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INTERESTING SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND DEATH

OF

DOCTOR HARRY I. TODD,

OF KENTUCKY.

BY THE REV. J. R. WILSON.

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NOTE BY THE PUBLISHER.

The citizens of Bedford, Pa., where the young gentleman closed his life, can, from their own observation, confirm most of the statements here given. "The Author," they can tell any one disposed to enquire, "is well known to us; for he resided and taught among us for several years." If further information should be desired, they can lead him to the burying ground belonging to their town, and say—"This is the grave of DR. HARRY I. TODD."

This narrative is recommended, not only for its nervous and elegant style, but especially for the correct and evangelical sentiments which it contains. It has, if we mistake not, peculiar and forcible claims on the attention of the young, who are now passing the very interesting period of youth. None, it is hoped, can read it without feeling its tendency to correct the heart and life, and impress the mind of the necessity *of being also ready* for that hour which will place them before the *judgment seat of CHRIST.*

The individuals referred to in this sketch, were his father, the late Thomas Todd of the Supreme Court of the U. S., his brother, the late John H. Todd of Frankfort, and his aunt, the late Mrs. Tunstall of that place, with her ancient servant Gloucester.

SKETCH
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DOCTOR HARRY I. TODD.

MY VERY DEAR SIR,

At your request I shall give, and with great pleasure, a short sketch of the life and death of Dr. HARRY I. TODD. He was a native of Kentucky. The families of which he was descended, both paternally and maternally, were, and still are, among the most wealthy, fashionable, influential and intelligent of that flourishing State. I need not say to you that the wealth and fashion of Virginia were transferred at once into that fertile region of the west, where nature appears to have opened her richest treasures, and poured them forth in the most splendid profusion, to enrich and adorn the face of the earth. TODD drew his first breath in the atmosphere of opulence and exterior refinement. Slaves waited upon his childhood and youth, ready to minister to his ease, and gratify all his wishes. His father, benevolent and liberal to all around him, was peculiarly so to his children. He withheld from them no reasonable gratification. Young Harry was beautiful, sprightly, interesting and sensible in his childhood. Of course he was a favorite. His parents, the domestics, and even strangers, loved him. After acquiring the rudiments of an English education, in the best manner that Kentucky could afford, he was put to the grammar school of Mr Wilson, who was deservedly celebrated in that country. Tho' Harry was not remarkably attentive to his studies, such was his quickness and soundness of memory, that with a moderate share of application, he soon outstripped all his equals in the study of classical literature. At a very early age, for this country, he became a tolerable proficient in the Latin and Greek languages. The elegance of his person, and the ease of his manners, his taste in dress, and the neatness and perspicuity of his style, and his fluency in conversation, added to an unusually rapid flow of social feelings, rendered him, when but a boy, the delight of all his associates, and the pride of his family and friends. Yet he possessed an acuteness of feeling, and a quickness of temper, which made him, on some occasions, a little petulant.

The course of classical literature usual in Kentucky, with some other preparatory studies, having been completed, he commenced the study of Medicine, with one of the most respectable

physicians in the town of Lexington, (the late Dr. Ridgely). In this study he spent three years. During this period, though but a youth between the ages of seventeen and nineteen, he mingled with all the first society of that gay, luxurious, and dissipated place. He was the sun of every circle. During that period he was engaged in a duel, or as they term it there, and elsewhere in the ungodly world, "an affair of honor." There was an accommodation, however, on the field, before either of the parties was injured.

We are now about to see our youth launched into a greater sea of folly and fashion. His father resolved to send him to Philadelphia, that he might there finish his medical studies, in the deservedly distinguished University of Pennsylvania; where he might have the benefit of the first medical lectures in the new world, and in some respects, equal perhaps to any in the old. You will perceive, that all this time I have said nothing of his religious education, of his moral or spiritual improvement. Alas! in the world usually called *great*, there is rarely any ground to enlarge on these subjects in the story of youth. Though master Todd was taught to scorn any thing that might be thought mean, to cherish a principle of integrity in all his dealings, and to be generous to the needy, yet he was not accustomed early to perform these duties as enjoined by the great and good BENE who made him, or from any respect for his laws; but merely as affairs honorable among men, and worthy of a gentleman. As to morality, he was probably not different from the major part of young men of his age and standing about Lexington. I shall not go into details here. I had rather let the curtain fall. In general, it must be said, that he was far from possessing those moral feelings, to say nothing of religion, which were calculated to preserve him from ruin in a great city, in which the facilities of vice are rendered almost numberless, and in which the only safety, for any young man, is to keep himself out of the way of temptation. In one word, he was devoid of both religious feeling and religious knowledge, as will shortly appear.

