

THE CHURCH'S WORKING DOCTRINES.

BY THE REV. DR. CARMAN.

(A General Superintendent of the Methodist Church.)

I.

WALKING with much interest around the deserted fortifications at Annapolis, Nova Scotia, one breezy morning of last December, and calling up what I had viewed and even studied at other points, as St. Andrew's, New Brunswick ; Windsor, Nova Scotia ; Kingston and Quebec ; aside from the captivating history of these places, the thrilling and important events of which they have been the scenes, and the evidences of labour, foresight, enterprise, valour, wealth and military skill and power they evince ; my mind, sweeping over the past and the present ; as my eye, surveying the tumultuous waters, the solid quiet hills and the far-reaching shores, looked from the fortifications a century or so ago all bristling with strength, all stirring with vigilance, and all alive with daring, to the same fortifications to-day—all silent from desertion, all quiet from disuse and all falling into decay, because it seems they are no longer specially needed, and are not worth the expense or trouble of keeping them up to their former life, might, terror and brilliancy. And would it not now be a strange employment, a ghostly and unaccountable diversion to maintain these old forts in all their original activity, power and glory ?

But why were they once such centres of interest, energy and action—we may say, the only centres of the thought and outlook and efforts of the time on the continent ? And what has become of the people, and the descendants of the people, whose utmost ability was then severely taxed, and their utmost resources of mind and heart and substance and uplift right-hand were brought into the conflict ? Where are the men, the communities, the nations, the cause, the enterprise, whose intense light flashed like beacon fires on loftiest hills all along the sea coasts and water-courses of the New World ? Why are the parapets dismantled, the embrasures silent, and the ramparts falling into decay ? Why have the soldiers gone, and the engineery and munitions of war ? Is it not that they have served their time and purpose ; that when it was a question