now Rama, now Nob, and now Gilgal, and so on, not for his own gratification, but from love and a sense of duty, and because of the wants and desires of the people. In the Books of the Kings, we read the same thing of Elijah, and Elisha, which work Christ Himself most diligently prosecuted, and on this account He had no place of His own where to lay His head (**Mark 8: 20**). What examples, also, were the ancient Fathers, the holy Bishops, who prosecuted their work with diligence?" He claims divine authority for the office of oversight, visitation, and ruling, for a Bishop, he says, is really an overseer or visitor. After referring to the neglect of the Bishops, in not rightly performing the duties of their office, he says: "But now, that the Gospel has, by the grace of God, been restored again, we would willingly see this true Episcopal and visitation office, as of the highest necessity, established again." As neither Luther, nor any of his colleagues felt called to assume this office, or undertake the work of visitation, the immediate necessity of which was much felt, they requested the Elector of Saxony, to appoint suitable persons to attend to it, at the same time stating that it was not his duty, in the capacity of a civil ruler, but that he should do it for the sake of Christian love. It was, moreover, to be a mere temporary arrangement, for it was expected that the Episcopal office, cleansed of abuses, would soon be established

again. But in this they were disappointed. For when the princes, with their officers and counsellors, began to regulate the affairs of the Church, they refused to relinquish the power they had assumed, to the great injury of the Church.

From this time on, the Princes and Jurists had a controlling influence in the Church. They were looked upon as chief members, and it was not long until the Prince was regarded as chief Bishop—or Sumepiscopos. Before the Reformation the Church was incorporated into the state, the Pope of Rome, having the supreme control; in and after the Reformation the state was incorporated into the Church, the Civil Ruler having the chief control and direction; and the organization of the Protestant Church, in a number of states, was such as to maintain and perpetuate the supremacy of the civil authorities. The consequence of this state of things was, that in external matters it was even worse than before. The fears of Melanchthon were realized. Writing to Camararius, he said: "Would to God that I were able, not, indeed, to confirm the worldly power of the Bishops, but to restore to them the spiritual administration. For clearly see what a Church we will have, should the Episcopal government be abolished. I see that afterwards there will be a worse tyranny than ever yet existed." That Melanchthon was not mistaken, we see from a letter of Brentz, to his friend Eisenman: "In respect to the Episcopal government, every sensible person thinks as we do. But you say, 'They are false prophets and murderers.' But if they accept our conditions and propositions, they would cease to be false prophets and murderers. For we also except the freedom and unity of doctrine. If we gain this, will you then reject the Episcopal government? You have no idea under what burdens the most excellent Evangelical ministers have to groan, in the Evangelical principalities, on account of the princely officers and counsellors. To no prudent person, will it therefore appear fitting, that the Church and the ministerial office, should be governed by the civil authorities." (**Haupt**).

In the year 1543, Luther, after seeing to what the juristic consistorial Bureaucracy was tending, and what effect it must inevitably have upon the doctrine and life of the Church and congregations, wrote thus to Dr. Greser, of Dresden: "Satan will always be Satan. Under the papacy he mixed the Church into the state. now he mixes the state into the Church. If the courts (princely counsellors and jurists) rule the Church after their own pleasure, a poor blessing will God give, and the last will be worse than the first. Either let them become ministers themselves, preach, baptize, visit the sick, and administer the Lord's Supper, or let them cease to hinder the office. For the court they may care; but let them leave the Church to those who are called thereto. For, it is not to be endured that others shall concern themselves about that for which we must give account."

Several years before this, Luther complained of the interference of the jurists in the affairs of the Church, and of the injury it was suffering from this interference and rule. And this state of things, which the Reformers so much deplored, continued and became worse as time passed on. Both Luther and Melanchthon saw what the Church suffered under the rule of the Princes and Jurists, and from having departed from the Episcopal government; but they could not prevent the encroachments of the state in the Church. Were there objections against the temporal power of the Bishops, there are greater objections to the spiritual powers of princes and civil rulers.

It appears, then, that the Reformers deplored the mixing of the state into the Church, (Luther calling it a work of Satan), and they complained of the evils resulting from it. At the same time they expressed themselves in favor of the Episcopal government of the Church. Their utterances on this subject are numerous and decided, and there is no doubt, if they could have had their way, the Episcopate, cleansed of popish abuses, would have been retained. Luther held that the Church could be best governed and preserved with the Episcopate, and said: "We may see how necessary and useful the Episcopal office in the Christian Church is, by the evils that have occurred since it has been abolished."⁵

The Reformers encouraged the continuance of the Episcopate where it had not been dropped. In an address to the Dukes of Pomerania, they say: "A well-ordered Episcopate will be a valuable treasure for the whole Dukedom of Pomerania, and its neighborhood." And then they exhort them in making choice of, or nominating, a person for the Episcopal office, not to look only to the preservation of the benefices (**Guter**) for Church purposes, but chiefly, or above all, to consider the office, to which pertains more important functions—as teaching, the examination and ordination of priests, oversight of doctrine and ceremonies, visitation of the churches and schools, preservation of Christian discipline, etc.

There seems to be little doubt that the Episcopate would have been retained in all the principalities receiving the Evangelical doctrine—had it not been for the encroachment of the state within the Church. Some retained it, but in the course of time it was abolished in all the German states, and a kind of juristic consistorial bureaucratic organization took its place. The countries and states adopting an Evangelical Episcopate, in the period of the Reformation, were: The Dukedom of Prussia, in 1525; in the Bishoprics of Samland and Pomerania, by Bishops George of Polenz, and Erhart of Quiez, aided by the Duke of Brunswick; in Sweden, in 1527, under Gustavus Vasa; in Denmark, Norway, Schleswig, Holstein and Iceland, beginning in 1534; in Pomerania, in 1535; in Mark Brandenburg, in 1539 and 1540, and in several other localities. In Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Iceland, the Episcopate still exists. In the Germanic States it has entirely disappeared, and other forms of organization have taken its place, and in all of which the chief control of the Church was given to the state.

⁵That Luther was favorable to the Episcopate and desired to have it retained in the Church, appears also from the fact that he, assisted by the three superintendents, Medler, Spslatin and Stein, consecrated Nicolas Amsdorf Bishop of Naumburg in 1542. In his address on this occasion Luther said: "It has not been our opinion that the Bishoprics should be destroyed. but we mean to set an example how they should be reformed; and that the Bishop should exercise his Episcopal office, and the canons their canonical offices, in accordance with the purposes for which these offices were instituted and established." He then gives reasons to justify his act.

In 1540 Luther, with the assistance of several neighboring superintendents, consecrated Prince George of Auhalt Bishop of Merseburg. There can be no doubt that Luther and the other Reformers desired the Episcopal form of Church government, and wherever it could be done, established it.

Among the forms of ecclesiastical organization, or systems of Church government, may be mentioned the Territorial, the Collegial, and Consistorial systems. **(Stahl)**. Territorialism soon began to show itself. And since the Reformation, the Church in Germany has been more or less agitated with the different forms of Church government. And thus the hope of the Reformers, when they asked the Elector of Saxony to order a visitation of the churches, that this would be a mere temporary arrangement, and that soon the normal order would be restored, and Bishops would oversee the pastors and churches, was disappointed. Melancthon's fears, with regard to a worse tyranny than under the Bishops, have been realized. In regard to Church organization, there has been nothing fixed and uniform. Each principality, large or small, has had its own organization, and been independent—a state of things by no means desirable, and not for the best interests at the Church. To remedy this wretched state of things, (or this "*Verfassungs-jammer*," as it has been justly called), the restoration of the Episcopate has been advocated and urged. This Episcopal government is justly regarded as that which most corresponds with the nature of the Church, by which it can best be preserved and extended, and by which its various interests can be best promoted.

We have already referred to Rothe, who has shown that the original Constitution of the Church was Episcopal. He has also shown the advantages of the Episcopate; and it follows that he would have that which is Apostolic, and which is most promotive of the unity, and general welfare of the Church restored. Stahl, referring to the existing organizations of the Church in Germany, states that they have not, with right and reason, taken the place of the Episcopal government which had existed until the Reformation. He further says: "If we refer to the original organization of the Church, and as it is presented in the Scriptures, we find it to be the Episcopal and not the Presbyterian. The Episcopal government is that also which corresponds with the nature of the Church, and is its normal constitution. It is grounded in the specific nature of the Church. Only in it (the Episcopal government) exists an oecumenical organ of Church government, through which the unity of doctrine, and the order and discipline required by the doctrine, can be maintained over all nations, and through all times. In the Lutheran Church the foundation of the Episcopal government was laid in the Reformation, the Episcopal office was given, and it needs only to be put in its right position."

