

# THE MONTHLY RECORD



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**Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia and the adjoining Provinces.**

"IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING."—PSALM 137, *it.*

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**CRITICAL NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.**

**THE RELATION BETWEEN PIETY AND INTELLECTUAL LABOUR.** An address delivered at the opening of the fourteenth session of Queen's College, By Rev. Professor George, Vice-Principal of the University, Kingston, 1855.

We have perused this address with profit, pleasure, and gratitude. Whether as regards the subject of it or the manner in which it is treated we cannot conceive a more appropriate one for the opening of a College session. Altogether apart from the decided proof which it affords of the possession, by the author, of a high order of talent, it must be to parents and guardians, a most satisfactory testimony of the kind of discipline and training to which the students attending Queen's College are subjected. Than the student there is no person who feels with greater temptation to overlook the importance of piety as an aid to intellectual labour, and there is no period of life when the excellent sentiments and sound principles enunciated with such manly eloquence in this address, need to be enforced more frequently or more earnestly, than when the fascinations of Literature and Science command the expanding powers and exert the efforts of the youthful mind. Professor George has obviously chosen his subject in view of these facts. The choice is not less happy than the discussion is masterly. The theme and its illustrations are equally suited to the time, the place, and the audience. Our fervent prayer is, that the young men who were privileged to listen to the Professor on this occasion, may be preserved from the dangers, while they contend with the difficulties of a student's life, and that leaving the halls of College, as recently pious as well as learned, their sole occupation of the watchtowers of our souls may be blessed to the salvation of their souls. We subjoin a portion of the

author's illustration of the importance of piety as an auxiliary to the study of physical science

C. K.  
 "As all our bodily wants are supplied from matter, it is natural that matter and its laws should be studied with great diligence. But in addition to the wish to obtain supplies from matter for bodily wants, the lovers of science, whether their field be chemistry, geology, or some department of natural history, will aim chiefly at ascertaining the great laws of nature, in the innumerable beautiful connections which God has established between causes and effects. These speculations of intellect are very pleasing, and in many ways very profitable. Now, although it is true that some natural philosophers who were notorious for their impiety, have made contributions to physical science, yet, it will not be denied, by those competent to judge, that such men have, rather been the expounders and applicators of principles, than the discoverers of great truths. This is an important distinction. Any navigator may now go to the West Indies, but it required a Columbus at first, to discover the way. The mote of impiety in the mind's eye, in many ways, unfits it for making discoveries in nature. Infidels should rather ponder this than sneer at it, for whether they believe it or no, it is, nevertheless true, that the *high priests*, whom God admits within the veil of nature, to see its hidden laws, are those who approach the Holy of Holies with clean hands, and a pure heart.

Linnæus, one of the greatest of natural philosophers, appears to have gone to his work every morning after devout prayer, and to have closed the labour of each discovery with the hymn of adoring praise to God. Nearly the same may be said of Davy, and others who have occupied the highest places as successful investigators of the laws of nature. With these wonderful men it was no poetical fiction, that nature, with its star-fretted roof, and its floor inlaid with oceans, mountains, and plains, is a

great temple, in which the heart was to give profound homage to God, while the intellect was employed in investigating His works. It is, indeed, deeply interesting to observe how these great men found in this temple, from its suns and stars down to its plants, insects, and pebbles, vast and beautiful thoughts of His wisdom, power, and goodness, who created and sustains the whole. We are struck with their enthusiasm in prosecuting their researches, but are apt to forget that the enthusiasm which enabled them to accomplish so much in unfolding the laws of nature, was but the form that their piety took in doing homage to the God of nature. It was indeed their ardent love and reverence for Him, that kindled and preserved alive their enthusiasm which no disappointment could quench and no labour wear out. If I may so speak, their piety furnished them with a kind of compass, telescope, and microscope, which enabled their intellect to go further and to see further and deeper into nature than it otherwise could have done."

P.S.—Since writing the above notice we have learned, with great gratification, that to give Professor George his due we must henceforth address him differently. At a meeting held on Monday, the 9th December last, the Senatus of our own Alma Mater—the ancient and flourishing University of Glasgow—while awarding honours to other deserving individuals, conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity on "the Rev. James George, Vice-Principal of Queen's College, Kingston, Canada West." We heartily congratulate Dr. George on the event, and we hope he may be long spared to wear as he has won, honourably, so high a distinction.

"The End:" by Dr. Cumming.

Whether as a preacher or as an author, Dr Cumming of London is undoubtedly, at the present day, one of the most distinguished clergymen, either of our own or of