

# THE MONTHLY RECORD

OF THE

## CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

In Nova Scotia and the adjoining Provinces.

VOL. VII.

JULY, 1861.

No. 11.

"IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING."—Ps. 137, v. 5.

### Sermon,

By the Rev. Alexander Vinet.

"Things which have not entered into the heart of man."—1 Cor., xi. 9.

"I do not comprehend, therefore I do not believe." "The Gospel is full of mysteries, therefore I do not receive the Gospel."—Such is *one* of the favorite arguments of infidelity. To see how much is made of this, and what confidence it inspires, we might believe it solid, or, at least specious; but it is neither the one nor the other; it will not bear the slightest attention, the most superficial examination of reason; and if it still enjoys some favor in the world, this is but a proof of the lightness of our judgments upon things worthy of our most serious attention.

Upon what, in fact, does this argument rest? Upon the claim of comprehending everything in the religion which God has offered or could offer us. A claim equally *unjust, unreasonable, useless*. This we proceed to develop.

1. In the first place, it is an *unjust* claim. It is to demand of God what He does not owe us. To prove this, let us suppose that God has given a religion to man, and let us further suppose that religion to be the Gospel: for this absolutely changes nothing to the argument. We may believe that God was free, at least with reference to us, to give us or not to give us a religion; but it must be admitted that in granting it he contracts engagements to us, and that the first favor lays Him under a necessity of conferring

other favors. For this is merely saying that God must be consistent, and that he finishes what he has begun. Since it is by a writer: revelation He manifests his designs respecting us, it is necessary He should fortify that revelation by all the authority which would at least determine us to receive it; it is necessary He should give us the means of judging whether the men who speak to us in His name are really sent by Him; in a word, it is necessary that we should be assured that the Bible is truly the Word of God.

It would not indeed be necessary that the conviction of each of us should be gained by the same kind of evidence. Some shall be led to Christianity by the historical or external arguments; they shall prove to themselves the truth of the Bible as all history is proved; they shall satisfy themselves that the books of which it is composed are certainly those of the times and of the authors to which they are ascribed. This settled, they shall compare the prophecies in these ancient documents with the events that have happened in subsequent ages; they shall assure themselves of the reality of the miraculous facts related in these books, and shall thence infer the necessary intervention of Divine power, which alone disposes the forces of nature, and can alone interrupt or modify their action. Others, less fitted for such investigations, shall be struck with the internal evidence of the Holy Scriptures. Finding there the state of their souls perfectly described, their wants fully expressed, and the true remedies for their maladies completely indicated; struck with a character