

THE CANADA CHRISTIAN MONTHLY.

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Editorial.

THE OLD FAITH AND THE NEW.

HAVE our readers noticed that there has hardly ever been in the CHRISTIAN MONTHLY any extracts or quotations from the pen of the minister of Plymouth Church? This is not from lack of knowledge of his writings nor from blindness to his eloquence, nor from prejudice against his denomination. The truth is that for years we have stood in doubt of the soundness of Mr. Beecher as a theologian and his safety as a guide. On the other hand we have scarcely allowed a month to pass without extracts from Mr. Spurgeon, not because he is of the same denomination as the writer, which he is not, nor because the CHRISTIAN MONTHLY can approve of all he says, which it cannot, but because, on the cardinal doctrines on which the Evangelical churches of the world agree, Mr. Spurgeon's teaching is eminently scriptural, solid, sensible and safe.

There are in their history and attitude as pulpit orators, many points of strong resemblance. They are both sons of ministers of the Congregational body. They both began their ministrations in obscure country parishes. By talents of a high order, by unconquerable energy, by unceasing and sleepless toil, they both fought their way to thrones, in comparison with which, in some aspects, the throne of Queen Victoria is less exalted. Mr. Spurgeon, by the common consent of

English speaking Protestants has been crowned King of the Protestant Pulpit of the old world: and by a consent, not however quite so harmonious, Mr. Beecher has been proclaimed the foremost pulpit orator of this continent. The printing press each week takes hold of the sermons of both and engraves them on something better than marble, that is *paper*, which goes forth to be read by millions of readers in both worlds. Neither of the men are content with the power at their control in their sermons, spoken or printed, but they act as Editors of Periodicals (Spurgeon of *Sword and Trowl* and Beecher of the *Christian Union*), whose pages are read by thousands who perhaps would not care to read their sermons. On civil and political questions that underlie the well being of society both these men have spoken on the side of freedom and truth with a power that shook their respective countries, and turned to their side the current of public opinion.

In the matter of Theology, however, Spurgeon and Beecher part company, as Abraham and Lot of old, Beecher taking the pleasant well-watered plains and Spurgeon keeping to the everlasting and rugged hills: and on the choice of each hangs, we see, important consequences.

Spurgeon we may call the modern apostle of DOCTRINE. Beecher is the high priest of SENTIMENT. Spurgeon's