

THE MONTHLY RECORD

OF THE

Church of Scotland

IN

NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK, AND ADJOINING PROVINCES.

VOL. XXII.

MARCH, 1876.

NO 2.3

“IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET ITS CUNNING.” Ps. 137, 4.5

L I N E S

Suggested by Mr. Herdman's noble Picture in the Exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy, (361) “A Conventicle

Preacher arrested and brought before a Justice Court.

By the author of “There is a Happy Land.”

Yes! there he stands, the injured and the good
With dauntless mien before a court corrupt:
He knows his cause is just, and that the God
Of truth and might will vindicate his claim.
What though an ermined Judge, a hostile
priest

Now sits in judgment—conscious in the power
Of a triumphant faith, with placid mind
He calmly eyes the scene, and trembles not:
Strong in the strength of an Almighty arm
That will not leave him, nor forsake him now,
Bound as a felon, though no crime was his,
Nor brand of infamy had stained his name;
This holy man—this shepherd of his flock—
This faithful watchman—driven from his place
Of Sabbath meeting, by a tyrant's law,
Seeks, with his scattered sheep to worship God
Among the heathy hills and silent glens
Of their own native land: the lofty sky
Their temple's canopy, the hills its walls;
And there the blessed gospel is proclaimed,
The bread is broken and the wine poured out,
The spirit falls upon them, like the dew
Upon the new-mown grass, and as the showers
That sweetly bless and beautify the earth.

Oh! in this sacred hour what hallowed joy,
What bliss ineffable inspires the soul.
As now, in rapt communion, they enjoy,
Amid those wilds—that lonely so itode—
The peace of God, an antepast of Heaven!
Oh! happy time; alas! too bright to last:
For now a dismal cloud o'erspreads their sky,

In rushing haste the fierce oppressor comes:
The silent air is rent with direful shouts
Of godless men, whose hands are red with
blood.

The smitten sheep are scattered, and the hills,
That lately echoed to the voice of praise,
Now sad reverberate the wail of woe.

Fear not, brave, faithful man, though captive
now,

In wicked hands, the God whom thou hast
served

Is able to deliver, and He will
Fear thou not them that may the body kill,
And aiter that have nothing they can do
A heartless soldiery may drag thee on,
And guard the portals of that hated hall
Where now thou art arraigned; be of good
cheer,

That blessed book now cast upon the ground,
That Word of life, will be thy comfort still;
And in this trying hour it will be given
To thee from God above what thou shalt
speak,

And let them do their worst—thou hast a hope,
A faith, a peace, which they can never know
Who persecute the servants of the Lord.
Thy pilgrim's staff and plaid, unneeded now
Thy faded garments all—will be exchanged
For that pure robe of spotless righteousness
Reserved for saints—the faithful unto death,
And on thy manly brow—now thin bespread
With silver locks—a shining diadem
Of deathless glory shall for ever rest;
And unto thee shall be the high award
Of those who, being wise, and many turned
To paths of righteousness, shall brightly shine,
As shines the starry firmament of heaven;
And from the Master's lips, in accents sweet
Of high approval, will the welcome come—
“Oh! faithful martyr, take the crown of life—
Receive thy just reward—and enter thou,
For evermore, the Paradise of God.”

A YOUNG.

Edinburgh, 30th April 1874.