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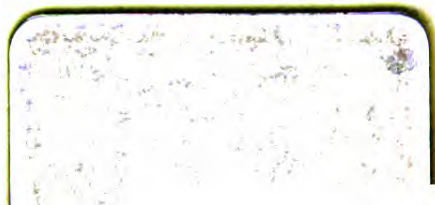
A VOICE  
FROM THE  
CLOUD OF WITNESSES

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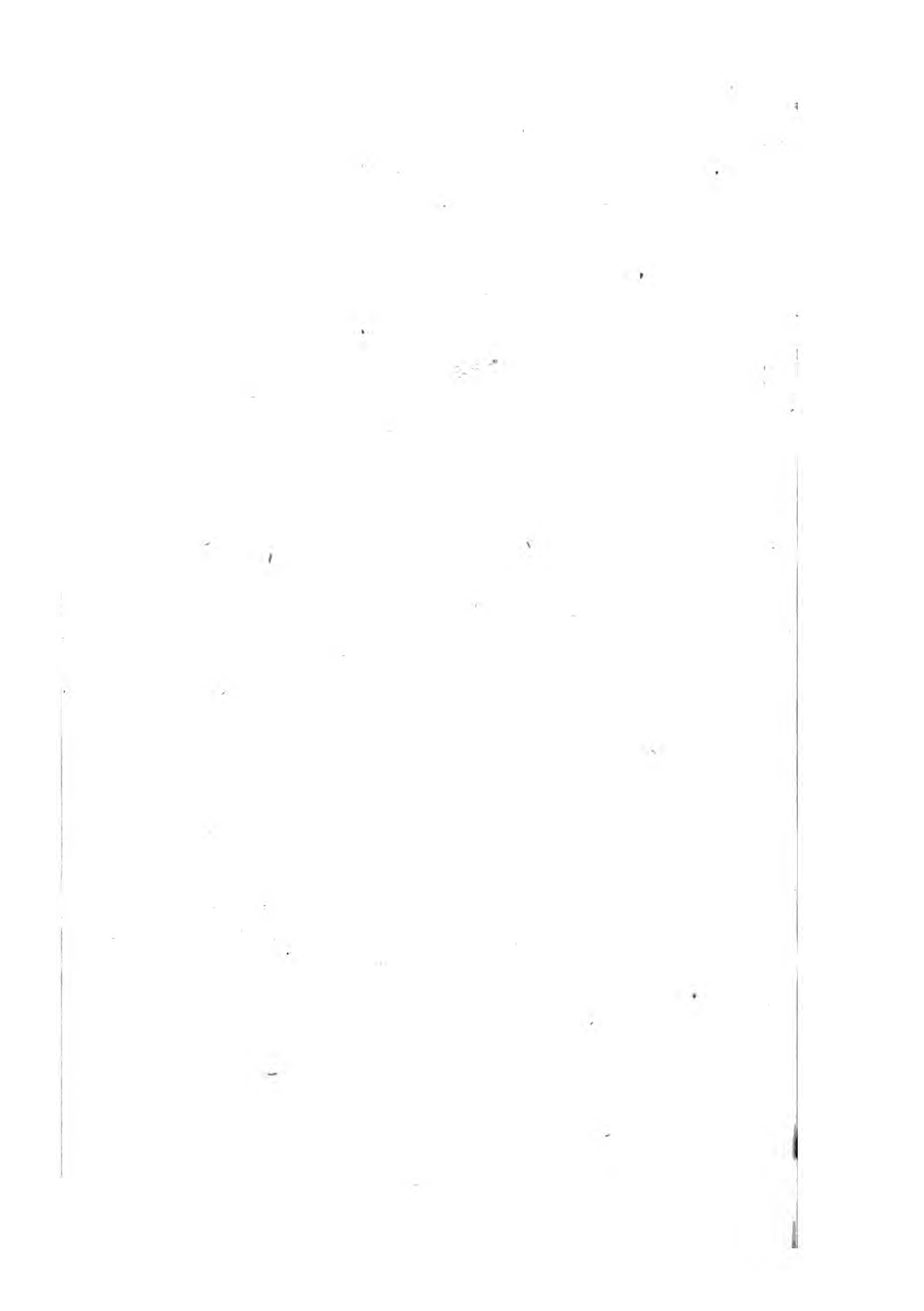




A VOICE

FROM THE

CLOUD OF WITNESSES.



**A VOICE**  
**FROM THE**  
**CLOUD OF WITNESSES:**

**LETTERS MEMORIAL**  
**OF**  
**THE LATE MRS. MARTIN,**  
**OF WHITEFIELD CHAPEL.**

**BY HER HUSBAND.**



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TYP.,  
15, FRITH STREET, SOHO.

## PREFACE.

OUR heavenly Father wills that we also should be heavenly. But we are strangely reluctant even to contemplate our future everlasting home, and therefore he frequently resorts to very affecting methods to induce us to look stedfastly at things within the veil. He sometimes gives us a very precious treasure, allows it to become a powerful magnet, and then deprives us of it by taking it to himself. We are thus allured to look after that which is gone; heaven thereby becomes a more manifest reality and more attractive—part of our very self being there; we are led to long for reunion, and become “followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

Hence the motto of this memorial. It explains the position and purpose of the writer. Having of late been led to look thoughtfully at “The great Cloud of Witnesses;” being desirous of listening to the testimony of

one whose living voice has been hushed in death ; hearing solemn but soothing sounds ; receiving comfort, instruction, motives to holiness, and heavenward tendencies, he is now anxious that others may receive the same. The idea of publication, however, was not his own—that was very remote from his first intentions ; but he was persuaded to this by many who thought that, by thus gratifying friends, he might pay a tribute of affectionate respect to departed excellence ; perpetuate and extend the influence of a holy life now closed ; construct a monument to the honour of the Redeemer ; and help onward that cause to which the subject of this memorial was so zealously devoted. Many of the reflections were penned for the writer's personal improvement, or in reply to letters of condolence and sympathy received in the hour of sorrow. The epistolary style is therefore retained ; that being the original form, thought and feeling flow most naturally in this channel ; at the same time it is hoped that it will not be less interesting and instructive to the reader. He offers no apology for placing his relative in the "Cloud of Witnesses," nor for the lofty tone of confidence and fond affection that pervades the following pages ; since the New Testament warrants us in believing that when

the living testimony terminates in this world, the Witness joins the company of the faithful above, and may henceforth be regarded as addressing us from heaven. And if so, the amazing elevation of relatives and friends, by increasing our affection for them, justifies and renders natural and appropriate, language, even more confident and endearing than would have been becoming whilst they were on the earth, imperfect at best, though highly esteemed.

The author commends his memorial to the candid and devout consideration of the reader, and to the guardianship and grace of the Divine Spirit, who is able to make it the means of consolation to those bereaved of pious friends; awakening the unprepared; quickening spiritual life; stimulating the disciple to diligence and activity; and of reproducing in many the character it so imperfectly describes.

DECEMBER, 1849.



### Memory of the Just.

YOUR request, my dear friend, has placed me in a very serious difficulty. You ask me to write my reflections upon an event that has absorbed my mind more than anything that has happened to me—that has plunged me into depths before unknown, unfathomed, unfelt—that has caused a revolution in my nature paralleled only by the conversion of the heart to God—and that has been accompanied with heart-withering, distressing conditions of the inner man.

I never felt so much as I do now, that there is a sacredness in deep sorrow that shrinks from human inspection, and, may I add, human criticism. There is an awfulness in God's profound dealings in the discipline of his children that seals the lip and dries the pen. There are thinkings, questionings, forebodings, speculations, sorrowings, from which intense communion with the Saviour is the only relief.

Ah! how everything reminds me of my loss. I had once, and yet but recently, one to whom I could confidently communicate everything; but that soul of sympathy has been taken from me into another world, and an insuperable barrier excludes all intercourse. To every question the answer is, Wait a little, do God's will, then "Come and see."

But you very properly remind me that I am not my own; that we are stewards of all our possessions; that ministers are distressed, tempted, tried, and comforted, not only for their own sakes, but for the good of the community; and, above all, that God may be glorified by a revelation of the internal and spiritual life.

Here, then, is the difficulty your affectionate request has placed me in. It has caused a struggle between inclination and duty, between the feelings of the husband and the duties of the minister; and led me to ponder the question—whether I am called upon to undergo a process of self-dissection; to sacrifice personal feeling for the public good?

At the same time, and in perfect harmony with these remarks, I am free to confess that it is not without considerable pleasure I think, or speak, or write upon this subject. The

memory of departed believers is a precious heritage to the survivors; the blessed associations of a holy, amiable, and useful life are valuable spiritual riches; and whatever tends to recall them, increases their value, gives them additional power in our nature, evolves life from death, and perpetuates and augments the moral influence on earth of those who have gone before us to glory.

