Thesis scanned from best copy available: may contain faint or blurred text, and / or cropped or missing pages.
"THE CHURCH IN THE TEACHING OF
PRINCIPAL WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM (1805-1861)."

by

RUDOLF JOACHIM EHRLICH, B.Th. (Montpellier), B.D. (Edinburgh).
"THE CHURCH IN THE TEACHING OF
PRINCIPAL WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM (1805-1861)."

by


In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) of Edinburgh University,
Faculty of Divinity.
# CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter

### I  THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH.

| 1. The Nature of the Church. | 1 |
| 2. The Notes of the Church.  | 28 |
| 3. The Promises to the Church. | 47 |

### II  THE GOVERNMENT AND ORGANISATION OF THE CHURCH.

| 1. The Rule of Faith and Practice. | 54 |
| 2. The Lawfulness of omitting certain Apostolic Practices from the Government of the Church. | 61 |
| 3. The Council of Jerusalem as the Model of Church Government and the Apostles as ordinary ecclesiastical Office-bearers. | 69 |
| 4. The Authority and Power of ecclesiastical Office-bearers and the Place and Standing of ordinary Church Members. | 74 |
| 5. The Authority and Power of Synodical Assemblies or the Subordination of Courts. | 94 |
| 6. The Union and Organisation of several particular Congregations under one Government. | 103 |
| 7. The Unlawfulness and Unwarrantableness of Episcopacy. | 117 |
| 8. The Rights of the Christian People or Congregations in the Election of Pastors. | 136 |

### III  THE RELATION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE STATE.

| 1. Historical Survey of the Doctrine of the Relationship between the Church and the State. | 157 |
| 2. The Doctrine of the State. | 177 |
| 3. The Relationships between the Church and the State and the Principles that regulate it. | 190 |
### CONTENTS (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III (Continued)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. The Distinctness and Independence of Church and State.</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The Supremacy of the Church and the State in their respective Spheres.</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The Alliance between the Church and the State to be based on a Co-ordination of Powers and a mutual Subordination of Persons.</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSION. 225

BIBLIOGRAPHY 1
INTRODUCTION

The divisions of Scottish Presbyterianism date from the time of Queen Anne (1702-1714). Although the Leaders of the National Church of Scotland succeeded in securing and safeguarding the independent rights of their Church, determined efforts were soon made to establish in Scotland ecclesiastical uniformity with England. In pursuance of this object two important Acts were passed by Parliament in 1712: the first gave the status of a tolerated communion to Episcopacy in Scotland; the second, still more offensive and repugnant to Scottish sentiment, restored, in defiance of the Law of the Church of Scotland, patronage, that is, the right of patrons, (usually the Crown or landlords), to appoint Ministers to vacant Charges without the consent and against the will of Congregations.

Scottish Presbyterians raised strong objections against the violation of the Law of their Church and the infringement upon the rights of the Christian people. As a matter of fact

1. In the Introduction extensive use has been made of the following works:
   Hugh Watt, Thomas Chalmers and the Disruption, Edinburgh, 1913.
   Hugh Watt, Lectures on Scottish Church History, given at New College, Edinburgh in 1939. (my own notes)
annual protests were submitted by the General Assembly for many years. Ebenezer Erskine, of Stirling denounced patronage and was deposed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1740. Before being deposed he and his associates had founded the Secession Church.

Thomas Gillespie, of Carnock, who had refused to take part in the induction of a Minister who had been appointed to a Charge against the will of the Congregation, was deposed by the General Assembly in 1752. In 1761 he and his associates founded the Relief Church, which united in 1847 with the United Secession Church and became the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. This branch of Scottish Presbyterianism was the main representative and exponent of Voluntaryism.

It must not be assumed, however, that the Secession Church and the Relief Church were the only anti-patronage elements in Scotland and that the National Church of Scotland as a whole acquiesced in the violation of the Church’s Law and accepted patronage. While it is true that the “Moderates” who supported or at least accepted patronage, were for a considerable time the pre-dominant party in the Church of Scotland, their power went never unchallenged. Gradually the “Evangelicals” who maintained that no Minister can be “intruded” on a reclaiming Congregation, grew in strength and numbers and
were able to challenge the leadership of the Moderates.

The occasion of the open conflict within the Church of Scotland arose when in 1834 the Evangelical party secured the passing by the General Assembly of two Acts: the Chapel Act and the Veto Act. The Chapel Act raised the Chapels of ease, which had been instituted to provide for the spiritual needs of the ever increasing population in cities and towns, to the status of full Charges; the Veto Act which really only declared what was already the Law of the Church, was an instruction to Presbyteries not to proceed with the induction of a candidate if the majority of the Congregation were opposed to him and vetoed his appointment.

Three important cases arose out of the Veto Act: Auchterarder, Lethendy and Marnoch. In each case the Congregation vetoed the appointment of the candidate. Appeals were made to the civil Courts whose decisions ignored the rights of the Congregations. When the House of Lords finally decided against the Church's appeal in the Auchterarder case, Lord Brougham whose good offices had been sought, declared that "the objections of the people were of no more consequence in the settlement of Ministers, than the recalcitrance of the champion's horse in Westminster Hall, at the coronation of our kings."

The climax of the struggle was not far off! The Evangelicals made plans during the winter of 1842/43 to be ready for all eventualities. At the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1843 the Moderator, David Welsh, read on behalf of 250 Ministers a protest which dealt with the disability to labour under the existing conditions. After the reading of the protest the dissenting Ministers and Elders "came out" and constituted the first General Assembly of the Church of Scotland Free with Thomas Chalmers as Moderator.

Thus "the Disruption" became an accomplished fact! The Ministers, Elders and members of the Free Church of Scotland believed honestly and sincerely that their dissent was the only possible way of safeguarding and securing the Crown Rights of Jesus Christ on the one hand and the rights of the Christian people on the other.

Three great names are indissolubly linked with the "Disruption" and the early days of the Free Church of Scotland: Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847), William Cunningham (1805-1861) and Robert Smith Candlish (1806-1873). These three men were complementary to each other and, when working together, (pooling as it were their resources and several abilities,) provided the
leadership which enabled the Evangelical party in the Church of Scotland to become first a movement and finally a "Church". Without generalising too much it is yet possible to say that Chalmers was the practical Leader, Cunningham the Theologian and Candlish the ecclesiastical Politician of the Disruption Movement and later of the Free Church of Scotland.

William Cunningham with whom we are concerned, was born in Hamilton in 1805. Already at school he showed a great love for learning and when in 1820 he entered Edinburgh University, it was not surprising that his thirst for knowledge was unquenchable. The tremendous amount of reading he did during these years - it became a life-long habit, almost a passion - laid the foundation of his encyclopaedic knowledge.

In 1824 Cunningham entered the Divinity Hall at Edinburgh. He was not very enthusiastic about his theological teachers nor was he impressed by their methods of imparting knowledge. As a matter of fact he often deplored "the inefficiency of the Professors who filled the different Chairs," and was therefore all the more delighted when Chalmers was appointed to the Professorship of Divinity. In a letter received in 1827 Cunningham wrote: with Thomson in St. George's

(Church) and Chalmers in the Divinity Chair, we may hope that the time to favour Zion, yea, the set time, has come."

It is, however, true to say that "the education for the work of his life was due to other powers than any within the classroom." The school which really educated Cunningham and formed his mind was constituted in the great controversies of his time. There was the controversy regarding pluralities in the Church of Scotland. At that time it was possible for "one individual uniting in his single person the offices of Professor of Humanity, and Natural History, and Chemistry, with the Collegiate Charge of a tremendous Parish of 20,000 people." Then there was the Apocrypha controversy involving the whole question of the Canon and Inspiration of Scripture. To the same period belongs the great agitation for the abolition of slavery in the West Indian Islands. These struggles provided Cunningham with the training that enabled him to accomplish the task which the future had in store for him.

When great abuses were found to exist in the management of the theological library at Edinburgh, a committee of students with Cunningham as secretary was set up to secure their

correction. This was the first controversy in which he was personally engaged. When he was on one occasion asked: "Are you not tired of controversy?", he replied: "If my life is spared, it will be spent in controversy, I believe."

In December 1828 Cunningham was licensed in Dunse by the Presbytery and in January 1830 he was engaged as Assistant to Dr. Scott of the New Middle Parish, Greenock. On the 15th October of the same year the Presbytery of Paisley ordained him as Dr. Scott's colleague and successor. In Greenock Cunningham endeared himself to his Congregation although it was soon realised that this young Minister was a rising man in the Church.

Soon after having gone to the New Middle Parish Cunningham's attention was taken up by the Row Heresy. John Campbell, Minister of the Parish of Row in Dumbartonshire was deposed in 1831 owing to the unorthodox views he held on universal pardon etc. Cunningham had been summoned as a witness against Campbell when the latter's trial for heresy had come before the Presbytery of Dumbarton in June 1830. While this process agitated Scotland, Edward Irving was exciting the public mind about the mysteries of prophecies, and the immediate personal advent of the Lord. Soon "miracles" abounded, in many

2. Modern spelling is Rhu.
Congregations speaking with unknown tongues was supposed to have been heard and gifts of healing were said to have been witnessed in several places. Even the raising of the dead was tried!

Greenock shared in the general commotion. This "proved the occasion of drawing out his (Cunningham's) great powers as a controversialist." In his Church he delivered a course of lectures on the Gospel according to St. Mark and dealt with the whole subject of miracles. These lectures established the fame of the young Minister and gave him a commanding position in the community.

After having declined an invitation to go to St. Andrew's Glasgow, Cunningham accepted a call from Trinity College Church, Edinburgh in 1834. Very soon after his arrival in Edinburgh he had to give evidence on the subject of patronage before a Committee of the House of Commons. He was by now undoubtedly one of the acknowledged Leaders of the Evangelical party although strangely enough neither he nor Chalmers nor Candlish were members of the General Assembly when the Evangelicals won their first real victory: the passing of the Veto Act in 1834.

During the final years of the conflict which ended in

the Disruption, Cunningham defended the principles of the Evangelical party and put what he believed to be the Scriptural views on the relationship between Church and State, the rights of the Congregation etc., before the people of Scotland in powerful speeches and able pamphlets. When the Disruption came his ability and leadership were immediately recognised by the Free Church of Scotland. One of the earliest cares of that Church was to provide for the education of its Ministry. Within a few weeks of the Disruption the Education Committee of the Free Church appointed Cunningham who had received the degree of D.D. from Princeton in 1842, to a professorial Chair in the New College already projected. After having visited the United States to investigate on behalf of his Church the constitution and working of some of the most famous American theological institutions, Cunningham began his academic work as Junior Professor of Theology at Edinburgh in 1844.

In 1845 Cunningham succeeded Dr. Welsh in the Chair of Church History. When intimating to the General Assembly his acceptance of the Chair, he outlined his views on the task of teaching. Church History in the following way: "My plan is to confine myself to a two years' course, in one of which I will go over, not the external history of the Church, but rather its
theological history, - the history of doctrines; and give an historical exhibition of the various deviations which, in the course of eighteen centuries, had occurred from the truth laid down in the Holy Scriptures, - the only standard we recognise as affording a test of error. My second year's course will be devoted to polemic Theology, in which I will give a detailed view of some of the great leading controversies which from time to time have agitated men's minds, and which have exerted the greatest influence on belief and doctrine."

Although his original plan was not carried out in every detail, his course of lectures was based on his conception of dealing with the theological history of the Church and the actual work of the class was arranged in accordance with this end in view.

In 1847 Cunningham succeeded Chalmers as Principal of New College, Edinburgh but the crowning honour of his career was bestowed upon him when he became Moderator of the General Assembly of his Church. Cunningham's Moderatorship meant not only honour and recognition of a life spent in the service of the Church but also reconciliation with old friends, especially with Candlish.

There had been an estrangement between Cunningham and some of his oldest associates over the question of College extension. Although Cunningham had recognised that "some difficulties or hardships might occasionally be connected with want of Free Church Colleges at the old University seats", he yet believed that it would be a waste of teaching power and of financial means to have more than the one College already in existence at Edinburgh and was therefore opposed to the multiplication of Colleges.

Candlish on the other hand was the Leader of the College extensionists and thought that the establishment of more than one Divinity Hall "would encourage theological scholarship by multiplying posts which would be objects of honourable ambition to learned men" and "would produce a certain variety in the style of training and the mental tendencies of the rising Ministry, whereas one Hall only might create the monotony of a single type."

When the Extensionists finally won the day, there was much bitterness on both sides, a bitterness which Cunningham did not conceal and which made him withdraw from all active part in Church affairs. The offer of the Moderatorship to

1. Robert Rainy and James MacKenzie, op. cit., p. 338
2. Robert Rainy and James MacKenzie, op. cit., p. 342
Cunningham and his acceptance of it was fortunately an opportunity, readily taken advantage of by all concerned, to renew old friendships and a chance for Cunningham to resume his old interest in Church affairs.

The Free Church did however not enjoy for long the benefits of Cunningham's wise counsel. On the 4th of December 1861 Cunningham was unable to undertake his class duties. On the 9th of December though still very weak he resumed his work at the College but it was only for one day. He took to his bed never to rise again. On the 14th of December 1861 there passed away - to use the words of his biographers - "William Cunningham, one of the strongest and bravest, one of the gentlest, most loving, and most loveable of Scottish men".

Cunningham whose name was bracketed by Dr. Hugh Martin with that of Thomas Halyburton "as one of the two greatest Divines that their country has ever produced", was undoubtedly the most outstanding Theologian of the Disruption Movement and the early Free Church of Scotland. His collected Works in four octavo volumes were edited by his literary executors who were his colleagues at New College, Edinburgh: James Buchanan and James Bannerman.

The first volume of Cunningham's collected Works is entitled: "The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation".

1. Robert Rainy and James MacKenzie, op. cit., p. 478
2. John Macleod, Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History since the Reformation, Edinburgh, 1943, p. 269
It consists of a series of essays which Cunningham contributed to the "British and Foreign Evangelical Review" near the end of his life. The second and third volumes, called "Historical Theology", reproduce Cunningham's lectures in the Chair of Church History. Here he deals with the various Schools of Theology and their main deviations from historical Calvinism. The doctrines of the Church of Rome, Arminianism, Socinianism etc. are set over against Reformed Theology as it is found in the utterances of Calvin himself, the Divines of the Westminster Assembly and Francis Turretine. The fourth and last volume of the collected Works which bears the title: "Discussions on Church Principles," is made up of Reviews and Pamphlets which were originally published by Cunningham in defense of the principles which in the views of the Evangelicals and the Free Church ought to regulate the relationship between Church and State. Besides a Collection of his Sermons, edited with a biographical sketch by his friend John Bonar, there is another volume in which Cunningham's work is found. It is his edition of Stillingfleet on Popery. The extensive notes which he as editor supplied, show how conversant he was with the vast literature of the Roman controversy.

Cunningham's writings as a whole, shaped by his Calvinistic interpretation of Christian doctrine and designed to guard it against the opposing views of Roman Catholicism,
Arminianism, Socinianism etc., are a "Systematic Theology" in themselves. From the great variety of subjects which cover more or less the whole field of Dogmatics, we have selected that of the Church because it is in our opinion most relevant to our present day situation. "The Church in the Teaching of Principal William Cunningham" is therefore the subject of this Thesis.

Cunningham's views on the Church are not "original". His teaching was and was meant to be that of Calvinism. He restated it, however, in such a way that it was able to hold its own in an age which repudiated to some extent the gains of the Reformation. He developed it to meet the exigencies of a new situation and applied it to the particular circumstances of his day and country. The clearness of his thought, the vastness of his knowledge and the logic of his conclusions were such that in him Presbyterianism has an exponent who though he cannot solve for us of today the problems of ecclesiology, is yet able to show us where Presbyterianism stands and what it has to give to the Church as a whole.

In dealing with the doctrine of the Church Cunningham's main interest and concern were, of course, the events which led up to and finally caused the Disruption of the Church of Scotland. Therefore if one dealt with his doctrine of the Church from a
purely Scottish point of view, one would be tempted to lay the main emphasis on the controversy that divided Presbyterians in Scotland and resulted in the schism of 1843. Yet though the question of the relationship between Church and State, of the rights of the Christian people in the election of their Ministers etc. can hardly be exaggerated, it is only part of a still greater problem, the problem of the Church. From a historical point of view Cunningham's importance lies undoubtedly in the part he played before, at and after the Disruption, from a theological point of view, however, an investigation of his teaching must concern itself not only with the problems which agitated Scottish Presbyterians in the last century - the relationship between Church and State - but also with those aspects of the doctrine of the Church on which there was no controversy within Scottish Presbyterianism: the nature of the Church and its government and organisation in the world.

When Cunningham's ecclesiology is viewed as a whole, it is easily seen that he was not only the exponent of the Free Church principles of 1843 but also the defender of the Reformed doctrine of the nature of the Church against Roman Catholicism and the champion of Presbyterian Church government against Episcopalianism and Congregationalism. Therefore to do full justice to the subject and to assess Cunningham's theological importance for the whole Church of Christ, we
propose to set his findings and conclusions not against the
historical background of the Disruption controversy but against
the views on the various aspects of the doctrine of the Church
as they are expressed and taught by prominent representatives of
other non-Presbyterian Denominations.

We shall endeavour to let Cunningham answer three
questions:

1. What is the Church?
2. How should it be governed and organised?
3. How is it related to the State?

There will therefore be three chapters. In the first chapter
we propose to compare Cunningham's conclusions on the nature
and notes of the Church with the Roman Catholic viewpoint as
expressed by John Adam Moehler (1796-1838). In the second
chapter the government and organisation of the Church are
discussed and Cunningham's findings are set against the
Episcopalian position taken up by Richard Hooker (1554-1600)
on the one hand and the Congregationalist position taken up
by John Owen (1616-1683) on the other. In the third chapter the
relationship between Church and State is investigated and
Cunningham's views are again contrasted with those of Richard
Hooker. As Cunningham claims the support of the Reformation
for his position, we have as far as possible given in each
chapter John Calvin's own opinion on the various aspects of the subject which makes it possible to judge whether or not Cunningham's claim is justified.
CHAPTER I.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH.

1. The Nature of the Church.

When the breach with the Church of Rome took place, the Reformers of the 16th century were faced with the practical task of organising the Reformed Communities as Churches according to the instructions of the Word of God. They could, however, undertake and accomplish this task only because they had previously answered the question as to what the Church really is. It was because they found in Scripture an answer fundamentally different from what the Church of Rome teaches concerning the nature of the Church that they could justify the breach with the Roman Church on the one hand and on the other claim for the new Reformed Communities the name, rights and privileges of true Churches of Christ.

It goes without saying that Cunningham was not faced in the 19th century with exactly the same problem as the Reformers in the 16th, yet he, too, realised that in defending Presbyterianism and its institutions, it was of
vital importance that the problem of the nature of the Church should be satisfactorily solved and that the more practical aspect of Church government and organisation would depend to a large extent on what idea of the Church men possess and accept as true. He was also aware of the all-important fact that the whole Reformation would be superseded and all its gains lost if it could not be established that the claims of the Church of Rome concerning itself - its virtual identity with the Church of Christ were false and unwarranted by anything taught in Scripture.

It is obvious that for a Theologian of Cunningham's outlook the only tribunal by which doctrinal issues can be assessed and judged is the Word of God and it is therefore to the Scripture that he appealed for a definition of what the Church is. "What definition or description of the Church," he asks, "does the Scripture warrant or require us to give?"1. "What view of the Church is really given us in Scripture?" "What ideas does Scripture authorize and require us to introduce into our definition or description of it?"2. It is in answering these questions in the light of

God's Word that he reiterated the great doctrine of the Reformation taught by John Calvin, the doctrine of the Church as visible and invisible.

The definition of what the Church is, must of course depend on the actual meaning of the word ἱκκλησία and its usage in the New Testament. The word ἱκκλησία is the typical example of a word which passed through several distinct stages of meaning until it was finally adopted in the New Testament to express a specifically Christian idea and notion. The original meaning of ἱκκλησία in the Greek world was that of "the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all those possessed of the rights of citizenship, for the transaction of public affairs."¹ The next stage in its etymological development was reached in the Septuagint where the translators used ὡκκλησία to render the Hebrew יִנ (e.g. Deut. 18, 16) though sometimes they also used συνεκκλησία for the same purpose (e.g. Lev. 4, 13). This Jewish meaning is, of course, the direct preparation for the sense in which ἱκκλησία was employed in the New Testament, for already the Septuagint attached a definite religious meaning to it - it is the assembly of those who stand in a special relation to God. Cunningham observes that in the New Testament ἱκκλησία

has first of all a general meaning - it is an assembly of men of any sort as for instance the tumultuous assembly in the theatre of Ephesus (Acts 19, 32; 39-41); but secondly it is used in a specific and limited sense - the most common usage in the New Testament - being "descriptive of a society or collected number of men standing in a certain peculiar relation to Jesus Christ."¹ This second meaning which is given to the word in the New Testament is naturally decisive for the definition and description of the nature of the Church. What the Church is and is meant to be and how its nature is to be defined and described depends, therefore, on the application or applications the New Testament makes of this specific sense of the word.

In the New Testament then the word is employed to describe the society or assembly of those who stand in a certain peculiar relation to Jesus Christ, but it is obvious that even in this specific sense several different applications are made of it. In his Epistles to the Corinthians for instance, Paul addresses "the Church of God which is at Corinth," whereas in the Epistle of the Ephesians (Eph. 1, 22-23) the Apostle speaks of God who

"hath put all things under His (Christ's) feet and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all" and again of Christ who "loved the Church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing but it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5, 25-27); and in the Epistle to the Hebrews the author speaks of "the general assembly and Church of the first-born who are enrolled in Heaven" (Heb. 12, 23). In the first passage where Paul addresses his letters to "the Church of God which is at Corinth" it is clear that the ἐκκλησία referred to is a society of men who stand in a certain peculiar relation to Christ in a particular place in the world at the time of the Apostle's writing to them while in the later passages the Church spoken of, though still a society of men standing in a certain peculiar relation to Christ, is no longer limited to any particular place on earth nor to any particular time, which indicates that though ἐκκλησία is descriptive in both cases of a collected number of men who stand in a certain peculiar relation to Christ
a different application of this sense is made in each case.

The passages in which it is said that the ἐκκλησία is Christ's Body the fullness of Him that filleth all in all, and that Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, lead Cunningham to assert that "here the word Church is employed as descriptive of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ, the Head thereof; and further that .......... none but those who have been chosen by God to salvation through Christ, and also are all in consequence saved, are regarded as comprehended in the Church."¹

Cunningham, however, goes still further and states that this application which makes the ἐκκλησία "the whole body of the elect, the believing, the saved, - of those who are chosen through Christ to faith and salvation and who in due time attain to them, and of none others"² must be regarded as the "leading, guiding meaning, - that which must to some extent regulate and modify the rest."³ This interpretation is perfectly sound; for when the Church is spoken of as the Body of Christ, the general assembly and Church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven, the nature of the case and the scope of what is involved,
are such that this meaning must be the fundamental and primary one in the New Testament sense and that all other meanings - and there are several, as for instance, "the Church of God at Corinth" - must be regulated by this first and basic one.

Once this is accepted as true, it follows necessarily that the Church in this primary sense - because it is the collected number of those whom God has chosen from all eternity through Christ to faith and salvation and because it consists of these ἄγωνοι, these elect alone and none else - is invisible, for "those who are elected to life cannot with certainty be known or recognised individually by men even after they have been brought by God's grace to believe and to enter upon the way of salvation"¹ and naturally "the company or society so constituted cannot, as to its particular component members, be accurately and certainly discerned."²

A few quotations from Calvin's Institutes will show how faithfully Cunningham re-stated the Reformed Doctrine of the Church as invisible. Calvin, too, teaches that the usage of the word Ἐκκλησία (Church) is not uniform in the Sacred Writings but that more than one application is made of it. "We have remarked", he says, "that the word Church is used in the sacred Scriptures in two senses."³

3. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. 1, Sec. 7
One of these describes the Church in its largest signification as the whole company of the Redeemed in all times and ages in Heaven and on earth. "Sometimes, when they (the Scriptures) mention the Church," Calvin asserts, "they intend that which is really such in the sight of God, into which none are received but those who by adoption and grace are the Children of God, and by sanctification of the Spirit are the true members of Christ. And then it comprehends not only the saints at any one time resident on earth, but all the elect who have lived from the beginning of the world". The Church in this sense is "invisible" to us, and known to God alone.

The question of how far the idea of the invisible Church can be accepted now arises. Is it conceivable that the Church should primarily be the society of all the Redeemed, past, present, and future? Is this idea still acceptable today? Indirect support for the Reformed notion of the Invisible Church is found in Professor D. Baillie's publication "God was in Christ". The author, when discussing the problems of Historical and Eternal Atonement says that

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. 1 Sec. 7.
2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. 1 Sec 7.
"here we are confronted with a problem with which theology is continually beset, that of the relation between time and eternity. We are accustomed to say that while we finite creatures are subject to temporality in our experience, living always in a present moment which is between the remembered past and the unlived future, God "inhabits eternity", living in an eternal present, in which past, present and future are all one."\(^1\) It is evident that a modern Theologian like Prof. D. Baillie has no difficulty in accepting the idea that God lives in an eternal present which includes that which is for the finite mind of man past, present and future. This eternal present though beyond the understanding of the finite creature is yet a reality from the divine point of view.

When applied to the invisible Church as conceived by Cunningham, this means that the society of those who did, do and shall believe in Christ is a reality from the point of view of God because living in eternity, that is in the eternal present, the faith of the elect who from a human point of view belong to the past, present or future is eternally present to Him. This, of course, does not signify that the invisible Church is timeless in the sense that it has no relation to time. Prof. D. Baillie writes that "when we say that God

\(^1\) D.M. Baillie, op. cit., p. 190.
lives in eternity, not in time. . . . . . . we ought to mean, not
that God has no relation to time and no experience of it. . . . .
but that, while embracing time in His experience, while
knowing past, present and future, God is not confined, as
we are, within the limits of temporality and successiveness,
but transcends these limits, so that He can experience
past, present and future all in one. " When this is taken
into account and applied to the idea of the invisible
Church, it means that the Church as the society of those who
are chosen by God through Christ to Faith and Salvation,
while being embraced by time, is not confined within the
limits of temporality but transcends these limits so
that in it there can be past, present and future all in
one.

Still more important is what Prof. D. Baillie
has to say with reference to the Atonement. "God's
reconciling work cannot be confined to any one moment of
history. We cannot say that God was unforgiving until
Christ came and died on Calvary; nor can we forget that
God's work of reconciliation still goes on in every age
in the lives of sinful men, whose sins He still bears. . . . . .
There has never been an age when it would have been true
to say that God was not carrying the load of the sins of

His people and thus making atonement and offering forgiveness. If this is accepted it bears out though in a different connection the Reformed teaching of the invisible Church. The Invisible Church must be a reality, for if "there has never been an age when it would have been true to say that God was not carrying the load of the sins of His people", and if we cannot "forget that God's work of reconciliation still goes on in every age in the lives of sinful men", then there has never been an age and there will never be a time when the Church did not or will not exist; for the Church is simply the society of those for whom God in Christ was making atonement. It is obvious that the Church in this sense is invisible even on earth, for her members cannot be known with certainty by men.

It is this idea of the Church as invisible which Cunningham, just like Calvin before him, consistently opposes to the Roman Catholic doctrine, according to which the Church is and must always be visible on earth. There cannot be any doubt that for Cunningham the question of the necessary visibility of the Church - visibility being a necessary property of the nature of the Church - is the crux of the matter in the controversy between the exponents of the Reformed and Roman Catholic Ecclesiologies.

John Adam Moehler whose "Symbolism" is one of

the most important Roman Catholic statements on Doctrine in relation to Protestantism has no hesitation in saying that "by the Church on earth, Catholics understand the visible community of believers founded by Christ, in which by means of an enduring Apostleship established by Him and appointed to conduct all nations in the course of ages back to God, the works wrought by Him during His earthly life for the redemption and sanctification of mankind are, under the guidance of His Spirit, continued to the end of the world. Thus to a visible society of men is this great, important and mysterious work entrusted". It is thus made perfectly clear that according to Roman Catholic teaching, whatever else the Church in Heaven may be, on earth it is always a visible community, a society whose visibility is a necessary property of its nature, without which it ceases to be the true Church.

Whereas Cunningham speaks of the Church as being in one sense at least the society of all those who believe (past, present and future, which makes it invisible from a human point of view) Moehler insists on a Church which is always visible on earth. The reason for this disagreement is of course, the different ideas of membership these two

representative Theologians entertain, or rather the different idea they entertain as to how men become members of the true Church. For Cunningham, God's secret election is the first cause of membership - God's election makes a man a member of the Church and because he is elected he will in due time respond to the call of God addressed to him by the preaching of the Gospel and thus attain to salvation. The decisive factor, therefore, is God and His election - God is the beginning and His election causes a man to become a member of the Church - on God's election membership depends. Moehler, on the other hand, does not admit any such thing. For him, the Church itself, at least the action of the Church in the Roman Catholic sense, is the cause of man choosing the way of salvation. "This Kingdom of God", he writes - "begins, grows and ripens within us, after it has first externally encountered us and made the first steps to receive us into its bosom. The act of exterior excitement, instruction and education is ever the first condition of life to what is internally excited, taught and educated".

It is obvious that according to Roman Catholic doctrine the first step towards membership in the Church is taken by the Church itself - the act of exterior excitement - which means that Roman Catholicism must claim visibility as

an essential property of the nature of the Church; for only a society that is visible can make "the first step to receive us into its bosom". Cunningham, on the other hand, rightly maintains that "the word Church is used as a general term to describe the whole number of those who are elected and ultimately saved, viewed collectively". He can and must therefore conclude, that as the Scriptures do set before us an invisible Church, "visibility is not an essential quality of the Church of Christ in at least one of the leading aspects in which the Church is presented to us in the Bible.

