

we are more closely affiliated have among their men of the same kind.

Now brethren, these are some of the more palpable indications of the existence of that spirit in the church which, under the name of free inquiry or christian liberty, threatens to do an amount of mischief in the church *far more serious than the enemies outside could possibly inflict.*

The idea is growing and strengthening in the church generally, that the laws of Christ and the authority of apostolic example should only command submission when they do not oppose the choice of the human heart, and do not seem to stand in the way of the progress of human speculations.—This they call christianity! Because of this creeds and confessions are cried down at the present day. Verily it is time to utter the warning of the apostle, "Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to the weak"; "Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." It may also be well to remind the apologists for such a course that God requires us to take note of the "TIME" in which we live. "Little children," says the apostle, "it is the last time"; "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, &c." The Lord Jesus, in whom all the types of the Old Testament had their fulfilment, has come to set up his kingdom.—He is to have the honour of introducing the new and final dispensation. He is now, by the decree of the father, "Head over all things to the church." In him the types are all fulfilled. He has carried us beyond the "weak and beggarly" elements of the old dispensation, and provided for a more exclusively spiritual worship. It were well if the christian church would remember that every attempt *now* to copy from the modes of worship which we are told were *ceremonial, and typical of something better*, is in fact dishonouring to Christ. He has the honour of introducing that dispensation which is claimed to be perfect; and without his express authority we ought not to

presume even to borrow a pin from the tabernacle for use in the New Testament Church. "In Christ, *all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.*" This point, at which I have but time to glance, must yet receive a degree of attention that it does not obtain at the present day. Certain it is that the antichrist of the early christian church gained much of his power and influence by keeping this point out of sight; and the antichrists of the present day find it much to their purpose to practice similar tactics. If, like the Papist or Puseyite, they want a more splendid ceremonial, more and different kinds of vestments, or a more imposing array of spiritual officials than is countenanced by the New Testament, or a more imposing and sensuous worship, they point you to the companies of Priests and Levites, to the silver trumpets, to the sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and other kinds of music—all of which pertained to that age of ceremonial from which, thank God, the church was delivered, when He came in whom all the types had their fulfilment.

If we enquire *why* these and other evils are encouraged in the christian church of the present day, we come to the conclusion that the object is *popular effect*. The rivalry among different denominations has had its influence in fostering the evil. Some, in fact, will go so far in justifying such courses as to force from the words of the apostle an excuse for acting upon such principles. "Being crafty I caught you with guile," 2 Cor. xii. 16. But those who argue thus from these words have not paid attention either to what the apostle does say, nor have they considered how much their argument dishonours that great and holy man. None of us would like to bear such a character as is implied in their construction of these words; and never was there a man more above such conduct and feelings than this apostle. It is worthy of those who hold that "the end sanctifies the means"—but it is a libel when applied to Paul. The very next verses warrant us to believe that this was one of the charges forged against him by his enemies, and one which he utterly repudiates.