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ART. I.—ON THE POSITION AND RIGHTS OF THE LAITY IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

THE position and office of the laity in the primitive Church may be considered from two different points of view, each of them contributing towards the solution of the many and difficult problems which arise out of the slenderness of the historical material we possess for the inquiry, and the distortion which has been given to them by the controversialists of every subsequent age. The first kind of evidence is of a historical and documentary character, and the argument arising out of it assumes a synthetical form. The second arises out of the examination of the claims and rights of the laity which lie (as it were) dormant under the Church in its developed state, recognised in principle, but in abeyance in their practical exercise. This is an argument rather of an indirect than a direct character, but is as necessary as the former, inasmuch as it represents the result of the various influences which reigned in the Church of the earliest period, and the permanence of the principles which guided it from the beginning. The former argument has been almost exclusively used during the long controversies which have agitated the Church in all its history; and the failure to consider the second has led to all those extreme claims on the part of the clergy which so seriously disturb the relations between the two great divisions of the ecclesiastical body.

The historical evidence may be subdivided into three periods: (1) The period of the Apostolic Church; (2) that of the Apostolic Fathers; (3) that of the Apologists, which extends to the age when the organization of the Church became more complete, and was gradually assimilated to that of the empire.

I. The consideration of the first period leads us to fall back upon the origin of the Christian Church, and the constitution

of the synagogue out of which it came. In the close of the year 53, or the beginning of 54, St. Paul arrived at Ephesus, and for three months carried on his preaching in the synagogue there. Then it was, that owing to the resistance given to his doctrine, "he separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this," we read, "continued by the space of two years" (Acts xix. 8, 9, 10). Here we see clearly the first formation and organization of the Christian Church as a separate body, and cannot but arrive at the conclusion of the great Neapolitan historian Giannone: "As the Apostles and their successors propagated the Gospel in the provinces of the East through the synagogues, which they found after the dispersion of the Hebrews to have been instituted in many of its cities, the Churches began to adapt their external polity to that of the synagogue, to give the superintendence to one of their ministers, and to take the same form it had adopted" (Indice dell' Opera de' tre Regni).

The two years during which the formation of the Ephesian Church was carried on, enabled the Apostle to assign to every member of it his appointed duties and office. And it is memorable that to the Ephesian Church he describes more fully than to any other the constitution of the newly-organized body in the words, "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers" (Eph. iv. 11). Here we see a division of office and labour, but not of order and caste. The law of the synagogue recognised no other. A priest had in it no higher place than any of its lay members, and the chief of the synagogue (the *αρχισυνάγωγος*) might be a layman, and was only chosen for his higher attainments and greater fitness for the office. In reply to an inquiry I made of my learned friend the present Chief Rabbi, he writes:

"It does not admit of doubt that it was not necessary in ancient times, nor is it necessary now, that the 'ruler of the synagogue should be a priest, a descendant of Aaron. He was chosen for his learning, knowledge, piety, and character; nor was it necessary for the prophets to be of priestly descent.'"

How exactly these words correspond with the description of the presidents of the Christian assemblies given us by Tertullian must be obvious to every reader: "Præsident probati quique seniores, honorem istum non pretio sed testimonio adepti." The sacerdotal system had passed away when the only means of carrying it on, the temple and its entire sacrificial institutions, had ceased to have any existence or capability of renewal. The theory that a priestly order or caste is revived under Christianity, supposes that the Christian Church came forth from the temple instead of from the syna-

gogue, and that a new priesthood of popular election was substituted for the priesthood of Divine appointment and hereditary descent; an assumption which no one can entertain for a moment who reads the Epistle to the Hebrews with impartiality and intelligence, and recognises it as a connected and elaborate argument against any claim to a priestly office under the exclusive and eternal priesthood of Christ. We cannot but observe that every office described by the Apostle in the passage already referred to is one of duty and labour, and not of privilege or caste. The title claimed by the Apostles themselves is that of elder, a word indicating only age and experience—the other titles represent offices of teaching and guidance; not a vestige is to be found anywhere of that division between the "ordo" and the "plebs" which we find at a later period, and which Tertullian alleges to have arisen from "ecclesiastical authority," not even claiming for it an Apostolic origin. The word κλῆρος in the single passage in which it is found in the New Testament (1 Pet. v. 3) is applied to the laity as the lot or heritage of God in opposition to the ruling body, while the priesthood in its high and spiritual sense is diffused over the whole Church (1 Pet. ii. 9). Throughout the Epistles of St. Paul it is impossible to trace a single indication of a separation of *order* in the Church of Christ. They are addressed to the whole body of the Church in every city or district whose necessities had called them forth. They enjoin a mutual ministration rather than a submission of one class to another. We read in them the perfect equality subsisting between all the members of the Church, and giving it that corporate or collegiate form in which all the members have equal rights, however different or distant their places may be in the spiritual body.

