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BY

EDMUND DE SCHWEINITZ,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH AT BETHLEHEM, PA.

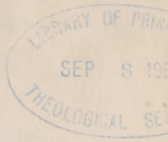
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NOTE.

The following paper was originally written for "The Moravian," the weekly journal of the Moravian Church, and appeared in its issue of the 30th of November, 1865.

v. Hutton's History - Revised
— pp 56 - 57. —

v. Muller's "Geschichte der Böhmischem
Brüder" Vol. I - ch IV p. 113

THE MORAVIAN EPISCOPATE.

We have been repeatedly asked to give a critical account of the Episcopate of the Moravians. It forms an interesting subject of inquiry. In the popular histories of the Church its origin is set forth, but an examination into its validity would have been foreign to their purpose. An history whose province it would be to discuss this point, and, in general, to bring forward the authorities which exist for the current narratives of the founding of the Church and the institution of her ministry, has not yet appeared in the English language. Indeed it is well that a work of this kind remains to be written, for in recent times only have the most important records come to light, and but a few years ago, through the researches and publications of Bohemian antiquaries, have they been made more generally available than they were when first discovered.

We need scarcely say that this article is not meant to subserve the interests of exclusivism, nor based upon the idea that episcopal ordination only is valid. The founders of the Moravian Church in the fifteenth century secured what is commonly called "the apostolical succession" because they believed that an episcopal form of government would be the best for them, would give them stability and unity, and, above all, would help them maintain their protesting position over against the Romish Hierarchy and the National Church of Bohemia; but they did not hesitate to fraternize with the Reformers of Germany. On the contrary, it was one of their highest aims to bring about a union among all evangelical Christians. As they were the leaders of the Protestant world in translating the Bible into a vernacular and publishing hymns and introducing a holy discipline, so also in the furtherance of this great duty. And such has remained the principle of the Church to the present day. Her episcopacy is essential to her existence; it

is the historic form of her organic life; it enabled her to come forth from a time in which her visible structure was destroyed with the stream of that life uninterrupted; it conferred upon her the right to renew her ecclesiastical constitution and reoccupy her ancient place in Christendom. But, at the same time, she glories in the catholic standpoint of her fathers; and instead of presuming to unchurch other bodies of believers who have no episcopacy, upholds a close fellowship with them.

Nor do we intend to give a polemic treatise, although we shall take notice of a paper against the validity of the Moravian episcopacy written, in 1835, by Rev. A. P. Perceval, of England, and occasioned by a pamphlet published in 1833, entitled "Apostolical Succession Examined," in which the episcopate of the Moravians was exalted above that of the Anglican Church.¹ We shall do this, first, because it is, in so far as we know, the only critical attempt ever made to disprove with a show of ancient authorities the lawfulness of our episcopacy, and, second, because it has lately been republished in this country. Our chief purpose, however, will be to meet the wishes of members of the Church desiring information upon this subject, as expressed to us long before the appearance of that republication.

In order to a proper comprehension of our narrative, it will be necessary to present a somewhat detailed statement of the sources of early Moravian history.

HISTORICAL SOURCES.

In the very nature of the case some obscurity with regard to that history must be expected. This will be manifest from the following considerations:

In the first place, the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren were an oppressed and persecuted people; the rack and the stake beset them on every side. These were not circumstances favorable to the

1. In 1841, a Moravian Clergyman of England having published a letter addressed by him to Rev. Dr. Hook, Vicar of Leeds, upon the subject of the Moravian episcopacy as acknowledged by the British Parliament, in 1749, Dr. Hook, in the way of reply, reprinted Perceval's paper with additions in the September number of the "Christian's Miscellany," of which he was editor, entitling it "An Enquiry into the Episcopacy of the Moravians: occasioned by a letter from a Presbyter of that community to the Rev. Dr. Hook."

collection of materials for the historian. "Of what sort our records must be amidst such great disquietude and persecutions," writes Bishop Nigranus, in 1556, to the well known Reformer, Flacius Illyricus, "thou mayest safely judge."¹ Moreover, both the law of self-preservation and the rule of Christ taught them to combine the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. Hence they intentionally concealed some occurrences that would have inflamed the wrath of their enemies. Bishop Blahoslav writing, in 1571, to Lasitius, who was preparing an history of the Church, says: "He (Esaias, his pupil, by whose hands he sent the letter) will indicate to thee the reasons which have led the Brethren to prefer that their affairs should remain unknown rather than be published abroad. They do not wish to extol themselves and make themselves the subject of their own praise: they prefer peace and tranquility to all things, being, namely, men cast down, oppressed and greatly afflicted."²

In the next place, their earliest archives, which were deposited at Leitomischl, in Bohemia, together with the private library of Bishop Augusta embracing most valuable records, totally perished, in 1546, in a conflagration which swept away that entretown.³

And, finally, the great mass of their numerous publications which were issued at a later period fell a prey, in the Bohemian Anti-reformation, to the fury of Jesuits and imperial dragoons sent through the country to search out and burn every vestige of evangelical literature. Upon this point the Roman Catholic historian, Gindely — of whom more hereafter—while carefully withholding the true cause, which would stigmatize his church, is nevertheless constrained to acknowledge: "The writings of the Brethren in particular seem to have been devoted to annihilation. We are not astonished that, as a general thing, but one or two copies of works in manuscript have come down to us from former days: but that printed works, circulating by the hundreds and thousands scarcely two and a half centuries ago, have in part altogether

1. Gindely's Quellen zur Geschichte der Böhmischen Brueder, Vienna, 1859 p. 278.

2. Ibid p. 327.

3. Ibid p. 278: also the Preface p. ix: further, Die Katechismen der Waldenser und Böhmischen Brueder, by Dr. von Zeschwitz, Erlangen, 1863, p. 135.

disappeared and in part are extant in not more copies than if they were manuscripts—this is so remarkable a fact that it becomes credible only because it cannot possibly be denied.”¹

It is, therefore, not surprising that a partial obscurity rests upon the first era of the history of the Brethren, including the period in which they received the episcopacy. It is, rather, surprizing that at this late day we can, in spite of the disasters and persecutions of former times, give so clear a view of their origin, and bring forward so many and such solid authorities.

After the burning of Leitomischl, the Brethren began (about 1550) to gather materials for new archives. This important labor was entrusted to various Bishops, of whom the most active were Nigranus and Blahoslav. By their exertions there were brought together fourteen folio volumes of manuscripts relating to the history of the Church and her correspondence with the Reformers, and containing duplicates of some of the lost records.² Until the year 1620, these second archives were preserved at different places in Bohemia and Moravia. Then, amidst the storms of the Anti-reformation, pious hands conveyed them for safe-keeping to Lissa, a town of what is now Prussian Poland, not far from the Silesian frontier,³ where they remained for two hundred and twenty-two years,⁴ and were, at length, entirely forgotten, in as much as Jablonsky and Sitkovius, the last Bishops of the Ancient Church, passed away without informing the Renewed Church of their existence. Perhaps they were themselves not aware of it.