The known high standing of his family, especially of his father, and the letters of introduction with which he was furnished, ensured him admission into any society he chose. His own personal qualities secured him the favor of all the ungodly part of the fashionable world. Indeed, he possessed in a remarkable degree the power of creating an interest in his favor with all who knew him. Among the hundreds of young men who resort to the medical school at Philadelphia, Harry I Todd could not fail of finding many disposed to open for him a highway to every criminal gratification. He soon became himself an adept, a leader in the ways of vice, and the frequent visitant of the haunts of dissipation. He generally, indeed, attended the lectures, by

which he increased his stock of medical knowledge, but his great delight was in the dancing assembly, the theatre, the card party, the ——. Oh! poor human nature, when the best of children are by nature thus fallen! And will no kind angel of mercy reach the hand of salvation to this hapless youth, sinking, how deep! into an ocean, a bottomless ocean of corruption? Wait, and I will tell you. Three years he spent chiefly in Philadelphia. Once or twice he visited, in that period, his friends in Kentucky. A young gentleman, a near friend of mine, travelled with him from Bedford in Pennsylvania to Philadelphia, in the stage, on his last return from Kentucky, to attend the medical lectures. He said he had travelled with a young Dr. Todd, of Kentucky, who would be the most fascinating young man he had ever seen, did he not swear so profanely. His last winter in Philadelphia was one of greater dissipation than any of the former. With all his great opportunities he was barely able to procure a degree. A mind so excellent, and feelings so noble as his, were thus expended in the mad career of vicious indulgence.

About the time that he received his degree of M. D. he visited Washington, to see his father married to his second wife, a lady connected with people of the highest rank in the United States. In his career of fashionable folly, he took no care of his health. While in the city of Washington, he caught a cold, which, settling upon his lungs, produced a considerable inflammation. He also had a slight fever. In order to remove these complaints he took some medicine. In swallowing it a coughing was produced, which ruptured a blood vessel in his lungs; the consequence of which was an immediate discharge of nearly one quart of blood, threatening him with instant death. My friend, I know your thoughts. You think this alarmed the gay young doctor, and turned his thoughts on religion and a future world. No. Alarmed he was, but religion never commanded in his bosom one transient emotion. That bosom which heaved with pity at the woes of the miserable, and prompted to give even the last shilling to the "beggars boy," could not be softened by impending death, to one thought of God, or one relenting pang, for ingratitude to the Giver of all good—could not be roused to seek "refuge from danger," by all the horrors of the gulf of perdition, on whose dark verge he was tottering. How obstinate is human depravity!

He immediately set off for Philadelphia, to seek for medical aid. He arrived without any return of the discharge of blood, and placed himself under the care of Dr. P———. His vigor of body, which had been greatly impaired, rapidly increased. In a few weeks it rose nearly to the tone of health. A party was formed for an excursion to the country. Dr. Todd was invited to make one of it. Though sensible of the danger to which he was exposed, he could not deny himself the gratification. By

exposure to rain, fatigue, and much exercise of social feeling, a coughing was produced, and the discharge of blood returned upon him. An ulcer on his lungs was soon formed. He had a constant cough, and in a few days begun to discharge pus from his lungs. He soon experienced a great prostration of strength. In this state he formed the resolution of setting off for Kentucky; a journey of seven hundred miles; and a considerable portion of it over rugged mountains. His physician advised him against it, probably thinking that he would not have strength to reach his father's residence, and that he might die among strangers, who would neglect to minister to his comfort, during his last moments. His resolution, however, was taken. He prepared for setting off. The preparations plainly evinced that he did not himself apprehend death, though, as a physician he would have pronounced it inevitable in another. He purchased a chaise at about four hundred dollars, a horse at two hundred; also shoes, boots, and full suit of the best quality of clothing the city could afford, and made, of course, in the first style of fashion. He also hired to attend him a black servant, for whom he purchased a fine horse. Thus equipped, and forgetting as much as possible the fatal disease that preyed upon his vitals, he set off to return to his native State, little doubting but he should there dash in the gayest circles of fashion, and soon be at the head of his profession in Kentucky.

Having seen him take leave for ever of Philadelphia, let us linger behind a little, to drop a tear over the multitudes of godless associates whom he has left behind him. Multitudes of youth of the first natural parts, of the best collegiate education which our country can afford, and out of the wealthy and influential families in the Union, every year resort to Philadelphia to procure a knowledge of the healing art. How many of them, alas! like Dr. Todd, are either confirmed in habits of vice, or initiated into the dark mysteries of libertinism; and these are the angels destined to wait around the beds of dying mortals! How poorly calculated are such men to minister consolation to the dying, or "to smooth the path of death?" Even the heathen god Esculapius rebukes & disallows them to minister at his altars. How destructive an influence have they upon the state of society! Do they not by their examples, and conversation in instances numerous lead into dissipation and produce more disease than the whole amount of what they remove? Will the God of nature bless; ought we to expect him to bless the prescriptions of such physicians, for removing the afflictions brought on by sin? He may, he sometimes does, but we ought not to expect it. I mean no reflection on the medical school, none on the faculty generally, none upon those gentlemen who fill the medical chairs. No, I am not aware that they merit any. Many gentlemen of this

profession adorn society, and what is more, adorn the church. It is the state of society that I deplore, and the numerous temptations which it presents. Would to God that all those whose business it is to alleviate the sufferings of the miserable, and diminish human misery by promoting health, were calculated to impart moral and religious instruction on those impressive occasions which are so frequently presented in the course of their practice.

