

**MANUAL OF PRESBYTERY: COMPRISING,  
I. PRESBYTERIANISM THE TRULY PRIMITIVE  
AND APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTION OF THE  
CHURCH OF CHRIST. II. THE CHARACTER  
AND ADVANTAGES OF PRESBYTERIANISM  
ASCERTAINED BY FACTS**

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Constitution of the Church of Christ. II. The Character and Advantages of Presbyterianism  
Ascertained by Facts by Samuel Miller & John G. Lorimer

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**SAMUEL MILLER & JOHN G. LORIMER**

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# MANUAL OF PRESBYTERY:

COMPRISING,

## I.

PRESBYTERIANISM THE TRULY PRIMITIVE AND APOSTOLIC  
CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST;

OR, A VIEW OF THE HISTORY, DOCTRINE, GOVERNMENT, AND  
WORSHIP OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

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TERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY.

## II.

THE CHARACTER AND ADVANTAGES OF PRESBYTERIANISM  
ASCERTAINED BY FACTS.

WITH AN APPENDIX

ON THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS AND REFORMERS TO PRESBYTERY—  
THE MORAL TENDENCY OF CALVINISM, ETC.

BY THE REV. JOHN G. LORIMER,

MINISTER OF FREE ST. DAVID'S CHURCH, GLASGOW.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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WHILE I rejoice in the increased interest which questions of Church government are awakening, and the demand for fresh publications on the subject which that interest is calling forth, I have nothing to add to the statements of the former Preface, except that in this New Edition I have endeavoured to bring down the question of Presbytery to the present day, by supplying a Chapter on Presbytery as Favourable to Catholic Views of the Church of Christ; another on the Free Church movement, as furnishing a favourable illustration of the operation of Presbytery; and by also giving the most recent information respecting the progress of this form of ecclesiastical government in other Christian Churches. I trust that, by these and kindred additions, the reader will find the present Edition more worthy of his

attention. It is certain that within the last five years questions of Church rule have acquired a fresh importance in themselves, and in their bearing at once upon the civil and religious prospects of Christendom.

J. G. L.

GLASGOW, *August*, 1847.



## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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THE question has of late been not unfrequently put, "What is the best book on the distinguishing characteristics of the Presbyterian Church—free from personal controversy—at once simple, short, and comprehensive, and adapted to general use?" This inquiry is not proposed by those members of the Church of Scotland—few it is believed in number—who, from ignorance, prejudice, or other causes, taking offence at her present struggle, have passed into another communion. These persons do not put themselves to the trouble of inquiry. They act not from principle, but from feeling, and probably, therefore, would not be moved by any investigation which they might institute. The inquiry originates with warmly attached friends of the Church, who are quite satisfied that her constitution is scriptural, and who are daily—unlike to the carelessness of other times—taking a deeper and deeper interest in her prospects, but who are anxious to inform themselves, and the youth of their families, more intelligently of the peculiar principles and institutions of the Presbyterian Church, than they have hitherto had a call for, or opportunity of doing.

It is probable that some may say, "The fewer such books as those referred to on denominational distinctions the better. In these days, when there is so much Infidelity, Popery, and Error in the world, and such vast continents to be reclaimed from Heathenism, would it not be well that all Christian Churches holding the Head, were united in heart, and joined together in the same labours?" In answer to this, we have to say, that controversy upon confessedly subordinate matters is to be deprecated, especially if it interfere with Christian union and co-operation; but we are not sure that in any circumstances it is warrantable to sink the peculiarities of Presbyterianism. Church government, discipline, and worship, hold an important connection with doctrine. They are in some respects the fences of its purity, and though in themselves inferior to the weightier matters of the Law and the Gospel, yet, as part of the revealed will of God, are of higher value than the most esteemed objects of earth. If men are to give an account of every idle word which they speak, they will certainly be held responsible before God for the care which they bestow in ascertaining the scriptural constitution of the Christian Church, and the zeal or remissness which they manifest in adhering to it after ascertained. Besides, the more closely that any Church is conformed in constitution to the will of its great Head, the richer blessing may be expected to rest on its ministrations.

Whatever may be the particular circumstances of the Church or of the world, requiring Christians, it may be for a time, to subordinate questions of ecclesiastical polity to more important and immediate duty, no one

who is alive to the present state of the Christian world, and much more, to the existing religious condition of British society, can question that this is not one of the seasons when Presbyterians should be silent upon the peculiarities of their faith. Unhappily, it is too well known that a large, influential, and rapidly increasing party have of late years appeared in the Episcopal, or, more correctly speaking, the Prelatical Churches, both of Britain and America, whose proclaimed doctrine it is, that the Presbyterian Church, and all Churches not Episcopal, have no authorized ministry or valid ordinances; in short, are no Churches of Christ at all, but mere religious communities, dealing in pretended services. In such circumstances, it is high time at least *to stand on the defensive*, and to vindicate the claims of the Presbyterian Church. Silence were not only treachery to the cause of truth where assailed, it would be equivalent to a cowardly acquiescence in insolent presumption. It were well that there were no need for controversy, or that less important controversies were occasionally absorbed in the common pursuit of higher objects; but when not merely the honour, but the very existence, of the Presbyterian Church as a Church of Christ is denied, and millions of the most intelligent and well-conducted professors of Christianity, not a whit inferior to their brethren in character, are summarily unchurched, it is a sacred duty, if not to expose the pretensions of assailants, at least calmly to state the claims of the Presbyterian Church, and to circulate the knowledge of these claims as extensively as possible among the members. It is only in this way, with God's blessing, that painful apprehensions