The Christian Church has been defined by the great Canonist Böhmer as a *societas æqualis*, presenting no differences of order, caste, or privilege, in contrast with the civil kingdoms or states which constitute *societates inæquales*, including every diversity of station and authority.

"For," he observes, "unlike that form of external society which involves a governing and governed class, it is associated by a voluntary pact and agreement among its members either tacit or expressed. It resembles, therefore, rather the form of a college or corporation in which the members have equal rights, and whatever is done in the name of the body for its conservation is determined by all its members."[1]

This proposition he founds:

1. In the intention and words of Christ Himself (Luke

[1] Jus. Eccl., tom. i., pp. 849-854.

ix. 46; Matt. xxiii. 1; Mark ix. 34; Matt. xx. 26; Luke xxii. 27; John xiii. 13; Matt. xxiii. 8.

2. On the practice of the Apostles (Acts i. 15, vi. 2-5; Acts xv., etc.
3. On the fact that in the communications of the primitive Churches with one another, Churches, and not individuals, are addressed.
4. On the fact that the names of presbyter and bishop represent not a ruling, but an inspecting and directing power.
5. On the dependence of both these orders upon the whole Church, and the power of judgment and even deposition which resided in the whole body.
6. On the fact that Church censures and judgments were pronounced in the presence and with the consent of the entire body.
7. And that all laws for the regulation and discipline of the Church were passed synodically.
8. From innumerable testimonies of the earlier Fathers which he cites.

From this original equality, the rights and powers of a general council, the representative of the whole body of the Church, are derived; the impossibility of assembling the entire community as in the earliest age rendering a representation of it by delegation a necessity. And here it must be observed that this equality in the Christian body by no means disturbs that principle of ministration and subministration, and those distinctions of office which must exist in every organized body. Public officials and their respective duties are as clearly marked out and as readily accepted in a republic as in a monarchy. Our Lord, therefore, while He repudiated for His disciples the title of Master, yet chose His Apostles for official rule and pre-eminence, the equality of the Church remaining undisturbed. Yet there was no severance of order, or division of caste; the law of mutual subjection preserving the original equality of all the members.

II. As we approach the period of the Apostolic Fathers, we find in that a development of the individual authorities of the Church, which naturally tends to limit the exercise of its collective powers. The Presbyterial head of the synagogue was now assuming a headship more nearly resembling that of the future bishop, though the offices were not yet distinctly separated. Yet the principle that the authority of the Church resided in the whole body and not in the individual is clearly vindicated in the former Epistle of St. Clement, which is addressed "from the Church sojourning in Rome" to that of Corinth. In this remarkable and precious monument of the

transition period, we note how gradually the government of the Church was evolved from its first principles, and how clearly the correspondence of one Church with another was limited to consultation and persuasion. The same feature is marked in the Epistle of Polycarp, and in the account of his martyrdom as it was communicated from the Church of Smyrna to the Churches throughout Asia. In this we only find mention of presbyters and deacons, which feature is one of the many indications that the so-called letters of Ignatius in which the episcopal office has so premature and almost mediæval a development cannot be assigned to the age which it claims to represent. The testimony of the Apostolic Fathers is necessarily rather a negative and indirect than a positive and direct one. Their writings imply by their silence that the Church in its outward organization had departed very little from the simple lines which are traced in the writings of the Apostles; and the picture of early Christianity given us by the apologists does not bring us much nearer to the state of the Church as it was in the day of its adoption by the empire.