As Dr. Todd has bid a final adieu to his associates in folly and vice, so we shall leave them in the hand of God, and follow the Doctor on his journey westward. We find him at Bloody Run, a village in the Alleghany Mountains, about two hundred miles west of Philadelphia; his strength exhausted, utterly unable to prosecute his journey farther, confined to his bed among entire strangers, in a house crowded with the noisy wagoners who drive teams through those mountains. This village is seven miles east from Bedford, lately become celebrated; on account of the numerous and valuable mineral springs in its neighborhood. Bedford is a place of extensive fashionable resort in the summer season. At Bloody Run he began to despond. It was indeed a sad reverse which he experienced. "Nursed in the lap of ease" from childhood, he is now among entire strangers, sighing under the pressure of an incurable disease. A young gentleman of Bedford, Dr. E——, who had attended one course of medical lectures with Dr. Todd, and formed a partial acquaintance with him, as soon as his situation was known, had him conveyed to Bedford, and provided with lodgings, in a private house, as it was the season of bathing, and all the houses were crowded with visitants. Here I first saw him. It was at the request of Dr. E——, who said he was a hapless and interesting stranger, who was not far from death, and had no one to comfort, or even to speak to him, except a dull black servant, who knew little of his master. When introduced into his room, mingled and lively sensations were excited. He was in bed where his weakness confined him. The vivacity and fire of youth yet shone in his countenance. His eye was still keen, and expressive of a quick, brilliant, and ardent mind. He endeavored to render himself agreeable. Indeed it required no effort to render him in an uncommon degree interesting. But alas! there was one sad drawback. He swore very profanely. His mind ran upon the theatre, at which he had been, while in Philadelphia, a constant attendant. He recited some pieces with great ardour to illustrate the attitudes, tone, and emphasis of distinguished players. Some of the pieces which he selected were extremely licentious. However, the more licentious, the more he seemed to delight in them. Thus though almost in the arms of death, he would exhaust his remaining strength in reciting

unchaste and impious selections from plays, which ought never to be read, or heard by any human being. How do ladies hear those things in the theatre, without a blush, which in private would be esteemed the grossest insult? This by the way.

Youth and age, will you visit with me this young man? Do you desire that your dying moments shall be thus spent? Speak. Let conscience answer. My heart sunk within me, as I saw "death and sin" committing their ravages upon one of the fairest portions of the work of God, and rendering it a loathsome mass, disgusting, shocking. I became attached to him, though shocked with his profaneness. I soon learned of what family he was, and that he was the same Harry I. Todd, of whom my friend had spoken. I did not reprove him in the slightest degree during this first short visit. He pressed me to call again, to call frequently. "When," said he, "I was the gay and fashionable Dr. Todd, in high health and able to contribute to the amusement of company, my society was sought after by young men. Now I am sick, and in need of something to render me cheerful, they all forsake me. Far from all my relations, in this lonely condition, you will have pity upon me, and see me as often as convenient. You see I am fond of society." I promised, and took leave. Here one cannot help remarking of how little value the friendship of the world is. It only discovers itself when least needed. The ungodly cannot endure the sober solemnity which is spread around a sick bed; much less those thoughts of death which intrude themselves into the anti-chamber of the grave. Worldly men possess less benevolence and are more wrapped in themselves than is generally supposed. Do you ever see Christians thus forsake each other in their distress? Do they fly from the sick, or death beds of friends? No, never. Their friendship is deeply rooted in the heart. It is nourished and unfolds its blossoms in the sunshine of prosperity and its fruits are ripened and mellowed by the frosts of adversity.

How deplorable was now the situation of this youth, who to use a phrase of the world, had appeared one of the favorites of fortune! No friend to comfort him; the tide of life rapidly ebbing; his impiety gathering strength; and not even calling upon his God for mercy! Eternal misery threatens to make him her prey. How many thousands die thus! Young man, young woman, think before it is too late. Pardon me, my friend, this warmth. I know you do.

Dr. W—— of Bedford, had been called in to attend upon Dr. Todd. This was a favourable circumstance. For though death could not be deprived of his prey, his approaches might be rendered comparatively easy through the instrumentality of so skilful and attentive a physician. In conversation with me on the case of Dr. Todd, he said, "there is no hope of recovery. He

