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CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN.

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CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIANISM.

THE meeting at Edinburgh, in July, 1877, of three hundred and thirty-three ministers and elders, commissioned by forty-nine Presbyterian Churches, in twenty-five different countries or colonies, representing 19,040 ministers, with 21,443 congregations, holding creeds in harmony with the consensus of the Reformed Confessions, was fitted to show that, at least in the more literal sense of *καθ' ὅλου*, Presbyterianism has some claim to the adjective Catholic. Certainly it has its foot on all parts of the globe, and is especially active and advancing wherever the English tongue is spoken. That gathering undoubtedly tended to free it from a prejudice that has long clung to it—of being a poor piece of provincialism, a troublesome but insignificant obstruction to the real catholicity of the Protestant Church. It is singular how many of the clouds of prejudice that gathered during the cold eighteenth century over Presbyterianism as a whole, and over its most distinguished leaders of former days, are now yielding to the daylight and fresh air of a more honest and wholesome age. What extraordinary vicissitudes of reputation have Calvin and Knox undergone! Calvin, honoured and loved in his lifetime above all other men, and pronounced by such a strong opponent as Richard Hooker, “incomparably the wisest man that ever the French Church did enjoy since the hour it enjoyed him;”<sup>\*</sup> then looked on by Anglicans in the eighteenth century as a mere incarnation of spite and mischief; and now again, despite some blots which it is vain to deny, restored to his pedestal as the great and venerable Calvin, with somewhat of the old halo shining round his head. The name of Knox has passed through a similar circuit. In his own time he was regarded as “a man of God, the light of Scotland, the comfort of the Church, the mirror of godliness, a pattern and example to all true ministers in purity of life, soundness of doctrine, and boldness in reproofing wickedness;”<sup>†</sup> in the eighteenth century he had become an

<sup>\*</sup> Ecclesiast. Polity, Preface.

<sup>†</sup> See M'Crie's “Life of Knox,” p. 350.

indicates an awakened conscience—a first step in the direction of truth, to be followed by many others. Those who have taken this step will be, through their willing minds, much nearer the kingdom of heaven than a large number of nominal Protestants who have forgotten the lessons of their Bibles and their ministers.

Finally, although we have, thus far, spoken only of human means to be employed, it is not because we count upon their efficacy, without the help of God and the action of His Holy Spirit on men's hearts. But, however we may try to explain it, there comes in the history of nations as in the lives of men a solemn hour, when the hand of the Lord seems stretched out to deliver, and when His ear seems open to the supplications of His people—an hour when the Holy Spirit, like the wind blowing where it listeth, seems specially ready to breathe upon the souls of men.

What was the remarkable movement, which, spreading over the half of Europe in the sixteenth century, led to the Reformation, but the fulfilment of the Master's word: "Seek and ye shall find"? This same promise, addressed to men yearning for the truth, was held out to me when seeking after the light of faith; and, blessed be God, I found it with all the fulness of irresistible evidence. The same word is intended for all who, having taken crooked paths that lead to destruction, turn back to seek "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Yes, it is my firm belief that if the religious question is placed before France at the end of this nineteenth century, and if France earnestly seeks, God will help her, and she shall find. Oh that she may bring forth abundantly fruits of righteousness and holiness—this dear land of France, watered with the blood of so many martyred Huguenots! May the Lord of the soil give His rich blessing, so that her fields may become white unto the harvest, and labourers never be wanting! Let His children roll away the stone from the sepulchre of the Church of Rome, which holds men back, and impedes their flight towards those regions where they can feel and grasp the life-giving truth that "God is love," and that "He so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish but have everlasting life."

EUG. RÉVEILLAUD.

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## PRESBYTERY AND LIBERTY.

**W**HATEVER of ridicule, reproach, and partisan denunciation may have been heaped upon Presbytery during the last 300 years, and whatever may have been the occasional blunders and inconsistencies of its advocates and leaders, no candid student of history will challenge the statement that Presbyterianism—in the wide sense of that doctrine of the Church, and system of Church order, which is the logical outcome of the Pauline, Augustinian, or Calvinistic theology—has

uniformly been found ranged on the side of constitutional liberty, civil and religious. Alike on the Continent of Europe from the origin of Protestantism ; in Scotland at the first, and in Great Britain at the second Reformation ; and in America at the revolution and separation of the colonies from the mother country,—Presbyterianism was ever found foremost in the conflict for civil and religious freedom.

