

THE

Canadian Independent.

VOL. XVII.

TORONTO, OCTOBER, 1870.

No. 4.

PREACHING AND HEARING.

A friend of ours, who had just assumed the pastoral oversight of one of our Canadian churches, some years ago, was quietly taken aside one day by the former minister, and presented with a classified list of the membership, which he thought might possibly be of service to him. On inspecting the document, he found them ranged under three heads,—“TRUE YOKE-FELLOWS”—ready for every good word and work,—“NOBODIES”—a title that needs no explanation—and “QUEER !” We have no means of knowing what species were included under these several *genera*, or what proportion they bore to one another in the church aforesaid ; but we fancy the classification will suit other communities besides the one for which it was originally intended, and our readers are therefore at liberty to rank themselves under whichever heading they please, always bearing in mind, however, that “if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.”

The existence of the two latter elements in a church, to any considerable extent, is an anomaly and a source of weakness, which no amount of ability and earnestness in the pulpit can ever wholly counteract. They are a dead weight upon any man's energies, from under which an Apostle himself might strive in vain to rise. The Lord calls men and women into his vineyard to work. He has made them children of light, that they may let their light shine. He has given them understanding, that they may hearken, and do his will.

Not a few church-members, however, seem to regard a religious profession as if it were the *goal*, rather than the *starting point*, in their Christian course. They join a church as they would a benefit society ; their safety is now assured, and all they have to do is to pay ! The minister is expected, by his eloquence and zeal, to fill the pews, to