

noble tendency, of the success and benefit of which we have had many glorious and consoling examples in our day, in America and Australia. We cannot see how sensible men—men of a reasonable and practical temperament—can be indifferent to a cause which may allay so much passion and recrimination, and divert so much misapplied zeal and energy into a mutually beneficial channel, instead of its being wasted or worse. You are, of course, aware that something has been done in this direction, the particulars of which will be submitted to you. But while abjuring all intention of cavilling at the basis agreed upon by the Union committees, or depreciating their labours, or retarding union for a single day, I desire to prevent disappointment, to caution you in reference to a great and common error on this subject. Many persons are so sanguine as to think that when two religious bodies are agreed in their principles, they are ripe for union. Now I believe that it is with religious denominations as with individuals, only in a far higher degree. Persons who differ in opinion, but are agreed in affection, will harmonize and cooperate more easily than such as are agreed in principle but alienated in feeling. Whether perfect harmony of opinion be possible, even between individuals, is very doubtful. I don't believe it can exist among congregations and denominations. It may seem to exist when men receive and subscribe confessions in the lump, without having thought or doubted. But it is only a semblance of unanimity. For thought will always produce diversity. Hence I don't lay much stress on what I believe to be a moral impossibility. Supposing, however, as our present theory of subscription supposes, that it is possible, I believe that it is of far less importance to future peace and prosperity than love, confidence and esteem. In short, I regard harmony of sentiment as more important than harmony of opinion—love as more essential than unanimity.

I may be told that if Christians are agreed in principles, so should they be in affection. And so they should; but if they are not, you will not produce the proper feeling by argument. You must appeal to the heart more than to the

head. Love and logic are different affairs. The affections cannot be argued into a certain tone. The grace of God, fair treatment, mutual acquaintance, and friendly intercourse, will do far more than union speeches and treatises. You cannot storm the citadel of the affections which ever shrink from a too eager and forward solicitation. Sacred feelings must be wooed and won with some adroitness and tenderness. In this case, not theories but facts separate us. A separation of history has produced a separation of feeling. Different recollections, associations and traditions, crowd upon our minds. Though nearly related—though once one and the same, and though possessing much to be proud of together—our quarrels have for years furnished embittered memories.

"They stood aloof, the scars remaining,  
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder—  
A dreary sea now flows between."

And because the synods or the ministers choose to lay down their arms and become friends, it does not follow that their flocks will. They cannot expect to allay at once the storm which they themselves have raised. Church champions should have thought of these things ere they began to quarrel, and it may be a lesson for the future. People connected with city congregations are apt to exaggerate the simplicity of such a movement as union. Church matters do not engross their attention or take such a deep hold of their minds, as is the case with people in our country districts. Surrounding influences rub down their prejudices, and other things compete for their share of attention. But in the country, ecclesiastical disputes have gone into every family and reached every individual. Every man has had his argument or conducted his controversy.

Now, I trust that I have said enough to show that this matter should be cautiously and constitutionally managed. If I have stated the matter fairly, then I infer that one great object should be simply to ascertain the opinions and feelings of our people. In this process there should be no endeavour to direct or misdirect feeling. Let us not be astonished if we are disappointed; for the people are more conservative than the clergy, and even a small minority