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*The moral law doth forever bind all,
as well justified persons as others,
to the obedience thereof; and that not
only in regard of the matter con-
tained in it, but also in respect of
the authority of God, the Creator,
who gave it. Neither doth Christ in
the gospel any way dissolve, but
much strengthen this obligation.*

Westminster Confession XIX.5

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Religion, True and False

THANKS to the editors of *Life* magazine, millions of Americans have in the past few weeks had the opportunity of becoming much better acquainted with the native religion of India than they ever were before. The presentation which *Life* makes is in some ways fascinating, in some ways disturbing, in some ways thought-provoking, but always interesting.

What will be the reaction of those who read this portrait? We fear that in many cases it will be entirely too sympathetic. There will be people who think that all religions are equally good (as the Hindus themselves claim) and who will see in Hinduism another sincere attempt to find eternal truth. There will be people who will despise the crass materialism of some aspects of the cult, but who will find high ideals embedded in its philosophy. There will undoubtedly be some people who will find it so interesting that they will want to try it — or try some elements of it, at least.

What should be the reaction of people to this religion? The Westminster Shorter Catechism states that the "fall brought all mankind into an estate of sin and misery." Many who have been born into Christian homes, who have enjoyed the privileges of an enlightened culture from their youth, have little idea what those words, "an estate of sin and misery," mean. Theoretically we accept the words, and even apply them to ourselves. At times they seem more applicable than at others. Yet rarely do we really appreciate the depths they indicate.

But here, as one reads the account of Hinduism, is a picture which in a very real sense sets forth "an estate of sin and misery." Here is a religion which does not glorify God as God, but which has changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of corruptible man and four footed beasts and creeping things. Here is a religion which follows a lie, and teaches generation after generation to follow that same lie. Here is a faith without a God, without a Saviour, without a salvation, without hope—a faith which teaches men that existence is meaningless and that the ultimate aim of the individual is to lose him-

self, render himself "unconscious," to be swept back into the mysterious void where he no longer has any existence.

As we read the account, it seems incredible to us that men in the twentieth century could take such a religion seriously. Yet it should not be incredible. Until the darkness of sin is done away through the clear shining light of the gospel of saving grace, no state of sin and misery is incredible. Paganism flourished in the days of the Old Testament prophets, and men made kindling wood and gods out of the same tree trunk. Paganism flourishes today, in equally crass forms, also in more cultured forms. But wherever Christ is not known, trusted, and honored, there is still paganism, be it cultured or uncultured.

The editors of *Life* suggest that "Americans can re-examine and enrich their own spiritual life through the insights and intuitions of others," meaning in this instance Hinduism. We are glad if *Life's* editors think the spiritual life of Americans needs enrichment. It certainly does. But we are sorry at the suggestion that enrichment can come through contact with that which is false, corrupt, and doomed to eternal destruction. If there is — by the grace of God — that which is good and worthwhile in Hinduism, it is to be found in a more perfect and more enduring form in Christian faith, and as presented in Christian faith it will indeed uplift and enrich, being free from corrupting associations.

The story from India is the story of a national tragedy. For it is the story of millions of men, women and children who are going to a Christless grave and a God-less eternity. As such it represents one of the great challenges to the Christian Church. The Church will meet that challenge through the faithful preaching of the gospel of the saving Christ — not through preaching the gospel of agricultural reform, social uplift, non-violence — but preaching the gospel of deliverance from sin and guilt through the blood of the Son of God, who gave Himself for our sins, and who rose from the dead to be the living Head of an eternal kingdom.

L. W. S.

accurate and observing reporter, and, as we read, it is almost as though we were actually taking the trip described. We are taken first to Paris. However, the author does not merely give us a guide-book account of the city. He does not merely take us through museum after museum. Not at all. He puts us down right in the midst of modern Paris and presents us with an engaging account of modern French life and problems. We receive the impression that we are actually learning something worthwhile about the country. Best of all we are shown the country through a Christian interpretation. We have been entertained, and that quite royally; but more than that, we have been instructed, for we are reminded that the destinies of the nations of today lie in the hands of Almighty God. As we read what the author has to say about France we are more grateful than before for the blessings which God has seen fit to bestow upon America. And is there not need for a genuine repentance in America lest the calamities and misfortunes which have befallen other nations should also come upon us?

From France we are taken to Italy, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and finally to the Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan, where we pause at Jerusalem. It is truly remarkable to note how much Dr. Henry's eye has observed. We are brought up to date with the situation in Jerusalem, and at the same time we are constantly being presented with the relation of the modern city to the Bible. There is a fine blending of the modern and the ancient in this discussion of the Biblical lands. One who intends to visit the Holy Land could hardly do better than begin his preparation by a careful reading of this book.