We must now deal with the problem of how the idea of the invisible Church affects that of the visible in Reformed Theology. Roman Catholicism has tried to refute the Reformed conception of the invisible Church by alleging that this idea involves either the denial of the visible Church altogether or the existence of two separate Churches. "If we adopt the idea of an invisible Church" - writes Moehler - "then neither the Incarnation of the Son of God, nor His miracles nor in general any outward, positive revelation can be conceived, because they comprise authoritative proofs, outward visible manifestations of eternal

ideas; and accordingly, they are by force of an internal necessity there gradually rejected, where it is assumed that Christ has founded a mere invisible Church, since the members of such a Church need only invisible internal proofs to obtain certitude\textsuperscript{1}.

Reformed Theology, however, does not "assume that Christ has founded a mere invisible Church". "Protestants" - Cunningham says - "do not dispute that the Scripture sets before us a visible as well as an invisible Church"\textsuperscript{2}; for he knows as well as Moehler that the New Testament bears witness to the existence of a "Catholic or general visible Church"\textsuperscript{3}. The fact that the New Testament specifies the Church of a particular place and names the Churches of a particular district shows and proves that "these Churches must have been visible societies, having some outward marks of distinction by which they and their members might be recognised".\textsuperscript{4}

The existence of the visible Church is thus recognised, for the Scripture bears witness to visible societies of believers reveals that "Christ calls men to come out of the world, to believe in Him, to submit to His authority and to unite together in an organized society of which He

\textsuperscript{1} John Adam Moehler, op. cit., p. 266
\textsuperscript{2} William Cunningham, op. cit., vol. II p. 14
\textsuperscript{3} William Cunningham, op. cit., vol. II p. 14
\textsuperscript{4} William Cunningham, op. cit., vol. II p. 14
is the Head, and which is to be governed exclusively by His Laws. Cunningham, therefore, has no hesitation whatsoever in affirming and maintaining that the visible Church is Christ’s foundation, for "it was Christ’s intention and requirement, that those who were effectually called and enabled by grace to receive Him personally and individually as their Saviour and their Master, should not only individually profess their faith in Him, and their subjection to His authority, but should also unite together in the discharge of certain outward duties which he enjoined, and in the enjoyment of certain privileges which He conferred".

Calvin states that "as it is necessary, therefore, to believe that ‘Church, which is invisible to us and known to God alone, so this Church which is visible to men we are commanded to honour, and to maintain communion with it’ and "it has been the Will of God, by the Ministry of the Church (visible) to preserve the pure preaching of His Word " Hence it follows that a departure from the Church is a renunciation of God and Christ”. When these statements are added to those of Cunningham, one wonders where Roman Catholics like Moehler discover in Reformed Theology

2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol II p. 15.
the assumption "that Christ has founded a mere invisible Church".

Cunningham asserts that through the preaching of the Gospel there arose "a body or company of men visibly distinguished from the mass of men around them, by their professing individually and collectively, faith in Christ and subjection to Him."¹ When this viewpoint is compared with the Roman Catholic definition of the Church as it is given, e.g., in the French Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge "Ecclesia" - "L’Église est une société visible, la société de ceux qui sont unis pour professer la religion du vrai Dieu, telle que Jésus-Christ nous l’a donnée" -² the similarity of the very wording in the two statements makes us realise that the Roman Catholic allegation that Protestants assume that Christ has founded a mere invisible Church is - at least in so far as Reformed Theology is concerned - groundless, unfair and unwarranted.

While there is, therefore, no justification for charging Reformed Theology with denying the existence of the visible Church, is Roman Catholicism entitled to say that the Reformed teaching of the visible and invisible Church leads to the conception of two distinct or separate Churches,

¹ William Cunningham, op. cit. Vol. II p. 15
² Ecclesia, Encyclopédie Populaire Des Connaissances Religieuses, Paris, 1933 p. 94.
the one seen by men, the other known to God alone? On the surface, it almost looks as if the second charge were justified. Cunningham speaks indeed of the visible Church, which consists "of the professed followers of Christ viewed collectively, and characterised by certain outward marks cognizable by men", as being distinguished from the invisible Church which is the company of "the true followers of Christ, who were all chosen by God before the foundation of the world, who are all in due time united to Him by faith as members of His body and who are at length admitted to share in His glory."

This distinction, however, is not to be understood as a separation of the invisible from the visible Church, making the two separate entities. Cunningham repudiates such an idea most emphatically and asserts that Reformed Theology represents the two Churches, not as separate, "but as two different phases or aspects of what is in substance one and the same." The two Churches are and must be one and the same because "the Ἐκκλησία both etymologically and really, is just the Assembly or Congregation of the Κυρίων, those who are called out of the world."

A distinction, however, must be made; for while the invisible Church consists exclusively of the elect in all ages, and is therefore, known to God alone, the visible Church

1. William Cunningham op. cit. Vol. II p. 15
addressing the call of the Gospel to the whole world contains not only the elect resident on earth but "has also mixed up with it some inferior elements - some chaff which will one day be separated from the wheat."¹ As there are in the New Testament instances where the Kingdom of God can be virtually indentified with the Church - e.g. the parables of the sower, of the threshing floor, etc. - it follows that there is a difference between the outward and the inward call or the effectual and ineffectual call; which proves that Cunningham is right in saying that "we have good grounds in Scripture to believe that cases did, in point of fact, occur even in Apostolic times, in which men professed to obey Christ's call by outwardly joining the society of the \( \kappa\lambda\gamma\tau\omicron \), while they had not really by faith received Him as their Saviour, or in heart submitted to His authority."² Yet, as Cunningham points out, it was only natural that already in the New Testament "the same names and designations which were properly and strictly applicable only to the true \( \kappa\lambda\gamma\tau\omicron \), were applied to the company or society of those who professed to have obeyed the Gospel call, and were in consequence, visibly and outwardly associated with the followers of Christ."³ The reason for this was that

---

¹ William Cunningham, op. cit. Vol. II p. 16
² William Cunningham, op. cit. Vol. II pp. 14f
"It was not His (Christ's) intention to employ any supernatural means of accurately discriminating upon earth between those who made this profession (of faith) in sincerity and truth, and those, who in making it, were deceiving themselves or others by a profession which did not correspond with the real state of their hearts and characters". This means that the visible and the invisible Church are the same as to their substance (the substance being the elect). The visible Church - that is the Church as it is seen by men - includes, however, also those who have obeyed the call of God only externally and whose profession of faith is for that reason only an outward one. Cunningham therefore comes to the conclusion that although the visible and invisible Church are not two Churches but one Church contemplated from two different aspects: an internal and external one. Although they do not occupy different spheres but the same sphere, it is yet the case that the visible Church only "includes or contains the invisible", having "in its present imperfect condition ..... also mixed up with it some inferior elements, some chaff, which will one day be separated from the wheat".

In other words, the Church visible is the same as

the Church invisible or rather is part of the invisible, in so far as it contains or includes the elect who at present live in this world and make profession of their faith. For Cunningham then Scripture sets forth two aspects of what is one and the same in substance. Yet when taken as a whole, as men see it, the visible Church cannot be identified with the invisible Church, for the former only contains the latter or, as Calvin puts it: "In this Church (visible) are included many hypocrites who have nothing of Christ but the name and appearance; many persons, ambitious, avaricious, envious, slanderous and dissolute in their lives, who are tolerated for a time, either because they cannot be convicted by a legitimate process, or because discipline is not always maintained with sufficient vigour". There can, therefore, be no question of either denying the existence of the visible Church or making it a separate entity, as Roman Catholicism alleges. What Reformed Theologians like Cunningham teach is that the Church as the company of the elect in all ages, known to God alone and therefore invisible, is "the proper, principal sense of the word - the leading idea attached to it - that to which any other notion to which from necessity or convenience, the word may have been applied, must be regarded

as subordinate". From this their deduction is not that the visible Church does not exist or is a separate Church, but that "visibility, including regular external organisation, cannot be held to be a necessary or essential property of the Church of Christ". Reformed Theology thus admits that the Church on earth is ordinarily visible but denies that it must be visible, to be the true Church of Christ: for "we are taught", writes Calvin, "that it (the Church) is no less to be considered as existing when it escapes our observation than if it were evident to our eyes".

It is of course only natural that the Church of Rome should oppose the Reformed teaching, for its claim to be the only true Church of Christ, indefectible and infallible, cannot be sustained, once it is established that visibility is not an essential property of the Church of Christ, and that therefore "there is no necessity of applying what is said in Scripture about certain of the prerogatives and privileges of the Church (as e.g. indefectibility) to any visible society or to any portion of any visible society". Cunningham, too, believes that the Church of Christ on earth will never cease to be to the end of the world; but he believes in the indefectibility of the Church in the sense that the Scripture

3 John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. I, Sec. 3
indicate, namely "that from the time when Christ ascended to the right hand of His Father, there have always been, and until He come again there will always be upon earth some persons who have been chosen to salvation, and who during their earthly career are prepared for it". In opposition to Roman Catholicism, however, he maintains that there is not "anything in Scripture which guarantees the constant existence at all times or in any one particular country, of an organised ecclesiastical society standing out visibly and palpably to the eyes of men as the true Church of Christ". In this connection one more Roman Catholic argument against the Reformed conception of the Church remains to be answered. As we have seen earlier on, Moehler rejects the Reformed teaching concerning the Church, on the grounds that "neither the Incarnation of the Son of God nor His miracles nor, in general, any outward positive revelation can be conceived, because they comprise authoritative proofs, outward visible manifestations of eternal ideas, and accordingly they are, by force of an internal necessity there gradually rejected"; where the idea of an invisible Church is adopted, "since the members of such a Church need only invisible internal proofs to obtain certitude". Roman Catholicism thus tries to make out that, because of the doctrine of the invisible Church in Reformed

3. John Adam Moehler, op. cit., p. 266.
Theology, the Incarnation of Christ is rejected "by force of an internal necessity". It might be argued that as membership in the invisible Church and consequent salvation depend on God's election, there is no reason why the Son of God should have become Man and that as the visible Church proclaims a redemption, the certitude and effectiveness of which depend as far as the individual is concerned on whether or not he has been chosen by God from all eternity, there is no purpose in its existence. The doctrine of the invisible Church would be untenable indeed if the Reformed Doctrine of election were what Moehler implies it to be. Reformed Theologians like Cunningham, however, do not conceive election apart from Christ or without the Incarnation. For them it is election in Christ through faith unto salvation, which means that there is no internal necessity by which the Incarnation is rejected. On the contrary it is made necessary; for "they who are elected being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ".

In other words, those who are elected are predestined to be redeemed and saved through Christ, through God who became Man. Cunningham states that the substance of the doctrine of election is "that God from eternity...chose or elected certain men to everlasting life, and resolved, certainly and infallibly, to effect the salvation of these men, in accordance with the provisions of a great

E. Westminster Confession, Chap. III, Sec. 6.
scheme which He had devised for this purpose, a scheme without which no sinners could have been saved." Roman Catholics like Moehler are entitled to disagree with the Reformed Doctrine of election and consequently with that of the invisible Church; but they are not entitled to say that in holding these doctrines, Reformed Theology is compelled by force of an internal necessity to reject the Incarnation; for it is obvious that the provision of the great scheme which God has devised for the purpose of saving His elect, to which Cunningham refers, is precisely the Incarnation and the mediatorial Work of Christ. When Calvin exclaims: "Sachons donc que notre salut est certain. Et pourquoi cela? Pourquoi qu'il est en la main de Dieu. Et comment en sommes-nous assurés. Pourquoi il l'a mis en la main de notre Seigneur Jésus, qui nous manifeste que le Père qui nous a élus veut avancer son conseil à plein effet et perfection"; or again "notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ est le fondement de ces deux, c'est à savoir des promesses de salut et de notre élection gratuite, qui a été faite dès la création du monde", it is difficult to see where Moehler finds the internal necessity

1. William Cunningham, Works, Vol. III
   Historical Theology Vol II p. 431.
3. John Calvin, Congrégation sur L'Élection Éternelle, in op. cit., p. 95
by which the doctrine of the invisible Church is supposed to compel Reformed Theology to reject the Incarnation. Calvin and Cunningham make it clear beyond dispute that election is in Christ, which means that membership in the invisible Church cannot be conceived apart from or without the Incarnation of the Son of God.

In the same way as the idea of the invisible Church does not make the Incarnation of Christ unnecessary or superfluous, so it does not make the existence of the visible Church unnecessary or superfluous. Though election is from all eternity, the blessing which Christ purchased with His death must still be imparted to men individually, that they might believe and repent. According to Cunningham, the provision which God has made for this purpose consists in three things: "First, the making known to men what Christ has done and suffered for their salvation; Secondly, the offering to men the blessings which Christ purchased and the inviting men to accept of them; and Thirdly, the communication of the Holy Spirit to dispose or enable them to accept the offer to comply with the invitation, that is, to repent and believe, and to effect or contribute to effect in them the renovation or sanctification of their natures."1 It is thus recognised that the visible Church which makes

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. III p. 396
Christ known and invites men to come to Him by the preaching of the Gospel, is an essential part of God's scheme of salvation for the elect. The visible Church is God's way of maintaining the preaching of the gospel; for God "has deposited this treasure with the Church," and it is through the Ministry of the visible Church that He calls His people out of the world. "It is God who inspires us with Faith", says Calvin, "but it is through the instrumentality of the Gospel according to the declaration of Paul, that Faith commeth by hearing." (Rom. 10, 17)
2. The Notes of the Church

The subject of the notes or marks of the true Church figures very largely in the controversy between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. Reformed Theology recognised, of course, that the visible Church of Christ bears certain marks which distinguish it from a false Church and other societies. Over against the Roman Catholic claim, however, according to which the Church of Rome is the true Church of Christ because it alone possesses the marks of Unity or One-ness, Sanctity, Catholicity and Apostolicity, Reformed Theologians propound the principle laid down by Calvin, that "wherever we find the Word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there, it is not to be doubted, is a Church of God". In other words, in Reformed Theology, the trueness of the Church does not primarily depend on what the Church possesses or is supposed to possess in the way of notes or marks, but on what it does. That which distinguishes the true Church from all other societies is the obedient and faithfull discharge of a divinely appointed duty and task;

1. Nicene Creed.
2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. 1, sec. 9.
the preaching of the Word and the hearing of it; and the administration of the sacraments according to the institutions of Christ and the participation in them.

Cunningham, who endorsed this principle, states that "as the Word of God plainly teaches that the principal function of the visible Church, as an organised society, is to be a pillar and ground of truth, i.e. to support and hold up the truth of God before men, we cannot refuse the title of a true or real Church of Christ to any society which is organised in professed subjection to His authority, and with a professed submission to His Word, and which holds forth to men those great fundamental truths, on the knowledge and belief of which the salvation of sinners depends". ¹

Cunningham, like Calvin, therefore believes that obedience to God's command to preach and hear the Word distinguishes the Church from other societies of men and that this mark of obedience alone decides whether or not a Church or any section of it is true.

It goes without saying that the Reformers and those who succeeded them in the Reformed tradition believe as firmly as any Roman Catholic, that the true Church of Christ

---

¹ William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol II. p. 21.
is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic; but whereas Roman Catholic Theology argues that the Church of Rome is the true Church because it alone possesses the notes of Unity, Sanctity, Catholicity, and Apostolicity, Reformed Theology asserts that these notes are necessarily possessed by any Church that purely and faithfully preaches the Word and administers the sacraments. In other words, the Church of Christ is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, simply because it is the true Church. It is for this reason that Cunningham does not attach "very great intrinsic importance"¹ to the subject of the notes of the Church, but discusses it only in so far as "it is necessary to refute the arguments which Papists found upon this topic, in support of the claims of the Church of Rome."²

The actual examination of the subject can, of course, take place on one ground only, that of the Scriptures. It is only natural that on this ground alone Cunningham is willing to meet Roman Catholics, because firstly, legitimate reasons for claims such as the Church of Rome puts forward can rest "upon no other foundation than the direct authority of God Himself; and secondly, because the sacred Scriptures form the

2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol II. p. 21
only common ground between the two parties in the discussion."¹

In examining the notes of the Church as set forth in the Nicene Creed, Cunningham contends "first, that these notes or marks are not to be taken in the sense which the Papists attach to them, or with the application they make of them; and secondly, that in the sense in which Scripture sanctions the application of these notes or marks to the Church of Christ, they afford no countenance whatever to the claims of the Church of Rome".² Roman Catholics contend that as the Church of Rome alone possesses the notes of One-ness, Sanctity, Catholicity and Apostolicity, it alone is the true Church of Christ. Cunningham, on the other hand, asserts that because the Church of Rome qua Church of Rome does not preach the Word of God purely and faithfully and does not administer the sacraments according to Christ's institution, it is not a true Church of Christ and therefore does not possess the notes of the true Church, as Scripture understands and applies them.

Of the four marks given to the Church in the Nicene Creed, Cunningham selects that of One-ness or Unity and deals

---

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II p. 21
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II p. 23
with it at some length.

It is the belief of all Christians that the true Church of Christ is one because "there is one body, and one Spirit ......; One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph. 4. 4-6). On the surface, therefore, Cunningham can have no objection to Moehler's statement which defines the Roman Catholic position as follows:— "As Christ, therefore, is one and His work is one in itself, as accordingly there is but one truth, and truth only maketh free, so he can have willed but one Church ...... On the other hand, the human mind is everywhere the same, and always and in all places, is created for truth, and the one truth ............ Thus the one-ness of the human spirit, as well as the one-ness of truth which is the food of spirits, justifies in the views of the reflecting Catholic the notion of the one visible Church."1 Could anything be more Scriptural? As Christ is not divided but is one, there is and can be only the one truth to be imparted to the human mind which always and everywhere is the same, in the sense that all men being sinners stand in need

of God's Grace. It ought, therefore, not to be doubted that the Scripture which reveals the one Christ, also reveals that the Church which "rests on the basis of belief in Him (Christ) and hath eternally to announce Him and His Work",¹ is and must be one. Reformed Theology would have no hesitation in endorsing Moehler's statement as it stands on condition that it means what it says; for it bears out the views not only of the "reflecting Catholic" but of all reflecting Christians. The controversy between Reformed Theology and Roman Catholicism, however, is concerned not with the fact of the necessity of unity or one-ness recognised by both parties as a mark of the true Church, but with the meaning of unity. The question which must be asked, resolves itself into this: What do Roman Catholics like Moehler mean when they say that the Church is one and what do Reformed Theologians like Cunningham mean by the same statement? Once this question is asked it becomes obvious that the whole controversy arises because of the different senses, in which Roman Catholics on the one hand and Protestants on the other use the term "one-ness".

Moehler makes it perfectly clear that the end of

1. John Adam Moehler, op. cit., p. 264
revelation requires a Church as "Catholics conceive it"; that is, a Church which is necessarily visible; for the object of the divine revelation in Christ Jesus would either have wholly failed or have been imperfectly attained, if the "bodying forth of the divine truth had been only momentary";¹ that is, if the Church were not permanently visible. Hence he insists on a Church which is one and always visible. On this point, however, agreement is impossible; for when it is remembered that Roman Catholics define the Church as being "the congregation of all the faithful professing the same faith, partaking in the same sacraments, governed by lawful pastors under one visible head, the vicar of Christ"², it becomes only too plain that one-ness or unity for the Roman Catholic is entire unity or one-ness of organisation, conformity in all matters of belief and practice and complete subjection to one visible government which is embodied in one visible head, the Pope. If it were true that Scripture really revealed that unity means one-ness of outward organisation, etc., the claims of the Church of Rome would be justified. It is, however, precisely on Scriptural grounds that Reformed Theologians base their refutation of the Roman Catholic claims.

1. John Adam Meehler, op. cit., p. 265
In stating the Reformed doctrine, Cunningham contends that unity does not depend on anything outward-organisation, subjection, to one particular government, conformity in all matters of belief and practice - but that it depends and is founded on the one-ness of faith and life of those who submit to the authority of Christ. "All who are admitted to be His real disciples must profess and exhibit some qualities, in which they agree, or are one; and also all societies admitted to belong to the Church of Christ or to be Churches of Christ, must profess and exhibit some points of unity".¹ In other words, according to Cunningham, the unity of the Church consists in the agreement of Christians - individually and collectively - on all fundamental articles of faith and doctrine and all essential features of character, all of which is of course implied in the principle laid down by Calvin: "wheresoever the pure voice of the Gospel doth sound, where men continue in the profession thereof, where they exercise themselves in hearing the same ordinarily that they may profit, without all doubt there is the Church".²

In professing faith in the one-ness of the Church, Reformed Theology believes in unity of faith and life, inward

---

2. John Calvin, Commentary on Acts (2. 42), tr. by Henry Beveridge, Edinburgh, 1859.
and spiritual, and opposes it to unity of organisation and
government, outward and material, as believed in and claimed
by the Church of Rome. It is evident that Cunningham
does not in any way minimise the desirability of a common
outward organisation and of a particular form of government -
he is far too good a Presbyterian for that - but on
Scriptural grounds he teaches that the Church is one, not
by having an organisation, a government, a visible head,
things that are common to all branches of it; but because
it has one Lord and God, one faith, one Spirit, things that
are common to all those who believe in the salvation and
submit to the authority of Christ. "In short", says Calvin,
"the unity of the Church consists more especially in this
one thing, that we all depend upon Christ alone".1 It is
this common dependence on Christ which constitutes in the
Reformed view the unity of the true Church.

Cunningham does not enlarge on the other notes of
the Church, those of Catholicity, Sanctity and Apostolicity,
because having indicated in his treatment of the mark of
One-ness or Unity how the case really stands and what
principles ought to be applied in dealing with it, he rightly

1. John Calvin, Commentary on 1 Cor. (1:12), tr. by
John Pringle, Edinburgh, 1848.
contends that it can be proved from Scripture that the notes of Catholicity, Sanctity and Apostolicity "do not apply peculiarly and exclusively, if at all, to the Church of Rome". A fair and unprejudiced estimate of the Scriptural evidence shows that nowhere in the Bible is Unity and Catholicity understood in the Roman Catholic sense of unity in outward communion and uniformity in outward profession. Cunningham, therefore, is correct when he denies the validity of all claims which the Church of Rome bases on the possession of notes, the character of which is not sanctioned by Scripture. Furthermore, when the Scriptural meaning of Sanctity and Apostolicity - holiness of heart and life and conformity with the Apostolic model - is accepted, it becomes clear that the sense which the Scriptures apply to the notes of the true Church, does not support the claims of the Church of Rome, but as Cunningham says, can be used as a conclusive argument against them; for "the Church of Rome is, in all its features, flatly opposed to the representations given us in Scripture of the Apostolic Church; and no branch of the Church has ever done so little in proportion to its means and opportunities to produce holiness, or done so much

to corrupt the standard of morals, to eradicate a sense of moral responsibility and to open the flood-gates of all iniquity. ..

From Cunningham's line of argument it is possible to form an idea as to how Reformed Theology understands the notes of the true Church on earth. For Reformed Theology the marks of the Church apply to and are possessed by the visible Church of Christ as a whole, that Church which is Catholic or universal, consisting "of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion together with their children." No particular Church or branch or section of it can lay any exclusive claim to the possession of the notes of the Church of Christ but possesses them only in so far as it conforms to the Word of God in all matters of faith, life and practice. It is, therefore, the degree of conformity to the Word of God and the model of the Churches established by the Apostles, which decides in how far the marks of the true Church, which belong to the visible Church of Christ as a whole, are possessed by any particular Church or branch of it.

The foregoing pages have shown that Unity, Sanctity, Catholicity and Apostolicity are accepted and

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol II p. 25
2. Westminster Confession, Chap. XXV, Sec 2.
recognised by Reformed and Roman Catholic Theologians alike as marks of the true Church, though of course the meaning attached to and the application made of these notes are entirely different in the views of the contending parties. In the controversy with the Church of Rome, Reformed Theologians however are concerned not only with the true meaning and the correct application of these notes which are set forth in the Nicene Creed, but also with the question of whether or not certain other characteristics which the Church of Rome claims to possess, can be looked upon, even if rightly interpreted and understood, as marks of the true Church at all. In this connection it is necessary to revert to Cunningham's views on the Ministry.

It is in the Westminster Confession that Cunningham finds the true Scriptural doctrine of the Ministry and its standing in the Church of Christ. "Unto this catholic visible Church, Christ hath given the Ministry, oracles and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life to the end of the world; and doth by His own presence and Spirit, according to His promise, make them effectual thereunto".¹ There can be no doubt whatsoever

¹ Westminster Confession, Chap. XXV, Sec. 3.
that for Reformed Theology the Ministry is a divine institution which God is using "for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life to the end of the world"; for, Calvin says, "although He (the Lord) alone ought to rule and reign in the Church and to have all pre-eminence in it, and this government ought to be exercised and administered solely by His Word, yet as He dwells not among us by a visible presence, so as to make an audible declaration of His Will to us, we have stated that for this purpose He uses the Ministry of men, whom He employs as His delegates, not to transfer His right and honour to them, but only that He may Himself do His work by their lips; just as an artificer makes use of an instrument in the performance of his work".¹

Reformed Theology thus asserts that the Ministry was appointed and instituted by God, that through it He might make manifest His Will and rule His Church; but at the same time, Cunningham and those who like him stand in the Reformed tradition maintain that though of divine appointment, the Ministry was given to the Church and is therefore subordinate to it.² How different the Roman Catholic viewpoint is from the Reformed idea of the Ministry becomes

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. III., Sec 1
2. see 1 Cor. 12.28; Eph. 4. 11f.
obvious when Moehler's statement is considered: "The visibility and stability of the Church ...... require ...... an ecclesiastical ordination, originating with Christ, the fountain head, and perpetuated in un-interrupted succession; so that as the Apostles were sent forth by the Saviour, they, in their turn, instituted Bishops and these appointed their successors and so on, down to our own days. By this episcopal succession, beginning from our Saviour and continued on without interruption, we can especially recognise as by an outward mark, which is the true Church founded by Him (Christ)".

Reformed Theology recognises that the Ministry was given to the Church and deduces from this that the Church being first the Ministry is dependent on it and subordinate to it. In Roman Catholic Theology the position is reversed; the Ministry does not depend on the Church but the Church on the Ministry; for not only is the Ministry a self-contained unit within the Church, which unit alone can perpetuate itself and uphold its validity, but being an outward mark of the Church, the trueness of the Church as Roman Catholics understand it is decided by the presence or absence of the Ministry, as the Church of Rome claims to possess it. Cunningham is, therefore, perfectly correct in saying that for all practical purposes the Roman Catholic position comes to this: "where there is

not a valid Ministry there is not a true Church”. The Reformed view on the other hand, realising that the Ministry was given to the Church and is therefore subordinate to the Church, arrives at the opposite conclusion: “Whatever there is a true Church, there is, or may be, a valid ministry”. This means, as Cunningham points out, that the Roman Catholic position “virtually proceeds upon the assumption that the Church is for the sake of the Ministry”, while “the Protestant one (position) proceeds upon the assumption that the Ministry is for the sake of the Church”.  

It is not difficult to see that the real problem - Cunningham does not hesitate in making it the issue of the whole controversy - is whether the Ministry is the end and the Church the means or the Ministry the means and the Church the end. As Roman Catholicism leaves no doubt that the trueness of the Church depends on the validity of its Ministry which thus becomes an outward mark of the Church, the only logical conclusion is that Roman Catholicism elevates the Ministry, (that is, the Ministry in the Church of Rome), to the superior position of an end in itself, while it lowers the Church to the subordinate position of a means. It is the Ministry which makes the Church to be true or false and not

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 27
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 27
3. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 27
the Church which makes the Ministry to be either valid or not valid. Cunningham, on the other hand, though upholding the divine origin of the Ministry and maintaining that the gathering and perfecting of the saints is its divinely appointed purpose, yet realises and recognises that "the Ministry in the abstract may be said to occupy a position of sub-ordination and not of superiority to the Church." In other words, as Christ has given the Ministry to the Church, the latter is the end and the former the means. Owing to their respective views, Roman Catholics decide the question of the validity of the Ministry first and make the character of the Church depend on that decision, whereas Reformed Theologians give precedence to the Church which possesses and ordains it. Cunningham sees clearly that the primary concern of the Reformers was not to prove or to disprove the claims of a particular society or community of Christians for its Ministry, but to establish that Protestant Communities of believers are true Churches and part of the Catholic visible Church of Christ. Once this claim is established and Protestant Communities are recognised as true Churches, the problem of the validity of the Protestant Ministry is solved at the same time; for, the Ministry being given to the Church, a true Church always has a valid Ministry.

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 28
Calvin observes "that wherever the state of the Church is safe or at least tolerable, an ordinary call is requisite. But is a law therefore laid upon God and may not He extraordinarily by His Spirit raise up prophets and other ministers to restore His fallen and ruined Church?" He thus rejects the Roman Catholic idea according to which the trueness of the Church depends on the validity of its Ministry, a particular Ministry thus becoming a mark of the Church. For Reformed Theologians the only criterion by which the trueness of a Church is or ought to be tested, is the acceptance of what Scripture makes the great fundamental duty of men individually to whom the Gospel is preached, viz., to receive the truth in the love of it, and the fulfillment of what Scripture makes "the most important function of the Church or of believers or professed believers collectively, viz., to hold up and promote the truth or the way of salvation". Reformed Theologians like Cunningham see that "the essential note or mark of a true Church, as a visible body or society, (is) the profession and maintenance of Scriptural views of the great fundamental principles of Christian Doctrine".

Reformed Theology, therefore, denies not only that

1. John Calvin - The true Method of Giving Peace to Christendom and Reforming the Church, In Tracts tr. by Henry Beveridge, Vol III. Edinburgh, 1751, p. 237
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 29
subjection to a visible head, the Pope, but even to lawful
Pastors ordained in the regular and prescribed way - essential
features of a true Church according to Roman Catholic Doctrine -
constitute anything which could be taken as decisive in
establishing the character of the Church true or false.
It is not denied that there should be a regular Ministry -
ordination conferred by those who were Pastors before - but
in special circumstances a Church might have an irregular
Ministry or no Ministry at all and still be a true Church,
because in such a case the end, (profession and maintenance
of the fundamental principles of Christian Doctrine), and not
the means (the regularity of ordination) must be the guiding
and higher standard.

