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S E R M O N

PREACHED IN THE

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ALBANY,

FEBRUARY 9, 1845,

THE SABBATH IMMEDIATELY SUCCEEDING THE

DEATH OF MRS. OLIVER S. STRONG,

OF JERSEY CITY,

DAUGHTER OF ARCHIBALD McINTYRE, Esq. OF ALBANY,

By WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D.D.

MINISTER OF SAID CHURCH.

ALBANY :

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TO MR. & MRS. A. McINTYRE :

MY DEAR FRIENDS—

In complying with your request that a few copies of this sermon should be printed for distribution through your afflicted circle, it is due to myself to state that it was among the most hurried of my pulpit preparations, and was not designed, strictly speaking, as a funeral sermon, inasmuch as your beloved daughter was never one of my pastoral charge. It *was* designed however, to administer comfort to you in your affliction; and if, in the perusal of it, you or those who are afflicted with you, shall be led to think less of the gloomy vacancy that death has made, and more of the world of glory to which it has been an introduction, it will be more than a compensation for any scruples which I may have felt in suffering so very hasty a production to appear in print.

With every feeling of sympathy in your affliction, and with earnest prayers that the God of all grace may manifest himself to you as a Comforter,

I am, your affectionate friend and pastor,

W. B. SPRAGUE.

ALBANY, FEB. 12, 1845.

SERMON.

PSALM xxxvi, 9.

In thy light shall we see light.

THE natural state of man is a state of darkness. His vision is indeed clear enough for the discerning of natural objects; and the sun in the heavens pours his radiance around him, to delight his eye and to illuminate his path. So too he has the faculty of viewing the *qualities* of the ten thousand objects by which he is surrounded — of looking over the creation with the intellectual as well as the bodily eye — of admiring as well as beholding the beauty, and grandeur, and harmony, which pervade the works of God. And more than that — he has a certain kind of moral discernment, by which he sees the immutable distinction between right and wrong, and the unchanging obligation of man to yield obedience to his Creator, and the fearful recompense of transgression under a wise and righteous government. All

the great truths, both of natural and revealed religion, are, in a certain sense, fairly within the scope of his vision ; and he can speak of them, and speak of them honestly, with reverence and admiration.

But notwithstanding all this, the remark with which I began is true — emphatically true — that man is naturally in a state of darkness ; else what means that declaration of the Apostle that “ the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned ? ” The truth is, that man, with the eye of his natural understanding, can look — if I may be allowed the expression — at the exterior of God’s truth ; but he is incapable of penetrating beneath the surface. There is in it a depth of spiritual excellence and beauty — an adaptation to meet the inward cravings of the soul, and to exalt and glorify its all-wise Author, of which he has no knowledge. He has not penetrated into the sanctuary of experimental religion. He may talk even in rapture of the spiritual glory of the gospel, and may imagine that he has felt its power ; but it is an imaginary experi-

ence, and nothing more. The true light has not shined into his soul ; for the film that naturally obstructs his spiritual vision has not been cleared away.

But there have been those in every age, whom the Spirit, by his illuminating and all gracious energies, has brought out of darkness into marvellous light. Among these there have been not a few who had been accustomed to view divine truth before, with a strong intellectual vision ; and what is more — men who had imagined that the true light had already found its way into their understandings ; nay, who had ridiculed the idea of any other light than that which every man enjoys, in the diligent use of his natural powers. But these, as truly as others, have had their views corrected, and have acknowledged with the most grateful admiration of God's grace, that " old things have passed away and all things have become new."

I say then, the Christian, even in this imperfect state, sees light in God's light. In the contemplation of his truth, as it is revealed in his word ; in the experience of his grace, as it refreshes and elevates his soul ; he walks in

the light of the divine countenance. When he contemplates the glory of God's providence, the glory of Redemption, the anticipated glory of Heaven,—especially when the eye of his faith fastens upon Christ, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead, whose presence is the bliss, and whose praise is the employment of, the ransomed,—I say, when these wonderful subjects come before his mind, he seems to himself to be walking in an immeasurable field of light, and the illuminations of the sun of righteousness well nigh entrance his soul with ecstasy. In the experience of christians, the intense joys to which I have here referred, are by no means constant; and many perhaps, may remain strangers to them through life; but all, all without exception, who have been born from above, have some new views of spiritual objects: if there is not the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, there is ordinarily the peace that passeth understanding; and in every case there is a spiritual relish for God's truth, which develops itself in earnest aspirations after Heaven, and which has in it the elements of heavenly glory.

