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SERMON,

PREACHED AT BELCHERTOWN,

ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1814,

AT THE INTERMENT

OF

MRS. BETSEY MATILDA DOOLITTLE,

WIFE OF MARK DOOLITTLE, ESQ.

WITH A BRIEF SKETCH

OF

HER LIFE AND CHARACTER.

.....

BY JOHN WOODBRIDGE,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN HADLEY.

.....

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SERMON.

LUKE VII. 13.

And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

THE occasion which gave rise to these words of Jesus was very affecting. Accompanied by many of his disciples, and followed by a multitude, whom curiosity had drawn together, to learn his doctrines, or to witness his miracles, he went into a city called Nain, about two miles from Mount Tabor. "Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city," saith the sacred historian, "behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and much people of the city was with her." The loss of a dear friend, under any circumstances, is justly considered as a severe affliction. If only one be taken by death, from a numerous family, the hearts of surviving relatives bleed at the separation, and often alas! refuse to be comforted. But, in this instance, a mother had been deprived of her only son; a son, on whom she had probably leaned for support, and, in whose filial tenderness and attention, she had anticipated much comfort and happiness. This child of so much promise, on whose dear features, she has, a thousand, and a thousand times, gazed with delight,—is gone. The people have convened, to participate in her sorrows, to mingle their tears with hers. The solemn procession is already formed; and soon the beloved remains are to be housed in the grave. Melancholy scene! The woman too was a widow;—her counsellor, her protector, the friend of her bosom, her husband, was no more. She was left solitary and defenceless, exposed to the rude storms of adversity. The death of her

only son seemed to complete the climax of her woes. Who could have refrained from weeping? The tender heart of the Saviour was affected. *And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.* Influenced by the kindest motives, "he came, and touched the bier; and they that bare him, stood still." Now see what divine love and power can perform:—"And he said," he who has the keys of death and of hell, "said, Young man! I say unto thee, Arise." The slumbering dust obeyed the sovereign mandate. "And he that was dead, sat up, and began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother."

The words of the text, in their connexion, naturally lead to several useful reflections, appropriate to the present mournful occasion. We have assembled, my hearers, this day, to pay the last tribute of respect to the remains of a much esteemed, and much lamented fellow mortal. The individual, whose death we now deplore, was one, whom you have often seen in this temple of God. With her, some of you have frequently taken "sweet counsel." She was truly pleasant in her life. When I think of the many amiable qualities, by which she endeared herself to her friends; when I remember her benevolence towards men, and her fervent piety towards God;—indeed, my brethren, I do not wonder at the sadness, which I see portrayed on so many countenances. I do not wonder that they, who knew her best, and loved her most, should feel those pangs of sorrow, which the tongue cannot utter. May the thoughts, which shall be, at this time, suggested, be rendered effectual, by the blessing of God, to comfort those, whom I now behold in tears.

I. The text teaches us the readiness of Jesus Christ to compassionate those who are in affliction. In the case of the unhappy widow of Nain, this disposition of the Saviour appears, with clear and affecting evidence. We are not informed, that, either the woman herself, or any of those, who, commiserating her griefs, had assembled on the occasion, had presumed to ask, or even to expect, the great fa-

vor, which, it was his determination, to bestow. Indeed, the blessed Jesus needed no other motive than her wretchedness, to excite his pity. He saw, he was moved with compassion, he ran to her relief. He speaks,—joy revisits her bosom,—*behold, her son lives.*

From the early ages of eternity, foreseeing the misery to which the human race would be reduced by sin ; their inability to deliver themselves from the bondage of iniquity, and the curse of the law ; and the necessity of the interposition of a Mediator, between them, and an offended God ; Immanuel, in the plenitude of his self-moved goodness, resolved to become their Surety, to assume their nature in personal union with the divine, and, by his own obedience and sufferings, “ to make reconciliation for the sins of” his “ people.”

Soon after the apostasy, he began to manifest his compassionate concern, for his suffering members on earth. Long before his incarnation, the affectionate regard of the Son of God, for his afflicted people, was celebrated in inspired songs. * “ I will mention the loving kindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them, according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses.” — “ In all their affliction, he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them ; in his love, and in his pity, he redeemed them ; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.”

At length, agreeably to his eternal purpose, from love to miserable men, he entered the world in “ the form of a servant,” vailing the splendors of his Divinity in mortal flesh. In the days of his humiliation, though his own sufferings were unparalleled, both in their number, and in their extent, he did not cease to exercise compassion towards the wretched children of men. Of this amiable attribute of his nature, frequent mention is made in the evangelical history. † “ Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and

* See Isa. lxiii. 7, 9.

