

intelligence, self-denial, zeal, labours and success, must and ought to command superiority of influence and authority in every community united by voluntary rules and upon moral principles. But this authority does not and ought not to consist in the letter of written rules in a Christian Church, but in the power of moral influence—not in the assumptions of theoretical prerogative, but in the supremacy of religious excellence and intellectual worth, which will, by the very laws of men's moral constitution, as surely secure to itself the homage which is its due, as the sun in the solar system evinces, by his own unrivalled splendour and diffusive effulgence, his unquestioned and unquestionable supremacy over the other planetary bodies of our material universe. But it involves the essence of despotism, tyranny and oppression, to claim and exercise a power upon the abstract ground of prerogative, irrespective of superior qualifications and virtues, which results from the natural order of things where those pre-eminent qualifications and virtues manifestly exist.

These remarks in no degree contravene the necessity and importance of different offices and authorities in the Church of Christ; but they do legitimately and properly apply to arbitrary and unnatural distinctions amongst labourers and ministers of the same order and vocation. If the Conference in England has not acquired, through its Representatives, that supremacy over the Church in Canada which was intended and anticipated by the London Missionary Secretaries, it has not been for want of an ample and most favourable opportunity. The members of the British Conference in Upper Canada have occupied, for several years, the most important and influential stations in the Canada Conference; they have been put forward and distinguished on all special occasions; they have been noticed in the annual addresses of the Conference from year to year in language of courtesy and praise, such as the members of the Canada Conference have never adopted in respect to each other. If, after all, the attachment of our congregations is strong and universal, with a few individual exceptions, to those Ministers who have been called out into the work in the country, and who, like their congregations, are emigrants from various parts of Great Britain and Ireland, as well as natives of the Province, who suffer with the poverty, and rise with the wealth, and are involved in the destinies, and partake in all the sympathies, of their congregations, we believe that the inheritance of respect and affection and influence thus obtained by our Ministers has been legitimately acquired, ought to be diligently and scripturally employed in the service of the Church, and cannot be sacrificed at the shrine of any distant prerogative, without unfaithfulness to their People and infidelity to their Providential trust.

For five years and upwards after the Union, the representatives and members of the British Conference in Upper Canada co-operated harmoniously and with apparent cordiality with the Conference in the Province, in reference to both ecclesiastical and civil affairs, and received every mark of affectionate respect and distinction which our Ministers and people could bestow upon them. During this period the Missionary Secretaries and other members of the British Conference entered decidedly and publicly into leading questions of civil polity agitated in the Mother Country, espousing the cause of the Church establishment against the Dissenters, and assuming an attitude of avowed hos-