

THE CANADIAN DAY-STAR.

"I am the light of the world."

"Preach the Gospel to every creature."—JESUS.

MAY, 1862.

THE DOCTRINE OF MOTIVES.

That circumstances over which we never had, and never can have any control, have to do with the formation of our character is quite evident to any reflecting mind. But it is no less evident that our characters are formed *by* us, not *for* us. We are not at the mercy of external circumstances. We know that we can modify them, materially change them, rise above them, to a great extent control them, and make them the servants of our will.

The doctrine of motives properly understood gives no countenance to the absurd, the unscriptural, and indeed atheistic idea that men, all men, good and bad, just do what they cannot help doing. The doctrine of necessity held by every consistent Calvinist in Christendom is irreconcilable with free agency and accountability. The doctrine of necessity is in its right place in the physical universe, or kingdom of matter; but it should never have been introduced into the kingdom of mind, for in the moral universe it is as much out of place as argumentation or persuasion would be in the kingdom of matter.

The apple that falls from the tree has no choice in the matter, and is not responsible for coming in contact with the earth. The needle that tremblingly turns toward the pole is never blamed or praised by any one for pointing due north. Dr. Jonathan Edwards, in his work on the Will, compares our volitions to the vibrations of a scale-beam, the different ends of which are respectively elevated or depressed as the opposite weight may chance to vary. Mind, according to this theory, is at the mercy of external influence, or, which is the same thing, it is a mere thing governed