In adopting these principles which he finds implied
in the statements of the Westminster Confession, Cunningham
arrives at the following conclusions: "First, that the
absence of a regular Ministry, appointed in the ordinary
prescribed way, or even the absence of a Ministry altogether
for a time, is not necessarily and in all circumstances a
sufficient proof of itself, that a society of professing
Christians is not a Church of Christ; and secondly, that any
company of faithful or believing men is entitled to a
Ministry, since Christ has given the Ministry to the Church;
and if they are so placed in providence that they cannot have a Ministry in the ordinary, regular, prescribed way, are entitled to make a Ministry for themselves and that that Ministry, though not a regular, is a valid one. The Ministry, therefore, is not an outward mark of the true Church in the sense that its continued presence and particular form decide whether or not a Church is true.

3. The Promises of the Church.

Few topics show more clearly the gulf that separates Protestantism from Roman Catholicism than that of the promises made by Christ to His Church. Christ's sayings: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world", or: "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth" have been understood by Christians in all ages as being a definite promise to the Church, the truth and fulfillment of which have been experienced again and again by God's faithful people down the centuries. No Reformed Theologian would therefore deny that this promise was actually made by Christ and that it has an important bearing on the life and history of the Church, because it amounts "in substance to an assurance of His (Christ's) own constant presence with it (the Church) and of the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit - the Spirit of truth". Reformed Theology believes on scriptural grounds that Christ will always be present with His Church and that therefore He will accomplish in and by the Church whatever it was and is His design to accomplish. No more and no less than this does Reformed

1. Matt. 28. 20
Theology deduce from Christ's promise: Christ is present with His Church and His Spirit guides the Church and this presence and guidance will go on to the end of the World so that at no time will the Church be without Christ or His Spirit.

Roman Catholicism with its peculiar views on the nature of the Church is not content with this glorious promise nor is it satisfied with the assurance implied in it. The simple, straight-forward promise of Christ - His continued presence with the Church and the guidance of His Spirit - is not taken by Roman Catholics at its face value as it stands, but is understood and interpreted as meaning or purporting to mean at least ultimately the infallibility or inerrancy of the Church (in the Roman Catholic sense); that is, the Church of Rome.

Cunningham undoubtedly agree with Moehler when the latter, in defining the Roman Catholic position, states that the Church, though composed of men, is yet not purely human but "is at once divine and human; she is the union of both".¹ The Reformers believe as firmly as the Church of Rome in the divine - human character of the Church. But - and that is the point at issue - what does Roman Catholicism

¹ John Adam Moehler, op. cit., p. 259
infer from this divine-human character of the Church? This is what Moehler says: "He (Christ) it is who, concealed under earthly and human forms, works in the Church; and this is wherefore she has a divine and a human part in an undivided mode, so that the divine cannot be separated from the human nor the human from the divine. Hence these two parts change their predicates. If the divine - the living Christ and His Spirit - constitutes undoubtedly that which is infallible and eternally inerrable in the Church, so also the human is infallible and inerrable, in the same way, because the divine without the human has no existence for us.  

Christ's presence with the Church and the guidance of His Spirit is, therefore, in the Roman Catholic view much more than what Christ's promise actually says; it is a virtual identity of Christ with the Church; for the living Christ and His Spirit - the divine element in the Church - and the human element interchange their predicates which makes the human divine, and so the Church becomes infallible and must be so.

It is of little practical consequence that according to Roman Catholic doctrine, the infallibility of the Church is limited in the human element to the time when it is acting "as the organ and as the manifestation of the divine".

1. John Adam Moehler, op. cit., p. 259
2. John Adam Moehler, op. cit., p. 259
for the Church in the Roman Catholic sense is the only competent judge of when and where the human is acting or not acting as the organ and the manifestation of the divine. Christ's promise to the Church is, therefore, understood by Roman Catholics as signifying that "the Church, in the Catholic point of view, can as little fail in the pure preservation of the Word, as in any other part of her task - she is infallible".

Whatever explanations Roman Catholics may give as to the limitations of infallibility in the human element of the Church, their position for all practical purposes is well defined by John Calvin when he says: "When they (Roman Catholics) assert that the Church cannot err, their meaning is, as they themselves explain it, that as it is governed by the Spirit of God, it may safely proceed without the Word (of God): that whithersoever it goes, it can neither think nor speak any thing that is not true and therefore that, if it determine any thing beyond or beside the divine Word, the same is to be considered in no other light than as a certain oracle of God. If we grant the first point, that the Church cannot err in things essential to salvation, our meaning is that its security from error is owing to its renouncing all its own wisdom and submitting itself to the Holy Spirit, to be

1. John Adam Moehler, op. cit., p. 261
taught by means of the Word of God. This, then, is the difference between us. They ascribe to the Church an authority independent of the Word; we maintain it to be annexed to the Word and inseparable from it". 1

Cunningham, though of course agreeing with Calvin that the Church's one safeguard from error is complete subjection to the authority of God, goes even further in his repudiation of the Roman Catholic position. He opposes to the unscriptural claim of a visible society, the Church of Rome, continuing here on earth without any mixture of error, always infallible, the view that the promise of Christ's continued presence with the Church and of the guidance of the Spirit of truth does not bear the meaning nor warrant the interpretation put forward by Roman Catholicism. He interprets Christ's promise as meaning: firstly, that the Church on earth will "enjoy and affect all that He (Christ) intended it to enjoy and effect" 2 - in other words, the Church cannot and will not fail in her divinely appointed task and purpose; and secondly, that God's elect people will become acquainted with and ultimately accept the knowledge of salvation, and having really entered Christ's service, they can devote

1. John Calvin, Institute, Book IV, Chap. VIII, Sec. 13 see also John Adam Moehler, op. cit., p. 277
themselves to the advancement of His cause and the discharge of all their duties without fear of failure. ¹

For Cunningham then, the promise of Christ in so far as it applies to the visible Church generally and not to the Apostles and the special position they occupied, does not warrant a claim to any kind of infallibility of inerrancy. He recognises that Christ's promise secures the establishment and preservation of a Church here on earth but secures them only in so far as this corresponds with God's intended design, whatever this may be. ² If it could be proved from Scripture that it actually is God's purpose that there should always be on earth a widely extended Church, infallible in the maintenance and proclamation of the divine truth, then - Cunningham concedes - the infallible maintaining and proclaiming of the truth would be accomplished through the presence of Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit; but as it cannot be established from Scripture that such were Christ's intentions, Cunningham repudiates the Roman Catholic claim and concludes that it is not implied in Christ's promise to the Church. ³

The infallibility of the Church - of the Church of Rome, or any other Church, even of the visible Church as a whole - is thus rejected; and Cunningham endorses the Reformed

¹ William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II p. 33
² William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II p. 33
³ William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II pp. 33f
teaching as contained for instance in the Westminster Confession, according to which not only has Christ not given us any reason to expect a visible Church which would always be infallible in the maintaining and proclaiming of the truth - His promise does not secure it - but He has given definite indications that in the Church there would be error and corruption, which can only mean that His promise was and is not supposed to prevent it.

1. Westminster Confession, Chap. XXV, Sec. 5.
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 34.
CHAPTER II.

THE GOVERNMENT AND ORGANISATION OF THE CHURCH.

1. The Rule of Faith and Practice

A study of Protestantism reveals very clearly that its divisions are due to a large extent to the different ideas which Protestants entertain as to how the Church of Christ on earth should be governed and organised. The government of the visible Church has undoubtedly been one of the main factors and reasons which have prevented the various branches of Reformed Christianity from presenting a united front against the Church of Rome. Although all sections of Protestantism have been unanimous in their rejection and repudiation of the Roman Catholic system of Church government, there has been neither unity nor uniformity nor unanimity among Protestants, when it comes to the problem of replacing the Roman Catholic system by a doctrine and scheme of Church government and organisation which have the support of all or which have, in the opinion of all, the warrant of Scripture.

The great difficulty with which every investigation of and inquiry into Church government is faced, is of course the great scarcity of direct rules, and formal laws in Scripture.
in this respect. In spite of this lack of direct information, however, most denominations, including the Church of Rome, have claimed that their own particular form of Church government is laid down in and borne out by Scripture. At the same time, it is admitted by all that only the leading features and fundamental principles of their respective systems of government are revealed in Scripture and that therefore certain minor details of constitution and organisation are left to the Church itself, being determined by local circumstances and the changes of time and age.

It is Cunningham's contention that the government and organisation of the Church on earth ought not to be left to the will and devices of men, because God has given in His Word, though in the main not directly, instructions as to how the Church should be governed and organised. As it is recognised by Cunningham that Scripture does not contain many direct rules, the obvious question which arises is what constitutes the rule of faith and practice in Church government or rather what can be derived from Scripture as the rule of faith and practice. Cunningham claims that as the Apostles acted in the name of Christ and in obedience to His will and were commissioned by Him to organise His Church as a distinct visible society and to make provisions for preserving and perpetuating it to the
end of the world, the practice which they adopted in planting, establishing and organising Churches, ought to be the example to be followed, the pattern to be imitated and the rule to be obeyed in the government of the Church in all ages.

This means that for Cunningham the rule of faith and practice is APOSTOLIC PRACTICE. The rules observed by the Apostles and the arrangements made by them when organising Churches "constitute", writes Cunningham, "when combined together, a full scheme or system of government; what may be justly and reasonably called a particular form of Church government". Cunningham is thus in full agreement with Calvin who says: ".... their (Apostles') very name shows what degree of liberty they were allowed in their office; that if they were Apostles, they were not to declaim according to their own pleasure, but to deliver with strict fidelity the commands of Him who had sent them". It is evident that for Reformed Theologians like Cunningham and Calvin, the teaching, example and practice of the Apostles have the authority of Christ Himself, and are therefore the binding rule laid upon the Church in all ages. If this is accepted as a general principle, Cunningham is right in saying that "a particular form of

2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II. p. 75
3. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. VIII, Sec. 4.
Church government has been laid down in Scripture as permanently binding upon the Church of Christ", which form to our mind is the Presbyterian type of Church government.

In all fairness, however, it must be stated that the general principle according to which Apostolic Practice "is, and was intended to be, a binding rule to the Church in all ages; that the Christian Churches of subsequent times ought, de jure, to be fashioned after the model of the Churches planted and superintended by the Apostles", is not peculiar to Presbyterianism. Furthermore, it must be conceded that the general principle proves no more than that there ought to be a particular form of Church government; but it does not prove that Presbyterianism is this particular form. Roman Catholics, Episcopalians and Congregationalists as well as Presbyterians, recognise the binding character of Apostolic Practice, base on it the claims for their respective systems of Church organisation and assert that in governing and administering their Churches as they do, they are following in the footsteps of the Apostles and imitating their example. It is evident that all forms of Church government are supposed to be derived from the practice which the Apostles adopted when planting and superintending Churches. Therefore before it is possible to assess the merits of any one form of Church government in the light of

what the Apostles revealed through their practice, it is necessary and essential to define what is to be understood by APOSTOLIC PRACTICE.

Cunningham contends that the Presbyterian form of Church government is fashioned after the model of the Churches established by the Apostles and is therefore de jure the form of government which the Church on earth should adopt in all ages in obedience to Christ's Will. The main clue to Cunningham's argument in favour of Presbyterianism is to be found in the Reformed Doctrine of the sufficiency and perfection of the Written Word of God. This doctrine imposes severe limitations on what can be accepted as Apostolic Practice; for if Scripture is the only standard, the practice of the Apostles is a binding rule and permanent obligation, only if and in so far as it is "itself established from the Word of God" and does "not rest merely upon materials derived from any other and inferior source".

Here again Calvin is of the same opinion as Cunningham. "Let us lay down this, then, as an undoubted axiom" - he writes - "that nothing ought to be admitted in the Church as the Word of God but what is contained first in the Law and the Prophets, and secondly in the writings of the Apostles, and that there is no other method of teaching aright in the Church than according to the direction and standard of that

2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 65
Word". He goes on to say that "this is the extent of the power with which the Pastors of the Church ....... ought to be invested; that by the Word of God they may venture to do all things with confidence ......... Between the Apostles and their successors, however, there is ......... this difference, that the Apostles were the certain and authentic amanuenses of the Holy Spirit, and therefore their writings are to be received as the oracles of God; but succeeding Ministers have no other office than to teach what is revealed and recorded in the sacred scriptures".

According to Reformed Doctrine, therefore, Apostolic Practice is a binding rule only if it is revealed in or can be established from the New Testament. If Scripture is the only standard in all matters concerning the Church - and Presbyterians believe this to be the case - Cunningham is justified in saying that "it follows that anything which is imposed upon the Church as binding by God's authority or jure divino, whether the medium or proximate source of obligation be Apostolic Practice or anything else, must be traced to and established by something contained in or fairly deducible from Scripture. Unless Scripture proof be adduced, we are entitled at once to set aside all claim alleged, upon our submission".

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. VIII, Sec. 8
2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. VIII, Sec. 9
Let us compare the claims which Cunningham is making for Presbyterian Church Government, his findings and contentions, with those of John Owen representing Congregationalism and those of Richard Hooker representing Episcopalianism. John Owen accepts the authority of Apostolic Practice with the limitation imposed by the doctrine of the sufficiency and perfection of Scripture; Hooker accepts Apostolic Practice but does not limit it to what is contained in the New Testament.
2. The Lawfulness of omitting certain Apostolic Practices from the Government of the Church.

While Cunningham states categorically that "it is unwarrantable and unlawful to introduce into the government and worship of the Christian Church any arrangements and ordinances which have not been positively sanctioned by Christ and His Apostles"¹, he agrees "that everything which the Apostles did or sanctioned connected with the administration of the affairs of the Church is not necessarily and ipso facto, even when contained in or deduced from Scripture, binding universally and permanently upon the Church".² In other words, though the lawfulness of introducing anything which has not the positive sanction of Christ or His Apostles is denied, the lawfulness is admitted of omitting or abrogating certain practices or ordinances, even though they are sanctioned by scripture and were at one time a binding rule.

In making this admission Cunningham realises, of course, that a certain degree of doubt is introduced into the application of the general principle of the authority of Apostolic Practice, if "there are some things made known to us in Scripture about the Apostolic Churches, which were local

¹. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 72
². William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 66
and temporary and not binding permanently upon the Church in future ages". He asserts, however, that neither the qualifications with which the general principle is to be held "nor the difficulties that may arise in particular cases, as to the practical application of the principle viewed in connection with these qualifications and limitations, warrant us in refusing to admit and maintain it and to make a reasonable application of it".

A typical example of lawful abrogation of an Apostolic ordinance is the rule imposed by the Apostles on Gentile Christians of abstaining from things strangled and blood. Though in a different context Calvin states the Reformed viewpoint on lawful abrogation in his Institutes as follows: "He who shall have duly considered these things, will not afterwards be deceived by the fallacy of those who attempt to justify their tyranny (Church of Rome) by the example of the Apostles, as if they had begun to infringe the liberty of the Church by their decree. But that they may not be able to avoid confirming this solution by their own confession, let them tell me by what right they have dared to abrogate that decree. They can only reply: Because there was no more danger from those offences and dissensions which the Apostles

intended to guard against, and they knew that a law was to be judged of by the end for which it was made. As this law, therefore, is admitted to have been made from consideration of charity, there is nothing prescribed in it any further than charity is concerned. When they (Roman Catholics) confess that the transgression of this law is no other than a violation of charity, do they not thereby acknowledge that it is not a novel addition to the Law of God but a genuine and simple application of it to the times and manners for which it was designed?"¹

For Reformed Theologians, omission or abrogation of certain Apostolic practices is therefore lawful, if the end for which they were designed, was achieved. The end which the rule of abstaining from things strangled and blood was meant to achieve, was not to give offence to Jewish Christians. When the Church became predominantly Gentile, the eating of things strangled and blood was no longer a cause of offence and therefore the Apostolic ordinance of abstinence having lost its meaning and raison d'être was abolished by the Church.

Cunningham's admission that certain Apostolic

¹ John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. X, Sec 22
practices can be omitted from the government and worship of the Church, in our opinion strengthens the Presbyterian position. By inquiring what the ends of an ordinance are and for what reason it was introduced into the government of the Church, Cunningham makes it abundantly clear that Scripture is not to be looked upon as a catalogue or set of ready-made rules to be enforced at any price, but that in Scripture the general features of a form of Church government are revealed as binding for the Church in all ages, only if of a permanent and universal, and not of a local and temporary character.

There is naturally the danger of disagreeing on what may lawfully be omitted from the government and worship of the Church, but Cunningham feels that this matter can easily be regulated by the observation of and adherence to three principal rules, which undoubtedly constitute a sufficient safeguard against any unwarrantable abolition or abrogation of Apostolic practices, the character of which is not local and temporary but universal and permanent. These rules are as follows:

"First, That nothing ought to be admitted into the ordinary government and worship of the Christian Church which has not the sanction or warrant of Scriptural authority, or of
Apostolic Practice at least, if not precept; but with this exception or limitation, as stated in the first chapter of our Confession of Faith (Westminster Confession), that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the Church common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence according to the general rules of the Word which are always to be observed.

Secondly, That the Scriptural proof of any arrangement or practice having existed in the Apostolic Churches, ordinarily and prima facie imposes an obligation upon all Churches to adopt it — an obligation that is imperative and unlimited in regard to all things which obviously enter into the substance of the government and worship of the Church, and the mode in which they are administered.

Thirdly, That the onus probandi lies upon those who propose to omit anything which has the sanction of Apostolic Practice, and that they must produce a satisfactory reason for doing so, derived either from some general principle or specific statement of Scripture bearing upon the point, or from the nature of the case as making it manifest, that the particular point of practice under consideration was local and temporary.¹

¹ William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 68
In summing up Cunningham's position, we may say that:

a. The Written Word of God is the only rule of faith and practice.

b. It is in the main through the Practice of the Apostles reported in the New Testament that God makes known how His Church on earth ought to be governed, organised and administered.

c. Although a detailed directory for Church government is not to be found in Scripture, the principal features of a particular form of Church government are revealed in Scripture.

d. As Scripture is perfect and sufficient with regard to the revelation of God's Will and Truth, it is unlawful to introduce into the government and worship of the Church anything that has not the positive sanction of Scripture; though it is permissible to omit from the government of the Church those practices which can be shown in the light of Scriptural evidence to have been of a local and temporary character.

e. As there is no indication in Scripture that the main features of Church government and organisation revealed through the Practice of the Apostles were not meant to
be of an universal and permanent nature, they are a binding rule for the Church in all ages.

From this general position, Cunningham proceeds to establish his particular claim that the main features of Church government which are set forth in Scripture are those of Presbyterianism and that therefore Presbyterianism is **jure divino** the form of government which ought to be adopted by the Church in all ages. Cunningham's mode of establishing the divine right, the **jus divinum** of the Presbyterian form of Church government is that of an "induction of particulars". ¹ "We proceed", he writes, "in the way of collating from Scripture certain rules in regard to the government of the Church, which have the sanction of Apostolic Practice; we combine these together; we show that, when combined, they constitute what may be fairly called a scheme or system of Church government; and that this scheme or system is just Presbyterianism in its fundamental principles and leading features, as it has been held by the great body of those who have been usually classed under this designation". ² The method of induction of particulars leads Cunningham to the conclusion that "in its substance it (Presbyterianism) is the form in regard to which Christ has, with sufficient plainness, indicated in

---

¹ William Cunningham, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 75
² William Cunningham, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 75
His Word, by the Practice of His inspired Apostles in establishing and organising Churches; that it is His Mind and Will that it, to the exclusion of all others, in so far as they are inconsistent with it, should be the form of government adopted in His Church, and in all its branches: in other words, that Presbyterianism, in its substance or fundamental principles, is binding jure divino as the form of government by which the Church of Christ ought permanently and everywhere to be regulated.¹

¹ William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 77
3. The Council of Jerusalem as the Model of Church Government and the Apostles as ordinary ecclesiastical Office-Bearers.

It is obvious that if Apostolic Practice as set forth in the New Testament is to be taken as the pattern of Church government and organisation, the Council of Jerusalem and its proceedings must be looked upon as one of the main sources of information. Cunningham has indeed no hesitation in asserting that the 13th Chapter of Acts "affords a warrant for the general substance of some of the leading features of Presbyterian Church government". This means, of course, that if Presbyterianism is really the one and only form of Church government adopted and enforced by the Apostles in obedience to Christ's Will, at least some of its leading features and fundamental principles must be exemplified in or deducible from the proceedings of the Council of Jerusalem.

Before the principles adopted and observed by the Apostles in the conduct of the Council of Jerusalem can, however, be accepted as binding for the Church and as providing the pattern of its government and organisation in

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 44
all ages, it is necessary to find out what the status and the standing of the Apostles were when they conducted the Meeting. It is essential to know whether they were present at and in charge of the Council as ordinary office-bearers of the Church or as the infallible instruments of the Holy Spirit.

In his commentary on Acts 15, 2, Calvin writes: "Paul indeed did not depend upon the beck of the Apostles that he would change his opinion if he should have found them contrary to him, who would not have given place even to the very angels, as he boasteth in first chapter to the Galatians (Gal. 1,8); but lest the wicked should slanderously report that he was a man that stood too much in his own conceit, and which (who) was too proud and which (who) did please himself with an unseemly contempt of all men, he offered to give an account of his doctrine as it became him and as it was profitable for the Church; secondly, he presented himself before the Apostles with sure hope of victory, because he knew full well what would be their judgement, seeing they were guided by the same Spirit wherewith he was governed. Notwithstanding it may be demanded, for what purpose the men of Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas unto the rest of the Apostles;
for if they did so greatly reverence them that they stood in doubt until they had given judgement on this side or that, their faith was hitherto vain, and altogether none? But the answer is easy: seeing they knew that all the Apostles were sent by Christ alone with the same commandments, and that they had the same spirit given them, they were fully persuaded of the end and success; and undoubtedly this counsel proceeded from honest and stout men, who were not ignorant that the knaves did falsely pretend the names of James and Peter. Wherefore, they sought nothing else but that the Apostles might further a good matter with their consent.  

For Calvin, the "victory" of Paul was obviously assured and the favourable decision of the Council a foregone conclusion, because the Apostles enjoyed the special and infallible guidance of the Spirit. The reason for sending Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem at all was nothing more than an opportunity for the Apostles to further "a good matter with their consent". Calvin, however, is surely under a misapprehension in this instance; for if the decision of the Council was a foregone conclusion, there was no real reason for calling it, and the manner in which the Apostles conducted

it is of no consequence for subsequent ages. If "the giving of their consent" was the only purpose of the meeting, it did not matter very much how the decision was obtained or communicated.

More important, however, is the fact that if Paul "knew full well what would be their (the Apostles') judgement, seeing they were guided by the same Spirit wherewith he was governed", that is, if the Apostles enjoyed the special guidance of the Holy Spirit to such an extent that they could give no other decision than the one they actually gave, the Council cannot be looked upon as a pattern of Church government, simply because men in subsequent ages have not been guided by the Holy Spirit in such a way that the Church could possibly know that their decision would always be right and in accordance with the Will of God.

Cunningham does not make the same mistake as Calvin, but realises that if the Council of Jerusalem is to have the force of an example, the Apostles must have been and must have acted as ordinary office-bearers of the Church, who in this particular instance were guided by the Holy Spirit in no other or more special manner than office-bearers in subsequent ages. The proof that the Apostles did actually act as ordinary office-bearers at Jerusalem is found by him in the fact that the matter in dispute - the necessity of circumcision -
was brought before the Church at Jerusalem for a decision. In other words, the incontrovertible fact that a Council was called at all and that "the Apostles who took part in the discussion, in place of at once declaring authoritatively what was the Mind and Will of God regarding it, formally argued the question upon grounds derived at once from God's providential dealings, and from statements contained in the Old Testament Scripture, shows in Cunningham's opinion that in this instance the Apostles acted as ordinary ecclesiastical office-bearers and not as the infallible instruments of the Holy Spirit. "Here", writes Cunningham, "everything plainly indicates, and seems to have been obviously intended to indicate that inspiration was not in exercise, but that the matter was decided by means accessible to men in general under the ordinary guidance of the Spirit". It is for these reasons that Cunningham concludes that the Council of Jerusalem affords "a pattern and precedent for the proceedings of the Church ordinarily in similar circumstances".

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II pp 45f
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II p. 46
4. The Power and Authority of ecclesiastical Office-bearers

and the Place and Standing of ordinary Church Members.

We are now in a position to consider the various features and principles of Church government which have been deduced by Presbyterians like Cunningham from the instructions and directions given and the methods adopted by the Apostles at the Council of Jerusalem. It has already been stated that Cunningham maintains that the features and principles deducible from the proceedings of the Council of Jerusalem (and other parts of Scripture) when combined together, are those of Presbyterianism. We shall proceed to show what the principal features of Presbyterian Church government are, and then compare them with those of Episcopalianism and Congregationalism. This comparison will disclose a very interesting fact. Presbyterian Church government as Cunningham puts it "occupies the golden mean between Prelacy on the one hand, and Congregationalism on the other; holding some principles in regard to the government of the Church in common with Prelatists against Congregationalists, and others in common with Congregationalists against the Prelatists."

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 545
and what is still more important, Presbyterians "have the concurrence of Episcopalians in the leading points in which they differ from the Congregationalists and the concurrence of the Congregationalists in the leading points in which they differ from Episcopalians".

To start with, we shall deal with those features and principles of Church government which Presbyterians hold in common with Episcopalians against Congregationalists.

The form of Church government depends, of course, largely upon the choice of persons who are vested with power and authority to govern the Church. Cunningham finds the answer to this vital question in Acts 15, 6: "And the Apostles and Elders came together for to consider of this matter" - he calls it "the regular formal minute of sederunt" - and in Acts 16, 4 - "....... the decrees ........ that were ordained of the Apostles and Elders". From these two passages he derives the first fundamental principle and main feature of Presbyterian Church government. Acts 15, 6 and 16, 4 show that the Council of Jerusalem as such was composed exclusively of the Apostles and Elders, the office-bearers of the Church, and that they alone ordained the decrees of the Council; which bears out the Presbyterian principle, that the authority and

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 547
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 50
power to ordain decrees, that is to govern the Church, is
and ought to be vested exclusively in ecclesiastical office-
bearers. Although it can be assumed that the ordinary members
of the Church, the "brethren", were present at the meeting,
were consulted by the Apostles and Elders and conurred in the
latter's final decision, there can be little doubt that
Cunningham is right in asserting that the Council of Jerusalem
proper consisted of ecclesiastical office-bearers - Apostles
and Elders - to the exclusion of the brethren - i.e. the
ordinary members of the Church. This sanctions, of course,
"the Presbyterian principle of the right of the office-bearers
of the Church as distinguished from the ordinary members,
to decide judicially any disputes that may arise about the
affairs of the Church - to be the ordinary interpreters
and administrators of Christ's Laws for the government of
His House". In short, the Presbyterian principle according
to which a clear distinction is to be made between the office-
bearers and the ordinary members of the Church, the right to
govern the Church belonging to the former and the duty of
obedience being imposed on the latter, is based on the procedure
adopted by the Apostles at the Council of Jerusalem and

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II p. 50
derived from it.

It is not surprising that on such a vital point, Cunningham should be in complete agreement with Calvin. Calvin's interpretation of Acts 15, 6 is as follows:— "Luke saith not that all the whole Church was gathered together but those who did excel in doctrine and judgement, and those who according to their office were competent judges in this matter. It may be, indeed, that the disputation was had in presence of the people. But lest any man should think that the common people were suffered hand over head to handle the matter, Luke doth plainly make mention of the apostles and the Elders, as it was more meet that they should hear the matter and to decide it. But let us know that here is prescribed by God a form and an order in assembling Synods, when there ariseth any controversy which cannot otherwise be decided ......."

Power and authority to govern the Church are thus vested solely and exclusively in ecclesiastical office-bearers and not in the ordinary members of the Church. Whatever may be the rights of the Congregation, the Christian people—and they have very definite rights—the right to govern the Church does not belong to them but to the office-bearers.

1. Original Latin: Legitimi
2. John Calvin, Commentary on Acts.
Up to this point Prelatists, even Roman Catholics, would have little hesitation in agreeing with Presbyterians. They, too, accept the principle evinced by the proceedings of the Council of Jerusalem, that ecclesiastical office-bearers alone have the authority to govern the Church and that ordinary members ought to submit to their decisions. How then is Presbyterian Church government different from this? The difference becomes obvious when due attention is paid to the limitations which Presbyterianism imposes on the extent to which the above-mentioned principle ought to be held and applied in the government of the Church.

According to Presbyterian teaching, the power of ecclesiastical office-bearers on the one hand, and the obedience of ordinary Church members on the other are very definitely limited by their being subject to Scripture which is the sole rule of faith and practice; that is to say, the power of office-bearers and the obedience of members must be consonant with the Word of God, and the Scriptural doctrine of the absolute King and Headship of Christ. Only within these confines - Scripture the sole rule of faith and practice and Christ the only King and Head of the Church - do ecclesiastical office-bearers have power and authority to govern the Church and ordinary Church members the duty of submitting to their decisions. Cunningham's position may be summarised as follows:
a. The power which is vested in ecclesiastical office-bearers is never lordly, legislative, or discretionary but purely ministerial, to be exercised in all circumstances in Christ's name, i.e. the entire subjection to His Authority and His Word. Christ, the only King of the Church, has made the Laws for the government of His Kingdom, which Laws are promulgated in His Word. Being made and fixed by Christ Himself, they cannot be altered, abrogated or extended by any human authority. For Cunningham, therefore, the power to rule and govern the Church on earth is simply and solely a question of interpreting and administering the Laws of Christ in His Name and in entire subjection to His Will, because "the office-bearers of the Church are not lords over God's heritage: they have no dominion over men's faith; they have no jurisdiction over the conscience; they are the mere interpreters of Christ's Word, the mere administrators of the Laws which He has enacted".

