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VOLUME XXIV

NUMBER X.

THE
MONTHLY RECORD,

—OF THE—

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,

—IN—

NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK

—AND—

ADJOINING PROVINCES.

OCTOBER,



1878.

PICTOU, N. S.:

PRINTED AT "THE COLONIAL STANDARD" OFFICE,

1878.

IF EACH MOMENT.

BY E. NORMAN GUNNISON.

If each moment of infinite gladness
That unto us mortals are given,
Were not followed by infinite sadness,
Then this earth might seem dearer than Heaven.
If our joys were not followed by sorrow,
If our woes did not shadow our bliss,
We should not care for any to-morrow,
But rest well contented with this.

If our hearts were but sure of each pleasure,
If we saw not an end to each joy,
We should lay not in Heaven our treasure,
Where no rust can corrode or destroy.
But there is not a joy without sadness,
And there is not a bliss without pain,
And the pattering footfall of gladness,
Lies close to the drip of the rain.

He knows what is best for us ever,
Or whether 'tis laughter or woe,
He leadeth our footsteps, that never
Can stray if He bids them to go.
The way may seem darksome and weary,
And clouded and shadowed may be,
But the heart it can never be weary,
If only it lean upon Thee.

So close when the sunshine is fading,
And closer when shadow shall fall,
We follow Thy way without turning,
And go where the Master may call.
We answer Thee, Lord, without pleading;
Of whether by day or by night,
Contented to follow Thy leading,
And knowing it endeth in light.

LIGHT ON THE DAILY PATH.

He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding.

The Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering.—The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Be ye . . . followers of God as dear children; and walk in love.—The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.—This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. Christ . . . suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.

HOME PIETY.

It is in the family life that a man's piety gets tested. Let the husband be cross and surly, giving a slap here and a cuff there, and see how out of sorts everything gets? The wife grows cold and unaimable too. Both are turned on one key. They vibrate in unison giving tone for tone, rising in harmony or discord together. The children grow up saucy and savage as young bears. The father becomes callous, peevish, hard—a kind of two legged brute with clothes on. The wife bristles in self-defence. They develop an unnatural growth and sharpness of teeth, and the house is haunted by ugliness and domestic brawls. Is that what God meant the family to be—He who made it a place for Love to build her nest in, and where kindness and sweet courtesy might come to their finest manifestations? The divine can be realized. There is sunshine enough in the world to warm all. Why will not men come out of their caves to enjoy it? Some men make it a great point to treat every other man's family well but their own—have smiles for all but their kindred. Strange, pitiable picture of human weakness, when those we love best are treated worst; when courtesy is shown to all save our friends! If one must be rude to any, let it be some one he does not love—not to wife, sister, brother or parent. Let one of our loved ones be taken away, and memory recalls a thousand sayings to regret. Death quickens recollections painfully. The grave cannot hide the white faces of those who sleep. The coffin and the green ground are cruel magnets. They draw us farther than we would go. They force us to remember. A man never sees so far into human life as when he looks over a wife or mother's grave. His eyes get wondrous clear then, and he sees as never before what it is to love and be loved; what it is to injure the feelings of the loved.

THE MONTHLY RECORD,

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Church of Scotland

IN

NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK AND ADJOINING PROVINCES.

VOLUME XXIV.

OCTOBER, 1878.

NUMBER X.

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."—Psalm 137, 4-5.

SERMON BY REV. WILLIAM M. TAYLOR, D.D.

GOD'S MESSAGE TO THE DESPONDING.

"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God."—Isaiah 1. 10.

It is not, as you see from these words, anything unheard of or impossible, that a child of GOD should "walk in darkness and have no light." And when the sadness of such an experience comes upon the saint, it will not be always safe to say that it is the shadow of some special sin. No doubt, when we hear DAVID cry, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation," we are right in concluding that if he had not committed that great transgression which stains his name, he could not, at that time at least, have needed to present such a petition. So, also, when we see ELIJAH "under the juniper tree," and hear his pitiful wail, "O LORD, take away my life now," we cannot but feel that his flight from the sense of my duty is bearing its appropriate fruit: But the case described in my text is different from these. It is that of one who even at the moment "feareth the LORD, and obeyeth the voice of his servant," while yet he has lost the radiant happiness of the new life, and is sinking under the weight of spiritual

despondency. Many would say flippantly that a Christian must be very feeble indeed if he is ever in such a state; and some would say cruelly, that he who permits himself thus to be "in heaviness," cannot be a Christian at all. But all such unqualified assertions spring out of a shallow philosophy, and a superficial experience. For GOD does not change toward us with the mutations of our frames and feelings. Our salvation depends on CHRIST, and not on our emotions regarding it. They may rise and fall like the waves of ocean, but He and the salvation which is in Him are as stable as the stars. The security of the saint is rooted in the fact that GOD has a hold of him, and not at all in his consciousness that he has a hold of GOD. His comfort may be affected by the latter, but his safety is due entirely to the former. Hence they who roundly affirm that if a man be walking in darkness and finding no light he cannot be a Christian, are making salvation depend, not on GOD's work for a man and in him, but simply and entirely on his own emotions. Moreover, they are strangely oblivious of some of the best known passages in the history even of the most eminent saints. Out of what other experience than that of despondency was such a Psalm as the Forty-second born? Yet who will say that its author, even at the