† See Matt. xv. 32.

said, I have *compassion* on the multitude.” To a demoniac, whom he had healed, he said ; * “ Go home to thy friends, and tell them, how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had *compassion* on thee.” † “ And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was *moved with compassion* towards them.” “ And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him, and, behold, two blind men, sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace ; but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David.” What did Jesus do ? Did he disregard their earnest cries ? No, no. “ Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I should do unto you ? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had *compassion* on them, and touched their eyes.” It is added, “ And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.” With what tender concern, did he weep over the unhappy city, Jerusalem ! Lamenting its sins, and deeply affected by a prospect of the doom, which awaited it, he uttered his feelings in the pathetic apostrophe, ‡ “ If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace ! but now they are hid from thine eyes.” To his disciples, in a particular manner, he manifested the energy of his divine compassion. With what generous sympathy, did he enter into all their sorrows ! Read his addresses to them, which were spoken to comfort them, in view of the loss, they were about to sustain, in his removal from this world. They might well have said,

“ How soft the words, our Saviour speaks !

“ How kind the promises he makes !”

¶ “ Let not your heart be troubled ; ye believe in God ; believe also in me.—I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you

* Mark v. 19.

† Matt. xiv. 14. and xx. 29—34.

‡ Luke xix. 42.

¶ See John xiv. xv. and xvi.

forever.—I will not leave you comfortless ; I will come unto you.”

In the miracles, which he wrought, his object was, not to make a useless and ostentatious display of his power, but to convince a miserable race of his readiness and ability to save. Indeed, most of them were performed, not only for the ultimate advantage of mankind, by affording irrefragable proofs of the divinity of his mission, and his qualifications for the mediatorial work, but for the immediate benefit of afflicted individuals, groaning under the influence of disease, tormented by madness, or mourning the untimely death of beloved kindred.

As it was pity for miserable sinners, which induced the Son of God to assume the vestments of mortality ; so it was this, that carried him, a willing victim, through all the sufferings of his life, from Bethlehem to Calvary, “from the fordid manger, to the bloody cross.” At every step, in his earthly journey, he manifested divine compassion for our wretched race. But, in the last moments of his life, it broke forth in all its lustre. While he is suspended on the accursed tree, his hands and feet pierced with nails, and his whole frame convulsed with agony ; while he prays for his murderers, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do ;” while he bears in his own body the sins of the world, and sinks and dies, crushed beneath the mighty burden ; then it is, that he exhibits proof, confounding to hell, and strong as the demonstrations of eternity, to a silent and amazed Universe, of the infinite compassion of his heart.

Since the whole life of Jesus was thus signalized by deeds of mercy to the wretched, it is not surprizing that his friends, when in affliction, were induced to repair to him for pity, and for consolation. We read, in the sacred history, of many, who went to him, that they might enjoy his sympathy, and obtain relief, from his power, under the pressure of their griefs. Witness the nobleman, mentioned in the 4th chapter of John, whose son was at the point of death. Believing that Jesus was disposed to relieve the

afflicted, and relying on his power, he earnestly cried, "Sir, come down ere my child die." Jesus pitied the sorrows of the affectionate father. "Go thy way," said he, "thy son liveth." Witness the disciples of John, when called to mourn the death of their beloved master. Then it was, that they needed a kind friend to weep with them. Where could such an one be found? They had heard of the compassions of Jesus. They believed that he would willingly listen to their mournful story, and share their grief. *They "took up the body, and buried it," saith the Evangelist, "and went and told Jesus." †Behold Mary and Martha, those interesting, affectionate sisters, after the death of their brother, Lazarus, going to the Redeemer, prostrating themselves at his feet, and spreading before him their sorrows. Others would fain have comforted them; but their endeavors were ineffectual. Jesus alone can speak peace to the troubled bosom.—The mourning sisters are informed that Jesus is coming. They soon appear before him,—with streaming eyes, they rehearse the sad tale of their wo. They expect the pity of the dear Immanuel, and they do not expect it in vain. With deep interest, he listens to their complaints, and, with the tenderest sensibility, sees their flowing tears. "When Jesus, therefore, saw her weeping," saith the sacred writer, "and the Jews also weeping, which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." Precious friend! Yes, *Jesus was troubled*. It is emphatically said, that, when he had come to the grave, "Jesus wept." He, who cheerfully submitted to the insolence of scorn, to the miseries of poverty, to the agonies of the cross,—could *weep* for the sorrows of a friend. The pity of Jesus was not an unoperative principle. "And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always; but because of the people, which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he,

* See Matt. xiv. 12.

