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ELIZABETH THORNTON;

OR

THE FLOWER AND FRUIT OF FEMALE PIETY.

WITH OTHER SKETCHES.

BY "IRENÆUS."

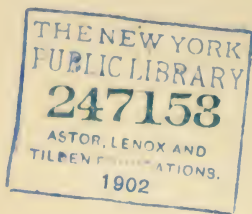
NEW-YORK:

M. W. DODD,

BRICK CHURCH CHAPEL, OPPOSITE THE CITY HALL.

1841.

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UNIVERSITY PRESS—JOHN F. TROW, PRINTER.

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# ELIZABETH THORNTON.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION—ELIZABETH'S EARLY HOME— CHILDHOOD.

PERHAPS something will be lost by the reader, if he overlooks these introductory remarks in his haste to enter upon the narrative. I am about to record the simple and faithful history of a retired, humble Christian, whose name was never known beyond the circle of her friends. And I have a definite object in view in selecting such a subject for this sketch.

It has often occurred to me that religious biography fails of its appropriate usefulness, from the fact that only the bright and shining lights of the world are made the theme of the biographer. When private Christians read the memoirs of distinguished servants of God, in the midst of admiration of their worth and works, they feel that few can expect to reach

such heights of usefulness and happiness. The secluded female fears to believe that she may be as holy and consequently as happy as the honoured Ambassador of Christ, who was raised up to move the age in which he lived; qualified by grace divine for the mighty work, and called home in triumph to his reward when the work was done. Though the histories of such saints are rich legacies to the Church, they are not blessed to many, who live with the conviction strongly impressed upon them, that such patterns are too perfect for them to imitate. They feel like saying, "It is high, I cannot attain unto it."

To meet the case of such Christians, I have here chosen one who, like themselves, never rose above the walks of humble life; one, who never dreamed that a memorial of her labours of love would live after her; one, quite content to be unknown, who went about doing good, and whose story is now told with the simple purpose of showing how easy it is for *any one* to be useful, who has a heart to pray, and a will to toil in the service of Jesus Christ.

The record shall be faithfully true. There is a propriety in withholding the names of

many places and persons to which allusion will be made, but no colouring shall mar the naked simplicity of truth that adorns the character here portrayed. And I give the sketch with the fervent prayer, that all who read it may be led to seek after eminent holiness and extended usefulness in whatever sphere they move.

On the banks of the Hudson bloomed the flower that is the subject of this sketch. It early withered, but it lived long enough to be loved and admired, before it was removed to flourish in immortal bloom by the side of the river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb.

The Hudson is a noble stream. Its placid bosom, its expanded bays, its giant Highlands, its lofty palisades, combine to form its unrivalled attractions, and to make it the most admired of American waters. Between thirty and forty miles above the city of New-York it widens into "Tappan Sea." This part of the river is justly esteemed the most beautiful, from the extent of its surface and the peculiar richness of the scenery on shore. And when the eye has rested on the loveliest spot in this enchanting

scene, Elizabeth's birth-place and early home will have been found.

Every one of the countless passengers on the North River steamboats must have noticed the peculiarly commanding situation of the village of S—— S——. The noble view it presents of the river, from the Highlands above, down to the city or as far as the eye can reach—the salubrity of its air—and the romantic country that surrounds it, have made it a favourite resort for those who would fly “the town,” and spend the summer months in the luxury of the country.

About a mile below the village is “the Cove.” Mount Murray, a promontory so called, extends some distance into the river, and forms a delightful bosom of waters. The visiter at the village soon finds and loves this quiet spot, and a ramble on the beach or a walk through “Fairy Glen” is among the chief attractions of this neighbourhood. No one, with a soul to love the wild, the beautiful, and sublime, ever visited the Cove without being delighted with its charms.

An old fashioned mansion stands on the

high but gently declining bank of the river, at the point in the Cove most favourable for an extended view. The attention of the passer-by might not be arrested by the style of its architecture, but its elegant situation, and the peculiar neatness and taste with which the grounds are arranged by the hand of nature and adorned by art, would immediately fix the eye. The vines wandering over the piazzas, the dense shrubbery climbing the windows, the shade and fruit-trees forming a forest, define this spot as the abode of ease and happiness. This was the home of Elizabeth's childhood.

A knowledge of the scenery that her eyes first saw may account for some traits of character which her life developed. In childhood and youth the shore of the Hudson was the home she loved. Its waters she almost idolized. For hours together, when a mere child, would she wander alone upon the beach, or muse on the rocks, while the waters broke gently over her tiny feet, or rock on the waves in a little skiff, guided by a brother's hand. She was truly and emphatically nature's child. If ever one grew up in the midst of society uncontam-



inated by its associations and ignorant of its evil ways, this child did.

But while she derived her purest pleasure from the world around her, she did not neglect the duties which she owed to her parents and herself. With a disposition naturally sweet, and softened by her fondness for communion with the beauties of nature, she entered as cheerfully upon domestic duties as on the more attractive pleasures which the out-door world presented. Her love for parents, brothers, and sisters, was unbounded. Her heart leaped for gladness when she could make them glad, and the tear of delight would gather in her eye when to others she had given joy. It was, therefore, not strange that she should become the idol of the domestic circle.

At school her advancement was so rapid as to afford to her teachers and parents the highest gratification, and the powers of mind which she developed gave strong encouragement for future usefulness.

## CHAPTER II.

## ELIZABETH'S AWAKENING AND CONVERSION—PUBLIC PROFESSION OF RELIGION.

AT the age of *fourteen* we date the commencement of her religious character. To intellectual and personal attractions that won universal admiration, she added the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. The pearl of great price was the brightest jewel that she wore, and it shone with a loveliness and lustre rarely surpassed. Elizabeth became a most eminently pious woman, and because she was so distinguished in the circle of her friends it is believed that her history, though humble and brief, will be useful to others, affording an example of high Christian attainment, and great success in faithful, unassuming efforts to do good.

She was first awakened to a sense of her condition as a sinner, by an occasional sermon which the Rev. Mr. Remington, of Rye, Westchester Co., N. Y., preached in S—— S——. This excellent clergyman was not so much dis-

tinguished for the brilliancy of his powers of mind, as for the ardent piety of his heart, and the earnest sincerity with which he presented the simple gospel of Christ. He died suddenly, a few years ago, and never knew that he was the instrument in God's hand of turning to righteousness one who is, doubtless, now shining as "a crown of his rejoicing," in glory.

With that diffidence which ever characterized her, she concealed her incipient anxiety on the subject of religion. Perhaps she would not have cherished the secret so closely, had she not found sympathy in the breast of a young companion, an inmate of her father's family, who was awakened at the same time. They were of the same age, and quickly detecting each other's seriousness, they commenced a systematic and persevering effort to secure the salvation of their souls.

Such a determination, made without any special counsel from others, may appear incredible, on the part of two children only fourteen years of age. But they took the best guide, the word of God; they sought by prayer, the best counsel, the teaching of the Holy Ghost. Without disclosing the state of

their feelings to any one but to Him who seeth in secret, they pursued the diligent and constant study of the New Testament, and resolved to seek until they found the pardon of their sins.

Their closet was the wide world. Its roof was the arch of heaven. Its music was the ceaseless roll of the waters that broke on the rock—the altar where they knelt to pray. In a secluded spot just under the verge of Mount Murray, a low flat rock, rising but a little above high water mark, projects into the river. Here is a sweet and secure retreat from the world. Its solitude is seldom disturbed save by those who would be alone.

There is a touching interest in the case of these two young inquirers, that to my mind exceeds description. They read the promises, “Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find,” and they resolved to persevere until they received forgiveness and found peace. In this retired spot they studied the Scriptures together; they knelt and together prayed for pardon; they wept and mourned together on account of sin: and thus, day after day for several successive weeks, they continued the struggle till

they obtained mercy and found grace to help in time of need. Here they laid down the weapons of rebellion, and submitted to Christ. Here they first rejoiced in the assurance that their sins were forgiven. Here their lips first broke out in songs of praise to Him who had washed them in his own blood.

The flame that burned in their youthful bosoms could no longer be concealed. A pious mother wept for joy when a loved and lovely child threw herself into her arms, and told her that she had found a Saviour. There was likewise joy in heaven.

I cannot say why Elizabeth should have been so exceedingly careful to conceal her anxiety about her soul. All inquirers are at first in a measure unwilling to have it known that they are seeking Christ. But this spirit of Nicodemus is soon overcome, and they venture to inquire what they must do to be saved. Elizabeth would have found in her mother, one abundantly able and willing to point her to the Lamb of God. Her father, though a man of high moral principle, and exceedingly careful in the instruction of his children, was not a professor of religion. She had no pious

brother or sister or young friend to whom she might apply for counsel. And yet it is strange that she did not unbosom herself to her mother, and with the confidence of a child, ask that aid which she so much required. I can only account for it by supposing she had been so well instructed already that she did not hesitate as to what was her duty, and she was so very timid by nature that she feared to disclose her thoughts. The Lord led her by a strange way, but following his counsel, she soon found that pearl which the world cannot give or take away.

A new world now opened on the eye of our young friend. Nature she had loved before, but now it was clothed with charms to her all new. God was in every thing she saw. His goodness appeared in every leaf that stirred, and in every star that rolled. Her heart swelled continually with joy, as she looked on the world around her, filled with riches and beauty which she had never seen, but which had always been spread before her eye.

She now made a public profession of religion by uniting with the first Presbyterian Church in the village of S—— S——. To

her soul that day was one of unusual solemnity. I have heard her say, that when she knelt to receive the sacrament of baptism she was scarcely conscious of being in the presence of any one but God himself, who seemed to own and accept the sacrifice she made. From that hour to the day of her death, she never for one moment lost sight of the vows which she then took upon her soul.

## CHAPTER III.

CLOSET PRAYER—OLD JACOB—HIS CONVERSION  
AND DEATH—EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

BEING well persuaded that out of the heart are the issues of life, it was Elizabeth's first object to purify the fountain that the streams might be sweet. Her closet was a favourite and favoured spot. With faithfulness worthy of universal imitation, she habitually maintained private devotion, and suffered no circumstances whatsoever to interfere with its regular enjoyment. Instead of regarding it as a duty merely, she entered upon it as a privilege inexpressibly sweet. The most of God's people will refer for the occasions of their highest religious enjoyment, to seasons of special excitement, when their hearts were peculiarly elevated, as at public meetings, when all the sympathies of the soul are awakened. But with her the closet was the scene of the highest excitement; where the Saviour appeared peculiarly near and dear, and manifested himself in all his loveliness to her soul. Her closet was none



other than the house of God. When she came from secret communion with her Saviour, her face sometimes shone, if not as brightly, at least as truly, as did the face of Moses when he came down from the mount. I mention what I have often seen with wonder and delight. Her countenance at such times reflected the joy of her heart, and spoke louder than words of the bliss she had experienced while she had been with Christ.

Such extraordinary devotion could not fail to display itself in fruits to the glory of God. We shall see that she entered at once, and ardently, upon efforts to do good, and spent her life in one ceaseless exertion to honour and serve Him who had died for her.

In her father's house was an aged servant, a son of Africa, who had been for many years in the family, and who found, in his age and sickness, faithful friends in those whom he had faithfully served. He was attacked by consumption, and lingered long with this slow, but fatal disease. For Jacob's soul Elizabeth felt the deepest concern, as she perceived that he was not long for this world, and had made no preparation for the next. His mind was quite

untutored ; he could not read ; but in such discouraging circumstances, she entered upon the systematic use of means for the salvation of this dying man. With the word of God in her hand she would sit down by his bed-side, and read and explain to him such portions as were especially adapted to his case, while, with all the simplicity of a child and the fervour of a devoted heart, she would tell him of Jesus, and of a Saviour's dying love. This was her theme. She loved much, and delighted to recount to others, the joys which flow from union with him who was her soul's delight.

She taught Jacob of his natural depravity ; she endeavoured to set before him his actual sins ; she revealed his danger while exposed to the wrath of God ; she presented the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, and besought him to repent and believe. And when she had told him all she could tell, Elizabeth would kneel by him and plead, with earnestness and tears, that God would send renewing grace into poor Jacob's heart.

I have said that she was a lovely girl, and who ever saw the loveliness of one in a more engaging light than while kneeling by the

bed-side of an African servant, and praying God to have mercy on his soul. A sweet girl of sixteen summers holds in her hand the hand of an aged, dying black man, and prays for him until her tears prevent her utterance, and her voice is choked with the gush of her soul. Many may regard this as the fruit of enthusiasm; such would do well to read no farther, as they will find more of the same. Such fruit Elizabeth yielded as long as she lived.

Elizabeth laboured with Jacob with perseverance under discouragement; his mind was so dark and his capacity so small, that it was very difficult to convey instruction to him in language level to his understanding. Perhaps this child was, on this very account, the instrument chosen for his salvation. For at last she had the blessed satisfaction of believing that Jacob had become savingly acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ. He did give most comfortable and delightful evidence that he had passed from death unto life, before he passed from life unto death. The consumption is usually slow in its work, and Jacob lingered so long that he was able to afford more satisfaction, even to

the most suspicious of death-bed repentances, than many give who are hopefully converted at the eleventh hour.

But little confidence is to be reposed in the repentance of a dying hour. The apostacies of those who recover shake our faith in those who die. The Bible records but one instance of dying conversion, and quaintly, but justly, Matthew Henry has remarked, "this case is given that none need despair, and only this that none may presume."

Some years after this interesting occurrence I received a letter from Elizabeth, in which allusion is made to Jacob's death; and the tenderness with which she speaks of him years after he was gone, presents her character in a most engaging light. I give but an extract:

"You have no idea how anxious I was for Jacob's soul. I loved him. We all loved him. When we were little children he had taken care of us, and by faithfulness and kindness for years, had endeared himself to every member of the family. He was without relatives, and had no friends save those he found under our roof. And when he came to lie on a bed of sickness, with the prospect of death

before him, I could not bear to think that Jacob should die without an interest in the precious Saviour. My soul was in agony for Jacob's soul. I prayed for him as I never prayed for another, and God gave me comforting evidence that Jacob was prepared to die before he called him hence. Jacob was very ignorant, but the simplicity and apparent sincerity with which he expressed his thoughts; his quiet resignation to the divine will; his peace of mind that followed a season of deep and bitter anguish on account of sin; all combined to make me believe that it was well with him when he left us, and that to die was his gain. And when I think of going to heaven, it is not the least of my joys to feel that there I shall meet that African servant in the company of the redeemed, wearing as white a robe, and singing as sweet a song as any who are there."

And now Elizabeth is there, and together I believe they are singing the sweet songs of redeeming love. Who does not admire the early devotion of this dear child to the service of God, in direct personal efforts to promote the salvation of souls? Here is an eminent in-

stance of praise being perfected out of the mouth of the young, and a bright example placed on record for the imitation of those who, like Elizabeth, have early consecrated their hearts to God. "In the morning sow thy seed." And "in the evening" she did not withhold her hand, but from childhood to the day of her death, never suffered an opportunity to pass which she could improve for good. The records of eternity will disclose the names of many who were, by her instrumentality, brought to Christ, and the names are not few of those whom I know to have been savingly benefited by her labours. But more of these will appear as we proceed.

## CHAPTER IV.

ELIZABETH BECOMES A SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER  
—HER FIDELITY AND SUCCESS.

ELIZABETH was yet quite young when she entered upon the duties of a teacher in the Sabbath School. To her taste and powers this field of labour was peculiarly adapted. The success which followed her efforts is evidence of the fidelity with which her duties were performed.

Gathering around her a class of little ones, she placed before her own mind the conversion of those children, as the object at which she was to aim continually. Every exertion that promised to contribute to this result she was willing to put forth; every sacrifice she was willing to make.

She first sought to secure the personal attachment of her class to herself, and this was in the present case far stronger than is usually found to exist even in the sweet relation of Sabbath School teacher and scholar. On their part this attachment was manifested by the

most punctual and attentive performance of their duties, and the most scrupulous compliance with her desires. They were frequent and delighted visitors at "the Cove," and to spend an afternoon with their teacher, at her own home, was a treat which they richly prized. Having made sure of their affections, she laboured to impress lessons of divine truth upon their tender minds.

Elizabeth had an exalted opinion of the responsibilities of a Sabbath School teacher. She had no idea that the duties of that office were to be discharged by simply spending an hour in the School of a Sabbath day. She studied her Bible diligently and systematically, in preparation for the work; deriving from books all the aid she could obtain. In her closet she sought supplies of divine grace, to qualify her for her high calling, and never went to her class without having earnestly sought God's blessing for her scholars and herself. Her little charge lay near her heart at all times, and she daily carried them in the arms of faith and love to the throne of divine grace.

Such prayers and such labours are never



spent in vain. Elizabeth lived to see the fruits of her toil developed in the serious deportment and exemplary lives of all the children of her charge. Since she has rested from her labours, some, and I believe all of them, have been led to the Saviour, and they refer their first serious impressions to the time when they sat at her feet.

In the village of S—— S—— was a wild ungoverned coloured girl, whose deportment rendered her an object of universal aversion. Nobody cared for her, and of course she cared for nobody. She had grown up, as too many of her class do, without the least instruction, but had learned lessons in vice so rapidly without instruction, that she was, at an early age, an adept in evil. Profane, vulgar and impudent, she spent the most of her time in the streets of the village, insulting those who passed her, and not unfrequently exposing herself to the notice of the law by the uproar she raised. This abandoned and almost hopeless case enlisted Elizabeth's sympathies, and she resolved to make an effort for this poor creature's good. Kind words and gentle smiles soon won even her regard.

The worst heart is not insensible. Some avenues are open to the soul, and grace and prudence will enable us to reach those *apparently* the most inaccessible. How many of our fellow creatures are perishing by the way side, whom we pass by and leave in their misery and sin, without putting forth a hand of kindness for their relief! Such was not the spirit of Christ. Had it been, he would have left us in our ruin, without an offer of the gospel or a hope of heaven.

Elizabeth persuaded this neglected outcast to attend the Sabbath School, and undertook to teach her to read. The labour was so great, her mind was so untutored and feeble, that the task could not be accomplished in the brief space of time allotted to the exercises of school. But Elizabeth was not to be disheartened. With a spirit of self-denial that is truly to be admired, she determined to devote a portion of time *in the week* to the thankless work of teaching this degraded girl to read. For this purpose she walked more than a mile from her own home, to the village, to give lessons to this new and uninviting pupil. Her perseverance and fidelity were finally attended with

success. This ignorant girl learned to read the word of God, and in some measure to understand its precious truths.

She now took her seat as a regular member of the Sabbath School, and became one of the best scholars in Elizabeth's class.

Nor did her progress end with a knowledge of reading. In her lessons through the week Elizabeth taught her *to write*, and I have before me this moment the evidence of the proficiency she made, in letters addressed to her benefactor, in which she expresses in rude, but earnest language, her gratitude that she had been thus kindly instructed. She promises to live for God, and blesses the day when she was taken from the streets and led to the Sabbath School.

She went out to service in the city of New-York some years ago, and I have not heard from her since. She may have relapsed into vice, and before this time have finished a career of sin. But if the instructions of Elizabeth are not forgotten, and her prayers, which continued as long as she lived, are not unheard, she has been or will be brought into the fold of God.

Elizabeth taught a large class in the Sabbath School, and I believe that all of them are now adorning the gospel by consistent lives. The seed sown by her in tears was not sowed in vain. And if saints may join with angels around the throne of God in joy over repenting sinners, then has she, before this hour, rejoiced in the fact that her Sunday School children were born again.

This little volume may fall into the hands of many who, like Elizabeth, are Sabbath School teachers. To such I have a passing word to say.

If you *are* like her, you never meet your class until you have diligently examined the lesson you are about to teach. No slight examination of the subject will qualify you for the responsible work in which you are engaged. You will give it a thorough investigation; so thorough as to be ready to give a satisfactory answer to every question, and to communicate such instruction as shall be calculated to make an impression on a tender mind.