We travel next to Greece, and then to Switzerland and England, and as we travel we learn. The book is well illustrated with clear photographs, and these enable the reader to visualize somewhat the places about which he is reading. The last chapter brings us home again to America which Dr. Henry calls the "Land in the Valley of Decision." After such a journey, it is time to reflect upon our own land which, we are told, is building "—on a humanistic culture—" and so "may have but a rubbed glory." The book closes with a sermon which Dr. Henry preached on Mars Hill.

There are two principal points at which the present reviewer finds himself in disagreement with the author. Dr. Henry is a Baptist, and he substitutes the word "immersion" for "baptism." Thus, for example, he speaks of Christ's being immersed in the Jordan River (page 99). We do not believe that the evidence will substantiate this substitution of "immersion" for "baptism." The second point at which we are in disagreement is that the author finds in the modern state of Israel a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies (page 183ff.). With this interpretation we cannot agree, for we think that the prophets of the Old

Testament had in mind something far greater than a material state of Israel. But Dr. Henry has stated his convictions clearly and forcefully.

This is a book which should be read not only by those who wish to visit Palestine. It is a book that should be read by every earnest Christian who wishes to be abreast of modern developments in the promised land. It is also a book that should be read by all who wish, for a time, to forget the every day world of hum-drum existence, and to delight themselves with glimpses of the fascinating lands on the shores of the Mediterranean.

Some arguments against Term Eldership

The Ordination of Elders

By JOHN MURRAY

THE QUESTION being discussed in this brief article is whether ruling elders in being elected and ordained may be elected and ordained to the office for a limited and specified period of time or whether election and ordination should have in view permanent tenure and exercise of the office. The position being taken by the present writer is the latter, namely, that the

This article continues the consideration of the proposed revision of the Form of Government of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, by members of the revision committee.

idea of being ordained to office for a limited period of time is without warrant from the New Testament and is contrary to the implications of election and ordination.

In taking this position, it is necessary at the outset to make clear what it does not involve. It does not mean that a ruling elder may not be removed from office. Of course an elder may be deposed from office for false doctrine or immorality. And even though he may not be guilty of error or immorality, he may be relieved of his office for other reasons. For example, he may prove to be destitute of the requisite gifts and, in such an event, it would be a travesty of the order instituted by Christ for him to continue to retain the office and presume to exercise its functions. The elder in such a case may resign and his resignation should

be accepted. Or he may simply be divested of his office by the proper action of the session. What the procedure would be in this latter case is not our interest at the present time. Again, when an elder ceases to be able to exercise the functions of the office, he should no longer retain the office. This inability may arise from infirmity or the elder in question may have to move from the locality in which the congregation that elected him resides so that he is no longer able to discharge the duties. It is not feasible for the elder to retain his office in these circumstances—we may not separate the office from its functions. Ordination to permanent tenure of the office, therefore, does not in the least degree interfere with the duty of resignation from office when that is necessary nor with the right and duty of removal from office when the circumstances require it. The question in debate is something quite different.

It is true that the practice of ordaining ruling elders for a limited period has a long history in Reformed Churches. Many interesting facts could be brought to light if that history were to be traced. But now we are concerned to discover what may be elicited from the Scripture on the question.

In support of the position adopted in this article it will have to be said, first of all, that there is no *overt* warrant from the New Testament for what we may call "term eldership." There

is no intimation in the relevant passages that the elders in question were ordained to the office for a specified term. This is a consideration that must not lightly be dismissed. While it does not, of itself, conclusively determine the question, yet it is necessary to take account of this absence of explicit warrant for term eldership. We must bear in mind that there are two ways in which the Scripture reveals to us God's will, namely, what is expressly set down in Scripture and what by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture. We are now concerned with the former and affirming at the outset that in respect of express warrant there is no evidence to support the idea of term eldership.

It could well be argued, however, that though there is no express warrant for term eldership yet there is no evidence against it and the New Testament leaves the matter an open question; it is a matter on which the New Testament does not legislate. It is this position that the present writer controverts. While the New Testament does not *expressly* legislate against term eldership, there are considerations which fall into the category of good and necessary inference and which militate against the propriety of this practice. These considerations are derived from the implications which underlie or inhere in the acts of electing and ordaining to this office, implications which are incompatible with the idea of term eldership.

