

we request the labours of our contributors; such as schemes and endowments for education;—reviews of laws more directly affecting the moral and religious character of the people;—the best means of improving what is amiss, and perpetuating what is good in our civil and religious institutions;—nor would we altogether discourage our contributors, even from questions of a political nature, provided the discussion be conducted with a Christian spirit, without regard to party, and free from local and temporary prejudices.

Happily for us, though we live in times of political change and agitation, it is not an era of religious controversy. But it is an age in which the outward frame-work of the temple is minutely scrutinized: some parts of it have been discovered to be antiquated and rotten, and because of this, its enemies are disposed to advance, with rash and impious hands, to pull down the whole fabric to the ground. It will be our task to restrain their violence; to allay unholily excitements; to discriminate faithfully between what ought to be preserved, and what removed; to advocate the preservation of what is useful, and to cherish the admiration of what is venerable; to admonish our readers, rather to profit by the wisdom and experience of the servants of God in former ages, than to join in the hazardous schemes of those, who, confident in their own sagacity, would overthrow, on account of some blemishes, what has been of acknowledged benefit, without being able to erect any thing in its room that shall not be liable to more serious objections.

We confess that we feel the deepest solicitude on account of the present state and prospects of this, our adopted country. Our population is increasing with immense rapidity; already, in Upper Canada alone, it verges on half a million;

and if the same influx of emigration continue, we may, within half a century and with the affectionate concurrence of the parent state,—the benignant power that so kindly nurtures our rising greatness—be prepared to assume a distinct place among the nations of the world. A reflecting mind cannot resist anxiously forecasting what character we shall assume! Nor can we fail to perceive that this will depend much upon the character of our present population. There is much in its present religious aspect to awaken our fears. Religion in every country must exist under some definite form. But of the mass of older settlers among us, it would be difficult to say to which of the party coloured sectaries they ought to be referred; nor do they themselves know their own standard. Many of the more recent population which have a British origin, have forsaken the religion of their fathers, if not in name yet in fact, and have not embraced any other in its room. Of a great part of those who are daily coming among us, it may be safely affirmed, that having had no religion in their native country, they have not brought any to this land of their adoption; and whether they were disaffected to the system established in the former, or were attached only by the loose tie of national predilection, when placed in this new world, they wait to receive the form into which new circumstances shall cast them.—What that shall ultimately be—who can tell? The serious part of the community—for we have a serious part—is divided into numerous fragments, following systems very different, at least in their external forms and practical economy. Amongst different religious sects, there will always be a degree of rivalry and zeal for proselytism, which will often endanger the existence of