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Pisgah views: or, The negative aspects of Heaven

Octavius Winslow





PISGAH VIEWS.

PISGAH VIEWS:

OR,

THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF HEAVEN.

BY

OCTAVIUS WINSLOW, D.D.

"THE TOP OF PISGAH."—Deut. xxxiv. 1.

"Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's streams, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore."



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To
The Right Honourable
THE EARL OF KINTORE,
Esq. Esq. Esq.

This Volume

is respectfully

Inscribed,

*In grateful recognition of the grace of God manifest in
his earnest Catholic character as a CHRISTIAN, and in
his zealous and acceptable labours as an EVANGELIST.*

"And they glorified God in me."

By
his affectionate friend,
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE revealed descriptions of HEAVEN are, for the most part, of an obscure and negative character. The negative style of delineation was probably adopted by the Holy Spirit as more fitted to convey to our minds intelligent and vivid ideas than those positive modes of existence of which the future blessedness of the saints really consists. Who can fail to recognise in this arrangement of the picture the hand of a Divine Artist? Throwing in the background of the canvas some of the darker shadows of the present life, the great and attractive objects of

the future are thus made to stand out in more distinct form and in richer glow. By portraying to us what Heaven is *not*, we form a more correct and bright conception of what Heaven really *is*. By a similar stroke of artistic skill—reversing the picture of our Lord's life of humiliation—we get a more true and realising idea of His great glory and happiness in Heaven. To be told that He no more sorrows, nor weeps—is no more reviled and persecuted—no more hungers and thirsts—suffers and dies no more—unfolds to us more impressively the great and inconceivable blessedness into which He has entered! What a contrast to the life of meanness and poverty, scorn and neglect, grief and woe, suffering and death, to which He subjected Himself all for the great love He bore us on earth! What Divine glory now crowns His head! What perfect joy fills His soul! What pure worship robes Him with its incense! What sublime songs

of adoration roll in circling waves around His throne!

“’Tis past ; the dark and dreary night !

And, Lord, we hail Thee now

Our Morning Star, without a cloud

Of sadness on Thy brow.

“ Thy path on earth—the cross, the grave—

Thy sorrows now are o’er,

And, oh, sweet thought ! Thine eye shall weep,

Thy heart shall break no more.”

The design of this little work is to serve a twofold, soul-animating, purpose,—as a *staff*, aiding faith’s ascent of the glorious height of Pisgah ; and then, from its summit,— as a *glass*, bringing nearer to its sanctifying and comforting view those sublime beauties and winning attractions of the “land which is very far off,” and which, in our present imperfect state, are best understood and felt in their shadowy and negative forms. “ Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face ; now we know in part, then shall we know even as also we are

known." Oh, sweet thought ! soon we shall spring from the Pisgah of earth to the Mount Zion of Heaven, exchanging the dim glass of faith for the full, resplendent and eternal vision of its glory !—above, and eclipsing all—the beatific vision of "THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY."

"Out of your last home dark and cold,
Thou shalt pass to a City whose streets are gold ;
From the silence that falls upon sin and pain
To the deathless joys of the Angel's strain,
Out of the shadow into the sun,
The battle fought—the victory won !"

BRIGHTON, *March* 1873.

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PISGAH VIEWS;

OR,

The Negative Attractions of Heaven.

NO MORE CURSE.

"And there shall be no more curse."—REV. xx. 3



HE last song of Moses, the servant of God, on earth, was one of blended judgment and mercy. That he was not permitted by God to bring the Church in the wilderness into the Promised Land, to whose border he had so skilfully and faithfully conducted it, was a signal mark of the Divine displeasure of the sin of not honouring God—and this constituted the song of *judgment*. Quitting the plains of Moab, God gently led His servant up the highest mountain, from whose summit

A

He bade him survey the land of Canaan—its fertile vales, and watered plains, and vine-clad hills, and sun-gilded peaks, unveiling their richness, beauty, and grandeur to his eye—and this constituted the song of *mercy*. With this last look of earth—God thus confirming His servant's faith, and vindicating His own faithfulness—opened upon his astonished vision his first view of heaven! The distant and dim shadows of the earthly Canaan dissolved into the near and splendid realities of the Heavenly—the type lost in the antitype—when on Pisgah's height God 'kissed his soul away,' as a mother's caress fondly and softly lulls her infant to sleep.

“ Sweet was the journey to the skies
The wondrous prophet tried ;
' Climb up the mount,' says God, ' and die '—
The prophet climbed, and died.

“ Softly his fainting head he lay
Upon his Saviour's breast :
The Saviour kissed his soul away,
And laid his flesh to rest.”

Earth has still its “ Nebos ” and the Church of God its “ Pisgahs,” sacred and sunlit heights, scaling which, in faith, the believing soul often

sees "*the King in His beauty, and the land which is very far off.*" The experience of the Church still is, "*He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places.*" Faith being a divine principle, its eye is spiritual and its sight far-reaching. The 'substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen,' it bounds beyond the narrow present, pierces the invisible future, and expatiating amid the wonders and wealth of the unseen world, returns, like the spies of Canaan, bearing the rich clusters it gathered from Heaven's vintage—the evidences and the earnest of the great and precious things God has laid up for them that love Him.

While yet upon the threshold of our subject, it may be instructive to note the starting-point of faith in its Pisgah ascents. The base of Mount Pisgah lay low in the plains of Moab, and from that base Moses ascended to the summit. Divine grace, which is glory begun on earth, finds us in the low estate of nature,—'*dead in trespasses and sins*'—at enmity against God—living after the flesh—'without God, and

without Christ, and without hope in this world.[†] It is very useful, beloved, to recall to memory the days of our unregeneracy, when Christ went after us, found and brought us home to Himself. The apostle never forgot that, before divine mercy and free grace called him, he was a "*blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious,*" yea, that of sinners he was the 'chief.' Oh! how these retrospects confirm the electing love, and exalt the free and sovereign grace, of God in the conversion of the soul! How they lay in the dust all man's glory, rearing upon its ruins the "*kingdom of God which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" Now, it is from this low valley that we begin our heavenly ascent. None ever reach the summit of Pisgah who make not this their starting-point. What numbers set out upon a religious course without any real or thorough sight and conviction of their *sinfulness*! They make some eminence of their own uprearing the starting-point, rather than the valley of sin-acquaintance and self-abase-

ment. Reversing God's order, they work from the summit to the base, rather than from the base to the summit of the mount—from the circumference to the centre, rather than from the centre to the circumference of the circle. But at the cross of Jesus, beneath whose shadow *sin* is seen, confessed, and renounced, the soul commences its spiritual life, its heavenly ascent. There *glory* begins in the smallest amount and in the lowliest form of *grace*. The seed may be insignificant, but the tree will be great ; the bud unpromising, but the flower lovely ; the pulse infantine, but the growth gigantic. The instant that the soul becomes a subject of grace, it becomes an heir of glory ; and all its future course of sunshine and cloud, of tempest and calm, stable and chequered, is a gradual and certain progress towards the highest state of perfection in heaven. What the acorn is to the oak, and the child to the man, is present grace to future glory. In this present state, grace, though real and precious, must necessarily be limited and defective. Just as sweet spices, imported from southern climes,

come to us not in their original purity and fragrance, so the graces of the Spirit, divine and heavenly though they are, are shorn of much of their beauty, and exhausted of much of their sweetness; but when we reach the land in which they grew, they will unfold a splendour, and breathe a fragrance, inspiring every soul with admiration and filling every mouth with praise. And should the chill, agonising question cross your mind touching a departed one with whose spirit your heart travelled as it passed within the veil,—“Is the soul happy?” recall to remembrance the *least* measure of divine grace, the smallest degree of precious faith, the faintest spark of divine love, the feeblest throb of spiritual life in that soul,—I would even take the lowest evidence of grace,—*love to the brethren*—and the question of its safety is settled.¹ Thus we may be assured of the glorified state of our friends by their having but “*tasted* that the Lord is gracious.” Grace is glory militant; glory is grace triumphant; grace is glory begun; glory is grace perfected.

¹ 1 John iii. 14.

Grace is the first degree of glory ; glory is the highest degree of grace. Grace is glory in the bud ; glory is grace in the full-blown flower. “ *The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give GRACE and GLORY.*”

The view of Canaan which God presented to His servant Moses was a *negative* one. It was Canaan robed in twilight shadows, rather than bathed in meridian sunlight. It would appear to his believing eye more what it was *not*, than what it really *was*. Now, it is with the *negative* views of the true, the heavenly Canaan that these pages especially deal. And in thus studying it in its negative aspects, faith reverses her glass, and learning what heaven is *not*, obtains a more vivid revelation of what heaven *is*. God, for the most part, adopts the *negative* mode in His dealings with His people, rather than the positive. We see but *negative* views of His own personal majesty and glory. Thus He dealt with Moses. “ *And the Lord said, It shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover thee with*

my hand while I pass by. And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my BACK PARTS; but my face shall not be seen."¹ God has a method and an end in all His works in creation. It may be but a lowly violet protected from the sun's heat by the diamond dewdrop,—nevertheless there is a divine plan and purpose there. How much more conspicuous this principle in His kingdom of grace, in His dealings with the saints! He moves in the "*thick darkness*" but to appear all the more glorious as "*clothed with light*." He speaks from the "*secret place of thunder*," the "*cloudy pillar*," the "*whirlwind*," and the "*storm*," that, when they are past, the sky may appear all the serener, and in its brighter mirror may reflect more clearly the precious truth that, all things were working together for our good. When the angel announced to the shepherds the best news earth ever heard, "*they were sore afraid*;" and yet how soon their trembling fears gave place to the most ecstatic joy! And has it not been often so with us? The cloud has looked dark

¹ Exod. xxxiii. 22, 23.

the thunder has pealed, the lightning has flashed, but presently the beauteous bow has appeared sparkling upon its bosom, and all is sweet peace! Thus we are taught that, so to speak, God's dealings, for the most part, come to us back-foremost—His glory in its "*back parts*"—we see not face to face—and so we learn the lessons and revelations of His law as Hebrew students read their Bible backward, from the left to the right, travelling as from the end to the beginning. But oh! how blessed when, from some dark and crushing event of God's providence, we presently find ourselves reposing within the paternal arms of His love! In expatiating upon the NEGATIVE ATTRACTIONS OF HEAVEN, let us begin with the absence of the CURSE: "*And there shall be no more CURSE.*"

A greater contrast can scarcely be found—a negative of heaven more expressive of its real and positive blessing. Sweep from the globe the mildew of this curse, hurl the incubus from humanity, and you have restored earth and man

to their original beauty and stateliness. But our subject has a *gospel* and a *spiritual* teaching, and to this let us first direct our thoughts. In the present history, and condition of God's saints, the original curse, as a penal and condemning law, is already and virtually repealed. There is an evangelical sense in which it may be said, "There is no more curse." This Christ has done. Thus we read,—"*Christ hath redeemed us from the CURSE of the law, being made A CURSE for us ; for it is written, CURSED is every one that hangeth on a tree.*" This great evangelical passage sets the entire question at rest touching the present relation of the curse in the history of God's saints. As Deity alone could pronounce the curse, so Deity alone could cancel it. As God alone could enact the law, so He alone could repeal it. Christ has cancelled the law of the curse on behalf of His Church, and Christ is GOD. The gospel statement of this great and precious truth is simple and clear. The Son of God consented to be born of a woman, and thus to be made under

the law as violated and broken by man. As such, He became amenable to the law, came under its precepts, assumed its curse, and endured its condemnation; and all this He did for the love He bore His Church. He honoured every precept of the law, exhausted every atom of its curse, and endured to the utmost its condemnation, thus "*magnifying the law, and making it honourable.*" And now, by this substitutory offering, the curse is transferred from the Church to Christ, and righteousness is transferred from Christ to the Church—an exchange of place involving an exchange of condition—and, as a blessed result, all who believe in Jesus are in this present life delivered from the curse and condemnation of the law. "*There is therefore now NO CONDEMNATION to them that are in Christ Jesus.*" But Christ has not only repealed the curse as a condemnatory law, but He transforms even its *effects* into *blessings*. There are infirmity and toil, sorrow, suffering and death,—all the fruit and effects of the curse,—nevertheless, in the deepest sorrow, in the acutest suffer-

ing, in the most agonising death of the saints of God, there is nought of the bitterness and the sting and the condemnation of the curse ; since Jesus, being made a curse for us, has by His marvellous grace transmuted all these terrible effects of the curse into the costliest blessings. "*Howbeit, our God turned the CURSE into a BLESSING.*" O beloved ! accept the discipline of trial and suffering, however dark its shadow or bitter its cup, as among the all things of the covenant of grace on which there rests not an atom of the curse, in which there glows not one spark of hell, but in which are embosomed some of the costliest, holiest *blessings* of your life. Pause, and silently adore, and faithfully follow, that loving, gracious Saviour who for us was cast out as an accursed thing, that we might dwell for ever in that blessed world of which it is said,—"*And there shall be no more CURSE.*" "*Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.*"

Now of the New Jerusalem state of the Church—in the new heavens and the new earth—the element of the curse will be entirely absent. That the final and eternal abode of the risen and glorified saints will be *material*, and not *spiritual*, a *place*, and not a *condition* merely, admits, I think, of not a doubt. The Apostle Peter writes,—“ *We, according to His promise, look for NEW HEAVENS and a NEW EARTH, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*” Such too was the glorious vision of the exiled Evangelist: “ *And I saw a NEW HEAVEN and a NEW EARTH, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.*” “ *I go to prepare a PLACE for you,*” said Jesus. Now it will be an essential and distinctive element of the abode of the saints that, *there shall be no more CURSE.* There shall be no more divine—no more human—no more ecclesiastical curse. What a glorious world will that be, where the landscape will not be blighted, nor the inhabitants crushed beneath the incubus of the curse! The earth will no more bring forth thorns and thistles—man will no more gain his sustenance by the

sweat of his brow—no Shimei shall curse God's anointed ones—no Vatican fulminate its bulls against God's Word—and no Pope shall thunder his anathemas against Christ's Church. "*There shall be no more CURSE,*"—man no more a curse to himself,—no more a curse to others.

Thus let us ascend by faith Pisgah's height, and behold the good land which is afar off, and delight ourselves in the prospect of this glorious negative. Survey that promised country which gently woos you to its holy, peaceful coasts, where the flowers ever bloom, and the fruit ever grows, and the spring ever abides, and the landscape ever smiles, and man is ever blest,—where every vestige of the curse is annihilated, and all is divine, perfect, and immortal. The dividing stream of Jordan is but narrow, and it is quickly passed. A step—a tear—a sigh, and the spirit is on the other side, realising, as there it only can, the depth of meaning and the unutterable preciousness of those wondrous words—"AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE CURSE."

"THY BLESSING IS UPON THY PEOPLE."

“ We dwell this side of Jordan stream,
Yet oft there comes a shining beam
Across from yonder shore ;
Whilst visions of a holy throng,
And sound of harp and seraph song
Seem gently wafted o’er.

“ The other side ! ah, there’s the place
Where saints in joy past times retrace,
And think of trials gone.
The veil withdrawn—they clearly see
That all on earth had need to be
To bring them safely home.

“ The other side ! NO CURSE is there
To blight the robes those blest ones wear,
Made white in Jesus’ blood ;
No cry of grief, no voice of woe,
To mar the peace their spirits know—
Their constant peace with God.


“ The other side ! its shore so bright
Is radiant with the golden light
Of Zion’s city fair ;
And many dear ones gone before
Already tread the happy shore—
We seem to see them there.

“ The other side ! oh, cheering sight—
In cloudless, everlasting light,
For me a loved One waits ;
Over the stream He calls to me—
‘ Fear not, I am thy Guide to be,
Up to the pearly gates.’

“The other side ! the other side !
Who would not brave the swelling tide
Of earthly toil and care,
To wake one day, when life is past,
Over the stream, at home at last,
With all the BLEST ones there ?”

NO MORE NIGHT.

"And there shall be no night there."—REV. xx. 3.

