

SERMON

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

MRS. ELIZA M^CINTYRE.

XP6461

A

SERMON

DELIVERED IN THE

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ALBANY,

SUNDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 6, 1859,

ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF

MRS. ELIZA MCINTYRE,

WIFE OF THE LATE

HON. ARCHIBALD MCINTYRE.

BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

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Notes of the Author

TO
DOCTOR ALEXANDER McDONALD,
OF ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND,
HONOURED ON BOTH SIDES OF THE OCEAN FOR HIS GREAT PERSONAL WORTH,
THIS DISCOURSE
IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,
AS A TOKEN OF HIGH REGARD FOR HIMSELF,
AND AS
AN HUMBLE TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF HIS LAMENTED SISTER.
WHOM TO KNOW WAS TO VENERATE AND LOVE,
BY HIS SINCERE FRIEND,

W. B. S.

SERMON.

JOHN XI, 38.

JESUS, THEREFORE, AGAIN GROANING IN HIMSELF, COMETH TO
THE GRAVE.

Our blessed Lord Jesus became man that He might exalt and glorify humanity. In fulfilling his mission upon earth, He identified Himself with those to whom He came to minister, not merely by sympathising in their varied experiences, but by becoming Himself the subject of like experiences, as far as would consist with his immaculate purity. He was no enemy to social enjoyment; for we find Him putting forth his miraculous power in aid of the innocent festivities of a wedding. He was at home amidst bleeding hearts; for not only was his own heart full of love and kindness, but it was oppressed with many a burden of sorrow. He mingled freely with the enemies of truth and righteousness,—with those who not only denied and derided his claim to

the Messiahship, but even plotted for his apprehension and death ; for these were among the lost whom He came to save. He met the tempter and vanquished him, thus teaching his disciples to be always girded for conflict. And finally, He showed Himself stronger than death—the lifeless body, at his bidding, became reanimated ; the heart that had ceased beating, re-commenced its pulsations ; and all the functions of the living man came back ; and the mourners, with tears of joy and thankfulness, took again the loved one to their bosoms.

It is to an occasion of this latter kind that our text refers—the grave to which our blessed Saviour had now come was the grave of Lazarus ; where He exhibited the tenderest sympathies of humanity blended with a Divine power and majesty ; where He proved Himself, as He had just before proclaimed Himself, the Resurrection and the Life. Jesus had come to wrest from death one of his victims ; but it is said that he came “groaning in Himself”—which may be regarded as an expression of sympathy in the sorrows of the bereaved ; or perhaps as a rebuke for their immoderate grief ; or possibly as a lamentation over the mortality of

the race. The purpose was speedily accomplished—one omnipotent word brought Lazarus from his grave, and restored him to the embraces of those sisters, one of whom had shown her want of faith by virtually demurring at the procedure which Jesus had directed as immediately preparatory to the stupendous miracle.

It is not my design on this occasion to discourse on the Resurrection of Lazarus, however fruitful the subject is of both instruction and consolation. I have chosen this passage simply because it presents to us our blessed Redeemer in contact with a grave; and I shall consider it as suggesting the SEVERAL RELATIONS WHICH JESUS SUSTAINS TO THE GRAVE.

I. I say then, in the first place, Jesus is the *Light* of the grave.

The grave—what is it but an emblem of darkness and desolation? Those who go thither, go to carry the dead, or to weep over the dead; and how gloomy an errand that is, the bereaved and disconsolate can best tell. Death is not only an inexorable but a mysterious agent—he is not only certain of accomplishing his purpose, but he moves towards it

in deep darkness. You have seen your friend gradually sink under the power of some fatal malady, and at length have realized that you were actually standing in death's presence. You have watched the waning and flickering of the lamp of life ; have noted the longer and yet longer intervals between the pulsations ; have listened to the faint and inarticulate whisper, until it died away into perpetual silence. And then came the dressing for the grave ; and the depositing in the grave ; and that unseen dissolving process at which nature instinctively recoils. Now what is it that this strange agent has accomplished in thus extinguishing the vital principle and, turning the body into a clod ? Here is a problem before which the senses are dumb ; before which Reason, even Philosophy, owns herself confounded—Socrates and Cicero were here nothing more than children, dealing in mere dreamy conjectures—they saw the body perish, but whether the thinking principle perished too, or escaped the visible wreck, was a question which overtasked their highest wisdom ; and, as for the body itself, it never occurred to them as even possible that it was destined to live again. A dark world indeed

must this be to the eye of unassisted reason, when it is so full of graves, and each grave is a scene not only of such utter desolation, but of such profound mystery.

