

tween the ministry and the eldership, as will be seen in the further discussion of the subject.

One wonders that the respected brethren in a distant mission field, where a fully equipped Presbyterian Church can scarcely yet be developed, and where, therefore, there can be little experience of the problems growing out of congregational and presbyterial life, should have taken it upon themselves to challenge the practice of the Church, in the matter regarding which they sent up the Overture now before the Presbyteries. Surely we may all shrink from taking a position on this question which implies that almost the entire Presbyterian world, some portions of it having a history of centuries, has wrongly interpreted the teaching of scripture on the point in question.

Even if the allegations of the Overture were admitted, they would not establish that it has been "the practice" of Presbyterian Churches to elect ruling elders moderators, and it is the practice to which our Constitution restricts us, not deviations from that practice. Granted that George Buchanan was elected Moderator of the Church of Scotland in 1567, can that fact, once in 358 years, be cited as showing what the practice of the Church of Scotland is? But, as a matter of fact, the Constitution of the Church of Scotland, approved by the General Assembly and Parliament of Scotland, as set forth in the Second Book of Discipline, was not fixed until 1638, and it stipulated that the Moderator of the Church Courts should be a Minister. It gave place in 1647 to the "Form of Presbyterian Church Government," which is part of our Constitution; and this was confirmed by William and Mary, in 1690, and by Queen Anne in 1710, when the maintenance of Presbyterianism in Scotland was made one of the terms of the union of the two kingdoms. It is to be presumed that in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in India, and in that of the Presbyterian Church South, referred to in the Overture, there is nothing to hinder the election of an elder to the Moderator's Chair, as there is in our Constitution. Besides, it was the practice in Presbyterian Churches, at the time our Constitution was adopted, that we are governed by, not by any recent deviation from that practice.

## *2. Rules and Forms of Procedure.*

The four Churches which united in 1875 to form "the Presbyterian Church in Canada" all had rules and forms of procedure, following generally the precedents and practice of