O an ardent and undevout astronomer the total absence of *night* would scarcely convey an intelligent and attractive idea of the blessedness and glory of heaven. Enthroned within his towering Observatory, he watches with intense interest the gradual fading of the golden beams of day into the gray twilight of evening; and the deepening of evening's shades into the darker drapery of night; then, with his glass sweeping the firmament studded with myriad stars and planets, he revels amidst the countless worlds of grandeur now bursting upon his gaze, and which *night* alone unveils. Remind him that there will be *no night* in heaven for his favourite study; but that, if his faith

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has caught a glimpse of "*Jesus, the bright and Morning Star*," taking the planets in his flight thither, he will know more of astronomy in that wondrous transit than centuries of discovery on earth could have taught him ; but, wedded to his science, and satisfied with studying merely the *outside* glories of heaven, in vain you seek to convince him that the absence of night will be the revelation of sublimities unimaginable, the presence of wonders inconceivable, the unveiling of glories indescribable, such as "*eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man.*" But, interpreted in its spiritual and metaphorical sense, this remarkable negative of heaven suggests to the heir of glory some of his most entrancing and cherished anticipations. Let us first take the lowest.

There will be no *literal* night. This at once reminds us of the entire absence in heaven of all the weariness and jadedness—bodily and mental—inseparable from our present state. There is a limit to the exercise of our physical and intellectual powers, the laws of which will

admit of no arbitrary infringement. If we urge the physical beyond its proper bounds, paralysis of power supervenes ; if the mental, insanity of mind follows. The government which regulates both cannot be outraged with impunity. Able writers on mental disease have clearly demonstrated that it is not so much the amount of brain-work which paralyses power and shortens life, as the superadded element of *anxiety*. Were it possible for an individual whose brain is incessantly seething to throw off the noble yet undue anxiety for others,—the result, often, of the want of faith in God ; or, the more selfish anxiety for his own literary fame—the effect too frequently of a morbid ambition, vanity, or envy,—in all probability a premature corrosion of the brain would be averted, and usefulness and longevity greatly prolonged. But how wise and beneficent this arrangement of God—*the night season of sleep !* How welcome and grateful to the exhausted student, the weary labourer, the suffering patient, is the advent of night, with its diadem of glory and enshroud-

ing curtains, bringing with it the renewing power and soothing influence of *sleep*, restoring the balance of our over-wrought faculties, and raising us new creatures from our couch of repose! There is much in its philosophy and physiology, not to speak of its moral instruction, we have yet practically to learn touching this sweet necessity of our nature, *sleep*,—ignorance or wilful neglect of which has been productive of much evil which might otherwise have been avoided. It is an established physiological fact that the human brain expands in all cases to an astonishing degree during the period of wakefulness, especially in those individuals whose powers of thought are concentrated upon abstruse and profound subjects of study; and the fact is equally demonstrable that, when *recuperation* is not equal to *expenditure*, imbecility, or insanity and self-destruction are often the certain and sad results. It follows that those who do most brain-work require a larger amount of *recuperative* power; or, in other words, the most *sleep*,—which has been well defined life's manna,

dropping from heaven to create us anew day by day. Such is the wise and beneficent arrangement God has made for our present condition.

But not bodily or mental alone are the blessings which the night season brings. It distils equally, yet more certain and refreshing, its *spiritual* dew. How appropriate is the night for holy thought and prayer! "*I have remembered Thy name, O Lord, in the night.*" "*I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate upon Thee in the night-watches.*" To some the night may be long and weary; but there are those who can testify that if there are tears, there are also songs in the night; if sleeplessness, there is also meditation; if there are night-watchings, there are also night-thoughts. Pillow-prayers and pillow-praises are among the most fragrant incense and sweetest music that float from earth to heaven. And he who is a stranger to their exercise is ignorant of one of the richest modes of communion with God, and of intercourse with heaven, practical to man on earth.

How appropriate, too, is the night season for *death*! All is now still. The world's busy hum has ceased—every object and every being is in repose—the labourer has hied him to his couch, and the bird to its nest—and silence, profound as the grave, reigns supreme. It is as though the pulse of universal life stood still.

“ All things are hushed, as nature's self lay dead.”

And now is the time for the Christian *to die*! All is as tranquil in that death-chamber as death itself. The soft footfall—the bated breath—the subdued whisper—the rustling of the angels' wings waiting to escort the spirit home, are the only sounds that break the hush of that still, solemn hour. What an appropriate time for the believer's departure! It is the soul's holy pause ere earth is exchanged for heaven. It is time standing for a moment still—the sun arrested in its course—waiting the solemn, the glorious advent of ETERNITY!

“ How sweet this very hour to die!
To soar from earth, and find all fears
Lost in thy light—Eternity!”

" Night is the time for *rest* :
How sweet, when labours close,
To gather round an aching breast
The curtain of repose,
Stretch the tired limbs, and lay the head
Upon our own delightful bed !

" Night is the time for *dreams*,
The gay romance of life,
When truth that is, and truth that seems,
Blend in fantastic strife.
Ah ! visions less beguiling far
Than waking dreams by daylight are !

" Night is the time to *weep* ;
To wet with unseen tears
Those graves of memory where sleep
The joys of other years ;
Hopes that were angels in their birth,
But perished young, like things of earth !

" Night is the time to *watch*
On ocean's dark expanse,
To hail the Pleiades, or catch
The full moon's earliest glance,
That brings unto the home-sick mind
All we have loved and left behind.

" Night is the time for *care* ;
Brooding on hours misspent,
To see the spectre of Despair
Come to our lonely tent ;
Like Brutus 'midst his slumbering host
Startled by Cæsar's stalwart ghost.

“ Night is the time to *muse* ;
Then from the eye the soul
Takes flight, and, with expanding views,
Beyond the starry pole
Descries athwart the abyss of night
The dawn of uncreated light.

“ Night is the time to *pray* :
Our Saviour oft withdrew
To desert mountains far away—
So will His followers do ;
Steal from the throng to haunts untrod,
And hold communion there with God.

“ Night is the time for *death* ;
When all around is peace,
Calmly to yield the weary breath,
From sin and suffering cease ;
Think of heaven's bliss, and give the sign
To parting friends :—such death be mine ! ” ¹

But what a world and what a condition will that be in which the mind and the body of the glorified will be occupied with studies the most profound, with enjoyments the most ecstatic, and in a service the most incessant, yet never conscious of the slightest satiety, or sensible of a moment's weariness ! Searcher of truth ! student of science ! labourer for Christ !—ye who

¹ James Montgomery.

often mourn the limit of your powers, and the interruption of your inquiries, and the cessation of your toil which languor and sleepiness entail, begrudging the time which repose demands—oh! think how much is contained in that marvellous negative, "*And there shall be NO NIGHT there!*" With every intellectual faculty developed, and with every moral power sanctified, and with every material organ strengthened, and with every moment incessantly employed,—new subjects of study presenting, new wonders of glory unveiling, new spheres of service opening; and with them the powers of the soul expanding to an inconceivable extent, and still expanding with every fresh theme of thought, and intensified with every fresh draught of knowledge—oh! what a blessing will the absence of night be! Like Israel's Divine Watchman, who "*neither slumbers nor sleeps,*" and who "*fainteth not, neither is weary,*" we shall be girded with power that knows no limit. Study will not exhaust us, thought will not oppress us, activity will not

weary us ; and, like the four living creatures round the throne, who "*rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is, and is to come,*" we shall never fatigue in performing God's holy will, nor faint or tire in celebrating His high praises. No night in heaven!—think of this, ye sick and suffering saints, to whose over-wrought brain, to whose shattered nerves, to whose anguished hearts and restless pillow the refreshment and ease of sleep cometh not. Oh ! what a precious boon to you will a nightless heaven be ! No slow, anxious, sleepless hours then,—gazing at the shadows dancing upon the wall,—watching the flickering flame of the dimly burning night-lamp,—or listening to the heavy tread of night's guardian as he paces to and fro beneath your casement,—intensely longing for the first streak of day "*as they that watch for the morning.*" Oh ! what a perfection of heaven—to need no repose ! Sleep ! thou hast proved to me a kind and faithful friend ; thou hast come at my need, and, as with an

angel's wing, hast fanned my fevered brow, and like the dew of Hermon hast sweetly distilled upon my aching eyelids, and like the waters of Lethe hast drowned in oblivion my cares, anxieties, and sorrows; and so, strengthened and refreshed by thy kind and renewing influence, I have risen with the morning's light, and have gone forth to life's daily duties, service, and trials, as a "*bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race.*" But, sweet sleep! I shall no more need thee in heaven!—for there will be no night of fatigue, no night of suffering, no night of sorrow, no night of sleeplessness there. Until then, come, thou angel of loveliness and love, and shroud my pillow with thy soft, balmy wings; and when morning light breaks upon my eyelids, I will uplift my praises to Him who so giveth His beloved sleep!

“Come, sweet oblivion of all care,
And reign triumphant in my breast;
There's no alloy to comfort there,
And I need rest.
Soon as the morn steals on the night,
I'd have thee flee away;
And I'd resume, with mind more light,
The duties of the day.”

But let us study this negative attribute of heaven in its *metaphorical* teaching. There shall be no *intellectual* night in heaven. Intellectual night—as natural—is inseparable from our present existence: it would seem, indeed, a necessary part of our education for heaven. Darkness is the type of ignorance. “*The people which sat in darkness saw a great light.*” Ignorance is the rule, and knowledge the exception, of our present condition. It is rather what we do *not* know, than what we *do* know, that forms the distinctive feature of this life. There is a limit to our range of knowledge, even as there is a limit to our faculty of knowledge. “*We know in part.*” “*Now we see through a glass darkly.*” We admit that the subjects of human study are vast, and their range illimitable; but the faculty of grasping these subjects, and the power of compassing that range, are by sin paralysed and cramped. The limit is not so much in the fields of study as in the power of traversing those fields. We know in part here, and in part only can we know. Take, for example, our spiritual

attainments. How limited is our knowledge of God, of Christ, of truth ! How meagre our experience of His grace ; less than all is our knowledge of ourselves. In human knowledge we are but "children ;" in divine knowledge, but "babes." Contrasted with the future development of the mind; the vast range of its research, and the sublime subjects of its study, our present grasp of intellect is infantine, and our present acquirements but rudimental. And when the longest life of inquiry has closed, and its results are piled upon the shelves, or stored within the archives of earth's literary treasures, compared with the eternal day of intellectual life which awaits us—to quote the simile of the greatest philosopher that ever lived¹—we have but been gathering pebbles upon the shores of knowledge, the ocean of which still stretches out before us in all its fathomless and illimitable extent. Yes, there will be no intellectual night in heaven. Problems in human science, the solution of which baffled us here,—mysteries in divine truth,

¹ Newton.

for the unravelment of which no thread was provided,—the facts and prophecies and revelations of God's Word, which now are accepted as matters of faith rather than of reason,—the character and government of God—the glory and work of Christ—the inexplicable agency of the Spirit in regeneration—will then be seen in light so transparent, and will be bathed in lustre so divine, that a new-born babe, the moment it opens its eyes in glory, knows more of all these intellectual and sacred wonders, and grasps them with a stronger power of thought, than the profoundest philosopher or the most learned theologian on earth. No overtaking the brain there—no crushing of the mind by the weight of thought, or bounding its range of intellectual research,—no languor in thinking—no exhaustion in studying—no mental cloud-veil;—for “*there shall be no night there;*” and when countless centuries of thought and study have passed, the mind will be as youthful and fresh, as vigorous and luminous, as at the moment when it first emerged from its night of intellectual dark-

ness into the perfect and eternal day of intellectual light. O blessed Land! when my mind, unclouded by sin, unwarped by prejudice, unimpaired by disease, will be commensurate with its unlimited range of thought, and its exhaustless subjects of study; where all the mysteries of knowledge will be unravelled, all its facts confirmed, and all its discrepancies harmonised! Depths which my line cannot now sound,—truths which my reason cannot now compass,—texts which my learning cannot now explain,—contradictions which my ingenuity cannot now adjust,—will in that world all stand forth bathed in the golden sunlight of perfect day, where not an infirmity will cramp the energy, nor a cloud shade the lustre, nor a sin taint the sanctity of my intellectual powers; but where I shall be equal to the world of thought in which my soul shall expatiate, knowing even as I am known. It is a blessed reflection, too, that, in a world of pure and perfect intellect, Christian doctrine,—now impaired by the subtilities of human thought, obscured by the poverty of human

language, entangled by the theories of human philosophy, and robed in the antiquated garments of bygone ages,—will then stand out in all its native and sublime simplicity. The soul unclothed, the mind unshackled, wandering through amaranthine bowers, inhaling the life-inspiring odours of paradise, plucking fresh fruit from the tree of knowledge, sustained by nectar draughts of peace, gladness, and joy flowing from beneath and around the throne of God and the Lamb, oh! what a world of intellectual bliss and glory awaits us! What an ocean of research—the character and government of God! what a body of divinity—the person and work of Christ! what an arcana of mystery and wonder—the operation and grace of the Spirit! what themes of thought and subjects of study—the revelations and teachings of the Bible! *“Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.”*

There will be no *night of error* in heaven.

The perversion of divine truth is among the saddest results of the Fall. To transmute truth into error, and to clothe error with the garb of truth, has ever been one of Satan's master and most successful efforts. The dreary but momentous inquiry of Pilate still trembles upon many an anxious lip, "*What is truth?*" The history of error is one of the saddest, as the most voluminous and instructive, the pen of man ever wrote. From the first moment of its introduction to the present hour, the conflict of truth and error, of human doctrine and divine, has been as fierce and fiery as it has been incessant and prolonged. Oh! how has the 'virgin form of Truth'—to quote the simile of Milton—been mutilated, dismembered, and scattered,—a limb here and a fragment yonder,—until, to a superficial eye, she has 'no form or comeliness' that men should either recognise or desire her! With what damnable heresies, Christ-denying doctrines, and God-despising practices have the inventors and apostles of error sown and flooded the world!—propagating their schisms and their falsehoods

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often by the cell and the chain, the faggot and the sword. How has the teaching of the Bible been adulterated, the simplicity of Christ distorted, the Gospel of God caricatured by the ungodly and designing, who have erred from the faith, not knowing the Scriptures; substituting for divine doctrines human traditions, the teaching of men for the revelation of God—plunging countless immortal souls into endless perdition and despair! In this connection let us remark that, all theological error, all false doctrine, and will-worship, have had their rise and origin in the ignoring of CHRIST as THE TRUTH. Here is the beginning of all doctrinal error. The moment a church or an individual starts off from CHRIST as the great central truth of the Bible, the anchor is slipped, the cable is broken; and the bark, loosed from its moorings and drifting towards the lee-shore of soul-destroying error, is wrecked and engulfed amidst its rocks and surf. Hold firmly to CHRIST, my reader, would you stand fast in the faith, and quit you in your combat

with false doctrine like men. Start not from Him your Centre. Fasten the anchor of your faith firm upon the doctrine of His Deity, Atonement, and Mediatorship. Draw all truth from Christ, test all teaching by Christ, examine every spirit in the light of Christ ; take no lower standard, submit to no inferior test, listen to no stranger voice, enter by no other door than—CHRIST. All that is saving, satisfying, and comforting in this life—all that is bright, pure, and hopeful in the life that is to come, centres in, and flows from, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, "*who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.*" Christ is essentially and emphatically "*the Truth;*" and to know Him is to compass all truth. Christ is essentially and emphatically "*the Life;*" and to possess Him is to have life eternal. "*This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.*" If the apostles of error have seduced you—if false doctrine has ensnared you—if papistical delusion or infidel sophistry has drawn you from 'the

truth as it is in Jesus,—if, searching sincerely and earnestly, but fruitlessly and despairingly, for the divine and precious jewel, you roam from mine to mine, anxiously inquiring, “What, and where, is truth?”—our exhortation to you is,—Believe! simply and only believe, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and your inquiry will be met, your question answered; and, casting away your doubts, you shall exclaim, with a yet deeper significance and profounder emphasis than the Grecian philosopher, “I have found it! I have found it!” But there will be no night of error in heaven. Blessed negative! All will be *truth*, and all will be *true* there! False doctrine will not assail the divine citadel of our religion; designing men will not sap the foundation of our faith; doubt and distrust will not shade the brightness of our hope. The decoy-lights of error will then be extinguished; the blinding mists of ignorance dispelled; the misconceptions of the superficial and the prejudices of the bigot will all be entirely and for ever banished. The “BEAST, and they who had received his mark

and worshipped his image," the "FALSE PROPHET and those who had been deceived by his miracles," will then be "*cast alive into a lake of fire and brimstone;*"—for there will be no night of error in heaven.