But powerless as are other agencies to illumine the grave, there is one that is adequate to it,—one that has actually done it—I repeat, *Jesus* is the light of the grave. Jesus was the substance, the soul, of the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations; and from the memorable conference between God and the offending pair in the garden of Eden, till the last Jewish prophet had prophesied, and that whole economy had become as a cast-away garment, the darkness that rested over the grave was gradually yielding; and the eye of faith could discern, through the clouds and shadows, a glorious world beyond. But it was not till the incarnation of Jesus,—till He came to be the light of the world,—that He became in the highest sense the light of the grave. Then not only the doctrine of immortality, but the doctrine of a resurrection, stood forth, in bold and luminous letters; the veil was so far withdrawn from the eternal future that men have since been able to discern clearly what they

are hereafter to be, according to the characters which they possess ; and the believer in Jesus can behold an exceeding and eternal weight of glory in store for him, involving the reunion of body and spirit, and the perfection of his entire nature. Whither has fled all that darkness that was but just now brooding over the grave ? Jesus, my Lord, has dissipated it—He has done it by means of the types which He instituted and the prophets whom He inspired ; by the instructions which fell from his own lips as well as from the lips of his commissioned agents ; and above all by the example which He gave, not only by his own power but in his own person, of changing death into life. I can afford to dispense with the oracles of Reason, to look with scorn upon the surmises of Infidelity, since I am permitted to sit at the feet of the Great Teacher and hear Him discourse at large upon that world to which the grave forms the entrance, and to receive from Him the assurance that the grave itself, though its doors be of iron, shall ere long give up that redeemed dust of which it is now the depository.

II. Contemplate Jesus, next, as the *Tenant* of the grave.

Jesus was a wonderful person—He was the only specimen of immaculate humanity that the world has seen since the fall—in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily—and yet He died. And He died, not as men generally die,—by some or other of those mysterious agencies which are incorporated with our physical nature; but his was an extraordinary death—it was a death which earth and hell entered into a conspiracy to render terrible—the hand of torture broke the heart-strings—the weeping heavens and the rending earth signalized the hour. But this event, predetermined as it was in the counsels of Heaven, was itself a conquest over death; and it had in it the elements of all the triumph which God's saints ever have exhibited, ever will exhibit, in the dark valley. Do you ask how the death of Christ thus renders the last enemy weak and harmless? The Gospel, the very heart of the Gospel, supplies the answer. The sting of death is sin. It is the consciousness of guilt that clothes with terror the prospect of a retribution. But the death of Christ

brings in its train both forgiveness and sanctification; and he who is forgiven and sanctified may enter the dark passage without fear, for it is sure to bring him to Heaven. I say then, Christian, the cross on which your Redeemer bled, the sepulchre in which his dead body lay, each conveys to you a right to anticipate death, to encounter death, without faltering. That bloody baptism was for thee; that iron slumber was for thee; and thou mayest well afford to forget death's terrific aspect in the prospect of the glories of an immortal life.

III. Behold in Jesus the *Guardian* of the grave.

True there is that in the decaying, mouldering process consequent upon death, that seems to indicate that the body has become the subject of final abandonment. Not only is this curious fabric reduced to a complete wreck, so that no trace of the Divine workmanship remains, but it becomes, in process of time, literal dust, undistinguishable from that we tread upon—nay, it may fly off upon the winds, so that the same mortal body shall be represented in different lands—it may even nourish the roots of the tree that overshadows us, or

of the plant that yields us food. It certainly looks as if this part of the Creator's handiwork had accomplished its end, and was therefore cast out as nothing worth—but this is the mere report of the senses—faith assures us that a watchful, vigorous, almighty guardianship is still exercised over it, and that even the soul itself is not more safe, though it be inside the gates of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Jesus claims as his own the whole person of every saint,—body as well as spirit—both are alike contemplated in his redeeming plan; both in the sacrifice which He offered on Calvary; and He has pledged Himself that both shall share at last the common redemption. I do not say that the bodies of the saints, as they will be reproduced in the resurrection, will be composed of all the same materials with the bodies which fell into dust; and I know not how near or how remote may be the resemblance of the glorified body to that out of whose ruins it has sprung—it is enough for me to know that it will be *substantially* the same body that dies and that lives again; for as the body is part of the man, and as the whole man is the subject of retribution, this must be so or the prin-

ciple of retribution is sacrificed. I can come to my Redeemer then, and with my last breath commit to Him my body as well as my soul—I can think of that long sleep of the grave without a shudder, knowing as I do that Jesus will be there, and that his care, his blessing, will be extended even to those mouldering remains, to that inanimate dust—nay, if my faith is not shaken by the swellings of Jordan, I can say, Welcome, welcome the grave as a safe and quiet resting place on my upward journey.

