

THE  
CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTOR.

SEPTEMBER, 1859.

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THAT THE SOUL BE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE, IT IS NOT GOOD"—Prov, xix. 1

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SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE OPENING OF THE SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF NOVA SCOTIA, 28TH JUNE, 1859.

1 Peter iii. 8.—"*Be ye all of one mind.*"

*Continued from last No.*

To this however it cannot be added, that while it is vain to think of securing the *manifestation* of union by binding up all christians in the same and the same system of ecclesiastical organization, the number of sects might, and ought to be reduced in all cases where this can be effected without the compromise of any important principle. Although unity is perfectly consistent with minor differences, and with the existence of a variety of sects, which indeed are unavoidable, as the existence of a multiplicity of sects disfigures the exhibition of the church's unity in the view of this world, hinders her progress, and in the very best of men, under the influence of our common friendships, never in this world entirely subdued, leads to alienation of mind and estrangement of heart, and other evils too palpable not to suggest themselves to every one accustomed to view their tendency and acting, their number ought not to be increased beyond what the embodiment of important principle demands. Dissent in matters comparatively of small moment, does not warrant separation or division, or form the grounds of schism. Coincidence in sentiment and thought between two individuals, even of the same denomination, is unattainable. Forbearance must be exercised, why may not churches agree to unite by the exercise of mutual forbearance and charity, when the points of difference are confessedly of greater magnitude than those which divide any two members of the same ecclesiastical denomination, and more especially in those parts of the world where, as it may happen, no practical effect can be given to them? When churches in the same locality particularly and necessarily interfering with each other while distant, approx-