is far, very far beyond the power of medicine. You should tell him so. I have been as plain with him on that subject as perhaps a physician ought to be with his patient. He does not appear to understand me. Were it another's case he would see death approaching. But he does not seem to have the smallest apprehension of death." A Dr. — of Virginia, was invited to see him. We concurred in the opinion that his death was inevitable, and probably within two or three weeks. On the next day I found him in the same state. He had, however, been told that it was impolite to swear before me. This he avoided, for he would violate, knowingly no law of politeness. This he would have deemed high treason against every thing excellent. But Shakespeare, Kotzebue, and other licentious dramatists were still upon his tongue. The most unchaste portions of their plays appeared evidently to have made the deepest impression; to have interwove themselves with every fibre of his heart. The greatest votaries of theatrical amusements must have perceived something highly incongruous in the state of Dr. Todd's mind, relative to this point, had they witnessed these death bed scenes. After some introductory remarks respecting the nature of his complaint, I asked Dr. Todd whether he considered his night sweats, and his fevers hectic, and his diarrhoea colliquative? He said "Yes, no doubt of it, and they proceed from ulcer in the lungs." He was then asked how long patients in consumption usually lived after those symptoms appeared? "Two or three weeks" was his reply. I then thought he must be sensible of the near approaches which the king of terrors was making to him. What was my astonishment to hear him, with the very next breath say to his servant, "John take care to have the horse and gig in good order," and turning to me, he continued, "I mean to set off in two or three days for Kentucky, and thence to the southern States to spend the winter there. I hope the travelling and mild air of the South will restore my health." At that time he could scarcely have risen from his bed. The thoughts of death were far from his mind as in the days of health, and greatest gayety; as far from him as when in the theatre, or ball room. I said to him—Doctor, no one would be more happy than myself that a young man of your education and genius should be restored to health and to society. But let me tell you, I fear you will never see either the Southern States, or Kentucky. Dr. W——, Dr. H——, and myself are all of opinion that you have no prospect of recovery, and that the termination of your earthly course is not many weeks distant. We have thought it proper to mention to you this opinion, that you may make some arrangements in relation to the property which you have with you. I hope also you will not think me impertinent, should I suggest to you, the propriety of making some arrangements relative to a

future state of existence. As a rational man, Dr. you will no doubt think this proper." One could easily read in his countenance that he considered all these remarks very indelicate. Indeed, he afterwards told me, that at the time, he thought me extremely impertinent. However, he was a gentleman too well bred to express any displeasure. He replied, "Yes sir. Certainly sir. By all means. I mean to *settle my accounts*. Every man ought to be ready to stand his trial. I mean to be ready. Quite proper. I have always been generous to the poor. I have never committed murder, nor wronged any man. O! yes sir, I mean to *settle my accounts and be ready for my trial*." All this was pronounced with much vivacity and without any seeming concern. How dreadful to see a fellow mortal plunging into the boundless ocean of eternity with such delusive hopes! Yet how many, were they now to have delivered to them such a message as that to Dr. Todd, would find their hopes no better, nay, precisely of the same kind with his! The question will ere long be as important, as nearly interesting to us as it was to the subject of these remarks. It ought to be so now. It was said to him, "you no doubt believe the Bible." His reply was, "Yes sir, O yes sir. To be sure I never read it much. My father believes the Bible. He subscribed to aid the building of churches. I have heard Dr. Campbell* preach, and think him quite an orator. Yes, Sir, I mean to be ready for my trial." How my heart sunk within me! I said to him: "Though before any earthly tribunal, I have no doubt Dr. you would receive as honorable an acquittal as any one, yet you will have soon to appear before a tribunal where if you receive a sentence of acquittal, it will not be through the rigid exercise of justice. No, it will be through mere mercy. This was pronounced with feeling and solemnity. It seemed to move him. He said, "have you a Bible in your house?" God forbid, said I, that I should not have a Bible in my house. He requested that I would bring him one; and immediately began to talk about Solomon's temple: asking me, "are you, sir a freemason?" Upon hearing me reply, no sir, I never had the honor of belonging to that respectable association; said he, "O then its over." "Why," he was asked, "can no one except a freemason know any thing of the Bible?" He apologized, and was really distressed that he had either thought or spoken so rashly and impolitely. "Perhaps," said he, "you can, and will be so good as to point me to that part of the Bible which describes Solomon's temple. I think too, there is an account given of a hero called Joshua, who commanded the sun to stand still, and it obeyed him. There is too, I think, a story about another general Moses, who divided the Red Sea. Is there not? I shall thank

*The late very learned and pious Rev. Dr John P. Campbell of Kentucky.

you to mark these places." He appeared to have very, very little wish to see the Bible, but to gratify his curiosity as to the architecture of Solomon's temple, and to read the story of Joshua, Moses, &c. whom he no doubt, compared to Edward the Black Prince, or any other captains delineated by Shakespeare, or other dramatists. He was promised a Bible with the references which he requested. One was bought for him, and on the following day presented to him. He was directed to the stories of Moses and Joshua, and the descriptions of the temple at Jerusalem, and also to the three last chapters of Matthew's gospel, containing an account of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Redeemer. After a great deal more conversation about theatres, copious eulogies on Shakespeare, and much regret expressed that the clergy did not more generally study the prince of dramatic poets, he was presented with his Bible. He said, "I have been trying to settle my accounts. They seem to be in great disorder. I cannot make them balance. They are in utter disorder; I can make nothing of them." While uttering these sentiments, there was more seriousness in his manner than he had exhibited before. In fact, until now his whole air and manner was that of a vivacious, dashing young man, who is all sprightliness, and hardly takes time either to think, or speak one serious word. He now began to feel. He found what he had not before even suspected, that his spiritual affairs were in a state of the most alarming derangement. Thousands, upon a little reflection, would meet with a similar disappointment.