† John xl.

that was dead, came forth."—Although he does not, at this day, exert his miraculous power, in administering consolation to the distressed; yet his heart retains all its tenderness.

Though he has ascended into glory, and has forever sat down, on the right hand of the Majesty on high, exalted above all principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion; yet he remembers the sorrows, which he once experienced, and, therefore, knows how to sympathize with his afflicted followers on earth. "For we have not an high priest," saith the apostle, "which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was, in all points, tempted, like as we are, yet without sin."

We have contemplated the compassion of Jesus Christ to his afflicted people. We will now consider

II. The nature and grounds of our duty under affliction.

Does the Saviour require us to contemplate, with stoical insensibility, the ravages of death, the melancholy ruins of the tomb? When our friends, dear to us as our own souls, are laid in the grave, are we not permitted to *feel*? Would the religion of the gospel transform us into brutes—into *stones*?—Jesus himself had feelings.—The man, who, with perfect indifference, can witness the agonizing struggles of a dying friend; who, without a pang, can hear his expiring groan, and mark in his eye the extinguishment of its last spark;—such a man is not a christian,—shall I say?—he hardly deserves the name of human being. He may boast of his firmness, of his philosophy, of his resignation, of his—I know not what;—but his heart is made of adamant.

In a certain sense, however, the injunction, "Weep not," may be considered as applicable to all the mourning people of God. The gospel of Jesus Christ evidently forbids the indulgence, under any circumstances, of that violent, ungovernable grief, which is incompatible with entire submission to the divine will. Supreme selfishness alone is the source of that sorrow, which nothing can restrain, nothing

affluage, which, rising to a torrent, bursts through every mound, sweeping away reason, hope and devotion, in its tumultuous course. We may *feel* the loss of a friend, without any disposition to murmur, or repine. We may be even serenely cheerful, in the midst of the furnace, and rejoice in God, while his billows roll over our souls. This, the gospel demands of us ; and this, my hearers, is our “reasonable service.” For

1. The Lord reigns. Were our afflictions the offspring of chance, or produced by a fatality, equally blind and irresistible ; we could be justified in giving unrestrained indulgence to our grief. Without a beam of light, to cheer the darkness of this “vale of tears,” or to penetrate the incumbent horrors of the tomb ;—we might well sit down in unutterable agony, and mute despair. But God almighty sits upon the throne, and, according to his sovereign pleasure, directs the destinies of all his creatures. “Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.”—“See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me : I kill, and I make alive : I wound, and I heal : neither is there any, that can deliver out of my hand.”

2. The government of God is infinitely wise and benevolent. “He is the Rock, his work is perfect ; for all his ways are judgment : a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he.” Whatsoever he does then, is certainly for the best. If we cannot, therefore, discover the special reasons of his conduct, in any particular chastisement of his hand, let us not have the impiety to say, let us not have the presumption to think, that no sufficient reasons exist. Has he, in any instance, veiled his face in darkness, to us impervious and dreadful ? We ought to believe, that, however mysterious to us, short-sighted creatures, may be the dispensations of his Providence ; yet “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” Shall the little, prattling child, whose knowledge is confined to his play-things, and to other trifles, adapted to engage the attention of one at such an age, dictate to his kind and

provident father, with respect to his plans of business, and the management of his estate? Diminutive thing! What acquaintance have you with subjects of this nature? Learn to know your proper place, and be satisfied with the prudence and kindness of your parent. What has he done, that you should be afraid to trust him out of your sight,—that you should be perpetually filling his ears with your puerile advice, and impertinent babble? It is enough for you to know that he is competent to the superintendence and direction of his own concerns;—that he has no intention to waste his substance, or to injure you.

But, my brethren, a consideration of the wisdom and goodness of our Creator, as they are displayed in his government of the world, is not the only thing, which enforces the propriety of uniform and entire submission to his will.

3. Our afflictions in this world, of whatever nature they may be, and however severe, are infinitely less than our sins deserve. We are, “by nature children of wrath;” and we have, a thousand times, by overt acts of rebellion, forfeited all our mercies. We are unworthy of the raiment, which clothes us; of the food, that sustains our life; of the ground, on which we tread; and of the very air, we breathe. “Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?” Are we still inhabitants of earth? May we still hope for heaven? Does Jesus continue to invite us to his own compassionate bosom? And can we, after all, indulge one murmuring thought? Amazing ingratitude! If a disposition to complain of the divine dealings, do not appear to us inexpressibly monstrous, we must be lost to all sense of the loveliness of justice, and the beauty of moral fitness.

