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"IF I FORGOT THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET ITS CUNNING."—Ps. 137, v. 6.

Sermon.

By the Rev. Thomas Duncan, Charlottetown, P. E. Island, preached at the opening of the Synod, in St. Matthew's, Halifax, June 28th, 1861, Published by request.

"Even as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."—Eph. v. 25—27.

Many are the trials and vicissitudes, and singular, in many respects, the circumstances through which the Church has had to pass. Possessing, as it does, a history of events and changes such as from the ordinary nature of things, might have been expected, as well as many things of which we could possibly form no conception until their actual occurrence; yet that same history presents to us features which are of the very highest importance to us in our sojourn here below. Even to the mere student of ordinary history it must at all times be interesting to be able to trace the rise and progress, the movements—sometimes apparently retrograde, and sometimes progressive—of the Church; the one great central idea being unswervingly carried out, becoming as time passes, more clearly and fully developed, whilst; it may be, the details are allowed a certain scope of movement and of change. Interesting, especially, it must be to be able to trace, in a clear and well authenticated history, the records of the varied dealings of God with man, and at the same time, to have placed side by side with these, for purposes of comparison, the return dealings

of man with God. Interesting, we might reasonably suppose, and yet strange, exceedingly strange, the tale that is there related. Surpassing all conjecture on the one hand, the interest and concern displayed by our Heavenly Father in the affairs of man; and still stranger, passing all belief—were it not that it agrees with our ordinary and daily experience—passing all conception, the extraordinary manner in which this care and interest and unbounded benevolence have been appreciated and received by an ungrateful race. Truly it is an interesting and yet astounding record—astounding in its recital of God's extraordinary mercy and regard for his creatures, and still more startling in the singular discoveries it makes of man's more than base acknowledgment of his Father's bounty. To one prominent feature of that record we would look to-day.

Christ loved the Church! Come, then, let us read that history; take it up item after item, page after page. If anywhere, we will find the fact there fully illustrated. Why, then, take that history. Read it, yes read it carefully, attentively; take it from the very first instalment of man into the honours and offices of life, surrounded as he was with those sweet scenes; the pleasant gifts, the extraordinary blessings of his first abode. From that period, down through all time, read that mercy displayed at the Fall,—a mercy not only that spared, but that ushered in greater blessings even than had ever been bestowed before: then that guardianship exhibited to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the founders and then almost the only represen-