But we may consider the text, in its ultimate bearing, as looking at the condition of the christian in a *future* world rather than in the present; that world in which we are to "see face to face," rather than this in which "we see through a glass darkly." There are some beams of spiritual light that bring gladness to the christian's soul here; but *there* it will be light without shade; the sun of righteousness will shine forever in his glory without the intervention of a cloud. I know, my brethren, that our views of Heaven are at best exceedingly imperfect: there is a depth of meaning in the descriptions which inspiration has given of it, which it might defy even the seraph before the throne to fathom. It were in vain for us, for instance, to attempt to decide in what part of the universe will be the city of our God; or to form any adequate conception of that splendid garniture with which the Creator has adorned it. Conceive of a city which is of pure gold; the walls of which are of jasper, and its foundation of all manner of precious stones, and its gates of pearl, and its very streets transparent, so as to reflect every image of beauty and grandeur:

conceive that it is illuminated by the presence of the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb; and that the nations of them that are saved walk in the light of it, and that the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it; and then, if you can analyze this conception, and tell what is included in all this burning imagery, you have some idea of Heaven.

But instead of attempting to lead you into any general view of this sublime subject, I shall limit myself in the present discourse, to the simple thought suggested by our text— that *in Heaven the glorified saint will behold light*—light emanating directly from the fountain of all light. He will dwell in the immediate presence of the Lord God, who is the sun of the universe; and wherever he moves, he will move amidst a flood of divine illuminations.

Let us consider then, some of the CHARACTERISTICS of that light in which the Christian is hereafter to rejoice.

I. It is a *spiritual* light. We know too little of what will be the constitution of the glorified body, to be able to decide whether it will possess distinct organs of vision adapted to behold external objects, or whether the mind will act

directly, as by a kind of intuitive survey, on the splendors of the renovated creation. But whether the one or the other be true, the glorified saint will behold light that will reveal to him all that is magnificent in the palace of the king of glory; all that is majestic in the throne on which the Redeemer sits, and around which angels sing; all that is attractive and enchanting in the fields and flowers and fruits of immortality. But that light which will be most enrapturing to the eye of the redeemed saint, no doubt will be the light of truth; that in which he will behold the same great truths on which his mind had been fastened here, illustrated and amplified into a field of glory. Here he had often been occupied in contemplating the character and government of God; the character and mediation of his Son; the love and grace and glory which are displayed in the scheme of redemption; the relations which that scheme may sustain to other worlds, and to the whole created universe: and there too the same truths will still be before his mind, and he will see them in a yet brighter light; and will discover in them endlessly diversified forms of moral and spi-

ritual beauty. He will find in these truths a depth of wisdom, which here it had not entered his mind to conceive; and which, even with the vision of a seraph, he will never be able fully to explore. And other truths involved in these, or growing out of them, or independent of them, will no doubt unfold to his understanding, and engage his admiring scrutiny. It was in the light of truth that he drew his first breath as a regenerate and adopted child of God; and in the light of truth his soul will breathe forth its noblest aspirations, will rise to its sublimest heights, will burn with its most ecstatic joys, when this mortal shall have put on immortality.