If so, there is exquisite bliss in the thought, that when we cannot, as hitherto, minister to them bodily, they being out of the reach of all want, we can manifest our affection still; yes, and in a way that will react upon them in heaven; for, by increasing their usefulness, undoubtedly we increase their bliss. Some may smile at this, as the fancy of a fond husband; but may he not tell them that the holy on earth and the holy in heaven constitute one grand communion; that there is in the universe not only an intercommunity of nations, but of worlds; that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth; that the dead are blessed that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them? From all which may we not conclude that it may be something more than fancy, but a soul-thrilling fact, that by per-



petuating the influence of our loved ones, we may be adding to their joy even in glory?

In writing my reflections, I purpose to follow the order in which they have occurred to me—being the most natural, if not the most logical; and it will enable you to mark the method of divine discipline, as well as the sources of Christian consolation.

May I ask you to join with the writer in earnest supplication, that this effort to honour the Redeemer in the affectionate remembrance of one of his flock, may advance his glory, and the spiritual good of multitudes.

*Absent from the body, present with the Lord.*

It is the duty and privilege of believers to avail themselves of all the consolation derivable from the gospel. The great Refiner, in sanctifying his people, frequently brings them into circumstances of such deep desolateness, that they are thrown upon their bare principles; when, looking round upon the whole creation, they find nothing firm enough to support them—no foot-hold, no hand-hold—a chasm has been created in all their comforts, a blank in all their blessings; and when, if it were not for the immutable truths of Scripture, they would sink into inconsolable grief. But then it is that the sympathising Saviour reveals himself to his suffering servants; and, placing himself under them as a rock, keeps them from sinking in the deep waters; whilst he opens to the eye of faith the wonders of his

grace, and pours into the heart the divinest balm.

Thus it has happened to me. When the spirit of my precious wife had fled, instantly the question came—Where is my Martha now? “Man dieth and giveth up the ghost, and where is he?” Ah, where? The universe is vast, its regions, its inhabitants, its climates various; there are stupendous heights of bliss, but there are also tremendous depths of woe. Where, amidst all these, is she who was just now here? Here it becomes a Christian to triumph in his principles. What answer has the infidel to give to this question, prompted by nature, by reason, by affection? NONE! Does he, then, in looking over the dark frontier of death, look at *nothing*? What a blank—a dark, dreary, dismal blank, is the creed of the infidel! Oh, the agony of thinking that all that lovely life is swallowed up in everlasting death! that all those sweet, holy affections, all those mental and moral riches, all those capacities of enjoyment and usefulness, all, all, extinguished for ever!

But does the infidel really see nothing? hear nothing? feel nothing? Is there no dreadful apprehension that there may be something for him to meet after death? But to us, my dear

friend, there is an answer ; and I write now to tell you that it came from the holy oracle in a moment, and with such power, that ever since my associations have been with her, not as slumbering or mouldering in the cemetery at Abney Park, but as a most blessed and glorified immortal in the presence of the Redeemer and the redeemed. Text after text came bright and beaming with the sublimest comfort to my afflicted spirit, imparting such an energy, that I arose and went to console the mourners ; mourners indeed !—smitten as with a thunderbolt, and at an hour they did not expect.

I must not lengthen this letter by enumerating the passages of Scripture as they occurred ; they are familiar to every Christian ; they form the sublime hill-top of contemplation, far above the mists, the shadows, the gloom of this lower world ; from off which he can, by faith, behold the magnificent metropolis of Jehovah's empire, the holy home of the blessed ; and if his friend has left behind a proof of discipleship, he can with the calmest confidence believe that, absent from the body, he is present with the Lord ; that death is swallowed up of life ; life in death, rather than death in life.

This was the first river of consolation, and I

drank deeply; my spirit was thirsty. Apt as others to be invaded by that terrible evil, unbelief; often having to dispute every inch of territory with this mortal foe, I needed more than ordinary evidence—evidence proportionable to the depth of affection for her who had gone. The least shadow of doubt would have been death to me. Oh, how I feel for those who<sup>s</sup> have no hope! But you know, my dear friend, how little cause I had to doubt of her eternal safety, who believed, loved, adored, and served the Saviour with extraordinary devotedness, and who fell a sacrifice in his service. True, there is a want we must all feel; we cannot figure any form to our minds; imagination presents no image of departed friends; but we may know what is infinitely better: that death is no interruption to spiritual life; that the spirit is fully awake with all its immortal faculties, energies, and possessions; that, with one mighty bound, it soars into the limitless expanse of truth, of love, of God. Yes, that loving soul is now embosomed in infinite love; that intellect is now in the region of perfect knowledge; that zealous spirit is now burning with cherub, seraph, and saint in the intensest ardour; that sensitive nature, with all its exquisite susceptibilities,

is in consummate blessedness. This is our consolation.

For this we are indebted altogether to the Son of God, who brought life and immortality to light. Let us comfort one another with these words.

### Cause of Death.

WHEN a crushing calamity comes upon us, it is like a tremendous threatening thunder-cloud, overshadows our prospects, blots out the sun, and the luminaries of heaven are extinguished; we are terrified, dismayed, bewildered; can understand nothing, lost in mysteriousness; but, if patient, prayerful, believing, by-and-by the cloud begins to disperse, gleams of light break through the darkness, and we are enabled by degrees to look on the scene calmly, and, as it brightens, to understand somewhat of its solemn import.

And here I cannot but remark, what an amazing assistance it is when we can repose with comfort in a well-grounded belief in the safety of our departed friends; all solicitude about them ceasing, we can with fortitude and faith apply our minds to study the dispensations of Providence. I am still in the train of

thought as it passed through my mind. When satisfied of her bliss, the next question was—what were the physical causes of death? To me it was very sudden and surprising. I did not realize the idea of danger fully till within a few hours of the event. It passed before me like a dream. But subsequent reflection soon dispelled all mystery. Mrs. M. had not lived quite half the threescore years and ten, being born on February 14, 1820, at St. Neots, Hunts., so that it did appear very premature, when, on September 19, 1849, she died, in the midst of so much activity and usefulness. Her life, however, explains her death. Such was the ratio of expenditure, such the intensity of her solicitude to do as much as possible, and so small the amount of solid nutriment taken to sustain life, that the wonder is that it was protracted so long. Many, accustomed to see her almost flying about on her errands of mercy, or conducting a meeting with so much spirit and energy, might have been led to suppose that she was in the enjoyment of sound health and a vigorous constitution. But it was far otherwise. For the last nine or ten years she had been literally thirsting for eminent usefulness, every now and then making some extraordinary effort, while all along so averse to



animal food, that her constitution, originally not strong, was continually being undermined.

I have frequently known her, after spending her strength in preparing for some meeting, become perfectly prostrate, then rise from her bed, conduct the meeting with spirit and animation, and return to suffer a serious illness. And I find, from the testimony of her relatives, and from her own journal, that this was but the repetition of her former habits.

Having been accustomed to see her sink and rise so rapidly, I expected the same result in this instance, but it was differently ordained; and when the fierce invader, fever, came, there being no constitutional vigour to stand up against it, she fell at once, to rise no more in this world.

Where is the consolation? and what instructive lesson may we derive from this view of the cause of death? True, the dissolution of the body is in itself an awful fact; it is the declaration of the dread Eternal against sin; it is his will that we should go to the grave of our dearest friend, and learn impressively the exceeding odiousness of evil in his sight: for surely that must be a dreadful thing in his estimation on account of which he demolishes the wondrous workmanship of

his own hand, and consigns to "corruption, earth, and worms," the "temples of the Holy Ghost." Let our conviction of the iniquity of sin be deepened by every opening sepulchre, that spiritual life may be quickened; but, at the same time, take the consolation concerning "those who sleep in Jesus."

Now, if this precious life had been expended in the ardent pursuit of some mere vanity, if all this solicitude had been in the service of some adored idol, if all this energy had been exhausted in the cause of wickedness, then should we be mourners indeed, without hope. But when we know the glorious object to which it was devoted—that it was spent in the best of causes, that, indeed, for which all things exist—in self-consuming zeal for the honour of God, for the glory of Immanuel, and the great interests of humanity; that the intense action of the spirit has worn out the body; that she fell on the field of battle with all her armour on, having received the fatal wound probably in visiting the homes of wretchedness; then, whilst we feel keenly our loss, we rejoice in her gain.

Gain, indeed! for all of life that is devoted to Christ is gain, yielding an eternal reward. "He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he

that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal." John xii. 25. My dear friend, let us be profoundly persuaded that the very best and only safe investment of our life is to devote it to Christ. May we have wisdom and grace to see this, and act upon it, as the leading principle of life !

