

T H E

Canadian Independent.

VOL. XIII. TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1867. No. 8.

A GOOD WORD FROM ENGLAND.

We publish on another page, with peculiar pleasure, a letter from Dr. Wilkes embodying an enquiry from the Colonial Missionary Society on the ministerial stipend question. Our public communications from the latter quarter have been all too few and far between, and have partaken of a character, which, we have ever felt, represented but one aspect of the feeling entertained towards us by our English fellow-helpers, viz., their desire to make their money go as far as possible; a laudable desire in itself, and one we have no right to quarrel with, if suitably modified and expressed, though not appearing to advantage, when alone. But the present message from across the sea breathes a *sympathy* which will refresh the hearts of colonial missionaries, and proposes a *practical* manifestation of that sympathy worth ten thousand mere words.

We do not wonder that the Committee in London are alarmed at the migrations from this field. We will, however, follow their example, and forbear reopening the warmly-debated issues of the irrevocable past. Rather let us address ourselves to the urgent demands of the present and the future. Does this proposal open out our way, in any measure, for the time to come? We think it does.

At our Union meeting in June, the conviction found earnest expression in various forms, sometimes in public, and sometimes in the deliberations of the Missionary Committee, that the time had come when it was absolutely essential to the prosperity, and even the continuance of our work, that our ministers should be more liberally supported. In a general form, such a conviction was announced as demanding a change of missionary policy, in the direction of "consolidation," that is to say, that, instead of covering so much ground with half-paid labourers, the Society should not extend the field more rapidly than it could secure a proper maintenance for the missionaries, and, if necessary, withdraw from some posts already occupied, rather than disable itself from accomplishing that purpose. So far, good; but we have ever since regretted that this general plan was not put into a still more definite and practical shape; and applied accordingly. We fear that time has been lost thereby. It is