

THE MONTHLY RECORD

OF THE

Church of Scotland,

IN NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK, AND ADJOINING PROVINCES

VOL. XXXI.

AUGUST, 1885.

No. 8.

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning."—Psalm cxxxvii. 5.

SCOTTISH GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

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ONT.

In my two last papers I spoke about the spiritual life of the Church and the methods employed for furthering its growth. I will now say a few words regarding the means used for improving her services. Twenty or thirty years ago very little attention was paid to the devotional part of the service, including the service of praise. From all accounts we learn that these were often crude in the extreme. The Protestant Churches had broken off from the forms of the Church of Rome, with its imagery and its choral services; and in the reaction they went to the extreme of baldness. Beauty was thought to be the badge of the Scarlet Woman, Roughness therefore, was regarded as praise-worthy. The ecclesiastical buildings as seen from the outside were ugly: gaunt, square buildings, usually occupying a beautiful situation on some rising ground. The interior was ugly. The pews were high and unbending—like their occupants—with a board nailed tightly at one end, and a door fastened to the other. Of what use these doors were I could never understand, unless to emphasize the insular, independent character of the pew holders. The singing was sometimes a mere caricature. A precentor, occupying a high box beneath the pulpit, led. His ignorance of music was usually equal to his conceit; and both were amazing. And yet there was much good in that old church. If the service was unattractive,

the same cannot be said of the worshipers. The clergyman was beloved and respected by all, and, in these high-backed pews were many noble characters—men who would scorn to do wrong, who would lose their right hand rather than utter an untruth.

But, a great change for the better has taken place in the services of the church of Scotland. It would be an error to say that any one man is the cause of this. It has rather been brought about by the growing intelligence and refinement of the community; and I hesitate not to say that it is, to some extent owing to the example of the Scottish Episcopal Church, whose services are often beautiful. While then it is impossible to name any one as the cause of this improvement in the services of the Church, one clergyman may be taken as a type of those who have led in this matter, I mean the Rev. Dr. Boyd of St. Andrew's who sits to the left of the Moderator. Dr. Boyd has won world-wide fame as a writer. His first work, "Recreations of a Country Parson," has had an enormous circulation. As its name indicates, it describes the occupations of the clergyman during his leisure hours. The book is most readable, and gives a pleasant picture of the life at the country manse, showing the difficulties, the trials and the pleasures of the Scotch clergyman. Following this work came a number of others from the same pen, each securing a large measure of fame. Many of these works consist of sermons written in an easy, graceful style, full of spiritual beau-