The uniformity of the phenomenon evinces that it cannot be merely accidental or incidental, and suggests that there must be something inherent in Presbyterianism itself which allies it logically with liberty. It becomes, therefore, an interesting inquiry—What are the peculiar elements of this system of religious faith that give rise to this tendency to gravitate so uniformly toward freedom, both in Church and State ? It is proposed, in this article, to suggest very briefly the outlines of an answer to this inquiry.

In order to comprehend clearly the relation of Presbyterianism to the question of human rights, it is necessary to refer to the state of public opinion throughout Christendom, in reference to the sources of governmental power, temporal and spiritual, at the Reformation in the sixteenth century, when modern Presbytery had its origin. At that period two theories divided Europe on the subject of the relation of the Christian religion to the political systems of the several nations which had been dominated by Christianity. The prevailing theory recognised a distinction between the temporal and the spiritual power, but maintained that the spiritual power is supreme over the temporal. The *juris-consults* of this school argued from the declaration of Christ—"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," that the Church, as representing Christ, must have supreme authority in the secular as well as in the spiritual order. They held that, though the civil power is in the hand of the magistrate, he must exercise it in obedience to the spiritual authority, in consideration of the fact that the spiritual interests of men are far more important than the temporal. The method of argument in support of this theory is well illustrated in the reasoning of Roger, Archbishop of Séns, in the conference between the French bishops and the nobility, before Philip of Valois in 1339. Expounding Luke xxii. 28, in response to Pierre de Cugniere, Roger argued—"He says, and says truly, that by the two swords are to be understood the two powers, temporal and spiritual. But in whose hand does Christ will the two swords to be ? Certainly in that of Peter and the Apostles, of the Pope and Bishops,—that is, of the Church. Do you say that Christ blamed Peter for striking with the temporal sword ? That is nothing. For, mark, he did not tell him to throw it away, but to return it to its scabbard, to keep it in his possession ; signifying that although this power is in the Church, he wills that under the new law it should be exercised by the hand of the layman at the command of the priest." \*

\* Rohrbacher, Hist., cited in Brownson's Review, January, 1853.

By such arguments was maintained, and very generally held, the theory that by Divine right the Church holds both swords, but exercises the temporal power by the hand of the civil magistrate.

The secular *jurisconsults*, on the contrary, in their zeal to maintain the authority of Cæsar against this arrogant claim, set up by the spiritual power, endeavoured to maintain a theory on the other extreme, equally fatal to human liberty. These, under the influence of the Justinian code on the Continent, contended that the authority of Cæsar is over both temporal and spiritual; the Church being an incident of the State. This is substantially the old Pagan theory. It is the theory maintained in substance by Hobbes, which in after-times found its expositor in Vattel. In his 12th chapter of "Piety and Religion" Vattel affirms such propositions as these:—

"A nation ought to be pious."

"So far as religion is seated in the heart, it is an affair of conscience; so far as it is external and established, it is an affair of State."

"The establishment of religion by law and its public exercise are matters of State, and are necessarily under the jurisdiction of the political authorities."

"If there is yet no religion established by public authority, the nation ought to know and to use the utmost care in order to establish the best."

"It solely belongs to the society, the State, to determine the propriety of changes in religion; and no private individual has a right to attempt these on his own authority, or to preach to the people new doctrines."

It will be perceived that on this secular theory of the depository of power, religious liberty is no less impossible, than is civil liberty under the theory of the supremacy of the spiritual power. The civil authority, whether represented by Monarchy or Republic, while itself subject to an autocratic spiritual power, is, in the nature of the case, powerless to protect the liberties of its subjects. Nor, on the other hand, can the Church ever be a free Christian commonwealth, protecting rights of conscience, while the civil power assumes to regulate the conscience of the people in the worship of God.