Again; The woes of life are not remediless; religion is a refuge for human misery; its consolations are adapted to every condition, and are unfailing.

We have been deprived of an estimable friend; this is a severe affliction; but have all our comforts died with him? The Saviour still lives; and we may, if sincerely disposed, go to Jesus, cast ourselves at his feet, and, with

filial confidence, tell him our sorrows. While humbled as in the dust before him, we shall know, by experience, the sweetness of true repentance, of evangelical faith, of holy resignation, and of that "hope," which "maketh not ashamed." What! "Is there no balm in Gilead?" Yes, enough—*enough* to heal all the wounds of a bleeding soul.

The *promises* of the gospel are a store-house, from which the believer, in the darkest periods of his life, may draw consolations, rich and abundant. In them, he may always find something appropriate to his circumstances; fitted to allay his sorrows, and to confirm his trust in a faithful God. It is surely a false conclusion, which a careful attention to the promises would rectify, that our heavenly Father has forsaken us, because he has been pleased to correct us in measure for our sins. To withhold afflictions, when they have become necessary for us, as means to detach our affections from the world, and animate us to diligence in our christian course, would be a judgment, under which we might well tremble, rather than the fulfilment of a promise. On the other hand, the appointment of trials for our good, is one of the mercies of the new and everlasting covenant. Believers may be certain, that they never suffer any more, than he, who has, at once, a perfect view of the circumstances of every case, and who can never be unmindful of the interests of his children, sees to be necessary for their benefit, and the promotion of his own glory. "We know," saith St. Paul, "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." But the covenant of grace, not only promises that the afflictions of the saint shall be overruled for his *final good*; it assures him, that he shall enjoy *present support* under his trials. "The LORD," saith the Psalmist, "will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.—Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: Wait, I say, on the LORD.—Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." "Who is among you," saith Isaiah, "that feareth the

LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.—These things have I spoken unto you,” saith the Redeemer, “that in me ye might have peace. In the world, ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Such, brethren, are the promises of God to his people in affliction. Surely then, each mourning believer, instead of refusing consolation under his trials, has reason to say with David, “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”

The arguments for submission, we have already adduced, are of universal application, with respect to the afflicted people of the Lord. A consideration of the holy government of God, the desert of sin, the compassion of the Saviour, and the promises of the gospel, may well sustain and comfort the pious mind, in hours of the deepest affliction.

But sometimes, in addition to these reasons for submission, the believer, on the death of a near friend, has ground for joy from the evidence, which he, while living, exhibited, of being prepared by grace, for an exchange of worlds. If we may entertain the hope, with respect to a departed friend, that he was a christian indeed, whose heart had been renewed by the power of the Holy Ghost; we surely ought, not merely to forbear complaint, but to be thankful, and to praise the Lord. True, he, whom we loved, has bidden us farewell. God has changed his countenance, and sent him away. We shall behold him no more, until we see him in the eternal world. But shall we, therefore, complain? Our loss, great as it may seem, is his unspeakable gain. The spirit, liberated from every shackle of infirmity and sin, has taken her happy flight up to the bosom of God. She is now a seraph in glory,—an angel in bliss. Tell me; would you recall that spirit from the realms of light? Could you be so selfish,—so cruel? Does not your heart bound with rapture at the thought, that her warfare

is finished, that her blessed eternity is begun, that, while you lament the loss you have sustained, it is her delightful, uninterrupted employment, to celebrate the praises of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ? This is not all.

Believers may, with joy unutterable, anticipate the day, when they shall behold their pious relatives, whose death they now deplore, in that world, where friendship is pure, perfect and eternal. Soon the summons will be heard ; “ Come, ye redeemed sinners ; leave your tenements of clay ; ascend, and sit down with me on my throne.” Moment of ineffable felicity ! Then shall you meet those, from whom you are now separated by the gloomy abyss of the grave, to part no more forever. “ I look on death,” says a lively writer, “ as reuniting me to those persons, whose loss had occasioned me so many tears during my pilgrimage. I represent myself as arriving in heaven, and seeing this friend running to meet me, to whom my soul was united as the soul of David to Jonathan. I imagine myself as presented to those ancestors, whose memory is so revered, and whose example is so worthy of imitation. I represent those children as coming before me, whose death affected me with a bitter anguish all my days.——”

“ This idea of death, and of the felicity, which follows, is extremely delightful ; and I do most sincerely believe it : at least I have never yet met with a thought, which could dissuade me from thinking, that the glorified saints shall enjoy in heaven, the society of those, with whom they have been so intimately connected on earth.”* With our pious friends, who have gone before us to glory, with all the redeemed family above, and with all the angels that surround the throne, we shall shortly, if we are indeed the children of God, be united in praising Him, who liveth and reigneth forever and ever. With such hopes, O believers,

“ Why *should* you mourn departing friends,

“ Or shake at death’s alarms ?”

