

as the "King's Confession." To this confession the King himself with his household and counsellors adhibited their signatures. Along with this, James, through his representative the Laird of Caprintoun, presented to the Assembly "certain rolls containing the number of Presbyteries to whom the planting of Kirks should belong, and the numbers of congregations belonging to everie Presbyterie; and the Assemblie, did nominate a committee for reviseing of the draught and to report their judgement thereanent." After this committee had reported, their judgment on this matter, it appears that "the Assembly thought good that without delay some Presbyteries be constitut for paterne to such as were to be erected afterwards; viz, at Edinburgh, St. Andrew's, Dundee, Perth, Stirling, Glasgow &c." Such is the statement in "Forbes' Narration," but in "Row's History" there is a fuller statement than this, from which we gather that the Assembly having reduced the 924 reputed Kirks in Scotland to 600, "divided them into 50 Presbyteries or thereabouts; 12 Kirks or thereabout to each Presbytery. Three Presbyteries or more, or fewer, according as the country lies, to make up a Provinciall Synode and a Diocie, and everie Provinciall Synode shall appoynt the place of the next Synode within the same Diocie."

Then follows a list of 18 Provincial Synods and of 53 Presbyteries, concluding with the remark. "Thus Presbyteries were presentlie erected in the most eminent places to be patterns to the rest." Again, in the next Assembly which met at Edinburgh in October of the same year (1581) it was "ordained that Presbyteries be fullie and rightlie constituted, and that the now named place of a Presbyterie seat be not altered, but with the advice of the General Assembly." Again, in the fiftieth Assembly, May 10th, 1586, we find it "Inacted: That Presbyteries be settled in all convenient places." From this date the Presbytery (though not without opposition from the Episcopal party) took the place in the government of the Church which it now occupies. Hence we find that in 1592, when Episcopacy was abolished and the Presbyterian discipline restored, the government of the Church was established by Kirk Session, Synods and Assemblies. This order was ratified and approved by Act of Parliament, (1592) an Act which is regarded as the charter of the Church's liberties. The powers of Presbyteries were also in said "Act" defined and described as follows:—

"MATTERS TO BE INTREATIT IN THE PRESBYTERIES.—The power of the Presbyteries is to give diligent laboures in the boundes committed to their charge. That the Kirkis be kept in gude ordour, to enquiry diligentlie of nauchtie and ungodly persones, and to travell to bring thame in the way agane, be admonitioun or threatening of Goddis judgements, or be correctioun."

It was probably about this time, too, that the power of electing commissioners or representatives to the General Assembly was transferred from the Synodal Assembly to the Presbytery. In 1593 the names and number of the Presbyteries were carefully recorded in the Acts of the Assembly as if for this purpose, but it was not till 1694 that the proportion of Ministers and Elders to be sent from the Presbyteries was determined.

From this historical survey of the developement of the Presbyterian Polity into the symmetrical form in which it now appears in Scotland, in the United States, and partly amongst us, it will be seen that the process has not been a regular one from the congregation to the Assembly. The Church Session and the General Assembly seem to have sprung into existence at one end the same time—they were contemporaneous. The Assembly it would further appear called into existence the Provincial Synod, to meet the pressing wants of the Church at that time—to be the Superintendent's Council and to be a check upon his prelatie tendencies. Again, the Session together with the voluntary