

careless and unconverted for Christ, and as little personal interest in the spiritual welfare of members of the church committed to their care. The young are welcomed on profession of faith in Christ, and after that left to take care of themselves. They are gladly planted in the house of God, but afterwards left to grow as best they may. The elders do not make themselves heard at the prayer meeting and in the discussions of our Church courts as much as they should. Of the 280 appointed commissioners to the General Assembly last year, 150, or more than one half, never put in an appearance, of the total, 7,000 in our Church, not much more than one-third engage in Sabbath school work. These are painful facts which can be verified at any time from the General Assembly Blue Books. What then can be at the bottom of all this? Surely it is not that in the Presbyterian Church there is less grace and ability than in other denominations. I feel sure that our elders, take them all in all, are "able men, men who fear God, hating covetousness," men of whom any Church might well feel proud. To my mind the fault does not lie so much in them as in several defects in the working out of our system, perhaps small in themselves, but which like grains of sand in a perfect machine, may greatly lessen the work done, if not completely stop it.

1. The first of these I would mention is the want of a time limit. Just as among ministers so among elders: there are a few quite unworthy of the office; men who have no higher conception of their duties than merely to pass the elements at the communion. One of the number, near Montreal, lamented there was nothing further left for him to do when managers were appointed "to take up the coppers." Another has become somewhat celebrated. When asked, as an elder, if he could pray, he said No; Preach? No; Teach? No; What then? "He could object." It is to be hoped there are not many like these unworthies. But the truth is, once in, they can scarcely be got rid of. It is an easy thing to put them into the office, but it would take an earthquake to put them out of it. The starvation process can't be applied to them, they can't be rozen out by members absenting from Church service, nor