"The Episcopal government is not contrary to the Protestant confessions, either in the letter or spirit; but on the contrary, it alone corresponds to them. The Confessions oppose the power of the Bishops, in so far as they assume to establish services and ceremonies contrary to the Scriptures. as a condition of salvation, but in so far as it permits a Church government for the preservation of pure doctrine, order and discipline, it ascribes to it none other than the Bishops." After referring to what the Confessions say against the abuses of the Episcopal power, it is added: "The symbols are hence nowhere opposed to the Episcopal government, but everywhere in favor of it; on the contrary, we nowhere find an expression in favor of the Presbyterian organization, or for the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the sovereign." "I hold the Episcopal to be the most natural organization of the Church, and that which is best adapted to

the conservation and promotion of its interests. It is the ancient Apostolic, and though in many respects corrupted, yet the unbroken arrangement to the Reformation. The whole Church was first ruled by the Apostles, afterwards by the Bishops, the power and authority of the latter, as of the former, adhered to their person and for life." Referring to Rothe, he says that his historical investigations furnish additional proof that the original constitution or organization of the Church, was Episcopal. "And though we may not accept the conjecture, that the Episcopate was formally established by the later Apostles, at a Council in Jerusalem, it appears to be proved with sufficient evidence that the Episcopate is directly connected with the Apostolate."

In regard to the necessity of the restoration of the Episcopate, other Lutheran writers have clearly expressed themselves. Dr. Vilmar says: "The restoration of the Episcopate is an indispensable necessity of the Lutheran Church." Rev. L. Harms, shortly before his death, stated that "he regarded the Episcopate as a gift of God, and of eminent importance to the Church, and hoped for its future restoration." Dr. Lechler says: "The want of the Church is a Bishop, who will be to the Church of the country (Landes-Kirche) and her ministers, what the parish clergyman is to his congregation—a minister of the Word—whose chief work it is, to preach the Gospel to those under him in office, whether this be done in sermons and edifying discourse, or in pastoral letters occasioned by special occurrences, or in a general way. She—the Church—needs a minister for her pastors, to be to them an example of humility, and of willingness to serve; a fatherly friend, who, converted himself, will strengthen his brethren, rejoice with those that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine, and this not so much in an official way, but simply after the manner of every other pastor, by personal visitation or confidential correspondence. She needs a Priest for her Priests, who will not only regard it his duty to be serviceable to them on all proper occasions, but who has also the high function of imparting to them the consecration to their high calling. Owing to the high position which he occupies towards the pastors, the scripturalness of which we will seek more fully to show below, he becomes also the chief pastor of the congregations, with whose wants he is the most intimately acquainted. Since, in general, in him the unity of the Church as a living communion in the Lord finds its expression, he is also the centre to which the Church, in her combined movement from within and from without, connects itself, and he thereby becomes, in the fullest sense of the word, a "star" (on the candlestick of the Church—*auf dem Leuchter der Gemeinde*)."

Zetzschwitz said: "Who, that knows the history of the ancient Church in the past Apostolic time, can doubt that the office of Bishop over that of Pastor was a useful and good arrangement, introduced by the Apostles themselves?"

Haupt says that "the form of Church government, which the Reformers set forth and desired, was the Episcopal, purged of its abuses; that with the Episcopate the life of the Church can alone attain its true and full manifestation, and that the Episcopate, as we find it in the Apostolic and primitive Church, is what our Church needs." Other distinguished writers of the Lutheran Church have expressed themselves to the same effect. One "that the historic and symbolic proofs for the Episcopate are complete."

Another urges the "necessity of the Episcopate, as the only anchor of deliverance for the Lutheran Church."

We thus see that the Reformers desired to retain the Episcopate, regarding it as useful and necessary. We see, too, that it is that which is most in accord with our confessions, that it is Apostolic, and that, by means of it, "unity of doctrine, and the order and discipline required by the doctrine, can be maintained over all nations and through all times;" that it is that which best accords with the nature of the Church, that with it the Church can be best governed, and its extension and interests be best promoted.

Stahl, and many others, regarded the restoration of the Episcopate as the best remedy for the evils which the Lutheran Church in Germany was suffering. So far, however, nothing came of their efforts for its restoration, and no doubt mainly because of the state control in the Church. And as long as the state is in the Church and governs it, there can be no improvement. The state is also upheld in its position by theologians who are opposed to the Episcopate and in sympathy with the union of Church and state. It was maintained that the ministry had to do with the Word of God and spiritual things, and should not, therefore, be concerned with temporal affairs, and the government of the Church belonged to the state.

Different systems of Church government have prevailed, since the Reformation, Territorialism, Consistorialism, Collegialism. Of the Consistorial, Stahl says that "its origin rests by no means on any churchly principle, but simply on external occurrences and necessities, which the Bishops resisted, but which the princes protected and carried out, and this was afterwards justified as the natural and necessary organization of the Protestant Church." Of the other systems of organization the same may be said—they rest on no churchly principle. Of the Territorial system, it has been said "that it is of such a nature, that it is of itself fully sufficient to kill the Church, were it mortal."

There seems to have been no unity, nor uniformity in the Lutheran Church in Germany since the Reformation, in regard to Church organization. Each state or country, large or small, had its own organization and order, independently of others.

William VI said: "The Lutheran Church has as many forms of organization as there are countries, large or small, belonging to her; in other words, she has no organization." And as in the Germanic countries there is no fixed and uniform organization in the Lutheran Church, so there is none in our Church in this country. And one cause of this want of organization has been a misapplication of Art. 7 of the Augsburg Confession. In order to defend the wretched condition into which the Church was brought by the incorporation of the state into the Church, it was represented that according to Art. 7 the organization of the Church was a matter of indifference, a "res media." Doctrine was everything. Nothing was made of organization, or polity; uniform services were not necessary, and hence the Church in each country could have whatever form of organization, or order of service it preferred. And this has been the case in this country. Here we have, nothing fixed and uniform, so far as organization and the order of service are concerned. We have a clearly-defined and fixed doctrinal system, but do all hold to this doctrine—is there unity of faith among us? It has been said: "Our Church is strong in doctrine, but weak in government." And yet this strength

in doctrine has not held our people to the Church and bound them together, as should have been. And doubtless one great reason of this has been because, "so weak in government." Outside of those countries where the government of our Church is Episcopal, we have nothing fixed and uniform in government—it is simply a variety arrangement, "a coil of sand," as one of our laymen terms it. Our pure doctrine should not only find expression in the form of sound words in the creed, but also in a pure and uniform Liturgy and an Apostolic Church government. A fixed and uniform service and government have much to do with the preservation and extension of the doctrine. These are the body of which doctrine is the soul. It is right to give the first place to doctrine, or the creed, but we must not think lightly of the Liturgy and the Polity. To exalt the one at the expense of the others, will hinder the progress and prosperity of the Church. Of this we have abundant proof in the history of the Lutheran Church. We have made much of doctrine, but too little of the order of service and government. And what has been the result? Has the Church prospered and increased as she ought? Have we been able to gather and hold our people as became us? Have we been able to enlarge and strengthen our borders, as our vast material required us to do? Thousands upon thousands of our people have been gathered into other churches, whose doctrine does not compare with ours, but who have a vigorous and fixed organization. And not only have they gathered our people, but they hold them. No Church in this land, except the Roman Catholic, has had so much material of its own as the Lutheran, and yet how little comparatively have we accomplished. Early did our people come to this country, and churches were planted, and had things gone as they should, with the natural increase of our Lutheran population, and the constant inflow of Lutherans from Europe, our Church should far exceed in membership the largest denominations of the land. Over thirty years ago, a writer of our Church, who has given attention to statistics, put the Lutheran population of this country at two millions. It is now much larger—six millions or more. Much as we have accomplished in the past forty years, and rapid as has been the increase of our membership, yet with such a population we ought to have a much larger communicant membership, and to have accomplished much more in the great work of the Church. We have over one million one hundred thousand members, but what has become of the millions?

