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"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem! let my right hand forget its cunning."—Ps. 137, v. 5.

SERMON,

Preached at the opening of the Synod of Nova Scotia and P. E. Island, in connection with the Church of Scotland, in St. Andrew's Church, Halifax, on the 28th day of June, 1865, by the Rev. Daniel McCurdy of Wallace River and Folly Mountain, Retiring Moderator.

"Make full proof of thy ministry."—2 TIM. iv. 5.

It was alleged against the primitive teachers of Christianity, by the leaders of a Jewish synagogue at Thessalonica, that they had "turned the world upside down." This ill-natured charge, viewed in a better sense than their accusers intended, contained more truth than error. It was their proper work, as it had been the mission of their Divine Master, to overturn the world by a peaceful revolution in the whole framework and spirit of human society. At that stage of their operations, the conversion of the world was but well begun.

Nearly two thousand years have now passed away, leaving this great Christian enterprise only in progress. The Christian ministry, by which the apostleship was superseded, still falls vastly short of the ends it was intended to accomplish. Within the meaning and scope of a world-wide commission, there is room for larger investments of love and labor. Until now, "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." The solemn charge of the apostle, in the text, may be regarded as a reminder to us, Fathers and Brethren, to make full proof of our ministry. At such a time as this, it is well

to have our minds stirred up by way of remembrance to consider, first, The ends of the Christian ministry; and, secondly, The means by which those ends shall be best promoted.

I. The conversion of sinners to God is the great object of the Christian ministry. By this is meant that heaven-born change by which they are brought from darkness to light, from death to life, and from sin to holiness. In this their new relationship to God their Saviour, their position and character are savingly affected for the present life and the world to come. They are made one with their glorious Head. Their "life is hid with Christ in God." Bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord their God, they live by Him, they live for Him, they live like Him; "and when He who is their life shall appear, they shall also appear with Him in glory." The conversion of one sinner shall save an immortal "soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins." The conversion of a lost world will be Paradise regained—an earnest and foretaste of heaven.

It is with mankind viewed in their spiritual relations to God as sinners that we have to do in the exercise of our ministry. It is to better their condition and prepare them for a glorious future that we have been entrusted with the word of reconciliation. The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. This precious truth runs like a chain of gold through the beginnings and ends of the ministration of life. How offensive soever to the self-sufficiency of men, it is, nevertheless, a faithful saying, that Christ came to save sinners, the chief of sinners. We do not over-magnify our office in claiming to be known.