

THE CANADA CHRISTIAN MONTHLY.

OCTOBER, 1875.

Editorial.

HIGHER ISSUES.

It is good for us, and hopeful for our children, that questions of living, real, and abiding interest are coming to the front in our Dominion. Hot debate, and bitter discussions about matters of minor importance lower public morality and hinder the progress of religion; but when the debate and discussion are about the great matters of God and the State, the closer and keener the conflict the better for us and for those that come after us. Petty questions as to sect and party, as to Sibboleth and Shibboleth, have been the bane of our religious and political life for years past in British America.

The Church of Christ has been greatly hindered in all ages by the "Traditions of the Fathers." Certain maxims were uttered and customs sanctioned in the long past by men who were esteemed for their wisdom. These maxims and customs of the fathers were received by the children as gold without further examinations, because they bore the stamp of their superiors. In some instances, matters are all right, for the Traditions are Truth; but in many instances the Traditions are Error. These traditional errors have impeded the progress of the

church and have exposed her to the sneers of men of this world.

There are, however, "Traditions of the Fathers" to be found elsewhere than among the churches. There are "idols of the den or cave," as Bacon calls them, to be found—class prejudices and traditions—among all classes of the community. They are to be found among our politicians as well as among our theologians. The tradition that "There must be parties in politics" has come down from the Political Fathers, and passes current as pure gold from hand to hand, among the disciples.

It is true that as long as there is right and wrong struggling for the mastery, sense and stupidity each trying to grasp the helm, there must be two parties, the party of right and the party of wrong, the side of sense and the side of non-sense. Even this however is, not a thing to be desired, but a thing to be regretted; not a thing to be gloried in, but a thing to be deplored. Instead therefore of blindly accepting the maxim "That parties in politics is a good and necessary thing," every intelligent man should submit the maxim to examination. On enquiry it may be found that this maxim is an "idol of the political den." A