### Dying Testimony.

**YOUR** affectionate interest in the departed led you to wish me to relate what is usually termed the dying experience. This was abundantly satisfactory.

Such, indeed, was her life, that, had she died suddenly at any moment, no one that knew her could have doubted of her safety. There was no ambiguity, no habit that could throw a dubiousness over the mind contemplating an abrupt removal to another world. Notwithstanding, it is another source of consolation to know that up to the last moment of consciousness there were manifestations of the great principles of Christianity. There was life in death. The religion of Jesus asserting its superiority in the most testing time, triumphing over the ravages of disease, and the terrors of death.

We witnessed faith meeting the dread foe with fortitude and fearlessness, calmly resting upon the Rock of Ages, and displaying the visions of a bright futurity; patience enduring the pains attendant on the breaking-up of the mortal tabernacle; penitence mourning over transgression; hope anticipating the blest reward; and desire longing to depart and to be with Christ.

Her illness was brief; six days only was she confined to her bed, and during even this period, great bodily weakness, constant pain, and occasional delirium, interrupted the course and action of spiritual life. The idea of death, as the probable issue, very soon dawned upon her mind; and from that moment she most deliberately, calmly, and Christianly prepared for her departure.

She was remarkably solemn; said little; was not observed either to weep or smile; evidently absorbed in prayer and heavenly contemplations.

When I asked if she could pray, she replied, "Yes, and I can realize God."

When, finding that her mind was impressed with the idea of death, I asked how she felt in such a prospect; she replied, "If I were not prepared, I could not now prepare; but I

know whom I have believed ; I had one battle with the enemy, but it was soon over." When asked her desire as to the result, her only remark was, " I desire that God may be glorified." And when it appeared certain that her time could not be long, she expressed very strong desire: " Oh, that I could spring into life ! I long to go home, to Jesus, to everlasting love !"

As a proof of devotedness to God, even in her delirium her conversation was about a Maternal Meeting, which was to have been the next object of her benevolence. The keenest anguish of her mind was occasioned by the prospect of parting with her husband and child. This had been the terror of her life ; and, knowing this, I feel that I would rather be left, than leave her a sorrowing widow.

When conversing on the subject of death with a kind Christian lady who ministered to her wants, her first thought was, " How can I leave my beloved husband ?"

Her friend replied, " He will soon follow you ; the separation will not be long ; duration in eternity is not measured as in time ; what would seem a long while here, will appear but a moment there ; he will soon be with you."

With this she was comforted, and very soon died to the world.

Her last words to me were, "I wish I could take you with me."

What a triumph of Christian principle! How consoling to behold the lovely plants of holiness, born of heaven, and for heaven, living and flourishing on the bed of death! I felt this at a time when I least expected it; I refer to the funeral solemnities, to which I looked forward with perfect horror. My esteemed friend and fellow-student, the Rev. J. Davies, of Albany Chapel, Regent's Park, officiated at the grave, and gave such a bright view of Christ our life, of death as a birth, the commencement of a new, immortal, glorious life, that all that was painful vanished before the brilliant reality. The funeral sermon was preached by my beloved friend and brother, the Rev. E. T. Prust, of Northampton, who with deep solemnity and fervid affection urged upon us the necessity of being prepared for death, and of aspiring to that glory beyond the grave.

Well may the Christian triumph! O, death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!

## Early Life.

I HAVE remarked, in a former letter, that the memory of departed friends is a precious heritage to survivors, and it will be my aim to bring up before your mind the image of an amiable spirit as it manifested itself to our observation in life. The most important part is the spiritual history; to trace the train of circumstances connected with the birth, growth, development, and maturity of holy principles; to bring out the distinct, striking features of character; to exhibit the mind as it was embodied in holy action; and in all to show what grace can do with our fallen nature, preparing it for usefulness on earth, and glory in heaven.

But, whilst we hold everything as subordinate to the spiritual life, we must not attempt to dissever what is necessarily joined. Our notion is, that when the Spirit of God enters



the human mind for a permanent dwelling, he pervades it with his energy; the individual becomes filled with the Spirit;" what are termed natural endowments become supernatural, gracious, divine; the experience of the past becomes a valuable treasury of wisdom and power; corruptions are either kept in check, or entirely destroyed; and all, more or less, brought under the dominion of grace. This is seen in instances of *decided* piety only, and therefore such are valuable, as illustrating the method of sanctification.

If so, there are other motives beside those of affectionate curiosity, that lead us to inquire into the history of any one, the phenomena of whose life we wish to explain.

You will not be surprised to learn that the childhood of my beloved wife disclosed in their native state those striking features of character which afterwards, under the mighty influence of the grace of Christ, shone so brightly to his glory. The image of her girlhood, as left upon the memory of friends, is that of one very ardent in her attachments, kind-hearted, energetic, never daunted by little difficulties.

The intensity of her nature has often been the subject of conversation, and we have been led to adoring gratitude that it was seized, and

so powerfully, by a gracious hand, that guided its action in the right direction ; otherwise she might have been as eminent in the cause of evil as she has been in that of holiness. Nor must we overlook the potent influences of home. You know her esteemed parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver, of St. Neots, and will join me in admiring their strict integrity, hospitality, candour, and truthfulness : must we not therefore believe that the influence of these admirable qualities, constantly acting upon a susceptible mind in early life, combined with a religious education, tended to their reproduction in the child, and co-working with the grace of God, made them so conspicuous in after life? I cannot help remarking what a motive, what an encouragement to parents to be holy, very holy, always holy, not only for their own sake, but for their children's, who are imperceptibly and daily receiving the impress of parental character, and it may be, to remain for ever, on tablets more durable than brass or marble.

### Conversion.

IN my last I gave some account of the early developments of character, in which we find the rudiments of those qualities subsequently unfolded under the influence of religion. The great change that turns the tide of life, and alters the destiny for ever—conversion to God—happened in the year 1835, at Hitchin. I gather this from a letter she wrote to her parents in 1839, in which she states that it was then nearly four years since the change occurred. She had left home, not from necessity, but from strong desire to engage in business, and rather, I believe, against the wish of her fond parents. She, however, never regretted so doing; the knowledge, experience, and habits acquired in business were turned to admirable account in after life, in the management of home, and in conducting benevolent societies.

I have no formal record of her conversion, but I know she always regarded her estimable friend, Miss Baker, now of Blackheath, as the honoured instrument of her decision, and that it was at a prayer meeting, conducted by a group of young persons, all, I believe, engaged in business, she first dedicated herself to her adorable Lord.

This was, doubtless, one reason why she always regarded prayer meetings as of paramount importance: as we frequently find that the instrumental cause of conversion becomes an object of peculiar affection all through life. Hence that mighty text, "The just shall live by faith," being the means of Luther's salvation, was ever afterward his favourite truth, and contained the germ of the Reformation.

I need not remark that the life of Mrs. M., from her conversion to her death, has proved its genuineness. She soon formed the habit so essential to the Christian life—severe self-scrutiny; calling herself continually to account before the bar of conscience and truth, and, at first, used to record the exercises of her mind.

From this record we learn that the foundation of a holy character was broad and deep,

adequate as the basis of a noble superstructure.

We find the usual evidence of the work of the Divine Spirit leading a human spirit to God through Christ: first, conviction of sin, self-loathing, contrition, thorough abandonment of all hope of self-salvation, accompanied with an absolute trust in the Redeemer; next, the peace which passeth all understanding; and then, the irrevocable deed of self-devotement to the Author and Finisher of her faith.

From what has been written of her native tendencies, early habits, and training, considering her peculiar susceptibility of powerful influences, it might have been expected that if ever the grand, awful, and glorious objects of the Christian system, and the future world, should be fully revealed to her by the Holy Spirit, the result would be extraordinary; that it would cause a mighty revolution throughout her entire being, call forth all its resources, enlist them all in the service of Immanuel, exhibit many striking and interesting manifestations of spiritual life, and build up and unfold a character that would reflect the glory of the blessed God, and confer extensive good upon mankind.

Although a husband, I hesitate not to say that such an expectation has been fully realized ; leaving but one regret, that it was not permitted to abide longer on the earth ; and requiring, on our part, an uncommon faith and fortitude, calmly to acquiesce in the arrangement by which so much useful energy, holy action, and moral loveliness, have been removed from us. Let us, however, be grateful that life was thus prolonged, and endeavour to perpetuate its influences on ourselves and others.

