

again, there is a difference of opinion—some seeing nothing objectionable in principle, or dangerous in practice, from the free and unlimited extension of the right of voting to all classes in the congregation, who contribute to the support of the Minister and are under no church censure—others again, being decidedly of opinion that the right of voting should be confined to the members of the church in full communion, and that it is dangerous to extend the absolute right to elect farther, though the wishes and feelings of all should be studied and consulted.

The answer to the queries, though they contain many valuable remarks and suggestions, do not in general enter much upon the principles involved in the question; nor in directing themselves to the queries were parties necessarily called upon to do so.

It may be as well to disencumber the general question, by first of all advertising to certain specialties connected with the state of our church in Canada, which seem justly to have had much weight with those who are in favour of universal suffrage. Not only is the number of communicants in many of our congregations very small, but the calling of Ministers is constantly going on by bodies of persons who are not yet formed or organized into regular churches, having no session, nor ever having had any Christian communion as a church.

Now a question might perhaps be raised whether strictly and constitutionally there is here a proper constitution of the pastoral relation, or whether it is not more of the nature of a Missionary connection? A Minister is sent to a certain number of persons to preach to them, it being yet a matter depending upon the future, whether there is ever to be a regular church or not. The

case is certainly supposable that the Minister might never feel himself authorised upon scriptural warrant to appoint officers of the church or administer the sacraments, and so regularly to constitute church membership and communion. This state of things calls upon the church to consider whether it would not be better to frame a missionary system under superintendants, or at least to ordain Missionaries over Districts, and thus organise bodies of persons so situated into churches before the more permanent pastoral relation is formed. Is there not cause to fear that the pastoral relation being formed before there are the elements of a regular church, (more especially where the Minister is altogether dependent upon his hearers for his support,) presents a temptation to a looser discipline, and a premature formation of a church; for where the minister has no session and no church-members to strengthen his hands, he is placed in very trying circumstances for the conscientious discharge of his duties.

But while we throw out these suggestions we are by no means prepared to say that in no case, except where a regular church is already formed, should there be a settled pastor. In many cases there are often all-sufficient grounds perhaps to warrant the measure. There is a people coming before a Presbytery with a unanimous expression of their wishes to have a certain person set over them as pastor, by the solemn act of ordination, and it will seldom or ever happen that none of those who give the call have been members of other churches. In most, if not all cases, many will be found to have been members, and some even officers. The circumstances may be such as to render it highly desirable that the expressed desire for union, by the bond of