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Solace for bereaved parents

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SOLACE FOR BEREAVED PARENTS:

OR

INFANTS DIE TO LIVE.

WITH AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF

THE DOCTRINE OF INFANT SALVATION.

ALSO,

VERY FULL SELECTIONS FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS,

IN

PROSE AND POETRY.

✓
BY THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D.D.

The dead,
The only beautiful, who change no more ;
The only blest ; the dwellers on the shore
Of Spring fulfilled. The dead !—whom call we so ?
They that breathe purer air, that feel, that know,
Things wrapt from us.

HEMANS.

NEW YORK :

ROBERT CARTER, 58 CANAL STREET,
AND PITTSBURG, 56 MARKET STREET.

1852.

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THIS VOLUME
IS DEDICATED TO MY DEAR AUNT,
MRS. M. M. MAGEE,
OF DUBLIN, IRELAND,
AS A TRIBUTE OF GRATEFUL AFFECTION;
AND ALSO AS AN EXPRESSION OF HIGH ADMIRATION
FOR THAT CHRISTIAN HOPE AND PATIENCE
WHICH, BY DIVINE GRACE, SHE HAS SO TRIUMPHANTLY
DISPLAYED UNDER MANIFOLD TRIALS,
AND WHICH STILL ENABLE HER TO GO ON HER WAY REJOICING,
IN THE GLORIOUS ANTICIPATION OF
A HAPPY REUNION IN THAT BLESSED WORLD
WHERE DEATH SHALL BE SWALLOWED UP
IN EVERLASTING LIFE,
AND ITS CURSE, AND ITS SORROW BE FOR EVER DONE AWAY.

Christian brethren of *other* denominations, that in holding Calvinistic doctrines, we do not hold *their views* of what these doctrines teach, nor those awful consequences which, in *their conception* of them, these doctrines imply. I hope, therefore, that this exhibition of the *real* nature and tendency of Calvinism will serve to put down misrepresentations; to remove prejudices; and to draw nearer together, in the bonds of charity and good-will, all who love the Lord Jesus Christ—"BOTH THEIRS AND OURS"—in sincerity and truth, and who trust in the word of God *only*, in the grace of Christ *only*, and in the sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost *only*. The Trinity of the one immutable Godhead, as the source of salvation, of grace, and of power—the author, finisher, and imparter of eternal life—this is the grand platform on which all true Christians can meet, sympathize, hope, rejoice, and triumph. May we all "stand fast" in this faith, and "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of" a more open, more visible, and more consolidating "peace."

Not with mistrusting heart, or anxious brow,
 My little book, I send thee forth again—
 So thou the suffrage of the good obtain,
 I seek not what the worldling can bestow,
 Of perishable praise—enough to know
 That at the lonely couch of grief or pain,
 Thy simple page one passing smile may gain,
 Or kindle in the breast devotion's glow.
 Yet, shouldst thou find a place in blissful bower,
 'Midst happy hearts, unthinking of their doom,
 In the fond trust of that delusive hour,
 O whisper to them of the coming gloom,
 And tell them of the faith whose mighty power
 Can light the dreary precincts of the tomb.

THE AUTHOR

Charleston, Dec. 1845.

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SOLACE FOR BEREAVED PARENTS.

CHAPTER I.

ADDRESS TO A BEREAVED PARENT.

Bid gentle patience smile on pain
Till dying hope revive again ;
Hope wipes the tear from sorrow's eye,
And faith points upward to the sky.

STEELE.

MY DEAR READER,

This work is addressed to you as a bereaved Parent. God has given you a child whom you dearly loved, and God has taken that child away. He has "stricken the desire of your eyes," and "wounded you sore." Like Rachel you weep for your departed child, and "refuse to be comforted because it is not."

Your grief, my dear friend, is natural, for your affliction is great. Your heart is left lonely and desolate. Its strings are broken. That joy which had swallowed up all remembrance of the hours of solicitude and pain, is now turned into melancholy sadness. That current of affection and gladness which had flowed out upon the object of your regard is turned back upon the soul—its channels are dried up, and its fountain gone. The grief of a bereaved parent can only be known by those who have endured it. Of this it may be truly said, "the heart knoweth its own bitterness and a stranger intermeddleth not with it." There are susceptibilities in man which are only developed by an

entrance upon the relation of parent. The individual who has never become a Father or a Mother, has never felt the most powerful of human emotions. He is a stranger to that joy which seems to fill the heart to overflowing ; and to that outgoing of the soul which identifies the parent with his child, absorbs all selfish regards, and inspires a willingness to endure all things for the sake of his beloved offspring.

Who then can truly sympathize with parents in their joys or sorrows, but he who has been himself a parent ? An old writer has quaintly remarked,—as illustrative of the adaptation of Christ, by the endurance of human misery, for his present office of Mediator between God and man,—that were his limb broken he should desire to have it set by a physician who had himself experienced a similar calamity. Sure it is that the wounded heart of a bereaved parent can only be bound up by one whose own heart has been in like manner torn, and who can sincerely weep with him who weeps over the grave of his buried offspring.

Young mother ! what can feeble friendship say,
To soothe the anguish of this mournful day ?
They, they alone, whose hearts like thine have bled,
Know how the living sorrow for the dead ;
Each tutored voice, that seeks such grief to cheer,
Strikes cold upon the weeping parent's ear ;
I 've felt it all,—alas ! too well I know
How vain all earthly power to hush thy woe !
God cheer thee, childless mother ! 't is not given
For man to ward the blow that falls from heaven.

I 've felt it all—as thou art feeling now ;
Like thee, with stricken heart and aching brow,
I 've sat and watched by dying beauty's bed,
And burning tears of hopeless anguish shed ;
I 've gazed upon the sweet, but pallid face,
And vainly tried some comfort there to trace ;

I 've listened to the short and struggling breath ;
I 've seen the cherub eye grow dim in death ;
Like thee, I 've veiled my head in speechless gloom,
And laid my first-born in the silent tomb.

It is on this account I would venture to intrude my thoughts upon your present solitude, and whisper words of consolation to that ear which can never more hear the infant voice now silent in death. Like you, my friend, I have been called to witness the unexpected departure of my children. Two of them I committed to the same grave, where they sleep the sleep of death. They were growing up together like two young flowers, which had intertwined their tendrils, and mingled their sweet fragrance, but which were suddenly withered by the same rude blast. Like them, these children were lovely in their lives, and in death they were not divided. The same storm overwhelmed them both. They lie, as it were, arm in arm, and side by side, in the same deep and narrow bed of earth, until they awake in the morning of the resurrection. Nor do they lie alone, their narrow bed has been uncovered to receive another sleeper, the victim of a similar malady, whose sun of brightest promise went down while my heart was still rejoicing in the beauty of its day-spring.

It was when tossed upon that sea of trouble in which these sudden visitations involved me, I was led to the full investigation of the question of the salvation of infants. That examination more than confirmed my hopes. It strengthened them into A COMFORTABLE ASSURANCE THAT IN THE DEATH OF INFANTS, IT IS WELL WITH THEM, AND WELL WITH THEIR PARENTS—that God's purposes are merciful to both—and that while he glorifies himself in the exaltation of the children to heaven, he would also secure by such

afflictions the sanctification and the salvation of their parents.

You will, therefore, allow me to present to your mind, in substance, some of those considerations by which I have been myself comforted of God, and through which you may also, by His blessing, obtain "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," and enable you to believe that the tide of death, whose receding waves withdrew the desire of your eyes for ever from your sight, "like waifs flung for a season upon the shores of this world," has only borne them back again upon "the eternal sea which washes the throne of God."

Of one thing be very sure: "God does nothing without a reason. That reason may have respect to you—it may have respect to your child, and not unlikely to both. He sees effects in their causes. Your case may have been this: you may have been in danger of loving the world too much, and he removed the cause in time. Its case may have been this: it may have been in danger from the growth of a corrupt nature, and he took it in the bud of being that it might grow without imperfection, 'for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Think of your child then not as dead but as living, not as a flower that is withered, but as one that is transplanted, and, touched by a divine hand, is blooming in richer colours and sweeter shades than those of earth, though to your eyes these last may have been beautiful, more beautiful than you will hope to see again.

"With patient mind thy course of duty run,
God nothing does, nor suffers to be done,
But thou wouldst do thyself, if thou couldst see
The end of all he does as well as he."

CHAPTER II.

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE DOCTRINE OF INFANT SALVATION,
WHEREIN IT IS SHOWN THAT IT WAS FIRST ADVOCATED AND
RECEIVED BY CALVINISTS, AND BASED UPON CALVINISTIC DOCT-
RINES.

I stood beside a death-bed scene, a mother bent and wept,
But deep within her breaking heart, a deathless faith she kept :
She gazed upon her little one, so beautiful and still,
And humbly tried to yield him up unto her Maker's will :
She bent and kissed his pallid brow, she joined her hands in prayer,
And then I knew the Christian's hope had surely entered there.

WHEN I was led to the investigation of this subject, nothing surprised me more than the difficulty with which I could then* find any thing adapted to my inquiries. With very ample resources, I could discover but little in the form of direct discussion, on this most interesting subject. It is certainly strange, that while works of consolation and advice had been prepared for almost every other class of mourners in Zion, bereaved parents were left to comfort themselves by those general considerations only, which leave their peculiar sorrows unalleviated.

With very diligent search I have procured an Essay on this subject by the Rev. DANIEL GILLARD, published in London in 1787 ; a similar Essay, entitled Grounds of Hope for the Salvation of all dying in Infancy, by the Rev. WILLIAM HARRIS, LL.D., published in London in 1821 ; An Essay on the Salvation

* Since then many things in prose and poetry have been written.

of all dying in Infancy, by the Rev. DAVID RUSSELL of Dundee, published in Edinburgh in 1823;* a little volume addressed to Bereaved Parents, by JOHN THORNTON, published in London in 1831; a Sermon, by the late Dr. HENRY; and two others, on the death of their children, by Dr. DODDRIDGE, and Dr. COTTON MATHER. Besides these, I found only some scattered hints in various volumes.†

From an examination of all these, I matured that opinion I have embodied in the following chapters, the substance of which was delivered in discourses to my people. Their earnest wishes induced me to prepare them for the press. Some work of the kind is imperatively demanded. Almost all parents are called to endure the loss of children, and to feel the need of such a comforter. Within a few months, I have committed to the grave thirteen children, from within the bounds of my official ministration. Now there is no work to which such parents can have access, for of all those enumerated above, I may say, they are printed in England; they are rare, and therefore inaccessible. Besides, even when parents may have a general persuasion of the safety of departed infants, yet, when such a belief is not founded on a firm and clearly established *conviction* of its truth, it will give way before the flood of sorrow, and fail to support in the hour of need. Just as men sport with death till called themselves to grapple with its terrors, so may men think lightly of the trial of a bereaved parent, until they stand by the bedside of their own dying child.

* This is a most full and satisfactory work, and fully answers every objection.

† The only other treatise on this subject then known to the author, besides one by Mosheim, a Lutheran, is by Dr. Williams. I believe the same who advocated the cause of Modern Calvinism, and answered Whitby.

But then will they earnestly look for any light which may irradiate their darkness, calm their fears, and assuage their grief. A writer in an English magazine, speaking of the death of very young children, thus beautifully remarks:—"The soul of the cherub child, that dies on its mother's breast, wings its way to heaven, unconscious of the joys it might share here, as well as of the many, many miseries of which it might be partaker. This can hardly be called *death*. It is but the calm, soft ebbing of the gentle tide of life, to flow no more in the troubled ocean of existence: it is but the removal of a fair creature—'too pure for earthly stay'—to make one of that bright band of cherubim which encompasses in glory and in joy the throne of the living God."

But glorious as the change may be to the little one, it is hard for the mother to part thus early with her fair-haired innocent—to break off all the delightful ties of prattling tenderness that had bound her even in a few months, to that gentle form forever—

'Tis hard to lay her darling
Deep in the cold, damp earth—
His empty crib to see,
His silent nursery,
Once gladsome with his mirth.

To meet again in slumber
His small mouth's rosy kiss;
Then, wakened with a start
By her own throbbing heart,
His twining arms to miss!

To feel (half conscious why)
A dull, heart-sinking weight,
Till mem'ry on her soul
Flashes the painful whole,
That she is desolate!

And then to lie and weep,
And think the live-long night
(Feeding her own distress
With accurate greediness)
Of every past delight;—

Of all his winning ways,
His pretty playful smiles,
His joy, his ecstasy,
His tricks, his mimicry,
And all his little wiles!

Oh! these are recollections
Round mothers' hearts that cling—
That mingle with the tears
And smiles of after years,
With oft awakening!

That this little volume therefore may be rendered as satisfactory as possible, it will be proper to give some historical account of the views entertained at different periods of the church on the subject of the salvation of infants. This will show the necessity for its present and thorough investigation; and at the same time expose the groundlessness with which a belief in the future loss or damnation of infants has been charged upon Calvinists, and upon Presbyterians, as a doctrine peculiar to them, or involved in their system of belief.

Among the Jews, the hope of salvation seems to have been confined to themselves, and to their children who had received circumcision. "They imagined that the law of Moses made the very infants of the Gentiles be treated as sinners and hateful to God, because they were uncircumcised, and descended from uncircumcised parents. They of course imagined that all their own children were saved, and that all those of the Gentiles perished. It is partly on this account that the apostle, after mentioning the universal reign of

death from Adam to Moses, distinctly adds, that it came upon infants, as well as upon adults, without distinction of Jew and Gentile; and then shows that infants, whether they descend from Gentiles or Jews, are treated as sinners, not by virtue of the law of Moses, but in consequence of the sin of Adam, the common father of the human race."

A corresponding faith was early developed in the Christian Church. Erroneous views of baptism, as in itself communicative of regeneration, led to the belief of its absolute necessity in order to salvation. Of course, those who failed to enjoy the benefits of this ordinance were believed to be excluded from all participation in the benefits of that gospel, with which it was so essentially connected. And hence it was supposed that the children even of christian parents who were not baptized, as well as all others in the same unfortunate condition, were cast, with unbelievers, into hell for ever; or, at least, excluded from the divine presence, and the blessedness of heaven.

This opinion prevailed *generally* in the Church until after the Reformation. It was the opinion of Augustine, of Gregory, Ariminiensis, Driedd, Luther, Melancthon, Tilmanus, Heshusius, "who have all fallen into the worst of St. Austin's opinion, and sentence poor infants to the flames of hell for original sin, if they die before baptism."* "The Catholic faith," says Augustine, "resting on divine authority, believes the first place to be the kingdom of heaven, WHENCE THE UNBAPTIZED ARE EXCLUDED; and the second Hell, where every apostate and alien from the faith of Christ will experience eternal punishments. A third place we are wholly ignorant of, nor shall we find it in

* See Jer. Taylor's Works, vol. 9. p. 129.

the Scriptures.”* The decree of the Council of Trent, by which it is determined that “whosoever shall affirm that baptism is indifferent, that is, not NECESSARY TO SALVATION, let him be accursed,” is still binding on the Roman Catholic Church: for their catechism also teaches that children, “be their parents christians or infidels, UNLESS REGENERATED BY THE GRACE OF BAPTISM, ARE BORN TO ETERNAL MISERY AND EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION.”† “Nothing,” says the Council of Trent, “can be apparently more necessary, than that the faithful should be taught, that the law of baptism was ordained by the Lord for all men; so that *unless they be regenerated by God, through the grace of baptism*, they are begotten by their parents, be they believers, or unbelievers, *to everlasting misery and perdition.*”‡ “No other means of salvation,” adds the Catechism, “is supplied to infants, except baptism be administered to them.”§ “There is a third place for infants,” says Bellarmine, “who *die without baptism*. This Limbus Puerorum is for the eternal punishment of loss only:” that is, “the loss of the presence of God.”|| “Since, then,” adds this defender of the Papacy, “infants are without reason, so that they cannot imitate the sins of their fathers, and are nevertheless punished with the most severe of all punishments, that is to say, *death temporal and eternal*; it necessarily follows that they have some other sin, for which they are justly punished: and this is what we call *original sin*. It cannot, therefore, be

* August. Hypostgnost. Contra Pelag. lib. V. tom. iii. Col. 1405. C. Basil, 1569.

† See Cramp’s Hist. of Council of Trent, p. 129, and the works quoted.

‡ Concil. Trid. Sess. VII. can. v. p. 51. Romæ, 1564.

§ Catechismus ad Parochos, pp. 189, 191. Lugduni, 1579.

|| Bellarm. de Purgat l. II. chap. vi. tom. ii. p. 410. A. Coloniz. 1628.

doubted that infants (for whom it is shown from the word of Christ and apostolical tradition that *Baptism is necessary*,) have sin, which they bring with them from their mother's womb."* This belief passed down to the Reformed Churches, and was at first very generally held. The Church of England placed the unbaptized on the same footing with the suicide and the excommunicated, and denied to them the office of burial.† And this still continues to be the doctrine of the church, and of all high-church prelatists who agree on this subject with the Romanists. "Without baptism," say the Oxford Tracts, "none can enter the kingdom of heaven."‡ "And so momentous is this dogma in their judgment, that one leading object," says Mr. Bridges, himself an Episcopalian, "of their great movement confessedly was to bring it more fully before the church."§ The question of the future condition of infants became thus involved with that of baptism, and was not considered upon its own merits. Ecclesiastics, who were secluded from all personal interest in domestic life, were of course insensible to the happiness connected with the enjoyment of children, or to

* Bellarm. de Amiss. Gratiae et Statu Peccati. lib. IV. c. 7. tom. iv. p. 61. G. 62. B.

† See Burns' Eccles. Law, vol. i. p. 266, and Wheatley on the Book of Prayer, p. 477.

‡ Vol. i. p. 260. See also Dr. Pusey's work on Baptism, *passim*, Bethel on Baptismal Regeneration, pp. 7, 8, 9, &c.

§ See his Sacramental Instruction, p. 46, 47, where he quotes a host of authorities, including Perceval, Keble, Dr. Pusey, Sewell, Bishop Mant, &c. It would even appear that some evangelical Episcopalians of our present day are unwilling to say anything about the future condition of *unbaptized* children who die in infancy. See the Churchman's Monthly Rev. May 1843, p. 372. This doctrine of the *absolute* necessity of baptism to salvation was established in the Western church by papal authority, and was retained in the English church after the reformation, until the year 1604, when it was declared to be necessary "where it may be had." See Hallow on the Order of Baptism, &c., and Ogelby on Lay Baptism, p. 159, 160, &c.

the distress consequent upon their loss. The fate of children awakened, therefore, but a relative interest, as it affected other truths considered of more importance.

The horror naturally associated with this fearful doctrine was nevertheless very early felt, and at different times manifested. Various theories were adopted to throw over it a veil of charity, and to render it more tolerable to the wounded spirit of mourning parents. In the time of Augustine, Vincentius, Victor and some others believed that infants dying without baptism might, notwithstanding, be saved.* This opinion was favoured by some of the School Divines, in reference to cases where baptism could not be had, inasmuch as it was the will of the parents that it should be enjoyed.† Bernard, Biel, Cajetan, and some others, adopted this charitable supposition.‡ And so also did Peter Martyr, Wickliffe, the Hussites, and the Lollards, who adopted, preached, and suffered for, ALL those doctrines which are *now* denominated Calvinistic. But this opinion has been considered as involving unconquerable difficulties. Jeremy Taylor says, "What will be the condition of unbaptized infants, so dying, I do not profess to know or teach, because God hath kept it as a secret."§ Baxter, with all his charity, and perhaps too liberal views of Christian doctrine, could only go so far on this subject as to say, "I think that no man can *prove* that all unbaptized infants are damned or denied heaven. Nay, I think I can prove a promise to the contrary." Beyond "penitent believers and their seed," he says, "what God may do for others unknown

* See Jer. Taylor's Works, vol. ix. p. 90.

† See list of in Hooker's Works, vol. ii. p. 219.

‡ Jer. Taylor's Works, vol. ix. p. 91 and 93.

§ Jeremy Taylor's Works, p. 92.

to us, we have nothing to do with, but his Covenant hath made no other promise that I can find.”* Similar were the sentiments of Bishop Hopkins: “Not only infants baptized,” says he, “but all infants of *believing* parents, though they should *unavoidably* die before baptism, are in the same safe and blessed condition.” This, however, is the extent to which he could apply his hopes.†

To this charitable view of the matter, which Calvinists, and Calvinistic Churches generally adopted, the Pelagians could not fully assent.‡ They excluded infants when unbaptized from the kingdom of heaven, but promised to them an eternal and a natural beatitude. This opinion was embraced by Ambrosius Catharinus, Albertus Pighius, and Hieronymus Savanarola, Gregory Nazianzen, Athanasius, Ambrose, Pope Innocent III., and others.§ Hence arose the present doctrine of the Romish Church, which teaches that there is a *limbus patrum*, or place on the borders of hell, for those who had believed in Christ before his advent; and a *limbus infantum*, for children who die unbaptized.

When the mists, however, which had gathered round the ordinance of baptism were gradually dispersed, this subject was examined on more impartial grounds. The natural feelings of the heart were permitted to declare their interest in the decision of the question. The hope expressed by Wickliffe in reference to unbaptized children was eagerly embraced by his followers, who were all Calvinists, and who all re-

* See Works, vol. v. p. 326 and 323.

† See Works, vol. ii. p. 429.

‡ See the Articles of the Synod of Dort, with Scott's Notes. Works of Scott, vol. viii. p. 576.

§ See Jer. Taylor, vol. ix. p. 90.

garded baptism in its truly simple and scriptural character. Zuinglius was perhaps the first who proclaimed hope for the salvation of ALL INFANTS, WHETHER CHRISTIAN OR HEATHEN, who died in their infancy, and before they became chargeable with the guilt of actual transgression. He maintained, that in consequence of the atonement of Christ offered for all, "original sin does not even damn the children of the heathen." For this conclusion concerning children generally, Zuinglius quotes Romans v.; though he admits that we have but little light upon the subject. He rejects the idea that baptism washes away original sin and condemnation. The blessing, he says, is not tied to signs and symbols; baptism *recognizes* and *attests* the privilege rather than *confers* it. "What scriptural authority," he asks, "is there for ascribing such an effect to baptism?" "The words of Mark xvi. 16," says he, "relate to those only to whom the gospel was sent. They that hear the gospel and believe it were blessed; they who hear it, and believe it not, are accursed. But this is no prejudice to election, for both they who come to Christ are drawn to him by the Father, which is election: and they who come to the Father are chosen by him; but so that they may at length come to him by Christ. The (infant) children of Christians are the children of God by virtue of the covenant. Concerning the children of heathens, we decide nothing: though I confess that I incline to the sentiment which considers the death of Christ as available to the salvation of all who are free from actual sin."* For this doctrine Bossuet charges Zuinglius with being a Pelagian, and pronounces this a

* See Epist. fo. 17, 18. Zuingl. Op. 1. 382, and Scott's *Contin. of Milner*, vol. iii. p. 143, 144, 146.

“strange decision.”* This opinion of Zuinglius excited considerable controversy.† Eckard says, “*perhaps* Zuinglius pronounced too liberally when he included the children of the heathen.” The same doctrine was, however, maintained by Cornelius Wigger, and by John Iac-Schultens, who embraced in the decree of predestination to eternal life those who die in infancy, whether born of Gentile or Infidel parents. This was the declared sentiment of Arminius,‡ Triglandius, Walders, Heidanus, Curcelleus, Maresius.§ Maresius says, “The question is, whether the decree of Election and Reprobation affects infants. There is not the smallest ground from Scripture to think it does. Let parents then be comforted for departed children. These words of Christ, (“of such is the Kingdom of Heaven,”) why are they so general, but that they seem to include the children not only of believers but of unbelievers also.”||

The Remonstrants believed that such infants as were not entitled to heaven by their relation to the covenanted mercies of God, would be consigned only to the punishment of loss, their bodies not being raised, and their souls not being annihilated, yet being eternally separated from the beatific vision of God.¶

Many, however, regarded the decision of this question as presumptuous. They left the whole matter in the hands of God, determining nothing one way or another, but quieting themselves with the assurance, that as far as God’s purpose of salvation extended it would be secured; and that infants, as far as included in it, would be assuredly ransomed. Infants were, however,

* See Hist. Var., vol. i. p. 66.

† See an account of in De Moor’s Comment, vol. ii. p. 104, &c.

‡ See ditto.

§ See ditto.

|| See ditto, p. 105.

¶ See ditto, p. 104.

universally regarded as involved in all the guilt of original sin, and as requiring for their salvation the exercise of the same mercy, and the bestowment of the same grace, as adults. They were described by some as, "*damnabilibus et forte quibus dum etiam damnandis.*" But even when infants were included by any in the decree of Reprobation, their punishment was believed to consist, not in the positive infliction of misery, but only in the deprivation of heavenly rewards.*

Calvin clearly recognized the fact that all infants are involved in the guilt of Adam's sin, and therefore *liable* to the misery in which it has involved our race. But at the same time he encourages the belief that they are redeemed from these evils by Christ, are capable of regeneration, and are, when taken away in infancy, "redeemed by the blood of the Lamb." He argues against those who, like the Anabaptists, asserted that regeneration cannot take place in early infancy. For says he, "if they must be left among the children of Adam, they are left in death, for in Adam we can only die. On the contrary, Christ commands them to be brought to him. Why? because he is life. To give them life therefore he makes them partakers of himself, while these men, by driving them away from him, adjudged them to death."† He then goes on to prove, by incontestible arguments, that infants both have been, and can be, regenerated by God. And in his Commentary on the words of our Saviour, "Of such, &c.," without any limitation of his meaning, he unequivocally declares, that "God adopts infants and washes them in the blood of his Son," and that "they

* See Stapfer, vol. iv. p. 518. On the ground of their condemnation, see Buddeus Theol. Dogm. p. 591.

† See Institutes, B. IV. ch. XVI.

are regarded by Christ as among his flock." "In this passage," he adds, "Christ is not speaking of the general guilt in which all the descendants of Adam are involved, but only threatening the despisers of the gospel who proudly and obstinately reject the grace that is offered them; and this has nothing to do with infants. I likewise oppose a contrary argument: all those whom Christ blesses are exempted from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God; and as it is known that infants were blessed by him, it follows that they are exempted from death."*

Certain it is, that Calvinists were foremost in overthrowing the dogma that baptism was essentially connected with salvation, and in establishing the truth, that want of it does not militate against their future safety.† It is well known that the former opinion is still extensively held by those who are opposed to Calvinistic sentiments. On this subject Scott in answer to Bp. Tomline, remarks, "a *few* presumptuous, extravagant Calvinists have spoken shocking things of the damnation of infants: but to consign the innumerable multitudes of those all over the world, and in every age, who die before they commit actual sin, and die unbaptized, to eternal damnation, is far more shocking. Even *such* Calvinists may suppose *some* of these children to be elect and saved: but the sentiment that none dying when infants, except such as have been baptized are saved, excludes them all."‡ "The most unfeeling supra-lapsarian never ventured on so dire an

* Institutes, book iv. chap. 16, sec. 31, vol. ii. p. 460. See also pp. 461, 456, 436, 435.

† See Cartwright's reply to Hooker on this subject, in Hanbury's Hooker, vol. ii. p. 221. See also, Bp. Hopkins' Works, vol. ii. p. 429; Davenant on Col., vol. ii. p. 448; Heywood's Works, vol. iv. p. 447; Pictet's Theology, p. 399.

‡ See Works, vol. vii. p. 502.

opinion as to consign *all* the unbaptized infants, in every age and nation, to eternal misery.”* This is the language of a Calvinist addressed to that large body of his own church who oppose Calvinism, and take occasion to impeach its charity. Some Calvinists, it is true, have in former times avoided the decision on this question, leaving dying infants in the hands of a merciful God. But, “why,” asks the same writer, “might not these Calvinists have as favourable a hope of all infants dying before actual sin as Anti-Calvinists can have?”† What doctrine of the most rigid Calvinism is there, with which such a hope can possibly militate? Is it the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, whereby is attributed to him all power and right of dominion over his creatures, to dispose of them, and to extend or withhold favour, as seemeth to him good—but why may it not please God, in the exercise of this sovereignty, to extend his favour to all dying infants? Is it the doctrine of election, whereby God, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in due time, hath, in Christ, chosen some men to eternal life and the means thereof—but why may not dying infants be among these chosen ones? Is it the doctrine of the divine decrees, whereby, for his own glory, God hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass, especially concerning angels and men—but why may not the salvation of all dying infants have been thus decreed? Is it the doctrine of God’s free and rich grace, whereby the holiness, obedience, and righteousness of Christ are imputed to us for justification; and inherent grace is wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, in regeneration;—but why may not this grace be imparted to all dying infants? If God gives

* See Works, vol. x. p. 407.

† Do. vol. viii. p. 573.

us hope for such in his blessed Word, then is it not manifest that their salvation, instead of being thrown upon the contingency of human will; or being made dependent upon human effort; or connected with the moral character or personal agency of infants themselves; or left at hazard, through the indifference or neglect, of men;—is based by these doctrines upon the unchangeable purpose, and the all-sufficient grace of God; and is therefore rendered GLORIOUSLY CERTAIN to the bereaved and mourning spirit of the disconsolate parent? If, however, rejecting these doctrines (which Calvinists love because doctrines of the Bible) we make election to rest on the foreknowledge of good works;—or moral character to depend on moral conduct;—and salvation to be limited, in its flow, to the channel of Christian ordinances;—then what hope can be entertained for those who have been taken away while as yet they could not discern good from evil;—while without any moral character, and thus wholly unfit for enjoyment or reward;—and while, as “nameless things,” they have never passed through the “purifying entrance” to the kingdom of heaven? We answer—none that is reasonable or satisfactory.

But on the ground of Calvinism this hope is all that can be desired, and arises most naturally from its principles. “In perfect consistency,” says Dr. Harris, in his Essay on this subject, “with their theological creed, have some Calvinists entertained the *opinion* advocated in the preceding pages; while others, expressing a hope of its truth *to the full extent*, have discovered the wished-for *evidence*, in favour of the children of pious persons only; but none of any consideration are known to have maintained, or even allowed, that the inference in question (i. e. the damnation of *any* infants) is an evident and necessary deduction from Cal-

vinistic doctrines. In direct opposition to what must, therefore, be considered an unfounded aspersion, it would require but little labour to prove, that the great peculiarities of this system, supply the MOST TENABLE AND SATISFACTORY GROUNDS OF HOPE FOR THE SALVATION OF ALL WHO DEPART THIS LIFE ANTECEDENT TO PERSONAL TRANSGRESSION."

I would here quote the language of one of our oldest and most thoroughly Calvinistic Divines, the celebrated William Perkins, a Puritan: "Infants have no works whereby they may be judged, seeing they do neither good nor evil, as the Scripture speaketh of Jacob and Esau, Rom. ix. 11. Therefore all shall not be judged according to works. Ans. These phrases of Scripture, *as a man sows, so shall he reap: every one shall receive according to his works*, &c. are not to be extended to all, but must be restrained to such as have works, and knowledge to discern betwixt good and evil, which, infants have not. For besides that they are destitute of works, they also want the use of reason; and therefore they shall not be judged by the book of conscience, but by the book of life. For to say as *Hugo de S. Vict.* doth upon the Romanes, *quaest.* 59, that they shall be condemned for the sins which their parents committed in their conception and nativity, as though they themselves had actually committed them, is contrary to that, *Ezek.* xviii. 20., The son shall not bear the iniquity of the Father.

"Again, some may say, if children do not apprehend Christ's benefits by their parent's faith; how then is Christ's righteousness made theirs and they saved? Ans. By the inward working of the Holy Ghost, who is the principal applier of all graces, whereas faith is but the instrument. As for the places of Scripture that mention justification and salvation by faith, they

are to be restrained to men of years: whereas infants dying in their infancy, and therefore wanting actual faith, which none can have without actual knowledge of God's will and word, are no doubt saved by some other special working of God's Holy Spirit, not known to us." "Infants," he adds, "already elected, albeit they, in the womb of their mother before they were born, or presently after, depart this life, they, I say, being after a secret and unspeakable manner, by God's spirit engrafted into Christ, obtain eternal life." 1 Cor. xii. 13. Luke i. 35, 41, 64, and Jer. i. 5.*

And equally strong speaks the great Coryphaeus of Calvinism, who carried out its principles to their extremest limits, I mean the celebrated Toplady. In his vindication of the Church of England from Arminianism, he had asserted his belief in the salvation of all infants dying in infancy. This opinion his opponents interpreted as involving the doctrine of general redemption. "As if," says Toplady, "all died in infancy." "I testify my firm belief, that the souls of all departed infants are with God in glory: that, in the decree of predestination to life, God hath included all whom he intended to take away in infancy; and that the decree of reprobation hath nothing to do with them."†

"In the mean while (says he) I should be obliged if he would, with the help of Mr. Wesley's irradiation, show me what becomes of departed infants, upon the Arminian plan of conditional salvation, and election of good works foreseen."

Dr. Gill, who resembled Toplady in carrying out the principles of Calvinism to their extremest limit, also resembled him in holding this comfortable view of the doctrine of election. In his *Complete Body of*

* Works, Fol. vol. iii. p. 386. Vol. ii p. 127, and vol. i. p. 77.

† Ditto, vol. i. p. 207.

Practical and Doctrinal Divinity, he makes the following remark on the case of infants dying in infancy : “ Now such a number as they are, can never be thought to be brought into being in vain, God is and will be glorified in them ; now though their election is a secret to us, and unrevealed, it may be reasonably supposed, yea in a judgment of charity it may rather be concluded, that they are all chosen, than that none are. But the election of them cannot be owing to their faith, holiness, obedience, good works, and perseverance, or to the foresight of these things, which do not appear in them.”

I may *refer* also to the sentiments of Tyndale, the Translator of the New Testament into English ;* of Pictet the learned Professor of Geneva ;† to the touching letter of Whitefield on the death of his infant son ;‡ of Watts to a lady bereaved of several infant children ; and of the pious Rutherford to a lady on the loss of a daughter ;§ of Addington,|| and of Robert Hall ;¶ of Howe,** and of Cotton Mather,†† Buchanan,‡‡ and these are all Calvinists.

It may be well, however, to add a few more quotations from Calvinistic writers. Dr. Williams, in his “ Defence of Modern Calvinism ” against the attacks and misrepresentations of Bishop Tomline, at p. 75, says : “ That they [infants] are capable of regeneration indeed, is admitted, as well as of remission, justification,

* See Works, vol. ii. p. 516.

† See his Theol. B. xi. Chap. iv. pp. 494, 495, and p. 444, 445.

‡ See Life of, by Philip.

§ See Letters, Part 2, Letter iii.

|| Work on Baptism, p. 62–64, 67,* 76.

¶ Works, vol. i. p. 88, 89.

** Works of John Howe, vol. iv. p. 4, 5, and vol. vii. p. 544, 5.

†† See quoted afterwards.

‡‡ Rev. James Buchanan of Edinburgh, in his *Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*, Part. 1, ch. viii. on the Regeneration of Infants.

holiness of nature, and heavenly blessedness ; and we reflect with pleasure, that the Holy Scriptures afford many encouraging intimations relative to the salvation of dying infants—whether baptized or not. Though *they* have no hope, *we* have hope concerning them.” The same view is also presented in that noble defence of Calvinistic doctrine, the Lime Street Lectures, where it is said, “ an elect infant is as capable of being effectually called, or renewed by grace, of being freely justified, and for ever glorified, as a grown person.”* Again, at another place, the subject is more fully discussed—“ As for infants, we take it for granted, in the present argument, that they are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity ; that that which is born of the flesh, is flesh ; that they are, by reason of the disobedience of the first man, sinners, and so unworthy of, and unmeet for, the heavenly glory, and must be excluded from it, unless washed in the blood of Jesus and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. To suppose them all, or indeed any of them, to perish IS TO BE CRUELLY WISE ABOVE WHAT IS WRITTEN : and to imagine they are so holy, as to need no cleansing, or that any thing defiled can enter into heaven, is directly flying in the face of Scripture : so that, though we are not told positively what is their portion ; yet WE MAY SAFELY DETERMINE THAT THEY ARE MADE MEET, IF IN HEAVEN, FOR THAT INHERITANCE WHICH IS INCORRUPTIBLE AND UNDEFILED.”

I will only add to these authorities the following remarkable quotation from the National Covenant adopted in Scotland in the year 1581, again in 1590, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1650 and 1651. “ But,” says this venerable document, in detailing the enormous errors

* P. 279, 280, Eng. ed.

of the Roman Antichrist, "in special we detest and refuse his cruel judgment against infants departing without the Sacrament, and his absolute necessity of baptism," &c.*

Dr. Junkin, also, of the Presbyterian Church in this country, and one of the strongest defenders of strict old-fashioned Calvinism, in his late work on the doctrine of Justification, heads his 10th chapter thus : "Original Sin—proved from the salvation of those that die in infancy." "It is not inconsistent," says he, "with any doctrine of the Bible, that the souls of deceased infants go to heaven." "As to the opinion that ALL who die in infancy, BOTH CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS, CHRISTIANS AND PAGANS, go to happiness and heaven, it may be harmlessly entertained; it may however operate an evil influence upon the minds of wicked and unbelieving parents." "While therefore I have no objection to the opinion that *all* who die in infancy go to happiness, yet I must think that in reference to the infants of *unbelievers*, it is mere opinion, although it is in all probability an opinion according to truth."†

The Rev. Thomas Scott the author of the Commentary, and another of the boldest defenders of the Calvinistic doctrines, says, "I do not propose it as an article of faith; for it is not expressly revealed (though it appears to be favoured in scripture) that as infants, without actual transgression, are involved in the ruin of our race by the first Adam, so infants, as such, dying before actual transgression, before they are capable of knowing right from wrong, are, without personal repentance and faith, but not without regeneration, made partakers of the salvation of the second Adam.

* See Irving's Confessions, p. 135.

† P. 141, 143.

I do not say, 'It is so;' but, 'probably it may be so.' And, when we consider what a large proportion of the human race, in every age and nation, die in infancy, it appears to me a cheering thought."

Thus, also, speaks Newton: "I hope you are both well reconciled to the death of your child. Indeed, I cannot be sorry for the death of *infants*. How many storms do they escape! Nor can I doubt, in my private judgment, that they are included in the election of grace. Perhaps those who die in infancy are the exceeding great multitudes of all people, nations, and languages mentioned (Rev. vii. 9.) in distinction from the visible body of professing believers, who were marked in their foreheads, and openly known to be the Lord's."

But these quotations it is unnecessary to multiply. In the Presbyterian and other Calvinistic churches, including the Congregational, which embrace the doctrinal portions of the Westminster Confession of Faith, there is, it is true, no *canonical* determination on this subject. This Confession says: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the spirit."* It teaches, therefore, THE CERTAINTY OF THE SALVATION OF ALL INFANTS, WHO ARE ELECT. It also teaches that baptism is not necessarily connected with grace and salvation, and that exclusion from it does not exclude from regeneration.† It teaches further that infants, though incapable of exhibiting their faith, may be regenerated.‡ It leaves every one therefore from an examination of the Scriptures to decide how far the electing love of God extends. At this time it is, I suppose, universally believ-

* Ch. 10, sec. 3.

† Ch. 28, sec. 5.

‡ See note 3, and see Larachi Op. Tom. ii. p. 47. Dick's Theol. vol. iv. p. 75, and Calvin's Instit. 13, 4.

ed by Presbyterians, and those who hold to the doctrine of election, that all dying infants are included among the elect, are made heirs of grace, and become members of the kingdom of heaven. I, at least, am not acquainted with any who hold an opposite sentiment. Possibly, when the doctrine is extended to the infants of Heathen parents, some might not be prepared *fully* to concur in it; but that there is ground from Scripture to believe that even *they* are included in the promises of Divine mercy, and are, as Mr. Toplady confidently says, "all undoubtedly saved," is, I have no doubt, an opinion to which Presbyterians will, *generally*, subscribe. The opposite opinion, which has been maintained by *some* Calvinists, in common with many Arminians of *former days*, and which is held by the Roman Catholic Church *at the present time*, may be most certainly regarded, as a recent writer has said, as "an excrescence, and not an essential feature, of the system of Calvinism."

The assertion, however, is still frequently and most slanderously published, that Calvinists believe that children, dying in infancy, are damned; that this is the doctrine of our confession of faith; and that Calvin expressly taught that there are infants in hell only a span long. Nothing, however, can be more untrue. As to the opinion of Calvinists, we have shown that it is now universally in favour of the hope that all children dying in infancy are saved through the merits of Christ's death, applied by the Holy Ghost. Calvin, also, as has been shown, was among the very first of the reformers to overthrow the unchristian and most horrible doctrine of the Romish and High-church divines, that no unbaptized infant can be saved; to maintain the possibility of their regeneration by the Spirit without baptism; and to encourage the hope of

their general salvation. And as to the passage in the Westminster Confession of Faith, which is supposed to teach the damnation of infants, it is contained in ch. x. sec. 3, and is as follows :

“Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth. So also are all other elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the Ministry of the Word.”

The subject of this chapter is “effectual calling,” by which, it is believed, that “all those whom God hath predestinated unto life he is pleased, in his appointed time, effectually to call out of that state of sin and death in which they are, by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ,” &c. (See Sect. I.)—The Confession proceeds in Sect. 2d, to say : “This effectual call is of God’s free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.”

Now the objection which would naturally arise in the mind against this doctrine, would be this—If this is so, then does not this doctrine apparently exclude infants from any participation in this salvation, since they clearly are not capable of obeying this call, and of embracing this offered grace. The Confession, therefore, proceeds to obviate this objection by showing that, as this calling in itself considered, and the power and the disposition to answer this call, and embrace the grace conveyed in it, is a different thing from that answer and embrace—there is no more difficulty in bestowing this quickening and renewing influence of the Holy Spirit upon infants than upon adults. In-

infants as well as adults may be thus effectually called and regenerated, though adults only are in a state fitting them to act upon this call by the exercise of their renewed powers and sanctified will. Regenerated infants are equally, with adults, endued with a renewed and holy disposition, which will develope itself, when the subject is capable, in holy acts. Our Confession, therefore, wisely, charitably, and scripturally concludes, that this grace is co-extensive with God's electing love and mercy, and is bestowed upon the objects of that love, whether they are removed from this world in a state of infancy, or of maturity. It overthrows the doctrine of Romanists, High Church Episcopalians, and others, who teach that this grace of salvation, by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, is tied down and limited—*first*, by what they most vainly and arrogantly call the only true Church, to wit, the Romanist or Episcopal Churches, and *secondly* by the ordinances of baptism as administered in these churches; and what the passage does decide, is, as Calvinists now universally agree in believing, THAT THERE IS EVERY REASONABLE GROUND TO HOPE THAT ALL INFANTS DYING IN INFANCY ARE INCLUDED IN THE DECREE OF ELECTION AND ARE MADE PARTAKERS OF EVER-LASTING LIFE.* This, then, is the view of Calvinists; and while it favours the most unbounded charity and hope, it rests that hope, not upon any thing in the infant itself, nor upon any thing done for it by any church, but upon the sure purpose of a merciful God, and the comfortable promises and declarations of his word.

* Thus Dr. Cumming, of the Scotch Church in London, has lately published a Discourse to prove that ALL CHILDREN DYING IN INFANCY, OR BEFORE THE YEARS OF RESPONSIBILITY, ARE, WITHOUT ONE EXCEPTION OR LIMITATION AS TO THE CHARACTER OR THE CONDUCT OF THE PARENTS, SAVED.

AMONG ALL EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS THIS OPINION IS NOW RECEIVED. We have given the names of Evangelical Episcopalians. Gillard, whose treatise I have mentioned, was, I presume, both a Baptist and a Calvinist. Dr. Gill's sentiments have been alluded to, and they are quoted with approbation in the Baptist Confession of Faith. The Rev. Robert Robinson, who has written the History of Baptism, thus expresses himself: "Various opinions concerning the future state of infants have been adopted. The most probable opinion seems to be, that they are *all* saved through the merit of the Mediator, with an everlasting salvation. This hath nothing in it contrary to the perfections of God, or to any declarations of the holy scriptures; and it is highly agreeable to all those passages, which affirm, *where sin hath abounded, grace hath much more abounded*. On these principles, the death of Christ saves more than the fall of Adam lost."

Wesley does not appear to have determined this question at all. The salvation of all dying in infancy is, however, the prevalent belief among his followers. The Rev. Richard Watson, who is deservedly regarded as the ablest writer, and as a standard authority among the Methodists, very powerfully advocates this opinion.*

This is also the established belief of the Lutheran Church,† as it is of the Quaker denomination.‡

But whence, we ask, arose this community of opinion? It originated, as has been shown, among the

* See his Institutes, vol. ii. p. 228, and vol. iii. p. 72.

† See Schmucker's Theology, 128, and p. 220. Storr & Flatt's Theology, sec. 68, p. 394. Mosheim wrote a treatise, which we have not seen, on this subject.

‡ See Barclay's Apology.

Calvinists. The battle for liberty and charity of opinion against the dogmas of the church was fought by them. Even when light had not irradiated the subject, and it was still shrouded in the darkness of prejudice, many Calvinists, rather than yield to the gloom of the generally entertained opinion that all unbaptized infants perish, groped about for any possible theory that might relieve them of their distress. Some, as I have shown, threw a veil of impenetrable darkness over the whole subject, and regarded an entrance upon its examination as presumption.* Others were induced to believe that the souls of all such children would be annihilated.† Others, that their souls remained in a state of insensibility either to good or evil.‡ All advocated the *possibility* of their salvation—the *practicability* of their regeneration—and all denied the absolute necessity of baptism to either. And can any one deny that the present clear and settled views on this subject have been introduced by Calvinists? Let him only remember that every one of the works and discourses on the subject to which I have alluded, were written by Calvinists; that almost all the selections I have been enabled to collect are from writers holding the same views; and that much even of the finest of our Poetical Selections, are from authors whose muse was guided by Calvinistic views. Our work, in fact, may be regarded as a noble testimony to the truly scriptural and CHARITABLE nature of those much abused, because misunderstood, doctrines which most Evangelical churches agree in adopting. And surely it may be expected, that these facts will give joy and consolation to those christians whose ideas of Calvinism have been

* See De Moor, Stapfer, Doddridge, (sec. 168,) Baxter.

† This was Dr. Watts' laboured hypothesis. See his Works.

‡ Dr. Ridgley advocated this opinion. See his Divinity.

such as to lead them to cherish the prejudices that are so commonly and so ignorantly entertained, and enable them to cherish more kind and liberal feelings towards Calvinistic churches.

And that the reader may still more clearly perceive how much bereaved parents are indebted to Calvinism for the present comfortable and established hopes for dying infants, let me call his attention to the conflicting opinions which once prevailed on this much controverted subject, as they are given by Baxter :

“Some think that all infants (baptized or not) are saved from hell, and positive punishment, but are not brought to heaven, as being not capable of such joys.

“Some think that all infants (dying such) are saved as others are, by actual felicity in heaven, though in a lower degree. Both these sorts suppose that Christ’s death saveth all that reject it not, and that infants reject it not.

“Some think that all unbaptized infants do suffer the ‘*pœnam damni*,’ and are shut out of heaven and happiness, but not sensibly punished or cast into hell. For this Jansenius hath wrote a treatise ; and many other Papists think so.

“Some think that all the children of sincere believers dying in infancy are saved, (that is, glorified,) whether baptized or not ; and no others.

“Some think that God hath not at all revealed what he will do with any infants.

“Some think that all the adopted and bought children of true Christians, as well as the natural, are saved (if baptized, say some ; or if not, say others.)

“Some think that elect infants are saved, and no other.

“Some think that all that the pastor dedicateth to God are saved.

"Some think that this is to be limited to all that have right to baptism 'coram Deo;' which some think the Church's reception giveth them.

"And some think it is to be limited to those that have right 'coram ecclesia,' or are rightfully baptized."

Bereaved Parent! what would be the aggravation of your distress if still plunged in this vortex of conflicting opinions? and how much, therefore, should it add to your patient resignation to the will of God in the removal of your children, when you find that ALL BRANCHES OF THE PROTESTANT EVANGELICAL CHURCH, HAVE NOW COME TO A COMMON AND UNITED BELIEF, THAT THERE IS EVERY REASON TO HOPE, THAT, IN SO DOING, GOD HAS SECURED THEIR SALVATION, AND WOULD ALSO LEAD TO YOUR SPIRITUAL AND EVERLASTING GOOD.

It will be our object, then, to illustrate this subject, and to prove the salvation of those who die before they reach the age of personal responsibility, or in other words, before they become, properly speaking, moral agents. It is by no means pretended that we can precisely specify the exact period when personal accountability commences. This will vary in different individuals, according to the degree of natural faculties of which they are severally possessed, and according to the means which they have enjoyed for their development. Some may be as accountable when but a few years old, as others are when double their age. It is for parents then to begin as soon as practicable to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to seek to instil into their tender minds the truths of the gospel; and to bear them on their hearts at the throne of the heavenly grace; and then the event may be left with confidence in the hands of the God of all mercy and faithfulness."

In doing this, however, let none imagine that we are about to lose sight of any of the great doctrines of the evangelical system, and be thereby led to entertain doubts or prejudices against our views.