If you *are* like Elizabeth, you never meet your class without having first met your Saviour in holy and intimate closet commun-

ion. Here was Elizabeth's strength. Being strong with God, she prevailed with man. The fervour of that intercourse with heaven glowed in her countenance and glistened in her eye as she sat among her pupils, and, with tenderness and earnestness that the pulpit never surpassed, pressed them to come to Christ and be happy in his arms. Sometimes a teacher, whose class was near Elizabeth's, would suspend for a season her own instructions, that she might listen to the sweet tones of her subdued voice, and the gracious words of moving love with which she addressed her class, as if she could not let them go without a blessing. The ardent piety of her heart at such times came gushing as from a fount of love, and hard was that child's heart that did not melt under its power. I suppose she never closed her Sabbath instructions without being in tears herself, and it was rare that her pupils did not mingle their tears with hers.

If you *are* like Elizabeth, you visit your scholars often during the week, and always when one is absent you hasten to learn the cause. You make yourself intimately acquainted with the circumstances of the family, that

you may minister to their temporal or spiritual wants, as they may require. This was the secret of Elizabeth's exceeding power over the affections of her children; and I believe no teacher can be sure of their love who does not visit them frequently at their own homes.

If you *are* like her, you esteem your labours a privilege rather than a duty, and delight in your employment far more than in all the amusements and pleasures of youth. Instead of finding the time in school hanging heavily on your hands, the hour is always too short for your labours, and you regret that it is so soon spent. Your own soul is blest while you are seeking to bless others; your zeal for God is kindled; your joys in his service are greatly increased, and you are more and more willing to spend and be spent in this delightful employment.

And, lastly, if you are like Elizabeth, you constantly aim at the immediate conversion of your scholars. You regard their early conversion as possible, and more probable than their conversion in adult years. Thus regarding it, you make your efforts to tend toward this one point. With intense anxiety you watch for

the effect of your instructions, and when encouraged by the faintest evidence that an impression has been made, you seek to follow it up in private, as well as in the class. You are never willing to rest while one of your dear charge is not a child of God.

A generation of such teachers would train up a better generation of children than the world ever saw. There is no field of labour in which female influence and piety may be more appropriately and powerfully exerted. Here no fear of man can benumb their faculties; no doubts of propriety can check their zeal. They are in the very sphere in which heaven designed that females should move, in the midst of children; and, as in the domestic circle, the pious teacher may wield the influence of affection and authority and prayer. If Sabbath Schools were deserted by the "sterner sex," they would not fail, and *I do not know that they would suffer*. But this last remark I suggest *to be considered*.

## CHAPTER V.

THE FEMALE PRAYER MEETING—DIFFICULTIES—  
SUCCESS—VISITS AMONG THE POOR, THE SICK,  
AND AFFLICTED.

FEMALE piety is lovely wherever seen ; but its loveliness in the church is concentrated in the social meeting for prayer. The very air seems purer and holier where this circle are gathered. That church will flourish in whose bosom this meeting is sustained with interest by the body of the female members. It may be so small as to exert but little influence ; but however small, as long as “ two or three are gathered together,” it should be kept up as a centre about which the female piety of the church may rally. Many a revival has had its beginning in such praying circles, and many souls are now rejoicing in God on earth or in heaven, who never knew that the work of grace in which they were converted began in the female prayer meeting, and spread thence until it filled and enkindled the church.

This was the spot in which the holiness of



Elizabeth shone with peculiar grace. In the village there were never found many who were willing to co-operate with this devoted saint in this holy enterprise, but the attempt was at last made, and the results were happy and blessed. A few met once a week in a little upper chamber, and spent an hour or two in delightful communion with God and each other, and in singing the songs of redeeming love.

She walked a mile and a half every week to the place of meeting. Many would have found this necessity an excuse for entire neglect of prayer meetings. Not so with her. In the severest cold of winter, and in weather when others deemed it imprudent for her to venture out, Elizabeth would find her way to the place of prayer. Such self-denial on her part was no small stimulus to others, who were often surprised to find her there, when they had hesitated before they left their nearer homes.

She was a sweet singer. Her voice was soft and clear; her ear for music unusually delicate; her proficiency in the science great, and her delight in the exercise bordering on enthusiasm. Often, when engaging with oth-

ers in this part of divine worship, would her feelings so completely overpower her, that she would be compelled to suspend her song and listen in rapture to the strains prolonged by other tongues. Let this be written down to the *enthusiasm* of her character.

Elizabeth was eminently gifted in prayer. How could it be otherwise? She lived at the throne of grace, and it would be strange if she were not *at home* when there. In the praying circle, the ardour and humility and confidence in God with which her petitions were offered, communicated to others, and spread a glow of hallowed feeling over that company of devout women. Her language was simple but abundant and strong, and as she poured forth the fulness of her heart, she seemed to wrestle as one who would take no denial. Those who were ever permitted to hear her pray will never forget the *power* of those prayers.

That was a favored altar at which those women ministered. Long may their incense burn thereon! Elizabeth has gone to minister before the throne; and she at whose house they met, has joined her in the house not made with hands; and another has been added to

the heavenly throng ; but a few still cling to that mercy seat, and love it the more when they think that perhaps glorified spirits are permitted to hover around a spot they loved so much on earth.

There was another sphere in which the devotion of Elizabeth in her Master's service appeared still more attractive. We have mentioned her attachment to the Sabbath School and female prayer meeting, as evidence of the *activity* of her piety. But in the self-denial and patience and constancy with which she ministered to the necessities of the poor, the sick and the afflicted, she gave, if possible, still stronger proof of the power of divine grace in her soul.

I know from personal experience as a pastor, that the public duties of the ministry do not require such abundant supplies of grace to secure their regular and faithful discharge, as the humble and more private labours which the minister of Christ is expected to perform. In the services of the sanctuary, and even in the social meeting for prayer, is a constantly returning opportunity for seeking the praise of others, and that man has made high attainments

in holiness who feels that he is beyond the reach of this temptation. But to follow Christ into the abodes of poverty, disease and death, where the eye of the world sees you not, and where nothing can be gained but the luxury of doing good, requires much of Christ's spirit. Such was his own estimate of these labours of love when he said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

And the same remark will hold true, so far as it extends to the case of the pious female. She may not be insensible to a desire to be known as an active and devoted Christian, and the Sabbath School or praying circle may be the chosen field for the display of her zeal. But this motive does not urge her to the obscure cottage or the miserable hovel, or the more miserable garret, where penury has made sickness more painful and clothed death with more fear. And yet such places were the favourite resorts of this young and delicate girl, as she sought to alleviate their misery, and with devotion scarcely to be believed, she strove to dispel their gloom. Especially

around the beds of the infirm and aged poor did she hover like an angel of mercy, to supply the wants of those whose scanty means afforded them few of the comforts and none of the luxuries of life, and whose abodes were seldom visited by a messenger of love. In the village there were several families of this description, in which sickness and poverty and old age had combined to make sorrow more sad, where Elizabeth was a frequent and welcome visiter.

Sitting down by the side of those whose sight was so much impaired, or whose strength was so much reduced that they could not peruse the word of God, she would read to them from the pages of divine truth, and in her own artless and often eloquent language, strive to impress its sentiments on their hearts. She would then kneel, and lead them in prayer to the throne of divine grace, and commend them to Him who is the friend of the fatherless and widow. No language could be found for these sufferers to express the gratitude they felt for such visits as these. With tears they would pronounce a "God bless you," as they saw

her depart, and often would the old and superstitious saying escape their lips—"Too good for this world," she will die young.

Such predictions had a sad and early fulfilment when God called this saint, in the bloom of youth and the midst of her usefulness, from her labours to her reward.

## CHAPTER VI.

EFFORTS FOR THE CONVERSION OF SINNERS—LETTERS TO IMPENITENT FRIENDS—ANSWERS—RESULTS—REVIVAL OF RELIGION—CONVERSION OF A SISTER—OF A YOUTH WHO HAS ALREADY DIED IN A FOREIGN MISSIONARY FIELD—ANOTHER NOW PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

WE have hitherto followed our young friend in the retired walks of life, pursuing that systematic course of religious duty which so strongly marked her character. That course was not without its influence upon the circle that surrounded her. But she was formed for more extended usefulness than she had yet been instrumental in accomplishing.

Her native place had long been suffering a spiritual drought. Few places could be named in our land where revivals of religion were so rare, and where conversions to God were so "few and far between." There were some praying souls, but the great mass were out of Christ, and thoughtlessly perishing in sin. The young were gay, careless and pray-

erless, and for them the heart of Elizabeth was moved. Like Esther of old, she could not bear to see the destruction of her kindred and friends. She determined to make an effort for their salvation. With this object before her, she addressed letters to some of her most intimate associates, urging upon them the importance of seeking the Lord in the midst of their youth. Some of these letters are now before me, or copies of them, and I cannot forbear inserting them. If they have no claim on the score of peculiar ability in their writer, they will at least reveal the desires of her heart for the good of others.

To a friend, who was a professor of religion, but who had in conversation with her spoken of being in deep spiritual darkness and distress, she thus writes :

S— S—, April 18th, 1831.

*My dear Friend :*

The conversation which I had with you last evening has filled me with pain. You asked me to pray for you, and the promise I made was faithfully kept. If ever I felt what it was to pray—to *wrestle* at the throne of grace, I



do think it was last night. My heart was melted. I watered my couch with my tears. Sleep was a stranger to my eyes, and when I thought again and again of your pitiable state, I could not refrain from calling on God and beseeching him to speak peace to your troubled soul. Oh! persevere at the mercy-seat. Go to Christ continually. He will not cast you off. To whom can you go but unto him? He is the same kind Saviour who first shed joy and peace abroad in your heart; and though now he hides his face from you, he will give you the oil of joy for mourning, beauty for ashes, and a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Though weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning. Do not despair. If you ever had a spark of grace; if you ever felt any love for Christ; if you could ever say that Jesus was yours and you were his, do not doubt his willingness still to bless you with his smiles. Perhaps in an unexpected hour he may display his pardoning love, and cause you to rejoice in him with joy unspeakable and full of glory. May our prayers prevail to call down that blessing, without which life is a burden and existence a curse.

And when we meet again, may we be permitted to rejoice together in the sweetness of forgiven sin.

Yours truly,

ELIZABETH.

To this letter she received the following answer, which I find among her papers :

S— S—, April 18th, 1831.

Your kind note, my dear E., was received this morning, and read with deep interest. But it would be useless for me to attempt to describe my feelings. After conversing with you last evening, I came to my closet and tried to pray. But the heavens were shut. Gross, Egyptian darkness covers and blinds me. And when I had called on God with solemn words and found no answer, I sought my bed, and in sleep forgot that I was under the hidings of a Father's face. How different your feelings! You hear of my situation, and wrestle and pray, and sleep not, while I am forgetful even of the danger to which I am exposed. And yet I cannot abandon my hope, though I have little reason for clinging to it. A drowning

man will catch at a straw, and I seize on every favourable evidence with similar avidity. But I could not die as I now am. And this thought overwhelms me, and makes me miserable. What shall I do? I know that Christ is mighty to save, but it seems as if I had shut myself out of his favour; as if I had sinned against so much light and love that perhaps I have committed the unpardonable sin, and shall never obtain mercy. You will pray for me. *Your* prayers may be heard. I thank you a thousand times for your kind letter. Farewell.

Yours ever,

\* \* \*

This letter made her so well acquainted with her friend's case, that she determined to make another effort to afford relief. Taking "Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," she sent it with the following note, attached to a chapter entitled, "*The case of the Christian under the hidings of God's face.*"

"The book which I send you is full of im-

portant instruction, but the chapter marked I commend to your special and careful attention. If you have never believed in Christ, come now and trust in him. And if you have been born of the Spirit and are now in darkness, the way to find light and peace is the same. Sin is the cloud. Seek pardon in Jesus' blood."

The effect of this effort to do good may be learned from the letter which follows:

S—— S——, April 26th, 1831.

*My dear Friend:*

I cannot forbear writing to you a few words this morning, to say that I find more peace of mind and enjoyment in divine things than I have for some time past. Last evening I took the volume which you had the kindness to send me, and sat down with a firm resolution to make an honest examination of the state of my heart. I read the chapter you selected, with prayerful interest. I fell upon my knees and wept and prayed. Light broke in on my despairing heart. Jesus appeared to me the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. I seemed to hear his sweet

voice saying, "Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." If I know my own heart, I do love that Saviour whose *holiness* will banish me forever if I do not give him my heart. I am happy, yet I rejoice with trembling. But leaning on the arm of my Saviour, I shall be held up. He will lead me into green pastures, and by the side of still waters. I cannot express the gratitude I feel for the interest you have taken in my behalf. Your reward is laid up with those who have turned many to righteousness.

Yours sincerely.

From this time these friends were inseparably engaged in the work of the Lord. Their desires were particularly strong to see religion revived in the village, and for this they laboured with humble dependence on divine aid. Nor were their prayers in vain. It was not long before they had reason to believe that the letters which Elizabeth wrote, and the faithful and affectionate appeals which in person they addressed to unconverted friends, were the means of awakening them to a serious concern for their souls.

If the propriety of such exertions by private individuals is a question with some, I have no desire to argue that question. My only wish is that more of such efforts were made for the revival of religion in the churches of the land. Harlan Page will be long remembered and blessed for such labours of love. Elizabeth Thornton drank deeply at the same fountain, and with the same spirit went just as far for the same cause as the proprieties of her sex would allow. And there are those who will never forget her for her work's sake.

To a young lady in S—— S—— who was intimate in the family, she thus writes :

*May 2d, 1831.*

You will pardon me, my dear \*\*\*\*\*, for addressing you on a subject that lies very near to my heart, but I fear is very far from yours. In common with others I suppose you think that religion is a gloomy subject, and well enough for the old and dying, but not calculated to make you happy. How sadly you are deceived. Oh! if there is any joy this side of the grave, it is in feeling that Jesus Christ loves us, and that we love him—that we have

an interest in him that will abide in the day when God takes away the soul, and make us blessed to all eternity. And could you know for one moment how sweet it is to be assured that you have a friend in Jesus, who will delight in making you as happy as an angel forever, you would never think again that religion was a source of gloom. And my dear \*\*\*\*\*, you want to be happy. Seek it then in the love and service of God. Repent of your sins, and believe in him who has died that you may live. Jesus stands with open arms, and longs to embrace you as a returning child. Come to him and be saved. You may be surprised that I should write to you on this subject, and so freely too, but I love your soul. Oh! come to Christ before it is too late.

Yours in much love,                     · E.

Again she writes to another :

*May 5th, 1831.*

*My Young Friend:*—If you were as much concerned for my happiness as I am for yours, I would readily excuse you for addressing me with freedom and warmth. You are young,

but in your breast is an evil heart of unbelief, and while that heart is unrenewed by the Holy Ghost you cannot be happy. Sin is an evil and bitter thing—it is offensive to God, and while you love it you cannot love him. And do you not feel at times alarmed in view of your danger, while out of Christ and exposed to the wrath and curse of an angry God ?

You have indeed sinned against great light and boundless love. Jesus has died for you, and offered you life and salvation in his blood, and often you have rejected his offers, and treated his sweet overtures of mercy with indifference if not with scorn. And should that Saviour, who now invites you to his bosom, lift his hand and swear that you should not enter into his rest, he would not punish you beyond your deserts. Oh, you may yet feel the wrath of his slighted love. And now he is waiting to be gracious. Fly to him and be saved.

I know, my dear girl, you may think me assuming more than belongs to me, and I fear exceedingly that my desires for your good may be misunderstood, and may offend you so as to do you an injury. But if you knew the joy of my heart in the love of Christ, and the sweet



peace of mind I feel in view of the future, even of an eternity that is before you as well as me, you would see why it is, that I wish all those whom I love, to love the Lord Jesus Christ. He is such a Saviour! He has displayed such unspeakable love for such guilty creatures as we, and now is so willing to embrace his enemies, when they are ready to come to his arms.

The sermon last Sabbath afternoon appeared peculiarly adapted to your case, and I could not refrain from constantly raising my heart to God in prayer for you, that the word spoken in so much love and power, might be the means of awakening your attention to the things that make for your everlasting peace.

Write to me—we write more freely than we converse—and tell me whether you have any desires to find a Saviour for your perishing soul.

Your sincere friend,

ELIZABETH.

How many letters of this general character she addressed to her impenitent friends, I have not the means of knowing. But that she extended her exertions quite to the limit of the

circle of her intimate associates, I infer from the number of replies which her letters elicited, and which I would insert in this place, had I the consent of their writers, who are still living, and might be perhaps displeased with so public a use of thoughts which were intended *only* for the eye of a single individual. Some of these individuals discover a willingness to consider the subject; they express gratitude for the kindness that prompted the effort; and soon they manifest an increasing desire for the concerns of their souls. Again, I have before me the gushing of hearts announcing the fact that Jesus is found, the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. And Oh! what tears of joy did that young saint shed, when God permitted her to believe that her exertions had been the means of leading some of her young friends to the cross of Christ!

It was soon apparent that the Spirit of God was moving upon the youth in the village. The anxiety which had commenced in the breast of Elizabeth, or which had at least been first displayed by her, began to appear in other Christians. The female prayer-meeting was attended by greater numbers, and with far

greater devotion. The public prayer-meeting of the church was enlarged. The school-room in which it was held was "too strait." Another room was added, and both were filled to overflowing. The work silently but steadily deepened. The amusements of the young gave place to meetings for inquiry and prayer. Some will never forget that the fourth of July, 1831, was spent by a company of young persons in the Literary Institutions in the village, and by others who chose to join them, as a day of special prayer. And this unusual mode of observing this anniversary was not the result of any previous arrangement. The ordinary exercises of the Academy and Female Seminary were suspended according to custom; but the pupils had no disposition to embark in the entertainments of the day, and naturally gathering together from the force of sympathy, they met in the school-room of the Academy, and there united in earnest prayer for each other and the young around them.

A work of grace was now begun. It attracted no great attention. Many knew nothing of its progress. Some may learn from this sketch for the first time, that there was a

revival of religion among them, in the summer of 1831. But there *was* a precious revival. It had its birth in the heart of Elizabeth. It spread from hers to other hearts, and eternity will alone disclose the fruits of that work. But I can record something of the results ; and I record what I know with devout gratitude to Almighty God.

The first individual to whom she addressed a note was a most intimate friend, to whom she could write without overstepping the limits of female propriety. He was a professor of religion, but had lost so much of his spirituality of mind, and become so conformed to the world, that he was about to abandon his hope as a delusion which he had indulged too long. At this juncture, he became so much interested in conversation with Elizabeth, that he made known to her his state of mind, and the result was what we have stated before. That same fall he entered the Theological Seminary at Princeton, and is now a minister of the New Testament in the Presbyterian church.

A letter from him happily presents the next instance to be mentioned of the effects of this work. An extract here follows.

“Last evening my younger brother \*\*\*\*\* came into my room, and throwing his arms around my neck, said, “I want you to pray for me.”

It was a moment of surpassing interest, and emotions never to be told or forgotten were awakened in my heart. He had always been what is called, “a good boy”—his life had been marked by the strictest morality, and his attendance on the duties of religion made it impossible to detect in his character any thing amiss. And while I had looked on him as a stranger to the Saviour, and in need of regenerating grace, I never expected to see him strongly excited in view of sin, or the prey of peculiar distress. He seemed so near the kingdom of God; like the young man in the gospel, he had outwardly kept all the commandments, so that it appeared as if he must easily be led to embrace the Saviour. His *morality* had allayed my anxieties in his behalf, and the interest he had ever manifested in the subject of religion tempted me almost to forget that he was still in his sins, an enemy of God and an heir of hell. And when he broke in upon me with the solemn demand that I should pray for him, it startled me

as if he had come in starving and asked for bread.

Perceiving that he was in great distress of mind, I desired him to sit down for a moment and tell me the occasion of his anxiety freely, and then I would comply with his request. He said that the subject of religion had for years been often before him, and he had always intended to become personally interested in it, but he added, "when in the prayer-meeting last evening you closed your remarks with the words, 'Choose ye *this day* whom ye will serve,' I resolved that I would seek earnestly the salvation of my soul. But at that time I felt no unusual concern, and this morning scarcely any more; but my resolution was firm to choose the Lord for my portion. And this afternoon in church, the sermon came home to my case, and I feel that I am a sinner, a great sinner, sinking into hell; and I want you to pray for me."