Two quotations from Calvin's writings will show how completely Presbyterians agree on this point. In his Commentary on Malachi 2:9 Calvin says "We now see ....... that God resigns not His own right and power when Priests are set over the Church: for God commits to them the ministration only, and on this condition, that the authority remains in Himself alone; for otherwise the Priest would not be the

messenger of the God of hosts". On Matt. 23:8, he writes "Christ therefore does not attach importance to the title bestowed on those who discharge the office of teaching but restrains them within proper limits, that they may not rule over the faith of brethren. We must always attend to this distinction that Christ alone ought to be obeyed, because concerning Him alone was the voice of the Father heard aloud from Heaven, Hear Him (Matt.17:5), and that teachers are His Ministers in such a manner that He ought to be heard in them, and that they are masters under Him, so far as they represent His person. The general meaning is that His authority must remain entire, and that no mortal man ought to claim the smallest portion of it. Thus He is the only Pastor; but yet He admits many pastors under Him, provided that He hold the pre-eminence over them all, and that by them He alone govern the Church".

b. Even the ministerial function of ecclesiastical office-bearers to interpret and administer the Laws of Christ for the government of His House is limited. As Christ neither promised infallibility to, nor conferred it on any man or class of men, ecclesiastical office-bearers, even within their proper sphere of applying Christ's Law to the government of the Church, remain fallible men; which means that they are

---

not entitled "to exact implicit and unquestioning obedience".

Here again, Cunningham had the full support of Calvin, who says in his Commentary on James 4:12: "It hence appears what is to be thought of human precepts, which cast the snare of necessity on consciences. Some indeed would have us to show modesty when we call the Pope Antichrist, who exercises tyranny over the souls of men, making himself a lawgiver equal to God. But we learn from this passage something far more, even that they are the members of Anti-Christ, who willingly submit to be thus ensnared and that they thus renounce Christ when they connect themselves with a man that is not only a mortal but who also extols himself against Him. It is, ... a prevaricating obedience, rendered to the devil, when we allow any other than God Himself to be a lawgiver to rule our souls".

c. Though ecclesiastical office-bearers are vested with the power and the authority to govern the Church and are therefore the interpreters and administrators of Christ's Laws, the right to interpret Christ's Laws does not belong exclusively to them. "Every man" - says Cunningham - "has the right of private judgment, i.e. he is entitled to interpret the Word of God for himself upon his own responsibility for the regulation of his own opinions.

and conduct, for the execution of his own functions and the discharge of his own duties, whatever these may be". The difference between ecclesiastical office-bearers and ordinary Church members (and for that matter, men in general) is that whereas all men have the right to interpret Christ's Laws for the discharge of their respective duties, in the case of office-bearers the right to interpret Christ's Laws "must be viewed in connection with this additional Scripture truth, that they are Christ's ordinance for the ordinary government of His visible Church - that it is their function and duty, while it is not the function and duty of any other party, to administer His Laws for the management of the ordinary necessary business of His Church, for deciding and regulating all those matters which require to be regulated and decided, wherever a Church of Christ exists and is in full operation". In other words, while all men have the right to interpret Christ's Laws, only ecclesiastical office-bearers have the right to interpret these Laws for the purpose of executing the function of Church government, a function which Christ has vested in them and not in the ordinary members of the Church. As the right to interpret Christ's Laws for the

purpose of executing the function of government belongs exclusively to the office-bearers of the Church, it is the duty of ordinary members to submit to their decisions unless they - the members - are sure "that these decisions are opposed to the Mind and Will of Christ and, that therefore they may confidently appeal from the decisions of the office-bearers to the tribunal of the Head of the Church Himself."

Having summarised Cunningham’s position, let us compare it with that held by John Owen, whom we have chosen to represent Congregationalism. We shall endeavour to show that the difference between Presbyterianism and Congregationalism as represented by Owen is due to a large extent to the latter’s failure to draw the right conclusions from and make the right application of the principles of vesting power in ecclesiastical office-bearers and not in the members of the Church.

On the question of the kind of power and authority which is to be exercised in the Church of Christ on earth, the views of Owen are identical with those of Cunningham. Owen accepts unreservedly the doctrine of the Kingship of Christ and teaches that as Christ is the only King and Head of the Church, all power and authority in the Church are derived from Him and that consequently “there is no rule of the Church but what is ministerial, consisting in an authoritative
declaration and application of the Commands and Will of Christ unto the souls of men, wherein those who exercise it are servants unto the Church for its edification, for Jesus' sake (2 Cor. 4,5)". Cunningham and Owen are obviously at one in their insistence on the purely ministerial character of all Church rule, which is exercised in Christ's name and on His behalf.

As to the question of who rules in the Church and has authority to do so, Owen is again in full agreement with Cunningham. Both assert that while power to rule is committed by Christ to the whole Church, the right to exercise it is granted by the King of the Church to the office-bearers of the Church, to whose authority in the discharge of their office the Church as a whole is called upon to render obedience within the limits laid down by Christ.

The measure of their agreement becomes still more evident once it is realised that Owen rejects most categorically the extremist view held by some Congregationalists according to which "the government of the Church ............ is absolutely democratical or popular." "They judge" - writes Owen - "that

2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 45
3. John Owen, op. cit., Vol.XX, p. 386
4. John Owen, op. cit., Vol.XX, p. 388
5. John Owen, op. cit., Vol.XX, p. 480
all Church power or authority is seated and settled in the community of the brethren of body of the people. And they look on Elders or Ministers only as servants of the Church; not only materially in the duties they perform, and finally for their edification, serving for the good of the Church, in the things of the Church; but formally also as acting the authority of the Church by a mere delegation, and not any of their own received directly from Christ, by virtue of His Law and Institution. Hence they do occasionally appoint persons among themselves, not called unto, not tested with any office, to administer the Supper of the Lord, or any other solemn offices of worship. On this principle and supposition, "I", remarks Owen, "see no necessity of any Elders at all, though usually they (extremists) do confer this office on some with solemnity". It is quite obvious that Owen holds, just like Cunningham, the view that "there is power, authority and rule granted unto and residing in some persons of the Church and not in the body of the fraternity or community of the people".

Owen, however, differs from Cunningham in the application of what is implied in the above principle. This

1. John Owen, op. cit., Vol. XX, p. 490
2. John Owen, op. cit., Vol. XX, p. 503
becomes plain when the principle of vesting Church rule in ecclesiastical office-bearers is brought into relationship with the place and standing of ordinary members in the Church.

The proceedings of the Council of Jerusalem once again provide guidance for the purpose of determining the place of ordinary Church members. Cunningham, taking the narrative in Acts 15, 12 - "all the multitude kept silence and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul" - asserts that here no more is said or implied than the fact that the ordinary members of the Church were present at the meeting yet "for anything that appears here, they might have been mere spectators and auditors, without having anything more to do with the matter". The next mention of Church members as distinct from office-bearers is made in Acts 15, 22: "Then pleased it the Apostles and Elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas ........." From this statement, Cunningham draws two conclusions:

a. The ordinary members of the Church who were present at the deliberations of the Council did not have the same rights and privileges and did not occupy the same place as the Apostles and elders, the office-bearers of the Church.

"They did not stand upon the same platform in the matter with the Apostles and Elders" - says Cunningham - and "they had not the same place and standing in this, any more than in the preceding part of the transaction which the office-bearers had".

b. Although the brethren, the ordinary members of the Church, present at the meeting did not form a constituent part of the assembly and could therefore not act with judicial authority, the subject under discussion was brought before them all the same; yet it was brought before them only "after the Apostles and Elders had made up their minds as to what was the Mind and Will of God in this matter and what decision should be pronounced".

Once the decision of the Apostles and elders had been made known to the people and the latter had concurred with it, it was only natural that the letter addressed to the Gentile Christians in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia should have been written in the name of those who had made the decision on the point at issue and those who had concurred with it, namely the Apostles, Elders and brethren. (Acts 15, 23). It should, however, be noted that as Acts 15, 23 reads in

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol II, p. 55
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol II, p. 55
earlier manuscripts: οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ἡγεῖτοι instead of οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ ἡγεῖτοι the Apostles and the Elder brethren or the Apostles and the elders of the brotherhood - it is doubtful that the "brethren", the ordinary members of the Church were associated with the letter to the Gentile Churches at all, though of course, they concurred with the decision it contained. We have no hesitation in saying that from the proceedings of the Council of Jerusalem no more can be deduced than that which Presbyterians like Cunningham do actually deduce and admit to be the case, namely that "in important questions affecting the welfare and peace of the Church, the people (the ordinary members of the Church) should be consulted, and that their consent and concurrence should, if possible, be secured by the fair use of Scriptural arguments addressed to their understandings". What cannot be deduced from the proceedings of the Council of Jerusalem and what Cunningham, therefore, denies to be the case is, that the consent or concurrence of ordinary Church members in the decisions pronounced by the office-bearers in the ordinary regulation of ecclesiastical affairs is necessary and indispensable so that "the with-holding

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 57
or refusal of their consent" would nullify or invalidate "the judgement" or form "a bar in the way of its taking practical effect".

From Calvin's remarks on Acts 15, 22, it can be seen that he too advocates the desirability of obtaining the consent and concurrence of Church members in the decisions of ecclesiastical office-bearers, without, however, making the effectiveness or validity of the latter's decisions depend on the former's consent. Calvin writes that "...... the modesty of the common people is gathered by this, because, after they had referred the matter to the judgement of the Apostles and the rest of teachers, they do now also subscribe to their decree; and, on the other side, the Apostles did show some token of their equity in that they set down nothing concerning the common cause of all the godly without admitting the people". The desirability of obtaining the consent of the "common people" could not have been expressed more strongly, yet Calvin's remarks show nevertheless that the subject under discussion at the Council Meeting was brought before the people for their consent and concurrence after "they had referred the matter to the judgement of the Apostles and the rest of teachers"; that is to say that however

1. William Cunningham op. cit., Vol II p. 56
2. The Question of the rights of Church members in the Election of their Pastors will be dealt with later
desirable it may have been to obtain the concurrence of ordinary Church members at Jerusalem, the decree of the Apostles and Elders was valid and effective before and not after it was subscribed to by the ordinary members of the Church.

It is on the question of whether or not the validity of the decision of ecclesiastical office-bearers depends on the consent and concurrence of ordinary Church members that Owen differs from and parts company with Cunningham. Owen, like Cunningham, looks upon the Council of Jerusalem as giving some indications as to the place and standing of ordinary Church members. His interpretation of the relevant passages is, however, different from that of Cunningham. According to Owen, the whole Church received Paul and Barnabas when they came up to Jerusalem (Acts 15:16) which is, of course, perfectly true. Owen goes on to say that when the Apostles and Elders gathered together to consider the point at issue, the whole multitude—consequently ordinary Church members too—assembled with them (Acts 15:12) which is also correct. Yet though there is no evidence for it in the narrative, Owen goes so far as to assert that the brethren were not "mute persons, mere auditors and spectators in the Assembly, but they concurred both in the
debate and determination of the question; insomuch as they are expressly joined with the Apostles and Elders in the advice given". (Acts 15:23)

Whereas Cunningham comes to the conclusion that it is desirable to consult Church members, once a decision has been arrived at by ecclesiastical office-bearers - that is to say after debate and determination of the matter, concurrence is to be sought - Owen deduces from the fact that at Jerusalem the whole Church was consulted and did actually concur with the decision of the Apostles and Elders, that ordinary Church members have a part both in the debate and determination of the question. On this interpretation of the narrative, Owen bases his view that the consent of ordinary members is necessary in matters of Church government and asserts that "unless this be observed, the primitive Church-state is overthrown".

It is our contention that a fair and reasonable exegesis of the relative passages in the narrative does not bear out Owen's viewpoint, and therefore, does not warrant his conclusions. The fact that the "whole Church" concurred in the decision of the Apostles and Elders cannot be taken to mean

1. John Owen, op. cit., Vol. XX, p. 398
2. John Owen, op. cit., Vol. XX, p. 398
or to prove or even imply that ordinary members of the Church had an active part in the reaching of this decision nor that their consent was necessary to make "the decree" valid.

Quite apart from the narrative, however, it seems to us that Owen's conclusions involve him in a contradiction. On the one hand he asserts in common with Presbyterians that "where anything is acted and disposed in the Church by suffrage or the plurality of voices, the vote of the fraternity is not determining and authoritative, but only declarative of consent and obedience". On the other hand, though he admits that power and authority do not reside in the body of the fraternity or community of the people he states that their "consent and the liberty of it is absolutely necessary according to the Law of obedience unto Christ...........". This is, in our opinion, a contradiction; for if the consent of ordinary members is necessary to make the decisions of ecclesiastical office-bearers valid, though in theory their consent may only be looked upon as a declaratory act, in practice it has and must have the effect of authoritative and determining power, because, if withheld, it would prevent the decisions of ecclesiastical office-bearers from becoming effective. If, therefore, the

1. John Owen, op. cit., p. 503
2. John Owen, op. cit., p. 503
3. John Owen, op. cit., p. 503
principle of power and authority being vested in ecclesiastical office-bearers to the exclusion of ordinary members is accepted, the only conclusion that can possibly be drawn is that of Cunningham and not that of Owen; the decisions of ecclesiastical office-bearers are valid and take effect whether or not ordinary Church members concur. For all practical purposes Owen's viewpoint makes Church rule reside in the last resort not in the office-bearers but in the members of the Church, the Congregation. This must be rejected for it is not borne out by the proceedings of the Council of Jerusalem.
The Westminster Confession states that "for the better government and further edification of the Church, there ought to be such assemblies as are commonly called Synods or Councils" and that "it belongeth to Synods and Councils ministerially to determine controversies of faith, and cases of conscience; to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God, and government of His Church; to receive complaints in cases of maladministration, and authoritatively to determine the same". Here is set forth the second fundamental feature of Presbyterian Church government - the subordination of Courts!

Subordination of Courts may be defined as the principle of vesting in synodical Assemblies the right "to exercise authority or jurisdiction over Congregational and classical assemblies, i.e., over what we now call Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries". In accepting this principle and making it a fundamental feature of Church government, Presbyterians - in common with Episcopalians and in opposition to Congregationalists - deny "that each congregation possesses ordinarily

1. Westminster Confession, Chap. XXXI, Sec. 1.
2. Westminster Confession, Chap. XXXI, Sec. 2.
a right, and a divine right, to entire and absolute independence in the regulation of all its affairs" and maintain that it is lawful and proper that there should be "such a union or organisation of different congregations together, as affords warrant and ground for the exercise of a certain measure of authoritative control by ecclesiastical office-bearers over a number of associated congregations".

According to Cunningham, it is once again the Council of Jerusalem which provides the chief warrant for the principle of the subordination of courts. It is indeed an indisputable fact that the Church of Antioch, being faced with a grave problem which demanded a solution in the interest of the whole Church of Christ, referred the entire question "to the Church of Jerusalem as to a superior Authority", and that the latter gave "an authoritative decision upon the subject referred to them". Cunningham, of course, does not contend that there is a virtual identity or complete similarity between the Council of Jerusalem and modern synodical assemblies. He admits that

5. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 60
there is no evidence "that any other Churches were present or were represented in this Council except those of Antioch and Jerusalem", yet he claims that owing to the fact that the Apostles had jurisdiction over the whole Church of Christ, "a Synod or Council of which they were constituent members might be fairly regarded as representing the Church and as thus entitled to exercise over the whole length and breadth of it whatever authority and jurisdiction was in itself right or competent".

Though modern Synods or Assemblies are not identical with the Council of Jerusalem in every respect and in all details, Cunningham is, in our opinion, entitled to assert that "the general principle or idea of a representative character or standing and of a corresponding jurisdiction or right of exercising judicial control, is sufficiently indicated and maintained by the general position of the Church at Jerusalem and especially of the Apostles who resided there and regulated and administered its affairs". All that can be and is claimed by Cunningham is, that the Council of Jerusalem conveys and countenances "the general idea or principle of courts of review, or of a subordination of courts of ecclesiastical office-bearers - of some assemblies possessed of a wider representative character, and

of a corresponding wider jurisdiction than others”. However different the Council of Jerusalem may be from modern Synods or Assemblies - if it is a pattern of Church government at all - then the essential principle which was applied to the regulation of its affairs, the subordination of courts, should be applied to the regulation of all ecclesiastical affairs in subsequent ages.

In evolving the Congregationalist system of Church government, John Owen recognises that, as the end and purpose of all particular Churches “is the edification of the Body of Christ in general or the Church catholic”, particular Churches “are obliged unto mutual communion among themselves, which is their consent, endeavour and conjunction in and for the promotion of the edification of the catholic Church; and therein their own, as they are parts and members of it”. Owen goes on to say that this communion among particular Churches “in an equality of power and order, though not of gifts and usefulness, is the only way appointed by our Lord Jesus Christ after the death of the Apostles, for the attaining the general end of all particular Churches, which is the edification of the Church catholic, in faith, love and peace”.

There is, of course, nothing in these statements which Presbyterians could not accept or which contradicts the principles laid down by them as binding for the Church. What Presbyterians derive from the Council of Jerusalem is not the principle of the subordination of one Church to another but that of the subordination of one Court to another. When Cunningham says that the Church at Antioch referred the matter under dispute "to the Church of Jerusalem as to a superior authority", he makes it abundantly clear that this superior authority was due to the presence of the Apostles as constituent members of the Assembly which may fairly be said to have made the Council at Jerusalem representative of the whole Church. The Church at Antioch submitted, therefore, to the Church of Jerusalem not qua Church of Jerusalem but qua Assembly or Court of the whole Church of Christ.

In laying down the principle of the subordination of Courts, the problem of the equality in power and order of particular Churches does not arise; for in Presbyterian Synods and Assemblies all particular Churches are equally represented. It is, therefore, on the question of the power and authority of synodical Assemblies that Presbyterians differ from Congregationalists. Whereas it is a fundamental feature of Presbyterian Church government that there should

be "the subordination of one Church to many Churches, or to their representatives", Owen asserts that "Churches have communion unto their mutual edification by advice in Synods or Councils". While Presbyterians thus uphold the principle of the subordination of Courts, Congregationalists adhere to the idea of advice and consultation in synodical Assemblies.

Owen states that "synods are the meetings of divers Churches by their messengers or delegates, to consult and determine of such things as are of common concernment unto them all...." He admits that "this acting in Synods is an institution of Jesus Christ; not in an express command, but in the nature of the thing itself, fortified with Apostolical example". Finally, he acknowledges a threefold power to be ascribed to Synods: "The first is declarative, consisting in an authoritative teaching and declaring the Mind of God in the Scripture. The second is constitutive appointing and ordaining things to be believed or done and observed by and upon its own authority; and thirdly, executive in acts of jurisdiction towards persons and Churches". According to Presbyterian teaching, the power and authority of synods are such that their "decrees and determinations, if consonant to the Word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission, not only for their

agreement with the Word, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God, appointed thereunto in His Word”.

Owen on the other hand asserts that “no office-power (is) to be exerted in such synods as such neither conjunctly by all the members of them nor singly by any of them”. “The authority of a Synod” — he says — “determining articles of faith, constituting orders and decrees for the conscientious observance of things of their own appointment, to be submitted unto and obeyed on the reason of authority ..... or acted in a way of jurisdiction over Churches or persons, is a mere human invention.”

As Presbyterians and Congregationalists accept the same rule of faith and practice, the point at issue must be decided by a careful exegesis of the relative Scriptural passages. Only the Scriptures can determine whether synodical assemblies are Courts whose function is to give merely advice to particular Churches, advice which may or may not be accepted — the Congregationalist view — or to make judicial decisions which if consonant with the Will and Mind of Christ as revealed in Scriptures ought to be obeyed by particular Churches "as being an ordinance of God, appointed thereunto in His Word" — the Presbyterian point of view.

1. Westminster Confession, Chap. XXXI Sec. 3.
2. John Owen, op. cit., Vol. XX, pp. 593f.
4. Westminster Confession, Chap. XXXI, Sec. 3.
In Acts 15:4, we are told that as Paul and Silas went through the cities "they delivered them (Christians) the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the Apostles and Elders which were at Jerusalem". In other words, the decrees of the Council of Jerusalem were communicated to particular Churches to be kept and obeyed by them. The Greek word δοθει translated "decrees" is also used in Luke 2:1: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a δοθει from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed" and again in Acts 17:7 "..... these (Christians) all do contrary to the δοθει of Caesar saying that there is another king, one Jesus". In both passages, Luke 2:1 and Acts 17:7, the term "decrees" is used in connection with Caesar. It is hardly possible to assume that Caesar's δοθει in the first and his δοθει in the second case were anything else but authoritative orders, judicial decisions, ordinances to be kept and obeyed by those to whom they were communicated. When δοθει is used in Acts 16:4 in connection with the decisions of the Council of Jerusalem, is it reasonable to look upon these decrees as advice to particular Churches which may or may not be accepted, when the same word used in connection with Caesar is accepted as having the meaning of authoritative, nay dictatorial orders? Just as Caesar Augustus did not advise his subjects to submit to a census but issued a command to
that effect, so the Council of Jerusalem did not advise particular Churches to accept their resolutions but ordered them to keep and obey its decrees.

The only possible conclusion, therefore, is that in all cases where the words "ὅµεµ" or "ὕµετα" are used, authoritative orders, judicial decisions are meant which leave no choice to those to whom they are communicated, but to receive, keep, and obey them. In as far as synodical Assemblies are concerned, the Congregationalist viewpoint in our opinion fails to take into account the clear and obvious implications of the meaning of the term "ὅµεµ" or "ὕµετα". The Presbyterian position on the other hand does full justice to the etymological meaning of the term and to the Scriptural teaching and draws from the latter the only possible conclusion, namely that synodical Assemblies do not give mere advice to particular Churches, but that they make judicial decisions, that they are superior courts which if "consonant with the Word, ..... are instances of the right working of a provision which God has made, of an ordinance which He has appointed for the administration of the affairs of His Church".

---

6. The Union and Organisation of Several particular Congregations under one government.

As previously stated, Presbyterians deny "that each Congregation possesses ordinarily a right, and a divine right, to entire and absolute independence in the regulation of all its affairs" and affirm "the lawfulness and propriety of such a union or organisation of different Congregations together, as affords warrant and ground for the exercise of a certain measure of authoritative control by ecclesiastical office-bearers over a number of associated Congregations".

The problem of the subordination of Courts which was dealt with in the foregoing paragraph and that of the union of several congregations under one government to be considered now, are, of course, only different aspects of one and the same topic. In holding the one, Presbyterians are bound to hold the other, while Congregationalists in rejecting the former, must also reject the latter.

Generally speaking, Protestants agree on three of the several senses in which the word "ἐκκλησία" is used in the New Testament:

a. the whole body of true believers in heaven and on earth which is the Catholic invisible Church.

b. the whole body of those who profess faith in Christ on earth which is the Catholic visible Church.

c. the number of those who profess faith in Christ and worship together in one place which is the local, single, or

particular congregation.

In addition to this, however, Presbyterians with the majority of Protestants hold that it is legitimate to use the term "ἐκκλησία" in a fourth sense and to apply it to a number of congregations united and organised under one government, whose Authority is set above the particular congregation. Congregationalists on the other hand, deny the existence of anything intermediate between the catholic visible Church and the particular congregation to which the term "ἐκκλησία" can legitimately and properly be applied and for which the rights, powers, and privileges of a Church as set forth in Scripture can be claimed.

In his "Inquiry into the Original, Nature, Institution, Power, Order and Communion of Evangelical Churches", Owen states that "the name of the Church under the New Testament is capable of a threefold application or it is taken in a threefold notion":

1. the Catholic invisible Church;  b. the Catholic visible Church;  and c. "for such a state, as wherein the worship of God is to be celebrated in the way and manner by Him (Christ) appointed and which is to be ruled by the power He gives it and according to the discipline which He hath ordained". Whereas Presbyterians hold that "the Scripture doth hold forth that many particular

1. John Owen, op. cit., Vol. XX, pp. 77f.
2. John Owen, op. cit., Vol. XX, p. 73
Congregations may be under one Presbyterial government", Owen sets out to prove: - a. "that Christ hath appointed this Church-state under the Gospel, namely of a particular or single Congregation" and b. "that he hath appointed no other Church-state that is inconsistent with this, much less that is destructive of it".

Presbyterians are, of course, in full agreement with Owen's first statement - the divine appointment and institution of the particular or single Congregation. They deny, however, the correctness of the second statement and maintain that there is something intermediate between the catholic visible Church and the particular Congregation to which it is legitimate, lawful, proper and Scriptural to apply the term "ἐκκλησία" and that for such a union of several Congregations together under one government all the rights, powers, and privileges of the "Church" can and ought to be claimed.

Owen only reiterates a Scriptural doctrine accepted by Presbyterians as well as by Congregationalists, when he says that God has appointed this Church-state - the single Congregation - "as the way and means whereby they (Christians) may jointly and visibly make profession of this their subjection to Him, dependence on Him, and freedom in the

1. Form of Presbyterial Church Government (1645), Sec. 90f
2. John Owen, op. cit., Vol. XX, p. 114. (Classical Assemblies'
observation of all His commands". Evan Owen's assertion that because God "will not have this done singly and personally only, but in society and conjunction", "this cannot be done in any Church-state imaginable wherein the members of the Church cannot meet together for this end, which they can only do in such a Church as is congregational", will not be contradicted by Cunningham as long as it does not mean more than it says, namely the divine appointment of particular congregations as a means of enabling Christians to fulfil their duty of corporate worship. Though Presbyterians are in full agreement with Owen as to the divine appointment of single congregations to enable believers to worship God "in society and conjunction", they cannot and do not accept the Congregationalist view according to which "no Church-state that is not immediately suited unto this end is of His institution". In other words, they deny that any other Church-state than the particular Congregation is of divine appointment.

The point at issue between Congregationalists and Presbyterians is therefore not the divine institution of the single or particular Congregation but the question whether or not the particular Congregation is the only Church-state appointed by Christ.

Owen bases his views on the etymological significance of the word \( \dot{\varkappa} \kappa \lambda \gamma \omicron \omicron \) which, expressing as it does the idea of assembling together, leads him to conclude that it "signifies nothing but a Congregation which assembles for the ends and uses of it, and acts its duties and powers". His argument, however, is in our opinion not very convincing for he admits that the term \( \dot{\varkappa} \kappa \lambda \gamma \omicron \omicron \) is sometimes applied "unto that whose essence is not denoted thereby, as the Church Catholic invisible, which is only a mystical society or Congregation". If it is admitted that the New Testament applies the term \( \dot{\varkappa} \kappa \lambda \gamma \omicron \omicron \) to a mystical society in which membership depends on God's election and in which the assembling together of members is impossible in the ordinary sense, if furthermore, it is granted that the New Testament applies the same term to the Catholic visible Church, a society in which membership depends on profession of faith in Christ but in which the actual gathering together of those who profess faith in Christ as a body in the same place is impracticable, if in other words, it is admitted that the term \( \dot{\varkappa} \kappa \lambda \gamma \omicron \omicron \) is sometimes applied "unto that whose essence is not denoted thereby", it is hardly convincing suddenly to revert to the original meaning of \( \dot{\varkappa} \kappa \lambda \gamma \omicron \omicron \) when it comes to several Congregations united and organised under one government and to deny to such a union of

congregations the name, powers, and privileges of a "Church" and to say that such an organisation is not of Christ's appointment.

Yet according to Owen "no society that doth not congregate, the whole body whereof doth not meet together to act its power and duties, is a Church or may be so called". Seeing, however, that Owen recognises that the term "ἐκκλησία" is applied in the New Testament to the Church Catholic visible and invisible, that is to say, to societies the members of which cannot congregate in the ordinary sense, it seems to us that Cunningham's viewpoint is more in keeping with New Testament usage when he states that "from the primary etymological meaning of the word "ἐκκλησία", viz. an assembly, it was quite natural that even after it was applied to designate the whole body of true believers, or the whole body of professing Christians, it should still continue to be applied to any branch or section of this body or community" - that is to say, it can be applied to any single congregation or any number of congregations united and organised under one government, whose authority is higher than that of the single congregation.

It is, however, not only the etymological meaning of the word "ἐκκλησία" which Owen puts forward in support of his position, but also what he supposes to be Apostolic Practice. He alleges that "from the nature of the Churches

---

instituted by the Apostles and their order, as it is expressed

1

in the Scripture", it can be proved that "they were all of them

2

congregational and of no other sort". According to Owen there
were Churches in so short a time after the first preaching of
the Gospel that it is impossible to conceive them in any other

3

way but as single Congregations. "It is said of most of these
Churches expressly" - writes Owen - "that they respectively
met together in one place or had their assemblies of the
whole Church, for the discharge of the duties required of
them which is peculiar unto Congregational Churches only;
so did the Church at Jerusalem on all occasions".

In defending and stating the Presbyterian position,
Cunningham does, of course, admit "that the word "κυριακή "
is applied in Scripture to a single Congregation meeting
together for the worship of God; and that on many occasions,
when the different Congregations scattered over a district
are spoken of, they are described not as the Church but the
Churches of that country".

What Cunningham does deny, however, is "that this
usage is universal in Scripture, so as to form an adequate
basis for laying down as a general principle the unwarrantable-
ness of applying the designation of a Church to anything but

In support of his view, Cunningham takes as examples the cases of Jerusalem and Ephesus. "Considering", he writes, "the numbers of converts in Jerusalem who professed their faith in Christ through the preaching of the Apostles after the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, we cannot suppose that they were all accustomed ordinarily to assemble together in one place for public worship - we cannot doubt that they commonly met in different places as distinct Congregations". "Yet these distinct Congregations" - Cunningham goes on to; say - "are still spoken of repeatedly as the Church which was at Jerusalem; and this Church, consisting of several Congregations, is represented as being under the superintendence of one united body of Apostles and Presbyters, or Elders". The same can be said about Ephesus, where there must have been several Congregations after Paul's lengthy stay. Yet these Congregations "are represented by Paul, in his address contained in the 20th Chapter of the Acts, as a flock under the superintendence of a united body of men, whom he describes as at once Presbyters and Bishops."

