

# THE MONTHLY RECORD

OF THE

## Church of Scotland

IN

NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK, AND ADJOINING PROVINCES.

VOL. XXIII.

JANUARY 1877.

NO. 1.

*I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning.—Psalm 137, 4-5.*

### DILIGENCE AND DEVOTION.

A SERMON BY THE REV. D. MCKAY, OF GAIRLOCH, PREACHED AT CAPE JOHN, ON WEDNESDAY, JAN. 10. 1877, ON OCCASION OF THE PRESBYTERY VISITATION.

“And at even when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased &c. . . and in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place and there prayed.”—MARK I. 32 : 35.

Parallel passages—Matt. VIII. 16, 17, Luke IV. 40, 41, 42. Of these three narratives, that of Mark is the fullest. It contains an incident omitted altogether by Matthew, and only distantly alluded to by Luke,—Our Lord’s solitary prayer early in the morning. These and other differences between the three Evangelists in their relation of this passage in the life of Christ are characteristic of themselves as Evangelists, and of the objects which they had severally in view. Thus Matthew, the Jew, writing to the Jews, that in Christ they might be led to recognise the predicted Messiah, arranges his narrative so as to bring out therein the fulfilment of that prophecy in Isaiah regarding Christ which he quotes—“Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” Luke on the other hand whose object, as he tells us himself in the beginning of his Gospel, was to set forth in order, a declaration of the truth as it had been delivered by eye-witnesses, gives a connected narrative, describing first the cure of the sick, secondly the casting out and rebuking of the devils, and lastly Jesus’ departure. Mark, again, has always in view the Gospel realized in Christ and taught by Christ. He styles his narrative of that blessed life, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in the very first verse. He confines himself to the official life—the life of doing and preaching

and suffering—the gospel embodied. And he ends as he began, by telling us in the 15th verse of the last chapter that Jesus after having finished the Gospel by his resurrection commissioned his disciples to preach it to all the world, which they did, he tells us in the two last verses, after the Lord’s ascension, “the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.” The object of Mark, in the present instance, as always, is therefore to shew how the Gospel,—the good news of the kingdom of God, peace on earth and good-will towards men,—was accomplished and preached by Jesus Christ. It was his work to preach it; for therefore came he forth, and he did so by teaching on the Sabbath day in the synagogue, as in verse 21st, and that with authority and not as the Scribes. He confirmed his word thus authoritatively uttered by his wondrous works, which attested his doctrine in two ways. *first*, they testified its origin, as from God who only doeth wonderful works; and *secondly*, they testified to its nature, as a gospel of mercy and love. Thus you see that Jesus not merely spoke the Gospel, but did it; not merely taught the Gospel, but lived it, not merely brought the Gospel with him as a doctrine from heaven, but was that Gospel himself. He shewed forth its peace when he stilled the tempest on the sea, and the fiercer tempest in the souls of raging demoniacs. He testified of good will to men in deed as in word when he cured the sick. And in every work he did, as in every word he uttered, he gave glory to God in the highest. He was the Gospel; He did the Gospel; he spoke the Gospel; and by being doing, and speaking, he was always preaching the Gospel, and fulfilling the great object of his life. This passage then is an exhibition of the Gospel, in the person and work of Christ. Mark how the parallel passages, while chiefly illustrative of that view of Christ’s mis-