III. Of these early defenders of our faith Justin Martyr claims the first mention. His description of the assemblies of the early Christians, which would naturally indicate the relations between the ministerial body and the congregation, the teachers and the taught, gives a clear view of the Christian Church as it emerged from the synagogue. We have in it the reader and the preacher in the exact form and order in which we see them even in the modern Jewish synagogue. After the reading of the Scripture by the one, we find an exposition or sermon by the president, who represents the ruler of the synagogue; and after prayers, which doubtless were formed on those of the synagogue, the germs of which are clearly visible in the earliest liturgies, there follows a distribution of the Eucharist. It does not appear whether the right of expounding the Scriptures was exercised by the reader, but the precedent of our Lord's exposition in the synagogue (Luke iv. 16) leads us to the belief that so sacred a tradition must have been carried down in the Christian Church. The division of gifts and labours described by St. Paul (Rom. xii. 6-8) makes so little difference between those to whom they are assigned, that we can hardly trace the lines which separate their office and work. Prophets (expounders of Scripture), ministers, and exhorters are brought into such a union of work that it is hard to classify them in their official order. How long this co-operation of Christian labour and proof of the love which animated it was carried on in the Church is not easy to determine. That there are clear traces of it in the second century the description of Justin Martyr gives sufficient

evidence. That a ruling authority was exercised by the presidents or elders, who represented the rulers of the synagogue of the earlier day, cannot be disputed. But this by no means established a difference of order or *caste*, but merely had an honorary character, as the position of the Chief Rabbis in the present Jewish Church as clearly indicates. The Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians throws but little light upon the actual position and mutual relations of the rulers of the congregation and the congregation itself. We see the presidents of the assembly described as elders, and the ministers of the synagogue as deacons; but the heads of the Church are not separated in authority from the body, and the Churches address each other in their corporate character, and not in the person of their individual rulers. Approaching the age of Tertullian, we observe a development in the relations between the ministerial body and those to whom they ministered, and distinctive terms are first used to mark their separate *status*. The works of Tertullian are divided by commentators into three periods—those written while he was yet a Catholic, those written after he became a Montanist, and those which are only probably Montanistic—while of one or two other works nothing certain can be pronounced.[1]

But this division of them does not materially affect our subject. For though the tract "De Exhortatione Castitatis" is placed by Bishop Kaye and others among the writings of the second class, the establishment of a distinction between the *ordo* and the *plebs*, the clergy and laity, is referred to "ecclesiastical authority"—the authority of the whole Catholic Church. This is a general proposition derived from a view of the entire body, and is not affected in any degree by the fluctuations in the doctrine of the writer, of which it is absolutely independent. Montanism was rather doctrinal than ecclesiastical, and the outward relations between its followers were not affected by their new profession. This is manifest from the fact that the bishop of Rome of that day (as Tertullian himself tells us) leaned towards a belief in it. The much-vexed passage on the separation between the laity and the clergy runs thus: "Differentiam inter Ordinem et Plebem constituit ecclesiæ auctoritas et honor per Ordinis consessum sanctificatus." Bishop Kaye translates this passage: "The authority of the Church and its honour, which derives sanctity from the assembled clergy, has established the distinction between the clergy and the laity." Tertullian concludes from this that, "in places where there are no clergy, any single Christian may exercise the functions of the priesthood—may

[1] See Bishop Kaye's "Tertullian," p. 61.

celebrate the Eucharist and baptize." We are not concerned here with the argument which he founds upon these statements. They point evidently to the first stage of the development of the separation between clergy and laity, and to the authority upon which it rests. One point in this passage is worthy of note. The difference between the *ordo* and *plebs* is made one of ecclesiastical arrangement, and no idea of a sacerdotal office is involved in it. The priesthood of the Church remains where St. Peter left it; a spiritual kind of nobility extended over the whole Church. In this sense Tertullian asks: "Nonne et laici sacerdotes sumus?" We hear of no consecration to such an office, election, or appointment (according to the precedent of the choice of Matthias) alone separating the *ordo* from the *plebs*. The election by the people, which extended to the highest offices of the Church, including even the popes and patriarchs, lies at the root of the subject we are considering, and destroys every vestige of a proper sacerdotal caste, as it proves the origin of all jurisdiction in the Church to lie in the electorate, and not in the elected; to be, in fact, a delegation of the administrative or executive power to the only parties who could properly exercise it, and who became thereby representatives of the whole body. This principle and the grounds upon which it rests have been ably asserted and illustrated by the great Bishop of Avila, Alfonsus Tostatus, in his Commentary on Numbers (chap. xv.). It must be obvious to everyone that a sacerdotal order or dynasty cannot be created or perpetuated by means of election, which introduces a principle altogether foreign to it and incompatible with it. Had our Lord and His apostles designed to create a new hierarchy in the place of that which was so soon to pass away, they would have clearly marked out the line of succession by which it was to be carried on, and established a new Levitical order to perpetuate it. They would not in any case have left so sacred an order to the chances and risks of a popular election.