very moment when he was singing it, was not truly a child of God? Whence came that pathetic undertone that trembles beneath some of PAUL's richest autobiographic passages, if not from the occasional distress that comes over every thoughtful man as he becomes increasingly conscious of the distance between him and his ideal?—or, as he hears, now fainter and now more distinct, like the roar of the surge upon the shore, the unceasing sound of the sins and sufferings of mankind? Whence, again, that soothing utterance of PETER, as he says to his friends, "Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness," if not from his own experience of the effect of suffering on a sensitive and ardent nature?

Thus it is not only uncharitable but untrue to say that despondency must be always traced to sin; and he who unfeelingly alleges that if a soul be in sadness it has never been really renewed, may yet be led to revise his theory of the Christian life, as he passes through some valley of shadow, or lies in some dark Gethsemane, sobbing out the cry, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Immense harm has been done sometimes to a timid, shrinking, yet conscientious spirit, by such thoughtless and unsympathetic utterances; so let it stand out clear and distinct before you this morning, as the first inference we draw from this text, that a man may be a sincere, earnest, and devout follower of the LORD JESUS, and yet "be walking in darkness."

But while his despondency furnishes no valid reason for calling the genuineness of his religion in question, it is very far from being a comfortable thing in itself. It is not a state of mind in which any one desires to remain. And he should be encouraged to get out of it as quickly as possible. For it puts everything about him into shadow. It sets all his songs to a minor key. It gives to all

his prayers a wailing pathos. It takes away much of his buoyancy and elasticity for work. And it stamps his countenance with a settled melancholy, which gives to those around him a disagreeable impression as to the results of serving God. It is, therefore, in every way desirable, both for his own happiness and for the good of others, that he should be brought out of the darkness into the light.

Now, it may contribute to the production of that result if I turn your thoughts for a little to the causes out of which despondency may spring, and to the counsels which in this text are given to those who are suffering from it.

Adverting, then, to the causes of spiritual despondency, I mention first, that it *may spring from natural temperament*. However we may account for it, whether on the principle of hereditary transmission, or on that of special characteristic being given directly by God to every man, it is the fact, that each of us is born with a certain predisposition to joy or sadness, to irascibility or patience, to quickness of action or deliberateness of conduct, which we call temperament. And it is also true, that while conversion may Christianize that temperament, it does not change it. The sanguine man does not become after conversion a melancholy man. But then, on the other hand, the man of melancholy temperament is not made over into the sanguine when he comes to CHRIST. The LORD takes men as they are, and works in and through their very idiosyncrasies, so as to produce in His Church that unity in variety which is the charm of the physical universe.

Now, there are some men to whom Christianity altogether apart, it comes as natural to be joyful as it does to the lark to sing its morning crol as it mounts into mid-heaven. And there are others, alas! whose disposition inclines them always to look on the darker side of things. In the former case there is no merit in

the gladness, just as in the latter there is no blame in the sadness. In truth, if we were to get at all the facts of both cases, we might see that the man who was so generally desponding had in reality made far more exertion to cultivate joy than the other had done. For we are often shamefully unjust in our estimates of our fellows. In a class at school the first prize is often gained by a boy who did nothing to secure it. God made him so bright and quick that he could not help out-distancing all the rest, while the boy in the middle was perhaps ten times more diligent than he; but, not having such original capital to work on, he made a poorer show. And in the same way many a man gets credit for good temper, who never knew what it was to be provoked; while he who has restrained his explosiveness by great effort nine times, is reputedly a fiery tempered man, because the dynamite got the better of him on the tenth. We don't know what is restrained, we only know what comes out. And the same thing holds in this matter of despondency. We see the melancholy, but we do not see and we cannot know the daily efforts and prayers that are made by the man to overcome it. But CHRIST knows. And He will not be unjust like men. He will not make it, as men so often do, a thing to banter and ridicule you for. He knows it is a real trial, and He will give you honor in proportion to your effort to get above it. Do not fret, therefore, over that which is the result of temperament. Keep resisting it, and take to yourself the helping hand which the LORD stretches down to you in the precious injunction of my text.

