

In nearly all our mission stations there have been accessions to the membership of the Church. In one case as many as 36 were added on profession of faith.

The outlook in our Presbytery was never more favourable. All but two of the vacancies are filled; several new stations have been opened; new congregations are being erected; and at the same time the Presbytery was never less charge upon the Board, that is to say the contributions of the fields and congregations have more than kept pace with the expenditure. The Lord is doing great things for us, whereof we are glad.

The Elder and the Eldership.

BY REV. PRINCIPAL MACRAE.

(Continued.)

My conviction accordingly, with regard to "the Elders that rule well," and those that "labour in the word and doctrine" is this: Given men in a given congregation, by reason of their character, were held to be worthy of being "bishops," inspectors or overseers as to this or that department of the administration of affairs in such congregation. Some of these men were sufficiently gifted for only what may be termed external superintendency or oversight. They ruled, and did it well. But, being modest, slow of speech and of a slow tongue, they did not venture to air their eloquence in the way of expounding or exhorting in the public assemblies of the worshippers. Others of the number were thus gifted,—powerful in the scriptures,—apt to teach. And they were set apart for these purposes. And inasmuch as the possession of such gifts implied a higher order of ability in that respect,

and demanded learning, and study and devotion to the culture of the gifts, they were counted worthy of more honor than those of the common body of Elders who were competent merely to "rule well." The work of preaching involved more labour,—more exclusiveness of devotion to its requirements, and therefore entitled proportionally to reward or pay. I fail to see any greater mystery in the matter.

To sum up: for to enter at length historically into the subject is beyond my power for lack of access to the requisite sources of information. The New Testament fundamental principle is, that men are entitled to respect, first of all, not on the score of birth, or race, or family, or office, but of character. Given the being endowed with a certain character, of which the sum is Love to Christ, and a man is, so far, qualified for office in church with which he is connected. It may be a humble office. But whatever its duties, "Their hands should be clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." Is one but a "doorkeeper in the house of the Lord"? In so far as he performs that duty in the spirit of his Lord, he is an Elder. He is "conspicuous," which is one meaning for the word. He is "worthy of honour." He is "reverend." He ought to be, according to the ancient idea "aged," but need not be that in years to be worthy of respect.

"According as gifts qualifying for work demanding a larger and more various kind and amount of ability are displayed, a man will be entitled to a large amount of respect, character in equal or superior degree being assumed. But he is still neither more nor less than an Elder. In all cases, the character of the man determines the honour due to him, not the office to which he may be more or less righteously or wisely appointed. As the church grows in