We kneeled down, and I offered prayer while he wept in bitterness by my side. After a few moments, and still on our knees, I asked him what appeared to weigh the most heavily on his heart. He said that he had been chiefly distressed by the fear of the hell to which he

was exposed, but now that had ceased to fill him with peculiar horror, and his sins appeared so great and so wicked that he must sink under their power. We spoke of the peculiar aggravation of his guilt who had enjoyed the highest religious privileges, had been early consecrated by pious parents to God, and had been the child of many tears and prayers, and had still refused to give his heart to Christ. And as his ingratitude was revealed, he seemed to abhor himself as unworthy of the dust. And now despair was filling his breast. Such sins, so many, so great, so inexcusable, can never be forgiven. I asked him if he felt that God would be just in shutting him out of heaven, and making him miserable forever. Oh yes, he replied, he deserved the everlasting wrath of a holy God. He could never suffer more than he deserved; but it was not hell, it was sin that made him miserable. He would suffer any thing, every thing, if he could only be delivered from this dreadful load of sin. We spoke of the character of God; of his spotless purity, that could not bear with sin; of his justice that burns to punish it; of his truth, that had sworn to take vengeance on the ungodly.



But he anticipated all this, and my words were too weak to meet the views he already had of these attributes conspiring against his soul. I spoke of the love of God; love against which he had sinned so long and deeply; love that had given him the religious privileges of his youth; love that was now keeping him out of hell; love that even now offered to pardon and save him.

“No no,” said he, “I have sinned too much for that. There can be no pardon for so vile a wretch as I.” And sinking under this despairing thought, he gave utterance to his grief in sobs and tears.

It was an awful moment. I loved him as my own soul; and his arm clung round my neck as if I were holding him out of the pit. He seemed ready to perish. I plead at the throne of grace, that the convicted sinner might find mercy in this hour of his extremity. I asked him to pray, and the few broken petitions that he was able to offer discovered the depths of distress from which he cried.

Thus far I had said nothing to him of the Saviour as waiting to be gracious. I had set before him his sins, as they appeared in contrast



with the holiness of God, and had endeavoured to lead him to a deep sense of *guilt* on account of those sins. He had been well instructed in the great truths of religion, but the thought of a possibility of finding salvation from such sins as he felt on his soul, seemed not to have entered his mind. And when at this juncture I spoke to him of the atonement which Christ had made for guilty man, he could see no provision that met his case. I called up the precious and frequent promises of God; the gracious and glorious offers of salvation that Jesus Christ has made; I explained to him how consistent it was for God to pardon since Christ had suffered; and how willing that Saviour was to have mercy on the chief of repenting sinners. We went to Calvary and dwelt on the dying sacrifice; and I asked him, if with that bleeding witness of God's willingness to provide salvation for sinners, he could doubt the eternal word. Here his unbelief was staggered. Seizing upon the first gleam of hope, I besought him to cast himself away upon the sovereign mercy of God in Christ Jesus. "You are a lost sinner, self-condemned and perishing. You acknowledge that God will be just in

sending you to hell. But you see the provision which he has made for just such sinners. Can you not trust your immortal interests in the hands of that Saviour?"

The solemnity of eternity appeared to rest on his soul as he poured out his heart in prayer, and committed himself unto him who is able and willing to save. We wept in silence in the fulness of souls that knew no words to express the emotions of that hour. With perfect calmness, almost incredible after the storm through which he had just passed, we rose from our knees—we had been praying and conversing for about two hours—and walked out together. A Sabbath's sun was just setting, but a brighter sun, with healing in its beams, was rising on his heart. We met some young and unconverted friends, and at my request he told them what God had done for his soul, and tenderly invited them to seek the Saviour he had found."

Thus far the letter. But it will be interesting to the readers of this book to know that this young man some time afterwards made a public profession of religion, and having completed a collegiate and theological course of

instruction, entered the ministry, and is now an ambassador of the cross, beseeching men to be reconciled to God.

Thus were the minds of two young men turned to the holy ministry; and who can estimate the amount of good which they may be instrumental in accomplishing in the church and the world? The circle of influence which Elizabeth exerted, will widen and widen forever. But the record is not completed.

In the female seminary at S—— S——, was a teacher whose name we are free to mention, because her name is now written in heaven. She has gone to her rest, and what is said of her now will reach her not.

HELEN MARIA WELLS was at this time awakened by the Spirit of God, and led to feel her need of a Saviour. She possessed more than ordinary powers of mind, and had received a superior education. Eminently qualified for the station she filled as the principal assistant in the seminary, she needed only the grace of God in her heart to qualify her for distinguished usefulness in any sphere. Under the influence of the work now begun she was hopefully converted to God, and dedi-

cated herself to his service. She was afterwards married to Mr. D. White, and they went forth together to carry the lamp of life to those who were sitting in the region and shadow of death. Western Africa was the field assigned them. It had terrors that would have shaken most hearts. The graves of many that had gone before them were monuments to warn them away. But they went forth. They entered upon their labours, and in six short weeks they were lying side by side in the yard of the mission house at Cape Palmas.

We have thus seen the labours of this retiring and delicate girl resulting in the introduction into the public service of God of two ministers of the gospel, and one devoted female missionary of the cross. How far their several circles of influence may widen, the world to come can only disclose. But the work of grace that now was begun did not rest here. Elizabeth writes as follows to a friend :

“ This morning as I entered our chamber what should I behold but my dear sister on her knees by the bed-side, pleading with God to pardon her sins, and save her soul ! You cannot tell the joy, the pure, rich, overflowing

joy, I felt in seeing this dear sister engaged in prayer. Oh! how much I have prayed for her, and now my prayers were in part answered—she was praying for herself! We mingled our tears together. We plead with the dear Redeemer; and I am strong in faith that she will find peace in believing. Pray for her.”

This “strong faith” was not fruitless. Elizabeth soon had the purer, richer, and fuller joy of embracing a “sister in Christ.” A new source of happiness was now opened. This sister was but two years younger than herself, and entered with her immediately into all her plans and efforts for doing good. They were companions in labour; in joy; in grace; and sweet were the hours of private enjoyment of these devoted sisters. And often does Elizabeth speak, in her letters to her friends, of the conversion of this sister as the richest mercy she had experienced since she found the pardon of her own sins.

But it is not important to continue further the enumeration of individual cases of awakening and conversion which now occurred. The work was principally confined to the Academy, Female Seminary, and the Sabbath

School. Several of the youth in the literary institutions, who were then hopefully converted, made a profession of religion after they left the place. But it was a day of almost unexampled interest to the little church in that village, when twelve of the young people whose days had been spent in the pursuit of worldly vanities, came out together and openly embraced the Saviour, as their portion, and made a public consecration of themselves to his service. Again there was joy in heaven.

Although this revival may appear small when compared with the more powerful outpourings of God's Spirit which have refreshed other parts of the American church, it was great for that place. Nor were its effects transitory. It exerted an influence on the future prosperity of the church, and gave a new impulse to the religious character of the village. And when I have followed out the influence of that *little* revival in its various bearings, as it has exerted itself in the communities where the individuals have lived who were converted therein—when I see that influence stretching itself across the mighty deep, and working amid the darkness of benighted Africa; I love to trace it back to its incipiency,

and behold it springing from the heart of a humble female, under the influence of the Holy Ghost. I then discover what mighty effects may be produced by humble means, and that no one knows how much he can do until he has made an effort to do all in his power, for the honour of God and the good of his fellow men.

When Samuel J. Mills left the college door he said to his friend, "let us make our influence felt on the other side of the globe." Mills was an exceedingly modest and retiring man, and the determination thus expressed was not from his *nature*—it was the result of *grace*. And the "other side of the globe" long ago was reached by the influence of that devoted servant of God. Almost the whole number of benevolent associations that are now sending out from this land the light and truth of the Gospel of Christ, may be traced immediately or remotely to the influence of that same man.

"If our race is short let it be well run," said Elizabeth, in a letter a few years before her death, and with this noble resolution constantly in her eye, she did run well. Her race, though short, was marked with usefulness and crowned with glory.

## CHAPTER VII.

DEVOTES HERSELF TO THE MISSIONARY WORK—  
HER EXPECTATIONS DISAPPOINTED—MARRIAGE  
—REMOVAL TO CONNECTICUT.

It will have already occurred to the reader, that the talents and piety of this gifted and devoted individual formed her for a wider field of usefulness than the one in which she had been hitherto confined. Her own heart had been early and deeply interested in foreign missions. Nor was she willing to rest satisfied with *praying* for the heathen, or with the feeble contributions which she was able to make to send them the gospel. *She longed to give herself to the work.* This was no visionary desire. She had made herself thoroughly acquainted with the trials and difficulties to be encountered; the losses to be experienced; and the pangs of separation to be endured. She did not enter the warfare without counting the cost. The desire was as *pure* as probably ever burned in a human heart for the human race.

Christ Jesus from the throne of his glory



looked down on the perishing children of men, and left *his* throne and *his* glory and was made flesh and dwelt among us. He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. No one doubts the sincerity of Christ's love to man. It was pure, disinterested, heavenly.

And the missionary spirit is only the spirit of Christ. He who has the spirit of Christ is ready, not only to go to prison or death for his Master's sake, but to take his life in his hand, and go forth into the wilderness of the world, and carry the bread of life to a starving race. The higher this spirit of missions is carried, the nearer the individual who feels it is likened to the Lamb of God. The church has been too prone to consider the missionary as actuated by an impulse which the home-bound Christian does not feel. But the missionary has merely taken one step higher in divine life. All ought to take that step. It is not contended that all ought to go as foreign missionaries, but that all should be ready, willing, anxious to go wherever Christ may lead the way. And he who has made a sincere and undivided consecration of himself to the service of Christ, will

not hesitate, when called on, to exchange the enjoyments of home and a Christian land, for the trials and toils of a missionary life in a pagan world.

But the devotion of some to the cause of God, and their peculiar emotions under the impulse of the Holy Ghost may lead them to be willing to go, not only when specially called on in the Providence of God, but anxious to find an occasion to go, that the fond desires of their souls may be gratified by carrying the news of salvation to dying men. When the young *man* has thus devoted himself to the foreign field, the path is plain before him. Is he poor? the hand of benevolence will supply him with the means of preparation for the work. The church is ready to send him forth on this embassy of mercy, and his life may be spent in the noble and heavenly enterprise of winning souls to Christ. Not so with the pious female. She must wait to be asked. There are, doubtless, many such in this day of missionary enterprise, who would rejoice in the privilege of forsaking father and mother, and houses and lands for the sake of their Saviour, but who are compelled to cherish that desire in

secret, with never an opportunity for its indulgence. We know there are far more of the female sex than of the other, in the bosom of the church, and that female piety is of that warm and expansive character, which glows for the good of others, and seeks to spend itself upon the wants and woes of every suffering son and daughter of man. Were the appeals that are constantly made to the church for *men*, changed for appeals to the gentler sex, though they are less fitted by nature for the exposures incident to a work like this; more, far more would answer the appeal; and the societies for the spread of the gospel among the heathen would soon have a supply of missionaries on their hands, which their *full* treasuries could not send. The *women* were the firmest friends of the Saviour when he was on earth. They did not desert him when his immediate disciples forsook him and fled. "They were the last at the cross, and the first at the sepulchre." The same steadfastness of purpose has marked the female character in every age of the church.

Elizabeth had long cherished, in her own breast, a strong desire to "go on a mission." It was the settled purpose of her soul to do the

most good in the least time. The field was the world; and as she looked abroad upon its whitening harvest, she saw a brighter prospect of gathering abundant sheaves in the pagan than Christian department of that field. Her soul had been tenderly affected by the condition of the heathen world, and it would be wrong to doubt that the natural sympathies of a benevolent heart had been powerfully wrought upon in behalf of the perishing in foreign lands. But those emotions were calm and abiding. They depended on no special and transient excitement for their strength and fruits. They were the habitual exercises of her soul, and they exerted a controlling influence over all her plans for the future.

A marriage engagement formed at this period, with one who was looking forward to a life in the service of God among the heathen, promised to gratify the desires that had long been cherished in her heart.

She commenced immediately a course of preparation for the work. Her early education, sufficient for the ordinary duties of the private Christian, required to be extended to prepare her for the more responsible and pub-

lic duties that must devolve on the wife of the minister of the gospel, and even more especially upon the wife of a foreign missionary.

Perseverance was a prominent trait in her character. This had already been developed. But a severer test was now required when she entered upon the study of the dead languages, being advised that they would be of great assistance to her in preparation for usefulness in foreign lands. Whether or not that advice was judicious, this is not the proper place to discuss. She considered it important that she should become acquainted with the Latin and Greek languages—particularly the latter. There was a peculiar reason for this opinion in her case, from the field which had been selected as the spot for their future labours. Having numerous domestic duties to engross her time, she could not devote an undivided attention to her studies, but her proficiency was wonderful. She commenced the Latin Grammar on Monday morning, and studying but one or two hours daily she accomplished the whole, and made thorough work of it, in one week. Her success in mastering the language was great. Passing rapidly through the intro-

ductory studies. she read the *Æneid* of Virgil with a degree of fluency that was truly astonishing; and I have now before me a translation which she wrote of the first book, that is well worthy of being published, not merely as a specimen of her proficiency, but as a correct and handsome translation of that finished production.

In Greek her progress was marked by the same success. She soon read the Greek Testament with ease, and displayed considerable acquaintance with the structure and peculiarities of that language. Elizabeth was not a superficial scholar. She began these studies at a period of life and under circumstances that would appear to have justified her in passing lightly over the course, but she judged correctly that as her object was to learn *language*, it was important to lay a broad and deep foundation. The superstructure must rest upon it.

The Hebrew next received her attention; but her progress in this language was arrested by circumstances beyond her control.

While this course of preparation was in progress there was another department of far greater importance which she did not overlook

She studied intently and prayerfully the word of God. It was emphatically her meat and her drink; she prized it more than her daily food; and by the diligent and careful perusal of its sacred pages she sought to qualify herself to be useful when she might come to expound them to others. It is believed that few individuals have ever embodied more of the qualities of mind and heart that are requisite to eminent usefulness in the field of labour to which she was devoted, than this individual. Her manners were of that mild, unassuming but winning character, which secure for their possessor the interest and affection of those around her; her piety was of that order which leads to ceaseless efforts for the good of others; and her mind was so far improved by education and general reading, that she was able to wield her various powers with great prospect of usefulness in any department of Christian enterprise. Most peculiarly was she qualified to discharge the high, responsible, varied and interesting duties which devolve on the wife of the gospel minister.

Those duties are high. They are second only to those of the minister himself. His wife



may stand between him and his people, and in a more retired but scarcely less important department, may minister to the spiritual necessities of the flock. In her sphere she is capable of exerting an influence which he never can.

The responsibility is great. By prudence and fidelity, she may strengthen her husband's hands and encourage his heart. Or she may by negligence and unfaithfulness impair his usefulness, clog his hands, and increase instead of lightening his labours.

Her duties are varied and interesting. In the faithful performance of the work which God in his providence has committed to her hands, she will visit the sick and the afflicted; she will rally the female piety of the church around a common altar; she will labour for the lambs of the flock in the Sabbath School, if domestic cares will permit—and in a thousand ways that cannot be named she will contribute most powerfully and effectually to the promotion of her husband's usefulness. Whoso getteth a wife getteth a good thing; but pre-eminently blessed is that pastor who has a help—*meet* for him.

We have hitherto contemplated the subject



of this sketch as surrounded by every circumstance that was calculated to make her happy. Every desire of her heart seemed to be gratified, and life opened before her with all the prospects of usefulness which she so ardently sought. But at this period, an important change took place in her hopes for the future. God saw fit to bring upon a bed of sickness and expected death the one with whom she had hoped to share the joys and sorrows of a missionary life; and though the hand of Providence was revealed in sparing his life, he was left with such health as to shut out the hope of ever being permitted to go forth to the heathen.

Her letters at this juncture breathe a spirit deeply afflicted by the disappointment, and struggling to be resigned to a dispensation that kept her at home. So far from being happy at the thought that the fond endearments of the beloved circle of friends were still to be hers, she looked upon it as *self-denial* to stay away from the heathen, whom she loved more than father or mother or houses or lands. Here was a sterner test than her piety had yet encountered. Before she saw any door open

for the gratification of her desires, she had given her heart to the pagan world; when the door was opened, she entered it with gratitude; and now that the same hand which had so far led her on was raised to turn her back—to hedge up her way that she could not follow her heart's promptings and go far hence to the Gentiles, she was more severely tempted to repine than when the Lord whispered to her in the midst of all the joys that cluster around the domestic altar and smile in Christian lands, and asked her, "Lovest thou me more than these?"

USEFULNESS was the great aim of her existence; usefulness as yielding praise to her Redeemer; usefulness in the work of saving sinners, that God might have the glory, and heaven be more full of joy; and with this desire ever burning on the shrine of her heart's affection, she saw the world of heathenism as opening a wider field of usefulness and a prospect of doing more good in less time, than she could find in her own land. And in addition to this, with unusual timidity of character, she shrunk from the notice of the world, and rather than labour where she was exposed to the eye of others, she seemed to seek some retired and

distant spot, where unnoticed and unknown she might spend and be spent for Christ and dying sinners.

But when the path of duty was revealed, and she saw that it was not the will of her Master that she should go abroad, she yielded implicitly, and with more than wonted diligence laboured for those around her; and with equal earnestness and faith and love prayed for those or whom she was not permitted to labour.

Shortly after the decision was made that the missionary work must be abandoned, Elizabeth was married, and removed with her husband to W——, a secluded town in the state of Connecticut. A new field of labour now invited the youthful sower, and she entered cheerfully upon the work.

## CHAPTER VIII.

ELIZABETH IN THE FAMILY—IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD—HER GROWTH IN GRACE—RIPENING FOR HEAVEN.

It could scarcely be otherwise than that one whom grace had so far purified from the infirmities of human nature, should, in the family circle, develop the loveliness of her character.

After the higher duties which she owed to God, she made it her first object to render *home* happy. Throwing around it the charms of cheerfulness, refinement and peace, it was her delight to be the source of joy to those who rejoiced in her smiles and shared richly in her love.

She was always cheerful. A cloud never sat on her brow for a moment. It may be said that there was nothing to make her otherwise than happy—but every one knows that the daily duties and cares of life expose us to a thousand nameless sources of anxiety, and there are few who do not yield at times to despondency. Elizabeth was not exempt from those

cares. But she met them with equanimity, and under all circumstances was both happy herself and a source of happiness to others.

Such uniform cheerfulness could not exist except in connexion with remarkable *evenness of temper*. It is not known that from the time she made a profession of religion to the day of her death, she ever spoke a hasty word or *gave* pain by an unkind remark. No one who has read this account of her can have failed to observe that she was easily excited. How abiding and powerful must have been the restraints of grace, when her temper was thus habitually and perfectly controlled!

It is strong evidence of the *loveliness of her piety*, that her zeal and activity in Christ's cause never subjected her to those observations which the world are apt to make of the peculiarly devoted Christian. Especially is the female, who spends much of her time in the service of God by ministering to the wants of those around her, liable to have her good evil spoken of by the censorious or indifferent. Perhaps efforts are sometimes injudiciously made, and thus occasion for reproach fairly given. But as we have said that Elizabeth never spoke

an unkind word, so we may say, and with equal truth, that no one ever spoke an unkind word of her. In the neighbourhood where she spent her early years, and in the village where she had now made her home, and where she was to close her days, she was the object of universal love. Her efforts to do good were made with such winning grace, and displayed a soul so full of love for the best interests of those she sought to bless, that she found her way irresistibly to all hearts. Her peculiar faculty of conciliating the feelings and securing the esteem of others, was evident in the success that attended her labours as a Tract Distributer. I know that she was a welcome visiter to families that would receive Tracts from no other hand. And this unbounded popularity, if I may use the word, was not secured by any effort to gain it, but was the natural result of the development of her character. Her words and works were her passport to every heart.

Her removal to W—— was not followed by any diminution in exertion for the good of others. She began to inquire without delay in what manner she might be most useful; and soon found, as every one will find, that where

there is *will*, there is no lack of *opportunity to do*. She was now in a land of strangers. Not an individual save her husband did she know when she took up her residence in this secluded town. But with her unfailing energy and love she soon became engaged in all the schemes of benevolence in which she had formerly been so anxiously employed. The Sabbath School, the female prayer meeting, chambers of sickness and abodes of poverty were all here, and she was soon in the midst of them. Those who knew her in these labours and pleasures will bear witness, that new life was speedily infused into the benevolent operations of the little church in which she worshipped, while she was there.