Again, *spiritual despondency may be caused by disease.* The connection between the soul and the body is both intimate and mysterious. They act and react upon each other; so that while it is true that the power of the will may keep the body up under protracted and severe labor, it is also true that the con-

dition of the body tinges and affects the experience of the soul. That which we call *lowness of spirits* is very often the result of some imprudence in diet, or some local disturbance. It would not do, of course, to resolve all spiritual phenomena thus into the consequences of our physical state. But every one who has given attention to the subject in any degree knows that the sound body is in all ordinary cases necessary to the sound mind; and I believe that a Christian physiologist could render no better service to many desponding spirits than by preparing a work which should treat of the effects of different diseases on religious experience. I know that in the course of my pastoral life, now extending nearly to a quarter of a century, I have seen many phases of so-called spiritual depression, or exultation, which I could only account for under GOD, from the nature of the maladies with which the different individuals have been afflicted. Thus I have literally waded with a friend for months through the swelling river, and battled with the waves of despondency that were breaking over him; yet, though I knew that he was a noble Christian, I did not lose my faith either in him or in God, because his disease was of the liver, and he saw things through a jaundiced eye. Again, I have heard great words of joyful confidence, and even of ecstasy come from those whose natures I knew were wanting in depth and stability, and if the truth must be told I did not set much store by them, for their disease was one which excited to hopefulness, and tended to lull every suspicion to sleep.

Now see the relief which all this affords. It removes from religion the responsibility for the depression of such a man as COWPER, and traces his spiritual gloom to disease of the brain; while, on the other hand, it takes away from Christianity all reproach for the hypocrisy of the man who, while he seemed to be on his death-bed, talked with the

unction of a saint, and then got well again, to transgress like an abandoned sinner; for there, too, the exhilaration was due to the nervous character of the malady under which he was suffering. Many, I fear, will doubt these things; but when they have been at as many sick-beds and death-beds as I have been, they may see reason to revise their opinion. At any rate, I am sure of this, that spiritual depression is very often the first indication of bodily disease, and that the medical attendant is fully as necessary in many cases as the spiritual adviser. Now when we can trace our despondency to such a cause, it will cease to be a thorn to us. It will weigh heavily upon us, indeed, but it will no longer seem to us as if the LORD had deserted us, and so the trial will be deprived of its sting. One whom I knew had the Seventy-seventh Psalm read to him while he lay dying, and when he heard the tenth verse, "And I said this is my infirmity," he broke in with these words, "That's my liver. My soul and body so act one upon the other. With the liver wrong, the mind gets clouded, and I feel as though GOD had swept me out of His house as useless; but after He has taken so much trouble to mold the vessel, He will not throw it aside." There you see was depression, but without the sting, and the reason was because the sufferer recognized the spiritual effect of his disease.

But I hasten to remark further that *spiritual despondency is often the result of trial*. Think of PETER's words: "Ye are in heaviness through manifold trials." One affliction will not usually becloud our horizon. But when a whole series of distresses comes on us in succession, the effect is terrible. First, it may be, comes sickness, and we are getting round from that when business difficulties overwhelm us. These are scarcely arranged before bereavement comes; and while we are still in the valley, we are set upon by APOLYTON in the shape of some scan-

dalous accuser who seeks to rob us our good name. Thus we are for years it may be, passing through an experience like that of the sailor who is seeking round a stormy cape, and is continually baffled by some cause or other, so that for weeks, as each morning breaks, there is still the same weariful headland before him, and he has to begin anew. On those who have passed through such a series of afflictions, and who can say the words of the old prophet, "He has barked my fig-tree and made it clean bare," can tell how much there is in such a history to weigh the spirit down. Nay, the same effect may be produced by the mere monotony of our labours without any special affliction. To have the same things to do day after day for years; to fill in one's constant round of duties with gin-horse regularity; to feel as the years revolve, that one is degenerating more and more into a machine; who among us has not experienced a depression which is caused by such a history? How many of us can enter into the feelings which FABER thus pathetically describes:

"Love adds anxiety to toil,
And sameness doubles cares;
While one unbroken chain of work,
The flagging temper wears."

O ye mothers and housekeepers, you know what is meant by the assent that sameness doubles cares; and it is when such a burden is lying most heavily upon the heart that the words of our text come to us with their soothing influence, as sometimes the music of a psalm chanted by a wandering street singer steals into a troubled dream, and awakes us to comfort and security.

But to mention no more, *spiritual despondency may be caused by mental perplexity*. We are living in an age when the spirit of inquiry and bold independent criticism is abroad. The sacred things of our faith are assailed. The old beliefs are once more on the trial, and when a youth reaches the age when he must exchange a tradition

Piety for a personal conviction, he is plunged for the time into the greatest misery. It seems to him almost as if everything were giving way beneath him. One assails him on the supernatural character of CHRIST; another on the authority of the Scriptures; and others, bolder still, will question even the existence of God to him. And so he is launched on a black and stormy sea, over which he toils in rowing, and even when in the fourth watch the LORD appears to him marching over the waves, he is so broken down that he mistakes the Master for a ghost, and is terrified and affrighted. I tell you, friends, that when a soul is called to pass through such an ordeal it is no mere superficial anxiety that is felt. It is agony—deep, intense, enduring; and I charge you when your children are wrestling their way through it, that you do not upbraid them or blame them, but help them by entering into their difficulties, and removing if you can every stumbling-block from their path. And let those who are thus walking in darkness take to themselves the comfort of my text, and walk on in the full assurance that there is light beyond.

