



I saw an Indian die, and I said that the righteous hath hope in his death.

p. 40.

HOW TO DIE HAPPY.

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HOW TO DIE HAPPY.



DEATH DREADED.

DEATH visits mankind in various forms; but the announcement of a death, in whatever form it may have been, seldom fails to arrest the attention even of the most hardened. If we hear of an accident, we wish at once to know whether it was attended with fatal consequences; if not, we feel relieved; but if lives have been lost, it makes us sad.

The report of a death in a neighbourhood or village soon passes from house to house, and causes a stillness; all the

people step more softly and speak in a lower tone : and when the bell tolls, every other voice is hushed, and labour is suspended ; and, for a few moments, every person is thinking of death. And when the funeral procession passes by, all is still again ; the children forget their plays, and are reminded that this is the end of all living ; and many are forced to say, “As that one is now, so must I soon be.”

It is well to think of death, and to think of it often, and to keep in remembrance that we too must go the way of all the earth ; and because we cannot before hand know the time or manner of our death, therefore we ought always to be living in a state of preparation for it. “It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting : for that is the end

of all men ; and the living will lay it to his heart."

It may be, perhaps, too generally the case, that the subject of death and the grave is presented in those aspects which are most terrifying. The chamber of death is associated in the mind, with the pains and groans and dying strife of the person whom the king of terrors has come to tear away from earth, and with the boisterous grief of friends who are about to be bereaved. Then the darkened, desolated room, the cold corpse, the winding sheet, the coffin, and the whole house made to put on mourning. This may well appall the heart, and cause it to shudder at the thoughts of death, and to dread above all things its entrance into the house.

There are other considerations which

cause death to be dreaded; as when we think of passing away and being forgotten; the places which know us now soon to know us no more; as when we think of the body falling a prey to corruption and worms; and as when we hear death spoken of as travelling alone through some dark and gloomy passage.

Most persons do indeed shrink back when they contemplate their own dissolution, and it is truly called the "trying hour." The best people have some misgivings as to how they may be able to meet and grapple with the king of terrors; and they are accustomed often in their prayers to ask, that they may have all needed support in the final conflict. There are sometimes extreme physical sufferings experienced in dying, when there seems

to be a fearful struggle going on ; the soul apparently labouring to liberate itself from its prison ; or the body, as it were, grappling and clutching at life, determined, as long as possible, to resist the approach of death. Others again die easy, like the wasting, flickering, and then expiring taper.

To most people the very idea of death is appalling ; and God has ordered that it should be so. By God's appointment death is made the punishment for the highest crimes ; and the fear of the death penalty has undoubtedly deterred many persons, who were murderers at heart, from the commission of capital crimes.

God designed that death should be terrible to the wicked. Death is in consequence of sin. When God placed our first parents in the garden of Eden,

and entered into a covenant of life with them, on condition of perfect obedience, forbidding them to eat the fruit of a certain tree, he said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But, alas ! they did eat, and in consequence of that transgression the curse of God fell on them ; and Adam being our federal head, we "sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression," and thus we are all subjects of the curse. We all died in Adam, and that was the moral death ; that is, we are born just as Adam became as soon as he had sinned ; we are born with wicked hearts—with sinful dispositions. In consequence of the curse for sin we are also exposed to all the miseries of this life, and to the death of the body of which we have been speaking, and to the pains of hell for ever ; and the

pains of hell for ever are sometimes called the "second death." All who are not redeemed from the curse of the law, and who die in that condition, are "cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

THE DEATH OF THE WICKED.

There is, therefore, reason why the thoughts of dying should be terrible to the ungodly, who have learned that the ungodly cannot stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for they have before them only the "fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." They know that the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. They know, therefore, that

if they continue as they are, the moment they leave this world they will find themselves in the place of lost souls, the place prepared for the devil and his angels. It is not surprising that the wicked should dread death, and be unwilling to talk or think about it. And it is not surprising that when sickness comes they grow fearful, and are filled with distress when they learn that it may be fatal; and we need not wonder at those distressing death-bed scenes which are sometimes witnessed. How could a person but be distressed who sees that he has but a few days, or a few hours to live; who sees that he must bid farewell for ever to all his pleasures; that his sins will all follow him, and that he must appear in judgment before God, whose commandments he has trampled on, whose mercy

he has abused, and whose invitations he has scornfully rejected? How can he but be in anguish of spirit who expects in a very short time to hear Christ say, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire? Sometimes it has been the case, that the sinner, unreconciled to God, seemed before death to be beginning to feel already something of the pains of hell in his soul; already he seemed beginning to feel the gnawings of the worm that never dies; conscience had fully aroused and commenced its terrible upbraidings; and in bitter lamentations, in shrieks of despair, with awful contortions of countenance, and sometimes, too, even while cursing the Almighty, such persons have gone to meet their doom.

“What scenes of horror and of dread,
Await the sinner’s dying bed!

Death's terrors all appear in sight,
Presages of eternal night.
His sins in dreadful order rise,
And fill his soul with sad surprise ;
Mount Sinai's thunder stuns his ears,
And not one ray of hope appears."

DEATH WITH ITS STING EXTRACTED.

To many persons death is divested of its terror ; the grave to them has no horror, and eternity is viewed without dread ; but rather, they are accustomed to think of death as a falling asleep ; of the grave as the bed in which their bodies shall rest in hope ; and, to their eyes of faith, eternity is seen with all its fulness of joy, and pleasures forevermore.

And perhaps you ask, How is it that death is a terror to some, and without terror, or even sweet to others ? It is because Christ has taken away the

sting of death, and robbed the grave of its victory. Christ died that we might live. He came to redeem us from the curse of the law. He took our law place, he obeyed the law, and he gave himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and to reconcile us to God; so that whosoever will trust in him as their surety, shall be freed from all the curse. They shall live by their faith. For, whereas they were dead in trespasses and sins, by believing in Jesus they shall be raised up to newness of life; they pass from spiritual death to spiritual life. The moment they believe, they lay hold on eternal life, they begin a life of holiness; and by diligently improving all the means of grace they make constant progress in holiness, and are thus daily dying unto sin, and living unto righteousness.