IV. I observe, lastly, Jesus is the *Lord* of the grave.

His mediatorial dominion, which comes to Him as the reward of his mediatorial death, is universal—of course it reaches to the grave—it contemplates death as a mere servant, and the triumph of death in respect to the believer as a mere show of power—the keys of the sepulchre are lodged in the hands of Jesus, or rather they belong to Him by mediatorial right; and the authority herein implied He exercises according to the dictates of perfect wisdom. We have already seen that He began to show his power over death before He had yet

Himself submitted to *its* power—in several instances, while He was on earth, the dead heard his voice and came forth; and in what He did then He gave at once an example and a pledge of what He *will* do, when all who have ever slept in the bosom of the earth or in the ocean's depths, shall start forth into life again, and all who have been united to Jesus by faith shall be hailed as heirs of the life everlasting. There are many questions having a bearing upon that august occasion, which, when brought into the strongest light of Revelation, cannot be answered; but that it belongs to Christ's mediatorial office to raise the dead in preparation for the ulterior scenes of the judgment, is as certain as that there is truth in his own declarations. Hear what sublime and consciously authoritative words He spake to the Jews, while they were not only resisting his claims, but seeking to take his life:—"Verily, verily I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." And again: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and

shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.”

Rejoice then, Christian, that the sepulchre falls within the dominion of your own risen Lord. He asserted his dominion over it especially in the act of his resurrection; and then it was that death felt the arm of his power wither. What a blessed thought that the monster, though he seems to be at large, exercising his tyranny at will, never finds a victim but by the permission, and under the direction, of the Son of God. How consoling the reflection that he is bound in such a sense that he cannot even point his finger towards you, unless it be permitted by Him who has given you the gracious pledge that all things shall work together for your good. And even when you fall into the hands of this enemy, you will be held yet more closely than ever in the embraces of the great Mediator; for not only has He given his word that death shall not harm his people, but in that hour of their greatest need, He often fills their hearts to overflowing with the consolations of his grace. And the time

of your remaining under this enemy's power is to be determined not by himself, but by his Conqueror and your Redeemer—if it is to be a long period, it should suffice you to know that his boundless wisdom and grace have ordained it; but you are sure that the day of glorious deliverance will finally come. No matter where your dead body may be laid, the Son of God will make his voice heard there, and, in response to the call, your dust will quicken into a new and glorious organization, and you shall put on your immortal robes; and then death will be swallowed up in victory.

Such are the relations which our Lord Jesus Christ sustains to the grave—Light of the grave—Tenant of the grave—Guardian of the grave—Lord of the grave: and now I ask whether these relations do not supply to the Christian a legitimate ground of triumph in his approach to the grave. Who needs be told that the bed of death sometimes becomes radiant with Heavenly glory, vocal with expressions of transport; so as to cast the brightest previous experiences of the soul into the shade? Who especially that has been professionally conversant with dying scenes,

has not witnessed cases in which the joy of the spirit has seemed completely to neutralize the agony of the body, and the soul, in stretching her wings for her final flight, has felt that she was leaving a Heaven below to enter the Heaven above? I cannot say how often scenes of spurious triumph may be exhibited on the death-bed,—how many may have to exchange, at the gate of eternity, the self-complacent raptures of the hypocrite's hope for the overwhelming conviction that they are entering the world of wo; but let such cases be as numerous as they may, that does not vitiate or even render dubious the death-bed triumph of the true believer. The secret of all *his* triumph is that he is united to the Lord Jesus by faith; and that, though death may effect a temporary separation of soul and body, here is a bond of union that is proof against his power. Jesus has poured light upon the grave; and in that light why should I not walk both securely and serenely? Jesus has, in his own person, encountered death, and plucked out his sting; and wherefore, if I am a disciple, should I dread to meet that stingless, harmless enemy? Jesus will be always round about my grave;

and his all-seeing eye and almighty arm will be put in requisition to guard my slumbering dust; and wherefore should I fear the mouldering process, or any other process, to which my mortal remains may be subjected? Jesus reigns throughout all the regions of the dead; and ere long He will speak a word that will open every grave; and reorganize every human body; and clothe the bodies of his saints in glorious attire, thus fitting them to be presented before the eternal throne;—and wherefore should I, if He has written my name among his ransomed ones, be afraid of that which is the certain harbinger of a glorious renovation? Or rather, why should I not cheerfully, joyfully resign my body to the grave, knowing that the day of its final redemption will seal my complete and everlasting triumph in Heaven? The grave does indeed present a terrible aspect to all but the true believer in Jesus; and though others may seem to contemplate it with calm unconcern, or meet it with heroic self-possession, rest assured that the very soul of these demonstrations is delusion and madness. I have heard of the warrior dying triumphantly on the bat-

tle-field, when his triumph was identified with bloody victory—I have heard words of resignation, if not of joyful confidence, spoken upon a death-bed where the reliance was not upon Jesus, but upon personal merit—I have seen death apparently welcomed merely as a relief from life's cares and burdens, just as if it were the beginning of a perpetual night of unconsciousness—in each of these cases, I have shuddered at the terrible deception,—at the terrible revelation. . . But when I have seen the Christian bright and strong and joyful in his conflict, I have said, *let him triumph—it becometh him to triumph* ; for there, in the act of dying, he is holding communion with the Lord of the sepulchre, and one step more will land him amidst the glories of the Heavenly city.