For reasons that will soon be apparent, Elizabeth felt about this period the necessity of living in a constant state of preparation for a dying hour. That she had been making rapid attainments in holiness from the commencement of her Christian career, must have been evident to those who have read this sketch thus far. The fruits she brought forth were the best possible evidence of rapid sanctification. But during the year that followed her removal to W—— her growth

in grace was so rapid as to excite the attention of all who enjoyed her intimate acquaintance. This portion of her life, which was spent principally in retirement, will be more correctly learned from the following statement by her husband.

“ Elizabeth was accustomed to disclose her inmost feelings to me, with all the simplicity and freedom of a child. She considered this her delightful duty and privilege. And her countenance was a perfect index to the state of her mind. If she was in doubt or anxiety, I knew it, the moment I met her. Was she in joy, her face told the gladness of her heart. I will not make public many of the exercises which marked her religious experience, and I decline for this reason—they will not be regarded as the genuine fruits of the Spirit, and, therefore, their publication will do no good. Many would attribute her special seasons of excitement and ecstatic enjoyment to what is often called “ animal feeling,” and some might not be so charitable as to refer them even to such a cause. But I speak that which I know, when I assert, that her temperament was not of a visionary cast; that imagination never tri-



umphed over judgment ; that her life was marked by the exercise of sober reason and sound practical sense ; and that her whole conduct in public and private duties, was the result of serious reflection and active principle, rather than feverish emotion or sudden impulse. Her mind was serious and solid rather than visionary. I have no idea that she lived without sin. Her prayers were full of penitential confessions. Her soul panted after holiness continually, and she lived not as though she had attained, but as if she were looking forward to a higher mark. Often when I returned home after the absence of a day, I would perceive by the special richness of joy that played on her countenance, that something had occurred to fill her with uncommon delight while I had been absent. I can express my idea more clearly by saying that she looked as if she had heard some joyful intelligence and was still under its influence. On studiously inquiring into the cause of her peculiar happiness, too apparent to be concealed, I would learn that she had been favoured with such intimate communion with Christ, and the manifestation of the Spirit had been so precious to her soul, that she was

actually rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Such seasons were not uncommon with her. But each successive season was so much more precious than the last, that she enjoyed it as a new and gracious display of God's love.

“Nor do I speak of this revelation of the goodness of God, as a favour which she of all Christians alone enjoyed. Doubtless every believer can recall the time when his soul has been refreshed by unusual nearness of intercourse with his Saviour and Father. But with Elizabeth these hours were of frequent occurrence, and *consequently* they were more glorious than if they had been “few and far between.” Because they were so frequent, they were so precious. She was rapidly rising in Christian enjoyment, and each progressive step was bringing her into the more perfect image of God, and into higher and brighter revelations of his character. The work of grace was proceeding with so much rapidity in her soul, that in order to be perceptible to others, it must have appeared most unusually great to herself.

“And yet this ardent enjoyment did not unfit her for the sober and daily duties of life. The

innocent and rational amusements of society were as congenial to her feelings as to those of others. The social circle at an evening visit was a source of real pleasure, and she entered into its enjoyments with as much zest as any one else.

“ But I can mention one fact that will present in a few words a more complete exhibition of the effects of divine grace upon her heart than any laboured description which I can give. Of course religion was the most frequent subject of our conversation. And often when we had retired to rest at night, as she composed herself to sleep, have I heard her say (what she would never have said to another), ‘ I cannot doubt that Christ is mine, and I am his. If I was sure that when I fell asleep I should never wake in this world again, the thought of so sudden a death would not keep me awake a moment.’ And I firmly believe it. I had proof of it afterwards.

“ When we were alone, Elizabeth was accustomed to lead our devotions frequently, at my request, and I was often astonished at the fervour and power of her supplications. Words seemed to be given her as if by inspiration, and

her desires for the glory of God in the salvation of souls were beyond the capacity of language to express. Her own wants were uttered with humility and a sense of unworthiness that I cannot describe, but her prevailing, overruling anxiety was to become more holy. She longed to be like God; to have every vestige of sin removed, and to be permitted to be holy as the angels of heaven.

“She shrunk from sin as from the touch of the plague. Often has she endeavoured in secret to tell me how much she dreaded to do any thing offensive to God, and that, not so much for fear of punishment, as of displeasing a kind and holy Father. Nor did the idea seem to occur that such horror of sin was peculiar to herself. It appeared to her that every one who had tasted that the Lord was good, must feel the same loathing and abhorrence of the least approach towards any thing that would not be approved in the sight of infinite purity. But those feelings were in degree peculiar to her if not in kind. Every Christian must feel that sin is an evil and bitter thing, and flee from it. And yet is it not a fact that many of the people of God are too little afraid of offend-

ing their Father? that, instead of striving to see how far they can live from sin, they endeavour to see how near it they can live and keep a good conscience? And making such an effort, do they not often grieve their Father who is in heaven? Many Christians seem disposed to inquire with how little religion they can get to heaven, instead of seeking to see how near sanctification they can attain before they pass into glory. I have heard professors of religion say, 'if we only get to heaven it is all we want.' But I very much doubt whether such professors will obtain even the little they seem to wish. We ought to be striving after high and glorious attainments in holiness, that when we do reach heaven we may take an exalted station in the rank of God's worshippers. There are doubtless degrees of happiness in heaven, and he who is the most holy here, will be the most happy there. And if so, there is an overpowering motive to excite the most intense desires for advancement in divine life, beyond the mere wish to reach the kingdom of God. The point of holiness which we reach here, may be the point from which we shall start there. And though we shall be perfectly happy in the enjoyment of God to all eternity,

and shall be making rapid progress forever and ever in the knowledge and glory of Him who will be the study of all the hosts of heaven, we shall never reach the standard of holiness and happiness which those have gained, who have gone before us in grace on earth, and of consequence have taken the start of us in glory. We may rise, but they will rise as rapidly, and while the ages of eternity fly, there will be the same undiminished distance between us and them.

“But Elizabeth sought holiness for its own sake. She loved it as the loveliest object in the universe, and most worthy of the attention of the immortal soul. Hungering and thirsting after righteousness, she sought to be filled with all the fulness of God. And of his fulness she did receive ‘grace for grace.’ Every day witnessed some new triumph over the remaining corruptions of the heart. Every day witnessed some new discovery in the character of God and of her own soul. She ‘grew in grace and in the favour of God,’ and gave evidence to all who knew her well, that she was ripening rapidly for some high service, either here or where the saints serve day and night.”

## CHAPTER IX.

## ELIZABETH'S SICKNESS AND DEATH.

THE narrative continues: "On the thirty-first day of July, 1834, she gave birth to her first born and only child. This event had been anticipated with more than usual solicitude. She had told me repeatedly that she wished to be ready to leave me and the little one behind, as she thought it so probable that at that time she might be called away. Such an anticipation may not be uncommon, but with her it appeared reasonable that she should be prepared to meet the event if it should in truth occur. And the conviction of the danger through which she was soon to pass, was the exciting motive 'to set her house in order.'

"But when the crisis was past, and we were permitted to embrace a son, the feelings of anxiety which had for many weeks possessed our hearts, gave place to those of devout and high-wrought joy. We mutually consecrated the child to the service of God, and made a



renewed dedication of ourselves to Him who gave himself for us.

“For two or three days there were no symptoms that excited apprehensions in her case. She was rapidly gaining strength, and in the prospect of returning health she was unusually cheerful and happy. But on the morning of the fourth day it was evident that a *fever*, so fearful in such cases, had fastened upon her. Yet we could not but hope that it would yield to skilful treatment, and every effort to arrest its progress was made that the best counsel could suggest. But the hand of the destroyer was at work. Death had selected a shining victim, and was not to be foiled of his prey. We were not however seriously alarmed until the eighth day, when her physicians informed us that it was not probable she would live twenty-four hours. It was left to me to communicate the fact to her. Sitting by her bedside, with no one in the room, I took her hand in mine, and she inquired, ‘What do they think of me this morning?’ ‘They think,’ said I, ‘that you cannot live beyond to-morrow.’ ‘Indeed,’ said she; ‘well, I did not think it was quite so near; will you pray, my dear?’



There was no more agitation perceptible than if I had announced to her the most ordinary fact. I have no idea that her heart beat quicker, than before she was told that in twenty-four hours she would in all probability be in eternity.

“My own feelings would not permit me to comply with her request, and immediately folding her hands upon her breast, in a firm and audible voice she offered one of the most fervent, comprehensive and importunate supplications to which I have ever listened.

“She prayed for herself—for dying grace; that she might glorify God by leaving a testimony of the power of religion to sustain the believer in the last great struggle. But her petitions for herself were few.

“She prayed for me—that my health might be restored, and that I might live to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ to a perishing world; that I might be a man of God—of faith, of holiness—and that my labours might be blessed to the conversion of many souls. She commended me to God in prospect of bereavement, and, with earnestness that no language can describe, she prayed that God would com-

fort me in my solitude, and pour joy into my bruised heart.

“She prayed for her child—and Oh! what a prayer was that! She gave him to God. She implored Him to spare its life, and preserve it from the dangers of childhood, the temptations of youth, and the snares of a seductive world. She asked God to train that child for his service, and to prepare it for distinguished usefulness; and (if it pleased Him) to qualify it for preaching the everlasting gospel to dying men.

“She prayed for her parents. They had just arrived, having heard that she was considered in danger. She prayed that they might be supported by Divine grace in the hour of their affliction, and be resigned to the will of Him who was calling them for the fourth time to weep over a dying child. Especially did she pray for her father, who she feared was still ‘without God and having no hope in the world.’ As if she could take no denial, she urged a dying petition that God would prepare him for usefulness and glory.

“And then she remembered many of her friends, whom it is not proper here to name,

and with all the calmness of her morning or evening devotions, her voice never faltering, she continued to pray till, from exhaustion, being now very weak, she was compelled to pause.

“We then conversed on those subjects which it was necessary for us to attend to in view of her sudden departure, and from that hour she considered the whole work as done.

“Elizabeth had always expressed to me a strong desire that she might enjoy the exercise of her reason unimpaired when she came to die. Her desire was to be able to honour Christ by dying joyfully in Him. This wish was kindly indulged. Not a cloud for a moment obscured her mind. She rejoiced continually in the clear sunlight of the Divine countenance, and triumphed the more as she drew near the borders of the grave. She continued to converse with cheerfulness and *composure* that astonished those who knew the natural ardour of her character. To us it appeared probable that the closing scene of such a life as hers would be marked by some exalted views of Christ and his glory that would fill her with rapture, and call forth expressions of ecstatic joy. But it

was the calmness of her departure, and the strong confidence in her Saviour, that filled us with so much delight in the midst of our grief.

“ She said, ‘ Does the child fear to go to the home of the father it loves ? and shall I fear to go to my Father in heaven ? No, I do not, I cannot fear to die.’

“ Said I to her, ‘ And what shall I do, Elizabeth, when you are gone ?’ ‘ Preach the blessed gospel,’ said she, and repeated it, ‘ preach the blessed gospel.’

“ Those words were uttered with a tongue stiffening in death, but they were heard, and have never ceased to ring in my ears from that night to this present hour. I have tried to obey the dying command of my wife, and the ascending command of my Saviour, ‘ Preach the gospel.’ And often in the midst of arduous labours, with feeble health, I have been ready to yield to discouragements, and retire from the field. But those words, those dying words, have come to me from one who being dead yet speaketh, and have stirred me to fresh exertions in the great work of beseeching men to be reconciled to God. In the midst of appeals to dying men to turn from their evil ways and

live, when I have felt that I had exhausted every argument, and had spent all my strength, those words, those dying words have come upon the ear of my soul with tremendous power, and have urged me to still more earnest efforts to save them who are ready to perish. But I am wandering from the narrative.

“ She continued to converse with perfect cheerfulness as long as her powers of articulation remained, and endeavoured to employ her latest breath in speaking of Jesus, who was now more than ever precious to her soul.

“ As I raised her up in the bed when she was so far gone that it was a matter of doubt whether or not she was conscious of what was transpiring, I said to her, ‘ Do you know whose arms are around you ?’

“ ‘ Yes,’ said she, ‘ and the next will be my Saviour’s.’

“ These were about the last words she uttered with sufficient distinctness to be understood, though she lived for some hours afterwards. But while her tongue refused its office, her countenance spoke with seraphic eloquence, and told of the peace and joy and glory that reigned in her heart. For several successive hours to-

ward the closing scene, when she could not speak, her face was lighted up with smiles more radiant than in the sunny days of health. A stranger entering the dying chamber would have supposed that she who lay there was laughing in the fulness of a glad heart, and could scarcely have been persuaded that she was sinking into the arms of death. But surrounded with every conceivable source of happiness here, and with all the ties that bind to life drawn closely about the heart, she welcomed death with joy, that none who saw her were able to comprehend. There was something *unearthly* in it. Perhaps when we have dying grace given us, we may understand and feel the believer's dying joy.

“Now, she was *beautiful* beyond description. Her cheeks, flushed with the raging fever, bore the high colour of perfect health; her long black hair curled with the dampness of death and hung in glossy ringlets upon her snowy neck, while smiles of radiant loveliness played unceasingly upon her sweet face. She looked more like an angel ready to wing her way to the bosom of God, than a dying creature soon to be the tenant of a tomb.

“ Thus she died. She died as she lived, cheerful, happy, smiling, joyful—a death well fitting such a life.

“ If I have omitted in this rapid sketch of her sickness and death any incidents that should be recorded, you will find them in Pollock’s description of a similar scene. Had the poet been present, he could not have given a description more true to the case before us.”

The following is the passage referred to :

“ Our sighs were numerous, and profuse our tears ;  
 For she we lost was lovely, and we loved  
 Her much ; fresh in our memory, as fresh  
 As yesterday, is yet the day she died.  
 It was a summer’s day, and blithely all  
 The youth of nature leaped beneath the sun,  
 And promised glorious manhood. And our hearts  
 Were glad, and round them danced the lightsome  
 blood,  
 In healthy merriment—when tidings came,  
 A child was born ; and tidings came again  
 That she who gave it birth was sick to death.  
 So swift trod sorrow on the heels of joy !  
 We gathered round her bed, and bent our knees  
 In fervent supplication to the throne  
 Of mercy, and performed our prayers with sighs,  
 Sincere and penitential tears, and looks  
 Of self-abasement ; but we sought to stay  
 An angel on the earth ; a spirit ripe  
 For heaven ; and Mercy, in her love, refused :



Most merciful, as oft when seeming least !  
Most gracious when she seemed the most to frown !  
The room I well remember ; and the bed  
On which she lay ; and all the faces too  
That crowded dark and mournfully around.  
Her father there, and mother bending stood,  
And down their aged cheeks fell many drops  
Of bitterness ; her husband too, was there,  
And brothers, and they wept—her sisters too  
Did weep and sorrow comfortless ; and I  
Too, wept, tho' not to weeping given ; and all  
Within the house was dolorous and sad.  
This I remember well ; but better still,  
I do remember, and will ne'er forget,  
The dying eye—that eye alone was bright,  
And brighter grew as death approached ;  
As I have seen the gentle little flower,  
Look fairest in the silver beam, which fell  
Reflected from the thunder cloud, that soon  
Came down and o'er the desert scattered far  
And wide its loveliness.

She made a sign

To bring her babe—'twas brought, and by her placed.  
She looked upon its face that neither smiled  
Nor wept, nor knew who gazed upon't, and laid  
Her hand upon its little breast, and sought  
For it—with look that seemed to penetrate  
The heavens—unutterable blessings, such  
As God to dying parents only granted  
For infants left behind them in the world.  
And now her eyes grew bright, and brighter still,  
Too bright for ours to look upon, suffused  
With many tears, and closed without a cloud.



They set as sets the morning star, which goes  
Not down behind the darkened west, nor hides  
Obscured among the tempests of the sky,  
But melts away into the light of heaven."

## CHAPTER X.

## THE FUNERAL—THE GRAVE-YARD.

WHEN it was first apparent that Elizabeth could not recover, she expressed a desire long cherished, to die among the scenes of her childhood and youth. This was said with no unwillingness to meet the event where it was the will of God to call her away, and was regarded by her friends as another evidence of the strength of her attachment to the home and friends of her earlier years. It was a beautiful tribute of filial love. But as she knew at once that such a desire could not be gratified, she never alluded to it except to speak of the sweet satisfaction it would give her to be surrounded in that hour by those whom she loved so dearly.

Her remains were removed to her native village, to rest with the graves of her kindred who had been called before her. It was a sad

and solemn procession that left that secluded town on a quiet Sabbath day.

Elizabeth had not resided in W—— quite a year, and of course had not formed a very extensive circle of personal acquaintance. But she and her husband had been cordially received upon their arrival, and the extent of that attachment was not known until the time of trial. In the midst of Elizabeth's sickness she received such abundant and delicate and assiduous proofs of kindness, as will never be forgotten by her surviving friends.

And when it was known that she was dead, and that her remains were to be removed from among them, the whole people gathered about the house of mourning, to testify the respect they bore to her who was gone.

The pastor of the church addressed the assembled multitude in a solemn and interesting exhortation, and led them to the throne of grace in prayer. After these services the friends of the deceased set forth on their melancholy journey with the body of the departed, when to their surprise the assembly joined in the procession, and followed for the distance

of eight or ten miles, as if they could not part with one so universally beloved.

The memory of Elizabeth is still cherished with affection there, and her virtues are often mentioned with a tear.

A messenger had gone before to carry the sad intelligence that Elizabeth was dying, and that she would be brought home when all was over. The arrival of the remains with the friends was therefore hourly expected. The day after leaving W—— they reached the family residence.

It was home—lovely as when a few short months before, a blooming, beautiful bride had left it for a sequestered vale in a stranger land. The waters broke as softly on the banks of that mighty stream. But she, who loved to sport by their side, or on their glossy surface, was not there to revel in the luxury of that rich scene. The same arbour that her own hand had formed and decked with the loveliest flowers—the same arbour in which she had plighted her vows of love, and where she often went to pray—was there; and its flowers were as fresh as when she gathered them on her wedding morn; but the light and joy of that bright and

beautiful spot had set forever. The rock on which she knelt when Jesus came and whispered, "Daughter, go in peace," was there; but the forgiven and rejoicing one was kneeling before the throne.

The bells of the village tolled on the arrival of the procession, and a great multitude assembled to pay the last sad offices to one so suddenly and mysteriously removed. The pastor of the Presbyterian church conducted the solemn services of that day, and on the Sabbath following delivered an appropriate discourse, occasioned by this afflictive event.

On the banks of the Hudson river, sufficiently elevated to command an extensive view of this noble stream, is the grave-yard in which the remains of this departed saint were laid to rest till the resurrection morn. This ground had been selected as a burial place before the revolutionary war, and presents many features of interest to the traveller who finds any pleasure in communing with the dead. Its old tomb-stones, some of them broken (as it is said) by cannon balls—its elevated situation—its wide prospect—render it worth a visit from the stranger who may be wandering in its vi-

cinity. In the northeastern part of the grounds, on the highest part of the hill, he will find a neat marble slab with this inscription :

ELIZABETH THORNTON,

WIFE OF

\* \* \* \* \*

AND DAUGHTER OF

\* \* \* \* \*

DIED AUG. 9TH, 1834,

Aged 22 years.

## NOTE.

THE sketches that follow were originally published in the N. Y. Observer, and many of them have been copied into numerous periodicals in this country and Great Britain. As the writer has received frequent testimonials of their usefulness, he has embodied them here, in the hope that that usefulness may be increased by their circulation in another form.

# THE WANDERER BROUGHT BACK :

OR,

## PARENTAL POWER.

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A SON of pious parents was dedicated from infancy to the service of God in the holy ministry. He was publicly consecrated by baptism; early and faithfully taught the great truths of the Bible; and by all the means that God gives to parents to prepare their children for usefulness here, and glory hereafter, he was trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. His early years gave bright promise, that his future life would yield the fruit of parental watchfulness, and that a father's counsels and a mother's prayers would not be lost on him.