Believers are saved from the second death, saved from going down to the pit. The death of the body, however, they cannot escape; but its sting is taken away. To the believer death is a blessing; and, if he considers it as he ought, and as he may, he will look forward to it with pleasure. The apostle Peter thought of death merely as the putting off this tabernacle. Paul longed for death; he hailed it as a release from all suffering and sin; he believed that for him to depart from the body would be to be present with the Lord. With Paul, to die was just to leave the earthly house of this tabernacle, and go and take possession of the mansion which Jesus had gone to prepare. He said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Death is surely a blessing to the christian, if

then his soul is made perfect in holiness and immediately passes into glory, and his body still united to Christ rests in the grave till the resurrection. We have an assurance of a resurrection. Christ says, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Jesus has taken his people into his care, both in this life and in that which is to come. He is the good Shepherd, and he will lead, and guard, and feed them while they remain on earth; when they walk through the valley of the shadow of death they shall fear no evil, for his rod and his staff they shall comfort them; and after he has taken them to heaven, they shall still follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

Therefore, with the present consola-

tions of religion, the assurance of his Saviour's presence always, and thinking of all the blessings which are laid up in heaven for the righteous, the believer may look forward with calmness to the time of his departure; yea, with joyful expectation. There may be many trials yet to pass through, but he says of them all, "These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The pangs of death may be sharp, but he knows they cannot last long, and then will come the joy unspeakable and full of glory; and what, he says, would be a long life-time of suffering compared with an eternity of infinite pleasure? Of the sufferings of the sick bed, and of the dying hour, as well as of all the troubles of life, he may sing,

“Though painful at present, ’twill cease before long,
And then, Oh how pleasant the conqueror’s song !”

There have been instances in which all the sting of death seemed to have been taken away, and Jesus did “make the dying bed as soft as downy pillows are.” God can strengthen his people upon a bed of languishing, and make all their bed in their sickness; he can comfort them, even “as one whom his mother comforteth.” He can reveal to the vision of the soul such views of himself, of his faithfulness, goodness, and love; and afford such antepasts of heaven, that bodily sufferings will be unheeded. The spiritual delight may so exceed the physical pains, that the latter will no more be thought of than if the soul had already been separated from the body.

HALYBURTON.

The last sickness and death of this eminently godly man afford an example of the kind of which we have just been speaking. For many days he seemed to be dying. His disease was acute, the pains sharp, and without interruption; and when he turned his thoughts upon himself, and took note of his sufferings, they seemed to him, as they did to those who were with him, as very nearly unendurable; but such floods of joy were immediately poured in upon his soul again, that all his pains were forgotten, and at different times he made use of these expressions, "My body complains of pain, but I complain of none. Never was I more uneasy in my life, and yet I was never more easy. I am now in

the hands of the king of terrors, and within a little while I shall be out of them. I am now about to grapple with the last enemy, and I find he is a conquerable enemy; I am more than a conqueror. O sirs, I could not believe that I could have borne, and borne cheerfully, this rod so long. This is a miracle; pain without pain. And this is not the fancy of a man disordered in his brain, but of one lying in full composure. God is melting me down into corruption and dust, and yet he is keeping me in a calm. I have peace in the midst of pain—my peace has been as a river.”

TRIUMPHANT DEATH-BEDS.

Sometimes as christians draw near the end of life, they seem to get a sight of the country towards which they have

long been journeying, and heavenly sounds seem to reach their ears; and their own conversation so seasoned with holiness, and their faces beaming so with unearthly pleasure, that we feel that their heaven is indeed begun.

There have been cases, and perhaps some of you have witnessed them, in which heaven seemed to be opening to the vision of the soul before the spirit quite forsook its clay; in which the dying saint seemed to catch upon his ravished ear some notes of the celestial music: cases in which the departing friend seemed to be abstracted from all around, and to be communing with spiritual visitants; and now and then the lips of the dying friend would move; and now and then he would speak half audibly, as though he saw the forms of angels which were wait-

ing to transport his soul to their home in glory; and now and then there is an exclamation, as though Jesus was near, and he could see him with his pierced hands and wounded side, yet with his many crowns upon his head, and beckoning him to the mansions which he had prepared, and saying, "Come now with me, to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God:" and you who were gathered about that couch, sorrowing yet rejoicing, bent your ears to the pale lips of the dying one, and you heard a gently murmuring sound, or a sweet whisper, and it said, "Come, Lord Jesus; O come quickly:" and you could hear no more, for already the freed spirit had begun its flight up through the skies, amongst the stars, speeding onward towards the golden gates, leaving with

you only the now deserted tenement of clay—deserted, cold, and dead, but still precious—and you commit it to its kindred dust, while you comfort one another with the words of inspiration, “Them that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him.”

DEATH A SLEEP.

Death is sometimes spoken of as a gently lying down to sleep, and such was the manner of Stephen’s death; though he was slain, and his murderers, crying with a loud voice, ran upon him casting stones at him; nevertheless, to the martyr was vouchsafed a heavenly vision, and he said, “Behold I see heaven opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.” And while kneeling down and calling upon God, and saying, “Lord

Jesus, receive my spirit," and praying that the sin of his murderers might not be laid to their charge, "he fell asleep."

THE FLAMES NOT FELT.

God promises great things to his people, as when he says, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned: neither shall the flame kindle upon thee:" and this promise he has fulfilled always, when he has enabled holy martyrs to proceed undaunted to the place of execution, and to spend their dying breath in singing praises to God, in declaring the loving-kindness of the Lord to them, in exhorting their friends and brethren

to remain steadfast in their faith, and in imploring forgiveness for their persecutors. How often has the martyr welcomed the executioner as a friend, who had come to deliver him more speedily from this world of sin and suffering, that he might go to the rest prepared for them that love God ! Christ can make the fagot and the flame seem no more terrible than were the horses of fire, and the chariot of fire, and the whirlwind, which came to carry Elijah up to heaven. He opened heaven to the view of Stephen, and gave him a cheering, sustaining sight of his Redeemer, once dead but now living, and reigning, and interceding at the right hand of God ; and could make his death seem like falling asleep, though showers of stones were bruising and crushing every part of his body. He

could prepare those recent martyrs, the missionaries in India, and the converts who died witnessing a good confession—he could prepare them for their trials, and their tortures; he could sustain and comfort them, yea, and fill them full of joy, so that they could meet death with a smile, and depart with a psalm to Jesus on their lips, and with prayers for their murderers. And in thinking of them their friends will mourn indeed, but not as those who have no hope: they may think of them as now with that multitude in white robes that have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple. When contemplating the horrid butch-

eries of the Sepoy rebels, they still could say with entire composure, "Our little church and ourselves will be the first attacked; but we are in God's hands, and we know that he reigns. We have no place to flee to for shelter, but under the covert of his wings, and there we are safe. Not but that he may suffer our bodies to be slain; and if he does, we know he has wise reasons for it. I sometimes think our deaths may do more good than we could do in all our lives; if so, his will be done. Should I be called to lay down my life, do not grieve, dear sisters, that I came here; for most joyfully will I die for Him who laid down his life for me."

