

timent, both on political and religious subjects, which if not kept in check by christian charity, may produce very ruinous consequences. We think this feature in our provincial character should awaken the most anxious solicitude, and should lead all who fear God and love their adopted country to embrace the most effectual methods of diffusing among the people a spirit of "truth, unity, and concord." And we speak on the high authority of God's word when we affirm that there is not another instrument more powerful for effecting this unanimity than that gospel, touching which so many are indifferent. We appeal to you, whom we now address—claiming as we do the alliance of birth with different countries, whether there be not a kindly uniting principle in the religion we profess; whether, after reverently worshipping God in his temple we have not felt inspired with kindred sentiments; and whether when we sat down at the Lords table, commemorating the redemption of the world—we did not feel that we were one in Christ Jesus, hastening to be where he is that we may behold his glory. And we at least from an experimental knowledge, may assert that peace and union follows in the train of pure and undefiled religion. In defiance of the sectarian contention with which we are surrounded we shall indulge the pleasing anticipation, that it shall yet blend us as a people into one harmonious family, making us kindly affectioned one towards another in brotherly love. And when that period shall have arrived we shall not have to deplore, as now we do, that our legislators, contrary to the practice of christian states, transact the business of their country—business involving its entire well-being—without invoking the direction and blessing of the God of nations, because they cannot agree what minister of Christ shall conduct their devotions before God. When that period shall have arrived it will be deemed of as much importance to the country's welfare, that the remote and solitary settler in the woods, furnishing for the bread of life, shall be supplied with this blessing, as that canals and roads and bridges should be constructed. And then we shall have no reason to deplore before God as a national characteristic, an indifference which places religion—man's best comfort in time, and only preparation for eternity—in the meanest rank in the catalogue of a nation's wants.

Another ground on which we hazard the assertion that religious indifference is among us a national sin—is the open and undisguised neglect of all the institutions of christianity, even when the observance of them, might with a slight effort be attainable. And that we may be impressed with

the extent and enormity of this evil, let us confine our attention to our own district.* It contains a population upwards of 33,000. To this multitude we know of only 12 stated and regular ministers—having pastoral charges—besides several itinerant preachers. Now, on the most favorable supposition, we believe it will be found that the average number of those who attend regularly on the Sabbath, the public worship of God, throughout the whole district, will not exceed 2,000, that is there is only one in ten of the population of our district who profess to regard even the outward form of religion. Lest however we may have erred in this calculation—let us turn to a smaller territory where greater certainty may be attained: let us look at our own Town and Township.* In its population of nearly 3,000, how many may be found walking in the regular observance of christian ordinances? We much doubt whether 500 among all sects on an average, meet together for the public worship of God, on the day that God has set apart for that solemn purpose. Even in the town, with all the advantage for public worship which it enjoys—can we number 400 out of nearly 2000 who make it a point of conscience and of duty to give regular attendance in the sanctuary of God. Reckon up its families, and we greatly fear you will not find one in six who pay any stated and conscientious regard either to the domestic or public rites of religion. The Sabbath bell summons them to the house of prayer, but they are deaf to its sound; and the few scattered worshippers, who wend their way to do homage to the God of heaven, as they pass along the road, discover too many evidences that the Sabbath brings no holy or religious rest to multitudes around them. Tell us not that these careless people may worship God in their families and homes, although they do not choose to meet with their fellow christians in public assembly for that purpose. This is contradicted by all observation. For the history of Christ's church teaches that wherever religion prospers in the family, its blessed influence will appear in a greater desire for the public ministration of the word and ordinances: and enlightened christians know that divine grace is to be obtained only in the way God has promised to communicate it, and those who turn aside from that way in contempt of divine authority, will not obtain God's blessing in any other, however much they may delude themselves to the contrary. But would that this evil were not aggravated beyond the point of mere indifference. Alas! it often proceeds beyond this, even to a contempt of the de-

* Niagara.