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preacher our hearts grow big and we feel fit for anything. It seems as if we were on the threshold of a larger life; and it may be so. In many it has been so. But Jesus sternly admonishes us that nothing is worth reckoning which does not find its way past feeling out to action.

I do not mean that emotion is a bad thing; certainly our Lord had no suspicion of it, if only it were sincere. Without reserve He accepted the offering of a life though the man who made it was excited and unlike himself. The sinful woman in Luke's story could not possibly gauge the stress of what was waiting for her in the city outside, where she was known only for evil, and she certainly would not always be in the same exalted mood. And yet Jesus took her at her word, for He knew that emotion is one of the driving powers of life, which must not be wasted but captured and turned to service. For more than a century in Scotland our religious history was engaged with the struggle between two types or parties—the 'Moderate,' so called, and the 'Evangelical.' The good Moderate laid stress on right behaviour and was a little shy of the sublimities of doctrine; he talked of diligence and honesty and sobriety and human kindness. But the good Evangelical, whilst not forgetful of these duties, was convinced that for the achieving of them some spring or inspiration was needed. The battle with vice was not to be gained by any amount of good counsel or even of manly effort. The world, as he saw it, was a lost world, and only God could save it. And thus he dwelt continually on an amazing mystery of condescension, of One who for our sakes became poor and endured the sharpness of death, and thus opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. Moderate and Evangelical, in altered forms, are still with us; but even secular moralists have confessed that the Evangelicals have had much to say for themselves. There is not enough of impulse in a precept. It can point the way, it does not give strength to walk in it; and the admonition to a weak man to amend his life may be a sort of cruelty, as he feels that he cannot even make a beginning. Before he can hopefully try there must be set free in him some emotion of gratitude, or wonder, or love, or desire, such as in all ages has been stirred by the exhibition of Jesus Christ, 'with whom alone is strength to create goodness in the worst and to make the weakest strong.' Sick eyes all around the world to-day are looking with a sort of despairing hope at Him who was not content with gestures or emotions of pity but actually did something. He loved me, they dare to say, and gave Himself up for me. That has been for many the beginning of the end of evil habits; for from this point they enter on a new course of effort in which, since God is with them, they are not defeated.

In the Church of Jesus we have no need to be ashamed of feeling, but we do need to be ashamed of the feeling which is never yoked to service. Few people have not at some time longed for a better life, but what of that if they never attempt it? It is not enough, says Jesus in this Parable, to have emotions of reverence for God and His will, you must push on to action, you must enter on the way of obedience. For it is in obedience that the religion of Jesus finds its goal.

Present-Day Faiths.

Presbyterianism.

By Professor Archibald Main, D.Litt., D.D., Glasgow.

I.

There can be no doubt of the firm root which Presbyterianism has taken in the ecclesiastical soil not only of Europe but of other continents. An object-lesson on its greatness as a polity and tradition can be found in *The World Alliance of Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System*, a society which furnishes an imposing array of churches, clergymen, and communicants. Undoubtedly, there are several varieties of Presbyterianism within the fold of that Alliance, and there may well be a danger hidden in the welcome which such a fold holds out to differing flocks; but it is obvious to every student of ecclesiastical forms of government that presbytery has a strong appeal to Protestant Churches in old and new countries of the world. Whatever may be its

credentials or its heritage it apparently satisfies many yearnings of Christian folk.

II.

The older text-books dealing with Presbyterianism usually, and not without a savour of glibness, distinguish between the three classic forms of ecclesiastical polity—the Episcopal, the Congregational, and the Presbyterian, though the first of the three was almost invariably called 'prelatic,' a name that is not now so much used as it once was. The Episcopal form of government, witnessed in the Roman and Anglican Churches, has well-known features such as recognition of the principle of gradation of ministerial rank and office of the diocesan episcopate, and of the radical distinction between clergy and laity. The Congregational form, on the other hand, denies any gradation either in office or in court of the Church, and maintains the theory that all ministers are on an equal footing, and that all congregations of believers are independent and therefore freed from any judgment of a higher judicature. In a sentence, 'the fundamental and distinctive congregational doctrine is the independence or spiritual autonomy of the individual Church.' The resolute presbyterian sees dangers in each of these polities, and makes the claim, not always modestly, that his particular form of ecclesiastical government avoids such dangers, and points out a *via media* that is not a compromise but is well founded on scriptural authority. It is fair to remind him that some writers have reckoned that Presbyterianism has realized the faults and not the virtues of the other ecclesiastical types. But that is an expression of a partisan position, for which little evidence can be adduced. In opposition to a prelatic form of organization, Presbyterianism subscribes to an equality of clerical status and the maintenance of a parochial rather than a diocesan episcopate, whilst it furthers Church government and discipline by the members of the Church through ordained elders whose function it is to rule. Such elders are representatives of the Christian body, but they are not mere delegates. Again, in opposition to Congregationalism, the presbyterian claims to place more emphasis on the unity of the Church, and he can point to a well-devised gradation of unifying ecclesiastical courts which have legislative, executive, and judicial powers.

