

THE MONTHLY RECORD,

OF THE

Church of Scotland

IN

"OVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK AND ADJOINING PROVINCES.

VOLUME XXVI.

MAY, 1880.

NUMBER V.

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."—Psalm 137, 4-6

THE LAW AND FAITH

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"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."—ROM. in 31.

The most striking peculiarity in this passage is that it goes over a very wide ground. The ideas contained in it extend over the whole of the sacred canon. Covering such a wide ground it harmonizes the Church under both dispensations, for the faith of the Christian Church is of the same nature as that of the Jewish. The former has God manifest in the flesh as its object, the latter has God the Father. Obedience to the moral standard is required of christians as well as of Jews. Faith and obedience were the two great requisites of the Jewish Church, the same are the requisites of the Christian Church. As the latter bears the same relation to the former that the branches do to the trunk follows that they are both the same, and that what is necessary for the preservation of the one is necessary for the preservation of the other. There is this difference however between the Christian and the Jewish Church, that the former realized Messiah, the latter only expected

him. The former has been cheered by his presence, and animated by his divine life, the latter has been destitute of all these blessings. But although there is such a difference between them yet what is necessary for their preservation remains the same. The faith of the christian must be of the same principle as that of Abraham and obedience to the injunctions of Christ is substantially the same as obedience to the moral law. The Jews charged the Apostle with overthrowing the law, but in the passage before us he justifies himself from such a charge. He shows that he did not teach any doctrine inconsistent with what the other inspired penmen taught nor with what is taught in the Scriptures as a whole. He did not mean to overthrow God's plan, but rather vindicated such doctrines as are consistent with the whole revealed word. There are two views regarding the word law in the passage before us.

- (1) That it means the Old Testament.
- (2) That it means law in a general sense embracing the civil, moral and ceremonial. Whatever view we adopt we find it favourable to the doctrine which the Apostle vindicates.

I. If it means the Old Testament then the whole thing is clear for the greater includes the less. The Old Testament chiefly consists of Moses and the Prophets