The zeal of several sections of Protestantism against the arrogant claims of Popery to supreme power in temporals; the necessity of some shelter under the broad shield of Cæsar against the legions of the Pope; the necessity for protecting the work of Reformation from the assaults of a fanaticism equally hostile to Church and State; and last, though not least, the strategies of ambitious Cæsars and their agents,—all combined to betray the larger section of Protestantism into acquiescence with the secular theory, and submission to the dominion of the secular power. Zuingle and his followers, from the very first, assumed the necessity of a Christian State Church, so that acts of Church discipline became necessarily political. Luther and his followers, though at first

having the true conception of the Church as a spiritual autonomy, were driven by force of circumstances, after the peasants' war, to give over the Reformation to the protecting care of the princes and the nobility; and from 1527 the government of the Church was placed in the hands of the civil ruler. The Anglican Reformation, having its origin in the monarch, rather than in the people as in Germany, was even more Erastian in its spirit than the Lutheran. Cranmer, who, more than any other, gave shape to the Anglican system, went to the extent of denying the need of any other authority for ordination than the king's commission. Hooker, to whose brilliant genius the Anglican system owes its most ingenious exposition and defence, assumes the broad ground of the ancient Paganism in making the Church and the State but two forms of one and the same thing. "Just as though a triangle," says he, "contemplated one way, hath two of its lines called sides, and the other the base, and, contemplated another way, may have this base one of the sides, and a side the base thereof: so the Church and State is one society, being called a commonwealth as it liveth under secular law, and a Church as it liveth under spiritual law."

But Calvin, at the very outset, denied both the claim of the Church to supreme authority in temporals, and the claim of the State to exercise authority over spirituals. He drew the line clearly, separating between the temporal and spiritual powers; and pointed out the provision made in the Scriptures, and according to reason, for two distinct governments, both ordained of God. The one, appointed by God as Creator, for His creatures, with natural religion and reason as its primary rule of faith, and having for its end the temporal interests of men. The other, appointed by God as Mediator, with His revealed Word as its rule of faith primarily, and having for its end the spiritual interests of men. While he admitted the close relation between the two—so close that the one cannot be treated of without the other—for "not even any heathen writer has treated of the office of magistrate, of legislation, and civil government, without beginning with religion and divine worship;" yet he maintained that man is the subject of two kinds of government—"one situated in the soul or inner man, and relating to eternal life, the other relating to civil justice, and the regulation of the external conduct." (See "Institutes," b. iv., c. 20, *passim*.)

This theory of the two powers, each distinct from the other, and each supreme in its own sphere, is a fundamental element of the Presbyterian doctrine of the Church. It is formulated in what may be regarded as the original symbol of the Presbyterian doctrine of the Church—the "Heads and Conclusions of the Policy of the Kirk," or "The Second Book of Discipline," in the following, among other, clear and explicit propositions:—

"The power and policy ecclesiastical is different and distinct in its own nature from that power and policy which is called the civil power and appertaineth to the civil government of the commonwealth; although

they both be of God, and tend to one end if they be rightly used—*wit, the glory of God and to have godly and good subjects.*”

“The civil power is called the power of the sword: the other the power of the keys.”

“The magistrate commandeth external things for external peace and quietness amongst his subjects. The ministers handle external things only for conscience’ cause. The magistrate handleth only external things, and actions done before men. But the spiritual rulers judge both inward affections and external actions, in respect of conscience, by the Word of God.”

“The civil magistrate seeks and gets obedience by the sword and other external means; but the ministry by the spiritual sword.”

“Finally, as ministers are subject to the judgment and punishment of the magistrate in external things, if they offend, so ought the magistrates to submit themselves to the discipline of the Church, if they transgress in matters of conscience and religion.”