The principal writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries who treated of the history of the Brethren, and, either directly or indirectly, drew their information from these archives, are the following:

1. John Lasitius, a Polish nobleman of the Reformed Church. Traveling in Bohemia and Moravia, he became an ardent admirer of the Brethren, examined their records and produced their history,

1. Gindely's Quellen zur Geschichte d. Böh. Brueder, Preface, p. vi.

2. Gindely's Quellen, Preface, p. ix and x.

3. Lissa lies about forty-two miles S. W. of Posen, and is one of the stations on the railroad from that city to Breslau. It was the original seat of the Leczinski family, ancestors of Stanislaus, King of Poland.

4. Gindely's Quellen zur Gesch. d. Böh. Brueder, Preface p. x.

written in Latin in eight books, between the years 1560 and 1570.¹ In 1586 he sent it to their Bishops for publication; but fearing that it might seem to extol their Church above measure, they did not print it. One of their number, however, Bishop Turnovius, enriched it with marginal notes. In 1649, Amos Comenius issued the eighth book, the rest of the work was never published. Four manuscript copies of it are extant, namely: two in the Moravian Archives of Herrnhut, Saxony; one in a Library of Prague; and one in the University Library of Goettingen.

2. Joachim Camerarius, the well known humanist and professor at Leipzig. At the request of the Brethren themselves he wrote their history,² between 1570 and 1574, in which latter year he died. But it was not given to the world until thirty years after his decease, and then, not the Brethren, but his own grandson, Louis Camerarius, had it printed at Heidelberg (1605) with additions of his own.³ Camerarius never visited Bohemia and personally never consulted the archives of the Brethren. His principal authorities were Lasitius' M. S. History, and Blahoslav's Historic Treatises, of which latter we will speak more at length hereafter. These had been sent to him by the Bishops from Bohemia.

3. John Amos Comenius, that illustrious Bishop of the exiled Brethren who never ceased to hope that their Church would be resuscitated, and zealously labored for this consummation. He published at Lissa, in 1632, the *Ratio Disciplinae Unitatis Fratrum* which had been officially drawn up by the Bishops, and adopted by the General Synod held in 1616, at Zerawitz, in Moravia. It embraces a very complete account of the ministry, constitution and discipline of the Church, and Comenius added a concise but exceedingly important history. A second edition of this work appeared in 1660, at Amsterdam, with the eighth book of Lasitius prefixed. This edition Comenius intended as a legacy for posterity in the event of a renewal of the Church, and dedicated

1. The title of this work is: *Lasitii Origo, Progressus, Res prosperae quam adversae, nec non Mores, Instituta, Consuetudines Fratrum.*

2. Gindely's Quellen, p. 343 and 347.

3. The title of this work is: *Historica Narratio de Fratrum Orthodoxorum ecclesiis in Bohemia, Moravia et Polonia.*

it to the Church of England, to whose fraternal care he commended the Brethren of a future age.¹

4. Adrian Wengersky, an exiled minister of the Brethren. Under the assumed name of Regenvolscius he issued, in 1652, at Utrecht, an history of the Churches of Slavonic origin in Bohemia, Moravia and Poland.² In 1679 a second edition came out at Amsterdam, with his real name.

After the renewal of the Moravian Church (1722), these four secondary sources—we omit several minor ones because they are mere compilations from those we have mentioned—constituted, for a period of one hundred and twenty years, the only sources open to writers on the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, whether they were friends or foes. By these Cranz, Loretz, Holmes and John Plitt³ were guided; on one of these Perceval mainly relied. Of the existence of original records they know nothing.

In 1842, however, a Moravian clergyman, on a visit to Lissa, accidentally discovered these in the vestry-room of one of its churches. Thirteen volumes of the ancient archives were there, intact, and in a state of excellent preservation.⁴ They were purchased by the Church, placed in the Library at Herrnhut, and are now technically known as the “Lissa Folios.”

These invaluable documents have thrown new light upon the early history of the Brethren. They have been examined with much care by Anton Gindely, a Roman Catholic Professor of Prague, and one of the most distinguished antiquaries of Bohemia, who has quite recently been appointed Archivist of that country; and by Franz Palacky, also a Roman Catholic, the great Bohemian historian,

1. A third edition was published at Halle, in 1702, by Buddaeus, who wrote a lengthy introduction to it, and embodied with the work Comenius' Treatise on the Amelioration of the Human Race. Of this edition, the following is the title; *Jo. Amos Comeni, Eccl. F. F. Boh. Episcopi, Historia Fratrum Bohemorum, eorum Ordo et Disciplina ecclesiastica, ad Ecclesiae Recte Constituendae Exemplar, cum Ecclesiae Bohem. ad Anglicanam Paraenesis.*

2. *Regenvolscii Systema historico-chronologicum ecclesiarum Slavonicarum.*

3. In 1828, Rev. John Plitt wrote the best and most erudite history of the Boh. Brn. which existed prior to the discovery of the original sources. It was, however, not intended for publication, but as a guide for lectures in the Theological Seminaries of the Church. Hence it remains in manuscript.

4. The 14th folio has since been found in the Bohemian Museum at Prague.

whose "Geschichte von Böhmen" has now reached nine volumes, and forms the most learned and exhaustive work which has ever appeared upon that subject. Both these writers consider them of paramount importance for the history not only of the Brethren, but of Bohemia in general,¹ and hence Gindely is now having them copied entire for the National Archives at Prague.² Nor have they failed to make use of them. The seventh, eighth and ninth volumes of Palacky's History contain frequent references to them; while Gindely, who has taken up the history of the Bohemian Brethren, in spite of his Romish views, with an enthusiasm which can be explained from the stand-point of a fellow-nationality only, says that his "Geschichte der Böhmischn Brüeder" (Prague, 1857) is based substantially upon these records. This work, of which two large octavo volumes have appeared and a third is expected, is the most complete history of the Brethren that has been published in ancient or modern times, although its Romish bias greatly mars its value.³ This is not the case, however, with its supplemental volume, entitled "Quellen zur Geschichte der Böhmischn Brüeder vornehmlich ihren Zusammenhang mit Deutschland betreffend" (Sources of the History of the Bohemian Brethren particularly in relation to their correspondence with Germany): for it consists of a literal publication of many of the Latin, and of German versions of a number of the Bohemian manuscripts of the Lissa Folios. Dr. Gindely deserves the thanks of the whole Church for this magnificent contribution to her literature.⁴

1. Gindely's Geschichte d. Böhmischn Brüeder, Preface, p. iv: also his Quellen, Preface, p. vii.

2. Palacky's Gesch. v. Böhmen, vol. ix, p. 432, note 335.

3. The thorough research upon which this history is based, is worthy of all praise, but the mode of representation is often faulty in the extreme. Nor can it be otherwise. Gindely occupies, as the article, in Herzog's Encyclopaedia, on the Renewed Brethren's Church well says, a standpoint which is inwardly and therefore fundamentally foreign to that of the Brethren.