It is quite obvious that the qualifications for eldership are well defined in the New Testament (I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; cf. Acts 20:28-35). The qualifications are of a high order and they imply that the person possessing them is endowed with them by the Holy Spirit and by Christ the head of the church. The implication is that the person thus qualified is invested with these gifts and graces to the end that he may serve the church of Christ in that capacity for which these endowments fit him. There are diversities of gifts in the church of God and the gifts possessed dictate the function or functions which each person is to perform in the unity of the whole body. Now the gifts for eldership are not of a temporary character. If a person possesses them the implication is that he permanently possesses them. Sadly enough he may through unfaithfulness lose them. But when a man possesses

them we must proceed upon the assumption that he is going to prove faithful and we may not entertain any suspicion to the effect that he is going to prove unfaithful. The simple fact is that when a man possesses certain endowments which qualify him for eldership we must proceed on the assumption that they are abiding and permanently qualify him for the discharge of the functions of the office.

When the congregation elects a man to the office of elder and when the session ordains him to the office, both the congregation and the session must be convinced that he is possessed of these qualifications—when they act otherwise they violate the New Testament institution. But this judgment on the part of congregation and session involves more than the conviction that he is possessed of these qualifications—it is also judgment to the effect that by reason of the gifts with which he is endowed Christ the head of the church and the Holy Spirit who dwells in the church are calling this man to the exercise of this sacred office. The congregation and session, in other words, ought to recognize themselves as merely the instruments through which the call of Christ and of his Spirit comes to effect. The Church is acting *ministerially* in doing the will of Christ. The word of Paul to the elders of Ephesus is surely relevant to this fact: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to shepherd the church of God, which he hath purchased through his own blood" (Acts 28:28).

When these two facts are coordinated, namely, the permanency of the gifts which qualify for the office and the judgment of the church that Christ is calling this man to the exercise of the office, it seems to me quite inconsistent with all that is implicit in the judgment and action of the church for the person in question to be ordained and installed in the office for a limited term. In the absence of any express warrant for term eldership it is, to say the least, most precarious to assume that ordination for a limited term is legitimate. When we duly assess the weight of the consideration that the gifts which qualify for the office are the gifts of Christ and therefore in effect the call of Christ and of his Spirit to the exercise of these gifts, when we bear in mind that the possession of

these gifts is not temporary but abiding and that the gifts increase in fruitfulness and effectiveness with their exercise, the most conclusive warrant for ordination to temporary office would have to be provided in order to justify that kind of ordination. It is precisely that conclusive warrant that is lacking. It is in this light that the absence of express warrant takes on the greatest significance. Only conclusive warrant can offset the cogency of these considerations with which we have been dealing.

Finally, there is the argument that pertains to the unity of the office of ruling. In respect of ruling in the church of God the ruling elder and the teaching elder are on complete parity. When the teaching elder is ordained, he is ordained to rule as well as to teach and his ruling function is just as permanent as is his teaching function. In the Orthodox Presbyterian Church there is no provision for term ordination of teaching elders nor has it ever been proposed, as far as I am aware. Term ordination for ruling elders has been proposed and contended for. There is surely some inconsistency here. To say the least, consistency would appear to demand that, if term eldership is approved and provided for in our Form of Government in the case of ruling elders, the same should be approved and provided for in the case of teaching elders.

It will perhaps help to point up the anomaly of term eldership when we think of the same type of ordination in the case of teaching elders. No doubt the reason why the latter has not been seriously proposed is that it appears incompatible with the calling which teaching eldership implies, that is, the call to the gospel ministry. Exactly so. When the call to ruling eldership is properly weighed and its implications properly evaluated we should have the same sense of incompatibility in thinking of term eldership in the case of ruling elders.

The most important consideration of all in this connection is that term eldership for ruling elders draws a line of cleavage between ruling elders and teaching elders in respect of that one function which is common to both and in terms of which both are on complete parity. The teaching elder is ordained to permanent tenure of the ruling office, the ruling elder would not be if the practice of term eldership

is adopted. Here is a line of distinction which tends to institute a sharp cleavage between the ruling elder and the teaching elder in respect of that one thing where it is necessary to preserve unity and complete parity. One cannot but feel that the practice of term elder-

ship for ruling elders is but a hangover of an unwholesome clericalism which has failed to recognize the basic unity of the office of elder and, particularly, the complete parity of all elders in the matter of government.

Orthodox Presbyterian Church News

Portland, Me.: On December 28 the Machen League of Second Parish Church was host to a Camp Deerwander rally. On January 12 the Ivy Club sponsored a pleasant social evening for adults of the congregation. Mr. and Mrs. K. E. Peterson showed slides and told of their trip to Denmark and Norway. Harvey Conn, a Westminster Seminary student, and Paul MacDonald, a Senior at Calvin College, participated in the evening service January 2.

