

THE

Canadian Independent Magazine.

VOL. V.

TORONTO, MAY, 1859.

No. 11.

THE UNION MEETING IN TORONTO.

The Annual Convocation of the Congregational Union of Canada is at hand. Due preparation for its solemnities demands more than an intelligent apprehension of the details of business, it centres chiefly in the culture of the heart. Brotherly love, zeal for the salvation of men, and singleness of eye for the Divine glory, will impart health, and diffuse life through all the proceedings. These essential feelings in every Christian enterprise can receive no check when brought into a genial atmosphere. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Every heavenly plant grows under the influence of the dew on the mountains of Zion, and diffuses a holy fragrance like precious ointment. The sun-light of communion with God, opens the flower, ripens the fruit, and gives the seed of future harvests. Let the prayer of every minister and delegate be for a double portion of God's Spirit, then their assembling will be in the fulness of the blessing. Each church of our order—according to our professed principles,—maintains a separate and independent jurisdiction. The principles of the New Testament, we conceive, can only be fairly wrought out by this arrangement. We believe a church is an assembly of the faithful: the laws of Christ that assembly is bound to obey. Churches thus composed and ruled, must have oneness of motive and oneness of aim. Hence a unity of affection and interest. The New Testament is full of that identity. The churches may thus be viewed as "distinct as the billows yet one as the sea." The gravitation which unites them is love. Truth is the basis of their union. Conformity is not union. Bind as you may a dead branch to a living stem, it remains dead: neither can an act of Parliament, or a decree of man cannot infuse the healthy sap of living faith and love into a dead community. The love of the truth therefore, must draw hearts together. With a well defined object, a way is made for united action. There are matters which call for co-operation to promote the general good. The advantages thus obtained for the spread of the gospel are manifest. We adopt the machinery of the Union with this view not to supersede the spirit of individual effort, but to give direction to that spirit. We rely on the courage of every soldier in the Lord's army to win His battles, and not on any mechanism whatever. That courage too is heaven derived. We unite then to be stronger; we pray together