

## MONTHLY RECORD

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IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING."—*Psalms 137, v. 5.*

The following is the first of a series of short and simple discourses by ministers of our church. These are intended to appear from time to time—it is hoped every month. Perhaps the general reader, or he who enjoys the ministrations of some valued pastor every week, would prefer a general article to teaching cast into the mould of a sermon, which is so familiar, that it is divested of a certain interest. But, while general articles will not be wanting to the pages of the *Record*, we believe that such discourses will be acceptable and useful to a great number of our people who are without the regular ministrations of the sanctuary.

## Sermon

By the Rev. Allan Pollok, New Glasgow, N. S.

"Speaking the truth in love."—Eph. iv., 15.

The ungodly spirit will not receive and practice the whole truth of God. The conscience will not permit it to resist the truth altogether and declare open and implacable war. It is not yet prepared to say with the great fallen spirit: "To do aught good will never be our work." But while not prepared to advance the full length in rebellion, the ungodly man is as yet prepared to advance the needful length in a gracious obedience to the commands of God. The corrupt heart rebels against what the conscience pronounces to be right. Hence the commands of God are but partially obeyed.

This is very apparent in the manner in which the above advice of the apostle is followed among men. Many speak the truth, it

is true, but think that this is all that is required; they pride themselves in speaking the truth, no matter how distasteful it may be and how evil may be the consequences; they speak it not often out of season as in season; they take a savage delight in speaking an unkindly word, because it is true and speak ever as if they were invested with a special mission to rebuke the vices of the earth; they fulfil the first, but neglect the second part of the apostle's injunction, so beautifully modifying the sternness of truth. If thus they speak the truth in love, they would choose their time better; they would recommend the precious word by the proprieties of time, place, circumstances and persons; they would remember that medicine does not cure because it is nauseous, and that it is all the better of being administered in a pleasant form.

Others again are disposed to sacrifice the truth in some measure. With them, pleasure and popularity are everything, and truth next to nothing. They feel so much love, so much mistaken tenderness, so strong a desire to stand well with their fellows, that they tamper with truth, they flatter, they sacrifice truth to false delicacy, or a baser motive. They please their neighbor, but not "for his good, to edification."

A believing and amiable spirit will avoid both extremes. Wisdom will be "justified of all her children." The people of God, while they speak the truth, will speak it as Jesus spake it—"in love."

The phrase in the original is very peculiar. The word translated "speaking the truth" has the widest signification. It refers to truth in doctrine and to truth in heart. It means