

THE

HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD

OF

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

No. 4.

FEBRUARY, 1864.

VOL. III.

THE GERMAN POPULATION OF UPPER CANADA.

While in the eastern portion of the Province a large Roman Catholic population, speaking another than the English tongue, claims the prayers and the evangelistic efforts of a revived Protestantism, in the western section of the Province there is to be found another people, speaking another than the French and English tongues, not less entitled to the warmest sympathies and Christian efforts of our Church; a people for the most part sprung from those who first raised around Luther's standard the loud protest of Europe against the claims and the assumptions of Rome; and many of them the descendants of the sturdy heroes of the Low Countries, who fought under William of Orange, and who battled for the true freedom of their country against the power of Spain. The German population of the western province is to a very large extent Protestant, entirely severed from the Church of Rome. It is composed of immigrants from Germany proper, and also of immigrants from Lower Germany; both classes, however, speaking the German language in one or other of its dialects. Locally, they are divided into German and Pennsylvania Dutch; and between them very much the same state of feeling subsists, as did, a century ago, between the Scots and English. Morally, they have hitherto been noted in the Province for their simplicity, purity of life, peaceableness, and honesty. Living very much apart from those of other nationalities around them, preserving their own language, and almost all the habits which they brought along with them to the country,—attached to these, they have been slow to adopt any other; and, yet, in few sections of the country will a stranger see better farms, more comfortable looking houses, or more thriving orchards than those of the German settlements. In many of the villages that have risen up within the last twenty years, the leading millers and manufacturers are Germans. Wherever you find them, you cannot fail to see the marks of an energetic, industrious, and thriving population. Among them crime is rare, and the proprieties of ordinary life are scrupulously observed. But here, it is to be feared, our meed of merited praise must end. In all that embraces the highest interests of man, the German population are woefully deficient. The Lutheran Churches among them, while holding by their constitutional creed, are sadly wanting in life and earnestness. None mourn this more than those of them who know anything of the life and power of Christi-