Another writes, "I know that you will rejoice with me when I tell you that my faith in God's goodness has

never failed me. And 'I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in him will I trust.' And like the psalmist, I am sure I could say most truly that I was delivered from the 'terror by night.' I was alarmed, but I had no overwhelming fear, certainly not of death. I tried most devoutly to realize that perhaps a few hours might bring me to the end of life, and I was not afraid to die, if I knew my own heart. I had a horror of seeing violence and bloodshed, and of the sufferings of others; and there was a dread occasioned by uncertainty that was very trying; * * * * but I was not so terrified that my mind was distracted from the contemplation of divine things, God's goodness hitherto, and the bliss of heaven. * * * * All our hope is

in God. Heaven, not this world, is our lasting home." * * * *

THE BILLOWS OF THE SEA FOR A DYING
BED.

There was one in China, a missionary of great promise, and who, though still young, had already done good service for his Master. His death was unlooked for, sudden, and attended with circumstances which caused a thrill of grief to run through the hearts of all his fellow labourers, and which overcast our sky with gloom. But to him the translation from earth to heaven may have been as easy and as pleasant as that of Enoch, of whom we have the record "that he walked with God," and the "testimony that he pleased God," and then the record

that "he was not, for God had taken him."

At first we thought of the dark-visaged, iron-fisted, stony-hearted pirates who boarded the vessel on which our fellow missionary was a passenger, and seized him and plunged him headlong into the sea. We thought of him in a hopeless struggle with the waves for a time, then sinking and sinking down into the depths of the blue waters. But soon we began comforting one another; for we called to remembrance his previous life, his steady walk with God, his large attainments in piety; we remembered his many perils by sea, and perils by land, and perils by robbers, all of which had been sanctified as the means not only of increasing his usefulness while he lived, but of ripening him rapidly for

heaven. We reflected upon his daily conversation, so seasoned with grace. We thought of his last employment before he went to be with Christ, which was reading in that constant companion of his studies and travels, his Hebrew Bible, and which is now treasured by surviving friends. We believed that one who loved, as he did, to think of that place where there shall be no more sea, could be pillowed as gently on the billows of the ocean as on any other bed; and we doubted not that Jesus was with him there, making all his bed, though no earthly friend was near. We believed that while settling down, and the waves were closing over him, he was gently and sweetly breathing his life out, and saying, "Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit." And thus the Lord buried

him there in his ocean grave, though, like as it was with Moses, no man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day. With such reflections we comforted ourselves and one another, for we believed that when the sea gives up its dead he shall arise with all those who sleep in Jesus; and we shall meet again, for we shall all be caught up together.

ONE WHOSE GRAVE IS AMONG THE INDIAN
TRIBES.

There was one whose home had been amongst the Indians, and who was born in that Indian home; for her parents were veteran missionary labourers, and still they kept cheerfully toiling on, bringing forth fruit in old age, in the same good work to which they gave the dew of their youth.

This young lady had been well instructed by her parents, and had been early taught by the Spirit. She loved the poor Indian, for whose intellectual and spiritual improvement her parents were labouring and praying. In her more youthful days she was a willing, and a much interested tutor of the dark haired children that gathered in from the scattered cabins. In an institution of learning in one of the eastern States her own education was advanced; and with learning and accomplishments, and with the same kind heart, pleasant manners, and an increased devotion to Christ and his cause, she returned to her parents, and to the people of the tribe whose spiritual interests and advancement in civilization she had at heart more than ever before. She was at once employed as a teacher,

and engaged with ardour in her chosen work. But by and by a disease assailed her, and interrupted her labours, or rendered them more burdensome. Her spirit was still willing, but the flesh grew weak. Her heart was panting to do much, even much more than ever before; but her hands became feeble, and her feet faint; and strength so failed that at length she went from room to room only as supported by others; and then she was carried to the room where she was to tarry, waiting the will of God, till some messenger should say, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee."

For seven or eight months she was a sufferer, and most of the time confined to the bed. But, says her sister, "that room was a very pleasant place of resort, as she was always cheerful.

She felt uncertain whether she should ever be well again, and often feared that she might be deceived respecting her hope; but those fears seemed gone from the time she gave up expectation of recovery." The sister then goes on to give some account of her last visit; the dying sister having sent for her to be with her, if possible, a little while before she would have to bid them all adieu, and depart on her long journey. She found the much emaciated, but still patient sufferer surrounded by sorrowing friends, but herself calm and peaceful, and even joyful, ready to depart and be with Christ, or willing to abide still in the flesh; she hoped she was as willing to *suffer* all his righteous will, as she had prayed and endeavoured to be willing to *do* his will. But while she waited for him whom she was ex-

pecting to come that he might receive her to himself, she was telling her friends of the felt presence of her Beloved; of the support he was affording her, and the words of assurance and love that he seemed to be whispering to her.

She strove to comfort her afflicted husband and all her dear friends; begging them to dry their tears and to rejoice with her, and to praise God for all his goodness, especially for his manifest presence in the trying hour.

During her protracted sickness she had often breathed out her desires, and her admiration of Jesus and his salvation in the hymns,

“ Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,”

“Come to Calvary’s holy mountain,
Sinners ruined by the fall,”

and now she desired her friends to sing them for her, and in the midst of such exercises she passed away. One moment with a portion of the church militant; the next moment with the church triumphant. One moment with the saints on earth singing praise to Jesus; the next moment amidst that multitude which no man can number, and still singing praises to God and the Lamb, but with music which swells forth like the voice of many waters, and the voice of a great thunder, and the voice of harpers harping with their harps.

She rests from her labours, and her works follow her. There, “where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,” she will find some gathered from the Cherokee Nation; some whom her fa-

ther pointed to the Lamb of God ; some whom she herself had taught how to say, " Our Father which art in heaven," whom she instructed daily, and for whose good she laboured, and for whose conversion she wrestled in the place of secret prayer. She will meet those who are gathering home after their day's work is done ; and those too who are the sheaves brought home by them who like her went forth weeping, bearing precious seed.

" How blest the righteous when he dies !
 When sinks a weary soul to rest,
 How mildly beam the closing eyes !
 How gently heaves the expiring breast !

" Life's duty done, as sinks the clay,
 Light from its load the spirit flies ;
 While heaven and earth combine to say,
 How blest the righteous when he dies !"

A BRAND PLUCKED FROM THE BURNING.

I saw an Indian die, and I said that the righteous hath hope in his death, whether he be educated or unlettered; I said it shall be well with the righteous, whether he takes his departure to Abraham's bosom from a palace, or from a rough cabin in the woods. I had known him while he was yet in health. He was a genuine child of the forest, with hair as black as a raven, and limbs as lithe as those of the deer which he had once delighted to pursue. When a youth, it was said, few could excel him in the wild sports of the Indians, in wrestling, the ball play, the race, or the dance; and none were more wedded to these sports than he. But now he was a christian; and sinful pleasures, or mere sports and games

delighted him no more. He was a growing christian. Seldom was he absent from any of the meetings of the church to which he belonged. There was a particular seat which he occupied, and in which we might almost always be sure to find him. In our social meetings he was often requested to lead in prayer, and we loved to hear him pray; and though I did not understand him (for he prayed in his own language), yet he seemed to plead with fervour, and importunity, and humility; and appeared like one much accustomed to commune with God—like one who had found a place very near to the mercy-seat.