IV. Between the time of the Apologists and that of the establishment of Christianity in the empire a transition period elapsed, during which the external development of the Church made a very remarkable progress. The distinction between the laity and the presbyters, of which the first lines are to be traced in the Apostolic Fathers, led on to a further separation between the presbyters and the bishops, and to the gradual merging of the powers, which were originally exercised by the presbytery in common, into the episcopate. The old rule, "Quod frustra fit per plures quod fieri potest per pauciores," led to the gradual absorption of the authority, which was once diffused over the community, by the chief member of it; and

the influence acquired by the bishops, as the custodians and dispensers of the property of the Church during the important interval between its endowment and actual adoption by the State, gave to the episcopate a new position and hierarchical character, which it never claimed in an earlier and better age. This brought with it the ideal, so foreign to the spirit of primitive Christianity, of a sacerdotal priesthood, a sacrificial ritual, and a separation of order and caste, as well as of office and labour. The relations between the laity and clergy became thus fatally strained, and at last dislocated; and until the rights of the laity were vindicated by the Councils of Constance and Basle, and their claim to a portion of the government of the Church asserted and established, they were reduced to a spiritual slavery, which destroyed every memory of that day when St. Peter proclaimed them to be "a chosen generation and a royal priesthood."

The writings of St. Cyprian, especially his letters, present the most important evidence we possess in regard to this transition period. In his Sixty-eighth Epistle he writes of the election of Sabinus to the bishopric: "Since the people themselves have chiefly the power of electing worthy priests and rejecting unworthy ones . . . this course we have seen adopted in the ordination of our colleague Sabinus, who by the suffrage of the whole brotherhood, and in the presence and judgment of the bishops who had met together and had written to you, received the episcopate." Here the "whole brotherhood" (evidently meaning the laity) are contrasted with the bishops who joined in the consecration. Those who contend in our Church for a succession through consecration and episcopal laying on of hands, forget altogether the supreme place which election and the popular suffrage held in the earlier and better ages of the Church. In view of this, Archbishop Cranmer replied to one of the questions of Henry VIII.: "In the New Testament, he that is appointed to be a bishop or priest needeth no consecration by the Scripture, for election or appointing thereto is sufficient."[1] The Roman Church, which preserves not a few of the earliest principles of Church-government in a kind of dormant state, has at this point given a remarkable evidence in favour of our present contention. For the Pope enters upon all the authority and jurisdiction of his office before his coronation, which is equivalent to the consecration in the case of an ordinary bishop. Urban VII. died before his enthronization, yet exercised every function of the papacy. Clement V. excommunicated everyone who held the contrary doctrine.[2]

[1] Burnett, "Hist. of Ref.," vol. i., App., p. 228. Ed. fol., 1679.
[2] "Leti Itin. di Roma," P. ii., p. 388.

But this part of our inquiry belongs rather to the second division of the main question, the argument derived from the present state and discipline of the Church. We have shown that the root of jurisdiction in the Christian Church lies in the Church itself as a corporate body, and not in the clergy or the episcopate, and devolves upon these latter by an act of delegation, and not by an inherent right. "Claves datæ sunt non uni sed unitati" was the great thesis of St. Augustine, and was nobly vindicated in the great synodical period of the fifteenth century, when the representatives of the whole Church, both lay and cleric, reformed and reconstructed the hierarchy on what may be called a constitutional basis. At the Councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basle, lay members took part not only in the debates, but in the divisions of the Council. "The memory of the Council of Constance," were the words of the Cardinal of Arles in the Council of Basle, "is still fresh, where very many of us were present, including myself, who was not then a cardinal or bishop, but only a doctor; and saw that inferiors were admitted to the decision of great questions as well as bishops."[1] The rights of the laity to a decisive voice, even in General Councils, was eloquently vindicated by Andrew, Bishop of Megara, in his work called "Gubernaculum Conciliorum," addressed to Cardinal Julian as the president of the Council of Basle. His reply to those who alleged that the ancient Councils did not admit the laity to a deliberative or decisive vote is a significant rebuke to the exclusives of a later age: "If any should say (which I do not, however, grant) that in other Councils of old they were not admitted, I reply that this rule does not hold; nor is it necessary that because they were excluded then they should not be admitted now. For the Holy Spirit can inspire one thing at one time and another at another, according to the character and changes of the times" ("Gub. Conc.," part vi., c. iii.).

