

# MONTHLY RECORD



OF THE

## Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia and the adjoining Provinces.

"IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING."—PSALM 137, 10.

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### SACRED LITERATURE.

#### The Decalogue;

A series of Discourses on the Ten Commandments, with an Introductory Essay and Concluding sermon. By Robert Gillan, D. D., Minister of St. John's Parish, Glasgow. Glasgow: T. Murray & Son.

These discourses were delivered by their talented and indefatigable author in the ordinary course of ministerial duty, and apparently without any view to publication. They afford every admirable specimen of those instructions which the present incumbent of St. John's Church is accustomed to provide, which have placed him in a high place in popular estimation, and secured for him, in a most unpromising locality, the adherence of a large, intelligent, and warmly attached congregation. Every part they exhibit strongly marked impressions of his own mind and character, and they could not fail to be listened to without manifestations of acceptance and satisfaction, which at once dictated the propriety of their being committed to the people in a permanent way, through the medium of the press. As a monument of pastoral diligence and fidelity, the volume possesses more than ordinary claims to respect and affection, and it will doubtless be received and regarded by those who are desirous of spiritual improvement as the cherished memorial of one who has their best interests sincerely and deeply at heart, who watches for their souls as he that must give account, who is willing both to spend and to be spent in their service, and has proved himself to be indeed a man that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly using the word of truth. But the merits of these discourses entitle them to occupy a far more exalted position than that for which they were originally intended; and in presenting them to the public, Dr. Gillan has rendered a most valuable service to the cause of truth and holiness. Such a testimony to the obligations of Christian morality was never more loudly called for, or calculated to be more admirably useful or more worthy of general attention than at the present day. The preacher has deeply and most importantly treated in the treatment of it has put forth all the energies of his acute and vigorous mind. His style is hackneyed and familiar, his glowing

and animated style has imparted all the interest and freshness of novelty. Sameness of arrangement could not be avoided, but it has been modified, and relieved by an agreeable and instructive variety of illustrations. An essay on moral obligation, designed to establish the unimpaired authority of the law, as a rule of conduct, forms a suitable introduction to the work; and an equally appropriate conclusion is supplied by an argument tending to show the insufficiency of the law, as the instrument of a sinner's justification, and fitted to shut up the reader to the necessity of accepting Christ as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Each of the Ten Enactments constitutes the theme of a separate discourse, in which the requirements of the law are pointed out with a distinctness and perspicuity, and enforced with a power and persuasiveness, which render them intelligible and impressive, and at the same time attractive and interesting, no less to the simple and unlearned than to the most refined and fastidious. A tone of lofty and devout sentiment pervades and animates the work from beginning to end, conveyed in strains of fervid and impassioned eloquence. Dr. Gillan has accomplished the task which he undertook with his characteristic ability, and has produced a book which well deserves, and we hope will obtain a large circulation. The fear of extending this article to an inconvenient length, prevents us from subjoining some quotations especially from his account of the law of the Sabbath, which forms a considerable and most valuable portion of the volume. We beg to recommend in strong terms the whole work to the favourable attention of our readers.—*Glasgow Herald.*

#### Reformers before the Reformation, principally in Germany and the Netherlands, Depicted;

By Dr. C. Allman. The Translation by the Rev Robert Menzies. Vol. 1. *The Seed of a Reformation, in reference to the General Spirit of the Church, and certain particular abuses.* Edinburgh. T. & T. Clark. 1855.

Of all the volumes of the foreign theological library, valuable as many of them are, that before us appears to be the most readable. Allman is universally esteemed one of the most

elegant writers in Germany. His works have none of that hazy mysticism which is so apt to be mistaken for profundity, and which, indeed, is so very profound that the writers themselves could scarcely tell you the meaning, if it should happen to have any. In the present case however, the thoughts, the language, the arrangements, are thoroughly English. Everything is just as it would have been, had the work proceeded from the pen of a learned and accomplished Englishman. Nor has the author been less fortunate in his translator. Mr. Menzies is thoroughly acquainted with the language and literature of Germany. Already from that great storehouse, he has given several important publications to the world with ability and success. Experience has improved his power, and we shall be surprised if for a long time we meet with any version superior to that now before us.

The subject is one of much interest. In the times of the Papacy there were many wise and good men who groaned under its burdens, and who were anxious that its abuses should be remedied. Such a change however, they were not destined to see. The time was not yet to come; but they strove to hasten its arrival, and did much by their labours to pave the way for a Reformation. Hitherto their merits have not met with the reward which they deserved. But their lustre was overshadowed by the greater glory of those who won the triumph. They were the pioneers, and without their exertions the field would not have been so well prepared for the advancing standards of the conquering armies. Allman, therefore, has done a service to the Church and to the cause of truth, by rescuing their names from that oblivion into which they had sunk, and where they seemed destined to remain. Those commemorated in the present volume are John of Goch and John of Wesel, both men of religion and of very considerable talent. Their works, of which they published many, had a very considerable influence on the spirit of the age, and even Luther himself confessed that he was much indebted to them. We are not much given to prophecy—that we leave to the learned men who devote themselves to this subject—but for once we will venture to predict that this will be one of the most popular works which the Messrs Clark have published. Of one thing we are certain—that it deserves to be so.—*The Edinburgh Evening Post and Scottish Record.*