

renown," like Bishop Ryle, to vindicate their principles and character, and to establish their claims to the admiration and gratitude of posterity.

— *Ed.*

* * * You are allowed to associate together upon evangelical principles, and for religious ends, and no one hinders you. You are allowed to meet in large numbers, and take sweet counsel with one another, and strengthen one another's hands in the service of Christ, and no one interferes to prevent you. You are allowed to assemble for devotional purposes, to read the Word of God, and to stir one another up to perseverance in the faith, in the midst of this great Babylon, and no one dares to prohibit you. How great are all those privileges! How incalculable the benefit of union, conference, sympathy, and encouragement, to a young man launching forth on the stormy waters of this great city! Happy are the cities where such institutions exist! Happy are the young men whom God inclines to join them! Blessed is the labour of those by whose care and attention these institutions are kept together! They are sowing precious seed. They may sow with much toil and discouragement; but they may be sure they are sowing seed which shall yet bear fruit after many days.

But never, never forget to whom you are indebted for all this liberty of conference and association which you enjoy. Never forget that there was a time when informers would have tracked all your steps—when constables and soldiers would have rudely broken up your gatherings, and when your proceedings would have entailed upon you pains, penalties, fines, and imprisonments. Never forget that the happy and profitable freedom which you enjoy was only won by long-continued and intense struggles, by the blood and sufferings of noble-minded men, of whom the world was not worthy; and never forget that the men who won this freedom for you were those much-abused men—the Puritans.

Yes! you all owe a debt to the Puritans, which I trust you will never refuse to acknowledge. You live in days when many are disposed to run them down. As you travel through life, you will often hear them derided and abused as seditious, rebellious levellers in the things of Caesar, and ignorant, fanatical, hypocritical enthusiasts in the things of God. You will often hear some semi-popish stripling fresh from Oxford, puffed up with new-fledged views of what he calls "apostolical succession," and proud of a little official authority, depreciating and sneering at the Puritans, as men alike destitute of learning and true religion, while, in reality, he is scarcely worthy to sit at their feet and carry their books. To all calumnies and false statements, I trust you will never give heed.

Settle it down in your minds that for sound doctrine, spirituality, and learning combined, the Puritans stand at the head of English divines. Settle it down in your minds that with all their faults, weaknesses, and defects, they alone kept the lamp of pure, evangelical religion burning in this country in the times of the Stuarts,—they alone prevented Laud's popish inclinations carrying England back into the arms of Rome. Settle it down in your minds that they fought the battle of religious freedom, of which we are reaping such fruits—that they crushed the wretched spirit of inquisitorial persecution which mis-guided high-Churchmen tried to introduce into this land. Give them the honour they