In giving direction to your meditations this morning, I have found myself shut up to the one great and precious theme on which I have been discoursing to you. This theme has been presented to me from amidst the mingled sufferings and triumphs of a death-bed. An aged, beloved, revered member of this church has just gone up to her final rest ; and so much was the name of Jesus upon her lips,

so firmly did she cling to his promises, so earnestly did she exhort those around her to accept his proffered grace, and so manifest was it that love to Him breathed in her last words and glowed in her last pulsations, that I can think of her only as I saw her resting on her Redeemer's arm, and as faith brings her before me now, casting her crown at her Redeemer's feet. I can appeal to all who had access to that privileged chamber, for the fact that the very atmosphere around her death-bed seemed impregnated with thankfulness and praise to the Lamb that was slain. Jesus, the Divine Teacher; Jesus, the Atoning Sacrifice; Jesus, the All-prevailing Intercessor; Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life,—every thing else seemed merged in grateful adoration of *Him*, and in the effort to bring others to test the healing virtues of his Cross. I say, therefore, I could not have selected any other topic than the one which I have now presented to you, without consciously ignoring what seem to me the special claims of the occasion. To her many grateful and loving words about Jesus, to her expressions of boundless confidence in his love and grace, and to the Hea-

venly glow that lighted up her countenance as often as his name was upon her lips, my mind has instinctively recurred as suggesting a train of thought, at once most grateful to my own feelings, and best fitted to honour her precious memory.

I will not dissemble the fact that, grateful as it is to me to speak out my convictions in respect to the character of our departed friend, there is a double reason why the service embarrasses me—I cannot do her even the feeblest justice without saying that which I know her extraordinary humility and modesty would have forbidden: but I am constrained to believe that God does not design that the vail should fall upon such a character as hers, as soon as the grave has claimed the mortal body; and I cannot doubt that if she could speak to me from amidst the scenes in which she now mingles, she would bid me lose sight of all other considerations in the one desire and endeavour to extend and perpetuate her posthumous usefulness. And then again, I cannot forget that I am speaking in the presence of some who knew her intimately, and of others who had only a general acquaintance

with her, and of course saw only the exterior of her life ; and I can easily imagine that statements which to the latter class may seem exaggerated by personal regard and affection, may to the former appear like a meagre and very inadequate representation. I think I may safely say that I knew her as well as I have known any one ; and if I can succeed in even faintly conveying to you my impression of the beauty and excellence of her character, I cannot doubt that I shall have performed a service profitable to you and acceptable to her Lord and ours.

MRS. MCINTYRE was born in Scotland, October 27, 1781, and came to this country when she was about twelve years of age. Shortly after her arrival, she was placed by her father, the Rev. John McDonald, at the celebrated Moravian School at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where she remained for several years. Many of the acquaintances which she formed there were among the most cherished of her whole life ; and the venerable men and women who not only gave direction to her studies, but most faithfully watched over all her interests, she used often to speak of, almost to her dying

day, in terms both of warm affection and of high admiration. Indeed, though she frequently spoke most tenderly and gratefully of her mother's watchful care and good influence during her earliest years, I am inclined to think that it was among the United Brethren at Bethlehem that she received those more decided and mature impressions that gave the ultimate complexion to her character.

From the time of her marriage to Mr. McIntyre in 1804, she lived successively in this city, in Philadelphia, and in New York, and in 1835 returned to this place to pass the remainder of her life. The family became at that time connected with this congregation, and in January, 1837, Mrs. McIntyre transferred her relation to this church from the Murray Street Church in New York. Her health, which has never been firm since she last became a resident here, has, for several years past, been exceedingly frail, insomuch that her attendance in the house of God has been subject to frequent and sometimes protracted interruptions. At the time of the death of her lamented husband, she was so ill that we supposed she would quickly follow him

to his rest ; but the great recuperative power of her constitution, with God's blessing, brought her back to a comparatively comfortable state, though her life ever since has been at best an alternation between feeble health and an oppressive and exhausting malady. In the latter part of the last summer she found herself so much invigorated that she yielded to the earnest request of her son to pass a little time at his house in the country ; and there she remained several weeks, enjoying the pure air and the bright landscape, and being ministered to by loved and loving ones ; and when she came back to her own home, a few weeks since, so much was her health improved that we ventured fondly to hope that her cheerful and kindly presence might for years to come be the light of that dwelling. But it turned out that she had made her last visit, and had come home only to fall into her Saviour's arms and die. We flattered ourselves at first that it was only a passing cloud, and that relief would come after a few days ; but while we were looking for the favourable change, the signs of danger and of death kept multiplying, until we heard that mother in Israel bidding us her

last adieu, and saw her actually making the transition from earth to Heaven.