To use the words of Dr. Russell, in his valuable Essay on this subject, "Though the great question is, 'What saith the scriptures?' and not, What saith this or the other reformer? yet, as names are sometimes used as the means of reproaching the innocent, and misleading the unwary, and the uninformed, it may be proper to state, that there is nothing in the great peculiarities of the system commonly called moderate Calvinism which is in the least incompatible with the salvation of infants. On the contrary, that system, as now held by its enlightened advocates, furnishes the most tenable and satisfactory grounds for the pleasing persuasion, that all who die without personal transgression, are written in the Lamb's book of life. Accordingly, very many of its most *decided friends* have avowed their conviction of this, in relation to all dying in infancy. And even some of the very highest, if not even hyper-Calvinists, have expressed themselves favourably in regard to it.—This, for instance, has been done by Dr. Gill, who says, 'that many unguarded expressions have been dropped, concerning the punishment of such, which are not at all to the credit of truth.*' Mr. Toplady, to whom we have already referred, has given an explanation of our Lord's admonition in Matth. xviii. 10, which (supposing it to be just) affords a direct proof of the sentiment in question. 'Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.' He understands by their angels,

* Body of Divinity, vol. ii. p. 543.

‘the souls of such children as die in their infancy,’ who upon their bodies being previously ‘dislodged by death, do always behold the face of God, who is in heaven.’* Now, whatever may be thought of this interpretation of the passage, or of the word *angel*, in this ‘connexion, (which some think is supported by Acts xii. 15,) it will be allowed, that the salvation of infants was not considered by this writer as inconsistent even with the high views which he connected with the doctrine of election, and in the defence of which he was so active and zealous. In other parts of his works, he expresses his full conviction, that all dying in infancy are saved through Christ. It must be very uncandid, then, to represent a man as inimical to the principles of what is called modern or moderate Calvinism, because he believes in the salvation of departed infants, when the sentiment has been held by some of the keenest defenders of the very highest Calvinism.† It may be added, that the opposite sentiment has not been exclusively held by persons of one school of theology, for not a few Anti-Calvinists have held, that a great proportion of those who die in infancy, are at least excluded from the benefits of redemption. The question of course is, on what grounds do the respective advocates of these different views rest their particular sentiments? That some maintain the universal salvation of deceased infants on unscriptural grounds is true, but is this a reason for charging all who hold the sentiment with those errors, in the face of evidence sufficient to satisfy every candid mind, that they rest it on grounds altogether different? It were well, if some of the friends of Calvinism would take the advice

* Historic proof of the Calvinism of the Church of England. *Introd.* p. 78.

† *Toplady's Works*, vol. i. pp. 101, 207, 208.

given by Bishop Horsley to his enemies, 'Take special care before you aim your shafts at Calvinism that you know what it is.' Not a few who profess to hold that system, are but little acquainted with it, and confound certain illegitimate inferences drawn from it, with hostility to the system itself, while Anti-Calvinists continue to charge the friends of Calvinism with holding those inferences in the face of repeated denials. This is very unfair. I refer here, in particular, to the doctrine of sovereign reprobation, and to what is connected with it. It is a fact, too, that *some* who wish to be considered the *only* friends of Calvinism, hold sentiments which were by no means held by Calvin, and not seldom represent sentiments as Arminian, which were actually held by him. In a word, let candour be exercised, and never let those be blamed as inimical to a particular system, who may be unwilling to admit some unjust and exceptionable inferences, which have been rashly drawn from it, because they appear to them injurious excrescences, that deform and weaken its strength."

There is, then, every thing to carry the arguments of the following chapters with power and consolation to the heart of every bereaved parent, and thus to shed the bright beams of hope upon the gloom of his sorrow, to take from the death of infants its sting, to disarm their grave of all victory, and to enable their parents to rejoice in the comfortable hope that they are exalted to glory, honour, and immortality.

I never grieve to see an infant die,
Or mark the frost of death within its eye;
'Tis but a messenger—a welcome guest—
To hie its spirit to the world of rest.
Who, who would weep, or mournful heave a sigh,
To watch its progress to its native sky?

Who, who would have it longer stay on earth,
When there awaits it an immortal birth?

Sin, with its dreadful impress, marks our race,
In every form its ravages we trace;
From earliest dawn of life to hoary age,
The fell destroyer vents his fiercest rage.
All, all must die—then wherefore long delay,
And whence the wish to dwell in cumbrous clay?
Why cling to life with such tenacity,
When death but gives a blest eternity?

The gospel consolation meets us here,
To banish doubt and quell each anxious fear:
“As little children such the kingdom is,
Forbid them not, for they shall live in bliss.”
Blest promise to the heart oppressed with pain;
Our loss shall prove but their eternal gain;
And while we shed the sympathetic tear,
They shall arise, and “read their title clear!”

I saw a precious babe convulsed with pain;
I marked the heaving of its little breast;
I saw it wither, waste, and die,
But knew its spirit panted for the sky.
Say, shall we mourn for such a loss as this?
Say, would we stay it from immortal bliss?
Ah! no; but when life's dullsome dreams are o'er,
We'll join it, there to dwell forever more.

“The death of children,” to use the words of Dr. Lawson, another Calvinistic and old divine, “puts a final period to all that we can do for them, but our grief on this occasion is effectually counterbalanced by the consciousness that we have earnestly endeavoured to do what lay in our power whilst they were with us; especially when we have good reason to hope that our prayers for them have not been rejected, and that Divine Mercy led them safe through life and death to a world from whence they would not for a thousand worlds return. I have lost for the rest of my time in

this world some children whose faces I always beheld with pleasure, but I hope, young as they were, they were better fitted for leaving this world than I am. We are authorized by Scripture, without expecting a revelation from God respecting their state, to rejoice in the hope that they are sleeping in Jesus, and living with him, shall be brought with him in the great day of his appearance.”*

Sure, to the mansions of the blest
When *infant* innocence ascends,
Some angel, brighter than the rest,
The spotless spirit's flight attends.
On wings of ecstasy they rise,
Beyond where world's material roll,
Till some fair sister of the skies
Receives the unpolluted soul.

That inextinguishable beam,
With dust united at our birth,
Sheds a more dim, discoloured gleam,
The more it lingers upon earth.
Closed in this dark abode of clay,
The stream of glory faintly burns:—
Not unobserved, the lucid ray
To its own native fount returns.

But when the LORD of mortal breath
Decrees his bounty to resume,
And points the silent shaft of death
Which speeds an infant to the tomb—
No passion fierce, nor low desire,
Has quenched the radiance of the flame;
Back to its God the living fire
Reverts, unclouded as it came.

Fond mourner! be that solace thine!
Let Hope her healing charm impart,
And soothe, with melodies divine,
The anguish of a mother's heart.

* Discourses, p. 23.

O, think ! the darlings of thy love,
Divested of this earthly clod,
Amid unnumbered saints above,
Bask in the bosom of their God.

Of their short pilgrimage on earth
Still tender images remain :
Still, still they bless thee for their birth,
Still filial gratitude retain.
Each anxious care, each rending sigh,
That wrung for them the parent's breast,
Dwells on remembrance in the sky,
Amid the raptures of the blest.

O'er thee, with looks of love, they bend ;
For thee the LORD of life implore :
And oft from sainted bliss descend,
Thy wounded quiet to restore.
Oft in the stillness of the night,
They smooth the pillow of thy bed,
Oft till the morn's returning light
Still watchful hover o'er thy head.

Hark ! in such strains as saints employ,
They whisper to thy bosom peace ;
Calm the perturbed heart to joy,
And bid the streaming sorrow cease.
Then dry, henceforth, the bitter tear :
Their part and thine inverted see,
Thou wert their guardian angel here,
They guardian angels now to thee !

CHAPTER III.

THE NECESSITY FOR DISCUSSING THE DOCTRINE OF THE SAL- VATION OF INFANTS.

O Lord, the message from thy throne has come !
We hear thy voice, and give her back to thee ;
With tears we lay our darling in the tomb ;
In faith her spirit at thy feet we see.

DEATH is one of the profoundest mysteries of Nature. With all the light which science has thrown around it ; with all the increased knowledge we have acquired of its phenomena ; life, in its origin, in its nature, and in its cessation, remains as incomprehensible as ever. We stand amazed at the entrance into our world of a new, living, and active being—the miniature of man—breathing the same air, and exercising the same functions, incapable of instruction, and yet displaying the most perfect knowledge, wholly unable to help himself, and yet exhibiting the most inimitable skill. How then are we filled with horror, when that same being, even in its beauty, “ a thing all health and glee,” is prostrated by some invisible power, upturns its glazed eye, and with the quivering of its soft lip and the convulsion of its little limbs, sinks into the waxen form of death.

Were an inhabitant of some other world, where immortality was the duration of existence, and perpetual bloom the appearance of the outward form, by any chance to visit this ; probably he would first be attracted by the glory of that same God he had ever worshipped, written, as it is, in such lines of magnificence and

beauty upon the heavens above, and upon the firmament around. The same wisdom, goodness and power, in which he had ever rejoiced, would shine forth resplendently from every star, and from every mountain, lake and valley. The same chorus sung by those above, ascribing glory, honour, majesty and praise unto God Most High, would echo from the earth beneath, and swell the anthem of the skies. He would still feel in his own breast the spirit of piety—the spirit of joy, and peace, and devotion ;—and he would still feel that he moved amid the wonders of *His* creating hand who fills the universe with his praise.

But what would be the emotions of this stranger, when he turned his gaze towards the inhabitants of this fair creation ? When he saw sickness or pain—bed-ridden decrepitude, or helpless old age,—when he heard groans and lamentations, the voice of misery and care, or the loud wail of bereavement—in every household ? When he beheld the moving form of strength, and beauty, and intelligence, withered by the blast of death, become pale, motionless, and ghastly—how great would be his unutterable terror ! Surely he would at once conclude that they were a race of bold and hardened sinners, against whom the fierceness of the anger of the Almighty was poured out.

But when he observed yet longer—when he saw man in the innocence of his first young dawn, with rosy lip and cherub eye, his countenance radiant with smiles, and his heart filled with love, as yet unconscious of his relation to his God, and incapable of wilfully offending him,—when he saw this young voyager not yet well launched upon the ocean of life—wrecked upon its very coast, cast among its roughest breakers, shattered by its fiercest storms, and borne into eternity by most disastrous calamity ;—when he saw the cradle, instead of

being a place of rest, converted into a little hospital, and its babe, instead of a gentle sleeper laughing through its sweet dreams of yet untasted happiness, a sufferer torn and agonized by writhing and convulsive torture, with the cup of life dashed from its lips ere it had well tasted of its hopes or its blessings—would he not exclaim, “My God, and can it be! Is not this thine own creation? Are not these thine own offspring? If, then, parents are wicked, and deserve thy wrath, yet surely these ‘innocents’ might be spared their sufferings. What fiend of darkness has gained possession of this earth, and fixed here his empire of horrid cruelty? ‘Thy judgments, O Lord, are a great deep. They are unsearchable, and past finding out.’”

Truly, these feelings would not be strange in such a visitant, at such a sight. They would be our own, were we not familiarized to such scenes of woe. For, while reason might teach us that it was well for those who had outlived the activities and the joys of life to leave it—that they were happy who, ere that period of imbecility arrived, had retired from its coming ills;—yet never could we learn from reason alone that it was right, or that it was well for those who had passed through the painful entrance of life, and had not yet awakened to the realization of its joys, to be driven through its still more painful exit. No! Death is the profoundest mystery of Nature, and the sufferings and death of infants the profoundest mystery of Death.

Nay, my reader, have you not yourself felt, in some hour of sad bereavement, the unsearchable mystery of this dispensation of Providence? I address myself now to those who, like myself, are the parents of children who *were*, but *are not*. When in the very fulness of life, while buoyant with playful mirth, and drinking in the promise of a happy future, and while forming to you

the objects of so many tender solitudes and fond hopes, you saw your beloved child bowed down by the presence of some sudden disease ;—when unable to tell its woes you saw its playfulness forsake it ; its smiles, one by one, depart ; the happy expression of its sweet countenance give place to one of painfulness ; its strength gradually fail ; its voice become too weak to utter even the lisping name of its loved nurse or parent ;—when you watched beside the little sufferer, incredulous that it could die, as it sunk rapidly into insensibility, until at last the glazed eye, the unmoving chest, the pulseless arm, and the inexpressible solemnity of Death startled you into the awful truth that it was gone ;—oh ! in that hour of intensest agony, did there not seem to fall upon a world, ere while fair and bright, one wide covering of gloom ? Did there not appear, amid the busiest haunts of men, to be the silence of desolation ? Did not life cease to have any charms, fortune any attractions, and earth itself any possible endurance ? Did not the full heartswell with unholy murmuring against Him who made you, and who made your offspring, only to make you, as the Evil One would then suggest, miserable by their destruction ? In such circumstances a desolate father, even with christian hopes, but not in the exercise of christian faith, would say,

“ For oh ! to dry a mother’s tears,
Another babe may bloom,
But what remains on earth to him,
Whose last is in the tomb !
To think his child is blest above,
To pray their parting brief,
These, these may *soothe*, but death alone,
Can *heal* a father’s grief.”*

• A Father’s Grief, in Poems, by the Rev. T. Dale.

Is it any wonder that, in such a time of human weakness and woe, when under no guidance or restraint from the truths of a heavenly faith, the Heathen mother will mangle herself with torture, will dishevel herself of all future charms, and cut herself off, if not from life, yet from all future interest in it? * The sorrow of

* This description will not appear exaggerated to those who have had an opportunity of witnessing the workings of nature in the bereaved mother, when its violence is not restrained by the powerful hand of religious principle, or by the presence of other motives exercising a similar control. A father, who was quite respectable and intelligent, but not pious, once said to me, when his child had been taken from him, "My God, what have I done against thee, to deserve this at thy hands." How frequently are parents found under similar circumstances, altogether unwilling to give up their children, and wholly unable to acknowledge the wisdom or goodness which led to their removal. I have seen a mother weep at the recollection of an infant which had been separated from her many years previously. "It is," says Doddridge, "to a parent indeed such a cutting stroke, that I wonder not if nature shrink back at the very mention of it."*

"When once the mind has surmounted the difficulties that press upon it," says a bereaved parent, "it acts with increased vigour and a more enlarged freedom. At first the attention becomes riveted to the mass of breathless clay. With a too intense, but pardonable fondness, it clings, as Doddridge tenderly expresses it, to 'the darling dust.' There is the image of your child; and what a ray of comfort darts across the deep sorrow of the soul, when you can see or say, or hear others say, '*she looks natural!*' Not long will that be true. Those lips once instinct with the warm colouring of life, are now cold and colourless. Would they would remain even so! But no, they must decay, and be hidden in the dust. The cheek that was often pressed to yours in the ardour of filial love, has now on it only the marble chill of death. Oh, how the heart writhes in a paroxysm of agony, when the truth and reality of the thing are felt. Would it were literal marble, that the heart might love *that*; but no, the decay of the grave must deform and dissolve the fair clay. The slumberer will not indeed be sensible to this process, but the living know it. The father knows that the cherished form of his child moulders in the grave. The mother knows that the loved one, whom she bore, and nursed, and fondled, is now buried out of her sight. Such is the sad necessity of death! And it is on these subjects that the mind is too apt to dwell."

Now, if such is the truth in reference to christian communities, how much more violent must be the ebullitions of grief in the hearts of heathen parents, when vice and superstitious belief have not extinguished all maternal affection. That parental feeling survives amid the wreck of every better principle, and actuates the bosom of the pagan mother as

* Doddridge's Works, vol. iii. p. 325.

the world worketh death. Its darkness deepens into the midnight of despair. And the hopes of the glorious

far as she is permitted to manifest it, as powerfully as that of the more civilized and enlightened parent. I might bring many instances to prove this. The following relation by Mr. Rich, in his *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, will be regarded as beyond any possible misinterpretation. Describing a Mussulman acquaintance, he says,

“Mahmood Pasha is, indeed, a very estimable man, and I shall always think of him with affection. His very countenance is indicative of purity, of candour, and simplicity. I never expected to meet with such a man in the East. I fear many such are not to be met with in better climes. There is a melancholy and a tenderness in his character which render him very interesting. He is all feeling. The death of his son he will not readily get over; and I will confidently assert, that no native of the East ever loved his wife and children as he does. Yesterday, he went into the harem for the first time since the unhappy event. A child of his brother's met him, and called him father. That name, and the infantine voice in which it was pronounced, were too much for him; he shrieked and fell senseless to the ground. It must be recollected that all grief is reprobated by the Mahometan religion, which preaches only apathy and sternness; and excess of feeling for a woman or a child is universally despised by the followers of Islam.”

To this affecting narration may be added the testimony of Euripides, who, in “*The Suppliants*,” represents the Iphisu thus speaking:

“Observing other houses
Flourish with children, I grew fond of them,
And wish'd to be a father; had I known,
Had I experienced what a father feels
When of a child bereaved, I had not fallen
Into this present woe. I wish'd, I gained
A Son with every excellence adorned;
Of him I am bereaved.
What shall this wretch now do? Should I return
To my own house? Sad desolation there
I shall behold, to sink my soul with grief.”*

The chorus of bereaved Argive mothers then take up the lamentation:

“Look here, look there; the ashes of my son
Warm from the funeral pile they bring;
Support me,
My female train, support my feeble age.
Grief for my son, long rankling at my heart,
Hath wasted all my strength; a greater grief
Can mortals know, thro' all the various ills

* Potter's Translation, vol. ii. p. 45.

gospel of the blessed God form the only anchor which can hold fast the soul amid the swellings of such a tempest.

Of life than this, to see their children dead.

* * * *

Where now are all a mother's nursing cares,
Her watchings o'er her son, her sleepless nights,
And the fond kiss on his dear cheek impressed ?
All lost ; thy sons too, thou sad mother, lost ;
The ethereal air now has them, from the flames
Nought but this little heap of ashes left.
Too hastily to Pluto's halls they sunk."*

Once more, in his *Rhesus*, Euripides thus represents the muse as speaking :

"Ye pangs that rend a parent's heart, of ills
To mortals the severest, he who deems
Rightly of you, will childless pass through life,
Nor shed a parent's tear on a child's tomb."*

This accords with the account given of Octavia, sister of the Emperor Augustus, the death of whose son Marcellus, threw her into a state of despair, from which she never recovered during the twelve years of mourning in which she survived her child. Cicero himself, prince of philosophers as he was, when deprived of his favourite daughter Tullia, lost all command of himself, gave himself up to the most violent and incurable grief, and had determined to erect a temple to her memory, and worship her as a goddess.

We will close this long note with the following piece from Mrs. Sigourney, which will at the same time, inspire gratitude, and lead to prayerful efforts for the unsolaced heathen :

THE AFRICAN MOTHER AT HER DAUGHTER'S GRAVE.

Some of the Pagan Africans visit the burial places of their departed relatives, bearing food and drink ; and mothers have been known, for a long course of years, to bring, in an agony of grief, their annual oblations to the tombs of their children.

Daughter !—I bring thee food,
The rice-cake pure and white,
The cocoa, with its milky blood,
Dates and pomegranates bright ;
The orange in its gold,
Fresh from thy favourite tree,

* See also Todd's *Truth Made Simple*, p. 89, 90.

"I know not a thought," says Doddridge, "in the whole compass of nature, that hath a more powerful tendency than this, to produce suspicious notions of God, and a secret alienation of heart from him." A very respectable gentleman, not a professor of religion, who lost a little son, said to me, "I have tried to philosophise on the subject, but philosophy will not do." The language of nature, on this subject, is thus spoken by

Nuts in their ripe and husky fold,
Dearest ! I spread for thee.

Year after year I tread
Thus to thy low retreat,
But now the snow-hairs mark my head,
And age enchains my feet ;
Oh ! many a change of woe
Hath dimmed thy spot of birth,
Since first my gushing tears did flow
O'er this thy bed of earth.

But thou art slumbering deep,
And to my wildest cry,
When pierced with agony I cry,
Dost render no reply.
Daughter ! my youthful pride,
The idol of my eye,
Why did'st thou leave thy mother's side
Beneath these sands to lie ?

Long o'er the hopeless grave,
Where her lost darling slept,
Invoking gods that could not save
That pagan mourner wept.
Oh ! for some voice of power
To soothe her bursting sighs,
" There is a resurrection hour !
Thy daughter's dust shall rise !"

Christians !—ye hear the cry
From heathen Afric's strand,
Haste ! lift salvation's banner high
O'er that benighted land ;
With faith that claims the skies
Her misery control,
And plant the hope that never dies,
Deep in her tear-wet soul.

Lamb, when describing "a floweret crushed in the bud, in her coffin lying:" he says,

"Riddle of destiny, who can show,
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?

* * * *

The economy of heaven is dark," &c.*

Could we be present in every part of the globe, we should find that each day ushered its thousands into being, and conducted its thousands out of it;—we should find that of all who are born heirs of mortality, one half are cut off from their inheritance by an early death, and that thus one half of the entire race of man, from its beginning to its close, never live to be men.† Beautiful as the dew-drops of the morning, they pass like them from earth. Fragrant as the breath of spring, they are poisoned by the torrid rays of an ungenial summer. Lovely as the lambkins, bleating after their dams upon the daisied meadow, they are led, like them, to an apparent slaughter. Mystery of mysteries hid from the comprehension of reason, hast thou ever been made known to man? As parents, as mothers and as fathers, or as those who may sustain those tender relations, as relatives and friends, we are all deeply interested in this inquiry.

"Upon the pallid face of the dead infant, there are awfully mysterious hieroglyphics, which reason cannot decypher, at the depth of which nature staggers and grows faint. Christianity alone reads them. She pours from the fountain of truth, living light into each dark

* Works, vol. i. p. 409.

† "We find," says Watts, "more than a third part of the race of man dying before they arrive at two years old, and about half before five."*

* See Philosophy of Death, and Quatelet's Philosophy of Man.

symbol, and illuminates it with the rays of the past, and the lights of the future, showing death once victorious by sin, but now for ever vanquished by Christ." Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the gospel, has brought to us that light by which I feel that I can confidently sustain the answer I would give to the interrogatory of such a perplexed inquirer. CHILDREN ARE TAKEN AWAY IN INFANCY NOT IN ANGER, BUT IN MERCY, AND NOT FOR OUR PUNISHMENT MERELY, BUT MUCH MORE FOR OUR GOOD. Death is to them a kindness, to us a blessing. They are removed from this world in mercy to them and in goodness to us. These are the two points to which I shall now call the attention of my reader.

Pray unto God, my friend, that these considerations may prove comfortable and beneficial to your disconsolate heart.

I cannot make him dead !
His fair sunshiny head
Is ever bounding round my study chair ;
Yet when my eyes, now dim
With tears, I turn to him,
'The vision vanishes—he is not there !

I walk my parlour floor,
And, through the open door,
I hear a footfall on the chamber stair ;
I'm stepping toward the hall,
To give the boy a call,
And then bethink me that—he is not there !

I tread the crowded street,
A satchel'd lad I meet,
With the same beaming eyes and coloured hair ;
And, as he's running by,
Follow him with my eye,
Scarcely believing that—he is not there !

I know his face is hid
Under the coffin lid ;
Closed are his eyes ; cold is his forehead fair ;
My hand that marble felt ;
O'er it in prayer I knelt ;
Yet my heart whispers that—he is not there !

I cannot *make* him dead !
When passing by his bed,
So long watched over with parental care,
My spirit and my eye
Seek it inquiringly,
Before the thought comes that—he is not there !

When at the cool, grey break
Of day, from sleep I wake,
With my first breathing of the morning air,
My soul goes up, with joy,
To Him who gave my boy ;
Then comes the sad thought that—he is not there !

When at the day's calm close,
Before we seek repose,
I'm with his mother, offering up our prayer,
Whate'er I may be *saying*,
I am, in spirit, praying
For our boy's spirit, though—he is not there !

Not there ?—Where, then, is he ?
The form I used to see
Was but the *raiment* that he used to wear.
The grave, that now doth press
Upon that cast-off dress,
Is but his wardrobe locked ;—*he* is not there !

He lives !—In all the past
He lives ; nor, to the last,
Of seeing him again will I despair ;
In dreams I see him now,
And on his angel brow,
I see it written, “ Thou shalt see me *there* !”

Yes, we all live to God !
FATHER, thy chastening rod
So help us, thine afflicted ones, to bear,
That in the spirit land,
Meeting at thy right hand,
'Twill be our heaven to find that—he is *there* !

CHAPTER IV.

CHILDREN ARE TAKEN AWAY IN INFANCY IN MERCY TO THEM.

When the Archangel's trump shall blow,
And souls to bodies join ;
Millions shall wish their lives below
Had been as short as thine.

It will be our object in this chapter to show that the dispensation of Providence by which children are removed in infancy is ordered in mercy to them.

It is so, considered as it affects them temporally. Their early dismissal from all the pains and perils of this mortal life, is a manifestation of tenderness: it shows a willingness to save from all unnecessary trial, and an unwillingness needlessly to afflict.

Life, at its very best estate, is vanity. In its full splendour of gaiety it is "vexation of spirit." When ambition has scaled the very loftiest height of its proudest aspiration, it feels its loneliness and misery more keenly than ever.

Ah ! little deemest thou, my child,
The way of life is dark and wild !
Its sunshine but a light whose play,
Serves but to dazzle and betray ;
Weary and long—its end the tomb,
Whose darkness spreads her wings of gloom,
That resting-place of things which live,
The goal of all that earth can give.

So universal is this estimate of the present "fashion of this" sin-ruined "world," that even heathen philoso-

phy pronounced the early dead the favourites of the Gods.

Lady, we have much cause to thank ourselves
Touching our daughter bless'd ; for 'mong the Gods
Commercing she in truth resides.*

The Christian dead, then, who under the smiles of Heaven are early delivered from this vain unsatisfying portion, miserable ! Tell it not at Rome, or Athens, lest the philosophers of Paganism should rejoice over the weakness of Christianity.

The great proportion, too, of those who do live to mature years, become entirely estranged from God, and live without him, and without hope for the world to come. But by their early removal from the temptations arising from the world, the flesh and the Devil, infants are forever preserved from such open apostacy. Should they, on the other hand, be supposed to live and become holy and devoted Christians, then it is to be remembered that in this world "the righteous shall have tribulation, for through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom of God, they must suffer, and then enter into glory ;" and that from an entrance upon this path of sorrow, this narrow road, this way of the cross, such infants are forever delivered.

The apprehension of coming evils, which, like ghosts, haunt our paths and mock our joys, is a most fruitful source of misery to man ; but from all such anticipations of distress, whether real or imaginary, the early dead have been most effectually protected. The coldness of those who should have been our warmest friends ; the averted countenance of those who had once smiled upon us in perfect love ; and the estranged

* Euripid. Iphig. l. 1804.

affections of the heart in which our soul had found its home ;—these, oh these, are some of the bitterest of earth's many disappointments. The infant dead !—they pass from love, to love ;—from the bosom of their earthly, to that of their Heavenly Parent ;—from that love which is the only bliss of time, to that which is the rapture of heaven. And finally, death is the great tormentor of mankind, through fear of whom men are all their lives subject to bondage, and by whose grim shadow a fearfulness is made to surprise them in their most gladsome hours. But death has for these, no sting. The grave for these, is encompassed by no shadows. Eternity frowns upon these with no fore-tokenings of ill.

Parents—art thou then full of tears,
 Because thy child is free
 From the earthly strifes, and human fears
 Oppressive even to thee ?
 No ! with the quiet dead,
 Baby, thy rest shall be ;
 Oh ! many a weary wight,
 Weary of life and light,
 Would fain lie down with thee.

Considering, then, the present condition of human life—the character too generally acquired by those who are actors on its stage ; the peculiarly trying lot of all who will not be “ of the world,” but will “ live above it :” that self-tormenting power of apprehending future calamity which reason gives us ; the many bitter trials of the heart which every one who trusts in man so continually experiences ; and the awful darkness which, thick as Erebus, sin has gathered round the dread hour of human dissolution ;—and can we not say, that the arrangement of Providence, by which one half the human family is cut off from the possible ex-

perience of these mortal ills, is a dispensation of mercy. This is our conclusion from the contemplation of human life, not in its worst, but in its best aspect, not when tried with more than usual adversity, but in its ordinary state of mingled good and evil. We have only supposed them to meet that current which all must breast, and pointed to those shocks which all must encounter. How much stronger, then, would our inference be, were we to make the supposition in regard to each individual child, that it was taken away from the evil to come, and plucked as a brand out of that fire of evil where it might have been salted with the fire of guilt, and eventually have perished.

"O God, spare my child!" were the words of an affectionate and almost idolizing mother, as she bent over the side of her dying child. The little sufferer, unconscious of its situation, was in a burning fever. The sands of life were fast running out, and the darting pain seemed well nigh to rend the spirit from the body. The piteous moan pierced the heart of the fond mother, and drove her, as the last resort, to the throne of grace, where she poured out her soul in prayer that her darling might be spared.

Nor was the cry unheeded. She heard a voice, saying, "Child of earth! since thou art unwilling to trust thine offspring's destiny in the hands of thy heavenly Father, thy prayer is answered. His fate is in thy hands. Whether he live or die, is for thee to decide."

A momentary thrill of joy rushed through the mother's heart, at these words; but it was *only* momentary. She felt the reproof. "Alas!" she exclaimed, "how shall I decide the fate of my child? Should he recover, perhaps he will prove a bitter curse to me hereafter, and he may bring down my grey hairs to the grave. But how can I see him die, when it is in my power to save

his life? O, that I had left his fate with him who gave him to me!" Filled with remorse for her unwise and undutiful conduct, she again betook herself to prayer, beseeching her heavenly Father to remove from her so fearful a responsibility.

Again her prayer was heard and answered: "O, rash child! why didst thou repine at thy lot? Couldst thou look into futurity, and behold thy child in the years of manhood? Or couldst thine eye pierce the vale of eternity, and behold the scenes that await him there? Why, then, didst thou not, like a confiding child, submit to the will of thy Father, knowing that he will do only that which is for thy good? Thou hast prayed to be delivered from this responsibility; thy prayer is answered. Go, and learn from this never to repine at the allotments of Providence."

The child died; and as the mother took her last look, and then resigned him to the grave, she meekly adopted the language of one who had drank deep of the bitter cup of affliction,—“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

And now let us consider this dispensation as it affects infants eternally, and we shall find as indubitable evidence that it is grounded in mercy to them.

Revelation is the only source of our knowledge of eternity. The ignorance and helplessness of human reason, and of all merely human research, we have already exposed. To scan the ways of God, to fathom the depths of his judgments, or understand the mystery of his moral government—these are wholly impotent. They are no better than the magicians of Pharaoh, or the astrologers of Belshazzar, humbled and confounded before the stupendous mysteries of heaven. It is then “to the law and to the testimony” we must

look for any guidance in this high path of investigation. And here must we call to mind the nature of that revelation, as intended not to make known the whole compass of God's divine proceedings, but only so much of his ways as are necessary for man, in his present temporary state. It is a lamp hung up midway between earth and heaven, to *guide from* the darkness of the one, *to* the glory of the other;—it is not that heaven itself, in all the fulness of its splendours, or the extent of its administrations, brought down to the comprehension of man.

To whom then does this revelation directly and specially address itself? The answer will be found by considering its precepts, its duties, its ordinances, its threatenings, and its announcements of future retribution. Its precepts address themselves to those who can understand;—its duties are enjoined upon those who can obey;—its ordinances are adapted to those who have knowledge to discern and improve them;—its threatenings strike terror into hearts capable of despising them;—and its future judgment is a day of destiny to all the workers of iniquity, to all the rejectors of mercy. It is then at once apparent, that the immediate and direct bearing of the annunciations of revelation is upon adults, and not upon infants. The Bible was written *for* adults, and the Gospel proclaimed *to* adults, though the blessings they announce are designed for all. The character, condition, and prospects of adults, and not of infants, form, therefore, the burden of revelation. Their condition, considered as living and dying, while merely infants, is not its subject matter. Infants are necessarily referred to, but only incidentally, as connected with the great business of this heavenly message. If then there is no distinct declaration in the Bible militating *against* the salvation of infants, when

dying as such, that salvation we may regard as certain, since infants can never violate a precept, neglect a duty, despise an ordinance, provoke a threatening, or incur a judgment of this holy book.

Inasmuch, then, as Revelation addresses itself distinctly and immediately to those who are capable of understanding and obeying it ;—it is all important to inquire how far children, *as such*, are similar in their circumstances and relations, to those of mature years. They are similar, in their relation to Adam as the great representative of the human family, for “in Adam all die,” and “death has come upon all men, even upon those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, because all have sinned.” They are similar, inasmuch as they are like fully grown men, mortal. “It is appointed unto them” as well as unto all others “once to die.” There is one event to the aged and to the young, to the child of a span long, and the man a hundred years old :—“they must lie down alike in the grave and the worms cover them.” They are similar to men also, in that depravity of nature, which results from the withdrawment of those chartered benefits forfeited by Adam, as the representative of the human family ; for “they are born in sin,” and are “children of wrath,” the “natural heart being enmity to God.” They are, I again remark, similar to men in their helplessness ; in their entire inability to change their own nature, alter their own wills, or transform their own hearts into the image and likeness of God. They are similar also in their ignorance of the true God, of Jesus Christ whom he has sent, of the way of salvation, and of eternal life ; for “the natural heart understandeth not the things of God, neither can it do so, for they are spiritually discerned.” They are similar, in their capacity for progressive improvement, being

destined to an interminable being, with powers which are illimitable in their exercise. And they are similar, in their susceptibilities of happiness, these being always measured by the degree of their advancement.

Such are the important points of similarity between infants and those in mature life. How far then will this similarity involve infants in the awful responsibility and fearful hazards connected with such a condition of guilt, sinfulness and degradation? That it would have been *equitable* in God, apart from the consideration of the plan of salvation, to include infants in the consequences of the fall, and to involve them in the common ruin of their entire species, we cannot, for a moment, doubt; because we see, in fact, that they *are* so involved and made to experience the bitterness of its sad results, as far as this involves temporal suffering and death. But, in such a case, we may imagine that none would have died in mere infancy, but that all would have been permitted to grow up to a period of perfect moral agency, and to act out their own character of vile depravity; and that all men would have been put under an equal lot, been allowed an equal opportunity of receiving or rejecting the gospel, and had their fate determined under a perfectly equal administration.

The Adamic constitution cannot, however, in fact or argument, be disconnected from the Messianic constitution. The federal relation of the first Adam, cannot be severed from the federal relation of the second Adam. The one was introductory to the other;—the one was supplementary to the other. The one was never designed to exist without the other, nor the evils consequent upon the one to be endured, without the more abounding blessings of the other. When God, from eternity, arranged the plan, by which Adam,

under the most favourable circumstances, should represent his race, he devised also the plan by which the "Lord from heaven" should take the place of fallen humanity, and represent it before eternal justice. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

The question then to be determined is, not what would have become of infants, had they been left to meet all the consequences of their natural condition;—not whether, being equally guilty and depraved and helpless, with full grown sinners, they were not equally deserving of eternal separation from God; nor whether such an infliction of the sentence pronounced on all, would have been righteous; but it is whether now, under another constitution, even that of a mediator, the second Adam, who has entered into the guilty position and sustained the curse resting on the first, and upon all his posterity; whether now, since redemption from that primal curse, and cleansing from that original depravity, and entire deliverance from that native unworthiness, have been procured through the Almighty Saviour; children are or are not, interested in these blessings, and partakers of them?

Now, just so far as scripture is *silent* upon this point, may we feel assured that it is so from the fact, that infants, dying such, come not under its proclamation of DUTY, and therefore are not referred to in its overtures of mercy, which are to be received or rejected, by *voluntary agents* to whom alone they are addressed. We

may be perfectly satisfied, since God has exercised infinite mercy in providing salvation from the guilt and misery of the fall ; and since He has been pleased to remove one half of the entire human race at a time when they could not possibly enjoy through their personal agency, any benefit from such merciful provision ; that having all died in Adam, they shall all, in Christ, be made alive ; and having by one man's disobedience been all constituted sinners, they shall through one man's obedience be all made righteous. And when in connexion with this we state, what is universally admitted, that so far as scripture does cast its light upon the subject, it is the light of encouragement and hope, this conclusion amounts, we think, to a moral certainty. For, on what other principle can we have any conceivable explanation of that dispensation of Providence, by which one entire half of all earth's inhabitants are swept from this state of condemnation and of hope, before they can open their mind to the comprehension either of their fall in Adam, or their recovery in Christ ? Were they not at once removed, before they become personally guilty, that they might certainly enjoy the blessings of salvation—would not God have permitted ALL to reach a period of maturity, and thus, in their own person, receive or reject his mercy, and be pronounced worthy or unworthy of an inheritance among the saints in light ?

And what does scripture intimate on this subject ? We have said that infants, like full grown men, are mortal, and that death comes upon them, inasmuch as they have sinned in Adam. Now, the Bible declares, that they shall be partakers of that resurrection which is the fruit of Christ's death, and through which death itself shall be abolished, and the grave despoiled of its

victims.* We have said that infants stand equally related to Adam and his consequent fall, guilt, and ruin, with those who are adult. But in the gospel we are taught, that great as was that fall, greater is this redemption; that extensive as were the ravages of the one, much more multiplied are the blessings of the other; and that great reason as we have to mourn over the one, infinitely greater may all have, to rejoice in the other. For as in Adam all died, so in Christ might all have been made alive. "Not as the offence, so also is the free gift, for the judgment was by one (offence) to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification." This free gift is offered for the reception, and is, in its own nature and sufficiency, adequate to the justification, of all men. And since, it is by their unbelief and rejection of this gift, that the wrath of God will come, unimpeded, upon guilty and ungrateful men, infants being incapable of rejecting it, are not, we may hope, "condemned with the world."

"Christ took upon him our nature, to sanctify and to save it, and passed through the several periods of it, even unto death, which is the symbol and effect of old age; and, therefore, it is certain he did sanctify all the periods of it: and why should he be an infant, but that infants should receive the crown of their age, the purification of their stained nature, the sanctification of their person, and the saving of their souls, by their Infant Lord and Elder Brother?"

If the heathen, who are "without the knowledge of the law, shall be judged without the law," or on principles different from those applied to such as "enjoy the law;" surely infants, who die previous to their possible

* On this part of the subject, see Russell's Essay on Infant Salvation, chapter 3.

knowledge of the gospel, shall not have its application to them measured by the rules of personal accountability? Having never "sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," they will not be saved after the similitude of those of Adam's full grown posterity, who have thus sinned. All objections to this conclusion arising from the incapacity of infants for salvation, are entirely presumptuous, since Christ has assured us that "of such," even infants in the arms, "is the kingdom of heaven." Now, as God is no respecter of persons, and as all children are his moral offspring, and all are equally guilty; and equally incapable, by any possibility, of seeking deliverance from sin; we must conclude that all children, dying in infancy, are saved with an everlasting salvation through the abounding grace of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

"It appears," says Dr. Russell, "that the original constitution and that which is now established through Christ, are thus far co-extensive, that the direct penal effects of the sin of Adam, *separately considered*, are so far removed, that none shall be finally condemned, merely for his one offence, or *without having personally transgressed*, and thereby, *actually concurred in that sin*, by their approval and imitation of it. This is confirmed by the consideration that, when speaking of the condemnation even of such as are "without law," the apostle limits this doom to such as actually have sinned. He refers to such as have sinned against light, sufficient to render them "without excuse;" and who, of course, are actual transgressors. Rom. i. 19—32; and ii. 12. This declaration, respecting the ground of the condemnation, of such as were without law, ought to be considered in connexion with the reasoning in chap. v., which must be consistent with it in all its parts. And as the ground of condemnation now

in question, cannot apply to infants, the reasoning respecting it, so far from militating against the salvation of such, serves to establish it, because it supposes the abuse of at least a measure of light, and the imitation of the sin of Adam by actual transgression. If such, as is evident, be the declared ground of the condemnation of adults, and if not a word is said of any ground on which children dying in infancy shall be finally condemned, does it not follow, that all of them are saved? This conclusion is completely confirmed by its full accordance with the principle, that, as the resurrection of the body is the result of the advent and administration of Christ, it is of course connected, as we have seen, in the case of deceased infants, with deliverance from the *whole* result of the original curse.

“It is obviously taught by the apostle, that the glory of the work of Christ is more illustriously displayed in overcoming the accumulated effects of the many personal offences of actual transgressors, than in simply overcoming those of the single offence of Adam, and this accounts for his passing from the latter display of glory to the former. He takes for granted, the redemption of those who had “not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression,” when reasoning on the transcendent grandeur of the plan of mercy, as embracing the remission of “the many offences” of actual transgressors. On the full glory of the plan, as thus most impressively exhibited, he delighted to dwell, and what he says of the circumstances of infants, is introduced chiefly for the sake of illustrating this higher manifestation of “the exceeding riches” of divine grace. In arguing for the greater, he takes for granted, the less. He cannot but be considered as teaching us, that the scheme of redemption shields from the penal consequences of Adam’s sin, separately viewed, or where

they are not connected with actual sin and final impenitence, seeing he maintains that its object extends, not to this only, but much farther.

“When he reasons, that if the forfeiture was incurred by one offence, we have *much more* reason to expect that the blessings of redemption will be communicated on the principle of representation, or through the work of Christ as a public head, and that those blessings shall far exceed the damage sustained by the fall of the first Adam, his reasoning proceeds on the principle that God delighteth in mercy, and is slow to anger, and reluctant to execute judgment. It also supposes that justice, in the infliction of punishment, is limited to desert, while grace, when not obstructed in its exercise by the claims of offended righteousness, can be imparted in the most unlimited abundance, according to the good pleasure of the divine will. It seems, then, necessarily to follow, that, under the present dispensation, no exclusion occurs, where nothing additional to the sin of Adam has taken place, since all obstructions in the way of the honourable exercise of mercy, and grace, have been completely removed, by the infinitely precious sacrifice of Christ. This conclusion is but the natural result of the foregoing premises, and it, of course, involves the salvation of all who have not been guilty of actual transgression.

“It may here be farther remarked, that the concern of infants, in the sin of Adam, is of a relative nature, and, therefore, cannot be divided among them, so as that one may have this share of it, and another that; as in the case, when a number have shared in the doing of a thing for the whole of relative blame must attach to every individual of the parties concerned in it. Now it will be granted, that the guilt of this sin was expiated by Christ: for, otherwise, Adam could

never have been saved, and not a *single infant* could have been delivered from its effects on his posterity ; so that, according to this principle, the universal perdition of infants must be maintained ; a thing which, none will admit as possible."

It is true, infants are by nature as depraved as those of riper years, though not as actually guilty ; but it is also true, that the spirit of God can as easily and as effectually wash and sanctify and justify them ; and since He does assuredly prepare many infants for the kingdom of Heaven, He can as easily prepare all.

"Respecting the time when God may be pleased to change their hearts by his Spirit," says Dr. Russell, "whether before or at the time of their dissolution, it does not seem to be of great importance to inquire. He who imparted his moral likeness to Adam, immediately at his creation, and gave his Holy Spirit to John, while in his mother's womb, ought not to be limited. If the first Adam had continued obedient, would not his children have been born in a state of holiness, or with a principle predisposing to holy exercises, as soon as the faculties of the mind were so developed as to fit for moral agency ? And if so, why may not the Spirit of God so influence the heart of a child, as to produce a similar predisposition there ? If, as we have seen, the germ of sin be in infants from the beginning, though not developed in actual transgressions, why may not the germ of holiness be implanted by the Divine Spirit on earth, though its developments in the case of infants can be witnessed only in heaven ? The most eminent of our older evangelical writers distinguish between the principle and the exercise of grace, and maintain that the former may exist in children while as yet incapable of the latter.* We cannot say what may be

* Owen on the Spirit, vol. ii. 253, 413.

the *mode* of the Divine operations, in regard to such, and no practical benefit could we derive from the knowledge of it. The Almighty can doubtless instantaneously raise from infantile weakness and ignorance, to the perfection of heavenly light and holy purity. This will afford a display of the Divine power, which will be deeply impressive. Christians who have long known the truth upon earth, though through a glass darkly, understand something of the celestial glory, before they enter on it, but what must be the feelings of infants, on being suddenly translated to the full radiance of the heavenly inheritance, and what the feelings of others on witnessing this striking display of Almighty power?

“What prevents the full renovation of Christians on earth, but the weakness and unsettledness of their faith, in the gospel, and will not the full blaze of its lustre at once assimilate the whole soul to itself? ‘The germ of life and of glory,’ which was here implanted in the infant mind, will burst forth instantaneously into a full and vigorous life, and the heart will be impressed with the beauty and grandeur of the character of God, and capacitated for the services and the bliss of the celestial sanctuary.

“And when we remember, how God taught the children of Jerusalem, to offer up their artless hosannas in the temple, how their praises were accepted of the Saviour, and how they seem to have relieved and gladdened the mind of the Man of sorrows, as he thought of the obstinate unbelief, and impending fate of that city over which he mournfully wept, we cannot but recommend them to God, in the confidence that his power and his goodness are always the same. Knowing, as we do, that our Lord was much attached to children when he was on earth, and seeing such im-

mense numbers of them cut off by death ; are not we warranted to say that he is now by his providence, repeating from heaven what he said when in our world, ‘Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God.’ ”

It is also true that infants are as helplessly impotent to good as are adults ; but they are not more so, and spiritual good cometh not by human might, nor human power, but by the spirit of God. True, they are equally, with grown persons, ignorant of God and holiness ; but they are also as susceptible of heavenly guidance : and after all, the difference between the most perfect, and the lowest, attainments in human knowledge, and those which are acquired in heaven, is insignificantly small. It is true, also, that infants are as capable of progressive improvement, and as susceptible of happiness, as those of the most giant powers ; and a brief schooling under the teachings of the upper sanctuary, will, therefore, put them far in advance of the most exalted earthly genius.

When, in addition to what has been now advanced, we remember the peculiar interest which God has ever manifested in infants ;—when we remember how he has distinctly called them his “innocents,” his “poor innocents,” and has thus, it would appear, declared that, under his present dispensation, they are held no longer, *as such*, (that is, when their period of probation closes in infancy,) accountable for their guilt in Adam ;—when we remember, in the manifestation which God made of himself in the flesh, how marvellously he was drawn out in his affectionate regard to infants, and how emphatically he declared them to be a great component part of the kingdom of heaven ;*—when

* “The expression, ‘Of such is the kingdom of God,’ means, then, that ‘of such it is in a great measure made up,’ because they will form

we remember, that it is out of their mouths, God is to perfect his praise; that their hosannas will be sweetest in the loud song of heavenly praise; and their angels be nearest to the bright vision of the face of unveiled Deity;—and when, in the actual demonstration of the purposes of God, we find him carrying home to his bosom, while in this state of happy innocency, one half of his human family;—are we not, beyond all controversy, assured that the infant dead are ransomed from all the pains and perils of this mortal strife, that they may be at once admitted to that kingdom “prepared” for them, and for all the elect family of heaven, “from the foundation of the world.”

Calm on the bosom of thy God,
Young spirits! rest thee now!
Even while with us thy footsteps trod,
His seal was on thy brow.

I have thus very briefly adverted to the numerous grounds upon which a belief in the salvation of infants may be founded. A full discussion of them, with an

a very great proportion of the redeemed family of Heaven. The Saviour appears to have had the universal salvation of all of them who die in infancy in his view. His reasoning is not, ‘of persons resembling such in temper and disposition is the kingdom made up, for this, as has already been hinted, would not warrant the conclusion drawn, namely, that children ought not to be hindered from being brought to Him, in order to be blessed, for on the same principle he might have said, ‘Suffer doves and lambs to be brought unto me to be blessed, for of persons resembling such is the kingdom of God made up.’ Now, this would prove too much; consequently it proves nothing. His words, then, must respect children literally; and his blessing such ensures their salvation. It is to no purpose to deny this conclusion by saying, that though our Lord wept over Jerusalem, yet, Jerusalem fell, for there is a wide and an essential difference between a lamentation over the obstinacy of active rebels, and a benediction poured upon infants, between a warning of impending danger, and an assurance, that ‘of such is the kingdom of Heaven.’ Nor can the words be construed to respect only the particular children then brought to Him, or any particular class of children exclusively, for the expression, ‘of such,’ is comprehensive of all who never get beyond the condition of infancy.”—*Dr. Russell.*

answer to all difficulties involved in the subject, has been given by Dr. Russell, and the following abridgment of his views, by Dr. Cumming, of the Scotch Church, London, though it may in part cover the ground we have surveyed, may be useful and interesting.*

“It will be admitted by all that the bodies of infants will be raised at the resurrection morn. The language of Scripture is explicit—‘I saw the dead, small and great,’ (that is, *infants* and *adults*) ‘stand before God;’ ‘and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them;’ and ‘ALL that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth.’ We must include in this mighty assemblage numbers of infants as well as adults. To this the apostle seems to allude, when he says, every one shall be raised ‘in his own order.’ The literal translation is, ‘in his own class;’ infants in their class, adults in their class, males in their class, females in their class—‘every one in his own order.’ Now, if the bodies of infants are to be raised, we may fairly inquire, what can be the purpose of thus raising their sleeping dust from its resting-places, and reuniting each infant soul to its body? It cannot be to be judged; for the judgment proceeds according to *works* done in the body, and infants have done no works. In every record of the judgment morn, the statement is, that it proceeds, not according to the *merit* of works, (far from that,) but according to works as the manifestation of a principle of grace within. Infants, having had neither the opportunity nor the physical power of manifesting character by conduct, cannot be raised to be judged, as they are not just

* From a Discourse on Infant Salvation. Lond.

subjects of the judgment ordeal. In the next place, infants cannot be raised to be condemned to everlasting punishment. Why? Because this is not a part of the original curse that was pronounced upon Adam. The curse pronounced upon Adam was, 'Thou shalt surely die:' that is, the soul shall die, and the body shall die; and when the one is severed from the other, the penalty is exhausted. The punishment apportioned to them that have either rejected the overtures of the glorious gospel, or stained their souls with sin and their hands with wickedness, can never be due to infants. They can be the subjects of the primitive curse only. But to raise their bodies again, and to reunite them to their souls in order to suffer, would be unjust, because it would be apportioning greater punishment than the original sentence contained. It would be the infliction of a doom severer than God pronounced in Paradise. God's truth never errs, in excess or shortcoming. Therefore, when infants are raised from the dead, they are raised *not to be judged*, for there are no works, according to which they can be judged; they are raised *not to suffer*, because this would be unjust, and exceeding the original sentence. What must, then, be the end? They are raised in order to be admitted into glory; that, re clothed with more glorious apparel than Adam lost, they may take their place in the midst of those, who have 'washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

"But this presumption amounts almost to certainty, if we bear in mind, that if infants' bodies are raised from the dead, then is there in this fact the actual removal of half the primeval curse; for its penalty was the death of soul and body, both. Now if we find it to be the fact that the body is raised, which is the removal of half the curse, may we not, in full harmony

with the presumptions of reason, and above all in full coincidence with the merciful genius of the gospel, infer that the other half of the curse is remitted also—that the soul and body shall be reunited, both together to inherit everlasting happiness?

