

THE MONTHLY RECORD

OF THE

Church of Scotland

IN NOVA SCOTIA AND THE ADJOINING PROVINCES.

VOL. VIII.

MAY, 1862.

No. 5.

"IF I FORGOT TEBER, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET ITS GUNNING."—Ps. 137, a. 6.

SERMON,

By Daniel Moore. M. A.

"And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgement to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time. when I have a convenient season, I will send for thee."—Acts xxiv. 25.

THE Jews at Thessalonica spoke with much more truth than they were aware of, when, in describing the first introduction of Christianity into Europe, they exclaimed, "These that have turned the world upside down have come hither also." Christianity *did* turn the world upside down; and that not before it needed turning. Everywhere around were seen the tokens of spiritual disorder: men were judged of by false standards, actions were weighed in deceitful balances, laws were framed on erroneous principles, and every thing denoted that the moral world had flown from off its centre, or, under the action of some strange disturbances, had travelled far out of its appointed orbit. The time was come; therefore, when it was needful that a change should pass over the spirits of men; that there should be, not a revolution of thought alone, but a recasting of language. Moral qualities were losing all their distinctness, by being called out of their proper names; men delighted "to call evil good, and to call good evil; to put darkness for light, and light for darkness; to put bitter for sweet, and to put sweet for bitter."

But Christianity gave mankind a new vocabulary, taught them the right use of language, and made words to become (what they could scarcely have said to have been before) the true representatives of thoughts

and things. No purpose, either in politics or morals, seems to be answered by such conventions, as that a great general should ordinarily mean a great curse; that the most terrific scourge which can afflict humanity should be described as the glory of a nation's arms; that we should call a man high spirited, when we mean to say he is resentful; or proclaim him destitute of spirit, because he aims to resemble the meek and lowly Jesus. Delusions like these, however, never want either for advocates among teachers, or partisans among the taught. In every age there are to be found those who would "say to the seers, see not, and to the prophets, prophesy not unto us right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits;" and, on the other hand, there have rarely been wanting prophets, who, in compliance with such infatuated request, have been willing to prophesy their people into smooth destruction, and have been careful only that they should die an easy death.

Not so, however, the great apostle of the Gentiles; he would be a prophet in chains, and, before those "in high places," was bold to denounce "spiritual wickedness." He would neither prophesy deceits to obtain his own deliverance, nor smooth things to conciliate his judge. He was one of those who was to "turn the world upside down," and, therefore, was only pursuing his vocation when he turned a judgment-hall into a sanctuary, and made a pulpit of the prisoner's bar; showing how the accused might arraign his judge, and the judge be made so to tremble on his own tribunal, that he was glad to wave the man of chains away saying, "Go thy way