

VIII. CANADIAN PROSPERITY, A CAUSE OF THANKFULNESS—A RALLYING POINT.

(Extract from the speech of the Rev. Dr. M'Cauley at the anniversary dinner of the St. George's Society, Toronto, 1853.)

“When I consider the advance of the country in education and in other important elements of greatness and of prosperity, I must say that I feel but little sympathy with those who indulge in mournful recollections of what they have left, or querulous complaints of their present position, instead of acknowledging the advantages which they enjoy, or looking forward to the bright future which is before them. Let us consider for a moment what are the leading characteristics of this fair land of our adoption. A fertile soil, amply rewarding labor in the abundance and diversity of its produce; a salubrious climate, calculated to rear a hardy and vigorous race; water communication by noble rivers and vast lakes (or rather Mediterranean Seas), unequalled in the world; and millions of acres of unoccupied land, able to support millions of additional immigrants. Let us add to these natural blessings, the results of the energy and enterprise of an active and intelligent population; our cities with all the convenience and comforts of European towns of twice their population, and twenty times their age; our villages springing up where lately there were but dense forests or uncultivated wastes; the remotest points of this extensive country soon to be connected by railroads, now either drawing to completion, or in progress, or guaranteed; the facilities afforded for the education of our children by our common schools, our grammar schools, our private seminaries, our colleges, and our universities; the progress of knowledge, advanced by the scientific and literary societies and institutes established in our cities and towns; the solemn duties of religion inculcated by fixed ministrations or by the occasional visits of the missionary; the voice of prayer and praise rising each Sabbath alike from the stately piles in our towns, which rear their spires towards heaven, and the lowly shanty, which scarce lifts its humble head under the leafy arches of our backwoods; and all this with the full enjoyment of the blessings of civil and religious liberty, conferred by our own free constitution, and secured by our connection with that glorious empire of which we form a part. In my opinion, the language of dissatisfaction or complaint but little becomes those who enjoy such advantages. Thanksgiving is rather our duty—thanksgiving to Him from whom all blessings flow, for what in His abundant mercy He has given to us, and prayer to the same Almighty Being for contentment with what we have—for peace, wherein we may use and enjoy what His bountiful hand has provided for us. By peace, I mean not freedom from war—not tranquillity undisturbed by aggression from without—that I have no fears; but I do mean freedom from internal strife, from civil commotion, from the injurious influences of bickerings and contentions with each other. I do mean that peace which is produced by mutual forbearance—by laying aside national feuds and party differences, and by the union of all,—casting aside their distinctions, whilst they still hold fast to their principles—for the advancement of the welfare of their common country, the land of the Maple Leaf! Nor do I know any more appropriate words in which this supplication can be offered, than those, which must be familiar to many whom I address, and in which I doubt not all will cordially join—that “we may live in the fear of God, in dutiful allegiance to the Queen, and in brotherly love and Christian charity each towards the other.”