Away, every murmuring thought ; hush, each rebellious sigh.

* Saurin.

I have finished what I had intended to say in the body of the discourse. The occasion, on which we have assembled, requires a more particular notice.

Few of us, I trust, can contemplate the scenes, which we this day witness, with entire indifference. The recollection of the virtues of the deceased, the thought of a bereaved husband, of motherless children, of many relatives in tears ; cannot but awaken in our minds some tender sensibilities. Yes, my friends, we are not wholly destitute of humanity ; we cannot but feel for the afflicted. But though all the mourners should share in our sympathy, there is one, who has a special claim to our compassion, and our prayers. Your hearts must have anticipated what I would say. They must have told you, that I can refer to none but him, who this day mourns the loss of the chosen companion of his days. You would think me culpable, should I not, on this occasion, affectionately recommend to him, the consolations of that religion, which proclaims peace on earth, and publishes good will towards men.

DEAR SIR, your situation indeed deserves our pity. Were it in my power, gladly would I pour into your wounded bosom the balm of consolation. But alas ! what shall I say ? Your “breach is great like the sea ; who can heal” it ? Mortals cannot relieve the anguish of your bleeding heart. The wife of your youth, the mother of your children, she, who was united to you by innumerable ties, the most tender and sacred, has fallen a victim to the king of terrors. She has fallen too, in the midst of her usefulness, before she had reached the meridian of her days. Never again, in this world, will she pronounce your name, or, in tones of maternal tenderness, utter the names of your beloved children. Silent forever is the tongue, on which, once dwelt the sweet accents of kindness ; fixed and sightless are the eyes, which lately beamed with all the effulgence of goodness, and sparkled with all the lustre of intelligence. She is no longer numbered with the living. With the living, she will have intercourse no more. They, who would find her now, must not seek her in those circles

of friendship, where she might once have been seen. Ah! she is not there;—the narrow coffin is now her house. There, she sleeps. She sleeps, never more to awake, until the Archangel's trump shall sound, and all the slumbering millions arise from their tombs. The event, by which you are now called to mourning, could not have been foreseen by mortals. You have ever known that the hour of separation would eventually arrive. But that it should come *so soon*,—that your fond expectations should be *so soon* blasted;—this is what, a few weeks since, you had perhaps hardly anticipated, even as possible. But the ways of the Lord are not as our ways, nor are his thoughts as our thoughts. He has been pleased, in holy sovereignty, to give commission to the angel of death to enter your windows, and to tear from you your dearest earthly friend. May He, who has afflicted you, comfort your soul. He alone is able to assuage your mighty sorrows.

Permit me then, dear Sir, to commend you to a God of mercy. Although earthly friends may forsake you, the great ETERNAL lives; and is ever ready to hear the penitential cries of his children. Repose in his government an unshaken confidence. Rejoice in the Lord, and your sources of happiness can never fail. He is immutable; he inhabits eternity. Clouds of adversity may gather over your head; but sunshine will remain in your soul. In health or sickness, in prosperity or adversity, in life or death, your joy in God will suffer no interruption. Is the divine conduct now mysterious? The period will eventually arrive, in which you will learn the reasons of this affliction. All the footsteps of divine Providence will then appear luminous with glory. Go to the throne of grace; there, in the exercise of true submission, vent your sorrows; "O Lord, lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness; and now, when I am overwhelmed with grief, O Lord, abandon me not."

Remember, I entreat you, the compassions of that Saviour, who said to the mourning widow of Nain, *Weep not*. To him repair, in the spirit of humble faith; and be assur-

ed, that he will not, *cannot*, turn from you with unfeeling indifference. He would deny himself, should he refuse to lend an ear to the cries of his suffering disciples. He knows how to pity you.

“ His heart is made of tenderness,

“ His bowels melt with love.”

He has power, so to overrule your afflictions, that they shall work out for you, an exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory.