4. Besides these two works, Gindely has also written a Life of Bishop Amos Comenius; the Dogmatical views of the Böhemian and Moravian Brn., with some notices respecting the history of their origin (1854); and the "Dekreten der Brüeder Unität" (Prague, 1865). With these works, which we have not yet been able to procure, we are not acquainted. Hence Gindely, having devoted no less than five works, one of them of three vols., to the Bohemian Brethren, might well be called their historian

Of Moravian works these Folios have called forth a manuscript volume of Addenda to Plitt's MS. History; a concise account of the Brethren's Church by Rev. Henry L. Reichel, formerly President of the Continental Theological Seminary; and Bishop Croeger's latest "Geschichte der Alten Bruederkirche" (Gnadau, 1865).

And, last but not least, they have brought to light the Historic Treatises of John Blahoslav; the one written in Latin, in 1556,¹ the other in Bohemian, somewhat later, but more in detail.² These Treatises are the oldest Histories of the Brethren, and the first was composed expressly in order to give the Reformers of Germany a correct account of the origin and ministry of the Church. Their importance cannot be over-estimated.

With such newly discovered original sources, then, to serve as a complement to the former secondary ones, we proceed to consider the Moravian Episcopacy.

THE PLAN OF THE BRETHERN TO SECURE THE EPISCOPACY FROM THE BOHEMIAN WALDENSES.

During the first ten years of their existence (1457 to 1467) the Bohemian Brethren were a Society rather than a Church. Occupying an isolated retreat—the Barony of Lititz in the North Eastern part of Bohemia—they endeavored to carry out among themselves the reformatory principles of John Huss, and edified one another in the Lord. Their ministers were pious priests ordained in the Calixtine or National Church. Gradually, however, they felt the necessity of a total separation from the Establishment and of a regular ecclesiastical organization of their own; and yet

par excellence, if he were not unfortunately a son of Rome. It is certainly remarkable, however, that that Church which crushed the Brethren in the 17th century, is, through the works of one of her most learned writers, doing what she can to make their memory known in the 19th century.

1. It is entitled, *Summa quaedam brevissime collecta ex variis Scriptis Fratrum, qui falso Valdenses vel Piccardi vocantur, de eorumdem Fratrum origine et actis*, and found in the viiiith Lissa Folio. We have in our possession a copy of this Treatise, made in 1846, from the Folio by the then Archivist of the Brethren's Church.

2. Dr. Gindely has made a German translation of this Bohemian Hist. for the Continental Theo. Sem.

they hesitated to take this step without unmistakable evidence that it would be in conformity with the will of God. On the occasion of a Synod, therefore, convened in 1467 at Lhota, in the Barony of Reichenau, the decision was left to the Lord by the lot, agreeably to the example of the apostles. Nine candidates were chosen and twelve lots put into a vase, nine being blank and three inscribed with the word *Est*. These lots were drawn singly by a lad, named Prokop, who presented one to each of the candidates. Three lots remained in the vase. It is evident that these three might have been the ones marked with *Est*, and that all the candidates might have received blanks, in which case the Synod would have accepted the result as a divine intimation that the time for instituting an independent ministry was not come. But the lots having been simultaneously opened, those with *Est* were found in the hands of Matthias of Kunwald, Thomas of Prelouc, and Elias of Chrenovic. Thus God both approved the creation of a separate ministry and designated its first candidates.¹

But how were they to be ordained? Should the priests present at the Synod proceed to do this and thus establish presbyterial ordination? It was a question which, even prior to the meeting at Lhota, had caused the Brethren no little anxiety. "Their minds," says Comenius, "were agitated by the fear whether an ordination would be sufficiently legitimate if a presbyter and not truly a bishop were to create a presbyter; and in what manner, in case of controversies, such an ordination could be defended either among themselves or against others."² And now that the Synod was assembled, the subject was fully and earnestly discussed. The result of these deliberations is given by Adrian Wengersky (Regenvolscius Book I Chap. VIII): "That in the times of the apostles there had existed no difference between a presbyter and a bishop; that the distinctive prerogatives of a bishop did not rest upon explicit instructions of the Bible, but upon a provision of the ancient Church; but, that, in order, to prevent in future all doubts

1. Blaloslav's *Summa quaedam collecta &c.*, VIIIth Lissa Folio; Lasitius II, 47, 48 (quoted by Plitt); Camerarius p. 93 and 94 (quoted by Plitt); Regenvolscius Book I Chap. VIII; Comenius *Ratio Disciplinae*, Sections 59 and 60; Gindely's *Geschichte der Böhmischesen Brüeder* I, 33-35; Zeschwitz "Die Katechismen d. Waldenser u. Böhms. Brüeder" 160.

2. Comenius *Ratio Disciplinae*, Section 59 p. 17.

on the part of the Brethren themselves and all objections on the part of their enemies, the anciently established principle and usage must be maintained." From this point of view, therefore, the Synod resolved to introduce episcopal ordination by securing the apostolical succession. To apply for it to the Calixtines would have been useless. They were reconciled with Rome, and whatever they might have been willing to do ere they had agreed to the Compactata of Basle, they would have spurned such a request now that these were adopted. But, providentially, there lived on the Moravian frontier a colony of Waldenses with two Bishops who had received the legitimate consecration. Of these Bishops the senior was Stephen, the name of the other is not known. To them a deputation was accordingly sent, composed of Michael Bradacius, theretofore the principal minister of the Brethren, and two other of their priests.¹

That the object of this mission was to seek not fraternal encouragement, or ordinary communion with religionists of like mind, but absolutely *episcopal ordination* and such episcopal ordination as Romanists and Calixtines would have to acknowledge, is so clearly shown by the extracts we have given from Comenius and Regenvolscius that we need add nothing more upon this head. Hence we go on to inquire whether these Waldenses on the Moravian frontier possessed a valid episcopacy and could confer the succession.

THE VALIDITY OF THE BOHEMIAN WALDENSIAN EPISCOPATE.