II. But now it is time to look at the COUNSELS TO THE DESPONDING which are given or suggested by this text. And here, very evidently, the first thing to be said is that *the oppressed spirit must keep on fearing the LORD and obeying the voice of His servant*. Whatever happens these must not be given up. Nothing whatever can furnish any proper reason for ceasing to practise them; while on the other hand the neglect of them will only deepen the darkness that is already over you. If, therefore, your depression comes from temperament, or disease, or trial, never think of giving up God and His service. The tunnel may be long, but it will come to an end at last, if only you will go through it. But if you stand still in it you will be always in its darkness. Walk on, therefore, and

whatever you feel let no evil be wrought by you, but keep steadily in the path of rectitude. And if you are involved in sceptical difficulties, let the same principle regulate you. Amid all your doubts you must accept some things as certain; hold by these, then, and act up to them, so will you prove that you are a docile learner and put yourself into a position where you will catch the first glimpses of returning light.

Very instructive in this regard is the experience recorded by Frederick W. Robertson, of his striving toward the light, in that terrible spiritual conflict which he fought out among the solitudes of the Tyrol. In one of his letters written there he says: "Some things I am certain of, and these are my *Ursachen*, which cannot be taken away from me. I have got so far as this: Moral goodness and moral beauty are realities, lying at the basis, and beneath all forms of the best religious expression." And, generalizing from his own case, he thus addressed the working-men of Brighton, in words which I delight to quote, because, though I did not meet with them until after I had written the former part of this discourse, they corroborate in the strongest manner what I have already said:

It is an awful hour—let them who has passed through it say how awful—when this life has lost its meaning and seems shrivelled into a span; when the grave appears to be the end of all, human goodness nothing but a name, and the sky above this universe a dead expanse, black with the void from which God himself has disappeared. In that fearful loneliness of spirit, when those who should have been his friends and counsellors only frown upon his misgivings and proudly bid him stifle his doubts. I know but one way in which a man may come forth from his agony scatheless: it is by holding fast to those things which are certain still—the grand, simple landmarks of morality. In the

darkest hour through which a human soul can pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain. If there be no God and no future state, yet even then it is better to be generous than selfish; better to be chaste than licentious; better to be true than false; better to be brave than a coward. Blessed beyond all earthly blessedness is the man who, in the tempestuous darkness of the soul, has dared to hold fast these venerable land-marks! Thrice blessed is he who, when all is cheerless within and without when the teachers terrify him, and his friends shrink from him, has obstinately clung to moral good! Thrice blessed because his night shall pass into clear, bright day.

If there be any young man before me passing through this terrible ordeal, let him take to himself the direction and the comfort of these eloquent sentences. Or, if he would have the same thing in homelier phrase, let him remember that only by acting up to the level of our present convictions can we rise to higher things. Sometimes an evil life has led to a shipwreck of the faith; but always a good character clarifies the spiritual perception; for has not Jesus said, "If any man be willing to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God"? Keep your conduct abreast of your conscience, and very soon your conscience will be illumined by the radiance of God.

But to the desponding believer the second thing to be said is, *Keep on trusting God.* What a blessed privilege it is to be permitted to do that! My Bible would not be so precious to me as it is to-day if I could not read these words in it: "Let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon the God." When we cannot see, it is an unspeakable blessing to have some hand to cling to; and when that hand is God's, it is all right. But let us take the full comfort of these sayings. "Let him trust in the name of the Lord." What

is that name? It is "Jehovah, God merciful and gracious; long-suffering; purifying iniquity, transgression, and sin; and who will by no means clear the guilty. Therefore I need not despair about my guilt, for there is forgiveness with him. What is that name? Jehovah Tsidkenu—the Lord our righteousness. Therefore we may in him have "boldness in the Day of Judgment." What is that name? It is Jehovah Rophek—the Lord that healeth thee. Therefore I may bring all my spiritual maladies, and this of despondency among them, to Him for cure. What is that name? It is Jehovah Jireh—the Lord will provide. Therefore in every time of strait I may rest assured that He will give me that which is needful. What is that name? It is JEHOVAH NISSI—the LORD my banner; and as I unfurl that signal and wave it over me, I may see in it the symbol of His protection. What is that name? It is JEHOVAH SHALOM—the LORD of peace; and so, beneath His sheltering wing, I may be forever at rest.

DONT FRET.

Some people are fretting from early morning to dewy eve. It does no good either to themselves or others. Such persons simply make themselves and those around them uncomfortable. There is a great deal in the cultivation of an agreeable temper with respect to trivial events. A certain degree of indifference is essential to comfort. We may safely say of many things, "Well, it will not make much difference after all," when, if we gave way to a natural feeling of disappointment an irritation—perhaps of indignation—they would keep us awake. There are few things about which a sensible, reflecting person need be unhappy or over-concerned. People make themselves unnecessarily uncomfortable, and their own voluntary discomfort extends to others.

The Monthly Record.

OCTOBER, 1878.

