

Let us now see what preparation we have in our common Presbyterianism for such present or future conditions.

It constitutes an important affinity that the Presbyterianism, which has been planted here, possesses a long eventful history. Whether brought from Scotland or the North of Ireland, it is an offshoot of the Scottish Church—the fruitful mother of nearly all the Presbyterian Churches of the English speaking race. [iv.] The formation of separate Presbyterian communions has certainly tended to interrupt the current of historical association and sympathy. [v.] The natural effect of separation has been to lead men to cherish the history and principles of the division, and justify and teach it, and, by withdrawing attention from the best part of their history, to discourage Christian unity. But they have always professed to be the true children of the old prophets, whose tombs they have rebuilt—whose works they have printed and circulated, and whose monuments they have restored. Thus the phrase: “the church of our fathers,” has been bandied about among all parties. Nevertheless, a true filial instinct has been preserved, and union ought to reawaken the ancient love, and recall old and valuable traditions. The Presbyterian Church of Canada, as one of the Churches of the Reformation, is entitled to refer back to that great epoch of religious life for examples and associations. It is an edifice which has accumulated innumerable monuments of the past. The church of Knox, of the Melvilles, of Henderson, of Binning, of Robertson, of Gillespie, of the Guthries, of Rutherford and Carstairs, and Boston, of “the Cloud of Witnesses,” and the historians, metaphysicians, natural philosophers, and political economists of the eighteenth century—the church of the covenanters who were the apostles of spiritual light and political freedom, whose faults were due to the most malignant and most unjustifiable persecution that ever stained the annals of our race, and who *conquered*—can not be a church of which any one need be ashamed. [vi.] Within her walls the present and the past meet together. Here we feel the smallness of the individual, and the greatness of the institution. Here a single life is but a fraction of a life whose line runs out through centuries. Every peculiarity