In their native valleys of Piedmont, the Waldenses were never an episcopal but always a presbyterian Church. The best authorities prove this, and the most recent discoveries of Waldensian documents in the University Library of Cambridge and elsewhere serve to corroborate it. To teach, as has been frequently done, that the Italian Waldenses had a succession of bishops stretching back to the apostles' times, and independent of that perpetuated through the Roman Catholic Church, is treading upon most unhistoric ground. In no way can such a position be established. As early as the first quarter of the fifteenth century, however, we find

1. Some of the authorities mention only two deputies.

Waldenses in Bohemia,¹ and their ecclesiastical development was wholly different from that of their brethren in the valleys. Paul Stransky, a Bohemian historian of the seventeenth century, says that they were expelled from the South of France, came by way of Germany to Bohemia, and settled near Saatz and Laun.² It was a period of extraordinary developments in church and state. By the execution of John Huss Rome had sown the wind and was reaping the whirlwind. The Hussite War raged with terrible fury. However incongruous the elements among the Bohemians, they were a unit in their national, although by no means doctrinal, opposition to the Hierarchy. These circumstances, on the one hand, rendered Bohemia a safe refuge for the Waldenses, on the other, laid a snare for them. The Hussites were divided into two factions: the Calixtines, who contended, mainly, for the privilege of the cup in the Lord's Supper, and the Taborites, who desired a thorough reformation of the church. The former were the aristocratic, the latter the popular party. Learned Doctors of the University of Prague guided the one, enthusiasts of the tented city of Tabor the other. Coming into contact with both these factions, the Waldenses shaped their course so as to give offence to neither. They associated with the Taborites,³ they were on friendly terms with the Calixtines, and, in course of time, openly fraternized with them even at the mass.⁴ Men like Rokycana

1. Herzog's Real Encyclopaedie vol. xvii, 515 and 520. Giesler's Kirchengeschichte ii, 4, 432.

2. History of Bohemia, by P. Stransky 6. 6. (quoted by Plitt).

3. Herzog's Real Encyclopaedie vol. xvii, 520.

4. This statement is established by very positive and abundant testimony, both ancient and modern. Blahoslav in his *Summa*, &c., (Lissa Folio viii) says: "It seemed that the doctrine of the Waldenses was taken from the H. S. even as is ours. Nevertheless, they (the Brethren) discovered certain practices which are unworthy of true disciples of Christ and deserve censure:" and then goes on, at considerable length, to specify these practices, amongst the rest, attendance at mass. *Come-nius Rat. Disciplinae* Sect. 62, p. 18, says: "The purity of their (Waldenses) doctrine and their endeavor to lead christian lives greatly pleased them (the Brethren). But they were displeased that they should hide and not openly confess the truth; and that for the sake of avoiding persecution they should frequent papistical temples and take part in idolatrous worship." Zeschwitz in his *Katechismen der Waldenser u. Böhm. Brueder* p. 161, corroborates this: "What the Brethren censured in the conduct of the Waldenses was, above all, that, although they recognized in the Pope the Antichrist, they yet did not openly proclaim their protest, but even took part in the Romish mass." And Herzog in his article on the Waldenses (*Encyclopaedie* xvii, 520) repeats the same charge, and adds that this sort of accommodation the Waldenses everywhere allowed themselves.

and Martin Lupac, leading Calixtine divines, the one afterward elected Archbishop of Prague and the other his Suffragan, were well disposed toward them, and esteemed Stephen especially as an excellent man.¹ Nor did such relations cease when the unprecedented route of the papal and imperial crusaders at Taus, in 1431, which filled all Europe with amazement, forced Sigismund to confess that the Bohemians were invincible, and that the Council of Basle, then in session, must immediately open negotiations with them. On the contrary, the intimacy grew so close that the Waldenses turned it to their own advantage. It so happened that their priests had nearly all died, and that a renewal of their ministry was desirable. This the Calixtines could not only effect, but could thereby also give them a far more influential position than they had as yet enjoyed. The Calixtines lent a willing hand, and upon their recommendation two Waldenses, Frederick Nemez and John Wlach, were ordained priests, on the 14th of September, 1433, in the Slavonian Convent of Prague, by Bishop Nicholas (Philibert), a Legate of the Council of Basle. In the summer of the following year (1434), these two priests were sent to Basle, where the Council was at open variance with the Pope, and in a full convocation of clergy consecrated Bishops by Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church. It was done again at the instance of the Calixtines and out of regard for them, the Council being anxious by all possible means to gain their confidence. Thus the Bohemian Waldenses obtained the apostolical succession, and Bishop Stephen and his colleague, who had been consecrated by Bishops Nemez and Wlach, could legitimately transfer it to the Brethren.

For this account of the origin and validity of the Bohemian Waldensian episcopate the following are the direct authorities :

1. A "Narrative of the origin of the Unitas of the Brethren," in the *Lissa Folios*, written in the year 1605, and probably by Bishop Jaffet. It gives facts and dates as we have presented them above, and that under circumstances forming a most indisputable guarantee of their correctness. For, as clearly appears from internal evidences, this Narrative was one of the controversial writings with which the Bishops of the Brethren were, at that time, officially meeting the assaults of Wenzel Sturm, a learned and

1. Palacky *Geschichte v. Boehmen* vol. vii, p. 494.

cunning Jesuit, who tried his utmost to render the *Unitas Fratrum*—no longer an obscure community, but a powerful church—contemptible in the eyes of his countrymen by disparaging, amongst other things, its ministry. Consequently if this account of the origin of the Bohemian Waldensian episcopate had not been authenticated beyond all doubt, the Bishops would not have ventured to base upon it their refutation of Sturm's charges, as he might at once have proven it false, which he never attempted to do.

2. Palacky, who in his "Geschichte von Böhmen" (vol. vii p. 492) says, treating of the Bohemian Waldenses:

"The narrative given in an old manuscript is not improbable, namely, that in the autumn of 1433 Bishop Philibert, as Legate of the Council of Basle, ordained Waldensian priests in the Slavonian Convent of Prague, of whom several, it is said, were in the following year (1434) elevated, at Basle, even to the dignity of bishops. For it is possible that such an act, just at that time, was meant as an example and encouragement for the Bohemians, that they might be the more ready to agree to the *Compactata* of the Council."

3. Gindely, who, in his "Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder" (vol. i, p. 37), describing the acts of the Synod of Lhota, says:

"It may on this occasion have become known to the Brethren that the (Bohemian) Waldenses of that day claimed a valid episcopate, and they certainly knew that their superintendents made use of the episcopal title. In particular did they hear of Stephen, the head of these Austrian Waldenses, who was said to have been consecrated by a Waldensian Bishop that had, in 1434, himself received consecration at the hands of a Roman Catholic prelate—a statement which the Calixtines of Bohemia pronounced correct."

This direct testimony of an original document and of two modern Romish authors would be amply sufficient even if it were all that we had. It is, however, not all. For the authorities which we shall bring forward to prove our next point will be found to offer such overwhelming collateral evidence as to leave no room even for a quibble.

