

creasing, she passed away, and the arrangement was not completed. Notwithstanding, we entered on the work, trusting to Providence to supply the means, and began to make lime and bring stone. During a protracted rain nearly the whole of the wall on three sides fell down, and left us no alternative but to build with stone, as this same fence has been largely rebuilt several times. About four-fifths of the labour has already been completed."

Lying before us, ready for use, we have selections from these Bible-books, like the above, that would fill many pages; but, very reluctantly we find ourselves compelled, by our limited space, to desist.

THE OFFICE OF RULING ELDER IN THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

BY THE REV. DR. PROUDFOOT, LONDON, ONT.

Intelligent Presbyterians well know the important position which the Ruling-eldership occupies in the form of church government which they believe to be scriptural. If the distinction between the ruling-elders who teach, and those who do not, is not recognised in the Bible then it is plainly the *duty* of all elders to teach and to rule—so that none should be elected to the eldership who are not competent to do both—and further, the distinction among elders which does exist, in Presbyterian churches, is a mere matter of expediency, without divine authority. In this last case Presbyterians should be willing to give Prelatists the benefit of the admission; for, if all the presbyters had the same functions at first, is there anything more unreasonable in some losing the function of government as in Prelatic churches, than in others losing the more important function of teaching as in Presbyterian churches? If the distinction in the eldership referred to did not exist at the beginning and receive the sanction of the Apostles, and if it is due to a gradual, and perhaps natural, and practically convenient development, then it is idle to plead divine authority for it, or for the entire form of government of which it is a constituent element.

The design of this paper is to state the reasons for believing that the distinction in the eldership referred to existed from the beginning and has Apostolic sanction.

It is admitted that church government is not presented in a systematic form in the New Testament, and hence that the information we possess in reference to it is incidental and largely inferential. But this does not seriously detract from the value and authority of such information, as evangelical doctrine is presented in the same way. It is to be noticed also that references to church officers are to be found mainly in Epistles addressed to organized churches, and to Timothy and Titus who were Paul's assistants in organizing churches. In these cases such full statements of church polity as might be desired by persons having no previous knowledge of the constitution of the church, are not to be expected.