### Religious Principles.

I WILL not attempt to give any formal analysis of character, but I wish to notice what I regard as the leading features, those great principles of action, which I know, from daily observation, were enthroned in the depths of the soul, exercised a regal sway over all its powers, gave law to the entire being, and fully interpret the external phenomena of life. Very much of the philosophy of her Christian course lies in one fact—*her allegiance to the everlasting law of duty*. I cannot think it possible for a human mind, in this imperfect state, to be more rigidly under this law than she was. She believed with Foster, “that power to its last particle is duty.” When entering upon a new sphere, or thrown into new circumstances, “What is duty?” would be the immediate question; not What is inclination? not What will gratify self

or promote self-interest? nor, Which is the easiest?

No, but What is right? Right, considering all my relationships to all being, visible and invisible, to whom I am related. And when, after prolonged, prayerful deliberation, the path was plain, I know of no power in creation that could turn her from it.

Perhaps these remarks will recall her image; you hear again the solemn tone in which she used to put this question; you see that heavy-laden brow, the aching head, the anxious eye, as though she had the cares of the universe upon her. This was when deliberating upon some important movement. Again you see her coming out as from the presence-chamber of Jehovah; the whole countenance animated with brightness; all the powers of the mind summoned to the fulfilment of what appeared to be right; and then with what a bound of being, and elastic spring, did she go forth to execute the high resolves of her spirit.

Pardon this effusion. But I have dwelt upon it because it is so thoroughly congenial to my own views; because it did excite so much admiration and esteem whilst living; it is so blended with my remembrance of her



now ; is such a striking illustration of her character, and yields an undying consolation, when I know she has gone to that region where this is the great law, from the loftiest archangel to the humblest saint. But this alone would not explain the life of a devoted Christian. It is possible to be under this law, and yet be even opposed to the Gospel. Saul of Tarsus was a striking example. He verily thought he was doing God service when hunting his people to death. This leads me to observe that my loved one really believed that the Saviour was entitled to her whole nature ; and therefore it was duty to give him all, to subordinate all to his glory. She regarded it as simple equity, that if the Saviour has really delivered us from eternal death, if he has turned the tide of destiny out of the channel leading to everlasting ruin, and into that leading to immortal bliss, it must have made a grand alteration in the whole sphere of morals ; and that henceforth absolute, uncompromising, unhesitating loyalty to him ought to be, in all justice, the predominant principle of life. And when the Saviour is a glorious reality in the mind, when there is a consciousness of having received pardon, life, and holiness from him, love unutterable must be awakened. This

impels the powers of the inner man in the direction of his service, and henceforth devotedness to him is the master principle of action.

Again : the manner of testifying our attachment to Christ will vary, according to native temperament, talents, and circumstances. In Mrs. M. there was a happy combination ; what was the dictate of religion, and the impulse of gratitude, fell in with the natural kindness of her heart and early habits, producing that concentration of all the mental and moral forces ; that intense solicitude for the salvation of souls ; that burning zeal for God ; that generous sympathy for humanity and all its interests, manifested by incessant labour ; and kindled that self-consuming flame to which, in a few years, she fell a victim.

This appears to me the interpretation of her Christian course, these the mainsprings of action, the roots of which her useful life was the outgrowth, the pillars of the spiritual temple, Jesus Christ himself the chief corner stone. To him be all the glory.

### Holy Habits.

I HAD intended in this to give some facts illustrating what I have written, but it has occurred to me that it may be useful to mention some of those religious habits by which principles were kept in vigorous vitality. Young Christians, especially, should bear in mind the vast importance of forming and cultivating holy habits, as conservative of all that is good, preventive of immense evil, the safeguards of our moral nature, and necessary for the development, growth, and perfection of principle.

It may be a question amongst divines, whether a holy principle is ever lost; but there is no doubt about habits; they are frequently lost, and great indeed is the loss. Since so many run well, and then are hindered, when we meet with one whose course is one uniform, consistent manifestation of spiritual

life, it is interesting and useful to ascertain by what means, under the direction of the good Spirit, this has been maintained.

I have great satisfaction in being able to account for this in the present instance.

Here it is to be observed, that it was her constantly cherished desire thus to live: "I desire," she writes, "to shine with a steady brilliancy."

This led to habits necessary to this attainment. The word of God was the fountain of supply, as will be seen by the following extract. It is the preface to a commentary on Isaiah, which she began to compose for her own improvement:—

*September 2, 1839.*—"From a deep consciousness I have of the barrenness of my own soul, I am resolved, by the assistance of the Most High, to set about the culture of my own too long neglected vineyard. There is yet much fallow ground to be broken up; there are still the remains of a corrupt and deceitful heart; I feel myself too awfully deficient in the knowledge of the word of life. In endeavouring to obtain, through the medium of prayer, that wisdom Christ has promised to those who ask for it, how I might read the word of God with more profit and pleasure, and also retain it in my memory, this way has been pointed

out: that of noting down what I read, and, when read, to propose a few questions to myself, which may arise from the passage, in order that my mind may be fixed on heavenly things, and raised above these sublunary joys.

“Oh, God, grant me assistance in this work, that it may increase my love to Jesus, whose character I hope to contemplate.”

About the same time she formed a Bible class amongst her juvenile associates, and for the same reason. On September 18, she thus writes:—

“I thank thee, O Father, for that answer to prayer, in granting my request in forming a Bible class in our own little company. May it produce its desired effect, and lead all our minds to search the Scriptures, as for hid treasure.”

It is evident that this habit of searching the Scriptures, with devotional poetry, religious biography, committing hymns to memory, noting down observations on what was read, must have had a powerful influence in nourishing the great principles of holiness.

Diligent attendance at God's house was another habit in which she was very exemplary. It was not a question of convenience, but of solemn duty. All such engagements

she held sacred, regarding them as contained in the covenant she had made with God ; and nothing but stern necessity could keep her away. It is needless to observe that she was eminently given to prayer. No Christian ever attained much without it. I have heard her refer to seasons when she was accustomed to spend the whole night in communion with God. The greater part of the small journal she has left is prayer ; and so far as I could judge, it was not only at set seasons that she prayed, but prayer pervaded and ran like a golden thread, through her religious life. She in this sense prayed without ceasing.

Very much must be ascribed also to habitual activity. "Exercise thyself unto godliness" is the divine mandate, and necessary for spiritual healthiness. Many moral invalids would lose their ailments, their doubts, and miseries, if they would vigorously exert themselves in doing good.

"Go, fix some weighty truth ; chain down some passion ;  
Do some generous good ; teach ignorance to see, or  
grief to smile ;  
Correct thy friend ; befriend thy greatest foe ;  
Or, with warm heart, and confidence divine,  
Spring up, and lay strong hold on Him who made  
thee."

YOUNG.

This, the poet's prescription for happiness, will explain also the active Christian's stability of character. That in our nature we cultivate the most, grows most rapidly. There is a constant reaction going on between the internal and external; principle and habit reacting upon each other continually. Such was the habitual, incessant activity of Mrs. M., that inactivity was the severest trial; and so varied was the sphere of exertion, that it is difficult to imagine what in her nature was allowed to remain dormant.

It will not be out of place, in noticing the secondary causes of religious prosperity, to mention deep tribulation, as one of the chief. Involved in that sublime, consolatory truth, that "all things work together for good," is another, "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience," &c. Hence it is that great principles are strongly developed, invigorated, and matured in the deep waters of affliction. This is especially the case when in the trial, principles living low down (if you will allow the phrase) in the soul are called into activity; problems of great moment are revolved over and over in the anxious mind; the judgment kept in long suspense by conflicting views, inclinations, and interests; and,

in all, intense solicitude to know the will of the Eternal; to answer the question, What, amidst all this, is duty? I say it is in such circumstances that our characters are severely tested; but principles, if divine, are greatly invigorated.

To such trials, minds of exquisite sensitiveness are most exposed. Such a mind had my dear wife, beyond anything I can describe; through such trials she had passed, and to this I always ascribed that maturity of judgment which often won the veneration even of her seniors in age, and eminently qualified her for usefulness.

I hope your patience will bear with me in mentioning one more cause closely allied to the last. It will account partly for the burning desire to do a great work in a short time. I refer to a presentiment that her course would be brief. It is said by a profound writer, that "a presentiment fulfils itself," and it is not difficult to see how it may do so. I believe it did in this case.

About twelve years ago, it was strongly impressed upon her mind that her life would be short. I account for this from her being so often seriously ill, generally occasioned by over exertion.



The following is an affecting description of one of those seasons, which you will read with interest:—

“*July 2, 1838.*—I was reduced to such extreme weakness, as not to be able to give utterance to my feelings. Never, I trust, shall I forget the hymns and passages of Scripture which were forcibly impressed on my mind, especially that of Doddridge, where he exclaims—

‘ While on the verge of life I stand,  
And view the scene on either hand,  
My spirit struggles with my clay,  
And longs to wing its flight away.’

