

what we affirm : that, so far from it being the duty of Colonial Churches that approximate in doctrine, government, and discipline, to remain in separation, looking askance on one another, till the corresponding parent Churches unite, that the very opposite course is the duty indicated by their position ; and for our part, we expect to see unions formed by the comparatively unembarrassed Churches of the Colonies, before they can be seriously attempted in the mother country.

Add to this, that the Colonial position presents an opportunity for the revival of the usages of the Church in worship and discipline, distinguishing between the things essential which must be permanent, and the things circumstantial and conventional that may be changed. Let us not be misunderstood. We are no advocates for rash innovations or crude experiments ; but we think it a dull and unwise course to stereotype in a new country all the old forms and customs that have accumulated in a distant land, and in a very different state of society. We are no lovers of new "platforms" ; but we know that, on the old platforms, many things are contended for as fundamental and essential, which are merely circumstantial and local. We are no restless meddlers with established things, but we desiderate great care and caution in the moulding of Ecclesiastical, as well as Political institutions, for Colonial society ; and would distinguish the living organism essential to an Apostolic Church, from the many accretions which gather round it in process of time, and with which we are at perfect liberty to dispense. It is a grave error to magnify all the present Presbyterian usages of Scotland and Ireland, as if they possessed a sacred value, had descended from the Apostles, and were suitable and needful for all lands and all times. In more instances than one, it can be proved, that these are of comparatively recent origin, and superseded customs more ancient and comely than themselves. In the countries we have named, however, these usages have possession, and their alteration can scarcely be discussed. Here the Colonial Churches have an obvious advantage. They are put in a position to prove all things, and hold fast only that which is good. Accordingly it is, in our judgment, specially incumbent on Colonial Ministers and the influential Christian Laity, to address themselves to the work of *construction* with much prayer, that old prejudices may not be mistaken for eternal principles ; and, as good builders, to sweep away the mere debris and rubbish that are of no authority, and, going down to the foundation of rock, to erect thereon a fabric which need not be a tame copy of any other, and yet may be fashioned, in all essential points, according to the revealed will of Christ.

Canadian Presbyterians, if the foregoing statements are just, must learn two lessons.

1. Not to follow in a slavish spirit the forms and customs of older Churches. We have new duties, new difficulties, and new wants. We must have new Ecclesiastical adaptations. Young life must not be bent or twisted into old shapes. The brave old trees of the forest may be knotted and gnarled, but there is no reason why the young trees should not grow smooth and straight.