Think of the circumstances of mercy, with which the last sickness, and the death of your departed friend were attended; and, while you remember them, let tears of gratitude be mingled with those of sorrow. You were permitted to watch over her. You were allowed to carry her, in the arms of faith and prayer, to Him, who ruleth over all. You had opportunity to commend to the Father of mercies, the soul, struggling to get free, and just ready to wing its way to God.

Think of the many reasons, which should induce you to cherish the hope, that your dear companion has died in the Lord. When we recollect her sensibility to religious subjects; her apparent delight in the doctrines and duties of christianity; and the reputation she acquired, among her pious friends, who best knew her worth; we cannot but feel a strong persuasion, that she was one of those, who, having “ chosen the good part, which can never be taken from” them, have nothing to fear in the glooms of the grave, or in the retributions of eternity. What must have been your feelings now, had she lived and died without hope? But she did not thus live and die.—O bless the Lord, that she did not. Mourn not then, as those who have no hope. Rejoice in the evidence, with which you are favored, that she is now forever removed above sorrow and sin, the associate of blessed angels, in the kingdom of God. Why should you tremble to commit the body to the grave, since the dust of believers is precious in the eyes of their Saviour? May Jesus Christ himself cause his face to shine upon you, and give you peace. To thy mercy, O Immanuel, we would now commend thy

afflicted servant, and his children. Enable him, we beseech thee, to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” May he and they, being purified from all sin, and justified by thy grace, at last, meet in that “land of pure delight, where saints immortal reign.”

Let me commend all the mourners on this occasion, to that God, whose mercies endure forever. Remembering the pious example of the deceased, may you all be disposed to imitate it, in proportion to its assimilation to the perfect example of our Lord Jesus Christ. Choose the Saviour, whom, we trust, she loved; and obey the gospel, in the truths of which, we believe, she rejoiced with her whole heart and soul. Then shall you live happily, die joyfully, and, at last, sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, with the saints of all ages and nations, in the heavenly city of our God.

Professors of religion! in the instance of mortality, which has spread a gloom over so many faces in this assembly, God addresses you, in language, peculiarly affecting and solemn. He admonishes you of your frailty; he teaches you, that over the future, you can have no control, and that the present moment alone is yours. One, lately of your number, from whose pious exertions, much good was anticipated, has fallen, in the midst of her hopes; and is this day to be consigned to an early grave. Others may soon follow. And what if any of you should be summoned into eternity, this night! Does not the thought make you tremble? Surely, brethren, “it is high time to awake out of sleep.” We know not the day, nor the hour, when the commissioned arrow shall escape the string;—when the fatal blow shall be inflicted. We do know, however, that human life, at the longest, is but a momentary dream. “Brethren, the time is short; it remains, that they that have wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away.”—“Wherefore, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.”—“Add

to your faith, virtue ; and to virtue, knowledge ; and to knowledge, temperance ; and to temperance, patience ; and to patience, godliness ; and to godliness, brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness, charity."

Parents ! God addresses you. He tells you that death is near,—that the Judge standeth at the door,—that shortly all your opportunities for usefulness to your children, will be irrevocably past. You may be soon snatched from your possessions, from your families, from the world. Should this be the case, what account could you give, of the manner, you have performed the duties, which you owe to your children ? Could you say to the supreme Judge ; " Lord, we have faithfully admonished them, thou knowest ; we have frequently and earnestly prayed for their salvation ; we are free from their blood ?" Rather, should not some of you be compelled to say ; " Alas ! by our neglect, and wicked example, we have given them reason to believe, that all religion is a farce ?" Should they perish, through your unfaithfulness, how dreadful, beyond the power of language to tell, would be your final doom ? *But shall they ?*—God forbid !—Let me beseech you, by all the love you bear them, as you value the approbation of your Judge, as you would hope to meet them, at length, in heaven, as you dread the everlasting displeasure of Him, whose frown is death, to allow yourselves no rest, until you obtain evidence, that they belong to the family of God, and to the household of faith. Have compassion on them ;—*O have pity on yourselves.* May the Lord make you faithful, and give you success, in the good work of rearing the children, he has committed to your care, for glory immortal.

My hearers ! God addresses us all. He tells us, that our " life is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." He assures us, that his favor is the only treasure, for the attainment of which, we should employ our utmost labor ;—that the grand inscription on every thing terrestrial, is, VANITY. Are we disposed to question the fact ? We have the evidence before our eyes. Go—look into that coffin ; behold that countenance, mark-

ed with the lines of death ; and, while you muse, learn the end of all human expectations, and worldly felicity. Ye votaries of wealth and of pleasure, tell me ; is this she, whose expressive features you have so often seen, kindling with the radiance of animation and joy ? How changed ! How pale, that cheek ! How silent, that tongue ! What, to that inanimate clay, are all the bubbles, the phantoms, the shadows of time ?

