

THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND MISSIONARY RECORD.

For the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

"Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and the strength of salvation."

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Original Poetry.

(For the Missionary Record.)

THE HOME OF MY YOUTH.

The home of my youth is far o'er the sea,
In the land of the true, the true and the free;
Where dark rugged mountains tower up to the sky,
And rude rocks of granite the ocean defy.

There lakes, with their forests, and sweet lawns of green,
And white waving fields may, in harvest, be seen;
There the cottage and castle—the rich and the poor,
Are spread in the valley, the hill and the moor.

A spot in the ocean—a foot to the main—
A thing for the warriors of old to disdain;
And yet, to the world, it's the great source of light,
The centre of wisdom, of virtue and might.

In this lovely free land, the Church must be free,
And pure as the waters that fill the salt sea:
Tho' Melvil, and Knox, and Chalmers are dead,
Into error and bondage she shall not be led.

Her head ever lives, and is ever at hand,
And can raise, in this dark day, a true martyr band,
Like the forest in number—like the mountain in
night,
That will ne'er fail in courage, and ne'er fail in fight.

Such a band is now rising—their banner now
waves—
Their standard is planted by old martyr's graves;
Their vow has been taken—their armour is on—
To the field of their foe in haste they have gone.

The Church, once in bondage, made free by their
hand,
Is rising to glory, and filling the land;
And the sword, now uplifted, shall ne'er be put
down,
Till Truth is triumphant, and Christ wears the
crown.

The nobles and rulers, by no means at ease,
May flatter, or threaten, or do what they please;
But sever, they cannot, from the true Kirk and
Cross,
Those men who, for Christ, count the world but as
dross.

The cold, and the sleet, and the blast from the hill,
May soon drive the worldling from market and mill.
But the cold and fierce winds that rush up from
the sea,
Cannot scatter the flock that's on Conobie lea.

The cold damp of death may come there in disguise,
And hasten to silence the tongue of the wise:
But still, in their frail tent, they'll worship anew,
Should the strong become weak, and the old be-
come few.

For, true to their faith, to their Lord and his cause,
They ne'er shall submit to unrighteous laws,
Nor worship in temples, though fine they should be,
Where pastor and people can never be free.

P. S.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND met in Cannonmills Hall, Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 18th day of May. There was a large attendance. The Rev. Dr. Sievwright, the Moderator of the last General Assembly, preached the opening sermon, from Lam., ii. 14. After the sermon the Assembly was constituted, and the Rev. Dr. Clason unanimously elected Moderator, and the Rev. J. J. Wood interim Clerk. The second day (Friday) was chiefly taken up in devotional exercises. The Rev. Mr. Gray, of Perth, delivered an admirable address, from which we can only make room for the following extract:

"We have hinted at some of the sins which the Lord may have seen in us, and which he may be calling us to repent of and forsake. Perhaps there is a further design in the recent dealings of His Providence. Every state of the Church has dangers that are peculiar to it. After any great change in the condition of the Church has occurred, the Church has need to arise, and look forward, and around, that it may know what the dangers are against which it has to guard. May we not believe that we have had a summons to keep our eyes about us, and to watch lest we fall into temptation? If the summons is loud, the peril may be great.

"An eminent writer has said, that 'it is after the most painful fatigues, and the most strenuous exertion, that sleep generally overcomes a man, and even so, after the most laborious struggles, does the Church lie most exposed to the danger of slumber. A revival is generally followed by a lethargy, and a great elevation by a great fall.' Thus it was in the times of early Christianity. The fire and water of centuries of trouble once fairly passed, and a wealthy place arrived at, religion languished, and the Church fell asleep. The same thing happened at the Reformation. When Protestantism made its way from under the imperial ban and the interdicts of the powers of the world, how soon did it lose the spirit of a holy propagandism, and sink into apathy and sloth! A result not dissimilar, as we all well know, followed our own Revolution of 1688.—When the darkness and death that had pressed round the Church, and afflicted it for twenty-eight years, were gone, how soon did darkness and death

of another kind, but more disastrous, take up their abode within its pale! My fathers and brethren, shall future historians find another example of the same mournful sequel, in the case of this Free Church of Scotland? May God forbid it! But surely there is danger. We peruse the records of the past in vain, if they do not teach us thus. Compared with the period of excitement and distress of warfare which preceded the summer of 1743, we have had, though with many serious exceptions, comparative rest and peace. The disruption itself, with all its drawbacks, had, in a large degree, the character of a triumph. Now, generally speaking, our places of worship are built, and we are far advanced with our manse and our schools. Our Sustentation Fund too,—that precious legacy of the year-able Chalmers,—is progressing with unshaken energy, amid all the vicissitudes of the times. Are these things, then, to tell with soporific effect upon the Church, and to throw us into a dull, and inert, and unproductive routine of duty? Let us cry to the Lord that it may not be; let us cry to heaven, with incessant supplications, that grace may come down, in the richness of pentecostal supplies, to help us; let us watch, that drowsiness steal not in upon our souls, and let us daily and habitually pray for the fuller indwelling of the Spirit of life to ourselves, our brethren, and our flocks. It would be wrong to overlook the fact that the historical warnings, to which reference has been made, do not perfectly apply to our case. Even were there a law, by which the fatal sequence with which they present us must be uniform, there is reason to hold that we are not altogether in the category to which they belong. Our present condition, in a temporal point of view, is not quite analogous to that of the Church under Constantine, and his successors, to that of the Protestant communities when the Reformation was achieved, or to that of our forefathers after the Revolution. Our outward prosperity is chequered, and materially modified.—We are still the disestablished, disendowed Church of Scotland. Many of our ministers, embracing not a few grey-haired men, have in early the same pastoral charge as they had before, with but less than half the amount of income, while strangers have entered into the possession of their emoluments. And all of us are deprived of rights and advantages which, by Scotland's constitution, are ours. There is danger notwithstanding. We fought a great battle, we acquired great honour, and our outward condition is better than we ventured to hope for. There is danger lest we fold our hands, and our zeal for our Master wax cold. Let us watch and pray against that danger. Let us go to Him who never yet refused to hear us, and obtain his aid to keep the Church awake.

"Besides the general danger which has now been pointed out as affecting our whole proceedings as a Church and as office-bearers therein, it may be proper to consider ourselves to be called to guard against a danger of a more special kind. In our new position of separation from the State, the ministry of the Church is, humanly speaking, dependent upon the people and their contributions for the means of temporal support. Have we no need to take care that the circumstances of being thus dependent do not lessen our ministerial usefulness, weaken the exercise of discipline, and induce us to refrain from declaring the whole counsel of God? For no temporal advantages, however important and necessary they may be, must we sacrifice the truth or the interests of souls? Better far that we strive to maintain ourselves and our families by the labour of our hands, than that we purchase our