But we proceed to the second division of our subject, the argument for the rights of the laity and the proof of their original status, which we derive from the examination of the principles which have survived in the present Church, and which even now direct its course.

II. And here we must fall back upon Tertullian's suggestive words: "In places where there are no clergy, any single Christian may exercise the functions of the priesthood, may celebrate the Eucharist and baptize." Further on he writes: "If, therefore, you possess within yourself the right of the priesthood, to be exercised in cases of necessity," etc., assuming that this right is inherent in every Christian, though dormant

[1] Æn. Sylv. de Gestis Conc. Basil., l. i.

and, as it were, in abeyance until it is called forth by some occasion of necessity. It is obvious that necessity could never create a right, but only call into exercise a right already existing—in such a case, as the Canonists say, "jus singulorum reviviscit." In the case of baptism, which was held to be of necessity to salvation, the right of the laity has survived in every part of the Church. Even if administered by a layman without actual necessity, the sacrament is valid, though the ecclesiastical offence described as "irregularity" would be committed. The right of administering the Communion to one's self, though almost universally exercised in the Church of the fourth and fifth centuries, and to the ascetics living in the deserts an inevitable usage, became obsolete in later ages. The consecration of the elements remained with the clergy, while the liturgical accompaniments and the reception were exercised by the laity. In this case and by these means the necessity, arising absolutely in the case of baptism, could be anticipated and provided against. The well-known passage of St. Gregory Nazianzene describing the self-administration of the Sacrament by his sister Gorgonia gives an eminent illustration of this usage. But it is less to the actual usage than to the inherent right which it indicates, and to the permanence of that right in the Church, which we would draw attention in connection with our present subject. That it points clearly to the original equality of every member of the Christian Church, and the absence from it of any proper sacerdotal claim, must be obvious to every impartial inquirer. This universally admitted right is protected by a most important safeguard, the baptismal compact which every Christian forms with the Church on his entrance into the Covenant. By it, the simple terms of the Creed are offered by the Church and accepted by the baptized person as the sole condition and test of his discipleship, to which, as in a mere earthly compact, no article can be added without the consent of both the parties to it. This is a most important but a much neglected principle, and its violation has led to all those divisions of Christianity which everyone affects to deplore, though none is prepared to make the concessions which can alone remove them. The right to all the privileges of his new profession is given in baptism to every Christian, nor can he be deprived of that right but by the act of the Church legally depriving him of it by a formal process of excommunication.

From this freedom of church membership he derives also that franchise in the election of church officers which has already been referred to, and which was exercised in the choice of bishops and priests by the various churches in their free assemblies, but was usurped by the secular powers and by the

chapters, until no trace of it remains in our day. At no point has the Christian Church swerved more completely from her first principles than in this, though the election even of an apostle by the whole Church gave a precedent for the popular choice, often indeed cited, but never in recent times acted upon.

Christ bestowed the gift of His Divine Presence upon the whole Church, and not upon any special order or class of men in that Church; and with His Presence He bestowed also His power, which was inseparable from it. Hence John of Segovia uttered in the Council of Basle that noble sentence: "Quaerenda non est alia potestas, ubi præsens est divina majestas."[1]

It is vain to talk of apostolic succession and episcopal orders as vital and essential to the organization of the Church, when the first principle of that Church, the elective right inherent in all its members, has been usurped and set aside. Until this is restored there must remain an element of illegitimacy in the Church, and a violation of its freedom, for which not the most undoubted succession of its bishops or clergy can ever compensate.

In the great synodical period of the fifteenth century the real principles of ecclesiastical order and jurisdiction were in a manner rediscovered, and as far as possible reduced to practice. In the chaos of the triple Papacy and by the deposition of the three anti-popes it became necessary to establish the rights of the whole Church against any one of its separate orders, and the claims of a General Council as representing, however imperfectly, the whole body were gradually evolved. It was then that the elective rights of the laity reappeared, partially at Constance, where the laity and members of the religious orders took part in the debates, but more fully at Basle, where they were vindicated by the greatest divines and orators of the Council, and by the luminous writings of the most illustrious of the theologians of the day, Alphonsus Tostatus, Bishop of Avila; while Andreas, Bishop of Megara, addressed to its president his remarkable work, already cited, the "Gubernaculum Conciliorum." "Jurisdiction," affirms Tostatus, "in its origin and in its virtue is in the community, inasmuch as all persons who receive it receive it by means of the community, because *they* can exercise it, but not the whole body. And this seems to be the case in regard to the keys of the Church. For these are given by Christ to the whole Church; but as the Church cannot collectively exercise the power, as it is not an individual, He gave it to Peter in the name of the Church."[2]

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[1] Æneæ Sylvii Hist. Conc. Basil., l. i.
[2] "Comms. in Num.," c. xv.

