

may be received or rejected at will: for one man's opinion is upon an equality with another's,—the Bishop of Canterbury's opinion as good as elder Davidson's, and elder Davidson's opinion as good as the Bishop's. In this style, then, we cut off all that latitudinarianism which at first thought might be supposed to attach itself to our acceptance of the Bible without a restricting formula.

Now, in pressing around this banner and standard, for the double purpose of destroying partyism and of enjoying the pure faith of the gospel, we are not so full of self-sufficiency as to suppose we are entirely free from the errors which environ us on every side. Hence, then, another peculiarity, of the disciples may be noted. *We are willing to impart and receive instruction by a free interchange of religious views with our fellow professors.* 'The spirit of the gospel, the times, the circumstances that surround us, and the imperfections to which we are incident, make this demand upon us; and hence, instead of framing a splendid theory of liberality, regardless of a corresponding practice, as many that I could name, we endeavour to exhibit our desire to learn others and in turn receive what they can learn us, by an adherence to the genuine liberality developed on the pages of the Christian oracles. It is true, some among us, like some among you, are more or less sectarianly rigid, not so much however in theory as in the department of practice; but still, as a people, we endeavour to follow the apostles of our Lord, by entering into synagogues of all classes and degrees, Jew, Gentile, and Samaritan; hearing and being heard; giving and receiving; repelling darkness by light, and adding to our light if others have it to give; contending earnestly for the truth amid the sternest elements of opposition, and yet gladly embracing whatever divine teaching others can impart to us.

The spirit that animates the parties or sects, properly so called, has a very different unction, and displays a very different species of liberality, either sentimentally or in fact, compared to what has now been expressed. Each sect proclaims its independency, lays down its rules, fixes its centre and circumference, issues its decrees, and henceforth rigidly maintains that it is always right in doctrine, if not wholly so in practice or character. This spirit of sectary perfection and party exclusiveness reaches from the latest made sect to the first and most venerable of all: and, what is a little singular, and worthy of being pondered well, this unfriendly spirit is invariably developed the most perfectly where there is the least religious purity. Rome is infallible; Episcopacy is perfect; the holy Presbytery is never wrong; and I will leave you to