

# THE CANADA CHRISTIAN MONTHLY.

SEPTEMBER, 1875.

## Editorials.

### "OUR LITTLE SYSTEMS"

There is a sad confusion of thought among intelligent people, and even among those writers that guide public opinion in the newspaper press, as to the difference between the Bible as it speaks to us in our English translation, and the Bible as it is made to speak to us through the Creeds and Catechisms of the different Christian denominations. The Bible in the original tongues, or the Bible even in our English translation, belongs to no sect or party. There is a Methodist hymn-book but no Methodist Bible. There is a Presbyterian Confession but no Presbyterian Bible. The Bible is higher than either, and wider and truer, so that we may paraphrase these words of Tennyson's thus:—

Our little systems have their day;  
They have their day and cease to be,  
They are but broken lights of thee,  
And thou, O Book art more than they."

That the Bible is the *Book*, and in its truest sense, the *Creed* of Christendom, is even at this very hour placed beyond doubt or denial by the union of all our Protestant denominations in the Jerusalem Chamber, Westminster, on a new translation of their common Bible. The Bible is the Creed of Christians as they are distinguished from Mahometans, whose creed is the Koran.

When the Bible, therefore, enters any of our public schools, or colleges, and when it speaks to the students in our common English translation, it is not denominationalism, or sectarianism that is speaking, but our common Christianity.

But some one will object that though the Bible is non-sectarian, the teacher whose mission is to explain it, belongs to some denomination, and that the Bible passing through his mind to the children will take his denominational hue. This danger is more imaginary and theoretical than real. There is no sensible Christian man, (and we should aim at all our teachers being Christians of a decided stamp,) that will ever take advantage of his position in the public school to inculcate his denominational principles. The atmosphere of the school where all denominations meet is against sectarianism. The principles of honest dealing demand silence on disputed points before the scholars, and that honourable silence would be as seldom broken over the Bible as over the history and the literature. But supposing it should be broken and it should be found that the teacher is taking an unjust and undue advantage of his position, then it is an easy matter for the trustees to dismiss a teacher who is lacking both in sense and honesty.

In the present position, however, of