There must then be something radically defective somewhere. It is not in the doctrine—the creed is right. But we have had no fixed and uniform order of service.⁶ Nor have we any fixed organization. Ours is a kind of congregational independency—a chaos. We have a number of general bodies, and each of these has its own constitution and fundamental principles, and each has its own order of service or Liturgy and Hymnal. There are also some Synods which have their own Liturgy and Hymn Book. And in the same Synod some use the service one way and some another way, some use

⁶This is now being remedied. We have now the Common Service for English churches. But its use is still not common in several parts of the Church.

one part and some a different part, and others no part. And what a diversity in the congregations. Many have their own way with little or no regard to other congregations or to Synods.

We know that other things besides the want of unity, uniformity and proper organization, have been in the way of the increase and prosperity of our Church in this country, and have contributed to the great losses we have sustained. But many of these hindrances have grown out of our lack of unity, uniformity and organization.

We need a better organization for our Church in this country. And we believe that the establishment of the Episcopal form of government would go far to remedy our evils, and best promote the unity, extension and prosperity of the Church. Next to sound doctrine and a fixed Liturgy, our Church in this land needs the Episcopate. With this she would enter upon a new career, and have a future which she cannot have with her present defective organization and lack of uniformity. The fact that the Episcopate is the order of the Apostolic and primitive Church, universally prevailed for fifteen hundred years, and now almost universally prevails, strongly commends it as the best thing for the Church. Even the larger part of Protestantism is Episcopal; a large portion of the Lutheran Church, the Church of England, the Episcopal Church in America, the Moravian, the Methodist, and some smaller bodies. In all this we have proof that the Episcopal government is that by which the Church can best be preserved, extended and governed. And this form of government is what is best for our Church in this land, and with it she can best accomplish the great work she has to do.

Suppose, for instance, a Synod had a Bishop. He would have the oversight of pastors and churches within its bounds. He would be a bond of union and sympathy between its members. He would promote purity and unity of faith, uniformity of worship, harmony and co-operation in Church work; vacant churches would be looked after and supplied, peace and harmony in the churches promoted, the mission work overseen and diligently prosecuted, important centres of population and influence looked after and occupied, and the whole work carried on with an efficiency that cannot otherwise be attained. He would also be a barrier to independency which too much prevails among us, and to which there is too much tendency.

A Bishop also carries with him an authority and influence which no mere pastor, or missionary, or agent, or president, or superintendent can have, and he commands the confidence as well as the respect of the people wherever he goes. What a gain for our Church, could we have the Episcopate in every Synod, and could we send Bishops into States and Territories, where we have no Synods. How different and how much better would it be with our Church in this land, if from its beginning here we had had the oversight, which the patriarch Muhlenberg exercised, properly organized and perpetuated.

The necessity and usefulness of Episcopacy may be seen from the history of the Methodist and Episcopal Churches. In the early history of Methodism in this country, there was a time when its continuance was doubtful. In this extremity Asbury was appointed Bishop. He immediately addressed himself to the duties of his office, visited churches and preachers, and infused new life into them. He established new preaching places, appointed preachers, and rapidly extended the field of his operations. We need

not speak of the success of Methodism in this country. But we may safely say that it is mainly owing to its organization, peculiar as that is.

The Episcopal Church, because of its relation to the Church of England, had in the beginning many difficulties to contend with, owing to the feelings towards the mother country, especially in the time and after the Revolution. But it made progress, and grew in influence and prosperity, and now, in proportion to its numbers and material, is growing and spreading more rapidly than any other denomination. This is mainly owing to Episcopacy. It has Bishops in every part of our country, and sends Missionary Bishops into the Territories, there to plant churches and to ordain and settle ministers. And in this Church we see how useful and good the Episcopal office is. Though there is a great diversity of views among its ministers and people, (not more so than among us), they hold together, and co-operate in their Church work. During the late war the Episcopal Church, North and South, continued united, whilst other churches divided. Everywhere there is oversight of the churches and pastors, and their Bishops are a bond of union and sympathy; and no people are more attached and devoted to their Church than her members. And in this we have additional evidence of the advantage of a fixed and uniform order of service and of the Episcopal government.

Even in the history of our own Church, we see that there is a better Church life where the Episcopal government prevails. The testimony that comes to us from Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Denmark, through travelers shows the advancement of those people. Their strict morality, their religious education of the young, their devotion to higher education, their faithful observance of the ordinances of religion, their zeal in the cause of missions, and their Christian life, show the advantage, not only of a pure faith, but also of a uniform service and Episcopal government.

Some, indeed, complain of the evils in the Church in Sweden and Norway. But these grow out of the connection of Church and state, and not because of Episcopacy. With the Episcopate in this country the Scandinavians would find it to be different. And it is to be regretted that they have not retained the Episcopal government, or brought it with them.

Two Lutheran ministers asked a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church, staying at the same summer resort, what, in his estimation, is the practical value of the Episcopate? The answer was reproduced in *The Lutheran* by one of the inquirers. From this we make some extracts.

"We find it (the office of Bishop) an exceedingly useful and valuable office. We look upon the Bishop as the head and centre of our Church organization, and if he is a man of wisdom and administrative ability, he can render the greatest service to the Church. He keeps his eye on the whole field, and pays special attention to that part of the work that lies beyond the bounds of the individual parishes and to which the rectors of those parishes cannot well attend. He has his eye on the growth of the Church, and looks about for places where schools and churches may advantageously be located. Some of the most important institutions of our large and influential diocese can be traced back to the suggestions and efforts of the Bishop. He has the confidence of the churches. His long service in the diocese makes him perfectly familiar with all its wants and possibilities. He learns to know those who have means, and are willing to employ

them for the good of the Church. If he has anything on hand that really deserves a helping hand, he is the very man to lay it before them. They have confidence in his wisdom, impartiality and zeal for the Church, and they will do what they might not so readily do for any other man. I have known such men to seek out the Bishop to offer their means for the prosecution of any good work he might commend to them. The people learn to go to him for advice.”

This corroborates what we have said in regard to the usefulness of the Episcopate, and with what regard and confidence the people hold the Bishop. But we state more fully what has already been referred to.

“The Episcopate promotes unity. This was so in the early Church. Parties and contentions had arisen, but the institution of the Episcopate promoted unity, order and tranquility.” (**Neander**). In the time immediately following the Apostles, the Bishops were the organ of Church unity. This appears from the clear testimony of the letters of Ignatius. (**Rothe—444**). If the Episcopate promoted unity, order and peace in the early Church, why should it not accomplish the same result now? And surely no Church more needs unity and peace than the Lutheran Church in this country.

The Episcopate conserves sound doctrine. The Bishops are not only an organ of unity, but also of pure doctrine. This was so in the early Church. They taught and defended the truth over against error and heresy. And a Bishop, in the discharge of his duties among the churches, looks after the doctrine and will have a care that sound doctrine is taught and maintained, in accordance with the Word of God and confessions of the Church.⁶

The Episcopate is promotive of good order and uniformity. Where it exists, the polity is fixed, the order of services and usages are fixed and uniform. This is so in Northern Europe, and in other countries. And there is also security against error. During the prevalence of rationalism, Liturgies, Hymnals, and the form of Church organization were changed to suit the prevailing unbelief in non-Episcopal Churches and states. But where Episcopacy prevailed there was no change in the established order of things. Though rationalism found its way into countries and communions having the Episcopate, it found in the fixed order prevailing a constant testimony against itself, and for the truth. And when the pure faith revived it found there the organs in which to maintain itself.

We may add here that it is of great importance and advantage to have a fixed order in the Church. People want something fixed and definite in the doctrine, worship and government of the Church. They prefer to be where the faith is settled and clearly stated, the order of worship uniform, and the polity definitely established. And the churches, where this is the case, have a decided advantage over those that are disputing about confessional points, trying to decide on constitutions and forms of organization, and arrange orders of worship and administration. And it is here where

⁶As confirmatory, we give the following: It is related of the late Bishop Martensen, that on a visitation of one of the churches, the pastor preaching from the Gospel, taught unsound doctrine. The sermon ended the Bishop took up the lesson and preached the true Word. At the close of the service he told the man that he could no longer be pastor there.

our Church is weak and has too little hold on the people. It is not meant that discussion is not useful, and that there should not be growth and development, and provision for new wants and emergencies, but all must proceed on the foundations already laid and grow out of what we already have, or from the past. We have our faith. We need a uniform service and a fixed polity. We need unity, and uniformity in the Liturgy and polity is promotive of unity.