Franklin Square, N.Y.: Construction of the new building for Franklin Square church has been held back by the weather, but is proceeding slowly. Sunday school attendance continues at a record level. Three classes will be divided as soon as space is available. A teacher's training program, as outlined by the Presbytery, is planned to start soon.

Westfield, N. J.: Nine new members were received into Grace Church in January. Katherine Hunt, daughter of the Rev. and Mrs. Bruce Hunt of Korea, visited the Rev. and Mrs. Dunn during the Christmas holidays. At one of the church services she was interviewed by Mr. Dunn. Attendance at the mid-week services has increased recently, in connection with a series of studies concerning the Second Coming of Christ.

Crescent Park, N. J.: The Machen League of Immanuel Church and the Collingswood group had their annual outing at the Pocono Mountains December 28-30, with 28 persons making the trip. The first annual Fathers and Sons banquet was held on January 15, sponsored by the Men's Club. A turkey dinner was enjoyed by the 103 persons who attended. A social program followed the dinner. The men planned the whole affair, though the ladies helped serve.

Nottingham, Pa.: Four men were received into membership of Bethany

Church at the January communion service. Two came as adult converts, and two on reaffirmation of faith.

Gresham, Wisc.: The twin infants, Jerry Lee and Janice Kay, of Mrs. Bernard Belike were baptized at Old Stockbridge church the last Sunday of the old year. The next week Mr. Elmer C. Quinney, direct descendant of David Brainerd's interpreter, was received into the church. The Men's Fellowship held a well-attended meeting in January. The Young People have published the sixth issue of The Presbyterian Herald, under the editorship of Dave Beyer. Four catechetical classes are currently under way.

Volga, S. D.: A Christmas program, "The Old, Old Story," was presented at Calvary Church on December 23. An offering of \$100. was received, to be used for Korean relief thru the "Meals for Millions" foundation. The congregation reached the Thank-offering goal of \$15. per communicant member. A film on archaeology, "The Stones Cry Out," was shown by the Young Adult Fellowship.

Yale, S. D.: Mr. Clifford Anderson was ordained an elder at the Yale Church on January 23. The previous Sunday two new members were received into the church.

Brancroft, S. D.: At the congregational meeting of the Bancroft church, Clarence Rabenberg was elected an elder for a three year term, and Don Wilkens, Noel Cheney and James Thaden were elected trustees. Siebelt Siebelts is the new Sunday school superintendent. At Manchester, Fred Ritterbusch was elected elder for a three year term, and Harvey Marx and Ray Wubben were chosen trustees. Mrs. Roy Van Ningen is S. S. Superintendent. A remodeling program for the Bancroft manse and church basement is under way. The congregation recently crated up a refrigerator for shipment to the Hunts in Korea.

Berkeley, Calif.: Two catechism classes are being held at Covenant Church each Saturday morning. The Confession of Faith is being studied at the mid-week services. The Rev. Francis Mahaffy was guest speaker at a meeting of the congregation on Friday evening, January 21. The biography of Dr. Machen by Stonehouse was recommended to the Berkeley public library, and a copy has been secured by the library and placed on the reserved shelf.

Long Beach, Calif.: The Rev. Glenn R. Coie was guest preacher at First Church on January 23. The Rev. Francis Mahaffy was a recent visitor at the church and at Garden Grove chapel.

National City, Calif.: On Friday, January 10, a covered dish supper was held at First Church for the members of the National City and Santee congregations. Guest speaker for the occasion was Mr. Mahaffy. Members of the congregation continue their work of putting the building into shape for use. Sunday school attendance continues about 20 per cent above what it was before the attendance contest of last Fall.

Manhattan Beach, Calif.: Ten members were received into First Church in January.

Bend, Oreg.: The pastor of Westminster Church and his family recently moved into the manse which has been acquired by the church. The four bedroom house is three blocks from the center of town. It is not a new house—part of it was built in 1904, before the city of Bend was organized. Extensive alterations are planned, but at present only the kitchen is being changed. The church is again emphasizing a program of Bible reading in the homes.

Daughter to Cloughs

A DAUGHTER, Lois Elaine, was born on January 16 to the Rev. and Mrs. Ralph Clough of Bridgeton, N. J. Mr. Clough is pastor of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

New Manse at Cedar Grove

THE REV. and Mrs. Robert K. Churchill of Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, recently moved into the new manse built by the congregation of Calvary Church.

On Wednesday evening, January 26, the congregation assembled for the mid-week Bible class and prayer meeting, but instead of the usual service,