

means of harm rather than benefit. It may be too inquisitorial, too minute; or wanting in appreciation of circumstances and in sympathy; but what part of our administration may not be imperfectly directed? Very strong reasons, it seems to us, may be given for having the interests—the whole condition—of each congregation in a presbytery separately and distinctly brought before the presbytery at suitable intervals. Why should a presbyterial visit not be held till there is something wrong—very often till the application of a remedy has become well nigh hopeless? This duty of inspection arises necessarily from the unity of congregations under our Church system, and we fail to act upon our principles unless we endeavor in some effective way, such as regular visitation, to provide for its discharge. The parity of the ministry is no barrier to the fullest exercise of Episcopal functions in the Church; and whatever measures are necessary for the welfare whether of minister or congregation should, within constitutional limits, be faithfully adopted. Till this is done—till the supervision of the entire Church, and every part of it, shall become a reality—we shall have to complain of weakness and inefficiency without any hope of remedy.

The question of Lay Agency is engaging the attention of all the Protestant Churches. This arises partly from the scarcity of ministers and partly from the conviction that such agency is peculiarly suited to certain kinds of work. Some classes can be more easily reached by such agency, which more readily gains their confidence.

It would be incorrect to say that Presbyterianism has made no use of lay help in carrying on the work of the Church. The elder, if he be regarded as a layman, has certainly rendered the greatest service. All who have any knowledge of the Highlands of Scotland have heard of the "*men*." The "*Church in the Desert*" depended not a little upon lay agency. Many other instances might be adduced. But the conviction largely prevails that unordained members may be much more extensively employed and that the Presbyterian Church has vast reserves which may, and should be, more fully brought into the field. While the offices expressly instituted in the Church are duly respected, there is nothing, I think, in the Presbyterian system which forbids the larger employment of laymen, in both teaching and administra-