

THE

MONTHLY RECORD

OF THE

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND IN NOVA SCOTIA.



"IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING."—PSALM 137, iv.

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THE CHURCH AT HOME.

Gilmarnock Parochial Association in aid of the Schemes of the Church

In presenting their first Report, your Committee desire, at the outset, to remind you of the objects for which the Association was formed. Convinced that much more might be done to aid the Missionary Schemes of the Church, and that want of interest in them was, in a great measure, to be attributed to a want of knowledge regarding their operations, certain members of the Church here commenced the movement, the result of which was the formation of this Association. Its objects, therefore, were two-fold, the diffusion of missionary information, and the collecting of funds in behalf of the schemes. How far these objects have been attained the sequel will shew.

On their appointment, your Committee found that their first duty was to divide the parish into districts suitable for collectors. Of these they formed ten; and having received intimation from a number of ladies of their willingness to assist in the work, they appointed one, or, where convenient, two collectors to each district.

The collectors have been regularly supplied with copies of the *Record* for distribution in their respective district. Upwards of 100 copies have thus been circulated during the year; and your Committee hope that, by this means, the support already given to the work will yet be greatly increased. They would take this opportunity of gratefully acknowledging the services of the collectors, without whose aid they feel that all their efforts would have been comparatively unproductive and fruitless. "Whom, therefore, ye have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, we send you as messengers of the churches and glory of Christ; wherefore, shew ye to the churches, and before the churches, the proof of your love unto Christ."

The monthly meetings for prayer, and the diffusion of missionary intelligence, have been regularly kept up. Your Committee regret,

however, that so little countenance has been given to this department of their labours, and that addresses, carefully prepared by your ministers, on some of the more interesting scenes of the missionary field, have often been delivered to a thin, though an attentive audience. They would earnestly direct attention to this important matter; and would urge upon all the duty of meeting together for united prayer for the prosperity of Zion.

In the month of December, your Committee took advantage of Dr. Gillan being in town, to request him to preach a sermon in behalf of your Association. This he kindly consented to do, and on the evening of the winter fast-day, preached to a very large audience.

The number of subscribers during the year has been 237. These have varied in times of payment, as well as in amount of subscription, from the regular contribution of a penny a week to the annual donation of £2. It will be seen from the treasurer's statement, that upwards of £64, have thus been collected in aid of the Schemes of the Church by this Association. Nor has this been at the expense of the regular collections. These, we are happy to be able to state, have actually increased to the amount of upwards of £20 over the previous year. We are thus enabled to quiet the apprehensions of those who thought our Association would lessen the regular offerings at the church-doors, and that what was given by the one hand would be withheld by the other. At our commencement, we calculated on an increase in these collections, and the result has so far gratified us.

In whatever regards the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, we are persuaded that to know is to feel, and to feel is to give in proportion to the demands of the Church—to the necessities of perishing souls—to the claims of a Saviour's love. Never was there a time so big with hope and encouragement to the people of God as the present. There is not a country on the face of the globe where the Gospel may not be preached.

China is now open, and her people, by millions, are eagerly seeking instruction from the Book of Books. The power of the priesthood is broken in India—their temples are deserted—their idols, many of them, are "cast to the moles and the bats"—and the Hindu is enquiring for that which neither Brahmin nor Shaster can supply. The isles of the Pacific are receiving and spreading the Gospel faster than they can be supplied with European teachers, or even with printed books. Africa, too, has caught the spark; and from the south and west, a band of devoted men are steadily pressing onward through that dark continent with the light of the Gospel, so that soon we may expect to see "Ethiopia stretching out her hands to God." Nor does the state of Europe seem dark and discouraging. We have the first fruits of the war already. In Turkey the Gospel is free. Missionaries may now labour throughout its length and breadth, none making them afraid. The Bible is extensively circulated on the Continent, one society alone having distributed upwards of half-a-million copies during the last twelve months. Protestant preachers and Protestant churches are met with even in Italy itself. Nor do the churches seem forgetful of the wants of the masses at home. There are City Missions, Ragged Schools, Scripture Readers' Associations, &c. Our own Church has her Educational Scheme, her Home Mission, and her last, if not her brightest and best, her Endowment Scheme. All these indicate energy, effort, progress. They point to an approaching crisis, and to a coming glory. They tell that "the time to favour Zion has come; yea, the set-time, for the saints take pleasure in her stones, and her very dust is dear to them." Shall we not, then, gird ourselves to the emergency of the times? Shall we not, then, redouble our efforts for the diffusion of the Gospel? Shall we not, then, labour till Christ is preached to every creature in the world? Shall we not, then, by prayer take hold of Him whose hand can move the universe, and