

THE  
CANADIAN PRESBYTER.

SEPTEMBER, 1858.

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

It is not exactly our province to discuss questions of political concern. We do not wish to mingle in the strife of political parties. The field we have chosen to ourselves invites us to consider matters of higher import than those relating to the kingdoms of this world. Notwithstanding therefore the title of this paper, it is not now our intention to become an inquisitor into the public policy of our Government. Nevertheless circumstances may arise in the progress of public and national transactions which demand the serious attention of the professedly religious press of the country. The cry of "politics, politics," ought not certainly to daunt the guardians of morals and piety from either lifting up their voices or wielding their pens against actions and proceedings which violate the plainest commands of God, or which disregard the principles of His Word. These are issues in national affairs which religious men cannot contemplate without alarm. Wickedness and wrong are bad enough when perpetrated in the private circles of society, but when they proceed from the seat of power itself, and are publicly gloried in by the governors of the country, they have a tenfold more fatal effect upon the community; and unless they be protested against, rebuked, and punished by the public voice, they involve the nation itself in the guilt of dishonouring God.

If, therefore, we find anything like public impiety in high places, silence in regard to it, by those who are solicitous for the maintenance of true religion, is unfaithfulness to their profession, and a pusillanimous betrayal of the cause of truth and righteousness. Now we think we do find impiety in the proceedings of our governors in the political movements of the past month. We find, for instance, our Government, in the execution of a political manœuvre, playing fast and loose with the holy name of God—taking solemn oaths in His presence to discharge duties they do not intend to undertake. In these circumstances we feel constrained to mark and to protest against such impiety. The plain English of the matter is that, to escape a political inconvenience, our rulers