And when he left his father's house to complete his education abroad, there was scarce a fear that the tender-hearted boy (who could not hear of a Saviour and his love without a tear)



would ever become a prodigal. Parental confidence was strong that early instruction would exert its appropriate and restraining power. Christian confidence in God assured those anxious parents that their child would be saved from destruction though he was going into danger. He went abroad. New scenes opened upon him. He was young and ardent, and the gay companions that surrounded him, welcomed him to their circle, as they spread before him the allurements of pleasure and of sin. He struggled, for a while, against the tempter. But one barrier of virtue yielded to the assault, and another, till he fell. The conquest was not easy, but it was at last achieved: and he plunged headlong into the vortex that has swallowed thousands, and from which few have ever been drawn.

There were those who saw his danger, and who desired to deliver him as a bird out of the hand of the fowler. They called him to their company. They set before him the joys of religion, but it had no attractions for his corrupted heart. They spoke of heaven, but his heaven had been already gained. They spoke of hell, but he feared it not; of Jesus and his

dying love, but his eye was tearless, and his heart unmoved. Argument, motives, entreaties were equally vain. The tender-hearted boy was hardened in sin. A coat of mail was on his soul.

“How would your parents feel, should they hear that you had become a Christian?” said a pious friend to him, one day, as they were for a moment together. It was an arrow that found its way through the joints of the harness and reached his heart. The rock was smitten and the waters gushed. The fountains of the great deep were broken up. He fell on his knees and besought his friend to pray. He thought of home; of a parent’s prayers and tears, and as early recollections thronged on his mind, he resolved to return. He did turn to God. He renounced the ways of sin, and consecrated himself to the Saviour; and often have those parents’ hearts been filled with joy, as they have heard the gospel preached by him whom they had in infancy dedicated to the ministry. Every tie *but their love* was sundered, and that tie drew him back. Parental faithfulness saved him in the hour of his danger.

This is not language too strong. God em-

loys means to accomplish his purposes. In this case, he caused the early instructions of those pious parents to spring up like long-buried seed, in the heart of that wayward youth. And such impressions are the most powerful that human instrumentality can make on the soul. The ties that entwine around the heart, and bind it to the scenes of early life, are the strongest that man can throw around his fellow man. And when the sinner leaves the path of virtue and wanders into the ways of the transgressor, those impressions grow fainter and fainter, those ties weaker and weaker; but as long as they are not wholly obliterated or broken, there is hope.

Oh yes! there is hope for the vilest prodigal, who has not yet forgotten his father's counsels and his mother's prayers. He may be a thief, a robber, a murderer; he may be a wild, lawless, reckless rover of the seas; his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him; sailing under the black flag of piracy, he may riot like an incarnate devil, in scenes at whose recital the world turns pale; he may strew the decks of his prize with the mangled corpses of his victims, and dance in

their warm blood ; or slake his foul lust on innocence and beauty that have fallen into a pirate's power ! He may be all this ; he may do all this ; but if that monster, (I will not call him a man,) when the day's work of butchery is over, and he slings himself into his hammock to find repose, then feels the thoughts of home stealing over him ; if the memory of a deserted mother who prayed for him in infancy calls a tear unbidden to his eye "unused to weep," *there is hope* even for him. He is not altogether lost. That thought may be a beacon light in the darkness of his black heart. He is a wanderer on the broad ocean, tossed by the tempests of heaven, and driven by fiercer tempests in his own soul ; but that thought of a mother's prayer and a mother's love, **THAT THOUGHT**, that last expiring ray of hope, may be the polar star that shall lead him back to virtue, home and God.

The return would be more natural than the departure. He would follow the guidance of an impression which, it may be, the Holy Spirit made on his heart when he sat on his father's knee, or bowed by his mother's side to repeat his evening prayer.

Parents ! your power is next to Omnipot-

tent over the children that God has given you. The cords you fasten on their hearts, are the strongest that human power can furnish to hold them back from ruin. Follow them with the ceaseless influence of parental love, from infancy onward to the grave. Make home sweet to the child. Throw around his heart a thousand tender associations that will bind him, as with links of iron, to the home of his childhood; to the parents that nurtured and sheltered him, and wept and prayed for him long ere he knew the meaning of prayers or tears. Impress on his heart your tenderness, your deep anxieties for his everlasting weal; and when he breaks away from your arms, and rushes on in the ways of sin and death, it may be, yes, *it may be*, that he who would trample on a Saviour's blood, and despise the grace of God, and break his laws and reject his proffered love, may pause, before he crushes beneath his feet *his mother's heart*.

## JESUS WEPT.

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THIS is the shortest verse in the Bible. But it relates a wonderful fact; one that fills the heart with melancholy joy—sorrowful gladness; sorrow that such an one as Jesus should find cause to weep; and joy, that he whom we love as our Saviour, was a man of like passions with ourselves.

But it is wonderful! He was the Lord of glory. He was on a throne, high and lifted up. He dwelt in light that no man could approach, and rejoiced continually in the praise of angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim! He was infinitely blessed. His ilimitable mind conceived no bliss superior to that which filled his heart with a boundless ocean of joy. But this blessed Prince, of whose dominion there was no end; whose joy knew no limit or increase; this Jesus, who lay in his Father's bosom and rejoiced before him his chief delight; stands by the grave side in

a little obscure country village, in a miserable, sinful, blighted, wilderness world, and *weeps!* And the sun does not hide its head. The earth does not tremble. The stars do not fall from their spheres. Man is not amazed, while the God-man Christ Jesus stands by the sepulchre of a worm of the dust, and tears of sympathy and sadness, heartfelt, sincere, warm, gushing tears, heavenly, holy, precious tears, flow freely.

Perhaps the weakness of human nature has led me to magnify the interest of that scene. But I scarcely ever read it without mingling tears with him who felt for others' woes. I love to cherish the memory of that tender season. I love to tell the story of Jesus and Lazarus, of Martha and Mary. Perhaps you will be willing to bear with me, while I run over it again.

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Oh that he loved me and my house as he loved that little family in Bethany. Whenever I read the passage that saith "the Son of Man had not where to lay his head," I think of Bethany, and the house of Mary that sheltered the houseless wanderer, and

made for him the only home that the king of heaven had on earth! What a privilege to entertain the Lord of glory! Angels are welcome, but Mary and Martha had the God of angels for their guest. He loved them. He loved them all. Lazarus was like a brother to him; and while Mary washed his feet and Martha ministered to his wants, he talked with Jesus, and mingled the deep feelings of his soul with his Messiah. It must have been a lovely and a loving group. But while Jesus was absent for a little season, Lazarus sickened and died. The sisters thought much of Jesus in those hours of anguish. And when they heard that he was coming, Martha went out to meet him and said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." To this expression of her confidence, she could not refrain from adding, "But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." Here was a faint, glimmering hope that it was not too late yet, for that power to raise, that might have saved.

Jesus saith unto her, "Thy brother shall rise again." But this was not the promise that a sister wanted. And when the Saviour



added, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," she felt that *perhaps* he might *even now* restore her lost brother to her arms. And Mary came with the same words on her lips, and fell down at his feet, and wept there. How the Saviour must have been moved with pity for these lone sisters! Remember that he loved them. He had shared their hospitality, and knew how close were the ties that bound that family circle to each other; and he knew, too, that death had sundered those ties, and made that house a desolation, and crushed those sisters' hearts. And when Jesus saw Mary weeping at his feet, and the Jews around her weeping, "he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." There is something awful in every description of the Saviour's sorrow, which inspiration has given. He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled. And when he asked them where his departed friend was laid, the memory of his love rushed upon him, and his humanity yielded to the emotions of that sad hour. *Jesus wept.* I am glad that Jesus wept. I am glad that he wept at the grave side of a deceased friend. I am glad that he

wept with bereaved relatives, and chided them not when their hearts overflowed with grief, and rivers of water ran down their eyes.

In his sorrow I rejoice, because when I weep, the thought that he was touched with a feeling of my infirmities, brings sweet relief. And when I weep by the grave of the loved and lost, it hallows the tears that fall, to think that the incarnate God once stood over the tomb of a child of clay, and shed such tears as flow only from a sinless heart. And when friendship asks that I would go to the house of mourning and weep with those that weep, I love to think that Jesus would bear me company if he were here; nay, that he is here, and though unseen but by the eye of faith, he is heard to whisper in the ear of the afflicted, "thy brother," thy son, thy daughter, thy husband, thy wife "shall rise again!"

How precious the religion of Jesus! It is suited to the wants of the children of sorrow. "A man of sorrows" gave this blessed comfort to those who drink of the cup that he drinks, and are baptized with his baptism. And how often is it true, that the more sorrow, the

more of this comfort the weeper hath. The broken heart is the mellow soil where the fruit of piety grows luxuriantly, and therefore, blessed are they that mourn.

## “THE SUMMER IS ENDED.”

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INFINITE wisdom fixed the divisions of weeks and months and years, and the changes of the seasons, not merely that summer and winter, seed time and harvest might regularly return, but to mark the progress of time, and remind us that we are passing by successive stages to its close. On the highway to eternity these posts are set up, and as the traveller meets them in his journey, he is silently but clearly informed how far he has gone. The spring time of life is the budding season of infancy, when the opening flower gives promise of the future. Youth is life's summer, when the heart is warm and the sunshine gilds every prospect. The autumn sets in on the man of riper years, who now reaps the fruit of his earlier days. And winter scatters his hoar frost over the heads of the aged, and chills the stream of life.

But the prophet who utters the sad lamentation, “the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved,” employed “the

summer” to express those seasons that are peculiarly favorable to religious improvement ; seasons that might have been enjoyed to the soul’s salvation ; but seasons now gone, and gone never to return ! Such seasons you have enjoyed. Perhaps the present is the summer in your soul’s year of grace. Perhaps it is ended. Let us inquire.

*Youth* is the season of summer for the soul. On the tenderness of the youthful heart, religious truth readily makes impression. In riper years that heart is hardened, and in old age the stone has become adamant, and the adamant, iron. Depravity deepens by years. Like the oak, whose age may be determined by the folds that envelope its centre, the heart of man is encompassed by successive walls of brass, as his years increase. And often they who in childhood and youth were remarkably sensitive to every religious influence, discover in after life, an insensibility that defies impression, and an aversion to every thing good that is difficult to be explained. And of those converted to God, by far the largest portion are brought in while young ; a few in the midst of manhood ; and only here and there one in old age. Nay, if

an aged sinner is subdued at the foot of the cross, he is looked upon as a moral phenomenon, and his case is mentioned with astonishment even by those who believe that all things are possible with God. This fact proves clearly that the conviction is general and well grounded, that the farther you pass from the season of youth without religion the darker your prospects for eternity. Your summer is therefore ended, or rapidly drawing to a close.

*Seasons of revival* are summer seasons. It is easier to fall in with the current and be borne along, than to stand out and resist. And when the tide seems to set in favor of the religion of Christ, many impediments in the sinner's way are instantly removed. His companions are seeking the Saviour; they would take him by the hand and lead him to Jesus; the opposition of the world is in some degree overpowered, and thus there are invitations where at other times there would be repulses; the general seriousness pervading the community encourages solemn thoughts; not to say that the Holy Spirit then hovers near with peculiar longings to bless. Perhaps the reader remembers the season of revival when all these circumstances

conspired to lead him to an immediate concern for his soul's salvation. That was a summer season. Its warm sun shed genial rays on his heart, but it is ended. The Spirit of the Lord has departed, and moral desolation reigns where but a few months or years ago, was felt the power of the Holy Ghost. No summer showers descend. No dew waters the tender herb. The heavens are as brass, and the earth as powder. The revival is changed for deep spiritual declension. Friends around are not concerned. Christians are in a measure indifferent. The opposition of the ungodly has revived. Difficulties thicken in the sinner's path. His case is more dangerous and desperate. His summer is perhaps forever ended.

The season of *personal conviction* of sin was *the* summer in the soul's history. It may have been in the midst of a general revival or not. But such hours are probably within the memory of every individual who has lived long under the power of the gospel. There have been times, or there has been a time when you have felt that it was an evil and a bitter thing to depart from the living God ; when your conscience upbraided you with manifold sins ; when

your guilt and danger were revealed with terrible distinctness, and you trembled under the awful display of justice threatening your soul. Then the Spirit of God was striving with your heart. Then the arms of the Savior were ready to embrace you; your own heart was half-persuaded to yield to the struggle and submit; and angels in heaven were ready and waiting to strike a note of joy over another sinner saved from hell by grace divine. You have not forgotten that hour. It will cling to your heart forever. It will hold on in life, and in the dying agony, and at the judgment seat of Christ, and in eternity! You will remember it as the *summer* hour of your immortal existence. You will look back to it, if you finally perish, with bitter but vain remorse, as you forever mourn that *that* summer was ended and your soul was not saved.

We cannot speak with certainty, and it is well we cannot, of any who have thus passed such precious seasons as these. But the case is dark of those who have spent the summer season of youth and have not found a Saviour. The precious promises addressed so frequently to the young are not made to the aged. Ten-



derness of conscience has given place to callous insensibility. The love of sin has strengthened, and the hatred of God has kept pace. Attachment to this world has grown stronger and stronger, and the grasp of the sinner tightens, as his hold on life relaxes by the approach of death. He may by a miracle of grace be plucked from the jaws of death and be saved. But there is scarcely hope in his case.

The case is very dark of those who have passed the summer season of *revival* and have *not* been awakened. Such cases are not rare. We have seen sinners in the midst of glorious outpourings of the Spirit, as unconscious, apparently, of the work around them, as if having eyes they saw not, and having ears they heard not. We have seen stout-hearted sinners smitten to the dust by the power of the Holy Ghost, as when a whirlwind sweeps through a forest and prostrates the mighty oaks; and in the midst of the commotion some as unmoved as the mountain rock. But the summer is ended, and dark is the case of those who disbelieve where the mightiest of a Saviour's works are done.

Darker still is the case of those who have grieved the Spirit from their hearts. They still live, and in the enjoyment of the means of grace. But they stand like the tree that the lightning of heaven has scathed, and left leafless and branchless. It stands, but no verdure clothes it in the spring; no fruit grows on it thenceforth for ever. The Spirit that would convert and save, if despised and rejected may seal the sinner to undying wo. He may hear the gospel, but it falls on his ear as an idle tale; he may hear of heaven, but for him it hath no joys; of hell, but for him it hath no fears. A leaden stupidity has settled on his soul, and he may never wake till the ear of death listens to the angel's trump.

We have seen a hoary headed veteran in the armies of sin; his companions had fallen like autumn leaves around him, till he stood alone. The blossoms of eternity began to open on his head; the trembling knee, the failing eye, the broken voice gave signs of approaching death. He sat under the tenderest exhibitions of truth; listened to the most stirring appeals of the gospel; heard the roar of the ocean of eternity, on whose shore he stood; but

neither love nor fear could rouse him. His summer was ended, and he perished in his sin.

We have seen a sinner stretched on a dying bed. In life and health he had enjoyed the rich means of grace, but had slighted them all. Waiting for a convenient season, suffering the summer of his life to pass, the cold winter of death was now on him, and he was unprepared to die. Oh! what horror hangs around that scene!

“ In that dread moment, how the frantic soul  
Raves round the walls of its clay tenement,  
Runs to each avenue and shrieks for help,  
But shrieks in vain.”

Slowly but surely the work of death goes on. The prayers of love cannot stay the destroyer's arm; the tears of pity cannot move the compassion of death. The sinner gasps and dies. His summer was ended, and his soul was not saved. Had he improved the golden moments of life and health, he might have been garnered in heaven when the harvest is gathered. But now it is too late, *too late!*

Eternity opens. In the world of despair, a lost spirit lifts up his voice and cries for help. The past throngs on his mind. Oh, that those

summer days would return, those precious hours of youth ; those Sabbaths when the gospel of Jesus fell like the music of heaven on the ear ; those revival seasons when the Spirit of God came down in a rain of mercy ; those hours of deep conviction when the resolution was half-formed to repent and believe. Oh ! for one moment of summer time again ! But regret is unavailing. The harvest is past. The summer is ended. The soul is lost.

## IS IT WELL WITH THEE ?

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THE story of the Shunamite mother is one of tender interest. In the simple language of Scripture the tale is told with more power than the fancy of the poet has ever given it, and no one can read it without being moved with sympathy for the bereaved, and admiration of the sweet submission with which she bowed to the heavy blow. God had given her a son,—an only begotten, and well beloved son,—and it was not strange that a mother's heart should entwine itself most tenderly around him, and all her hopes of earthly happiness be centered in her darling boy. In his infancy she had watched him with a mother's love, and now, he was just blooming in the beauty of childhood, and beginning to repay the debt, which to none but to a mother is due.

“And it fell on a day that he went out to his father, to the reapers. And he said unto his father, My head! my head! And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother. And when

he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, *he sat on her knees* till noon, and then died. And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out."

In this hour of her terrible affliction, it was natural that she should fly to the man of God, for counsel and comfort. He had promised her this child from God, and the trembling hope doubtless lingered around her heart, that He, who had given her the child, could give him back. He saw her coming, and sending his servant, asked her, "Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child?" and she answered, "It is well." Was it well with thee, O mother! when thy first born, thine only child, thy bright and beautiful boy, was cut down like a morning flower? Was it well with thee, when the *only* flower that ever blossomed in thy bower, was withered, and the light of thy happy home had gone out in darkness;—when the merry laugh of that loved child would no more cheer thy heart, nor his opening beauty gladden thine eye? Was it well with thee, fond mother, when all thy earthly hopes were blasted, and

the child of thy bosom was cold in the arms of death ?

Yes, it was well ! And severe as she must have felt the blow to be, with the meekness of pious resignation to the holy will of the Lord, she acquiesced in the dispensation, though it made her house desolate, and her heart a desert.

This is a profitable question to put to any and every one, at all times, and one, on the answer of which, the most tremendous consequences may depend. In affliction, the inquiry may appear more appropriate, as it was originally addressed to one in the depths of distress. But it is not to be confined to those who mourn. It is often better with those who weep, than with those who rejoice. "Blessed are they that mourn ; for they shall be comforted." Those who are called to weep over the loss of those they love, and those who weep on account of sin, have found that it was *well* for them to be in sorrow. In such times the Comforter has come, and dried up their tears, and given them beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning. Their sorrow has been succeeded by that peace that passeth all understand-

ing, and joy that the world knoweth not of. And when the Lord, by the mouth of his servant, has inquired, "Is it well with thee?" the ready reply has been, "It is well."

The question ought rather to be put as a test of character. It is well with those, and those only, who have found peace in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. With them it is well under all the vicissitudes of life; in the trying hour of death, and in the eternal world. Put the question to the believer, and hear his answer. Perhaps the world calls him poor. He has struggled all his days against the current of adversity, but is still poor. And what is more, he expects never to be otherwise than poor. But he never murmurs. He feels that it is well with him, and better than it was with his Master when he dwelt among men.

Perhaps some sudden change of circumstances has swept away his property, and reduced him from affluence to poverty. He feels his loss more keenly than he would have felt poverty, had he never been rich. But he knows that he has not lost his all. He has an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved eternal in the



heavens. Thither he turns his eye when this world perishes with the using, and as the last vestige of his fortune passes from his hands, he cries, "It is well."

Death comes to his fireside and takes away the joy of his heart, the delight of his eyes, the comfort of his life. He loves. He weeps. He feels the bereavement, but in the exercise of quiet resignation to His will who strikes the blow, he finds grace to say, "It is well." So when he comes to lie down on a death-bed himself, he would love to live and rejoice in the joy of those who now weep around him. But he knows that to die is gain,—to depart and be with Christ is far better,—and though the pains of death are terrible, and the ties that bind to life are strong, still, as he feels his heart-strings breaking he can say with truth, "It is well." And, oh! is it not well with him when eternity opens on his soul; when he quits this vale of tears; this land of sorrow, and pain, and death, and enters the gates of heaven? As he treads the golden streets of the new Jerusalem, as he casts his crown at the foot of the eternal throne, as he sits down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God,

as he looks upward to the face of the Lamb, and meets his smile of transporting love, will he not exclaim, in the fulness of his satisfied soul, "It is well!"