Such is the doctrine of the relations and limits of the spiritual and temporal powers, as enunciated by Presbyterianism in the sixteenth century, in face of the two great errors, one or other of which at the time dominated the Christian world. On the slightest examination, it will be apparent that these principles of the Second Book of Discipline furnish the only foundation upon which either a free constitutional civil government, or a Church maintaining liberty of conscience, can be constructed. It is no wonder that a system maintaining such a doctrine against the heresy of the supremacy of the spiritual power in temporals on the one hand, and the supremacy of the civil power in spirituals on the other, should have been met with fierce storms of opposition, and that every effort should have been made by Caesar as well as by the Pope to crush it out. Nor need we go any further in search of the reason why, from that day to this, Presbyterianism should have had to bear the reproach of being a system tending ever to strifes and conflicts; or why it has been subjected to the ridicule of courtiers and time-servers, in the oft-quoted words of the satirist:—

“For his religion it was fit  
To match his learning and his wit.  
’Twas Presbyterian true blue;  
For he was of that famous crew  
Of errant saints, that all men grant  
To be the true Church militant.”

But what if these charges are true? It may readily be shown that this system must make its way by war and conflict, for the reason why the Prince of Peace said, “I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword;” it needs to struggle for the truth, because a world in arms is arrayed against the truth, and in defence of error fatal to human liberty. It was natural enough for the obsequious advocates of

prerogative and the divine right of kings, in former times, to curse Presbyterianism on the ground, as King James expressed it, that "Presbyterianism and Monarchy agree no more than God and the devil;" for in his conception of Monarchy, as the unrestricted rule of prerogative, his saying was only an exaggeration of the truth. But it ill becomes those who now glory in British and American constitutional liberty, to keep up the reproach against the belligerency of Presbyterianism, whose steadfast faithfulness to its principle of the two distinct governments won for these scoffers the very liberties which now they enjoy. On the theory of Cranmer and Hooker, what would have become of constitutional liberty in Britain? Without the principles of the Second Book of Discipline permeating the nation far beyond the limits of the Scottish Kirk, how would the Stuarts ever have been overthrown? If these principles have made Presbyterians fighting men, those who enjoy the liberties which the warriors have won for them ought to be a little modest about reproaching their benefactors. But just as the Quakers can well afford to denounce all war and arrogate to themselves the saintly character of men of peace, so long as they live among a people that do their fighting for them; or as a man may safely denounce the effeminacy of umbrellas, so long as he lives alongside one under whose umbrella he may take shelter,—so other sects of Protestant Christians can afford to denounce the belligerency of Presbyterianism that has won for them the liberty for which they would not fight themselves.

In this fundamental truth of the powers spiritual and temporal, as both of God, yet each supreme in its sphere, we have the key to all the conflicts of the Church of Scotland with the despotism of the Civil Government, during the first century of its existence. In this we find the key to the great conflicts of the second Reformation, which gave rise to the Westminster Assembly, and the persecutions which followed half-a-century afterwards; for whatever the particular phase of the controversy as between Knox and Melville, and the treacherous Stuart and the equally treacherous nobles of Scotland; or as between Henderson and Rutherford, author of the immortal "Lex Rex," and their associates, with the Independents and the Erastian Parliament; or as between the suffering Covenanters and the persecuting prelates; or as between the several secessions of the eighteenth century and the Erastian Moderates—it will be found that the issues involved all had their root in the doctrine of the two distinct powers, as set forth in the Second Book of Discipline. It was but the logical application of these principles, when Erskine of Dun resisted the despotic claims of Regent Mar with the declaration—"There is a spiritual power and jurisdiction which God has given unto His Kirk, and to them that bear office therein. And there is a temporal power and jurisdiction given of God to kings and magistrates. Both the powers are of God, and most agreeing to the fortifying of one another, if they be rightly used." And so when Andrew Melville resisted the

tyrant James with the famous declaration—"There be two kings and two kingdoms here in Scotland. There is King James, the head of the Commonwealth, and there is Christ Jesus, the King of the Church, whose subject James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king nor a lord, but a member."

It would not be difficult to show, if there were space for it here, that this principle of the two distinct powers, each supreme in its sphere, and both from God is the great germinal principle of all freedom, either in Church or State. Whatever of constitutional liberty and freedom of conscience exists in Britain and America at this day is but the logical outcome of this principle, by whomsoever the principle has been enforced; and it is a striking testimony to the far-sightedness of the Scottish fathers, that the ecclesiastical sons of the men who persecuted them to the death for what was deemed their seditious doctrine of the autonomy of the Church in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, are now bewailing the slavery of the Church of England under its Erastian yoke, and disposed to break that yoke even at the expense of the disestablishment of the Church. Indeed, it may well excite surprise that in the early days of the Church of England, it was not perceived that any scheme of the relation of Church and State, which involved the principle of a power in a State to enforce a religious creed and a Church order upon the conscience, is radically as fatal to liberty of conscience as the scheme of the supremacy of the spiritual power is fatal to civil liberty.

