

pregnant with the most fatal consequences to the Church at large—consequences which will inevitably flow from it unless there be a speedy return by all parties to more catholic views, and sounder principles.

But we contend that Lay Associations, such as we advocate, do not partake of that demerocratical character at all. They would, strictly speaking, be ecclesiastical organizations, for they would have no object at variance with the appointments and laws of the Synod, and their funds would be applied to no object but such as would be previously sanctioned by the Synod itself, and which it would be plainly the duty of every individual member of the body politic to promote. There are duties, that are peculiar to the Office-bearers of the Church, with the performance of which a Lay influence should not be permitted to intermingle. But there are duties also, that exclusively belong to the Lay Members of the Church, with the discharge of which it would be unbecoming the Office-bearers to interfere. That they be associated to give practical effect to their benevolent intentions is a state that naturally arises from a deep consciousness of the importance of the duties they have to discharge. Not only would the numerous advantages, that result from unity of purpose, be thereby gained, but a greater amount of Christian activity and zeal would be called into operation. The practical development of their incumbent duties would impress more deeply on their minds their obligations to discharge them; and the sympathy of harmonious co-operation would spread, awaken energies that otherwise would lie dormant, and incite to still greater efforts in the promotion of objects tending to the edification and peace of the Church. To such a scheme it is essential that the distribution of the funds be retained in the hands of the Association, or at least that they shall direct to the disposal of them. And, so far from using any power, which they would possess, for the overthrow of the "liberty with which Christ maketh His people free", we contend that, constituted as they would be, they would present a strong barrier against the encroachments of Spiritual despotism on the one hand, and *Erastianism* on the other, whether exercised by Civic Rulers, or by a more insidious, and a more dangerous power still—religious demagogues—men inflated with spiritual pride, who act in the spirit of the Pharisee, if they utter not his words, "Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou."

But, if we will not have the satisfaction of seeing the grand object of a Provincial Association with its clustering auxiliaries carried into operation, as contemplated by the Synod, still some of the practical advantages designed to be obtained by its establishment may to some extent be secured through the columns of the *Presbyterian*. Besides the general information

on religious subjects that will be diffused throughout the Province by means of its pages, it will present common ground on which all may meet to explain their views, to state their opinions, and what their true position is, whether as individuals or congregations, and to make known their prospects, both encouraging and discouraging. Thus many of the evils that arise from misrepresentation or wrong impressions, will be removed. A wider and stronger sympathy will exist between congregations that are far separated from each other. The diversified talents and gifts of the various members of the Church will be brought into harmonious action for the common weal. In the friendly collision of many minds the rougher edges will be rounded off and polished. Schemes for the fuller development of the Christian life and the removal of existing evils, will be founded on sounder principles, and carried out to practical results with greater energy; and, limited though such co-operation may be, we do not think it unwise to anticipate important advantages flowing out of it, not only to the Presbyterian population, but to the Christian Church at large.

To render the *Presbyterian* a mean of communicating intelligence regarding the early history as well as the present state and prospects of the Churches in this Colony, it is our intention, as far as lies in our power, to furnish from time to time separate articles on such of the Congregations of the Synod, already formed or which may be formed, as may be considered worthy of being noticed. Much interesting information may thus be obtained, showing the many trials which have been undergone both by Ministers and people in obtaining the great object of their struggles, their prayers, their sacrifices, their labours of love, and works of patience,—of enjoying in this, the country of their adoption, their sanctuaries and ordinances as in the land of their fathers,—of seeing their teachers breaking anongst them the bread of life, visting, as their common friend, their domestic dwellings, instructing the young, strengthening the old, and comforting the dying. It cannot be expected in a new and rising country where the population is of a mixed description, including not only variety of creeds, but the numerous shades of difference of opinion on refined questions of Church polity which exist in the Fatherland, that emigrants, on landing on our shores, should forget their past prejudices and early associations. *Coelum, non animum, mutant, qui trans mare currunt*, is the saying of the old Poet, literally meaning, *They change their country, not their mind, who go beyond the sea*. Than the Scotch Presbyterians none can be found more staunch in their attachments not only to the faith and worship, but even to the denominational parties of their sires; for, though there is a strict agreement on all

matters of Doctrine, Government, and Worship amongst them, as contained in the Confession of Faith, yet amongst no class of Christians has the spirit of Sectarianism been found more prevalent; so much so, that even the breaches between Dissenters themselves in Scotland have been found to be as wide and irreconcilable as, if not in some instances greater than, between them and the Establishment. In this thriving country where independence of sentiment, connected with an independence of support, and an accompanying emulation in vying with one another to rise, if possible, above the level of equality, at all events to maintain that equality, is much more strongly manifested than at home, it is not surprising to find that past feelings of a religious nature should strengthen in their growth. The unbending follower of the Erskines, the more pliant one of Gillespie, with the sturdy son of the Covenant, however they differ from the Establishment on what they severally entertained on the score of strictness in Discipline, the question of Patronage, or the nature of the Revolution Settlement, yet differing on the same accounts as widely from each other—have been found in past years throughout the Colonies willing to avail themselves of the services of a Licentiate of the Church coming directly from the common stock of origin, not only because many of their neighbours held in strong veneration the National Establishment, but from the pleasing consideration that, as in this land no patronage existed, the settlement of a common Pastor depended on their common choice, and, provided the Gospel was faithfully preached, many felt indifferent as to the particular Presbyterian body from which a Minister should come. The cheering prospects of continued unity, however, in many places, have failed of realization; and it is a rare matter to find the first Minister of any Congregation, thus composed of conflicting opinions, either remain long in his charge, or enjoy much comfort in his work. In large towns, where the various denominational bodies have their respective Churches and Ministers, the difficulties in the way of unity to which we allude are in a great measure unknown; each individual can follow his own choice, and, while those, who adhere themselves to the ministrations of a Pastor, either from attachment to his person, or to the Zion of their fathers, can do so unmolested by the fierce spirit of division more generally displayed in country places;—while, if on the other hand from any principle whatever any become dissatisfied, they can simply retire to enjoy the advantages of a *pure* body; while the Minister, however he may mourn over their departure, is yet cheered by seeing others come forward to occupy the places of those who walk no more with him, to strengthen his hands and encourage his heart in the good work of the Lord. Far otherwise, however, has it been in