

circumstances of our church here. Bearing all these things in mind, the framers of the draft constitution would submit whether as regards this matter of the election of minister, it might not be better to adopt those leading features which can be traced as belonging to the church of Scotland upon this subject, and which have been referred to the somewhat different circumstances of our church here, rather than adopt the very letter of a part of the constitution of our parent church, which has of late been undergoing various modifications, and which is likely to undergo still greater changes.

On the one hand it might be dangerous to make no distinction whatever in the right of voting between those who are members of the church and those who are not. Because in drawing up a constitution, we are bound to look to principles, and possible results and consequences naturally arising out of principles, as well as to the mere circumstances existing at the present moment. Granting, therefore, that no immediate danger were likely to arise from disregarding all distinctions between membership and no membership, yet this is the possible result, namely, that the spiritual affairs of the church might be managed by those who have nothing beyond a pecuniary interest in it, and in opposition to the wishes of its members—a thing not only unscriptural and certainly at variance with the laws of the church of Scotland, but which seems also at variance with the plainest dictates of justice and common sense, which render it necessary and expedient that the internal affairs of every society be managed by its own members. For surely none will venture seriously to dispute that the very object and end of that peculiar society called the church is of a spiritual nature—that there is a plain distinction between members in spiritual communion with it, and those who have nothing beyond a mere temporary connection with it.

On the other hand it must be admitted that the church is a society whose very object and design is aggression upon the whole world for its good—a holy combination, so to speak, to make the whole world happy. Instead of seeking, then, by unnecessary pains, penalties and disabilities, to exclude, it ought, by all lawful means, to attract within its pale. In this view it seems to merit consideration whether, supposing the necessity of maintaining some distinction between those who are members and those who are not, some means might not be devised by which the distinction should be maintained, and yet all parties really interested admitted to a participation in the election.

Suppose, for example, that the power of nomination were lodged in the session and members of the church, but that before the final election or formation of the pastoral relation, matters were in some way submitted to the general congregation for its concurrence. By preserving this right of nomination in the members, a wholesome check would thus be secured against the day of danger. By proper rules and regulations of the church, especially by Presbyteries exercising a tender superintendence over vacant charges, and coming into friendly intercourse with all classes of the congregation, much, it is thought, might be done to avoid any collision between them; and should this be sometimes unavoidable, there would still be the Presbytery to act as a mediator and a balancing power.

ART. 6. B. Although the framers of the draft constitution have submitted this article for consideration, yet from the fewness of the number of labourers, and other circumstances connected with our church in Canada, it is not easy to fix a time when the nomination should pass from the proper electors into the hands of the Presbytery. It may, therefore, be thought perhaps as well to leave this matter to the operation of the existing laws of the church, without making it the subject of special regulation in constitutions.

ART. 7. C. In judging whether in the present state of the church, any special regulation should be inserted in constitutions, respecting the amount of the minister's stipend, and the matter of a bond, these points will fall to be considered.

On the one hand the looseness and uncertainty of arrangements respecting the minister's support, is very painful and injurious to the best interests of the church; and the bringing the subject definitely before the view of congregations in constitutions, may have some effect in producing more clearness and certainty, and in awakening more exertions. On the other hand, it is a very difficult matter, in the present state of our church, to decide what should be the minimum to authorise a settlement—perhaps not always expedient to insist on a formal bond as an indispensable requisite. And the giving unnecessary prominence to matters of this kind, is at all times to be avoided; while, according to the laws of the church, Presbyteries have already a discretionary power in the matter.

ART. 8. D. Many of the sacred duties of the eldership have, it is to be feared, been suffered to go into disuse, and others of them to be overlooked. The framers of the draft constitution would, therefore, suggest that a re-publication of them among congregations, by the Synod, accompanied with a suitable appeal, might be beneficial;