Mrs. McIntyre's character, in order to be rightly estimated, must be viewed as the joint product of nature, culture, and grace. That which more than any thing else constituted the source of its power, was living faith in her Redeemer, or a principle of vital godliness. This sanctified and elevated all her fine intellectual, moral and social qualities; and it had scarcely less to do with the loveliness of her demeanour than the usefulness of her life.

Our departed friend was constituted by her Creator with a mind clear, comprehensive, well balanced, and susceptible of any degree of improvement. It was indeed eminently a practical mind, and delighted to contemplate things in the light of common sense; and yet it was capable of a sustained process of vigorous thought, and of moving with graceful facility in the domain of cultivated taste. Her discernment of character seemed well-nigh intuitive—though her benevolence pre-disposed her to contemplate it through a sunny medium, she rarely failed in just appreciation of the intellectual and moral qualities with

which she came in contact. And her mind was not only richly endowed but highly cultivated—her excellent advantages at Bethlehem she improved with the utmost diligence; and even amidst the manifold cares of subsequent life, she was always a vigorous reader, and read such books, and in such a manner, as contributed to her constant intellectual growth. Her instinctively retiring spirit served, in ordinary intercourse, to keep her superior acquirements as well as natural gifts in the shade; but those who knew her well, knew that she possessed a mind, which, for original endowments, solid acquisitions, and even graceful accomplishments, placed her among the most favoured of her sex.

Passing from the intellectual to the moral and spiritual, the quality which perhaps seemed most patent and all pervading was benevolence;—a benevolence not less remarkable for its searching eye than its open hand;—a benevolence that never knew what it was to be either passive or weary; that never quailed before difficulties; that never waited for a more convenient season; that took its type from Him “who went about doing good.”

Sometimes a generous Christian heart is fettered in its actings by the want of means; and it may be that God alone, who searches the heart, is witness to its benevolent impulses and aspirations; but the friend whom we lament, was, during a considerable part of her life, in circumstances which enabled her to make full proof of her charity. She shared the princely spirit of her husband, not only rejoicing in the noble contributions which he made, from time to time, in aid of the great objects of Christian benevolence, but distributing largely with her own hand, and in her own quiet way, to the necessities of the poor, and especially to sustain those institutions among us which are designed for the relief of human suffering. And while she gave freely for these objects, she gave intelligently also; for such was the interest that she felt in them, that she kept herself well informed of their progress, and indeed was the guiding spirit of many of the more important movements by which they were sustained. The death of her husband made her God's almoner on a larger scale than she had ever been before; and I am myself a witness that, even while she lay upon a sick-bed,

where most others would have been absorbed in their own sufferings, she never forgot a contribution that was taken here, and never failed to be represented in it by a liberal offering. But a few days since,—just before our last Communion, she placed in my hands, as I was leaving her bedside, the amount which I suppose she was accustomed to give to the poor of the church; and there was abundant evidence that her considerate and generous spirit remained in full vigour until her heart had done beating.

But her benevolence took on other forms than that of almsgiving—she contemplated with the deepest compassion all whom she saw wandering in forbidden ways; and her fertile mind teemed with expedients for their recovery. Instead of approaching them with a spirit of harsh rebuke, she would go gently and tenderly, apologizing, as far as she could, for the evils which she wished to correct, and producing an atmosphere around her in which it would seem as if vice could not live for an hour. Sometimes there were obstacles which forbade her access to the person whom she wished to benefit; and then she would silently put in

requisition the most fitting agencies for the accomplishment of her purpose,—still, however, keeping an intelligent and watchful eye upon every effort that was put forth, and gathering fresh encouragement from even the feeblest indications of success.

Let me add that her benevolence, admirably tempered by consideration, shone forth in the ordinary intercourse of life. She wished to see every one around her happy; and so strong and enduring was this desire, that, even on her death-bed, she sought to produce a smile on the face of one of her granddaughters, whose deep sadness attracted her notice, and evidently distressed her. I am sure she never uttered a word to give needless pain to any human being; and I may add, so far as my own knowledge extends, a word that she had occasion to regret. She knew as well as others the imperfections of her fellow-creatures, but she seemed never to regard them as a suitable subject for conversation; and when her excellent husband, with an honesty that sometimes forgot extreme caution, would deliver opinions of individuals in a less gentle tone than her feelings would dictate, I have

been amused at the facility with which she would interpose a remark, suggesting something by way of apology, and pleasantly hinting at the obligation to forbearance.