Perhaps the most appropriate general definition of Presbyterianism is that given in an article contributed to Dr. Hastings' ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS. It is: 'The name "Presbyterianism" may be applied in a general sense to that theory of the Church which aims at realizing its visible unity through government by presbyters, clerical and lay, such presbyters being set apart by their peers with popular consent, being all of equal status, and being organized for purposes of ecclesiastical administration into Church courts, which rise one above another in an ascending scale, from the congregational to the national.' That is a 'general' definition, and it should be supplemented in various ways, not the least important of which would be a reference to historical circumstances in the halcyon days of presbytery. Such a reference makes it easier for the spectator to see what is really the essence and not the accident of the polity. Many people are impressed by the gradation of ecclesiastical courts in the Presbyterian Church—by the kirk-session, presbytery, synod, and assembly—which F. W. Maitland called 'a concentric system of courts and councils of which Rome herself might be proud'; and they believe that Presbyterianism is government by those renowned courts. But, if we read the classic writings of Rutherford, Gillespie, and Baillie, who flourished in the golden era of presbytery, we shall see that the essence of presbyterian polity is government not by presbyteries but by presbyters—and that is an important distinction. In Scotland the matter has been discussed by theologians and ecclesiastical lawyers during the last three centuries, and few presbyterians would now cavil at the judgment of the late Dr. William Mair, an expert of recognized authority, when he wrote: 'The government of the Church as embedded in its constitution is presbyterian. This does not mean . . . government by presbyteries, but by presbyters, as distinguished from prelates.'

The Church of Scotland, as the mother of many presbyterian daughters, has some claim to be an exponent and guide of presbyterianism. Her history and her documentary archives are helpful in determining the essentials of the Church government of which she is a living advocate. From the Westminster Confession of Faith we gather that the Ministry is an institution of Christ. 'Christ hath given,' so the words run, 'the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God . . . and doth by his own presence and Spirit according to his promise make them effectual.' At the time of the Revolution Settlement, the ecclesiastical government was 'established in the hands of and exercised by these Presbyterian ministers who were outed since the first of January, 1661 . . . and such ministers and

elders only as they have admitted and received, or shall hereafter admit and receive.' To-day the doctrine of the Scottish Church, as is evidenced by its loyalty to its confessions and directories, lays it down that every minister of the Word is to be ordained by the imposition of hands, and prayer, with fasting; that preaching presbyters orderly associated are those to whom the imposition of hands appertains for the congregations within their bounds; and that in ordination the presbyters act with the authority of the whole presbytery (Church of Scotland Assembly Report, 1911).

It is an interesting and not irrelevant fact that the Presbyterian Church in Canada, in view of approaching union with other branches of the Christian Church, issued a statement regarding ordination to the ministry in which it declared that it is a 'part of the Catholic Church, is in historic continuity with the Church of Scotland, and its ministry is continuous with that of the Catholic Church through presbyters of the Scottish Church.'

Presbyterianism, then, has no mean view of the Holy Ministry, and is rightly jealous of its ordained presbyters whose high duty it is to preserve the true preaching of the Word, the true administration of the Sacraments, and a true discipline amongst an orderly and united body of Christian people.

III.

Presbyterianism has often been identified with Calvinism, and it is important to notice the exact relationship between the two. In what has been said about the three main types of Churches the principle of division has been one of ecclesiastical polity merely and not of theological doctrine. A Church might well be Calvinist without being presbyterian, and it might be presbyterian without any obedience to the form of worship prescribed at Geneva. There is Calvinist doctrine in the Thirty-nine Articles, though the Anglican Church is certainly not based on John Calvin's theory of Church organization. But principles of polity and doctrine act and react on one another, and it is an axiom that any form of Church polity must be based, in the long run, on a definite doctrine of the Church. Accordingly, we are not surprised that with some exceptions—and these are usually due to external factors—Calvinist doctrine, presbyterian government, and a simple type of worship go together. It is not too much to say that in modern times the presbyterian type of ecclesiasticism owes much to Calvin's doctrine of the Church, though it should be remembered that the Scottish reformers did not slavishly follow the lead of the Genevan preacher. Calvin's celebrated régime was moulded to suit the requirements of a municipality, but the task of Knox and Melville was the organization of religion for a nation. John Knox deemed Geneva the most perfect school of Christ since the days of the Apostles, but he and his followers did not permit their loyalty to the Protestant Rome to hinder necessary changes in their schemes or to prevent their adoption of expedients inspired by other branches of the Reformed Church. But in broad outlines the Scots reformers accepted Calvin's doctrine of the Church as a fellowship of believers bound together by the motive of realizing the fellowship of each member with his neighbour and of all with Jesus Christ the Head of the Church. They distinguished between the Church visible and the Church invisible. The latter is known only to God, and the former can be seen 'wherever we see the Word of God sincerely preached and heard, wherever we see the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ' (*Institutes*, iv. 1). Such a spiritual theory should make it impossible for any presbyterian to unchurch a believer, and it is noteworthy that Calvin himself refused to go the length of unchurching Rome.