There will be no *providential night* in heaven. How dark, long, and weary is often this night with us here! In the present life our path is at times draped with gloomy, painful, and inexplicable clouds.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

So strange in shape, sombre in hue, and crushing in effect are often the events and circumstances of our personal history, we are stunned and appalled, paralysed and awed at the 'thick darkness' in which our God moves, at the overshadowing cloud which He makes His chariot,—wondering where the scene will end. What seer will explain to us the handwriting upon the wall? Who will interpret the symbols of an event that has suddenly plunged us in a world of mystery? GOD is speaking to us from the 'secret place

of thunder;' His voice issues from out the cloudy pillar. He has nipped the bursting bud, plucked the lovely flower, broken the graceful sapling, uprooted the strong oak, sowing life's landscape with the snowflakes of winter, congealing all its flowing springs, and tincturing all its sweet rivers with the bitterness of Marah. Like Moses, we are awed into silence by these awful emblems of His majesty and power, and wrapping our faces in our mantle, bow our heads in reverence to the ground. But the absence of night in heaven bids us look beyond the present scene of suffering and sorrow to that glorious world where shall be no drapery of dark and mysterious providences. In that light, pure and transparent as the atmosphere which encircles the throne of God, we shall read all the lessons of His love, interpret all the symbols of His providence, understand all the mysteries of His dealings. Our education then complete,—the last task done, the last lesson learned, the last discipline experienced,—we shall emerge from the gloom of this night of providential dis-

pensation into that world of glory upon whose noontide splendour no shadow shall ever fall, and upon whose landscape the sun shall never set. How wise will then appear all the way our covenant God led us, through the wilderness, across the desert, home to Himself! We shall then see that every dispensation was right, every stroke needed, every step a round in our heavenly ascent, and that every cloud that veiled God's love was one of its truest and holiest expressions. And till this night of mystery passeth, ushering in the perfect day whose sunny sky no providential clouds will ever darken, let us resolve all our Heavenly Father's dealings into infinite wisdom, rectitude, and goodness, fully assured that, "*as for God, His work is perfect.*"

" We cannot see the twinings
In God's long cord of love;
We cannot trace the windings
By matchless wisdom wove.

" E'en as a skein, when ravelled,
Still holds the hidden end,
So love's mysterious windings
Around our footsteps blend.

" That cord can ne'er be broken,
'Tis held by God alone;
The Lord's seal is the token—
He knows, He keeps His own.

" And when the Father chasteneth,
His children's faith to prove,
The cord is held by Jesus—
The unseen end is—LOVE !

" Love, deep, divine, unsearchable,
Love is the binding cord;
And hid beneath the chastening
Twines round the saints of God."

There will be *no night of peril*. Of the New Jerusalem it is said, "*And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there,*"—clearly implying the freedom of the favoured citizens of that glorious city from the invasion of every foe. O ye who are the subjects of cruel enmity and persecution, against whom lying tongues are levelled, and malicious shafts are flung; whose labours are misinterpreted, whose achievements are unrecorded, whose motives are misunderstood, and whose names are cast out as evil for Christ's sake! rejoice that through these jasper gates no foe of the saints shall ever pass, no barbed arrow of

malignity shall ever fly, no peril to soul or body shall ever enter. "*There the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.*" The moment you cross its threshold you breathe an atmosphere untainted by a breath of calumny, undisturbed by a sound of harshness, undimmed by a cloud of envy, jealousy, or revenge. Wide as is heaven's door—never shut at all by day—no persecutor, no reviler, no slanderer, no evil-speaker, no envenomed tongue, no avowed enemy, no anonymous assassin, no wily thief, no bloodthirsty murderer, shall enter. Night has its terrors as its attractions, its alarms as its soothing, its disturbings as its repose, its sighs as its songs, its restless tossings, its troubled dreams, its fancied apparitions, its feverish pillow—even as its ambrosial dews, its pensive thoughts, its heavenly musings, its praises and its prayers. But in heaven "*thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night;*" for the gates of the holy city shall be open all the day, "into which no foe shall ever enter, and from whence no friend shall ever depart."

There will be *no night of spiritual desertion,*

darkness, and despondency. All this is inseparable from our present condition, and forms a necessary part of the soul's education for heaven. If it was essential that the Divine Sun should pass through the terrible eclipse of the cross,—and O my soul! what a night of nights was that! when Jesus cried from the depths of His soul's darkness and woe, "*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*"—much more essential is it to our holiness, obedience to the divine will, and meetness for heaven, that we should at times walk in darkness having no light, travel many dreary stages without the sensible presence of Christ, exclaiming, "*The Lord hath forsaken me! My God hath forgotten me! Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies, and will He be favourable no more?*" Not a star to guide, nor a ray to cheer the soul's perplexity and gloom! Beloved! is this thy present experience? Are there no sweet visits from Jesus, no fatherly manifestations of God, no light beaming from the Sun of thy soul to cheer thee on thy way? Behold the

path trodden by the flock, nor less by the Shepherd of the flock, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps. The sun's eclipse is not its withdrawal, but the veiling only of its light. The spiritual gloom and mental depression now shrouding you is not the darkness of hell, nor the despondency of despair ; it is the Lord's wise and gracious dealings, designed but to lead you into the experience of truth, to teach you lessons, and confer upon you blessings, known and learned only in the night season of soul-exercise. But all this is done away in heaven. Not a passing shadow crosses the sunshine of the spirit. With the corruptions of the body will be entombed the infirmities of the soul. With every quiver and pang of the body laid at rest, will be every mental doubt and fear. Disencumbered of the vehicle which clogged its progress, repressed its aspirations, and shaded its hope, the soul will expand and expatiate in a world of ever-growing wonder, and ever-widening range, freed from every element that contributed to its night of gloom and woe. Oh ! the bliss of the glori-

fied saints!—no longer tormented with doubts and fears, no more questioning their interest in Christ, their adoption by God, their hope of glory! The agonising question, “Am I a Christian?” is now answered by the perfect realisation of the fact. “Am I a child of God?” is now met by the beatific vision of His face. The distressing fear, “Have I union with the Saviour?” is now lulled to rest upon His glorified bosom; and the trembling uncertainty of ever reaching heaven at last is lost in the blissful consciousness of being actually, safely and for ever there! No longer anxiously inquiring, “Have you seen Him whom my soul loveth?” you will gaze upon His transcendent countenance outshining ten thousand suns, hear His loving voice sweeter than ten thousand harps, and bask in the rays of His presence as they sweep in circling glory around the throne before which you stand ‘without a fault.’ *“In Thy presence is fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”* No more soul-despondency—mental cloud-veil

—or heart-sorrow,—for the night of gloom and disquietude will for ever have passed. Oh! to think that I shall never forego the sensible presence of God—never lose sight of Jesus, my soul's Beloved—never grieve the Holy Spirit by whom I am comforted and sealed—and never more wander from the bosom which so often soothed me in grief, sheltered me in danger, and upon which I shall now for ever recline.

The negative of night in heaven assures us of *the absence of all the loneliness and solitude of the wilderness* which conducts us there. The Christian pilgrimage is in some of its stages, isolated and lonely. Created for intercourse, fitted for companionship, yearning and sighing for love, sympathy, and fellowship, the Christian is often as Joseph separated from his brethren, travels a lonely path, and is like a pelican in the wilderness, a sparrow alone upon the house-top. This may be the way God is leading thee, my reader. It is often with thee a night of weeping because it is a night of loneliness. You eat your morsel alone. You sit and

meditate and suffer in solitude, often longing for Christian society, sighing for the communion of saints, yearning for affection, sympathy, and fellowship; but it is your heavenly Father's appointment, and it must be right,—it must be in love. This is the school, and this the discipline, of your training for the full, the perfect, the eternal fellowship of heaven. "*They wandered in the wilderness in a SOLITARY way.*" But it was the right way to Canaan. Such was a part of the suffering by which Christ, though a Son, learned the lesson of obedience—the school of solitude. Separated from His brethren, denied by one disciple, betrayed by another, forsaken by all,—oh! how isolated and lonely was the path He trod, the life He lived. But was He all alone? Oh, no! Listen to His words: "*And yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.*" Does not thy heart, thou lonely one, echo these words? Thou art not all alone. Lover and friend God has put far from thee, and thine acquaintance into darkness; He has written thee a widow—made thee an orphan

—removed the being whose life seemed essential to thine own—and, like a green tree whose foliage the wintry blasts have scattered, and in whose leafless branches the birds sit and plaintively sing, thy heart is smitten, and sad and lonely. Oh! you will never know until you reach heaven how necessary this peculiar path was to thy meetness for its fellowship. It was just the school thy soul required—just the discipline thy heart needed. But in heaven thy dark, lonely night of weeping will give place to a bright and eternal morning of fellowship and joy. There we shall meet again all those who crossed the river a little while before us, then lining the shore to greet and welcome our arrival home. In heaven there is no solitude or loneliness, no chilled affection or fickle friendships,—no misunderstandings, woundings, or separations. This long, dreary, troubled night is passed, and the sun of the soul's affection and fellowship never sets. Wedded hearts are united by a bond which sin cannot taint, which infirmity cannot peril, and which

neither poverty, adversity, nor death can impair or dissolve. Each glorified spirit, while retaining its personal identity, its loves and memories, will yet be so perfectly blended with the whole, and all so swallowed up in God, as to constitute one vast and endless unity, "distinct as the billows—one as the sea." Oh! let the thought soothe your loneliness, and the hope lighten your solitude, that ere long this dreary night will be one perfect sunlight and eternal day of fellowship and love.

In the literal and eternal absence of night in heaven, how magnificent the contrast! "*There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light.*" As stars fade and disappear in the increasing beams of the rising sun, so the dim and partial light that irradiated and cheered our path on earth will all be lost in the glory of God which then will fill and illumine the heavenly temple. Oh! what must be the purity of that world, and the splendour of that day, of which God is the light and Christ the Sun thereof! There will then

be no need of the faint 'sun' of human ministrations, and of the dim 'candle' of church ordinances; for we shall be admitted to the beatific vision of the immediate manifestation of Deity, in the overwhelming effulgence of which all other lights expire. "*They need no candle.*" What think ye, child of affliction! of that world in which there shall be no night of *sorrow*? What think ye, child of loneliness! of that home in which there will be no night of *solitude*? What think ye, child of pining sickness! of that place in which there will be no night of *sleepless suffering*? What think ye, mourning one! of that night in which there will be no night of weeping? Cheer up! The night is far spent—the day—the perfect, endless day of glory—is at hand, when "THE SUN SHALL BE NO MORE LIGHT BY DAY, NEITHER FOR BRIGHTNESS SHALL THE MOON GIVE LIGHT UNTO THEE, BUT THE LORD SHALL BE UNTO THEE AN EVER-LASTING LIGHT, AND THY GOD THY GLORY. THY SUN SHALL NO MORE GO DOWN, NEITHER SHALL THY MOON WITHDRAW ITSELF, FOR THE

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LORD SHALL BE THINE EVERLASTING LIGHT,
AND THE DAYS OF THY MOURNING SHALL
BE ENDED."

Until that day in which we shall emerge from our present night of sin, ignorance, and sorrow, into a nightless world of glory, let us not forget that, long and dark though our present night season may be, we are, as believers in Jesus, not children of the night, but of the day. Putting off the works of darkness, let us put on the armour of light, and walk as children of light, illumining this dark, benighted world with the light and lustre of true holiness. It is not all night with the believer in this world. By God's light he walks through darkness; and standing where stood the apocalyptic angel in the sun, and thus drawing his light from Christ, he will "*let his light so shine before men, that they may behold his good works, and glorify his Father who is in heaven.*" Let your light, beloved, be not a borrowed, but a solar light; take your religion, your creed, your profession, not indirectly from others, but directly and only from Christ. "*Now are*

ye light in the Lord, walk as children of the light." Following Christ, your Light, your feet shall not stumble, however dark and dreary your night of difficulty, want, and sorrow may be. "*Walk in the light*, as He is in the light," then shall your path be as "the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day."

"Walk in the light ! and thou shalt know
That fellowship of love
His Spirit only can bestow
Who reigns in light above.

"Walk in the light ! and sin, abhorred,
Shall ne'er defile again ;
The blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord,
Shall cleanse from every stain.

"Walk in the light ! and thou shalt find
Thy heart made truly His
Who dwells in cloudless light enshrined,
In whom no darkness is.

"Walk in the light ! and thou shalt own
The darkness passed away,
Because that light is on thee shone
In which is perfect day.

"Walk in the light ! and thou shalt see
A path, though thorny, bright ;
For God by grace shall dwell in thee,
AND GOD HIMSELF IS LIGHT "

NO MORE SEA.

“And there shall be no more sea.”—REV. xxi. 1.



THE entire absence of *sea*, as a distinctive feature of the New Jerusalem, would, equally with the absence of night, scarcely present an object of beauty and attraction to those who have been wont to regard the grand old ocean, with its dark blue waves, its mountain billows, its creamy surf, and its coral reefs, as one of the most picturesque and sublime features of nature. And yet there can be no difficulty in assigning to this negative attraction of heaven its proper place and significance in the future home of the saints. It is clearly a marked and expressive feature of the new earth and the new heaven which will form the blessed and eternal

abode of the holy city—the New Jerusalem—coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. The sea covers three-fourths of the surface of the globe, and consequently, while contributing essentially and beneficently to the purposes of commerce, the beauty of the earth, and the health of the races, must yet to a great extent absorb a vast portion of the earth which otherwise might be devoted to the purposes of agriculture,—thus furnishing food and sustenance for man. But the absence of the sea in that material world which will constitute the blessed and eternal abode of the glorified saints must have its special and profound significance. To its consideration let us address ourselves, regarding this magnificent and suggestive phenomenon of nature both in its *emblematic* and *spiritual* teaching.

What an evidence of *the existence and creative power of God is the SEA!* To Him its creation is ascribed. “*And the gathering together of the waters called He SEAS.*”¹ “*The SEA is His!*

¹ Gen. i. 10

*and He made it."*¹ Making it, He bounded it by a perpetual decree which it cannot pass. "*He hath compassed the waters with bounds;*"² "*And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.*"³

Thus let the atheist consider and learn that there is a GOD, who created the heavens, the earth, and the sea; and humbly and devoutly acknowledge "*His eternal power and Godhead,*" blushing that he should for a moment have gazed upon this sublime phenomenon of nature, and then have lifted his atheistical brow to heaven, exclaiming in his heart, "*There is no God!*" But to the believing and devout mind, recognising, considering, and glorifying God in all His works, with what conviction and comfort does this emblem of the sea bring to his mind the great foundation-truth of all revealed religion—*the being of God!* And, as he studies its varied moods and phases, its endless forms of grandeur and beauty,—now roused into billows by the giant storm, and now pencilled with dimples

¹ Ps. xcv. 5.

² Job xxvi. 10.

³ Ib. xxxviii. 11.

by the gentle zephyr,—now an ocean of liquid diamonds sparkling in myriad sunbeams, and now a ‘sea of glass,’ upon which the victors might be supposed to stand having the harps of God,—with what filial and devout emotion he exclaims, “My Father made it all!”

“The God that rules on high,
And thunders when He please,
That rides upon the stormy sky,
And manages the seas;
This awful God is ours,—
Our Father and our Love :
He shall send down the heavenly powers
To carry us above.”