It could, of course, be argued that that which Cunningham adduces as proof and evidence are mere suppositions not borne out by anything which is definitely and expressly

stated in Scripture. Yet is there really no evidence for his views in the Scriptures? Is it really conceivable that in Jerusalem, e. g., over 3000 people (Acts 2:41) congregated regularly for common worship in one place? It is surely true that at Jerusalem as elsewhere when there were great numbers of Christian believers, they were divided up into groups or congregations meeting at different places (private houses) for common worship, but all of them supervised and governed by one and the same body of men - the Presbyters of the Church.

The Scriptural information we possess about the numbers of Christians at Jerusalem warrants in our opinion Cunningham's view that "the word Church in the singular number is applied to something intermediate between a single Congregation on the one hand and the Catholic or universal Church on the other - viz, to a number of congregations united together in external communion and government and that, of course, such a union of congregations is lawful and warrantable and that to whatever extent such a union or combination may lawfully go, according as circumstances or providence may admit or require it, the designation of a Church and all the general principles and rules applicable to a Church as such, may be warrantably applied to the union or combination".

This means that the word "\textit{\'i\text{\\kappa}l\text{\textgamma}r\text{\iota}}\text{\textacute{\iota}}\text{\textquoteright}" is used in the New Testament not in three senses as Congregationalists assert but in four senses as Presbyterians maintain, that is to say: the Catholic invisible Church; the Catholic visible Church; the single Congregation; and a number of Congregations united and organised under one government. The "Church" in this fourth sense has also a divine warrant for its existence and can therefore claim all the rights, powers and privileges given by Christ to His Church.

It now remains to ascertain the views which Calvin himself holds as to the problem of the subordination of courts and the union of several Congregations under one government. As the question was not controversial at the time of the Reformation, it is understandable that Calvin makes no definite statement or clear pronouncement on the point at issue between Presbyterians and Congregationalists. As a matter of fact, it is not so much from what he says about Church government and organisation but rather from what he did at Geneva in that direction, that it becomes evident that the system of Church government which he introduced was not Congregationalism but Presbyterianism.

There cannot be any possible doubt that for Calvin the jurisdiction and power of the Church reside in a Court or Council to whose authority all Congregations ought to submit, and that he finds in Scripture itself the justification for his views. "The power of the Sanhedrin" - he states - "is for
the future transferred to the Church of Christ. Till that time, the Jews had their own method of government, which as far as regards the pure institution, Jesus Christ established in His Church, and that with a severe sanction.

It will be admitted that the Sanhedrim was in the days of Christ the central authority in Jewry to which all Jews in theory at least had to submit though in practice its power and jurisdiction were restricted to the Jewish communities in Judea. The Sanhedrim at Jerusalem was supreme in Jewry; all other Courts - Councils of local synagogues, of villages and towns - were subordinate to it. Now Calvin claims that this method of government - "as far as regards the pure institution" - was established by Jesus Christ in His Church. Can there really be any doubt that Calvin just like Cunningham upholds and advocates the principle of subordination, the subordination of all ecclesiastical Courts to one of wider jurisdiction? "This power (jurisdiction) as we have stated" - Calvin goes on to say - "was not in the hands of one man, for him to act according to his own pleasure, but resided in the Assembly of the Elders, which was in the Church what a Senate is in a city". It is true that in this instance Calvin is attacking the Roman Catholic idea of centralising

4. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI, Sec. 5.
all Church power in one man, the Pope; but on the other hand, is it not equally true that he is repudiating at least by implication the Congregationalist viewpoint of Church government? He compares the Assembly of the Elders in the Church to the Senate in a city and as such a Senate in Calvin's day was the central authority in a city which had jurisdiction over all other councils or institutions subordinate to it, it is surely to be assumed that what Calvin had in mind is a Church organised not on Congregationalist but on Presbyterian lines, that is to say a Church which, consisting of many particular Congregations organised under one government, has a central Court or assembly to which all lesser courts are subordinate.

Any doubts as to what form of Church government Calvin had in mind are, however, dispelled when we look at what he introduced at Geneva. The Reformer returned from his exile in Strassburg to Geneva on the 13th September, 1541, and set immediately to work on the "Ordonnances ecclésiastiques de l’Église de Geneve", which were adopted by the "Conseil Général" of the City on the 20th November of that same year. The discipline, government and organisation of the Church as proposed by Calvin were made law by the Council of the City, though certain changes emphasising the prerogatives of the Civil Authorities were made and accepted by Church and State alike.

"The Ordonnances ecclésiastiques" of 1541 show beyond
dispute that the Church at Geneva was organised by Calvin on purely Presbyterian lines. Under the heading "du Nombre, Lieu et Temps des Prédications" we read inter alia: "Le dimanche, qu’il y ait sermon au point du jour à Saint-Pierre et Saint Gervais et à l’heure accoutumée au dit Saint Pierre, à la Madeleine et Saint Gervais. À midi, qu’il y ait catéchisme, c’est-à-dire instruction des petits enfants, en toutes les trois églises, à savoir Saint Pierre, la Madeleine et Saint Gervais. À trois heures, aussi bien en toutes les trois paroisses, le second sermon....."

It is obvious that Calvin looked upon the Church of Geneva, as something which is neither the Catholic Visible Church nor a single Congregation but something intermediate, in fact, a Church which is made up of a number of Congregations - Saint Pierre, Saint Gervais and la Madeleine. Though there were at Geneva three single and distinct Congregations, they were yet organised under one government and referred to as the Church of Geneva. Can it be denied that Calvin just like Cunningham repudiates the Congregationalist position, for obviously he too applies the word "Church" in the singular number "to something intermediate between a single Congregation on the one hand and the catholic or universal Church on the other - viz. to a number of Congregations united together in external communion and government".

Under the heading "De l'ordre qu'on doit tenir envers les Grands, pour observer bonne police en l'Église, the "Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques" of 1541 state: "Que les commis (Elders) susdits, dont il a été parlé, s'assemblent une fois la semaine avec les ministres, à savoir le jeudi, pour voir s'il n'y a nul désordre en l'église et traiter ensemble des remèdes quand il en sera besoin."

It is obvious that here Calvin contemplates an Assembly or Synod which consists of Ministers and delegates from various Congregations and which has power, authority and jurisdiction over all lesser Courts. Calvin, therefore, like Cunningham holds the view that there should be "the subordination of one Court to another of wider jurisdiction, of the subordination of one Church to many Churches, or their representatives."

It can easily be seen that Cunningham holds exactly the same position as Calvin, a position which may be summarised in the words of "The Form of Presbyterial Church Government of 1645": "The Scripture doth hold forth that many particular Congregations may be under one Presbyterial government."

1. John Calvin, op. cit., p. 43.
3. op. cit., Sec. "of Classical Assemblies".
7. The Unlawfulness and Unwarrantableness of Episcopacy.

In the foregoing pages our investigation was concerned with those principles of Church government and organisation which Presbyterians hold in common with Episcopalians against Congregationalists. We now pass on to the leading points of Church government in which Presbyterians in common with Congregationalists differ from Episcopalians. There are in the main two features which fall into this category: the question of Episcopacy as a distinct and superior ecclesiastical order, and the problem of the rights of the Christian people in the election of their Pastors.

We are, of course, aware of the fact that the question of ecclesiastical orders raises a number of important points, i.e. the problem of the Papacy in the Church of Rome; the exact functions to be assigned to the different classes of ecclesiastical office-bearers; the admission of laymen to the Diaconate and Presbyterate, etc. As Presbyterians and Episcopalians agree, however, in principle at least on the existence of two distinct orders in the Church — Presbyters and Deacons — and concede that both were instituted by the Apostles to continue permanently in the Church, our investigation will concern itself solely with the question of whether or not there should "exist permanently in the Church of Christ, a separate and distinct order of ordinary office-bearers superior to Pastors, invested with jurisdiction over them, and possessed of the exclusive right
of performing certain functions which are essential to
the preservation of an organised Church, and the ordinary administra-
tion of ecclesiastical affairs."

Episcopalian answer this question in the affirmative,
which means that they must maintain that "Presbyterians want
(lack) an important and divinely authorised order of office-
bearers, which they (Episcopaliens) have; and that, in
consequence of the want of this order (Bishops), there are
certain necessary ecclesiastical functions, such as confirmation
and ordination (exclusively appropriated to this higher order),
which cannot be validly or at least regularly executed in
Presbyterian Churches".

Presbyterians, of course, repudiate this Episcopalian
allegation and contend not only "that they have all the classes
of ordinary office-bearers which the Apostles instituted
that the ordinary Pastors are fully authorised to execute all
the functions which are necessary to the right administration
of the affairs of the Church", but also "that the Episcopaliens
have introduced a new, unauthorised and unnecessary order of
office-bearers".

For the purpose of this investigation we have chosen
Richard Hooker as the exponent of the Episcopalian system and

shall set his views on Prelacy against those of Cunningham.

It must be clearly understood from the outset, that in defending Presbyterian orders Cunningham does not deny the lawfulness of according special authority to a particular Presbyter. He recognises that the Presbyters should appoint one of their number to preside over them and that such a President or Moderator should have in virtue of his appointment and special position "a certain measure of superior power or authority". He also admits that as there is not laid down in Scripture any very definite standard of the precise degree of power or authority which the President or Moderator should possess, or of the precise length of time during which he might be allowed to continue in office, a great deal in settling these points depends on times and circumstances. Although Cunningham is aware of the "general injurious tendency of such an arrangement", he sees no fundamental objection to a "perpetual Moderatorship" or to "the Presbyters appointing one of their number to fill their chair ad vitam aut culpam. He furthermore concedes "that special and extraordinary circumstances might warrant the Church in extending somewhat, for a time, the power of a President or Moderator and, more generally, in delegating extraordinary powers to individuals".

There cannot be any doubt that Cunningham is in full agreement with the views expressed by Calvin. Calvin too sees the necessity of having due regard to times and circumstances in the settling of certain aspects of Church government. In commenting on the word "Bishop" in Phil. 1, 1, he says that "afterwards (original French: depuis les temps de l'Apostre) there crept in the custom of applying the name of Bishop exclusively to the person whom the Presbyters in each Church appointed over their company (original French: ordonnoyent conducteur de leur congrégation). It originated, however" - Calvin writes - "in a human custom, and rests on no Scripture authority. I acknowledge indeed", he goes on to say, "that as the minds and manners of men are, there cannot be order maintained among the Ministers of the Word without one presiding over the others".

Calvin goes so far as to say that only "from the corrupted signification of the word (Bishop) this evil has resulted, that as if all the Presbyters (original French: tous prestres et pasteurs) were not colleagues called to the same office, one of them, under the pretext of a new appellation, usurped dominion over the others".

In examining the form of the ancient Church he

1. John Calvin, Commentary on Philippians tr. by John Pringle, Edinburgh 1851
2. John Calvin, Commentary on Philippians tr. by John Pringle, Edinburgh 1851
deals with the office of Bishop as follows: "All those to whom the office of teaching was assigned were denominated Presbyters. To guard against dissension, the general consequence of equality, the Presbyters in each city chose one of their own number, whom they distinguished by the title of Bishop. The Bishop however was not so superior to the rest in honour and dignity, as to have any dominion over his colleagues; but the functions performed by a consul in the senate, such as to propose things for consideration, to collect the votes, to preside over the rest in the exercise of advice, admonition, and exhortation, to regulate all the proceedings by his authority and to carry into execution whatever had been decreed by the general voice - such were the functions exercised by the Bishop in the assembly of the Presbyters".

It is an indisputable fact that Cunningham and Calvin are in full agreement on the following points:

a. There is in the Church no class or order of office-bearers superior to Presbyters, who are all essentially equal in power and authority.

b. Owing to the necessity of times and the force of circumstances and taking into account "the minds and manners
of men", it is permissible or even necessary that one
Presbyter should be chosen and appointed to preside over the
rest, be his title what it may: President, Moderator or
even Bishop.

c. In virtue of his office a Moderator or President
of the Assembly of Presbyters may have "a certain measure of
superior power or authority" delegated to him by the Church
or by its lawful representatives.

It is also obvious that Cunningham and Calvin alike
deny that the office of a Moderator is essentially different
from that of any other Presbyter or that the former belongs
to an order superior to that of the Presbyterate. Both deny
that the Moderator is entitled to exercise jurisdiction over
the other Presbyters and that certain functions can be
performed by him alone, so that without him an organised Church
cannot be preserved and the ordinary administration of
ecclesiastical affairs cannot be undertaken.

While Presbyterians thus concede that in special
and extraordinary circumstances and for a certain length of
time the Church may delegate a certain measure of power and
authority to a Moderator or to individuals, Episcopalians
maintain that in all circumstances - ordinary and extraordinary-

1. John Calvin, Commentary on Philippians (Phil. 1; 1)
there is and ought to be in the Church a class of ecclesiastical office-bearers - Bishops - whose office is superior to that of Presbyters and that these office-bearers - the Bishops - in virtue of their office have jurisdiction over Presbyters and that they alone can perform certain functions - ordination etc. - necessary to the continued existence of an organised Church.

In the 7th Book of his Ecclesiastical Polity, Richard Hooker admits that from the term "Bishop" no inference can be drawn as to the special authority and power claimed for Prelates, because the term was used in "ecclesiastical writings" to designate all Church Governors alike and not the "chiefest" only.

Though it seems to us that the universal use of the word "Bishop" for all Church Governors alike points rather conclusively to the fact that they were all alike and were therefore possessed of the same power and authority, Hooker maintains that the office which came to be designated by the term "Bishop" was in existence before the term was actually applied to it. "Because the things themselves" - Hooker says - "are always ancienter than their names; therefore that thing which the restrained use of the word doth import, is likewise

ancienter than the restraint of the word is, and consequently that power of chief ecclesiastical Overseers, which the term of a Bishop importeth, was before the restrained use of the name which doth import it".

Though Hooker admits that at first all Church Governors were called Bishops, he contends that there has always been in the Church the office of a Minister of God "unto whom with permanent continuance there is given not only power of administering the Word and sacraments which power other Presbyters have; but also a further power to ordain ecclesiastical persons, and a power of chiefty in government over Presbyters as well as laymen, a power to be by way of jurisdiction a Pastor even to Pastors themselves. So that this office, as he is a Presbyter or Pastor, consisteth in those things which are common unto him with other Pastors as in ministering the Word and sacraments; but those things incident unto his office, which do properly make him a Bishop, cannot be common unto him with other Pastors".

In support of his view that even though the term "Bishop" was originally used to designate all Church Governors alike, the episcopal office was in existence "before the restrained use of the name which doth import it", Hooker quotes

the case of Matthias who was elected to be an Apostle and whose office is termed ΠΥθΟΝ (Acts 1, 20) and deduces from this that the Apostles were the first Bishops of the Church. Once again, he admits, however, that "the word ΠΥθΟΝ, expressing that part of their (the Apostles') office which did consist in regiment, proveth not 

........ their chiefy in regiment over others, because as then that name was common unto the function of their inferiors, and not peculiar unto theirs". In our opinion, Hooker's argument is most unconvincing for if ΠΥθΟΝ was the name common to the function of all, is it not much more likely that the function of all was the same and that none had "chiefy in regiment over others?".

Hooker tries to overcome the difficulty by arguing that "the history of their (the Apostles') actions sheweth plainly enough how the thing itself which that name ΠΥθΟΝ appropriated importeth, that is to say, even such spiritual chiefy as we have already defined to be properly episcopal, was in the holy Apostles of Christ". Presbyterians admit, of course, that the Apostles occupied a peculiar position in the Church and were in many ways "superior" to ordinary Presbyters.

They claim, however, that whatever chiefty or superiority in regiment the Apostles may have had, was not due to their being Prelates or Bishops in the Episcopalian sense, that is, belonging to a third or higher class of ecclesiastical office-bearers, but to the fact that they held an extraordinary office - that of the Apostolate - which was not "instituted to be of perpetual continuance in the Church ....".

Although Hooker recognises that the Apostolate was an extraordinary office which was not to be continued permanently in the Church, he yet maintains that the Apostles combined in their persons two separate offices - the one Apostolic and the other Episcopal, the former extraordinary and now extinct, the latter ordinary and permanent. He contends that Bishops are the successors of the Apostles qua Bishops, in that Bishops exercise the kind of "Episcopal function whereby they (the Apostles) had power to sit as spiritual ordinary judges both over laity and over clergy where Churches Christian were established". Hooker can, however, produce no evidence that the Episcopal office existed before it was actually termed πρίσκοπος or that any "superiority" the Apostles did have, was not due to their extraordinary and

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. III, Sec. 4
now extinct office - the Apostolate.

Another example of end proof for New Testament Episcopacy is found by Hooker in the cases of Timothy and Titus, who deputised for the Apostle Paul in Ephesus and Crete. Here again it is admitted by Cunningham and by Calvin, that Timothy and Titus seem to have exercised some jurisdiction over the Churches at Ephesus and Crete. Cunningham and Calvin deny, however, that the office Timothy and Titus held was that of Prelates or diocesan Bishops. Whatever superior jurisdiction they were possessed of was due, according to Presbyterian teaching, to their office of Evangelist, which like the Apostolate was unique and extraordinary and is now extinct; or it was due to the right of the Church to vest special powers in certain circumstances and for a time in individuals.

"It may be thought" - writes Calvin - "that he (Paul) gives too much power to Titus when he bids him appoint Ministers for all the Churches. That would be almost royal power. Besides, this method takes away from each Church the right of choosing, and from the College of Pastors the power of judging; and thus the sacred administration of the Church would be almost wholly profaned. "The answer" - Calvin goes on to say -

2. John Calvin, Commentary on Titus (1; 5) tr. by William Pringle, Edinburgh, 1856
3. John Calvin, Commentary on Titus (1; 5) tr. by William Pringle, Edinburgh 1856
"is easy. He (Paul) does not give permission to Titus that he alone may do everything in this matter and may place over the Churches those whom he thinks fit to appoint to be Bishops; but only bids him preside as Moderator at the elections, which is quite necessary".

Even if it could be shown from the New Testament that Timothy and Titus did hold ordinary and perpetual offices, Episcopalians, as Cunningham points out, could still not prove the case for Episcopacy; for the activities and position of Timothy at Ephesus and of Titus in Crete indicate at the most that they possessed "a superior potestas jurisdictionis", but do not "afford any evidence in support of their (Timothy's and Titus') possessing a higher potestas ordinis, in virtue of which their presence could be held indispensable to the valid or even the regular performance of any necessary ecclesiastical acts".

Indeed there is no evidence in the New Testament "that the Apostles any more than Timothy and Titus, exercised any exclusive potestas ordinis; in other words, there is no evidence that after Presbyters had once been settled and ordained there were any ordinary ecclesiastical functions, for the performance of which these Presbyters were incompetent and

1. John Calvin, Commentary on Titus (1:5)
for which the presence of an Apostle was necessary”.

In summarising the Presbyterian position, we may state that Episcopacy cannot be established from the New Testament because:—

a. There is no evidence that the Apostles combined in their persons two distinct offices: the extraordinary office of the Apostolate and the ordinary permanent office of Bishop (in the Episcopalian sense).

b. There is no evidence that the Apostles appointed successors to their alleged Episcopal offices.

c. There is no evidence that in the absence of the Apostles or their deputies, Timothy and Titus, ordinary ecclesiastical functions, i.e. ordinations, etc. could not be performed.

Hooker makes a very telling admission when he says that "all Churches by them (Apostles) erected received from them the same faith, the same sacraments, the same form of public regiment" and that "the form of regiment by them established at first was that the laity or people should be subject unto a College of ecclesiastical persons which were in every such city appointed for that purpose". Hooker thus admits that the original form of Church government established by the Apostles was "a College of ecclesiastical

persons" - Presbyterians call it a Presbytery - and that the laity or people were subject to these ecclesiastical office-bearers who according to Hooker, were called sometimes Presbyters and sometimes Bishops.

Although Hooker maintains that this College of Presbyters or Bishops was subject to the Apostles as to higher Governors appointed of God to be over them, he does not deny that it exercised jurisdiction over the people. We may add that there is evidence in the New Testament which shows that the College's authority was not confined to potestas jurisdictionis but included potestas ordinis.

While St. Paul reminds Timothy in 2 Tim. 1:6 of the putting on of his (Paul's) hands, it becomes plain from 1 Tim. 4:14 that the Presbytery or College of ecclesiastical persons shared in this act of ordination in such a way and to such an extent, that Paul could use the expression "the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery" and "putting on of my hands" interchangeably: which can only mean that he performed the act of ordination and used the potestas ordinis on behalf and in the name of the Presbytery, of all Presbyters. If, however, it can be shown that in the New Testament the Presbytery was possessed not only of potestas jurisdictionis but also of potestas ordinis, the likelihood of the Apostles

3. 1 Tim. 4:14.
4. 2 Tim. 1:6.
themselves having instituted an order of office-bearers - that of Bishops - to whom alone the power of jurisdiction and ordination etc. belongs, becomes to say the least of it exceedingly remote and dubious.

Yet Hooker avers that already in Apostolic times, so as to avoid strife and contention, it was necessary to change the original form of Church government and to appoint ecclesiastical office-bearers with Episcopal authority, giving them pre-eminence or principality "in those things wherein the equality of many agents was the cause of disorder and trouble."

It is, of course, true that there was already in the days of the Apostles dissension and strife in the Church; but Hooker fails once again to furnish evidence from the New Testament which proves that these disorders induced the Apostles to abandon the original form of Church government and to introduce and establish a new form of government, the main characteristic of which is a third order or class of ecclesiastical office-bearers - that of Bishops - distinct from Presbyters and Deacons and superior to both. We have no hesitation in saying that whatever be the merits of Episcopacy, there is no evidence of it in the New Testament nor is there in the New Testament any indication of a government which was originally based on the equality of all Presbyters but which changed owing to adverse

circumstances into Episcopacy.

How then do Episcopalians like Hooker claim divine authority for their system of Church government? "All things we grant which are in the Church ought to be of God", he writes, "but forasmuch as they may be two ways accounted such one if they be of His own institution and not of ours, another if they be of ours and yet with His approbation; this latter way there is no impediment, but that the same thing which is of men may be also justly and truly said to be of God, the same thing from heaven which is from earth...... The rule to discern when the actions of men are good, when they are such as they ought to be, is more ample and large than the Law which God hath set particulars down in His Holy Word; the Scripture is but a part of that rule as hath been heretofore at large declared...... Sufficient it is for the proof of lawfulness in any thing done, if we can show that God approveth it. And of His approbation the evidence is sufficient, if either Himself have by revelation in His Word warranted it, or we by some discourse of reason find it good of itself and unrepugnant unto any of His revealed Laws and Ordinances".

The point at issue between Presbyterians and Episcopalians is thus in the last resort the question of what is to be accepted as the standard of authority, as the rule

of faith and practice. Cunningham, holding the doctrine of the perfection and sufficiency of Scripture in all that pertains to salvation, must necessarily reject everything which has not the warrant of Scripture and endorses the teaching of the Westminster Confession according to which "the whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life is either expressly set down in Scripture or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men". Hooker, on the other hand, taking Scripture only as a part of God's Rule and Law, can accept, as having divine approbation, such things as human reason finds good and which to all appearances are not directly and expressly opposed to the revealed Will of God.

With regard to Church government, Hooker is therefore able to claim divine authority for Episcopacy because, as he puts it, "whether we look into the Church or commonweal, as well in the one as in the other, both the ordination of officers and the very institution of their offices may be truly derived from God and approved of Him, although they be not always of Him in such sort as those things are which are in Scripture". In combining Scripture and human reason as

1. Westminster Confession, Chap I, Sec. 6.
the rule of faith and practice and in laying down as the only condition that things must not be opposed to God's Will and Law, (we must of course remember that it is necessarily left to human reason to decide, whether or not a thing is opposed to God's Will and Law. — Hooker, in so far as Episcopacy is concerned, is able to dispense, for all practical purposes, with the evidence contained in the New Testament and to conclude that "albeit the offices which Bishops execute had been committed unto them only by the Church, and that the superiority which they have over other Pastors were not first by Christ Himself given to the Apostles and from them descended to others, but afterwards in such consideration brought in and agreed upon as is pretended, yet could not this be a just or lawful exception against it."

Owing to their different views concerning the rule of faith and practice to be accepted, Cunningham and Hooker are bound to arrive at different conclusions as to what form the government of the Church should take. One thing, however, is sure and certain, that whosoever abides by the Reformed doctrine of the perfection and sufficiency of Scripture and accepts the Scriptures of the Old Testament and New Testament as the only rule of faith and practice, must agree with Cunningham when he states that "Prelacy was not established by the Apostles, for there is no proof of it in the New Testament."

Apostles) established only two orders of ordinary permanent office-bearers - Presbyters and Deacons, - and by uniformly using the words "Bishop, and Presbyters" interchangeably as both descriptive of one and the same class of office-bearers, and by giving us no hint whatever of any other intended permanent office, they of course designed that, in taking the Word of God for a guide and applying it for a standard of faith and practice, the Church should adhere to the Presbyterial government which they, in accordance with their Master's directions, had established.

This being the case, we can only conclude that as long as Scripture is accepted as the only rule of faith and practice, Episcopacy ought to be repudiated; for in the words of Cunningham: "First it introduces a new and unauthorised order of office-bearers into the Church. The Church is Christ's kingdom - He alone is its Sovereign - He has settled its constitution and established its laws, and He has revealed His whole Will to us concerning all these matters in His written Word. No one is entitled to prescribe laws to the Church, or to fix its office-bearers, except Him who has purchased it with His own blood; and all its arrangements should be regulated by the constitution which He has prescribed...... Secondly...... though indeed it is virtually the same charge in another form.... ... it deprives the Pastors of Churches of the power and authority which Christ has conferred upon them...."

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II., p. 262
The Rights of the Christian People or Congregation in the Election of Pastors.

In completing the survey of the government, constitution and organisation of the Church, it remains for us to assess Cunningham's view in regard to the rights possessed and the place occupied by ordinary Church members in governing their Church or congregation. Keeping in mind that Presbyterians adhere to the principle of power and authority to govern the Church, vested in ecclesiastical office-bearers, the problem of the share of ordinary members, of the Christian people or Congregation in the government of the Church, resolves itself for all practical purposes, into the question of the share which Church members exercise in the election and appointment of their Pastors.

It was this problem which led to the great battle of Scottish Presbyterianism, a battle which ended in the "Disruption". As our investigation, however, is not concerned with the historical aspects of the Disruption Controversy which had such far-reaching results for the unity of Scottish Presbyterianism, nor with Cunningham's place in the events leading up to the Disruption, nor finally with his leadership in the dissenting body, the Free Church of Scotland, we shall deal solely with the doctrinal aspects of Cunningham's teaching on the point under consideration.

(1) See Chapter II, Sec. 4.
In evolving his views on the rights of the Christian people Cunningham refers to the great Reformed principle, according to which Christ has given unto the Catholic visible Church the Ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God. It is from this principle that he draws conclusions which have a direct and important bearing on the problem under consideration.

Cunningham asserts that as Christ has given the Ministry, Oracles and Ordinances to the Catholic visible Church, they belong to it, "occupying thus, according to their respective natures and objects, a place in some sense subordinate, as property is to its possessor". While it is therefore Scriptural that the ordinary exercise of the power of the keys - the administration of the ordinary business of the Church - should be vested in the office-bearers of the Church, it is according to Cunningham equally Scriptural that, radically and fundamentally, power and authority should belong to the Church itself.

These two principles are not contradictory but complementary. The idea that the Ministry, Oracles and Ordinances were given by Christ to the Church, imposes upon it the duty of having office-bearers in whom to vest power and authority to govern it. It also means that "when

(1) See Chapter I, Sec. 3, also Westminster Confession, Chap. xxv, Sec. 3.
necessity required, Churches might provide and establish office-bearers for themselves, and do whatever might be needful for securing all the objects connected with their own welfare which they were bound to aim at, and the enjoyment of all the ordinances which Christ had appointed.

The two principles are thus maintained in Presbyterianism side by side; for though ecclesiastical office-bearers are vested with power and authority to govern the Church to the exclusion of ordinary Church members, Cunningham agrees with the Reformers who "pleaded the general sentiment of there being something democratic in its (the Church's) constitution, that is, of the great body of the members composing it being entitled to exert some influence in the regulation of its affairs".

The influence which ordinary members exercise in the regulation of the Church's affairs is seen by Cunningham in the fact which is borne out by Scripture, that Church members have "a right to choose their own pastors and other office-bearers and that of course a fortiori they (are) fully entitled to prevent any pastor from being intruded upon them - that is, placed over them without their consent or against their will"

2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. III p. 536. See also John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. III, Sec. 15.
Cunningham is again in full agreement with the views expressed by Calvin. "Here it is inquired", Calvin writes, "whether a Minister ought to be chosen by the whole Church or only by the other Ministers and the Elders who preside over the discipline, or whether he may be appointed by the authority of an individual ...... They are exceedingly mistaken, if they suppose that either Timothy at Ephesus (1 Tim. 5:22) or Titus in Crete (Titus 1:5) exercised a sovereign power to regulate everything according to his own pleasure. For they presided over the people, only to lead them by good and salutary counsels, not to act alone to the exclusion of all others. But that this may not be thought to be an invention of mine, I remarks Calvin," will prove it by a similar example. For Luke relates that Elders were ordained in the Churches by Paul and Barnabas; but at the same time he distinctly marks the manner in which this was done, namely, by the suffrages or votes of the people; for this is the meaning of the term he there employs - χωροτοιχον σαυτες πρεσβυτέρους κατ' ἐκκλησίαν. 1 Those two Apostles, therefore, ordained them: but the whole multitude, according to the custom observed in elections among the Greeks, declared by the elevation of their hands who was the object of their choice .... We find, therefore, that it is a legitimate Ministry according to the Word of God, when those

who appear suitable persons are appointed with the consent and approbation of the people; but that other pastors ought to preside over the election to guard the multitude from falling into any improprieties through inconstancy, intrigue, or confusion.