But suddenly he was seized with a violent fever; and, despite all the attention of physician and friends, the disease worked on, and worked rapidly;

and it seemed that the stronger the constitution of the patient, the more violently did the fever rage, the more harshly did it assail him; and that so recently active, powerful man lay almost helpless, torn with pains, his temples throbbing, breathing with difficulty, his tongue swollen, his mouth dry and parched, and with a thirst which nothing could allay: but still he was peaceful. There was no complaining, no impatience; but a quiet resignation to the will of God. He knew, and confessed with shame that he had been a sinner, a great sinner; but he hoped that all his sins had been forgiven, that God had cast them all behind his back. He trusted that he was one of God's dear children, and to us he appeared like one who had received the spirit of adoption; for, with a warm,

full gush of filial feeling he called God his Father; and he seemed to have the Spirit witnessing with his spirit that he was a child of God. He was willing to die, and that not because this world had been to him all cold and dreary: no, for he had seemed to be always happy; seldom would you meet him but his brown face was lit up with smiles, and he was at peace with all men. He did not desire to leave the world because his home was comfortless, like the cabins of too many Indians where strong drink is used, and where the wife is ignorant and indolent or unfaithful; no, for his wife was a christian wife and mother. She had been educated at a mission school; she made his home pleasant; and their children were a comfort to them. Their little farm, through their industry, and

with the blessing of God, yielded them all needed supplies. But he was willing to die and leave all these comforts, because he believed there was a better country, and that there his God had provided some better thing for him. He knew of the promise which Jesus had made to his disciples, that he would go and prepare mansions for them, and then he would come and receive them to himself, that where he is, they may be also. Judging from what we saw of his every-day life, we might suppose that he was endeavouring so to live that when the Son of Man should come he might be found watching. He diligently improved all the means of sanctification which were afforded him, so that he might be growing meet to become a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. And now as the

event, for which it had been the main study of his life, since his conversion, to be prepared, seemed rapidly approaching; as it seemed that Jesus would soon come to receive him to himself, he appeared to be ready, yes, and glad to go. Ready, I say; not because he thought himself already holy like the angels, and pure like the saints who are in heaven: not that he considered himself already fit to appear in the presence of God; but he hoped to leave all his imperfections behind, when he should leave the world; he hoped to be made perfect in holiness, and to be clothed upon with the righteousness of Christ. Having these expectations, and enjoying the comforting influences of the Holy Spirit, he had no dread of death. Calmly he arranged his worldly affairs; commending his wife

and children to the care of his own God, whom, by experience, he had found a covenant keeping God, a faithful friend, and an ever present help in times of trouble. Then, his body still suffering, but his soul at peace, and animated more and more with the hope of eternal life and glory, he waited a few hours, till He who had plucked him as a brand from the burning, placed him, as we trust, as a jewel in his crown.

Thus died one who, but for the efforts of christians to instruct the Indian in the right way to worship the Great Spirit, would have died in ignorance of a Saviour; and therefore, where God and Christ is, he could never have come. Scattered over the territory of his tribe were the graves of his fathers and brethren, who had died with no better hope than that they

would go to some country, with its perpetually green prairies, and dark deep forests abounding in game; and all around him the people of his tribe were still dying with no more cheering hope, nor higher desire than to go, as these were accustomed to say, "where other Indians go."

THERE REMAINETH A REST.

Our design in these sketches, as you have already noticed, is not to present the most joyful death-bed experiences, in which the departing saint is in ecstasies of delight, and ravished with views of the celestial city; but we have selected such examples as may show simply in what respects death is divested of its terror, both as regards the person who is called to meet it, and those too who stand around minister-

ing to him in his last moments on earth; and to show also how surviving friends are comforted with the hope that their dear ones died in the Lord, and are taken from the evil to come, and gone to be for ever at rest.

There is a little hamlet resting quietly at the feet of giant hills. Following up a not much frequented road along a narrow valley, you soon come to a venerable looking farm-house, embowered in trees, and with flowers and vines. You are sure that order and happiness dwell there. It was the residence of a good man—a christian gentleman. His life flowed peacefully along, for he was one who had learned in whatsoever state he might be, therewith to be content; he had learned the art of being happy, which is to endeavour to keep a conscience void of offence be-

fore God and man. For many years he had been walking with God, and was still in the vigour of a strong and active manhood. He was an officer of the church of which he had long been an honoured and an active member. Doing good was his study and delight. Many resorted to him for counsel; nor were they afraid to intimate their wants, if they were needy; nor did he always wait till applications for help were made, but was beforehand with kind words, and material assistance. His house and his barns were large, and so too was his hospitality; and seldom were they without guests. Their company, however, was mostly of christian and serious minded people; for conversation in that house was generally turned to good account. The affairs of Christ's kingdom at home and abroad,

the interests of their own church, the state of their own hearts, plans for usefulness, or the meaning or application of some passage of scripture were themes much dwelt upon.

That house was the stopping place and the tarrying place of the servants of Christ, who for Christ's sake are the servants of his people; and if none shall lose their reward who give even a cup of cold water to the least of Christ's brethren, shall not they, who thus "lodged strangers," and "washed the saints' feet," have their recompense? The spirit of that man seemed never to be ruffled: no hasty or unkind word escaped his lips.

His occupation and associations were calculated to make life pleasant. When in summer he laboured, or walked out upon his farm, he might see the flocks

of sheep feeding high upon the hills, and the contented cattle in the valleys and by the brooks. The fragrant meadows, the growing grain, and the singing birds are pleasant sights and pleasant sounds to those who love to commune with God, and to talk of his wisdom and goodness.

Though it might seem that such a man could hardly be spared from his family, from the neighbourhood, or from the church; yet He whose servant he desired to be, saw best, long before he had lived out the threescore years and ten, to remove him from labour and watching on earth, to his rest and reward in heaven. And his death was as his life had been—serene. His life had been like a mild summer day, and so calm was its evening.