What an emblem of the divine attributes of eternity, majesty, and power is the sea! God’s eternity who can grasp? His self-existence who can understand? His infinity who can measure? His thoughts who can count? His perfection who can fathom? Of all this greatness the sea is an expressive emblem. “*He hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out the heavens with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. . . . Behold the*

*nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold He taketh up the isles as a very little thing."*¹ Thus illustrating the divine attributes, to the devout Christian the grand old ocean presents an instructive and soothing emblem. You repair to it when all God's waves and billows are going over you, and are ready to sink in deep waters. His dealings are trying, His dispensations are dark, and His judgments are a great deep. And as you gaze upon the vast expanse of ocean spreading out before you, you exclaim, "He who made this great wide sea can send from above and take me and deliver me out of many waters. I will trust and not be afraid, even though troubles and trials come in upon me like a flood, and I sink where there is no standing. He who binds and controls the waves can bring me up again from the depths, hushing the tempest and stilling the billows of my soul into peace, even His own peace, which passeth all understanding." Man of God, tried and troubled ! child of sorrow,

¹ Isa. xl. 12, 15.

daughter of grief, around whom the dark waves are surging,—go and stand upon the sands that belt this grand old ocean, and learn that He who made it, who binds and controls it, can, from His infinite resources of power and goodness, supply all your need, bring you out of all trouble, and through the deep, dark waters lead you to the Rock that is higher than you. “*The VOICE of the Lord is upon the waters,*”—His voice of authority commanding them—His voice of power staying them—His voice of love calming them. “*The Lord sitteth upon the flood.*” Enthroned in majesty and sovereignty, His sceptre rules it, His word controls it, His love stills it. “*The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice ; the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.*” Have faith in this great God, child of affliction and trouble, upon whom the water floods are falling ; for He has promised, “*When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not over-*

flow thee." And that exceeding great and precious promise He will make good ; for "*He is faithful that promised.*" He may see fit, in order to display His own faithfulness and love, and to make you a partaker of His holiness, that you should pass through fire and water ; but He will bring you into a wealthy place.¹

As an *emblem of God's love*, how expressive is the sea ! "GOD IS LOVE." Words of mighty import, the truth of which distances all thought, defies all imagery, exhausts all language ! But what we cannot fully understand we yet may in some degree experience. God's LOVE is, like His eternity, *everlasting* ; like His nature, *infinite* ; like His essence, *divine* ; like His power, *omnipotent* ; like His immortality, *unchangeable*. "God is love," and every divine perfection is a modification and embodiment of love. His love is wisdom planning ; power redeeming ; holiness obeying ; mercy suffering, bleeding, dying to save sinners. Thus every attribute of His nature is but another and new form and ex-

¹ Ps. lxvi. 12.

pression of the LOVE, the great love, wherewith He has loved us. All that that love has done—from the gift of its costliest, most precious treasure, to its last and latest expression as the spirit it ransomed and saved wings its flight to heaven—is worthy of its greatness and its grandeur. As every perfection of God is an embodiment of His love, so every part of His salvation is a reflection of His love: it is electing love, and so reflects His eternal purpose; it is discriminating love, and so reflects His sovereignty; it is saving love, and so reflects His mercy; it is free love, and so reflects His grace; it is unchangeable love, and so reflects His immutability. True love, as a mere human passion, is never at a loss for modes and seasons of expression. It inspires every purpose, moulds every thought, prompts every action, pencils with beauty and bathes with perfume its every and lowliest offering, and never falters or wearies in sacrifice and service. But oh! what imagination can conceive, or thought can reach, or language describe, the LOVE OF GOD to man?—the *love* of God, beloved, to

you ! Think how it chose you to salvation, laid all your sins upon Jesus,—adopted,—pardoned, justified, freely, fully,—and for ever SAVED you. Well may we exclaim, “ *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and gave His Son to be a propitiation for our sins.*” Thou grand and beautiful old ocean ! upon whose brow time has impressed no wrinkles—flowing on in thy majesty and power, in thy soundless depths and boundless reach—washing with thy waves every shore,—whitened with every sail, and bearing upon thy bosom earth’s costliest treasures ! thou art to me the image and the emblem of the ocean of DIVINE LOVE—the Triune love of God the Father, of God the Son, and of God the Holy Ghost,—full, limitless, free,—restoring a heaven forfeited, and extinguishing a hell deserved. And, as I tread thy pearly shore, muse upon thy vast expanse, and listen to thy sweet music murmuring at my feet, thou shalt raise my thoughts to Him who made thee, fixed thy bounds, pencilled thy dimples, fanned thy wavelets, controls thy rage, and bids thee do His pleasure. Beloved ! the Lord the

Spirit direct your heart—your contrite heart, your sad heart, your lonely heart, your sinful heart—into the fathomless, boundless ocean of divine love, exclaiming, as you descend, “Oh! the breadth and length, the depth and height of my Saviour’s love! it passeth knowledge, and yet it fills my soul with all the fulness of God.”

There is yet one more view of God’s love in Christ Jesus which the sea beautifully images—its *perfect freeness*. Who thinks of *paying* for the sea? Who dares fetter it, restricting and burdening it with a price? Such is God’s love to us—it is a most *free* love. “*I will love them FREELY.*” It is the full, free, spontaneous outflow of His grace to sinners, the unworthy, the needy, the poor. Away then with every thought of meriting, purchasing, working for God’s pardoning love in Christ Jesus. The ocean’s waves are not more unfettered, the mountain spring not more spontaneous, the winged winds not more free, than God’s love to sinners, flowing through the cross of His dear Son. All the worth of angels and of saints could not deserve,—and all the

wealth of the universe could not purchase, one drop of this infinite ocean of God's love to man. The great gospel truth is,—“*By GRACE are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.*” Come, then, to this vast sea of love, without money and without price; linger not upon its shore, waiting for some meritorious work, some good thing in yourself, some worthy preparation and fitness ere you plunge into its fulness, and drown your sins and guilt, your sorrows and wants, your doubts and fears, in its free and fathomless depths. God enjoins no worthiness, Christ looks for no fitness, the gospel imposes no terms, love asks no price, in those who approach as humble, penitent, believing sinners, casting themselves upon the Saviour, and accepting as the free gift of His grace God's pardoning love in Christ Jesus.

One thought more. Deal with God's love to you, and not with your love to God—with the fathomless depths of His love, and not with the empty shallows of yours. We shall never find Christian evidence, or derive spiritual comfort, or

extract divine strength, from looking in upon ourselves,—sitting and deploring the coldness of our affection to God, raking among the dead embers of our hearts for some faint spark of love to give us assurance and comfort, our sad lamentation still will be, “My leanness! my leanness.” Oh! there is naught but sin and darkness and death in our fleshly hearts. The Fall has robbed us of every particle of holiness; not a pulse of spiritual life beats there; not a spark of divine love glows there; not an atom of heavenly purity exists there. Why, then, seek streams from this dry well? Why expect purity from this foul source? Why search for flowers of grace and fruits of holiness in this sterile soil and uncultivated wilderness? In a word, why seek ye the living among the dead? A greater saint than, perhaps, he who reads this page has declared, “*I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.*” Turning aside, then, from all this corruption, darkness, and death, plunge just as you are into the infinite sea of God’s love, and sink every sin and sorrow,

doubt and fear, in its fathomless depths,—depths of love “which the lamb may ford, and in which the elephant may swim.”

Not less is the sea an emblem of *the great Atonement of the Son of God*. It is clearly to this truth, thus symbolised, that the prophet refers in those marvellous words, “*Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*”¹ The ATONING BLOOD of Christ is the sea into the *depths* of which all the sins of the Church are cast, which, if sought for, are never more to be found. “The blood of Christ!”—how often are these wonderful words upon our lips! yet how low our thoughts of its nature! how shallow our soundings of its depth! how cold our realisations of its preciousness! and how imperfect our experience of its power! To what shall we trace this essential defect in our personal religion? To one cause—viz., *imperfect views of the exceeding sinfulness of sin*. Low views of sin will ever engender low views of sin’s great Atonement. Superficial apprehensions of the disease will beget superficial appre-

¹ Micah vii. 19.

ciation of the remedy. Oh! what must sin be, the removal of which required the bloodshedding of Incarnate Deity! But how superficial and defective are the views of sin even of many of God's people! What wilful blindness to its guilt, and vain excuses for its commission! what torpor of conscience, languid resistance, little confession, and infrequent laving of the feet in Christ's blood! What perversity of judgment and laxity of practice touching particular things—the sanctity of the Sabbath,—conformity to the world,—light literature,—doctrinal error,—volatility of conversation,—disregard of purity and truth! These are stains upon their professional garments, “spots upon their feasts of charity,”—clouds which dim the lustre—and inconsistencies which weaken the power of their public testimony for Christ and His gospel, and are unworthy of them as becometh saints.

But these infirmities and defects touch not the great truth or efficacy of Christ's Atonement. Into that crimson sea God has cast all the sins of those that believe. Alas! how

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faintly do His people realise this truth; and, consequently, how little do they know of the peace and joy of a *present salvation*! "*Behold, NOW are we the sons of God.*" "*Thy sins ARE forgiven thee.*" "*By grace ye ARE saved.*" "*Having FORGIVEN you all trespasses.*" "*I write unto you, little children, because your sins ARE FORGIVEN you.*" If, then, God has cast all your sins into the infinite depths of Christ's blood, why attempt to recall them? If God does not seek them, and if law and justice and judgment cannot find them, why should you be ever angling with the rod of unbelief, as if to bring them up again to the surface? Oh! it is not so much dealing with your sins that will fill you with sin-loathing, penitence, and humility, as your dealing with the sin-atoning guilt-cleansing BLOOD that has put them all out of sight,—its crimson waves closing over and entombing them for ever. The great secret of peace and assurance is a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience with atoning blood, and thus purged from dead works, serving the living God. It is not deal-

ing with a wound that promotes its healing, but with the balm. It is not poring over the wounded conscience, probing its depth, and lamenting its symptoms, that will cicatrise and heal it ; but, it is applying in faith the only true and infallible remedy prescribed in God's *pharmacopœia*—the SIN-ATONING BLOOD OF CHRIST. Only believe the grand truth that Jesus died for sinners—that He pardons the guiltiest—receives the vilest—saves the greatest—welcomes the poorest ; rejecting none who apply to Him for healing but those who bring a price in their hand with which to purchase it, and you shall be saved,—yea, you *are* saved. Well may the apostle designate it “ *the PRECIOUS blood of Christ* ”—essentially, efficaciously precious—one drop of which is of more worth than the wealth of the universe. Oh ! what will riches, or rank, or honours, or learning avail in a dying hour ? One drop of Christ's blood applied by the Spirit, and received in faith at that solemn moment will be more precious and welcome than life's dearest treasures, or earth's richest diadem. Sin-laden,

guilt-oppressed soul! plunge by faith into this atoning sea, and yours will be the "blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, and unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." But, dropping this symbolical view of our subject, let us examine more closely the spiritual import of this negative attraction of the New Jerusalem—"And there shall be no more SEA."

The first thought which the words naturally suggest is the absence in the new earth of all barriers to international intercourse and friendship; in other words, *the perfect unity of the races*. Such a union the sea now prevents. It is true the power of steam rapidly transports our persons over its surface, and the power of electricity yet more rapidly flashes our thoughts along its bed; yet, with all these wonderful means of intercourse and facilities of friendship, the seas still interpose a wide and separating barrier. The advancement of "unity, peace, and concord among all nations,"—for ages the prayer of the Church, and the labour of the Christian,

—has presented but a faint and feeble illustration of the revealed truth, “*He hath made of ONE BLOOD all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth.*” Despite the diffusion of Christianity and the march of civilisation, the triumph of commerce, the discoveries of science, and the efforts of philanthropy, men are still ‘learning’ the art of ‘war,’ and the nations are still ‘delighting’ in its carnage. It is quite clear, then, that we are to look for a new era in the world’s history, when this barrier to the intercourse of nations shall be removed, welding and moulding into one great family of love and Christian brotherhood all peoples that dwell on the face of the earth.

That era will be inaugurated by the ‘COMING OF THE LORD ;’ and then shall the “*people beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks : nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*” Oh ! what a paradise will the new earth be when the languages and habits, the feuds and the hates, the jealousies and wars, which for so

many centuries have separated nation from nation, turning the world into a very Aceldama, will no longer exist ; for there shall be no sea to float the murderous pirate, the marauding privateer, or the invading armada. And its absence will be that unity, peace, and intercourse among nations for which Christians prayed and philanthropists laboured ; which prophets predicted, and of which poets mused ; but which in its glory and blessedness will infinitely transcend all thought, imagination, and song. O happy land ! when the nations of the earth will be ONE—one heart, one language, one King, around whose throne all will cluster, and at whose feet all will lay the tribute of their homage and their love !

Not the unity of nations only, will the absence of the sea promote ; but what will prove far lovelier, holier, and spiritual—the *unity of the Church of God*. Independent of many causes which, in the present imperfect state of the Christian Church, prevent its union, and unhappily and widely divide it, the geography of the world—of which the sea constitutes so large

an element—limits, if it does not render almost impossible, the intercommunion of the saints of the Most High scattered abroad. But when we are reminded that in the New Jerusalem there will be "*no more sea*," a vision of the Church in her essential and perfect unity rises before the mind in all its peerless splendour. A perfect Church—unbroken in her unity—filled with the Spirit—fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as a bannered host—will then descend out of heaven upon the new earth, in which will dwell righteousness. O thou blessed Saviour! King immortal! hasten Thy APPEARING, that with Thee may come Thy ONE Church,—her divine symmetry no more marred by theological creeds—her essential unity no more broken by human divisions—her spiritual beauty no more veiled by uncomely ritual—her moral strength no more impaired by unseemly strifes—her intercourse and communion no more interrupted by national distinctions, ecclesiastical separations, and geographical bounds,—for "*there shall be no more sea*." Then, and not till

then, will the visible unity of the Church, of which prophets foretold and bards have sung; for which martyrs bled, saints laboured, and the Saviour died, be complete, and the glorious prayer of our great High Priest be fully answered,—“ *That they all may be ONE ; as Thou, Father, art in ME, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.*”

“ One song employs all nations, and all cry,
‘ Worthy the Lamb ! for He was slain for us.’
The dwellers in the vales, and on the rocks
Shout to each other ; and the mountain-tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy ;
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round.”

An idea cognate to the preceding one, and suggested by this negative attraction of heaven, is that, *there will be no interruption of personal intercourse with those we love* in the New Jerusalem. The idea which the existence of the sea suggests is just the opposite of this. It is a separating element—it divides relatives and friends; tears asunder kindred minds and loving hearts,—its dark and stormy billows sepa-

rating for months, for years, perhaps for aye ! But oh ! how sweet the thought of the certain reunion, the perfect recognition, the inseparable love, the changeless friendship, the personal communion of that holy and blissful world in which there shall be no more sea ! How the thought softens our present grief, alleviates our present separation, makes the sweetness of life more sweet, and the bitterness of death less bitter ! The PERSONAL COMING of the Lord, with all His saints, will be the gathering together unto Him, and to each other, of all that are scattered abroad. Who can conceive the blessedness, or paint the glory of that scene—that countless throng, that resplendent gathering, that holy, joyous meeting, greeting, and fellowship ? The very prospect is enough to reconcile us to all the separations of earth—to the thought of a thousand seas rolling between us and the being we love. We shall soon and for ever dwell where there is no more sea,—and, therefore, no more separation ! Once we have crossed the narrow isthmus that separates time from eternity, and have passed the

little stream that divides earth from heaven, we sweep beyond all the sundering, separating limits of this world, and are identified with the Church of the First-born, "whose names are written in heaven." Oh! the welcomes—the greetings—the songs that await us on that shore! The dead in Christ are safely housed with Him; and with Him are 'expecting' the advent of that glorious day when, at the bidding of Christ, the ransomed spirit will return to earth, re-tenant the body now rebuilt and refashioned like unto His glorious body—fair, beautiful, and vigorous—blooming with immortal youth—the meet abode of the pure, enraptured spirit which will then reanimate and re-enter it, every limb and organ, muscle and nerve, fitted to sustain, without weariness or decay, an 'eternal weight of glory.'