“We are also to connect with this fact the truth, that this resurrection of their bodies is the fruit of the atonement and resurrection of Christ—because if Christ had not died and risen again, there had been no resurrection; the very resurrection of the body is the result of the atonement of Christ, and in that sense it extends to every man. Now if infants’ bodies are raised from the dead, and this only through Christ’s resurrection, and as the result of His perfect atonement, and if thus half the curse is remitted by the efficacy of the Saviour’s blood, and by the virtues of His resurrection from the dead, may we not infer that the other half will be remitted also, and that soul and body will live and rejoice together in the presence of the Lord for ever?

“With respect to those who are born amid the means of grace and opportunities of mercy, there is one only cause given in the gospel for their condemnation, *viz.*, their wilful rejection of the gospel. ‘This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.’ ‘He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.’ And again, ‘Ye will not come to me that ye may have life.’ If, then, this be the great condemning sin, which consigns sinners to misery, it is clear that infants never committed that sin, because physically and morally incapable of it; and therefore infants, having not committed the only condemning sin, cannot and will not be ranked amid the condemned hereafter.

“Nor will it alter the conclusion if it be alleged that infants will be tried by the standard according to which the destinies of the heathen, who never heard the gospel, will be decided. The great apostle of the Gentiles says, ‘When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.’ We have only to weigh the import of this phraseology to see its total inapplicability to infants. They can be accused neither of rejecting the gospel nor of violating the law. If grace cannot save them, which is not the case, we may be sure that works cannot condemn them. Moral inability is sin. Physical inability is misfortune. Let it not be supposed that I deny the doctrine of original sin. This would be to deny fact and dispute scripture. But this I am fully persuaded of—that none will be condemned for its taint only—Satan’s purposes of ruin and of wreck shall not be fulfilled. Nay, every picture we have of the place of misery implies, I think, that infants are incapable of being lost. This is a strong assertion, but it is a perfectly correct one. What is the scripture picture of hell? It is men who have ‘sown to the flesh,’ ‘reaping corruption;’ it is men who have sown iniquity, reaping punishment. It is ‘the worm that never dieth’—an accusing conscience, the fell agony of ceaseless remorse—the remembrance of rejected grace—of abused mercies—of rebellion against God, and of wrestling against conscience. These constitute ‘the worm that dieth not;’ these make up and feed the flame of that ‘fire that is not quenched.’ But an infant is totally incapable of those poignant sufferings—those stings and agonies of remorse, because an infant never committed a single trans-

gression. And therefore, as these feelings of remorse are the main elements of hell, and as infants are by their very nature destitute of hell's chief element, they are incapable of suffering hell's dread punishment, as far, at least, as the nature of that punishment can be ascertained from the pages of the inspired volume.

"It may be objected here, that throughout the scriptures, salvation is invariably tied to faith. Unquestionably it is so; but it is of necessity with reference to them only who are capable of exercising faith. To require faith in infants, is to require a physical impossibility, and if faith, the instrument of salvation, is the free gift of God in the case of every adult, we may fairly presume that in the case of infants, where there is no ability to appreciate its nature or its object, God will bestow the end without it, and implant the principle of a living and everlasting faith. He can work with, or without, or against means, when his own high purposes demand it.

"It would appear that one leading object contemplated by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is the destruction and depression of Satan, and that, too, by a demonstration that not one particle of his malignant policy and prospects has been, or will be secured.

"Now it does seem, if infants are not universally saved, that Satan hath got nearly as much as he hoped to achieve of triumph over God. It is evident that Satan's policy, when he seduced Adam and Eve, was meant, either, on the one hand, to force God to destroy this world, in which His smiles gave beauty to every blossom, and His breath gave fragrance to every flower, and all of which He himself had pronounced to be 'very good,' or, on the other hand, to lead God to pronounce one universal and indiscriminate amnesty upon every creature that had transgressed,—thereby unhinging His moral government, conniving at crime, and com-

promising the claims of holiness and truth. His policy was, to drive God either to destroy this beautiful world and its rational offspring, as baulked and disappointed, or, when the creature sinned, to pardon the creature at once, and thus dissolve the fixed and unchangeable connexion between sin and suffering, between iniquity and death. These were the two extremes, either of which Satan made sure of achieving; but the atonement is the unexpected solution of the difficulty,—the great cause of the lesson being inscribed in heaven, and legible on earth at the moment that the chiefest of sinners are saved—‘The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.’ But if infants are lost, they are lost because of their connection with the first Adam, and therefore in that respect Satan has triumphed; nay, if this be true, half the human race by Satan’s policy, and without their personal guilt, are lost.

“ Infants, however, are not lost. We know that none shall perish, but those that reject the cure; none shall inherit the serpent’s curse, except those that imbibe the serpent’s spirit. And on the other hand, those who are saved, it is declared expressly in scripture, are saved only through the mediation of Jesus, by reason of the transcendant goodness, that gave Christ to die for the sins of mankind, and therefore by a way of salvation, which does not tarnish the glory of God. Neither shall man be lost, nor the world destroyed, nor God dishonoured by the policy of Satan. The reverse shall be the triumphant issue. We justly infer, that the sum total of this dispensation will be, that not one soul shall be lost because of Satan’s success in Paradise, but that on the contrary, his apparent triumph shall be overruled by Infinite Wisdom to be the means of bringing many sons to a greater happiness, and of giving greater glory to God. They that perish, perish by

their rejection of life, not by their inheritance of Adam's sin. Not Satan's success, but their own suicidal resistance of truth necessitates their doom. Satan's kingdom is destroyed and Satan's expectations crushed by the nature of the gospel; and it thereby comes to pass, that, if infants be universally saved through grace, there will be left to Satan not one single fragment or wreck, which he can quote as a proof of the success of his stratagems, and a fruit of his wickedness in the garden of Eden.

"Thus his head will be crushed—thus the very victims he hoped to retain as symbols of his might are snatched from his fangs, and enrolled in the Lamb's book of life as heirs of happiness: and those who sink into the abyss in which 'life dies, and death lives,' will be there, not murdered by Satan, but suicides—not proofs of the power of his will, but the exponents of the infatuation of their own hearts.

"In the eighth Psalm we have an express scriptural proof of the salvation of infants, and an unequivocal intimation that amid the multitudes that grace the triumphs of the Son of God, infants will not be wanting—'O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! who hast set Thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength, because of Thine enemies, that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.' Now the apostle Paul, in reasoning upon this very Psalm in his epistle to the Hebrews, quotes it as descriptive of Christ in the days of His final triumph. It is in the second chapter. 'But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set

him over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.'—The sacred penman states that the Psalm refers to that period when Christ shall reign from sea to sea—all rebellious elements being laid prostrate, and creation clothed afresh with holiness, and beauty, and bliss. Amid the anthem-peal of praise that rises up to Him from the redeemed earth, the psalmist hears the songs of infants as no weak tone in the rich diapason, as ascriptions to the Lamb 'out of the mouth of babes and sucklings.' Yes, the beautiful truth stands forth in all its lustre, deep and consolatory, that the sweetest hymns which shall be heard in the millennial era, will be infant hymns; that amid the songs that rise before the throne, will be melodies that are warbled by infant orphans' tongues, and that gush forth from full infant hearts. The unspeakably precious truth comes home from this to every parent, that, if a saint of God, he shall join in the songs of heaven with his departed infants, who have already caught the key-note.

"In the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse we have an outline of the proceedings of the judgment-day, which bears somewhat on this topic: 'I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books (the plural number) were opened.' There are two books symbolically referred to in Scripture: the book in which are the names and deeds of the unbelieving, and the book in which are the names and deeds of the children of God. Now after these two books were opened, we

read—‘And another book was opened, which is the book of life.’ We connect this with the eleventh of Revelation—‘And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and unto the saints and them that fear Thy name, *small and great.*’ At the production of these three books, infants are present, and therefore we may presume that the two books contain the deeds of the evil, and the deeds of the good ; but that the third book, which is ‘the Lamb’s book of life,’ is that in which the names of the lambs of the flock are written, and which I believe is the memorial and record of those who barely lived before they died, who scarcely breathed the air of time before they were transferred to breathe the sweeter and the balmier atmosphere of eternity.

“We cannot conceive what other record that can be which is the Lamb’s Book of Life. On its tablets the names of our infants now in glory are inscribed. Theirs is a peculiar case, and theirs, therefore, a specific but glorious record. Each name is illuminated with everlasting splendour, while each possessor is bathed in that flood which is ‘fulness of joy for evermore.’

“On no other ground, we may also observe, than on that of the universal safety of deceased infants, can we account for the vast multitudes declared to be ultimately saved. The various expressions used in Scripture respecting the final salvation of men, unquestionably imply that a very great number will be eternally saved. ‘After this I beheld, and lo, A GREAT MULTITUDE, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; and cried with a loud voice, say-

ing, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.' 'A GREAT MULTITUDE which no man can number' is the characteristic of the finally saved; showing that it is not a minority, but a majority that shall ultimately be admitted to glory. Christ, in numbers, as in glory, shall have the pre-eminence. In the nineteenth of Revelation, again, we read, 'And I heard as it were the voice of a *great multitude*, and as the voice of many waters;' another expression denoting the vast number of the saved. Again: Christ is to 'bring *many* sons unto glory.' And again: 'Christ was once offered, to bear the sins of *many*.' And again: 'As by one man's disobedience *many* were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall *many* be made righteous.'

"This is a sweet and majestic thought. The great multitude will not be lost. The prospect dilates the heart of philanthropy, and comes home to us clothed with the attributes and glories of God. They wrong our faith who call it narrow. They wrong its fountain also. The myriads shall mount to glory. Minorities only will sink to hell, and this not because there is not room or welcome in heaven.

"There are texts expressly asserting the safety of dead infants. There is one passage descriptive of David's feelings on the loss of his infant, which, with its context, we quote. 'And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David, therefore, besought God for the child, and David fasted, and went in and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth, but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child

was dead, for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice, how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead. But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped: then he came to his own house, and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child while it was alive, but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I SHALL GO TO HIM, BUT HE SHALL NOT RETURN TO ME.'—2 *Sam.* xii. 15—23.

“If ever there was a case where the infant might be expected to suffer hereafter for the father’s sin, it was that of David in this passage. Yet David’s conviction of his own sin, expressed so poignantly in the fifty-first Psalm, and anxiety about his own spiritual safety, did not cloud his assurance of the safety of this babe. He hoped to meet him in that purer and better land whither he had gone before him.”

But this will suffice; although there are still remaining several considerations which strengthen our conclusions, I will only present from the same author a brief reference to some objections.*

* See these *fully* answered by Dr. Russell.

“It has been objected, for instance, that facts prove that children are involved in the punishment that has been executed on their parents. At the flood, for instance, when the world was destroyed, it is an undoubted fact that millions of infants must have perished. In the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, many infants must have been consumed. Then, says the objector, reasoning from analogy, as we see that infants do suffer because of their parents’ transgressions in time, we cannot but consistently infer that infants will suffer for their parents’ transgressions in eternity. Our reply is: there is no proportion whatever between suffering temporally and suffering eternally; these states of suffering also differ not only in degree but also in character, and because the one takes place, it is no fair or legitimate inference that the other must take place also. Such visitations in time may be essential though disguised goodness; in eternity they could be wrath only. If it be a truth, (as we have asserted, and shall endeavour to prove,) that all infants dying in infancy are saved, then the destruction of the infants of the antediluvian world was not wrath but mercy; not cruelty but kindness. It was light affliction for a moment working out a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory—the wave that overwhelmed the casket bore the jewel upon its bosom to the presence of the Redeemer. It was the translation of their spirits from a world dismantled by the flood, and over which they would have looked and wept and wandered many-yearred and miserable pilgrims, to a world where there are—

‘No griefs to feel, no fears to beat away;
The past unsigh’d for, and the present sure.’

It was really harvest treading on the skirts of spring,
and glory anticipating grace.

“It has been asserted that this doctrine must necessarily prove that there is no such doctrine as election—for if there be such a doctrine, we cannot but presume that some of half the human race who die in infancy are elect, and that others are non-elect. We reply, that whatever be the meaning or the mystery of the doctrine of election, it has nothing whatever to do with this question. If it has, then we may fairly confirm our doctrine from its nature, and maintain that all children who die in infancy are elect children; that they are not the punished and proscribed, but the peculiar favourites of God, the predestined subjects of glory, to whom He has manifested, without works and without merit, the riches of his grace, remitting the largest proportion of even the temporal consequences of the primeval curse, and receiving them to the enjoyment of the blessing ere they have even known what it is to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. In their case election may have its richest development. Thus the very doctrine from which many recoil, may have one aspect at least which every one must hail, and, what seems in my judgment an unfounded notion, that it is a doctrine wrapt in terror and fraught with wrath, may, after all, be one of the brightest revelations, instinct with the essence of heavenly love, and significant of unutterable glory.

“It has been objected, also, that the number of the saved is represented in scripture always as small, in comparison with the number of the lost. For instance; ‘Many are called, but few are chosen,’ and, therefore, that so great a proportion of the human race should be eventually saved is extremely improbable. The text referred to is applicable exclusively to adults, and by no possible stretch of language to infants. Infants cannot be ‘called,’ because they are incapable of listening or

yielding obedience to a call, and therefore of rejecting it. Adults only are capable of this ; they alone are the 'called,' and of them, it is true, the few are chosen. It is a truth as painful to the heart as it is palpable to the eye, that of adults the great majority live far from God, 'strangers to the covenant of promise.' If we quote London, for instance, the metropolis of the world, we find that perhaps 600,000, or probably nearer a million, out of its two millions, never enter a place of worship at all ; and of those who do enter places of worship, how few are there, whose hearts are really-savingly touched, whose souls are truly renewed, who have felt the Gospel not merely in its letter, but in its power,—not only as a word, but as the wisdom and power of God ! This we do not deny ; but we are not to forget, that, whilst scripture represents the number of adults that now reject the Gospel as still many, the same scripture represents the sum total of the saved by the gospel, at the winding up of its solemn dispensation, as very numerous. Its language is that of 'a multitude no man can number.' It was promised, that Abraham's seed (that is, Christians,) should be 'like the stars of heaven for multitude ;'—that they should be upon the earth as the dew-drops of the morning ; that they should be like the sands upon the sea-shore. And, therefore, while it seems true that a majority of adults are lost in the present day, and under the present dispensation, it is still not true (and this is a delightful fact) that the majority of the human race as a whole will be ultimately lost. If half the human race die in infancy, and if infants are universally saved, then the glorious result evolves, amid feelings of joy and holy gratitude to every heart, that the great majority of the human race shall be saved ; and that instead of a small number only eventually reaching glory, 'a great multitude, whom no man

can number,' shall stand before the throne with palms in their hands, kings and conquerors and priests, through Him that loved them and washed them in his blood, and redeemed them out of every kindred and people and tongue.

"We purposely abstain from even mentioning many other objections. A fertile fancy and a repugnance to a truth may invent innumerable objections. Abuses, also, may be appended to it, but for these it is not answerable. Use is God's destiny of things; abuse is the perversion of man. Heaven's best blessings have been perverted. Evil men can turn any mercy into means of evil. It is one of the effects of sin, that man has in every instance the secret of that awful chemistry which can transmute a blessing into a bane, and distil deadly poison from precious truths. The tarantula spider extracts poison from the most delicious blossoms. So man can extract poison from the fruits of the tree of life, and death from the very leaves which are for the healing of the nations of the earth. But, to object to a doctrine because it may be abused, or to reject it because it may be perverted, is just to imitate the man who would cut down a beautiful fruit-tree, because caterpillars find food from its leaves, and spiders weave their webs amid its branches. We must test conclusions by 'the law and the testimony,' and not by the fancied abuses to which they may be open.

"Grace has been made the pretext for licentiousness, and that cross on which man's sins ought to be crucified, has been used to cover and conceal them."

I shall only, therefore, in the language of Dr. Russell, advert to the objection, that to maintain the certainty of the salvation of all who die in infancy, is calculated to induce parents to be less fervent in prayer for their children while in that state, or when they are

apparently dying in it, because they will conclude that in such circumstances there is little or no call for supplications in their behalf. In addition to what has already been said, in reply to this objection, it remains to be observed, that it proceeds upon the principle that some, even of the infants of Christian parents, may eternally perish, for otherwise there could be no uncertainty on the subject. If, again, there be no uncertainty in regard to the salvation of the dying infants of believing parents, then the objection is as strong against this view of the subject, as against that which is now pleaded for. It follows, then, that those who make this objection, so far from considering the promises respecting the children of believers, as including the certain salvation of all of them who die in infancy, actually think that a great degree of uncertainty hangs upon the subject. Now, do any who take this view of the subject feel the smallest scruple as to the propriety of praying for the salvation of the dying infants of unbelievers? And if they do not, they of course allow that at least some of the infants of such may be saved, for if they do not believe this, why do they pray for them any more than for fallen angels? On this principle they ought only to pray for the conversion of the parents, and not in the first instance, in behalf of the children.

It is to be hoped, however, that none will say, that it is sinful to pray for such children, and that no Christian will fail to pray that they may be saved. Indeed, it is generally allowed, even by those who hesitate as to the salvation of all infants, that some of the infants, even of unbelievers, shall be saved.

If, then, the objectors in question allow that *some* of the infant children of unbelievers may be saved, what is this but saying of *them* what they say of the infant children of believers, for the objection supposes that all

even of *such*, are not to be saved? Is not this completely to give up the point? Does it not place the infant children of believers and unbelievers as much on a par, as does their indiscriminate salvation? In vain, therefore, is any objection on this ground brought against the sentiment now pleaded for. If again it be said, that there is a certainty of the salvation of the infants of believers, but not of other infants, then, as has been hinted, the objection is as applicable to Christian prayer, in regard to the former, as it is on the principle, that *all* infants are saved.

This objection supposes, too, that such parents deem it needless, if not absurd, to pray for that of which we have a promise, or of the accomplishment of which we are certain. But will any pious and rightly informed parent reason in this way? David had a promise made him, that his house and kingdom should be established for ever, and yet no sooner did he hear it, than we find him praying that it might be accomplished. "And now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said."* After making many promises to his people, God says, "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them."† When Daniel knew that the time of deliverance from Babylon was at hand, he became the more earnest in prayer for it.‡ Are not Christians assured that the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, and does not this assurance encourage and stimulate to prayer, instead of causing them to relax in it? And will not the assurance that their infant offspring, when taken hence, are removed to the heavenly paradise, call forth

* 2 Sam. vii. 16, 25.

† Ezekiel xxxvi. 37.

‡ Dan. ix. 2, 3.

the aspirations of a devout and a thankful heart? Will it not lead parents to devote them to the God of all grace, and the Father of mercies? And when they sit by the death-bed of their departing infants, will not this confidence endear to them the cross and resurrection of the heavenly Adam, will it not enlarge their views of the exuberant grace of God, of the glory of the work of Christ, and of the preciousness and suitability of the hope of the gospel? and will it not attract their hearts towards the God of all consolation, whose glorious perfections are employed in bringing good out of evil, and in making all things to work together for the present and the future blessedness of his people? And can views and feelings such as these cause to restrain prayer before God? Far, very far from it.

How consoling are the views which this subject presents to those parents who are bereaved of their children! Theirs is privilege as well as pain. Of the destiny of their little ones who have preceded them we have no manner of doubt. It has not been thus with all Christian parents: Job saw his sons and his daughters in the meridian of age laid prostrate before him. Aaron beheld his two sons struck down by the bolt of heaven, in the midst of their rebellion against God. But it can be little painful in comparison, to the Christian parent, to behold an infant die, because he knows that that infant has been forgiven not only its original sin, but forgiven, in addition, through the rich mercy of God, its seventy years of weary pilgrimage. It has gained the crown without the turmoil—reached the goal without running of the course; its harvest has been heaped upon its seed-time; it has reaped without sowing. It is a distinguishing privilege, and surely no Christian parent would wish an infant back again to earth. Could you say, let me ask of every

parent that has lost an infant—could you say to your infant, if it were to come back, Weep no more, my child? Could you dry all the tears from its eye, so that it should mourn no more? What could you promise it? Seventy years of sore pilgrimage at the very best, in a world where men must become almost martyrs to get their daily bread: where all is hollow, deceptive, unreal, and where every moment as it speeds tells us that the great ocean-stream of eternity is rushing onwards, and carrying millions unprepared to the judgment-seat of God. Better is the babe in its Father's home. We do not wish to recal it. The tears of nature are wiped away by the hand of grace. We do not sorrow because our infants are removed. We rejoice. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be His name, and blessed are the dead that died in Him, for they rest from their labours." They go (happy and holy ones) from a life of martyrdom to a life of millennial blessedness; and if an infant tongue in heaven could be audible on earth, that infant's tongue would say—Weep not for me; "if ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I am gone unto my Father."

THE DYING INFANT TO ITS MOTHER.

Cease here longer to detain me,
Fondest mother, drowned in woe,
Now thy kind caresses pain me,
Morn advances—let me go.

See yon orient streak appearing,
Harbinger of endless day:
Hark! a voice the darkness cheering,
Calls my new-born soul away.

Lately launched, a trembling stranger,
On the world's wild, boisterous flood,
Pierced with sorrows, tossed with danger,
Gladly I return to God.

Now my cries shall cease to grieve thee,
Now my trembling heart find rest ;
Kinder arms than thine receive me,
Softer pillow than thy breast.

There, my mother, pleasures centre ;
Weeping, parting, care, or woe,
Ne'er our Father's house shall enter :
Morn advances—let me go.

Yes, bereaved parents, the hour is on the wing when
we shall meet them, and mingle our hosannahs with
theirs.

EPITAPH ON A CHILD.

FROM SACRED LYRICS, BY R. HUIE.

SLEEP on, my babe ! thy little bed
Is cold, indeed, and narrow ;
Yet calmly there shall rest thy head,
And neither mortal pain nor dread
Shall e'er thy feelings harrow !

Thou may'st no more return to me ;
But there's a time, my dearest,
When I shall lay me down by thee,
And when of all, my babe shall be
That sleep around, the nearest !

And sound our sleep shall be, my child,
Were earth's foundations shaken ;
Till He, the pure, the undefil'd,
Who once, like thee, an infant smil'd,
The dead to life awaken !

Then, if to Him, with faith sincere,
My babe at death was given,
The kindred tie that bound us here,
Though rent apart with many a tear,
Shall be renewed in Heaven !

OH, WEEP NOT FOR THE DEAD.

MARY E. BROOKS.

Oh, weep not for the dead !
 Rather, oh rather give the tear
 To those that darkly linger here,
 When all besides are fled.
 Weep for the spirit withering
 In its cold cheerless sorrowing,
 Weep for the young and lovely one
 That ruin darkly revels on ;
 But never be a tear-drop shed
 For them, the pure enfranchised dead.

Oh, weep not for the dead !
 No more for them the blighting chill,
 The thousand shades of earthly ill,
 The thousand thorns we tread ;
 Weep for the life-charm early flown,
 The spirit broken, bleeding, lone ;
 Weep for the death-pangs of the heart,
 Ere being from the bosom part ;
 But never be a tear-drop given
 To those that rest in yon blue heaven.

POUR NOT THE VOICE OF GRIEF.

ROBERT MORRIS.

Pour not the voice of grief
 Above the sable bier !
 The weary spirit finds relief
 In some more hallowed sphere.
 What reck's it that the lip
 Hath lost its thrilling hue—
 Untainted was their fellowship
 As blushing rose and dew.
 And now—too soon a creeping thing,
 Will, like a leech, there feed and cling !

Yet weep not for the dead
 Who early pass away,
 Ere hope and joy and youth have fled,
 Ere woe has wrought decay !
 Better to die in youth,
 When life is green and bright,
 Than when the heart has lost its truth
 In age and sorrow's night—
 Then woes and years around us throng,
 And death's chill grasp is on us long.

Life is a rifled flower
 When love's pure visions fade—
 A broken spell—a faded hour—
 An echo—and a shade !
 The poet's thirst for fame,
 And siren beauty's kiss,
 Ambition's height, and honour's name,
 But yield a phantom bliss—
 And man turns back from every goal
 Thirsting for some high bliss of soul.

Would I had died when young !
 How many burning tears,
 And wasted hopes, and severed ties,
 Had spared my after years !
 And she on whose pale brow
 The damp and cold earth lies,
 Whose pure heart in its virgin glow
 Was mirrored in dark eyes !
 Would I had faded soon with her,
 My boyhood's earliest worshipper !

Pour not the voice of woe !
 Shed not a burning tear
 When spirits from the cold earth go,
 Too bright to linger here !
 Unsullied let them pass
 Into oblivion's tomb—
 Like snow-flakes melting in the sea
 When ripe with vestal bloom.
 Then strew fresh flowers above the grave,
 And let the tall grass o'er it wave !

CHAPTER V.

CHILDREN ARE TAKEN AWAY IN INFANCY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE LIVING.

The cup of life just to her lips she prest,
Found the taste bitter, and declined the rest :
Averse, then turning from the face of day,
She softly sighed her infant soul away.

Epitaph on an Infant.

“ But for myself I bless God I have observed and felt so much mercy in this angry dispensation of God, that I am almost transported ; I am sure highly pleased with thinking how infinitely sweet his *mercies* are, when his *judgments* are so gracious.”—*Jeremy Taylor on the loss of two children.*

ATTENTION has been already called to several passages of Scripture, and to the subject of infant salvation, which they bring to view. In considering them, I have endeavoured to give full force to that mystery which naturally surrounds this subject, and to that grief which the death of infants awakens in the hearts of those who are called to witness it, and to endure the bitterness of consequent separation. But with the light of this heavenly revelation as a guide, I have adventured into the depth of this gloomy subject, and there found, I trust, inscribed upon it words of peace and comfort—nay, even of joy. Instead of mystery, there is around it bright evidence of wisdom and goodness: instead of cruelty, there was discovered to be mercy; and thus, instead of withdrawing our affections from Him who is the arbiter of our destiny, and of the destiny of our children, it draws them towards

him with still stronger power. The removal of infants while in a state of infancy, I feel satisfied is in mercy to them. In mercy, if it is considered as affecting them temporally ; in delivering them from all the evils of this evil world, and that before they are capable of apprehending future suffering, or lamenting over the loss of future and anticipated good. And in mercy considering it as it affects them eternally ;—in at once redeeming them from our sad inheritance of guilt and depravity ;—in at once freeing them from the curse of the fall ;—rescuing them from the power of sin and Satan ;—admitting them to the privileges of the sons of God, and introducing them to the glorious liberty, and the blissful occupations, of the bright world on high.

One half the human race are thus early taken from their parents, their home, their family and their friends, and thus cut off from the future struggles of this toilsome life, through the mercy of our God, “having an entrance administered unto them,” through the imputed merits of the Saviour’s righteousness, and in virtue of his atonement, “into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,” being washed, sanctified, justified, and completely redeemed. Having clean escaped the corruptions that are in this world through lust, they are made partakers of the divine nature, admitted to the divine presence, exalted to be ministering spirits, kings and priests unto God. Happy spirits ! who have passed through this vale of tears, ere the fountain of tears had been unsealed ;—who have journeyed through this valley of the shadow of death, while the gleam of the morning’s sunshine irradiated it with joyful hope ; who encountered the last enemy of sinful man while disarmed of his sting, and disrobed of his terrors ;—and whose whole eternity of happiness will have been unbroken by the sorrows, the pains, and

the remorseful agonies which fall in such showers of misery, upon those who linger through life's sad vicissitudes.

"Happy, thrice happy were they thus to die,
Rather than grow into such men and women,
—Such fiends incarnate as that felon-sire,
Who dug its grave before his child was born;
Such miserable wretches as that mother,
Whose tender mercies were so deadly cruel!
I saw their infant's spirit rise to heaven,
Caught from its birth up to the throne of God;
There, thousands and ten thousands, I beheld,
Of innocents like this, that died untimely,
By violence of their unnatural kin,
Or by the mercy of that gracious Power,
Who gave them being, taking what he gave
Ere they could sin or suffer like their parents.
I saw them in white raiment crown'd with flowers,
On the fair banks of that resplendent river,
Whose streams make glad the city of our God;
—Water of life, as clear as crystal swelling
Forth from the throne itself, and visiting
Fields of a Paradise that ne'er was lost;
Where yet the tree of life immortal grows,
And bears its monthly fruits, twelve kinds of fruit,
Each in its season, food of saints and angels;
Whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.
Beneath the shadow of its blessed boughs,
I mark'd those rescued infants, in their schools,
By spirits of just men made perfect, taught
The glorious lessons of Almighty Love,
Which brought them thither in the readiest path
From the world's wilderness of dire temptations
Securing thus their everlasting weal.

Yea, in the rapture of that hour, though songs
Of cherubim to golden lyres and trumpets,
And the redeem'd upon the sea of glass,
With voices like the sound of many waters,
Came on mine ear, whose secret cells were open'd
To entertain celestial harmonies,
—The small, sweet accents of those little children,
Pouring out all the gladness of their souls

In love, joy, gratitude, and praises to Him,
—Him, who had lov'd and wash'd them in his blood ;
These were to me the most transporting strains,
Amidst the hallelujah's of all Heaven.—
Though lost awhile in that amazing chorus
Around the throne,—at happy intervals,
The shrill hosannas of the infant choir,
Singing in that eternal temple, brought
Tears to mine eye, whilst seraphs had been glad
To weep, could they have felt the sympathy
That melted all my soul, when I beheld
How condescending Deity thus design'd,
Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings here,
To perfect his high praises ;—the harp of heaven
Had lack'd its least but not its meanest string,
Had children not been taught to play upon it,
And sing, from feelings all their own, what men
Nor angels can conceive of creatures, born
Under the curse, yet from the curse redeem'd,
And placed at once beyond the power to fall,
—Safety which men nor angels ever knew,
Till ranks of these, and all of those had fallen.”*

Why then, it may be asked, do such infants live at all, seeing they are thus destined to press onwards to eternity? They live, that they may become actually existent beings ;—they live that they may become mortal ;—that they may be united to the human family ; that they may be enrolled among the citizens of earth ;—and that thus they may become heirs to all the privileges, and entitled to all the blessings provided for the race of men. By their relation to the first Adam, they are related to the second Adam. By their incorporation with Adam, in the covenant of works, they are held equally capable of all the benefits of the covenant of grace. Their first birth thus prepares them for their second birth—their entrance upon earth

* See Montgomery's *Pelican Island*, canto vii., where he describes a heathen parent sacrificing her child.

is the commencement of their bright pathway to the skies. And being thus introduced within the pale of humanity, they are called to the endurance of suffering, in order that by inheriting the curse of mortality they may thus be placed under its remedy : in order that these present light afflictions may work out for them an exceeding and eternal weight of glory ; and that through their suffering, their survivors may be benefited and improved.

This is and must be the case, for if any of those who die in infancy are not chosen of God to salvation, to what are *they* left by Him ? Is it to the impenitence and hardening influence of their hearts ? No, for they are removed before they are capable of actual sin, and of course, while incapable of despising his goodness, or taking occasion from it, to harden their hearts against Him. Is it to the consequences of Adam's sin ? No, for they shall rise again. Is it to the sufferings and penalties entailed by sin upon this evil world ? No, for God has in mercy removed them from it. Say, then, are not all who die in infancy chosen to inherit everlasting life through the grace of God, flowing through the atonement of Christ ?

This brings me to the brief consideration of my second position, that the early removal of infants is not only in mercy to them, but also in goodness to us. After the satisfactory establishment of the first position, there will be little room for questioning the truth and certainty of the second, for if this dispensation of Providence is of unquestionable mercy, considered as affecting infants in their temporal and eternal prospects, how can we but conclude that it is also kind in its bearing upon ourselves. Can our interests be different from, or opposed to, those of our children ? Can *they* be happy, and we miserable on *their* account ? Can their wel-

fare be certainly and immeasurably promoted, and their parents left any reasonable ground for lamentation or regret? No! their interests are ours;—their happiness ours;—and their advancement ours. “If love (says Baxter) teaches us to mourn with them that mourn, and to rejoice with them that rejoice, can it be an act of rational love to mourn for them that are possessed of the highest everlasting joys?” Oh, no! like Legh Richmond, we may press the lifeless remains of our departed child to our bosom, and in the agony of grief burst into tears, but like him let us, as we struggle with nature’s anguish, exclaim, “My child is a saint in glory.”

We wish our children to be happy. Having been instrumental to their birth, we are solicitous for their welfare. Bearing our image, reflecting our every quality, and living in our life, we feel that their comfort is one and identical with our own. And are our children happy here; happy while called to struggle with so many infantile diseases, dangers and accidents? Even if comparatively happy in this age, when their ignorance is their bliss, and their very helplessness the source of their enjoyment;—will they be always so? In the very region of storms, can they escape their ravages?—surrounded by misery, can they remain unharmed by its malignant influence?—breathing the atmosphere of pollution, can they be saved from its corruption?—and exposed to the shipwreck of their present character and the loss of their future and everlasting hopes, where is there security for their preservation or deliverance? “There is a death worse than the death of the body,—the death of affection, of reputation, of conscience, of the soul. Parental hopes may be crushed by the misconduct of children, more than by the closing of the grave’s portals. They may live only to treasure up

wrath against the day of wrath, and bring down the grey hairs of pious parents with sorrow to the grave."

The snare is before them, the pang and the sorrow,
The breath of the Syren, the voice of the rod,
The crime of to-day, the despair of to-morrow,
And all that can sever the soul from its God.

"See that son of many prayers ; he was consecrated to God in infancy. How anxiously do those Christian parents watch every indication of sobriety. How ardently do they hope it may result in his salvation. What despondency and sinking of heart do they experience, as they behold him grow up in impenitence. He is about to leave his father's house ; his mother gives him a Bible, and begs him to read it. But as he passes beyond the reach of parental restraint, he casts off fear, restrains prayer, takes his seat with the scorner, and, with the drunkard's unmeaning laugh, scoffs at the Bible, and the Bible's God. Behold him now the grief of parents, the shame of friends ; an outcast from society. Were it not for the hope that at some future period he might be overtaken by divine grace, and peradventure might repent, would it not be the spontaneous language of those afflicted parents, ' Would God, my son, that you had never been born ; would that you had died in infancy, ere such a measure of guilt and wrath had been treasured up against you ! ' And now let *him* be laid upon his dying bed, let all hope of his repentance be taken away ; and see him pass into eternity with all his sins upon his head, and what consolation can cheer the midnight gloom of such bereavement ? Be assured that there is a measure of grief in that affliction, compared with which all else is nothing. When David's infant child was dead, he arose, washed, anointed

himself, and took refreshment : but when Absalom died, deep in sin and rebellion, his heart broke, and burst out in an irrepressible flood of grief,—‘ O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son ! ’ ”—But are our children gone ? Have we committed them to an early grave ? Do they sleep the sleep of death ? And are they not happy ? Have I not proved that they are happy—happy to the full extent of their capacities—happy with the perfect bliss of heaven ?

O ! mourn not for the dead,
The happy dead who die in infancy—
Calm is their slumber in the church-yard bed,
Called early from life’s struggles to their rest,
Ere yet to their unconscious lip was prest
The mingled cup of frail humanity.
Oh do not mourn for them, their lot is blest.

No more confined to grov’ling scenes of night,
No more sad tenants pent in mortal clay ;
Now should we rather hail their glorious flight,
And trace their journey to the realms of joy.

We are not only desirous to see our children happy, but to have that happiness made sure to them. This is the great struggle of earthly ambition,—the fond desire of parents. It is their uncertainty, their instability which most painfully characterizes the joys of life. “ The fashion of this world passeth away.” That which is of, or connected with, the earth, cannot endure. Like its own changing seasons, its own uncertain sky, its own ever-varying phenomena, it abideth not. And the foresight of such coming changes, preparation for them, and the erection of some safe retreat, where we and ours may take refuge, and where our children may escape the rough adversities of life—this is the highest

wisdom of man. But the happiness of departed infants, is it not secure and certain? Does it not rest on foundations, immoveable by wind or flood? The anchor of their hope, is it not within the vail? The foundation of their joys, does it not rise in the paradise of God? The tenure of their bliss, is it not guaranteed by the promise and the oath of Him who cannot lie,—who will not deny himself, and who is the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever? It is. And let then even reason itself teach us to submit, and to rejoice in hope.

The Rev. J. S. Meissner, Moravian missionary in Labrador, observes, “We have known what it is to mourn over the loss of beloved children, having accompanied two to their resting-place during our service in this distant land. I was once standing by the grave of my departed children, under a brilliant sun and cloudless sky, when suddenly a light shadow passed over the green turf. Looking up for the cause, I beheld a snow-white gull winging her lofty flight through the air. The thought immediately struck me—Thus it is with the dear objects of my mournful remembrance. Here indeed lies the shadow, but above is the living principle. Nor was the reflection without comfort to my wounded spirit, since of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

But again, we have made some tolerable provision for the security of the future happiness of our children, our next desire is to see them in such a situation as will give the promise of its permanence. So long as they remain within the years of immaturity, while they are unfixed in their destiny, or unsettled in their earthly relations, however ample may be the provision for their comfort, there is still connected with them the deepest solicitude. And if ever there is a time when a parent should be willing to say, “Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,” it is when he beholds

his children, one after another, choosing the path of uprightness and piety, and all settled down, each in his own homestead, and all together walking in peaceful and affectionate harmony. But over the most peaceful establishment of sublunary and domestic bliss, how many fitful clouds portentously roll on the thunder; and with what ruthless ferocity have we seen death enter the limits of such a happy community, and convert it into one wide waste of deserted ruin. But the infant dead! is their happiness not permanent, and unchangeable, incorruptible, undefiled, and such as cannot fade away? The infant dead!—are they not settled for eternity, made immortally blessed, and far, far, and for ever, removed from all the sources of sorrow and of change? Instead, therefore, of indulging in those vain regrets, which suit those only who never look above earth's bounded scene, and centre all their treasures here, let us cherish feelings of resignation, thankfulness and hope.

Let me not mourn, that thou wilt be
A tenant of the sky,—
Escaped from life's tumultuous sea,
And frail mortality.
When storms arise, and tempests blow,
No adverse gale thy bark shall know.

Let me rejoice, to think that thou
Hast early joined the blest;
Before thy youthful heart could know,
Aught to disturb its rest,—
Before earth's chilling storms had given,
A blight to fruit prepared for heaven.

“One of the bitterest pangs too, which a parent can experience when about to die, is the thought that he leaves his children in an evil and dangerous world, un-

certain what will be their conduct and destiny. While with the utmost confidence he can leave all the temporal allotments of his fatherless children with God, he cannot but feel some sorrow and foreboding at heart, in view of the uncertainty which overhangs their future prospects as moral beings, who are to act, choose, and decide for themselves. That uncertainty he escapes, who, before his own departure, sees his children securely laid in their best home and refuge. Once he might have mourned, and said of him who he had hoped would have been his solace and joy, 'How is the strong staff broken, the beautiful rod!'—But now as he thinks of the uncertain conflict to which he would have been exposed, with the temptations and dangers of a wicked world, he is grateful that the blessed Jesus holds the keys of life and death, and that, like the skilful gardener, whose experienced eye detects the approaching storm, and who knows when to hide the lily in its narrow bed, *He* knows when to put his little ones secure from the storm and tempest."

Yes—if I have not sacrificed all other claims to thine,
Surrendered with a selfish love, because that thou wert mine,
I still may hope to feel that bliss within my soul revive,
Which never in this yearning heart will languish while I
live ;

May hear thy unforgotten voice join the archangel's song,
And know my own beloved one, amidst a holy throng,
May see thee, by the light that breaks the shadows of the
tomb,

A portion of my happiness in the bright world to come !

They are gone—never to return !—Where we now are, they can never more be. The home of their infancy they will never re-visit. Their baby couch they will never again press. The bosom which first beat for them, with the wild ecstasy of maternal love, they

will never, oh ! never embrace. The sound of their happy lullaby we shall never again hear. Nor shall we ever again reciprocate a parent's nameless joys. The heavenly sweetness of those countenances unfurrowed by care or guilt, we shall never more gaze upon, nor shall we listen, in wrapt delight, to the infant prattle, or feel the throbbing of the joyful heart as we hear from their infant voices the loved name of father, or of mother. It is true, my bereaved friend, they are gone ; but it is also true that all solicitude is gone ;—and while we look down the coming future, and see it as dark with storms as the troubled past, and as full of fiery trial as the present, we feel no consciousness of alarm for those who are now safely housed in their home in the skies. “ To grieve us even for our profit is not the *sole* reason why they are consigned to an early grave. This is the passage by which even they must be brought into the presence of God, and this is the time when he pleases to call for them. How animating the thought, that those powers which were but beginning to unfold themselves, are now expanding, and employed amid the glories of the heavenly paradise. Whether they were spared for a season, and multiplied attractions and endearments, or were cut off from the womb, and had the allotment which Job so passionately wished had been his, the same end has been answered. Their short-lived existence on earth, may appear as a kind of blank, but God does nothing in vain. Their life below, short as it was, has served to introduce the eternal state, as well as the life of the hoary headed patriarch. At the same time, their death by its effects will impress a character on the eternity of surviving witnesses, relatives, and friends. Let bereaved parents then say, ‘ It is well with the child.’ ‘ It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good in his

sight.' He who wept at the grave of Lazarus, hath hallowed the tears of affection, but he forbids us to sorrow, as if there were no hope. While you weep as nature feels, and indeed ought to feel, for otherwise the providence could not profit you, beware of nursing melancholy, and cherishing a morbid sensibility. May not the child say to you, 'If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I have got home to my father.' If the hope of going to the Saviour animates your heart, is not the thought, that the happy spirit will 'never return to you,' in this evil world, likewise fraught with consolation? 'Staying only to wash away its native impurity in the laver of regeneration, it bade a speedy adieu to time and terrestrial things—just looked on the light, and then withdrew into the more inviting regions of undisturbed repose.—Happy voyager! no sooner launched, than arrived at the haven.' No one acquainted with the works of this evangelical writer will suppose that he identifies regeneration with an external rite. He obviously refers to that change of heart which is indispensably necessary in order to the enjoyment of the kingdom of heaven."

And these helpless innocents—oh! how do they steal upon the heart—how insensibly do they entwine themselves around us!—how irresistibly do they engross the thoughts, and call forth pride and vanity, and selfishness, and an overfondness of inordinate regard! Like the slender creeping vine, do they attach themselves to us—lean helplessly upon us—drink in, from our joy, all their merriment—throw around us their fragrance and beauty—but, like it, do they oftentimes insidiously cramp the growth of piety, and drink up the essential aliment of godliness. And if God has transplanted them to his own heavenly vineyard, and by so doing, restored our souls to health and prosperity;

should we not rejoice in that tribulation which worketh out for us such peaceful fruits of righteousness? We may lament as an incurable evil, what God esteems an invaluable good. Our prayers and energies may be excited to agony in warding off a storm which it is his purpose shall come down upon us in all its fury. We watch at the couch of a languishing child: our life is bound up in his; if it die it seems to us God must design to undo us, and yet, perhaps, that child was given us that it might die in our arms and be the means of our sanctification. Sixteen years after such an affliction, a father says, "I have found the loss of my child, which is the greatest cross I ever met with, hath been blessed to the good of my soul." As a good woman once said, "Bearing my children and my crosses has cost me dear, but I would not be without either. It is not fit that I should choose my affliction, what God lays on me is welcome, and I will esteem Christ no worse for his cross; for I find these bitter waters most medicinal, and the sweetest fruit grows on this bitter tree."

Thou, then, pale mourner o'er an infant's bier,
Brighten thy cheek, and dry the trick'ling tear;
This came, though veiled in darkness from above,
A dispensation of eternal love!
He who perceived the dangerous controul,
The heart-twined spell was gaining on thy soul,
Snatch'd from thine arms the treacherous decoy
To give thee brighter hope, and purer joy.

Should we, however, have been enabled to preserve our hearts from too excessive fondness for the creature, have we guarded them as faithfully against all the other seductions of this spiritual idolatry? Have we given our hearts, and the supremacy of our thoughts, purposes and desires to the business of life, to the many cares of the household, to the heaping up of riches, to

the enjoyment of pleasure, or to any other creature—more than to God, to religion and to things divine? And if it was thus with us, were we not closing up all intercourse between our souls and God; shutting out the light of Heaven; obscuring the pathway to everlasting life; and thus fast gathering around our souls the dark shadow of despair. Was it not, then, merciful in that God we were thus putting far from us, to visit us with some touching bereavement, and thus waken us to our dangerous position? “A mother employed during a score of months, in rearing to intelligence a lovely babe; but at the juncture when it begins to reciprocate her smiles, when it had entirely entwined her heart, had become an essential ingredient in her cup of blessings, she wakes and finds herself embracing a lump of lifeless clay. All distress and darkness, she inquires, Why did it not perish in the birth? Why could it not have died when I loved it less? Why must it live till a mother cannot survive its death? And yet perhaps this very event is the means of snatching the mother from perdition.”*

“Why do the loveliest of earth,
The soonest pass away—
Like radiant flowers of summer birth
The earliest to decay?”

“They come like angel forms to bless
Our visions for a while,
They make our daily burden less—
And half our tears beguile.

“They grow so deeply in our hearts,
We make them idols there;
’Till God in love asunder parts—
The ties which bind them here.

* Clark’s Works, vol. i. p. 304.

" 'Tis thus He chides us that we love
The creatures more than God;
To fit our souls for rest above—
He chastens with his rod !"

" There is something pleasing in this fact : that every infant that you lose is a link that binds you to the grave, on the one hand, and a link also that binds you to eternity on the other. A portion of yourself has taken possession of the tomb, to remind you that you must lie down there. A soul that was related to yourself has taken possession of eternity, to remind you that you must enter there. Our bodies are, through our infants, in communion with the dust; and our spirits, through theirs, with the everlasting throne. We are so disposed to strike our roots into this fading and fainting earth, that it becomes mercy on the part of God to send those chastisements, which loosen our affections from a world doomed to flame. Each infant that we lose is a tie (holy and happy truth !) less to bind us to this world, and a tie more to bind our hearts to that better world where our infants have preceded us. It is thus God gradually loosens the tree before it falls. Death thus loses half its pain before it overtakes us. Happy truth, if we realize it ! Happy lesson, if we feel it ! Good and gracious is that Father, who thus preaches to His people from the infant's bier, when they will not learn the lesson which they need from His ambassadors in the pulpit ! " And that such may be the result, we are encouraged to hope from the following fact.

Several years ago, said the Rev. Mr. G., I was called to attend the funeral of a child *five* years of age. She had sickened and died suddenly. The father I knew not, except that he was an infidel. This child had attended my Sabbath school, and she had left behind

some interesting conversation with several members of the church. This, after the child had died, was communicated to the bereaved mother for her consolation. At the funeral the mother appeared more deeply interested in the subject of her own salvation than that of the loss of her child. The next Sabbath this family were at my meeting and requested prayers that their affliction might be sanctified. They continued to attend meeting, Sabbath after Sabbath, and on the fifth Sabbath, the father became hopefully pious. Soon after this his wife became pious, and then a sister, and then a young lady residing in the family; and the father, mother, sister, and young lady, all, on the same Sabbath, made a public profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That father is now a pillar in the Church. This great change in that family was produced instrumentally by the *death of that child*!

Who will say this dear child lived and died in vain? Will not many an aged Christian have fewer gems to brighten their crowns of rejoicing, than will this babe in Christ? "That life is *long* which answers life's great end."

We are too ready, notwithstanding all the admonitions we receive, to connect prolonged existence with the period of life and the quantum of health: and thus are thousands kept in a trance-like indifference to the urgent calls of death and eternity. And surely if aught beside the dread reality of that hour of doom, and that after judgment of which it is the prelude, can break this delusive, this soul-destroying spell, it is when we behold death lay the grasp of his icy fingers upon some moving form of youth and beauty, and in the very fulness of exuberant and ruddy health, consign it to the tomb. Here surely, Oh man! you cannot but be taught, that youth, or strength, or health, are no bar-

rier to the approach of death, and that in this warfare there is no retreat and no victory. In this matter all are equal, all alike mortal, and all alike destined to death, and to that "judgment which is after death!" So that the highest, as well as the lowest, the richest, as well as the poorest, must bow to the stroke of bereavement, of affliction, and of death. How forcibly was this truth taught in the case of the Princess Charlotte :

A throne on earth awaited thee,
A nation long'd to see thy face :
Heir to a glorious ancestry,
And father of a mightier race.

Vain hope!—that throne thou must not fill ;
Thee shall that nation ne'er behold ;
Thine ancient house is heirless still ;
Thy line will never be unroll'd.

Yet while we mourn thy flight from earth,
Thine was a destiny sublime :
Caught up to Paradise in birth—
Snatch'd by Eternity from Time.

