

THE MONTHLY RECORD,

OR THE

Church of Scotland

IN

NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK AND ADJOINING PROVINCES.

VOLUME XXIV.

JULY, 1878.

NUMBER VII.

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

THE PRINCIPLES OF PERPETUAL PROSPERITY.

By Rev. P. Melville, A. M.

The sure and only way to lasting prosperity, here and hereafter, is to become like God, namely, to grow into the divine Image, which is perfect wisdom, power and goodness.

Can I prove this to your own satisfaction? Assuredly I can, and shall, if you will but think and reason aright. The secrets of success are summed up in these three divine qualities, wisdom, power, and goodness. One or two will not do without the other. You must get each and all of them in equal proportions, or else your life is so far a failure. They are the image of God, and the very principle of His eternal blessedness. They are equal in Him, each is infinite, and from him alone you can obtain them. I might easily prove all this by logical argument, but you will learn it more easily and pleasantly by an example. Take that of Joseph.

Joseph's life may be divided into three periods. First, the happy time of his childhood, with his father Jacob at home; second, the unhappy days of his youth, with his envious brethren and with dangers abroad; third and lastly, the blessed period of his manhood, when he was aided by wisdom, power, and goodness, over all the hosts of Egypt; with his father and his brethren restored, reconciled, and completely overcome with good.

This was Heaven begun on earth, to be enjoyed for ever in the world to come.

"Think of these three stages of life: 1, The dreams of childhood; 2, the envy of society; and 3, the victory of virtue! You cannot miss the first and second of these, for they come upon all, male and female; but the only way to reach the third and highest stage of life, by wisdom, power, and goodness, like Joseph's. Without wisdom your life will end in the failure of folly; without power it will become a failure of weakness; without goodness it will sink into a failure of vice.

"In your own short life. O my young friends, have you not felt something of those three stages? Have you not had your own fond dreams of youth, like Joseph? I mean of course your waking dreams of early hope. Have you not felt your inner power of rising genius and talent? Have you not also been boasting a little, and like Joseph, telling your waking dreams of hope? Have you not then met with the envy of society? Have not your enemies mocked at you as a vain dreamer? Aye, and have not your false friends, too, tried hard and rudely enough to disappoint you, and to ruin your fondest hopes? But finally, have you yet prevailed to rise above this envy and to reach the crowning victory of virtue? There is one only way to do so. Do you long to know the secret? It is short and simple, but there is such a divine depth of meaning in it, that you must make it your