There will be no more *soul-distress* in the new earth,—strikingly symbolised by the fact that there will be no more sea. How often is the believer brought into David's experience, and the yet deeper experience of David's Lord—
"*Save me, O God; for the waters are come unto*

my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing ; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me."¹ Soul-distress springing from a fallen nature—the power of sin—a corrupt and deceitful heart—fears within and conflict without—the workings of unbelief, and the suggestions of the Evil One—the corrodings of guilt—the grieving the Spirit—the hidings of God,—oh ! these are waves and billows that *enter into*, the believing soul. While the tempest breaks above the vessel, she rides gallantly and securely on the mountain billow, laughs at the storm, defies the waves, and "walks the water like a thing of life." But, let a plank start, let the waves rush in and the vessel begin to sink, and then the brave mariners stagger like drunken men, and are at their wits' end. So is it with the believer. While the storms of outward adversity sweep over him he can trust and not be afraid ; but, when the waters of spiritual conflict, fears, and unbelief *come in unto* His soul, then it is he cries, "*Lord, save ! I perish !*" But

¹ Ps. lxi. 1, 2.

all this will entirely and for ever have vanished in the New Jerusalem abode of the saints, for there shall be no more sea of spiritual distress. The unbelieving doubt will be dislodged by unshaken confidence—the tormenting fear will give place to perfect repose—the shading cloud will dissolve into noontide splendour—the sweeping tempest will slumber into perfect repose, and the surging billows will subside into a peaceful and eternal calm.

“ And not a wave of trouble roll
Across the tranquil breast.”

But let not this *calm*, which will distinguish the blessedness of the saints in glory, be misunderstood. The absence of the sea in the future home of the blessed indicates the absence of a religious phase common alike to all God's people. We refer to those seasons of spiritual deadness and torpor, of relapse and decay of religion in the soul, the sad and deplored experience, more or less, of the most gracious and eminent saints. The spiritual life is subject to the changes and vicissitudes of the natural. In

nothing is the analogy stronger than in this. Who can read the remarkable experience of David, as recorded in the 119th Psalm, and not trace these variations and moods of which we speak—the diversity of feature which marks the personal religion of all the regenerate? How frequently he speaks of his “*soul cleaving to the dust!*” and then his prayer is, “*Quicken me, O Lord, according unto Thy word.*” Are there no records in the diary of your daily life, my reader, corresponding with this? How frequently have you to mourn over the drooping of spiritual life, the decay of divine grace, the waning of your love, the weakness of your faith, the drowsiness and lethargy of your spirit, the faint hold which the realities and glories of eternity have upon your mind, the coldness and formality of your soul in prayer, the distance of your walk from God, and the half-heartedness with which you follow Jesus! But all this will be done away in heaven! If there will be no more the sweeping tempest of soul-distress, stirring it to its depths, there will also be no more the dead calm of soul-

insensibility, lulling it to unsuspicion and danger. Oh, blessed thought ! in heaven my love for God will never chill ; my zeal in His service will never flag ; my obedience to His word never falter ; my assimilation to Christ never veiled ; my soul never lulled into that carnal security, spiritual torpor, drowsiness, and death more to be dreaded than the storms and tempests, the searchings and probings that drive me in tears and confession closer to Christ. For—

“ More the treacherous calm I dread
Than tempests bursting o’er my head.”

The absence of the sea in heaven tells me that there will be no more *affliction* and no more *temptation* there. How like an overwhelming flood are sometimes God’s disciplinary providences, and Satan’s permitted yet curbed assaults ! In reference to the one, we may quote the language of David, “ *Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of Thy waterspouts ; all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me.*” And in reference to the other, we may quote the words of the prophet, “ *When the enemy cometh*

in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." But we part for ever with all this when we plant our feet on that shore unwashed by a wavelet of temptation and sorrow. Heaven is sorrowless because sinless—is free from temptation because free from corruption. Cheer up, thou tried and tempted one! Soon shalt thou breast the last foaming billow, quench the last fiery dart, and exchange the troubled sea of sorrow for the crystal sea of glass, upon which thou shalt stand among the victors with harp all strung and tuned to the song of Moses and the Lamb.

" Courage, Christian ! Though the way
Be both lone and dreary,
Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
Passed this way before thee.
See Him standing at the door
Of thy home in glory ;
He has made thy title sure ;
None can e'er defraud thee."

The *sea* will be closely associated with the solemn transactions of *the last great day* of the world's history. "*And the SEA gave up the dead which were in it.*" The sea has its dead ; its swell-

ing bosom and its crested billows, are mounds and monuments of the myriads who have gone down into its liquid tomb. What a vast proportion of the race has the sea engulfed! As the scene of battle and the highway of commerce,—as the road of the discoverer and the path of the tourist,—what a sad and instructive volume is the history of the sea! When God lets loose His winds, it is here man feels his impotence. He has scaled the mountains and chained the lightning; curbing the sternest elements, he has compelled all nature to obey his behest; but the sea he cannot curb, the winds he cannot bind. Here he is passive and powerless. How varied and how touching the victims over whom the dark blue sea rolls its waters! The gallant commander going down in the faithful discharge of his responsible and perilous trust—the last to die; the brave sailor dropping from the yard-arm in the midnight gale; the merchant, bent on enterprise and wealth, sinking beneath the deep waters, all his busy thoughts at that very moment perishing;

the invalid returning to his home, committed to the deep in sight of his native hills ; the emigrant to a land of strangers in search of a new home, perishing amid the rocks and breakers of its very shores ; the missionary of the cross bearing the tidings of salvation to the distant heathen, all his fond and holy thoughts of service, and plans of usefulness engulfed in the trackless deep. All these—and countless myriads more—will rise from the liquid tomb at the trumpet of the archangel for, “ *the SEA shall give up the dead which were in it.*”

And will there be no more sea in the New Jerusalem ? Oh yes ! *one sea* yet remains !—the sea of heavenly bliss—the ocean of God’s love—into the fathomless depths of which the glorified saints will plunge—upon whose sparkling surface the happy spirit will sport and the joyous harpers will stand, their anthems of adoration and praise to God and the Lamb, rolling in swelling thunderings, and in circling symphonies, mightier than the voice of many waters, round earth’s new creation. My soul ! breast

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hopefully the waves, and plough manfully the billows of the stormy seas, across which thou art voyaging to the heaven-land — for surely and safely Jesus will bring thee to thy desired haven.

“ I am hastening homeward
To the land I love ;
Would'st thou bid me linger
From the realms above ?
Soon I'll be with Jesus,
See Him face to face ;
Then I'll sing the story,
Of His wond'rous grace.

“ In His presence standing,
I my voice shall raise,
In a sinless anthem
Of eternal praise ;
Praise to Him who brought me
From darkness into light,
Put away transgression,
Clothed my soul in white.

“ Here I have had sorrow,
There shall be no more—
Hushed is ev'ry WAVELET,
On yon glorious shore.
One by one they're gath'ring
Home from every land ;
Soon I'll pass the desert—
Join their happy band.

“ Why then should I murmur,
If the way be rough ?

Jesus, He will guide me—
Is not that enough ?
Then let clouds o'ershade me—
Still I need never fear ;
His strength shall sustain me,
His sweet voice shall cheer.

“ Therefore I will hasten,
Homeward on my way,
Singing as I journey,
To the realms of day ;
Ever shall my song be,
Through eternity,
Of His matchless glory,
And His love to me.”¹

¹ Geraldine Denning.

NO MORE HUNGER AND THIRST.

“They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.”—
REV. vii. 16, 17.



HERE would seem to be, at the first blush of these words, an apparent contradiction of ideas and dissonance of meaning. There is the negative of hunger and thirst, and yet a positive provision supposing still their existence,—the absence of desire, and yet the presence of rich and ample refreshment. Now, as God's word never contradicts itself, and as its apparent discrepancies are perfectly reconcilable—nay, those very discrepancies often confirming its actual coincidence, as opposite notes in music produce the sweetest harmony—we may suppose that there is an underlying truth in these words of a most interesting and

instructive character, the intelligent reception of which, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, will convey to us a vivid idea of that special attraction of heaven set forth in the negative—
“*They shall HUNGER no more, neither THIRST any more.*”

The whole passage is a splendid picture of the blessedness of those who had died in the Lord. They are first described by the vestments which they wear—“*Who are these which are arrayed in WHITE ROBES?*” They are a robed assembly, and their robes are white. The robe in which they are arrayed is the imputed righteousness of Christ,—the “Lord our righteousness,”—“clothed upon” with “*the righteousness of God which is unto all and upon all them that believe.*” Not a shred of their own righteousness composes that vestment, not a weft of their own unworthiness is woven with that robe. It is the righteousness of the Incarnate God, wholly, entirely, and His alone. O my soul! praise and adore the Saviour who has provided for thee such a righteousness—a righteousness that has

answered and honoured every precept of God's law—in default of a single work or one particle of merit of thine own, invested with which thou dost stand 'complete,' "*accepted in the Beloved!*" How perfect must be the justification of the believing sinner!—how costly his attire!—how resplendent his glory! seeing that he stands in the "*righteousness of GOD*" Himself. "*The righteousness of GOD, which is unto all and upon all them that believe.*" By no creature is this standing excelled; by none is it equalled;—the sinner raised from the dunghill of his vileness and pollution, is made to sit among the princes of heaven. The *hue* of this robe is expressive. It is "*white.*" White is the emblem of dignity and purity. When our Lord was transfigured on the Mount, "*His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was WHITE as the light.*" The angel at the tomb—the first preacher of Christ's resurrection—was "*clothed in raiment white as snow.*" The ancient kings and priests, and the Roman patricians, were robed in white, indicative of rank, purity, and rectitude. Thus are the glo-

rified spirits arrayed. They form a part of that "*glorious Church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing*," which Christ will present to Himself and to the Father, in that day when "*they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many unto righteousness as the stars for ever and ever*." A similar vision of the saints in glory is presented in connection with the final nuptials of the Church, when the marriage of the Lamb will be celebrated, and she shall be presented to God "as a bride adorned for her husband." "*Let us be glad and rejoice ; and give honour to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and WHITE, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints*." Have we on this wedding-garment? Divorced from our idols, and separated from our own righteousness, are we united by the Spirit, and through faith, to Christ? Have we a vital union with Christ the Head? Oh! let no uncertainty attach to this momentous matter. We

are either in Christ, or out of Christ ; one with Christ, or separated from Christ ; for Christ, or against Christ ; invested with His righteousness, or still clothed with the filthy garments of our own. The marriage-supper of the Lamb is fast speeding on ! Oh ! that when the King comes in to see the guests, that solemn and personal inspection may not discover us without having on the wedding-garment, which is the imputed righteousness of the King Himself ! But, with Paul, may we be *"found in Him, not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."*

Cleansing is another distinctive feature : "*And have WASHED their robes, and made them white in the BLOOD of the Lamb.*" They are not only justified, but they are also pardoned. A cognate truth with justification is pardon : essentially distinct, they are yet savingly one. Justification gives us a title to heaven ; pardon, a meetness for its enjoyment : the one clothes us, the other cleanses us : by the one we pass out of the court

of God's justice, freed from all condemnation ; in virtue of the other we emerge from the prison of God's law, released from all debt. Justification, in its forensic sense, looks upon a believing sinner as though he had never broken the law ; pardon, as though he had never incurred its guilt. Now it was this twofold condition of the glorified saints which appeared in the vision of the Evangelist. They were washed in the blood of the Lamb—*therefore* they were before the throne of God. It was not their own blood that washed them—it was not their suffering of martyrdom that exalted them : they could only occupy that position as they were cleansed and robed—the blood and righteousness of the Saviour constituting their one and only plea. Sin-burdened, guilt-oppressed soul ! behold your present and future standing before God ! No longer hesitate to plunge into the sea of Christ's blood, or to accept the proffered robe of His righteousness. No merit of your own will afford you the slightest encouragement to come to Christ ; and no demerit shall dare inter-

dict your coming. Though you were the most holy of fallen creatures that ever lived, though you were to sacrifice your first-born for your transgression, the fruit of your body for the sin of your soul, yea, give your own body to a martyr's flame, all would not avail to place you as a pardoned and justified sinner before the throne of God : you could only stand there on the footing of Christ's Atonement once finished for all time. "THEREFORE *are they before the throne of God.*"

"Jesus ! Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;
In flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

Precious blood ! glorious righteousness ! thou art my trust and hope now ; and hereafter my plea, my boast, and my song for ever and ever !

Another feature of the glorified saints is the discipline through which they came. "These are they which came *out of great tribulation.*" Suffering was their school—trial their discipline—affliction their furnace. The path to heaven is

the royal road of suffering. There the King Himself walked, learning, though a Son, obedience by the things which He suffered. Our blessed Lord foretold us of this : "*In the world ye shall have tribulation.*" And the apostles but echoed this truth when they reminded the early Christians that, "*through much tribulation they were to enter the kingdom.*" In this crucible their principles were tested, in this furnace their grace was tried ; and, like the three children of Israel, they lost nothing in the flames but the cords that bound them, emerging from the baptism of suffering with not even the smell of fire upon their garments. Accept, then, beloved, the discipline of the Refiner as a necessary part of your heavenly training, and as assimilating you to the "noble army of martyrs" who have gone before you. And though the tongues of fire leap high, and the furnace whitens with heat, yet One like unto the Son of Man shall tread it at at your side, and you shall come out of it with no trace of the fire upon your robes, save their deeper purity and richer lustre.

These words may also admit of a pointed and remote allusion to the *great tribulation* which is to overtake God's Church during the terrible reign of the coming Antichrist. This future baptism of fire, more terrific in its nature and consuming in its effects than any that ever preceded it, will, for the elect's sake, be shortened ; but from its searching flames the Church of God will emerge all the more resplendent, and her Head all the more triumphant. Every species of evil, and form of false doctrine, and mode of torture that ever existed, now embodied in this hydra-headed monster, will then be entirely and for ever destroyed ; and from out this fierce and fiery tribulation the saints of the Most High shall be delivered, "*purified, and made white, and tried.*" From this rapid view of the character and heavenly position of the saints in the New Jerusalem, let us more closely consider this negative quality of their blessedness,—"*They shall HUNGER no more, neither THIRST any more, neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat.*"

Shall we take the lowest idea suggested by this negative of heaven—the total absence of all *corporal appetite*? In this lowly, but expressive sense, there shall be no more hunger or thirst. That the saints of God have often been exposed to famine—that many noble servants of Christ, and labourers in His vineyard, have perished by hunger and thirst, is a notable fact in the history of the Church of Christ. Of the Church in the wilderness it is recorded, "*Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.*" Speaking of his deprivations for Christ, and those of his fellow-apostles, Paul could testify, "*We both hunger and thirst, and are naked.*" And this suffering for Jesus he numbered among the highest lessons of his spiritual education—"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content: in all things I am instructed to be HUNGRY, and to suffer NEED." Our blessed Lord will show this to have been a part of the discipline of His saints in that day when, before an assembled world, He will recognise the humble crust and the simple cup of cold water, given

to a needy disciple in His name, as given to Himself. "*I was an HUNGERED, and ye gave me meat: I was THIRSTY, and ye gave me drink.*" Who can read the early history of the Patagonian Mission, and not recall the touching fact of Gardner and his fellow-missionaries dying of starvation in their noble and self-sacrificing efforts to plant the standard of the cross on those heathen shores?

Now, keeping these facts in view, there is a peculiar charm in this impressive negative—the absence of all *literal* hunger and thirst in heaven. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more." We are here reminded that the risen bodies of the saints will not be material or corporal, but spiritual and immaterial. "*It is sown a natural body, it is raised a SPIRITUAL body.*" What this "spiritual body" will be, we are left to conjecture. Enough that it will require no longer the material nourishment needful to sustain our present life, but will be nourished by aliment suited to its nature and requirements—gathered, it may be, from 'the tree of life,'

which, 'bearing twelve manner of fruits, and yielding her fruit every month,' is planted in the midst of the street, and on either side of the river. But this lower interpretation of the negative is not without its practical teaching. Let us not forget that many of the Lord's most holy saints—many among His hidden but brightest jewels, are, in this life, suffering, and even dying, for bodily want. Be it our holy mission to seek them out, and supply their need. "*Deal thy bread to the hungry*,"¹—recognising Jesus in His needy saints. Thus shall we prove the reality of our faith, and the sincerity of our love. "If a brother or a sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?"² Nay, more. Not to the needs of the saints only are we to give of our abundance, but also to those who are not, yea, even to our enemies. "*If thine enemy HUNGER, feed him ;*

¹ Isaiah lvii, 7.² James ii. 15, 16.

if he THIRST, give him drink." Oh! how divine and heavenly is the religion of Christ! Where else, on the face of earth, will a religion be found which teaches us to love our enemies, and to do good to those that spitefully use us? But the gospel of Christ inculcates this, and the gospel is divine. Lord, impart to me its mould, and imbue me with its spirit. Saint of God! often hard pressed for the necessities of life, and, like the Shunammite widow, with "not anything in the house, save a pot of oil,"¹ think not hard of thy God and Father that thus He should deal with thee. Thy blessed Lord passed through this trial before thee, for He ofttimes hungered and thirsted, and even had not where to lay His head. All is in love; and thy present temporal need is but designed to prepare thee for that blessed world, and to heighten its bliss, of which, in its literal sense, it is said, "*And they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more.*" Until the dawn of that blessed negative, trust the love, providence, and faithfulness of thy covenant

¹ 2 Kings iv. 2.