The mother knew her offspring dead :
Oh ! was it grief, or was it love
That broke her heart ? The spirit fled
To seek her nameless child above.

Led by this natal star, she trod,
His path to Heav'n ; the meeting there,
And how they stood before their God,
The day of judgment shall declare.

Again, how constantly do we find ourselves associating the guilt and the danger of sin with open and gross enormities, to the entire forgetfulness of the truth, that after all sin lies in the heart—that this is its fountain—and that from its enmity to God, and aversion to ho-

liness, proceed all other transgressions. Oh, what a rebuke does God give to this delusion of Satan, by which thousands are ensnared in the net of perdition, when he brings death, the effect of sin, and the demonstration of His infinite hatred of sin, even upon infants ! For if they, who have not sinned personally, are made to suffer the curse of a violated law, how shall those escape who, to all the guilt of original corruption, have added all the blackness of their own voluntary iniquity, and their own perverse rejection of mercy ?

How willingly too, do men deceive their hearts and sustain themselves in a course of sin, by interpreting that goodness and long-sufferance of God by which he would "lead them to repentance," into an indifference to the conduct of his creatures. Approach, deluded mortals, to that infant bed ! There lies an innocent and helpless nursling in the convulsive throes of death. Un-availing to its relief are a mother's prayers, or a physician's help. Bold infidelity, say wherefore is it so ? Is God so over-willing to repent him of his threatenings, as you say he is ? Is God so reckless of offences ; is God so willing to pass by unatoned transgression as you aver he is ? Wherefore, then, does he thus inflict even on this helpless babe the awful curse pronounced on man thousands of years ago ? Miserable men ! who remember not that God "treasures up wrath against the day of wrath, and his righteous revelation against every son of man who doeth evil ; and that the wicked shall be turned into hell with all who forget God."

To unbelieving and unconverted parents, therefore, the death of their infants speaks in solemn and impressive tones. Surely such parents "are summoned by their best feelings to the cross. Though they are guilty of violating God's law, and yet more in refusing God's gospel, their infants, if lost during the period of infancy,

are not suffering the consequences of their parents' guilt ; they rest from their tears, they are snatched from the contagion of their company. Here is mercy to their souls as well as mercy to their bodies. Their infants are in perennial peace ; but if the parents die unsaved, unsanctified, untransformed, unrenewed, a yawning chasm must separate them from their infants for ever and ever. Theirs will be the joy, but yours, unconverted reader, must be the sadness ; theirs the blessing, but yours for ever the conscious and consuming curse. No interchange of love shall ever cross the gulf that severs you. The stroke that severs you in time severs you in eternity also."

Such then are the lessons taught by this dispensation of providence, by which God would admonish, and instruct us, and by which, these afflictions, light compared with what they might be, and with what we deserve, and light contrasted with the whole duration of our being, may work out for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. And when we duly consider the necessity and importance of these truths and their bearing upon our present and everlasting interest ;—and to their consideration add the delightful assurance that it is well with our departed infants, can we not confidently and triumphantly say that they are thus early removed in mercy to them, and in kindness to us ? Is not the bitterness of their death thus removed, and its sting extracted ? Can we not with Job say, "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord ?" Can we not with Aaron exclaim, "It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth to him good ?" Can we not with David rejoicingly declare, "They cannot come to us, but we can go to them ?" Yes, we can go to them. "They are not lost, but gone before." There in that world of light, and love, and

joy, they await our coming. There do they beckon us to ascend. There do they stand ready to welcome us. There may we meet them, when a few more suns or seasons shall have cast their departing shadows upon our silent grave. Then shall our joy be full and our sorrows ended, and all tears wiped from our eyes.

Oh ! when a mother meets on high,
The child she lost in infancy ;
Hath she not then for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrows, all her tears,
An over payment of delight ?

Death separates, but it can never disunite those who are bound together in Christ Jesus. To them, death in this power of an endless separation, is abolished. It is no more death, but a sweet departure, a journey from Earth to Heaven. Our children are still ours. We are still their parents. We are yet one family—one in memory—one in hope—one in spirit. Our children are yet with us, and dwell with us in our sweetest, fondest recollections. We too, are yet with them, in the bright anticipations of our reunion with them, in the glories of the upper sanctuary. We mingle together indeed no more in sorrow and in pain,

But we shall join love's buried ones again
In endless bands, and in eternal peace.

Blessed and glorious hope, and blessed and glorious gospel by which it is inspired ! I have gloried in thee, but never as I do now. I have found thee precious, but never as precious as now. I have hoped in thy word, and stayed myself on thy promises, and exulted in thy immortal hopes, but never aught as now. When I stood a fond parent, surrounded by my little ones, growing up in their sweet loveliness around me,

my future delight, my future helpmates and companions, I rejoiced in the sunshine which this heavenly gospel threw around me. But when I stood bereft of these loved ones—when I saw them cold in the speechlessness of death—when I put them both together in their clayey bed, there to sleep the sleep of death—when my heart shuddered to think that there they would lie exposed to winter's storms and the summer's torrid heat—then did thy cheerful promise, span as with a bow of hope my dreary darkness, sustain my sinking heart, and enable me, even with death, and its horrid desolations before me, triumphantly to exclaim "Oh death where is thy sting, oh grave where is thy victory! thanks be to God who giveth me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" And here let me commend, especially to bereaved parents, this "balm for wounded spirits." Clasp it, sorrowing mourner, to your bosom. Receive it into your inmost heart. Treasure it as your pearl of greatest price. Seek it as your first and greatest object of pursuit. Buy it at whatever cost. Sell it—no, not for worlds. Heaven is not only *our* home, *our* rest, *our* heaven—it is now the home of our children—it is our common inheritance. Let it then be the prize of our high calling. Towards it let us press. To it let us continually ascend. For it let us diligently prepare, that when our earthly house of this tabernacle is taken down, we may have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.

For oh! that star of morn still beams
With light to direct my feet,
There, when I have done with my earthly dreams,
The parent and child may meet.

"It may be," as Cotton Mather observes, "your affliction is the loss of children. Well, have you not

read such a message sent to a godly man, as that in 1 Sam. ii. 33. 'The son of thine whom I shall not cut off, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart.' It is possible that, if thy child had lived, it might have made thee the father of a fool, or (that I may speak to the sex that is most unable to bear this trial) the mother of a shame. It is a very ordinary thing for one living child to occasion more trouble than ten dead ones. However, your spiritual interests may be exceedingly injured by the temporal delights which you desire; you may rue what you wish, because it may be an idol, which will render your souls like the 'barren heath in the wilderness before the Lord.' It was the very direful calamity of the ancient Israelites, in Psalm cvi. 15. 'The Lord gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls.' A lean soul, a wretched soul, a soul pining away in its iniquities, is oftentimes the effect of those fine things which we dote upon. It is a blasted soul that sets up a creature in the room, on the throne of the great God, that gives unto a creature those affections and cares which are due unto the great God alone. Such idolatry the soul is too frequently by prosperity seduced into. We are told, in Prov. i. 32. 'The prosperity of fools destroys them;' many a fool is thus destroyed. O fearful case! A full table and a lean soul! A high title and a lean soul! A numerous posterity and a soul even like the kine in Pharaoh's dream! Madness is in our hearts if we tremble not at this; soul calamities are sore calamities."

"Let not then the death of your children cause any inconsolable grief. The loss of children did I say—nay, let me recal so harsh a word. The children we count lost, are not so. The death of our children is

not the loss of our children. They are not lost, but given back; they are not lost, but sent before.

“Well, this is the calamity which many of you at some time or other have experienced; the death of children is a thing in which the children of Jacob seldom escape a resemblance of their father. Many carry themselves under the trial, as if a death of virtue, yea, as if a death of reason had befallen them; but recollect yourselves, O dejected Christians, and be not like them that mourn without hope this day. Let bereaved parents be still believing parents; the voice of the great God that formed all things is unto them, as in Jer. xiii. 16. ‘Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord.’ Let the thoughts which have been set before us compose and settle our minds under this affliction. Let us not say, this thing is against us; but let us say, ‘the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.’ It is indeed very true, that this affliction is none of the most easy to be borne; the heart of a parent will have peculiar passions working in it, at such a time as this, though there be greater sorrows than those with which we follow a child unto the grave; I bless God it is a more bitter thing to say, my sin is mighty; or to say, my soul is guilty, than it is to say, my child is dead; that moan, ‘I have pierced my Saviour,’ is more heart-wounding, than to mourn as one mourneth for a first-born. Yet few outward, earthly anguishes are equal unto these. The dying of a child is like the tearing of a limb from us. But O remember, that if ever we had any grace in our souls, we have ere this willingly plucked out a right eye, and cut off a right hand, for the sake of God. Why should we not then, at the call of God, readily part with a limb, and leave him

room to say, 'Now I know that thou fearest me, because thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me.' It was from God that we received those dear pledges, our children, and it is to God that we return them. We cannot quarrel with our God, if about those loans he say unto us, Give them up; you have had them long enough! We knew what they were when first we took them into our arms; we knew that they were potsherds, that they were mortals, that the worms which sometimes kill them, or at least will eat them, are but their name-sakes; and that a dead child is a sight no more surprising than a broken pitcher or a blasted flower.

"But we did not, we do not know, what they might be, in case they were continued among the living on the earth. We cannot tell whether our sons would prove as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace; or, whether our sons might not, like Isaac's son, do those things that would be 'a grief of mind unto us,' and our daughters, like Jephtha's daughter, be of them that trouble us. Christians, let us be content that our wise and good God should choose our portion for us; he will appoint us none but a goodly heritage. Our temptation is no more than what is common to men, yea, and to good men. The greatest part of those human spirits, that are now beholding the face of God in glory, are such as dwelt in the children of pious people, departed in their infancy. And what have we to say, why we should not undergo it as well as they. Was the infant whose decease we deplore, one that was very pretty, one that had pretty features, pretty speeches, pretty actions? Well, at the resurrection of the just we shall see it again; the Lord Jesus will deal with our dead children as the prophets Elijah and Elisha did by

those whom they raised of old ; he will bring them to us, recovered from the pale jaws of death ; and how amiable, how beautiful, how comely they will then be, no tongue is able to express, or heart to conceive ! Though their beauty consume in the grave, yet it shall be restored, it shall be increased, when they shall put off their bed-clothes in the morning of the day of God.

“ Again ; was the infant now lamented, very suddenly snatched away, and perhaps awfully too ! not merely by a convulsion, but by scalding, by burning, by drowning, by shooting, by stabbing, or by some unusual harm ? Truly it is often so, that the quicker the death the better. It is more desirable for our children to feel but a few minutes of pain, than it is for them to lie groaning in those exquisite agonies which would cause us even ourselves to wish that the Lord would take them out of their misery. As for any more grievous and signal circumstance attending our dying children, our best course will be to have it said of us, ‘ they ceased ; saying, The will of the Lord be done ! ’ As the love or wrath of God is not certainly declared in, so our grief before him should not be too much augmented by, such things as these. And it is a favour, if so much as one of our children be left alive unto us. Let not the sense of one trouble swallow up the sense of a thousand mercies. The mother from whom a violent death has taken one of her two children, may immediately embrace the other and say, ‘ Blessed be God who has left me this.’

“ But once more ; is the deceased infant an only child ? Are we now ready to sigh—All is gone ! Nay, thou hast but a poor all, if this were all. I hope thy only child is not thy only joy. If thou hast ever experienced the new birth, the sense of thy soul is, one Jesus is worth ten children ; yea, one Christ is worth ten

worlds. What though all thy candles are put out! The sun, the sun of righteousness is arising to thy soul for ever. An undone man art thou indeed! thou hast thy little glass of water spilt or spoilt, while thou hast a fountain, a living fountain running by thy door! The blessed God calls thee, my child; and that is infinitely better than a name of sons and of daughters.

“Finally. Have we any doubts about the eternal salvation of the children which we have buried out of our sight? Indeed AS TO GROWN CHILDREN, there is often too sad cause of suspicion or solicitude; and yet here, the sovereign disposals of God must be submitted to. Besides, though it may be we could not see such plain marks and signs of grace in our adult children as we could have wished for, nevertheless they *might have the root of the matter in them*. There are many serious, gracious, well-inclined young people, who conceal from every body the evidences of their repentance, and the instances of their devotion. You cannot tell what the Lord did for the souls of your poor children before he took them out of the world. Perhaps they sought, they found mercy at the last. The child of a good parent is not to be despaired of, though turned off the gallows.

“But as to young children, the fear of God will take away all matter of scruple in the owners of them. Parents, can you not sincerely say, that you have chosen God in Christ for the best portion, as of yourselves, so of your children? Answer this: if your children had been spared unto you, would it not have been your care to have them brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Would you not have used all prayers and pains to have them engaged unto the service of the living God, and unto a just aversion

to all the vile idols and vain courses of the world ? Then be of good cheer : your children are in a better place, a better state, than you yourselves are yet arrived unto. The faithful God hath promised, I will be their God, as well as thy God. O say, This is all my desire, though the Lord suffer not my house to grow. Those dear children are gone from your kind arms, into the kinder arms of Jesus, and this is by far the best of all to have children this day in heaven. Truly this is an honour which neither you nor I are worthy of. But so it is : the King of kings hath sent for our children to confer a kingdom on them. They are gone from a dark vale of sin and shame ; they are gone into the land of light, and life, and love ; there they are with the spirits of just men made perfect ; there they serve the Lord day and night in his temple, having all tears wiped from their eyes ; and from thence methinks I hear them crying aloud unto us, ‘ As well as you love us we would not be with you again : weep not for us, but for yourselves, and count not yourselves at home till you come to be, as we are, for ever with the Lord.’

“ I have done. The fit epitaph of a dead infant (that, that alone is enough to be the solace of a sad parent), is, ‘ Of such is the kingdom of heaven.’ ”*

To you who are still the parents of living children, or who may be such, let me say, Take heed and beware of regarding as your own, what is entrusted to you *by* the Lord, and *for* the Lord. Look upon your children as immortals—as passing, you know not how rapidly—to the world beyond. While provident of their present wants and temporal comforts, make their heavenly welfare your chief concern. Let your language be that of the poet.

* Right Thoughts in Sad Hours.

Dear cherished babes, if you should have
To travel far alone,
And weep by turns at many a grave
Before you reach your own ;
May he who bade you weep, be nigh
To wipe away your tears,
And point you to a world on high,
Beyond these mournful years.
Yet if it be his holy will,
I pray, that hand in hand,
We all may travel many a hill
Of this the pilgrim land.
With Zion's shining gate in view
Through every danger rise,
And form a family anew
Unbroken in the skies.

Again, would I remind you of the uncertain tenor by which you hold you children, friends, and all earthly blessings. The days of darkness will come upon you. Through much tribulation you must enter the kingdom of God. As a general, when he is suddenly overtaken by an overpowering enemy, or by the inclement frosts of winter, falls back into some well garrisoned and impregnable fortress, until the enemy has gone and his strength has increased—so, let me advise you, to have these hopes and comforts of the gospel understandingly and thoroughly fixed in your memory ; and constantly preserved in your frequent meditation ; that when met by some sudden and overwhelming visitation, you may not find yourself exposed, shelterless and alone, to the pitiless peltings of the storm, but may at once take refuge under this safe covert until the tempest be overpast. And may God in infinite mercy fit and prepare us all for the issues and events of life, for the hour of death and the day of judgment.

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

In heart divided, and in spirit rent,
Who could forbid a mother to lament?
Death! thou dread looser of the dearest tie,
Was there no aged and no sick one nigh?
No languid wretch who long'd, but long'd in vain
For thy cold hand to cool his fiery pain?
And was the only victim thou couldst find,
An infant on its mother's arms reclin'd?
But 'tis thy way to pass the ripest by,
And cause the flowers and buds of life to die;
Full many a flow'r is scatter'd by the breeze,
And many a blossom shaken from the trees,
And many a morning beam in tempest flies,
And many a dew-drop shines awhile and dies:
But oftener far, the dreams that fancy weaves,
Of future joy and happiness, deceives.
And thou pale mourner, o'er an infant's bier,
Brighten thy cheek, and dry the trickling tear;
'This came, though veil'd in darkness, from above,
A dispensation of eternal love!
He who perceiv'd the dangerous controul,
The heart-twin'd spell was gaining on thy soul,
Snatch'd from thine arms the treacherous decoy,
'To give thee brighter hope and purer joy.
Oh! see how soon the flow'rs of life decay,
How soon terrestrial pleasures fade away.
This star of comfort, for a moment giv'n,
Just rose on earth, then set to rise in heav'n
Yet mourn not, as of hope bereft, its doom,
Nor water with thy tears its early tomb;
Redeem'd by God from sin, releas'd from pain,
Its life were punishment, its death were gain.
'Turn back thine eye along the path of life,
View thine own grief, and weariness and strife:
And say, if that which tempts thee to repine,
Be not a happier lot by far than thine.
If death in infancy had laid thee low,
Thou hadst escap'd from pain, and sin, and woe;
The years thy soul the path of sorrow trod,
Had all been spent in converse with thy God;

And thou hadst shone in yonder cloudless sphere,
A seraph there, and not a pilgrim here.
O! it is sweet to die,—to part from earth,—
And win all heav'n for things of little worth;
Then sure thou wouldst not, though thou couldst awake
The little slumberer, for its mother's sake.
It is when those we love, in death depart,
That earth has slightest hold upon the heart.
Hath not bereavement higher wishes taught,
And purified from earth, thine earth-born thought?
I know it hath. Hope then appears more dear,
And heaven's bright realms shine brightest through a tear.
Though it be hard to bid thy heart divide,
And lay the gem of all thy love aside—
Faith tells thee, and it tells thee not in vain,
That thou shalt meet thine infant yet again.
On seraph wings, the new-born spirit flies,
'To brighter regions and serener skies;
And, ere thou art aware, the day may be
When to those skies thy babe shall welcome thee.
While yet on earth, thine ever-circling arms
Held it securest from surrounding harms;
Yet even there, disease could aim her dart,
Chill the warm cheek, and stop the fluttering heart.
And many a fruitless tear-drop thou hast paid,
To view the sickness that thou couldst not aid.
No ill can reach it now, it rests above,
Safe in the bosom of celestial love:
Its short but yet tempestuous way is o'er,
And tears shall trickle down its cheek no more.
Then far be grief! Faith looks beyond the tomb,
And heav'n's bright portals sparkle through the gloom.
If bitter thoughts and tears in heav'n could be,
It is thine infant that should weep for thee.

ON THE DEATH OF MY SON.

FROM SACRED LYRICS, BY R. HUIE.

My little one, my fair one, are then thy troubles o'er?
And has thy slight and feeble bark arrived at Canaan's
shore?

Hast thou at length a haven reached, where thou can anchor
fast ?

And heed no more the pelting storm, the billow or the
blast ?

My little one, my fair one, though brief thy course has
been,

Few days of sunshine cheered thee on, few smiling coasts
were seen ;

It seemed as o'er thy shallop frail the raven flapped his
wing,

And scared the bright and halcyon tribes, which might thine
advent sing.

My little one, my fair one, thy couch is empty now,
Where oft I wiped the dews away, which gathered on thy
brow ;

No more amidst the sleepless night I smooth thy pillow fair,
Tis smooth indeed, but rest no more thy small pale features
there.

My little one, my fair one, thy tiny carriage waits,
But waits in vain to bear thy form through yon inviting
gates ;

Where bloom the flowers as erst they did, when thou
couldst cull their sweets,

But roams in vain thy father's eye, no answering glance it
meets.

My little one, my fair one, thy lips were early trained
To lisp that gracious Saviour's name, who all thy guilt
sustained :

Nor would I weep because my Lord has snatched my gourd
away,

To blossom bright, and ripen fair, in realms of endless day.

My little one, my fair one, thou canst not come to me,
But nearer draws the numbered hour, when I shall go to
thee.

And thou, perchance, with seraph smile, and golden harp
in hand,

May'st come the first to welcome me, to our Emmanuel's
land !

A FATHER'S REFLECTIONS ON THE BIRTH OF A SON.

PRESIDENT DAVIES.

Now thou art born into an anxious state
Of dubious trial for thy future fate ;
Now thou art listed in the war of life,
The prize immense ; and, oh ! severe the strife :
Another birth awaits thee, when the hour
Arrives, that lands thee on the immortal shore,
(And oh ! 'tis near, with winged haste 'twill come,
Thy cradle rocks towards the neighbouring tomb),
Then shall the immortals shout, " A son is born,"
Whilst thee, as dead, mistaken mortals mourn.
From glory then, to glory thou shalt rise,
Or sink from deep, to deeper miseries ;
Ascend perfection's everlasting scale,
Or still descend from gulph to gulph in hell.
Thou embryo angel, or thou infant fiend !
A being now begun, but ne'er to end,
What boding fears a father's heart torment,
Trembling and anxious for the grand event,
Lest the young soul so late by heaven bestowed,
Forget his father, and forget his God ;
Lest while imprisoned in this house of clay,
To tyrant lusts he falls a helpless prey ;
And, lest descending still from bad to worse,
His immortality should prove his curse.
Maker of souls ! avert so dire a doom,
Or snatch him back to native nothing's gloom.

CHAPTER VI.

SELECTIONS IN PROSE, CONFIRMATORY AND ILLUSTRATIVE OF
THE PRECEDING VIEWS.

The heart that has not known the hour
When Grief could bid it bow,
Or *seen* that looks and words have power
To cloud the brightest brow,
’Twere vain to torture with a song
So sorrowful as mine ;
Leave such to pant amid the throng
That crowd life’s gilded shrine.

But ye who suffer—who have felt
The destiny of earth,
That Death with shadowy hand hath dealt
Rebuke amid your mirth ;
To you *this* tribute of a word,
When other sounds have fled,
Will come like loved tones faintly heard :—
The Memory of the Dead.

STATE OF INFANTS IN HEAVEN.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—You desired some thoughts upon the existence and employments of the spirit of an infant in the heavenly world ; and although there is not much said in Scripture upon the subject, yet, doubtless, many a pious mother, whilst shedding the tear of parental affection over her departed little one, has been anxious to trace that spirit into the regions of everlasting happiness and glory. That there are different degrees of glory it cannot be questioned, if you look at several passages of Scripture, such as the following :—

* From the Evangelical Magazine.

Rev. xxi. 10—17 ; James v. 10 ; Daniel xii. 3 ; Matt. xiii. 43 ; 1 Cor. xv. 41 ; Rev. vii. 13—17.

From these passages, we may gain the assurance that this is the case, and that will be sufficient to allay every fear of the doubting mind.

“I saw a little baby breathe its last.”

One evening, I had just sat down to read, when some person knocked at the door, and Mr. — entered to inform me his baby, to all appearance, was near death. Immediately I went down stairs, and soon perceived the interesting little object could not exist many hours. At such a time, how affecting was the scene ! Parents, servants, and friends waiting to see the change. Their thoughts seemed called away from every thing earthly. The parents were wrapt up in the thought, “We shall see our child no more.” I marked the sovereignty of God. He does according to his will, independently and irresistibly, without giving an account of his matters any further than he pleases. He does nothing without the best reasons, whether those reasons be disclosed to his creatures or not. All his pleasure, all his determinations are perfectly wise and good, founded on the best of all reasons, and directed to the best purposes. It was very affecting to see the approach of death in one so young. Her struggles were soon over. I watched until I fancied I saw the soul depart, but it was a spirit. ’Twas not flesh. It escaped from the body, and was in a moment translated and introduced to a world of spirits. How amazing the change ! how incomprehensible ! It was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour. It was a wonderful change, if we only contemplate its introduction to angels. At the moment that soul entered their presence, its facul-

ties were enlarged, its knowledge increased, its mind expanded to a wonderful degree. It lives in ever-blooming youth, highly-favoured, exalted and happy, destined to survive and triumph when this universe will be destroyed. It will exist for ever and ever. That little being which, while in this world, was incapable of employing itself, is now, in its character, complete. It is possessed of attributes divine : all these are angelic and heavenly. Its employments are numerous, and all becoming its station. The world could not furnish materials for the composition of such an angelic character. It is perfectly free from fault, impurity, and defect. It has escaped all the troubles of life, and will never meet with any thing that will prove an alloy. Its pleasures are unfading, and every tear is wiped away. But how astonishing that this little being should be introduced into the presence of God ! that Being, whose power can, in a moment, crush the proudest monarch, and who possesses an essential glory to which our imaginations cannot extend, and a sublimity of character which is elevated above the utmost stretch of thought. But when he took upon himself our nature, and lived in our world, he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." She dwells in his presence, is near his throne, and sits at his feet. Increasing praises dwell upon her lips ; boundless perfection constitutes her felicity. Her holiness is for ever perfected. Her affections are made to flow in ever-during channels towards the source of infinite perfection. Her knowledge is expanded beyond the highest conception. The sources of it are ever widening, ever increasing. The light of heaven irradiates her, and its splendours delight her soul. Her vision is unclouded, and penetrates the deep things of God. A short time ago, she was a sufferer here ; now,

she is a rejoicing spirit. She has attained to fuller powers than she could have done in this world, had she been possessed of the greatest wisdom and the talents of the most accomplished individual that ever sojourned here. She possesses unbounded freedom, and delights in executing the Divine will. See her amongst the glorious throng, now bending in holy adoration before the Majesty of heaven, and now a commissioned messenger to far distant worlds.

My thoughts were lost in the boundless track, and earth seemed too polluted to mingle again in its low pursuits.

“No; if I could, I would not call her down.”

“Through glass of faith I plainly see
That she is happier far than me.
Her golden harp she tunes so sweet,
While sitting at her Saviour’s feet,
That I should like to go and hear,
I sometimes think, and shed a tear,—
No tear of sorrow, but of joy,—
The hymns that now my child employ.
Angels do sit and listen round,
I make no doubt, to catch the sound,
And every voice in chorus raise,
To sound the great Redeemer’s praise.”

“I WANT TO BE AN ANGEL.”

A CHILD sat in the door of a cottage at the close of a summer Sabbath. The twilight was fading, and as the shades of evening darkened, one after another of the stars stood in the sky, and looked down on the child in his thoughtful mood. He was looking up at the stars and counting them as they came, till they were too many to be counted, and his eyes wandered

all over the heavens, watching the bright worlds above. They seemed just like "holes in the floor of heaven to let the glory through," but he knew better. Yet he loved to look up there, and was so absorbed, that his mother called to him and said :

"My son, what are you thinking of?"

He started as if suddenly aroused from sleep, and answered :

"I was thinking——"

"Yes," said his mother, "I know you were thinking, but what were you thinking about?"

"O," said he, and his little eyes sparkled with the thought, "*I want to be an angel.*"

"And why, my son, would you be an angel?"

"Heaven is up there, is it not, mother? and there the angels live and love God, and are happy ; I do wish I was good and God would take me there, and let me wait on him forever."

The mother called him to her knee, and he leaned on her bosom and wept. She wept too, and smoothed the soft hair of his head as he stood there, and kissed his forehead, and then told him that if he would give his heart to God, now while he was young, the Saviour would forgive all his sins and take him to heaven when he died, and he would then be with God forever.

His young heart was comforted. He knelt at his mother's side and said :

"Jesus, Saviour, Son of God,
Wash me in thy precious blood ;
I thy little lamb would be—
Help me, Lord, to look to thee."

The mother took the young child to his chamber, and soon he was asleep, dreaming perhaps of angels and heaven. A few months afterwards sickness was

on him, and the light of that cottage, the joy of that mother's heart went out. He breathed his last in her arms, and as he took her parting kiss, he whispered in her ear :

"I am going to be an angel."

This is a very simple story, and it is just the way I have felt a thousand times. I have looked at the heavens, and given up to the child's thought that there are the blest ; I have wished that I might be one of their company ; done with sin ; and a bright career of holiness and glory begun, to be ended never.

And it looks so lovely there where God is, and the sunshine of his smile beams with matchless radiance on every heart, and love reigns through the realms of glory, and each strives to see which shall do the most for each other's bliss, that my heart goes there as to a resting-place, where sorrow cannot enter, and joy flows perennially from every soul.

I feel at such times just like the child in the cottage door ; just like the man of old, who sighed for the wings of a dove that he might fly away.

Yet, were it not for sin, this would be as bright and fair a world as that. God would be here as when in the morning of its being he walked in the garden with his friend, and smiled on him with parental love. The angels would be here, our companions and guides. Earth would be heaven, paradise as it was when sin was not.

Then to be happy here, we must be holy. And the holier we are, the happier. And when we are released from sin, and by the merits and mercy of the Saviour, are introduced to the courts above, we shall be as the angels, holy, happy, rejoicing always with God.—*Mother's Magazine.*

FROM Dr. Watts' letter to Madam Sewall, upon the death of her children.

"Have you lost two lovely children? Did you make them your idols? If you did, God has saved you from idolatry. If you did not, you have your God still, and a creature cannot be miserable, who has a God. The little words 'My God,' have infinitely more sweetness than 'my sons' or 'my daughters.' Were they very desirable blessings? Your God calls you to the nobler sacrifice. Can you give up these to him at his call? So was Isaac, when Abraham was required to part with him at God's altar. Are you not a daughter of Abraham? Then imitate his faith, his self-denial, his obedience, and make your evidences of such a spiritual relation to him shine brighter on this solemn occasion. Has God taken them from your arms? And had you not given them to God before? Had you not devoted them to him in baptism? Are you displeased that God calls for his own? Was not your heart sincere in the resignation of them to him? Show then, madam, the sincerity of your heart in leaving them in the hand of God. Do you say, they are lost? Not out of God's sight, and God's world, though they are gone out of your sight and our world. 'All live to God.' You may hope the spreading covenant of grace has sheltered them from the second death. They live, though not with you.

"Are you ready to complain, you have brought forth for the grave? It may be so, but not in vain. Is. lxxv. 25. 'They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble (i. e. for sorrow without hope); for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.' This has been a sweet text to many a mother, when their children are called away betimes.

And the prophet Jeremy, ch. xxxi. 15, 17, has very comfortable words to allay the same sorrows. Did you please yourself in what comforts you might have derived from them in maturer years? But, madam, do you consider sufficiently, that God has taken them away from the evil to come, and hid them in the grave from the prevailing and mischievous temptations of a degenerate age? My brother's wife, in London, has buried seven or eight children, and among them, all her sons. This thought has reconciled her to the providence of God, that the temptations of young men in this age are so exceedingly great, and she has seen so many of the young gentlemen of her acquaintance so shamefully degenerate, that she wipes her tears for the sons she has buried, and composes her soul to patience and thankfulness, with one only daughter remaining. Perhaps God has by this stroke prevented a thousand unknown sorrows. Are your sons dead? But are all your mercies dead too? Food, raiment, safety, peace, liberty of religion, access to the mercy seat, hope of heaven; all these are daily matters of thankfulness. Good madam, let not one sorrow bury them all. Show that you are a Christian, by making it to appear, that religion has supports in it which the world doth not know. What can a poor worldling do, but mourn over earthly blessings departed, and gone down with them comfortless to the grave? But methinks a Christian should lift up his head, as partaking of higher hopes. May the blessed Spirit be your comforter, madam. Endeavour to employ yourself in some business or employment of life continually, lest a solitary and inactive frame of mind tempt you to sit brooding over your sorrows, and nurse them to a dangerous size. Turn your thoughts often to the brighter scenes of heaven and the resurrection.

“Forgive the freedom of a stranger, madam, who desires to be the humble and faithful servant of Christ and souls.

“ISAAC WATTS.”

FROM DR. DODDRIDGE.

COULD I wish, that this young inhabitant of heaven should be degraded to earth again? Or would it thank me for that wish? Would it say, that it was the part of a wise parent, to call it down from a sphere of such exalted services and pleasures, to our low life here upon earth? Let me rather be thankful for the pleasing hope, that though God loves my child too well to permit it to return to me, he will ere long bring me to it. And then that endeared paternal affection, which would have been a cord to tie me to earth, and have added new pangs to my removal from it, will be as a golden chain to draw me upwards, and add one farther charm and joy even to paradise itself. And oh, how great a joy! to view the change, and to compare that dear idea, so fondly laid up, so often reviewed, with the now glorious original, in the improvement of the upper world! To borrow the words of the sacred writer, in a very different sense: “*I said I was desolate and bereaved of children, and who hath brought up these? I was left alone, and these where have they been?*”^{*} Was this my desolation? this my sorrow? to part with thee for a few days, *That I might receive thee for ever,*[†] and find thee what thou art?” It is for no language, but that of heaven, to describe the sacred joy which such a meeting must occasion.

In the meantime, Christians, let us keep the lively expectation of it, and let what has befallen us draw

^{*} Isa. xlix. 21.

[†] Philem. ver. 15.

our thoughts to heaven. Perhaps they will sometimes, before we are aware, sink to the grave, and dwell in the tombs that contain the poor remains of what was once so dear to us. But let them take flight from thence to more noble, more delightful scenes. And I will add, let the hope we have of the happiness of our children render God still dearer to our souls. We feel a very tender sense of the kindness which our friends expressed towards them, and think, indeed very justly, that their affectionate care for them lays a lasting obligation upon us. What love then, and what service do we owe to thee, oh gracious Father, who hast, we hope, received them into thine house above, and art now entertaining them there with unknown delight, though our former methods of commerce with them be cut off! "Lord," should each of us say in such a case, "I would take what thou art doing to my child as done to myself, and as a specimen and earnest of what shall shortly be done." *It is therefore well.*

THE REGENERATION OF INFANTS.

BY THE REV. JAMES BUCHANAN.*

DR. BUCHANAN shows the doctrine of the Confession of Faith on the subject of regeneration, of its absolute necessity to all men, including infants; that it is not baptism, nor necessarily connected with it, although baptism is its sign seal, and when God pleases, its means; and that infants are capable of being regenerated. He then lays down the position that children, however young, even infants in their mothers' arms, are

* Of the Free Church of Scotland, in his Work on the Office and Work of the Holy Spirit. Part I., ch. viii. Edinburgh, 1842.

fit and capable subjects of divine grace, may be evinced by various considerations. Several of these considerations afford a presumption in favour of the expectation that some provision would be made in the scheme of grace on their behalf; while others of them afford a positive proof that such a provision exists, and is available for their benefit. * * * *

The positive proof on the subject will be found to afford ample evidence for affirming that in the actual scheme of grace, provision has been made for the case of infants, and that they are fit and capable subjects of the Gospel salvation.

That proof consists chiefly, (1) in express doctrinal statements on the subject; (2) in recorded instances of sanctified infancy; (3) in the analogy of the typical dispensation; and (4) in the ordinance of baptism, as applicable to infants in the Christian church. * * *

On these grounds, I think it must be evident that infant children are fit and capable subjects of divine grace, and that they are included in the covenant of redemption. It may be difficult for us to understand in what way the Spirit of God operates on their minds, or through what medium they obtain a participation of the blessings of salvation, which are said to be "by faith." The regeneration of infants may be ascribed to a direct operation of the Spirit on their minds, and in this respect may be said to resemble what is supposed to be in every case the primary influence of the Spirit, under which the soul is passive, and by which, without the intervention of any instrumentality, he effects a permanent change, "predisposing it to receive, and love, and obey the truth."* By this direct operation he may implant that principle of grace which is

* Lectures by Dr. Payne of Exeter, 338, 357.

the germ of the new creature,—that incorruptible seed, which may lie long under the furrow, but will sooner or later spring up, and produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Our older divines were wont to distinguish between the principle or habit of grace, and the exercise of grace;* and to maintain that the principle might exist in children who were as yet incapable of the exercise, and that grace in such was real and saving,† It may be generally connected too, with the faith of the parent, in whom, during the period of non-age, the infant is federally included.‡ But it is sufficient to say in the language of the Westminster Confession, that “they are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth,”—“for the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” And to him who objects to the regeneration of infants on the ground of its mysteriousness, may we not say, that the natural birth of a child is full of mystery: “I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them;”—and in the Preacher’s words, “as thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.”

* Dr. Owen, ii. 283, 482, 492.

† Ibid. ii. 413.

‡ Homilies on Baptism, by Rev. Edward Irving, 346, 349

FROM THE REV. DR. PYE,

IN REPLY TO A LETTER OF CONDOLENCE ON THE DEATH OF HIS
CHILDREN.

DEAR SIR,—I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for your very kind letter, and seasonable present of your sermon. My wife and I now look upon ourselves as your friends, in the best sense of the word ; since you have manifested so much tenderness and compassion in our late circumstances of grief, and indeed, to us, uncommon sorrow. I call them late circumstances, because the time is already come, when, I am sure, we can both of us speak of the death of our children with resignation, and think of them with pleasure. What philosophy could not accomplish Christianity has done. To the author of our religion and our consolation be the glory.

I cannot in a better manner express our thoughts upon this occasion, than by quoting the following lines, which I wrote, a few days after the death of our two children, for the use of my then mourning wife and myself. You may call it a short letter from my dear girl to us, just after she had ceased to breathe, and a little before her brother's death.

“Your tender care and fond, though rational love of all your children, with your agonies of grief under the apprehension of parting with me and my dear brother, are the most convincing proofs of the reality and greatness of your sorrow, now that I am gone, and he is just upon the wing to follow me to the unknown world. But it was He who made us that called us away, and we cheerfully obeyed the summons: and I must now tell you, though you both already know it, that He expects from you, not only that you meekly and calmly submit to such a seemingly severe dispen-

sation of his providence, but that you also rejoice with me in it, because it is the will and pleasure of our divine Father.

“I, young as I was, am now become an inhabitant of heaven, and already see the beauty and harmony of that little chain of events, which related to my short abode in your world, and even the manner of my leaving it: and when you see the things as they really are and not as they may now appear, you will confess and adore the divine goodness, even in taking us so soon from your embraces.

“God, who has made all things for the manifestation of his adorable perfections, gave us our being from you; adore him therefore for his goodness, in making use of you as instruments, in the course of events, to usher us into the world. Ask not why he so early removed us; we sufficiently answered the great end of our being, if, while living at the same time that we gave you pleasure, you were disposed to lead us, by your examples and precepts, into the paths of virtue and religion; and if now, by the loss of us, you become examples of patience and submission to the Divine will, which, next to doing the will of God, are virtues which bear the greatest name in our world.

“Let, therefore, all the little incidents in our past lives, the remembrance of which are too apt to renew your sorrow, be so many occasions of your joy: inasmuch as they may recall the pleasant ideas you once delighted in; and to let the dismaying and melancholy remembrance of our sickness and early death, be changed into cheering and bright ideas of what we now enjoy; and what you, I hope, will one day see us in possession of.”

ORIGINAL LETTER OF DR. MASON.*

THE respected friend who has favoured us with these letters for publication, will have secured his main object, should any whom God has set in darkness, derive from them light and consolation. Let mourners read them and be comforted. The great truths which satisfied the reason, gave peace to the heart, and rendered full of immortality the hopes of Dr. Mason, can sustain the soul under every misfortune and calamity, and enable it to rise above the fear, and prove itself invincible in the warfare with Death. They are a treasure open and free for all who will receive them with thankful acknowledgment of the divine mercy and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. With them poverty is rich, and sorrow clad in garments of praise; without them the purple of all the Cæsars were but rags and wretchedness, and kings poor indeed.

NEW YORK 12th April, 1808.

Again in the furnace, my brother! Again lamenting under the chastenings of God! My heart bleeds with yours, I pour out my tears and supplications that this new and sore visiting may be blessed, and may afterwards yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. It shall be so. It is so, in some measure, already. Whatever brings us to the feet of our Redeemer, does us good. He is the physician, and he knows best how to make up the prescription, and how to administer it. He has taken away your boy, but not Himself, nor his loving kindnesses. He has shown you the rod, but not the evil it has avoided. He has made you to smart under the stroke, but it is, probably, a substitute for some blow

* From the N. Y. Observer.

unspeakably more awful, and perhaps nigh at hand when he smote you, but now turned aside forever. We must live by *faith*, my brother. Our comforts must not be our gods. Our souls have neither purity nor peace, nor establishment, nor victory, but in proportion as our fellowship is with the Lord our life, and our life-giving head. O, for that habitual nearness to him which shall keep in constant and gracious dependence upon his word of truth, which he has promised never to take utterly from us. The further the creature removes from us, the more desirable and consoling is our walking with him who, when we are overwhelmed, knows our path.

Yours most tenderly,

REV. JAS. LAURIE.

J. M. MASON.

TO A BEREAVED PARENT.

ERSKINE.

I CANNOT, I dare not say, weep not. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and surely, he allows you to weep; surely, there is a "needs be" that you feel a heaviness under such a trial. But O, let hope and joy mitigate your heaviness. I know not how this, or a former trial, shall work for your good, but it is enough that God knows. He that said, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God," excepts not from this promise the sorest trial. You devoted your son to God; you cannot doubt that he accepted the surrender. If he has been hid in the chamber of the grave from the evil of sin, and from the evil of suffering, let not your eye be evil, when God is good. What you chiefly wished for him, and prayed on his behalf, was spiritual and heavenly blessings. If the greatest thing you wished

for is accomplished, at the season and in the manner Infinite Wisdom saw best, refuse not to be comforted ; you know not what work and joy have been waiting for him in that world, where God's "servants shall serve him." Should you sorrow immoderately when you have such ground of hope that he, and his other parent are rejoicing in what you lament ? I know that nature will feel ; and I believe suppressing its emotions in such cases is not profitable, either to soul or body ; but I trust, though you mourn, God will keep you from murmuring, and that you shall have to glory in your tribulation and infirmity, while the power of Christ is manifested thereby.

Unhappy one ! thou callest in vain unto the dead to awake. The sleep of the body is dreamless and eternal. Cold and white as the marble is that face of beauty : as still that breast which heaves with deep affection. Turn to the heavenly Helper ! Between God and thee was her love divided. O flee to Him in thy sorrow, and he will give thee consolation. He himself hath drunk of every cup of bitterness : he will have sympathy with thee in thy anguish ; he will heal thy broken heart.

WALTER HAWTHORNE.

REV. ROBERT HALL, ON THE DEATH OF HIS CHILD.

MY DEAR FRIEND :—

I am greatly obliged for your kind and consolatory letter, replete with those topics whence alone true consolation can be deduced. The stroke has been very severely felt by us both, but certainly most by dear Mrs. Hall. She was dotingly fond of our lovely boy. For my own part, I was not at all aware my affection for

him was so strong, until he was removed from us ; my anguish was then great. It seemed to me as if I felt more on this occasion, than I should at the loss of either of my others. This feeling, I suspect, was delusive, and arises from our being incapable of estimating the strength of our attachment to any object until it is removed. I was disappointed in his being a boy ; for recollecting my own extreme and portentous wickedness, I fancied there was something in the constitution of boys peculiarly tending to vice, and adverse to their spiritual interests. I had also remarked that females seemed much more susceptible of religious impressions than men. On these accounts I trembled for his salvation, and did not feel that gratitude for the blessing vouchsafed me, which I ought. I suspect I greatly displeased God by my distrust of his goodness, and that he saw it meet to adopt this method of chastising me. May it be sanctified as a means of making me humble, heavenly, and submissive. It is a very solemn consideration, that a part of myself is in eternity, in the presence, I trust, of the Saviour. How awful will it be, should the branch be saved, and the stock perish !

Pray for me, my dear friend, that this may not be the case ; but that I may be truly sanctified, and permitted to walk in the fear of the Lord, and in the consolations of the Holy Ghost.

FROM A LETTER OF ROBERT HALL.

I SINCERELY sympathize with you in the loss of your child ; but, my dear friend, do not suffer your spirits to sink. Remember the tenure on which all human enjoyments are held, the wisdom and sovereignty of their great Author, and the gracious promise afforded

to true Christians, that "all things shall work together for good, to them that love him."

Remember, also, the many blessings with which a kind Providence still indulges you. Ought you not to rejoice, that your affectionate companion in life is spared; and that, though your child is snatched from your embraces, he has escaped from a world of sin and sorrow? The stamp of immortality is placed on his happiness, and he is encircled by the arms of a compassionate Redeemer. Had he been permitted to live, and you had witnessed the loss of his virtue, you might have been reserved to suffer still severer pangs. A most excellent family, in our congregation, are now melancholy spectators of a son dying, at nineteen years of age, by inches, a victim to his vices. They have frequently regretted he did not die several years since, when his life was nearly despaired of in a severe fever. "Who knoweth what is good for a man all the days of this, his vain life, which he spends as a shadow?"

THE LOSS OF CHILDREN.

FLAVEL.

MOURNER, whatever may be your grief for the death of your children, it might have been still greater for their life. Bitter experience once led a good man to say, "It is better to weep for ten children dead, than for one living." Remember the heart-piercing affliction of David, whose son sought his life. Your love for your children will hardly admit of the thought of such a thing as possible, in your own case. They appeared innocent and amiable; and you fondly believed,

that through your care and prayers, they would have become the joy of your hearts. But may not Esau, when a child, have promised as much comfort to his parents as Jacob? Probably he had as many of their prayers and counsels. But as years advanced, he despised their admonitions, and filled their hearts with grief. As a promoter of family religion, who ever received such an encomium from the God of heaven as Abraham? How tenderly did the good man pray for Ishmael! "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" Yet how little comfort did Ishmael afford.

Alas! in these days of degeneracy, parents much more frequently witness the vices of their children than their virtues. And even should your children prove amiable and promising, you might live to be the wretched witness of their sufferings. Some parents have felt unutterable agonies of this kind.

God may have taken the lamented objects of your affection from the evil to come. When extraordinary calamities are coming on the world, he frequently hides some of his feeblers children in the grave. Surely, at such a portentous period, it is happier for such as are prepared, to be lodged in that peaceful mansion, than to be exposed to calamities and distresses here. Thus intimates the prophet Jeremiah, "Weep 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." It was in a day when the faith and patience of the saints were peculiarly tried, that the voice from heaven said, "Write, blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord, from henceforth."

THE EARLY DEAD.*

To Mr. — and Mrs. — on the loss of an only child.

I HOPE I am not insensible to the severity of the blow which has fallen upon you, and spread desolation over your house; I desire in the spirit of Him who was a man of sorrows, to condole with you in this affliction. It seems but yesterday that I beheld your dear A——, and rejoiced with you in her personal comeliness, and her bright promise. Now the grave covers her from our sight. Alas! how insecure are our choicest pleasures, and our most valued blessings. Like the dew upon a flower, how soon they vanish, and we see them no more! We trust—our confidence is destroyed; we hope—our expectation is cut off.

It is no province of mine to exhort you not to mourn. "Jesus wept." The bosom will heave: we have affections and sympathies; and who shall say it is unchristian to drop the tributary tear over the ashes of the loved and lost? But I may exhort you to seek that temper of resignation, which will enable you to say with Job,—“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.” You may have occasion hereafter to say, It is good for us that we have been afflicted.

“Amid your list of blessings infinite
This may stand foremost, that *your hearts have bled.*”

Pray that God would not only send consolation, but the sanctifying influences of his Spirit; pray that “this dart, like that which once pierced an imposthume in battle, may bring health with its wounds;” and you

shall be enabled to say with one of old, "The Lord hath chastened us sore; but he hath not given us over unto death."

Death, though it involves many circumstances of a painful character, is often, in no small degree, rendered even attractive and lovely. There is something glorious and sublime in the exit of a saint, who is ripe for heaven, from this sorrowful, sinful world. There is something even lovely in the departure of an infant to be with angels, notwithstanding the awful chasm it occasions in the bereaved circle. The lifeless clay is beautiful; death cannot "steal the signet ring of heaven." It is no paradox, then, to speak of *the beauty of death*. We gaze upon features, pale and cold indeed, but which have never been furrowed by care; which have never been distorted by envy, malice or revenge, never have been darkened by *pining* grief. And as we gaze, there is no retrospect of reverses and vicissitudes, of sorrows and of sin. True we hold the remains of one who was the offspring of depraved parents, who inherited a depraved nature, and could be saved only by the atoning merits of a crucified Saviour; and who, if life had lasted, would have been exposed to temptation and sin. But how consolatory and cheering the reflection that the soul, which so lately animated the lifeless frame, now adorns, like a starry gem, the crown of our glorious Immanuel.

It is a relief to the agonized feelings of parents and bereaved friends, that the early dead are rescued from many evils to come. This world is a wilderness, through which it is impossible to pass and avoid danger; or this life is a voyage which exposes us to many tempests and adverse winds. How many in their sorrow, have mourned like Job that they did not die in infancy, "for then they should have lain still and been

quiet, they should have slept and been at rest." The early dead escape not only temptations and sins, but from the hazards of this changeful world, from vicissitudes, pain, weakness, from days of anguish, from sleepless nights, from untold agony. The merciful Disposer of events may have foreseen a storm of adversity impending, and therefore removed your precious lamb to a place of safety—the upper fold—to the bosom of the good Shepherd. Is it not safer, nay, happier on that bosom than it could have been on your own?

And how consolatory is the reflection that your dear A—— is not *lost*, but only removed to another apartment in our heavenly Father's house! Gone before you—*gone*, indeed, to return no more; but not *lost*, and may still be yours;

"A treasure but removed,
A bright bird parted for a clearer day—
Yours still in heaven!"

Yours hereafter to meet—yours to love—yours with whom to rejoice in eternal hymns of praise to a glorified Saviour. If children are a parent's jewels, let him not be disconsolate, when they are taken to be planted in the Redeemer's diadem. If children are our olive plants, flowers which we tenderly cherish, let us not mourn when they are taken to a shelter from the wintry storm and tempest.