Thus the believer answers this question. What saith the sinner? When afflictions assail him, he has not the strong consolation of those who have fled for a refuge to the hope set before them in the gospel. He mourns as those who have no hope. When his property is stripped from him, he murmurs at his lot. When those he loves are removed by death from his arms, his heart rises in rebellion at the dealings of God. When he comes to lie down to die himself, he may cry *Peace, peace*, to his soul, but his troubled conscience, the voice of God, assures him there is no peace. It is not well with the sinner in life—nor in death. In that awful hour, when, of all other hours, he needs the Christian's stay, he is torn by the torments of his own bosom, and harrowed by the awful forebodings of the future. But he must die. Eternity opens on his soul. Hell throws wide its gates. He plunges into its flames. He feels the gnawing of the worm that never dies; the fire that is never quenched

kindles upon him, and burns with its fiercest flame. That is his eternal couch. Ages will roll along, but no pang of hell will die, no ray of hope give sweet relief, no drop of water fall on his parched tongue.

Reader ! perhaps that lost soul is thine. Is it well with thee ? If not now, it may not be in death or in eternity. It will not be, unless, before the evil day overtakes thee, thou art persuaded to fly unto Jesus Christ, to make him thy friend. Then, it shall be well with thee in sickness and in health, in life and in death,—and well with thee to all eternity.

## PRAYER AT THE MAST-HEAD.

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A SAILOR, recently returned from a whaling voyage, in conversation with a pious friend, spoke of the enjoyment which he had in prayer while afar on the deep. "But," inquired his friend, "in the midst of the confusion on ship-board, where could you find a place to pray?" "Oh," said he, "I always went to the mast-head." I have heard of *closets* in various places, but never in one more peculiar than this. Peter went upon the house-top to pray. Our blessed Lord prayed upon the mountain-top. Others have sought the shades of the forest. I remember hearing of a youth who came home from the camp during the last war, and his pious mother asked him, "Where, John, could you find a place to pray?" He answered, "Where there is a heart to pray, mother, it is easy to find a place."

And yet the sailor's closet was a favored spot. The ear of man could not hear him as he cried mightily unto God. The gales that

wasted his ship on its voyage, would bear his petitions upward toward the throne. "The voice of many waters" would be the music of his sanctuary, and the angels that had charge concerning him, would listen to the swelling song. As he lifted up his heart and his voice in prayer, he was surrounded with the majesty and glory of his Maker. The "deep, deep sea" spread its illimitable expanse around him. The heavens, spread out like the curtains of Jehovah's chamber, and the stars, like the jewels that adorn His crown, hung over him as he climbed the giddy mast, and bowed down to pray. Perhaps he had little imagination, and entered not into the grandeur of the scene around him. But he had a soul; a soul that felt the power of God; that loved high and holy communion with the Father of spirits, and while others below were rioting in the mirth of a sailor's jovial life, his joy was literally to rise above the world and find intercourse with heaven.

What peace must have filled that sailor's heart! The storms might "rudely toss his foundering bark," but they could not shake his confidence in God. The ocean might yawn

beneath him to swallow him in its fathomless depth; but he was sheltered in the bosom of his Father's love. The frail bark might be driven at the mercy of the winds, or be dashed on the rocks, or stranded on the shore, but he had a hope that was an ANCHOR to the soul, both sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil. Through the thickest darkness that enveloped him, the "star of Bethlehem" shed its celestial loveliness over his path in the trackless deep, and guided him onward and upward to the haven of his eternal rest. Thitherward from the mast-head he strained his eye, and true as the needle to the pole, he pursued his way; when tempted he sought the mast-head to pray; when in despondency, at the mast-head he found joy; when the taunts of his profane companions filled his ear with pain and his soul with grief, he fled to the mast-head, and poured out the desires of his heart, into the ear of Him who hears the humblest suppliants that cry.

I love to think of this sailor. I wish I knew him, and could kneel down with him and hear him converse with God. How few would be as faithful as he! How many would

neglect their closet and seldom pray in secret, unless they could have a more safe retreat ; a more sacred chamber than the mast of a wave-rocked whaler. But He, “ who when here a sailor’s pillow pressed,” walks now on the mighty deep, and when the tempest-tossed mariner cries, He answers, “ It is I, be not afraid.”

## HOW DID HE DIE ?

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THIS question is often asked concerning the dead. If he was calm and resigned in the departing hour, mourning friends are comforted with a good hope that he has gone to heaven. But I would rather ask, How did he live ? The answer to this question would furnish far better evidence of the real state of his soul than all the death-bed experience he could give.

A dying-bed is a poor place to prepare to die. The body then must engross the thoughts. Pain, or stupidity, or sympathy with afflicted friends may prevent all consideration of the state of the soul. And this very indifference to death which results from the failure, perhaps, of the faculties, or the benumbing effects of disease, is construed by surrounding friends into a quiet yielding of the spirit into the hands of him who gave it. I once asked a dying man if he was willing to die ? Yes, he said, *I must die*. He was perfectly quiet in



view of death, and many thought he was prepared ; but my question drew from him the alarming fact that he was yielding as to a stern necessity, which he would be glad to escape if he could. He died, and gave no other evidence of preparation than is found in unmoved submission to inevitable fate.

Tell me that a man has lived the life of the righteous, that he has spent the latter years of his pilgrimage on earth in promoting God's glory, and the good of his fellow men ; that he has witnessed a good profession before the world, and demonstrated by his life the sincerity of his faith, and I will trust that man to go into eternity. He may be in darkness when death comes. His hope may waver. Disease may disorder his mind, and he may be left to despair of salvation, so that afflicted friends shall be distressed with the thought that he will leave no dying evidence of preparation to die. But if he lived a Christian, he will die a Christian, and go to heaven a Christian. The sun may go down behind a dark and threatening cloud, but it sets to rise with unclouded brightness. The soul may be in darkness as it

leaves this world—but it may set in clouds, and rise in the brightness of God's countenance in a better world than this. Let me die the death of the righteous, but rather, Oh, much rather, let me live his life.

## IS THAT IT ?

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I WAS requested to call upon a young lady who was supposed to be on her death-bed. She had been gradually sinking under the ravages of consumption, and now, abandoned as hopeless by her physicians, she was looking forward to a lingering but certain death. Just blooming into womanhood, though wasted and wan, the traces of youthful beauty yet lingered, and the lines of anxious thought that marked her expressive face drew deeply upon the sympathies of the heart. In health, a light-hearted girl, she had thought little of eternity, and in the follies of youth had banished the subject of religion from her mind. But arrested by the strong hand of disease, and roused to the discovery that *she must die*, she began to examine her prospects for another world ; and the truth forced itself upon her, that she had periled her soul for the vanities of time. Death was near, but no hope cheered the heart. And looking still farther, she saw that she was a

sinner in the sight of God, and needed pardon and sanctification or she could not be saved. The Holy Spirit opened the eyes of her understanding to see the evil nature and the fatal results of sin, and its present and future effects upon her own soul. The more she searched her heart, the more aggravated and cruel and wicked did sin appear, till in bitterness she mourned and wept that she had offended a holy God, and slighted the love of a kind Redeemer. Such was the state of her mind when I called to see her.

Sitting by her bedside, I inquired whether she considered her situation as dangerous. "I shall not recover," said she, "I have long given up all thought of ever being well again." Said I, "Have you any fears in regard to the state of your immortal soul when you die?" She replied that the terrors of eternity, though she knew what they were, had but little effect on her mind. "But," I inquired again, "do you not *feel* that you are a great sinner before God?" Bursting into an agony of tears, and raising her attenuated hands, she cried, "Oh! yes, that is all that pains me. Oh, I have been *such* a sinner, and God has been so good to me

—Christ so good, and I have sinned so much !” She continued to weep long and bitterly, till I feared that in her weakness she might suffer from its effects. Having succeeded in calming the violence of her grief, I spoke of the nature of sin—how it was opposed to the character and law of God, and must be repented of and forsaken, before He could have mercy. All this she seemed to feel, and deeply, giving evidence that her sorrow was of that godly sort that needeth not to be repented of. Being satisfied that she was sincerely penitent for sin, I spoke of the atonement of Christ—its necessity and nature and terms, and asked her if she could see in that plan to save, that there was *room* for her. “No, not for me—I am such a sinner,” she said, and the fresh torrents of tears attested the sincerity of her confession. Then I told her of the love of Jesus—of his infinite willingness to save even the chief of sinners; and pointing to Calvary, I besought her by the dying compassion of the Son of God, to believe in his name. But still she refused to trust herself in his hands. Making one more effort, said I, “Perhaps you do not understand precisely what you are to believe. You say that

you think Christ is willing to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God, repenting of their sins. You say that you repent. Now, trusting with all your heart in the promises which he has made, believe that he is willing to save *you*."

A smile as from heaven played on her pale cheek, as she exclaimed, "Is that it?" and trusting in Christ, she found joy. Lingered for many weeks afterwards, her faith never wavered; her views of divine things grew brighter and brighter; her confidence in God deeper and stronger; and as death approached she welcomed his coming as of a friend. The clear exercise of every faculty of her mind was graciously continued to the last, and her latest breath was spent in urging her friends to come to Christ. It was good to be there by her bedside, and hear her speak of heaven, and her Saviour, and her desire to "sleep on his breast and wake in his arms."

In the twilight of a summer Sabbath I was sitting by her, with no thought of her immediate dissolution, but with her large black eyes looking full upon me, she had ceased to breathe.

Some will read this short sketch and skip

the reflections that follow. Those who read the reflections may profit by the sketch. It teaches that faith in Christ is very simple—so simple that many make a fatal mistake on the subject. You may be one of the many. Like this young lady, you may long have mourned in secret over sin, and may now be ready to despair. But you can believe that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; that he died on the cross, a witness of his love for ruined man. Casting your eye thitherward, you can see him bleeding, dying for the sins of the world. You can hear him saying, “Whoso cometh unto me, I will in nowise cast out.” Now faith is believing and loving to believe those promises—not as made in general to a world, but as addressed *to you*. Believe that Christ died with reference to *your* case, that he bore *your* sins in his body on the tree, that he cast an eye of pity on *you* when he hung on Calvary. Such an appropriation of Christ’s sacrifice will secure perfect peace to your troubled soul. You may rest with instant and everlasting confidence on him, and be safe.

## A FUNERAL SERMON.

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HERE is a beautiful text for a funeral discourse. I do not remember that I ever saw or heard it improved for such a purpose, but it strikes me as full of interest and instruction.

Jeremiah xxii. 10. "Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep sore for him that goeth away; for he shall return no more, nor see his native country."

In this passage the prophet makes allusion to the death of the pious king Josiah, and the departure of his son Shallum into Egypt; and exhorts the people to dry up the tears they were shedding over the grave of the father, and to weep on account of the captivity of the son. The father was a man of God, and had died in peace, and gone to his reward. The son was a base usurper of the throne that belonged to his elder brother, and, for his sins, had been carried away captive by his enemies.

The doctrine taught is, that *departed saints*



*are not so much to be lamented as the apostacy of living sinners.*

We live in a vale of tears. Who ever lived and never wept? It is not wrong to weep. Jesus wept—wept over the dead, a departed saint. It is Christ-like to weep. But the heart is sometimes so swallowed up in grief, that a single object of distress engages all the sympathies, to the exclusion of others that have stronger claims. We may be weeping sometimes for the dead, when we should be weeping for the living.

Why should we “*weep not for the dead?*”  
Because,

1. Tears will not lighten grief. It is thought that a burdened heart finds relief when the fountains of the great deep are broken up, and the streams of sorrow flow freely. But such relief is only momentary. The current must be stopped, and the swelling torrent will struggle to break loose again. To the most of those who weep, tears are the *food* of grief. So long as they give way to the power of their feelings, and indulge in this outward demonstration of immoderate grief, it is almost useless to offer consolation. Counsel, or reproof,

or sympathy is alike unheeded. They *will* mourn, and like Rachel they *refuse* to be comforted. Before you can do them good, they must calm their feelings, dry their tears, and soberly consider the motives you wish to urge. Then you may pour the oil of joy into the wounded heart, and give them a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Then the truth, that before was drowned in floods of tears, finds its way to the soul.

But,

2. The pious dead are so much blessed in their death, that our mourning ought to be changed into joy. To die is gain. They gain in *knowledge*, and in *power*, and in *holiness*, and in *happiness*. What more do they, can they desire? What else could we ask for them? We would not call them back and deprive them of the glorious inheritance on which they have entered. Have you lost a beloved child? You would not mourn if that child were, here on earth, made perfectly holy and happy, and clothed with honors, and power, and wealth beyond your highest thought. And if God has called your child out of a world of sin and misery, and raised it to a throne at his right

hand, and put on its head a crown of glory, and a harp of gold in its hand, what mean you to weep and break your hearts as if some evil had befallen your loved one. "Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord;" and if they are blessed, let us not weep for them. Our tears are witnesses against us, that, in our *selfishness*, we prefer to have those we love near us, though they *gain* by being removed.

And,

3. God's will is done. That is reason enough to quiet the murmurs of any one but an Atheist. "The Lord God, Omnipotent, reigneth," and, let Him do what he will, his creatures ought to say Amen! Hallelujah! But because He has his way, and we cannot have our own, we are wont to repine. He has told us that "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than ours," and yet we are disposed to complain, as if we were wiser than God. Why, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men." It is true that we cannot now understand all the purposes of God, that are answered by our affliction. This ignorance is the severest part of the chastisement. Could we see all the objects that are

accomplished by the dispensations of Providence under which we mourn,—how the glory of God is immediately and remotely promoted,—how the happiness of the departed is infinitely augmented,—how our own sanctification is to be advanced,—how the salvation of others is perhaps to be secured, we would call on our soul and all that is within us to bless the name of the Lord. But God's purposes will be accomplished though we may not know how. This we believe, and our *faith* ought to satisfy us as perfectly as *sight*. Jesus said unto Thomas, “because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed : blessed are they that *have not seen* and yet *have believed*.”

4. We shall meet our friends so soon again, it is hardly worth while to weep. Paul's friends on parting with him, fell on his neck and wept sore, “sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more.” But when the Saviour bade his friends farewell, a dying farewell, he forbade them to weep. “Let not your heart be troubled. I will come again and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also.” Our departed friend has gone before us, but we shall soon follow.

We might weep that we cannot bear him company, but not that he is called first. "The night" through which "weeping endureth" is short, "but joy cometh in the morning."

But why "*weep sore for him that goeth away?*"

1. Those who depart from God are in awful danger. Sin is a state of separation from God. All sinners are in danger of hell. The wrath of God abideth on them. Their feet stand on slippery places. Fiery billows roll below. Any moment they may fall into the angry flood. They may be dashed on the rocks of eternal damnation! If your child were hanging over a horrid precipice, and liable to fall into instant destruction, your agony would be inexpressible. All your children, all your friends, may this moment be suspended by the brittle thread of life, over the bottomless pit. The author of our text saw his friends in this danger, and in the anguish of his soul, he cried, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night." David looked on his, and said, "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes."

2. Our tears may move them to think of a return. We are creatures of sympathy. Sinners feel. Seeing our distress, they might inquire the cause, and learning it, a natural reflection would be, "If others weep for me, I ought to weep for myself." But if the hard-hearted sinner can say, "No man careth for my soul," he will not be apt to care for it himself. And the more you feel for wandering prodigals, the more you will labour to bring them back to God. Your tears and prayers and labours may prevail. Then, though one child, or one friend be now a corpse in your dwelling, you may rejoice over another, saying, "This my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found."

3. Our separation from impenitent friends may be eternal. Between us and them now there is a great gulf; there may be a greater, an impassable one hereafter.

Oh there 'll be mourning, mourning,  
At the judgment seat of Christ;  
Parents and children there must part,  
Must part, to meet no more.

Tears for them now, may save tears for them then.

Finally, so Christ said to those who wept for him when he was about to die. Turning and beholding the heart-broken women that followed him, he said, “Daughters of Jerusalem! *weep not for me*, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.” He wept over a world in sin. “Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him, but weep sore for him that goeth away.”

## MEMENTO MORI.

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AN ancient monarch directed one of his servants to knock each morning at the door of his bed-chamber and remind him that *he must die*. There was beauty and propriety in the admonition. It is well that monarchs should be reminded of their mortality, but monarchs are not more mortal than their subjects. All men are mortal, though they may "think all men mortal but themselves."

God knows how apt we are to forget that we are dying creatures, and in his goodness warns us often that we are on the verge of the grave. His word is full of warning. Almost every page is marked with some special truth to teach us that we must die. His providence is full of warning. Death knocks at our neighbor's door to remind us that he will soon knock at ours. God's works are full of warning. Nature is living evidence that there is an end to all things here. The flower that yesterday bloomed in beauty, and shed its fra-



grance on the balmy air, to-day is withered. The grass that to-day is, to-morrow falls before the mower's scythe. The forest now is clothed in the deep verdure of summer, but soon will pass "into the sere and yellow leaf" of autumn. Those leaves will fall, and the forest itself will bow before the axe of the woodman or the breath of the Almighty.

Man dies. And as with man, so with his works. I was musing in the grave-yard of an old country church, which was crumbling under the slow, but sure assaults of time. There were the tombstones that affection had set up, to tell the story of her grief to future generations. But the monuments of the departed, were themselves decaying. And as if time was jealous of these attempts to preserve the memory of those with whom time was no longer, his envious tooth had often eaten out the record of the name, and left the broken epitaph, "Sacred to the memory of ——," but who was to be remembered I could not tell. Here the date was gone, and I could only judge from the moss-covered stone how long it had stood. Here the tablet was broken, either by violence, or by the gentle but the mighty

power of age. Over one grave, whose recently erected slab was the evidence that in that tomb lay one who was early dead, a little rose-bush struggled for life; a solitary bud gave promise of an opening flower, but I dared not believe, with that slab before me, that the bud would ever bloom. At the foot of another grave, in whose bosom was a youth of seventeen summers, some kind hand, perhaps a surviving brother's, had planted a willow—but it would not live in the midst of so much death. Its few pendent limbs were withered, and though the willow was young, it was dead.

Many of the stones cried out, and one of them said, in tones not to be unheard :

“ Prepare to meet thy God.”

Another spoke more softly, but not less eloquently, and said :

“ Thou, too, must die.”

From some were heard the sweet notes of consolation mingling with the sighs of affliction, as they whispered :

“ Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are,  
While on his breast I lean my head,  
And breathe my life out sweetly there.”

The sleeper in that silent chamber, thought I, now sleeps in Abraham's bosom, or rejoices in the arms of Jesus, while she looks upward to his smiling face and saith, "Lord, it is good to be here."

Many of the inscriptions were borrowed from the hymns with which the children of God are familiar, and I could not but think that here was evidence, both of the beauty and power of the lines, and of the taste of those who had chosen them as the last tribute of affection to the departed. Some were awkwardly engraved, but as I spelled them out, word by word, I read them with as pure a relish as if their beauties had never met my eye before. With such pleasure, mournful but sweet, I read these lines :

"Farewell, dear friends, a short farewell,  
Till we shall meet again above,  
In the sweet groves where pleasures dwell,  
And trees of life bear fruits of love.

There glory sits on every face ;  
There friendship smiles in every eye ;  
There shall our tongues proclaim the grace,  
That led us homeward to the sky."

Turning to another stone, I was struck

with these stanzas as if I had met the face of an old friend :

“’Tis finished ! the conflict is past !  
The heaven-born spirit is fled ;  
Her wish is accomplished at last,  
And now she’s entombed with the dead.

No sickness, or sorrow, or pain,  
Shall ever disquiet her now,  
For death to her spirit was gain,  
Since Christ was her life when below.”

By far the greater part of the inscriptions were from the word of God, and such gems as these : “ Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints,” and “ Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord,” and “ I am the resurrection and the life,” were frequently among these memorials of the dead. Others in the fulness of their hearts, could find no words that had been employed before to meet their case—for every heart knoweth its own bitterness—and they had used their own rude language, but its very rudeness was touching, and bore the evidence of truth.

