

# THE CANADA CHRISTIAN MONTHLY.

OCTOBER, 1876.

## EDITORIAL.

### THE EPIDEMIC OF CRIME.

"Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there; why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered." These are the words of a patriot. They were written at a time when religion was low and wickedness high. The words came therefore from a sad heart. Why was he sad? Was he sick? No! Was death robbing him? No! Was he suffering from adversity? No! It is not for himself; but for his country he is in trouble. Here is a spirit the opposite of Cain's. Every thing that concerns our country concerns us. Let us be followers of Jeremiah, and not of Cain. Let us arise above our own interests, and let us love our country, rejoice in its prosperity; and mourn for its guilt. Two things troubled Jeremiah; 1st. That his country was sick, with eating and running sores—i.e., morally and spiritually in a bad way; and 2nd. That his country was stubborn and stupid. It would not employ the balm and the physician. The remedy was as plentiful as the balsam from the Terobinth trees of Gilead, and the surgeon, as the Hebrew word suggests, within reach; but they were unconscious of their state, or unwilling to be relieved. They continued in this

state till the Chaldeans invaded their land, destroyed their cities, and carried them captives for long years. Have these words any meaning for us? They suggest this question:

I. *How is it with regard to the health of our own Dominion? Is it ill or well with it. Has it soundness? or are there wounds, running sores? From all quarters the answer reaches us there are festering sores!* There was held in the city of Toronto a few weeks ago a gathering of the medical men of Ontario. One of the oldest and most experienced among them called the attention of the Association to the "Epidemic of crime, that is now in the land." All the newspapers agree with this. Not a week passes but there is a list of crimes against decency, and against order, against property, and against life. Children and women are waylaid and outraged; houses broken into; men are murdered in silly quarrels—murdered for their money; on the street, at their doors. Listen to what the *Montreal Witness* says in a recent issue:

"Indecent assaults are becoming so common in Montreal upon children, as well as grown up girls, that it is a matter for serious consideration whether the punishment generally meted out is not