

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

ON THE INFLUENCE OF POPERY ON NATIONAL
PROSPERITY.

BEING A LECTURE DELIVERED BEFORE THE NOVA SCOTIA PROTESTANT ALLIANCE, AT HALIFAX ON TUESDAY, 10TH JANUARY, 1860,

By the Rev. George Patterson.

"Beware of false prophets, which come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenging wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringing forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringing forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

In these words the divine founder of our religion has intimated the fact, that false teachers and false systems of religion should arise in the world, which by assuming a fair exterior were likely to deceive men who merely observed their outward appearance, and that his disciples would need to be on their guard against them. But he has done more than this. He has laid down the tests by which such teachers and such systems are to be judged, viz: by their fruits.—as certainly as in nature a tree is known by its fruits, whether good or bad, as certainly will these systems be known by their results upon society.

Now the world presents the spectacle of several systems adopting the name of him who uttered these words, and each claiming to be that system which he came to establish in the world. Of these, two are especially prominent, Popery and Protestantism. Each assumes the name of Christ's church, each puts on the appearance outwardly of being his—each in a word "comes to us in sheep's clothing."—but in reality they are so entirely opposite in their principles, that the one only can be from him, and the other must be from his enemy.—the covering of the one must be natural, the other under the mask of sheep's clothing, must cover the rapacity and violence of the wolf. How then are these rival claims to be decided? How is the candid enquirer to determine as to their relative merits. Without devising other means of judging, we may affirm, that there can be no