Objections are made to the Episcopate, and we have been referred to some of the evils and dangers that have existed where it was the established order. But no objections can be urged against it, which cannot be urged with greater force against the presbyterial and congregational or non-Episcopal systems. Have evils existed where Episcopacy was and is the established order, greater evils have existed where it was not. Everything, however good and useful, is subject to abuse in this world. And owing to the sinfulness of man, the Episcopacy which prevailed in the Apostolic and primitive Church had abuses attached to it in the progress of ages. But cleansed of these abuses there is nothing better for the Church now.

Whatever view we take of the Church, there must be some form of organization. Take it to be a spiritual communion of faith united in Christ **(Stahl)** (or **"spiritual assembly of souls"** —**Luther**) it must necessarily produce an outward communion and institution, both according to its nature and by virtue of God's command. There will be produced not only a common confession of faith, and worship, but also common activities for the preservation of the faith, the accomplishment of the divine will in the salvation of man, and for the furtherance of God's kingdom. And for the direction and ordering of these activities, there must be different functions, offices and powers.

View the Church as the congregation, or society of the called out of the world to be a separate people, who truly believe the Gospel of Christ, have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and are united by a common faith, hope and love, it must like every other society have its officers, rules, rites and powers, or its ordinances and government.

The Church must then, from its very nature, have some form of organization. Without this it cannot accomplish its mission in the world, which is the preservation of the truth and the salvation of man, or the making of disciples of Christ of all nations through the Word and Sacraments.

The important question therefore is, What form of organization or government will best conduce to the fulfillment of her essential office **(Luthard)**, or will best correspond to her nature, and with which she can best accomplish her mission? For the answer to this we must look into Scripture and into history. And we there learn that in the Church of God from the beginning there was a visible headship. In the patriarchal age the father was head of the Church in the house, overseeing and ordering all things pertaining thereto. And when the chosen people were formed into an organic community under the lead and headship of Moses, and the Church in the Wilderness was organized by divine direction, there were different offices and functions. The High Priest was over Priests and Levites and the whole congregation. And when the Church was to be advanced to a higher state, and the possession of what she had in type and promise, Jesus Christ came, and in constituting the Church anew, "He gave some

Apostles; and some prophets; and some Evangelists; and some pastors and teachers." At the head and over the Church, its Presbyters, Deacons and its various ministries, were the Apostles, having the care of the churches, overseeing and directing their affairs. And before all of the Apostles had died we see others appointed over pastors and churches in cities and in districts, overseeing, ordaining approved men to the ministry and exercising government and discipline. So that yet in the Apostolic age, we find a fixed organization having men to whom the title of Bishop was especially and exclusively applied, and who had the oversight and government of the churches. And thus without any difficulty or dispute the Episcopate came to be the established order in the Church. And how rapidly and widely did the Church spread in the Apostolic and the immediately succeeding ages, until in a comparatively short time Christianity conquered the whole Roman empire and regions far beyond. Christ, the Head of the Church, blessed His Church in her organic union, and as she was constituted; and pervaded and animated by the Holy Spirit she went forth conquering and to conquer. But for the incorporation of the Church into the state, how different might it have been with Christendom, and the nations.

We hear it often affirmed that there is nothing said in the New Testament concerning the form of Church government. It is true there is no direct command on the subject, as there is none in regard to the Lord's Day, mode of baptism, and some other matters which the Church holds to and observes, but it does not therefore follow that the Apostles had no instructions on the subject. May not the risen Lord have spoken of the organization of His Church, as well as of other "things pertain to the Kingdom of God?" And in this, as in many other things, is it not likely that they would be divinely directed? Besides, they would have some regard to the order prevailing, by divine authority, in the Church under the Old Testament in ordering the Christian Church. There were officers and ministries, and over these there was a visible headship and oversight. And as various ministrations and men to minister became necessary in the Apostolic Church, would they not be guided, in some measure at least, in providing and arranging for these, by the past? Christianity is a growth out of a preceding dispensation. In its doctrines, precepts and sacred rites, we see much of what existed before. And our Lord instituted the Sacraments out of what already existed—the baptism of the Jews and the Paschal Feast. And so, in organizing the Christian Church, the Apostles would also have regard to what existed in the former dispensation, and purified and consecrated to the life and needs of the Church what was not foreign to its spirit. The Church is not only "built upon the foundation of the Apostles," but "of the prophets" also, Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. And as there was a visible headship and oversight in the Church under the Jewish dispensation, would there not be in the Church under the Christian? And was it necessary and useful in the Church under the old, would it not be necessary and useful in the Church under the new dispensation?

Every organization or society, of whatever kind, and every State or Commonwealth, must have an executive head for its efficient working and the accomplishment of the ends for which it was established. Even in the order of nature there is a headship, or a governing centre. The sun, the moon, the planets and stars

move not independently of each other, but in the order established by the Almighty Maker.

The sun is the centre of a system, governing and influencing the movements of the various bodies which constitute that system. And throughout creation, there are suns, and systems, which they control and govern. Even in Heaven, among the Angels, there are Archangels, and thrones—dominions, principalities and powers.

And so among men. When families were formed, the father or patriarch was head, and governed and directed all the movements and employments of children and servants. And when families were formed into States, there was an executive head. Things were not allowed to take care of themselves, nor left to the direction of all in common.

In our States there are various officers, judges, magistrates, etc., but above all and over all is the Governor, or executive head of the State.

And so in the Church, the society of the called, the assembly of the Saints, a visible headship, an office overseeing and governing is necessary to its efficient working, and the furthering of its various interests. In other words, the Church can best be governed and its mission best be accomplished with the Episcopal government. The Episcopate is inwoven into the very constitution of the Church from its beginning. And if with it the Apostolic and early Church spread and increased so rapidly, is it not that which is best for the Church, and for the accomplishment of her mission now? And if it is that which the whole Church accepted for fifteen hundred years without any question, and if now over four-fifths of Christendom accept it, is it not best for the whole Church? It will not do for us to say that the Church was in error for 1500 years, or that over one-half of Protestantism is in error in holding to the Episcopal system. And though there was a break with the past in regard to Episcopacy in the Reformation, it was not general where the revived faith was received, nor was it willingly, or of choice on the part of the Lutheran Reformers. As with the early Church, they held to the Apostolic doctrine as confessed in the three ancient creeds, restored and observed the worship of the Church, so did they hold to the Episcopate of the early Church as necessary and useful. As in the faith and in the worship, so in the polity, they would not break with the Church of the past. Where there were departures from this polity, it was not of their will or direction.

And if we will follow the history of the Church since the Reformation, we find that where the Episcopate has existed, her work has been more efficiently carried on than where it has not existed. There has been more unity, order and cooperation. Among the earliest and most active in the work of missions to the heathen were the Swedes, the Danes, the English and the Moravians. And where the Episcopal government has existed there has also been a fixed Liturgy, and thus always a testimony for the truth and against error, and the organs—in Liturgy and polity—in which the truth could live and spread. And as we have the faith of the ancient Church, as we have its worship, why not have its polity also? In its growth and development Christianity does not depart from the past. It builds on the past, and rooted in it, attains a richer growth and fuller development.

The office of the "Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth," is the conservation and spread of the truth, and this she can most efficiently do with the Episcopate. This is rooted in her very nature, inwoven in her whole history, and has the authority of the ages. And we answer, then, that the Episcopal government will "best conduce to the fulfilment of the Church's essential office."

