

THE REV. DR. COOK'S CLOSING ADDRESS TO THE SYNOD.

We subjoin a short extract from the *MODERATOR'S ADDRESS*, (The Rev. Dr. Cook, of Quebec) delivered at the close of the late Meeting of Synod in Montreal. After stating that past experience of God's great and gracious interpositions in behalf of his Church and people furnishes ground of expectation, and a plea to be urged in prayer for further manifestations of His favour, and that by considering such interpositions, the servants of God had often comforted and encouraged themselves, he proceeded:—

"Thus it was, that the prophet did, when in the loftiest strains of inspired eloquence, he uttered the sublime expostulation, "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head; they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." He was looking forward in prophetic anticipation to the sad season of the captivity at Babylon, when the Jewish church and nation suffered under calamities greater than had ever befallen them at any former period of their history. Then Zion was a wilderness, and Jerusalem a desolation, and their holy and beautiful house, where their fathers praised the Lord, was burned up with fire. The gates of Zion were sunk into the ground; her king and her princes were among the Gentiles. The law was no more, and her prophets found no vision of the Lord. The ways of Zion did mourn, because none came to the solemn feasts. All her gates were desolate; her priests sighed; her virgins were afflicted, and she was in bitterness. Her adversaries were the chief; her enemies prospered; and from the daughter of Zion all her beauty was departed. It was a season of calamity sufficient almost to have justified despondency in the mind of a Jew. Every object of national reverence and attachment was destroyed. The sword of the oppressor was triumphant. Every family was involved in the sweeping desolation, and the children of the promise were driven into ignominious captivity, from that good land to which their fathers had been brought by the high hand and the outstretched arm of Jehovah. It seemed, indeed, as if the Lord had forsaken his people—as if their sins had provoked him to cast them off forever, and he had at last forgotten to be gracious. But, strong in faith, the prophet looked not alone to what was alarming and distressing in the condition of his country. He cast his eye back on the marvellous history of his nation, and on God's dealings with them in the ages that were past. And from the contemplation of the gracious interpositions in

former days, he drew the assurance that the like would yet be vouchsafed. Splendid, indeed, was the long record of his country's deliverances by the hand of Jehovah. He could not be unmindful of the recent interposition of God in behalf of Judah, when the angel of the Lord went forth into the camp of the Assyrians, and smote the thousands of Sennacherib, and throughout the whole history of his nation, there were the like proofs of Jehovah's interference in their favour. But his mind, like the minds of all his countrymen of all ages, turned most readily to that deliverance from Egyptian bondage which the Lord had wrought for their fathers; and well, indeed, might he dwell on the glories of that eventful period. Then it was, that God cut Rahab and wounded the dragon; smote their Egyptian task-masters, and tamed the pride of the fierce tyrant who oppressed his people. Then had Israel left in safety the land of his captivity, while from the very family of the Egyptians, there was heard the cry of mourning for the first born. Then it was that the arm of the Lord made the depths of the sea a way for them to pass over, while the countless hosts of Pharaoh sank like lead in the mighty waters. Then did God guide them through the wilderness—daily spreading his cloud above them, and nightly lighting up his pillar of fire to direct their path, and tell them of his presence. Then had manna fallen from heaven, and water gushed forth from the flinty rock, to satisfy their wants. Then had the warlike nations of Canaan fled before the wanderers of the desert; the sun stayed his course that their victory might be complete; Jordan was driven back that the people might enter on their inheritance; the walls of the enemy fell at the sound of their trumpets; and the land that flowed with milk and honey was won for the chosen of the Lord. Oh, as he thought of these marvellous doings of God for his church and his people, was it not most natural for the prophet to treat that similar interposition might again be vouchsafed? "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old." And was it not natural for him to expect, that as God had done such great things in time past, he would not be slow to save in the time to come? that as he had burst the chains of Egyptian bondage, so he would yet turn the captivity of Zion? that as he had of old, made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed of the Lord to pass over, therefore the redeemed of the Lord should return from their long captivity and come to Zion with singing, and the sorrows of seventy years be forgotten in the restored prosperity of their nation. And the event has taught the church in similar circumstances to imitate his example. His prayer was heard. His expectations were answered. The arm of the Lord did awake. The princes of the heathen were moved to send back the children of the captivity into their own land. The civil and ecclesiastical polity of the Jewish nation was again established. Jerusalem rose in new splendour from its ruins, and a temple was built, of which it was pre-