THE SYNOD OF THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

The Annual Meeting of the Synod of the Maritime Provinces, was held in Pictou, on the first week of October. From the published report of the proceedings, the public can form but a faint idea of the work done. The attendance was fair and the business generally routine. Of the four proposed by the different Presbyteries for the Moderatorship, the Rev. A. Ross, Pictou, was elected. Two deaths, ten demissions, 13 inductions, 4 translations, 4 ordinations, and 4 licenses are reported since last meeting. The subject of large gatherings at communions, was, among other things, fully and warmly discussed. The advantages and disadvantages were brought out by the speakers on both sides. Large gatherings, from time immemorial having been the rule in this county on such important and solemn occasions—when ministers were few and the dispensing of the Lord's Supper of comparatively rare occurrence, people went long distances to attend them, and the attendances were generally very large and not only so, but very decorous and solemn, and the worshippers were revived and strengthened by such cheering sights, and dispersed, feeling and declaring that it "had been good for them to have been there." But although ministers are now more numerous, and the communion services of very frequent occurrence, the gatherings in some places continue as large as ever. The effects, however, are different. The Communion services are not the attraction to many who assemble. Curiosity draws some. Others come to see and be seen. "To

have a good time" is motive sufficient with others; while not a few come with "an eye to business." Such motives can add but little solemnity to the occasion, or derive but little profit from it. The largeness of the gathering on religious occasions cannot be reasonably objected to, but when levity, frivolity and inattention characterize such gatherings, 'tis high time that a warning voice were raised against them, and business and pleasure seekers directed to go elsewhere to follow their favorite pursuits; that all things may be done decently and in order.

OUR OWN CHURCH.

W. B. RIVER JOHN.—The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed at W. B. River John, on the 29th ult.

Reyds. Messrs. Fraser and McMillan dispensed the sacrament of the Lord's supper at River Inhabitants, C. B., on the 22nd Sept. The weather was all that could be desired, and notwithstanding the short notice given the attendance was very large.

SALTSPRINGS.—St. Luke's congregation recently held a meeting with a view to take the necessary steps to secure a pastor, at which it was almost unanimously resolved to correspond with Mr. Gray, a student about to be licensed, with the view of offering him a call to become their pastor.

EARLTOWN.—Mr. Duncan McKenzie student, has returned to Princeton for the winter term. His report appears in this number and will show that his labours were fully appreciated by the Earltown people, and we believe they look forward to his settlement over them as their pastor after the completion of his studies at college.

NEWS OF THE MONTH.

All the war clouds of the East have not yet dispersed.

The yellow fever is still doing its deadly work in the Southern States.

Another colliery explosion in Wales adds 280 to the number of the dead.

Dr. Nobiling, the would-be assassin of the Emperor of Germany died last week.

A terrific thunder storm passed over Zealand lately doing great damage to life and property.

The helpmeet and beloved wife of the Rev. Dr. Sedgwick, of Musquodobiott, has been removed by death.

Rev. L. G. McNeil, Maitland, is spoken of as the probable successor of Revds. Messrs. Harvey and Patterson, of St. John's, Nfld.

The Synod of the Maritime Provinces held its annual meeting in Pictou on the first week of October. The Rev. A. Ross, Pictou, Moderator. The business was chiefly routine.

The Rev. W. Sommerville, Covenantor, West Cornwallis, "a ripe scholar, an extensive reader, an enlightened educationist and an effective preacher" has ceased from his labours and gone to his rest.

Lord Dufferin, one of the most popular Governors of any country, after a peaceful and happy reign has returned to Great Britain, to make way for another of Britain's popular sons in the Governor General's chair. The Marquis of Lorne is expected by the last of November.

CHURCH STATISTICS AND DIS-
ESTABLISHMENT.

In a letter which appeared in the "Times" in July, I drew attention to the frequent misrepresentations made by public men as to the relative strength of the membership of the Church of Scotland and the other large Presbyterian bodies in Scotland. As even this letter, or at least the annexed table of statistics, has been misquoted and false issues raised on the subject, it may be well to present here in full the letter, with the statement of statistics, which followed. The statement was very carefully prepared by one thoroughly versed in the facts, and has not been, as it cannot be, impeached. Even the United Presbyterian Magazine has not ventured "to question the correctness," only it insists that not only Presbyterians but "Episcopalians, Independents, and Roman Catholics," must also be reckoned, and that the result of such a reckoning would be to show that the Church of the nation. "Is simply a sect, the largest sect, indeed, but only a sect or section of the people."