PART 3

IN ORDER TO BRING ABOUT the establishment of the Episcopate, it has been proposed to form an English Synod in Eastern Pennsylvania. It is generally admitted that the Mother Synod is too large and unwieldy to do her work efficiently. Especially is there a want of proper care for our English interests. The division of the Synod was at one time urged. A geographical division was proposed and outlined, making three Synods of nearly equal size, each having the office of oversight. Then there was a division proposed on the basis of language, believing that the interests of both languages could be better promoted, and many frictions and unpleasantnesses growing out of language would be avoided. But neither plan of division was favorably entertained. It was then proposed that the pastors and parishes in sympathy with the formation of an English Synod, having the office of oversight, unite and respectfully ask the Synod to allow them to withdraw for this purpose. The membership of this Synod is not to be limited to those who are now members of the Synod of Pennsylvania, but it would receive all who are in sympathy with its basis and object, hoping that there soon will be such a union of all our English churches in this country, that there will be but one English Synod on the same territory.⁷

Such an organization is necessary, and could accomplish a vast amount of good, which cannot be accomplished by our English churches in their present connection. An English Synod would give special attention to the English interests of the Church within its bounds, properly supplying churches where they exist, and planting new ones where needed. And looking beyond its own territory, would give special attention to the great centres of population, where little or nothing is done by us to establish English churches. The Germans and Scandinavians are in most of these centres, but beyond supplying their own people in their own languages, they have not done much for those who have become English. To the English pastors and congregations it mainly belongs to care for the English interests. And if the English pastors and churches in the Synod of Pennsylvania were united in an English Synod, how much could they do for the establishment and support of English churches and schools wherever needed. United in an English Synod, they would be awakened to increased interest, liberality and activity in the work of the Church. The necessity and advantage of an English Synod are well set forth in the following, from a Report on Division of Synod, in 1882: "English brethren favor the organization of a purely English Synod, not simply because it would diminish the size of the present Synod, but mainly because they believe that it would greatly promote the welfare of the English portion of our Church. They believe that it would give greater variety, simplicity and harmony to the meetings of Synod, if one language were to be used exclusively. They believe that it would bind the English

⁷The movement for an Episcopal organization should not be confined to a new Synod formed in this manner and for the object indicated. Any Synod could adopt the Episcopate. And this would not only be a great gain for the Synod which would do this, but would be the beginning of a better organization for our Church in this country.

pastors and churches more closely together. They are persuaded that common wants, difficulties and experiences would enable them to work together in greater harmony; that their united councils and contributions would enable them to build English Lutheran churches and schools; that such a Synod would attract others of the same way of thinking, and would be able to stand before the Lutheran Church, as well as other Christians, as a fair representative of pure Lutheranism in faith and practice. They contend that, as it has been found advantageous as well as necessary to establish purely English congregations, and the German congregations from which they have gone out have not only not suffered thereby, but have increased in numbers and efficiency; so also the establishment of purely English and purely German Synods would be of advantage to both, and would add to the strength and activity of the Church. They believe, and base their belief on their own experience, that while men of different nationalities may be one in the faith, each nationality or language has its own views and methods in practical matters, and should be left to carry on its work in its own way, without being under the necessity of having it measured, directed or influenced by others who may be presumed to have less sympathy with it. "

The future of our Church in this country will depend mainly on making necessary and suitable provision for our people in the English language. This has not been done in the past, and is not now done to the extent it should be. And it will not be done by Synods made up of pastors and churches of different nationalities, whose interests and sympathies are often antagonistic, and rarely have the unanimity and harmony that should exist in such bodies. In such bodies the interests of neither language are properly cared for. It is so in the Synod of Pennsylvania, and it is so in other Synods. In many localities there is not the care and provision for the wants of our people in English that there should be. More also could be done for the German and for other languages. Why not then organize our forces in such a way as to be able to work more efficiently? Unless we address ourselves more earnestly and unitedly to the better caring for our English interests, our Church will have no promising future in this land.

At the head of this new organization we want a Bishop, who would have the oversight of pastors and churches, performing all the functions pertaining to the Episcopal office, and as stated in connection with the Episcopate in Cammin—"the Bishop shall maintain and preach the pure doctrine of the Gospel, examine and ordain the ministers, visit pastors and churches, have oversight of doctrines and ceremonies, of studies and schools, maintain Christian discipline," etc. He would be a bond of union and sympathy between pastors and churches, one with whom pastors could confer, and to whom congregations could look for advice and instruction. He would also know the wants of the churches and the district over which he had the oversight, and knowing the ministers, would be able to have the right man in the right place. He could also plant new churches where needed. The Synod, with a Bishop over it, could accomplish what is not possible without one. And not only would we have a Bishop, but we would have him properly set apart and consecrated to his office—not by Presbyters, but by a Bishop or Bishops—in accordance with the usage of the early Church, and the usage of our Church in Europe. A Bishop should be consecrated to his office by one or more equal in office, and not as was the case with the first Methodist Bishop, by one

occupying an inferior position. Though a Bishop be a *Primus inter pares*, yet it is proper, and in accordance with the usage of the Church, that one chosen to be a Bishop, be consecrated and set apart to his office by a person or persons equal in office and dignity, or by Bishops.⁸ Even admitting that the Episcopal office, as distinct from that of the ministry, is not of divine right (*de jure divino*), it is proper and right that those filling the office should be consecrated by Bishops, so that from no quarter the objection could be made that we had not true Bishops.

And for such consecration we need not go out of our own Church. The Lutheran Church in Northern Europe is Episcopal in its organization, and has always been so. Nor has the true succession of her Bishops ever been questioned. From our own Bishops, those whom we might choose to be Bishops among us, could receive their consecration. We would thus have the Episcopate in a proper and regular manner.

"But," says one, "by this arrangement you would build a bridge for our people to pass into the Episcopal Church." By no means. There is already a bridge over which many of our people are passing. But it is a passage only one way. By having an Episcopal organization there would be a bridge by which they would pass both ways, and we be as likely to gain as to lose. And there are those in both communions, who would rejoice to see the chasm, over which this bridge extended, filled up so that there would be nothing to separate between us, and the two be one. And if these two churches, which have so much in common, could be united and become one—ONE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN AMERICA—what a conservative and aggressive power it would be—a power for Christ and His Kingdom—and it would be the beginning of the realization of that unity for which our Lord prayed.

The Episcopate is nothing new in the Lutheran Church. And as we have no fixed and uniform government in this country, let us adopt the Episcopal as that which has prevailed since the days of the Apostles, has existed in the Lutheran Church since the Reformation, and as that which is best adapted to secure the welfare and prosperity of the Church. A great want is a fixed government with oversight. And with Luther we believe that the Church can never be better governed and preserved than with an Episcopal organization after the manner of the Apostolic and ancient Church. And if our

⁸To this some may object. But what we want is that, the men who are chosen to the office of oversight, should be consecrated, or set apart to their office in a proper and regular way, and in accordance with the usage of the Christian Church.

"It is in accordance with the usage of the ancient Church, and as the ancient canons teach, that a Bishop should be consecrated by Bishops of neighboring cities."—Luther.

"Those who were in ancient times chosen Bishops, were consecrated by other Bishops, as were St. Augustine, Ambrose, Cyprian," etc. —Ibid.

We would therefore have our Bishops consecrated in accordance with the order and practice of the Christian Church. This would in no way compromise any doctrine or principle, nor would it be anything hierarchical or sacerdotal, but would give dignity and weight to the office, which otherwise it would not have. Besides, we would not be subject to the charge that we acted irregularly and contrary to historic and churchly order.

Church had such an organization and were united, what great things could she accomplish, and what a power for good would she be in this country.

It may be said that to form an Episcopal organization would be something new, and add to the variety that already exists. To this it may be answered that a large portion of the Lutheran Church has the Episcopal government, and adopting it here we would have what is Lutheran, and what is adapted to the wants and condition of our Church in this country.⁹ An Episcopate, purified of all popish abuses, is in accordance with our confessions, and is what the Reformers really wanted, and is that by which the Church could be best governed and preserved, and her interests be best promoted. And they desired this all the more when they saw how oppressive became the rule of the princes and their counsellors, when they had the control and direction of the affairs of the Church.

And as the history of the early Church teaches that the Episcopal system was promotive of unity, order and peace, may we not hope that the formation of a body with the Episcopal office would be the beginning of a movement which might gradually bring about a union of our Church, whose divisions and antagonisms have been so destructive to her interests, and are now crippling her efficiency and hindering her progress?

⁹The question has been asked, "What is the polity of the Lutheran Church?" To this it has been answered, "The Episcopal." And if we study the history of the Lutheran Church, we will find that this is really true. For wherever we find any fixed, definite and unmixed polity, it is the Episcopal. In the time of the Reformation, wherever the Evangelical doctrine was received, it became necessary to order the service and the government of the Church in accordance with the doctrine, and adapt them to the new wants. As the Bishops refused to receive their doctrine, ordain their Priests and visit their churches, the Reformers made provision for the oversight and government of the Church in the different countries where the Reformation spread. In north and northeast Germany the Episcopate, cleansed of Popish abuses, was retained. This was done in Prussia, Schleswig-Holstein. Pomerania, and Mark Brandenburg, and several other districts. In Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland, the Episcopate was retained and continues to this day. And the Reformers desired to retain the Episcopal government, cleansed of abuses, and regarded it as best for the preservation and prosperity of the Church.