The sixteenth-century reformers who cast off their allegiance to the mediæval Church needed a paramount authority which should be the test and the inspiration of all their work, and that authority they found in the Word of God. An immense impetus was given to the study of Holy Scripture as the norm of faith and practice. It was natural, then, that Swiss, French, and Scottish reformers narrowly scrutinized Scripture for guidance in their search for a proper ministry in the Church. They were profoundly dissatisfied with the clericalism of the Roman Church, and sought in their reformation schemes to copy the tradition of the primitive Church in the days of the apostles. They knew that organization was necessary, and they looked for their model in the New Testament. Their search was rewarded, so they thought, in the 'presbyter.' Whether or no it was but 'old priest writ large,' it was the office they cherished as scriptural and therefore divinely inspired.

It is appropriate to make here a brief reference to two theories that are intimately connected with the reformers' quest after apostolic practice in Church government—they may be called, without serious injustice, inferences from ecclesiastical facts. The first is the 'divine right theory' of Presbyterianism, which in its usual form claimed

that presbytery is the sole form of Church government sanctioned by Holy Scripture and the institution of Christ. The seventeenth-century presbyterians made that claim and repudiated the 'expediency theory' of Hooker, but it was not long before the Anglican Churchmen took up an equally strong attitude regarding the divine approval of episcopacy. These were days when divine right was a sanction glibly claimed in politics, and the Stewart dynasty insisted in and out of season that monarchy in their persons had that right. The Presbyterians took strong ground against what they reckoned despotism, and they were convinced that their ecclesiastical polity had a divinity which they denied to their sovereigns' political pretensions. Sovereignty was a word to conjure with in that era, and the stout-hearted presbyterians claimed it for their Church's government, a government modelled on the Bible. But this theory of Presbyterianism is no longer held in its original form. Its wiser advocates are content to affirm that their polity is in keeping with the spirit of the New Testament and the Apostolic Church, they are agreed that neither presbytery nor episcopacy as we find them in modern days has literally matched the pattern of the early Church, they are content to adduce considerations of expediency in favour of their ecclesiastical practice, and they are willing to admit that questions of polity must not be made matters of dogma.

The second theory to which we make reference is that which insists on apostolical succession. Some presbyterian apologists make much of this, and they claim a *perpetua successio presbyterorum*. A discussion of the merits of such a claim would be out of place in this article, but it is important to recognize the motive lying behind the claim. Presbyterians do not admit that their Church began in the sixteenth century, and they have rightly insisted that the Reformed Church of Scotland (to take one example) is undoubtedly connected with the pre-reformed Church by its succession of presbyters. During the Eucharistic Congress held at Chicago in 1926 there was an exhibition of Catholic treasures to quicken and delight the interest of the faithful, and I remember one ecclesiastical chart which attracted much attention. On it were marked various lines which delineated the rise and progress of the branches of the Church throughout the centuries. A great, broad line started from the first century and represented the Roman Church, whilst a thin line beginning in the sixteenth century showed the history of the presbyterians. Now it is proper that presbyterians should insist on their heritage of the Christian ages. But we must distinguish facts of heritage from interpretations placed upon these facts—and therein lies the difficulty. It is not easy to determine what Knox and Melville believed in the matter of men and orders. They were engaged in the Herculean task of reforming a Church that had fallen on evil days, and it is asking too much of them to demand a matured ecclesiastical philosophy of orders. The fact that Romanist priests became presbyters without reordination points in one direction, but even more important are the assured facts that it was not a new but a *reformed* Church for which they laboured, and that everything was subordinated to the ideal of furthering the preaching of the Word, the administration of the Sacraments, and the maintenance of discipline amongst Church people. Polity is important in a Church, but godliness is the chief concern.