II. It is a *surprising* light. Can you imagine it otherwise, when you contemplate the circumstances in which it first bursts upon the soul? For then the Christian will be fresh from the dark valley; will have just finished his struggle with the king of terrors; just closed his eyes upon all the objects and interests of the world. Perhaps he has had a long and dreary passage from one world to another—it may be that the fall of the earthly tabernacle was the result of a protracted and most

agonizing convulsion; and that those who loved him most were obliged to flee from his bedside because the scene overwhelmed them; and possibly the agony of the body may have brought a cloud over the mind, or at least have prevented it from apprehending in their full extent the consolations of the gospel. Say now, whether an angel's tongue be adequate to describe the joyful surprise, which the believer must experience in his transition from earth to Heaven. Think of him speaking one moment to the hearts of agonized friends, out of eyes already dimmed by the film of death, and the next, gazing with renovated vision on the glories of the eternal throne. Think how the light of this world, as he lies upon his death bed, gradually fades into darkness; how the objects around him become more and more indistinct; how the last object — perhaps his dearest friend — finally sinks away in the shadows of that night which has come over him; and just then, when the darkness is the thickest and the deepest, and not only the eye of sense, but it may be, the eye of faith, is closed — oh, at that moment, when the soul seems to be almost lost in the valley of death — to

have the light from beyond the tomb break in, and to find itself passing the gates of the heavenly city, and to have the whole field of vision filled with the brightness of the divine presence—tell me whether any human imagination can apprehend the surpassing glory of this contrast. When I stand by thy death bed, and witness thy last struggle—when evidence that I cannot resist glares upon me, that thou art really in the monster's hands, my heart sinks within me; but when I think that these are the last drops of bitterness in thy cup, and that this struggle which I behold is the harbinger of immortal victory; when I remember that an angel's hand is just ready to draw aside the veil, and let in upon thee all the light and glory of Heaven, I am constrained to say, "Blessed art thou above those who look on and witness thine agony: thrice blessed art thou; for that eye is closing in death only to open upon the light of an immortal life; that spirit is struggling to free itself from the body, only that it may soar away from earth and sing with seraphic ecstasy around the throne."

There is yet another occasion on which it

is reasonable to suppose that the Christian will behold the light that shines in the heavenly city with surprise — I refer to the period when the glorified spirit takes up its residence in the glorified body. During the season in which the earthly tabernacle has lain in ruins, the spirit has been constantly conversant with the glories of heaven; it has begun an eternal companionship with the angels; it has learned how to use a seraph's harp; it has grown familiar with many of the mysteries of Providence, and discovered many new wonders in the work of redemption; it has become at home in all the golden streets of the heavenly city, and perhaps has sometimes winged its course on errands of mercy into other regions of the divine dominions: but hitherto it has been disembodied; its operations have been independent of bodily organs; it has acted by an energy which the Creator has made inherent in itself. But now that the grave has given back its deposit, and that which is mortal has put on immortality, there is a change in its mode of existence, a change in the manner of its operations, which confers upon it an increased dignity, and advances the na-

ture of man to its highest perfection. And no doubt there are revelations now made to the saint which will fill him with delightful surprise: the light which discloses to him his own glorified body, the spirituality of its constitution, the energy with which it can act, and the rapidity with which it can move, we may reasonably suppose, will surprise him. And not improbably the same effect may be produced by the increased facility with which he will now carry forward his researches into the works and ways of God; by the new and more delightful modes of discovering truth with which he will become acquainted; and by the wonderfully increased success which will mark the results of his investigation. He will be surprised at the exceeding and eternal weight of glory which will rest upon him; surprised that that body should have come up from the corruption of the grave, clothed with such supernal beauty; that his entire nature should have thus passed under the renovating influence of the Spirit of God, and should have come out at last adorned with the glories of an entire perfection.

III. It is a *satisfying* light. I shall be satis-

isfied," says David, "when I awake in thy likeness;" and so will every believer be satisfied when he awakes to the light of immortality. He will be satisfied with the revelations which will then be made to him of God's *truth*. In this world he had found his highest delight in meditating upon God's word; in viewing divine truth in its various relations and bearings; in endeavoring to discover the consistency and harmony of different truths, which, at first view, might have seemed irreconcilable. But after his best efforts in searching the scriptures, there are mysteries there which he finds it impossible to explain; there are heights to which he cannot ascend; depths which he cannot fathom; and after the most diligent examination of God's word, he has often occasion to exclaim as he closes it, "O! the unsearchable riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" But how different will the truths of the Bible appear to him, as he contemplates them in the light of the heavenly world! What here seemed obscure and mysterious, will there be illuminated as by the broad light of the sun. What was here difficult to be reconciled, will there be seen to

