

THE MONTHLY RECORD

OF THE

Church of Scotland,

IN

Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Adjoining Provinces.

Vol. XXXII.

JULY, 1886.

No. 7.

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning." -- PSALM CXXXVII. 5.

LETTER FROM SCOTLAND.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

EDINBURGH, June, 1886.

WE have just got through the great annual Ecclesiastical Parliament of the Scottish Church. Last night, somewhat after midnight, we sang with joyful hearts the Psalm with which for ages the grand Supreme Court of our old Church has been invariably closed. There is something of a solemnizing and overwhelming nature, after ten days and often nights of protracted work, close attention, keen debate in which there is never broken water, but in which there are often *brocures*; after we have differed as St. Paul did with St. Peter and with Barnabas; after we have, as honest men and faithful Ministers and Elders, sought, according to our light and convictions, to do the right and to convince each other;—after all this has passed and gone, and thoughts of our own Parishes and their people—the sick, the sorrowing, the sinning—begin again to steal in upon us, it is a solemn moment when we all stand up together and sing,

"Pray that Jerusalem may have
Peace and felicity."

It comes with much more solemnity, it seems to me, in the stillness of the night, when the great city is asleep, than in the midst of the noise and confusion of the day. It was tried once as an experiment how it would do to close during the afternoon; but it did not seem the closing of the Assembly at all. The old ar-

rangement has come into vogue again, and will not likely soon be disturbed.

The Reports given in from the different Committees, and the debates to which they gave rise, all shew that since the Reformation the Church never was so strong as she is to-day. She is renewing her youth year by year. She is increasing in numbers and in strength all over the country—new Parishes added, new Home Mission fields opened up, and her members are increasing more rapidly than the population of the country—a fact deserving the notice of all who wish her well. This year she put upon herself the crowning condition of a National Church:—an Act was passed by which it is now lawful for any congregation to appoint to any vacant parish any Minister of any Presbyterian Church in Great Britain or Ireland. So that the whole question of the privileges of the National Church is put upon a footing that should remove all grievances as to the disabilities and disadvantages of other Churches and their Ministers. If they wish to get the benefit of the State recognition of Religion, all they have to do is to get a congregation to elect one of their Ministers and he at once becomes a Parish Minister. This concession has been granted without a corresponding equivalent on the part of the dissenters. I am not eligible for a charge in the Free Church, the U. P. Church, or the English Presbyterian Church; but were there a vacancy in the Parish of Buccleuch, (a thing which shall not be for some time if I can prevent it); but if there were, the people could elect Principal Rainy of the Free Church, Principal Cairns of the U. P. Church, or even Dr. Hutton of Paisley. That is as it should be. We are the National Church, and

Public
at
HAMILTON, N.S.

1886