

THE MONTHLY RECORD,

OF THE

Church of Scotland

IN

NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK AND ADJOINING PROVINCES.

VOLUME XXIII.

DECEMBER, 1877.

NUMBER XII.

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

FOR THE RECORD.

As just about the hour of midnight we look up at the clock and see the small hand at XII, and the large hand at XI, a sharp rough sound is heard warning us of the coming stroke which shall once more complete the circle of the dial, so we now, as it were, hear the "warning" of the coming stroke on the annual dial which shall complete the revolution of another year, and announce to us the departure of 1877. We don't suppose that any newspaper or periodical or Church Record will be issued during this month in any country without this fact being noticed, and the year which is about to close being reviewed, and its departure moralized upon. It would not become us, therefore, small and insignificant as our Record is, to be an exception. But before stating what we have to say of our own experience of this year, let us see what shall probably have to be said by reviewers of it in some other countries.

Away in the far distant East, in hot and sunny India, (unusually hot and sunny as it has proved during the past year), they shall have to speak sadly of gaunt and blighting famine stalking through the land, and smiting down vast multitudes of starved inhabitants; and gratefully of the exertions of the Indian Government and the liberality of the charitable in England and other countries, in order to alleviate the sufferings of the distressed throughout the famine-stricken districts. In the countries of the Turk both in Europe and Asia, the reviewers of this,

to them, ever-memorable year, shall have to rehearse the mournful tale of all the fearful horrors which one of the bloodiest and most pitiless wars on record has entailed—of tremendous carnage and slaughter on many a bloody battle field, of myriads of once happy homes overwhelmed by bereavement, of towns and villages destroyed, and vast districts of land devastated by the merciless invader, and lastly, if the whole truth be told, of the short lived joy of momentary victory being followed by the bitter despair of defeat.

Throughout the vast territories of Russia a tale similar in some respects to the above shall have to be told; though with two important exceptions; namely, that the ravages of war have not been carried on within their bounds, and that the startling and unexpected check of defeat now seems to be followed by victory. In other continental countries of Europe, such as Germany, Austria, Italy and Greece, they shall have to tell of constantly occurring disquieting rumours of war, of active preparations for it, and of the necessity there has been, and still is, of being constantly upon the *qui vive*, not knowing the moment when they might be involved in the great struggle. In France, that fertile land of revolutions, the prominent topics for the reviewers of 1877 will probably be the fierce struggle which has been going on during the greater part of the year, and is still going on between President McMahon, backed by the Papal Clergy, Monarchists and Buonapartists, on the one side, and the still infant Republic on