We can only refer here in passing to the outworking of the great doctrine of the Second Book of Discipline, in founding American Presbyterianism, at the separation of the colonies and the establishing of American independence. The attempt to establish religion was met, in the Memorials of East Hanover Presbyteries to the Legislature of Virginia, with the very doctrines of the Scottish fathers. "Every argument," say these memorialists, "for *civil liberty* gains additional weight when applied to liberty in the concerns of religion."

"We would humbly represent that the only proper objects of civil government are the happiness and protection of man in his present state of existence—the security of the life, liberty, and property of the citizen."

"Jesus Christ hath given sufficient authority to His Church for every lawful purpose; and it is forsaking His authority and direction for that of feeble man, to expect or to grant the sanction of civil law to authorise the regulation of any Christian society."

Thus they asserted the fundamental truths asserted by their fathers two centuries before, and with far greater success, for it was doubtless under the influence of these memorials that Jefferson and Madison were led to fight and win the battle for religious as well as civil liberty in America.

The liberty, civil and religious, for which Presbyterianism has ever contended is widely different from that freedom, the noisy turbulent advocacy of which has ever distinguished Continental Red Republicanism.

It differs because it recognises God as the source of the power vested in civil government, whatever may be its form. With this conception there can be no such thing as government by mere royal prerogative. The magistrate rules under law—the law of God as discovered in nature, and interpreted in the revealed Word. And it recognises the individual responsibility of every man to God in its claim that the spiritual power is supreme in its sphere, and the first principle of the spiritual power is that “every man shall give *account of himself* before God.” It recognises that all power is in the people, in the sense that they may choose the form of government and their rulers. Rutherford’s views in his “*Lex Rex*,” expounding Presbyterianism on the civil side, radical as they were supposed to be at the time, are wide as the poles apart from the Jacobinism of the Continent, which, no less than the theory of prerogative and divine right, is destructive of constitutional liberty. For while he maintains the right of the people to choose a sovereign and enact laws at will, yet, by showing that the power is primarily from God, and only secondarily in the people, he teaches them that they are under responsibility to God for the manner in which they exercise their liberty. On this principle, liberty is law, liberty is order, liberty is reason, “and always with right reason dwells.”

From what has been said, it is apparent that the alliance of Presbytery with the cause of constitutional liberty through the past three centuries is not an accidental coincidence, but springs from the fundamental principles of Presbytery itself in regard to the relation of the spiritual and temporal powers. If this view seem too abstract and transcendental, the objector is reminded of Coleridge’s saying—“By celestial observations only can terrestrial charts be properly constructed.”

An examination of the details of Presbyterianism, if there were space for it here, would show that they accord with its first principles in the support of regulated liberty both in the State and in the Church. While it claims that its Church order is of Divine warrant, and the government in the hands of church-officers by Divine right, yet it maintains as fundamental the power of the people in the choice and call of their rulers, and that the exercise of governmental power is never a “one-man power,” but always by tribunals. Then, for the protection of every member of the Church from the influence of passion and prejudice in the administration of discipline, there is the right of appeal upward through an ascending series of tribunals, until the humblest member charged with offence may have at last the judgment of the whole Church in his case. It is very apparent that a people, trained up under such ideas of the administration of law in the Church, will ever be disposed to appreciate constitutional government and well-regulated liberty in the State.

So, again, the constitutional restrictions placed upon these tribunals accustom the people to the notion of constitutional government. They

must determine issues raised, not by their own judgment, but by the Word of God, which is declared by the Westminster Confession to contain all things necessary to faith and practice, either expressly set down, or derived by good and necessary inference. "Synods and councils are not to be made the rule of faith and practice." "God alone is the Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the commandments of men which are in anything contrary to His Word."