Another prominent trait in Mrs. McIntyre's character was her strong sense of right—her uncompromising fidelity to her convictions. To yield her own convenience or even comfort to please, and especially to benefit, others, never seemed to be a sacrifice; and in all matters which she considered as involving nothing of moral obligation, the reed that bends gracefully to the blast is not more pliable than was she. But when a question involving truth and right presented itself, she took her ground with a firmness that nothing could shake, and held it with a tenacity that nothing could relax. Her bland and gentle spirit, and her desire to please others rather than herself, did not forsake her even then; but there was another and higher principle in operation, to whose dictates she never offered even a compromise—it was the principle of conscience,—the inward revealer, or rather interpreter, of God's will—and where that testified clearly, she never paused to take counsel of expediency. It was

delightful to observe how, amidst so much that was quiet and meek and lovely, that mighty power within would rise in majesty, and carry its purposes over all the opposition that could be arrayed against it.

I must not omit to mention also her great delight in the word and ordinances of God. She studied the Bible with a devotion that never tired—its truths were systematically arranged in her mind, and were always undergoing the process of spiritual digestion by meditation and prayer. Her joy was especially in the tabernacles of the Lord—her seat here was never vacant when she was able to occupy it; and no worshipper, I am sure, listened to God's truth more earnestly, or bowed before his throne more reverently. The ordinance commemorative of her Redeemer's death was with her always an object of devout and grateful expectation; and, after it was past, she would sometimes speak of it as having marked a precious and joyful season.

But that which may be said to have formed the graceful crown to that bright assemblage of qualities of which her character was composed, was her modesty and humility. This was

apparent not only in the manner in which she bestowed her benefactions, but in her intercourse with her friends,—in all that she said and did,—nay, in the very expression of her countenance. But it was in her Christian relations that her lowly opinion of herself was most strikingly exhibited. She was as far as possible from that kind of humility that loves to go upon the house top and proclaim the sins over which it professes to mourn; that leaves the door of its closet open that others may hear how loud and hearty are its confessions: but she was always oppressed by a sense of her deep unworthiness; always felt that she had not a particle of merit on which to build her hope of Heaven; and to the few Christian friends whom she admitted into the sanctuary of her confidence, she sometimes uttered expressions of self-condemnation and contrition, such as are scarcely to be found, out of the fifty-first Psalm. And with these expressions she was sure to connect the most grateful recognition of God's love in making such wonderful provision for cancelling her guilt and restoring her to his favour.

Mrs. McIntyre adorned every relation she sustained, and shone in every sphere in which she moved; but nowhere did her character present stronger attractions than in her own quiet and happy home. Her movements were noiseless as the falling dew; and yet combined with that calm dignity that every one admired so much, was a discretion that ordered all things well, and an efficiency that rarely failed of its object. Her domestic relations, especially those of wife and mother, were channels of perpetual blessing. Her conjugal devotion, through her whole married life, is said to have been extraordinary; and no less extraordinary was that of which she was herself the object. It was not till they were both far advanced in life that it was my privilege to know them; but I can truly say that I have never seen a husband and wife who seemed bound more closely together, or whose whole life was a more untiring mutual ministration of considerate kindness. The latter years of Mr. McIntyre were years of great bodily infirmity, his sight and hearing being nearly gone, and his limbs having contracted a rigidity which rendered it difficult for him to move—but she was

eyes, ears, and feet to him—with a vigilance that was never intermitted, with a tender assiduity that no amount of care or labour could weary, she was always, like a ministering angel, at his side, ready to meet every want the moment it was indicated. It was no doubt one of the sorest trials of her life that, when he who had so long been the object of her loving and watchful solicitude came to die, she was herself confined by severe illness in another room, and thus was denied the privilege of ministering to him in the last hour. But she was several times assisted into his chamber, that she might look upon the face that was never to smile upon her again, and mark his calm and gradual approach to immortality. And, after death's work was done, she went, I believe, more than once, supported by some one of her family and her God, and stood tremblingly beside the mortal remains, amidst the overflowings of the deepest sorrow. I never witnessed a scene at once more full of conjugal endearment, and more expressive of humble and quiet trust. We feared that she would scarcely survive the separation; but aided, I doubt not, by the soothing influence

of faith, her system quickly rallied, and, for nearly a year and a half, she has been spared, a cheering and blessed presence to the few who have had access to her in her retirement; though I may safely say that her heart's pulsations always quickened at the mention or the remembrance of the companion of her life, to whom she expected so soon to be restored in a state of perfect and endless bliss.

The same qualities that so elevated her character as a wife, rendered her also one of the best of mothers. In the happiness and usefulness of her children, her own earthly happiness was in a great measure bound up—whatever promised well to their interests, lifted her heart to God in thanksgiving; whatever touched them adversely, touched the apple of her eye. Five out of her eight children had gone to the grave before her,—some of them in the early budding of their faculties, and some after they had reached mature years, and had been advanced to a sphere of active Christian usefulness—these cherished ones whom the grave had claimed were often upon her lips, and her confident expectation of meeting them in Heaven was no doubt one element

of her joy in the prospect of her departure. Her children who survived to minister to her last wants and hear her last words, she bore upon her heart and upon her lips till death's hand was upon her ; and her warm expressions of love towards them, even after the process of dying had begun, were but a fitting termination of a long course of almost unexampled maternal watchfulness and fidelity.