In middle and south Germany circumstances were not favorable to the continuance of the Episcopate. The influence of the Emperor, the opposition of the Bishops, and the barriers of the constitution of the Empire, presented such strong hindrances that they had to drop the names Episcopate and Bishop, and used the Latin name Superintendentens for the Greek name Episcopos, claiming that the functions of the office of Superintendent were essentially the same as those of the Bishops of north Germany—Haupt. The Reformed influence of Switzerland also made itself felt in the organization of the Lutheran Church in south Germany, as it has done in the order of service there.

Of the Superintendential system it has been justly said that it is only a weakened (abgeschwächte) image of the venerable and purified Episcopal organization. Nevertheless the Episcopal idea underlies this system. And hence it may justly be said that the polity of the Lutheran Church in Germany was Episcopal.

The Episcopal idea, or that of oversight and visitation, was brought into the organization of the Lutheran church in this country by Muhlenberg. "At the meeting of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania in 1750 it was determined as necessity demanded, that for the sake of good order, an overseer should annually be elected over the united congregations." Muhlenberg himself was for the greater part of his life an overseer, visiting the churches and setting things in order. But this oversight was never properly

organized and extended. There is indeed provision in the constitutions of the older Synods for some oversight by the Presidents. But we doubt whether this provision of those constitutions was ever carried out. Yet we see that the principle of oversight was the prevailing one in the earlier efforts at organization. But now it has practically disappeared, except among the Missourians, where it exists in a peculiar form. And it may now be said of our Church in this country, as has been said of our Lutheran Church in Germany, that it has no organization. There is no fixed and distinctive polity. The Episcopal government gradually disappeared from north Germany, and after that there appears nothing definite nor settled. Various other systems became mingled with the Superintendency—the Consistorial, Territorial, Collegial. Rationalism also made itself felt. The head of the State was the head of the Church. His will was supreme in what should be the religion of the State, its Liturgy and Polity. "Cujus regio ejus religio." ("The will of the ruler must determine the religion"). Each country, whether large or small, had its own Church organization. There was no uniformity. Not one form of government for the Church in the different countries, as in other denominations. Each country or principality was independent. And thus there were many different forms of organization. Richter gives one hundred and eighty-two constitutions. And whilst there are points of agreement, in these constitutions, there seems to be no unity nor uniformity. Such an array of constitutions, with the other systems mentioned above, presents a confused and lamentable condition in regard to organization—justly called a 'verfassungs-jammer."

And it is no better in this country. Our Church government may be called an elective system, made up of the principles of different denominations. It is a "blending of certain principles adopted by the Congregationalists, with others that are recognized as Presbyterian."—Wolf. With these there also appears a blending of certain principles of Methodism and independency. Thus we have no distinctive polity in our Church in this country.

But must this mixed arrangement continue? Has the Church had nothing better, and has it not now that which is better? We have seen that in the early history of the Church in Germany, especially in northern Germany, the polity was Episcopal. That this idea in a measure existed in the early history of our Church in this country. And now the only fixed and distinctive polity in the Lutheran Church, and which has been in it since the Reformation, is found in Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Denmark, and this is Episcopal. And when we look at the condition of our Church in those countries, and of the countries themselves, as given in history and by travelers, we find a better state of things there than anywhere else. In true Church life, in the religious education of the young, in higher education, in mission work, and in intelligence, industry, honesty, sobriety and morality of their people, they are first among the nations. They have the doctrine of God's Word as confessed by the Church, they have a fixed Liturgy, and distinctive and settled polity. What an argument in all this for the most ancient polity, and which has proved itself that by which the Church can best be governed and its various interests best be promoted. And in adopting the Episcopal form of government we are not going out of our Church to bring into it what is foreign, but that which has existed in it from the Reformation, and which the Reformers approved and would have had for our whole Church. This would not be a Church government formed by the blending of the principles of different denominations as is now the case in this country, nor the mingling of different systems as has been in Germany. The Episcopal polity would be that which is distinctively Lutheran, has always been in the Church, and is in accordance with her Confessions. Why then should we allow groundless suspicions and prejudices to prevent its adoption in our Church in this country?

APPENDIX

Some reference is made in what is said on the Episcopate to the misapplication of Article 7 of the Augsburg Confession, wherein it is stated that to the unity of the Church it is sufficient to agree concerning the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, rights or ceremonies instituted by man should be alike everywhere.¹⁰ It has been held that the Confession and the Reformers treated the whole subject of Church polity as a "*res media*," or matter of indifference—that it is of no importance what form of government the Church may adopt. A uniform order of service, or Liturgy was also regarded as a matter of indifference. This opinion has generally prevailed, and has occasioned a lamentable confusion in the Church. One has said: "I know not whether there is in our day a more dangerous error in our whole Church question than this."

We hold that they err who claim that doctrine is everything, and that uniformity in the order of service, and the polity are of no importance. Nor is there any authority either in the Confessions, or in the writings of the Reformers, for such an opinion. And there is reason to believe that it was put forward and maintained for a purpose, and that the unfortunate divisions and diversities in the Lutheran Church are largely the result of it. Doctrine is important, but it must have organs in which to live and diffuse and sustain itself. The doctrine of the Apostles soon found in the polity and forms of the early Church the organs in which it lived and spread and brought itself into contact with men.

That the form of Church government is not a matter of indifference will appear from a reference to the Confession. The object and aim of the Augsburg Confession are irenic. The thought of division, or separation from the established Church is foreign to the Confession; on the contrary, the whole aim is the restoration of unity and peace between the two parties, and for the attainment of this the Evangelical party were truly anxious. Separation from the Catholic Church, and the bringing about a great schism in the Church were regarded as a great misfortune, and those who, by their obstinacy and tyranny, would cause such a schism, must answer for it before God. "Our Augustana, a dove with the olive branch of peace and reconciliation, is full of the kindest thoughts and counsels, and teaches how agreement and unity in the Church may be preserved or re-established." (**Haupt**). This appears in the preface to the Augsburg Confession, where it is said that they were summoned to deliberate in regard to "dissensions in the matter of our holy religion and our Christian faith, and in order that in this matter of religion, the opinions and judgments of diverse parties may be heard in each other's presence, may be understood and weighed among one another, in mutual charity, meekness and gentleness that those things which, in the writings on either side have been handled or

¹⁰ In this Article, it is not meant to give a definition of the Church; but marks of it.

understood amiss, being laid aside and corrected, these things may be harmonized and brought back to the one simple truth and Christian concord; so that hereafter the one unfeigned and true religion may be embraced and preserved by us, so that as we are subjects and soldiers of the one Christ, so also in unity and concord, we may live in the one Christian Church."

Further on, the confessors say that it is their fervent prayer to God that dissensions may be removed, and that "we may agree, and be brought back to one true accordant religion." And if their desires in regard to the restoration of peace and harmony should not be realized at the Diet of Augsburg, then they declare themselves ready to appear at a General Council, in the hope that all dissensions may be removed, and peace and unity is reestablished. The aim of the Confession being irenic, then there could be no reference to Church government in Article 7, nor does it imply that Church government, or any form of it is a "res media," or that it does not matter how the Church is organized, so that we have the Word and Sacraments. No such inference is warranted, for the Reformers could not be indifferent as to what form of Church government was maintained, when they again and again declare their willingness to be subject to the Bishops and to assist in maintaining the old ecclesiastical regulations and Episcopal government, provided the Bishops would tolerate their doctrine and receive their priests. Even as late as 1545, at the Diet of Worms, they "offer obedience to the Bishops, provided they do not require us to deny the Divine Word." And they further declare "that if the Episcopal government in the Church is destroyed, unutterable barbarity and desolation must follow therefrom."

"And is further proof required, we will furnish it from the *Corpus Reformatorum*, where Church government is expressly separated from things indifferent. Thus in the writings of Melancthon ad Gallos,' the first part of which treats *de potestate ecclesiastica* (ecclesiastical power), the second on the contrary *de traditionibus humanis rerum indifferentium* (human traditions of things indifferent), the things indifferent are limited to 'holidays, Church songs, meats, priestly garments,' and the like. In the first part Melancthon guards against making the impression that they meant to destroy the existing Church government. 'No, the Church has need of such rulers (gubernatores) who will examine and ordain 'those who are called to the sacred office, exercise jurisdiction, and have the oversight of the doctrine of the clergy. *Yes, if there were no Bishops, necessity would require that such be made.*'" (Haupt).