Another feature of Presbyterianism, the value of which has probably never been appreciated, because of its intangible but not less real influence, is to be found in its peculiar theory of the constituent elements of the Church, *as families*, and not merely as individual believers. Most, if not all other Protestant bodies regard the children of believers as made members of the visible Church by their baptism, and therefore the Church as composed of individuals. In this ordinance, they "*christen*" the children—that is, make them Christians. But on the Presbyterian theory, the Church is composed of "the families that call upon the name of the Lord." The children of believers are *born* members of the visible Church; the baptism simply recognises them as such, and is the application to them of the seal of the covenant. The family, as such, is the unit, and the aggregation of families constitutes the Church visible. "The visible Church," says the Westminster Confession, "consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children." Above all other Protestant systems, Presbyterianism gives prominence to the family and family religion. Hence, in the days of persecution in Scotland, when the visible Church, so far as concerned public ordinances, seemed utterly exterminated, she lived in the families while the storm raged, and sprang forth instantly into public view when the storm ceased.

It is a noteworthy historical fact, that constitutional liberty could never be permanently established except in such States as recognised families as the constituent elements of the State. Here is the fundamental difference between the Anglo-Saxon tribes and the "Latin races" of the Continent, and between constitutional government and Jacobinism. In accordance with the original law of God, establishing the family as the first government—a government of Divine right, with which no human authority may interfere with impunity—in the Anglo-Saxon civilisation the family ever stood prominent. The arrangement into tithings and hundreds was based, not upon topographical divisions, but with reference to family organisation. The families were held responsible for each other; hence grew up the idea expressed in the old British saying: "Every man's house is his castle." And this principle gave its significancy to Lord Chatham's eloquent saying of the English peasant's dilapidated cottage, that though the rains and winds of heaven may enter through its dilapidated roof and walls, the King of England dare not enter it without warrant of law. It is needless to point out how the Presbyterian system of government, recognising the

same Divine ordinance in the structure of the Church, sustains by its influence this true conception of the State, under which alone constitutional liberty may permanently exist.

STUART ROBINSON.

## MISSIONARY SACRIFICES.

BY THE LATE DAVID LIVINGSTONE, D.C.L., LL.D.

[THIS paper has been placed at our disposal by the family of the late Dr. Livingstone, and we have peculiar pleasure in making use of it, not only on account of its own remarkable qualities, but to show how gladly we shall welcome, in this Journal, suitable contributions from congenial writers, who, like Dr. Livingstone, are not identified with the Presbyterian Church. It does not appear for what purpose the paper was written, but it seems to have been composed during his first visit to this country, and doubtless with the view of giving an impulse, among young men, to the missionary spirit. It presents a most valuable side of Livingstone's character, which rather lies out of sight in his travels—his spiritual earnestness, and intense sympathy with the highest ends of the missionary office. In this respect it affords a glimpse of a vast but hitherto little known chamber of the great heart of Livingstone, a chamber in which the tenderest love of wife, children, and friends lay mingled with the warmest devotion to his Lord and Saviour. The public may well desire a fuller exhibition than has ever yet been given, of this side of the character of Livingstone. Readers will mark all through this paper the bright, hopeful spirit that ever took the best view possible of men and things—that admirable charity which, while deeply impressed by the wickedness that is in the world, ever clung to the hope that the good was gaining ground, and that mainly, because he felt so deeply that God was on the side of the right, the good, and the true.—ED.]

**I**T is something to be a missionary. The morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy, when they first saw the field which the first missionary was to fill. The great and terrible God, before whom angels veil their faces, had an Only Son, and He was sent to the habitable parts of the earth, as a missionary physician. It is something to be a follower, however feeble, in the wake of the Great Teacher and only Model Missionary that ever appeared among men; and now that He is Head over all things, King of kings and Lord of lords, what commission is equal to that which the missionary holds from Him? May we venture to invite young men of education, when laying down the plan of their lives, to take a glance at that of missionary? We will magnify the office.

The missionary is sent forth as a messenger of the Churches, after undergoing the scrutiny, and securing the approbation of a host of Christian ministers, who, by their own talent and worth, have risen to the pastorate over the most intelligent and influential churches in