

because they could not see eye to eye on matters of church government, or on some of the points of an exact theology. In our day, good men have learnt to understand the principles of the doctrine of their Divine Master far better, and *now* "rejoice" with the great Apostle of the Gentiles, when "Christ is preached," even though, as was the case in his day, it may be "of strife and contention." How clearly distinguishable is this line of conduct from that latitudinarianism, which resolves every description of error, of folly, and of viciousness, into "right enough, provided they are sincere;" and as to motives, "it is not for us to judge;" and which gives freely and indiscriminately, from policy or from fatal indifference, to all who ask. In this way, every system of error is mingled with the truth, and right and wrong become undistinguishable. In the language of the Bible—"They call evil good, and good evil; put darkness for light and light for darkness; bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter;" confounding all distinctions, and levelling all opinions, with an utter oblivion of any standard of truth.

I imagine I shall not assert anything new to this Association when I observe, that in every Society formed for the promotion of some good object, there will be found a mingling of evil. Even in the Christian Church—God's own institution—where the command is to root out the evil, if manifest, and where the utmost vigilance may be used in obedience to that command, how difficult is the task! and how seldom effected without fastening upon the Church some fresh spring of bitterness! Such is the nature of that depravity which darkens both the understanding and the heart, and finds us forever *groping* instead of *walking* in the light. How unlike the noble and animating passage of God's holy Word—"The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." In an Association composed as ours is, we may be more exposed to such evils than where there is agreement on the question of church government. How necessary is it, then, that we be particularly careful not to wound the feelings of each other respecting our views on such points. It is unfortunate that even the most sincere Christians frequently embrace opinions on some points, external as regards the Christian Church, with more strength of feeling than the doubtful