have a beautiful consistency. The Christian never doubted indeed, in this world, that there really is perfect harmony between all the various parts of the system of divine truth; but because he knew only in part, his mind was sometimes perplexed and well nigh bewildered in his contemplations. But now the beauty and proportion of the whole system, and the connexion between its various parts, are so clearly illustrated, that all painful perplexities are at an end; and though there still are, and always will be, deep things which he cannot understand; though after ages heaped on ages shall have passed, in which he shall have been a diligent student of God's truth, new mysteries will rise to awaken his admiration and employ his faculties, still he is enraptured with the discoveries which have already been made to him, and he is satisfied with the light that shines upon his path as he travels onward in his sublime investigations.

It will also be a satisfying light, as it will be reflected upon the *ways* of God. Some of God's ways, it must be confessed, are, to short sighted mortals, exceedingly mysterious; and the Christian, even in the exercise of the

strongest faith, can do little more than say, "How unsearchable are thy judgments, and thy ways past finding out!" When the hopes of parental fondness are blasted; when she who, but the other day, was a rejoicing bride, now finds her bridal ornaments exchanged for the habiliments of wo and widowhood; when a family of little children are left without a mother to guide and counsel and pray for them; when the career of active piety and usefulness is prematurely closed, and the good man has his countenance changed and is sent away, while the wicked are spared to be the scourges of the church and the world; when the hand of oppression is lifted to smite down the good, and the Church has occasion to put on the garments of sackcloth because they who should come bending to her are plotting for her ruin, — in all these various circumstances, the wisdom of the wisest is often baffled, and the faith of the true believer is sometimes staggered, in contemplating the wonderful ways of God. But not so when these things are looked at in the light of Heaven. There, no clouds nor darkness will surround those dispensations which here seemed the most dark

and inexplicable. There it will be seen that those events which here had pierced the Christian's heart most deeply, were among the means of his eternal joy; that the agony of being bereaved of beloved friends on earth, was part of the preparation for an eternal communion with them in heaven. There it will be seen how prayers had been answered by crosses; how God in mercy denied the Christian his heart's desire, that he might save him from some scene of calamity into which he would have plunged, and might discipline him to a spirit of submission when he was inclined to be rebellious, or to a habit of circumspection, when his vigilance was relaxed, or to a habit of spirituality, when he was forming a league with the world. There too it will be seen how Zion has arisen from the dust by the very means which have been used to crush her, and has lifted up the voice of thanksgiving and the shout of victory, when her mad oppressor vainly imagined that she was sinking under the weight of his arm. In short, there will be a light from the throne that will illustrate all God's dispensations; and in the

brightness of that light the Christian will rejoice and be satisfied.

IV. It is a *transforming* light. Truth is the great instrument by which the Holy Spirit exerts his transforming influence on the character of man. It is by the truth that the conscience of the sinner is aroused, and his soul converted, and the work of his sanctification carried forward till he reaches the fullness of the stature of a perfect person in Christ: and it will be in the light of truth that the graces which have been implanted in his soul will acquire a progressive maturity and strength, as the ages of his immortal existence roll away, and he has his dwelling in the third Heavens.

I need not attempt, Christian, to analyze the process by which the truth operates here to bring you into a near conformity to Christ. It is the simple operation of that law of our moral nature which subjects the feelings, in some measure, to the control of the habitual course of the thoughts; which causes to be left upon the character of the mind and the heart, the impress of those objects with which the individual is most conversant. Recur to

your own experience, and tell me when you have felt the deepest reverence for the divine character, the most fervent gratitude for the divine goodness, the strongest sense of personal unworthiness, the most devout longings after a holy Heaven; in short, tell me when your Redeemer's image has shone out most brightly upon your soul, if not when you have been most absorbed in contemplating God's truth; when the character, or the works, or the ways of God, as they are revealed in his word, have engrossed your thoughts and held you in deep and earnest meditation. It will be the same truth which will occupy you continually when you shall have reached Heaven. There will, indeed, be no occasion for its influence there as there is here, in overcoming temptation and subduing corruption; for the tempter will have done his last work, and will have sunk down in an ignoble defeat; and the soul will have got rid of all its pollution and be completely adorned with the image of the heavenly: nevertheless, as you are a finite being, you will be capable of an illimitable progress in knowledge and holiness; of ascending from glory to glory throughout your whole immor-

