

which others may differ from us, and which we as her ministers, after careful examination, have come to a deliberate conviction of their scriptural origin, and solemnly sworn to maintain them—are we, in a word, to sacrifice truth, disregard conscience, cast honor and integrity to the winds, so that we may come into visible unity with those who have ‘fled from her as a pollution,’ and deemed her so corrupt, as to warrant them to seek her utter overthrow?

‘The Church of Scotland!’ ‘tis an evil time Methinks, when that long hallowed name inspires Not veneration! Church! by which our sires Stood like the mountains of their native clime Unmoved, serene, and, if austere, sublime, Amidst the raging tempest,—forked fires, And crashing thunderbolts,—in flaming pyres, Illumed the dark, and left their bones as lime To fertilize her vineyard. Church of God! God be thy guardian as in days of old, When from the terrors of the tyrant’s rod, And Egypt’s horrors, through the pathless wilds, He led his people to the balmy bowers Of lofty Lebanon, and Zion’s holy towers.’

And are we to blot from our memory these holy associations, and forego these conscientious predilections, merely to achieve an amalgamation of all sects and parties, without possessing the elements of true scriptural unity? Are we to take to our bosom, as friends and brothers, with the love of complacency, those who have cruelly mocked and derided us? The instinctive feelings of our nature recoil from the thought of it—and I know of no divine precept that commands me to receive them, otherwise than with the love of Christian kindness, ‘not rendering railing for railing,’ but receiving their cruel mockings with forgiveness; and when they return to a better spirit, aiding their enlightened efforts to extend the kingdom of Christ with earnest prayers and personal influence.

We have no sympathy with that excess of liberality, so lauded in these days, which would embrace as friends and brothers, men of all classes and distinctions, let their principles and opinions be what they may. We do not approve of that laxity of sentiment which leads some men to symbolize with all sects and parties, and dignify their morbid indifference to their own avowed principles, with the name of Christian catholicity.”

In a subsequent portion of the discourse he impresses the great truth that the will of God is the foundation of all true religion, and he points out the only way in which the devout Christian can find out what that will is—the cultivation of a spirit of prayer which begets a hope and contrite confidence that nothing can shake. He points out the great liability we are under of mistaking mere indifference for a Catholic spirit, and then speaking of the Church finely says:

“A Church nourished by the prayers, and the deep scriptural researches of many a God-fearing man—a Church, blessed of heaven, as an instrument for spreading Christian light

and liberty abroad over the world—‘A light shining in a dark place.’ The God who hath blessed her, will continue to bless her still. ‘A man’s foes,’ said our blessed Lord, ‘shall be those of his household.’ I feel astray by false theories of ecclesiastical government, and puffed up by their own vain conceits, some who have been nursed in her bosom would tamper with her constitutional principles, and try so to modify them as to adapt them to the multifarious and ever-changing sentiments of the public mind, and, failing of success, they would turn and rend her. The apparent weakness, occasioned by such schisms, is her strength. ‘God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved.’”

The final appeal made by this venerable and venerated father of the Church to his brethren must, we should think, have been listened to with emotion.

“Let not the Church of your Fathers, which, as a lamp suspended in the deep vaults of heaven, has shed the light of the glorious gospel on the kingdoms whence you have come, ever cease to inspire veneration, or fail to attract the hearts, or charm by her apostolic zeal and the scriptural purity and simplicity of her worship, the minds of her children amidst the forests of Canada. Let not her glory fade from your remembrance as a lovely but vain dream. A blessing, which of all earthly blessings we may truly appreciate as the richest and the best that God has bestowed on us, let us transmit as unimpaired to our children, so that, in the same Temple where our Fathers appeared as the sons of God to receive his blessing, our children and our children’s children may also appear, to receive the ‘blessing God commands, even life for evermore.’”

‘Long be our Fathers’ temple ours;
We to the land by which it falls;
A thousand spirits watch its towers,
A cloud of angels guards its walls.’

In conclusion, we beg to thank the accomplished author for this timely contribution to our religious literature. We trust it will have an extensive circulation throughout the length and breadth of our Church. It is a fervid and stirring plea in behalf of the distinctive character of our Church, and we believe will not be put forth in vain. To us its perusal has been peculiarly refreshing, as inculcating with a force and feeling of which we are incapable, the very principles which, on the subject of Union, we have for the last twelve months been engaged in advocating, feebly it may be, but with all earnestness, in the pages of the *Record*. The name of Dr. Mathieson is a tower of strength, and we would recommend every reader of the *Record*, who loves the Church of his fathers to make himself master of a copy of this excellent discourse.