

THE

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OF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE LOWER PROVINCES.

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THANKSGIVING.

It is good and becoming at all times to give thanks to our Maker and Redeemer. Summer and winter, day and night, sunshine and storm, all testify of his beneficence and love. But when a beautiful summer is succeeded by a harvest-time crowned with plenty, then is there a special call for gratitude and praise. The people of these Provinces have cause to rejoice in many and rich blessings. We have reaped the fruits of the earth in due season, and safely gathered them into overflowing garner. Famine is far from our borders. Nearly every branch of industry has been duly rewarded by a bountiful Providence. The wealth of the sea has been flung upon our coasts in the amplest abundance. No plague has come near our dwellings. No great public calamities have come to spread mourning and woe among us as a people.

Not far from us war is destroying thousands every day—thousands of the young, the strong, the brave. Towns, villages, whole country-sides are laid waste by the destroyer. Young and old, women and little children are driven away from desolate homes to depend on alms for daily bread. Leagues of hillside beautiful with fruit and flowers three years ago are now mounded into soldiers' graves! All the while, we are free even from the fear of war: we hear and only hear the painful din. Our homes are not violated; our young men may follow the pursuits of well rewarded industry fearing no sound of bugle-note or drum; and our soil drinks not the blood of man slain by his brother.

Within the bounds of our Synod—in Bermuda—Pestilence has committed fearful ravages. But there is One who can say to the Pestilence as well as to the swelling sea, "Thus far, and no farther!" He has spoken the word, and the destroyer is checked in his career.

What shall we render to the Lord for all His benefits! Shall we repay Him with a Tenth of all that He has given us—the increase of our fields and flocks—the treasures of the deep—of the wilderness and of the mine?

Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were a present far too small:
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

Even so. But which of us all, while confessing with our lips, will translate our confession into action? Let us bemoan our littleness of heart, our weakness of purpose, our selfishness and ingratitude. Let us ask God to enlarge our souls, to give us full confidence in Himself that in all things we may cheerfully obey what He commands. God has blessed us abundantly, and He is, as it were, waiting now to see what we are willing to do for him. O let us not be found utterly barren and unfruitful, like that wicked servant who hid his Lord's money. Let us give Him cheerfully and liberally; for He once gave His life for us. Ye know the grace our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich yet for our sakes he became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich. He has not forgotten us in the springtime and the summer; let us not forget Him in the midst of our harvest-joy.