It is of no use quarrelling about a word. If the United Presbyterian meaning of the word "sect" be merely "section," of course it is impossible to deny that the Church of Scotland, in so far as it does not embrace the very considerable numbers of the United Presbyterians, and Free Church Presbyterians, and Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics, is literally only a part or section of the Scottish people. That is so much a truism that it is hardly worth stating. In this sense there never was a time when the Church of Scotland was "the Church of the nation." In other words, it never embraced the whole people of Scotland—not even the whole Presbyterians of Scotland. There were Roman Catholics, and large bodies of Roman Catholics, large bodies of Episcopalians, and even Cameronian Presby-

terians, outside its pale. This did not prevent it at the Revolution being constituted the National Church, as, upon the whole, the Church most "suitable to the inclinations of the people." Through all its history, and even what our United Presbyterian friends would call its unfaithfulness at certain periods of its history, it has remained, we contend, the Church most "suitable to the inclinations of the people of Scotland." We believe that with all its faults (we have no wish to hide any of its faults, but would gladly see them all amended, if our friends would only assist us) it is so still. And it is this *national suitability*—the fact that with all which has occurred to injure and weaken it the Church of Scotland is still the Church of the people of Scotland, to which they are more inclined than to any other.—it is this which makes it a National Church and not a "sect." It remains in the national position in which it was established, if even considerable portions of the national life have "cut" themselves off from it. This cannot destroy its old national character. It is the original trunk from which these branches have been severed. The cuttings or "sects" are made by the severance. However they may increase, this does not make the old tree from which they have been separated a cutting like themselves. "Sects" in short, are made and only made by separation. It is a mere abuse of language, to call the Church of Scotland, so long as it exists at all in its original legal position, a "sect." It is the Church of the country, and nothing but its disestablishment can destroy its claim to be such.

It is a still greater abuse of language and of history to speak of its position as being unjust to other Churches around it, merely because they have separated from it and refuse it privileges. If they have done so, it is because they suppose themselves to obtain privileges which they value more highly than State con-

nection. To call, in such circumstances, the historical position of the Church a cause of irritation to Dissenters, is simply to talk nonsense of the most arrant kind—nonsense only worthy of fledgling Radical candidates who know nothing either of Scotland or of its Church. It is to be hoped that we have heard the last of this sort of nonsense. The privileges of the Church of Scotland, pecuniary or otherwise, are inherited privileges of the people of Scotland. That certain persons who choose to avail themselves of them should enjoy these privileges, while others for the sake of advantages which they prize more highly should keep aloof from them, is surely no reason, political or Christian, why the privileges should be destroyed. Man cannot have anything in this world. They cannot, according to the common saying, have their cake and eat it too. The Scottish Dissenter cannot enjoy the pride of religious independence, and at the same time destroy the very institution which enables him to assert his independence. If the members of the Church of Scotland do not wish independence after his fashion, what right has he to thrust it upon them. If I rejoice in my bonds as a State Churchman (which I most heartily do), what right has any one to strike them off? I have inherited them; I prefer them. With the great mass of my countrymen, I not only do not find them bonds, but the dear symbols of the transmitted freedom; and I am to be made "free" against my will? It is the old story of the fox which lost his tail. It is surely enough for him that he is allowed to run about without a tail—that he is not arrested and compelled to adapt himself to the prevailing fashion. It is merely insanity that he should not be content with this, but should insist on every other fox who wears all the inherited honour of a full tail, and is proud to do so, being made tail-less like himself.

Scottish ecclesiasticism has been in-

genious and shifty in argumentation from its beginning. It has accomplished feats of tortuous logic which have made it often a laughing-stock to broad and candid religious minds. But in trying to make out the position of the Church of Scotland to be a cause of irritation to Dissenters, it has almost excelled itself; and that Radical politicians should have taken up this line, shows to what dire necessities they are driven. How they must laugh in their sleeves while taking up the howl of a jealous bigotry, which has become insensate in its hatred of an institution which lives and thrives notwithstanding all their dislike of it.

Let it be remembered that all the opposition to a religious census in Scotland in 1861 and 1871 came from the Dissenters; that while the Dissenters have had the making up of their own numbers, and the amount of their liberality, the statistics which represent the Church of Scotland are Government returns; and that the Church has not even now thought it necessary to bring forth in tabulated results the full strength either of its membership or its liberality. The latent strength of the Church in both directions is far more than that of any other ecclesiastical body in Scotland. Not only so, but—even taking numbers as an absolute test—an institution like the Church of Scotland is to be judged by the number, not merely of its own members, but of all who approve of the principle of a State Church, which it represents. All we make bold to say is that not even the wildest Radical imagination in the House of Commons will venture to affirm that there is a majority of the people of Scotland opposed to this principle—nay, that there is not a large majority in favour of it. So confident are we of this, that nothing would please us better than to see the question put to the popular vote. Let those who prate so much about Disestablishment venture to do this. They know as well as we do what the result would be.

But it is now time to present the letter and statistics, with the notice of which this article began. The letter was written to the 'Times' in London in the end of June, but did not appear till July 6, under the title of—

THE SCOTCH CHURCHES.

SIR,—Your readers. I am afraid, will be tired of the question of the Scotch Churches; and I have been reluctant to trouble you further after the notice you have already taken of my address at the close of the late General Assembly, and what I then said of the impolicy of the Liberal Party raising the question of disestablishment. It is very important, however, that mistakes should not prevail in England as to the relative numbers of the Church of Scotland and the two Presbyterian Nonconformist Churches which exist alongside of it. Notwithstanding the repeated assertions made in the course of the recent debate in the House of Commons that the Established Church is the "Church of minority"—assertions for which, as your correspondent of last Wednesday, "A Scottish Peer," truly says, there was "in no case any authority given."—I believe that the Church of Scotland at this date really represents a considerable majority of the Scottish people. It may be true that the number of its places of worship is not quite so large as those of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches combined; but the following statement, which has been carefully prepared, and which is self-authenticating, is sufficient to prove the statement which I have made as to its relative membership.

