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Church of Scotland

IN NOVA SCOTIA AND THE ADJOINING PROVINCES.

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FORGET THEM, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING."—Ps. 137, v. 5.

Action Sermon,

preached on the occasion of the Communion, by a Minister of the Lower Provinces, and published by request, in the Monthly Record.

"When ye come together, therefore, into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper."—1 Cor. xi: 20.

We intend to direct your attention, this morn-
ing, to the particular designation which
is here given of the interesting ordinance
which we are this day to celebrate. Paul calls
it the *Lord's Supper*. It is known by various
other names. It is frequently called the
Communion, in allusion to the passage, "The
bread which we break, is it not the commun-
ion of the body of Christ, the cup of blessing,
which we bless, is it not the communion of
the blood of Christ?" that is to say, do we
not, by the acts of eating the bread and drink-
ing the wine, so represent and renew our on-
eness with the body and blood of Christ, that
we participate in all the blessings which flow
from his broken body and his shed blood. It
is early called the *Eucharist*, a term com-
pounded of two Greek words, signifying the
giving of thanks. This term, however, is not
applied to it in the New Testament, but was
given it by the early Christian fathers, in
allusion to the feelings of gratitude with which
the ordinance should be observed. One of
the most common names by which it is known
also of human origin; we mean the *Sacra-
ment*. This is a Latin term, which was ap-
plied by the Romans to the oath of obedience
which was administered to their soldiers. The
Latin for this oath is *sacramentum*. The
term was early employed to designate bap-
tism and the Lord's supper, which were called
the two Sacraments, because it was thought

that in these ordinances we make the same
promise of fidelity and obedience to Christ
that the Roman soldier did to his general.
The abuse to which this has been put is a
proof of the danger of inventing epithets in
regard to such subjects, and shows us how
much better it is to content ourselves with
those which the Spirit has seen fit to employ.
The idea of a sacrament—of an oath-taking
—is the one universally associated with the
Lord's Supper. If you ask the great majori-
ty of those who seat themselves at the Lord's
table what they intend to do, they will tell
you that they mean to renew their covenant
vows. This is an important view to take of
the ordinance, but it is a very partial and im-
perfect one; yet it seems to be the only view
which many take of it, and this is probably
one great reason why so many keep back from
its observance. Their whole thoughts are
taken up with the solemn vows which are be-
fore them, and naturally feeling their weak-
ness and their proneness to err, they hesitate
about taking on themselves vows so very
binding in their nature. One would imagine
from their conduct that they were about to do
some great favor or important service to
Christ, instead of his conferring a favor on
them. We do not mean to say that the com-
municant does not take vows upon himself,
but what we object to is the looking at it ex-
clusively in this light, as so many seem to do;
and we think that the fact that vows in con-
nection with this ordinance are never once
alluded to in the New Testament, might lead
us to doubt if unnecessary stress has not been
laid on this view of the ordinance.

In the clause which we have taken as the
heading of this discourse, we have a descrip-