

zest of Dr. MacGregor as a Gaelic scholar, and poet, some of his hymns being worthy of a high place among the classics of that ancient and honorable tongue.

REV. DR. MACRAE

then spoke on the progress since Dr. MacGregor's arrival. He said:—

*Brethren*:—Permit me, in the first place, to thank you for what I unfeignedly deem the honour, — the most grateful to my feelings of any thus far in life conferred upon me,—of being invited to take part in this memorable celebration. It is pleasant to be made sensible that one is not forgotten among the people of "his own, his native land." It is pleasant to know that, looking around, every face is that of a friend. It is doubly, trebly pleasant, amid thickly rushing recollections, to be able to feel that behind, under foot, out of sight, are utterly buried and well nigh utterly forgotten ancient rivalries, that around the name and memory of him whom we have met to honour, we are assembled as brethren, we can sing, with not a solitary note of discord to mar our harmony; "Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" God speed the day when, like tributaries merging into one mighty river, like the East, the West and the Middle streams that blend their waters in this noble harbour, so the churches represented respectively by my honoured friends Dr. Patterson and Mr. Blair, and myself, shall, in other lands, be persuaded to sink their differences in a similar spirit of unity and brotherly love.

The celebration of Centenaries has, in these lands, become one of the features of our age. It is an evidence of our consciousness that we are acquiring a history. It is part of the process by which successive generations sift out from the events of the past those which to them appear most worthy of being perpetuated. In the events which they shall thus single out, and stamp as, in their estimation, of highest importance in their bearing upon the destiny of a people, there is a revelation of the character, intent and aims of that people. Scarcely does a year elapse indeed during which men of scientific pursuits, for example, do not assemble to commemorate the birth or achievements of one and another, the Newtons, Watts, Galileos, who have enlarged the boundaries of human knowledge, or those devoted to

literary pursuits, the Shakespeares, Goethes, Burns, who have given worthy expression to human aspiration and hope, or the votaries of the fine arts, the masters of painting, sculpture, or song. Politicians gather in vast conventions to repeat the story of their party's by-gone successes, or to lay their plans for future conquests on parliamentary arenas. And cities pour forth their citizens to hear recited the tale of the steps by which they have risen from obscurity to their present greatness. Such meetings of men may be viewed in the light of a declaration of the habits of thought, the ideals which those concerned in their success deem worthy of being realized in their history. And accordingly, I venture to regard this gathering first of all as a manifestation of that people's character among whom it was my privilege to breathe the first breath of life. For you declare to-day, that you have felt it to be fitting and right before God and man, to commemorate the arrival on these shores, of a man, not eminent particularly perhaps in any of the respects referred to, eminent, you believe, in a respect vastly more worthy, for, simply, his apostolic fervour and piety. You deem it becoming that you should attest in some fashion your sense of the debt due, under God, to a man, and to the labours of a man, distinguished only for his unwearied laboriousness in preaching the gospel, and whose first sermon to our forefathers was delivered one hundred years ago, near to the spot where we are assembled to-day. Surely, we say with one heart, "the place whereon we stand is holy ground."

Such considerations as these, are, perhaps, beside the immediate scope of the subject prescribed to me. Yet I cannot help adverting to them thus hurriedly, because I see in this gathering, viewed in the light of its immediate object, something of the nature of a protest and of an avowal. Recollecting the fact that this is an age of centennial gatherings, remembering what are ordinarily, the reasons dictating such gatherings, I see in this a protest on your part, that there are events more worthy of being recalled in the spirit of grateful remembrance, than the founding of earthly cities or the originating of temporal inventions, most worthy as these are of being gratefully commemorated. I see in it an avowal that, in your estimation, these higher events are those bearing directly on the glory of God, and on your