tal existence; and this will be, in a great measure, the effect of your contemplation of divine truth; because you enjoy the privilege of walking in the light of the Lamb. As your mind will wander continually over that immense field of glory, investigating the relations and exploring the depths of the divine attributes;—here fastening upon one of the mysteries of redemption, and there upon another;—now occupied with the everlasting triumphs of the redeemed, and now darting back with an angelic glance to that scene on Calvary in which the foundation for all these triumphs was laid; I say, while your mind is thus employed—and this will be its employment forever—its graces will continually glow, its powers will continually brighten, with a pure and noble lustre. Yes, Christian, I repeat, in Heaven you shall walk in a transforming light. There will be light in every object upon which your eye shall fasten;—light so intense that none but the vision of a glorified immortal could bear it; but not a beam of it shall be lost upon you, for you shall rise and rise forever, amidst its endlessly diversified splendors.

V. I observe once more, that this is an *ever enduring* and *ever increasing* light. Ah, it were much for the Christian to be able to reflect on his entrance into Heaven, that the light which shines around him then will continue to shine forever; that the joy which is kindled in his soul then will never die away, will never even be abated, through all the ages of his existence. But in addition to this, it is his privilege to reflect that the light in which he now rejoices, will shine with an eternally progressive splendor. Glorified spirit, who hast past the portals of the upper sanctuary, methinks I see thee enraptured with an ecstasy thou hast never before conceived, in view of the unutterable glories which are bursting upon thee, now that thou hast got within sight of the throne of the Redeemer, and within hearing of the songs of the ransomed. I see thee reaching forth to seize a golden harp, that thou mayest join in the praises of redemption: I hear the accents of thanksgiving to the Lamb that was slain, from thy lips already trained to pour forth strains of celestial music. I follow thee as thou art moving about among the angels, and amidst the general assembly and

church of the first born, and see thy countenance beaming with joy unspeakable, as it reflects the light of the Lamb. But I look forward a thousand millions of ages, and I perceive that the joy which thou art now experiencing has mounted up into a joy incomparably more intense and seraphic: thou art now an infant seraph, but then thou wilt be advancing towards an angelic maturity: thou art now gazing with rapture upon the palace of the great king — then thou wilt have learned far more of its magnificence; thou wilt ascend the heights which angels climb, and take in far more than thou now canst, of the immense dominions of Jehovah! Thou dost well to rejoice in what thou now art; but it does not even yet fully appear what thou shalt be; but be assured of this, that each successive age of thine eternity will find thee a more exalted being, will shed upon thee a brighter light, will carry thee farther and still farther down into the depths of divine wisdom!

Let the afflicted Christian look upward and rejoice. Yes, rejoice in all your tribulation. I see there is a weight of sorrow pressing head

vily upon thine heart: though thou shouldst not say a word, that dejected countenance would tell me that thy bosom is the dwelling of wo. But in view of this subject on which we have been meditating, I wait to see that countenance kindling with the smile of joy; to see that eye beaming forth a cordial complacency in the providence of God, as it looks upward to Heaven through its own tears. Believe it, Christian mourner, thy weeping time will soon be at an end. This darkness that surrounds thee, will soon fly away. Though thou art now bathed in tears, thou art standing on the margin of Heaven. And presently thou wilt be mingling in all its glories; its songs will be upon thy lips; its light will blaze upon thine eye; its joys will entrance thy soul; and thou shalt occupy a throne and wear a crown, which are the purchase of redeeming blood. In the joy of such a prospect, canst thou not bid thy troubled heart be still? Canst thou not be contented to suffer, when thou knowest not but the next moment, thy Saviour may reach down from his throne, and take thee up to dwell among the angels?

