

THE MISSIONARY RECORD

OF THE

Free Church of Nova Scotia.

VOL. II.

HALIFAX, N. S., JANUARY, 1853.

NO. I.

THE BELIEVERS HOPE IN GOD.

PSALM 39th. 7th:—"And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee."

The psalmist seems to have been contemplating the vanity of all human and worldly enjoyments and prospects, and to have turned from these to his own more satisfactory and abiding portion, or source of delight: "and now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee." There were two points of view from which he contemplated the more common, or general, sources of happiness, and from which he received that character of vanity which he concluded as belonging to all of them, and which made him turn from them to God himself, and repose his hope in him. The one was the shortness of our sojourn in this world; so that the best and highest enjoyments are after all not worth so assiduously cultivating or caring for; our having to be so soon removed from them being sufficient to characterize them as worthless and vain. The other was their own nature, being in themselves unsatisfactory, so that life itself is but a vain shew, and we pass through it as actors on a stage: we vex ourselves in vain, and even heap up riches only that others may possess them. Seen from both these points of view, what is this world, and all that it can afford for our gratification or delight?—The Psalmist says: "make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days," and he adds: "Behold, thou hast made my days as an breath; and mine age is as nothing before thee." His days, then, were but as a handbreadth: they were as nothing compared with that vast, that infinite, and consequently immeasurable, and consequently unsearchable, and throughout which the Almighty

ty's years extended. At most, they were few, "three score years and ten"; and they might be fewer: they might not reach the utmost term of man's life. We cannot even count upon "three score years and ten." Our days may be cut short long before that term is reached.—How very few arrive at it! The most die in infancy, or in the prime of their days. The grave-yard tells this affecting truth. How brief then is the sum of our days! And how worthless, then, absolutely, is any object which is to be possessed only for so short a time! It is not worth our struggles for it; or it cannot be an object on which our hopes may rest, or round which our wishes may gather. It will disappoint us: or it may be torn from us: or we shall soon leave it, and whither we go it cannot follow us. There is not a more affecting lesson than is learned in the demise of those who had all that this world can command, whether of its riches or its honours. Such is the delusive effect of splendour and riches, that we are apt to forget that their possessor can die, even while no lesson is more forced upon us than that of our mortality. So strong is this tendency of our minds that the most impressive expedients have been resorted to in many instances to remind the possessor of wealth and honour, that he was but mortal, and would die like the poorest and humblest of his fellows.—When a king has been smitten from his throne, or any of the mighty of the earth have been removed, and laid in the funeral vault, with the line of their ancestors, darkness swallowing up the light of their former career, and the crown or the coronet left with them in the charnel house, where it can no more distinguish or a-