It is to Christianity we are indebted for the most effectual consolation in the hour of bereavement. It disrobes death of his terrors, and disarms him of his sting. It teaches us to view death as a *separation*, and strews the amaranth over the tomb. Christianity styles death a sleep, and the grave a bed; an old writer calls it "a perfumed bed," for Jesus slept in it. It consecrates the sepulchre. It places angels of light around

its portals to guard and keep the reposing dust, and writes thereon, "HOPE," "ETERNAL LIFE."

That God may comfort you with the consolations of his grace, which are neither few nor small, is the prayer of your friend,

ALD.

Boston, Jan. 29th, 1840.

THE INFANT IN HEAVEN.

BY DR. CHALMERS.

THE following beautiful passage from the writings of Dr. Chalmers may comfort many a sorrowing mother, as she weeps over the grave of her infant babe.

This affords, we think, something more than a dubious glimpse into the question, that is often put by a distracted mother when her babe is taken away from her—when all the converse it ever had with the world, amounted to the gaze upon it of a few months, or a few opening smiles, which marked the dawn of felt enjoyment; and ere it reached perhaps the lisp of infancy, it, all unconscious of death, had to wrestle through a period of sickness with its power, and at length to be overcome by it. Oh! it little knew what an interest it had created in that home where it was so passing a visitant—nor, when carried to its early grave, what a tide of emotion it would raise among the few acquaintances it left behind it! On it, too, baptism was impressed as a seal: and, as a sign, it was never falsified. There was no positive unbelief in its bosom; no resistance yet put forth to the truth; no love at all for the darkness rather than the light; nor had it yet fallen into that great condemnation which will attach itself to all that perish because of unbelief, that their deeds

are evil. It is interesting to know that God instituted circumcision for the infant children of the Jews, and at least suffered baptism for the infant children of those who profess Christianity. Should the child die in infancy, the use of baptism, as a sign, has never been thwarted by it; and may we not be permitted to indulge a hope so pleasing, as that the use of baptism as a seal remains in all its entireness; that He, who sanctioned the affixing of it to a babe, will fulfil upon it the whole expression of this ordinance. And when we couple with this the known disposition of our great Fore-runner, the love that he manifested to children on earth, how he suffered them to approach his person, and lavishing endearment and kindness upon them in the streets of Jerusalem, told his disciples, that the presence and company of such as these in heaven formed one ingredient of the joy that was set before him; tell us if Christianity does not throw a pleasing radiance around an infant's tomb? and should any parent who hears us, feel softened by the touching remembrance of a light that twinkled a few short months under his roof, and at the end of its little period expired, we cannot think that we venture too far, when we say, that he has only to persevere in the faith, and in the following of the gospel, and that very light will again shine upon him in heaven. The blossom which withered here upon its stalk, has been transplanted there to a place of endurance; and there it will then gladden that eye which now weeps out the agony of an affection that has been sorely wounded; and in the name of Him who, if on earth, would have wept along with them, do we bid all believers present, to sorrow not even as others which have no hope, but to take comfort in the thought of that country where there is no sorrow and no separation.

which would be a great comfort to the bereaved parent.

Oh! when a mother meets on high,
The babe she lost in infancy;
Hath she not then for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrow, all her tears,
An over payment of delight?

THE VIEWS OF A TROUBLED FATHER OF MANY CHILDREN, AND A SELF-CONDEMNED CHRISTIAN:

IN A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR.

BUT, as if to show the nothingness of human applause—in the midst of our brightest and happiest hours, there comes one of those alarming and unexpected strokes of providence, to embitter even the short period allotted to us for enjoyment—the season of youth. It is only for a few years, when our first-born children begin to articulate the name of father, and to hang around us, with all that ardour of filial affection, and to wait for an approving smile, or a fond caress., that we experience the blessing without alloy, of having children. Bye and bye, they begin to love to wander; and the bustle of life—the studies of school—and the natural disposition for play—take off their attention from parents, and from home, and except during the few short moments of meals, our children are no more seen by us than entire strangers. Every succeeding year increases the distance, and anxieties like a wild deluge burst upon us, so that we are frequently tempted to wish that responsibilities so heavy had not been laid upon us. Such have been my feelings for the last seven years, and I state them in order to comfort you under the late severe bereavements. These considerations may have some weight with *you*, but what can

be said to relieve a mother's anguish ? In her heart is inflicted a festering wound, which nothing earthly can heal. But, blessed be God, there is consolation to be drawn from a higher source. God is our refuge, and our strength ; a very present help in the time of trouble, and he doth not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men. He gives, and when he takes away, he takes but what he gave ; he can give the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. When our children are removed in infancy, *we* know, who have endured the storms of life, from how many they have been sheltered within the bosom of their father and their God. If the dear Saviour, when on earth, took them up in his arms and blessed them, with what joy will they not be received into the land of pure delight, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

These must be part, and the greater part of that innumerable throng who surround the throne ; else heaven would not be peopled with inhabitants, for I really believe few of those who have long dwelt on earth, are fitted to enter there—few are chosen. Sin gains stronger and stronger dominion every year ; and love for divine things, or real joy in believing, becomes less and less ; and the troubles of life nearly drown the fire of celestial love that once glowed in the heart.

And so I find it to be in others, the older they grow—therefore, there are few that be saved unless as by fire. How merciful, and how kind is it, therefore, in early years, for the good Shepherd to snatch his young lambs from the jaws of the wolf, the temptations of a wicked world, and a growingly wicked heart ; from the cold blasts of wintry adversity, to those blissful regions, where the sun shall no more go down, nor the moon withdraw herself ; where *He*, who is on the throne, shall be their

everlasting light, and their days of mourning shall be ended. Will you accept these few poor imperfect thoughts on this melancholy subject, as the best that have suggested themselves to me? I know you and your wife avail yourselves of all that comfort which is derived from daily application at the throne of grace, and *there* alone can you expect to receive peace to your troubled minds; and *there* I leave you. My trials have been heavy and severe, but of a different kind, and I see no release from them in this world. To whichever side I turn, all looks black, and gloomy, and cheerless, and I feel yet as the dove who flew from the Ark, but could find no place that was not covered with the waters whose angry billows had swept away every thing lovely in creation, and left nothing for the eye to rest upon but chaos. Such is my present prospect. I could wish at the close of the year to dwell on more joyous scenes, but I cannot. May God of his infinite mercy sanctify to us the bereavements and changes of this eventful year, and prepare us for whatever is his will in the new one that is approaching. And though the fig-tree should not blossom, nor any fruit be found on the vine, and the flocks should be cut off from the stall, yet may we rejoice in the God of our salvation. Come and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us; in the third day he shall raise us up, and we shall live in his sight."

APPEAL TO PARENTS WHO ARE NOT PROFESSORS OF RELIGION.

IRRELIGIOUS, but bereaved parents,—after all, what avails the safety of the departed to you? While hope

for your own soul holds aloof so far—while the appeals of mercy are repeated in vain—while conscience tells so fully, and so truly, that the offer of salvation has ever been tendered in vain—what boots the rest? What is it to you that the hope of a glorious resurrection enters the dark and dank habitation of the little one? You meet again: but if there be a single feeling of horror above all others to our present conception, it is that of the ending of a natural and social law, at the judgment seat of God. It is that of a law of affection availing nothing. Your little one became the property of Jesus—not by virtue of any prayer of faith that *you* had uttered—not by a free-will offering that you had made—but by that blood of atonement you have thrust so often from you—by that distinguishing grace whose attractions were too faint for your eye.

Yet you have watched by the bed of the departing spirit of infancy; and you have caught the last sigh, as the soul winged its passage from earth. And even the loneliness of that sad moment seemed broken by an admonition—"FATHER!"—"MOTHER!"—"COME AWAY!" You heard—you thought—eternity neared—earth interposed—and you returned to its bosom again.

Impenitent, but bereaved parent!—When a future world, in some hour of reflection, flings its shadow over your path; and, despite of all your efforts, presses its realities upon your attention, *remember*—that no bond of parental love may abide hereafter, when the frown of an offended God settles the destiny of the lost, and the only relationship that exists, is that of the family of Christ.

If the tender mercies of the Saviour were too little engaging to win your admiration—if the worth of **your own soul** has not entered into your thoughts of

the future—behold what an argument is furnished by an afflictive dispensation! You loved the departed. To that very affection a most solemn providence of God has appealed. It bids you gaze from earth to Heaven. It reminds you of the abode of glorified spirits. It admonishes you to inquire, “am I also ready?” It intimates most earnestly and clearly, that the only true consolation which ever succeeds the stroke of sorrow, must be connected with a reconciliation to God, and an humble hope in the Redeemer’s blood. Let these be yours, and your peace will be independent of the precarious tenure of human life. Faith shall scatter the darkness, and explain the mystery, so readily attendant on affliction. You shall look up from the tomb to the late object of your solicitude and care. You shall exclaim with a confidence sure and steadfast, —“though he shall not return to me”—“I SHALL GO TO HIM!”

HAVE any of you lost children who are not yourselves pious? The mind of each of those children has been unfolding in heaven, and has probably grown faster than if on earth. It has been made acquainted with its relation to you, and perhaps it watches every soul that comes up from earth to heaven, to greet its father or mother. Soon you must appear at the bar of God. You may there have an interview with your child; and suppose that you are there separated from that spirit who has been growing in the knowledge of God and of the universe, anticipating the delightful employment of telling you about heaven, and leading you among its glorified society, and along its celestial plains!

Perhaps you have a little family there, expecting

your arrival. Can you bear the thought of being separated from them in eternity?

Are you an impenitent parent? and have you impenitent children who are growing up without religion? and has God taken away one or more of your children in infancy or early life? Perhaps it was because He saw that your example or neglect would ruin all the family, if they lived to grow up, and He has therefore rescued some of them from destruction by an early death.

But let the joy of meeting those that have gone to heaven excite you to save your own soul and the souls of your surviving children. Then, though you mourn over their early graves, you shall not sorrow as they that have no hope. "Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." Their early death may prove, if you are saved, a source of the richest joy and of praise!

"He is not here."

Nor at his grave, bereaved mother, weep;
He is not here!

First wipe away each tear,
And faith shall show thy clearer eyes
A star to guide thee where thy young child lies,
As safe in heaven, and dear
As when thou smiled'st on him in his sleep.

"The sting of death is sin."

MOURN not o'er early graves—for those
Removed whilst only buds are shown,
For God, who sow'd and watered, **knows**
The time to gather in his own.

This blossom knows no winter's breath
Sheltered beneath the Almighty wing;
And though it felt the *stroke* of death,
Blest babe ! it never knew its *sting*.

" The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken."

A CHILD of wrath—a child of grace—
In Heaven a smiling cherub now !
And all within a month's brief space :
Oh, sweet and blessed babe ! wert Thou.
Sent but to gladden and to grieve !
(Oh, thus our mourning hearts rebel !)
Why sent—why taken—we believe
Our babe, when next we meet, shall tell.

' I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

WHILE sickness rent thine infant frame,
Before our God we wept and prayed ;
But when his heavenly summons came,
Fond nature struggled, and obeyed.
We laid thee in thy early rest,
And changed the burden of our pray'r :
May he who took thee to the blest,
But make thee our forerunner there !

Not for the babe that sleepeth here
My tears bestow, my sorrows give,—
Pass on, and weep with grief sincere
For those who innocence outlive.

" Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest."

IF of our best and dearest God demands,
We yield the grave, with unreluctant hands,
Our best and dearest, striving to submit
To any sacrifice which he deems fit—
He will forgive the tears—reversed our doom—
Since weeping parents build their children's tomb.

It is well with the child.

It is well!—nor would we our babe recall,
 And soothing and sweet are the tears that fall;—
 But a few brief pangs on his mother's breast,
 And we laid him down in his holy rest;
 Ere the world its snares around him threw,—
 Or its sins and its cares he ever knew.

It is well! since the Saviour's word is given,
 That of such as our child is the host of heaven!
 No struggle for him,—no doubts or fears,
 His young cheek spared repentant tears.
 It is well! and we "bear" and adore "the rod,"
 For the wielding hand was the hand of God.

"Let him do what seemeth Him good."

INSTINCTS, affections, must lie still—
 In meek obedience to God's will.
 Oh, give me children or I die,
 Impatient Rachel sighed:
 Granted, but punished, was the cry—
 She travailed and she died.

"Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

THOU purified for heaven, oh, say—
 Shall we thy early death deplore?
 No, let us rather bless the day
 That gave to God an angel more.

"Weep not for me, but for yourselves."

MUCH as we loved thee—to our bitter cost
 Alas, *how much*, we knew not till we lost!—
 Oh, say not *lost*! the dead in Jesus sleep;
 And not for them, but for ourselves, we weep.

CHAPTER VII.

SHORTER SELECTIONS IN PROSE.

Flowers, nourish'd by my tears, I wreath for you,—
Sweet, stainless flowers :

 Come lay them on your heart,
Their cool, damp leaves will lull its fever pulse,
With balm from heaven.

L. H. SIGOURNEY.

IN the hour of grief the mind may not be able to follow the train of argument by which the doctrine of the salvation of infants, dying such, is established. To accommodate this little monitor to the situation of those whom it addresses, a number of detached thoughts are added, which, like stars, may throw their twinkling radiance over the gloom of sorrow, and irradiate its darkness by their heavenly consolation.

GOD IS NOT DEAD.

THERE lived in the east of Scotland, a pious clergyman, who had presided for a number of years, over a small but respectable congregation. In the midst of his active career of usefulness, he was suddenly removed by death, leaving behind him a wife and a number of helpless children.

The small stipend allowed him by his congregation, had been barely sufficient to meet the current expenses of his family ; and at his death no visible means were left for their support. The death of her husband prey-

ed deeply upon the heart of the poor afflicted widow, while the dark prospect which the future presented, filled her mind with the most gloomy apprehensions. By her lonely fireside she sat—the morning after her sad bereavement—lamenting her forlorn and destitute condition, when her little son, a boy of five years of age, entered the room. Seeing the deep distress of his mother, he stole softly to her side, and placing his little hand in hers, looked wistfully into her face, and said : “ Mother, mother, is God dead ? ” Soft as the gentle whisper of an angel, did the simple accent of the dear boy fall upon the ear of the disconsolate, and almost heart-broken mother. A gleam of heavenly radiance lighted up, for a moment, her pale features. Then snatching up her little boy, and pressing him fondly to her bosom, she exclaimed : “ No, no, my son, God is not dead ; he lives, and has promised to be a father to the fatherless, a husband to the widow. His promises are sure and steadfast, and upon them I will firmly and implicitly rely.” Her tears were dried, and her murmurings forever hushed. The event proved that her confidence was not misplaced. The congregation over whom her husband had worthily presided, generously settled upon her a handsome annuity, by which she was enabled to support her family, not only comfortably, but even genteelly. The talents of her sons, as they advanced in years, soon brought them into notice, and finally procured them high and honourable stations in society.

YOUR child, though dead, is still, bereaved parents, yours. “ God has given me three sons,” writes the Rev. Oliver Heywood in his meditations, “ all living, only the youngest lives with God, in his immediate presence, having died in infancy under the covenant.”*

* Works, Vol. i. p. 207.

“INFANTS are as capable of regeneration as grown persons, and there is abundant reason to conclude, that all those who have not lived to commit actual transactions, though they share in the effects of the first Adam’s offence, will also share in the blessings of the second Adam’s gracious covenant, without their personal faith and obedience, but not without the regenerating influence of the Spirit of God upon their souls.”*

IF the salvation of infants were pleaded for, on the ground of something meritorious in *them*, or even on the ground of what is called negative goodness, then there were just ground for objection; but on no such principle is the argument here rested. It is only pleaded, that the Scriptures have distinguished between those of the human race, who have sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, and those who have not,—that God, of his abundant goodness, has extended to the whole of the latter the blessings of redemption, and that He has commanded the gospel to be preached to the former, and has declared, that whosoever believeth it shall be saved, and whosoever believeth not shall be condemned. The distinction between relative and personal blame, is not introduced to show, that infants who are involved only in the former, have a *right* to salvation, but to show that there is an analogy between the way in which men came to be treated as sinners, and that in which they came to be treated as righteous, and to explain the principles of the present dispensation, both as an economy of moral government, and an economy of Sovereign goodness,—the former accounting for the principles on which adults shall at last be judged, and the latter communicating grace to

* Scott, on Matt. xix. 13—15.

all who never were the subjects of the other. And if, for reasons worthy of himself, the Almighty has determined that all dying in infancy shall be saved, what is this dispensation but a part of the general plan of redemption, through unmerited and Sovereign favour? Never can a dispensation designed to illustrate His grace, be in the least inconsistent with that very attribute.

HEAR a Christian say after burying his child, "And now one of our family is gone to take possession of the sepulchre in all our names. Ere long I shall lie down with my child.—It is a warning of Providence, that these concluding days of my life may be more regular, more spiritual, more useful, than the former."

"THE hope of their being transplanted into a more salutary clime, there to rebloom in everlasting vigour; and the reflection, that if they had been spared, they had been unavoidably exposed to innumerable temptations, from which, if our lives were spared, we should yet be unable to screen them, ought to settle our minds."

Yes, there is a pleasure in seeing them safe before us, instead of leaving them exposed to temptation and sin.

THE INFANT'S GRAVE.

THE wife of the missionary, who came home last spring, brought with her from the foreign country where she had been long a sojourner, three noble boys. But they were not all her children. Her youngest was not with her. Did he sleep, then, under the stately mimosa, or the beautiful palm-tree—beneath the sha-

dow of the church raised to the name of the Christian's God in the land of Idols? There, perhaps, his swarthy nurse sits on his grave, and tells how the gentle white lady devoted her child to her Saviour in baptism, and found comfort when he died, and how she, poor heathen as she had been, had learnt submission from the Christian's book; and now, having faith in Christ, lived in the calm hope of meeting again those her kind instructors, and that her foster-son. No! the missionary's child is not buried there; he died on the voyage home; he was buried in the deep sea; so neither nurse nor mother may look upon his grave; but his little coffin was made as neatly as circumstances permitted, and the ceremony of his funeral was conducted with all that attention to order and propriety which it is the last comfort of our survivors to pay. All the children, and there were many on board, beside his own little brothers, went on deck, and stood round the corpse whilst the beautiful service was read; and it was solemnly and affectionately read, by the beloved friend and fellow-labourer, who had been a stranger with them in the strange land. It was sad to be obliged to take the last look at the dear child, even before "the first day of death was fled." There was something inexpressibly melancholy in the plunge with which the lost treasure sunk down, deeper and deeper, to the depths which no line has sounded! and the waves rolled on, and the gallant ship hastened on her course, so that the eye of man might never again know the place of his rest. But "thou, Lord, art the hope of them that remain in the broad sea!" So thought his mother while she wept in silence; but she looked for the resurrection of the body, when the sea shall give up her dead, and she was calm.—*Scenes in our Parish.*

IF it has seemed meet to God, that the allotted three score years and ten should be spent rather in heaven than on earth, is there any reason for inconsolable anguish? Our departed infants have attained the end of their creation, so that there is no reason for saying, "Why were they brought forth for the tomb?" How animating the thought, that those powers which were but beginning to unfold themselves, are now expanding, and employed amid the glories of the heavenly paradise.

WHILE the Christian parent is consoled by the thought, that his departed children have been washed in the blood of the Lamb; he rejoices also in the faith, that the same blood can cleanse away all his *own* manifold and aggravated sins. Are not *irreligious* parents, then, solemnly admonished by what is said of their deceased infant offspring, to seek deliverance through the same atonement and resurrection, which have opened to the latter the kingdom of heaven. What a mercy, if the death of the child prove the life of the parent; by leading the latter to seek for consolation, where alone it can be had. And, oh! what a blessing, when, after wearying themselves seeking rest, and finding none, the eyes of the unhappy are opened to perceive the well of life, and their ears to hear the melodious sounds of that message, which calms the alarm occasioned by guilt, and soothes the sorrows of the afflicted sufferer. It is the Gospel alone which at once brings us to God, and, as it were, restores to us our friends.

How dreadful the thought, when properly realized, that if bereaved, unbelieving parents continue strangers to the power of the Gospel, they and their children are separated for ever.

THE BEREAVED MOTHER.

"A mother's sorrow cannot be conceived but by a mother."

Hannah More.

I MARKED a mother at the tomb of her son. Her sable garment coincided with the deep gloom that hung heavily around her heart. Her declining head, her closed clasped hands, her fixed position, her tear-bedewed cheek, bespoke the intensity of her thoughts, and the sorrow of her soul. The scene struck the strings of sympathy, and a correspondent tear, flowing from the impulse of a similar feeling, trickled down my cheek.—Fancy lent her creative power to my mind, and methought I heard and felt the grief-inspired soliloquy of the heart-broken mother, as she revolved in her depressed mind the following thoughts: "Ah! yes, my child, thou art numbered with the dead!—The curtain of my hopes has suddenly dropped, and the thick cloud of soul-rending despondency shuts the light of joy and tranquillity from my mind. When feeble infancy was thine, with what rapture I watched the pleasurable smile playing on thy health-flushed cheeks: it was then my heart bounded with ecstasy, and antedated the joys of youth and the happiness of manhood. I thought thou wouldst have been the pillar of my old age; I thought thou wouldst have supported my tottering declining life, when the extinguished hand of time had quenched the fervour of vitality. But ah! these love-built hopes are gone for ever; they are buried in the humid earth with thee. No more I hear thy voice—no more I mark thy sprightly eye; thy voice is as silent as the grave, and thine eye fixed by the rigid power of death. Scarce more than eighteen months had rolled around thy head before the "grim monster" came and snatched thee from the world. Thou wert

stricken as the tender sapling scathed by the lightning's fiery bolt. O Death ! thou art the destroyer of a mother's bliss. But still, amid all my sorrow, I will say,

“ Worms may banquet on that frame,
And ruin feed on what was fair :
Back to the skies from whence it came
The *soul* recalled shall flourish there.”

With these words she ended ; and taking her little daughter by the hand, she slowly retired.*

SUPPOSE, now, there should be a mother, always uneasy and solicitous about her child, when it was in health, or sitting over it when in sickness, restless and anxious, trying this remedy, and that, without reason and without hope, just because she cannot give him up ;—suppose, I say, that God should come to the bedside, and say to her, “ Anxious mother,—I was taking care of your child, but since you are so restless and uneasy about it, I will give the case up to you, if you will take it. There is a great question to be decided ;—shall that child recover or die ? I was going to decide it in the best way for yourself and him. But since you cannot trust me, you may decide it yourself. Look upon him, then, as he lies there suffering, and then look forward as far as you can into futurity ; see as much as you can of his life here, if you allow him to live ; and look forward to eternity,—to *his* eternity and yours. Get all the light you can, and then tell me whether you are really ready to take the responsibility of deciding the question, whether he shall live or die. Since you are not willing to allow me to decide it, I will leave you to decide it yourself.”

* Influence of Mothers, p. 132.

What would be the feelings of a mother, if God should thus withdraw from the sick bed of her child, and leave the responsibility of the case in her hands alone ! Who would dare to exercise the power, if the power were given, or say to a dying child, "you shall live and on me shall be the responsibility?" Then let us all leave to God to decide. Let us be wise and prudent, and faithful in all our duties, but never, for a moment, indulge in an anxious thought ;—it is rebellion. Let us rather throw ourselves on God. Let us say to him, that we do not know what is best, either for us, or our children, and ask him to do with us *just as he pleases*. Then we shall be at peace at all times,—when disease makes its first attack,—when the critical hours approach, by which the question of life or death is to be decided, and even when the last night of the little patient's sufferings has come, and we see the vital powers gradually sinking, in their fearful struggle with death.*

ONE day, whilst the lady of Sir Stamford Raffles was almost overwhelmed with grief for the loss of a favourite child, unable to bear the sight of her other children—unable to bear even the light of day—humbled upon her couch, with a feeling of misery ; she was addressed by a poor, ignorant, uninstructed, native woman, of the lowest class, who had been employed about the nursery, in terms of reproach not to be forgotten. "I am come because you have been here many days shut up in a dark room, and no one dares to come near you. Are you not ashamed to grieve in this manner, when you ought to be thanking God for

* Abbott's "Way to do good," p. 108.

having given you the most beautiful child that ever was seen? Did any one ever see him, or speak of him without admiring him? And instead of letting this child continue in this world till he should be worn out with trouble and sorrow, has not God taken him to Heaven in all his beauty? What would you have more? For shame!—leave off weeping, and let me open a window.”

WE may lament as an *incurable evil*, what God may esteem an *invaluable good*. Hence we may labour to defeat an event, to accomplish which, all the attributes of Omnipotence are embarked. Our prayers and energies may be excited to agony in warding off a storm, which, it is his purpose, shall come down upon us in all its fury. We watch at the couch of a languishing child; our life is bound up in his; if it die, it seems to us that God must design to undo us; and yet, perhaps, that child was given us that it might die in our arms, and be the means of our sanctification.*

A HEATHEN FATHER AND HIS CHILD.

SHAGDUR, a convert among the Moguls in Siberia, having lost his little son, addressed the following letter to Mr. Swan the Missionary:

MY DEAR SIR,—While you and I are, by the merciful providence of our Lord Jesus Christ, alive and in health, I desire to lay one little matter before you. It pleased God to give me a little son; and it has now pleased him to remove the child from me. Every day I think that one member of my body has been taken

* Clark's Works, vol. i. p. 298.

to heaven; and this thought is like a sweet savour in my heart. And when I think of my dear child as one of the countless assembly who are singing the praises of Christ in heaven, my heart longs to go up and join them: but although the child, a part of myself, is separated from me, I hope, through my Saviour's power and mercy, one day to meet him in glory.

Now, sir, when my little William was born, the neighbours came in, bearing to him gifts; some gave one copeck, (about one tenth of a penny;) some two; in all, forty copecks. When the child died, I did not know what to do with this money; but, at length, a thought came to me, which gave joy to my heart; and about this I write these few lines.

Among the many letters which go to make up the words contained in the New Testament, printed for the instruction of the heathen nations, *Tonilgaksha** is often repeated. Now, although these forty copecks may not be sufficient for more than the dot over the letter i, in the word *Tonilgakshi*, I beg of you to accept of my little William's money for that purpose.—Dear Sir, do not refuse it. I have not given it to you, but I have given it to print a dot over a letter in the name of my Saviour; and may this be a little memorial of my infant, for the benefit of my dear friends who are without Christ. I remain your scholar,

SHAGDUR, THE SON OF KEMUAH.

Mr. Swan makes good use of this affecting incident; he writes—

I hope the foregoing letter may meet the eye of many a bereaved parent to whom it may not have occurred to present to the Lord, in the form of an offering to His Cause, whatever belonged to some dear departed

* i. e. Jesus Christ.

child; or whatever they had destined as that child's portion, had the Lord been pleased to continue it to their embraces. And, perhaps, the reading of this simple effusion of a heart but lately emerged from the degradation of a heathen state, and which has found a sweet solace under its bereavement in devoting the child's mite to the Lord, may induce some to go and do likewise. Some may be able far to surpass this offering; some parents may present, as having belonged to some dear departed infant, what may be enough to print, not merely the dots over a letter, but the whole of the Saviour's precious name in some Heathen language,—others, a whole verse—others, an entire book,—others, an edition of the New Testament, or of the whole Bible.

STORY FROM THE MISHNA OF THE RABBINS.

DURING the absence of Rabbi Meir from his house, his two sons died, both of them of uncommon beauty and enlightened by the law. His wife bore them to her chamber, laid them upon the bed, and spread a white covering over their bodies. When Rabbi Meir returned, his first inquiry was for his sons. His wife reached to him a goblet; he praised the Lord at the going out of the Sabbath, drank, and again asked, "Where are my sons, that they too may drink of the cup of blessing?"

"They will not be far off," she replied, and placed food before him that he might eat. He was in a glad-some and genial mood; and when he had said grace, after the meal, she thus addressed him: "Rabbi, with thy permission, I would fain propose to thee one question."

"Ask it then, my love," replied he.

"A few days ago a person entrusted some jewels to my custody, and now he demands them ; should I give them back to him ?"

"This is a question," said Rabbi Meir, "which my wife should not have thought it necessary to ask. What ! would'st thou hesitate or be reluctant to restore to every one his own ?"

"No," she replied, "but yet I thought it best not to restore them without acquainting thee therewith." She then led him to their chamber, and stepping to the bed, took the white covering from the dead bodies.

"Ah ! my sons, my sons !" loudly lamented their father, "my sons ! the light of my eyes, and the light of my understanding. I was your father—but ye were my teachers in the law."

The mother turned away and wept bitterly. At length, she took the husband by the hand and said, "Rabbi, did'st thou not teach me that we must not be reluctant to restore that which was entrusted to our keeping ? See, the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord !"

"Blessed be the name of the Lord !" echoed the holy man ; "and blessed be his glorious name forever."

A CHRISTIAN PARENT'S REFLECTIONS ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

THE bills of mortality show that more than half the human race die in infancy and childhood. As God then gave us five children, and has now taken away three, we are not to think ourselves more hardly dealt with than others ; especially as these dear little ones have doubtless entered upon a good exchange. There is much in the consideration, that so many immortal human beings are just shown to this world, and so

quickly removed into another. They are as those plants which are gathered and housed the moment they are in season; while others, who arrive at maturer age, are as the fewer plants, which, being left for seed, remain longer out in wind and weather. What pains one's natural feelings most is, that we so much miss the delight that we have enjoyed in the lovely innocent ways of a thriving child. But even this is made up for the sure and certain prospect of what is far better. We do not regret the fall of the sweet and delightful blossoms of our plants and trees, though they soon drop off in such multitudes, because the fruit which succeeds is attended with more substantial enjoyment. Had we had no such child born to us a year ago, it is true we should not have been in our present sorrow; but having attended it this day to its grave, we are temporarily in the same situation as if we had never possessed it. And yet we can count it gain to be able to reckon on one more child of our own in heaven. It therefore was neither "made for naught," nor brought into the world in vain, nor has the care we expended on it been thrown away. And now that such care has ceased, and our responsibility with it, we have the more leisure to attend to the one thing needful, and to direct to this great object, in a more undivided manner, the attention of our two surviving children.

THE GRAVE OF MY CHILD.

THE sweet month has again returned—the first of the summer months—which will ever be remembered by me as the season when my cherished one sickened and died. If not a father, reader, you may pass on, though I should delight to detain you near my little daughter's grave for a few moments. But if the pulse

of parental love has ever had vitality in your bosom, I need not apologize. My feelings, my sympathies, my joys, and sorrows are yours. Two years have now elapsed since that day when death first entered my family. The whole scene rushes vividly before the mind, showing how deep and strong was the impression then made. The first attack of the insidious disease—the promise of recovery—then the relapse—the incessant anxieties—the unsleeping vigils—the anguish of the helpless sufferer—her sweet submission to the will of God—her triumph over death and the grave—in a word, the succession of emotions, that like wave after wave, swept across our bosoms, while life hung in fearful uncertainty, all these are engraven as with the point of a diamond on the table of the memory. Nor would we erase them. It is not a mere dream of the poet's imagination, that there is "luxury in grief." This idea is true to nature. Not, indeed, that the pain is not intense, when those chords of the heart are struck, which are the very seat of the most exquisite sensibility, but that pain is mellowed and hallowed by some mysterious influence, flowing from the inexhaustible fountain of infinite benevolence. The heart lingers too much round these visible scenes. "She goeth to the grave to weep there." Oh, why did she not *look up*? Contemplations that are bounded only by the limits of the grave are less fitted to minister consolation to affliction, than nutriment to sorrow, even that "sorrow of the world that worketh death." If the soul, in the tumult of its grief, will but pause a moment, and listen, it will soon hear a voice saying, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." This changes the entire scene. It is no more *sight*, but *faith*. What a

world of wonders does faith unfold to the view ! *Now*, we can see the ransomed spirit, not as it is oppressed with doubt and agonized with suffering, but spreading the unclogged wings of its Love, and expatiating with rapture amid scenes of heavenly beauty and songs of seraphic melody. Who would be so cruel as to call that spirit back again to be soiled with the dust of earth ; to re-endure its sorrows ; to be again endangered by its fascinations ; flattered with its illusions ; distracted with its cares, and deceived by its promises ? Is it not better for the soul to find “ its long sought rest,” to be disrobed of its earthly mantle ; to enter the pure and perfect society of the blessed ; to dwell where Holiness holds its court ; where angels tune their harps ; where the redeemed swell the high anthem of praise to the exalted LAMB ; where it will never be interrupted in that worship, which was the original privilege and the delicious employment of the soul, “ created in the image of God ?”

REQUIESCAT IN PEACE.

Here then is the dust of my child. Let it rest in peace. Many a sweet spring shall put forth its blossoms in sight of this early grave, but my little flower will remain crushed within its dark bosom. Many a gay summer will shed its beauty around the scene, and the bright colours of autumn will illumine yonder woodlands, but in this world my loved one will never smile again ! Oh the inexorable despotism of death ! Oh the iron-hearted sovereignty of the grave ! The thought is almost insupportable. But again, Religion teaches us to lift our eyes from the ashes of the dead to the region of pure, ethereal existence, of spiritual love, of unsullied holiness, and uninterrupted happiness. **Nay**, this must be the very object of dispensations like

these, to summon the mind to the contemplation of its superior good, and to attract the heart towards the centre of every pure affection ; the supreme object of love and adoration to every holy being. Then let these things come in their time. They come not by chance. Inspiration eloquently teaches us that they "come not of the dust, nor spring out of the ground." It tells us that "life is a vapour." How many parents can attest it !

"She came and passed. Can we forget
How we, whose hearts had hailed her birth,
Ere four autumnal suns has set,
Consigned her to her mother Earth ?
Joys and their memory pass away,
But griefs are deeper ploughed than they !"

Heaven will equalize all ! The soul that breathes its aspiration for such perfection, can never receive amiss what Heaven sends.

A FATHER.

TO A BEREAVED MOTHER.

"I FEEL for you, dear Madam, in the loss you have felt ; but more especially, as there appeared something of a doubt, whether you could say, with full assurance, the child is blessed. I have known several Christians troubled with doubts on this head ; and few things have appeared to me more strange ; for, we may say with truth, what could God have done more than he has done, to prove his love for the infants of the human race ? They were always admitted to be members of his Church. A regard for them, he mentions as a reason why Nineveh, in which were so many thousand infants, should not, as Jonah desired, be destroyed. Our Lord says, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the king-

dom of God." A great part of mankind die in infancy, before they have done any good or evil; and the Saviour declares, that of such little children the kingdom of God is made up; and as a token of this, he took the little children that were brought him up in his arms, and blessed them, Mark x. They die, by virtue of their connection with Adam in his first transgression; but having done neither good nor evil, in their own persons, they will not be judged according to the deeds done in the body, nor fall under the sentence of the second death, which is pronounced *only* upon personal wicked deeds; but being redeemed by the blood of Christ, and written in the Lamb's book of life, they shall be raised up from the first death, which came by Adam, to the enjoyment of eternal life in the heavenly kingdom.—I repeat it, not a soul is destroyed forever, but for wicked works; they are hypocrites, they are unbelievers, they are impenitent to the last, after warnings, admonitions, and calls, who perish. But what works have infants done that are evil? The Scripture expressly mentions, that they have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, but never that they suffer the pains of hell. Now, can such a thought be reconciled with the character of God, drawn by himself, as "slow to anger, and of great kindness;" as swearing, he hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner? It is his strange act to punish. Nothing but a contention against his government to the last, an impious denial of his Gospel, or a base, hypocritical assent to it, draws down his vengeance. Be assured, from such evidence, our dear children, taken away almost as soon as we see them, are safe in the hands of their merciful Creator and Redeemer. I hope you are ready to say, with the late excellent Mr. Black, (one of the ministers of Edinburgh,) who thus expressed him-

self on the death of his child,—“It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good; it is his will. Our dear child is now, I trust, with Christ in heaven, joined to her kindred spirits around the throne. What a marvellous change!—what a glorious transition!—from a sick-bed to a throne of glory; from weeping friends to glorified spirits; from a world of sin and suffering, to a world of perfect holiness, and endless blessedness! How inconceivable the expansion of faculties that must take place in the case of an infant, on its first entrance into the unseen world! It is an almost overwhelming thought, that our sweet babe already knows more than the most perfect saint on earth. Let my soul bless God, that I have been honoured as the instrument of bringing into existence one who is now added to the Redeemer’s company above. Soon shall the last trumpet sound, and the sleeping dust of countless generations awake to life. I shall then see my dear child; not the feeble infant which she appeared on earth, but a glorified saint, conformed to the image of her blessed Lord. A glorious hope!”

“This consideration, dear Madam, should dry up your tears. Your child is now with God, infinitely more happy than you could have made her on earth,—infinitely more happy than you can conceive; and if you, and your husband, are followers of them who, by faith and patience, inherit the promises, and of Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of faith, you shall one day meet with her amidst the redeemed company, where you shall never more part; and where “there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.”—Rev. xxi. 4.*

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* Rev. S. S. Simpson of Dublin.

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TO PARENTS BEREAVED OF A CHILD.

Extract from a Manuscript Letter of the Rev. Mr. Schauffler of Constantinople.

ON the subject of Infant Salvation, *I have no doubt.* I have had it in view to write something more thoroughgoing upon this subject than I have yet seen in print, but my multiplied engagements do not permit it. Suppose the dear Infants all in Heaven. What a glorious victory has been *already* achieved over the world of darkness ! Already more souls saved than lost ! What depth of meaning those passages of Scripture at once assume which speak of infants, “ Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.” “ Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” “ Their angels do always behold the face of my Father in heaven.” “ Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the *whole world*,”—only “ those who *believe not* shall be damned.” And around the conception, birth, and infancy of Christ a new and glorious light shines, while the bodily sufferings in which infants also share, and which show them to belong to a sinful race, bring them under some unalterable moral laws, (John xii. 24,) which have immediate reference to life and salvation. However, to understand these subjects, I am satisfied it is necessary to have looked into the graves of darling children. The night of affliction reveals to our wondering view the starry firmament of divine love, and divine truths, and the promises given to mourning souls, can be felt and understood by mourners alone.

It seems to me, we need infant choirs in heaven, to make up full concert to the angelic symphony. Who will sing like unto them, of the manger, and the swad-

dling clothes, and of the Lord of all, drawing nourishment from the bosom of mortal mothers! True these are themes of infinite interest, and the delight and wonder of angels. But ah! they are too tender for the Archangel's powerful trump—too tender for the thundering notes of seraphim and cherubim. We must have infant choirs in heaven. When on some Sunday School anniversary the multitude of little children come together, and after hearing some words of tender and affectionate exhortation and advice, they strike up their artless hymn, all the assembly is moved to tears and the single-hearted little ones carry away from the Masters in Israel the palm of eloquence; and the thrill of their tender voices is felt vibrating in the hearts of those who heard them, when the most powerful speeches are long forgotten.

We must have Infant Choirs in Heaven! And is it no privilege to know one of *our* dear ones among them? What an interest does not a father or a mother feel in listening to the sweet voices of the children when they know their beloved child is among the happy songsters. And is it not incomparably more precious to know them among the songsters in Heaven! And oh! with what additional interest, with what quickened anticipations do I now look beyond the grave! I think of the moment when I shall fold my little ones to a father's bosom again and that *forever*, and tears of joy and gratitude flow down my cheeks involuntarily. Even now while I am writing, the voices of two of *my children*, is it possible?—yes, of *my* children are singing praises unto Him who became a poor babe and a man of sorrows for them and for all men. O, let them sing then! I can only wish to join them soon!

And now, your dear James has gone to unite with

them. And while you read this, and it may be weep, he raises his growing notes of praise and gratitude to the Saviour of all men and learns in one minute more of God, and Christ, and Heaven, than you would ever have taught him in all your lives. Oh ! leave them there—all of them, and let us but become daily more heavenly-minded, and more ready to join the

“ Angels who stand round the throne,
And view my Immanuel’s face.”

And the—

“ Saints who stand nearer than they ! ”

All those redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and called close around the steps of His Throne to sing the song,—not of creation and providence only, but of *redeeming love* and *sovereign grace*.

THE CHRISTIAN PARENT IN BEREAVEMENT.

No sooner was its last struggle over, than the little corpse, with ashes put into its hand, was adorned again with clean linen, flowers, citrons, wreaths, &c., which, indeed, could only die and decay with it ; and which afforded but a poor and momentary agreeableness to the eye ; but how beautiful must that adorning be with which our heavenly Father clothes the soul in his own presence, in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of his holy angels !

Our chief hindrance to entire resignation is, that we are so much addicted to things present and visible, while eternal realities are as yet so foreign to us, and so little known. But could we take one glance at the condition of a spirit thus departed, we should never regret and lament, as we are apt to do, the decease of rel-

atives and friends, but our grief would rather be on account of the dim-sightedness of weeping survivors.

Surely, when the door of paradise is opened to let in any of our departed friends, delicious breezes blow through it upon us from that abode of blessedness. And we ought to avail ourselves of such refreshing influence; we ought to let it quicken us in following after those who have gone before us, rather than wish those friends back again to a world like this. Who could ever think of congratulating any that have been enjoying heavenly rest and security for ten, a hundred, or a thousand years together, upon their having to return back again to the perils and dangers of the present life; Why, then, should we regard it as an affliction that any one of our number has escaped from such perils, and is only entered into perfect peace and security? If a vacancy has been made in the family circle, let it also be remembered that another vacancy has been filled up in heaven. The nearer we in this world are approaching to the end of all things, the more welcome should be the thought of dying; because every departed Christian finds that the multitude of the blessed is increasingly outnumbering the militant remnant; and because the whole family of God are thus successively gathering in, that we may all be together for ever with the Lord.*

PARENTS should feel in reference to the death of their children, as did a pious woman who, being ill, was asked whether she were willing to live or die? She answered, "which God pleaseth." "But," asked one of her friends, "if God should refer it to you, which would

* From a Letter of Rev. J. A. Bengel, after the death of a child.

you choose?" She replied, "Truly, if that were the case, I would even refer it to him again."*

Thus leave your children in the hands of God, assured that he will order all things well, and that whether your child lives or dies it will be for its glory and your gain.†

THE STAR IN THE EAST.

IN one of those quiet, secluded valleys of the Alps, near the lake's wild margin, embosomed by snow-crowned mountains, lies the little village of Geneva. In its midst stood the moss-covered cottage of Bolien. The departing radiance of a summer's sun played among the leaves of the flowers, and the mountains and tall trees were inverted in the pure waters, now stilled beneath the deep blue sky of heaven. The windows of Bolien's cottage were thrown open, the curtains drawn aside, and there watched the wife of the faithful pastor over her dying child. Now she parted the damp curls from his brow, and then pressed her lips on his little cold fingers, which she held in her hand. Fervently the silent prayer ascended, that the night of sorrow might pass, and the storm of agony be stilled in her bosom; then, as the babe turned restlessly in her lap, in a low tone she sung,

Sleep, baby, sleep,
Once more upon my breast,
Thine aching head shall rest,
In quiet sleep.
Sleep, baby, sleep.
Sweetly thine eye is closing,

* Anecdote, *Christian Graces*, p. 163. *Whitecross' Anecdotes on O. T.* p. 374, vol. ii.

† *Carne's Letters from the East*, vol. i. p. 146, and p. 180.

Calmly thou'rt now reposing,
In slumber deep.
Sleep, angel baby, sleep:
Not in thy cradle bed
Shall rest thy little head,
But with the quiet dead,
In dreamless sleep.

As the mother looked on her boy, she saw that his little limbs were stiff with the icy chill of death. A smile was on the cherub face, and the long lashes were closed over the blue eyes. Sweet Babe! no wonder that thy mother's heart is broken when she looks on her only child,—dead! The kind-hearted villagers made a little grave among the trees,—and on the third day, when the morning sun shone upon the Alpine mountains, they took from the mother's bosom her little one, and laid it in the ground; and then they looked along the narrow and wild defile of the mountain for their Pastor, who had been some days absent.

At evening the wife of Bolien sat alone in her cottage. She looked upon the lake. A beautiful light was on its waters. She raised her head. It was the star in the east; and it came and stood over the place where the young child was. Upon her darkened soul it rose as the star of hope—the dawning of that light, which had been for a while withdrawn. “I shall rejoice in Him who was born King of the Jews,—for he hath gathered the sheep in his arms,—and he carries the lambs in his bosom,” she exclaimed,—and her feelings were calmed,—her broken spirit found repose.

That night the villagers welcomed their beloved Pastor. No one dared tell him his only son rested beneath the sods of the valley. As he passed from among them, into his own cottage, from which the little light was faintly gleaming, they uttered the heartfelt ben-

ediction, "Peace be within this dwelling." The embrace of the Pastor and his wife was close and affectionate, and then the eye of the father glanced on the cradle which stood in its accustomed place. "The baby sleeps," he said. "Blessed be God who has preserved you both!" The mother turned to wipe the tears from her eyes, as she replied, "Yes, the baby sleeps,—you cannot wake him."—The fearful truth did not enter the mind of Bolien, and he seated himself to partake of some simple refreshment which was set before him. "Your countenance is sad," he exclaimed, as he looked upon the face of his wife. "Methinks your heart should be full of joy. What shall we render to the Lord for all his goodness!" The struggle in the countenance of the afflicted mother was too agonizing to escape the notice of Bolien, and, as he took her hand in his, he exclaimed, "Tell me, I beseech you, what has happened. Christianity I know is not secure, even among the Alpine valleys. It may be, that we are yet to cross the mountains of ice and snow, and seek shelter from those who persecute us for righteousness sake. Tell me, what has befallen us, that you weep thus?" The eye of the heart-stricken mother glanced towards the cradle of her babe, and there needed no comment. The Pastor fell on his knees, and uttered, "*Our child is dead!*"—then buried his face in his hands, and wept aloud.

An hour passed,—and the Pastor and his wife mingled their tears at the grave of their child. Sweetly did the star in the east shine on that little mound.—As Bolien uncovered his head, and gazed upward, he exclaimed, "The Star of Bethlehem shall be our guide to that land which needeth no star to shine upon it! for the glory of God shall lighten it; and the Lamb is the light thereof!"

WE must enter into the designs of God, and try to receive the comforts that he bestows. We shall soon find him whom we seem to have lost ; we approach him with rapid strides. Yet a little time and we shall shed no more tears. We shall die ourselves. Him whom we love lives, and will never die. This is what we believe ; if we believe it rightly, we shall feel in respect to our friends as Jesus Christ wished that his disciples should feel with regard to him when he rose to heaven. "If you loved me," said he, "you would rejoice" in my glory. But we weep for ourselves. For a true friend of God, who has been faithful and humble, we can only rejoice at his happiness, and at the blessing that he has left upon those who belonged to him on earth. Let your grief then be soothed by the hand of him who has afflicted you.—*Fenelon*.

BE reconciled, therefore, to the loss of your children. Ever remember they are loans entrusted to you, to be reclaimed hereafter, and you should always stand ready to acknowledge the debt, and pay it back again with a cheerful and composed mind. "The Lord gave, and he hath taken away ;" he lent, and he hath recalled the precious loan, "Blessed be the name of the Lord." This couplet should be written upon all your children :

"The dear delights we here enjoy,
And fondly call our own,
Are but short favours borrowed now,
To be returned anon."

The Almighty permits you to have children, without any security for a continued possession. Be thankful for them while you enjoy them. Be humble and resigned when he comes and calls for them. It was a

noble saying of one of the ancients, upon the tidings of his son's death, "I knew that I begat a mortal." If, then, he takes your offspring away in infancy or childhood, let this thought comfort you, that it is to render them more happy than you could make them. He takes them from a world of sin, to a world of satisfaction. They are taken from being dandled upon the knee, to be cherished in His bosom. The gems are taken from your cabinet, to be brilliantly set in the Saviour's mediatorial crown. The great and good husbandman transplants them from an earthly soil to the heavenly paradise, where they will flourish in undecaying beauty and immortal bloom. In heaven there may be taller—older—and more majestic plants, but none more fragrant and lovely than those dear babes,

"Who died for Adam sinn'd,
But live, for Jesus died."

Comfort, therefore, yourselves, ye bereaved parents, under the loss of your children, whether at the birth, in infancy, in childhood, or in youth; and say, "Behold, he taketh away, and who shall hinder." Contemplate the pleasure of meeting them again, and spending an eternity together in singing the praises of God and the Lamb, through whose love and merits alone you and your infant seed attain to such an elevation of glory and felicity.—*From Maternal Solitude.*

IF we are sorrowing under a misfortune, of which this world affords no alleviation, the death of those most dear to us, let us humbly offer to our God the beloved whom we have lost. And what (after all) have we lost?—the remaining days of a being, whom we indeed loved, but whose happiness we do not consider in our

regret ; who, perhaps, was not happy here, but who certainly must be much happier with God ; and whom we *shall meet again*, not in this dark and sorrowful scene, but in the bright regions of eternal day, and partaking in the inexpressible happiness of eternity.—*Fenelon*.

THUS it is with God ; his parental heart does not wish to grieve us ; he must wound us to the very heart, that he may cure its malady. He must take from us what is most dear, lest we love it too much, lest we love it to the prejudice of our love for him. We weep, we despair, we groan in our spirits, and we murmur against God ; but he leaves us to our sorrow, and we are saved ; our present grief saves us from an eternal sorrow. He has placed the friends whom he has taken from us in safety, to restore them to us in eternity. He has deprived us of them, that he may teach us to love them with a pure love, a love that we may enjoy in his presence forever ; he confers a greater blessing than we were capable of desiring.—*Fenelon*.

IN another life we shall see and understand the wonders of his goodness, that have escaped us in this, and we shall rejoice at what has made us weep on earth. Alas, in our present darkness, we cannot see either our true good or evil. If God were to gratify our desires, it would be our ruin. He saves us by breaking the ties that bind us to earth. We complain because God loves us better than we know how to love ourselves. We weep because he has taken those whom we love away from temptation and sin. We would possess all that delights and flatters our self-love, though it might lead us to forget that we are exiles in a strange land. God

takes the poisonous cup from our hands, and we weep as a child weeps when its mother takes away the shining weapon with which it would pierce its own breast.—*Fenelon*.

