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Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia and the adjoining Provinces.

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

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Society and Religion.

It seems natural to expect that in such a country as California, with its ever changing and heterogeneous population, religion would have but little influence. In so stirring a locality, men's minds are so much engrossed at the present that they have scarcely time to think of the future state. It is only after a time, when the flush of excitement is past, that men begin to turn their attention to spiritual concerns. In such societies, more particularly when they are in a rudimentary state, do we see human nature in its normal and unmodified condition, unrestrained by any of those influences, such as law, religion or morality, which are so powerfully felt in better regulated communities. Original sin we hold to be as much a fact as a doctrine and one which is demonstrated by the crime-stained annals of such a country, as well as by texts from the Bible and the Confession of Faith. But the introduction of true Religion into any community is the production of those principles which conduce to order and progress. Christianity has a twofold mission in the world to enlighten and to improve and ameliorate society in a large measure. Possessed in its integrity it is the greatest blessing any people can enjoy, as a means of promoting their best happiness.— In the Book of Psalms, kings and rulers are exhorted to favour, protect and bow down to it: "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed ye judges of the earth; serve the Lord with fear and trembling; reverence the son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

immigrants the vast importance of religion as an element of the highest value and the most indispensable necessity in reforming the corruptions in the country above alluded to. It is entitled: "Society and Religion; a sermon for California, delivered on Sabbath Evening, July 6th, 1856, at the installation of the Rev. E. S. Lacy, as pastor of the First Congregational Church, San Francisco; by Horace Bushnell, D. D." The discourse is founded on Jeremiah I., 10: "See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant." These words, the preacher remarks, are not spoken of any great conqueror, but of the prophet himself. They are the words of his divine call and commission. But let it not be imagined that he is set over the nations and kingdoms, simply in the sense that he is to prophecy their fall. He is to be the vehicle as it were of God's judgements.— It will be observed, that he is to build and to plant, and it is not by merely foretelling something that any work is to be done.— The prophets were not merely foretellers, according to the vulgar impression, but they were the inspiring, quickening ministers of God's truth, the teachers and preachers of their times, educated in schools for this purpose. The priesthood represented the ceremonial function of their religion, they were the illuminative and pastoral function.— One had the power of a drill practice, the other of a divinely governing oracle, for it was their office to stand between God and men, and to be his voice unto them. Shown to be the sons of God by a clear illumination, having the radiance of the Shekinah visibly upon them, kings trembled and the people quailed at their word. It was as if they had in their power to kill and make alive — To root out and pull down and destroy, to build and to plant were their sublime prerogative. They represented, in fact, the divine side of society and history, and all the determining causes grouped under the

word religion. We are, therefore, always to see, in the power they exerted, the great fact or principle, that religion is the arbiter of states and nations, rooting out, pulling down, destroying what is opposite to God; planting and building and so erecting into social beauty and establishing in virtue and happiness with God; which latter is more especially the subject of discourse. Occupied mainly by the planting and building side of his text the preacher shows clearly that true religion, including the pulpit and the church, is the only efficient spring of civil order and social happiness. In illustrating this principle, which we hold to be sound and irrefragable, he takes occasion to remark that there is this immense difference on the side of religion, when it becomes a destroyer—and when any rough work requires to be done it has nerve to do it—that it never pulls down or destroys except in a way to build; on the other hand, it is a fact only the more remarkable, that there has never, in all known history, been a bursting of mere will, or passion, or atheistic Jacobinism that has planted anything or given organic life to any new social condition. Cromwell drives his chariot of the Lord over King and Parliament, with new laws and liberties, to be himself acknowledged, in all future time, as the regenerator of his country. The French Revolution, on the other hand, overthrows everything to establish nothing, and to leave a naked desolation, which was all that atheism, in full ascendancy, could do. In further illustrating the fact that religion is the only sufficient basis of social order and happiness, our author has some excellent remarks in answer to the question, "Is there not a natural law of progress in Society?" "By what right then," says he, "do we claim that nothing but religion can establish a happy state of society and civil order when it is known to be a fact that such a result can and must be reached by the natural progress of the race? To this I have only to answer that this doctrine of natural progress is no real truth but only

We are gratified to find, from a sermon which has fallen into our hands, and which we have read with great satisfaction, that at some efforts are being made by competent agents to press upon the attention of