“I can compare it to nothing but a trance; known only to God were my feelings. I enjoyed so much of his presence, that I longed to depart and be with him, which is far better. I was surrounded by kind friends, who watched over my apparently lifeless frame, but useless did all means prove, until God saw fit to impart a little strength; then I was carried by my dear father and my kind friend, whose abode we were then visiting, to the bed of repose, and, after being refreshed with sleep, God raised me in the morning, to call upon his great and holy name. Then I could say—

‘ Come, ye angelic envoys, come,  
And bear my willing spirit home;  
Ye know the way to Jesus’ throne,  
Source of my joys, and of your own.’

“ Are not these warnings from the Most High ?  
Do they not tell me to be ready, for I know not the  
day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh ;  
I have no wish to live, but to glorify God in my  
body and my spirit, which are his.

‘ I cast my every care on thee ;  
I triumph and adore ;  
Henceforth my great concern shall be  
To love and serve thee more.’ ”

When I remind you that she was often very ill, that at these periods her anticipations of heaven were very vivid, you will agree with me, that this presentiment impelled her forward with an earnestness which led to an early death, and doubtless hastened her flight to her long-desired mansion above.

## Church Membership.

YOU are about joining a Christian church, I hear, and you will receive in a friendly way what I write upon this subject. I grieve to think how lightly this is thought of by many, and that one great end, usefulness, is overlooked. You will regard it, I trust, as a solemn pledge, on your part, to live to the honour of Christ, and the good of mankind.

I was deeply interested in finding from the few documents left me, by comparing dates, that, although before this period Mrs. M. manifested solicitude for the welfare of souls, especially of her relatives, yet it was from the time of joining the church that her more public and systematic efforts commenced.

This was as it should be. Is it not one law of discipleship to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth—to imitate him who went about doing good? I commend to your serious

thoughtfulness the fifteenth chapter of John, where fruitfulness is the evidence of discipleship, and the fruitless branch is to be cut off.

I marvel to think how many professors of religion will meet their Lord, when his glory shall be fully revealed. What will be their feelings to remember that the idea of stewardship has scarcely been realised, and that they have allowed a life, teeming with precious opportunities of glorifying him and blessing mankind, to pass idly away?

Regard life, I beseech you, as valuable, chiefly in affording us abundant advantages for honouring God, doing good to mankind, and qualifying ourselves by divine aid for the higher and more perfect service of heaven.

It was in May, 1839, that Mrs. M. joined the Independent church at St. Neots, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. E. Muscutt. In July of the same year is the first record of her desire for missionary service. In September also in the same year she commenced her commentary, and formed the Bible class; and it was in the same month that she began her memorable visits at Eaton, a village about one mile from her native town; so that it is very evident that her religious principles received at this time increased energy, and that she regarded church-

membership in the light we have presented it. You know something of these visits to Eaton, and will be interested in reading her own account of them:—

“*September 16, 1839.*—Last evening I was led by the Spirit of God to distribute some small portions of the word of God. In doing this, it led me to the abodes of the wretched and forlorn. My heart bleeds for them. While they listened to my message from God, never shall I forget the intense interest depicted on their countenances to hear the words of eternal life. They hearkened to that word, and I do trust, by the blessing of almighty God, it will be as fire to reach their stubborn hearts, and melt their souls in love to Jesus, the sinner’s friend. This evening has been but the earnest of what thou art about to do. Oh, may this encouragement by the way lead me to pray more earnestly, and not faint! And if it be thy will, O Lord, may the whole of my time and talents be consecrated to thee! May I, like the great apostle, not count my life dear unto me, that I may work the works of him that sent me!”

“*November 24.*—There is no employment so satisfactory as that of God’s. How delightful to work for him! What an honour that I am permitted to share in taking any part in endeavouring to promote his interests! This has been a memorable Sabbath. The field of labour increases. I have found the

word of God my sure support. 'Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy day so shall thy strength be.' I trust I have the mark of God's signet: he approves of my visits to Eaton. We have had a soul-refreshing time. I can scarcely now think that thirty should come to listen to such a poor, insignificant creature as I. How did my heart leap for joy, to see the babe to the old tottering woman listening with devout attention to the words which fell from my lips! O, Father of mercies, may these meetings be but preparatory for those above."

"*May 26, 1840.*—Enjoyed the Sabbath evening with my poor at Eaton. Our numbers were few, but I felt more at liberty to speak to them. We took the second chapter of Matthew, and I was pleased they were able to answer many questions respecting the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus."

There is one more extract in reference to Eaton:—

"*August 10* —During the past week two of my poor at Eaton have been called to give up their last account. Mrs. S., after a protracted illness, died, I trust, in faith. Oh, how far has she outstepped us in the knowledge of God! What advances has she made in this short time, since she was wholly redeemed by the blood of Christ, and presented unto God.

“If the spirits of the just made perfect do visit these lower worlds, I think her blood-bought soul will delight to hover around our cottage at Eaton, for it was there, she has often told me, that her soul was often refreshed while on her journey. Mrs. B. was in an unlooked-for moment seized with apoplexy, and died after a short illness. She had no time for repentance upon the bed of sickness, to which I fear she had deferred seeking Christ. How awful the destiny of those who live without God! May these loud calls lead each one of my poor at Eaton, and myself also, to live in a state of preparation for another world.

“The greater part of my poor are still without Christ; they do not love his word; they will not hearken to his voice. O, Spirit of the living God, breathe upon these dry bones; exert thy wonder-working power; revive thy work in our midst; give us genuine faith in our Lord Jesus.”

I have given these extracts because they describe better than I could this interesting field of labour.

She continued her visits nearly six years. On the weekday, during the half of this period, she was engaged in business, and the other three years occupied in the duties of tuition in her sister's seminary.

Being a Sabbath school teacher also, at first she took her class, as usual, and distributed

tracts at Eaton afterward; then, for a time, she gave the whole afternoon to this work, reading at those cottages where she found the people unable; and at length was prevailed upon to go in the evening, attending the afternoon service at chapel, and the school only in the morning.

When she went at first to distribute tracts, she had no idea of holding a meeting, but was gradually led on, until as many as forty poor women have been found listening to her burning words of love and zeal. The mode of conducting the service varied: sometimes a printed sermon was read; at other times, as it appears from her own statement, she gave an exposition of the word of God, followed by questioning her flock, and accompanied by singing and prayer.

Such was the employment on the Sabbath. But this was not all: as often, on other days, as she could get away from business or teaching, she would be found in the houses of the poor, the sick, and the dying, administering temporal and spiritual relief.

Thus she gratified her desire for missionary labour. Had a path opened to foreign climes, it would have been most congenial to her feelings; but, no path appearing, she acted wisely



in availing herself of opportunities as they presented themselves.

All this was, however, to the serious injury of her health. It was not an unusual thing for her to come home on Sabbath evening wearied, wet, and spent—too exhausted to take refreshment, and carried to bed fainting; and when expostulated with by her affectionate and anxious relatives, her only reply was, “I cannot be spent in a better cause.”

It was indeed her meat and drink to do the will of God; and it would not be an inappropriate epitaph on her tomb: “The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up.”

### Pastorate.

I HAVE traced the history of my beloved wife's career of usefulness up to its last stage—the pastorate. I have no more written record. She was too busily engaged to write, and I never anticipated being her biographer. As I have described, or rather as she has described herself, in my last letter, so I found her engaged, when, in December, 1844, it was my happiness and honour to be united in marriage: an event we always contemplated with the holiest satisfaction and gratefulness, and shall, I trust, for ever.

We were perpetual blessings to each other; and it is no small consolation to me now to know that I was permitted to contribute so much to her happiness and usefulness. I need not remind you that her singular adaptation to ministerial work was the chief attraction to me, holding, as I do, all things in subordina-

tion to that which is the great end of my life. Judging from observation, many differ from me; but I regard it as a sacred point of honour, as the first, simplest, and sublimest rule of discipleship, and most emphatically in a minister, to endeavour to bend everything in this direction; to constrain, as far as possible, all things to administer to his qualification for the work of Christ; and surely, in the choice of a wife, this ought not to be a minor consideration.

Nor need I tell you I have not been disappointed; my highest expectations have been fully realised in all things save one; and even this is scarcely an exception; for when I married, I did not anticipate a long career for myself.

I will not pretend to write the history of this last period. It is to me quite impossible. It would be to give an account of the benevolent doings of almost every day; for indeed it was a remarkable one that did not witness some generous action; and, as I have intimated, I have no record.

We have seen her engaged in various walks of usefulness, her benevolence flowing in different channels; in her new sphere these and other modes of influence were opened; she

soon availed herself of them, and continued, with little interruption, till summoned to higher service.

It was a characteristic in her to *take things completely on her mind*; her nature corresponded with her name—a true Martha indeed, careful about many things; but, like Mary also, they were chiefly relating to the one thing needful.

