

To return to Halifax. On the resignation of Mr. Secombe in 1784, a Presbyterian minister was obtained, the Rev. Thomas Russell of the Church of Scotland. Whether Mr. Russell attempted to undermine the principles of the Church is not stated, but it appears that a considerable number of Presbyterians had united with the Church; that they made an effort to change its denominational character; that there was even a struggle for possession of the building; that sometimes one had the key and sometimes the other; and that there was even violence between the contending parties. In the end the Presbyterians obtained the mastery, and governed the Church in their own way. Mr. Russell, probably wearied with the strife, resigned his charge in 1786, and was lost at sea while crossing the Atlantic. He was succeeded by the Rev. Andrew Brown of the Church of Scotland.

To satisfy the Congregationalists the Presbyterians consented that Watts' Hymns should be used in the Church; but the title "Mather Church" was changed to that of St. Matthews, as near the sound as it was possible to have the word "Saint" included. To make sure that no ecclesiastical descendant of the founders of the Church would rise and claim the property, an Act of Incorporation was obtained for St. Matthews' Presbyterian Church in later years. The property is situated in one of the most central positions in Halifax, and is of considerable value. Some years ago when I visited "St. Matthew's Church," I noticed a few stray copies of Watts' Hymn Book, as the only memorials of the founders who had confidence in the honour of men and little regard for title deeds. In Halifax and in Chester we look for Congregationalists among the descendants of the early settlers, and we find Presbyterians and Baptists.

For the present generation are there any lessons? Are the Deeds of the Churches now properly guarded? Are there not those who in their extreme Independency are so much afraid of the encroachments of Unions or Conferences that they will heed no advice, make no proper provision for legal securities, and thus unintentionally invite the good offices of some other denomination to step in and care for the property, or encourage the complete surrender at a future day by some weak-kneed Trustees of that which was originally intended for the worship of God according to the principles which we uphold and cherish.

And is it not the case that the non-sectarian principle, of which we properly boast so much as a denomination, may be carried to such extent that it will become a lever for others to undermine our churches, and in the name of non-sectarianism and liberality to lead our people individually, and in some instances our churches, from our denomination to sectarian bodies? May not our non-sectarianism be carried so far that strong denominations will be made stronger at our expense by our short-sighted liberality. The longing for Christian Union does not