Ere taking up this point, a few words more with regard to the Bohemian Waldenses. Admonished by the Brethren, who sent a second deputation to them and fraternally reproved them for their latitudinarian practices, they grew bolder in confessing the truth. Persecutions were the consequence. Their Calixtine friends, who had long since relapsed into indifference upon the question of reform, forsook them; Bishop Stephen, arrested while laboring among the Germans, was carried to Vienna and burned alive at the stake; his flock in Bohemia scattered and disappears from

history.¹ Thus the Bohemian Waldensian episcopate became extinct after but a short duration. May we not assume that God had permitted it to be instituted as a necessary factor in the organization of the Church of the Brethren, and that this having been completed its mission was done?

THE CONSECRATION OF THE FIRST MORAVIAN BISHOPS.

We now continue our narrative. The three deputies of the Synod of Lhota arrived among the Waldenses, met with a cordial reception, and were consecrated Bishops by Stephen and his colleague. It was not, as Perceval asserts,² "an imposition of hands" "in token of fellowship and agreement, and for the confirming of their minds," there being "of any idea of consecration not a whisper"—but it was a consecration of bishops in the fullest sense of this title and in the strictest meaning of this office. We establish this position by the evidence here following:

1. Blahoslav's *Summa &c.*, (Lissa Folio VIII) says:

"Our countrymen were informed that somewhere near Austria lived certain ones of the number of the Waldenses, of whom it was reported that they had the pure doctrine of Christ, neither had given place to simony: that they had also brought together among themselves both grades of the ministry, namely, the episcopal and the priestly. Two of our people were sent to their Bishops, or Seniors, of whom two were found. Our deputies lay before them their purpose, and narrate to them all that had been transacted (at the Synod of Lhota), and what God had done for the Brethren, and they ask their opinion concerning this thing. The Waldenses say that the thing is of divine authority and good (rem sanctam et piam), strongly (vehementer) commend it, and with the greatest joy confirm them in their design. And immediately, having acknowledged them to be truly ministers of Christ chosen and sent by the Lord, they consecrate them with the imposition of hands, and declare them to be their associates in the Lord and fellow-bishops (imposita capiti manu illos benedicunt atque socios in Domine et Co-Episcopos appellat); and having been further exhorted to go into the vineyard of the Lord, the deputies returned to their own."

2. Lasitius distinctly affirms (Lasitius II, 45, quoted by Plitt), that the priests sent by the Brethren to the Waldenses were consecrated Bishops by the Waldensian Bishop Stephen.

1. Blahoslav's *Summa &c.*, Lissa Folio VIII; Comenius' *Ratio Disciplinae* Sect. 62, p. 18; Palacky *Gesch. v. Böhmen* vol. VII, 494; Zeschwitz *Katechismen &c.*, p. 161.

2. The Christian Miscellany, London, September, 1841 p. 4.

3. The General Synod of Zerawitz (1616), in the official preface to the *Ratio Disciplinae*, (p. 3 and 4) says :

“And inasmuch as the Waldenses, whom we mentioned before, affirmed that they had legitimate Bishops, and a legitimate and uninterrupted succession from the Apostles, they, in a solemn rite, created Bishops of three of our ministers, and conferred upon them the power to ordain ministers.”

4. Comenius (*Ratio Disciplinae*, Sect. 61, p. 18) says :

“Knowing that there were certain Waldenses on the confines of Austria and Moravia, the Brethren sent to them Michael Zambergius (the other name by which Michael Bradacius was known, from the village of Zamberg in which he lived,) with two others, in order that they might fully provide for conscientious scruples (namely, on the subject of ordination) among their own people and among others, both for the present and (mark!) for the future. These should tell them what had been done, and ask their opinion with regard to it. They find their Bishop Stephen. He having called the other Bishop and several of their ministers, these set forth their origin, the articles of their doctrine, and what horrible things the Waldenses had thus far suffered in Italy and Gaul. On the other hand, they listen to the account which our deputies give concerning our secession from the Pope and the Calixtines, approve of it and congratulate them upon it; and what is more, conferring upon these three the power to make ministers, they create them Bishops with the imposition of hands, and send them back to their own (quinimo tribus illis Ministros creandi potestate collata, manuum impositione Episcopos creant, et ad suos remittunt).

5. Adrian Wengersky (*Regenvolscius*, I, 8, p. 33), to quote the translation which Perceval has himself given, says :

“And whereas the aforesaid Waldenses affirmed that they had lawful Bishops, and a lawful and uninterrupted succession from the Apostles, they, in a solemn rite, created Bishops of three of the ministers of the Brethren, who had been already elsewhere ordained, and conferred on them the power of ordination.”

6. Gindely, in his “*Geschichte der Böhmischesn Brüeder*” (vol. I, p. 37), says :

“To this Stephen the Brethren resolved to send Michael, that he might be consecrated a Bishop. Michael, accompanied probably by Matthias, proceeded on his journey, found Stephen, obtained what he had come to seek, and returned to his own.”

7. The Roman Catholic Encyclopaedia, one of the greatest modern works of the Romish Church—“*Kirchen-Lexicon, oder Encyclopaedie der Katholischen Theologie und Kirche, von Wetzer und Welte. Freiburg, in Breisgau, 1848*”—which called forth the Protestant Encyclopaedia edited by Herzog, in its article on the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren (vol. II, p. 65), says :

“The Brethren living scattered through the country occasionally met in council for the purpose of mutual deliberations. One subject, which at such times particularly engaged their attention, was the manner in

which they should supply the want of ministers which they already began to feel. After long consultations, about seventy of the most influential of the Brethren from Bohemia and Moravia met, in the year 1467, and chose by lot three men, Matthias Kunwald, Thomas Prelautsch and Elias Krenov, who were recognized as set apart by God for the ministry of the Brethren. And as a body of Waldenses had settled on the Moravian Austrian frontier, of whom the Brethren knew that they had legitimate Bishops, descended from the Apostles in an unbroken succession, they caused those three elected candidates (this is evidently an inaccuracy, it should be, three previously ordained priests) to be consecrated Bishops with the imposition of hands, by the Waldensian Bishop Stephen, who was afterward burned at Vienna."

8. Zeschwitz, a Doctor of the University of Erlangen, of Moravian parentage, but himself a bigoted Lutheran, in his recent work, which we have repeatedly cited, which is wholly devoted to the relation subsisting between the Waldenses and the Bohemian Brethren, and which contains, as was to be expected, not a few *unfavorable* opinions concerning the latter, says, speaking of the consecration of the first Moravian Bishops by Stephen :

"It is a fact that does not admit of a doubt, and has lately been established in so surprising a manner, by a writer of Herrnhut, that nothing remains to be said upon it."¹

9. The Brethren's earliest enemies and persecutors, whose tacit acknowledgment of the validity of their episcopacy is a most remarkable evidence. Never did these bitter controversialists and bloody men call it into question. Rokycana denounced the institution of a separate ministry, and heaped woes upon the heads of the Brethren, not because he could say that they *pretended* to have lawful bishops, but because they had consecrated unlearned laymen, and inducted them into so holy an office.² If he had known that the claims of the Waldensian episcopacy were invalid, as he would have known in case they had been invalid, is it credible that he would have remained silent upon this subject?