Is this a solitary instance ? Is not the world one vast field of graves ? Alas ! the ravages of death ! How indiscriminate ! How universal ! The young and beautiful, the cheerful and vigorous, the infirm and aged, peasants, statesmen, lords and kings, descend, in one promiscuous crowd, into the tomb. “ The fathers, where are they ? and the prophets, do they live forever ? ” Where are the inhabitants of the antediluvian world ? Where are the ancient populous kingdoms of Asia ? Where are the armies of Xerxes, of Alexander, and of Cæsar ? Where are those distinguished personages of former ages, who wielded the sword of war, demolished empires, and revolutionized the globe ? They, and many later generations, have long since gone down to the grave. The many millions, that compose the present generation of men, will shortly be numbered with the immense congregation of the dead. Oh ! gloomy, gloomy world ! Oh ! vanity of human life ! *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity !* But let us not indulge despair. For is there nothing permanent, on which we may safely lean for support ? Blessed be God, his gospel points us to a foundation, more durable than the mountains ; a foundation, which, neither earth, nor hell, can move. Do we build our hopes, our comforts, on the Rock of ages ? Then we may rejoice ; then we may triumph. KING of TERRORS, at whose approach, the bravest are appalled ; thou Conqueror of conquerors ; thou Ravager of nations ; thou, whose prerogative it is, to turn the sun to darkness, and “ to quench the stars ; ” thou stern, universal Destroyer ; come, in all thy horrid pomp, decked in the spoils of vanquished worlds ; we will fear thee no more. True, we must

submit, for a season, to thy dominion ; thy touch shall wither our strength ; these limbs must fail ; these orbs be extinct ; these features be disfigured, ghastly, shocking to the sight ; these now active bodies moulder into dust ; *but the soul defies thy darts.* This spark, the walls of a tomb can ne'er confine ; this spark, the cold damps of death can ne'er extinguish. This spark shall rise, and mingle with the eternal source of light,—shall burn, when elements dissolve, and nature dies. This is not all. Know, thou fell enemy of the human race, that Jesus, who was once a prisoner in thy dominions, Jesus, who is “the resurrection and the life,” shall come, shall break thy bow asunder, and tread beneath his feet thy pointless arrows. While the earth is sinking, while the skies are in flames, a shout shall be heard,—bursting from the tongues of ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, resounding from the vaults of the third heavens, and echoing through the Universe ; “ALLELUIA, THE GRAVE IS CONQUERED, DEATH IS DEAD, AND HIS SLEEP SHALL BE ETERNAL. ALLELUIA, FOR THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH.” May it be our honor to unite in this song of victory. Amen. EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS. AMEN AND AMEN.

MEMOIRS OF MRS. DOOLITTLE.

THE following outline of the life and character of Mrs. DOOLITTLE, will not, it is hoped, be unacceptable to the reader.

This interesting woman was the daughter of DAN SMITH, Esq. of West-Haven, Vermont. She was born December 9, 1785. For the first 18 years of her life, though mild in her disposition, and amiable in her general deportment, she lived in a great measure careless with respect to the important realities of religion. When she was in the 19th year of her age, it pleased God, who in his own time, gives his chosen people a heart to seek him, to impress her mind with a conviction of her guilt and misery, as a sinner; and the consequent necessity of that moral transformation, which the gospel represents as the indispensable preparative to the felicity, it proposes, as the ultimate reward of cordial obedience to its requirements. The illumination of her conscience, by the influences of the Holy Spirit, was attended with a deep anxiety, that her strongest efforts could not repress, and before which, an imposing world lost all its fascinations. For several months, she continued to feel those distresses and fears, which, agreeably to the usual method of divine grace, precede the renovation of the heart by the efficient agency of the Holy Ghost. At length, though at what time, the writer is not able precisely to tell, she was made willing, as she hoped, and as we have every reason to believe, to receive the Saviour of sinners, on his own terms. Thinking it her duty, openly to manifest her attachment to his cause, she, at length, after suitable deliberation, and, as it is believed, much prayer, in November of the year 1804, proposed herself for admission, and was received to the communion of the Church in West-Haven. Ever after that event, to the close of her days, she maintained a character *consistent* with her profession, enjoying, in a high degree, the confidence of her christian friends. On the 19th of July 1807, she was married to Mr. DOOLITTLE, by whom she had two children, both of whom are still living, but too young to be sensible of their loss. May that Being, by whose Providence they are deprived of a mother's tender care, be their Father and their God.