Reminded by these records of the favourite passages which I had read, and whose beauty had indelibly impressed them on my mind, I

was unconsciously led to repeat them as I sat down on a low stone, and hummed them to various plaintive airs :

“ Oh ! weep not for the joys that fade  
Like evening lights away,  
For hopes that like the stars decayed  
Have left thy mortal day.  
For clouds of sorrow will depart,  
And brilliant skies be given,  
And though on earth the tear may start,  
Yet bliss awaits the holy heart  
Amid the bowers of heaven.

Oh, weep not for the friends that pass  
Into the lonesome grave,  
As breezes sweep the withered grass  
Along the restless wave ;  
For though thy pleasures may depart,  
And darksome days be given ;  
And lonely though on earth thou art,  
Yet bliss awaits the holy heart  
When friends rejoin in heaven.”

There was sweetness in these words, but they served to remind me of another hymn still more beautiful, that struck the soul with peculiar force, as the graves of so many were around me. I had lost friends and wept over their graves, and as I thought of the many that I had loved who were gone, and of those who were going, I said, softly and sadly :

“ Friend after friend departs ;  
    Who hath not lost a friend ?  
There is no union here of hearts  
    That finds not here an end.  
Were this frail world our final rest,  
Living or dying, none were bless'd.

Beyond the flight of time—  
    Beyond the reign of death—  
There surely is some blessed clime,  
    Where life is not a breath.  
Nor life's affections, transient fire,  
Whose sparks fly upward and expire.

There is a world above  
    Where parting is unknown !  
A long eternity of love,  
    Formed for the good alone.  
And faith beholds the dying here,  
Translated to that glorious sphere.

Thus star by star declines  
    Till all are passed away,  
As morning high and higher shines,  
    To pure and perfect day.  
Nor sink those stars in empty night,  
But hide themselves in heaven's own light.”

It was natural that the thoughts should be turned heavenward when surrounded by these memorials of the uncertainty of life—but heaven is a second thought—the first should be that we must die. How apt we are to

overlook death for the pleasure of thinking of heaven. But there is nothing so uncertain as human life. What is it ?

“ What is life ? 'tis but a vapor,  
 Soon it vanishes away ;  
 Life is like a dying taper,  
 Oh ! my soul, why wish to stay ?

Swift as the arrow cuts its way  
 Through the soft yielding air,  
 Or as the sun's more subtle ray,  
 Or lightning's sudden glare.  
 Or as an eagle to the prey,  
 Or shuttle through the loom—  
 So haste our fleeting lives away,  
 So pass we to the tomb.

Like the rivers, time is gliding,  
 Brightest hours have no abiding,  
 Use the golden moments well ;  
 Life is wasting,  
 Death is hastening,  
 Death consigns to heaven or hell.

Oh ! what is life ? 'Tis like a flower  
 That blossoms, and is gone—  
 It flourishes its little hour  
 With all its beauty on :  
 Death comes—and, like a wintry day,  
 It cuts the lovely flower away.

Oh ! what is life ? 'Tis like the bow  
 That glistens in the sky ;

We love to see its colors glow,  
But while we look, they die.  
Life fails as soon ; to-day, 'tis here—  
To-morrow it may disappear."

It was a comely place for musing. I love a church-yard ; I love to wander or sit among the tombs of a Sabbath evening. And even amid the business and bustle of the week, I could never pass one of these meeting places of the dead, without pausing to reflect that soon I should meet those who are there in the house appointed for all living. But now I had mused till approaching evening bade me return. I came away the better, I believe, for communion with death, at least with new and stronger resolutions to live as one who soon must die.



## THE BALL ROOM.

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IN one of the interior counties of Pennsylvania, a young man, whom for the sake of distinction we shall call B——, was convicted of sin and led to inquire anxiously the way to be saved. He was the son of one of the most respectable and wealthy inhabitants of that region of country, but his father was unhappily a bitter opposer of the religion of Christ. Perceiving the state of his son's mind, he determined to leave no means untried to divert his attention from the subject. He hurried him from business to pleasure and from pleasure to business, with strong hopes that his serious impressions might be driven away, or at least that he might be prevented from making any public profession of the change of his views. But all these efforts were vain. The Spirit of God had laid hold on his soul, and did not desert him. He was brought to the dust in submission, and found peace in believing in Christ.

About this time a splendid *ball* was got up,

with every possible attempt at display, and the youth of the village and surrounding country were all excitement for the festive hall. B—— was invited. He at once declined attending, but his father insisted that he should go. Here was a struggle for the young convert. On the one hand were the convictions of his own conscience, as well as the desires of his heart. On the other the *command* of a father whom he was still bound to obey. The struggle was long and anxious. At length it was decided; —*he determined to go*. His father rejoiced at his decision. His friends congratulated him on having abandoned his new notions and become a man again.

The evening at last arrived. The gay party were gathered in the spacious hall. There was beauty, and wealth, and fashion. The world was there. Every heart seemed full of gladness, every voice was one of joy. B—— appeared among the rest, with a brow that spoke the purpose of a determined soul. He was the first on the floor to lead off the dance. A cotillion was formed, and as the circle stood in the centre of the room, with every eye fixed on them, what was the astonishment of the com-

pany when B—— raised his hands and said, “LET US PRAY.” The assembly was awe-struck. Not a word was uttered. It was silent as the grave, while B—— poured out his heart to God in behalf of his young companions, his parents, and the place in which they lived. With perfect composure he concluded his prayer, and all had left the room *silently*, but *one*. A young lady whom he had led upon the floor as his partner, stood near him bathed in tears. They left the room together, and not long afterwards she was led to the foot of the cross, having been first awakened by her partner’s prayer on the *ball-room floor*. They were soon married, and are still living, active, devoted members of the body of Christ. B—— is an elder in one of the churches near the city of New-York.

This fact conveys some important hints. Here was a doubtful case of action. B—— was commanded by his father to go to a ball. He thought it was no place for him. There was nothing in the gay and frivolous amusements of the evening congenial to his feelings. Still he must go, or disobey his father. Here was the struggle. In resolving to obey his father, he also determined to keep a conscience void

of offence toward God. Having formed the resolution, he had strength for its execution. It must have required more than ordinary moral courage, to carry such a resolution into effect. But B—— was determined, and found grace to sustain him in the first effort, perhaps, ever made to convert a ball-room into a place of prayer. The effect was remarkable, though natural. The company retired. They came to dance, not to pray. When the voice of prayer broke on their ears, it was terrifying to their consciences. They fled from its power. B—— triumphed over himself. He obeyed his father; did his duty to his young companions; was the blessed instrument of awakening the lady who was afterwards his wife, and without doubt has occasion to this day for devout thankfulness to God, that he was thus enabled to be faithful in the discharge of the singular duty he had undertaken.

Should any of my young readers be similarly situated, perhaps the course of B—— may assist them in forming an opinion as to the stand they should take. And if any one reads this who is fond of the mirth and folly and music of the ball-room, let me ask you, my friend,

one or two questions. Should you frequent a place where *prayer* would be out of place? If the thoughts and the words and the scenes of a ball-room are not congenial to the spirit of prayer, is the reason not that in such pursuits there is something which conscience condemns? In the gayeties of those hours of folly which you have spent, has your mind ever been led to dwell on the solemn realities of the eternal world? Have you thought at such times that you were a dying creature, and soon would stand at the bar of a God whom you have slighted; at the judgment seat of a Saviour whom you have rejected and despised? I know that such thoughts are strangers to such scenes. The heart that leaps with gladness at the sound of the viol, seldom feels the solemnity of truth like this. But you are as liable to die in the ball-room as at home! And oh! what a change for you—from the midst of the festive mirth of pleasure's hall, to be summoned away to the judgment! No time is granted you to prepare for that *assembly*. Without a wedding garment you are found, and must be speechless when the Judge calls you to trial. What bitter regrets will then fill your heart, that here

you were so madly bent on the follies of this world, that you would not think of a world to come! How awful to dance on the brink of the grave! You would not trifle, if you saw the pit opening wide to engulf you. But you are dancing on the brink of the grave. You are trifling with the interests of your immortal soul, when the bottomless pit is yawning to swallow you in its fiery waves.

Leave all your sports and glittering toys,  
Come, share with us eternal joys."

## THE PEERAGE OF HEAVEN.

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WILBERFORCE, the philanthropist, whose name has adorned the age that gave him birth, and whose deeds have brightened the page of its history, had a sister who possessed many of those traits of character which rendered her brother the object of so much love in retirement, as well as of public admiration.

She died, and on the sixth anniversary of her decease, her surviving husband writes to Wilberforce in these words: “Where time is inexhaustible, they have probably no measure for its course; and were it otherwise, the inhabitants of heaven would hardly mark their eras by the revolutions of our little globe. If they did, this would perhaps be a festive day with them, as the birth-day of an illustrious spirit; for there are gradations of rank in heaven. One star differeth from another star in glory. And if love, humility, piety and patience are paths to the peerage there, my dear ——’s patent was secure. Dignities on earth

would have ill-suited her taste : but superior rank in heaven, where there is no envy and no pride, will attract only superior love, attest superior excellence, and confer superior joy.”

Nor is this altogether fancy. The disciple that is *least* on earth is the greatest in the *kingdom* of heaven. There, in that throng of kings, and princes, and nobles, titles are not purchased by deeds of blood, or received through a long line of illustrious ancestors. They are bought—but by the blood of the Son of God. They are inherited—but by those only who are heirs with Jesus Christ to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and unfading. And high and bright and glorious as is the honour which they enjoy who wear the robes of light, and shine as the stars in the firmament, that honour is within the reach of the humblest of the children of men. Yes, the humblest shall assuredly win and wear the brightest crown. Doubtless many have looked on the great men of the earth, and sighed for power, and wealth, and fame, that could never be theirs. But is there not earthly glory in that HOPE, that brings the throne at the right hand of God within the scope of a beggar’s vision, and opens an un-



obstructed pathway, from the wayside where he is perishing, to its eternal, undisputed possession?

Not many mighty, not many noble are called. They have their good things now. They are clothed in purple, and fare sumptuously every day; but death shall turn the tables, and Lazarus, who thought it a luxury to have his sores licked by dogs, shall wear a crown more radiant than suns, while Dives wails in fire. That poor Syrophenecian woman who would have the crumbs that fell from the Master's table, shall feast forever in the banqueting house of the King of kings, while the princes of this world that knew not God, shall cry in vain for a drop of water to cool their parched tongues.

How low he aims, who seeks an earthly crown! How narrow his desires, who limits his ambition by the orbit of the world! The mighty conqueror who wept for more nations to subdue, was poor compared to him, who, having triumphed over sin through the blood of the Lamb, waits quietly for his admission into the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world.

Let ambition spend itself in seeking angels' thrones. Nothing short of that height of glory is worthy the desire of an immortal spirit. Wreaths of earthly fame will wither. Thrones will crumble, and princes perish. But the glory of heaven is eternal. Its inhabitants are kings, of whose dominion there is no end.

## LOCALITY OF HELL.

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CAVILLERS often ask where hell is. An answer to the question may be difficult. The question is a foolish one, to be sure, but fools must sometimes be answered according to their folly. And so we might say that hell is in any place where God chooses to have it; or where sinners choose to have it; or where devils make it. Or it may be in some planet—or between the planets; or it may be in no particular place. It may be everywhere but in heaven!

Now all this depends on what hell is. And when this is determined, the question may be discussed. *Hell is infinite misery.* Wherever infinite misery is endured, is hell. If, to produce this, it is necessary to put all wicked men into one pit, they will be put there; if not, they may have more room.

“Misery loves company.” No one pretends that sin can produce happiness. Solitary sin is therefore more miserable than social sin.

Of course, then, they who deny that there is any such locality as hell, gain nothing by the denial. They make the matter worse. They deprive the sinner of the satisfaction even of social misery. It is therefore plain, that if there be such a place as hell, all the wicked will be gathered there; if not, each sinner will have a hell wherever he goes with an unholy heart:

“ Me miserable !

Which way I fly is hell—myself am hell !”

## I NEVER PRAYED !

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SEVERE and sudden sickness seized a young friend of mine, and I hastened to his bedside. In the midst of conversation which seemed to make little or no impression on his mind, I was led to inquire, "Did you ever pray?" A faint and hesitating "No," was the melancholy answer. A host of sad thoughts crowded on me, awakened by this reply. A youth of some eighteen or twenty summers was lying on a dying-bed. He had lived in the midst of the means of grace; had been taught the nature and the duties of religion; had been externally moral in his deportment, but had never prayed. He had been taught that he was a sinner, but had never asked to be forgiven. He knew that he was under the curse of the law of God, and exposed to everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; but he had never asked God to deliver him from the danger of hell, and prepare him for the enjoyment of heaven.

I was distressed beyond measure. It ap-

peared incredible, but I had no reason to doubt the sincerity of the dying youth. Taking his hand, I addressed him in words similar to these :

“ My dear friend, did you never pray ? You, a creature dependent on your Creator for every breath you draw, for every mercy you enjoy, for every power you possess, did you never thank that Creator for these gifts ? A sinful creature—having no hope, and without God in the world—ready to perish under guilt that would ruin the universe—did you never pray for mercy ? Brought up in the enjoyment of the gospel, and often told of that Saviour who died for just such sinners as you are, did you never go to that Redeemer, and in the dust, at the foot of his cross, acknowledge your vileness, and sue for an interest in his pardoning and atoning blood ? Look, I beseech you, at the sacrifice that God has made for you. Look at the sins which have separated between you and God. Consider the infinite debt which you owe your Maker, and your infinite inability to pay that debt, and then say if you ought not to pray for a discharge. Consider that you are not only a debtor, bankrupt, and in prison, but a criminal condemned al-

ready, and awaiting the day of execution to arrive. Another has undertaken to discharge your debt, and waits but for you to ask his aid. He has consented to suffer the penalty of the law in your stead, and justify you in the presence of your condemning judge, but he will extend the benefits of his clemency to you only on condition that you will *ask believing*. You are a sinner, dying in your sins. Death is feeling for your heart-strings now, and will soon break them. The frail thread of life holds you out of a burning hell. You must perish unless you pray. Pray, and perhaps you may be saved.”

With such words I urged the duty of prayer on this dying friend, and the insensibility with which they were heard, was as great as that with which the multitude of sinners listen to the same entreaties, when death does not appear so near. The work of death was going on, and that youth would not pray. I went from his bedside, reflecting that perhaps disease had made him still more insensible than those in health, and if I made the appeal to them I might meet with more success.

Some of them have doubtless read this, and

wondered that a sinner could die without prayer. But is it not more strange that one can *live* without prayer? Can you lie down at night and trust yourself to sleep without prayer, when you know that you are in the hands of an angry God who holds you in being, and might in an instant drop you into devouring fire? Can you presume on his goodness without so much as asking him to keep you while you cannot keep yourself? Can you wake in the morning, and begin the business of the day without once thinking of Him who watched you while you slept, and whose hand was your shield? Can you pursue the world and never ask His aid in whose hand are all your ways—who must favour your plans or they will fail? And these are but common obligations. These would bind though there were no such thing as sin and misery, or holiness and heaven. A wretch, who believes there is a God, and denies every thing else, ought to pray. But you believe more than this. You believe that the Bible is the word of God, and that every word of that book will have a certain fulfilment. You know that you must pray or God will never have mercy on



your soul. And knowing this, and knowing that God is waiting to be gracious, you refuse to pray.

Should the king come to the door of your cell, where you were waiting for the day of death to come, and offer to grant a full and instant pardon, if you would fall down on your knees, and confess with penitence your sin, and trusting in his unbought goodness would plead with him for mercy, would you plead? If he should come to you on the scaffold as you were on the point of suffering the penalty of the law, and make you the same offer, would you pray? There is not a more miserable evasion of duty than the plea which many put in that they *cannot* save themselves, and therefore it is of no use to try. You do not feel the force of that objection. If you did, you would pray. Were you in captivity, dependent utterly on the will of your master for life and death, you would put all your hope of escape in prayer. You would fall down before him whose chains were on you, and plead with earnestness and tears that he would have compassion and let you go. And the more sensible you were of the impossibility of deliverance,

except through the mercy of your master, the stronger would be your supplications, and the more abundant your tears. And if you felt your dependence on God for deliverance from hell, you would go down on your knees, and beg for your life as a dying man.

Now God has constituted an inseparable connexion between your salvation and prayer. Your prayer will not make you better, or God more kind. But if you are saved he must save you, and he will be inquired of by you, to do this thing for you. And oh! *if you never prayed*, pray now. If you have, pray more. Cry mightily unto God. Besiege his throne.

Perhaps he will admit your plea,  
Perhaps will hear your prayer.

No. There is no perhaps or peradventure in any promise that God ever made. “Ask, and ye *shall* receive”—not *perhaps* ye shall receive. “Seek, and ye *shall* find”—not *peradventure* ye shall find. “Knock, and it *shall* be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth—and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.”

## THE LIVING SPRING.

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SOME years ago I spent the summer at the Springs. Standing one day by the fountain where the crowd gathered to drink health-giving water, I was forcibly reminded of these gracious words of our blessed Saviour, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

Multitudes were pressing to obtain a draught of water. Every age, sex, and condition were represented. The old tottered to the spring, and raised the glass with a trembling hand. The young stood there in the flower and beauty of youth with light hearts, and laughing eyes, and cheeks that blushed with health and happiness. The sick were supported on the arms of friends, and as they drank, the sunken eye was lighted with the hope of returning life. Some were there from the far south, and some from foreign shores; some rolled along in their splendid carriages, and some came leaning on a staff. A mixed multitude gathered, as the crowds of old around the pool of Bethesda.

I thought again: If in some distant and almost inaccessible spot, a spring should be discovered whose waters possessed the power of conferring immortality, with the bloom of beauty and youth, the strength of manhood, and the wisdom of age, on all who should come and drink, what crowds would gather there that they might taste and never die! How the news of the discovery would spread from city to city, from land to land! From every kindred and people and tongue under the whole heaven, they would come and take of the water of life freely. No expense of time or money would prevent millions from flying thither.

Again the sound of a Saviour's voice, with the tenderness of heaven in its tones of love, seemed to fall on the ear as it said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This is the spring that confers immortality on those who drink.

A daughter of Samaria came to draw water, and the Saviour of the world stood leaning on the well. He asked her for that water, of which if a man drink, he shall thirst again;

but he offered water from the well of eternal life. Here at the springs the sons and daughters of pleasure, or the children of sorrow and care were coming to draw water, and I longed to cry in their hearing, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

These words of the prophet and those of the Saviour are figurative, but they are as full of meaning as they are of beauty. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. To make their salvation possible, he poured out his blood like water, and opened a fountain for the cleansing of sin. That fountain he presents under the striking emblem of water, to show its cleansing power, its health-imparting influence, its freeness, and inexhaustible abundance. For such as you he opened this fountain, and had his eye on just such sinners, when he cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

It is a precious invitation. Heaven never sent a sweeter. Accept that invitation, and you will secure

The pardon of your sins. You need pardon. You are a great sinner. This your conscience tells you. This your Bible tells you. Your sins are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore or the stars in heaven. They are very great; committed against great light; you knew your duty, but did it not; committed against great love; you knew the blessed Saviour died on the cross for poor sinners, but you slighted his dying blood and despised his bleeding love. You deserve to be punished for such sins. You will be punished unless you are pardoned. Christ Jesus, whom you have rejected, offers the pardon of your sins, and

Justification before God. The holy and inflexible law of Jehovah, whose penalty is eternal death, you have broken, and you must die unless another will die in your room. Jesus Christ offers to become the justifier of him who believes. He becomes his substitute. His sufferings under the law of God will be accepted in the stead of yours, if you will come and trust in him. Thus the law will be sustained, and the sinner saved. God can be just, and justify the ungodly who believes. This is a simple plan—the gospel plan. It commends itself to

you as the only plan by which you can be delivered from the curse of the law. But beyond all this, if you come to Christ, he will grant

The sanctification of your soul. When your past sins have been forgiven, the work of sanctification is begun, and only begun. Your heart is yet full of uncleanness. It is vile and abominable, and offensive in the sight of God. Its desires are impure and rebellious, and wicked. And with such a heart you cannot be happy here, and could not be happy in heaven. You must be made holy, or you cannot be made happy. Christ Jesus offers to make you holy. His blood cleanseth from all sin. The redeemed in heaven were made white in the blood of the Lamb. Saul of Tarsus washed in that fountain. The vilest sinners that ever lived have come to Christ, and drinking of the water he offers, have been sanctified and saved.