I do not add a word on the general question; but as there is no politician who can desire to be otherwise than correctly informed on such a point, and as the influence of your journal is justly so wide, I venture to hope that you will find room to submit the statement to your readers.—I am your obedient servant.

June 27

JOHN TULLOCH.

"Note of the 7members" of communicants belonging to the three leading Churches in Scotland:—

I. CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

"Number of communicants per return ordered by the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Edward Ellice, dated June 9, 1874, as also per further returns dated July 5, 1874—460,566. These returns have been so far verified by a return to the House of Lords, on the motion of the Earl of Minto, dated April 7, 1876, which showed that at 76 elections which had taken place since the Patronage Act came into force, and the regulations for which require the communion roll to be carefully purged and made up, 40 parishes had 1972 communicants less than in Mr. Ellice's return, and 36 parishes showed an increase of 2775, making a net increase of 803, and a total of 461,369.

II. FREE CHURCH.

"1 Lowland or Non-Gaelic Charges.—Number of communicants per statement by Treasurer of the Sustentation Fund given in to the Assembly of 1877, which numbers are taken from the Presbyterian returns for year to May 31, 1876—208,748. Add congregations blank in above statement, but whose membership appears in previous years—say 3252—total, 212,000. 2. Highland or Gaelic Charges.—In the statement above referred to, instead of giving the membership in this class—which in almost every case is very low compared with the congregation—a proportion of adherents is only given, and the only way in which an estimate of the members in these charges can be made is by using the report of the Committee on Religion and Morals which from year to year lays before the Free Assembly the statistics of certain Presbyteries visited by deputies during the year. Skye, Lochcarrou, Abertaff, Lorn, and all have in this way been reported on, and they fairly represent different parts of the Highlands. If it be assumed, as it is thought it may fairly be, that the proportion of the membership to the adherents in the Presbyteries so visited and reported on is very much the same as the proportion between the two classes in other parts of the Highlands, we find that the number of members in the High-

lands is therefore somewhere about 10,511—making the total for Free Church 222,411.

III. UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

"Number of communicants as reported to the Synod of 1877—172,170.

"The total number of communicants in the Free and United Presbyterian Churches is thus 391,581; showing the Church of Scotland to have 76,896 more communicants than both these Churches put together.

THE REPORT OF MR. MCKENZIE, CATECHIST.

MR. EDITOR:—

DEAR SIR,—Having been appointed to labour as a Catechist within the bounds of your Presbytery for the summer season, and having complied with your appointments, allow me now to give in my report:

I should do this, perhaps, immediately on the close of my summer labours but as my time was so much occupied I could scarcely avoid delaying the matter. I arrived from Princeton about the last of April and entered upon my labours without delay. Being appointed by Presbytery to labour between Earltown and the Falls I immediately proceeded to these places. As Earltown is a place which is well known to the inhabitants of the surrounding districts it is unnecessary for us to enter upon a detailed description of it. It is sufficient to state that its hills and valleys, brooks and brooklets and intersected roads are the prominent features which distinguish it from its neighbouring districts. Here live men who may be distinguished for their natural talents, piety and sound judgment of the truth. Although they did not study the science of theology, systematically nor familiarize themselves with such distinctions as meet the student of the said science in the course of his study nevertheless their clear understanding and sound judgment of the Word of God, enable them to draw these distinctions themselves and thus walk in the paths of orthodoxy. Moreover, these ever have been distinguished by their strict adherence to the Church of their

fathers. They have not their church as their coats which they put on and take off as suits them, but they remain in strict adherence to the mother Church and despise any such thing as divisive courses in matters of religion. They have a splendid church in the centre of the settlement which can hold about six hundred people, well finished both inside and outside. This edifice is an ornament to the place and a credit to the people. There is likewise a nice church at the Falls, altogether not quite so large as the one at Earltown. It is well finished and shows the zeal of the people. My service was equally divided between these two churches for the summer. I preached both Gaelic and English to each of these congregations. On Sabbath evenings I generally visited the Sabbath Schools which are conducted in the school houses. The parish being so large and scattered it was impossible to have all the children in the church. In some districts there did not seem to be interest enough taken in the important work of training the young but this I believe is on account of the absence of a settled pastor. Of the Sabbath Schools in the parish I would make particular mention of the one at the village as a school in which both pupils and teachers seem to be interested. Besides the schools which were before in operation I organized a new school at the Falls and appointed men which are capable of teaching it. On Mondays I always conducted a Prayer Meeting in the church, at which some of the old men always took part. Besides this I lectured on two or three occasions in the school house at the "corner." I may here state that I examined two of the week schools. The one at the "corner" which is under the excellent instruction of Miss Stevens and one of the schools at the Falls, taught by Miss McKay.

