

if properly cultivated, adapts him to the sphere of life, which he is to occupy. In the proportion in which he is *himself* he amounts to something. This is apparent in preachers, for instance. A man who seeks to be like somebody else whom he admires and imitates, soon loses his own individuality, and injures his usefulness. He may become a first-class mimic, but a very poor minister. This is one of the secrets of the success achieved through the itinerant system. What one preacher does not succeed in doing, his successor may. Thus in doing each his own work we most successfully contribute to the whole.

Now this principle holds good in its broader application to the Christian denominations called of God. Into the texture of every such denomination the Lord has woven a certain individuality, placed upon it a certain peculiar stamp, endowed it with certain distinguishing characteristics, which will make it fit into that very sphere of work, whereunto it is called, and answer the needs of men not otherwise reached. Each such denomination has a work to do which none other can do, nor can it for the same reason do the work of others.

That the Evangelical Association possesses such an individuality, every one who knows her origin and work will at once admit. She is not an offshoot or schism from another church, but has her own distinctive origin, her own peculiar mission from the beginning, and her commission is not confined to any one nation, race, or language. And whenever any portion of her merges its identity into that of another church, that portion will lose its efficiency, having surrendered its birthright. A union like that which has been suggested, means, in my opinion, such a shaving down of denominational characteristics, such a modification of long-tried efficient government, such a recasting of systems, which have proven invaluable, as must result in a loss of a marked, robust individuality, and consequent efficiency. Not uniformity, not similarity, but the mightiest results and the greatest effectiveness in the kingdom of Christ, this is the grand end of the churches.

It is well that the agitation on this subject cease. So long as the question is pending, a sense of uncertainty pervades the minds of all. And such a feeling of uncertainty in turn enervates the spirit. It cuts the nerve of aggressive action. Doubtful as to what might occur, men hesitate to launch out along new lines of work. It is well, therefore, that you have decided this question; decided it in the spirit of brotherly love, and yet in clear and unmistakable terms. Our sister church will respect you for this. One genuine man always recognizes and respects another genuine man. You will find, in consequence also, that ministers and laymen among you will kindle into a higher enthusiasm and enter more heartily into the labors before you. A decided mind and a definite aim are powerful elements in doing the will of the Lord and the work of his Church.

To exchange denominational homes is always a serious and solemn step, a step to be taken only when supported by the most unanswerable arguments. You have faced this solemn part of the question. Why leave the Evangelical Association? This is the question which you men of God have asked yourselves, and you have answered it well and truly. Was not this prosperous and fruitful part of the vineyard planted by her? Has not God given to her labors a great increase? Is there not a host in heaven to-day who bless God for her work in Canada? Are there not thousands in your midst to-day led to Christ through her ministry, whose hearts beat strong and warm for her, as they could not beat for any other? In city, and town, and country churches lives a multitude of men, women and children, who believe not only that God hath planted this goodly vine also on Canadian soil, but that under its spreading shade and increasing fruitfulness a multitude more shall yet be redeemed, and find a sheltering home. There will always be an Evangelical Association in Canada.

But I recur to my original proposition. True union is not necessarily organic union. Unanimity does not demand uniformity. The highest and noblest union is the spirit of Christian co-operation and mutual love among denominations. Not necessarily one organization, but one spirit. Unanimity, pervading, beautifying and