The account of his last illness and

death may be best given in the following extracts from a letter, written by his bereaved wife a few days after she had been made a widow. After speaking of the commencement of his sickness, and its progress for about two weeks; of the efforts of the physicians, and his cheerful compliance with all their directions, she says, "It had been his desire to get well; life was sweet to him, for he was always happy; home had many attractions; and, moreover, as a good servant he would wait and labour till he had accomplished as a hireling his day; therefore he was ready to try whatever the physicians recommended. But when at length the doctor told him that 'he supposed he was aware of his situation, that all they could do would not arrest the disease, and if he had any arrangements

to make they must be made soon,' he said, 'Well, then, if I must die, the will of the Lord be done. And now please make me as comfortable as you can. Give me no more medicine, but let me be quiet, that I may fix my thoughts.' Then after smoothing his bed, and composing his limbs as if to sleep, with his hands clasped across his breast, as he always rested when well, and with his eyes closed, he lay a few moments in silence, and then said, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!' He then opened his eyes and said, 'My hope is where it has been for years—in God. I know that I have not lived as faithful to him as I ought, and as I wish I had; but my hope is all in the mercy of God through Christ. As to my business matters, they are all arranged, and I have not a word now to

say on that subject, and nothing to do but to get ready to die.' I asked if he wished some one to pray. 'Oh, yes!' he answered; and our dear father knelt by his bed, and with a faltering voice, and with a childlike simplicity and faith, commended the soul to God.

"After prayer, and after he had rested a while, he began again to talk of death, and of his preparation for it; speaking of his assurance, and so comforting us that all the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, are nothing to be compared with the sweet remembrance of those last few precious words.

"He then gave some directions respecting his burial; stated that he would be dressed as he always was on the Sabbath day. * * * During

the succeeding night he said repeatedly, 'I wish that I could be laid to rest; but I'll try to wait till morning.' About four o'clock in the morning he started up as if to cough, and fainted. As I laid him back on the pillow, he said, 'I am dying.' I asked, 'Does Jesus stand by you now?' He did not answer directly, but kept his eyes closed, and I supposed that he had not heard me; but after a minute, as if to answer honestly, (so characteristic of himself,) he said deliberately, and distinctly, 'JESUS IS MY COMFORTER'—the last he uttered, except to ask to be turned on his side; where he lay perfectly still, with one hand clasping mine, until six in the morning, when, like a wasted taper, his life passed away without a struggle, a sigh, or a gasp.

"Oh, my dear friends, did you ever

see death in its beauty? 'Twas there so beautiful that one might fancy the angels were present, having come to transport the spirit to their own happy land, leaving still the impress of pleasure and joy on his placid face.

“When next I saw him he was lying on the bed, and dressed as he had desired, and as if prepared to go up to the house of God with the multitudes that keep holy day. He appeared only as if sleeping a little; and it seemed as though I should get ready to go with him. But soon the illusion passed, and the truth came back that he had gone without me this time, and gone to join the assembly that never breaks up, and where the Sabbath never ends. * * *

“At the funeral these words were read, ‘But I would not have you igno-

rant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.' To me they seemed peculiarly appropriate; for during his sickness and suffering the dear one had often prayed for sleep—'Oh, that I might have a little rest!'—and after he had ceased to breathe, and on until he was buried from my sight, I could not help repeating, 'For so he giveth his beloved sleep:' and I thought of those long nights of watching when he would say, 'How long will it be till morning?' and he was comforted with this and similar passages of scripture, 'And there shall be no night there.'"

“Oh ! for the death of those,
Who slumber with the Lord !
Oh ! be like theirs my last repose,
Like theirs my last reward !”

THE RIPE FRUIT GATHERED.

Let me speak to you of an aged pilgrim, yes, a pilgrim ; who, for many years has been journeying on, in this wilderness of sorrow and sin. In very early life he became a disciple of Christ, and the dedication which he made of himself to his new Master was sincere and hearty ; and daily has he been in the habit of inquiring, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?” Much of his earnings has he given to sustain the ordinances of God’s house at home ; much has he given to send the gospel abroad. Much has he bestowed in charity, scattering benefits as he travelled on in life’s journey.

Always have his Sabbaths been given to rest, and to the worship of God—to “a holy resting all that day.” On many days of the week, and evenings of the week of every month and of every year of his long life, has he suspended lucrative occupations that he might assemble with God’s people for the purpose of listening to his word, or joining in supplication for a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, or for the spread of the gospel into all lands; and to enjoy all the comfort and profit which is found in such exercises. Much time has he given to religious visiting from house to house, and none of that time does he now bemoan as misspent—none of that money expended in the cause of religion does he regret as uselessly expended.

Notice him now. He is nearly, or quite past labour; his steps are tottering, his head shakes, and his hands tremble; but every Sabbath-day he may be seen punctually in his seat in the sanctuary, and while there he seems like one in the place where he best loves to be. In the prayer meeting his lisping and trembling voice is still heard leading in prayer, or speaking of God's special mercies to him; counseling the young, repeating the promises, and encouraging those who are still bearing the burden and heat of the day; and almost always he adds, "But as for me, I have but a little longer to stay with you, brethren; my sands are nearly run: I am living now on borrowed time;" and with streaming eyes, he begs that they will hear once more that he bears testimony concerning the

faithfulness, and loving-kindness of the Lord, and the profit of godliness. Now and then he awakens life and feeling in the meeting by relating what his own eyes have seen in former times, when the Spirit was poured out, and souls were seen flocking to Zion as clouds, and as doves to their windows; and he adds, almost in sobs, and as a petition, that if God will but permit him to witness one more such Pentecostal season, he can then say, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

You see him again as he walks the streets steadied by his staff. The children (for there are many that know, and that love him too) walk slowly that they may have his company, and near his kind inquiries, and his affec-

tionate counsels; and in future years they will call to mind the many times he has laid his trembling hand on their heads, and asked a blessing on them; how many times they heard him say, "I have been young and now am old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread:" they will remember how many times he told them of Him who took little children in his arms and blessed them, and said, "Suffer little children to come unto me;" and he exhorted them to "remember their Creator in the days of their youth," and to "seek first the kingdom of God."

And now he is alone again, and musing; talking to God, sometimes aloud, and sometimes his lips only moving; and he says, "Cast me not off in the time of old age, nor forsake

me when my strength faileth ;” he says, “ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.” You listen as he goes on repeating hymn after hymn, and long passages of scripture, and you perceive what is the benefit of committing these good things to memory when children ; for all this, which he now recites so accurately, he learned by heart when he was a little boy. As you see him thus comforting his soul, you bless the Lord for his kindness to this aged saint, for so gently leading him along ; and you offer a petition for him, that in the valley of death the Shepherd’s rod and staff may comfort him ; that when he passes through the deep waters, they may not overflow him ; that when other supports fail he may find the everlast-

ing arms underneath him; and you are confident that when flesh and heart shall fail, God will be the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever.

This pilgrim, knowing that he is very near the end of his course, and now lingering but a few days on the shores of time, seems to be living in constant expectation of his summons. He is waiting, yet willing to wait on, even all the days of his appointed time, till his change come.

An habitual exercise with him is to try the foundation of his hope, to consecrate himself anew to God, to pray for a preparation for the great change, and to ask for all needed grace—dying grace, for a dying hour.