God, who has promised concerning His child, that, "*bread shall be given him ; his water shall be sure.*"¹ Recall the assuring words of Jesus, "*Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.*"

This negative also teaches *the absence of spiritual hunger and thirst* in the New Jerusalem of the saints. At first sight this would seem to indicate the withdrawal of one of the most blessed conditions of our present Christianity—the spiritual appetite of the regenerate soul. Most true, indeed, is this, a blessed condition of the believer! What is it that unmistakably confirms the existence of our spiritual life, and evidences the fact of its healthy growth? Is it not the soul's *appetite* for food, its longing desire for its own spiritual aliment, whereby it grows in grace and in the knowledge of God and of Christ? "*Blessed are they that HUNGER and THIRST after righteousness,*" or, as the Greek expresses it, *happy* are they! Beloved! have we this evidence within us of real conversion,

¹ Isaiah xxxiii. 16.

this attribute of healthy spiritual life—the soul's hunger and thirst after God, and righteousness, and heaven? Hence David's experience—why not ours?—“*As the hart panteth after the waterbrook, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.*” Oh! to possess more of this vital religion—this spiritual life—this ascent of the living water welled within the soul, and springing up in communion with God, in fellowship with Christ, in aspirations after holiness, in longing desires for heaven—yea, springing up into eternal life. Such shall be supplied. “*He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry with goodness.*” “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, *for they shall be filled.*” Out of the fulness of Christ, from the granary of His word, and the streams flowing through the appointed channels of grace, the Lord will supply all its need. He has promised to “*keep the souls of His saints alive in famine;*” i.e., when a scarcity of the bread and water of life exists,—as, alas! in many places and

pulpits of the land it often does—in the absence of a truly evangelical ministration of the word, and a spiritual and simple form of worship,—the Lord will still feed and nourish the souls of His saints, keeping their grace and their graces alive amidst the spiritual drought amidst which they dwell. Oh ! let us never forget what a full and present Christ we have to live upon ; that, in the most destitute place, amidst the most sterile means—no rich pastures of the Gospel—no spiritual means of grace—no communion of the saints—isolated, lonely, and depressed—Christ is near to you, in all the plentitude of His grace, and tenderness of His love, and watchfulness of His eye, and sympathy of His nature ; and your soul shall live, for He will *“guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones ; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.”*¹

But, in heaven, the soul's spiritual hunger and thirst will cease, simply because it will have

¹ Isaiah lviii. 11.

passed beyond the region of necessity—all want swallowed up in supply, all destitution in plenty, all desire in complete satisfaction. *“In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more.” “As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake, with Thy likeness.”*

No more shall we need the holy Sabbath—hallowed and welcome as it now is—for there it will be one eternal Sabbath. No more shall we require the Supper of the Lord—needful and precious as it now is—for there we shall banquet at the marriage supper of the Lamb. No more demand a Christ-exalting ministry—much as we prize it now—for there we shall be in the beatific presence of Christ Himself, leaning upon His ineffable bosom, gazing upon His transcendent countenance, feasting upon His overflowing love, and basking in the unclouded beams of His glory.

“O happy souls! O glorious state
Of overflowing grace!
To dwell so near the Father’s seat,
And see His loving face!

“ Lord ! I address Thy heavenly throne ;
Call me a child of Thine ;
Send down the Spirit of Thy Son,
To form my heart divine.”


“ *Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.*” The sun of affliction will never scorch—the fiery darts of Satan will no more be hurled—the heat of toil and labour will have passed—the fires of persecution will no longer burn—all this will entirely and eternally have passed.

“ *For the Lamb, which is in the midst of them, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.*” Christ’s place in heaven will be, what it ever has been in the care of His Church and in the government of the world,—*central*. He will, as the Lamb of God once slain, be “in the *midst* of the throne,”—He shall occupy the central place in the universe. And still it will be His office to minister to His Church. He will feed them with the heavenly bread, and make them to drink of the new wine of the Father’s kingdom—and will lead them, not to torpid and failing springs, but to “*living fountains of water*,”—ever springing, ever as-

ceding, ever increasing, at which the enlarged and enraptured soul will drink—drink deeply, drink incessantly, and drink for ever. Heaven is a ‘garden of fountains,’ all its blessedness, all its fulness, all its beauty flowing then,—as now it flows,—from CHRIST the Lamb;—occupying then,—as He occupies now,—the first and the last and the central place in His Church’s salvation, adoration, and love,—and so Christ will still be to His glorified saints through all eternity, what He was to them through all time—
‘ALL AND IN ALL!’

NO MORE PAIN.

“Neither shall there be any more pain.”—REV. XXI. 4.

T may, perhaps, be more difficult to define the nature of *pain* than to trace its origin—to analyse its subtle character than to describe its disquieting effects. Around both its nature and causes much obscurity exists not easy to dispel. But while the physiologist is in a perplexity, and the moralist in a mist, God's word steps in, and sets at rest all doubt and speculation by revealing the fact of *its entire absence* in that world of health and blessedness which Christ won by His merits and took possession of by His ascension on behalf of all His saints—the great distinctive features of which will be, *the absence of all evil and the presence of all good*. How many an

eye, languid with suffering and dim with watching, will quicken into life and lustre as it bends over this sweet, winning attraction of heaven—
“*Neither shall there be any more PAIN.*” To aid his meditations on this delightful negative of the coming glory, I invite my suffering reader to view it in the following points of light.

The absence of all *physical pain*—viewing the subject literally—is the first illustration that will present itself to the mind. To how large a portion of the family of God is this negation of pain unutterably significant and precious! Countless numbers know not a moment's cessation of bodily suffering. The exquisite net-work of nerve extending from the *sensorium* to the farthest extremity, transmits a sense of suffering to every part of the human frame. The most remote and insignificant member cannot suffer and all the members of the body, to a certain degree, not suffer with it. To what numbers will this condition apply! How many saints of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, temples of the Holy Ghost, for whom there awaits a

glorious resurrection, and for whom is destined a spiritual body, are tossing upon beds of disease and agony, or are reclining upon couches of debility and restlessness, the nature and extent of whose tortures are known only to God and themselves ! There are few afflictions of the Church of Christ which more touchingly appeal to our sympathy, or have a stronger claim upon our consideration and forbearance than this. We are but imperfectly aware, until our time comes to sicken and suffer, how much of irritability and depression, of nervous susceptibility and querulousness, which we are prompt to attribute to sinful infirmity, are to be traced to disease and suffering alone, pleading, in tones the most plaintive and tender, for our forbearance, sympathy, and soothing. And, on the other hand, we are prone to forget the fact that, if disease and pain often distort the finest character, how much womanly fortitude and manly heroism, how much Christian patience and Christ-like submission, how much true nobleness and greatness, lie concealed beneath the vail of acute

and violent suffering. In what a school is this to learn, and what a sphere in which to exercise, the "patience and gentleness of Christ!" Oh, if Christ's gentleness is ever conspicuous, and His sympathy ever displayed, methinks it is in the chamber where lies, in silent suffering, one for whom His own soul travailed in sorrow, and His own body writhed in anguish. Christ is *there*, never for a moment deserting that chamber. He is there, never for an instant leaving that couch. He is there, bending over that restless pillow in sleepless, unwearied love. As a Father, He is there, pitying His suffering child; as a Physician, He is there, ministering to His languid patient; as a Refiner, He is there, watching intently the purifying of His gold. "*My heart and my flesh faileth: but GOD is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.*" But more than this. Our blessed Lord Himself personally passed through the discipline of bodily pain—the fiery path in which so many of His followers are treading. There is something unutterably sweet and soothing in this thought.

If a mystery shrouds the fact of His actual and personal partaking of *bodily disease*—though we are told, “*He bare our sicknesses*,”—a profound significance attaches to the fact of His actual and personal suffering of *bodily pain*. What! did that sacred head suffer no pain when the thorn-crown bound His brow? No pain!—when fainting and swooning He bore His rugged cross up the ascent of Calvary? No pain!—when, stretched from limb to limb upon the wood, they drave the iron through and through His hands and feet? No agony in the concussion!—when the cross fell into the earth prepared for its reception? Oh, yes! physical suffering was an essential ingredient in the cup of woe, which, in meek submission to His Father’s will, He drank to its lees. How thoroughly was He thus disciplined to sympathise with all His saints who scarcely know a moment’s freedom from intense, indescribable pain! Sweet, consolatory thought! that, while I am unable to unvail, still less to describe, the hidden and deadly agonies through which

I daily and nightly pass, I may moan it all in the ear, and sob it all upon the heart of Jesus, whose hand is upon each fluttering pulse, and His eye upon each quivering nerve. Thus was Christ personally trained in the school of physical pain to sympathise with all the suffering members of His Body, the Church.

A difference of opinion has existed among some Christians—influenced, perhaps, by a more scrupulous than intelligent conscience—how far it were expedient and lawful to employ any of those preventive and mitigatory agencies in the suffering of pain—especially that of maternity—which modern medical science has so nobly discovered and successfully applied. But we think that the objection will scarcely stand the test either of reason or of revelation. There exists not a stronger evidence of the beneficence of God than in the almost endless provision He has made for the amelioration and softening of the varied consequences and effects of man's sin. Our illustration shall be confined to the single one of suffering. It is a remarkable fact that for

every poison in nature God has provided a corrective; that, side by side of every venomous plant grows its antidote. We think that the history of medical science establishes the fact. If this be incontrovertible, it follows that there can be no *sin* in the employment of those prevenient and mitigating agencies God has thus placed within our reach—demanding but the skill of the alchymist to compound, and the knowledge of the physician to administer—for the interception and palliation of bodily suffering. The case of our blessed Lord Himself would seem to confirm this view. We are told that, “*when Jesus had RECEIVED the vinegar*”—offered, doubtless, in mitigation of His suffering—“*He said, It is finished!*” With this illustrious example before us, let us accept, with faith and gratitude to Him who “delighteth in mercy,” any agent He has compassionately provided for the prevention and soothing of bodily pain.

From this digression we return to our more immediate subject. Possessing “a spiritual body,” we shall, in the resurrection, necessarily have

done with the material, thus freed from all the physical infirmities which now clog and pinion the soul in its divine life and heavenly aspirations. The blest inhabitants of the world of health and youth will no more say, "I am sick." Disease will no more invade, nor fever consume, nor convulsions madden, nor nervousness agitate, nor suffering torture, for "there shall be no more pain." Think of this, thou sick and suffering one, wasted, and weary, and worn! What an attraction has a *painless* heaven for you! Sin, the original and fruitful cause of all sickness and suffering, then entirely and for ever annihilated, with it will vanish one of its dire effects—the throbs and throes and tortures of this body of corruption and death.

There will be no more *mental pain* in heaven. Acute and indescribable as is physical suffering, there are few who will not admit that a far more keen and acute species of the agony to which sin has subjected us in this life, is the agony of the *mind*. Closely united as mind and matter are, the one constantly and power-

fully acting and reacting upon the other, there yet are, indeed, occasions in which the mind asserts its independence of the body, and rises superior to the most fearful tortures to which either physical disease, or the Papal Inquisition ever subjected it. Many a sick and suffering saint of God has passed through a lingering martyrdom of pain with a brightness, and even joyousness, of spirit, which has filled the sick-chamber with radiance and song—so completely has the soul been raised by God's love and Christ's presence above the decay and torture of the suffering body. But, regarding the subject more in its abstract light, we must admit that the most acute, crushing suffering is that of the *mind*. A mind diseased is a spectacle infinitely more touching than a body diseased. But—apart from the more fearful picture of mental aberration—of reason unbalanced—and the intellect cloud-veiled—where is the mind not constantly subjected to pain from the cares of life—the anxieties of business—misplaced confidence—alienated friendship—chilled affection—the

unkindness, ingratitude, and woundings of others? But even where this does not exist, what acute mental suffering springs from the guilt of sin,—from conscious failure—from remorse and self-condemnation, compared with which a Christian martyr's stake were a bed of roses, his sheet of flame a robe of down! In what did the anguish of Jesus mainly and the most acutely consist? Was it not *soul-sorrow*? To one cry of bodily agony—"I thirst!"—how many and how affecting were the exclamations of mental pain which broke from His lips!—"Now is my SOUL sorrowful, and what shall I say?" "My SOUL is sorrowful, even unto death." "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And why all this soul-sorrow—this mental anguish of the Saviour? Because He was bearing the sins, enduring the curse, suffering the penalty of His Church. Upon no other rational hypothesis can such mental agony be accounted for than that of an Atoning sacrifice. "*He was wounded for our transgressions;*

He was bruised for our iniquities: the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." "Who gave Himself for our sins." Oh, yes! Jesus is our Sin-Bearer. All your transgressions have met on the "Lamb of God," who took them up and bore them away into a land of forgetfulness, never to be found. Take the full comfort of this truth, my sin distressed reader! You have nothing more to do with your sins, as touching their condemnation, Jesus having "*condemned sin in the flesh*" by the condemnation of Himself. If God has put them all upon Jesus, and if Jesus has made an end of them by the sacrifice of Himself, having paid the utmost farthing of the great debt, surely not to accept this truth in faith, walking in the peaceful, joyful, holy influence thereof, is detrimental to our own soul and dishonouring to our God.

Oh, sweet and soothing thought that, Jesus, having been trained in the school of mental distress, can sympathise with the darkness, anguish, and despondency of the *mind*—administering

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the soothing and the healing it demands, as no other being, and no other physician skilled in the treatment of mental disease, can! Bear your case, beloved, to the Saviour, who, from personal experience, can soothe, and, with His Divine power, will alleviate, the mental distress through which you are passing. He loves to expend His compassion and exert His skill on the human *mind*,—the *soul* of man presenting the noblest and widest sphere for the display of His power, grace, and sympathy.

There will be *no more spiritual pain*. This may be regarded as akin to the mental, and yet it possesses a character, and springs from causes peculiar to itself. There may be much adversity in which the mind preserves its balance and retains its vigour, and even its brightness. If the negation of bodily suffering and deliverance from mental anxiety in heaven constitute attractions so winning, and are blessings so precious, what shall be said of the certain absence of all *soul-adversity*—no more corroding guilt, no more burdened conscience, no more unbelieving

doubts, no more tormenting fears, no more spiritual darkness, no more hidings of God's countenance, or withdrawal of Christ's loving presence ; no more Satanic assaults, worldly seductions, or creature allurements. Oh, long you not, beloved, for the wings of a dove that you might escape from all these spiritual infirmities of earth, to this heavenly and blissful world where they shall never be ?