IV.

Every Church has its glorious pages of enterprise and fidelity, and not least has the Church of the presbyterians. It brings to the universal Church some characteristic gifts. In the first place, Presbyterianism has almost always fought the battle on the side of civic and religious liberty. The Scottish Church can furnish many episodes of daring in which her sons and daughters played worthy parts. The struggle in the seventeenth century between despotic kings and dour subjects was taken up whole-heartedly by the Presbyterian Church. In 1638 the National Covenant was subscribed by the great majority of the Scottish people, many of them signing it with their blood, and it was a compact to 'defend the true religion . . . and recover the purity and liberty of the Gospel.' That pledge was soon made good, and under the leadership of Alexander Henderson the Scots 'cast down the walls of Jericho.' No presbyterian Scot dare forget the heroism begotten of the Scottish Covenants, for by them liberty in Church and State was won at the cost of disunion, revolt, and martyrdom. The Irish presbyterians had their epic in the defence of Londonderry, for it was mainly due to them that the city did not fall before the soldiers of James II. The presbyterian, William Carstares, was true to the Scottish tradition of patriotism and the fear of God; and 'the cardinal' guided the destinies of the Church in the momentous days of Revolution. Many an incident could be recalled in which sturdy presbyterians took the side of civic liberty and were not afraid to fight for it to the death. An American writer has

recently written that 'the Presbyterian Church is constituted like a republic, and its courts have afforded effective training in the art of government. It has also taught, in a practical manner, how laws may be essentially preserved, while yet undergoing gradual change to meet new conditions.' That there is much truth in this statement can be seen by any student who knows the history of the General Assembly in Scottish history. This characteristic court of Presbyterianism was for years 'a true House of Commons' (as Lord Balfour of Burleigh once called it), far more representative of the Scots people than their parliament. 'Take from us the freedom of assemblies, and you take from us the Evangel. Without Assemblies, how shall good order and unity in doctrine be kept?' The question was asked by John Knox, and the answer is seen in history.

We must not say that Presbyterianism in its earlier days was democratic in the modern sense of that much-misused word, for some of the reformers were far from democrats. Indeed, John Calvin and Andrew Melville were aristocrats rather than democrats. But Presbyterianism, largely favoured by the middle-class population, evolved an apparatus of popular representation which undoubtedly gave much assistance to the rise of democracy. And in recent days the Anglican Church has indirectly paid a tribute to the worth of a presbyterian court by its erection of a national assembly. Presbyterianism, then, has a contribution to the Church in its historic and valorous defence of the rights of the people against oppression.

Another gift is its emphasis on the eternal value of 'principle.' One cannot refrain from feelings of sorrow as one recounts the story of Secession, not only in Scottish history, but in the narratives of Presbyterianism in other parts of the British Empire, and even in lands that should have been free from Scottish stubbornness. But there is another side to the picture. If presbyterians have been too apt to separate from each other, they have taught the lesson that tolerance in Church matters is not always a virtue, that there are times when it is proper and Christian to take resolute stand for doctrinal principles and ecclesiastical practice. It is not too bold a statement to affirm that no secession in Scottish history has failed to achieve some good to the Mother Church by a severe object-lesson in the need of emphasis on some forgotten principle.

It is perhaps a corollary of this insistence that the Presbyterian Church has never been wanting in its testimony of ethical probity. Its Calvinism, with its doctrines of election and free grace, might have been expected to imbue mankind with a sullen fatalism, but, on the contrary, it has bred a morality most active. We now smile at the Genevan and Scottish régime of ethics, and criticize the austerity of presbyterian practice in bygone days, but we must admit that his type of religion made the Scot and the Huguenot trusted in business, independent in judgment, and insistent in the cause of righteousness. If the presbyterian of the past was stubborn and not always easy to live with, he yet commanded the respect of his fellows for his honesty and his fear of God—if not of men.

Lastly, Presbyterianism has always stood for a high level of education. The reformers believed that the people should be educated in the interests not only of the Church but of self-government. John Knox gave an inspiration by his outline of what a cultured Scotland should possess in schools, academies, and universities. The *First Book of Discipline* remained an ideal, but the presbyterian at his heart is an insatiable idealist, and he has never forgotten the lead given to his forebears. Theological discipline has always been an integral part of the Scottish university system, and outside of it there have been renowned Divinity halls whose teaching staffs have always won the admiration of scholars. In Geneva, Lausanne, Belfast, Montauban, Paris; in Canada, the United States, and Australasia, a like story could be told. Presbyterianism has always treated education as her handmaid, for she has never despaired concerning the republic of learning.