

influence which they often leave behind, yet are we decidedly of opinion that little comparatively is thereby effected. The loss to the congregation by a pastor's frequent absence is very great; and the want of a proper amount of labour among his own people, occasioned by lengthened and frequent missionary tours, even during the week, will materially injure a pastor's success. Besides, in a flying visit and by an occasional discourse very little can be done to reach those who really most need instruction. We doubtless send missionaries among them, that is, student-catechists and probationers, and with gratitude we own that God has wonderfully blessed the labours of such. But we would ask, is not the work of looking up neglectors of religion and endeavouring to bring them to the Church—of organizing congregations, and dealing with applicants on such occasions, and of selecting suitable office bearers,—a very difficult and responsible work? Does it not require a great measure of prudence and no little experience as well as zeal and piety? Surely it does. It cannot surely be the most judicious way to commit a matter so important to those who have no experience, and sometimes are not themselves thoroughly established.

Men have various gifts. While some excel as pastors, others unquestionably would excel as Evangelists, and we have no doubt that if our Church were to set apart a few of her ablest ministers who are qualified for such work, and confine them to Evangelistic labour, in a few years the fruits would be apparent in a more firmly consolidated Church organization, a more intelligent appreciation of Christian doctrine and discipline, and generally a more prosperous state of our mission field. Certainly we act unwisely if, having it in our power, we fail to accomplish the great Evangelistic work which is before us.

THE ELDERSHIP.

In ecclesiastical as well as in other matters, facts and theories are not always found in harmony. It is a pleasant theory among Presbyterians that there are only two classes of office-bearers in the visible Church. Presbyterianism will have us believe that as man has a soul which links him with celestial and spiritual things, and a body which connects him with the earth and its beggarly elements, that hence arise two classes of wants which need to be satisfied, and two classes of duties which Christians, in their associated capacity require to discharge; and that over the former by divine authority elders are appointed, and over the latter deacons preside. Such is the theory; and it has the simplicity of truth about it. We confess, however, that here facts and theory might be supposed to dwell in our Church at opposite poles. Doubtless the idea which practically prevails among Presbyterians is that we have three *grades* of office-bearers in our Church, viz.: ministers, elders and deacons. And we seriously suspect that an intelligent visitant from another world, should such chance to alight on our sinful globe, would, after spending a few months in our congregations and church courts, be in great danger of falling into the same mistake. He would see what is evident to all attentive observers, that there is as wide a difference between minister and elder as there is between elder and deacon. Why is this, if there are only two classes of officers in our church?

It seems somewhat difficult to comprehend what could be the design in the church of such office-bearers as the majority of our modern elders. They do almost nothing. They meet in Session and usually just say Amen to what the minister has done in examining applicants for church privileges, &c. They are a parliament to register the King's acts. Sometimes they give out *tokens*, and