That the form of Church government, and a fixed and uniform Liturgy, are not matters of indifference, may be seen from the history of our Church during the rationalistic period, both in Germany and in America. "Does the experience in our state churches," asks Haupt, "permit us to declare our Church government an indifferent thing? Let us look at Sweden and England. There also rationalism and infidelity caused their desolations as they have with us; and there, also, the Church was a field full of the bones of the dead. But when, by God's grace, the Spirit began again to breathe upon the Church, the newly-awakened life of faith found in the true churchly forms and order of the Episcopal government, existing there in comparative purity, the organs in which it could diffuse itself, and the pillars on which it could support itself; and there we see Church life attaining an enviable growth and vigor. We also had great awakenings in

our German Evangelical Church. Everywhere we saw a wondrous life again kindled in our congregations, which seemed to justify the brightest hopes. But is not the complaint general, that in a great measure this life has sunk away as in the sand, and was not able to gain any permanent form? And what is to blame but our wretched organization, and above all that state bureaucracy, which, like a giant polypus, holds our poor Church in its embrace, and forbids her every deeper life utterance and development?"

And as it was in the Church of Germany, so was it in this country. Rationalism spread its desolations in the Church here, sweeping away, in a great measure, the order and economy, and the doctrine even, as they existed in the early period of our history. And when Church-life revived, what had it in which to diffuse itself, and on which to support itself? And finding no fixed order of service and government, or organs in the Church, in which to spread and sustain itself, it sank away in the forms and practices of the sects, and thus our Church became very largely infected with their spirit. And hence it is that there has been so much in our Church in this country that is foreign to its doctrine and spirit. There were brought into it some of the peculiarities and practices of almost every sect and denomination, and it was sought to make our Church as much like others, and as much unlike her true self as possible. There has thus been neither unity nor uniformity nor a fixed Church government among us. Can we then justly say that it is a matter of indifference what system of Church government we have? And now that the life of faith, and a true Church consciousness have revived, may there not be danger that they will sink away, or be lost, if we do not have a different and better polity ?

A reference to the Constitutions—*Kirchen-Ordnungen*—of the Reformation period, shows that the form of Church government was not regarded as a matter of indifference. Attention was given to the organization of the Church, by the Reformers, among whom Bugenhagen especially took a prominent part. In those states and countries in which the Reformation was introduced, Constitutions were formed which were adapted to the new order of things. In the Duchy of Prussia, 1525; Sweden, 1527; Denmark and Schleswig Holstein, 1534-42; Mark Brandenburg, 1539, etc.; in all these the Episcopal government was retained. **(Haupt).**

Nor can it be justly said that uniformity in the order of worship is an indifferent thing.

By a reference to the Liturgies of the Reformation period it will be seen that the Reformers did not regard a fixed and uniform order of service as a matter of indifference. In the Wittenburg Liturgy, or *Kirchen-Ordnung*, of 1542, we read: "And since much that is erroneous has been caused among the common people, and the inexperienced, because the outward order of service, worship and ceremonies are not observed with reverence, regularity and uniformity; also that several pastors have purposely departed from the regular order, they (the visitatores) shall give attention and see to it that the ceremonies, with the singing, the dress of the priests, administration of the Sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, be regular and uniform, and that the festivals be observed at one place like at another and in

moderation, in accordance with Holy Scripture, as such is promotive of the peace and unity of the Church and of doctrine.”¹¹

In the Brandenburg Liturgy of 1540, approved by Luther, we read: “We wish, therefore, that no one establish any new ceremonies besides this, our order of service, which we herewith send forth; nor is anything to be taken from it, without the knowledge and consent of the Bishops and visitatores. For we are anxious that, as much as possible, uniformity be maintained in our country, and that all unnecessary division and separation be prevented. It is also our will that no one, on his own authority, venture to change anything herein.”

In the Liturgy of the Bishops of Samland and Pomesania, of 1525, after saying that they do not wish to bind any one’s conscience by anything merely human, or make it impossible for themselves, or successors to make any changes. should circumstances require it, they add: “Yet each one can well understand that on account of Christian unity, it is not becoming, nor can it be allowed, that any one of his own will and pleasure shall disregard or depart from this approved order. Let every one adhere to it.”

“From these testimonies, which might be multiplied, it is evident that the Reformers never thought of setting up a new Liturgical principle in Article 7, leaving it free what order to follow, or what ceremonies to adopt.” They knew what confusion would be occasioned if individuals and congregations were to act according to their own pleasure and will in these things. There is, therefore, no authority for the view that uniformity in the order of service is unimportant or even unnecessary. On the contrary, from these testimonies it appears that the regular observance of a uniform order of service and ceremonies is promotive of peace and unity in the Church, and conserves pure doctrine. And in further confirmation of this, we quote the following from the Pomeranian Liturgy:

“Although the Church is not built on a like round of ceremonies, but on the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, which is our Saviour Jesus Christ, and upon His blessed Word; yet inasmuch as God is not a God of confusion, but of peace, and wills that in the congregations all things should be done decently and in order (**1 Cor. 14: 40**), there can be no doubt that it is a service peculiarly acceptable to the everlasting Divine Majesty, when a uniform, spiritual and useful form of worship is adopted and maintained as far as possible. In addition to the manifold other blessings which it brings with it, it tends to secure unity in the doctrines of God’s Word, and to remove many causes of stumbling to the common people, who form their judgment of doctrines, sacraments and the whole work of the ministry from outward ceremonies. On this account the appointed order of hymns, lessons and ceremonies is to be observed in our churches.

It thus appears that uniformity in the order of worship and the form of Church government are not matters of indifference, but of great necessity and importance. From the Church Constitutions, or *Kirchen-Ordnungen* and Liturgies of the Reformation

¹¹These quotations from Liturgies are from Richter, given in Haupt’s *Episcopate der Deutschen Reformation*.

period, we see that the Reformers did not regard the form of Church government and uniformity in worship as unimportant matters, and that there is no warrant for the construction put on Article 7 of the Augsburg Confession. The conservation of sound doctrine and of a true Church life, the peace and unity of the Church, the proper co-operation of its members for its extension and prosperity depend, next to God's blessing, on the observance of a fixed and uniform order of worship, and upon having a truly Apostolic and historic Church government.

When we thus speak of the Liturgy and the polity, we are not to be understood as undervaluing doctrine. We give it the first place; but the Liturgy and Church government are also of great importance. Doctrine lives in the Liturgy and the polity. In these it finds utterance, and they are its bearers and guardians. They are the body of which doctrine is the soul and the life. The one cannot live without the other. And as to a healthy bodily life, a sound mind and a sound body are necessary, so to a true Church life, sound doctrine and a right Liturgy and polity are necessary. Doctrine is the principal thing, the soul and the life, but it must have the organs in which to live and spread and sustain itself. And who can say that these are not necessary and important?

OPINIONS

OF CLERGYMEN AND LAYMEN IN REGARD TO THE EPISCOPATE FOR THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

The following opinions in regard to the Episcopate for the Lutheran Church in America have been taken from some of the letters received by the author. In addition to these extracts, many clergymen and laymen of different Synods have personally expressed to the author their accord with his views. Laymen especially have spoken of our defective organization, and want an Episcopal government.

From Prof. T. L. Seip, D.D., President of Muhlenberg College:

I have read your argument with a great deal of interest and profit, and am disposed to agree with you throughout, although I have not examined the other side. There can be no doubt that we need and should secure more efficient oversight than we have ever had, or are likely to have under present arrangements. You are doing the Church a real service in agitating the matter. I pray that the Head of the Church may lead us to a proper solution of the problem. '

From Rev. G. F. Krotel, D.D., New York:

In reading over your pamphlet I recognized many passages that you published in *The Lutheran*, but now that you have all together, the presentation is calculated to make your argument stronger. Your array of facts and arguments is very strong, and proves how thoroughly you have gone over the whole ground. No one can doubt, after reading it, that supervision has been the rule from the beginning, and that the office as well as the name bishop are most venerable and have the sanction of ages. If the compilers of our Church Book, and the joint committee of the three general bodies, bow down with such veneration before the liturgical consensus of the sixteenth century, and our most orthodox divines refer to Luther's works and those of his fellow reformers as having such great authority, truly such a universal and ancient feature of church government as that of the bishops, deserves most respectful consideration. If congregations and their ministers are not in the end to be congregationalists and virtually independent, but desire to constitute a large union, a synod, diocese, conference, coetus, or whatever you may call it, there must be *oversight* and unity of action, and for this purpose men should be willing to learn from the wisdom and experience at the Church of all ages. If some one would rise and say, "here are \$50,000 to endow the Episcopate," we could go ahead. But as you may justly say, "Rome was not built in a day." What you have published will be read and pondered, and will have its influence in shaping the organization of the future.