Cunningham and Calvin are thus at one in claiming on scriptural grounds that the election of pastors and other office-bearers is the inalienable right of the Christian people. This means, of course, that whatever the particular circumstances or details of an election may be, the principle of non-intrusion - that is, the right of a congregation to prevent any pastor from being intruded upon them without their consent or against their will - ought to be maintained as the minimum safeguard against any infringements on what rightfully belongs to the ordinary members of the Church. The democratic element in the Presbyterian government and organisation of the Church consists, therefore, in the recognition that as the Ministry belongs radically and fundamentally to the Church, the ordinary members of the Church have the right to elect their pastors and other office-bearers, to whom power and authority are given to govern the Church; or at least they have the right to prevent any pastor from being intruded upon them without their consent or against their will.

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. III, Sec. 15.
In order to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding and to make it quite clear that for Cunningham the rights of the ordinary members of the Church do not detract in any way from the Presbyterian principle of vesting the power of the key in ecclesiastical office-bearers, it is necessary to agree on the meaning of the term "election of pastors".

Cunningham is aware of the fact that this term can be taken in a wider and in a more limited sense. Election of pastors in its wider connotation is the whole process by which men become qualified Ministers of the Gospel and their actual settlement as pastors of a congregation. Calvin in the "Ordonnances Ecclesiastiques de l'Église de Genève" divides election in its wider sense into three parts:

"nul ne se doit interer (introduire) en cet office (the pastoral office) sans vocation en laquelle il faut considerer trois choses, a savoir l'examen, qui est le principal; apres a qui il appartient d'instituer les ministres; tiercement, quelle ceremonie ou façon de faire il est bon de garder a les l'introire en l'office".

Election in the wider sense is, of course, not the sole right of the congregation; for it is the Assembly of Presbyters, the Presbytery, which is entitled to declare a candidate fit and qualified for the Ministry and to ordain him to a pastoral charge. Election taken in this sense,

therefore, is the right and concern of both Church Court and congregation. When taken, however, in the more limited sense of the process by which a qualified candidate is called to the Pastorate in a particular congregation - and it is in this limited sense that we are dealing with the election of Pastors - election is the exclusive right of the Christian people or Congregation.

The lawful rights of Church Courts are, however, fully safeguarded in Presbyterianism; for congregations are not exempt, "in exercising the power of election, from the ordinary control and censure of the Church Courts". Ecclesiastical office-bearers are entitled to preside and moderate in elections, "with full power to prevent faction, confusion and tumult". Furthermore, if a congregation consistently refuses to proceed with the election of a Pastor or is for some reason or other under ecclesiastical discipline, the appropriate Church Courts are then fully entitled to settle a Pastor in the dissenting Congregation without the consent and against the will of the members.

All things considered and due regard given to the

2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 539, See also John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. III, Sec. 15.
3. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 533, See also John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XIII, Sec. 15.
principle of power and authority being vested in ecclesiastical office-bearers, Cunningham who bases his views on the direct testimony of scripture and on its indirect testimony (God is Lord of the conscience, the right of private judgment) comes to the only possible conclusion, namely that except in cases of ecclesiastical discipline or unlawful obstruction the deliberate dissent of a Congregation is a conclusive obstacle to the settlement of any Pastor, so that no Congregation can ever have a Pastor to whose settlement they were opposed.

Cunningham agrees, however, that a certain measure of freedom might be granted to Church Courts in dealing with the objections raised by a Congregation to the settlement of a candidate with a view to removing them. A Presbytery might, therefore, call upon a Congregation, asking the members thereof to state the reasons for their dissent and attempting to overcome their opposition; but Cunningham is willing to permit this procedure only if it is clearly understood, that even if the grounds of objection are judged to be insufficient, inadequate or unfounded by the Church Court, the principle of non-intrusion shall be maintained and the candidate be not intruded on the reclaiming congregation. The objections raised by a congregation are, therefore, an absolute barrier to the settlement of a candidate.

1. Ruma 8.3f; Acts 1.23,26; 6. 3,5; 14.23.
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV pp 290f; see also Veto Act of 1835.
Cunningham does not accept the idea according to which the principle of non-intrusion is maintained as long as the members of the Congregation have the right to state their objections before the Church Court, which, if it deems them inadequate, is entitled to proceed with the settlement of the candidate in the vacant charge.

Although Cunningham is adamant about the application and enforcement of the principle of non-intrusion and believes it to be borne out by the direct and indirect testimony of Scripture, he, of course, does not contend "that the Scripture gives anything like a directory for the election of Ministers, but merely that it sanctions some general principles that ought to regulate this matter". One of these general principles sanctioned by Scripture is non-intrusion of Pastors, which constitutes the minimum safeguard against infringement on the rights of the Christian people or Congregation. Whatever the opinions as to the precise details of an election may be, the principle of non-intrusion ought to regulate all elections of ecclesiastical office-bearers.

The second general principle which according to Cunningham ought to regulate all elections of office-bearers is that, though it is only natural that there should be a variety of opinions as to the precise details of an election, the pastoral office and the nature of the Church are such that,

whatever the internal arrangement for the calling and settlement of Ministers may be, it is exclusively the business of the Church. The parties concerned with the election of Pastors - election taken in its wider and in its more limited sense - are Church Courts (Presbytery) and Congregations.

As Christ is the only King and Head of the Church, it is He who appointed office-bearers to administer the Laws which He has promulgated for His visible Kingdom. Cunningham is, therefore, emphatic in stating that the mode and the manner of appointing the office-bearers of Christ's visible Kingdom must be regulated by the standards of the same source - Christ - whence ecclesiastical office-bearers derive their authority for executing the functions committed to them.

As the Church is a Kingdom which according to the express teaching of the Word of God is not of this world, it stands to reason that the appointment of its office-bearers cannot be regulated by civil law or by secular considerations, as, e.g., the possession of property, but solely by the mode and the manner laid down by Him who is the only King and Head of the Church. The Church is a free society dependent on Christ alone, which implies that when its office-bearers are called and appointed, no authority can determine or control their calling and appointment but this society itself. This
means that whatever the exact arrangement within the Church may be, all institutions or persons whose authority is purely civil or rests on human law or is based on secular and worldly considerations, are excluded from the right to interfere in any way with the call, the appointment and the settlement of Ministers.

This viewpoint, of course, necessitates the absolute and uncompromising rejection and condemnation of patronage. "It is of importance", writes Cunningham, "that no party, unauthorised to interfere in this matter (of election) shall be allowed to interpose in the way of restraining or limiting either the Presbytery or the people in the exercise of their rights and functions, and on this ground, we decidedly condemn patronage". Whatever the exact delimitation of the respective rights of Church Courts and Congregations in the election of Pastors, Cunningham contends that this matter exclusively concerns the Church and that, therefore, secular authorities, e.g., patrons, have no right to interfere when Pastors are called or appointed to a pastoral charge. "We say", he writes, "that these matters of the appointments of Ministers are matters properly and purely ecclesiastical.

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 551
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 425
that these powers were given by the Lord Jesus Christ to the Church - that they form part of the ordinary government and business of the Church of Christ, and that this part of the process of its government must go on in Christ's Church, wherever that Church is situated or in whatever circumstances it may be placed."

Although Calvin upholds the principle of non-intrusio as emphatically as Cunningham and maintains that the Christian people, the Congregation, must at least concur in the choice of the Church Court before a Pastor can be settled in a vacant Charge, he grants more power and a greater share to secular authority in the election of Ministers, than is in our opinion consistent with the character of the pastoral office and the nature of Christ's Church.

"I confess", he writes, "that there was the greatest propriety in the decree of the Council of Laodicea, that the election (of Bishops in this case) should not be left to the populace. For it scarcely ever happens that so many heads concur in one opinion for the settlement of any business; and almost every case verifies the observation, that the uncertain vulgar are divided by contrary inclinations. But to this dange

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 563
was applied an excellent remedy. For in the first place, the clergy alone made their choice, and presented the person they had chosen to the Magistracy, or to the Senate and Governors. They deliberated on the election, and if it appeared to them a proper one, confirmed it, or otherwise chose another person whom they preferred. Then the business was referred to the multitude, who, though they were not bound to concur in these previous opinions, yet were less likely to be thrown into disorder. Or if the business commenced with the multitude, this method was adopted in order to discover who was the principal object of their wishes, and after hearing the wishes of the people, the clergy proceeded to the election.

This same method was applied by Calvin to the Church of Geneva, for in the "Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques", it is stated: "Il sera bon en cet endroit de suivre l'ordre de l'Église ancienne, vu que ce n'est qu'une pratique de ce qui nous est montré par l'Écriture. C'est que les ministres élisent premièremenl celui qu'on devra mettre en l'office, l'ayant fait à savoir à la Seigneurie. Après, qu'on le présente au Conseil. Et s'il est trouvé digne, que le Conseil le reçoive et accepte, selon qu'il verra être expédient, lui

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. IV, Sec. 12
donnant témoignage pour la produire finalement au peuple en
la prédication, afin qu'il soit reçu par consentement commun
de la compagnie des fideles".

Here we obviously have an example which shows how the
general temperament and outlook of an age - belief in the
indissoluble union of Church and State on the one hand and the
ever-increasing self-assertion of the civil powers over against
the Church in the 16th Century on the other - blinded even the
greatest Reformed Theologian. There cannot be any doubt that,
though Calvin rejects on Scriptural grounds any intrusion of
Ministers on Congregations and upholds from that point of
view the rights of the Christian people, he yet does not draw
from the indirect testimony of Scripture - the character of
the pastoral office and the nature of the Church - the only
possible conclusion, namely, that whatever the internal
arrangement for an election of Pastors may be, it is exclusively
the business of the Church. It is quite obvious that Calvin
gives a very definite place to secular authorities, parties
outside the Church, in the elections of Pastors and that he
makes the appointment and settlement of Ministers not the
exclusive business of the Church.

1. John Calvin, op. cit., in Calvin, Homme D'Eglise, p.29
It was left to Scottish Presbyterians like Cunningham to see clearly what is taught at least by implication in Scripture and to develop the idea that the Church ought to be free to elect, appoint and settle the office-bearers who govern it on behalf of its King and Head, Jesus Christ. It is, however, important to realize that the seeds of Cunningham's teaching are already contained in Calvin's doctrine, for the quotations from his writings show that, though he granted to secular powers a share in the elections of Ministers, yet even for him, the initiative lay with and the actual nomination was made by the "clergy", "les ministres", or the people, that is, parties that are within the Church.

As the above principles - non-intrusion and elections of ecclesiastical office-bearers as the exclusive business of the Church - are of vital importance for the whole Church, let us go beyond the narrow confines of the Scottish Disruption Controversy and compare Cunningham's teaching, Presbyterianism as he understood it, with that of Richard Hooker.

"None may ordain" - writes Hooker - "but only Bishops ......... Now when that power (the power which is received in ordination) so received is once to have any certain subject whereon it may work and whereunto it is to be tied, here cometh in the people's consent and not before. The power
of order I may lawfully receive, without asking leave of any multitude; but that power I cannot exercise upon any one certain people utterly against their wills, neither is there in the Church of England any man, by order of law, possessed with pastoral charge over any Parish, but the people in effect do choose him thereunto".

It is not important in this connection that Presbyterianism repudiates the exclusive right of Bishops to ordain Pastors, nor is it important that in Presbyterian Churches ordination usually takes place after a Congregation has extended a call to a candidate. What is important is that Hooker agrees with Cunningham's teaching in two essential respects:-

a. The principle of non-intrusion. According to Hooker, the Christian people or Congregation must consent to the settlement of a Pastor, for the power of order cannot be exercised "upon any one certain people utterly against their wills."

b. The principle of making the establishment of the pastoral relationship the exclusive business of

the Church. According to Hooker, Bishops ordain candidates and Congregations consent to their settlement.

But while these two principles lead Cunningham to the utter condemnation and rejection of patronage, Hooker in spite of his professed acceptance of the same principles has no difficulty in defending patronage as lawful in the Church. "For albeit" - writes Hooker - "they (the Congregation) choose not by giving every man personally his particular voice, yet can they not say that they have their Pastors violently obtruded upon them, inasmuch as their ancient and original interest therein hath been by orderly means derived into the patron who chooseth for them. And if any man be desirous to know how patrons came to have such an interest, we are to consider that at the first erection of Churches, it seemed but reasonable in the eyes of the whole Christian world to pass that right to them and their successors, on whose soil and at whose charge the same were founded. This all men gladly and willingly did, both in honour of so great piety, and for encouragement of many others unto the like, who peradventure else would have been as slow to erect Churches or to endow them, as we are forward both to spoil them and to pull them down".

It is seriously contended by Hooker that the principle of non-intrusion and that of the election of Pastors being the exclusive business of the Church are maintained and upheld in his system of Church government, though in actual fact the choice of a Pastor is made and the call extended to him, neither by the Christian people or Congregation, nor by ecclesiastical office-bearers or Courts, but by the patron. It is utterly impossible not to see in this a violation of the Congregation's rights and a negation of those principles which are essential to the establishment of the pastoral relationship according to the teaching of the Scriptures.

Hooker says that there is no intrusion of Pastors on Congregations against their will "inasmuch as their ancient and original interest therein hath been by orderly means derived into the patron who chooseth for them". By "orderly means" Hooker understands a transfer of rights and privileges in accordance with the order of law as opposed to violence and usurpation. But even though the transfer to patrons of the right of Congregations to elect their own Pastors was in accordance with the law of the land, the real point is whether such a transfer is in accordance with the revealed Will of God. Can a right which God has given to His Church be transferred

to persons or institutions outside the Church for purely worldly considerations? In our opinion, this must be denied. Hooker converts the principles which ought to govern the election of Pastors and the establishment of the pastoral relationship into a mere fiction.

In conclusion, reference must be made to a point which in Cunningham's opinion is of minor importance. This is the question of the respective rights of Church Courts and Congregations in the calling and settlement of Ministers. Cunningham admits that no precise details as to the exact place to be occupied and the influence to be exercised by the respective parties, Presbytery and Congregation in the election of Pastors, are revealed in Scripture. He is, however, inclined to believe that, though direct Scriptural injunctions are absent, the right procedure is to let the Congregation select their Pastor from among those whom the Presbytery has accepted as fit and qualified for the pastoral office. Cunningham feels that in the election and appointment of Pastors, the initiative should lie with and the nomination should be made by the Congregation, while the Presbytery has "the right of determining beforehand the whole subject of qualifications and of deciding afterwards whether they will
admit and ordain the person elected and recommended by the people".

In the absence of direct Scriptural evidence bearing on this point, it is, of course, permissible to disagree with Cunningham and to allow for the exercise of greater authority by the Presbytery in the nomination of Pastors, thus making the initiative lie not with the Congregation but with the Church Court. One thing, however, is perfectly clear and obvious, that whatever the exact delimitation of the respective rights may be, the pastoral relationship can only be established with the consent of both parties, Presbytery and Congregation. While, therefore, there may be some doubt or disagreement as to the question to whom the initiative or right of nomination should belong - Presbytery or Congregation - it is unquestionable that according to Presbyterian teaching no Pastor can be elected to and settled in a pastoral charge, unless Church Court and Congregation both consent to it.

"As the Presbytery and the people" - writes Cunningham - "have each on Scriptural and Presbyterian principles, a free negative upon the settlement of a Minister, it does not necessarily affect the essence of a right adjustment of this matter, whether the process should commence by the

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. 1V, p. 424
Presbytery recommending to the people a few individuals, any one of whom they are willing to induct and ordain, or by the people recommending one to the Presbytery; although we think there are strong reasons of expediency against the Church Courts interfering authoritatively in the nomination. Cunningham thus maintains that whatever the exact place to be occupied by the Presbytery and the Congregation in the election of Pastors, "the essential thing - that which alone it is a matter of imperative duty to have absolutely secured as indispensable - is that no man be settled without the consent or against the will of the Congregation".

1. William Cunningham, op. cit. Vol. IV, pp. 424f
2. William Cunningham, op. cit. Vol. IV, p. 428
CHAPTER III

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE STATE.

1. Historical Survey of the Doctrine of the Relationship between the Church and the State.

The Church of to-day has learned to its cost that it can neither ignore nor neglect the problems created by the existence of the State. The modern mind is no longer satisfied with the verdict of so-called positive science, which explains the existence of the State by accepting it as a fact which exists because it ought to exist. The resurgence of metaphysical explanations of the existence and nature of the State in Fascist and Marxist ideologies has forced the Church to face once more the problem of the State and that of the relationship between them.

How great a contribution Reformed Theology has made towards the solution of this problem becomes evident when we survey the history of the Church. History proves that Presbyterianism, by seeing the connection between the State and "the spiritual doctrine of faith", in other words by making this connection a theological issue, is the only theological system which has succeeded at least theoretically, in establishing a relationship

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX3, Sec. 1.
between Church and State which does justice to both the Church and the State.

Our survey will show at the same time that Presbyterianism as understood and applied by Scottish Calvinists like Cunningham cannot be ignored, if the Church is ever to solve the problem of the State and that of the relationship between Church and State in this modern age.

Since the conversion of the Emperor Constantine (306 - 337) and the subsequent recognition of the Christian Faith as the official religion of the Roman Empire, the Church has been confronted with the problem of its relationship with the State. Up to the 4th century the Christian community was a persecuted minority in a pagan empire and the Church was content with testifying to the divine origin of the State and the duty of men rendering obedience to its lawful representatives - emperors, kings, princes, magistrates - in accordance with the revealed Will of God. The Christian was enjoined to submit to the civil authorities, provided they did neither intervene in matters which were the Church's sole concern nor interfere with the worship of the true God. In case of conflict the Church insisted, however, that the Christian "ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5.29).

The recognition of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire contained, however, the seeds of
the future conflict. This conflict gradually ripened into the open contest between the civil and the ecclesiastical authorities: *inter imperium et sacerdotium.* While the Church had at one time been willing to submit to the authority of the State, reserving for itself only the right to resist passively such demands as would violate the worship of the true God, it began after the conversion of Constantine to assert more and more first its independence and then its power over the State.

Historical circumstances, as for instance the Teutonic invasion which brought about the collapse of the Roman Empire, helped the Church in its bid for independence and power. The Bishop of Rome, the Pope, became in the West the universal Head of the only unified institution! Thus strengthened and fortified, the Church gradually abandoned its original position of submission and subordination to the State and put forward claims which made it, or rather attempted to make it the dominant partner in its relationship with the State.

Certain elements in Augustine’s teaching, drawn mainly from his *De Civitate Dei*, were arbitrarily grouped together into a politico-theological system which has variously been called "Political Augustinianism", "Gregorianism" or "Hildebrandianism". In our opinion the
term "Political Augustinianism" is preferable to "Gregorianism" or "Hildebrandianism", because although Gregory VII put forward the claims of the Church of Rome, most of the ideas behind his scheme were not his own;
"Gregory was rather a manipulator of the ideas of others than a creator of new policies." Political Augustinianism made the State an institution which is subordinate to the Church and subject to its power and authority.

The ascendancy of ecclesiastical power reached its zenith during the pontificates of Gregory VII (1073-1085), Innocent III (1198-1216) and Boniface VIII (1294-1303). At that period the Church conceived the world as a unity with Christ and His vicegerent, the Pope, at its head. The Pope as the vicar of Christ claimed to be the absolute ruler of the world and looked upon emperors and kings as his vassals and empires his tools, in short the State was considered merely as the executive organ of the Church.

The famous "Dictatus papae" expresses the principle of Gregory VII: "1. Quod Romana ecclesia a solo Domino sit fundata: 2. Quod solus Romanus pontifex iure dicatur"


In the Bull "Unam sanctam" of 1302 Boniface VIII lays down the same principles: "In hac eiusque potestate duos esse gladios, spiritualem videlicet et temporalem, evangeliciis diotis instruimur........ Uterque ergo est in potestate ecclesiae spiritualis scilicet gladius et materiali. Sed is quidem pro ecclesia, ille vero ab ecclesia exercendus.
Ille sacerdotis, is manu regnum et militum, sed ad nutum et patientiam sacerdotis. Oportet autem gladium esse sub gladi et temporalem auctoritatem spirituali subiici potestati.
........ Spiritualem autem et dignitate et nobilitate terrenam quamlibet praecellere potestatem oportet tanto clarius nos fateri, quanto spiritualia temporalia antecellunt
........ Nam, veritate testante, spiritualis potestas terrenam potestatem instituere habet, et iudicare, si bona non fuerit
........ Porro subesse Romano pontifici omni humanae creaturae

1. Gregory VII, Dictatus Papae quoted from Carl Mirbt, Quellen zur Geschichte des Papstumes und des Roemischen Katholizismus, 5 Auflage, Tuebingen, 1934, No. 278, p. 146.
declaramus, dicimus, diffinimus et pronunciamus, omnino
esse de necessitate salutis."

This constituted not only a claim to world-rule
on the part of the Pope, but in a very real sense the denial
of the independent existence of the State as a separate unit
or order. As the Pope possesses both supreme spiritual and
supreme temporal power, sacerdotal and royal sovereignty,
the State is not only completely subordinated to the Church
but in actual fact non-existent as a separate and independent
unit; for "the Church is the actual State; the secular
State is only its organ."

Although political Augustinianism was opposed even
within the Church itself, it yet dominated its outlook for long
enough. The realisation of its principles remained the aim
of the Church of Rome until in the 16th century Dominicans
and Jesuits, influenced by the teaching of Thomas of Aquinas,
modified to a certain extent the doctrine of the relationship
between Church and State. They claimed for the Church only
an indirect power over the State.

In our opinion, however, the claim to indirect

power over the State which is still to-day the official Roman Catholic view, has not fundamentally changed the attitude of the Church of Rome towards the State. The Jesuit Bellarmini who systematized the doctrine of the Church's indirect power, declares: "Asserimus, pontificem ut pontificem, etsi non habeat ullam mere temporalem potestatem, tamen habere in ordine ad bonum spirituale summam potestatem disponendi de temporalibus rebus omnium christianorum..... Quantum non potest papa, ut papa, ordinarie condere legem civilem vel confirmare aut infirmare leges principum, quia non est ipse princeps ecclesiae politicus, tamen potest omnia illa facere, si aliqua lex civilis sit necessaria ad salutem animarum et tamen reges non velint eam condere aut si alia sit noxia animarum saluti et tamen reges non velint eam abrogare.

Indirect power over the State in the Roman Catholic sense really means that "the Church gives the latter (the State) a free hand in all matters which do not seem to her of sufficient importance to merit the special attention of the Church." However in matters that do merit the special attention of the Church, the Church of

Rome claims to be supreme. In the Roman Catholic Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, "Ecoleia", published in France, it is stated: "Sans s'immiscer dans les affaires du second (the State), la première (Church of Rome), en raison de sa fonction plus haute, doit pouvoir assurer la preéminence des intérêts dont elle a la garde."

When we remember that the Church of Rome makes itself the sole judge of what constitutes the interests of which it is the guardian, we realise that whether in the course of the centuries it has claimed direct or only indirect power over the secular State, its fundamental attitude towards the latter has always remained the same: the State is subordinate to the Church (to the Church of Rome of course! or "the Church is the actual State; the secular State is only its organ."

It must, of course, be clearly understood that the claim of the Roman Church to supremacy in the temporal as well as in the spiritual sphere, and its attempts to subordinate the State to its authority and even the assertion of its independence in spiritual matters, were more often than not challenged, opposed and combated by the civil power. It

is true to say that, with the possible exception of the pontificates of Gregory VII, Innocent III and Boniface VIII, the Church did at no time succeed in putting the principles of political Augustinianism into practice. Even when Papal power reached its most spectacular heights, the State never accepted willingly or for long the role which the "vicegerents of God" assigned to it. On the contrary Cunningham is perfectly right in saying that "the supreme civil powers, after the age of Constantine, professing to feel an obligation to exert their civil authority for the welfare of the Church and the good of religion" interfered "to a large extent in religious, theological and ecclesiastical matters, professedly in the discharge of this obligation." It is therefore true to say that along with the Church's attempt to subordinate the State to ecclesiastical authority, there was always an effort on the part of the State to subject the Church to civil authority and to control its affairs.

From the 11th century onward civil rulers endeavoured to shake off the yoke of ecclesiastical power. Their claims were supported by certain publicists who had worked out new conceptions of the relationship between Church and State. Marsiglio of Padua (1270 - 1342) e.g., attacked the claims of the Papacy and "intended to restore the imperial

system of a Church subordinate to the State." In his teaching he advocated what amounts for all practical purposes to the absorption of the Church by the State for according to him "the Christian State and the Christian Church are coterminous, the executive of the Christian State, as representing a body of believers, may call Councils, appoint Bishops, and control Church property."

The later Middle Ages with their growing sense of nationality witnessed the final collapse of the Popes' attempts to establish their temporal supremacy. The kings of France and the rulers of the Germanic States were not content with being the mere vassals of a Priest-World-Ruler and asserted their independence, often taking control of ecclesiastical affairs. A new view was being taken of the relationship between Church and State, which was the result of "the substitution of civil law based upon the law-books of Justinian, for the canon law founded upon the Decretum of Gratian." There cannot be any doubt that this substitution was to a large extent responsible for the Church coming to be "looked upon as a department of the State, a constituent

element of its essential life, partaking of the peculiar characteristics which belonged to it as a nationality.

While the Church as represented by the Papacy tried to make the State its instrument or even looked upon itself as the actual State and upon the secular State as its organ (which amounts really to the denial of the independent existence of the secular State), the new outlook reversed the order, and claimed that if the Church in a certain territory "was an arm of the Roman Church, it was first and foremost an organ of the State. Its immediate head was the Prince or Lord of the territory in which it stood, and its allegiance as an ecclesiastical body was primarily due to him."

On the eve of the Reformation there were thus two current conceptions of the relationship between Church and State, diametrically opposed to each other in their claims and aims, yet based on one and the same principle: subordination. In the one case it was the subordination of the State to the Church, in the other the subordination of the Church to the State. Perhaps it would be truer to say that at that period there was only one conception of the relationship between Church and State and that the only

question was who should be subordinate to whom. In the one case the Church was the actual State with the secular State as its organ, in the other the civil power was the actual State with the Church as its organ.

When the Reformation came, it was only natural that such a vital issue as the relationship between Church and State should have received the closest attention of the Reformers. They were unanimous in their repudiation of the claims of the Church of Rome to supremacy in the temporal as well as the spiritual sphere and in their denunciation of the Anabaptist opposition to and rejection of all civil order. All of them recognised the independence of the State with regard to the Church; but not all of them were able to work out a clear boundary between Church and State and to maintain the independence of the Church with regard to the State.

Luther is usually accused of having put the State in complete control of the Church. It is undoubtedly true that, when the Peasants' Revolt threatened the existing order in Germany and the Anabaptist movement challenged its right to legislate to Christians, Luther made somewhat incautious utterances in support of the civil authorities. It is, however, not true that he subordinated the Church to the State in all things nor is it fair to class him, as
Treitschke does, with Machiavelli "as a champion of the indefeasible rights of the State." Lord Vansittard's estimate of Luther "as the lineal forefather of Nazism" must be attributed either to gross ignorance or pure malice.

In his "An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation von des christlichen Standes Besserung" e.g., Luther sounded forth a trumpet call to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation to reform the Church; but it is misleading to interpret this as meaning that the German Reformer concedes the right to reform the Church to the State qua State. Luther does not! In the Address to the Nobility the emphasis is throughout on "christlich"; that is to say because he assumed that the members of the ruling classes were Christian and therefore, through faith and baptism, of the "spiritual estate", in the sense of the Universal Priesthood of all Believers; Luther laid upon them the responsibility and obligation to reform the Church. Even when Luther incorporates the Christian Prince as a "Notbischof" (Emergent Bishop) into the government of the Church, not wanting to rise the rise of a new hierarchy, he still regards "the relation of the State to religion as a relation of pietas, from which the

State authority derives duties, but no rights of any kind" for "even the most loyal fulfilment of this duty never confers on the government a right to rule the Church or settle questions of faith."

It was not Luther but later Lutheranism, which in supporting the absolute Monarchy gave its assent to the domination of the Church by the State and thus made it "part of the organism of the State and a national institution", though it is utter nonsense to say, as Lord Vansittard does, that "even in the last century the Lutheran Church was, in the main, a visible branch of the War Office."

The defect of Luther's teaching is two-fold: there is the absence of clear and definite pronouncements on the vexed subject of the relationship between Church and State and above all there is a certain naivety which made Luther believe that princes would really be willing to subordinate their private and dynastic interests to the obedience of the Word of God and the service of Christ in His Church.

It was Zwingli who advocated and introduced what became known as Erastianism, that is the subordination of the Church to the State. Zwingli held "that the ultimate

3. Lord Vansittard, op.cit., p. 11.
authority was the Christian community" and taught "that the exercise of that authority was through the duly constituted organs of civil government acting in accordance with the Scriptures."

Cunningham may be right in saying that Zwingli maintained "that all the powers conceded to the civil authorities of Zürich in religious matters, were exercised by them as representing the Church, and only with the Church's consent." We cannot, however, agree that Zwingli's teaching was "decidedly in advance of Luther ..... on this question." While Luther laid upon the members of the ruling class - because they were Christians - the duty and obligation of reforming the Church, Zwingli conceded to the civil authorities - admittedly because they were members of the Church - the right to govern the Church.