My visiting was more behind than any other part of my work. There are many families in the place that I could not go to see but this I may ascribe to four reasons.

1. Because my time in the place was short.

2. Because I was idle for a while by sickness.

3. Because I had no means of conveyance of my own.

4. Because I had been very often away from the place.

During the summer there were four elders ordained for Earltown and one for the Falls.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed at the Falls on Sabbath, August 25th, at which there was present a large gathering of the people. Rev. Mr. Stewart took charge of the Gaelic and Rev. Mr. Dunn of the English.

Besides my labours between Earltown and the Falls I also preached at Roger's Hill, Cape John, East River, Pictou Island, West Branch River John, River John Village and Loch Lomond, C. B.

Roger's Hill and Cape John are the sections of the Rev. Mr. Fraser's parish. Both these congregations are in a flourishing condition—this is due chiefly to the indefatigable labours and judicious management of their worthy pastor.

St. Paul's congregation, East River, although somewhat small, show great zeal in supporting the cause of religion and their high appreciation of their minister's service.

In Pictou Island there are about twenty three families and although they have no one laboring among them yet, they are all loyal adherents to the Church of Scotland.

The congregation at West Branch, River John, comprises about eighty families. Their church is old but I understand they are about to build a new one pretty soon. Although the congregation at River John is also somewhat small, yet it is in good working order, and their pastor seems to be doing good work among them. The congregation at Loch Lomond, C. B., has been vacant for the last two summers with the exception of occasional services they receive from Rev. Donald Sutherland of Gabarus. Mr. Sutherland's attainments as a scholar his ability as a public speaker and his faithfulness to the Church of Scotland render him dear to the people.

Before concluding my report let me allude to the kindness I received from the people of Earltown and the Falls. Although I had often to travel a considerable distance yet they never allowed

me to walk a step. They always drove me wherever I wanted to go.

The people were very busy about the time I had to leave but they saw that I was paid in full for the time I was among them. When I had (I may say) only fairly settled and commenced work the college re-opened and I had to bid a farewell for a time to this interesting field of labour.

Respectfully submitted,

DUNCAN MCKENZIE.

Princeton, New Jersey, Sept. 21st, '78.

AGREEABLE PEOPLE.

Rest assured, you cannot be pleasing at all times and seasons, or to all persons, without trying to be agreeable. You must not be too brilliant. Clever things cannot be said unobtrusively enough. A person so brilliant as to make others feel that your efforts are above theirs will be detested. If you are well satisfied with yourself, and sure of pleasing, you will be apt to succeed. Characters pleased with themselves please others, for they are joyous and natural in mien, and are at liberty from thinking of themselves to pay successful attention to others. Still the self-conceited and the bragging are never attractive, self being the topic on which all are fluent and none interesting. They who dwell on self in any way—the self-deniers, the self-improvers—are hateful to the heart of civilized man. Try to adjust yourself to the peculiarities of others, and appear interested in them. The belle is a lady who has an air of enjoying herself with whosoever she talks. We like those who seem to delight in our company. You must not overdo it, and thus make yourself suspected of acting; but do not imagine that you will please without trying. Those who are careless of pleasing are never popular. Those who do not care how they look invariably look ugly. You will never please without doing all these things, and more. After all, what a Pecksniffian business it is to go into—what constant subjugation of self is required! No wonder there are so few thoroughly agreeable people.

TRUST.

Life would be impracticable unless it were the primary rule to believe what is told. There is not a single relation in adult life in which we are not compelled to depend upon the word of another—of a husband, a wife, a friend, an agent. We believe certain things representing them—in their honor, their chastity, their affection, their faithfulness. To what kind of condition would life be reduced if we apply to these matters “the universal duty of questioning all that we believe?” In some, at all events, of these relations, it may be observed, it is in the nature of the case impossible that we should have “sufficient evidence” for our belief. It is an unquestionable fact that many a man who has been trusted, and who has for years borne an exceptional character, has proved faithless; and it is quite impossible I can be sure upon grounds of evidence respecting any particular man that he is incapable of this baseness. But the first condition of a genuine and honest friendship is to believe this, to refuse to entertain a doubt of it, and, if need be, to uphold a friend's honor until he is absolutely proved dishonorable. With respect to trust exercised in commercial relations, it might perhaps be said that it is a mere application of the principle of probabilities. As a matter of experience, if customers are trusted, the majority of them will fulfil their engagements. It may be doubted whether tradesmen really do act in practice on this mere calculation of probabilities; at all events the principle does not apply to the other relations of life just referred to. It would be an insult to a friend to say you trusted and loved him because you thought it more probable he was true than he was false. He expects from you, as the primary condition of true friendship, that you believe firmly concerning him that of which you cannot possibly have certain evidence.

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Alex. McEachern, Boom, C. B.	1.00

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THE Monthly Record

FOR 1878.

—IT HAS BEEN ARRANGED THAT—

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