

## RETIRING CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT HAMILTON, DURING THE RECENT SESSION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF CANADA, BY REV. J. ELLIOT, OF OTTAWA.

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## BELOVED BRETHREN,

Since the last annual meeting of the Congregational Union of Canada, we have read of many changes among the nations, and witnessed not a few, in part of which some of us have feelingly shared.

The great globe itself, in the course of its successive revolutions, has continued from day to day to throw off into eternity immortal spirits; some to be as "wandering stars," others as "the brightness of the firmament for ever." What proportion of those that have passed away from our congregations have done so, regenerated by the Spirit of Christ, irradiated with the light of the glorious gospel, and beautified with salvation, we have no means of telling: but we humbly and gratefully trust that, notwithstanding all imperfections in ourselves and obstacles from without, we have been owned of God with some degree of spiritual increase and usefulness to his glory and praise. "The Lord of Life," who has been pleased to keep us alive till this day, has often been reminding us that this is not our rest. Since we last met in annual assembly, *Death has entered the Palace of our beloved Sovereign*: and perhaps it is not too much to say, that the decease of the late Royal Consort of Queen Victoria has not only melted all Britain to tears, but feelingly affected the whole civilized world, and moved thousands of souls in the four quarters of the globe to prayer, sympathetic, earnest and tender, in behalf of the Royal Family.

Let us bless God for the influence, so near to the British Throne and so extensive in society, of the winning, bright and salutary qualities of that distinguished and noble Prince: whose domestic virtues and other social qualities, whose refined taste, high intelligence and warm patriotism and philanthropy, whose moral worth and unmistakable regard for evangelical truth have embalmed his memory in so many hearts. Let us bless God for the continuance to the British Empire and to the world of our beloved Queen: and pray that Almighty grace may sustain her spirit, and that "the Prince of the Kings of the Earth" may be the light and the glory of her illustrious House!

Many others have been called away in the course of the last twelve months, whose names will be long remembered in the Church of Christ. Of those we name three in particular.

1st. The late Rev. James Robertson, of Sherbrooke, C. E.—who long labored with faithfulness and success in the Saviour's service, who last year sent to the brethren assembled in Kingston an expression of his brotherly love, and a request to be remembered in our prayers, and whose latter years supply one of the many fine exemplifications the history of the Church affords of the truthfulness of the words of the Psalmist—"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that he planted in the House of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God; they shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing: to show that the Lord is upright."