The absence of all *the painful discipline of our present training for heaven* must be included in this view of our subject. Who can fully describe the pain and suffering of God's afflictive dispensations, so necessary to our moral purification and meetness for glory? The fiery furnace, the heated crucible, the surging waters, the lowering clouds, "the windy storm and tempest," of the Divine dealings in providence—oh, how much do they contribute to the sufferings of this present time! But let us not in our lamentations forget our *praises* ; in our 'sowing of tears' lose sight of our 'reaping of joy.' Exempt from this species of pain, we should be

exempt from a source of pleasure inconceivable; deprived of this ploughing and sowing of the soul, how blank we should look, when the time of harvest came, at the fruitless, barren fields from whence we expected to sickle the holy, happy results of the Divine chastisement, not joyous, but grievous now, but afterwards "*yielding the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby!*" But, oh, how much better acquainted we become with God! how increasingly precious and attractive Christ is to our hearts, by the light and momentary afflictions of our present state! It is only in severe suffering we learn to spell His name as "*the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.*" It is thus we have "*FELLOWSHIP with Him in His sufferings,*" and are made partakers of His afflictions in the body. Want brings us into sympathy with His poverty; enticement, into sympathy with His temptations; bereavement, into sympathy with His tears; persecution, into sympathy with His assaults; the disappointment and woundings of the creature, into sympathy with

the unfaithfulness and desertion of His disciples; the solitude of our path into sympathy with His isolated and lonely life, spent amid the dreariness of the desert, and the seclusion of the mountain; in a word, the daily battle with sin, into sympathy with the "agony and bloody sweat, the cross and passion," which His holy soul endured when He "*put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*." Oh, it is a grand and holy thing to have fellowship with Christ in His sufferings, a privilege and an honour to which the highest angel in heaven in vain might aspire! Among your present mercies count that the most costly and precious that draws you into closest communion with the suffering Head of the Church. But all this will have passed away when we become inhabitants of the New Jerusalem. The tempest will have spent its last force; the furnace will have kindled its last spark; the ocean will have heaved its last billow; the enemy will have hurled his last shaft, the moment we spring from earth to heaven!—for, "*there shall be no more pain.*"

There will be no more *pain of separation*.

“ Friend after friend departs,
Who hath not lost a friend ?
There is no union here of hearts,
That finds not here an end.”

Such is a part of our present moral education; and how painful a part it is! The bonds of friendship—the ties of relationship—the cords of love—oh, with what a slight and uncertain hand we hold them! How they loosen and break and vanish one by one! The friend we loved as our own soul; the being that seemed essential to our existence; the oak we leaned against—the vine we entwined us with—the plant we trained—the flower we cherished,—God has seen fit to remove; and the fires on the altar of the heart are gone out, and the world has become a desolate wilderness, and life a dreary winter. But oh! even from this bitter we may extract some sweet, and from these nettles we may gather the soft down. It is “*well with the righteous*” at all times; there is no circumstance in his history which may not supply him with material for thanksgiving and praise, for all springs from

God's everlasting love. His sorrows, alike with his joys, are from the hands of the same Divine musician whose skilful and delicate touch awakes harmony from every string.

“ His fine-toned heart, like the harp of the winds,
Answers in sweetness each breeze that sings ;
And the storm of grief, and the breath of joy,
Draw nothing but music from its strings. ”

But the pain of separation is annihilated in Heaven! O entrancing thought! O fond attraction! O blissful hope! Kindred souls, loving hearts, genial spirits are there for ever. The pangs of separation are past; no more oceans sunder, and no more death separates. The blessed inhabitants of glory shall “*go no more out* ;” “*for ever with the Lord*,” they are for ever with each other, spending eternity in the holiest love, in the most elevated communion, and in the closest fellowship; mind in harmony with mind, spirit blending with spirit, and with voice attuned to voice; all uniting in the study and admiration, worship, and song of the LAMB that was slain, whose blood and righteousness will have brought them there.

This negative—in conclusion—is not without its suggestive and practical reflections. How sweet is the thought that, the pains which we here suffer are the pains which *love* alone inflicts! Not a stroke of God's rod lights upon us that is not a subdued echo of His love. Viewed in this light, how sweet is every pang we endure! The hand that inflicts it, is a Father's; the love that sends it, is a Redeemer's; the grace that soothes it, is the Comforter's! The TRIUNE GOD is thus concerned, beloved, in every pain you experience. Another sweet reflection springs from the fact that, there is *no curse* in the pains our Heavenly Father in infinite wisdom and righteousness inflicts. Were it not so, oh how piercing and how bitter would they be! But Jesus, in bearing all our pains, and enduring all our sufferings, has so completely extracted every drop of the curse, has so entirely extinguished every spark of hell, that there is, in the most acute mental and bodily suffering, nothing but covenant blessing.

This last thought suggests another of most

vital and solemn character—"the pains of hell." There is not a spectacle more sad and mournful than that of a soul passing from the temporal and temporary sufferings of this life, to the mental and interminable sufferings of the life that is to come. Such must inevitably be the case of all who die *unconverted*. There exists a kind of purgatorial notion in the minds of many individuals that, the long and painful sicknesses through which they pass in this life are of a meritorious and saving character; that, God will accept them as balancing the account of their souls; and that when they go hence they will pass from a bed of pain as those that have been purified by fire, and so fitted for the kingdom of which it is said,—"*there shall be no more pain.*" A more unscriptural idea or fatal delusion never existed. No! there is no saving merit in mental suffering; no moral efficacy in bodily pain. Could there be concentrated in our individual self all the tortures, all the anguish, all the sufferings the human race ever endured—from the murdered Abel to the

last victim of anti-christian persecution—it would not bring our soul to heaven. By the pangs, and sufferings and death of ONE VICTIM alone can Divine Justice be propitiated, the wrath of God appeased, and the sinner saved. The sufferings of Christ were *atoning*—the sorrows of Christ were *vicarious*—the death of Christ was *sacrificial*. “*Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.*” There is *sin* in all human suffering—there was nothing but *holiness* in Christ’s. There is *demerit* in all the pains we endure—there was infinite merit in His. There is hell-deserving in all the sorrows which afflict our humanity—there is heaven-winning in the soul-sorrow which afflicted His. Away, then, with the thought that there is aught of merit, aught of worthiness, aught of salvation in the mere endurance of sickness and pain. The rebellion of the will against God—the impatience of spirit under His hand,—the questioning of His right, and wisdom, and goodness in sending so much pain—involve sin enough

to sink the soul to endless woe. That sickness and pain are often the means, in the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit, of bringing the soul to Christ, we gratefully admit. Oh! what multitudes in glory are singing the high praises of God, in remembrance of the languid couch, the suffering bed, the sleepless pillow, the long, wearisome sickness, by which they were brought to Jesus—the Lord's frequent method of calling in His "hidden ones," of finding His lost "jewels"—of drawing to Himself the people given Him of His Father. "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.*" Christ is at no loss for means of finding the lost one, of bringing home the wanderer. He knows where to seek them, how and when to draw them; and the sanctified sicknesses and sufferings of the *body* are often, in the sovereignty of His converting grace, the medicine, the health and salvation of the *soul*.

What future and endless suffering awaits the *unconverted mind*! Oh the thought is appalling

of passing from the fire that is temporal to the fire that is eternal! Such is the doom which awaits all who die in their sins. "*For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and He poureth out of the same; but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out and drink them.*"* "*These shall go away into everlasting punishment.*"† "*Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*"‡ Sinner! fly to Christ! Escape for thy life. Flee from the wrath to come. There is but one Way by which you may come to God—but one Refuge in which you may hide—but one Door by which you may enter heaven—but one Name by which you must be saved—it is JESUS. "*His name shall be called JESUS, for He shall SAVE!*" O precious truth! O joyous announcement! O faithful saying, worthy, my reader, of *your* personal believing, and immediate acceptance, that Jesus receives

* Ps. lxxv. 8. † MATT. xxv. 46. ‡ ISA. xxxiii. 14.

and saves sinners ; and will receive and save even YOU. "*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*"

Without anticipating a subsequent chapter, let me, in concluding the present one, remind the believing reader that, He who has soothed, mitigated and removed the pains of *life*, will not be wanting, in His succourings and consolations, in the pains of *death*. If ever His strength was perfected in weakness, and His grace found all-sufficient, it will be in that solemn, that trying hour. How we now shrink from the thought of dying ! But,

" Why should we start, and fear to die ?
What tim'rous worms we mortals are !
Death is the gate of endless joy,
And yet we dread to enter there.

" The pains, the groans, and dying strife,
Fright our approaching souls away ;
Still we shrink back again to life,
Fond of our prison and our clay."

But the death-pains of the body will all be abolished and forgotten in the sweet pleasure of

dying in the Lord. Once death's illustrious Victim, now death's Divine Conqueror will be there ; and it will be the joy, the poetry, and the song of death, to die clasped in the embrace and pillowed upon the bosom of JESUS.

“In the hour of pain and anguish,
In the hour when death draws near,
Suffer not our hearts to languish,
Suffer not our souls to fear.
And when mortal life is ended,
Bid us in thine arms to rest,
Till, by angel-bands attended,
We awake among the blest !”

NO MORE TEARS.

“God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more crying.”—Rev. xxi. 4.

IT were more than mere affectation—it were a *sin* of no ordinary turpitude of guilt—to ignore, whatever the philosophical view we may take of humanity, its *emotional* element. Mysterious as our organisation is, yet more inexplicable would be its mystery, were either the physiologist, the philosopher, or the divine to exclude from his study of man this essential and exquisite constituent of his nature. In moulding us after His own likeness God has invested us with *sensibility*. Endowing us with mind, He has equally endowed us with a *heart* ; creating us capable of reasoning, He has

equally created us capable of *feeling*. The essence of God is *sensibility*. It is nowhere recorded in the inspired records that God is wisdom—though He is “*the only wise God*;” it is nowhere asserted that He is power—though “*power belongeth unto God*;” neither is it anywhere recorded that He is immortality—though “*He only hath immortality*;” but, it is declared that—“GOD IS LOVE”—in other words, that *love* is the essence of the Divine Being. Now, it is from this infinite ocean of His nature, that God has distilled a portion into our original creation, investing us with sensibility, and thus making us like Himself—lovable and loving—objectively and subjectively, a reflection—faint and defaced indeed—of Himself. And as *love* is a quality more akin to feeling than to reflection—is more the gentle child of the heart than the athletic offspring of reason—it is no marvel that sensibility, like the flower of a yet unsinced Paradise, should unfold its bloom and breathe its fragrance along all the sylvan walks and avenues of life.

It is impossible for a thoughtful and spiritual

mind to take this view of our nature and not admire the wisdom and beneficence of God in providing for the *outlet* and *expression* of our sensibility. Our humanity, thus invested with sensibility—often of the acutest character and profoundest depth—needed an outflow—the heart demanded a channel. Feeling must be as free as thought; the heart as unfettered as the mind. To restrain, or curb, or crush our sensibilities would prove as dangerous and fatal to our existence, as the suppressed and pent-up vapour to the strongest and most accomplished piece of mechanism. A mental explosion would inevitably follow. Now God has mercifully anticipated, and wisely provided for this necessity of our nature. *Tears* come to our relief! Tears are the expression of sensibility—the language of sorrow, the symbols of grief. Our emotions must and will *speak*, or the heart will burst from its shrine, and the mind reel from its throne. “Sorrow is a kind of rust of the soul, which every new idea contributes in its pangs to scour away. It is the putrefaction of stagnant life, and is remedied

by exercise and motion." * We have already remarked that, condensed and imprisoned air is explosive and dangerous. Infinitely more so is the pent-up, unexpressed sensibility of the soul. Grief and love, either self-concealed or crushed by others, have contributed more to fill our asylums than, perhaps, any other cause besides. Our emotions seek an outlet ; our feelings demand an expression ; love yearns to confide, and grief pines to repose. Suppress these emotions of the soul, conceal these feelings of the heart, shroud these thoughts of the mind, chill and petrify these sensibilities of our humanity, and you have gone far effectually to impair, if not entirely destroy, one of the noblest creations of God—a loving heart, a sensitive spirit, a refined and thoughtful mind.

"Give sorrow words ; the grief that does not *peak*,
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it *break*."

What a divinely wise and beneficent provision then, is tears ! What a safety-valve of the soul !

* Johnson.

What an *outlet* of the profoundest grief and of the intensest love, and what an *inlet* of the divinest joy and the sweetest repose !

The present life is a night of mourning—the world, a vale of tears—man, a weeper ! A cry of woe proclaims our advent into its busy scenes, and groans attend our exit from them—while tears bedew the intervening passage from the cradle to the grave. But tears are not all symbols of woe, or expressions of suffering—unmusical and voiceless. They often come on a divine embassy and speak in the language of heaven. The *blessings* they scatter from their dewy wings are many and precious. Sanctified by grace, they soften our rugged nature, cool our fevered passions, recall our truant affections, and, detaching our minds from the things that are seen and temporal, they fix them more entirely upon the things that are unseen and eternal. Through their misty veil faith descries the “King in His beauty, and the land that is very far off.” With what a resplendent bow did the prised tear of Jesus arch the grave of Lazarus ! “JESUS WEPT.” O the love,

the significance, the sympathy of those wondrous tears ! And are not rainbows pencilled upon the dark clouds of our pilgrimage by the tears we shed on our way to heaven ? Yes ! They impel us to prayer ; they endear Christ ; they draw us to God ; they lift us to heaven. What a power, too, do tears give us in dealing with souls ! What an avenue they open to the most sinful and obdurate heart ! Select the most guilty and hardened criminal that ever stood at the bar—manacled and doomed to die. Approach him in gentleness ; address him in tones of sympathy and with words of kindness ; recall the memories of the past—the home and innocence of childhood, a mother's fondness, and a father's care ; speak of God's love to the wanderer, of the Saviour's grace to sinners, and of the hope which the gospel unveils to the vilest of the race,—and in a moment you have unlocked every ward of his heart, have touched every chord of his soul, and have found an avenue to every cloister of his innermost being. Oh ! be encouraged in your work of winning souls by the tear that trembles in the sin-

ner's eye ! The moment you descry *sensibility*, the bow of hope appears !

But our subject leads our thoughts forward to the tearless world of which it is said, "*And there shall be no more crying.*"

We need scarcely remark that this condition of the glorified includes the absence of *literal* tears. Tears are a necessary and benevolent provision of our material bodies—we find a sweet *relief* in *tears*. But the body of the resurrection will be a '*spiritual* body'—still the temple of the soul, but freed from all its present corporal infirmity and sin. We have no *data* by which to arrive at an intelligent and distinct idea of the "spiritual body ;" but this much we know—it will not be a *weeping* body ; there will, indeed, still be acute sensibility, profound feeling, deep emotion ; but there will be no more *tears*. Tears, now so beneficent, so relieving, so hallowed, will then be done away ; for we shall inhabit a spiritual body, fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, whose eyes will weep no more.

There will be no more *tears of penitence* in Heaven. The tears of contrition wept on earth are the most precious that bedew the eye. If God has a "bottle for our tears," methinks it is for these. There is no spiritual and gracious condition of the soul more marked, and honoured, and blessed of God, than that of a broken and a contrite heart for sin. It would seem as if it were the spiritual state which the most closely assimilated the believing soul to Christ, whose heart sorrowed, and sobbed, and was broken for the sins of His people. "*Sorrow hath broken my heart.*" Can we doubt God's estimation of the tears of penitence, after reading Divine declarations so marvellous and touching as these? "*Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy. I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*"* "*To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and*

* Isaiah lvii. 15.

trembleth at My word."* Precious in His sight are the tears of godly sorrow for sin—the fruit of His own Spirit's work in the soul. The power and skill of human genius in the construction of a finely-tuned instrument, is equalled, if not surpassed, by its perfect restoration when broken and destroyed. God made the human heart a pure reflection of His holiness and sweetly melodious with His praise—and in this we adore His creative power and love. But that God should take that heart destroyed by the fall and tainted by sin, repair its ruin, re-tune its strings, and awake it to the new song of salvation ten thousand times sweeter than the melody that first breathed from it in Paradise—how has He, as it were, surpassed Himself! O holy, blessed tears, wept beneath the cross, or bathing Jesus' feet! It is the first dawn of grace in the soul; the earliest sign of spiritual life; the earnest of a tearless Heaven. To whose ears is the gospel of the grace of God a joyful sound? To whose heart is the blood of Jesus

* Isaiah lxvi. 2.

the most precious? Who has God the most near to Him, looking upon them with a loving eye, and touching them with a divine and healing hand? Oh, it is he whose heart is broken, whose spirit is contrite for sin. "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.*" And Oh, how cheering to the heart, and lovely to the eye of the gospel preacher, are the tears of spiritual sensibility glistening in the eyes of his hearers! As an evidence of the power of the Spirit with the word in the souls of the people, they are the priceless diamonds of his ministry, to him more valuable, precious, and sparkling than the famed *Koh-i-noor* itself! Such a scene would be more frequently witnessed were the Holy Spirit more recognised, honoured, and sought in the ministry of the Word. Were there more weeping preachers, there would be more weeping hearers. Paul was not ashamed to remind the elders of Ephesus how he "*had been with them at all seasons, serving the Lord . . . with many TEARS,*" and how he had "*ceased not to warn every*

one day and night with TEARS." Addressing the Corinthian church, he could say, "I wrote unto you *with many TEARS.*" And it was with the same deep and holy emotion that he addressed the Philippians, and said, "*Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you WEEPING, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.*" Oh, let us who deal with souls, who preach Christ and in view of eternity, not fail to steep the precious seed we sow in tears of the deepest sensibility. Where is there an office more worthy, a work more befitting, an end more in harmony with the tears of the deepest sympathy, than that of the Christian minister addressing himself to deathless and endangered souls speeding to the judgment-seat? The thought of *one* soul saved, the spectacle of *one* soul lost, were sufficient to inspire the highest joy, the deepest woe. Think only of the latter—a *soul lost*—lost to all eternity! "What, my brethren, if it be lawful to indulge such a thought, would be the funeral obsequies of a lost soul? Where shall we find the tears fit to be

wept at such a spectacle? or could we realise the calamity in all its extent, what tokens of commiseration and concern would be deemed equal to the occasion? Would it suffice for the sun to veil his light and the moon her brightness; to cover the ocean with mourning and the heavens with sackcloth? or were the whole fabric of nature to become animated and vocal, would it be possible for her to utter a groan too deep, or a cry too piercing, to express the magnitude and extent of such a catastrophe?"* How holy and precious, then, are the tears of penitence—tears wept on this side of eternity for sin felt—sin loathed—sin pardoned—sin forsaken.