It is an indisputable fact that Zwingli transferred the rights of the Church to the "Grosse Rat" of Zürich - the civil government - which spoke "im Namen und an statt gemeiner Kirchen." Shortly before his death the Zurich Reformer was able to write in the preface of his commentary on the Prophet Jeremiah: "Eine christliche Stadt ist nichts anderes als eine

christliche Kirche." No doubt the personality of Zwingli and the "Prophetic" office which he held at Zürich were a safeguard against too obvious an encroachment of the State on the rights of the Church, so that the worst abuses of the doctrine of the subordination of the Church to the State were not apparent during the Reformer's life time. Zwingli was able to solve temporarily the problem of the relationship between Church and State by uniting the two societies as it were in his own person and office. As long as Zwingli was alive the civil authorities were indeed able to speak "statt gemeiner Kirchen", simply because they spoke through Zwingli.

After Zwingli's death (1551), however, the civil powers of Zürich being rid of all restraint took advantage of what had always been at least latently present in Zwingli's teaching and took complete control of the Church. Zwingli's son-in-law, Rudolf Gualther, Minister at St. Peter's Zürich, Wolfgang Musculus of Bern and Thomas Erastus of Heidelberg, (the latter gave his name to the system), reduced to a religio-political theory what Zwingli had practised but also kept in check.

for Gualther the distinction between secular and

1. Quoted from Walther Koehler, op.cit., p. 273.
ecclesiastical jurisdiction originated from "der Werkstatt der Paepste". Musculus asserted that just as the school was subject to the civil power, so also the Church. Erastus taught that "Gott hat es nicht gewollt, dass in einem christlichen Staate zwei verschiedenartige Rechtsprechungen, eine geistlich und eine politisch gleichgeordnet und unabhängig nebeneinander bestehen." The State was thus made supreme in both the secular and the ecclesiastical sphere and the Church was subordinated to its jurisdiction.

Erastianism does not say anything really new or original about the relation of the Church to the State. It accepts the idea of subordination but reverses the order of the Roman Catholic conception. It endorses the legitimate claims of the State but gives a kind of ecclesiastical blessing to secular encroachments on the rights of the Church. Erastianism is the Protestant version of an idea which had been current since the days of Constantine.

Erastianism is however not the only Protestant answer to the Roman Catholic idea of the subordination of the State to the Church. While one section of Protestantism agreed to the subordination of the Church to the State, another section produced a new and original doctrine of the

1. Quoted from Walther Koehler, op. cit., p. 273.
2. Quoted from Walther Koehler, op. cit., p. 274.
relationship between Church and State.

What Luther had been groping for, is clearly defined and systematically expounded in the teaching of John Calvin. His views on the relationship between Church and State might justly be called the distinctively Reformed contribution to the subject under discussion. Calvin does justice to both - the Church and the State, showing violence to none. He avoids the pitfalls of Roman Catholicism - he recognises the sovereignty and autonomy of the State in its own proper sphere and domain - without being caught in the snares of Erastianism - he insists on the freedom and supremacy of the Church in what is its sole and exclusive concern. The question of who should be subordinated to whom - the State to the Church or the Church to the State - does not arise for Calvin, because he abandoned the idea of subserviency altogether. He broke away from the doctrine of subordination and found a new basis for the relationship between Church and State, that of mutual independence. His doctrine is thus an alternative to Roman Catholicism and Erastianism while at the same time it is an alternative to Anabaptism and to what became known as Voluntaryism, - that is, the complete separation between the Church and the State: - because Calvin insisted not only on the mutual independence, but also on the mutual co-operation of the two societies.
It is of course an indisputable fact that Calvin found it impossible to give practical effect to all his views at Geneva. While "the magnificent, noble and honourable Lords" of the Genevan Councils "deferred in words to the teachings of Calvin about the distinction between the civil and the spiritual powers", they "in fact ...... retained the whole power of rule and discipline in their own hands."

Calvin, of course, cannot be made responsible for the failure of the civil authorities at Geneva to accept the principles set forth in his teaching. Yet although Calvin failed to give practical effect to all his views, he did succeed in systematising the information contained in the Scriptures on the relation of the Church with the State, in such a way that his teaching on this subject might well be called the Scriptural doctrine of the relationship between the Church and the State.

Cunningham was one of those great Scottish Presbyterians who defended and developed the Calvinistic principles which ought to regulate the relationship between the Church and the State and thus helped to lay the foundation upon which the re-united Church of Scotland was built in 1929. The re-united Church of Scotland is the

living proof of the Calvinistic contention, that there is an alternative to the doctrine of subordination to and to that of separation from the State: the mutual independence of and mutual co-operation between Church and State. Cunningham by adhering to and applying the principles laid down by Calvin became one of the architects of the re-united Church of Scotland, a Church which has solved the problem of the relationship between the Church and the State so satisfactorily, that it is the envy of the whole Protestant world.

In the succeeding pages it will be our endeavour to show the distinctive elements of Cunningham's teaching and to contrast them with the views of Richard Hooker whom we have chosen as the representative exponent of Erastianism.
2. The Doctrine of the State.

Cunningham's doctrine of the relation that "ought to subsist between the State and the Church, or the civil and ecclesiastical powers" will be more readily understood if we ascertain first of all his views on the State as such.

Cunningham looks upon the State as a divine ordinance. "That civil government" — he writes — "is an ordinance of God ....... is a doctrine which "can be easily shown to be sanctioned by the Word of God." In his opinion, however, the recognition of the State as a divine ordinance involves much more than "merely this, that it (civil government) is the natural appropriate result of the constitution which God has given to men, and of the ordinary providence which He exercises over them."

In other words according to Cunningham the State is not a divine ordinance merely in the sense that it grows naturally out of the divinely given constitution and nature of man; it is not a mere concomitant or by-product of human society developing naturally wherever there are men living together in society; but it owes its origin directly to the Will of God, it is a creation of God.

The identical idea is present in Calvin's teaching.

The Genevan Reformer sees in civil government an "ordinance established by God". It owes its existence directly to the divine Will and not to the natural inclination of men living in society. What is natural to man according to Calvin is his life in society, but not the subjecting of society to civil coercion. "A uniform decision of human reason is" - he says "that it is the mark of a servile and abject disposition patiently to bear it (the authority of the State), and of a honest and ingenuous mind to shake it off." For Calvin therefore as for Cunningham the State is an institution created by God for a specific purpose; it is in fact a "benevolent provision God has made for mankind".

However although the State is a divine institution, it came into being in Cunningham's opinion, subsequent to the original order of creation, to alleviate the worst consequences of the Fall. The divinely appointed end of all civil government that is the purpose of the State's existence, is "the promotion of the good order and prosperity of the community". The very fact that human society requires an institution, the State, which, so as to promote peace, good order and prosperity among men, must exercise jurisdiction over their persons and their property, and have

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 1.
3. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 1.
the right to enforce its authority in extreme cases with the use of the sword indicates sufficiently that for Cunningham the State was not part of the original order of creation. In the original order the perfection of human nature was such that civil coercion was not needed for the maintenance of harmony and justice. The State therefore made its appearance after sin had caused disorder and disrupted the social relations of men.

Calvin expresses identical views on this point. He, too, asserts that civil government is designed "to regulate our lives in a manner requisite for the society of men, to form our manners to civil justice, to promote our concord with each other, and to establish general peace and tranquility". Coercion is the only way of achieving this end, because a perfection which would make civil government unnecessary and superfluous "can never be found in any community of men", because "the insolence of the wicked is so great, and their iniquity so obstinate that it can scarcely be restrained by all the severity of the laws". It is obvious that Calvin does not include the State in the original order of creation, where the absence of sin precluded its existence and raison d'être.

2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 2.
3. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 2.
4. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 2.
While Cunningham recognises that the State is designated to further the temporal welfare of men, it is important to realise that he does not believe this to be the only end and purpose of its existence. On the contrary he makes it perfectly clear that the purpose of the State is not confined to the temporal sphere but extends to the spiritual sphere as well. It is "a portion of divine truth, fully sanctioned by the Word of God, and, therefore never to be abandoned or denied", he writes, "that an obligation lies upon nations and their rulers to have respect, in the regulation of their national affairs and in the application of national resources, to the authority of God's Word, to the welfare of the Church of Christ, and the interests of true religion".

Cunningham thus rejects the tenets of Voluntaryism whose "advocates maintain that nations as such, and civil rulers in their official capacity, not only are not bound, but are not at liberty, to interfere in any religious matters, or to seek to promote the welfare of the Church of Christ, as such". In putting forward the opposite principle Cunningham recognises that in creating the State, God has made a provision which is designed to promote not only the temporal but also the spiritual welfare of mankind and that therefore "there are things which they (civil authorities) can lawfully do, which are fitted to promote these objects.

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. II. p. 391
"Interests of true religion\(^1\)."

Here again we note that Cunningham follows the lead of Calvin. While Cunningham had to defend the Reformed viewpoint against the Voluntaryist principle of the entire separation between the religions and the secular spheres, (the Church and the State), Calvin had to contend in his day with what might justly be called the spiritual ancestor of Voluntaryism: Anabaptism. The Anabaptists went, of course, much further than the separation between Church and State. They identified for all practical purposes the State or civil government with evil and denied the legitimacy of all civil control and authority. "Infatuated and barbarous men" - Calvin calls them - and to the King of France he writes, that if the Reformed teaching were really like theirs "the whole world would justly pronounce it and its abettors worthy of a thousand fires and gibbets".

It is evident that Calvin, too, stresses the fact that while Church and State are distinct societies, this distinction must "not lead us to consider the whole system of civil government as a polluted thing, which has nothing to do with Christian men". The link between Church and State is in the Reformed view the fact, that the State is not confined to the temporal sphere but that it has a spiritual task to fulfil. For that reason Calvin believes that civil

1. William Cunningham, op. cit. Vol. II. p. 391
2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 1.
3. John Calvin, Institutes, Dedication. P. 21
4. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 2.
government was designed not only "to establish general peace and tranquility" but also "as long as we live in this world, to cherish and support the external worship of God, to preserve the pure doctrine of religion, to defend the constitution of the Church". Like Cunningham Calvin teaches that it is the duty of the State to further the ends of true religion and to assist the Church of Christ.

This obligation which is laid upon nations and their rulers, does yet not bring the State under the tutelage of the Church. Reformed Theology excludes the Church from any authoritative control in the affairs of the State because the latter is responsible for its actions to God and not to the Church. It is fully recognised by Cunningham, that as the State has received its power and authority directly from God, it is subordinate to Him and not to the Church. This being the case "Presbyterians" - writes Cunningham - "do not ask anything of civil rulers, but what they undertake to prove that the Scripture requires of them, and what they are therefore bound to do, not as subordinate to the Church, but as subordinate to God's Word". Cunningham admits of course that "God has not prescribed His written Word as the only rule to be followed by nations and their rulers in

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 2.
2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 2.
establishing and administering civil government" but claims that "there are materials in the Word of God which do bear upon the functions and duties of nations and their rulers". He asserts therefore that "some things, ..., respecting the functions and duties of nations and their rulers, are to be learned from Scripture"; and that "everything that determines the obligations and procedure of Churches and of those who represent and regulate them is to be ascertained from that source".

If, however, the Will of God in so far as it is revealed in the Scriptures, is the ultimate authority to which nations and their rulers ought to submit in the regulation of their affairs, is the State not in danger of being controlled at least indirectly by the Church? Has a State which is really endeavouring to abide by the Word of God not to rely on the Church for the interpretation of God's Will and the ascertaining of its meaning? It is, of course, true that God "has deposited this treasure (of His Word) with the Church"; but Cunningham denies that the Church is the exclusive channel through which the meaning of God's Will revealed in His Word is to be ascertained and transmitted to the State. "Civil rulers" - he says - "have

5. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. IX, Sec. 4.
the same independent right of judgment as ecclesiastical office-bearers, the same access to God's Word, and are equally entitled and bound to judge for themselves as to its meaning, and their consequent duty in matters of faith and practice. This means that as the State is entitled to interpret God's Will for itself and is responsible for its actions to God only, God and not the Church has the right and the authority to deprive the State of its power.

"The sentences which the Church may be warranted to pronounce upon civil rulers, ............, on the ground of sins committed", - states Cunningham - do not "affect their civil status or authority, their right to exercise civil power, and the obligation of their subjects to obey them". In the Reformed view nations and their rulers are never the tools of the Church for however disobedient they may be to the Will of God, "no step which may be competent to the Church as such, and no sentence which the ecclesiastical authorities may pronounce, can tell authoritatively upon the relation and mutual duties of rulers and subjects, or upon the actual regulation of civil affairs".

In this instance, too, Cunningham is a faithful interpreter of Calvin's teaching.

latter's view "have their command from God" and "are invested with His authority"; they "are altogether His representatives, and act as His vicegerents". In exercising civil power and authority rulers "are not employed in profane things, or occupations unsuitable to a servant of God, but in a most sacred function, inasmuch as they execute a divine commission".

As the magistrates are God's vicegerents on earth and exercise their power and authority on His behalf, the Church whose power is of an entirely different nature, cannot "assume to itself what belongs to the magistrate". The Church has received "no power of the sword to punish or to coerce, no authority to compel......" and cannot therefore interfere with the regulation of the affairs of the State. "If we consult" - writes Calvin - "the authority of Christ on this subject, there is no doubt that He intended to exclude the Ministers of His Word from civil dominion and secular sovereignty".

At this point it is necessary to remember that the position of the magistrate as God's vicegerent on earth is in Calvin's opinion so exalted and so entirely grounded in

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 4.
2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 4.
3. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 4.
4. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 6.
5. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI, Sec. 3.
6. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI, Sec. 3.
the divine Will that the Genevan Reformer condemns any kind of rebellion against rulers, even the most tyrannical, as a means of depriving them of their power. According to Calvin all rulers, good and bad, just and unjust, receive their authority directly from God, they "possess that sacred majesty with which He (God) has invested legitimate authority". The idea of a contract, therefore, which is binding not only on the ruled but also on the ruler and which can be dissolved if either of the parties do not fulfill their obligations, is foreign to Calvin.

If however the idea of a contract between ruler and people is not envisaged by Calvin, it can be assumed that he does not contemplate a Church which possesses the right by its sentence to deprive rulers of their civil status and authority or to release subjects from the obligation to obey them. Furthermore Calvin denies that "the correction of tyrannical domination" is committed to the people who according to him "have received no other command than to obey and suffer". It can therefore again be assumed that he does not entrust this correction to the Church but demands that it should suffer in adverse circumstances.

How for Calvin's ideas as to the complete absence of a contract between ruler and ruled, his demand for the

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 25.
2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 31.
unquestioning submission of subjects to their rulers and his absolute condemnation of rebellion can be accepted, goes beyond the confines of our investigation. Suffice it to say that while it is unlikely that Cunningham shares Calvin's viewpoint as to the relationship between ruler and people, the demand for the exclusion of the Church from any authoritative control in the regulation of the affairs of the State is made by both Calvin and Cunningham alike. The State is for both of them autonomous and sovereign in its own sphere and province. Its power is neither limited nor rendered ineffective by any thing the Church may say or do, although there is of course for the Christian the all important proviso, that "in the obedience" which is "due to the authority of governors, it is always necessary to make one exception, and that is entitled to our first attention, - that it does not seduce us from obedience to Him, to whose Will the desires of all kings ought to be subject, to whose decrees all their commands ought to yield, to whose majesty all their sceptres ought to submit".

In this connection reference ought to be made to the fact that in one important respect Cunningham differs from Calvin. As we have seen Cunningham is in full agreement with the Genevan Reformer "in asserting........ that it is competent to and incumbent upon nations as such

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 32.
and civil rulers in their official capacity or in the exercise of their legitimate control over civil matters, to aim at the promotion of the honour of God, the welfare of true religion and the prosperity of the Church of Christ.

Cunningham rejects, however, the notion, current at the time of the Reformation, that civil rulers have the right and the duty to inflict upon men civil pains and penalties on account of religious offences and disagreements, as for instance heresy or blasphemy. According to Cunningham intolerance or persecution with regard to religious opinion is definitely unlawful, because God alone is the Lord of man's conscience.

Calvin on the other hand does in this respect "not rise above the prevailing sentiments of his age". He states quite definitely that "it is the duty of the magistrate, by punishment and corporeal coercion, to purge the Church from offences". This is obviously a case where the circumstances at the time of the Reformation and the whole outlook of the era "produced very naturally a tendency on the part of the Reformers to state the powers and rights of the civil magistrate with respect to religious matters in the fullest and strongest terms", on

5. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI, Sec. 5.
account of which "we cannot appeal with the same confidence to what may be called the testimony of the Reformers upon this subject".

In summing up Cunningham's position which we believe to be the Reformed conception of the State, it may be stated that according to him:

a) the State is a divine institution, because it is created by God and grounded in His Will.

b) the State as such is not sinful, though the occasion of its creation was sin.

c) the State is free, autonomous and sovereign in its own sphere and domain.

d) the sovereignty of the State in its own sphere is limited, but limited only by the Will of God.

e) the purpose of the State's existence is not wholly negative. Although the State was instituted by God to check the worst consequences of sin - a negative purpose - it has also a positive task to fulfil: the promotion of the honour of God, the furtherance of the welfare of society, the defence of the true religion and of the Church of Christ.

3. The Relationship between the Church and the State and the Principles that ought to regulate it.

The difficulty with which the Church is confronted with regard to its relation to the State arises, of course, from the fact that both societies, the Church and the State, have "jurisdiction over the same persons" and operate "in some sense within the same sphere, though their provinces are different."

In Cunningham's view this difficulty can successfully be overcome on condition that the Spiritual principles which ought to regulate their relationship are accepted by both societies. It remains for us to ascertain what these principles are and what kind of relationship their acceptance enables Church and State to establish.

a) The Distinctness and Independence of Church and State.

As was previously stated, Cunningham denies the Church any right whatever to interfere authoritatively in the control of what concerns the State exclusively. But just as the Church is barred from any authoritative interference with the affairs of the State, so the State is excluded from any authoritative control in what is the sole concern of the Church. Cunningham thus insists on the freedom and independence, the autonomy and sovereignty of the Church in its own sphere because it "is a divine institution

---

established by Christ, placed by Him in a condition of entire
independence of any secular and foreign control and invested
by Him with full powers of self-government and complete
sufficiency within itself for the execution of all its
functions." According to Cunningham therefore the first
principle that ought to regulate the relationship between
Church and State is "that of the equality and independence
of the civil and the ecclesiastical powers".

It was of course precisely with regard to the
independence of the Church that Calvin was not successful
at Geneva. Yet though he had to agree to various compromises
with the civil authorities which tended to efface the Church's
distinctness and independence, there can be little doubt
that Calvin's teaching as such in this respect provides the
example which Cunningham follows.

In commenting on Matt. 22.21 Calvin states that
Christ's reply to the Pharisees, "render therefore unto
Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things
that are God's", "lays down a clear distinction between
spiritual and civil government, in order to inform us that
outward subjection does not prevent us from having within us
a conscience free in the sight of God". Although Calvin
demands strict obedience and submission to the State, he yet

3. John Calvin, Commentary on Matt. 22.21, Harmony of the
claims that "the rule for worshiping Him (God) must not be sought from any other source than from His own Word, and that we ought to abide by the only and pure worship which is there enjoined."

Furthermore while Calvin asserts "that those who destroy political order are rebellious against God", he demands at the same time that "if princes claim any part of the authority of God, we ought not to obey them any farther than can be done without offending God."

It is evident that for Calvin a definite distinction is to be made between the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world, spiritual and secular government, the Church and the State. He refers again to this distinction in the Institutes, where he says that "as no city or town can exist without a magistracy and civil polity, so the Church of God...... stands in need of a certain spiritual polity; which, however, is entirely distinct from civil polity." For Calvin as for Cunningham it would therefore be a grave mistake not to consider "the great distinction and the nature of the difference between the ecclesiastical and the civil power," which are such that the Church cannot "assume to itself what belongs to the magistrate, nor can the

1. John Calvin, Commentary on Matt. 22.21 In Harmony of the Evangelists.
4. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI, Sec. 3.
magistrate execute that which is executed by the Church”.

It is the principle of the permanent distinctness and absolute independence, fundamental in Cunningham’s view to the relationship between Church and State, which is denied by Erastianism. Cunningham claims that Erastians like Richard Hooker “have confounded altogether the members of the Church and the State, and have virtually denied that the Church is a distinct independent society”.

Is it true that Erastianism as understood by Hooker advocates what virtually amounts to an identification of Church and State, to a fusion of the two societies in such a way that they become different aspects of one and the same subject? We believe Cunningham’s estimate of Erastianism to be correct?

Hooker admits that “a Church and a commonwealth are things in nature the one distinguished from the other” but denies that they are “in subsistence perpetually severed; so that they which are of the one can neither appoint nor execute in whole nor in part the duties which belong to them which are of the other, without open breach of the Law of God”.

Hooker is of the opinion that the care of religion

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI, Sec. 3.
is common to all societies politic. From this obligation which is laid upon all societies politic, he deduces, however, that as "truth of religion is that proper difference whereby a Church is distinguished from other politic societies of men, such societies as do embrace the true religion have the name of the Church given unto every (one) of them for distinction from the rest". Hooker therefore comes to the conclusion that "the Church of Jesus Christ is every such politic society of men, as doth in religion hold that truth which is proper to Christianity".

Presbyterians like Cunningham maintain on the contrary — to use Hooker's own words — that "even in such a politic society as consisteth of none but Christians, yet the Church of Christ and the commonwealth are two corporations, independently each subsisting by itself". Hooker himself arrives at the opposite conclusion: "We hold" — he writes — "that seeing there is not any man of the Church of England but the same man is also a member of the commonwealth; nor any man a member of the commonwealth, which is not also of the Church of England; therefore as in a figure triangular the base both differ from the sides thereof, and yet one and the selfsame line is both a base and also a side; a side simply,

a base if it chance to be the bottom and underlie the rest: so, albeit properties and actions of one kind do cause the name of a commonwealth, qualities and functions of another sort the name of a Church, to be given unto a multitude, yet one and the selfsame multitude may in such sort be both, and is so with us, that no person appertaining to the one can be denied to be also of the other". "The Church and the commonwealth therefore" - Hooker goes on to say - "are...... personally one society, which society being termed a commonwealth as it liveth under whatsoever form of secular law and regiment, a Church as it hath the spiritual law of Jesus Christ; forasmuch as these two laws contain so many and so different offices, there must of necessity be appointed in it some to one charge, and some to another, yet without dividing the whole, and making it two several impaled societies".

In our opinion there cannot be any doubt whatever that in Hooker's view the State and the Church become one and the same, once the State consists of Christians or rather citizens who make profession of the Christian faith. He recognises that there are different qualities and functions in respect of which the Church and the State "may in speech be compared or opposed aptly enough the one to the other", yet he claims that "this is no argument that they are two

independent societies". "The truth is" - he says - "that the Church and the commonwealth are names which import things really different; but those things are accident, and such accidents as may and should always dwell lovingly together in one subject". Hooker's conclusion is that "the real difference between the accidents signified by those names, doth not prove different subjects for them always to reside in".

It is therefore correct to say that Erastianism advocates a fusion or identification of Church and State. The Church and the State whose citizens make profession of the Christian Faith, are names which import different things; yet those things are "accidents" which "may or should always dwell lovingly together in one subject", which is of course the denial of the Reformed principle of the permanent distinctness and independence of the Church.

Cunningham repudiates the Erastian idea of the fusion or identification of Church and State, because he finds in the Scriptures conclusive evidence "that the visible Church of Christ is an independent society, distinct from the kingdoms of this world". The distinctness and independence of the Church are in Cunningham's view evinced by the fact revealed in Scripture that Christ appointed and instituted

in His Church "a constitution, laws, office-bearers and functions of its own". From this he deduces that "the relation which ought to subsist between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, is one of equality and independence and that this equality and independence must ever be maintained inviolate". As the Word of God represents Church and State "as being, and of course make them to be, de jure, distinct and independent", it imposes in Cunningham's opinion upon all concerned the obligation "to regard and treat them as such, and to preserve them as far as possible in that condition".

Hooker agrees that when the Church of Christ is "under dominions of infidels", Church and State are "two societies independent". He asserts, however, that in a State which is neither pagan nor subject to the bishop of Rome, "one society is both the Church and the commonwealth". In other words for Hooker the distinctness and independence of the Church may and should cease in the State or commonwealth that professes to be Christian (in the non Roman Catholic sense).

Cunningham on the other hand denies most emphatically that the distinctness and independence of the Church depends on or is affected by the religious profession of the State, its representatives and citizens. "No change of circumstances" — he writes — "can legitimately transmute a Church

of Christ into a civil society - into a kingdom of this world, or exempt it from its obligation to maintain fully its peculiar distinctive characters and arrangements as they are set forth in Scripture". The Church therefore can never be identified with the State however Christian it may be, because "Christ has made His Church distinct and diverse from the kingdoms of this world; and distinct and diverse it must continue, if it would not change its whole character, and abandon entirely the relation in which it stands to Him".

In opposing Hooker's idea of Church and commonwealth being "accidents" which "may or should always dwell lovingly together in one subject", Cunningham maintains that "although the Church and the commonwealth consist of the same persons, it would still, if Christ's arrangements as set forth in Scripture were to be at all regarded, be by a different tenure - upon different conditions and under a different constitution and laws - that men held their places in the one or in the other whether as office-bearers or as members; and they would still have in these two different capacities different duties to discharge, or a different standard to follow".

In the Reformed view the religious allegiance of the State and of its representatives and citizens, does not affect the relationship between Church and State in the sense of leading to a fusion or identification of the two societies;

for, says Cunningham, "even if the whole community were members of the Church, and of one and the same Church, this could be regarded only as an accidental condition of things that could not be expected to last for any length of time, and if it should last, would afford no warrant for disregarding or setting aside Christ's arrangements."

b) **The Supremacy of the Church and the State in their respective Spheres.**

If the Church and the State are two distinct and independent societies, it is obviously necessary that each should be supreme in its own respective sphere. The independent supremacy of Church and State in their respective spheres is therefore of necessity the second principle that ought to regulate their relationship.

According to Cunningham the relationship between Church and State cannot be based on the idea of subordination - be it the subordination of the State to the Church: political Augustinianism - or the subordination of the Church to the State: Erastianism - because the two societies are "two co-equal and independent powers, each supreme in its own province, and in the execution of its own functions".

The leading Scriptural grounds upon which Cunningham rests his opposition to the Erastian principle of the subordination of the Church to the State are in the main as follows:

"First, that though the Scripture imposes upon civil rulers an obligation to promote the interests of true religion and the Church of Christ, it does not invest them with any jurisdiction or authoritative control in religious or ecclesiastical matters............. and, secondly, that the Scriptural views of the origin and

character, constitution and government of the Christian Church, are necessarily and obviously exclusive of the idea of its being subordinate to the State, or of civil rulers having any jurisdiction or authoritative control over the regulation of its affairs.  

However close and friendly the relationship between Church and State may be, the State "does not thereby acquire any right to assume any ecclesiastical function or jurisdiction, or to interfere authoritatively in the regulation of any ecclesiastical matters". As the government which Christ established in His Church, was entrusted by Him to ecclesiastical office-bearers, it must ever remain distinct from civil government and ought never to be subordinate in its own sphere to civil control. This means, of course, as Cunningham rightly points out, that "the civil magistrate does not possess jurisdiction or authoritative control over the regulation of the affairs of Christ's Church". In accordance with the revealed Will of its Head and King, Jesus Christ, the Church must be supreme in its own sphere and province, exercising its own jurisdiction, executing its own functions and accomplishing its own objects. Cunningham has no hesitation in saying, that when the State usurps the government of the Church of Christ and assumes jurisdiction

or authoritative control in the Church, it "is guilty of sin; and when the Church submits to the exercise of such jurisdiction, she too becomes a partaker of his (the representative of the State) sin, and is involved in all the guilt of it."

Although it must be admitted that Calvin could not prevail upon the civil authorities at Geneva to recognise at all times the Church's right to self-government and to its own jurisdiction, it is yet beyond dispute that in this respect, too, his teaching provides the foundation on which Cunningham bases his views.

In Calvin's opinion the right to exercise jurisdiction in its own sphere must be granted to the Church, "unless we would nullify the promise of the keys and entirely abolish excommunication, solemn admonitions and every thing of a similar kind." The demand for the independent supremacy of the Church is further implied, when Calvin states in connection with the power of the keys "that no man ...... may contemn the judgement of the Church, or consider it as of little consequence that he is condemned by the voice of believers, the Lord testifies that such judgement of believers is no other than the promulgation of His sentence, and that what they do or earth shall be ratified

---

2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI, Sec. 1.
in heaven." It is obvious that if a judicial sentence pronounced by the Church is "no other than the promulgation of His (God's) sentence" which "shall be ratified in heaven", there cannot be any doubt that for Calvin the jurisdiction in the exercise of which such a sentence is pronounced, is the inalienable right of the Church; which of course means that the Church alone ought to exercise it.

It is important to realise that according to Calvin the religious allegiance of the State or its representatives does not affect in the least the right of the Church to exercise spiritual jurisdiction. Supremacy in its own sphere and province is indispensable to the Church in all ages and circumstances. It was not instituted by Christ as a temporary measure but for all times and is therefore of a permanent nature. "When emperors and magistrates began to assume the profession of Christianity" - Calvin says - "the spiritual jurisdiction (of the Church) was not in consequence abolished, but only regulated in such a manner as neither to derogate from their civil power; nor to be confounded with it." "Wherefore" - Calvin concludes - "those who, to exalt the magistrate, despoil the Church of this power (of spiritual jurisdiction) not only pervert the language of Christ by a false interpretation, but pass a most severe censure on all the holy Bishops who have lived since the time of the Apostles, for having usurped to themselves, under a false pretext, the honour and

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI, Sec 2
2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI, Sec 4
dignity which belonged to the magistrate."

As the Church and the Christian commonwealth are in Hooker's view "personally one society", he has no hesitation in subordinating the Church to the State as represented in the case of the realm of England by the Crown.

