

THE

# Canadian Independent.

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VOL. XVI.

TORONTO, APRIL, 1870.

No. 10.

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## NON-PROFESSING CHRISTIANS.

Such a designation would seem, at first sight, to be a misnomer, especially when we reflect how directly and unequivocally the injunction is laid on all who love the Lord, "Do this in remembrance of me." Yet there are, in connection with almost all our congregations, more or less of this class of hearers,—persons who attend our prayer meetings, teach in our Sabbath schools, and give every outward evidence of divine renewal, who yet hesitate to unite with the church, and must therefore be set down as non-professing Christians. We are inclined to think that we have a larger proportion of them than other denominations. Whether it is that entrance into our fellowship is regarded as more difficult, and the scrutiny of experience and character more rigid with us than with most other communions, or whether it arises from any want of the social element, or of that *esprit du corps* requisite to hold us together, and attract others to us, we know not; but certain it is that the class referred to is much more numerous than it should be. We can conceive of cases in which a believer in Christ might properly delay for a time, the making of a public profession of religion; but such instances will always be exceptional, and should never be allowed to run into mere neglect. So far as we can judge of the practice of Apostolic times, confession of Christ always followed immediately upon faith in Christ, and it is both unsafe and wrong to depart in this, or in any other respect, from New Testament example.

The neglect referred to often springs, in the first place, from a desire for greater certainty as to the genuineness of religious experience. That desire is seldom, if ever, gratified by delay. Hesitancy about taking a decided stand for Christ, tends rather to increase the uncertainty than remove it. The doubt becomes chronic, and thus do many

"Children of a King,  
Go mourning all their days."