Omitting the numerous Moravian writers of modern times, whose evidence might be added, and summing up merely these nine points of testimony, we find: that the most ancient historian of the Brethren, appointed to collect materials for their history; the Reformed author in point of time next after him, and fully conver-

1. Die Katechismen der Waldenser u. Böhmisches Brüder als Documente ihres wechselseitigen Lehraustausches. Von Gerhard von Zeschwitz, Dr. u. Prof. der Theologie, Erlangen, 1863, pag. 163.

2. Palacky Gesch. v. Böhmen, vol. vii, p. 489.

sant with these materials; an official document of a General Synod of the whole *Unitas Fratrum*; the distinguished exile-bishop, whose literary fame was wide as Europe, and of whom Gindely testifies that "he had studied the history of his forefathers with the most devoted care;"¹ and his companion in exile, who had closely examined the original records as his many references prove—therefore all the ancient authorities, except *Camerarius*, unite in affirming that the apostolical succession was given by the Bohemian Waldenses to the Bohemian Brethren: and further, that the present *Archivist of Bohemia*, a Roman Catholic Professor, who has made their history his particular and favorite study; the *Roman Catholic Encyclopædia*, the modern standard in that Church on ecclesiastical history and cognate questions; and an intensely Lutheran author who, with much research, tries to unravel the true relationship between the Bohemian Waldenses and the Bohemian Brethren—explicitly corroborate this affirmation: and, finally, that the very oppressors and persecutors of the Church silently do the same.

But why cannot *Camerarius* be added to the list of witnesses? Let us see.

CAMERARIUS' VERSION OF THE CONSECRATION OF THE FIRST MORAVIAN BISHOPS.

Joachim *Camerarius*, speaking of the mission of the Brethren to the Waldenses, represents it as follows, to adopt the translation of *Perceval*:

"To them came the emissaries of the Brethren, and laid before them their affairs and accounts; all things were approved of by them, who professed singular joy at the knowledge of the piety and religion of the Brethren, and affirmed that the things that were done by them were agreeable to the institution and administration of Christ and the Apostles, and right in themselves: to which they added an exhortation to them strenuously to pursue the way of the truth, of heavenly doctrine, and of discipline agreeable thereto, which they had entered. And they laid their hands on them, blessing them after the manner of the Apostles, for the sake of confirming their minds, and in token of fellowship and agreement."²

This extract is the mainstay of *Perceval's* whole argument upon historic grounds; this shows, he imagines, that there was no

1. Gindely's *Quellen*, Preface p. x.

2. *Christian Miscellany* p. 3 and 4.

thought of an episcopal consecration, but merely of a fraternal communion; with this he collates Adrian Wengersky's narrative, cited above, and is then led, "speaking mildly, to affirm that these incongruous accounts present very great difficulty in arriving at the truth of the story:" this induces him to explain the Anglican recognition of the Moravian Episcopacy by saying: "Possibly they (the English prelates) knew only the accounts of Regenvolsch and Comenius, and had not noted the totally different accounts to be found in the earlier histories and documents collected and published by Camerarius."¹

Now remembering that Perceval was unacquainted with Blahoslav and Lasitius, excepting the eighth book of the latter on the Brethren's Discipline, published by Comenius; and, further, that he wrote his paper in the "Christian Miscellany" one year before the discovery of the Lissa Folios, sixteen years before the researches of Gindely and Palacky were given to the world, and eighteen years before the "Quellen zur Geschichte der Böhmisches Brueder" appeared; and finally, that he was ignorant of and hence misconceived the circumstances under which the work of Camerarius was compiled—let us inquire what weight, if any, the conflicting evidence of this ancient writer has in the present aspect of the case.

In former parts of this article it has been shown: *first*, that Camerarius undertook the history of the Brethren at their own request, as is obvious from the original correspondence between them found in the Lissa Folios and recently published by Gindely, and as we may now substantiate—although testimony other than that correspondence will hardly be demanded—by Zeschwitz, who says, "Heretofore writers depended almost exclusively on the work of Camerarius, but they seem to have been little acquainted with the fact that this Lutheran historiographer compiled his delicately drawn narrative at the direct instigation of the Brethren themselves, and was enabled to do this by the sources which they sent him:"² *second*, that every page of his work proves that these sources were principally Blahoslav's Summa &c., and Lasitius' History, which point we may again make good by our Lutheran witness, Zeschwitz, who writes, "Every page of the book demonstrates

1. Ibid p. 7.

2. Zeschwitz Die Katechismen &c., p. 136.

that Camerarius drew his information chiefly from Blahoslav and Lasitius:"¹ third, that Blahoslav, whose very words we have adduced, and Lasitius, as quoted by Plitt, both positively declare that the deputies of the Brethren were consecrated Bishops by the Waldensian Bishops. Consequently the conclusion is self-evident, that Camerarius falsified history.

He did not give an account, as Perceval for want of better knowledge would have us believe, drawn from "histories and documents earlier" than those which Comenius and Regenvolscius had, and disproving their narrative, but with precisely the same "earlier histories and documents" before him that guided them, he changed the truth, whereas they faithfully reproduced it.

Nor is it difficult to divine the motives by which he was actuated. Camerarius wrote from the standpoint of the German Reformers, who rejected episcopacy. He was a warm friend and admirer of the Brethren, but this feature of their ecclesiastical constitution neither accorded with his views nor presented itself to his mind as important. It would rather, he thought, tend to awaken mistrust among his fellow-Reformers, to whom he was anxious to commend the Brethren. For these reasons, which he deemed to be sufficient, he laid aside, in this instance, the exalted character of an honest historian. Is it surprising that, under such circumstances, his work remained in manuscript for thirty years after his death, and was at last published, not by the Brethren, but by his own grandson?

The conflicting testimony of Joachim Camerarius is, therefore, proven to be wholly without weight, a mere idiosyncratic whim.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MORAVIAN EPISCOPACY.

Having critically investigated the origin and validity of the Moravian Episcopacy, it yet remains for us to consider its development and preservation, and the transfer of the succession to the present Church.

After the return of the newly consecrated Bishops from the Waldenses, a second Synod was held at Lhota, in the midst of which the three candidates for the ministry, designated by lot on the

1. Ibid. p. 137.

occasion of the former Synod, were ordained, Matthias of Kunwald bishop, Thomas and Elias priests. At the same time, a regular form of episcopal government was instituted. The four bishops formed an ecclesiastical council over which Bishop Michael, as primate, presided, and which, in conjunction with a body of ten elders occupying the position of counsellors, ruled the young church. Ever after, the episcopal succession was carefully preserved, and when the Brethren had extended their bounds, divided into two lines, the Bohemian-Moravian and the Polish. The three grades of deacon, presbyter and bishop, were as carefully kept distinct. In the course of time classes of acolyths, or candidates for the ministry, were established, and assistant bishops consecrated. The *Ratio Disciplinae* gives a complete account of the character and functions of these grades, and of the manner in which ordination to each of them was performed (Comenius, *Ratio Disciplinae* p. 7—92).