You see him again at home, busy with that well-worn and familiar Bible—the one Book. Now he calls to

mind all the way which the Lord has led him these many years; now he talks of the country towards which he is journeying, and he smiles as he says, "And I am almost there." And then, with closed eyes and clasped hands, and face beaming with pleasure and expectation, he listens while children and grandchildren sing one of the songs of Zion. Then follow the scripture lesson and the prayer; and grandfather is lighted to his comfortable room, and his bed; and often as he retires, he has been accustomed to say, "If you should find the old man dead in the morning, remember that he was not afraid to die." As they say their good night, and the door has closed, the family repeat, for the thousandth time, "What a dear good man! Oh, what a dear good man! What would we do with-

out him in the house? for he helps to keep our thoughts so much in heaven; he makes us feel as if heaven were very near to earth. His path is indeed the path of the just, which shines more and more unto the perfect day. How near he does seem to be to his home! Almost there, indeed. He appears to 'dread the grave as little as his bed.' Should he drop away at any time, we shall have good evidence that he has gone to be where Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are, and where all the spirits of the just made perfect are."

One morning he did not appear at his usual time. The hour for the morning meal and the morning worship had arrived, and the family were waiting, but grandfather did not come; and the little ones, who always prized grandfather's salutations, and who felt

that their happiness was not complete unless he was occupying his accustomed seat in the family circle and at the social board, begged the privilege of running to call him. They knock at the door; but he does not answer. They knock again; and still no answer. They put their ears to the door; but all is silent within. Then they open—and enter—and call; but no answer yet. Alarmed, they slowly and hesitatingly approach the bed, and he appears as if asleep and in a pleasant dream; his limbs are composed, and the covering is unruffled; but he does not breathe, and his flesh is cold.

Perhaps while he slept, the angels, who once rolled away the stone from the Saviour's sepulchre, came and gently opened the door of his earthly tabernacle, and the soul flew away to its

house which is eternal in the heavens. Or, it may be that while he was meditating during the night watches, and communing with his heart upon his bed, in converse with Him who giveth songs in the night, and he was saying, "How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! When I awake I am still with thee—I wait for thy salvation—I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness—For we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is"—it may be that with his thoughts thus on God and heaven, with such sweet scriptures running in his mind, as he was saying, "Come, Lord Jesus," Jesus did come, and received his spirit, and left his dust to sleep on until the resurrection morning.

Devout men carried him to his burial. Many were assembled at the funeral to exhibit their regard for the dead; and all felt the appropriateness of these scriptures, "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season." "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

"One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er;
I'm nearer my home to-day
Than I've ever been before;

"Nearer my Father's house,
Where the many mansions be;
Nearer the great white throne,
Nearer the jasper sea;

"Nearer that bound of life
Where we lay our burden down;
Nearer leaving my cross,
Nearer wearing my crown."

GATHERED IN THE BLOSSOM.

The owner or cultivator of a garden enjoys it all—the ripe fruit, the yet growing fruit, and the blossoms too. Some of the fruit he plucks and prepares for his use while it is yet green; and some he carefully nurtures, and protects till it is matured, and ready to drop from its stem. Likewise the fragrance of the blossoms is pleasing to him, and very often may he be seen plucking little clusters of them that he may admire and enjoy them, carry them home with him, or wear them in his bosom.

So is it with our Beloved. The church is his garden, and he comes into it that he may enjoy its pleasant fruit. He notices with pleasure the growing plants; he loves to look upon the ma-

ture trees which are still bringing forth fruit in old age; and from time to time he gathers, and carries home such as he pleases to take.

Jesus loves little children, and bids the parents to let their little ones come unto him: he says, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

On a Sabbath morning, a father and mother—a happy pair—rejoicing in their hope of heaven, and thankful to God for special blessings, came with their babe to present it to the Lord. They devoted it to God, praying him to bless it and keep it; making it useful in this life, and perfectly blessed in the life to come. On their part, they promised to consider and to treat it as an immortal soul intrusted to their care,

to nourish and educate it with entire regard to the *Chief End of Man*, which is, "To glorify God, and enjoy him for ever." They promised to bring it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Some of the promises were repeated to them; especially the encouragement that those parents have, who do, with all their heart, present their children to Christ, that for them there is a place in his kingdom. They were reminded of the promise which is made to believing parents, and to their children. They entered into a solemn covenant with God concerning that child; and the outward seal of that covenant was applied when the water was sprinkled on its forehead. That child therefore belonged to God. By creation it was his already, and now the parents had consecrated it to him, and

HOLINESS TO THE LORD had been inscribed upon it. The parents acknowledged God's right to it, and entered into an engagement to take care of it as for him. For a while they were permitted to keep it. It grew; its mind expanded little by little; more and more the parents loved it, and it seemed to them that they could not do without it, and they perceived that their hearts were in danger of growing in the feeling that the child belonged exclusively to them, and that they must keep it.

But the owner of the vineyard was watching this opening blossom; and he took it.

The babe sickened; and neither medical skill, nor parental solicitude or prayers could keep it here. It was God's; all souls are his; he had the best right to it, and in taking it he intended no un-

kindness to the parents. Christ can save little children, and wash them, and make them white in his blood, and present them without fault before the throne of God, and have them to follow him whithersoever he goeth. I thought of all these things as we stood by the little coffin. The former bloom was wanting in the cheeks, but they were still full and fair, and the dimple was in the chin; and the little hands, crossed upon the breast, were holding a bunch of pure white flowers. The parents wept sore, and we all wept; but we rejoiced, even though we were sorrowful. We wept, for it is a sore bereavement when parents have to part with a darling child—when death comes, and seems, as it were, to snatch the infant from its mother's breast. We do not wonder that at such times

the parents' hearts seem ready to break; for they see the time too rapidly drawing on when they cannot even enjoy the comfort of gazing into its sweet face as it lies so peacefully, though it be in the embrace of death; but they must see the coffin closed upon it, and reflect that then they may behold it no more in this world, but must put it in the grave, and leave it there alone. Again, however, they are comforted; for if the Saviour has taken their child, they may be sure that it is well with it. They may think of it as in the good Shepherd's arms, and with that multitude which no man can number, clothed in its white robe, and having a crown and a harp. They may also reflect that it is taken from the evil that is in the world; and may look forward to a period, not far distant,

when they may meet with it again; for it shall not return to them, but they will go to it.

The parents did not refuse to be comforted; they seemed almost to smile through their tears; and when we sang the hymn,

“Gently, Lord, Oh! gently lead us,
Through this lonely vale of tears;

their voices joined in the song with a soft and subdued tone, and with such a look of calm resignation as seemed to say, “God hath done it; he who is our own God and Father; and he doeth all things well. His ways are perfect. If he chastens us, it is for our profit.”

