

STRONG POINTS OF OUR POLITY.

THE Presbyterian system of church government has been shewn by many able writers to be in harmony with the Word of God, and to be the nearest to the model laid down by the Apostles. It is not, therefore, my intention, in the limits of this paper, to discuss the origin of Presbyterianism, or its harmony with apostolic teaching, but simply to point out some of the features of our polity, which have made it, under the providence of God, a blessing to mankind. Some one has very truly said: "It is the weakest part of a church's creed which she holds alone, and it is the strongest part, that which she holds in common with other churches." Now, if this be true, then our system of church polity must be very strong indeed, for we find the chief principles of Presbyterian polity permeating almost every system of church government that at present exists in the world. There are different names by which church politics are distinguished, but after a careful analysis it will be found that it is possible and practicable, to arrange all forms under one or other of the classes, Episcopalian and Presbyterian. But while this is the case, it has come about by other churches adopting Presbyterian principles, and not by us throwing away the distinctive features of our time-honored polity. Let us, then, briefly consider some of the strong points of Presbyterianism, and which are worthy to be preserved and handed down from generation to generation. Now, before beginning to enumerate the strong points of Presbyterianism, it is well to state, that we do not claim that these points are found in our church alone. We claim that they belong to our polity, but some of them are found, and it may be the majority of them are found, in other churches, and when such is the case, we rejoice that others see eye to eye with us in the management of Christ's Kingdom upon the earth.

(1.) The first point to which we invite attention is *the importance which our church attaches to the office of the Christian ministry.*

The Presbyterian Church has always held that an efficient ministry is essential to the true carrying on of the Lord's work, and of building that work in such a manner that the work will be permanent. This Church, holding these views, has constantly endeavored to provide for such a ministry. First by prayer and supplication the Head of the