

# THE HOME & FOREIGN RECORD

OF THE

## CANADA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

No. 7.

JULY, 1872.

Vol. XI.

### CONTENTS:

Hymn of St. Clement..... 193 Collection for Assembly Fund..... 195 Proceedings of the Assembly..... 196 Free Church Assembly..... 210 United Presbyterian Synod..... 210 Established Church of Scotland..... 211 Reformed Presbyterian Church..... 211 Synod of Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland 212 General Assembly of Pres. Church of Ireland 212 General Assembly of Spanish Christian Church..... 212 General Assembly American Pres. Church. 213 A Prize Essay..... 213 Death of Ministers..... 214	HOME ECCLESIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE. Calls, etc..... 214 Presbytery of Guelph..... 215  MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE. Free Church Missions..... 218 United Pres. Church Missions..... 220 Irish Pres. Church Missions..... 220  Accounts of the Church..... 221 Moneys Received..... 225 Receipts per Record..... 226
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### HYMN OF ST. CLEMENT.

In previous numbers of the RECORD we have given translations of three famous hymns of the Latin church, composed by Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory, the earliest of which, that of Ambrose, was written at the close of the fourth century, or about the year 385. The great hymn of Clement of Alexandria, bearing the above title, is the earliest uninspired composition in any language used in the service of praise of the early Christian church, which has come down to our day. Dr. Killen, of Belfast, in his valuable text-book on the Ancient Church, thus speaks of the psalmody of the age immediately succeeding that of the apostles, and of the relation in which this hymn stands towards it. "In the earliest notice of the Christians of the second century which occurs in any pagan writer, their psalmody with which they commenced their religious services is particularly mentioned; for, in his celebrated letter to the Emperor Trajan, Pliny states that they met together before the rising of the sun to 'sing hymns to Christ as to a god.' It is probable that the hymns here spoken of were the Psalms of the Old Testament. Many of these inspired effusions celebrate the glories of Immanuel, and as for obvious reasons the Messianic Psalms would be used more frequently than any others, it is not strange that the disciples are represented as assembling to sing praise to Christ. But the Church at this time was not confined to the ancient Psalter. Hymns of human composition were