On the next visit, I was, as before, entertained with theatrical anecdotes, or dissertations on political affairs. The few thoughts which he could spare from the amusements of fashion, were consecrated to party politics. His object seemed to be to amuse me as well as possible, that I might not find my visits to his room disagreeable. He very soon, however, turned his subject of discourse to the Bible. It became manifest immediately that he had read more than the passages which had been selected. The story of the crucifixion of Christ had made a deep impression upon his mind. He looked further into the character of Jesus, and greatly admired it, as possessing uncommon excellence. One thing struck him as peculiarly remarkable. He discovered that Christ was perfectly free from all iniquity. He could not conceive why it was that God should deliver him into the hands of the malignant Jews, and permit them to put him to death, with all the agonizing tortures of crucifixion, and in addition to all, should give him reason to cry out "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" To have this explained, he was extremely eager. He was then told that 'Christ had laid down his life a ransom for sinners,' because 'the Lord had laid on him the iniquity of us all;' that it was not for his own sins, but because he

“bore our sins in his own body upon the cross,” that he had suffered those excruciating pains, and the frowns of his Father’s countenance: that as a substitute in the room of sinners and bearing the punishment due to their sins he had been subjected to the pains of crucifixion; and that it is only in consequence of his obedience to the laws of God, and his sufferings, that any sinner can hope for pardon. He was told, that so far from being able to make reparation to God for past offences, we are so frail as to be still adding to our guilt. All this he heard with great attention. But I easily perceived that he could hardly think men so very criminal, especially himself. The sin of ingratitude towards God was placed before him in very lively colours. “God has fed us, he has clothed us, he has caused the revolutions of day and night and of the seasons to minister to our comfort, he has watched over us from our infancy with the most unremitting care. He gave you, Doctor, your father. Your education was from his good providence. All your blessings, he gave you. Were it possible that any earthly friend could bestow upon us so many favors, and yet we spend whole weeks or years, nay our whole life without one emotion of love, one grateful remembrance of him, or offering him one expression of thankfulness, what would men say of us? What would we, what could we say of ourselves?” His heart smote him. The enormity of his guilt began to unfold itself. His accounts appeared to be still more deranged. He began to discover that verily he was in need of a Saviour. He requested prayers. He began to pray himself, or as he expressed it, “*to converse with the divinity.*” The Bible was continually in his hands or under his pillow. He called it “his good book.”

You no doubt think this young man already “plucked as a brand from the burning.” But remember, it is no light thing to become a Christian. Many, no doubt, upon slighter evidence have been pronounced converted. It should, however, be well remembered, that death-bed repentance is often insincere. A desire to be happy is mistaken for a hatred of sin. An apparent love to the Bible as a “good book” may proceed from its pointing out the road to endless felicity, and not at all from its exhibiting the nature and means of becoming holy. Hence we so often see all the hopeful appearances of piety commenced in sickness, vanish upon the return of health, “like the morning cloud and the early dew.” It is always, however, pleasing to every friend of man and lover of God, to observe any degree of attention to divine things awakened among the ungodly, either in sickness or in health—especially to speak of the Bible as a “good book,” & witness a preference of it to all other books. This was evidently the case with Dr. Todd. The hundred and nineteenth Psalm the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth, chapters of John’s gospel,

and other portions of the Holy Scriptures, were pointed out to him, as inculcating the necessity of holiness in all who would hope to see God, while he was continually warned against placing any reliance upon his own good works, and "pressed to rely upon the righteousness of Christ alone for all hopes of admission to the divine favor," and to mansions of glory after death, which was drawing near. He made great progress in divine knowledge. His questions relative to portions of Scripture which he read, discovered wonderful acuteness. While in this state, he received a letter full of parental tenderness from his father, who was by this time fully advised of the hopeless state of his favorite son. He advised his son, if he must die, to prepare himself by firm resolutions for dying without weakness and with the fortitude of a hero!