In the brief notice which I have taken of Mrs. McIntyre's life, I have purposely omitted the details of the closing scene, because I wished to use them as material for the more full illustration of her beautiful character ; and now, when my mind recurs to them in this connection, they come up before me in such variety and amplitude, that I am embarrassed in making a selection. The whole period of her decline, dating back to the time of her husband's death, has been marked by such tranquil submission to the Divine will, such joyful confidence in her Redeemer's power and grace, and so many casual indications of a deep and intelligent Christian experience, that my visits to her chamber or her bedside have been among the most refreshing and edifying scenes of my

whole pastoral life. But her last week on earth was literally crowded with incidents that never could have occurred, with sayings that never could have been uttered, except at the gate of Heaven; though what they were in all their impressive sublimity, can never be fully known to any who were outside of that privileged chamber. The first thing that impressed me was that another being was before me—not another in respect to the essential elements of her character, but another in regard to her demonstrations. I had never seen her before when her quiet and lowly spirit had not kept her comparatively silent, especially in the presence of others, in regard to the inward and the upward workings of her own soul; and when she spoke at all, it was generally to express her own deep sense of personal unworthiness. But in the wonderful change that came over her in the near approach of death, there was a fresh infusion of confidence and courage into her soul; her tongue, which had before seemed holden, was loosed; and though her humility was not abated, it was qualified and illumined by triumph. As I listened to her emphatic expressions of confidence in the Saviour, and

saw how she was well-nigh entranced in visions of immortal glory, I could not but think of the eloquence of Isaiah when his heart was most full of the promised Saviour, or of Paul when, standing on the threshold of Heaven, he anticipated the record of his own triumphant departure. The Bible, which had been the study of her whole life, seemed entirely at her command, and she drew from it with beautiful appropriateness to express not only her gratitude, her humility, her confidence of being united to Christ and of being an heir to the Heavenly inheritance, but even her own physical sufferings and her concern for the interests of those around her. With the utmost discrimination and adaptedness she addressed all the members of her family and other friends who were present, giving counsels to each that were dictated by the highest wisdom as well as the purest affection. And she forgot not her absent friends—to some she sent tender and faithful messages—to two venerable mothers in Israel especially,—like herself widows indeed,—for whom she had long cherished almost a sister's love, she asked that her dying regards might be presented. It was wonder-

ful how her mind, by a glance, seemed to pass over her whole life. She went back to the time when she was the object of her mother's gentle and watchful care. She called up her emotions when, at the age of twelve, she crossed the ocean, and was overwhelmed by a sense of the mighty power of God, as she saw the skies above and the billows beneath. She dwelt with manifest delight upon her school days at Bethlehem, and invoked some of her loved companions there, and tenderly and reverently called the name of one of the venerable sisters of the establishment, who taught her a favourite hymn, that, by her request, was then read to her. She had been all her life a lover of poetry, especially of sacred poetry; and many choice specimens of it were treasured up in her memory; and these were often put in requisition to grace the fine sentiments which her heart was constantly breathing forth. At one time she quoted a quaint but beautiful stanza from the Scotch version of the Psalms; and at the same moment looking up to me, with an expression of countenance that exactly suited the remark, said,—“I am an old Scotch woman—I was familiar with that

old version of the Psalms in my childhood, and I have not ceased to love it, now that I am old." As I knew how precious the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to her, and that she had not had the privilege for a long time of partaking of it, I intimated to her, about a fortnight before her death, my willingness to administer to her the ordinance whenever she should desire; but she seemed to hesitate as to the propriety of it, chiefly as I thought, on the ground that it would be a departure from the common order of the church. A week later, however, when the symptoms of death had become more decisive, and I referred again to the subject, she gave a cheerful assent to my suggestion, and expressed a wish to receive the consecrated memorials at once. And then we knelt at that bedside where death was beginning to make himself visible, and where faith was achieving one of its most glorious triumphs, to testify together once more our grateful sense of our Redeemer's love, and to receive unitedly a fresh baptism from his Cross. As her decayed but venerable form was slightly raised in order to her receiving the elements, her countenance took on an expression that

seemed like a reflection of celestial glory, and it filled our hearts with mingled joy and sadness to think that she would no more drink of the fruit of the vine until she drank it new with Jesus in his Father's Kingdom. In one of the prayers, her children and grandchildren were commended to God's gracious blessing; and the moment the service closed, she assumed a look of unwonted earnestness, and said in a clear, loud voice,—“My brother!” I knew at once the import of the exclamation, and we instantly joined in supplication for her venerable and only surviving brother, still in her native country, towards whom her heart was always going out in expressions of the warmest affection. When this prayer had been offered, she indicated that it was enough; and from that time she seemed to be waiting for the summons to ascend. She lived, however, three days after this; but her exercises, her utterances were all triumphant.

