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"IF I FORGOT THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET ITS CUNNING."—PS. 137, v. 5.

### SERMON,

*By the Rev. Robert Jamieson, D. D., Minister of St. Paul's, Glasgow.*

"More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold."—PSALM XIX. 10.

It is impossible to determine the origin of this sacred poem, as there is neither any notice of it to be found in the history of David, nor does it contain any internal allusion to circumstances which might afford direct evidence, or, at least, some ground of conjecture, as to the time and place of its composition. But there is no reason to regret the want of such data, as a knowledge of its import may be easily and satisfactorily arrived at, independently of all information as to the when and the where it was written. Its character is purely didactic, being a general record or expression of those feelings of piety which the Psalmist delighted so much and so habitually to indulge. The greater portion of it is occupied in celebrating the praises of Scripture, which he speaks of under a variety of terms, as, the law—the testimony—the statutes—the commandments—the judgments of the Lord. In a strain of admiring reflection, as he contemplates it in the various aspects presented by each of these expressions, he breaks out into a brief passing eulogy on the character and properties of that Divine Word; and the high estimate he set upon it, from his long familiarity and experience of its pure and exalted delights, is expressed in the language of the text, "More to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold."

In taking these words as a guide to the sentiments to be brought forward in this dis-

course, I remark, in the first place, that they indicate the Scriptures to be a valuable book; in the second place, the comparison they contain indicates the high measure of its value; and, in the third place, the strong desire they express for it on the part of the Psalmist shows the feelings with which we also should regard it.

According to the method proposed, then, I remark, in the first place, that the words before us indicate the Scripture to be a valuable book. A book is prized as valuable, chiefly on account of its contents, and accordingly, judged by this commonly approved standard, the Scriptures surpass all books that ever have been published in the world,—not only in having God for their author, but in the purity of their character, in the sublimity of their object, and in the certainty of the knowledge they communicate. Other books were written by men, containing only the effusions of their mind, and consequently bear the stamp of the frailties and imperfections that characterize their human authors. Some of them were the productions of ignorant men, who possessed but a limited, and very imperfect acquaintance with the subject they undertook to treat, and who, therefore, being blind leaders of the blind, could not but mislead. Some have emanated from bad men, who published from the selfish purpose of pushing themselves into notoriety by the novelty or the boldness of their speculations, or with the wicked intention of sowing the seeds of mischief, of unsettling the principles, or corrupting the morals of their readers. While other books, again have been written by men who, however eminently qualified by knowledge or