Upon entering his room he said, "I have just been conversing with the divinity." This was his way of speaking of prayer—and a truly emphatical one it was. Frail man in this sinful state *converse* with the mighty Lord of this great universe! Yes, young sinful Todd had been "conversing" with Jehovah. "I find," says the Doctor, that God can be merciful to sinners, pardon their sins, and make them forever happy, and that he does so. But how shall I know that he will me? I have been a dreadful transgressor." I replied, my dear sir, God, through Christ, is infinitely more willing to pardon your sins than you are to ask him. He had raised himself on his elbow, and was looking at me with great earnestness. At the conclusion of my remark, his face was illuminated with a joyful expression, he clasped his hands, and falling back upon his pillow, with his eyes cast up towards heaven, exclaimed, in transport, "Oh! that is joyful news to me." Thanks to thy name, O God, for all thy goodness to the fallen race of Adam. Miserable would have been the best comfort that those who deny the stonement could have afforded to this dying sinner. He had utterly failed. He had probably repented as sincerely as any without looking upon that Jesus whom our sins have pierced, can repent. All was insufficient. Though his conscience was blunted by sin, it was not sophisticated by false reasonings. It awoke now and performed its duty. It refused to be appeased until the blood of Christ was sprinkled upon it. Then streams of gladness were poured upon the soul, and the dry and parched wilderness became "like a field that the Lord hath blessed." That moment of peace and joy was more to Dr. Todd than all the false pleasures of his past life.

About this time, the symptoms of his disease began to mitigate. The tide of life which had been rapidly ebbing began to rise. His brother, a youth of sixteen, and an aged and faithful black servant, arrived in Bedford from Kentucky. Thus a great addition was made to his earthly comforts. A good effect was

produced upon the state of his health by the society of his friends, for in the light of a friend he viewed the ancient servant Gloucester. But alas! his piety! It seemed to depart from him.—He talked to his brother and the old servant, about Kentucky, his relations, his associates. The memory of former associations, former scenes, awoke in his bosom. Youthful feelings were revived. An anxiety to return to his friends and to the world was excited. I attempted to talk—I did talk to him about the state of his spiritual concerns. He attended, but without much interest. The Bible was almost abandoned for newspapers.—The claims of Clinton and Madison were again discussed.* The theatre was again introduced into the chamber of death. Sin and the world daily regaining some of the ground which had been lately wrested from them. My heart sunk within me. I was ready to give over all for lost: for about ten days things continued in this deplorable state. God, who alone can carry on his own work, interposed. Dr. Todd was attacked by a violent spasmodic cholera. The pain which he experienced was excruciating. It lasted two days. On the evening of the second day, almost as soon as I entered his room, he said, "Well, my friend, since this cholera attacked me, I have often thought that the Almighty treated me harshly. I am, you see, extremely feeble. A painful and loathsome consumption had drunk up my strength. I am a wretched and feeble creature. I had cast myself upon the mercy and protection of God in the Saviour. You and my "good book" here had taught me to hope that Heaven would receive those who threw themselves upon his mercy. I hope he had done it. Then, after all, to afflict me with such excruciating pains, tearing to pieces my poor emaciated frame; I thought he was treating me harshly. But this afternoon I have been considering that since my brother came to Bedford, I have been so much taken up about my friends and the world, and have contracted such a fondness for life, that I have forgotten my God. I have not conversed with him as much as I ought. Then to bring my attention to him and to religion, he has thus sent pains upon me. It has been good for me." I may truly say, "this was joyful news to me." It could be none other but the work of the Spirit of God assisting him to the right improvement of his affliction. It had not been suggested to him by any human being. The language, indeed, which he used, was out of the common road altogether; for he had not learned the vocabulary of religion. His complaints may be compared to Jonah's, saying, "I do well to be angry, even to death;" or to David's "Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Are his mercies clean gone?" Again,

Dr. Todd died in November, 1812, about the time of the re-election of President Madison.

"Verily, to none effect have I washed my hands in innocency; every morning I anew receive chastisement." The improvement which Todd made of his sore affliction from the cholera, was like David's "Verily it hath been good for me that I was afflicted, that I might be well instructed and learn thy laws. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy precepts." The ten days of the languishing of grace, and the reviving of corruption, may be compared to the sojourning of Jacob more than fourteen years in the house of Laban, when he forgot to pay his vow which he made at Bethel; or to Solomon's falling off for a season to idolatry, through the influence of his heathen wives. In reality, Dr. Todd, during the period of his short christian course here, exhibited an epitome of the various experiences which Christians usually pass through in a long life.

He often spent hours in developing to me, with admirable candor, the sins of his past life. The theatre was the centre, the beginning and the ending of those scenes of iniquity through which he passed in Philadelphia. I cannot pollute my page with what he thought he should exhibit to me of his life. These scenes of abomination haunted the imagination of this dying man both when sleeping and waking. Grace, sovereign, omnipotent grace, alone could root out those depraved habits, could vanquish those deadly foes. As an honest man I must declare, that from all the impartial observations which I could make on this dying youth, I inferred that the most deadly habits of vice had been contracted about the theatre. I do not, I hope, make these remarks from any narrow and contracted prejudices. Few of my friends who do not frequent that amusement, regard it with so much indulgence as I do. Since capable of reflection upon those subjects, I have always been disposed to think, that under proper restrictions, it might be lawful amusement, as well as an enlightened one, and rendered an auxiliary to virtue and moral taste, as well as exterior refinement. But who that had witnessed the manner in which it annoyed the spiritual peace of Dr. Todd when sinking into the grave, regard it in its present state in any other light than as hostile to religion and virtue.