How fatally this limitation of jurisdiction resulted in the swallowing up of the legislative by the executive power is too well known to every student of ecclesiastical history. The power of the laity was first absorbed by the clergy, the original rights of the presbyters by the bishops, and, lastly, the rights of the bishops by the patriarchs, two out of whose number, from their influence as representing the capitals of the two empires, became at last autocrats over the whole Church. The dependent position of the Patriarchs of Constantinople on the Eastern emperors effectually crippled their power in the earlier Byzantine period; while Rome established on the ruins of the more ancient empire, and by means of the conversion of the heathen races of Western Europe, an authority, half civil, half spiritual, which has no parallel in history.

The adoption of Christianity by the State led on inevitably to these successive usurpations. It was the policy of the emperors, a policy which arrived at its completion in the reign of Justinian, to bring the Church into a perfect correspondence and even identity with the empire. The equality which was an essential feature in the organization of the Church was thus broken up, and the various gradations of the hierarchy raised one above another, with the natural result of leaving the laity in a position of inferiority and even degradation, which the Founder of our religion never contemplated.

It is time that this great wrong should be redressed, and the laity resume the place which they were designed by Christ to occupy in the spiritual household. Much has been done in our own Church towards restoring the balance of power between the laity and the ministerial order, but much more yet remains to be done. The association of the presbytery with the episcopate, and with lay officials with both, in the discipline and administration of the Church; the removal of restraints and disabilities created by political exigencies and the results of earlier controversies; the rights of the congregations in their churches, and their due influence in the direction of its services —these and much else remains to be done before the balance now so greatly disturbed can be readjusted. If this work of reformation were actively entered upon, the reunion of the Nonconformist bodies—who were alienated from our Church less from doctrinal than disciplinary causes, less from the establishment of the Church than from the abuses which have ever attended an established church, and of which its political combinations and complications have made a removal so difficult—would be a comparatively easy thing. In some points these severed churches have preserved a more primitive order than ourselves, and the popular election of their ministers has fulfilled in them the most important of the conditions required

in the apostolic and primitive Churches, and a succession which, according to the great Nazianzene, is the only real apostolic succession—that of a sound doctrine and a free election.[1] Unfortunately our Church controversialists enter the field against Nonconformity with any feelings but those which the rule of St. Augustine demands: "Nemo nostrûm dicat se jam invenisse veritatem, sic eam quæramus quasi ab utrisque nesciatur."[2] If we could but search for union with this real love of the truth, we might soon pass from a mere *modus vivendi* to a peaceful and godly union with those who have been parted with us too long. Till then, "whatever be the result of that movement towards reunion which is the object of so many prayers and the subject of so many labours, we must attend to that spirit of Christianity which every Christian society professes, and to that mutual peace which their common interests and the welfare of mankind engage them to maintain, leaving to the providence of God the work of bringing them into a nearer and more perfect union when the moment determined on by Him who overrules all things shall have arrived."[3]

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ART. II.—THE WORK OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

THE JUBILEE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SUNDAY-SCHOOL INSTITUTE.[4]

AT the time of the Sunday-school centenary in the year 1880, a very interesting subject for historical investigation was suggested in the address presented to the Archbishop of Canterbury by the committee of the Church of England Sunday-school Institute. "We believe," wrote the committee, "that it is scarcely too much to say that the system of national elementary education, which has been called into existence during the last hundred years, owes its origin in great measure to the persevering efforts of those who were instrumental in the foundation of Sunday-schools. And if at the present day the Sunday-school teacher is free from the necessity of spending the short hours of Sunday teaching in any attempt to give secular instruction, and is able to devote all his time and

[1] See the discourse of Nazianzene on the anniversary of St. Athanasius.

[2] "Com. Epist. Fundamenti," c. iii.

[3] "Tabarand, de la Réunion des Communions Chrétiennes," p. 528.

[4] "What the Sunday-school Institute has done for Church Sunday-schools." By John Palmer.