

# THE MONTHLY RECORD

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IN NOVA SCOTIA AND THE ADJOINING PROVINCES.

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

### Sermon,

#### PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES.

By the Rev. J. M. McCulloch, D. D., Minister of the West Church, Greenock.

“But ye are come unto Mount Zion.”—Heb. xii. 22.

The object of the Apostle in here reminding the Hebrew believers of their high privileges as Christians, is to dissuade them from going back to Judaism. He admits that they were under strong temptation to apostatize, in order to escape the hostility of their unbelieving countrymen. “But do not yield,” he says, “to this temptation. Recollect the blessed exchange ye made by passing from the Law to the Gospel. Why return to Sinai with its terrors? Why consent again to meet God amid the withering splendours of His unpropitiated justice? Why forego, for any mere temporal advantage, the honor and blessedness of fellowship with Christ and His Church? Who would resume the chain of the bondman, after having tasted the sweets of freedom? ‘Look diligently lest any of you fall from the grace of God: For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire; but ye are come unto Mount Zion.’”

It is thus as an incitement to Christian duty that the Apostle here reminds the Hebrews of their privileges. And it is with the like view that I now propose to offer a few remarks illustrative, First, of the peculiar Privileges of Christ's Church; and Secondly, of the correspondent Duties.

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Need I premise, that by Christ's Church, I mean, not any visible church, but the collective body of all true believers? Some religionists confound these two, and challenge for their own particular communion the distinctive privileges of Christ's Church. But this is to err, not knowing the Scriptures. We read in the New Testament of many particular churches,—as the church at Jerusalem, the church at Corinth, the churches of Galatia; each of them, doubtless, entitled to the name of Christian church, as justly, to say the least, as any of the religious bodies which now divide Christendom. Yet not one of them singly, not all of them together, is ever described as *the* Church of Christ,—the Church of which He is the Head. The only Church whereof such glorious things are spoken, is—“the blessed company of all faithful people.” The Church of which Christ is the Head is an invisible community, which is ever gathering out of the many visible churches, and training for heaven, and transmitting thither whatsoever is devout and holy in each. The Church, which is Christ's body, has no members but living members. And hence those men quite wrest the Scriptures, who claim *its* name and privileges for any of the mixed and often ill-sorted communities of professing Christians on earth.

I. What are the peculiar privileges of the members of Christ's Church? They are threefold:—

The first and greatest, because the foundation of all the rest, is—*Union with Christ.*

By the constitution of the scheme of re-