

# THE MONTHLY RECORD,

OF THE

## Church of Scotland

IN

NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK AND ADJOINING PROVINCES.

VOLUME XXIV.

FEBRUARY, 1878.

NUMBER II.

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."—Psalm 137, 4-5.

SERMON BY REV. CHARLES S. ROBINSON, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN MEMORIAL CHURCH, NEW YORK.

### Christ at the Door.

BEHOLD, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.—Revelations iii. 20.

Times change, and we ourselves change with them. But it seems a little singular to find the same social custom prevalent in the East and in the West, holding its way on through all these thousands of years—the custom of knocking at the door of a dwelling in which we desire to become a guest. Back even to the time of SOLOMON we find traces of this identical act; the same courteous recognition of the owner's personal right; the same gentle importunity calling attention to the fact of our presence and wish to enter; the same generous confidence that hospitality will be extended the moment our application for it becomes known.

This it is which has always made the figure chosen in our text so clear and forcible. It needs no explanation even to the commonest minds. The Saviour is represented as standing at the door of a sinner's heart, seeking admission and offering amity. Simple as the simile seems to be, the entire scheme of the Gospel is contained in it. The doctrines of grace may be drawn out one by one.

I. In the first place, here, FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD IS PROPOSED AS THE GRAND PRIVILEGE OF THE RACE.

The proffer that is made is wholly spiritual. The language is chosen with

unusual care. You will find two things in this text.

1. One is that the friendship which GOD offers is *on entirely a humane plane*. JESUS says he will come and share our new lot in life. He does not mind where nor how we live, he stands knocking just at our door. It is at our table he will sit and sup. He will accept our invitation, and will take us just as we are. All he wants is to be our friend.

Christian life is only a transfiguration of every-day life. CHRIST expects no man to go out of his way to receive Him. He says to a statesman wielding vast power exactly as he does to a mechanic at his bench—go on with your natural work, let me not interrupt or incommode you, I only want to see you at home and be your friend.

2. The other thing you will discover in the text is, that the friendship which GOD proposes is *permanent in its continuance*. The whole force of that fixed Oriental custom concerning hospitality is invoked in the figure. You know an Eastern guest is sacred in the estimation of his host. To have eaten bread with any man is to have forever become that man's friend and ally. And our LORD repeats and reverses the order of words so as to show its binding force on both parties: "I will sup with him and he with Me."

So ye see the Saviour does not say so much what He will do as what He will be. He means to have each of us understand that our highest need is met when we have secured His companionship. "Can the children of the bride chamber