It is no exaggeration to say that when she entered upon her duties at Creton, the congregation, and I might almost add, the village, with its various interests, became at once the objects of her sympathy and solicitude. The first thing was to know the people, and then came the question, What can I do for them? The Sabbath school requiring assistance was one department of labour. There being no benevolent institution for poor women, she soon established and carried on an Infants' Friend Society, which was not only the means of relieving distress, imparting comfort in the time of need, but of uniting Christian minds, and calling forth Christian activity. Collecting for the Bible, Missionary, and Tract Societies, visiting from house to house, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, teaching poor children on the weekday, providing situations

for servants, superintending tea meetings, were amongst the many things that occupied her attention. No labour was spared, no sacrifice refused. I have risen with her in the dead of the night, and gone to the next village to watch with the sick and the dying. Such was her interest in the universal good of the people, that I know many will bear me out in saying that, when we left, there was scarcely a family in the congregation that had not, in some way or other, been the recipients of her benevolence.

I have not written this without thought. The congregation is before my imagination at this moment. I am looking round the sanctuary, going from pew to pew, and very many instances of her kindness occur to me, which prudence forbids my relating. Whilst so manifestly devoted to their good, she lived in the deep affection and esteem of most; when removed, they felt acutely they had lost an invaluable friend. The tidings of her departure produced a sensation from which they have not yet recovered; and they are looking anxiously to me for a memorial that will perpetuate her remembrance through future time.

It was precisely the same when, in June

1848, we came to Whitefield. Here she was thoroughly at home, more so than she had been for many years. She had now her heart's desire. Her health greatly improved, spirits unusually buoyant, a sphere as extensive as she could wish, a people heartily cooperating with her, united, affectionate, and grateful—everything promised a very happy, honourable, and useful career—but——

\* \* \* \* \*

Here the homes of ignorance, wretchedness, and guilt soon called forth her deepest sympathies. The auxiliary of the Christian Instruction Society being dead, it was revived and reorganised by her influence, and a prayer meeting soon commenced in her district. In a short time she succeeded in establishing a Dorcas Society, which soon numbered, I believe, between thirty and forty subscribers, and the last document she penned was its first annual report, which she presented at the anniversary meeting, the month in which she died. She became secretary to the Infants' Friend Society; continued her custom of visiting, of collecting, seeking out and relieving cases of distress, and in various ways manifesting her

deep interest in all that belonged to the cause of God and the welfare of humanity. So much so, that, for some weeks after her departure, the seeing any regular attendant reminded me of my loss, by recalling something said, or done, or devised for their good; and it was one of the most formidable things in my whole life, to face a congregation that awakened such recollections.

Perhaps it will be whispered by some—Was not home neglected? Yes, it was. If an inestimable wife, mother, and mistress be the chief part of home, home was neglected. Self was forgotten, and to this self-oblivion I must ascribe her lamented death. But beside this, I know not any other instance of neglect; and this is a mournful one indeed, although accompanied with sublime consolations. She had too profound and too intelligent a conviction of duty to sacrifice the interests of home under any consideration. I have at this moment found an unfinished note, which will give you a glimpse of a mother's heart, dated September 1, 1849, and intended, I think, for her highly esteemed friend, Mrs. Prust, of Northampton. Referring to her child, she says:—

“When he can give utterance to his thoughts in words, we shall be very delighted; there is no lack

of feeling ; his heart beats with affection. When I went down to breakfast the other morning, I found the darling boy alone, in the attitude of prayer, and trying to say something."

No, if she could do anything for me, or her "darling boy," or the comfort of home, no engagement could take her away.

I was, as she used always to tell me, more to her than all the world. And the feeling was reciprocal.

Those, and those only, whose happiness it is to have such a wife, can either imagine our bliss, or comprehend my loss. Here I must stop. My pen refuses to write more; and I must refer you for the finished portrait to that fine gallery of moral paintings—the Bible. Proverbs xxxi. 10—31 ; John xii. 2 ; Acts ix 39 ; Phil. iv. 3.



### Success.

BEFORE I bring my observations to a close, it will be interesting to add a word or two about the success that attended these varied labours.

It is needless to remark that the full results cannot be known until the great day of revelation, when the great mystery of godliness will be manifest before all worlds. This is true in all cases, but especially so when the course is, as it appears to us, prematurely terminated. I say prematurely, but it would be ungrateful to forget that it was fifteen years of Christian life, and such intense life, that more was accomplished than by many in fifty. And if I might have my choice, it would be such an one in preference to any other. Dr. Payson's career was shortened by self-denial, but who can read his holy life without feeling an infinite preference.

The idea is so spiritual, so seraphic, so like the Saviour, to ripen rapidly, to be consumed in the flame of zeal for God, and go home to glory. How much better than a long, lingering, life of littleness—or death. But the Divine arrangements are best.

It is, however, another source of consolation to know that Mrs. M. was eminently successful. I do not remember any one thing in which she failed. It is hardly necessary to remark, that I do not apply this to the direct conversion of souls, although in this she had great reason to rejoice. Her efforts were in such various departments, the seed sown in such different fields, that, in one or the other, it was always reaping time; and, if in some regions she found it cold, barren, and unfruitful, in another part her soul would be gladdened with the thirty, sixty, or even the hundredfold.

She had quite a talent for organising societies, and one proof of her success is, that all are still in existence, and promise permanence. And I cannot but express my esteem to those ladies at Whitefield who resolved immediately that, as a proof of their affection, and a mark of their respect, whatever Mrs. M. had commenced, should be continued, and not

suffered to decline; and also to those gentlemen who met together, and passed a resolution acknowledging what Mrs. M. had done towards liquidating the chapel debt, and resolving to take the entire burden upon themselves, that I might still pursue my course unfettered, unanxious, and free from all secularities.

As a collector Mrs. M. was very successful. She gathered for almost everything connected with the cause of God and the poor, and was seldom refused. The reason of this is neither a secret nor a mystery. It was Christian love, manifested in deep sympathy, in earnestness, in importunity, personal application, blandness of manner, untiring perseverance and tact; this was the magnetism that first attracted the individual, and then the money; and it was her stedfast faith, sincerity of purpose, and her prayerfulness that brought down the Power that can open every heart, however closed.

In a few weeks she collected above one hundred pounds for the debt at Whitefield; and the friends there know it was through her suggestion and example that another hundred pounds were raised; and her fancy work-basket produced about sixteen pounds.

I was reminded the other day, by a friend

from Creaton, of a circumstance that will strikingly illustrate character. In her visits one day, she found a poor member in grievous distress—distrained, I think, for rent; the bailiffs were in the house, an inventory of goods taken, wife ill, &c. This immediately awakened her sympathies. Hastening home, she consulted with me, as she always did, to devise some plan of relief. This was soon done; the amount collected from various sources, the debt paid, and the poor man liberated.

How often do I think with rapture, that if a cup of cold water given to a disciple, in the name of a disciple, will not go unrewarded, what must be her reward now? And here it is proper to remark, that a very large amount of her benevolence, being amongst the poor, belongs to that class of actions that cannot be recompensed now; but shall be at the resurrection of the just.

I have mentioned prayerfulness; and her sister has favoured me with an important proof of success: a fact which I know had a great influence upon her, and is referred to by her in a letter now before me.

A few years before her marriage, it was a cause of grief and anxiety to many that there were

scarcely any young men members of the church. A few friends, including Mrs. M. and her eldest sister, resolved to bring it before God, and they held a weekly prayer meeting, for the special purpose of interceding for the youth of the congregation. I do not know how long this continued, but God heard prayer, and many additions were made to the church. No doubt it is to this circumstance that Mrs. M. refers, in a letter dated July 10, 1842 :—

“ We are steadily increasing in number, and in piety too, I hope. Our young men now form a nice little group of followers of Christ. They are seventeen in number, that meet for prayer. I do not know that they are all praying characters, but the greater part of them are.”

I have given in her own words one instance of success at Eaton, have heard of several others, and have learned from a friend that she herself used to regard nine persons as being converted by her labours there ; and am happy to find that the service has been continued in the cottage up to the harvest of this year, and will be resumed, if a place can be obtained.

And there is one more instance of success that I am disposed to regard as being of equal,

if not of superior importance, to any mentioned; I refer to the moral impression produced by her life, taken as a whole, upon the minds of many, who loved and admired her even to veneration.

The Christian is to be a witness for God; he is in the world to reflect his likeness; and he may be regarded as successful in the highest degree who, by resemblance, reminds mankind of the great Eternal. It was with uncommon pleasure and gratitude that I received the following statement from a dear friend at Guernsey, in a letter of sympathy:—

“If ever I have been impressed with the beauty of holiness, and the advantage of serving God, it has been in her case. Often have I been constrained to say, ‘Oh, that I may be led to serve God as she served him, and may my last end be like hers. May I, when called to leave this world of delusions behind, leave to survivors such a testimony as your now happy and triumphant partner has left.’”