That, in spite of all this, Perceval tells us (Christian Miscellany p. 6), “the terms minister, consenior, senior and bishop did but express different offices of one order, as among us the offices of vicar, rector, rural-dean and archdeacon, are all held by clergy of one order, even presbyters,” basing this view upon misinterpretations of extracts from the eighth book of Lasitius, which extracts show the exact converse, is a disingenuous argumentation and involves a palpable absurdity. A more explicit statement of the distinctions of the three grades of the Christian ministry was never given, than that found in the *Ratio Disciplinae*. It would lead us too far to furnish citations; they would fill pages. The reader will find the substance of this document in Holmes’ Brethren’s History, Vol. I, Sect. III, p. 64—91. To suppose, therefore, that the assembled bishops and ministers of the *Unitas Fratrum* would publish to the world a full account of the three ministerial grades established among them, when there really existed but one, is to suppose that they were a body of arch-deceivers.

That Perceval, furthermore, flings out the charge that “none of their (the Brethren’s) writers exhibit any succession of consecrations beyond a few at first” (Christian Miscellany p. 6), is truly unfortunate for his general credibility as an author. For Regenvolscius, whom he repeatedly quotes and whose work he must have had before him, presents in his Third Book, Chapter, x, p. 315—382, a com-

plete succession from the beginning to his own time (1644); and this succession is reprinted in "Cranz's Brueder Historie" (p. 91-99)—a book also, several times cited by Perceval—and brought down, in accordance with Jablonsky's letter of 1717 to Dr. Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury,¹ to the times of the present Church. The same succession is given by Gindely, in an Appendix to his "Quellen" (p. 450-453). The succession in the present Church is set forth by Plitt from the official records in the archives at Herrnhut; and the entire succession from 1467 to 1859 is printed in the "Moravian Manual" (p. 129-133), embracing one hundred and sixty bishops, since which time six more have been consecrated.

That, finally, Perceval argues against the Moravian episcopacy from the circumstance that the newly created bishops of 1467, and their successors in the old Church, were generally called Seniors and not Bishops, will but provoke a smile; for himself declares that the title was rejected on account of the abuse of it among the adversaries. So far, therefore, from its "being hard to conceive that men should have been careful to preserve that, the name of which they shrank from owning"—it is precisely what we would expect from a body of Christians protesting, with all the fire of their first love, not against the *existence* of bishops in the Roman Catholic and Calixtine churches, which was acknowledged to be an ancient and wise institution and hence adopted among themselves, but against the *misuse* of that holy office. Moreover the title of bishop (*episcopus*) is constantly employed in the *Ratio Disciplinae*, and in the voluminous Annotations with which Comenius has enriched that document, he disapproves of the position the fathers had in this respect occupied, pronouncing it to have been a needless scruple (Annotata ad Caput I, Q, p. 71).

THE PRESERVATION OF THE EPISCOPATE.

When the Bohemian Anti-reformation had swept the Church of the Brethren from her original seats, she continued to exist, for some time longer, in Poland, where she had been previously

1. Published in Pfaff's *Dissertatio de Successione Episcopali*, 1721, under the title of *De Successione Ordinis Episcopali in Unitate Fratrum Bohemorum*. The substance of it is given in English, in the *Acta Fratrum in Anglia*. p. 112-115.

established, and where a number of the exiled ministers now sought refuge. These, in conjunction with their Polish brethren, held a Synod at Lissa, in 1632. The victories which Gustavus Adolphus, the champion of Protestantism, was gaining, filled them with the confident hope of a speedy restoration to their native land, and suggested the idea of perpetuating the Bohemian-Moravian line of Bishops. One representative of it, Bishop Gregory Erastus,* was still living, while the Polish succession was vested in Bishops Daniel Micolajevius and Paul Paliurus. These three, accordingly, consecrated Laurentius Justinus, Matthias Procopius, and John Amos Comenius, for Bohemia and Moravia, as also Paul Fabricius for Poland. In the following year (1633), Paul Paliurus having died, Martin Orminius and John Rybinus received consecration at Ostrog; and eleven years afterward (1644)—Gregory Erastus, Daniel Micolajevius and Matthias Procopius being no more—Martin Gertichius and John Byttner, at Lissa. Twenty-two years passed away, and the only Bishops that remained were John Amos Comenius, an exile in Holland, and John Byttner, in Poland. The sanguine anticipations of the Brethren had not been fulfilled; the Thirty Years' War had left Bohemia and Moravia under the heel of the Austrian oppressor. But still they hoped against hope, and by the advice and with the episcopal concurrence of the now venerable Comenius given in writing, in as much as the infirmities of old age prevented him from being present, Bishop John Byttner, at a Synod held at Mielenin, (1662), consecrated Nicholas Gertichius and Peter Jablonsky, that the succession might not be lost. But the latter died January 12th, 1670—in which year Comenius was also gathered to his fathers,—and Nicholas Gertichius, May 24th, 1671. Thereupon, although the scattered Brethren had greatly decreased, and the Polish branch of the Church was being absorbed by the Reformed, John Byttner, the sole surviving Bishop, still anxious to preserve the episcopate in the event of a future resuscitation, and mindful, in particular, of the prophetic hopes of Comenius, consecrated Adam Samuel Hartman, on the 28th of October, 1673, at Lissa. Byttner dying soon after, and on his death-bed designating John Zugehoer as the next bearer of the succession, he was consecrated, in the presence of a number of his brethren, by Bishop Hartman, on the 13th of August, 1676, in the Church of St. Peter and Paul, at Danzig.