HAVE you lost, by death, an object in whom your heart was bound up; who was in the full enjoyment of life and its prosperity, and in whose society you hoped for many years of enjoyment? Oh! consider (ere you accuse Providence for the stroke) that this death (apparently so untimely) is, possibly, the greatest instance towards you, both of the mercy and love of God. The creature so dear to you, may have been taken from some sad reverse of fortune, or from the commission of some great crime, which might have endangered his salvation. To secure this, therefore, God has removed him from temptation. The same loss is, perhaps, a call from God to yourself, and is intended to awaken you from that attachment which was binding you too fast to this world, and causing you to forget your Creator. Thus the stroke which, to secure his future happiness, takes him from the evil to come, detaches you from the world, and warns you to prepare for your own death, through that of one so dear to you. The pang of separation is, indeed, most bitter, yet our merciful Father does not needlessly afflict his creatures. He wounds, only to heal the diseases of our souls. Let us, then, in the hour of calamity, hold fast by this conviction, and say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." His mercy can be my support here, and my abundant recompense hereafter.—*Fenelon*.

How beautiful and affecting is the following language

of a wise and good parent, respecting his dead children, used in prayer to God, by the late William Hay, Esq., surgeon, Leeds.

“I would offer my most hearty and solemn thanksgivings, for thy mercies shown to my dear children. Four of them thou wast pleased to call out of this dangerous and sinful world during the state of infancy. I surrendered them to thee in thy holy ordinance of baptism, and committed them to thy disposal. Thou didst remove them, ere the pollutions of this world had led their corrupt hearts astray, and I humbly hope thou didst receive them to thy glory. Concerning the other four whom thou hast called hence in adult age, thou hast graciously given me the most solid hopes. Though by nature children of wrath, even as others, thou wast pleased to awaken them to a sense of the odious nature of sin, and to grant them true repentance. They were early taught by thy grace to flee for refuge to the friend of sinners, and thou didst prolong their lives till they had given clear proofs of a sound conversion. Though prepared, as I hope, to glorify thee on earth, thou didst dispense with their services, and didst remove them hence in the beginning of their usefulness. But thy grace was with them. In their sickness, and at the approach of death, they were enabled to rejoice in thy salvation. The last of them I am this day to commit to the silent grave, but in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection to eternal life. What shall I render to thee for all thy mercies! O that my future life might more abundantly show forth thy praise!” Attend, ye parents, to these sentiments of devotion. The only way to part with your children with resignation and hope, should they be removed from you by the stroke of death, is to dedicate them to the

Lord of all, and to bring them up for his service and glory.—*The Parent's Monitor.*

QUINCTILIAN'S letter upon the death of his two sons, one of whom was a youth highly accomplished, and of great promise, is beautiful and touching. But in it he boasts of his impatience, thinks it necessary to excuse himself for having survived the stroke, denies the doctrine of a Divine superintendence over the affairs of men, accuses the gods of spite and injustice, and says his tolerance, not his love of life, will revenge his son for the rest of his days. This was all that ethics could do to calm his mind. What will an infidel say to such a scene as contrasted with the faith and patience of the saints? Will he say that their meek endurance is the fruit of advanced philosophy? Quinctilian lived in an age enlightened by literature, but Rome was far behind Jerusalem in the sublimities of moral precept, because the true light had not radiated its horizon. And then see how Job acted, though in a ruder age, and surrounded by idolatry. Revelation cast a bright hue of heaven over all his sorrows.—*Dr. Lawson.*

God is righteous in taking from us. He is merciful in sparing to us what he has not taken. If it had pleased God to cut off the half of our families, it would have been our duty to have given him thanks that the other half was left. I bless God for the hope of seeing those whom I have lost with greater pleasure than ever, but I have still more reason to bless him for the gift of his own Son to such unworthy creatures as I am, that through faith in him I may have everlasting life.—*Dr. Lawson.*

WHEN God imposes a sacrifice upon us, or takes from us some object, he does not leave us to endure the stroke unsustained ; but if through the veil of sorrow which he spreads over us, we look up to Him, we shall by the means of our mortal trials, reap everlasting joys. We are not to enquire of God why he appoints us such trials, when we behold others exempt from them. Can we say how long our hitherto more fortunate fellow-creatures may continue untried with the like calamities ? It may be, that God sees we have most need of them : If we are faithful in what we understand, how limited soever our imperfect view may be of God's dealings with us, we shall find rest unto our souls, until it please God to dissolve our earthly tabernacle. We know, that then we shall have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Let us, therefore, follow continually that guiding star, which beams upon our darkened way. Let us, with a willing and steady mind, embrace the occasions which each day may offer us of advancing towards our heavenly country, where we shall find our everlasting home. This is our daily bread, our manna in the wilderness of life : with this let us be content. If we presumptuously seek to look into futurity, our endeavours will be like the forbidden provision of the Israelites, not only superfluous, but noxious to ourselves.—*Fenelon*.

THE TEACHING OF BAPTISM.

LET us now consider the feelings with which parents should retire from the baptismal service.

It is a solemn moment when they take the child away from the altar. They have given it to God ; and they bear it away, as the mother of Moses did her own son, to bring it up for another, who, in this case,

is God. They have, by their vows, promised that the will of God concerning their child shall be their will, so that the question of its life or death is left implicitly with him. Though their hearts will bleed if it should be taken away, yet, by the baptismal service, they have engaged to consider the child henceforth as entirely at God's disposal; and whenever they look upon it hereafter, the feeling which they are to have is expressed by these words, *Sent, not given*. If it dies, they will remember its baptism and their vows, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, will steal into their breaking hearts. If it lives, it is to be trained up for that God to whom it has been given.

VERY soon they who are separated will be re-united, and there will appear no trace of the separation. They, who are about to set upon a journey, ought not to feel themselves far distant from those who have gone to the same country a few days before. Life is like a torrent; the past is but a dream; the present, while we are thinking of it, escapes us, and is precipitated into the same abyss that has swallowed up the past; the future will not be of a different nature, it will pass as rapidly. A few moments, and a few more, and all will be ended; what has appeared long and tedious, will seem short when it is finished.—*Fenelon*.

THESE infant buds, therefore, that seem nipt on earth, are merely removed to heaven, there to unfold themselves in everlasting bloom. Nature leaves them pining upon earth, Grace takes them in her arms, wraps them in her warm bosom, and wafts them away to the better land.

“ See, then, how soon the flowers of life decay,
How soon terrestrial pleasures fade away.
A star of comfort for a moment giv’n,
Just rose on earth, then set to rise in heav’n.
Redeem’d by God from sin, releas’d from pain,
Its life were punishment, its death is gain.
Though it be hard to bid thy heart divide,
To lay the gem of all thy love aside,
Faith tells thee, (and it tells thee not in vain,)
That thou shalt meet thine infant yet again.
While yet on earth thine ever-circling arms
Held it securest from surrounding harms;
Yet even there disease could aim the dart,
Chill the warm cheek, and stop the flutt’ring heart;
No ill can reach it now; it rests above,
Safe in the bosom of celestial love.
Its short, but yet tempestuous way, is o’er,
And tears shall trickle down its cheek no more.
Then far be grief; faith looks beyond the tomb,
And heav’n’s bright portals sparkle through the gloom.
If bitter thoughts and tears in heav’n could be,
It is thine infant that should weep for thee.”

Mrs. Wilson writes very sweetly : “ It is only my child’s mortal part that rests in silence; his spirit is with God in his temple above. He is one of the redeemed, who now throng the courts of heaven, and surround the throne of the Most High. Boundless perfection constitutes his felicity, unceasing praises dwell upon his lips, his holiness is for ever perfected, and his affections are made to flow in ever-during channels, toward the Source of infinite perfection, and through all those subordinate streams where it is distributed. The light of heaven encircles him, and its splendours delight his soul. His vision is unclouded, and penetrates into the deep things of God. I see him among the glorious throng, now bending in holy adoration of the majesty of heaven, now a commissioned messenger of mercy to other and far distant worlds.

Perhaps he hovers now around our dwelling ; perhaps he will stand at heaven's portals, and be the first to usher us into the presence chamber of the King. Shall I then continue to shed unavailing tears, and selfishly repine at the short, the momentary separation? He will never return to us, but we shall go to him. In regard to our beloved child, we can take up the triumphant song, ' O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? ' "

THE HOPE OF A RESURRECTION.

LAVEL.

LET those mourn without measure, who mourn without hope. The husbandman does not mourn, when he casts his seed into the ground. He expects to receive it again, and more. The same hope have we, respecting our friends who have died in faith. " I would not have you ignorant," says Paul, " concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not as others who have no hope ; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." He seems to say, " Look not on the dead as lost. They are not annihilated. Indeed, they are not *dead*. They only sleep ; and they sleep to awake again." You do not lament over your children or friends, while slumbering on their beds. Consider death as a longer sleep, from which they shall certainly awake. Even a heathen philosopher could say, that he enjoyed his friends, expecting to part with them ; and parted with them, expecting to see them again. And shall a heathen excel a Christian in bearing affliction with cheerfulness?—If you have a well-grounded hope that your deceased friend was interest-

ed in Christ, ponder, I entreat you, the precious supports afforded by the doctrine of the Resurrection of the just.

THE DEATH OF A CHILD NO CAUSE OF DESPONDENCY.

DEJECTED mourner, bereft, as you seem, of all joy, you have no cause for despondency. O that you realized what blessings God has to bestow on those who submissively wait on him in their affliction ! He has consolations far transcending the joy of children. So others have found. An eminently pious man, having lost an only son, retired for some hours to his closet, and then came forth with such a cheerful countenance, that all who saw him were filled with surprise. Being asked an explanation of this, he replied, that he had enjoyed, in his retirement, that which, if renewed, might well reconcile him to part with a son every day. O how great the disproportion between the light of God's countenance, and the best, the sweetest of created enjoyments !

THE memory of the sainted dead hovers, a blessed and purifying influence, over the hearts of men. At the grave of the good, so far from losing heart, the spiritually minded find new strength. They weep, but as they weep, they look down into the sepulchre, and behold angels sitting, and the dead come nearer, and are united to them by a fellowship more intimate than that of blood.—*Rev. W. H. Furness.*

WE are forbidden to murmur, but we are not forbidden to *regret* ; and whom we loved tenderly while living, we may still pursue with an affectionate re-

membrance, without having any occasion to charge ourselves with rebellion against the sovereignty that appointed a separation.—*Cowper*.

WOULD YOU CALL THEM BACK TO THIS UNHAPPY
WORLD ?

REV. G. WHYTE.

COULD you be so selfish, and so cruel ? Could you wish them back—back from the presence of the Lamb,—back from the sweets of glory to the bitterness of time,—back from those rivers of pure pleasure which flow full and large at God's right hand, to the streams of mingled enjoyment in this vale of sorrow ? After they have reached the haven of rest, would you recall them to struggle again with the storm ? Is there any thing in the state or employments of those who surround the throne which you are called upon to contemplate with sadness, or to deplore in the language of despair ? Is it any subject of regret to them that their sun went down while it was yet day ?

LETTER TO A MOTHER ON THE DEATH OF HER CHILD.

DEAR MADAM,—I do most sincerely sympathize with you in your present distressed circumstances. It was only to-day that we heard how it hath pleased your Heavenly Father to take from you your little child. We can easily suppose that you must be overwhelmed with deep affliction ; and we desire rather to weep with you, than to try to stem the torrent of your grief ; yet will you bear with us, while we try to call up to your recollection topics of strong consolation. The dear little one is indeed gone ; you shall not any

more press her to your heart or dandle her on your knee ; her little pleasing arts shall no more delight you. And who can wonder that Rachel weeps because her children are not. But will you bear with us, my dear friend, if we say that you have cause for mixing joy with your mourning ?

Raise your thoughts, then, from the fears of death and the darkness of the grave to the land of light and holy joy. Consider your daughter as having escaped all the perplexities and sins of an evil world, and obtaining an inheritance among them who are sanctified. She was your charge for a short time, but God designed that she should now be glorified. He therefore sent his angel to fetch her home. The angel gladly descended. He saw, that you might for a little have sorrow upon sorrow, but the child should rejoice with joy unspeakable. He left your house a house of mourning, but with him your dear infant rose above the suns, and moons, and stars : the gate of heaven was thrown open,—the angel presented his charge—Jesus smiled with ineffable sweetness, and said, “ Come, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” She was no longer an infant of days ; her soul swelled and grew ; a crown was put upon her head ; she cast it at Jesus’ feet, and cried, “ To him that loved me and washed me from my sins, to him be glory.” See, and now in a white robe she walks with all the saints in the presence of God and of the Lamb. Oh ! my dear friend, amidst all your doubts and fears, what would not some folks give to be as sure as she is of singing for ever the praises of redeeming grace ? You have often prayed for her ; your prayers in substance are answered ; perhaps in heaven she may be praying for you. And much as in this world we mourn the death of friends, when the day comes that her parents

must die, it shall, I trust, be to her a day of transporting bliss. She will fly to the gate of heaven to welcome and to embrace you, and so shall you all be forever with the Lord. Wherefore, while you mourn your own loss, let us be permitted to entreat you to comfort one another with these hopes. We are well, thanks be to God; when you can find conveniency to write to us, be so good as to say when we may expect to see both in ———. A little absence from home at present might not be unseasonable: and we hope we may say, there are not many who would be more happy in the pleasure of your company. With all regard and sympathy, we remain your affectionate friends.

CHAPTER VIII.

SELECTIONS IN POETRY.

If there be power in song's harmonious meed,
To raise, refine, excite heroic deed,
Or crown proud virtue with perennial fame,
'Twas God first gave it with a worthier aim.
To hallelujahs—ere this world began,
Hymned through all spheres—he waked his image, man;
Touch'd every bosom-chord with grateful love,
That earth might join the host of worlds above.
The lowliest verse that ever breath'd to impart
Its simple fervour to the pious heart,
To make praise vocal, and give faith a voice,
Or help the humblest Christian to rejoice,
Though feebly lisp'd from childhood's faltering tongue,
Yet chimes aloft, where heavenly strains are sung:
That spirit pure all human thought above,
Still bears it up on wings of holiest love!
When tongues shall cease, and transient science fail,
The harps of heaven shall catch the undying tale,
Past ruin's power shall sacred truth embalm
The hallowed hymn, the heavenly breathing psalm:
Strains now unhonoured in this world's esteem,
When earth sinks mute, shall be the seraph's theme,
And all the choirs of blessedness employ,
The still sweet song of everlasting joy!

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

“THE great end of Poetry is to instruct, at the same time that it gives pleasure. By the decorations of elegance, and the harmony of numbers, it is well calculated to win its way both to the heart and understanding,—like a still and placid stream which beautifies and enriches all around it. Hence from the earliest ages, when the first hymn of praise, as it were the song of the morning star, was borne on the wings of the cherubim

to the throne of glory, Poetry has ever been a principal medium for communicating instruction to the mind, and captivating the affections of the heart. The truth of this remark is well illustrated by the use which all know has been made of it by the poets of the Ancients, to instruct in the various arts and sciences, as well as to incite to deeds of heroism, and to lives of virtue."

"In times of bereavement, the mind often becomes utterly depressed and bewildered at its inability of expression, and it turns instinctively to the language of another: to 'the deep sad harmonies that haunt the breast of the Poet,' who has foreshadowed a portraiture of our own hearts; and we are comforted by the assurance it gives, that *our* state is not peculiar. In our weakness of grief we are apt to feel as if alone; as if set apart as a mark for the shafts of adversity; but we now learn the fact, that we are only *one* of the great brotherhood of sorrow."

"In moments of affliction, we often shrink from the incompetence of those who, from their genuine kindness of heart, obtrude their sympathy upon us. The commonplace generalities to which such persons resort, revolt us, as heartless and hackneyed; the human voice, even, assumes a dissonance, when it urges us to forget a grief over which the heart yearns with a devoted tenderness, feeling as if relief were a treason to the beloved object. Few can afford consolation in periods like these—few should attempt it."

"The Poet is the interpreter of the human heart—the expounder of its mysteries. An utterance is given to him, which is denied to others, even although their feelings may be akin to his own. Through him Truth speaks: and wild or wayward as may seem her revelations, yet it is the common sentiment, the universal

emotion, she speaks ; she gives the germ of a nobler principle, the incentive to a higher hope."

"We weep over his words, relieved by a strange sympathy ;" find through him a voice and utterance for thoughts too deep for expression ; and are at once relieved, comforted, and instructed.

THE EVENING CLOUD.

A CLOUD lay cradled near the setting sun,
 A gleam of crimson tinged its braided snow ;
 Long had I watched the glory moving on,
 O'er the still radiance of the lake below ;
 Tranquil its spirit seemed, and floated slow,
 E'en in its very motion there was rest,
 While every breath of eve that chanced to blow,
 Wafted the traveller to the beauteous west.
 Emblem, how bright of dying infant souls,
 To whose white robe the gleam of bliss is giv'n,
 While mercy's breath its flight securely rolls,
 Right onward to the golden gates of heaven ;
 Where to the eye of faith it peaceful lies,
 And tells to weeping friends its glorious destinies.

(Altered from Professor Wilson.)

CASA WAPPY.*

AND hast thou sought thy heavenly home,
 Our fond, dear boy—
 The realms where sorrow dare not come,
 Where life is joy ?
 Pure at thy death as at thy birth,
 Thy spirit caught no taint from earth ;
 Even by its bliss we mete our death,
 Casa Wappy !

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* From "Domestic Verses, by Delta" (D. M. Moir, Esq.), 1842. Casa Wappy was the self-conferred pet name of an infant son of the poet, snatched away after a very brief illness.

Thou wert a vision of delight
To bless us given ;
Beauty embodied to our sight,
A type of heaven :
So dear to us thou wert, thou art
Even less thine own self than a part
Of mine and of thy mother's heart,
Casa Wappy !

Thy bright brief day knew no decline,
'Twas cloudless joy ;
Sunrise and night alone were thine,
Beloved boy !
This morn beheld thee blithe and gay,
That found thee prostrate in decay,
And ere a third shone, clay was clay,
Casa Wappy !

Gem of our hearth, our household pride,
Earth's undefiled ;
Could love have saved, thou hadst not died,
Our dear, sweet child !
Humbly we bow to Fate's decree ;
Yet had we hope that Time should see
Thee mourn for us, not us for thee,
Casa Wappy !

Do what I may, go where I will,
Thou meet'st my sight ;
There dost thou glide before me still—
A form of light !
I feel thy breath upon my cheek—
I see thee smile, I hear thee speak—
Till, oh ! my heart is like to break,
Casa Wappy !

Methinks thou smil'st before me now,
With glance of stealth ;
The hair thrown back from thy full brow
In buoyant health :
I see thine eyes' deep violet light,
Thy dimpled cheek carnationed bright,
Thy clasping arms so round and white,
Casa Wappy !

The nursery shows thy pictured wall,
 Thy bat, thy bow,
 Thy cloak and bonnet, club and ball ;
 But where art thou ?
 A corner holds thine empty chair,
 Thy playthings idly scattered there,
 But speak to us of our despair,
 Casa Wappy !

Even to the last thy every word—
 To glad, to grieve—
 Was sweet as sweetest song of bird
 On summer's eve ;
 In outward beauty undecayed,
 Death o'er thy spirit cast no shade,
 And like the rainbow thou didst fade,
 Casa Wappy !

* * * *

Snows muffled earth when thou didst go,
 In life's spring-bloom,
 Down to the appointed house below,
 The silent tomb.
 But now the green leaves of the tree,
 The cuckoo and the " busy bee,"
 Return—but with them bring not thee,
 Casa Wappy !

'Tis so ; but can it be (while flowers
 Revive again)—
 Man's doom, in death that we and ours
 For aye remain ?
 Oh ! can it be, that o'er the grave
 The grass renewed should yearly wave,
 Yet God forget our child to save ?—
 Casa Wappy !

It cannot be : for were it so
 Thus man could die,
 Life were a mockery, Thought were wo,
 And Truth a lie ;
 Heaven were a coinage of the brain,

Religion frenzy, Virtue vain,
And all our hopes to meet again,
Casa Wappy!

Then be to us, O dear, lost child!
With beam of love,
A star, death's uncongenial wild
Smiling above;
Soon, soon thy little feet have trod
The skyward path, the seraph's road,
That led thee back from man to God,
Casa Wappy!

* * * *

Farewell, then—for a while, farewell—
Pride of my heart!
It cannot be that long we dwell,
Thus torn apart:
Time's shadows like the shuttle flee:
And, dark howe'er life's night may be,
Beyond the grave I'll meet with thee,
Casa Wappy!

—

BY THE BEDSIDE OF A SICK CHILD.

David, therefore, besought God for the child.—2 *Sam.* xii. 16.

Now all is done that love, and care,
And skilful kindness could suggest;
And he who heard our anxious prayer,
Will answer as his love thinks best:
O, that both hopes and fears were still
Waiting on his mysterious will

And yet, both hopes and fears will crowd
Around that bright and precious child;
And both will speak their thoughts aloud,
Till this distracted heart is wild:
O might they all give place to one
Heart filling prayer,—“God's will be done.”

Sometimes a dream of what may be,
Comes, like soft sunshine, o'er the heart;

I hear his prattle at my knee,
 Feel his warm cheek near mine, and start
To find it—ah! so cold and pale,
That hope (and well-nigh faith) doth fail.

And then, again, the dream returns,—
 Childhood and youth are safely o'er ;
His eye with manhood's ardour burns,
 Tears hover round his path no more :
Hopes with their buds and blossoms, all
Burst, where his bounding footsteps fall.

He seems to speak—with anxious ear,
 My very heart waits breathless by ;
His lips are parted,—and I hear,
 My precious babe, thy restless cry ;—
E'en hope, affrighted, flees away,
As if it had no heart to stay.

Come then, my God, and take the place
 Of these distracting hopes and fears ;
'Stablish this trembling heart with grace,
 Dry with thine hand these falling tears ;
And teach me to confide in thee
The treasure thou couldst trust with me.

Happy if, rescued from the strait
 Of being called on to decide,
Here with submissive soul, I wait,
 By thy decision to abide,—
Life, with its blessings and its pain,
Or death, with its, "to die is gain."

THE SICK CHILD'S DREAM OF HEAVEN.

“ And bade me be glad to die.”

By Robert Nicoll, Scotland's second Burns.

“ O MITHER, mither, my head was sair,
 And my een wi' tears were weet,
But the pain has gane for evermair,
 Sae mither dinna greet :

And I ha'e had sic a bonnie dream,
Since last asleep I fell,
O' a' that is holy an' gude to name,
That I have wauken'd my dream to tell.

I thought on the morn o' a simmer day,
That awa' through the clouds I flew,
While my silken hair did wavin' play
'Mang breezes steep'd in dew ;
And the happy things o' life and light
Were around my gowden way,
As they stood in their parent Heaven's sight
In the hames o' nightless day.

An' songs o' yae that nae tongue may tell,
Frae their hearts cam' flowin' free,
Till the starns stood still, while alang did swell
The plaintive melodie :
And ane o' them sang wi' my mither's voice,
Till through my heart did gae
That chanted hymn o' my bairnhood's choice,
Sae dowie, saft, an' wae.

Thae happy things o' the glorious sky
Did lead me far away,
Where the stream o' life rins never dry,
Where nathing kens decay ;
And they laid me down in a mossy bed,
Wi' curtains o' spring leaves green,
And the name o' God they praying said,
And a light came o'er my een.

And I saw the earth that I had left,
And I saw my mither there ;
And I saw her grieve that she was bereft
O' the bairn she thought sae fair ;
And I saw her pine till her spirit fled—
Like a bird to its young one's nest—
To that land of love ; and my head was laid
Again on my mither's breast.

And, mither, ye took me by the hand,
As ye were wont to do ;

And your loof, sae saft and white, I fand
Laid on my caller brow ;
And my lips you kiss'd, and my curling hair
You round your fingers wreath'd ;
And I kent that a happy mither's prayer
Was o'er me silent breath'd ;

And we wander'd through that happy land,
That was gladly glorious a' ;
The dwellers there were an angel band,
And their voices o' love did fa'
On our ravish'd ears like the deein' tones
O' an anthem far away,
In a star-lit hour, when the woodland moans
That its green is turn'd to grey.

And, mither, amang the sorrowless there,
We met my brithers three,
And your bonnie May, my sister fair,
And a happy bairn was she ;
And she led me awa' 'mang living flowers,
As on earth she aft has done ;
And thegither we sat in the holy bowers,
Where the blessed rest aboon ;—

And she tauld me I was in Paradise,
Where God in love doth dwell—
Where the weary rest, and the mourner's voice
Forgets its warld-wail ;
And she tauld me they kent na dule nor care ;
And bade me be glad to dee,
That yon sinless land and the dwellers there
Might be hame and kin to me.

Then sweetly a voice came on my ears,
And it sounded sae holily,
That my heart grew saft, and blabs o' tears
Sprung up in my sleepin' e'e ;
And my inmost soul was sairly moved
Wi' its mair than mortal joy ;—
'Twas the voice o' Him wha bairnies lov'd
That waken'd your dreamin' boy !"

THE BEREAVED.

BY ROBERT NICOLL.

THEY RE a' gane thegither, Jeanie—
 They're a' gane thegither :
 Our bairns aneath the cauldribe yird
 Are laid wi' ane anither.
 Sax lads and lasses Death has ta'en
 Frae father an' frae mither ;
 But O ! we manna greet and mane—
 They're a' on hie thegither, Jeanie—
 They're a' on hie thegither.

Our eild will now be drearie, Jeanie—
 Our eild will now be drearie :
 Our young an' bonnie bairns ha'e gane,
 An' left our hame fu' eerie.
 'Neath Age's hand we now may grane—
 In poortith could may swither :
 The things that toddled but an' ben
 Are a' on hie thegither, Jeanie—
 Are a' on hie thegither.

Now sorrow may come near us, Jeanie—
 Now sorrow may come near us :
 The buirdly chields are lvin' low
 Wha wadna let it steer us.
 The bonnie lasses are awa'
 Wha came like sun-glints hither,
 To fill wi' joy their father's ha'—
 They're a' on hie thegither, Jeanie—
 They're a' on hie thegither.

In the kirkyard they're sleepin', Jeanie—
 In the kirkyard they're sleepin' :
 It may be grieves their happy souls
 To see their parents weepin'.
 They're on to bigg a hame for us,
 Where flowers like them ne'er wither,
 Among the starns in love an' bliss—
 They're a' on hie thegither, Jeanie—
 They're a' on hie thegither.

THE INFANT'S DYING WAIL.

A PARENTAL SKETCH BY THE AUTHOR.

THE midnight bell had toll'd—and earliest bird
Had loud proclaimed the break of coming day,
While yet the stars kept watch at gate of heaven,
And night winds sighed among the leafless trees.
But not to seek repose had now retired
The gathered inmates of that cherished home.
In silence, sad, they stand collected round
The couch, on which is laid a suffering babe.
The sun his yearly round had not yet closed,
Since first that babe was ushered to the light,
Most welcome gift from God's paternal hand.
In form most fair and perfect. In spirit
Warm, affectionate, and ever mild.
His capacious brow, and eye intelligent,
Gave noble promise of the mighty powers
Still latent, but fast bursting into life.
His parents loved him much. Their hearts had bled,
The darksome tomb within its bosom closed
The buried forms of other children dear.
They therefore clung to him as to the dead
Revived—the lost ones found—their light and life.
For joy o'er him they had forgotten
The bitter anguish of that dreadful hour,
When two fair buds of life lay crushed and torn.
Most sweet it was to see this opening flower
Expand its leaves and breathe its fragrance forth—
To hear his infant prattle—to behold
His looks of love, his first, light, gladsome steps,
And all the graces of blest infancy.
How have I clasped him to this doting heart,
In all the ecstasy of untold joy;
And felt, while round my neck his fond arms clung,
And his soft cheek press'd mine, that depth of bliss
Unutterable, which only parents know.
But he was not a destined heir of earth,
Nor long to tread its pilgrimage of woe.
An angel he—an elect child of grace—
An heir of bliss—a heaven-ward voyager.

His vacant throne for him was kept reserved,
And sister spirits longed to see him come.
A glorious crown of life, a sceptre bright,
And glittering robes, awaited him above.
God had now called his child, and forth had sent
The ministering host to guard him home.
And swift to loose his bonds of earthly mould,
To fierce disease had given him a prey.
For ten long days and nights the secret foe,
Invisible, his dread commission filled,
And baffled all the art of human skill;
Till now at length in death's last struggles lay
The sinking form of that most blessed child.
No cry escaped his lips—no sigh his breast—
Nor sign of murmuring by him was given.
But calm he lay—as in God's arms outspread—
As into heaven he cast his blissful gaze,
And even then had taste of joys to come.
It was the theme of all—I picture not—
How unrepiningly he met his fate—
Amid despair, most tranquil and serene;
With tearless eyes, while none around were dry,
Outworn with agony he now lay stretched
Upon his downy pillow, there to die.
Resigned by parents' arms, he bid farewell
To earthly scenes and all terrestrial joy.
His bright eye dimmed—his palsied limbs lay cold
And motionless. His heaving breast rose high—
Till with a dove-like wail he sunk to rest.

God speed thee in thy flight, my blessed boy!
Let angel bands conduct thee safe to heaven,
There with thy sisters dear to share its bliss!
Thou wert to me the dearest joy of earth,
And I would now rejoice with thee above,
And chide my selfish grief with thoughts of thee,
As now enroll'd among the cherub throng.
Farewell, my boy! no more thy smile I'll see
Till thee I meet around the throne of God.
But never from this heart shall pass away
Thy dying form, and that last dying wail.

Charleston, Nov. 27th, 1841.

"OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN."

MARY S. B. DANA.

I DEARLY love a little child,
 And Jesus loved young children too ;
 He ever sweetly on them smiled,
 And placed them with his chosen few.
 When, cradled on its mother's breast,
 A babe was brought to Jesus' feet,
 He laid his hand upon its head,
 And bless'd it with a promise sweet.

"Forbid them not!" the Saviour said,
 "Oh! suffer them to come to me!
 Of such my heavenly kingdom is—
 Like them may all my followers be!"
 Young children are the gems of earth,
 The brightest jewels mothers have ;
 They sparkle on the throbbing breast,
 But brighter shine beyond the grave.

A MOTHER'S LAMENT.

MONTGOMERY.

I LOVED thee, daughter of my heart ;
 My child, I loved thee dearly ;
 And though we only met to part,
 —How sweetly ! how severely !—
 Nor life nor death can sever
 My soul from thine forever.

Thy days, my little one, were few ;
 An angel's morning visit,
 That came and vanish'd with the dew ;
 'Twas here, 'tis gone, where is it ?
 Yet did'st thou leave behind thee
 A clue for love to find thee.

The eye, the lip, the cheek, the brow,
 The hands stretch'd forth in gladness,
 All life, joy, rapture, beauty now ;
 Then dash'd with infant sadness ;

Till, brightening by transition,
Return'd the fairy vision :—

Where are they now ?—those smiles, those tears,
Thy mother's darling treasure ?
She sees them still, and still she hears
Thy tones of pain or pleasure,
To her quick pulse revealing
Unutterable feeling.

Hush'd in a moment on her breast,
Life, at the well-spring drinking ;
Then cradled on her lap to rest
In rosy slumber sinking,
Thy dreams—no thought can guess them ;
And mine—no tongue express them.

For then this waking eye could see,
In many a vain vagary,
The things that never were to be,
Imaginations airy ;
Fond hopes that mothers cherish,
Like still-born babes to perish.

Mine perish'd on thy early bier ;
No,—changed to forms more glorious,
They flourish in a higher sphere,
O'er time and death victorious ;
Yet would these arms have chain'd thee,
And long from heaven detain'd thee.

Sarah ! my last, my youngest love,
The crown of every other !
Though thou art born in heaven above,
I am thine only mother,
Nor will affection let me
Believe thou canst forget me.

Then,—thou in heaven and I on earth,—
May this one hope delight us,
That thou wilt hail my second birth,
When death shall reunite us,
Where worlds no more can sever
Parent and child for ever.

THE THREE SONS; OR, FAITH TRIUMPHANT.

BY REV. J. MOULTRIE, A.M.

I.

I HAVE a son, a little son,
A boy just five years old,
With eyes of thoughtful earnestness,
A mind of gentle mould.

They tell me that unusual grace
In all his ways appears,
That my child is grave, and wise of heart,
Beyond his childish years.

I cannot say how this may be,
I know his face is fair,
And yet his chiefest comeliness
Is his sweet and serious air.

I know his heart is kind and fond,
I know he loveth me,
But he loveth yet his mother more,
With grateful fervency.

But that which others most admire,
Is the thought that fills his mind,
The food for grave, inspiring speech,
He everywhere doth find.

Strange questions doth he ask of me,
When we together walk;
He scarcely thinks as children think,
Or talks as children talk.

Nor cares he much for childish sports,
Dotes not on bat or ball,
But looks on manhood's ways and works,
And aptly mimics all.

His little heart is busy still,
And oftentimes perplexed
With thoughts about this world of ours,
And thoughts about the next.

He kneels at his dear mother's knees,
She teaches him to pray,
And strange, and sweet, and solemn, then,
Are the words which he will say.

Oh, should my gentle child be spared,
To manhood's years, like me,
A holier and a wiser man
I trust that he will be.

And when I look into his eyes,
And on his thoughtful brow,
I dare not think what I should feel,
Were I to lose him now.

II.

I have a son, a second son,
A simple child of three ;
I'll not declare how bright and fair
His little features be.

I do not think his light blue eye
Is like his brother's keen,
Nor his brow so full of childish thought
As his hath ever been.

But his little heart's a fountain pure,
Of kind and tender feeling,
And his every look's a gleam of light,
Rich depths of love revealing.

When he walks with me, the country folk,
Who pass us in the street;
Will shout for joy, and bless my boy,
He looks so mild and sweet.

A playfellow is he to all,
And yet, with cheerful tone,
Will sing his little song of love,
When left to sport alone.

His presence is like sunshine, sent
To gladden home, the earth,

To comfort us in all our griefs,
And sweeten all our mirth.

Should he grow up to riper years,
God grant his heart may prove,
As sweet a home for heavenly grace,
As now for earthly love.

And if, beside his grave, the tears
Our aching eyes must dim,
God comfort us for all the love
Which we shall lose in him

III.

I have a son, a third sweet son,
His age I cannot tell,
For they reckon not by years and months,
Where he hath gone to dwell.

To us, for fourteen anxious months,
His infant smiles were given,
And then he bade farewell to earth,
And went to live in heaven.

I cannot tell what form is his,
What looks he weareth now,
Nor guess how bright a glory crowns
His shining seraph brow.

The thoughts that fill his sinless soul,
The bliss which he doth feel,
Are numbered with the secret things
Which God will not reveal.

But I know, for God hath told me this,
That he is now at rest,
Where other blessed infants are,
On their Saviour's loving breast.

Whate'er befalls his brethren twain,
His bliss can never cease;
Their lot may here be grief and fear,
But his is certain peace.

It may be that the tempter's wiles
 Their souls from bliss may sever,
 But, if our own poor faith fail not,
He must be ours forever.

When we think on what our darling is,
 And what we still must be ;
 When we muse on *that* world's perfect bliss,
 And *this* world's misery ;

When we groan beneath this load of sin,
 And feel this grief and pain,
 Oh, we'd rather lose our other two,
 Than have him here again.

THE DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN.

ALARIC A. WATTS.

" Fare thee well, thou first and fairest !
 Fare thee well, thou best and dearest !"

BURNS.

My sweet one, my sweet one ! the tears were in my eyes
 When first I clasped thee to my heart, and heard thy feeble
 cries ;—

For I thought of all that I had borne as I bent me down to kiss
 Thy cherry lip and sunny brow, my first-born bud of bliss !

I turned to many a withered hope,—to years of grief and
 pain ;—

And the cruel wrongs of a bitter world flashed o'er my boil-
 ing brain—

I thought of friends grown worse than cold, of persecuting
 foes,—

And I asked of Heaven, if ills like these must mar thy
 youth's repose !

I gazed upon thy quiet face—half blinded by my tears—
 Till gleams of bliss, unfelt before, came brightening on my
 fears—

Sweet rays of hope that fairer shone 'mid the cloud of gloom
 that bound them,

As stars dart down their loveliest light when midnight skies
 are round them.

My sweet one, my sweet one ! thy life's brief hour is o'er,
And a father's anxious fears for thee can fever me no more ;
And for the hopes, the sunbright hopes—that blossomed at
thy birth—
They too have fled, to prove how frail are cherished things
on earth !

'Tis true that thou wert young, my child, but though brief
thy span below,
To me it was a little age of agony and woe ;
For, from the first faint dawn of life thy cheek began to
fade,
And my heart had scarce thy welcome breathed, ere my
hopes were wrapt in shade.

O the child, in its hours of health and bloom, that is dear as
thou wert then,
Grows far more prized—more fondly loved—in sickness and
in pain,
And thus 'twas thine to prove, dear babe, when every hope
was lost,
Ten times more precious to my soul—for all that thou hadst
cost !

Cradled in thy fair mother's arms, we watched thee day by
day,
Pale, like the second bow of heaven, as gently waste away ;
And, sick with dark foreboding fears, we dared not breathe
aloud,
Sat hand in hand, in speechless grief, to wait death's coming
cloud.

It came at length ; o'er thy bright blue eye the film was
gathering fast,—
And an awful shade passed o'er thy brow, the deepest and
the last ;—
In thicker gushes strove thy breath,—we raised thy droop-
ing head,
A moment more—the final pang—and thou wert of the
dead !

Thy gentle mother turned away to hide her face from me,
And murmured low of Heaven's behests, and bliss attained
by thee ;—

She would have chid me that I mourned a doom so blest as
thine,
Had not her own deep grief burst forth in tears as wild as
mine !

We laid thee down in sinless rest, and from thine infant
brow
Culled one soft lock of radiant hair—our only solace now,—
Then placed around thy beauteous corse, flowers, not more
fair and sweet ;
Twin rosebuds in thy little hands, and jasmine at thy feet.

Though other offspring still be ours, as fair perchance as
thou,
With all the beauty of thy cheek—the sunshine of thy brow,
They never can replace the bud our early fondness nurst,
They may be lovely and beloved, but not like thee—the
first !

The first ! How many a memory bright that one sweet
word can bring
Of hopes that blossomed, drooped, and died, in life's delight-
ful spring ;
Of fervid feelings passed away—those early seeds of bliss,
That germinate in hearts unsered, by such a world as this !

My sweet one, my sweet one, my fairest, and my first !
When I think of what thou migh'st have been, my heart is
like to burst ;
But gleams of gladness through the gloom their soothing
radiance dart,
And my sighs are hush'd, my tears are dried, when I turn
to what thou art !

Pure as the snow-flake ere it falls and takes the stain of
earth,
With not a taint of mortal life, except thy mortal birth,—
God bade thee early taste the spring for which so many
thirst ;
And bliss—eternal bliss—is thine, my fairest, and my first !

TO MY DEPARTED DAUGHTER.

From "Songs of Home."

BRIEF time has pass'd, my buried love,
Since, seated by thy gentle side,
A web of future joy I wove,
With all a father's fondest pride:
Hope's shuttle lies all idle now,
The thread is snapped, for where art thou?

Thy glossy curl retains its sheen,
The forehead where it waved is dust;
And thus 'twill be, has ever been,
With hopes which place their joy and trust
On things of earth; the dearer they,
The sooner doomed to know decay.

It was such joy to feel thine arm,
Thy soft white arm, twine round my neck;
To mark each day some budding charm
Steal forth in beauty free from speck,
That, gazing on thy dove-like eye,
I half forgot that thou could'st die.

Thy place is vacant now, my sweet,
Thy soft, endearing tones I miss;
No more with light and eager feet
Thou com'st to claim a father's kiss:
No more thy arch and laughing eye
Bids gay defiance to his sigh.

There is a spell upon our home,
So mirthful once, so silent now;
Thy mother's cheek has lost its bloom,
And grief lies heavy on her brow:
E'en while she bids me cease to pine,
Her tears gush forth and blend with mine.

Oh! my lost child! thou wert so dear,
So very dear to heart and eye;
So blooming, that the cloud of fear
Ne'er shadow'd o'er hope's rosy sky.
It came at length, a night of doom,
And turned our day to deepest gloom.

The grass above thy grave is green,
 And fresh as hope was wont to be ;
 But never in our home, I ween,
 Will joy shoot forth as cheeringly
 As erst it did, my gentle child,
 When thy dear eyes upon us smiled.

TO A WIFE ON HER INDULGENCE OF SORROW.

From "Songs of Home."

I WOULD not chide thee, my lov'd wife,
 But still I grieve to see
 Thy spirit thus with God at strife,—
 Thus mourning his decree ;
 It is not well, my gentle one,
 To rivet sorrow's chains,
 And in our grief for blessings gone,
 Forget how much remains.

'Tis true a fount of joy has closed,
 As holy as 'twas sweet ;
 The smiles on which our souls reposed,
 No more our bosoms greet.
 Our spirit's star has lost its light,
 And set no more to rise ;
 But there are others warm and bright
 In our domestic skies :—

Two hearts which never yet have known
 Love's "sere and yellow leaf ;"
 Two souls, the concord of whose tone
 Has been unmarred in grief :
 A fond esteem which passing years
 Have made more fond and warm,—
 These, then, are but ungrateful tears,
 Which steal from life its charms.

Then grieve not, love, our child is bless'd,
 Our loss has been her gain ;
 Her sainted spirit knows a rest
 Which has no dream of pain ;

If fondly still she hovers near
Around her once glad home,
Say, would it not her bliss impair
To see her mother's gloom?

SONNET.

EMILY TAYLOR.

MOTHER, revere God's image in thy child!
No earthly gift thy parent arms enfold;
No mortal tongue as yet the worth hath told
Of that which in thy bosom, meek and mild,
Rests its weak head. O, not by sense beguiled
Gaze on that form of perishable mould;
Though first by thee it lived, on thee it smiled,
Yet not for thee existence must it hold,
For God's it is, not thine. Thou art but one
To whom that happy destiny is given,
To see an everlasting life begun,
To watch the dawnings of the future heaven,
And to be such in purity and love
As best may win it to that life above!

THE CHILDREN WHOM JESUS BLEST.

MRS. HEMANS.

HAPPY were they, the mothers, in whose sight
Ye grew, fair children! hallowed from that hour
By your Lord's blessing! surely thence a shower
Of heavenly beauty, a transmitted light
Hung on your brows and eyelids, meekly bright,
Through all the after years which saw ye move
Lowly, yet still majestic, in the might,
The conscious glory of the Saviour's love!
And honoured be all childhood, for the sake
Of that high love! Let reverential care
Watch to behold the immortal spirit wake,
And shield its first bloom from unholy air;
Owning in each young suppliant glance the sign
Of claims upon a heritage divine.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN.

From "Sacred Lyrics," by R. Huie.

THE room was narrow, chill, and low ;
And from the casement small
Scarce light enough was thrown, to show
The damp and dingy wall,
Beneath whose shade, on pallet bare,
Was stretched an humble child of pray'r.

Eight times the summer's breeze has fann'd
His little pensive brow ;
But ah ! the lank and icy hand
Of death is on it now ;
And fast he journeys to the bourne,
From which no traveller returns.

His wasted limbs, his fevered cheek,
His faint and ghastly smile
Of deep decay and suffering speak ;—
And yet his lips the while
For naught but faith in Jesus pray,
And patience in this trying day.

His mother o'er his pillow bends,
To watch his spirit part,
And much support his converse lends
To her lone widowed heart :
For she, too, shares the inward joy
And peace, which cheer the dying boy.

"Dear mother," says he, "cease to weep,
Of hope my soul is full ;
But O ! my little brothers keep
At that blest Sabbath school,
To which I, under Jesus, owe
What I of grace and mercy know.

And when, by father's lonely bed,
You place me in the ground ;
And his green turf, with daisies spread,
Has also wrapt me round ;
Rejoice to think, to you 'tis given,
To have a ransomed child in heaven !"

O Lord ! how oft do sucklings' lips
Thy matchless praise declare !
How oft in faith do babes eclipse
The man of hoary hair !
But such is Thine unerring will,
In grace and nature sovereign still !

THE MOTHER AND HER DYING BOY.

BOY.

My mother, my mother, O let me depart !
Your tears and your pleadings are swords to my heart.
I hear gentle voices, that chide my delay ;
I see lovely visions that woo me away.
My prison is broken, my trials are o'er !
O mother, my mother, detain me no more !

MOTHER.

And will you then leave us, my brightest, my best ?
And will you run nestling no more to my breast ?
The summer is coming to sky and to bower ;
The tree that you planted will soon be in flower ;
You loved the soft season of song and of bloom ;
O, shall it return, and find you in the tomb ?

BOY.

Yes, mother, I loved in the sunshine to play,
And talk with the birds and blossoms all day ;
But sweeter the songs of the spirits on high,
And brighter the glories round God in the sky :
I see them ! I hear them ! they pull at my heart !
My mother, my mother, O let me depart !

MOTHER.

O do not desert us ! Our hearts will be drear,
Our home will be lonely, when you are not here.
Your brother will sigh 'mid his playthings, and say,
I wonder dear William so long can delay :
That foot like the wild wind, that glance like a star,
O what will this world be, when they are afar ?

BOY.

This world, dearest mother ! O live not for this ;
No, press on with me to the fulness of bliss !

And, trust me, whatever bright fields I may roam,
My heart will not wander from you and from home.
Believe me still near you on pinions of love ;
Expect me to hail you when soaring above.

MOTHER.

Well, go, my beloved ! The conflict is o'er ;
My pleas are all selfish ; I urge them no more.
Why chain your bright spirit down here to the clod,
So thirsting for freedom, so ripe for its God ?
Farewell, then ! farewell, till we meet at the Throne,
Where love fears no partings, and tears are unknown !

BOY.

O glory ! O glory ! what music ! what light !
What wonders break in on my heart, on my sight !
I come, blessed spirits ! I hear you from high ;
O frail, faithless nature, can this be to die ?
So near ! what, so near to my Saviour and King ?
O help me, ye angels, His glories to sing !

ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

J. CUNNINGHAM.

YES, thou art fled, and saints a welcome sing ;
Thine infant spirit soars on angel wing ;
Our dark affection might have hoped thy stay,—
The voice of God has call'd the child away.
Like Samuel early in the temple found—
Sweet rose of Sharon, plant of holy ground,
O ! more than Samuel blessed, to thee is given,
The God he served on earth to serve in heaven.

THE following beautiful lines will touch a chord in many a maternal heart, wounded by the hand of death, and sorrowing for those whom God has perhaps in mercy taken from the conflicts of life.

HOURS OF A BEREAVED MOTHER.

BY MRS. H. M. DODGE.

AND I am left ! There is a strange delight
In counting o'er one's bitterness, to cull
A flower of comfort from it. I am left
To hear the gathering storms of life, my child,
Still tempest-tost upon its dangerous seas,
While thou art safely moored. Thy little barque
Is anchored in the haven where the winds
Of sorrow never blow. Thy star has risen
In climes of peace and love, to set no more
For ever and for ever. All thy life
Was like a rose-bud—like the gentle breath
Of purest fragrance, wafted on the wing
Of early Zephyr—like the opening ray
Of morning's softest blush. Thy little heart
Had never tasted wo. Thy infant breast
Was heaven's own dwelling place—it never knew
The touch of aught save innocence and love.

* * * * * Blessed child !

Thy lot on earth was bright, and now thou art
With holy angels. I will cease to mourn !
Oh ! had I loved thee less, my foolish heart
Had sighed to keep thee in this changing world—
Had fastened thee to life, 'till thou hadst drained
Its very dregs of wo ! Never ! O, never
Could I have knelt and kissed the chast'ning rod
With such unfeigned submission. Never ! never
Could I have looked so calmly on the smile
Thy parting spirit left, had my fond soul
Less dotingly hung o'er thee in thy life—
Less proudly treasured up thy darling name
In the deep recess of my heart. But now
Our very lives were one. There could not be
A deeper, purer tenderness, than heaved

This trembling breast for thee. How could I then
 Ask aught for thee but happiness? In life,
 When thou wast closely folded in these arms,
 And I did feel thy warm breath on my cheek,
 Thy smiling eyes fixed tenderly on mine,
 My prayers were full of pleadings, agonies
 Almost of earnestness, that heaven would bless
 Thy opening day with joy and every good
 That might be deemed most proper. Oh, are not
 These prayers most fully answered? Could my soul
 In all its deepest gush of tenderness,
 Have asked a holier boon—a blessedness
 More durable, more infinite and pure,
 More like the nature of a God to give,
 Than heaven's own self, with all its blessed ones,
 Its high society, its holy love,
 Its rapturous songs of gratitude and praise,
 Its pure celestial streams, and fruits, and flowers,
 And glorious light reflected from the face
 Of God's eternal Son? Could I have claimed
 A HIGHER boon, my precious babe, for thee?
 And then, again, to be exempt from wo
 And human suffering, for ever free
 From all the toils, and pains, and nameless cares
 That gather with our years—and oh! perchance,
At last a hopeless death! Oh! I could weep
 With very GRATITUDE that thou art SAVED—
 Thy soul FOR EVER SAVED. What though my heart
 Should bleed at every pore—still THOU art BLESSED.
 There is an hour, my precious innocent,
 When we shall meet AGAIN! Oh! may we meet
 To separate NO MORE. Yes! I can smile,
 And sing with GRATITUDE, and weep with JOY,
 Even while my heart is BREAKING!

