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"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem! let my right hand forget its cunning."—Ps. 137, v. 9.

VALEDICTORY DISCOURSE,

*Delivered by the Rev. William Murray, on
the occasion of his leaving Dalhousie, N. B.*

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Acts xx. 17-38.

WE are always conscious of a certain degree of solemnity when we perform an act for the last time, even though it be an act which is insignificant in itself. The last walk we take on the well-known road, the last lingering look we cast on the well-known scene, the last parting with dear friends,—these are always felt to be peculiarly affecting seasons; and they are fitted, if viewed aright, to be suggestive of profitable, if they are of regretful feelings, throwing the thoughts back on the past, and sending them forward insensibly to the future.

Especially must this be the case with the parting interview between a minister and his people. The matters transacted between them are of a peculiarly important nature: the relationship that has subsisted between them, whatever may have been its result, is about to terminate—the opportunities which have or might have been enjoyed during its continuance, are now to cease; how natural that, at such a season, both should think how they have improved these—how readily will their natural faults occur to them; and, if they are actuated by proper sentiments, they will look forward with no little anxiety to what may be the probable issue of the termination of such relationship—the minister, lest his labors should be lost; and his people, to the possible contingencies before them.

The parting interview between such a man as Paul and those to whom he had ministered for three long years, could not fail to be a peculiarly impressive one. Animated by an intense desire to promote their everlasting welfare; gladly spending and being spent among them, becoming all things to all men that so thereby he might save some; yea, moved even to tears in their behalf; he could not but care for them, the objects of so much solicitude, even as a parent does for his offspring; while they, on their part, appreciating this his earnest yearning over them, and grateful for the benefits which he had conferred on them, could not but cherish feelings of reciprocal and reverential attachment towards him, so that, as he expresses the sentiment elsewhere, they would have been willing, if necessary, to pluck out their own eyes and give them to him. He whom they so loved, who had so labored among them, and whom, doubtless, they had so often grieved by their unreasonable conduct, was about to disappear from among them for ever.

Though, alas! my friends, we must stand at a humble distance from the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and from the flock to whom he ministered, yet should our feelings on this occasion bear some small resemblance to those which distinguished this devoted champion of the Cross and the little company whom he addressed for the last time, and the reflections in which he indulged may form a not unsuitable theme for our present meditations.

Without limiting ourselves particularly to these, we shall at least adopt the arrangement observed in this address, we shall throw our thoughts back on the few years, of our con-