Death had no terror there.

ANNA.

Anna was a minister's daughter, a modest, gentle, and intelligent little girl. Her home afforded every facility for developing, and guiding, and storing her mind. Father, mother, grandmother, and their frequent guests, all added something to her stock of information; for she was quick to hear, and so lovely in her ways that it was a pleasure to teach her, and to satisfy, as far as possible, her thirst for knowledge.

Whenever Anna was unwell, it was not her parents only that were anxious; nor was it the children, her playmates, only that came daily to see, or to inquire about her; but the older people also, for she was beloved by all; for she was a dear child, artless, confiding,

and so like a lady too. And yet, to know all her worth, you must see her more than once; you must live with her, and see her under many circumstances before you would perceive how much knowledge she had acquired, how much for one of her years she was given to meditation, and how correct were her views on many subjects, and how conscientiously she acted.

Anna had an older brother, a younger sister, and a still younger brother; but they, though generous and docile, yet were more strong and boisterous; and their parents hoped for much from the subduing, restraining, and mellowing influence of the gentle Anna upon her more ardent brothers and sister.

When we first knew her she was about two years old, and five years elapsed before we saw her again, and

she had grown somewhat tall and slender. She had been very sick, and her parents were trying what a change of air and scene might do towards confirming her health; but her physician, I perceived, had fears that her parents might be called to part with her before long. Her chest and lungs had been injured by her sickness, so that after she had so far recovered as to be able to travel, she breathed with difficulty, and must have suffered much; but I don't remember that I heard her complain at all, though from exhaustion she would frequently have to rest her body, or lean her head upon some support.

Anna was very fond of reading and of study. Often did her father say, "Oh, now, my daughter, lay aside that book, and run and play with the chil-

dren; father does not wish you to sit so much, and read so steadily." And she would do as her father requested; for so obedient was she, it was only necessary to signify a wish, and she hastened to obey. But soon she would tire of play, and back she would come to her book again.

Afterwards we visited at her home, and there we watched the children as they ran and played about the yard, and through the garden walks, and as they were engaged at their various little occupations. Then we left them to visit other friends, and came back again in a short time. We were met at the railroad station by her father and brother. I said to the brother, "Are all well at home?" He answered, "No, sir, we are not all well." "Who is unwell?" I asked. "Anna is sick,"

he said. "Is she very sick?" I asked again, and he replied, "Oh, yes, sir, she can't see any more, nor speak, nor hear." When we arrived at the house, it was nearly dark. The mother met and welcomed us, but in tears; and her lips were too tremulous to be entrusted with many words. We met Anna's grandmother, and she could say but little, for her much loved Anna was very, very sick, and the dear child might never again look upon her grandmother whom she loved so dearly, and the grandmother might never more hear the music of that sweet voice.

For two days she had been in the state in which we found her. The disease was upon the brain. At first she was in great pain, and her moans were distressing to those who could not relieve her sufferings, nor even

comfort her with words of sympathy and encouragement; for she could not see, or hear the dear ones who were around her, and anxiously bending over her. During the last three or four days of her sickness, the paroxysms of pain were few, and for the greater part of the time she lay without moving a limb; simply breathing, sometimes heavily, and sometimes hardly appearing to breathe at all. The physicians were frequently there, though they gave no encouragement that she could recover. There was no lack of attendants; for the parishioners and neighbours were ready beforehand, and anticipated every want. For several days she seemed to be fluttering between life and death, and therefore was not left alone for a moment. At length she ceased to breathe.

We could hardly persuade ourselves that she was dead; for lovely as she had appeared while yet alive, she was yet more beautiful in death; her face seemed radiant with beauty: the lips seemed as if waiting to speak some pleasant words, or to bestow a kiss.

She was permitted to remain still upon that same bed in the nursery where she had lain during her sickness, and in that neat and simple dress which once some time before, while talking with her mother about dying, she had said she would like to be wearing were she to be taken up to heaven. That conversation occurred while as yet her views of the future state were less distinct than they afterwards became.

How many, many times did the friends visit that room, and in silence gaze upon the form from which the

spirit had taken its flight! It was not surprising that the mother loved to be alone with her child, and seated by the bed-side. There was a communion there which she enjoyed—a communion with God, and with her own heart; and, doubtless, her faith, and her fancy too, were soaring away into the invisible world, and forming pleasing pictures of the scenes in which the soul now absent from the body was perhaps mingling, and of the glories which she fain hoped were unfolding to her sight. It would not have been surprising had she been glad to retain those precious remains, the perfect form of her darling, a little longer unburied.

We know nothing as to what were the thoughts of the little sufferer when she was about going into the world of spirits; for from the time that her

symptoms became alarming till life departed, there was no opportunity of conversing with her, and nothing could be ascertained of what she felt or feared. Whatever hope her friends may entertain concerning her must be gathered from her previous life.

Anna loved her Bible, and she read it much, and often inquired the meaning of passages which of herself she could not understand. She prayed, and appeared to love to pray. She often talked about heaven, desiring to know more concerning it. She loved the Sabbath-school; she loved the Sabbath-day; and she loved to go to meeting; and when in the house of worship there is evidence that she listened, and remembered what was said. On the Sabbath previous to that on which she was taken alarmingly ill, and two Sab-

baths previous to that on which she was buried, her father preached from that passage in Ezekiel the thirty-seventh chapter, respecting the vision of the valley of dry bones; and on Monday this little girl (not then feeling so well as usual) came into the study and said, "Father, I didn't understand all your sermon yesterday, when you were telling about the dry bones." "Well, my child," said the father, "would you like to read the chapter?" "Yes, sir," she replied; and he found it for her, and she read it all very carefully. The father then asked if she understood it. She answered that she thought she did, and was apparently much pleased with the new ideas which she then acquired; and then they talked for a little while upon the subject.

During all that week she was droop-

ing; and when a friend, who had called to visit her father, met her in the study, he said to her, "Anna, you seem to be unwell; do you ever think about dying?" She replied, "Oh, yes, sir, I think about it often." "And are you afraid to die?" he asked. "No, sir," she said. And then he asked, "Where do you expect to go when you die?" and she replied, "I hope I may go to heaven." "Then tell me, Anna," said he, "what makes you think you will go to heaven?" To this she answered, "Because Jesus says, Suffer little children to come unto me; and I want to go to him; and I pray to him to take me, and to make me good." "Then you love Jesus, do you?" he asked. And she said, "Oh, I hope I do."

Anna was an obedient girl, and whenever she had been impatient, or been

slow to obey, or done any wrong, she was very sorry, and confessed her fault, and asked forgiveness, and prayed God to forgive her.

