

son (No. 1.) for a senate or an eldership in every congregation—"Because, in the nature of the case, old men are better accomplished for the task; and if not very near the people, are very near to God, and must soon give an account to him." What, then do we mean by old men? Old men simply, or old men in the Christian profession? Not old men simply; for age alone is no qualification for any office, any more than sincerity in a pretender is a proof of the righteousness of his pretensions. Without sincerity there is no virtue; and yet sincerity alone is no virtue. Without oxygen there is no atmosphere; and yet oxygen is not atmosphere. Age is a relative term. Moses was old at 120 years; and yet Methuselah was a young man, only in his prime, when 500 years old. Timothy at 30 was an older man in the Lc.d than Sergius Paulus at 60.

Age in the Christian life is better than age in animal life. I have sometimes seen very old men very great babes both in Christ and in common prudence. I have forgotten whether it was Zeno or Seneca who said, "Prudence is the queen of all the virtues." No matter who said it: it is true; and more especially in reference to all governmental matters. Now as wisdom dwells with prudence, and both tabernacle in the tent of years, we generally expect to find them there rather than in the abodes of youth—

"We are warn'd by the wisdom of age,
And cheer'd by the sallies of youth."

Elihu has said that "days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom."

Grace only adorns the native faculties of the soul. It imparts no new ones. Therefore, the things wanting in the physical and intellectual structure of man are not to be supplied by converting and redeeming grace. I acknowledge that a man's energies may be improved by the faith of Christ, because that faith excites, rouses, and consequently improves the energies of man. While it does not appear that all industrious, active, enterprising persons are Christians, evident it is that all true-hearted Christians are industrious, active and energetic characters.

As before observed, under the Jewish theocracy, in its best days, elders governed the nation. They were, however, select men. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." This was the archetype of all their ideas of rulers. So did Moses choose and appoint "out of all the people *able men*, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness;" and "made them heads over the people." "So I took of the chief of your tribes, wise men and known, and made them heads over you."† But we should be told that this was in the state government. And does that change the necessity of government, or of able and just men to administer it? Not in the least: for if state governors and rulers should be *able* and *just* men, much more they who preside over the church of God! But the Jewish state was all church, and their church was all state; and in every imaginable point of view their wisdom and policy are models worthy of our imitation.

* Exodus xviii. 21-25.

† Deuteronomy i. 15, 16.