“The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day.”

And though your heart may be viler than all the thieves and murderers that ever came to Christ, still in him you may

“Wash all your guilt away.”

Thus you will be pardoned, justified, sanctified; and to these mercies will be added,

Preparation for eternal life. Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. You must be delivered from the power of sin, or lie down in eternal burnings. This is the second death. In its eternity of wo, it includes the wrath of an angry God, the torture of a guilty conscience, the gnawings of the worm that never dies, and the torments of the fire that is never quenched. "But God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." In Christ, then, is to be found deliverance from death. In him is eternal life. Come to the Saviour, and you may be clothed with unfading youth, raised to the enjoyment of God, and crowned with glory, and honour, and immortality.

These blessings flow to those and those only who come to Christ, and when he stands and cries, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," he invites you to partake of these infinitely precious gifts.

There is no limit to this invitation. If any man thirst let him come. The fulness of the



fountain justifies the unbounded offer. Millions have drank till their souls were satisfied. But the fountain is yet full. The more is drawn, the greater the supply. Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, are alike welcome. Come one, come all, and drink of the water of life freely.

Reader! perhaps you are young, and gay, and thoughtless. You are in search of pleasure. You drink of the waters of this world's pleasures and are not satisfied. Amid the gayest scenes of life your soul is yet unblest. Come to Jesus! In Him there is bliss the world knoweth not of. In His presence there is fulness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

Perhaps you are sick or sinking in years, and the world is fading and failing. In the Saviour's blood is the fountain of health and life. Here where sickness, and infirmities, and pains, and trials beset your path, you would not wish to live always. Eternal life, in such a world as this, would scarcely be a blessing. But the life which this fountain gives is life in a better and brighter world. Drink of this, and the disease of your soul, the malady of sin, will be healed, and you shall enter on the enjoyment

of heaven. There, "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

You may be a vile, abandoned profligate; but the chief of sinners Jesus came to save. The more unworthy you *feel* yourself to be, the more willing he is to have mercy.

"All the fitness he requireth  
Is to feel your need of him."

But mark one thing more. Although this offer is made so freely, and urged with so much love, it is addressed to those, and those only, who thirst. If any man *thirst*, let him come. But let not this deter *you*. Have you no desire for the water of life, no desire to be pardoned and saved from hell, and raised to heaven? You have broken God's holy law, and are now sinking beneath its blighting curse. Just ready to perish, you behold the water of life presented, and you have no desire to drink. The Sa-

viour offers it without money or price, and do you not desire to taste and live?

Yes, O sinner! I am assured you<sup>c</sup> desire, you thirst. Accept the invitation without one moment's delay. To-morrow it may not be extended. You may not *thirst* if it is.

## THE SINNER IN HEAVEN.

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A STRANGE thought that, but one which has often filled the depraved heart. Many a man has said to himself, 'If I can only get to heaven, it is all I want;' and with this thought has never connected the remotest conception of the preparation necessary for his happiness there. He has heard of heaven as the seat of perfect bliss; that all who are there are as happy as the angels around the throne; that God employs his infinite wisdom in devising, and power in executing means for the advancement of his creature's enjoyment in glory; and the sinner, in the ignorance and thoughtlessness of sin, imagines that he will be as happy as the rest if he may but be permitted to make one of their number.

Some persons have a great aversion to music. They will, if possible, leave the room or the house in which others are enjoying its harmonious sweetness. What misery would their sensitive nerves endure, if they were condemned

for life to listen to its sound. Music is sweet only to those who love it. If one has no taste for it, the more he hears it, the more he hates it, and wishes to be delivered from its power. This I have met with, as a happy illustration of the folly of a sinner's expectation of being blessed in the midst of employments for which he has no taste, and to which he has the most intense aversion. Follow the sinner from earth to heaven, and see the scene into which he enters, when the gates of glory open and let him in.

As he steps into the company of the pure spirits in glory, the hosts of heaven fly from his presence, as if a devil had broken loose from hell, and strayed into the paradise of God. How they cluster together in some far distant part of the upper temple, and shun his touch or approach as we would avoid the contagion of the plague. But he loves company. *The sinner is never happy alone.* He seeks society in heaven. Millions are there, and some whom he knew, and some whom he loved on earth. But the communion of heaven, is the communion of kindred souls. Love is the eye, the voice, the language of heaven. He cannot

find one there who can comprehend his wants, much less sympathize with him. He wanders through the shining courts. He thrusts himself in the midst of that glorious company who are speaking of the Lamb that was slain for them, and sounding his praise on harps of gold. But he is still alone. Alone in heaven! Alone among multitudes that no man can number! There is not a companion for him there. The company of heaven would therefore be no company, and of course no joy to him.

He wanders on and stands in the presence of the Son of God. Once he said in his heart, "Away with Him; crucify Him!" Now he beholds him on the throne. Angels bow before him. The spirits of the just adore him, and heaven rejoices in the light of his eye. But that Saviour God, he hates in the fulness of his soul. Would he be happy with the eye of that God fastened on him; with His glory filling the eternity in which he dwells; with His praise ringing perpetually in his ear? And if the presence of the Saviour would not make him happy, what source of enjoyment can he find?

He tries the employment of heaven. He

attempts to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, but his voice "grates harsh discord" on the ear of heaven. Every voice is silent when he disturbs the harmony of the angelic choirs. But praise is the only employment of heaven, and whom can he praise? Not the Father, for he never loved him; not the Son, for he despised and rejected him; not the Holy Spirit, for he resisted its gracious overtures and grieved it away.

Where shall he go? What shall he do? Whom shall he seek? Had he a friend in heaven, he might be more at home. But God is angry with him continually. Holy beings esteem his friendship as enmity with God. Could he find employment congenial to his soul, he might be less miserable. But a Sabbath on earth was tedious; how insupportable must an eternal Sabbath be! Heaven is no place for him. Every thing there reveals more terribly to his conscience his unpardoned sins. Its light displays his unwashed vileness. Its holiness crushes him under self-condemning guilt. He would rather be in hell. He would bow before the throne, to ask only the privilege of being sent *to his own place*.

## AN ECLIPSE.

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WHEN the moon comes between us and the sun, we are left in darkness. Though the sun is many times larger than the moon; though it is a globe of dazzling brightness and glory, and the source of all the light that gladdens the world in which we live, it may be eclipsed by the intervention of so small an object as the pale moon.

Again, it has been said, and with truth, that any object, however small, may be placed so near the eye as to shut out of sight all other objects however large. Thus a sixpenny piece may be laid upon the eye, or held so close to it, that nothing can be seen on the other side. The earth, the sun, the stars, the universe, may all be eclipsed by a sixpence.

These are very feeble illustrations of a more wonderful eclipse. When the earth comes between us and heaven,—the great fountain of light,—we are left in darkness. Though the eternal world is infinitely more glo-



rious than this, it may be eclipsed by the intervention of so insignificant an object as the earth. In fact this is *the* reason why eternity with all its vast realities is shut out of view, and this little world fills the eye. We place this world so near us, that we can see nothing beyond. Thus heaven, with its light and love, its crowns and thrones, its "joys substantial and sincere," is covered from our sight, and nothing is visible but the "beggarly elements" of a perishing world. Then, we grope in darkness; then, we lose sight of God and his glory, and the great object for which we were made and ought to live. As long as this eclipse continues, every ray of hope is extinguished, and unless it passes off, and the light of the Sun of Righteousness shines on our souls, eternal darkness will set in.

## HAPPY AS HOLY.

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WE know but three worlds of intelligent beings. There may be others, but we know of none save heaven, earth, and hell. In these three worlds are definite proportions of happiness and holiness, or misery and sin.

Take heaven first. Holiness reigns there. Its very air is holy. Its employments and enjoyments are holy. Its inhabitants are holy. God is holy. So are the saints and angels; cherubim and seraphim; all are holy. And there happiness reigns. God is happy;—happy in himself—in the worship of his temple—in the songs of his praise. Angels are happy; so are the saints; all—all are happy. In heaven, therefore, is *perfect* holiness, and *perfect* happiness.

Take the earth next. Here is some holiness and some happiness. When grace begins a good work in the heart, partial holiness is implanted. Sanctification is progressive, and as the believer grows holy, he grows happy.

The holiest man on earth is the happiest man. So the holiest angel in heaven is the happiest angel. The holiest employments on earth are the happiest employments. The hour of closet prayer is the purest and sweetest hour of the day. The revival season is the holiest and happiest season the church enjoys. On earth, therefore, is partial holiness and partial happiness.

Examine hell. There sin reigns. The devil is totally wicked. His heart is a fountain of unmixed sin. And his angels are as wicked as he. The spirits of the lost are perfectly wicked. Hell is all sin. It is an ocean of iniquity, without bottom or shore. Not a drop of holiness ever fell into the lake of fire. And there is perfect misery. The devil is perfectly miserable. So are his angels. So are lost souls. The smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever. There is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Hell is infinite misery.

This view of three worlds presents the following proposition. Happiness is always proportioned to holiness. Proof. In heaven is *perfect* holiness and *perfect* happiness. On earth

is *partial* holiness and *partial* happiness. In hell is *perfect* sin and *perfect* misery. The illustration, I believe, is clear, and may be readily applied. If I seek holiness as the means of obtaining happiness I shall not be disappointed. If I seek sin as a source of happiness, I shall reap misery. I shall be happy only as I am holy.

## WHERE IS CALVARY?

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As I was leaning over the railing at Catherwood's Panorama of Jerusalem, quite absorbed in contemplating the scene of surpassing interest there pictured to the eye, a stranger broke my reverie by a sudden but serious question. "Will you tell me, sir," said he, "where Calvary is?" I was startled at first by the inquiry, but recollecting myself immediately I pointed out the spot—I was then gazing on it—and mused again.

The view before us was full of objects to fix the attention and awaken deep emotions in the heart. The mosque of Omar rose in eastern magnificence, and reflected the dazzling radiance of the noon-day sun. Palaces and towers, minarets and arches stood before the eye, and claimed and received the admiration of every beholder. A mixed multitude were spectators of the scene—but one spot was the centre of universal attraction. Why did they not look at that troop of wandering Arabs that

formed a prominent feature of the view ? Why did they pass by the governor of the city as he sat luxuriating in his tent, dispensing justice to the gathered people ? Why is that shocking sight overlooked where a criminal is stretched on the ground with his feet upturned, and bared to receive the bastinado, which the executioner is brandishing above him ? Why is Mount Olivet, with its green foliage, and the more distant hills that surround the city and remind us of that striking illustration,—“as the mountains are round about Jerusalem so the Lord is round about his people forever,”—why are these unnoticed for the time, that all eyes may be turned upon one unmarked spot ?

Because that spot is Calvary. The time was when the eyes of the universe were fixed upon that spot. God from his throne looked down upon it. Angels ceased their songs awhile and gazed upon it. The Son of God was dying there. The last act in the tragedy of man's redemption closed on Calvary, and the spot has been made memorable in the annals of the world. There are other scenes on earth that are beheld with lively interest and intense delight. But the mind that was ever

touched with the dying love of the Lord of glory, will turn away from all other spots, and dwell on Calvary. It loves to dwell there. And should the humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus be taken up into an exceeding high mountain, whence he could see the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, he would cast his eye abroad over the expanded view, and before he rested on a single point, would inquire, "Where is Calvary?"

There is no place out of heaven dearer to the pious heart. And am I wrong in saying there is no place in heaven more precious to the believer's soul than this same sweet spot? I would rather lie at the foot of the cross than the foot of the throne. And though the heart is filled with sadness when the sufferings of the Saviour are in view, yet the same sad heart is filled with love that no other scene excites and with joy that no other scene affords.

"See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

But the question which the stranger asked, suggested other reflections than these. If he

knew not where Calvary was, it was the very question of all others that he ought to have asked. If he knew not the way to the cross, he was wise in asking some one to take him by the hand and lead him to it. And as I pointed him to the spot where the Redeemer hung in agony, and died in shame, I thought of the joy which the friend of Jesus feels in pointing sinners to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Next to the bliss of knowing that Christ is mine, is the bliss of showing him to others as their Saviour. No higher joy could be mine on earth, than to stand at the base of Calvary, and as the thoughtless multitudes were journeying down to hell, to cry in their hearing, "This is the way, walk ye in it—turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die—behold the Lamb of God!" And Oh! what rapture fills the watchman's heart when one from that multitude who are thronging the broad road to death, turns aside and asks, "Can you tell me, sir, where Calvary is?"

Yes, poor sinner, inquiring sinner, I can tell you where Calvary is. Go with me, and I will lead you to the very spot. But you cannot go as you now are. You are laden with



guilt. You must repent of that sin. You must cast away from you all your transgressions and look forward with an eye of faith. But there, in the distance, stands the cross. Upon it hangs the Saviour who bleeds for you and me. Look and live. Weary and heavy laden you may there find rest to your soul. There is no way to heaven but the one that leads over Calvary. By the cross you must win the crown.

## THE BRIDE SAITH, COME.

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How beautiful the emblems of Scripture ! And it is not strange that they are beautiful ; the purity of heaven selected them, and the wisdom of inspiration polished and presented them, as apples of gold, in pictures of silver. And in the sweet invitations which the gospel gives, a tenderness and power are combined, which appear almost too much to be resisted.

The bride is the church. Under this charming figure the church is often presented. John, the writer of the Revelation, rejoiced in this emblem. "I saw the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." "Come hither, and see the bride, the Lamb's wife." If the loveliness of the messenger would commend the message to the more favourable notice of the one addressed, this invitation would be accepted. The bride invites. It is rare that such an invitation is declined. All other calls give place to hers.

“The bride saith, *Come.*” A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, was flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. That stream was salvation. Whosoever drank should never thirst, and never die. It came from the *throne*. The sovereignty of God was displayed in opening this fountain for the salvation of a race which he might have justly left to perish. It came from the throne of *God*. The Father was the source—the author of the glorious scheme. It came from the throne of God *and the Lamb*. The Son’s consent was as needful as the approbation of the Father. The blood of the Lamb was the fountain. The river that flowed was the stream that issued from that fountain which was opened in His side. The Father provides the plan—the Son opens the fountain—the Spirit saith, *Come*. The church joins in the call, and urges sinners to take the water of life freely. The fondest desire of the church of Christ is to see God’s glory advanced in the conversion of souls. And well may the bride desire to see others come. She has felt the joys of her Saviour’s love—she has been to the stream that gushes at the foot of the eternal throne, and drank of its living crystal water

till it springs up in her soul a well of everlasting life. Because she knows how sweet those waters are, she would that others too might come. Since she has tasted and seen that the Lord is good, she longs that her acquaintance might share in the pleasures of his love. She sees the danger to which her friends are constantly exposed. Her feet once stood on the same slippery places, and she knows that fiery billows roll below. Hence the earnestness with which she cries, Come. Hence the perseverance with which she labours and pleads and prays that sinners may come to the fountain of eternal life and drink, and live. Sinners are often afraid to discover their anxiety to come, but did they know how glad *the bride* would be to welcome them, they could not be afraid. They would rejoice to be taken by the hand, and led to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.

The bride,—*the church above*, saith, Come. We are told there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Saints share in that joy. Angels feel it, but not as the saints who have tasted redeeming love. The church above looks down, I doubt not, upon the church

below, and would gladly add her voice to that of the Spirit, and cry, Come. Every note the saints and angels sing, invites sinners to join their song. Every harp vibrates "Come" on every string. Every throne is inscribed, "Come."

And can you, my friends, who read these lines, and have so often heard these sweet words of mercy inviting you to Christ, can you refuse to come? Ye are now far away in the desert perishing with thirst. No life-giving fountains will spring in the wilderness. No cooling streams will flow for your relief. You are dying. But ye need not die. There is a river, the streams whereof can quench your thirst, and revive your soul, and give you perennial youth. The fountain is at the foot of the throne of God and the Lamb. It is opened for Judah and Jerusalem to wash in.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day;  
And there may *you*, though vile as he,  
Wash all your sins away."

## “ I HAVE TRIED.”

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PERHAPS you have ; and without success. You feel that you are a sinner, in danger of hell ; and unless you repent and believe, you must be damned. And you say, “ *I have tried* to repent and believe, and cannot do any more.”

And who is to blame, my dear friend, you or the Lord ? The guilt of your ruin, if you perish, will be at some one’s door. God has made many great and precious promises concerning your salvation, and if he fails to fulfil those promises, he is exceedingly at fault and you are clear. He has said, “ Ask, and ye shall receive. Seek, and ye shall find.” “ Whoso cometh unto me, I will in nowise cast out.” Now, if he has forgotten these words or broken his vows, he has indeed sinned against himself. But “ God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it ? Hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good ?” Besides his word, you have the

fact that he desires to pardon and save you; so that not only his promise, but his inclination, leads him to do for you all that is needful on his part to save your soul. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." Add to this, the assurance that he has already done for you, or is now doing, all that he has promised; and the conclusion is inevitable, that the blame lies at your own door. What does God mean by that most tender and moving of all passages in the Old Testament, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard." And I believe, sinner, that the judgment is against you. God is acquitted, and you are condemned.

But how have you tried? Have you *asked* God for his Holy Spirit, as you would ask for life when about to die without hope? Have you *sought* the Spirit, as you would seek a lost gem of untold worth? Have you *knocked* at

the door of mercy, as you will knock when you find the door of heaven closed forever against you? If not, your efforts have not been proportioned to the object for which you strive, and of course you have no right to expect success. Were you in pursuit of an earthly crown, you would compass sea and land to gain the prize. And for "a crown of glory that fadeth not," you have scarcely raised an arm. To lay up riches here, which moth and rust may soon destroy, you eat the bread of carefulness and waste the flower of your days. But for an "inheritance incorruptible," you have never made a sacrifice worth the name.

In search of honours, riches, pleasures, would a single failure check the ardour of pursuit? And when honours at God's right hand, when riches in heaven and pleasures forevermore are set before you, will you be disheartened because you have not yet attained the summit of your hopes? I say, then, you have not tried. You have scarcely begun to try.

Perhaps *you have tried* to save yourself, without looking to Jesus as the only ground of your acceptance with God. If so, the more you try, the worse you are off. The sooner you



cease all that sort of effort, and fall down at the foot of the cross, the sooner you will find help. But though you have laboured to climb up some other way, and have only been piling barriers between yourself and heaven, come now, and rejecting all self-dependence as a soul-ruining hope, trust your eternal interests in the merits of a Saviour's sacrifice.

Did you ever try that ?

## THE KING'S JEWELS.

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THE largest and most brilliant diamond known, is in the possession of the sovereign of Spain. The monarchs of Europe display a peculiar ambition to gather the richest jewels, and hoard them in their cabinets as invaluable treasure. The kings of the earth have their jewels; and there are days when, adorned with the brightest gems they can obtain, they are beheld by their subjects with unmingled admiration. A coronation day is marked with such a display of regal magnificence.

The King of kings has his jewels. He rejoices in their possession. The stars in heaven might adorn his crown, but he has brighter gems than they. *His children are his jewels.* "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

He found them in the dark mountains of sin. He dug them out of the mountain. He removed the impurities that surrounded them, and polished them for his own use. He brought

them to his palace in the skies, and set them in his crown, and there they shine, and will shine forever, with the brilliancy of heaven.

God prizes his jewels. His saints are precious in his sight. For them he has made the most glorious provision, and spared no expense or pains to increase their happiness and glory. For them he gave his Son. For them he made heaven. For them he hath prepared what eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive. God takes pleasure in his jewels. Kings love to gaze on their caskets, and admire their precious stones. But God loves his gems as his own children. "And I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." God delights to surround his children with every circumstance of blessedness, and to remove every thing that can offend from their sight. He takes them as jewels from the mine, and fits them to be the ornaments of his crown—to shine in the paradise of God.

This figure strikes me as peculiarly beautiful. Our Father in heaven has neither left unemployed any means to make us happy, nor any terms to convey to us a knowledge of what

he has done for us. And this figure is not confined to a single passage. "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." Such honour is reserved for the children of God. They may well rejoice in view of it. What if they are humbled and despised, and their names cast out as evil—they will soon be crowned with glory and honour. They will be set like gems in the coronet of God, and reflect his beauty and brightness world without end.

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