When attacked by her last illness, she had a strong persuasion, which she expressed to her husband, that the disease would terminate in her dissolution. She was not, however, afraid to die. Relying on the mercy of her Redeemer, who had, as she believed, washed her soul in his own efficacious blood, she indulged a strong, though humble, hope, that he would not forsake her, when she should be called to pass through the swelling waves of Jordan. During the

whole of her sickness, which lasted 54 days, the powers of her understanding continued sound and vigorous; and, though she did not express those transports of joy, with which some christians are favored, on their dying beds, she endured her sufferings, not only without complaint, but with a calmness and resignation, as unlike the stupidity of ignorance, or the affected indifference of philosophy, as they were superior to all the principles of nature. It was her desire that she might, if consistent with the will of God, be released from the burdens of mortality, and commence her eternal sabbath, on that day of the week, ever hailed by the acclamations of the militant church, when the rising Redeemer spoiled the powers of hell, and triumphed over the grave. It pleased that Being, in whose eyes, the death of the saints is precious, to answer her prayer. On the Lord's day of the 13th of November 1814, at 10 o'clock in the morning, she joyfully resigned her spirit into the hands of her Saviour, and, as we have no reason to doubt, fell asleep in Jesus. "The memory of the just is blessed."—"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

Mrs. DOOLITTLE was indeed a woman of uncommon excellence. In saying this, the writer is persuaded, that he expresses the opinion of almost all who knew her. Perhaps she had enemies; but as he never heard of them, he cannot tell what *peculiar* foibles or mistakes they would lay to her charge.

Her person and manners were so interesting, that few, it is believed, could see her, without strong prepossession in her favor. She had regular features, which were rendered doubly pleasing, by the charm of the expression, that pervaded them. But external accomplishments, unaccompanied by intellectual and moral worth, are of little value, while they last; and, after they are gone, can give no pleasure in the recollection.

Mrs. DOOLITTLE had a good understanding, which was improved by various and well selected reading. The theological works, in which she took most delight, were those, that were best adapted, at once, to enlighten the mind, and to rectify the disorders of the heart. The great EDWARDS was with her a favorite author. It is hardly necessary to add, that, in her religious sentiments, she was strictly Calvinistic.

Her temper was very amiable. She possessed, to an eminent degree, that amenity of meekness, which, equally removed from obtrusive display and passive meanness, gives to female excellence its highest power to please. In her, frankness and discretion were so united, that the one seldom forgot the obligations, or invaded the rights, of the other.

She was humane and generous. For the relief of the necessitous, and, especially of the indigent followers of Christ, she was willing to contribute of her substance, and, what is more, to bestow her time

and personal exertions. No child of suffering, it is presumed, could ever truly say, that he found her selfish and hard hearted.

In the discharge of her relative duties, she exemplified the laws of humanity and religion. As a wife, she was affectionate and faithful, regarding her husband's happiness as her own, and making it her pleasure to promote his usefulness and respectability. She was a grateful child, a kind sister, a tender mother, and an upright friend.

Her life, as those most intimately acquainted with her, testify, was a life of prayer. She maintained daily intercourse with her God and Saviour. The duties of private devotion were her delight. It was not the terror of a slave ; it was "the spirit of adoption," which carried her to the mercy-seat.

She was constant, as her health and circumstances would allow, in her attendance on public worship. Of the female association for prayer, in the neighborhood to which she belonged, she was an active and important member. Her presence, her voice, and above all, the fervour of her supplications at the throne of grace, often gladdened and animated the pious circle.

As such was her character, it was to have been expected, that she would acquire influence in society, especially, with her own sex. A woman of talents, knowledge and piety, who can be familiar with dignity, who can instruct, without the air of a teacher, has an opportunity to be useful in her own sphere, quite equal, or rather, *superior*, to that of a clergyman in his. Mrs. DOOLITTLE had influence ; but she consecrated it, as she devoted all the talents, with which she was intrusted, to the cause of truth, and of God.

Such she was,—but her work is finished. She was soon "made meet" for her heavenly inheritance. The loss of her friends is great ; but they can rejoice, as well as weep. Her day was indeed, short ; but it was not wasted in idleness. If life be estimated by usefulness, her years have not been few. If she could now have an anxious wish, with respect to the living, it would be, that they might imitate her virtues, and follow her steps to glory.