

EXTRACT OF AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE SYNOD'S
MISSIONARY MEETING "ON THE CHARACTER AND EARLY
LABOURS OF THE FATHERS OF OUR CHURCH."

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THE review of the life, times and operations of our fathers opens up a wide field of contemplation, and affords subject for much profitable reflection.

Our fathers, where are they? Oh! sir, there are tender and affecting reminiscences called up by this enquiry, to which I dare not trust my feelings even to allude.

They have gone to their reward. Their toil is ended. Their conflicts are closed. All their labours and all their endurances have been realised as nothing, and less than nothing, when compared with their great recompense of reward. They rest from their labours, but their work is not done. The Church which they were privileged, and at the same time burdened, to plant in the wilderness has not reached its maturity. The legacy which they left to those on whom their mantle has fallen is the furtherance of the gospel where they introduced it, and the enlargement of the Church where they founded it.

While they have put off their armour and entered into rest, they may, for aught we know of their state of being, look back upon the scenes of their conflict, and watch the operations of those who have entered into their labours. They may rejoice at our successes in the service of Christ, and blush, if holy spirits may, for our follies, and grieve for our transgressions. At all events, though dead, they yet speak, loudly speak, and say, "Follow us, as we followed Christ."

Details of our fathers operations I may not on the present occasion largely supply. Let me rather group together some of the leading features of their common character and select a few of such incidents as will exhibit them in their true light.

Our fathers were men of unusual self-denial.

Look at them leaving the land of their nativity—the homes of their affections—the country in which they were fitted by native talent and superior attainments to rise into conspicuous positions and high places of usefulness—and expatriating themselves to found a temple for the Most High in a distant, and, at that time, an unknown land.

Dr Robertson, whose visit, in company with his highly esteemed associates, to our Churches, we so much love to remember, in his afterwards published account of what he saw and heard among us describes what he calls the "Mission of the Presbyterian Church to Nova Scotia." Sir, it is a libel upon Missions to call us a Mission Church. It is a stigma upon the memory of our fathers to style them missionaries, in the modern acceptation of the term.

What, sir, is a missionary? Is he not one selected of the Church, as possessing peculiar adaptation for the work to be performed in a chosen field of operation? Is he not outfitted—furnished with all suitable equipments for his interesting service? Is he not cared for, prayed for, cherished and sustained, by the sympathies, affections and exertions of the Church he represents?

Where is there a single feature of the missionary in our fathers character? In some instances, indeed, they were missioned in so far as being *sent out* is concerned. I have heard father Ross tell of what he was accustomed humorously to call his *banishment* to America.