This impression was produced when we were enjoying the beauties, hospitalities, and friendships of that lovely isle; and little did we think, when the object of so much admiration was tripping along the cliffs, the youngest,

most buoyant, and most happy—that, in so short a time, she would have taken her flight to another world. The impression made upon my friend's mind was, I believe, the common one. For my own part, I can truly say, that no living mortal ever so forcibly reminded me of God as she did; and I have often been led involuntarily to exclaim: “What a glorious being must God be! If there can be so much love in one of his creatures, and in a sinful creature, what must he be who is infinite love?”

And my cup of consolation will indeed be full to overflowing, if, in addition to all I have received, this one is added: that her death shall be made subservient to the great purpose of her life.

That this will be the case I have no doubt, having already many interesting proofs; but this will be the subject of my next epistle.

### The First Fruits of Death.

MY cup is overflowing. "He is faithful that promised." "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he will give thee the desires of thine heart." My desire was that this event might make such an impression upon my whole nature, that it would be equal in its moral results to the prolongation of the life that had just terminated; that God would mercifully impart to me and to others those benevolent dispositions for which that life was chiefly valued, as an equivalent, or, shall I say, a substitute, for what he had taken away. Was this too much to expect from Almighty Love? Sometimes it did appear so, especially when I was led to view her death as a mark of Divine anger.

These were terrible moments, though short. But, whenever I regarded God as a kind father, I believed most firmly that my desire would be granted. I imagine that my feelings were



something like those of Elisha, when he asked that "hard thing," "a double portion" of his master's spirit, as a substitute for Elijah's presence, his power, and his prayers.

And I was encouraged from the promise made to the disciples, that they should have the Comforter when their divine Lord left them alone in this world.

*How* the desire was to be fulfilled I could not see. I laboured for a whole day, to ascertain it from the following verse:—

"No good in creatures can be found,  
But may be found in Thee;  
I must have all things, and abound,  
While God is God to me."

It struck me as casting a reflection upon the all-sufficient Jehovah, to suppose that when he takes away a creature, even the most valuable, he cannot supply the loss. At length, the result of all this was the desire that her death might be made to accomplish in myself and in multitudes the end to which her life was devoted. With this I could be satisfied, and God glorified.

Whilst reposing upon this rock, in a state of mind indescribably calm and happy, the glorious Redeemer has manifested himself according to his own promise, and every day has

unfolded some fresh proof that the desire will be fulfilled. I select the following from several very decided conversions that have come under my notice, as illustrations of the wonders of grace.

Yesterday evening, we held a valedictory service in Whitefield Chapel, to commend a young brother—Mr. J. Fernandez—to the benediction of Heaven, he being about to leave England for Costa Rica, central America, his native land. There was a large audience, and deeply interested. Mr. F. gave an outline of his religious history, from which it appears that he was brought up a Roman Catholic, and from very early life addicted to all kinds of wickedness. Two years ago, his uncle, who had adopted him, sent him to Guernsey to be educated. There he was led to see the errors of Romanism, and became a very decided Protestant, but not a Christian. The day on which Mrs. M. was taken ill, he came to reside with us. His being a foreigner, an orphan, desirous of proclaiming Protestantism to his countrymen, made him an object of uncommon interest; and to prepare for his comfort, and provide tutors to complete his education, were the last of her earthly solitudes. Her death struck him with terror;

it appeared to him an awful thing for God to do—to smite down a young person in the midst of so much activity and happiness. He knew he was unprepared, and trembled. He was deeply affected with the vanity of life. Deep conviction followed, increased by the words of our Lord, “He that is not for me is against me,” brought forcibly to his mind when sitting as a spectator of the Lord’s supper. He soon saw that it would avail him nothing to be battling with error, if he himself was not on the Lord’s side. He opened his mind freely to me. I pointed out to him the absolute necessity of giving himself to Jesus at once. He was in great distress the whole of that day. He spent most of the night in imploring mercy; found peace in believing; gave himself up to Christ; became full of fire and enthusiasm, and burned to go and publish the glad tidings to his friends and countrymen, at present under the dominion of Romanism. This was five weeks since, and it has been an interesting privilege to watch his progress, to prepare him for future life, and publicly to commend him to the care and grace of that Saviour he most ardently loves. He being but sixteen—amiable, educated, talented—has, we trust, a long career of usefulness before him.

But this is not all. The friend who taught him Protestantism was impressed in the same way, and I immediately urged the young disciple to seek the decision of his teacher. He did so, and I have every reason to hope that he also is now rejoicing in Christ.

What a theme for reflection! I have referred to the desire of Mrs. M. for missionary service. It was very intense. As soon as she became a mother, and found that her infant was a boy, she said immediately, "I devote him for a missionary." Is it not striking that the first convert from her death, although not at present a missionary, should be thirsting to labour as one, and that his first efforts should be blest to him for whose salvation she longed and prayed? "It is the Lord's doings, and marvellous in our eyes."

My dear friend, I feel that all these things are of God; that, in seeking the gratification of my deepest desire, I am working with him in accomplishing his glorious designs, and therefore it is with the full assurance of hope that, from these passing events, I shall endeavour to derive and diffuse the instruction they are intended to impart.

And how just was the impression made upon the mind of this dear youth. It is truly "an

awful thing for God to do," to terminate the probation of an immortal so unexpectedly, without time for preparation. There is a voice from the "Cloud of Witnesses," many of whom were called away suddenly, which speaks with the emphasis of thunder, "Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not." To the majority of mankind Christ does come "as a thief in the night." How solemn, how startling the fact, that all are liable to be summoned at any moment to the great tribunal, where the whole of life must pass under the review of the Supreme Judge, whose final decision shall fix us unalterably in bliss or woe! How mournful the infatuation, what self-cruelty, to suspend our everlasting interests upon the precarious thread of life—upon a vapour! to leave the great work of all time to that one moment which is in the highest degree uncertain! May we be kept from this ruinous folly.

Such events are intended to give us a proper estimate of human life. Apart from immortality, the verdict of the wise man is most emphatically true, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Such is the tenure upon which we hold all earthly things, that, when at the height of prosperity, we may be nearest to adversity;

for God hath set the one over against the other ; when happiest, nearest to misery ; and in one moment, our fairest prospects may be blighted.

So it was with us. So happy, that I have often remarked : “ I feel that there is danger of forgetting that we are sinners ; ” never, perhaps, so useful ; nor were our prospects ever more cheering ; but Death, the stern teacher, has broken up the delusion, and unveiled the reality. You will not be surprised to learn that it gave me such a view of the precariousness and instability of all visible things, that, in pacing the room, the very flooring seemed to be giving way ; in the street the pavement appeared to be sinking under me ; human beings looked like shadows—unsubstantial, unreal things ; and the solid globe itself without solidity.

This is painful, but it corresponds to our real condition ; and it is necessary for our safety and happiness to have this as our settled sober estimate of all below. But how difficult is it to teach us this wisdom ! “ Alas ! ” observes Foster, “ that mere sojourners, beings of transition, travellers passing away, should be mainly intent on obtaining that which they must leave, doom themselves to depart in utter

deprivation, when their inquisitive glance over the scene should be after any good that may go with them, something that is not fixed in the soil, the rocks, or the walls." And a greater than Foster writes—"Brethren, the time is short; it remaineth that both they that have *wives* be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away." 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31.

But, my friend, there is an immortality, there is eternal life—the precious gift of God through Christ. Poor, indeed, is he who, in this life only, has hope; rich, unutterably rich, is he who has treasure in heaven; but surely he is the wisest of all, who, from his *youth*, uses time in accumulating wealth for eternity. We should lose the chief lesson taught us by the events we are contemplating, if we did not look at them as teaching us the glorious truth—that it is possible so to live, as to be daily laying up for ourselves possessions as lasting as the throne of God, "durable riches and righteousness."

It was an admirable resolution of the great

Edwards: "To endeavour to obtain as much happiness as I can in the other world, with all the might, power, vigour and vehemence—yea, violence, I am capable of, or can bring myself to exert, in any way that can be thought of."

Noble resolve of a noble youth! and well carried out; and to induce you to make it yours is my most anxious and prayerful desire.

Do you ask upon what principle may life be constructed, so as to secure this end? Unhesitatingly I answer—Devotedness to the Son of God. To this simple but sublime conclusion we are conducted by the New Testament; from a comprehensive survey of all things, seen and unseen, past, present, and future; it would be the unanimous testimony of the great Cloud of Witnesses, and *to us*, especially, of one recently added to their number.