Death began his work by palsyng first one hand and then the other; and when one who loved her much was turning away from her bedside in the full confidence that he should never hear her voice again, she indicated her

wish that her already lifeless hands might be placed in his, as the last token of affectionate recognition that her loving heart could give—and gratitude stands pledged that that beautiful memorial shall never die. We could not forbear the impression that we were standing in the presence of immortality; that we were watching the movements of a spirit in the act of being glorified. We wept—how could we avoid it—when we knew that the last flickering of the lamp of life was gone; but our tears ceased to flow when faith had had time to re-collect its energies and pierce the veil; for there was our friend, standing before the throne, unharmed by death; clothed in blood-washed robes; her voice trembling with ecstasy as she sounded her first notes in the immortal song.

And now let us pause and take the measure, as far as we can, of the goodness and wisdom of God as displayed in the life and character of this lamented saint. It was in an eminently favoured land, and amidst the most benign domestic influences, that she first saw the light, and spent several of her earliest years; for though her father migrated to this country when she had just passed the period of infancy,

she remained under the care of one of the best of mothers until she crossed the ocean herself. During the years which she spent in Scotland, she was brought in contact at her mother's house with some of the most excellent ministers of the day, especially the venerable Dr. Waugh, one of her father's most intimate friends; and, though a mere child, it was evident, from her fond and enduring recollections of these men, that they had cast some good seed into her youthful mind. Then, on her arrival in this country, she was placed at probably the very best school which the country then afforded for the education of young females; a school in which the heart and the head were cared for alike, and every thing that Christian gentleness and watchfulness united with high intelligence and vigorous effort, could do, was done to form at once the most solid and the most attractive character. By her marriage she was brought in immediate contact with a mind of great clearness and force, that never halted at obstacles, and made no compromise with what it believed to be evil. In sharing her husband's earlier fortunes, she was tried in one way; in sharing his later ones,

she was tried in another ; and the result in each case was that the appropriate qualities were beautifully developed, and her whole character matured, strengthened, elevated. Death, from time to time, found a victim among her children, towards whom her affection was nothing less than devotion ; but her Christian graces manifestly brightened in the furnace. At length she saw the object of her long continued tender solicitude pass away ; and, though her heart heaved with bitter sorrow, she could still rest upon God's gracious promises as a rock in the midst of the tempest. Age laid its heavy burdens upon her ; and in the train of age came wasting disease ; but both were charged with blessing—both helped to illumine her passage into Heaven. Thus, after a long life crowned with mercy,—a life which had been constantly working itself into something more pure and elevated,—a life whose influence beamed forth in love and power upon all within her reach, she lay down upon her bed to die. And there we heard her use her expiring breath in honour of her gracious Lord. We knew the monster,—that creature of darkness, was hovering about her, and we saw her look him in the face and

smile. And when we left her in her last lowly resting place, we needed no voice from Heaven to assure us that we left her in charge of the Resurrection and the Life, who would ere long command that corruptible to put on incorruption. What thanks shall we not render to Him who made her what she was, who endowed her with her admirable intellectual and moral constitution, whose Providence and Spirit combined to mould her into one of the most beautiful specimens of his own spiritual workmanship, and who finally took her up, as if in a chariot of glory, to join in angelic ministrations around the throne ! And if God displays so much goodness towards *one* of his ransomed ones, what say you of that boundless triumph of his mercy that shall be exhibited in forming and perfecting all his saints, and finally gathering them into one glorified community, at once the witnesses and the sharers of the Mediator's triumph.

Blessed are they who are permitted to walk in the light of God's saints. Blessed especially are those children who have always seen living Christianity identified with maternal love ; in whose hallowed remembrances a mother's

triumphant death scene lives, not only as a precious memorial of the Saviour's grace and power, but as a bright angel, perpetually breathing peace, and pointing upward, and whispering words of Heavenly counsel. Blessed are they of furrowed cheeks and tottering steps, who have walked in the way to Heaven with precious helpers who have gone up before them—for the embalmed memories of departed saints form a blessed ministration within : and Heaven looks brighter in the prospect, and will be more welcome in the realization, for having gathered to itself these most cherished of the heart's treasures. Blessed is that Church in which Christians of noble stature live long to glorify their Redeemer and Lord ; aye, blessed even in giving up such spirits to mingle in higher scenes. Let our mourning then to-day be tempered with gratitude, and our thoughts of death qualified and brightened by thoughts of Heaven. Let the blessed dead cheer us on in our upward course, and may each new made Christian grave become to us a fresh helper towards the glorious world unseen !