

the pastoral relation, should be taken advantage of, although in some cases it may be premature.

We are however in a situation for coming up to the general question unfettered by this specialty, because it is believed that all will feel constrained, by the necessity of the case, to admit the general right of voting in the election of a Minister, in such a situation of things as this. The Presbytery of Bathurst, who have as a Presbytery sent in their opinion in favour of confining the right of election to the members of the church, say, "In the case of new congregations, a call, signed by a majority of subscribers for the Minister's support, to be laid before the Presbytery is sufficient."

The time seems to have arrived for fixing the general principles connected with the constitution of churches, because it were obviously unwise, nay, guilty, to allow any thing fundamentally wrong or subversive of scriptural principles to grow up as a precedent in the church.

Taking up then this question of the election of the Minister, free from all specialties, let us try to get at its principles.

It must be granted by all that in every human society whatever, (whether one of these formed by the hand of nature, such as the family relation, or any of these many associations continually formed for certain definite objects and purposes,) it is the practice, for self-evident reasons, to manage its own internal affairs, to devolve all powers of acting, in relation to the society, upon its own members, and to appoint all its own officers. It will be granted that the church is a society—that it must have officers to manage its affairs—that the choice of its Minister, who may be said to be its chief officer, is of the greatest

consequence, and that it is a matter that belongs to the internal and spiritual part of the church, and requires spiritual qualifications rightly to discharge the duty. It will hardly be denied that the church has a set of persons belonging to it, who are rightly called members of it, and that if so, as in every other society, its own members ought to manage its own affairs. They who are for giving an indiscriminate right to all classes who may in any way be connected with a particular congregation, to act in this very important matter, must therefore, it is presumed, go upon the idea that all they admit to the right are substantially to be considered as forming a part of this society called the church.

This idea, naturally enough perhaps, arises from the various senses in which the word church is used and understood. This we shall afterwards consider—but in the mean time it may be remarked that the idea may also arise from this peculiarity in the nature of the true church of Christ, that while it is of all societies in the world the most exclusive, its constant business is to be ever throwing wide open its doors to all the world, to sound this invitation, "come with us and we will do thee good." Its separate and distinctive character however may be read in the very first opening of the way, in which this is to be done,— "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

It is very true that love is the inscription written on all the church's banners. But still the question recurs, are all that come within the walls of a church, or at least, all who have certain pecuniary interests connected with the