His health was now in such a state that he could occasionally make short excursions in the gig. In one of these, as I drove him past the burying ground, he said, "perhaps it would have been desirable that I should have been already laid there."

"But, my dear friend, you must not be impatient. You must wait patiently till God sends for you." "O yes, and so I shall," was his reply.

On this occasion I could not be certain whether the expression of a wish to be laid in the grave, proceeded from a wearisomeness of life, from pain and disappointment, or from a hope of a glorious immortality. I was upon the whole inclined to think

that both considerations might have united in creating a desire to be dismissed from the present life. His entire resignation to the will of Heaven, as to the time when the grave should receive his body, was, however, evidential of a gracious principle.

After his mind became deeply impressed with a rational sense of divine things, and the beauty and grandeur of the system of redemption began to unfold themselves to his view, he did not cease to pay the most perfect attention to exterior neatness. He very justly considered it really a virtue, to be careful that our external appearance shall be decent. It was indeed with him habitual. When he was so far recovered as to be able to ride out, he would have been as careful to put on all his clothes tastefully, as when going formerly to the most gay and fashionable party. I have not a doubt that so complete was his habit, that he could have been, and I hope was earnestly engaged in prayer when dressing himself. After he had dressed himself with such taste, he often sat for two or three hours together at a window of his room in the second story, with the Bible in his hand. The luxuriant branches of a locust, that beautiful American tree, hung down around the window where he sat. The placid smile that was alive upon his countenance when he would look out through the waving boughs, attracted the attention of all who passed by. The giddy throng of gay and thoughtless people, who were then collected at Bath, as they sauntered along Julian street, would often stop and gaze upon him with great interest. Some were even of opinion that there was occasionally a preternatural lustre beaming from his countenance. Whether this was true or not, there can be no doubt but that his face shone with beams of comfort, peace and joy. The contrast between what he had been a few weeks before, and what he was then, and between him and the frivolous multitude of youth dancing in the sun-beams of health and prosperity, was truly striking. Who in his right mind would not prefer to be Dr. Todd now, though within a step of the grave, rather than Dr. Todd fluttering in the ball room, about the theatre, and at the levees of the palace?

The pure elastic atmosphere of the mountains, the care of an excellent physician, and the blessing of God, so far restored his health that he began once more to think of returning to Kentucky. He had indeed no hopes of recovery, but he thought duty required him to make the attempt. While a man of the world and without religion, he never thought himself extravagant, though lavishing in the greatest profusion and prodigality his father's estate to pamper his appetite, gratify his desires, or indulge his vanity. Now behold how religion has changed his views and improved his moral feelings. "I have been a very expensive son," said he, "to my father. When in Philadelphia, a thousand dollars expenditure was a small matter to me. I regard-

ded it not. Heaven, it is true, has made ample provision for my father, but he has a large family. My expenses in this place are thirty or forty dollars a week. This added to all that I have hitherto expended of the estate of a kind father, is too much indeed. I may linger here the whole winter. My heart is pained at the wealth which I have wasted vainly and sinfully. I may possibly be able to travel over the mountains with care. If I can reach Pittsburgh, the passage down the river Ohio will be easy. I ought to make the attempt." Though his friends did not believe it possible for him to endure so much fatigue as must be encountered in crossing the great mountains, yet so correct were his views, we did not dissuade him. A carriage was prepared and a day fixed for his departure. On the morning in which he was to depart, I called. He would not say that he was to leave us in a few hours. "Call, said he, at twelve." Indeed he wished to avoid the pain of parting. At the hour appointed I called. He had gone. Many gloomy thoughts now crowded upon me. He might die on the side of some mountain. He might reach home and die without any one to give him the slightest spiritual comfort. But I at last consoled myself with the consideration, that the same gracious God who had brought him to Bedford, had put the Bible into his hand, afforded him means of understanding it, and had blessed the truth to his conversion and comfort, as I confidently hope, both could and would be his guardian until he should have introduced him into the New Jerusalem.

He travelled only sixteen miles west of Bedford, to the foot of the great Appalachian mountain, when from its craggy summits, there burst a tremendous storm of wind, rain and snow.—He, however, was safely lodged at a comfortable tavern before the storm broke. It continued to snow and rain for several days. The change of weather produced a rapid decline in the state of his health. As soon as the weather ameliorated, he returned to Bedford. When I entered his room and said, "Heaven has brought you back to us;" he replied with a smile, "O yes, it is the will of God that I shall die and leave my body here beside you. I am perfectly contented. Had I reached Kentucky, I might have had my attention drawn away from my God and a future world, upon which I must soon enter. But here I have nothing to do but prepare for my approaching exit." All this and much more to the same purpose he uttered with the greatest cheerfulness. How delightful are the effects of the benign religion of Jesus! See what tranquility it produced in the mind of an impetuous youth, about to die among strangers, far from his father and friends! What else could have produced these effects? Nothing else in all creation. The Bible, Saurin, and a few other practical books were his companions, his delight. The

world was rapidly receding from his view. He only turned his eyes to view it at a distance, that he might deplore its tumults, its follies, its crimes, its sins. When the noise of mirth from the theatre, the ball room, and the haunts of dissipation from afar fell dying away upon his ear, he would shake his head and say, "Oh! the folly, the sin of my poor short life! All my days seem now like a dream, a passing vision; but alas! how guilty! When I think of my past life, I am ready to despond, for my sins are most aggravated and innumerable." When directed to the atonement, the mediation and intercession of the Redeemer of men, "hope lighted up the cheek of the penitent mourner."