Hooker starts from the assumption that the Scriptures do not lay down any definite rule as to who should possess supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs. "As for supreme power in ecclesiastical affairs" - he says - "the Word of God doth nowhere appoint that all kings should have it; neither that any should not have it; for which cause it seemeth to stand altogether by human right, that unto Christian kings there is such dominion given."

Hooker agrees that "the true original subject of power to make Church-laws is the whole entire body of that Church for which they are made." He claims, however, that although "nature hath appointed that there should be in a civil society power to make law, the consent of the people (which are that society) hath instituted the Prince's person to be the subject wherein supremacy of that power shall reside."

Thus from Constantine downward "by a law which is termed Regia,

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap XI, Sec. 4.
that is to say royal, the people having derived unto the emperors their whole power for making of laws, and by that means his edicts being made laws, what matter soever they did concern, as imperial dignity endowed them with competent authority and power to make laws for religion, so they were taught by Christianity to use their power, being Christians, unto the benefit of the Church of Christ."

This leads Hooker to his second assumption: it is lawful for the Church to transfer its power to the State. This lawful transfer was made in the case of the Church of England, with the result that "power in causes ecclesiastical is by the laws of this realm, (of England) annexed unto the Crown" Thus according to Hooker it is lawful that in England the King within his own precincts and territories should hold of and under the law "power to command even in matters of Christian religion."

It is only fair to point out that supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs according to Hooker does not confer upon the King the right to lay down rules as to how the Word is to be taught, the sacraments to be administered; nor does it confer the right to sit personally in the consistory and "by judicial

3. Richard Hooker op. cit., Col 111 part 1 Book VIIl, p 427
sentence to decide the questions which rise about matters of faith and Christian religion. This restriction is, however, only theoretical. While Hooker denies that kings may do "whatsoever is incident unto the office and duty of an ecclesiastical judge", he yet admits for instance that in exercising their supreme power kings "do place Bishops". Kings do not "make" Bishops, but although "none but Bishops do consecrate" and "none but they only do give unto every Bishop his being", the fact remains that without the King no Bishop can be "made"; for it is the King who by his letters presents "such an elect Bishop as shall be consecrated" and furnishes "the place where Bishops, elected and consecrated, are to reside as Bishops."

Furthermore Hooker states that "when the whole ecclesiastical state, or the principal persons therein, do need visitation and reformation; when in any part of the Church errors, heresies, schisms, abuses, offences, contempts, enormities are grown, which men in their several jurisdictions either do not or cannot help", the King's supereminent authority and power are such that he cannot

only set "ecclesiastical synods on work, that the thing may be
their act and the King their motion unto it, ..." but also "by
commissioners few or many, who having the King's letters patents,
may in the virtue thereof execute the premises as agents in the
right, not of their own peculiar and ordinary, but of his
supereminent power."

It is evident that although Hooker states that the King
holds supreme power in ecclesiastical affairs of em under the
law and must exercise it within the bounds prescribed by the law,
the law deprives the Church of its supremacy and power. According
to the law "the King hath a transcendent authority, and that in all
causes" (including ecclesiastical ones) because "without any
exception ........ all courts are the King's."

Hooker justifies the transfer of the Church's power to
the State by a third assumption: in a commonwealth "there is
required an universal power which reacheth over all, importing
supreme authority of government over all courts, all judges, all
causes." In the case of the realm of England this universal
power is annexed unto the King's royal seat and crown, because
says Hooker - "in a free Christian State or Kingdom, where one end

the self-same people are the Church and the commonwealth, God through Christ, directing that people to see it for good and weighty considerations expedient, that their sovereign lord and governor in causes civil have also in ecclesiastical affairs a supreme power."

In Hooker's opinion this universal power, which is exercised "over all kinds of persons and causes" and which enables men who "are wronged by inferior judges, or have any just cause to take exception against them, .... to make their appeal", is necessary in a commonwealth because "as there could be in natural bodies no motion of any thing, unless there were some which moveth all things and continueth immovable; even so in politic societies there must be some unpunishable, or else no man shall suffer punishment. For sith punishments" - Hooker goes on to say - "proceed always from superiors, to whom the administration of justice belongeth, which administration must have necessarily a fountain that deriveth it to all others and receiveth it not from any; because otherwise the course of justice should go infinitely in a circle, every superior having his superior without end, which cannot be: therefore, a well-spring, it followeth there is, and a supreme head of justice, whereunto all are subject, but itself in subjection to none".

It is for this reason that Hooker comes to the conclusion that in a commonwealth everything, including the Church, ought to be subordinate to the State, which in the case of England is represented by the Crown.

Hooker's whole case for the subordination of the Church to the State thus rests on three assumptions. If it can be proved that these assumptions are unwarranted, his whole argument is bound to collapse. In our opinion Cunningham shows conclusively that Hooker's assumptions are indeed unfounded and that therefore his argument cannot be accepted.

Hooker assumes that "the Word of God doth nowhere appoint that all kings should have it (supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs), neither that any should not have it"; in other words that the Scriptures do not give any indication as to whether the State or its representatives should or should not have supremacy in ecclesiastical matters.

Cunningham on the contrary asserts that it cannot be denied that the Scriptures teach "that the Church of Christ is, by the ordination of its Founder, a society - that is, a regulated union or combination of many, for the promotion of common objects and interests." He therefore claims that whenever any organisation

2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 200
or section of professing Christians assumes the character and
designation of a Church, an obligation is imposed upon it, "resting
upon divine authority to conform in all respects to what Scripture
teaches concerning the duties and functions, the laws and arrange-
ments of the distinct Kingdom which Christ has established." This
obligation "to conform in all respects to what Scripture teaches" is according to Cunningham of a permanent nature, because
"nothing indicates that it was Christ's intention that the
constitution and arrangements of His Church should be altered." If there is no indication of Christ's intention that the constitution
of His Church should be altered, it surely means that an alteration
would not be in accordance with the revealed Will of Christ and
that the State should not exercise jurisdiction in the affairs of
the Church. The Scriptural evidence is such that "an alteration
in any of those matters which manifestly constitute essential
features of the Church as a distinct society, of the arrangements
He (Christ) made for the administration of its government and the
regulation of its affairs" ought not to be made simply because of
"a mere change in the external condition of the Church."

On these grounds Cunningham maintains that "the distinctness
and diversity between the Church, as settled by Christ, and the

2. William Cunningham ,op. cit., Vol IV, p. 203
3. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 203f
kingdoms of this world, must be permanently maintained; and that their complete organisation, as distinct societies, cannot be infringed upon without sin on the part of those concerned in it - without interfering with arrangements which Christ appointed and intended to continue till His second coming."

From the distinctness and diversity of the Church and the State Cunningham infers rightly that the two societies (and the authorities who represent and regulate them) are and ought to be wholly independent of each other, with respect to any jurisdiction or authoritative control of the one over the other, - (and) that it precludes the assumption or exercise of any right on the part of one to interfere authoritatively in the regulation of the affairs of the other."

If we accept therefore that "the only rule or standard by which the affairs of a Church of Christ ought to be regulated, is the Mind and Will of Christ revealed in His Word", we cannot but conclude with Cunningham that "the parties in whom the right of interpreting and applying Christ's laws for the administration of the affairs of His Kingdom - for the management of the ordinary, necessary business of His House - is vested, are ecclesiastical office bearers, and not civil functionaries."

---

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 204
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 205
3. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 211
4. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 311
Hooker's first assumption must therefore be rejected, because the Word of God does reveal that none but those who were appointed by the King and Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, have the right to govern the Church in His name and on His behalf and are "possessed of jurisdiction in ecclesiastical matters."

Hooker's second assumption that it is lawful to transfer ecclesiastical supremacy to the State or its representatives, is easily dealt with. If the King and Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, appointed ecclesiastical office-bearers to govern His House and exercise jurisdiction in His name and on His behalf, it is bound to be unlawful to transfer what He has granted to His Church to any person, institution or party outwith the Church. It is therefore unwarrantable to assume as Hooker does, that such a transfer can lawfully be made. However much the transfer of ecclesiastical power to the State or its representatives may be in accordance with the law of the land, it is not in accordance with the Will of Christ revealed in the Scriptures and must therefore be rejected.

Cunningham is right in saying that "the Church and its office-bearers not only are not bound, but are not at liberty to delegate or concede, for any reason or in any circumstances, to

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 230
any party, the discharge of any of the duties which Christ has imposed upon them - the execution of any of the functions which He has bestowed upon them - but are bound at all times, in all circumstances, and at all hazards to do themselves the whole necessary business of Christ's House on their own responsibility, subject to Him (Christ) alone and according to the standard of His Word."

It will be recalled that the third assumption on which Hooker bases his argument for the subordination of the Church to the State, is the well-known Erastian allegation of the apparent danger and absurdity of an "imperium in imperio." If the Church were not subordinated to the State but supreme in its own sphere, there would be according to Erastianism an imperium in imperio, which apparently is unacceptable because in a commonwealth "there is required one universal power which reacheth over all, importing supreme authority of government over all courts, all judges, all causes."

The obvious answer to Hooker's contention is, of course, that as the arrangements which Christ has made for the government of His Church are of a permanent nature, "no valid argument against the application of the doctrine (of the supremacy of the Church

2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol IV, p. 207
in its own sphere) can be derived from mere inconveniences or embarrassments that may occasionally arise". Cunningham, however, is certain that even these inconveniences and embarrassments can easily be avoided "by settling the limits of the respective provinces or spheres of the two powers", the Church and the State.

Cunningham maintains that from Christ’s injunction, "render ...... unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s" (Matt. 22.21) two inferences can be drawn:

a) "that there are some things which belong to the province of Caesar, or the civil magistrate, which are subject to his jurisdiction - with respect to which he has rightful authority - and is ordinarily to be obeyed; reserving, of course, the great principle which is of universal application, namely, that we must obey God rather than man (Acts 5.29)" and

b) "that there are some things which are God’s in such a sense as not to belong to Caesar at all - not to belong to the province, or to be subject to the authority of the civil magistrate."

What are these things respectively? "Caesar’s things" - according to Cunningham - "are the persons and the property of men,

---

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 208
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 208
3. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 208
and God's things are the conscience of men and the Church of Christ." This means that "the civil magistrate has rightful jurisdiction over the persons and the property of men, because the Word of God sanctions his right to the use of the sword, and because jurisdiction in these matters is evidently indispensable to the execution of the functions of his office, the attainment of the great end of civil government, namely, the promotion of the good order and prosperity of the community."

Caesar, that is the State, however "has no jurisdiction over the conscience; for God alone is Lord of the conscience, and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men"; and "he has no jurisdiction over the Church of Christ, because Christ alone is its King and Head, and because by His own authority in His Word, He has made full provision for its government for the administration of its affairs through other parties, without vesting any control over it in the civil magistrate."

In Cunningham's opinion, therefore, the civil authorities are excluded from exercising control over the Church and are barred from preaching the Word, administering the sacraments, inflicting censures and doing the ordinary, necessary business of the Church.

Yet Cunningham fully recognises the rights of the State.

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 208
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 208
with regard to the Church. As an obligation is laid upon the representative of the State to aim at the promotion of religion and the welfare of the Church, Cunningham agrees that though religion and the Church are not "within the sphere of his (the magistrate's) jurisdiction", they are yet "within the scope of his care." Furthermore Cunningham admits that "the civil magistrate is also entitled to exercise a certain superintendence and control in religious and ecclesiastical matters - "; but he makes it perfectly clear that they are "limited to the object of promoting the attainment and preventing the frustration of the great end of his office - the peace and good order of the community. In pursuing this great end of his office the civil magistrate, "acting in his own province, and in the exercise of the authority and jurisdiction competent to him as such", "is entitled to call Synods and to be present at them": but according to Cunningham he is "not entitled to exercise any judicial authority in controlling or altering their decisions, so as to impose upon them any obligation to obedience, as if he were a higher authority in these matters than they."

In one instance and one instance only does Cunningham admit that "the civil power is entitled to exercise jurisdiction in ecclesiastical causes", and that is "with reference to the civil

1. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol IV, p. 209
2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 209
3. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 229
4. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol IV, p. 229
matters" which may be mixed up with ecclesiastical matters. Civil matters, as for instance questions of property, even though they are involved in ecclesiastical causes, "belong in their own nature to the province of the civil magistrate and should of course be determined by the ordinary civil tribunals." In Cunningham's view there is no violation of the essential independence of the Church and of its supremacy, if the civil power decide "all questions which directly concern the persons and the property of men, provided the Church is left at full liberty to give effect to her own judgment and decision with respect to what may be properly ecclesiastical in the cause - that is, to take an illustration from the class of cases that ordinarily occur, provided she is left at full liberty to refuse to admit to offices or ordinances in the Church, all whom she regards as unfit or unworthy, in whatever way this refusal may affect questions of property". In other words Cunningham insists that the civil power "is entitled to exercise jurisdiction in ecclesiastical causes only in a civil way"; or to put it differently, the civil magistrate may have authority "circa sacra", but he has never "jurisdiction in sacris".

In our opinion the Scriptural evidence bears out Cunningham’s contention that "the Church and State are two distinct independent societies, each having a distinct government of its own, self-sufficient and authoritative in its own province and with reference to its own functions and objects."

1. William Cunningham op.cit., Vol IV p. 164
c. The Alliance between the Church and the State to be based on a Co-ordination of Powers and a mutual Subordination of Persons.

In opposition to Roman Catholicism and in common with Erastianism Cunningham denies to the Church, as we have already noted, any authoritative control in the regulation of the affairs of the State, because the latter is supreme in its own sphere and domain. On the other hand Cunningham concurs with Roman Catholicism "in opposing all Erastian principles, i.e., everything implying or tending towards or deducible from the subordination of the Church to the State, or the ascription to civil rulers of any jurisdiction or right of authoritative control, whether direct or indirect, in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs in the government of Christ's House".

If, however the relationship between the Church and the State is exclusive of the idea of subordination, both in the Roman Catholic and the Erastian sense, is the Voluntaryist principle of the entire separation between the two societies not the only alternative?

Cunningham is of course aware of the fact that in certain circumstances nothing else but "a condition of entire separation" can possibly exist, simply because the State is either actively anti-Christian or at least unwilling to fulfil its obligation towards the Church. Yet

2. William Cunningham op.cit. Vol. II p. 393
although in these adverse circumstances entire separation is and ought to be the only condition acceptable to the Church, Cunningham repudiates the view that this separation must be looked upon as a matter of principle, a necessary condition valid in all circumstances. He thus refutes the idea that separation is the only alternative in all circumstances and that it is the only lawful attitude of the Church towards the State.

Cunningham recognises that the Church does not depend on the support and assistance of the civil authorities and he does not maintain that in the event of an entire separation the Church's business cannot be carried on. "A condition of entire separation from the State" - he writes - "and entire dependence upon the contributions of the people, is a perfectly lawful and honourable condition for a Church of Christ to occupy........ The Church" - he goes on to say - "may flourish largely, both internally and externally, without any countenance or assistance from the civil powers, and accomplish fully all its essential objects".

While the Church, however, is able to exist in a condition of entire separation from the State and ought to

exist in such a condition in adverse circumstances, Cunningham emphatically denies that "the Church is interdicted by the Law of her Master from entering into an alliance with the State, or accepting assistance from the civil power", and that "if the civil authorities rightly understood their duties and were willing to discharge them aright, attaching no unwarrantable conditions to their offers of service, they could not render assistance to the Church which she might be fully warranted to accept". In short the alternative to subordination and separation which Cunningham puts forward, is the Presbyterian idea of the alliance between the Church and the State, an alliance which must, of course, safeguard the independence and distinctness of the two societies.

Cunningham's vindication of the alliance between Church and State, of the National Establishment of Religion as it is called, is based on the Scriptural view that since "the general ends or objects of the two societies, though different, are not only not opposed to each other, but harmonious and accordant, - since they are both fitted and intended, in their respective spheres, to promote the glory of God and the welfare of the community", - Church and State though distinct from and independent of each other, are yet able to work together and assist each other in the attainment

2. William Cunningham, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 204f.
of their objects: the glory of God and the welfare of the community. They are, therefore, not opposed but complementary to each other and their relationship "might roughly be described as of the nature of two intersecting circles".

The two societies can and should combine for mutual co-operation and assistance which may lead to an alliance between them, provided the idea of "the superiority in point of jurisdiction of the Church over the State" or "of the State over the Church" is excluded. An alliance between Church and State is therefore possible and desirable, according to Cunningham, as long as it does neither ignore nor destroy nor supersede the principles of the distinctness and supremacy of the two societies.

What is the basis of the alliance between the Church and the State? Cunningham asserts that "the true principle of connection between them" is "a co-ordination of powers and a mutual subordination of persons". This notion of the co-ordination of powers and the mutual subordination of persons does full justice to the principles of distinctness and supremacy of Church and State. "The co-ordination of powers" - as Cunningham points out - "just means the entire co-equality - independence - of the two powers, each being supreme in its own province, and with reference to its own

objects and functions; and the mutual subordination of persons means, first and more generally, that the same persons, if members of the Church, are subject to the civil power and to that alone in all civil matters, and to the ecclesiastical office-bearers and to them alone, in ecclesiastical matters, in so far as any earthly authority is entitled to regulate them; and secondly and more specifically, that civil rulers, if Church members, are just as much subject to the control of ecclesiastical office-bearers in ecclesiastical matters as their subjects are, and that ecclesiastical office-bearers are just as fully subject to civil rulers in all civil things, as any other members of the community.

This is of course precisely what Calvin teaches!

With regard to the secular and the ecclesiastical authorities he states, that "it ought to be known that they are in no respect at variance with each other", but on the contrary "their respective operations ought to be so connected as to be an assistance, and not an obstruction to each other", which means that Church and State should be co-ordinate powers. Furthermore Calvin insists that Christians should submit to the lawful authority of the State, but indicates at the same time that "a pious magistrate will not wish to exempt himself from the common subjection of the children of

2. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XX, Sec. 2.
3. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI, Sec. 3.
God, which in no small degree consists in submitting to the Church, when it judges by the Word of God", this involving what Cunningham calls "the mutual subordination of persons".

Although Calvin often failed to put his views into practice at Geneva, he succeeded in laying the foundation of what may rightly be called the Presbyterian doctrine of the relationship between the Church and the State. In a later age Cunningham was one of those Scottish Presbyterians who developed Calvin's views and principles. Although Calvin's views widened at one time the differences between the various sections of Scottish Presbyterianism and finally led to the Disruption of 1843, they became gradually the common heritage of the main branches of the Reformed Church in Scotland. In 1929 it was possible to erect on the foundation which Calvin had laid and which Cunningham had re-inforced, the building of the Re-united Church of Scotland. This Church, which is distinct from and independent of the State and supreme in its own sphere and province, is yet not separated from but allied with the State, the two societies being co-ordinate powers with a mutual subordination of persons. The problem of the relationship between the National Church and the State is thus satisfactorily solved in Scotland. The Scottish solution is an example which might well be followed everywhere so long as there are Christian States, or at least States that are not opposed to the Christian Faith.

1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book IV, Chap. XI. Sec. 4.
CONCLUSION

Recent developments in political ideologies finding expression in Totalitarianism which claims for the state total and absolute sovereignty in all spheres of life on the one hand and the Oecumenical Movement with its aims of co-operation between and ultimate visible unity of the Churches on the other, make it imperative that Christians in general and the student of Theology in particular should have clear ideas of and definite views on, the Church, its nature, its government and organisation, and its relationship with the state. Where are these ideas and views to be found? The answer is of course obvious: In the New Testament? Yet once it is realised that all "Churches", including the Church of Rome, appeal to the New Testament and claim to have their roots in it, it becomes evident that though the recognition of the New Testament as authoritative is common to all, it does not solve the problem of ecclesiology but constitutes it; for the interpretation of what is said, taught and revealed about the Church in the New Testament is anything but common to all.

In recent years, however, even the interpretation of the New Testament teaching concerning the Church has led to a
greater unity of opinion. At the end of the last century Biblical scholars were certain that they had solved the problem of the Church. By applying the methods of historical criticism to the New Testament, they thought they had discovered in the "original" sources the "real" Jesus - the Jesus of History who, freed from the fetters of ecclesiastical Dogma and Tradition, became the supreme Teacher, the great Revealer and Discoverer of God whose Teaching was the climax of man's quest for God. Naturally and necessarily a Christology that jettisoned as an unnecessary and cumbersome burden the "God-Man-ness" of Christ and insisted on Christ's Humanity, often to the exclusion of His Divinity in the New Testament sense, was bound to lead to important and far-reaching conclusions concerning the Church.

In making Jesus exclusively human the Church, too, lost its divine-human character and became a purely human institution. It was looked upon as a human association which has as its foundation and starting point in the Christian himself. Where a number of Christians meet there is the Congregation and where there is a number of Congregations there is the Church.

To-day the theological outlook being completely changed the "Jesus of History Movement" as Prof. D. M. Baillie calls it.

belongs to the past and also relegated to the past is the idea of a man-made Church. Once again it is recognised and accepted that as Jesus Christ is the God-Man, the Word made Flesh, God Incarnate, so the Church is a divine-human institution having its starting point in and with God who gave and created it.

There is then a first step towards a more unanimous interpretation of the ecclesiological teaching of the New Testament; for it is recognised almost universally that the Church is not merely a human organisation but that it is a divine-human institution, in fact the Church of God, His Creation. Agreement, however, stops there - it goes thus far but no further! But it is an important achievement; for it gives a common denominator, a basis of discussion to all who are concerned with the problem of the Church although, of course, it does not solve the problem itself. The student of Theology is thus faced with a confusing variety of "doctrines" of the Church, all of which claim the support, the authority and the warrant of the New Testament. He must make a choice but what is he going to choose? The ultimate choice of every Christian surely ought to be an ecclesiology which, in the light of the New Testament and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, combines what is true in all Church doctrines and thus, healing the wounds and sores of division, will lead to the visible unity and oneness of the Church of God on earth. However
before such an aim can be reached or even be contemplated, Christians must know where their own particular Church or Denomination stands and what it has to put into the "Oecumenical Pool".

In pursuing our investigation of Cunningham's teaching on the Church, its nature, its government and its relationship with the State, it became abundantly clear to us that Presbyterianism and more especially Scottish Presbyterianism has three distinct contributions to make to the Oecumenical Pool:

1. Its doctrine of the visible and invisible Church. It alone in our opinion solves the problem of and explains the contradiction between, the Church of our experience, a Church which is weak and frail, often failing and faltering, sometimes corrupt, always imperfect and the Church which is the Body of Christ, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all, the Church glorious which has neither spot nor wrinkle nor any such thing but is holy and without blemish.

2. Its doctrine of Church government. It alone combines the elements of the three forms of government exercised in one way or another in the various Christian Churches, and makes them into one. Presbyterian Church government is monarchical for Christ is the only King and Head of the Church; it is aristocratic for ecclesiastical office-bearers - the Presbyters - and not the people are appointed to govern the
Church on Christ's behalf. It is democratic for the members of the Church elect the office-bearers who are all equal in rank, order and degree.

3. Its doctrine of the relationship between the Church and the State. Presbyterianism and more especially Scottish Presbyterianism, by insisting on the mutual independence of the Church and the State, is able to ally itself with a State tolerant of Christian ideas and to co-operate with it without dominating it or being dominated by it.

We believe that these three Presbyterian doctrines are Scriptural and that therefore, whatever the outcome of the Oecumenical Movement may be, they cannot and ought not be ignored when the unity and oneness of the Church of Christ on earth is contemplated. Our conclusion is not based on any narrow denominational prejudice but on the sincere and honest belief that these Presbyterian conceptions of the Church, its nature, government and relationship with the State safeguard the Crown Rights of Christ and exalt Him as the King and Head of the Church.
# Bibliography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Editions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adam, Karl</td>
<td>The Spirit of Catholicism, trans. by Dom Justin McCann</td>
<td>London, 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam Assembly Series</td>
<td>Man's Disorder and God's Design, an ecumenical Study prepared under the auspices of the World Council of Churches, 4 Vols.</td>
<td>London, 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arquilliere, M.X.</td>
<td>St. Gregoire VII</td>
<td>Paris, 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailie, D.M.</td>
<td>God was in Christ</td>
<td>London, 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barth, Karl</td>
<td>Dogmatik im Grundriss</td>
<td>Zollikon-Zuerich, 1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binns, L. Elliott</td>
<td>Innocent III</td>
<td>London, 1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohrer, Reinhold</td>
<td>Luther and the Reformation in the Light of Modern Research, trans. by E.S.C. Potter</td>
<td>London, 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunner, Emil</td>
<td>The Divine Imperative, trans. by Olive Wyon</td>
<td>London &amp; Redhill, 1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin, Jean</td>
<td>Le Catéchisme de Jean Calvin</td>
<td>Paris, 1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin, Jean</td>
<td>Trois Traitées</td>
<td>Paris &amp; Genève, 1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin, Jean</td>
<td>Sermons</td>
<td>Paris &amp; Genève, 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin, Jean</td>
<td>Institution de la Religion Chrétienne (1541), Texte établi et présenté par Jacques Pannier</td>
<td>4 Tomes, Paris, 1936-1939</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CALVIN, JOHN:  Institutes Christianae Religionis, Corpus Reformatorum, 1539-1554.


CAMBRIDGE MODERN HISTORY:  Vol. I The Renaissance, Cambridge, 1934


CLAIM, DECLARATION, and PROTEST anent the Encroachments of the Court of Session, 1842 see Manual of Practice and Procedure in the United Free Church of Scotland.

CONFESSION OF FAITH:  See Westminster.


CUNNINGHAM, WILLIAM: Disruption Controversy, a Collection of Pamphlets, no Title page, New College Library, Edinburgh.


CUNNINGHAM, WILLIAM: Theological Lectures on Subjects connected with Natural Theology, Evidences of Christianity, the Canon and Inspiration of Scripture, London, 1878.

CUNNINGHAM, WILLIAM: see Stilligfleet, Edward.

DIRECTORY FOR THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD: See Westminster.

DOUMERGUE, Emile: Le Caractère de Calvin, seconde Édition, remaniée et considérablement augmentée, Neuilly (Seine), no date.


FLEW, P. NEWTON: Jesus and His Church, London, 1938.

FORM OF PRESbyterial CHURCH GOVERNMENT: See Westminster.


GREGORCTIUS, FERDINAND: Werke, Berlin, (no date), (a selection of his writings).

GUGGISBERG, KURT: Die roemisch-katholische Kirche, eine Einfuehrung und Quellensammlung, Zuerich, 1946.

HENDERSON
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Edition Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Henderson, G.D.</td>
<td>Scots Confession, 1560 and Negative Confession, 1561, with Introduction by G.D. Henderson</td>
<td>Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heppe, Heinrich</td>
<td>Reformed Dogmatics, revised and edited by Ernest Bizer, English Translation by O.T. Thomson</td>
<td>London, 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hodge, Charles</td>
<td>Systematic Theology, 3 Vols., London and Edinburgh, 1872-1873</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooker, Richard</td>
<td>Ecclesiastical Polity, Books I-V, 2 Vols., London</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunt, R.N. Carew</td>
<td>Calvin</td>
<td>London, 1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenkins, Daniel E.</td>
<td>The Nature of Catholicity</td>
<td>London, 1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koehler, Walther</td>
<td>Huldreich Zwingli</td>
<td>Leipzig, 1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koelman, William Jan</td>
<td>Martin Luther, ubers. von Fritz Thoma</td>
<td>Muenchen, 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kramm, H.H.</td>
<td>The Theology of Martin Luther</td>
<td>London, 1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuyper, Abraham</td>
<td>Calvinism, a new Edition</td>
<td>London, 1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger Catechism</td>
<td>See Westminster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LOSTIN, PAUL: Etudes sur la Pensée et L'Oeuvre de Calvin, Neilly (Seine), no date.

LUNN, BRIAN: Martin Luther, London, 1934.


MACGREGOR, MALCOLM B.: The Sources and Literature of Scottish Church History, Glasgow, 1934.

MACKENZIE, JAMES: Life of William Cunningham, D.D., see Rainy.

MACLEOD, JOHN: Scottish Theology, Edinburgh, 1943


MANUAL OF COUNCILS of the Holy Catholic Church see Landon, Edward H.

MANUAL OF PRACTICE and Procedure in the United Free Church of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1905.


MUELLER, J.T.: Die symbolischen Bucher der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche, deutsch und lateinisch,

NIRBUHR, REINHOLD: The Nature and Destiny of Man, 2 Vols.,

OLDHAM, J.H.: The Church and its Function in Society see
Visser 'T Hooft, W.A.

OWEN, JOHN: The Works of, edited by Thomas Russell, Vol. XX,
an Inquiry into the Original, Nature, Institution, Power, Order, and Communion
of Evangelical Churches: An Answer to Dr. Stillingfleet's Book of the Unreasonableness

PAGET, FRANCIS: An Introduction to the fifth Book of Hooker's

PICTET, BENEDICT: Christian Theology, trans. from the Latin by
Frederick Reyroux, London, 1834.

PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE in the Church of Scotland see Cox, James T.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FOURTH CALVINISTIC CONGRESS held in Edinburgh
6th to 11th July 1938, Edinburgh, 1938.

RAINY, ROBERT & MACKENZIE, JAMES: Life of William Cunningham, D.D.,

RUPP, GORDON: Luther's Progress to the Diet of Worms 1521,

SCHLINK, EDMUND: Theologie der lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften,

SCHUERER, EMIL: Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter

SCOTS CONFESSION, 1560 see Henderson, G.D.

SCOTT, ERNEST F.: The Nature of the Early Church, New York, 1941.
SHORTER CATECHISM  See Westminster.


STAUFFER, ETHELBERT: Christus and die Caesaren, Hamburg, 1948.


SYMBOLISCHEN BÜCHER der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche see Mueller, J.T.


VANSITTARD, LORD: See Sienkiewicz, Henryk.

VISCHER, WILHELM: Das Christuszeugnis des Alten Testaments,


WESTMINSTER CONFESSION see Westminster.