THE LOST ONE.

MARY HOWITT.

WE meet around the hearth—thou art not there,
 Over our household joys hath passed a gloom:
 Beside the fire we see thy empty chair,
 And miss thy sweet voice in the silent room.—

What hopeless longings after thee arise !
Even for the touch of thy small hand I pine,
And for the sound of thy dear little feet—
Alas ! tears dim my eyes,
Meeting in every place some joy of thine,
Or when fair children pass me in the street.

Beauty was on thy cheek—and thou didst seem
A privileged being—chartered from decay ;
And thy free spirit, like a mountain stream
That hath no ebb, kept on its cheerful way :
Thy laugh was like the inspiring breath of spring,
That thrills the heart, and cannot be unfelt ;
The sun, the moon, the green leaves, and the flowers,
And every living thing,
Were a strong joy to thee—thy spirit dwelt
Gladly in life, rejoicing in its powers.

Oh ! what had Death to do with one like thee ?
Thou young and loving one, whose soul did cling,
Even as the ivy clings unto the tree,
To those who loved thee—thou whose tears would spring,
Dreading a short day's absence, didst thou go
Alone into the future world unseen,
Solving each awful, untried mystery,
The unknown to know,
To be where mortal traveller hath not been—
Whence welcome tidings cannot come from thee ?

My happy boy !—and murmur I, that death
Over thy young and buoyant frame had power ?
In yon bright land, love never perisheth,
Hope may not mock, nor grief the heart devour :
The beautiful are round thee—thou dost keep
Within the Eternal Presence, and no more
Mayst death, or pain, or separation dread :
'Thy bright eyes cannot weep,
Nor they with whom thou art thy loss deplore,
For ye are of the living—not the dead.

Thou dweller with the Unseen, who hast explored
The immense unknown—thou to whom Death and Heaven

Are mysteries no more, whose soul is stored

With knowledge for which men have vainly striven,
Beloved child ! oh when shall I lie down

With thee beneath fair trees that cannot fade ?

When from the immortal rivers quench my thirst ?

Life's morning passeth on,

Noon speeds, and cometh the dim evening's shade
And night :—anon is every cloud dispersed,

And o'er the hills of Heaven the Eternal Day shall burst !

A FATHER'S LAMENT.

WILLIAM HOWITT.

“Thou takest not away, O death !

Thou strik'st—and absence perisheth ;

Indifference is no more :

The future brightens on our sight,

For on the past is fallen a light

That tempts us to adore.”

WORDSWORTH.

Two creatures of a pleasant life were mine ;

My house they filled with a perpetual joy ;

Twin lamps that chased all darkness did they shine—

My fairy girl and merry-hearted boy.

I never dreamed Death would their mirth destroy,

For they were dwelling 'mid life's freshest springs,

And I was busied with a fond employ,

Ranging the future on Hope's fearless wings,

And gathering for them thence how many pleasant things !

In truth, I was a proud and joyful man,

As from the floor unto the very roof

Their murmured bursts of joy and laughter ran,

And jocund shouts which needed no reproof—

All weariness, all gloom was kept aloof,

By their quaint shows and fancies ever new,

Now bending age with staff in its behoof,

Now Island Crusoe and “Man Friday” true,

Now shipmates far at sea with all their jovial crew.

But a dark dream has swept across my brain,

A wild, a dismal dream that will not break—

A rush of fear—an agony of pain—
Pangs and suspense that inly made me quake.—
My boy! my boy! I saw thy sweet eyes take
A strange unearthly lustre, and then fade;
And oh! I deemed my heart must surely break,
As, stooping, I thy pleasant locks surveyed,
And felt that thou must die, and they in dust be laid.

Oh! precious in thy life of happiness!
Daily and hourly valued more and more,
Yet, to the few brief days of thy distress,
How faint all love my spirit knew before!
I turn and turn, and ponder o'er and o'er,
Insatiate, all that sad and dreamy time
Thy words thrill through me—in my fond heart's core
I heard thy sighs, and tears shed for no crime,
And thy most patient love sent from a happier clime.

How dim and dismal is my home!—a sense
Of thee spreads through it like a haunting ill;
For thou—for ever, thou hast vanished thence!
This—this pursues me, pass where'er I will,
And all the traces thou hast left but fill
The hollow of thine absence with more pain;
I toil to keep thy living image still,
But fancy feebly doth her part maintain;
I see, yet see thee not, my child! as I would fain.

In dreams for ever thy dear form I grasp,
In noonday reveries do I rove—then start—
And certainty, as with an iron clasp,
Shuts down once more to misery my heart;
The world from thee as a shorn flower doth part,
Ending its care and knowledge with "Farewell!"
But in my soul a shrined life thou art,
Ordained with memory and strong hope to dwell,
And with all pure desires to sanctify thy cell.

Spring like a spirit is upon the earth—
Forth gush the flowers and fresh leaves of the tree,
And I had planned, with wonder and with mirth—
The bird, the nest, the blossom, and the bee
To fill thy boyish bosom—till its glee
O'erflowed my own with transport! In far years

I felt thy hand in mine, by stream and lea,
 Wandering in gladness—But these blinding tears,
 Why will they thus gush forth, though richer hope appears?

Far other land thy happy feet have trod,
 Far other scenes thy tender soul has known—
 The golden city of the eternal God,
 The rainbow-splendours of the eternal throne.
 Through the pearl gate how lightly hast thou flown!
 The streets of lucid gold—the chrysolite
 Foundations have received thee—dearest one!
 That thought alone can break affliction's might,
 Feeling that thou art blest, my heart again is light.

Thanks to the framer of life's mystery!
 Thanks to the illuminator of the grave!
 Vainly on time's obscure and tossing sea
 Hope did I seek, and comfort did I crave;
 But He who made, neglecteth not to save—
 My child!—thou hast allied me to the blest:
 I cannot fear what thou didst meekly brave;
 I cannot cease to long with thee to rest;
 And heaven is doubly heaven with thee, with thee possessed.

THE MOURNER'S RETURN.

BY SIR P. HESKETH FLEETWOOD, BART., M. P.

THESE lines, written after accompanying the remains of a loved and last child from London to the family resting place in Lancashire, were merely intended for private perusal among those interested in the beautiful, too highly gifted deceased.—*Lancaster Eng. Herald*.

“Who knoweth not, in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.”—*Job*, ch. xii.

HOME of my happier days! we meet once more,
 Yet meet we not as we have met before:—
 Alone and desolate thy hall I tread,
 Widowed and childless! mourning o'er the dead.
 Yet murmuring not that all have passed away,
 I know 'twas right, and though I feel—obey.

There was a time recalled by clinging thought,
 When children clustered round the hearth I sought,—
 When love e'er welcomed me—when I could turn
 To clasp my treasures—not embrace an urn.

Bright spirits! from your angel realm above,
 If ye have watched a father's tears and love,—
 Behold him seated near the silent dead,
 Tears of too late repentance vainly shed,
 Mourning in bitterness of spirit, o'er
 Lost joys he prized not half enough before.

All memory darkened—hope o'ercast a gloom,—
 The past, the present, and the time to come,
 All, all alike—save that, through Faith, mine eye
 Assays to pierce into Eternity!
 Then glorious all appear; no sin, no death,
 No sinking spirit, and no failing breath,
 No fell disease to blight each bud of joy;
 Hope without sorrow—peace without alloy!

Father of Mercies! may redemption bring
 To my crushed soul "a healing on its wing:"
 Shed o'er me, Lord, if so thy will design,
 (For thou alone hast power) thy peace divine;
 Blot out my sins, bend low my stubborn will,
 And—as thou hast been—be my Father still!

Lead me to Heaven—to those thou led'st before,
 And, through my Saviour, open mercy's door;
 That I may feel, whate'er my sorrows be,
"I go to them—though they come not to me."

ROSSALL HALL.

A DIRGE.

From Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.

WEEP not for her!—Oh she was far too fair,
 Too pure to dwell on this guilt-tainted earth!
 The sinless glory, and the golden air
 Of Zion, seemed to claim her from her birth!
 A spirit wandering from its native zone,
 Which, soon discov'ring, took her for its own:
 Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—Her span was like the sky,
Whose thousand stars shine beautiful and bright;
Like flowers that know not what it is to die;
Like long-link'd shadeless months of Polar light;
Like music floating o'er a waveless lake,
While Echo answers from the flowery brake:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—She died in early youth,
Ere hope had lost its rich romantic hues;
When human bosoms seem'd the homes of truth,
And earth still gleam'd with beauty's radiant dews,
Her summer-prime waned not to days that freeze;
Her wine of life was run not to the lees:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—By fleet or slow decay,
It never griev'd her bosom's core to mark
The playmates of her childhood wane away;
Her prospects wither; or her hopes grow dark;
Translated by her God, with spirits shriven,
She passed as 'twere in smiles from earth to Heaven.
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—It was not hers to feel
The miseries that corrode amassing years,
'Gainst dreams of baffled bliss the heart to steel,
To wander sad down Age's vale of tears,
As whirl the wither'd leaves from Friendship's tree,
And on earth's wintry world alone to be:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—She is an angel now,
And treads the sapphire floors of Paradise,
All darkness wiped from her refulgent brow,
Sin, sorrow, suffering, banished from her eyes;
Victorious over death, to her appear
The vista'd joys of Heaven's eternal year:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—Her memory is the shrine
Of pleasing thoughts, soft as the scent of flowers,
Calm as on windless eve the sun's decline,
Sweet as the song of birds among the bowers;

Rich as a rainbow with its hues of light,
 Pure as the moonshine of an autumn night:
 Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—There is no cause for wo;
 But rather nerve the spirit, that it walk
 Unshrinking o'er the thorny paths below,
 And from earth's low defilements keep thee back:
 So, when a few fleet severing years have flown,
 She'll meet thee at Heaven's gate—and lead thee on!
 Weep not for her!

LITTLE LEONARD'S LAST "GOOD-NIGHT."

"GOOD-NIGHT! good-night! I go to sleep,"
 Murmured the little child;—
 And, oh, the ray of heaven that broke
 On the sweet lips that faintly spoke
 That soft "Good-night!" and smiled.*

That angel-smile! that loving look
 From the dim closing eyes!
 The peace of that pure brow! but there—
 Aye—on that brow, so young, so fair!
 An awful shadow lies.

The gloom of evening—of the boughs
 That o'er yon window wave—
 Nay, nay, within these silent walls,
 A deeper, darker shadow falls,
 The twilight of the grave.

The twilight of the grave—for still
 Fast comes the fluttering breath—
 One fading smile, one look of love,
 A murmur, as from brooding dove—
 "Good-night!"—And this is death!

Oh, who hath called thee "terrible!"
 Mild angel! most benign!
 Could mother's fondest lullaby
 Have laid to rest more blissfully
 That sleeping babe, than thine!

Yet *this is death*—the doom for all
 Of Adam's race decreed—
 "But this poor lamb—this little one!
 What had the guiltless creature done?"
 Unhappy heart! take heed;

Though He is merciful as just
 Who hears that fond appeal—
 He will not break the bruised reed,
 He will not search the wounds that bleed—
 He only wounds to heal.

"Let little children come to me,"
 He cried, and to his breast
 Folded them tenderly—to-day
 He calls thine unshorn lamb away
 To that securest rest!

BLACKWOOD.

THE INFANT'S MINIATURE.

YES! thou art here, my sainted babe!
 Thy lustrous eyes of blue—
 The long dark fringe which o'er them sleep,
 As silken curtains drew—
 The full red lip, the dimpled cheek,
 The polished, lofty brow—
 The matchless smile that lighted all—
 They're here before me now.

Yet years, long years, have passed away,
 Since I, a mother blest,
 And thou, a babe too fair for earth,
 Didst nestle to this breast.
 Thy rosy dreams were not more sweet
 Than were the moments then;
 But all their joys are numbered now
 With pleasures that *have been*.

The most that I retain of thee
 Is one small sunny curl;
 A treasure I would not exchange
 For ocean's rarest pearl;

Though this bright picture, true to life,
Recalls thy infant charms
So vividly, I seem again
To clasp thee in my arms.

'Tis beautiful to look upon—
But only doth portray
The casket, which a jewel held
That God hath borne away;
For shining in His dazzling crown,
Is many an infant gem,
And he required this precious one
To deck that diadem.

And O! to paint a cherub soul,
In vain the artist tries!
For *this*, his pencil must be dipped
In azure of the skies;
Borrow the rainbow's hue, and make
The glittering stars its own;
For angel beauty never yet
In earthly colours shone.

So let me think of thee, my babe!
As when thou wert of earth;
And, like this picture, radiant with
The smiles of infant mirth,
Forget the dismal hour when God
Recalled what he had given,
And hope to see thee as thou art,
And claim thee still in heaven!

THE LOVED AND LOST.

TIME hath not power to bear away
Thine image from the heart,
No scenes that mark life's onward way
Can bid it hence depart.
Yet, while our souls with anguish riven,
Mourn, loved and lost, for thee,
We raise our tearful eyes to heaven,
And joy that thou art free.

We miss thee from the band so dear,
 That gathers round our hearth,
 We listen still thy voice to hear
 Amid our household mirth—
 We gaze upon thy vacant chair,
 Thy form we seem to see,
 We start to find thou art not there,
 Yet joy that thou art free.

A thousand old, familiar things,
 Within our childhood's home,
 Speak of the cherished, absent one,
 Who never more shall come.
 They wake with mingled bliss and pain
 Fond memories of thee.
 But would we call thee back again?
 We joy that thou art free!

Amid earth's conflict, wo and care,
 When dark our path appears,
 'Tis sweet to know, thou canst not share
 Our anguish and our tears—
 That on thy head no more shall fall
 The storms we may not flee—
 Yes, safely sheltered from them all,
 We joy that thou art free.

For thou hast gained a brighter land,
 And death's cold stream is past—
 Thine are the joys at God's right hand,
 That shall forever last:
 A crown is on thine angel brow,
 Thine eye the King doth see,
 Thy home is with the seraphs now—
 We joy that thou art free!

HYMN AT THE BURIAL OF AN EMIGRANT'S CHILD.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

WHERE the long reeds quiver,
 Where the pines make moan,
 By the forest river,
 Sleeps our babe alone.

England's field-flowers may not deck his grave,
Cyprus shadows o'er him darkly wave.

Woods unknown receive him,
'Midst the mighty wild;
Yet with God we leave him,
Blessed, blessed child!
And our tears gush o'er his lonely dust,
Mournfully, yet still from hearts of trust,

Though his eye hath brightened
Oft our weary way,
And his clear laugh lightened
Half our heart's dismay;
Still in hope we give back what was given,
Yielding up the beautiful to heaven.

And to her who bore him,
Her who long must weep,
Yet shall heaven restore him
From his pale sweet sleep!
Those blue eyes of love and peace again
Through her soul will shine, undimmed by pain.

Where the long reeds quiver,
Where the pines make moan,
Leave me by the river,
Earth to earth alone!
God and Father! may our journeyings on
Lead to where the blessed boy is gone.

From the exile's sorrow,
From the wanderer's dread
Of the night and morrow,
Early, brightly fled;
Thou hast called him to a sweeter home,
Than our lost one o'er the ocean's foam.

Now let thought behold him
With his angel look,
Where those arms enfold him,
Which benignly took
Israel's babes to their good Shepherd's breast
When his voice their tender meekness blest.

Turn thee now, fond mother !
From thy dead, oh, turn !
Linger not, young brother,
Here to dream and mourn :
Only kneel once more around the sod,
Kneel and bow submissive hearts to God !

TO A DEPARTED CHILD.

Thou art gone ! my precious one !
Gone to the spirit land !
Methinks I see thee there
Amid the angelic band ;
Removed from earth away,
Ere a tear had dimm'd thine eyes,
To live and sing and stray,
'Mid the flowers of Paradise.

But I would not call thee back
To sin, and grief, and pain,
To tread life's thorny path,
With her sorrowing sons again ;
For it is a cheerless way,
And a thousand ills are near,
And every joy its sadness hath,
And every smile its tear.

Thou art gone ! the laughing eye
Shall beam no more for me—
No more thy mother's heart shall wake
To that voice of childish glee.
And he who blest thee oft,
His future pride and joy,
No more shall twine thy sunny curls,
And bless his darling boy.

Yet that eye of love, again
On my longing sight shall beam,
And the little hand shall clasp my own,
In my soothing nightly dream.
And oft that thrilling tone
Will haunt my soul at even,

When I sit and weep alone,
Like a spirit's voice from heaven.

Farewell! my gentle boy!
Soft be thy cradle bed!
And soft the winds that sigh
At eve, around thy head!
Sweet be the early flowers
That spring upon thy breast,
And kind, and true, the angel-bands,
That guard thy lonely rest.

THE ANGEL AND THE CHILD.

AN angel form with brow of light,
Watch'd o'er a sleeping infant's dream,
And gazed, as though his image bright
He there beheld as in a stream.

"Fair child, whose face is like to mine,
Oh come," he said, "and fly with me;
Come forth to happiness divine,
For earth is all unworthy thee.

"Here perfect bliss thou canst not know;
The soul amidst its pleasures sighs,
All sounds of joy are full of woe,
Enjoyments are but miseries.

"Fear stalks amidst the gorgeous shows:
And tho' serene the day may rise,
It lasts not brilliant to its close,
And tempests sleep in calmest skies.

"Alas! shall sorrow, doubts and fears
Deform a brow so pure as this!—
And shall the bitterness of tears
Dim those blue eyes that speak of bliss!

"No, no! along the realms of space,
Far from all care, let us begone:
Kind Providence shall give thee grace,
For those few years thou might'st live on.

"No mourning weeds, no sounds of wail
 Thy chainless spirit shall annoy;
 Thy kindred shall thy absence hail,
 Even as thy coming gave them joy.

"No cloud on any brow shall rest,
 Nought speak of tombs or sadness there;
 Of beings, like thee, pure and blest,
 The latest hour should be most fair."

The angel shook his snowy wings
 And thro' the fields of ether sped,
 Where heaven's eternal music rings—
 ——— Mother—alas!—thy boy is dead!

THE CHILD'S FIRST GRIEF.

MRS. HEMANS.

"OH! call my brother back to me,
 I cannot play alone,
 The summer comes with flower and bee,—
 Where is my brother gone?"

"The butterfly is glancing bright
 Across the sunbeam's track;
 I care not now to chase its flight—
 Oh! call my brother back!"

"The flowers run wild—the flowers we sowed
 Around our garden-tree;
 Our vine is drooping with its load—
 Oh! call him back to me!"

"He would not hear thy voice, fair child!
 He may not come to thee;
 The face that once like spring-time smiled,
 On earth no more thou'lt see.

"A rose's brief, bright light of joy,
 Such unto him was given;
 Go! thou must play alone, my boy!
 Thy brother is in heaven."

“ And has he left his birds and flowers ?
And must I call in vain ?
And through the long, long summer hours,
Will he not come again ?

“ And by the brook, and in the glade,
Are all our wanderings o’er ?—
Oh ! while my brother with me played,
Would I had loved him more !”

GONE—BUT NOT LOST.

BY MRS. ELLEN STONE.

SWEET bud of Earth’s wilderness, rifled and torn !
Fond eyes have wept o’er thee, fond hearts still will mourn ;
The spoiler hath come, with his cold withering breath,
And the loved and the cherished lies silent in death.

He felt not the burden and heat of the day !
He hath pass’d from this earth, and its sorrows, away,
With the dew of the morning yet fresh on his brow :—
Sweet bud of Earth’s wilderness, where art thou now ?

And oh ! do ye question, with tremulous breath,
Why the joy of your household lies silent in death ?
Do ye mourn round the place of his perishing dust ?
Look onward and upward, with holier trust !

Who cometh to meet him, with light on her brow ?
What angel form greets him so tenderly now ?
’Tis the pure sainted mother, springs onward to bear
The child of her love from this region of care !

She beareth him on to that realm of repose,
Where no cloud ever gathers, no storm ever blows :
For the Saviour calls home to the mansions above,
This frail trembling floweret in mercy and love.

There shall he for ever, unchanged by decay,
Beside the still waters and green pastures stray ;
And there shall ye join him, with earth’s ransom’d host—
Look onward and upward ! “ he’s gone—but not lost !”

OH! SAY NOT 'TWERE A KEENER BLOW.

T. H. BAYLY.

OH! say not 'twere a keener blow
 To lose a child of riper years,
 You cannot feel a mother's woe,
 You cannot dry a mother's tears :
 The girl who rears a sickly plant,
 Or cherishes a wounded dove,
 Will love them most while most they want
 The watchfulness of love!

Time *must* have changed that fair young brow !
 Time *might* have changed that spotless heart !
 Years *might* have taught deceit—but now
 In love's confiding dawn we part !
 Ere pain or grief had wrought decay,
 My babe is cradled in the tomb :
 Like some fair blossom torn away
 Before its perfect bloom.

With thoughts of peril and of storm,
 We see a bark first touch the wave ;
 But distant seems the whirlwind's form,
 As distant—as an infant's grave !
 Though all is calm, that beauteous ship
 Must brave the whirlwind's rudest breath ;
 Though all is calm, that infant's lip
 Must meet the kiss of death !

LINES ON THE DEATH OF AN ONLY DAUGHTER.

BY MRS. A. L. ANGIER.

"I CANNOT feel that she is dead!" With arms about me flung,
 Like some bright jewel round my neck, but yesterday she
 hung.

I cannot feel that she is dead! And oft with throbbing ear
 I list to catch her shout of mirth I loved so well to hear.

I cannot feel that she is dead! And at her cradle side
 I bend, to watch her gentle breath—my blessing and my
 pride!

I cannot feel that she is dead ! 'This ringlet is as fair
As when upon her sunny brow it fell in beauty there.

I cannot feel that she is dead ! Her shadow passes by,
In every form of grace that glides before my wakeful eye.
And when I sleep, a vision bright across my fancy steals :
The smile, the tone, the look of love, my early loss reveals.

Once more her fairy foot I hear tread lightly on the stair,
And I almost *answer to the call*, breathed from those lips of
air.

The rose still blooms, she fondly nursed in spring's soft, ver-
nal hours ;

Alas ! that *she* should soonest fade, the fairest of the flowers.

Yet, Mother, though thy child be dead, light through thy
darkness streams,

As on the ear a low voice falls, like music in our dreams.

To soothe thy sadness, quell thy grief, and check thy tears
'tis given,

While thus it whispers—" I have found a *better home* in
heaven.

" And, loved ones, as ye watched o'er me, and chased away
my fears,

'Tis mine your spirit-guard to be through this dark vale of
tears.

To shield from sorrow, save from ill, and fix your hopes
above—

'Tis this shall be my task of joy, my ceaseless work of love ;

Till in the realm of cloudless light, the pure, blest spirit-
land,

Where no sad thought of parting comes, you join our
seraph band."

FROM THE PERSIAN.

SIR W. JONES.

On parent knees, a naked, new-born child,
Weeping thou sat'st, while all around thee smiled :
So live, that, sinking in thy last long sleep,
Calm thou may'st smile, when all around thee weep.

THE MOTHER'S SACRIFICE.

"God loveth a cheerful giver."

MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"WHAT shall I render Thee, Father Supreme,
For thy rich gifts, and this the best of all?"
Said the young mother, as she fondly watched
Her sleeping babe. There was an answering voice
That night in dreams:—

"Thou hast a tender flower
Upon thy breast—fed with the dews of love:
Send me that flower. Such flowers there are in heaven."
But there was silence. Yea, a hush so deep,
Breathless and terror-stricken, that the lip
Blanched in its trance.

"Thou hast a little harp,—
How sweetly would it swell the angel's hymn!
Yield me that harp."

There rose a shuddering sob,
As if the bosom by some hidden sword
Was cleft in twain.

Morn came—a blight had found
The crimson velvet of the unfolding bud,
The harp-strings rang a thrilling strain, and broke—
And that young mother lay upon the earth
In childless agony. Again the voice
That stirred her vision:

"He who asked of thee,
Loveth a cheerful giver." So she raised
Her gushing eyes, and, ere the tear-drop dried
Upon its fringes, smiled—and that meek smile,
Like Abraham's faith, was counted righteousness.

DEATH OF AN INFANT SON.

From the Scottish Christian Herald.

FAREWELL, my boy, my much lov'd boy!
Tears oft shall flow for thee;
And while this broken heart shall beat
Thou'lt ne'er forgotten be.

No laughing welcome greets me now,
As I approach the door ;
Thy footsteps light are heard no more
Upon the parlour floor.

Thy merry voice, resounding full
Of mirthful song and glee,
Is silent now,—no more thou'lt smile
Upon thy father's knee.

Thy little chair is empty now
At our once gladsome hearth ;
And all is sad and gloomy now,
Where all was joy and mirth.

But oh ! he only sleeps ; look there,—
How beautiful my boy !
His lips are red,—he slumbers, love,—
It is indeed my boy.

Come near,—his golden ringlets bind,
And softly, sweetly sing,
As thou wert wont to do, my love ;
O strike the sweetest string.

And he will smile to thee, his mother,
When he awakes again,
And clasp thee in his little arms,
And make thee glad again.

And yet he sleepeth long, love,—
Fear cometh on me now :
Ah ! feel that cheek,—'tis cold, 'tis cold,—
And colder still that brow !

“ Thou said'st he slept,—O why deceive ? ”
Yes ! he but sleepeth still,
But 'tis the sleep of death, my love,—
It is our Father's will.

Oh ! come with me, then, to His throne,
And rev'rently adore,
And kiss the Almighty hand that
Afflicteth us so sore.

And, oh ! He'll bless and comfort us,
 He'll not forsake us now,
 When waters deep encompass us,
 And Death hath bent his bow.

And tho' by Babel's streams we weep,
 And think how glad we've been ;
 Altho' our harps in silence hang
 Upon the willows green ;

O still our God will gracious be :
 Forsake us will He never,
 Till we in Zion dwell with
 Our little one—for ever.

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT NEPHEW.

REV. C. NEALE.

WHILST there was hope I wept and prayed ;
 For weeping, praying, still I said,
 Who knows if He above may spare
 The child of bitter tears and prayer ?

The child is dead. How short an hour
 Hath dimmed the radiance of that flower !
 In vain I wept, in vain I prayed ;
 The child, the dearly loved, is dead.

In vain thy weeping, praying ?—no ;
 It is thy Father ; say not so :
 That prayer, that silent agony,
 If not for him was heard for thee.

Is there not virtue in this hour ?
 Affliction hath a holy power :
 'Tis then that faith best shows its worth,
 As the bruised leaf breathes fragrance forth.

Once more the child of so much love,
 Hath joined thy family above ;
 And rising, vanishing from view,
 Calls thy affection upward too.

LINES TO THE MEMORY OF A BELOVED CHILD.

From the Banner of Ulster.

H. BROWN.

SWEET floweret, on the wastes of time
 Thy blossoms were unfolding fair—
 Now gathered to a brighter clime,
 To bloom in lasting beauty there.

Dear little one, thine hour was brief—
 Young traveller in the vale of woe,
 Thy lips but kissed the cup of grief,
 And bade farewell to all below.

The Summer beauty decks the grave
 Where sleeps the all that earth could claim
 And love, fond love, alone could save,
 And brood above thy cherish'd name.

A father's heart may lonely weep,
 When gazing on thy lowly tomb;
 Yet turns from where thine ashes sleep,
 And heaven's own light dispels the gloom.

But oh! a mother's spirit hung
 O'er her last pledge of earthly love,
 And, while attending, angels sung,
 Welcom'd her dear one home above.

 LOW SHE LIES, WHO BLEST OUR EYES.

MRS. NORTON.

Low she lies, who blest our eyes
 Through many a sunny day;
 She may not smile, she will not rise,—
 The life hath past away!
 Yet there is a world of light beyond,
 Where we neither die nor sleep;
 She is there of whom our souls were fond,—
 Then wherefore do we weep?

The heart is cold, whose thoughts were told
In each glance of her glad bright eye;
And she lies pale, who was so bright
She scarce seem'd made to die.
Yet we know that her soul is happy now,
Where the saints their calm watch keep;
That angels are crowning that fair young brow,—
Then wherefore do we weep?

Her laughing voice made all rejoice,
Who caught the happy sound;
There was a gladness in her very step,
As it lightly touched the ground.
The echoes of voice and step are gone,
There is silence still and deep;
Yet we know she sings by God's bright throne,—
Then wherefore do we weep?

The cheek's pale tinge, the lid's dark fringe,
That lies like a shadow there,
Were beautiful in the eyes of all,—
And her glossy golden hair!
But though that lid may never wake
From its dark and dreamless sleep;
She is gone where young hearts do not break,—
Then wherefore do we weep?

That world of light with joy is bright,
This is a world of woe:
Shall we grieve that her soul hath taken flight,
Because we dwell below?
We will bury her under the mossy sod,
And one long bright tress we'll keep;
We have only given her back to God,—
Ah! wherefore do we weep?

THE THREE LITTLE GRAVES.

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

I SOUGHT at twilight's pensive hour
The path which mourners tread,

Where many a marble stone reveals .
The City of the dead ;—
The City of the Dead, where all
From feverish toil repose,
While round their beds, the simple flower,
In sweet profusion blows.

And there I marked a pleasant spot
Enclosed with tender care,
Where side by side three infants lay,
The only tenants there,—
Nor weed, nor bramble rais'd its head
To mar the hallowed scene,
And 'twas a mother's tears, methought,
Which kept that turf so green.

The eldest was a gentle girl,
She sunk as rose-buds fall,
And then too little brothers came,
They were their parents' all,—
Their parents' all!—and ah, how oft
The moan of sickness rose,
Before, within these narrow mounds,
They found a long repose.

Their cradle sports beside the hearth,
At winter's eve, are o'er ;
Their tuneful tones, so full of mirth,
Delight the ear no more :—
Yet still the thrilling echo lives,
And many a lisping word
Is treasur'd in affection's heart,
By grieving memory stirr'd.

Three little graves !—Three little graves !
Come hither ye who see
Your blooming babes around you smile,
A blissful company,—
And of those childless parents think
With sympathizing pain,
And soothe them with a Saviour's words,
“ Your dead shall rise again.”

THEY ARE NOT THERE!

THEY are not there! where once their feet
 Light answer to the music beat;
 Where their young voices sweetly breathed,
 And fragrant flowers they lightly wreathed.
 Still flows the nightingale's sweet song;
 Still trail the vine's green shoots along;
 Still are the sunny blossoms fair;—
 But they who loved them are not there!

They are not there! by the lone fount,
 That once they loved at eve to haunt;
 Where, when the day-star brightly set,
 Beside the silver waves, they met.
 Still lightly glides the quiet stream;
 Still o'er it falls the soft moon-beam;—
 But they who used their bliss to share
 With loved hearts by it, are not there!

They are not there! by the dear hearth,
 That once beheld their harmless mirth;
 Where, through their joy came no vain fear,
 And o'er their smiles no darkening tear,
 It burns not now a beacon star;
 'Tis cold and fireless, as they are:
 Where is the glow it used to wear?
 'Tis felt no more—they are not there!

Where are they, then? oh! passed away,
 Like blossoms withered in a day!
 Or, as the waves go swiftly by,
 Or, as the lightnings cleave the sky.
 But still there is a land of rest:
 Still hath it room for many a guest;
 Still is it free from strife and care;—
 And 'tis our hope that they are there!

AN INDIAN MOTHER'S LOVE.

OS-HE-OAU-MAI, the wife of Little Wolf, one of the
 Iowa Indians, died while in Paris, of an affection of

the lungs, brought on by grief for the death of her young child in London. Her husband was unremitting in his endeavours to console, and restore her to the love of life, but she constantly replied—"No! no! my four children recall me. I see them by the side of the Great Spirit. They stretch out their arms to me, and are astonished that I do not join them."

No! no! I must depart
From earth's pleasant scenes, for they but wake
Those thrilling memories of the lost which shake
The life sands from my heart.

Why do ye bid me stay?
Should the rose linger when the young buds die,
Or the tree flourish when the branches lie,
Stricken by sad decay?

Doth not the parent dove,
When her young nurslings leave their lowly home
And soar on joyous wings to heaven's blue dome,
Fly the deserted grove?

Why then should I remain?
Have I not seen my sweet-voiced warblers soar,
So far away that Love's fond wiles no more
May lure them back again?

They cannot come to me;
But I may go to them—and as the flower
Awaits the dewy eve, I wait the hour
That sets my spirit free.

Hark! heard ye not a sound
Sweeter than wild-bird's note or minstrel's lay?
I know that music well, for night and day
I hear it echoing round.

It is the tuneful chime
Of spirit voices!—'tis my infant band
Calling the mourner from this darkened land
To joy's unclouded clime.

My beautiful, my blest !
 I see them there, by the Great Spirit's throne ;
 With winning words and fond beseeching tone
 They woo me to my rest.

They chide my long delay,
 And wonder that I linger from their home ;
 They stretch their loving arms to bid me come—
 Now would ye have me stay ? E. S. S.

AN INFANT'S SPIRIT.

An infant's soul—the sweetest thing on earth,
 To which endowments beautiful are given,
 As might befit a more than mortal birth—
 What shall it be, when, 'midst its winning mirth,
 And love, and trustfulness, 'tis borne to heaven.
 Will it grow into might above the skies ?
 A spirit of high wisdom, glory, power—
 A cherub guard of the Eternal Tower,
 With knowledge filled of its vast mysteries ?
 Or will perpetual childhood be its dower ?
 To sport forever, a bright, joyous thing,
 Amid the wonders of the shining thrones,
 Yielding its praise in glad, but feeble tones,
 A tender love beneath the Almighty's wing.

ON SEEING AN INFANT PREPARED FOR THE GRAVE.

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

Go to thy sleep, my child,
 Go to thy dreamless bed,—
 Gentle and undefiled,
 With blessings on thy head :—
 Fresh roses in thy hand,
 Buds on thy pillow laid,
 Haste from this fearful land
 Where flowers so quickly fade.

Before thy heart had learn'd
 In waywardness to stray,

Before thy feet had turn'd
The dark and downward way ;
Ere Sin had sear'd thy breast,
Or Sorrow woke the tear,
Rise to thy home of rest
In yon celestial sphere.

Because thy smile was fair,
Thy lip and eye so bright ;
Because thy cradle-care
Was such a fond delight,
Shall Love with weak embrace
Thy outspread wing detain ?
No !—Angels,—seek thy place
Amid the cherub train.

THE EARLY DEAD.

“ I saw a drop whose trembling ray
Was bosomed by a flower—
A sunbeam bore the gem away,
But Fancy in its airy sway,
Pursued it to a brighter day—
Gilding a fairer bower.”—*H. K. White.*

I MARK'D, where late a blossom grew,
In all the pride of young delight,
Its petals bore the morning dew,
And quaff'd the nectar-springs of night.

The culturing touch of love had given
This moral flower a softened grace ;
And o'er it shone the light of heaven—
The glow of hope—the seal of truth—
Though desolation's hand had striven
To mar it, in its tender youth !
Since withering grass and fading flower
Are fitting types of man's brief hour !

The tempest pours its chilling blast—
The wild winds echo as they pass—
And when their wrath is borne away,
Uptorn from earth their victims lay ! !

Again, I mark'd the parent stem—
 Shorn was it of its treasured boast—
 The perish'd bud ne'er bloom'd again—
 And yet its fragrance was not lost—
 Translated to a higher sphere,
 It found perennial beauty there !

I saw a gem of promise fair—
 Enshrined within its casket rare.
 A hand of might unclasp'd this token—
 And lo ! the gem was crushed and broken !
 But still its glittering fragments lay
 Reflecting back a purer ray—
 Gem of the soul ! it soars above,
 To bask in the Redeemer's love ! !

THE EARLY CALLED.

THE light of the setting sun
 Fell on the heaving sea,
 And the shriek of the sea-bird hastening home
 Came faintly and mournfully ;
 And sadly the fitful wind did wail
 As the twilight waned away,
 And before the light was lost in night,
 A mortal had changed to clay.

The flush of a summer cloud
 Hung over the gorgeous west,
 As a mantle of glorious hue, to shroud
 The close of the day of rest.
 Or ever the stream of the sunset gleam
 Was lost in the gloom of even,
 Another harp to the Saviour's praise
 Was heard in the courts of heaven.

Cold grows her glorious brow
 With the chilling dew of death ;
 The sunny eye fades mournfully,
 The heavy lid beneath.
 Hushed the melodious lip ;
 Fainter the pulse—now gone !

And another mourner lives to tread
Life's pilgrimage alone.

With a solemn step and slow,
Come to the place of prayer!
The words of life, the song of death,
She never more may hear.
Room in the sepulchre!
Room underneath the sod!
The mould is pressed on the bounding breast,
The sainted one's with God!

The sun shall rise and set,
The stars shall flicker and fade,
And one by one, beneath the stone,
We shall to rest be laid.
What matters it whether we sink to sleep
Lull'd by the murmuring billow,
Or whether we die on land, and lie
With the clod for our only nillow?

From the earth and the mighty sea,
The dead shall thronging come,
When that wrathful day shall melt away
The fetters of the tomb.
Then to the loved and lost
Shall a crown of light be given,
And the cherished here shall triumph there:
Meet ye the dead in heaven!

MOTHER, WHAT IS DEATH?

CAROLINE GILMAN.

"MOTHER, how still the baby lies!
I cannot hear his breath;
I cannot see his laughing eyes—
They tell me this is death.

My little work I thought to bring,
And sat down by his bed,
And pleasantly I tried to sing—
They hushed me—he is dead.

They say that he again will rise,
More beautiful than now ;
That God will bless him in the skies—
O, mother, tell me how !”

“ Daughter, do you remember, dear,
The cold, dark thing you brought,
And laid upon the casement here,—
A withered worm, you thought ?

I told you that Almighty power
Could break that withered shell,
And show you, in a future hour,
Something would please you well.

Look at the chrysalis, my love,—
An empty shell it lies ;
Now raise your wondering glance above,
To where yon insect flies !”

“ O, yes, mamma ! how very gay
Its wings of starry gold !
And see ! it lightly flies away
Beyond my gentle hold.

O, mother, now I know full well,
If God that worm can change,
And draw it from this broken cell,
On golden wings to range,—

How beautiful will brother be,
When God shall give *him* wings,
Above this dying world to flee,
And live with heavenly things !”

A BUTTERFLY AT A CHILD'S GRAVE.

LYDIA H. SIGOURNEY.

A BUTTERFLY basked on an infant's grave,
Where a lily had chanced to grow ;
Why art thou here with thy gaudy dye,
Where she of the bright and the sparkling eye
Must sleep in the churchyard low ?

Then it lightly soared through the sunny air,
And spoke from its shining track :
I was a worm till I won my wings,
And she whom thou mourn'st, like a seraph sings—
Wouldst thou call the blest one back ?

THOUGHTS WHILE MAKING A GRAVE FOR A FIRST
CHILD, BORN DEAD.

N. P. WILLIS.

Room, gentle flowers! my child would pass to heaven !
Ye looked not for her yet with your soft eyes,
O, watchful ushers at Death's narrow door !
But lo! while you delay to let her forth,
Angels, beyond, stay for her! One long kiss
From lips all pale with agony, and tears,
Wrung after anguish had dried up with fire
The eyes that wept them, were the cup of life
Held as a welcome to her. Weep, O mother !
But not that from this cup of bitterness
A cherub of the sky has turned away.
One look upon her face ere she depart !
My daughter! it is soon to let thee go!
My daughter! with thy birth has gushed a spring
I knew not of; filling my heart with tears,
And turning with strange tenderness to thee !
A love—O, God, it seems so—which must flow
Far as thou fleest, and 'twixt Heaven and me,
Henceforward, be a sweet and yearning chain,
Drawing me after thee ! And so farewell !
'Tis a harsh world in which affection knows
No place to treasure up its loved and lost
But the lone grave ! Thou, who so late was sleeping
Warm in the close folds of a mother's heart,
Scarce from her breast a single pulse receiving,
But it was sent thee with some tender thought—
How can I leave thee *here* ! Alas, for man !
The herb in its humility may fall,
And waste into the bright and genial air,
While we, by hands that ministered in life
Nothing but love to us, are thrust away,

The earth thrown in upon our just cold bosoms,
And the warm sunshine trodden out forever!

Yet have I chosen for thy grave, my child,
A bank where I have lain in summer hours,
And thought how little it would seem like death
To sleep amid such loveliness. The brook
Tripping with laughter down the rocky steps
That lead us to thy bed, would still trip on,
Breaking the dread hush of the mourners gone;
The birds are never silent that build here,
Trying to sing down the more vocal waters;
The slope is beautiful with moss and flowers;
And, far below, seen under arching leaves,
Glitters the warm sun on the village spire,
Pointing the living after thee. And this
Seems like a comfort, and, replacing now
The flowers that have made room for thee, I go
To whisper the same peace to her who lies
Robbed of her child, and lonely. 'Tis the work
Of many a dark hour, and of many a prayer,
To bring the heart back from an infant gone!
Hope must give o'er, and busy fancy blot
Its images from all the silent rooms,
And every sight and sound familiar to her
Undo its sweetest link; and so, at last,
The fountain that, once loosed, must flow forever,
Will hide and waste in silence. When the smile
Steals to her pallid lip again, and spring
Wakens its buds above thee, we will come,
And, standing by thy music-haunted grave,
Look on each other cheerfully, and say,
*A child that we have loved is gone to heaven,
And by this gate of flowers she passed away!*

TO A DYING CHILD.

SWEET child, that wasted form,
That pale and mournful brow,
O'er which thy long, dark tresses
In shadowy beauty flow—
That eye, whence soul is darting
With such strange brilliancy,

Tell us thou art departing—
This world is not for thee.

No! not for thee is woven
That wreath of joy and woe,
That crown of thorns and flowers,
Which all must wear below!
We bend in anguish o'er thee,
Yet feel that thou art blessed,
Loved one, so early summoned
To enter into rest.

Soon shall thy bright young spirit
From earth's cold chains be free;
Soon shalt thou meet that Saviour,
Who gave himself for thee.
Soon shalt thou be rejoicing,
Unsullied as thou art,
In the blessed vision promised
Unto the pure in heart.

Yes, thou art going home,
Our Father's face to see,
In perfect bliss and glory;
But we, O, where are we?
While that celestial country
Thick clouds and darkness hide,
In a strange land of exile,
Still, still must we abide.

O Father of our spirits,
We can but look to thee;
Though chastened, not forsaken,
Shall we thy children be.
We take the cup of sorrow,
As did thy blessed Son—
Teach us to say with Jesus,
"Thy will, not ours, be done!"

A PSALM OF DEATH.

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS.

Henry W. Longfellow.

“ Dear, beauteous Death ! the jewel of the just
Shining no where but in the dark,
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could we outlook that mark ! ”

THERE is a Reaper whose name is Death,
And with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

“ Shall I have nought that is fair,” saith he :
“ Have nought but the bearded grain ?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again.”

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves ;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

“ My Lord hath need of the flowerets gay,”
The Reaper said, and smiled :
“ Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where he was once a child.”

“ They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care,
And saints upon their garments white
These sacred blossoms wear.”

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love ;
But she knew she would find them all again,
In the fields of light above.

O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day :
’Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

TO A DYING INFANT.

SLEEP, little baby ! sleep !
 Not in thy cradle bed,
 Not on thy mother's breast
 Henceforth shall be thy rest,
 But with the quiet dead.

Yes—with the quiet dead,
 Baby, thy rest shall be.
 Oh ! many a weary heart,
 Weary of life's dull part,
 Would fain lie down with thee.

Flee, little tender nursling !
 Flee to thy grassy nest ;
 There the first flowers shall blow,
 The first pure flakes of snow
 Shall fall upon thy breast.

ON A FAIR INFANT.

MILTON.

O FAIREST flower, no sooner shown than blasted,
 Soft, silken primrose, fading timelessly,
 Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst outlasted
 Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry ;
 For he, being amorous on that lovely dye
 That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
 But killed, alas ! and then bewailed his fatal bliss.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
 Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,
 Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
 Hid from the world in a low delved tomb
 Could Heaven, for pity, thee so strictly doom ?—
 Oh, no ! for something in thy face did shine
 Above mortality, that showed thou wast divine.

Ah ! wert thou of the golden-winged host,
 Who, having clad thyself in human weed,

To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
And after short abode fly back with speed,
As if to show what creatures heaven doth breed;
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire,
To scorn the sordid world, and unto heaven aspire.

But, oh ! why didst thou not stay here below ?
To bless us with thy heaven-loved innocence,
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black Perdition hence,
Or drive away the slaughtering Pestilence,
To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart ?
But thou canst best perform that office where thou art.

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false-imagined loss cease to lament,
And wisely think to curb thy sorrows wild ;
Think what a present thou to God has sent,
And render him with patience what he lent ;
This, if thou do, he will an offspring give,
That, till the world's last end, shall make thy name to live.

TO THE MEMORY OF MY CHILD.

BY MRS. S. H. O.

“ These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.”—*Rev.* xiv. 4.

REDEEM'D from earth, my gentle child,
Now thou art of that seraph band,
The pure in heart, the undefiled,
Who roam the bright immortal land.
By crystal streams, through flowery meads,
Still following where the Saviour leads.

There doth the tender bud expand,
We watch'd with many a sigh and tear,
Too fragile for this wintry land,
Too pure for earth's polluted sphere.
Twelve moons mark'd thy gentle bloom,
The thirteenth beam'd upon thy tomb.

Sweet one ! when fondly on my breast,
I hush'd thee to thy soft repose,
And watched the wing of slumber rest
On violet eye—and cheek of rose—
While gazing on thy trusting eye,
How could I deem that thou would'st die !

That thou would'st die ! and from our bower
Withdraw the sunshine thou hadst shed,
While grief should bid her purple flower,
Spring up where'er our footsteps tread ;
And hopes, and dreams, once green and high,
Like autumn leaves should lowly lie.

When on thy pale cold brow of snow
I press'd the last fond kiss of love,
Such love as only mothers know—
A stream, whose fountain is above,
I felt that life was drear, and wild,
Bereft of thee, my gentle child !

When kneeling by the sacred tomb,
That held the form so prized, so dear,
A voice dispell'd my bosom's gloom
And whisper'd soft, she is not here ;
Not here, not here, beyond the skies,
Her spirit lives in Paradise.

What rapture thrill'd through every vein,
As faith, with eagle-piercing eye,
Beheld her in that seraph train,
The infant army of the sky—
By crystal streams, by flowery meads,
Still following where the Saviour leads.

And now, though years have onward sped,
Through tears and smiles, through light and gloom,
Still memory o'er the lovely dead,
Bids flowers of fairest verdure bloom—
And wakes her harp all sweet, and low,
Whence soft, delicious numbers flow.

Soft breathing tones, but not of wo,
Though lonely is the mother's heart;
And time's swift flight is all too slow,
For lov'd and cherish'd friends apart:
Those gentle airs with hope are rife,
And whisper of eternal life.

FAITH AND SUBMISSION.

OH, Lord! the message from thy throne has come:
We hear thy voice, and give them back to thee.
With tears we lay our children in the tomb;
In faith, their spirits at thy feet we see.

There, at the Almighty Father's hand,
Nearest the throne of living light,
The choirs of infant seraphs stand,
And dazzling shine where all are bright.

THE MOURNING MOTHER.

O! who shall tell what fearful pangs
That mother's heart are rending,
As o'er her infant's little grave
Her wasted form is bending;
From many an eye that weeps to-day
Delight may beam to-morrow;
But she—her precious babe is not!
And what remains but sorrow?

Bereaved one! I may not chide
Thy tears and bitter sobbing,—
Weep on! 'twill cool that burning brow,
And still that bosom's throbbing:
Be not thine such grief as theirs
To whom no hope is given,—
Snatched from the world, its sins and snares,
Thy infant rests in heaven.

ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG GIRL.

WILLIAM H. BURLEIGH.

SHE hath gone in the spring-time of life,
Ere her sky had been dimmed by a cloud,
While her heart with the rapture of love was yet rife,
And the hopes of her youth were unbowed—
From the lovely, who loved her too well ;
From the heart that had grown to her own ;
From the sorrow which late o'er her young spirit fell
Like a dream of the night she hath flown ;
And the earth hath received to its bosom its trust—
Ashes to ashes, and dust unto dust.

The spring, in its loveliness dressed,
Will return with its music-winged hours,
And, kissed by the breath of the sweet southwest,
The buds shall burst out in flowers ;
And the flowers her grave-sod above,
Though the sleeper beneath recks it not,
Shall thickly be strown by the hand of Love,
To cover with beauty the spot—
Meet emblems are they of the pure one and bright,
Who faded and fell with so early a blight.

Ay, the spring will return—but the blossom
That bloomed in our presence the sweetest,
By the spoiler is borne from the cherishing bosom,
The loveliest of all and the fleetest !
The music of stream and of bird
Shall come back when the winter is o'er ;
But the voice that was dearest to us shall be heard
In our desolate chambers no more !
The sunlight of May on the waters shall quiver—
The light of her eye hath departed forever !

As the bird to its sheltering nest,
When the storm on the hills is abroad,
So her spirit hath flown from this world of unrest
To repose on the bosom of God !
Where the sorrows of earth never more
May fling o'er its brightness a stain ;

Where in rapture and love it shall ever adore,
With a gladness unmingled with pain ;
And its thirst shall be slacked by the waters which spring,
Like a river of light, from the throne of the KING !

There is weeping on earth for the lost !
There is bowing in grief to the ground !
But rejoicing and praise mid the sanctified host,
For a spirit in paradise found !
Though brightness hath passed from the earth,
Yet a star is newborn in the sky,
And a soul hath gone home to the land of its birth,
Where are pleasures and fulness of joy !
And a new harp is strung, and a new song is given
To the breezes that float o'er the gardens of heaven.

