

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE LOWER PROVINCES OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

AMONG the many blessings which our country has received at the hand of a gracious God during the past year, the ecclesiastical organization named above stands conspicuous. It is indeed a "child of promise,"—the offspring of the prayer of faith, and the labour of love. We receive it with devout thanksgiving, as a blessed instalment of answer to that notable prayer of our Great Intercessor, "THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE,"—which is at once a prayer, a promise, and a guarantee, all combined. For wherever we have an *absolute* prayer of the Son of God, there we have at the same time, also a sure promise and a guarantee of the highest order, that it shall be answered and fulfilled in its time. We receive it too as a gracious answer to the prayer of multitudes of God's faithful ones in these lands—whose supplications have unweariedly ascended, in the face of many discouragements, for the same object. And not the less do we receive it as the reward of faithful, believing, unremitting labours for the same great cause. Ours is a most gracious, bountiful, and faithful master,—if we labour for Him, we shall in nowise lose our reward. Not a few humble, devoted labourers in this good cause, feel that they have been rewarded a thousand fold for all their toil, by what they have already witnessed; heard and experienced of the happy fruits of that blessed Union which has given us "The Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces of British North America." Thus far the Lord hath been with us of a truth. He hath done great things for us whereof we are glad. Let us fervently thank Him, and take courage. We stand now on a critical and most interesting point in our history as a Presbyterian Church. God grant that we may be enabled to understand and improve it!

We summon up the past, and before our gaze stands vividly a history, brief, it is true, but still of deep and varied interest. Some of its scenes more fitted to warn, others to encourage, while all are rich in instruction.—The time when we were yet but small and in numbers few—when our fathers, after having crossed the "great and wide sea," in all their weakness and destitution, laid the foundations of our "Zion" with such materials as they could procure, and on a larger and more liberal scale than could be expected of them, while sorely battling with the combined difficulties and privations of a physical and moral wilderness, claims our first attention, and our tenderest regard. It will be our wisdom to mark diligently the way by which the Lord led them, supported them, and gave them not over to the will of their enemies; but caused them to take root and to increase in the land, until the little one became a thousand, and the weak a strong people,—fulfilling His own gracious word, that He would make the handful of corn in the earth, on the top of the mountain to grow and prosper, till its goodly fruit should shake like Lebanon. We will also do wisely and well to remember our own and our fathers' shortcomings and transgressions. "We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly." Neither we nor our fathers walked steadfastly with our God, or kept that which he committed to us, with such pure devotedness as became so sacred a charge. Pride, selfishness, and worldly policy, fictitively taking the place of humility, charity, and godliness, and assuming the name and tones of dignity, zeal for the cause of God and prudence, often times led us from the path of duty, made us to be unfaithful where we ~~went to be most true~~ marred our harmony obstructed our progress, and