

have caused sundry things to be attached to it which were not known in Apostolic churches, and were not even hinted at by the Apostles. Notwithstanding this fact, we firmly believe that Presbyterianism, as held and practised by us, is more in accordance with the inspired directory than any other form of church government. This, however, constitutes no good reason why we should rest content therewith, and continue practices that have no higher sanction or recommendation than use and wont; and which, when traced to their origin, are found to be the birth of clerical supremacy and class-legislation. To one of these, viz., the meagre, we might truthfully say, the mock representation of the Lay Eldership in our higher church courts we wish, in a few sentences, to call special attention.

It is judged unnecessary here to adduce the Scripture proofs of the perfect parity, as regards governmental authority in the church, of all elders, whether they minister or merely rule. Our church very properly admits the principle of equality by allowing one ruling elder from each church or congregation to deliberate and vote in Presbytery and Synod, along with the whole of the teaching elders or pastors. The question presents itself, and is often put, and may well be put,—Why this distinction? Why admit to Presbyterian and Synodical rule all ordained ministers, and admit only the merest representation of ordained elders? As far as we are aware, no satisfactory answer has been given, or can be given. Scripture, as we have read it, affords not the shadow of authority for our present practice in this regard. It is not to be denied that thereby an important class of office-bearers in God's house is subjected to slight and to wrong, and in all probability the affairs of the church not unfrequently suffer injury. All elders should be—and we rejoice to know that many of them are actuated by an ardent and a holy zeal for the advancement of the spiritual interests of the church as a whole—while, by our present mode of government, perhaps more than three-fourths of them are denied opportunity of doing so in the way that Scripture seems to indicate, and which propriety and equity strongly demand.

We have heard it advanced under pretence of argument in favour of allowing only one elder from each congregation to sit in Presbytery or Synod, that if all the elders were admitted to that privilege they might, and in all likelihood would, outvote and domineer over the ministers. This argument is at once worthless and unworthy those who are supposed to put it. Its selfish character and carnal policy are most manifest. It contains by implication a libel on the christian brotherhood of which the church is composed, viz., that ministers and elders have divided interests, and that the latter would lord it injuriously over the former were it in their power to do so. Now the first part of this insinuation we emphatically deny. It is the glory of the church of Christ that the interests of her ministers, elders and members, are one and the same. And are we not in