When he was asked, whether, had he now the offer of health, with the prospects of life which opened before him a few months ago, was he certain he would not prefer them? After a little serious thought, he replied: "No. I have already tried them. from the highest to the lowest grades of life, I have tried it. I know what it can give. It is all empty. No. No. I cast myself upon the protection of my God in Christ. He will not, I have a strong hope, cast me off."

On the Friday night before his death, he requested me to sit with him that night. This had been offered before but he constantly refused. I promised. I was at that time engaged in reading the life of Buonaparte by Van Ess. I took the book with me. A very unfit one for the chamber of a dying man. But we are wonderfully fascinated with splendid deeds of iniquity. The Doctor desired to have a free conversation with me before his departure, which he felt to be near. At the beginning of every page I resolved that at the close of it I would lay down the book and talk to my dying friend. Thus I went through the last fifty pages of the book. It was midnight. He said, "You impose upon yourself. You must sleep some." I laid down on a bed near him and slept till morning. In the morning, when leaving his room, he said, "O! I hoped to have had much talk with you last night, but you said nothing to me." The tears flowed down his pale cheeks. My heart smote me. In the evening I found him asleep, with the faithful Gloucester watching beside him. Said the good old servant, "He has been growing a better man ever since I came here. At first he would still swear a little and be peevish. Sometimes he would scold about nothing. But he was always getting better natured. He said to-day he wished he was gone. I asked him if he was ready? He said he would not say that, but he cast himself on the care of God, and he had strong hopes. He said he was not afraid to die, and he talked to his brother so well. I told him he ought to pray. Oh! says he, I am so weak that I can hardly pray. But, says I, if you only whisper, God can hear and understand you. And," added the

old man, "it seems as if I should pray for him steady." What! said I, Gloucester, do you pray? He replied, "O yes: my wife is a member of the church. She prays. So have I, for many years." "Then," continued he, "how poor Harry's aunt T—— will be delighted when she hears of this! Harry was her favorite. She always prayed for him." How unspeakably valuable the prayers of the godly! There is no doubt one who will blaze, without end, an orb of intellectual bliss, in bright realms of endless glory, who, but for the prayers of Mrs. T——, as a means of his conversion, might have dwelt forever in the mansions of woe.

The doctor awoke. I had great pleasure in hearing him talk, and in witnessing his placidity, and resignation to the divine will. After evening prayers I left him. On Sabbath morning I found him still alive, after a comfortable night's repose, except that in his dreams he was visited by the shades of departed ——, which afforded fresh opportunity of repentance, and of again, with increased strength, applying to the blood of sprinkling.— That day the prayers of the church were to be offered up for him. He was so weak that I feared he would depart before divine service commenced. How childish are our fears! Jesus was his intercessor with the Father. I asked him if he would desire prayers. "O yes, I wish to hear you pray once more, but I give you so much trouble." This was his usual form of politeness. Indeed, every thing that is lovely in fashionable life, was in him sanctified, adorned, and rendered incomparably more beautiful and captivating. After prayer he expressed the utmost satisfaction with the ways of God, in respect to himself, and willingness to die, and the most cheering hopes of a blessed immortality. O! may I both live and die with and like the righteous. I read to him the 53d Psalm. He listened to the first part with fixed attention. Towards the close, the ebbing tide of life seemed to fall. I thought he was gone, and said, "Doctor, did you hear?" He opened his eyes and said, "read it again." Before I had finished reading the second time, he seemed again to sink into the arms of death. Again, however, he revived a little, and was able to renew his expression of hope and resignation. For one hour he lay speechless, struggling with the King of Terrors, in the dark valley of the shadow of death. At length all struggling ceased, his countenance assumed its wonted serenity. A slight convulsive motion in his heart, when, with his last breath, his spirit fled, ended all his pain, and relieved the heavenly inhabitant from its cumbersome mansion.

In all this there is no fiction. A faithful narrative of events, as they passed, has been given. You may think, perhaps, I have been too minute. I wished, however, to give you a faithful like-

ness, and a near hand view. We read, in novel descriptions much more minute, of unimportant, nay, frivolous incidents.— This subject is one of infinite magnitude. May I who write, and you to whom I write, die in the arms of that merciful Saviour in whom Dr. Todd trusted.

Yours sincerely,
November 14th, 1815.

J. R. WILSON.

FINIS.