

## MONTHLY RECORD

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IN NOVA SCOTIA AND THE ADJOINING PROVINCES.

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

## Sermon,

by the Rev. Thomas Jardine, of St. Matthew's Church, Halifax, N. S.

"The transgression of the wicked saith within his heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good. He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil." *Psalms 36: 1-4.*

Throughout the whole of this Psalm, there are eminently conspicuous the loftiest expressions and adorations of a devout enlightened mind. It is generally supposed to have been written some time after Saul had begun to manifest his jealousy and hatred to the inspired Psalmist, by repeated attempts to take away his life, and thereby frustrate the purposes of God, as they had been revealed by the mouth of Samuel the prophet. David knew that the name of the Lord was identified with his person, and that all who plotted against him were fighting against God. Accordingly, we find him in every part of the Psalms, characterizing his enemies as enemies of the Lord, and wicked men, and as such he earnestly prays for their destruction. Thus it is that his enemies are characterized in the Psalm before us, about seven years before the death of Saul, when David had been anointed at the command of the Lord, to be king over Israel. He knew that Saul, by his wickedness and hypocrisy, had alienated himself from the favor of the Lord, and had forfeited his kingdom. Saul was made aware of these circumstances; but instead of bowing to the decision of the Lord, he humbled himself on account of his trans-

gressions, he determined to retain possession of the kingdom and secure it for himself, by putting him to death who had been declared his successor. Various means were resorted to for accomplishing that object. Twice did he cause David to expose his life in battle against the Philistines, in the expectation that he would be slain. "Twice did he personally attempt to put him to death by a stroke of his javelin. Jonathan and all the servants of Saul had received instructions that they should put him to death, from which he was saved by the love of Jonathan. For a period of nearly seven years after he had escaped these dangers, he was the victim of unceasing persecution, from which he was only relieved by the death of Saul.

From the general tenor of this Psalm, it seems obvious that it was one or other, or all of these circumstances combined, that directed the mind of David, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, to give utterance to the verses before us, and it will be well to bear this in mind as we proceed in their exposition; for the subject is not confined in its application to individuals in any particular circumstances, or age, or nation. Wherever wickedness has existed—wherever the mercy, righteousness and loving kindness of the Lord have been manifested—wherever his protection has been experienced, the great truth which the Psalmist here sets forth is directly applicable. And although there is a change of subject at the fifth verse, yet it will be observed that there is a perfect unity of thought throughout the Psalm. In the first four verses the Psalmist contemplates and exposes the principles and actions of wicked men. In the fifth, by