Let the prosperous sinner look upward and

weep. Listen to the music of the redeemed, survey the light in which they walk, and the glory in which they rejoice, and weep that you have no part or lot in the matter. Weep that you are so infatuated as to sacrifice to transient and unsatisfying pleasures, the joys of a whole eternity. Weep that you are so ungrateful as to turn your back upon that inheritance which has been purchased by the richest blood in the universe. Weep that every hour is carrying you farther and farther from the city and temple of God, and bringing you nearer and nearer to the abyss of eternal torment. Weep that your spirit has no celestial tendency; that you have no relish for the employments of heaven; no vision to behold its splendor; no heart to mingle in its praises. Weep that the season will soon be gone in which Heaven will be proffered to your acceptance; that the season will soon arrive in which your destiny will be immutably fixed. Think it not strange that I call upon you amidst all your dreams of pleasure, to weep: He who looks upon your case just as it is, knows that that is a delirious joy in which you are indulging, and that it ought even now

to be turned into heaviness. I call upon you, yet again, to look upward and weep: and I pray the merciful Redeemer, who not only wept but bled for you, that you may weep such tears as shall prove the seed of immortal joy.

APPENDIX.

MRS. MARGARET STRONG was the daughter of Archibald and Eliza McIntyre, and was born in Albany, July 8, 1811.

In the earliest development of her character, she gave evidence of an active and well balanced mind, which was improved by the best advantages for education. She possessed also great natural benevolence of character, quick and generous sensibilities, and the utmost cheerfulness and buoyancy of spirits, which, both in childhood and maturer years, made her a favorite in every circle in which she moved. In January, 1834, she was married to Oliver S. Strong, of New-York, towards whom she discharged the duties of the conjugal relation, as she always did towards her beloved parents, the duties of the filial relation, with most exemplary fidelity and affection to the moment of her death. She left two young children, who, however deeply affected by their mother's departure, cannot adequately estimate the severity of the bereavement.

Mrs. Strong, from early childhood, evinced great tenderness of conscience, and under the influence of a religious education, had often been the subject of serious impressions; but it was not till the spring of 1843, that her mind became so decided that she felt prepared to take upon herself the responsibilities of a christian profession. During the preceding winter, her attention had been specially drawn to the subject of religion under the ministrations of the Rev. Dr. Potts. The earnest impressiveness of his manner, his strong appeals to a high sense of duty, in connection with his more private efforts in her behalf, had the effect, under God, of dissipating the darkness which had long hung over her mind, and bringing her, in connection also with her husband, to become a cheerful and exemplary member of the church. From this time she always showed herself a consistent and active christian—ready to every good word and work. She continued her connection with the Duane-street church till April, 1844, when in consequence of the removal of her pastor to a field of labor in another part of the city, and of the formation of a new Presbyte-

rian church in Jersey City, the place of her residence, she thought it her duty to transfer her relation to the new church in her immediate neighborhood ; and she did it with the greater alacrity, as she had already formed a high estimate both of the character and the ministrations of the Rev. Mr. Johnstone, who had been called to the pastoral charge of that church. In the success of this new enterprise she uniformly evinced the deepest interest ; and it was through her active and persevering efforts a short time previous to her death, that a sufficient sum was raised for the purchase of a new communion service ; and it is matter of grateful recollection to her friends, that it was used for the first time, on occasion of the communion in December, when she was permitted, almost for the last time, to visit the house of God.

The last illness of Mrs. Strong commenced on the morning of the 25th of January ; and though her bodily suffering was of the severest kind, and though she was naturally remarkably sensitive to pain, she maintained during all her agony, the most serene, submissive, and even grateful temper. The following account of the last days of her life, is extracted from a letter, written by a near friend, who was with her during the whole of her last sickness :—