Again, upon the death of Hartman in 1691, Bishop Zugehoer continued the succession by consecrating Joachim Gulichius, on the 26th of June, 1692, at Lissa; and Bishop Gulichius transferred it, at the same place, after the death of Zugehoer, to John Jacobides and Daniel Ernst Jablonsky, (the grandson of Comenius and Court-Preacher at Berlin), on the 10th of March, 1699. The former died in 1709, whereupon Bishop Daniel Ernst Jablonsky consecrated Solomon Opitz, the 11th of July, 1712, at Zulchow, on the Polish confines of Prussia, and David Cassius and Christian Sitkovius, the 4th of November, of the same year, at Thorn.¹

In this way the succession was carefully and piously preserved even in that period in which the Moravian Church remained a "hidden seed." These bishops did not make use of their title except when they met the remnant of their Brethren at occasional Synods, held here and there, for the confirmation of their hopes and the amelioration of their sufferings. They were ministers in the Reformed Church, but with the consent of the same, and of their respective sovereigns, received consecration as Bishops of the *Unitas Fratrum* in order that the succession might not die out. Hence the difficulty disappears which Perceval tries to create by assuming that Jablonsky's episcopal character could neither have been known nor recognized even in his own time, because candidates for the ministry went from Prussia to England in order to be episcopally ordained, and because there was an active correspondence between the courts of Berlin and St. James's with the view to obtaining episcopal consecration (Christian Miscellany p. 6). Not that he might officiate as a bishop in the National Establishment of Prussia, nor that he might make it an episcopal church, had he been admitted into the Moravian Episcopate. To do either would have been entirely contrary to the purpose for which it was maintained. Let us hear his own account of the case. In a letter to Count Zinzendorf, dated the 13th of August, 1729, he writes :

"The Bohemian Brethren's Church in Great Poland is steadily decreasing by reason of the uninterrupted oppression of its enemies, but she entertains the hope that God, in His great and marvellous mercy, will

1. The above exposition of the succession since the times of Comenius, is given by Jablonsky in his letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury. *Acta Fratrum in Anglia*, p. 114 and 115.

sustain her, yea and even cause her again to extend and spread. My parents were born in this Church; my father begot me in his exile. In this same Church I was brought up, and my love to her I imbibed with my mother's milk. It has, indeed, pleased the Lord to separate me from her in the body, but their Majesties, the late King, who rests in God, and the reigning King, have most graciously thought proper to allow me to take part in the administration of her bishoprick."¹

A subsequent letter, dated October 31st, of the same year, adds:

"By the most gracious permission of our pious Prince, then known as the Elector Frederick III, but since 1707 as King Frederick I, I received episcopal consecration in the year 1699, on the 10th of March, at a Synod held at Lissa, in Great Poland. On account of my absence from that country, there were two Bishops there, the one, David Cassius, at Lissa, the other at Zychlin; but as the latter died last year, we speak of soon consecrating another in his place, that the succession may continue to be perpetuated. About twelve years ago, it happened in England that certain enemies of all evangelical churches on the Continent took occasion to assert and, even to publish through the press, that the Bohemian Brethren had never had, and had not then, lawful bishops. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. William Wake, thereupon wrote to me and asked for information upon this subject. I replied by giving him the circumstantial succession, with which he declared himself to be perfectly satisfied. Neither I, nor the Bishops in Poland, however, make use of the episcopal title, because we think proper to avoid the offensiveness of it, it being unusual among German Protestants, and calculated to be a stumbling block rather than to promote edification."²

THE TRANSFER OF THE EPISCOPATE TO THE PRESENT MORAVIAN CHURCH.

In the year 1722, the prayers and hopes of the aged Comenius were at last fulfilled, although in a way different from what he had anticipated. At Herrnhut, on an estate of Count Zinzendorf, in Saxony, the ancient Church of Bohemian and Moravian confessors was renewed. That this was a legitimate renewal, that the Moravian immigrants who had there found a refuge were the spiritual descendants of his own spiritual fathers, Jablonsky joyfully acknowledged.³ Hence when the Brethren laid before him a formal request to transfer to them the venerable succession, preserved amidst perils, persecutions and exile, he willingly consented, and, at Berlin, on the 13th of March, in the year 1735,

1. Koelbing's *Nachricht von der Bischoefflichen Ordination in der Erneuerten Bruederkerche* p. 22. The original letter is in the Herrnhut Archives.

2. Koelbing's *Nachricht &c.*, p. 26.

3. Koelbing's "*Nachricht*," &c., pp. 27 and 29.

solemnly consecrated, with the concurrence of Christian Sitkovius, the other surviving Bishop, David Nitschmann to be the first Bishop of the Renewed Church of the Brethren. Two years afterward (May 20, 1737,) he and Bishop Nitschmann, again with the concurrence of Sitkovius, and also with the permission of the King of Prussia, consecrated Count Zinzendorf to be her second Bishop. And now both Jablonsky and Sitkovius deemed the purpose accomplished for which the succession had been thus far upheld, and neither of them consecrated any more bishops. They had given the episcopate to the resuscitated Church of their hopes and love, and conferred upon the new Bishops all the functions which belong to this office.

In the archives of the Moravian Church at Bethlehem, Pa., where Bishop Nitschmann died and lies buried, is preserved the original certificate of his consecration, in Jablonsky's own hand writing, and signed with the ancient episcopal seal, which is the same as that in use at present. This document, by way of conclusion, we here present in an English dress :

In the name of the Triune God blessed forever : to whom be honor and glory from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.

Whereas it has pleased the Eternal God, whose name is Wonderful, to suffer his faithful confessors, the Bohemian-Moravian Brethren, to fall into circumstances so grievous that many of them are necessitated to leave their native land, and to seek other places where they may serve God with a free conscience, and confess His truth, whence it hath come to pass that they are scattered in part to the northernmost countries of Europe, and in part even to the American Continent, and to several islands near the same: and whereas this Allwise God hath put into the heart of the high and noble born Count and Lord, Lord Nicholas Lewis, Count of Zinzendorf and Pottendorf, in a fatherly manner to care for these Bohemian Moravian Brethren in their dispersion, and to make provision for their temporal and spiritual well-being, but especially for their well established, ancient, Christian statutes and Church discipline: and whereas, with the knowledge and consent of their congregation, he has adopted the godly resolution* to have consecrated, in the old Moravian manner, as a Senior and Bishop of the said, and of future colonies, together with all their churches and pastors,—the Reverend Mr. David Nitschmann, one of the first of those Moravian witnesses in America who must venture all upon God, and to whom the Lord hath given the first converts from the heathen :

Therefore, upon proper request to this effect to me made, I, the undersigned, oldest Senior and Bishop of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in Great Poland, with the knowledge and sanction of my colleague in Great Poland, the Bishop Christian Sitkovius, have ordained the said Mr. David Nitschmann, on the 13th day of March, 1735, in the name of God, and according to our Christian method, with the laying on of

hands, and with prayer, to be a Bishop of said Churches and have given him power to hold the necessary visitations, to ordain the pastors and servants of the churches, and to fulfill all the functions which belong to a Senior and Bishop.

The faithful Savior, to whose service he has dedicated himself, powerfully support him; grant him courage and strength; and accompany his apostolical office with the fullness of blessings to the honor of God, and to the salvation of many souls; so that he may, in the vineyard of the Lord, bear much fruit, and his reward may be great in eternity!

The above I have myself written, signed, and sealed with our Church-seal.

Given at Berlin,
the 14th day of June, 1737. — 2 yrs after the consecration

DANIEL ERNST JABLONSKY,

S. L.

Royal Court Preacher, Church Counsellor, Counsellor of the Consistory, &c., &c., and oldest Senior and Bishop of the Bohemian Moravian Brethren in Great Poland.