From Rev. J. B. Riemensnyder, D.D., New York:

You have, in my judgment, thoroughly sustained your points. I am with you in your ideas and statements through and through. Many things, very late to remedy now,

have been left defective in our American Lutheran Church. Still we must do the best we can. . . Why should we not have the Episcopate? It is not alien to, but in harmony with our spirit and history. The only objections come from a needless sensitiveness and groundless suspicion. What the firm hand of a Bismarck has done for fragmentary Germany, its strong bond of unity would do for our dismembered elements in America. You deserve the Church's gratitude, and will have a place in her history for your earnest, stirring advocacy of this important measure.

From Rev. J. F. Ohl, Quakertown:

I have carefully read your pamphlet on the Episcopate for the Lutheran Church in America, and now I am more than ever confirmed in my views on the subject. There is only one side to the question, from the beginning to the present day. The Episcopate, striking its roots deep in the primitive Church, is the only form of Church polity that can have any claim to scriptural and historic authority; and only those blinded by prejudice and self interest will refuse to admit it. Your argument is unanswerable and your conclusions irresistible. But what shall be the next step? How can we obtain the Episcopate for the Church, or at least a part of our Church in this land? . . . Three of the general bodies have already united on a Common Order of Service, and might there not be many men and congregations in all three that could be brought together in the unity of the faith on the basis of an improved Church polity? This is a thought to be considered in all our future movements.

From Rev. D. M Kemerer, Missionary President of Pittsburg Synod:

Your tract entitled "Shall we Have a Bishop?" was received, and has been read with much interest and great profit. The work is excellent in character, strong in its positions, lucid in treatment, and forcible in style. Its appearance is timely. Its subject-matter is well calculated to awaken an interest in all thoughtful persons. The grounds taken are not only tenable, but maintained by arguments that cannot be gainsayed. I do not know which to admire the more, the strong array of testimony, or the matchless condensation of facts within so little space. You may be, and doubtless are in advance of the large portion of our membership on this question. You may not live to see the day when Bishops will bear rule in the Lutheran Church of this land, but it will and must come, and your treatise will do much towards hastening it. Truth is sometimes slow in accomplishing results, yet she does it notwithstanding.

From Rev. J. Ehrhart, New York:

I thank God that He has enabled you to see clearly what is wholesome and necessary for our dear Church. May He also move other hearts, and give us strength to hold fast to our convictions. Your arguments are solid and can be maintained to the utmost. Let us not be afraid of the opposition. The Episcopal office is an *Apostolic institution*, let us work for the Episcopate, and so that it includes English and Germans.

From Rev. S. A. Ziegenficss, Germantown:

I am very glad that you have put what you have written on this subject in this form. I have no doubt that the publication and distribution of the pamphlet will aid very materially in bringing our Church to a better form of government.

From Rev. C. J. Cooper, Allentown:

I have read your pamphlet, and am pleased with the presentation of the subject, and in the form in which it is placed before the public is calculated to do much good. I hope something substantial will come out of it. I think we ought to move in this direction at once. Agitation! agitation! agitation! The laymen in some of our churches are restless under the old way of doing things. They want Bishops, and nothing less than that. I see the ball rolling. I think I see that the east and west have the same end in view. How to get it may be the point of divergence at present. That will solve itself, I think, after a full and free discussion and consideration of the subject. Men in — Church are clamoring for it.

From Rev. G. A. Hinterleitner, D.D., Pottsville:

I hope your endeavors will be crowned with good results. Though I have not written for some years for the furtherance of this matter, and have been a silent observer of the steps and endeavors of you and others, you must not think that I have changed my views and convictions. . . You have the courage to speak out openly your convictions, and mean it well with the Church. . . It is time that we awake and work for a better government.

From Rev. H. C. Potter, D.D., Bishop of New York:

I have read your admirable essay on the Episcopate for the Lutheran Church, with sincere thankfulness for its learning, its candor, and above all its truly catholic spirit. Such words as yours are both wise and timely, and I pray God that they may have a wide and warm welcome among your people.

From Rev. A. J. Widdle, D.D., Norristown:

The subject on which you write has been a thing fixed in my mind for years. I believe that Episcopacy is not only a good thing for the Church, but the only system that falls in naturally and consistently with both the inspired and uninspired history of the early Church. If we have an Episcopacy I want the real thing, and no *superintendency or imitation*.

VIEWS OF LAYMEN

From H. W. Lewis, Philadelphia:

I am glad this matter is still kept in mind, and that your articles have been put in print so that they may have their influence in shaping opinion on the subject. . . This important matter is presented by you in such a clear and forcible manner, so strongly and yet so practically, that it seems to me conviction of the truth of the subject should be carried to all who heartily and carefully study the articles. I pray that God will bless your work to His glory.

From the late D. M. Fox, Philadelphia:

I have your admirable pamphlet on the subject of "Lutheran Episcopate," and have read it with much interest and satisfaction. I have been longing to see the Episcopate established for years; not a superintendency, for I believe in calling things by their right names. We are now substantially a congregation, so far as each church is concerned. We have not yet assumed denominational unity, nor are so recognized, and I know no other mode of bringing that about than by the establishment of the Episcopate. Among many others I have been desiring this for a long time, and I do hope you will make an impression upon the Church at large, and that it will ultimately assume the form spoken of in your pamphlet.

From Prof. D. Gerber, Muhlenberg College:

I think you make a strong case out of your subject, and you seem to have all the arguments of history and authority on your side. Your presentation of the present state of affairs in our Church and its government (if the last term may be used) in so strong a manner shows the necessity of having some head. To me as a layman the thought has often occurred that our Church government was not what it should be. I hope your pamphlet may create a stir among the ministers and arouse them to take some action in the matter as indicated by you. There are too many divisions in our Church. Too many ministers with their congregations are a law unto themselves. I think an Episcopal government would check this and bring about greater harmony.

From the late J. W. B. Dobler New York:

I am greatly pleased with your pamphlet, "Shall We Have a Bishop?" I am in full accord with you, and for years I have been advocating the Episcopal form of government for our Church. There must be a head, one competent, and one with due authority. Our Church government in the east has been entirely too loose, simply a coil of sand. I assure you of my hearty sympathy in the movement.

From W. L. Chapman, Brooklyn:

I received the pamphlet, "The Episcopate for the Lutheran Church," in which I was very much interested, and hope it may be the means of bringing about what we so much desire.

Writing to a friend who sent him a pamphlet, one says: "I thank you for the accompanying pamphlet, which is a learned and able, in fact a conclusive treatise. I have read it with great interest. If all our people could approach the question in the spirit of its author, the work would soon be accomplished. I have thought much about the subject."

From Geo. Alex. Bitter, Esq., Nauvoo, Ill.:

The Rev. J. Stuermer, pastor of the Lutheran church of this city, a man of learning and ability, handed me your pamphlet entitled "Shall We Have a Bishop, or Episcopate?" etc. He has become somewhat enthusiastic on this subject, and praises the scholarship of your masterly treatise on the Episcopate, and styles, or stamps your pamphlet with the word "Eureka." That the various interests of the Lutheran Church would be better promoted if the office of oversight over pastors and churches were instituted, I firmly believe. The Lutheran Church only lacks the Episcopate to make it the one great Church of the west. The Lutheran Church, I believe, has over one million communicants in this country, and is now developing a wonderful growth. In the providence of God it will reach the goal of all progress by *reconstructing* herself *within herself*." In *unity* there is strength. Let us become one great organic Church—a great organic union. Let us wheel into line as a solid body—*concentrate* our forces and consolidate under the *Episcopate*. Let there be unity, harmony and peace in the rank and file of all Evangelical Lutherans, and of Synods everywhere, and all labor to this *same end* and thereby extend and strengthen God's kingdom on earth.