This was the principle of her life, illustrated in her death; and were she permitted to address us now, it would be to tell us of the infinite desirableness of serving him in whose presence it is her bliss to dwell. I wish I could find words forcible enough to describe the unspeakable blessedness of following the Redeemer. But there are none; and even a



Milton would fail here. Heaven only can fully reveal it.

Do you ask for inducements? Look all around you, within you, onward, and for ever. From all parts of the universe they come, and when combined, form a magnetic power, no just or generous soul can resist. O, that there could be arranged, in one glorious assemblage, the infinite reasons why we should serve Immanuel! Surely no disciple of his could withstand their mighty force. In his service there is all that is beautiful in holiness—for it is a most righteous thing to devote all to him from whom we receive all; all that is pleasurable in the sensation of safety—for all given to him is eternally safe, kept unto life eternal, and yielding an immortal interest; all that is inspiring in true dignity—for devotedness to him dignifies all that it touches, and he is on the high road to honourable preferment, to whom he will say, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you;” “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord;” all that is inviting in usefulness—for there can be no limits assigned in that empire where the field is the world, the seed the mightiest truths, the all-glorious Spirit the prime agent, and the fruit life everlasting; all that is attractive in

happiness—for no bliss can be comparable to that which combines the calm approval of conscience, the gratification of benevolent desire, the esteem of the wise and holy, the gratitude of redeemed sinners, the approbation of God, and the prospect of shining as a star amongst those who have turned many to righteousness.

And upon all this death will be gain: in purity—for they bow before the throne without fault; in security—for he that is holy shall be holy still; in honour—for he that overcometh shall sit down with Jesus on his throne, even as he overcame, and is set down on his Father's throne; in utility—for being dead, they yet speak, their works follow them, and frequently they are more useful after than before death; in bliss—for it is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

In a word, if you would have your nature gloriously unfolded, the full force of intellect expanded to the sublimest truth, the best affections of the heart fastened upon the holiest and divinest of beings, the hidden energies of your innermost mind brought out and directed to the best ends, life made most precious, death most welcome, and heaven most rapturous, you must devote yourself to him who has the

highest right, who is the worthiest of all, and whose empire is the universe.

Do you ask how you are to carry out the great principle we are advocating? The grand point is to have the heart right with the Redeemer, to be rooted and grounded and built up in him, to copy him in exact resemblance so far as he is imitable, to form the habit of doing all things for his sake; so that whatever you do, however occupied, in whatever place, at home, in the world, the social circle, or the house of God, all may become tributary to his glory, and the advancement of his kingdom. Be this the mode of your life, and you will find, by learning of him who was meek and lowly in heart, his yoke to be easy and his burden light

Do you question the possibility of this? Pardon me for saying that it is impossible so long as you doubt. "All things are possible to him that believeth;" but where is the promise to the wavering?

Study the gracious promises of Jesus; read their ample fulfilment in the page of history; believe that you may be eminently useful; resolve in the strength of Omnipotent Grace, and you will be so.

Will you allow me once more to recall you

to that life which you so much admired? What so simple? A few divine truths vividly realised, kindling ardent emotions; the love of Christ the central force constraining all, impelling all onward in his service, and attracting other minds into co-operation; with wisdom, perseverance, untiring energy, and the blessing of God.

What was there that you cannot have? What was there that is not included in that one promise, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire?"

Be aspiring. Aim high. Forgetting the things behind, press forward to the first ranks of the righteous. It is not enough for you to shun sensualism, to abhor vice, to despise folly; no, there are loftier attainments for the Christian. Be it yours to leave the mediocrity of the multitude; to rise above the formal, the superficial, the inactive, and the insincere; rest not until you know that your whole being is embarked in the Saviour's cause, and every atom, and every power yielding a full revenue of glory to the great Creator.

### Conclusion.

I HAVE thus, dear friend, complied with your request. I have given you some of the many reflections awakened by an event I could not but regard as the greatest calamity of my life; with these I have interwoven the leading incidents in my beloved wife's history; endeavoured to comfort with the comfort where-with I have been comforted of God; standing forth as a witness to the fidelity and grace of the Redeemer in the hour of tribulation; and have aimed at making all converge to that one great point to which all the agitations, conflicts, anxieties, and consolations have conducted me—the chief moral of her life, and the glory of her death.

I am fully aware that the principle I have urged you to adopt is not a popular one. Even Paul found it a rare thing in his day.

Writing of Timothy, he says, "I have no man likeminded who will naturally or genuinely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." The standard is too high, it will be said, it is an extreme view—"a hard saying"—Utopian. I should like to see such objections defended by the New Testament. But, passing by this, do you not observe how the world is slowly coming round to the teachings of Jesus? Do we not see large numbers beginning to acknowledge principles that have slumbered for ages in the Word of God? Do we not know that multitudes, when brought to the bed of death, are forced to the conclusion that the great Teacher is right? Yes! and among them our great men, men of genius, of learning, and of renown.

I confess I was deeply affected the other day, with an account of the death of Sir Walter Scott. He asked his friend to read to him. "What book shall I read?" "*There is but one book,*" said the dying man, and requested a chapter in John to be read. And it is recorded of Dr. Johnson, that it was not until within a day or two of his death that he embraced the evangelical system.

At this very moment, are there not those

who have scorned Christianity all their days, treated it as an idle tale, and expended life in idle pursuits; but now, in the chamber of death, passing to the dread audit, the glare and deceptions of life disappearing before the awful reality about to be unveiled—now, being forced to look at neglected truth, and finding no alternative but Christ or perdition, are not they who slighted him as a thing of nought, as guilty culprits pleading for mercy at his hands?

And I wish this were all. But are not the last moments of many a professor beclouded, his dying pillow full of thorns, his soul filled with regret? And why? Because he has not kept his word, his covenant engagement, has not followed the Lord fully. If, then, all will come to acknowledge this principle, how infinitely better is it to act upon it at once—in health, in youth—and not to leave it to a period when all opportunities of serving him are rapidly passing away, or gone for ever.

Beware of the torment of unavailing regret. Be it unpopular; how little does that signify in a world the fashion of which is passing away, whose friendship is declared to be “enmity with God,” and therefore “whoso-

ever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

I am afraid you will think me tedious; but I have not yet delivered my soul. I have a solicitude I must express. It is concerning many of my esteemed friends and kindred, who, although they admired the life of Mrs. M., are not, I fear, travelling the same road.

I know the bitter pang of parting, but it is bitterest when the shade of that awful passage comes over me, “Lest I myself should be a castaway.”

Who can bear the agony of the everlasting farewell! To be separated not only from a friend, or relative, but from all friends, from the whole company of the redeemed, from Jesus, from God, and from glory! and to be cast down with all the unholy, the guilty, and the miserable!

How affecting to think of any family living in love, walking in harmony and happiness through life, advancing together even to the very boundary line which divides the two empires, and, on their arrival, parting—parting for ever! “These shall go away into everlasting punishment; those into life eternal.”

But there is one family union that shall



never be dissolved. Death enters, separates for a season, takes our friends out of sight, though not from our faith or affection; but neither death nor anything else can dissever the everlasting bonds which bind all believers in one holy brotherhood. Of this family Christ is the head, the soul, the life; and, to be one with him, is to belong to the great company of the holy in all worlds. "And who shall separate us from the love of Christ? For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Are we members of this heavenly family? Have we the family likeness? Are we sealed with the spirit of promise? And does he bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God? If not, how plain, how imperative our duty, to seek admission by repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But if we are children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." What amazing wonders are we going to behold! Soon

we shall see Jesus, the object of our trust, our devotion! see him in full manifestation, with the glory of his Father and the holy angels.

Oh, it would be worth while to travel creation over to have but a glimpse! But the vision will not vanish, it will abide for ever, increasing in brightness and splendour. And if a glimpse be so ravishing, what to be for ever with the Lord, admitted into his most intimate friendship, receiving and reflecting his glory, our nature unfolding in his presence, our whole being free from all evil, faultless, and unfettered, giving full expression to the burning love of a redeemed soul in everlasting devotedness to the glorious Deliverer.

O, thou mighty Redeemer, image of the invisible God, sovereign of the universe, whose we are, and whose right it is to reign over us, attract us to thyself; tie us in everlasting allegiance to thy throne; appropriate the whole of that nature thou hast ransomed, to thine own glory; help us to honour thee on earth, by leading sinners to thy cross, and saints to heaven; that when our eyes close in death, we may behold thee as thou art; and, in that bright host of redeemed spirits encircling thy throne, may we, through the unutterable

riches of thy grace, meet with those who have gone before, never again to be separated, but unitedly, perfectly, and for ever serve thee, our Lord and our God.

“EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS, COME QUICKLY!”