TO BEREAVED PARENTS.

TENDER guides, in sorrow weeping
O'er your first-born's smitten bloom ;
Or fond memory's vigil keeping
Where the fresh turf marks her tomb.

Ye no more shall see her bearing
Pangs that woke the dove-like moan,
Still for your affliction caring,
Though forgetful of her own.

Ere the bitter cup she tasted,
Which the hand of care doth bring—
Ere the glittering pearls were wasted,
From glad childhood's fairy string—

Ere one chain of hope had rusted,—
Ere one wreath of joy was dead—
To the Saviour, whom she trusted,
Strong in faith, her spirit fled.

Gone—where no dark sin is cherished,
Where no woes, nor fears invade,
Gone—ere youth's first flower had perished,
To a youth that ne'er can fade.

DEATH OF AN INFANT.

As the sweet flower that scents the morn,
But withers in the rising day ;
Thus lovely was this infant's dawn,
Thus swiftly fled its life away.

It died ere its expanding soul
Had ever burnt with wrong desires,
Had ever spurned at heaven's control,
Or ever quench'd its sacred fires.

It died to sin, it died to cares,
But for a moment felt the rod :—
O mourner ! such the Lord declares,
Such are the children of our God !

ELEGY ON A BELOVED INFANT.

FARE thee well, thou lovely stranger,
Guardian angels take your charge ;
Freed at once from pain and danger,
Happy spirit set at large.

Life's most bitter cup just tasting,
Short thy passage to the tomb,
O'er the barrier swiftly hasting
To thine everlasting home.

Death his victim still pursuing,
Ever to his purpose true—
Soon her placid cheek bedewing,
Robb'd it of its rosy hue.

Sealed those eyes, so lately beaming
Innocence and joy, so mild,
Every look so full of meaning
Seemed to endear the lovely child.

In the silent tomb we leave her,
Till the resurrection morn ;
When her Saviour will receive her,
And restore her lovely form.

Then, dear Lord, we hope to meet her,
In thy happy courts above;
There with heavenly joy to greet her,
And resound redeeming Love!

“NOT LOST, BUT GONE BEFORE.”

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 blest.

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 upwards 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 higher and higher shines,
To pure and perfect day;
Nor sink those stars in empty night,
But hide themselves in heaven's own light.

THE DYING INFANT TO ITS MOTHER.

“CEASE here longer to detain me,
Fondest mother, drown'd in woe;
Now thy kind caresses pain me,
Morn advances—let me go.

See yon orient streak appearing,
Harbinger of endless day ;
Hark ! a voice ; the darkness cheering,
Call's my new-born soul away.

Lately launched a trembling stranger,
On the world's wild boist'rous flood ;
Pierc'd with sorrows, tossed with danger,
Gladly I return to God.

Now my cries shall cease to grieve thee ;
Now my trembling heart find rest ;
Kinder arms than thine receive me ;
Softer pillow than thy breast.

Weep not o'er these eyes that languish,
Upward turning toward their home :
Raptur'd they'll forget all anguish,
While they wait to see thee come.

There, my mother, pleasures centre,
Weeping, parting, care or wo
Ne'er our Father's house shall enter,
Morn advances—let me go.

As through this calm, peaceful dawning,
Silent glides my parting breath,
To an everlasting morning,
Gently close my eyes in death.

Blessings endless, richest blessings,
Pour their streams upon thy heart !
Though no language yet possessing,
Breathes my spirit ere we part.

Yet, to leave thee sorrowing rends me,
Though again his voice I hear ;
Rise ! may every grace attend thee ;
Rise ! and seek to meet me there."

A MOTHER'S GRIEF.

To mark the sufferings of the babe,
That cannot speak its woe ;
To see the infant tears gush forth,
Yet know not why they flow ;
To meet the meek uplifted eye,
That fain would ask relief,
Yet can but tell of agony,—
This is a mother's grief.

Through dreary days and darker nights,
To trace the march of death ;
To hear the faint and frequent sigh,
The quick and shorten'd breath :
To watch the last dread strife draw near,
And pray that struggle brief ;
Though all is ended with its close—
This is a mother's grief !

To see, in one short hour, decay
The hope of future years,
To feel how vain a father's prayer,
How vain a mother's tears ;
To think the cold grave now must close
O'er what was once the chief
Of all the treasured joys of earth—
This is a mother's grief !

Yet when the first wild throb is past
Of anguish and despair,
To lift the eye of faith to heaven,
And think, " My child is *there* !"
This best can dry the gushing tears,
This yield the heart relief ;
Until the christian's pious hope
O'ercomes the mother's grief.

A CHILD'S DEATH

Was never more sweetly mourned than in these
lines, by R. B. SHERIDAN :—

IN some rude spot where vulgar herbage grows,
If chance a violet rear its purple head,
The careful gardener moves it ere it blows,
To thrive and flourish in a nobler bed ;
Such was thy fate, dear child,
Thy opening such !
Pre-eminence in early bloom was shown ;
For earth, too good, perhaps ;
And lov'd too much—
Heaven saw, and early mark'd thee for its own.

Oh Lord ! the message from thy throne has come :
We hear thy voice and give them back to thee !
With tears, we lay our children in the tomb,
In faith, their spirits at thy feet we see.

There, at the Almighty Father's hand,
Nearest the throne of living light,
The choirs of infant Seraphs stand,
And dazzling shine where all are bright.

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT DAUGHTER.

SWEET babe, she glanc'd into our world to see
A sample of our misery ;
Then turned away her languid eye,
To drop a tear or two, and die.
Sweet babe, she tasted of life's bitter cup,
Refus'd to drink the poison up !
But turn'd her little head aside,
Disgusted with the taste, and died.
Sweet babe, she listened for a while to hear
Our mortal griefs, then turned her ear
To angels' harps and songs, and cried—
To join their notes celestial, sighed and died.

Sweet babe no more, but seraph now
 Before the throne, behold her bow ;
 To heavenly joys her spirit flies,
 Blest in the triumph of the skies ;
 Adores the grace that brought her there
 Without a wish—without a care ;
 That wash'd her soul in Calv'ry's stream,
 That shorten'd life's distressing dream.
 Short pain—short grief—dear babe, was thine,
 Now joys eternal and divine.

Yes, thou art fled, and saints a welcome sing,
 Thine infant spirit soars on angels' wing ;
 Our dark affection would have hop'd thy stay,
 The voice of God has call'd *His* child away.
 Like Samuel, early in the temple found,
 Sweet Rose of Sharon, plant of holy ground ;
 Oh ! more than Samuel blest, to thee 'tis given,
 The God he serv'd on earth, to serve in Heaven.

“TWAS BUT A BABE.”

I ASKED them why the verdant turf was riven
 From its young rooting, and with silent lip,
 They pointed to a new-made chasm among
 The marble-pillared mansions of the dead.
 Who goeth to his rest in yon damp couch ?
 The tearless crowd past on—“’twas but a babe.”
A Babe ! And poise ye in the rigid scales
 Of calculation, the fond bosom's wealth ?
 Rating its priceless idols as ye weigh
 Such merchandize as moth and rust corrupt,
 Or the rude robber steals ? Ye mete out grief,
 Perchance, when youth, maturity or age,
 Sink in the thronging tomb ; but when the breath
 Grows icy on the lip of innocence,
 Repress your measured sympathies, and say,
 “*’Twas but a babe !*”

What know ye of *her* love,
 Who patient watcheth, till the stars grow dim,
 Over her drooping infant, with an eye
 Bright as unchanging Hope, if *his* repose ?

What know ye of *her* woe, who sought no joy
More exquisite, than on his placid brow
To trace the glow of health, and drink at dawn
The thrilling lustre of his waking smile?

Go ask that musing father, why yon grave
So narrow, and so noteless, might not close
Without a tear?

And though his lip be mute,
Feeling the poverty of speech, to give
Fit answer to thee, still his pallid brow,
And the deep agonizing prayer that loads
Midnight's dark wing to *him*, the God of strength,
Might satisfy thy question.

Ye who mourn
Whene'er yon vacant cradle, or the robes
That decked the lost one's form, call back a tide
Of alienated joy, can ye not trust
Your treasure to *his* arms, whose changeless care
Passeth a mother's love? Can ye not hope,
When a few hastening years their course have run,
To go to him, though he no more on earth
Returns to you?

And when glad faith doth catch
Some echo of celestial harmonies,
Archangels' praises, with the high response
Of cherubim, and seraphim, oh think—
Think that your babe is there.

TO MY DECEASED INFANT.

Thou art gone to rest in a lonely bed,
Sweet form of my precious child!
In the silent grave rests thy little head,
And hushed is thy voice so mild.

In a dreamless sleep are thine eyelids closed,
And pale that sunny brow,
And thy dimpled hands on thy bosom fair,
Lie folded and quiet now.

On my cheek no more shall thy velvet lip
Its fond kiss of love impress,
And thy cherished form at this heart no more
Shall be pressed with tenderness.

Yet, O child belov'd, while *my* loss I mourn,
 Not a tear is shed for thee ;
 For thy soul, uncaged, has fled to its home,
 In a world of purity.

And at Jesus' feet thou dost worship now,
 With a lovely infant throng,
 And soft music swells from thy little harp,
 And sweet is thy lisping song.

It is joy to think that *thy* rest is found
 Where the skies are always bright ;
 And this heart, tho' sad, would not call thee back
 To a land of cheerless night.

But at heaven's gate, may thy spirit pure
 Be the first to welcome me,
 When the *toils* of life, and its *griefs* are o'er,
 To a blest eternity.

And together then, in sweet hymns of joy,
 The Redeemer's name we'll praise ;
 And thy voice, new tuned, shall teach me the song
 Thou didst first in glory raise.

THE MOTHER'S SOLILOQUY,

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT SON.

By the Rev. J. Lawson.

HUSHED be the murmuring thought !
 Thy will be done,
 O Arbiter of life and death, I bow
 To thy command. I yield the precious gift
 So late bestowed, and to the silent grave
 Move sorrowing, yet submissive. O sweet babe !
 I lay thee down to rest. The cold, cold earth,
 A pillow for thy little head. Sleep on
 Serene in death ! No care shall trouble thee :
 All undisturbed thou slumberest, far more still
 Than when I lulled thee in my lap, and soothed
 Thy little sorrows till they ceased.
 Then felt thy mother peace ; her heart was light

As the sweet sigh that 'scaped thy placid lips,
 And joyous as the dimpled smile that played
 Across thy countenance. O, I must weep
 To think of thee, dear infant, on my knees
 Untroubled sleeping. Bending o'er thy form,
 I watched with eager hope to catch the laugh,
 First waking from thy sparkling eye, a beam
 Lovely to me, as the blue light of heaven;
 Dimmed in the agony of death, it beams no more!
 O, yet once more I kiss thy marble lips,
 Sweet babe! and press with mine thy whitened cheeks;
 Farewell, a long farewell! Yet visit me
 In dreams, my darling! Though the visioned joy
 Wake bitter pangs; still be those in my thoughts,
 And I will cherish the dear dream, and think
 I still possess thee. Peace, my bursting heart!
 O, I submit. Again I lay thee down,
 Dear relic of a mother's hope. Thy spirit,
 Now mingled with cherubic hosts, adores
 The grace that ransomed it, and lodged thee safe
 Above the stormy scene.

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

WITH what unknown delight the mother smiled,
 When this frail treasure in her arms she pressed!
 Her prayer was heard—she clasped a living child:
 But how the gift transcends the poor request!
 A child was all she asked, with many a vow!
 Mother—behold the child an angel now!

Now in her father's house she finds a place,
 Or, if to earth she takes a transient flight,
 'Tis to fulfil the purpose of his grace:
 To guide thy footsteps to the world of light;—
 A ministering spirit sent to thee,
 That where she is, there thou may'st also be.

ON SEEING AN INFANT AFTER DEATH.

I SAW a babe in death.

More beautiful she seemed,
Than when the living breath
From every feature beamed ;
She looked a spirit of the sky,
Whispering, O, 'tis sweet to die !

Her little hands so still ;
The alabaster cheek :
Eyes closed, which late would fill
With words she could not speak ;
All told the spirit stirring change,
How sweet, how soft, but O, how strange !

Ye friends, why should you weep ?
Would I were where she is ;
There is no earthly sleep
So calm, so deep as this ;
It is the bridal night, that binds
Her spirit to the angel minds.

THE SPIRIT'S SONG OF CONSOLATION.

DEAR parents, grieve no more for me ;
My parents, grieve no more ;
Believe that I am happier far
Than e'er I was before.
I've left a world where woe and sin
Swell onwards as a river,
And gained a world where I shall rest
In peace and joy for ever.

Our Father bade me come to him,
He gently bade me come,
And he has made his heavenly house
My dwelling-place and home.
On that best day, of all the seven,
Which saw our Saviour rise,
I heard the voice you could not hear,
Which called me to the skies.

I saw, too, what you could not see,
 Two beauteous angels stand;
 They smiling stood, and looked at me,
 And beckoned with their hand;
 They said they were my sisters dear,
 And they were sent to bear
 My spirit to their blest abode,
 To live for ever there.

Then think not of the mournful time
 When I resigned my breath,
 Nor of the place where I was laid,
 The gloomy house of death;
 But think of that high world, where I
 No more shall suffer pain,
 And of the time when all of us
 In heaven shall meet again.

THE LOST DARLING.

SHE was my idol. Night and day to scan
 The fine expansion of her form, and mark
 The unfolding mind, like vernal rose-bud start
 To sudden beauty, was my chief delight.
 To find her fairy footsteps follow me,
 Her hands upon my garments, or her lip
 Long sealed to mine, and in the watch of night
 The quiet breath of innocence to feel
 Soft on my cheek, was such a full content
 Of happiness, as none but mothers know.

Her voice was like some tiny harp, that yields
 To the light fingered breeze; and as it held
 Brief converse with her doll, or playful soothed
 The moaning kitten, or with patient care
 Conned o'er the alphabet—but most of all,
 Its tender cadence in her evening prayer
 Thrilled on the ear like some ethereal tone
 Heard in sweet dreams.

But now alone I sit,
 Musing of her, and dew with mournful tears
 Her little robes, that once with woman's pride
 I wrought, as if there were a need to deck

What God hath made so beautiful. I start,
 Half fancying from her empty crib there comes
 A restless sound, and breathe the accustomed words,
 "Hush! Hush thee, dearest." Then I bend and weep—
 As though it were a sin to speak to one
 Whose home is with the angels.

Gone to God!

And yet I wish I had not seen the pang
 That wrung her features, nor the ghostly white
 Settling around her lips, I would that Heaven
 Had taken its own, like some transplanted flower,
 Blooming in all its freshness.

Gone to God!

Be still, my heart! what could a mother's prayer,
 In all the wildest ecstasy of hope,
 Ask for its darling like the bliss of heaven?

DEATH OF AN INFANT.

DEATH found strange beauty on that polished brow,
 And dashed it out.—

There was a tint of rose
 On cheek and lip.—He touched the veins with ice,
 And the rose faded.—

Forth from those blue eyes
 There spake a wishful tenderness, a doubt
 Whether to grieve or sleep, which innocence
 Alone may wear. With ruthless haste he bound
 The silken fringes of those curtaining lids
 Forever.—

There had been a murmuring sound,
 With which the babe would claim its mother's ear,
 Charming her even to tears. The spoiler set
 His seal of silence.—

But there beamed a smile
 So fixed, so holy, from that cherub brow,
 Death gazed—and left it there.

He dared not steal

The signet-ring of heaven.

THE MOTHER'S LAMENT.

THOSE once loved voices all are still,
In happier years so cheerful;
At rest is now the ecstatic thrill,
The once fair form—how fearful!
All, all are laid within the grave;
Nor tears nor prayers e'en one could save!

"Is there no hope?" the parent cries;
"From death no glad revival?
The cherished dust, no dust that lies,
What world waits its arrival?"—
"That world, where Christ is gone before,
Is theirs and thine for evermore."

Oh blissful scene! where severed hearts
Renew the ties most cherished;
Where nought the mourned and mourner parts;
Where grief with life is perished.
Oh! nought do I desire so well,
As here to die, and there to dwell!

DIRGE OF A CHILD.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

No bitter tears for thee be shed,
Blossom of being! seen and gone!
With flowers alone we strew thy bed,
O blest departed one!
Whose all of life, a rosy ray,
Blush'd into dawn, and pass'd away.

Yes! thou art fled, ere guilt had power
To stain thy cherub soul and form,
Closed is the soft ephemeral flower,
That never felt a storm!
The sun-beam's smile, the zephyr's breath,
All that it knew from birth to death.

Thou wert so like a form of light,
That Heaven benignly call'd thee hence
Ere yet the world could breathe one blight
O'er thy sweet innocence :
And thou, that brighter home to bless,
Art pass'd with all thy loveliness !

Oh, hadst thou still on earth remain'd,
Vision of beauty ! fair, as brief !
How soon thy brightness had been stain'd
With passion or with grief !
Now not a sullying breath can rise
To dim thy glory in the skies.

We rear no marble o'er thy tomb,
No sculptured image there shall mourn .
Ah ! fitter far the vernal bloom
Such dwelling to adorn.
Fragrance, and flowers, and dews, must be
The only emblems meet for thee.

Thy grave shall be a blessed shrine,
Adorn'd with nature's brightest wreath,
Each glowing season shall combine
Its incense there to breathe ;
And oft upon the midnight air,
Shall viewless harps be murmuring there.

And oh ! sometimes in visions blest,
Sweet spirit ! visit our repose,
And bear from thine own world of rest,
Some balm for human woes !
What form more lovely could be given
Than thine, as messenger of Heaven ?

ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

LIFE is a span, a fleeting hour ;
How soon the vapour flies !
Man is a tender, transient flower,
That e'en in blooming dies.

Death spreads his with'ring wintry arms,
And beauty smiles no more :
Ah ! where are now those rising charms
Which pleas'd our eyes before ?

Hope looks beyond the bounds of time,
When what we now deplore
Shall rise in full immortal prime,
And bloom to fade no more.

Cease then, fond nature, cease thy tears ;
Thy Saviour dwells on high :
There everlasting spring appears,
There joys shall never die.

THE DYING SON.

Nay, mother, fix not thus on me
That streaming eye,
And clasp not thus my freezing hand ;
For I *must* die.

Deeply I've drunk the wormwood draught,
The grief, the pain ;
Oh ! ask me not one bitter drop
To taste again.

My father, on my weary head,
O lay thine hand ;
And bless me while I yet can hear
Thy accents bland :

And smile, as thou wert wont to do
In happy days,
When I looked to thy loving eye,
And sought its praise.

Loved parents, when my infant couch
Ye knelt beside,
And asked the gracious Lord to bless
Your hope, your pride :

To Him ye gave the opening bud,
The early bloom ;
Then grieve not that the ripened fruit
He gathers home.

THE INFANT'S HOME.

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF TWIN CHILDREN.

WHERE are ye now, sweet pair ?
Vacant is now your place of cradled rest ;
Ye slumber not upon a mother's breast,
Where is your home—oh ! where ?

How beautiful ye were,
With your meek, peaceful brows and laughing eyes,
All eloquent of life's first energies,
And joy's bright fount, yet clear.

How blithely ye awoke
With each new day ; familiar forms were there
To meet your eager glance—kind voices near,
In gentle accents spoke.

Ye seemed then to be,
As some pale flower, that to the morning's light
Rears its frail stem, and spreads its petals bright
As if confidently.

And when, at evening's close,
Those little hands, relaxing from the grasp,
That some dear object held, with loving clasp,
Ye sunk into repose.

Love made your slumber seem
As the closed flowers, o'er which the silent star
Keepeth its ceaseless vigil from afar,
And sheds its unfelt beam.

I looked upon you then
With thoughts almost of sorrow in my gaze,
As on a passing joy, which other days
Would make not mine again.

I feared some change might sweep
Through the untroubled breast, and leave its stain;
Some unsuspected ill, some bitter pain,
Mar with sad dreams your sleep.

I know that change *has* past
O'er you, sweet, tender nurslings! but I know
Your spirits now will never taste of woe,—
That change will be the last.

Ye are before me now,
As ye were wont to be—no beauty gone,
That in those eyes, even when tearful, shone,
No charm from those pure brows.

Too calm, too deeply still,
Is that unchanging picture; yet a part
Of the sweet visions of the past,
Can make its own at will.

And thus ye are mine own,—
Mine own, to dwell upon with quiet love;
Thoughts the world cannot touch, nor time remove—
From me ye are not gone.

I ask not, where are laid
Those faded forms—whether below the sod
Which busy feet have with indifference trod,
Or 'neath some kindly shade.

Where, on earth's tranquil breast,
The peace of the Eternal One hath smiled,
E'en as a mother o'er her cradled child,
There is your place of rest.

He, who mankind shall wake,
Over his children's rest a watch doth keep,
And with a voice that breathes of love, the sleep
Of innocence will break.

Not in that simple tomb,
But in "our Father's house," where love shall be
Abiding, even in its own sanctuary,
There is the infant's home.

TO A MOTHER ON THE DEATH OF HER INFANT

SURE to the mansions of the blest,
 Where infant innocence ascends,
 Some angel brighter than the rest,
 The spotless spirit's flight attends.

There at th' Almighty Father's hand,
 Nearest the throne of living light,
 The choirs of infant seraphs stand,
 And dazling shine where all are bright.

When thus the Lord of mortal breath
 Decrees his bounty to resume,
 And points the silent shaft of death,
 Which speeds our infants to the tomb.

Oh! think the darlings of thy love,
 Divested of this earthly clod,
 Amid unnumber'd saints above,
 Bask in the bosom of their God.

 THE GRAVE.

THERE is no monument to mark the spot ;
 Two feet of grass are all that o'er it wave ;
 The stranger passes, but he heeds it not ;
 It is an infant's grave.

But there are two who know the spot full well,
 And visit it, full oft, at evening tide ;
 For when the child entombed within it fell,
 Fell all their earthly pride.

The mother as she decks it round with flowers,
 Waters with tears the little new-grown sod ;
 The father bends his knee, and sadly pours
 His vexed soul to God.

Grieve not, ye sad ones ! does the spirit sleep ?
 'Tis with the Lord, who took but what he gave
 Angelic spirits nightly vigils keep
 O'er your infant's grave.

I WILL not weep, my boy, for thee,
 Though thou wer't all the world to me !
 I would not wish thee wak'd again,
 To strive like me with want and pain.
 I will but close that still bright eye,
 And kiss that brow so pale and high,
 And those pure lips, whose tones divine,
 Caught their first words, first pray'rs from mine
 And fold thee to this bosom lone,
 Which thou has left as cold's thine own,—
 And thus implore the God who takes,—
 To help the heart thine absence breaks !
 My boy—my boy—this darken'd earth
 Shall never more to me seem fair ;
 And I shall stand, 'mid all its mirth,
 Like something which should not be there !
 Yet, 'twas to heav'n thy soul was borne,
 And wherefore should thy parent mourn ?
 Perhaps in mercy, He reprov'd
 The selfish zeal with which I lov'd.
 I'll mourn no more ! my God, thou knowest
 The wealth my desolated heart has lost !
 Oh ! shield me from repining cares,
 When other parents point to theirs ;
 Bring back that light I now behold,—
 Oh, those lov'd features, calm and cold,—
 That deathless smile, which whispers me,
 He died in peace and joy with Thee !
 My boy—my boy—sustaining Pow'r,
 Thy sinking mother well may crave,—
 For welcome shall be that blest hour,
 Which sees her share thy lonely grave !

RESIGNATION ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

Now, O Lord, to thee submitting,
 We the tender pledge resign ;
 And thy mercies ne'er forgetting,
 Own that all we have is thine.

Rest, sweet babe, in gentle slumbers,
 Till the resurrection morn ;
 Then arise to join the numbers,
 Who its triumphs shall adorn.

Though thy presence was endearing,
 Though thy absence we deplore,
 At the Saviour's bright appearing,
 We shall meet to part no more.

DEATH OF A CHILD.

ALAS! how chang'd that lovely flower,
 Which bloom'd and cheer'd my heart !
 Fair smiling comfort of an hour,
 How soon we're call'd to part !

And shall my bleeding heart arraign
 That God whose ways are love ?
 Or vainly cherish anxious pain
 For one that rests above ?

No! let me rather humbly pay
 Obedience to thy will ;
 And with my inmost spirit say,
 The Lord is righteous still.

The darkest nights and loudest storms
 Of earth will soon be o'er ;
 Then upward with th' angelic forms,
 We'll rise to meet no more.

STANZAS.

*" Ostendent terris hanc tantum fata, nec ultra
 Esse sinent."*

HASTE to depart. The breeze of earth
 Is all too rude for thee ;
 For thou wast destin'd from thy birth
 For realms more fair and free.
 Our warmest beams too coldly glow,
 Thy beauties to expand ;
 Thy spirit lingers here below,
 As in a foreign land.

Haste to depart. The wandering dove,
Benighted as it flies,
Pants not to gain its bower of love,
As thou to reach the skies.
The hours of spring-tide come, but bring
No spring-time to thy heart;
Among the leaves sweet voices sing,
Thou heed'st them not. Depart!

And yet to us thou art as dear
As earthly thing can be;
And we are fain to keep thee here,
And share our hearts with thee;
The thought, how brief thy sojourning
In this low vale must prove,
But makes us closer round thee cling,
And wakes to deeper love!

Haste to depart. We would not dare
To stay thy wing from heaven;
And all thy love, and all thy care,
To God alone be given.
Though darkness veil our future hours,
Nor thou be near to shine,
The bitter loss can be but ours,
The gain immortal, thine.

Thy mossy grave our tears shall wet,
When thou art lowly laid,
But thy freed spirit shall forget
All of this earth's dim shade;
When crown'd and robb'd in spotless white,
Washed in the fount above;
The Fount of blessedness and light,
A great Redeemer's love!

THE SPIRIT VOICE

A LITTLE child said to her father a few days before her death,—“God calls me.” She was then well, but the next Sabbath she died.

God called her hence—the breath of prayer
Had gone unto his throne ;
And mighty like an incense there,
The voice of praise had flown.

God called her hence—that solemn tone
Upon her slumber broke,
As if an angel's golden harp,
On earth its music woke.

Whence did it come—that spirit voice,
Unheard by all but her ?
Like that which breathed from human lips,
The brooding air doth stir ?

Is it a dream too wild and vain,
That in our world of clay,
Though hid from mortal sense and ken,
A spirit realm may lay—

That tones are breathing all around,
Too subtle for our air,
And music woke, whose blissful thrill
Our sense could never bear—

That on the very air we breathe,
Bright forms are floating by,
With but a filmy veil to hide
Their glory from the eye ?

This may not be—but O, there is
A being ever near,
To whom thy bosom's secret thoughts,
Arrayed in light appear.

And though the realm of life or death,
Enrobed in mystery be,
The Sun of Righteousness at last,
Shall make it light to thee.

AN AFFECTING SCENE.

THE following lines describe the suffering and death of a young wife and her children, from the intemperance of the husband and father. The wife was taken suddenly ill in a very cold night, and left alone with her little ones, while her husband went to procure a physician and other needful assistance; the nearest house being over two miles distant: but he went into a tavern, became intoxicated, remained so for some time, and, on his return home, found them all dead. It is supposed the mother died soon after the birth of her child—that the boy struggled longest—that in trying to soothe his expiring sister, he sank down beside her, and could not at last release himself from her arms. With what feelings can Christians pursue a business which has a natural tendency to produce such results? The words are by Mr. Larned.

O! MOTHER dear, my lips are dry,
And Bessy's hands are cold;
Mother, dear mother! help me nigh
Your bosom—surely you can hold
Your little boy. I will not cry,
Nor ask again for drink or bread,
If you will only let me lie
Upon your breast, and hold my head.

O Mother! call your little boy
To your bedside—he'll try to crawl:
You said I was your only joy,
Your darling Henry, and your all;
And then you looked and screamed out so—
Boy! to your cruel father go.
Why do you weep and wail to me?
Fly! fly! I've nothing here for thee!

Don't stare on me, my mother dear,
I'm still—though Bessy will not stir;
And she's too cold to lie so near—
O, why don't father come to her?
Poor Bessy cried herself to sleep;
I wish I could—but when I try,
My lips won't shut—and always keep
Wide open on your staring eye!

Mother! how can you lie so still,
With that dead baby in your arms?
Who did that little dear one kill?
You said 'twas now safe from all harms.
Can't I be dead too, mother, say?
I'm sure 'tis very lonesome here;
Is Heaven a very great long way?
And is our father waiting there?

I'm tired now, and cannot go;
And the bright sun does blind me so;
Oh! shut your eyes, dear mother, do;
And let me love to gaze on you.
How can you see us lying thus,
On this iced floor—our feet so cold?
Once you would fondly run to us,
And round us both the blankets fold.

I'm falling—oh! the room turns round!
I cannot see you now,—but hark!
I hear a soft and pleasant sound—
Perhaps it is the little lark.
I love such sounds as these to hear—
And it is dark no longer now;
Dear little girls with wings are near,
And they are smiling on me too.

Oh! 'tis their songs so sweet and clear—
I think I hear them softly say,
Dear children, stay no longer here—
Come, come with us, we'll lead the way.
It must be heaven where they dwell—
I come! I come. Mother! Farewell.

DEATH.

BY MISS PARDOE.

THIS is a world of care,
And many thorns upon its pathway lie;
Weep not, then, mothers, for your fond and fair,
Let the young die!

Joys are like summer flowers,
And soon the blossoms of their beauty fall,
Clouds bloom o'er both; brief are both the hours,
Death ends them all!

This is a world of strife,
Of feverish struggles, and satiety,
And blighted enterprise—what then is life?
Let the strong die!

All human love is vain,
And human might is but an empty sound;
Power of mind and body bringeth pain—
Death is its bound!

This is a world of woe,
Of heaviness, and anxiety:
Why cling we then to evils that we know?
Let the old die!

Wrestling with fell disease,
Vain lamentations o'er departed years;
Is not age rife with these?
Death dries all tears!

This is a world of pain:
There is a BETTER LAND beyond the sky;
A humble spirit may that portion gain—
Let the just die!

But let those shrink with dread,
Whose days have been of evil, lest they find,
When all their earthly hopes are withered,
Despair behind!

Let them implore for aid,
A fitter record of their years to give;
And lean on Him who mercifully bade
The sinner live!

THE FATHER OVER HIS DEAD CHILD.

BY CATHARINE PONSONBY.

WE little thought, my darling boy,
When to my heart I pressed thee,
And blending with my sighs, "farewell,"
With ardent love caressed thee,
'Twould be our last adieu on earth,
Thy latest breathing kiss!
We meet again!—but ah, my child!
A bitter meeting this.

Thy bright blue eye is closed in death,
Thy merry laugh is o'er!
Thy thousand winning ways, alas!
Shall charm this heart no more.
Ah! could'st thou not have lingered, love,
To cheer me yet awhile,
Life's scenes to bless and brighten still,
With thy sweet, radiant smile?

Had I but seen thee once again,
And watched thy dying bed,
Caught the last flick'ring of thy breath,
Pillowed thy drooping head;
My heart, methinks, would not have felt
This bitterness of grief;
Though sad the past, to love it gives
A sacred, sweet relief.

But shall I mourn thy loss, my child,
Without one solaced feeling,
Or beam of light within the cloud,
High, heavenly hopes revealing?
Forgive, my God, the bitter grief,
Which murmured thy behest,

Thy love divine which made my child
An Angel bright and blest.

Teach me to say, "Thy will be done!"
'Tis kindest, wisest, best—
The cloud-robed tempest 'mid its ire,
Bears blessings in its breast.
Though darkness deep invests his path,
Yet glories gem his crown,
And merry beams through all the clouds
That o'er his footsteps frown.

My stricken heart to Jesus yields
Love's deep devotion now,
Adores and blesses—while it bleeds—
His hand that strikes the blow.
Then fare thee well—a little while—
Life's troubled dream is past;
And I shall meet with thee, my child,
In life—in bliss, at last!

MARY'S REQUEST.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

THERE was a shaded chamber,
A silent, watching band,
On a low couch a suffering child
Who grasped the mother's hand.

She told her faith in Jesus—
Her simple prayer was said,
And now that darkened vale she trod,
Which leadeth to the dead.

Red fever scorched her bosom—
Frost chilled the vital flame,
And her sweet brow was troubled,
As anguish smote her frame.

Yet 'mid the grasp and struggle,
With shuddering lips she cried,

"O mother,—dearest mother,
Bury me by your side."

"But where will you be buried?
My darling Mary—where?
In the green, shady dell you loved,
With earliest violets fair?"

Or in the ancient church-yard,
Where we were wont to stray,
'Mid the white marble monuments,
My little Mary—say?"

But the thought of flowers had faded—
The green dell charmed no more,
Dim grew those marble monuments,
With all their lettered lore.

And one lone image lingered,—
Bright 'mid the wreck of earth,—
That love, with which her soul was knit,
Even from the hour of birth.

One only wish she uttered,
While life was ebbing fast,—
"Sleep by my side, dear mother,
And rise with me at last."

'Tis o'er,—the spirit parted,
With that long, tender moan,—
Check not thy grief, fond mother,—
Thou daughterless and lone:

Weep freely,—Christ hath hallowed
The tear that nature wrings,—
And see,—how peaceful rests the clay,
That pain no longer stings.

Look! look!—the thin lip quivers,
The blue eyes open wide,
And what a hollow whisper steals,—
"*Bury me by your side.*"

And did the spirit falter
 Upon its upward track,
 To strew this never-dying flower
 In tender token back?—

Even at the gates of Heaven,
 Whence songs of angels flow,
 Remembered it the cradle hymn
 That soothed its infant wo.

THE DYING CHILD.

"SWEET mother, I seem gentle music to hear."
 "'Tis but fancy, my child; turn to slumber again."
 "Nay, surely 'tis music; hark, mother! 'tis near;
 It floats round my couch with its gladdening strain."

"'Tis but fancy, my child; let me moisten thy lips;
 These breezes will temper thy feverish brow;
 Some bee buzzes by as its nectar it sips;
 'Tis nothing, my child, thou wilt rest better now."

"Then 'tis nothing, dear mother, and yet sure 'tis sweet;
 It comforts my soul, for it whispers of bliss:
 Were I dying, and angels my spirit would greet,
 They could not bring welcomer music than this.

"And do you not hear it! and do you not see
 Yon seraph that beckons me hence to the sky?
 Perhaps, dearest mother, 'tis sent but to me;
 May I go if it calls? may I yield it reply?"

Gentle babe, I come for thee:
 I did come to bear thee home,
 Far from mortal agony;
 Come, then, gentle infant, come.

Cool shall be that fervid cheek,
 Every tear be wiped away;
 Ere the orient morning break,
 Thou shalt be in endless day.

Yes, meek babe, 'twas I that sang;
Heavenly anthems thou didst hear;
Strains to soothe thy dying pang,
Hymns thy parting soul to cheer.

Tell her on whose tender breast
Soft reclines thy fainting head,
Thou shalt shortly be at rest—
Say not, numbered with the dead.

No; while o'er thy mouldering dust
Falls the tear of earthly love,
Thou shalt live amidst the just,
Brighter life in heaven above.

Bid her, then, sweet babe, rejoice
That to her the boon is given,
To resign, at Jesus' voice,
One more cherub saint to heaven.

MY BROTHER.

Is this my little brother?
How cold he is, and still;
Do take him up, dear mother!
Is he not very ill?

No, no! my child, the dear one
Will suffer no more pain,
'Tis death makes him so silent:
He will not move again.

Not hold his little arms out?
Nor make his pleasant noise!
Nor open wide his tiny hand,
To take the pretty toys.

'Twas little brother's spirit
Which made him laugh and play;
That which you loved you see not,
There's nothing here but clay.

Why do you weep, then, mother?
You said, the other day,
To die was only going home;
Did brother want to stay?

Will God love to see him,
And show him pretty things?
And if he cries to come to you,
Won't he give him little wings?

He has not gone away, child;
If we love him with our hearts,
His spirit will stay with us,
When this little form departs

If you are good and gentle,
He will always be with you;
And I will try to grieve no more,
If you are kind and true.

We'll kiss once more those lips,
Then we will go away;
And God will give us happy thoughts,
If we ask him when we pray.

MARY.

BURIAL IN THE COUNTRY.

BY MISS A. M. F. BUCHANAN.

THE sunlight through the window's vines
Came in upon the dead—
A fair young child—and touched with gold
The ringlets of its head.
A smile so bright was round its lips
And on its dimpled cheek,
So life-like through the lashes long
Shone out an azure streak,
That in a childish playfulness
Its eyes were closed, it seemed,
To peep upon the glorious thing
Whence the effulgence streamed.

It lay where it had sunk to rest,
Upon a snow-white bed,
On which the bright and balmy air
Its coolness oft had shed ;
And, full in sight, all pictured o'er
With chequered greens of June,
Majestic hills arose, and streams
Sang their sweet, changeless tune ;
And bees, from out the garden hive,
And birds were winging by ;—
With its calm cheerfulness, it was
A lovely place to die.

No studied words of sympathy
Were coldly whispered round ;
The silence of the humble throng
Told more than measured sound.
A step anon the couch would seek,
A tear the shroud would wet,
And mothers clasped their babes with thanks
That God had spared them yet ;
And children touched the cold, white brow,
And then in awe stood by,
Their new-learnt lesson thinking o'er
Of angels in the sky.

An aged man with meek, low voice,
And simple words and few,
Arose, and from the Book of God
Inspiring comfort drew ;
He said that types to teach our doom
Were still our eyes before ;
He pointed to the morning flower
O'ershadowing the door ;
And said its bloom, so bright, and brief,
A child's existence shared ;—
Then who could look on it, nor be
For early death prepared.

And sobs gushed forth, as from the home,
Whence had for ever gone
The echoes of a loved, young voice,
The solemn train passed on.

Hailed by that holy comforter,
The fresh, soft morning air,
They wound along the woodland path
Where birds and blossoms were.
The fragrance and the melody
So breathed of love and peace,
That soon the hearts most anguished, felt
Their throbs impatient cease.

And then within the church-yard gate
The lowly bier they stood,
Thick strown with sweet acacia flowers,
That fell while in the wood ;
And hands that oft had fondled it,
While flowed its winning mirth,
Let gently down the coffined form
Into the silent earth ;
So carefully the sod they laid,
That ere they ceased, had come
The bees to the unwithered thyme
And filled it with their hum.

'Twould be a chilling thought to one
Whose love is Nature's bloom,
Whose oracles are every leaf,
That in a dark, cold room
He must be laid to die, where ne'er
The stir of forest trees,
Or murmurs of unfettered streams
Sent their deep homilies ;
That when the Almighty's summoner
His heart were stilled to hear,
The ribald shouts of reckless crowds
Should rise upon his ear.

'Twould be a chilling thought, that when
He sinks to silent clay,
The ones he loved must chain their sighs
Along the crowded way ;
And, though with anthems thrilling sad,
And sombre pall and plumes,
And knells to strike into the soul
They bore him midst the tombs ;

That careless tongues their tears should count
And strangers cold and rude,
Cast down the turf, and sneering bid
The worm to take his food.

Oh! that this hour of doom might come
Far from the city's din,
Where things of beauty, ever round
His heart's sweet guides had been!
Where Friendship, at its last sad rite,
Unchecked might rest and weep,
And Memory, o'er his ashes, oft,
Unseen, a vigil keep;
Where solitude and silence might
E'en worldlings unenslave,
To pause, and reverently glean
A moral from his grave!

DYING THOUGHTS OF A YOUNG CHILD.

MOTHER—the light of day is parting,
From my weary eye,
And my spirit is departing
To the blessed sky.
One unfading hope before me
Whispers it is well:
Brighter visions hover o'er me
Than the lip can tell.

On my young imagination
Bursts a purer light,
Than the beauty of creation
Sheds upon my sight—
Is it but a lonely vision,
Fading in its birth,—
Or the spirit's sweet transition
From the bonds of earth?

Will my hand, unwearied, gather
Brighter flowers than we
Culled—when once we roamed together: .
Mother—shall I see

Birds, like those whose song I listened
In the quiet wood ;
Insects, bright as those that glistened
In the sunlight's flood ?

Do not all men love each other
In a world like this ?
'The world's coldness ! tell me, mother,
What that coldness is :
I have found its scenes enchanting,
And its love sincere,
Yet my weary soul is panting
For a purer sphere—

For my Saviour's words steal o'er me,
Holy, kind and sweet—
Little children, come before me,
And your shepherd meet.
Mother, will not Jesus give me
More than earthly love—
Will his outstretched arms receive me
To a home above ?

Though on earth I have been dwelling
But a summer's day,
Hopes within my heart are swelling,
As its powers decay.
God to my young heart hath spoken
Many a sunny word,
And his love, by many a token,
In my soul was stirred.

Read once more that sweet narration,
I so love to hear,
How our Lord, for man's salvation,
Left his heavenly sphere ;
How his precious love hath freed us,
How his word can save—
And how safely he will lead us
Through the silent grave.

When my voice in this dear mansion
Is no longer heard,

May thy soul, with pure expansion,
Rest upon his word ;
From its page a light is shining,
And a holy spell,
Which forbids the heart's repining :
Mother—fare thee well.

DEATH OF THE YOUNG.

SLEEP, little one ! the summer winds are breathing
A gentle hymn, to lull thy quiet rest ;
Around thy tomb, in mournful beauty wreathing
The ivy creeps, in fresh'ning verdure dressed.

Sleep on, my love ! the summer flowers are springing
In holy peace above thy mouldering head,
To guard thy dust, and from their bosoms flinging
A mingled sweetness o'er thy silent bed.

We miss thee, love ! thy joyous face once blushing
With rosy light, death-shades have overcast ;
But ah ! how oft these heart-felt tears are gushing,
To think our eyes on thee have looked their last.

We miss those hours, when through our hearts was stealing
The merry music of thy fairy feet ;
We miss those hours, when every pulse of feeling
Thrilled quick and warm thy trusting eyes to greet.

We miss our babe, when evening gathers round us ;
Thy place is vacant on thy mother's breast !
We wake no more, to feel the spell that bound us,
When once to ours, thy infant lips were pressed !

Where art thou now ? the soul which once was pouring,
Through this cold dust, a warm and thrilling glow,
Lives *somewhere* yet ; it vanished, heaven-ward soaring,
Far from all pain, or blight, or earthly woe !

Where dost thou dwell ? It *must* be thou art wearing
A radiant light on thy enfranchised soul ;
In some bright world thy part with angels bearing,
Where hymns of holy joy forever roll.

To that deep life, God's love hath surely borne thee,
Dear cherished babe!—nor seek we to reclaim;
How much we love, how much we miss and mourn thee,
He knows alone—and blessed be his name!

THE MOTHER TO HER SICK CHILD.

SLEEP on, my boy, and o'er thy fevered brow
May gentle angels keep their silent watch;
May he who is the Lord of angels bend
His pitying eye, and give thee soothing sleep.
Oh! may he breathe around thy languid form
Benignant health, if such his holy will;
Yet good that holy will, though sickness sore
Should linger—even sickness unto death!
My child, my treasure, I have given thee up
To him who gave thee me! Ere yet thine eye
Rested with conscious love upon thy mother,
Long ere thy lips could gently sound her name,
She gave thee up to God; she sought for thee
One boon alone, that thou might'st be his child;
His child sojourning on this distant land,
His child above the blue and radiant sky.
'Tis all I ask for thee, belov'd one, still.
Perchance, in some fond hour, this heart may wish
High intellect to beam around thy brow,
And all that earth counts joy to tend thy steps:
Perchance I wish thy bright blue eye may cheer
The remnant of my solitary path,
That I may watch thy opening character
Expanding like thy father's, bright and pure,
The Christian, and the scholar; yet, my boy,
All these fond wishes of thy mother's heart
Are merged in one—that thou may'st be His child,
His own devoted child to spread his glory;
Whether in earth's dark places or on high,
In labours such as holy angels knew.
And he will hear the prayer,—He will accept
The offering, He hath strengthened me to make.
Even thus, of old, a babe was offered up—
Young Samuel, for the service of his Temple;
Nor he refused the boon, but poured on him

The anointing of all gifts and graces meet
For his high office. So may'st thou, my child,
In thine own humble sphere, be consecrate.
Sleep on, then, dearest; safe from peril,—safe,
Though sickness be thy lot. In life or death,
Be but his arms around thee, thou art safe.
Oh! it is bliss to live, even on earth,
Labouring for Him—gathering His elect in,
From a dark sinful world, to His fear fold!
And it is bliss to die—to soar on wings
Of seraph to His bright celestial throne;—
To bend, adoring, at the fount of light,—
To dwell for ever in its blaze! My child,
THIS is the blessedness I ask for thee.

A BENEDICTION FOR A BABY.

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY.

WHAT blessing shall I ask for thee,
In the sweet dawn of infancy?
—That, which our Saviour, at his birth,
Brought down with Him from heaven to earth.

What next, in childhood's April years
Of sun-beam smiles and rain-bow tears?
—That which in Him all eyes might trace,
To grow in wisdom and in grace.

What in the wayward path of youth,
Where falsehood walks abroad as truth?
—By that good spirit to be led,
Which John saw resting on his head.

What, in temptation's wilderness,
When wants assail, and fears oppress?
—To wield like Him, the Scripture-sword,
And vanquish Satan "by the word."

What, in the labour, pain, and strife,
Combats and cares of daily life?
—In his cross-bearing steps to tread,
Who had not where to lay his head.

What, in the agony of heart,
When foes rush in and friends depart?
—To pray like Him, the Holy One,
“Father, thy will, not mine, be done.”

What, in the bitterness of death,
When the last sigh cuts the last breath?
—Like Him your spirit to commend,
And up to paradise ascend.

What, in the grave, and in that hour,
When even the grave shall lose its power?
—Like Him, your rest awhile to take;
Then at the trumpet's sound awake,
Him as He *is* in heaven to see,
And as He is, yourself to be.

THE FATHER TO HIS MOTHERLESS CHILDREN.

COME gather closer to my side,
My little smitten flock,
And I will tell of him who brought
Pure water from the rock:
Who boldly led God's people forth
From Egypt's wrath and guile,
And once a cradled babe did float
All helpless on the Nile.

You're weary precious ones, your eyes
Are wandering far and wide;
Think ye of her who knew so well
Your tender thoughts to guide?
Who could to wisdom's sacred lore
Your fixed attention claim?
Ah! never from your hearts erase
That blessed mother's name.

'Tis time to sing your evening hymn,
My youngest infant dove;
Come, press thy velvet cheek to mine,
And learn the lay of love;

My sheltering arms can clasp you all,
 My poor deserted throng;
 Cling as you used to cling to her
 Who sings the angel's song.

Begin, sweet birds, the accustomed strain,
 Come, warble loud and clear;
 Alas, alas, you're weeping all,
 You're sobbing in my ear:
 Good-night: go, say the prayer she taught,
 Beside your little bed,
 The lips that used to bless you there,
 Are silent with the dead.

A father's hand your course may guide
 Amid the storms of life,
 His care protect those shrinking plants
 That dread the storm of strife:
 But who, upon your infant hearts,
 Shall like that mother write?
 Who touch the strings that rule the soul?
 Dear smitten flock, good night!

L. H. S.

BAPTISM AT THE COFFIN'S HEAD.

"Agreeably to her request, her little babe was baptized at the head of the coffin of its mother."—*Obituary of Mrs. E. R. L. Dowse, (consort of Rev. Edmund Dowse of Sherburne, Mass.,) in N. E. Puritan, of July 14, 1842.*

LIETH here beneath her shroud,
 Like a star beneath a cloud,
 She, of whom our love was proud.

Common mourners are not here;
 Sorrow, bending o'er this bier,
 Drops no inexpressive tear.

Kind, consistent, earnest one;
 Active, all her labour done;
 Ripe for summons to the Son.

Meek in her allotted place ;
Panting for and finding grace ;
Winner in the Christian race.

Giving life, she yielded life ;
Sharp the struggle, sore the strife,—
Quick, yet keen, the severing knife.

In the matron's modest bloom,
Just a mother—to the tomb
Sunk she by untimely doom.

Just allowed earth's purest bliss,
Just allowed her bud to kiss
Ere she perished ; anguish this !

" Perished ?"—No !—from this terrene
Borne by angels she is seen ;
God beholds the evergreen !

Stay awhile the funeral stave !
Stay, ere the insatiate grave
Takes the lovely dust it gave.

Stay !—for so she bade us—till
We perform her dying will ;
Ere the waiting grave ye fill !

Bring the precious, fatal gift !
Heart ! thy inner purpose sift,
While the fervent prayer we lift.

Meet it is in truthful prayer,
Thus to God our grief and care
To commit, and leave them there.

Meet it is when mothers go,
Thus the orphans to bestow
On His heart who loves them so !

Bring it to the Coffin's Head !
Kneel, while solemn word is said
In the presence of the Dead !

Though her little babe is nigh,
From that bosom where 'twould lie,
Comes not the maternal sigh.

Beckon not the sheltering arms
To protect it from alarms;
Speaketh not the voice that calms.

Ah ! that stream of life is dried,
Which those tiny lips supplied ;
Ah ! a mother's breast denied !

Peaceful doth that mother lie,
Closed affection's ear and eye ;
Heedless of her baby's cry.

Water—of blest purity
Emblem—do we pour on thee ;
Little one ! regenerate be—

Only by the crimson flood
Of the Spotless ; in the blood
Of the very Son of God !

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost !
Take the feeble, take the lost,
Purchased, once, at Calvary's cost.

Onward !—we have holy joy
Breaking on our sad employ ;
Dea'h ! thou canst not these destroy.

WM. B. TAPPAN.

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