

case not likely to arise for perhaps many years in Canada) the same end could be accomplished by a large delegation.

There are two obstacles in the way of the fraternization of churches in the same city.

First, Separate financial interests, and the holding of separate properties. These are fruitful sources of isolation, envy, and ill-will, and nothing calls for more constant watchfulness and more earnest prayer. These things, being secular, are too apt to be managed on secular principles. "Every man for himself" is the motto of this world. But "bearing one another's burdens" is the law of Christ; and that strong churches should help the weak, and rich churches the poor, is beyond all doubt His will. It would be too much to expect all the churches of a city to have a common purse; but it certainly is the Master's will, as clearly expressed in the Epistle to the Corinthians, that one should not "be at ease" while another is "burdened," but that there should be "an equality," i. e., as the epistle says, speaking of the relation of the church he is addressing to another church, "that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want; that their abundance also may be a supply for your want; that there may be equality; as it is written, 'He that had gathered much had nothing over, and he that had gathered little had no lack.'"

A church that is in debt has therefore a clear right to expect assistance towards getting out of it, that thus there may be realized in the relations of churches to each other those much abused terms—liberty, equality, fraternity; liberty to think and worship according to conscience, equality of position and burden, fraternity of sentiment and heart—words which, apart from Christianity, are an empty dream.

The other obstacle to fraternity of churches in the same city is, that some of these churches have been formed by separation from others in a spirit of anger and disputation. That any church should be formed in this spirit, is matter of regret. But, when once the separation is accomplished, it should be an understood rule and principle, that if it remain faithful to the Master and to truth, the right hand of fellowship should be extended. In such separations there is usually much to be said on both sides; and it is the part of wisdom, considering how strong is the common enemy, how hard at the best it is to maintain the truth, and how all-important it is to manifest the brotherhood of believers—that by-gones be by-gones, and the two that were lately one, be still one in heart, and work heartily for the common good.

There now only remains to be considered the manner in which the fraternization of churches in different localities can be manifested and developed.

The grand principle on which this fraternization is founded—and it is really the essential principle of their unity—is this: a member of one church is a member of all. This doctrine is but very imperfectly understood by many amongst us, and it is sad indeed to see how readily, in passing to strange places, to other localities than that in which a profession was first made, the obligations and privileges of membership are ignored and forgotten. Many a young man leaves the town or village for the city, and lives there for months without ever having communion with the disciples of the Lord; a state of things which argues indeed very strange indifference, but may be due in some measure to ignorance and inadvertence. Pastors or deacons, in such cases, are sometimes not free from blame; and I would respectfully, but most earnestly, press it on the attention of the pastors present, on no account to allow (if they can prevent it) a member to leave the town in which they minister, and