“ During the most of that week, every symptom was encouraging, and it was not until Saturday the 1st of February, that we became seriously alarmed. In the afternoon of that day, worn out by constant vomiting, she felt herself sinking and took leave of her husband and children, and seemed ready to depart. However, to the surprise of her physician, and of us all, she revived and passed a very comfortable night. On Sunday, her old friend and former physician, Dr. Vanderburgh, came to see her; and during that day she frequently said that she felt so much relief from all bodily pain and mental inquietude, that she thought her Heavenly Father would mercifully interpose and restore her to her family. With it all, however, there was the same grateful sense of divine aid, and submission to the divine Will, which had marked her whole illness. Through that night and Monday, her symptoms became fatally indicative of an early termination of her sufferings. Her physicians reluctantly yielded to this conviction, (for both of them, prompted by an affectionate interest in one so peculiarly attractive in her character, left nothing untried,) and weeping, left her with her immediate friends. About 4 P. M., on Monday, after remaining sometime quiet, she suddenly roused up, and asked earnestly for a “ bright light :” a candle was lit and placed near her, when she commenced enunciating in distinct, though interrupted words, a prayer to God, full of thankfulness and earnest supplication for continued support. Mr.

Johnstone came in about this time, and at her desire offered a prayer with her, during parts of which her hands would feebly struggle forth in an effort to clasp them in supplication, and she would slowly but distinctly repeat any sentence of Scripture quoted by her pastor.

“Mr. Johnstone being obliged to leave, she gratefully thanked him, and throwing her arm on his neck, drew his head down and whispered, “You are a great consolation to me, but not my God.” I then took up a Bible and read to her the 103d Psalm, parts of which she repeated after me. She then commenced in a voice feeble at first, to sing her gratitude to God, but growing stronger and sweeter as she proceeded. We then got her the Hymn Book, which she took in her own hands, partially aided by her nurse, when she sang in tones of strong rejoicing, the 665th and 643d Hymns of the late edition of the Presbyterian Church, emphasising with peculiar sweetness any words that seemed particularly applicable to her situation. At the close of one of these, her physician, surprised at her seeming strength and hoping against hope, suggested to her that she was exhausting herself, and that she had better cease singing; but she looked half-reproachfully at him, and said sweetly, “Doctor, how can you deny me this pleasure of thus praising to the last, that God who has so supported me and been so merciful?” No further effort was made to stay her; and still keeping the book, she turned to the 214th Hymn, and sang that with the same strength and sweetness as the others, repeating, I believe, the third verse twice. Mr. Johnstone shortly after this returned, and again prayed with her, every sentence seeming to be mentally echoed by herself, and occasionally she joined in the prayer audibly. During this time, she left many most touching messages for her parents and relations who were absent, and took one long, last look (as we all then supposed,) of her dear children. Their presence however, we all thought, was painful to her, as drawing her to earth and interfering with that earnest desire to depart which she was evidently laboring to keep ever present in her mind.

“One feature was remarkable throughout all the remembrances she left for absent ones—and that was, that they should all be thankful for her to God for his rich and abundant mercy to her, throughout all her trying sickness. Gratitude and love to her Maker, were, throughout, her ruling emotions. We had all anticipated that her strength would now rapidly sink, and that her departure was close at hand. Nature however was strong, and her constitution, always vigorous and buoyant, resisted the inroads of her disease. She now passed into a wandering state of mind, accompanied at intervals by severe spasms.

This continued through Monday night and Tuesday, until late in the afternoon. There were, however, moments of clear intelligence, when she would give utterance again and again to her gratitude for the merciful support which she experienced. Late in the afternoon, her nurse finding that low toned singing soothed her spasms, sang many hymns to her, when occasionally, as soon as a convulsion had passed off, and her mind had become clear, we could distinguish her voice taking up not only some of the notes, but words also. Indeed, I may confidently say, that with every return of consciousness up to her latest moments, came that *overpowering sense of gratitude for mercy vouchsafed*, with which I firmly believe her released spirit entered the presence of that God who bestowed the precious gift. She finally laid her head on the right side, and with an occasional moan, breathed her last sigh as calmly as an infant falling asleep. From first to last, she was perfectly resigned and submissive; there was not a murmur from her lips; nor an impatient look, nor a single expression of doubt, as to all being well ordered and right. She was sustained by unseen influences, and comforted by that God who is ever ready to succor his afflicted children."