Her parents said scarce anything about their hope that Anna was a christian, and was gone to heaven; but it was evident that they remembered with pleasure all these, and similar circumstances; and they reflected with comfort on the consciousness that they had devoted the child to God, and had renewed that covenant daily, and had seldom omitted to make mention of it in their prayers; and they had been untiring in their instructions, ever imploring the divine blessing on their endeavours.

And so death might come to this house without terror; nor was there anything dismal in his visit. True, we

all walked softly, and there were many tears that fell; but nevertheless there was in every countenance an expression of sweet resignation to the will of our heavenly Father; and I have no doubt that all felt precisely what the grandmother expressed, when, with moistened eyes, but with a look of submission, yea, and of pleasure too—which feeling those who are not christians may not be able to account for or understand—she said, after we had returned from the grave, “If death must come, it seems that it could not come in a less forbidding, or even more pleasing aspect than that in which it has visited us at this time.”

And now permit me to tell you something about the funeral. It was attended on the Sabbath evening: and perhaps you know how still, and peace-

ful, and hallowed seems the summer evening of a Sabbath in the country. It seemed that nearly all the members of the congregation, and all the children and teachers of the Sabbath-school, and most of the inhabitants of the village, were gathered in and about the parsonage.

For years the pastor had been their counsellor and comforter, attending with words of instruction, encouragement, and consolation at their sick beds; and weeping with those that wept as their loved ones were committed "earth to earth, and dust to dust;" and now they had come to weep with him, and to bury his dead.

The open coffin was placed in the study, and Anna seemed to be sleeping in it, all unconscious of what was passing around her; and so still was it

through all the house, that she need not have been disturbed had it not been her long sleep. On her breast lay a little wreath of flowers so delicate, and as white as snow; and another at her feet. On one side of the room were seated the now broken family: Anna's own chair was there; but it was vacant. It was still a family of four children, but one had gone—may we not say it?—to be with Him who gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom.

The minister, who was the pastor of a neighbouring church, and who within a few weeks had given up his two lambs to be carried in the bosom of the same Shepherd, read that chapter in which was the text on which (as we are encouraged to hope) Anna had based her faith, taking Jesus at his

word—that chapter in which are the words of Jesus where he says, “Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” He made no comment, offered no remarks, but slowly closed the book, and addressed the throne of grace in a prayer at once comprehensive, simple, and humble; thanking God for the hope which believing parents may have concerning their children, in so far as they themselves have been faithful in instructing those children, and in pleading with God in their behalf; thanking Jesus for his love for the little children, and for babes, and that whosoever will may bring their little ones to him for his blessing, and to be received into his fold. He asked the good Shepherd to deal gently with those from whose

little flock he had taken that lamb.
He commended us all to Him who doeth
all things wisely and well; who when
he afflicts does it for our profit, dealing
with us as with children.

Then, by a few voices, was sung,
with simplicity and tenderness, this
little hymn,

“I think when I read that sweet story of old,
When Jesus was here among men,
How he called little children as lambs to his fold,
I would like to have been with them then.

“I wish that his hands had been placed on my head,
That his arms had been thrown around me,
And that I might have seen his kind look when he
said,
‘Let the little ones come unto me.’

“Yet still to his footstool in prayer I may go,
And ask for a share in his love;
And if I thus earnestly seek him below,
I shall see him, and hear him above.

“In that beautiful place he has gone to prepare,
For all who are washed and forgiven ;
And many dear children are gathering there,
For of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

As might be supposed, that people who so loved their pastor and his family, desired once more to look upon the sweet face of Anna, and that comfort was not denied them.

Then we followed her to the grave, in the village burying ground. Those who carried the coffin were their neighbours; and they were fathers, who as they silently bore those precious remains to their long resting place, and lowered them to their bed, might be thinking of their own dear children, some of whom were yet spared to them, and some of whom were already buried.

Many were the tears that fell as the earth was returned into the grave, and

charged to keep its treasure, till He who is the resurrection and the life shall come the second time and receive his own.

HOW TO LIVE SO AS NOT TO FEAR DEATH.

We ought always to be living in preparation for death, and yet not in the fear of it; and that we may not fear it, we must all the time be prepared for it. Since we know not at what hour or moment the Son of Man may come, we should always be living as though we were in constant expectation of him; and for this reason Jesus himself hath said, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh." "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for

their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately."

Whatever preparation we have to make must be made before death, for in the grave no place for repentance will be found.

"There are no acts of pardon past,
In the cold grave to which we haste."

It is, moreover, extremely unwise to neglect the preparation for death until sickness comes, for then there is generally so much pain, or the mind is so weak, that it is very difficult to fix the thoughts long and intently upon one subject. Often, too, sickness is accompanied with delirium or stupor, which entirely disqualifies the mind for serious thought; so that many who put

off repentance to a time of sickness, or to a dying bed, must wake up in eternity and perceive their mistake. Oh ! it is a dreadful mistake to defer to a time of sickness, that which should be made the business of our days of health—a fearful mistake to think to crowd into those last few and troubled moments, that which should be made the business of every day of life.

Just as the soul is when it leaves the body, so will it go to appear before God ; if at death its sins are not forgiven, and the righteousness of Christ not imputed to it, so at the judgment must it appear in all its sin, and never be arrayed in the fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints. Just as we are when we fall asleep in death, so shall we be found when Christ shall come

the second time. If we are wise virgins, with oil in our vessels with our lamps, so shall we be with the wise virgins when the cry is made, "Behold the bridegroom cometh," and we may go in with him to the marriage.

The scriptures in very many places call our attention to the subject of death, and of the resurrection, and of the judgment day; and many are the solemn warnings which they give that we be ready for them: the apostle Peter says, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" Will my young readers be admonished to set about an immediate preparation for death? You cannot know how long you may have to live, or what may be the manner of your death. If we are

ready to die, we need not care how soon it comes, nor need we live in a constant dread of death. To be prepared to die, we need to have our sins forgiven—we need a new heart. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; and he is able and willing to save every one that will come unto him.

Again, let me assure you that no person is prepared to enjoy life, till he has a preparation for death. He who can welcome death can also submit cheerfully to all God's dealings with him. The person that is endeavouring to keep his house in order, so as not to be surprised if death should knock at his door the next time he appears in the neighbourhood, is also the person that is willing to wait all the days of his appointed time till his change shall come; and while he waits he will de-

sire to be profitably employed, and he will say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

He whose Chief End is "to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever," will live a useful and happy life, will die in peace, and possess the fulness of joy to all eternity.

It is our privilege in every prayer that we offer, to ask God to be near us in every hour of trial; we may pray especially that he will be with us when death approaches, to encourage and comfort us : we may say

"Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed :
Teach me to die, that so I may
Rise, glorious, at the awful day."

A PSALM OF DAVID.

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.