"Why, O my soul, why weepest thou?
Oh, say from whence arise
Those briny tears that often flow,
Those groans that pierce the skies?

"Is sin the cause of thy complaint
Or the chastising rod?
Dost thou departed friends lament,
Or mourn an absent God?

"Lord, let me weep for nought but sin,
And after none but Thee!
And then I would—oh, that I might—
A constant weeper be!"

* Robert Hall.

But in Heaven there will be no weeping penitents, because there will be no more sin to weep for. He who dried their tears on earth with a sense of His own pardoning love, will then wipe off all tears from all faces with its "fulness of joy."

- There will be no *tears of suffering* in Heaven. How universally and profusely do these tears now bedew the pillow! What multitudes weep for very pain! But in Heaven, where there will be no more disease, nor infirmity, nor suffering; those tears, often wept when no eye traces them but God's eye,—in solitude and in the night season,—are dried for ever. Oh, think of this, thou sick and suffering one! The last tear will soon fall from thine eye, and thou shalt weep no more for ever; for "*there shall be no more crying.*"

There will be no more *tears of affliction*. These are often flowing and bitter. Our Father's discipline causeth His children often sorely to cry. Yea, He corrects us that we may feel the force and hear the voice of the rod. An *unfelt* chastisement is an *unsanctified* chastisement.

Its mission is thwarted, its blessing is lost. The Lord intends that we shall be sensible of His judgments, and talk with Him concerning them. He would have us so to feel the smarting of the rod that we may inquire, "*Is there not a cause?*"—and diligently searching, and surely finding it, humble ourselves under His mighty hand because of it, until He lifts us up. But oh,—sweet thought!—the rod of paternal discipline will be laid aside in Heaven—treasured, it may be, in its archives, as was Aaron's rod that budded in the ark, and the tears of sorrow it unsealed be for ever dried, for "*there shall be no more crying.*"

There will be no more *tears of bereavement* in Heaven. Who can analyse the tears—or portray the grief of *bereaved sorrow*? To part with those we love; to catch the last look; to hear the last farewell; to listen to the last breath of one dear to us as our own soul,—Oh, the intensity, Oh, the anguish of that woe! But faith looks beyond these *partings* to the *meetings*! These sunderings of love's tie, of friendship's bond, to that tearless world, where

the very death that separates us now, reunites us again with those "who die in the Lord." Be comforted, bereaved heart, if thou art not sorrowing as those who have no hope. Jesus—who wept at the tomb—is not blind or indifferent to the tears you rain over that grassy mound. When you go to the grave to weep there, let faith look up to that bright world where there is no death-parting and no graves, but where the tears of bereavement are wiped away by God's own hand—for "*there shall be no more crying.*"

There will be no more *weeping for an absent Saviour*. Mary weeping at Christ's tomb in search of her lost Lord, is but the type of many disciples of Christ, who go mourning and weeping through cloudy and dark days, because they have not the sensible presence of, and the sweet communion with, Him their souls love. But what an evidence is this holy sensibility of a divinely-quickened soul, of a spiritually-intensified mind, of a Christ-loving heart! Oh, how blessed the condition—sad and desolate though for a time it may be—of a soul arising from its bed of sloth in quest

of the Saviour, whose withdrawn presence it feels and deploras. "By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth : I sought Him, but I found Him not. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek Him whom my soul loveth : I sought Him, but I found Him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me : to whom I said, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth ? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him whom my soul loveth."* Oh blessed seeking an absent Saviour ! Not a tear is lost wept after a withdrawn Christ. Think you, thou Christ-seeking one, that Jesus is indifferent to the drawings and yearnings of thy heart toward Him ? Impossible !
" Therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you ; and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you : for the Lord is a God of judgment : blessed are all they that wait for Him. Thou shalt weep no more : He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry ; when He shall hear it, He will answer

* Cant. iii. 1—3.

thee." * No poor soul ever really *sought* Christ that did not *find* Him. Mary sought Him sorrowing, sought Him weeping; and soon she found Him—Jesus manifesting Himself to her soul, comforting her sorrow, and drying her tears. But in Heaven we shall no more lose sight of Jesus; no more mourn His absence—for, "*there shall be no more crying.*"

A few words in conclusion. Let us not place too great reliance upon the religion of *emotion*, a religion of mere *sensibility*. Religious feeling, deep and strong, may exist apart from real conversion. Tears may flow fast and warm from a vivid representation of Christ's sufferings, or from a glowing picture of Heaven's happiness, unaccompanied by a change of heart, a holy life, or a good hope of glory. It is recorded of Burns that he could never read the words upon which this chapter is based without tears. The touching view which it presents of the Divine tenderness, and the poetic picture it portrays of a tearless Heaven, stirred to its lowest depths

* Isaiah xxx. 18, 19.

the sensibility of one whose life was yet deformed and tainted by many a sad infirmity and sin. Oh ! rest not short of *true conversion*, a mind divinely instructed in the truth, and renewed spiritually by the Holy Ghost ; a heart contrite, changed, and sanctified by grace ; and a hope—a good hope through grace—built believingly and entirely upon the blood and righteousness of Christ. While avoiding the two extremes—a religion of the intellect on the one hand, cold as moonlight—and a religion of feeling on the other, evaporating in mere sensibility—seek that both may be blended in your personal experience—the mind divinely and intelligently enlightened through the truth, and the heart spiritually quickened and sanctified by the Spirit ; the religion of your soul thus possessing the true, grand, essential elements of reality—*light and life*.

Overlook not the provision God has made for the tears of His saints. For the tears of *penitence*—there is the cleansing blood of Jesus ; for the tears of *adversity*—there is the unchanging love of Jesus ; for the tears of *sorrow*—there is the tender

sympathy of Jesus ; for the tears of *suffering*—there is the all-sufficient grace of Jesus ; for the tears of *solitude*—there is the personal, ever-abiding, never-failing presence of Jesus. O precious tears, which like pearls of matchless beauty and priceless worth, have so rich and costly a setting ! They are “ *Apples of gold in pictures of silver.*”

One thought more. *It is God who alone can dry our tears.* No power, no compassion, no love short of the Divine can wipe the tear from the weeping eye. How striking and beautiful the prophecy of this ! “ *And the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.*” * And in the New Jerusalem state, how literally and fully is this accomplished—“ *And the Lord God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*” He who knows our sorrow, who has an ear for the voice of our weeping, can keep our eyes from tears ; or, when they flow, can so staunch and dry them, as to turn our mourning into dancing, putting off our sackcloth and girding us with

* Isaiah xxv. 8.

gladness. Thus we are taught that our sorrows are designed to make us better acquainted with God ; to detach us from a too idolatrous reliance upon human sympathy and succour ; to sob our grief upon the bosom of Christ ; and to seek that our tears may rise beyond mere feeling and sentiment, and become so instinct with Divine intelligence, life and holiness, as to impart greater robustness to our Christianity, reality to our religion, elevation and sanctity to our Christian principles and walk.

Let us learn to *imitate* the Divine compassion. Does the Lord God condescend to dry the mourner's tears ? Be it our holy and benevolent mission to go and do likewise ! O sacred privilege "*to weep with those that weep,*" and from our own *excess* of affluence, or health, or grace, or joy, administer help and comfort to those that are in any need or sorrow—drying the orphan's tears, making the widow's heart to sing for joy ; raising the fallen, restoring the wandering, pouring sunshine into the desolate home—in conformity to the example

of Jesus, who gives us "*beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.*"

" If a pilgrim has been shaded
By a tree that I have nursed ;
If a cup of clear, cold water
I have raised to lips athirst ;
If I've planted one sweet flower
By an else too barren way ;
If I've whispered in the midnight
One sweet word to tell of day ;
If in one poor bleeding bosom
I a woe-swept chord have stilled ;
If a dark and restless spirit
I with hope of heaven have filled ;
If I've made for life's hard battle
One faint heart grow brave and strong,
Then, my God, I thank Thee, bless Thee,
For the precious gift of song."

He, to whom tears are sacred things, whose Christ-like mission it is to repair to the house of mourning, the bed of sickness, the couch of loneliness, and wipe the tear of sorrow—shall not want a Diviner and holier hand to dry *his*, when the night of weeping cometh, and lover and friend are far away, and there is none to soothe the sad and lonely heart but God. Oh, look through the mist of your

tears, to that tearless world of which it is said,
—“*The Lord God will wipe away tears from
off all faces.*”

“ Oh, for the robes of whiteness !

Oh, for the tearless eyes !

Oh, for the glorious brightness
Of the unclouded skies !

Oh, for the no more weeping,
Within the land of love—
The endless joy of keeping
The bridal feast above !

Oh, for the bliss of dying,
My risen Lord to meet !

Oh, for the rest of lying
For ever at His feet !

Oh, for the hour of seeing,
My Saviour face to face !
The hope of ever being
In that sweet meeting-place.

Jesus, Thou King of glory !
I soon shall dwell with Thee :
I soon shall sing the story
Of Thy great love to me.

Meanwhile my thoughts shall enter
E'en now before Thy Throne,
That all my love may centre
In Thee—and Thee alone.”

“HE WILL SWALLOW UP DEATH IN VICTORY;
AND THE LORD GOD WILL WIPE AWAY
TEARS FROM OFF ALL FACES.”

NO MORE DEATH.

“There shall be no more death.”—REV. xxi. 4.



HAT a thrilling negative of Heaven is this! What a multitude of believing souls, held in the bondage of the fear of death, will bend over it with a deep and quickening pulse of joy and hope! The total annihilation of *death*—that solemn crisis of our being which we all so inevitably anticipate, yet so instinctively dread; which marks every individual as its victim, transforms every home into mourning, and the world itself into a vast cemetery; which severs the fondest ties, and extinguishes the brightest hopes; nips the fairest buds, withers the loveliest flowers, lays low the tall cedar and venerable oak—what heart does not exult at the thought? But what is death? Abstractedly

considered, it is the most calamitous and humiliating event of our history, filling the mind with awe, the heart with grief, and the future with dread. Milton pourtrays—as he only could—the supposed shock of Adam on his first sight of *death*.

“But have I now seen death? Is this the way I must
return to dust?

O sight of horror, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think! how horrible to feel!”

But what, negatively, is death? It is not, as some vainly imagine, a deep sleep of the soul until the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised at the last Great Day. So far from this, in the transit of the soul to the spirit-world, it undergoes not even a moment's suspension of its consciousness. If ever its intelligence is wakeful, its perception vivid, and its memory undimmed, it is at the very moment of its unrobing of mortality, the body—like the useless scaffolding of the edifice—falling in wreck and ruin from around it.

Still less is death the *annihilation* of the soul. Annihilation is a word not found in God's natural

or moral vocabulary. Possessing no evidence of the annihilation of a single atom of *matter*, what reason have we to suppose that He will annihilate a single spark of *mind*? Is it conceivable that He should utterly destroy and entirely efface that immaterial, uncompounded part of our being—the thinking principle—which most assimilates us to His own nature? “*The dust shall return unto the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it*”—and just as He gave it—pulsating with life, instinct with intelligence, crowned with immortality. But, positively, what is Death? There is no more true and instructive point of light in which to view death than as a Divine arrangement, “*It is APPOINTED unto men once to die.*” Upon no other hypothesis can we rationally account for death. Inquire of the anatomist and he will tell you that, there exists no physiological reason why men should not live to an interminable age; that, there is no natural necessity why the human machine should for a moment stop, or stop for ever. Clearly, then, the dissolution of the body

is the *appointment* of Him "with whom are the issues of death." This brings us to the originating *cause* of death. And to *sin* we must trace it. Sin—*sin*—SIN is the terrible, fruitful cause of all our woe. "SIN *entered into the world*, and DEATH *by sin*." "*The wages of SIN is DEATH*." We die because we have sinned. Holy beings never die. The unfallen angels taste not of death because they have never sinned. Man fell; and in dying he died—the soul spiritually, the body naturally. Such is death. In a few summary words—it is sin's great conquest—Satan's chief-work—the brimming of sorrow—the triumph of corruption—the fulfilment of the curse—the sentence of God for the disobedience of man. But our chief subject is the consideration of death *as entirely annihilated in Heaven*. In the New Jerusalem-state of the Church death is known no more. Over the gate of the celestial city, within which countless beings pass—once Death's victims, now Death's victors—is written in letters of dazzling light and glory, "The last enemy enters not here! There

shall be *no more death!*" But ere we carry forward our thoughts to this sweet attraction of Heaven, we should do injustice both to Jesus and our theme, did we not pause and dwell for a while upon the *present relation* of death to the believer in Christ. It is a remarkable fact that, death did not smite Adam, the first sinner ; nor Cain, the first murderer ; but Abel, the believing, and the righteous one. Thus, the first man that met death, overcame death—and the first soul that left earth, went to Heaven. Such was the foreshadowing of the gospel truth in the earliest age of the Church, upon which we may now for a moment dwell. The gospel confers upon the believer in Christ a present enfranchisement from the power and condemnation of death, an intelligent and spiritual apprehension of which will tend much to change essentially the whole aspect of the "*king of terrors.*" Let us, then, bend our thoughts in the first place to a consideration of death as abolished by Christ in the present dispensation of the saints of God.

The great event in Christ's life was His *death.*

This was the goal towards which He pressed, and for which He was so often in a strait until it was reached. He never for a moment lost sight of the deace which He should accomplish at Jerusalem, toward which His face seemed ever to turn. *Calvary*, with its *physical* phenomena—the trembling earth, the veiled sun, the darkened skies, the rent rocks, the opening graves, the streaming blood, the bodily torture, the cry of woe; the *Cross*, with its more marvellous *moral* phenomena—the soul-sorrow, the mental darkness, the penitent thief, the shout of victory—all, *all* were vividly before Him every step He trod. Embarked as a voluntary sacrifice in the great work of the salvation of His elect, He never lost sight for a moment of Gethsemane or of Calvary—the one, the anticipated scene of His unknown sorrow, the other, of His unparalleled death. Listen to His touching language: “*I have meat to eat that ye know not of. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.*” “*I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be*

accomplished!" This crisis He ever expected, and never sought to evade. From it there was no avenue, and in His heart no desire—to escape. Die He, or His church must die. But no! This could not be. *He* must die. Blessed truth, coming from the taunting lips of His foes—"He saved others; HIMSELF He cannot save"—He could not, because He *would* not, save Himself. Had He willed it, He could have wrenched every *nail* which fastened Him to the tree; but the *cords* of love which bound Him to His Church, He could not break! O the willingness, O the eagerness of Christ to suffer and die to save lost sinners! "*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.*"

My reader, is your soul guilt-burdened—sin-distressed? Are you debating the question whether Christ is *able* to save so great a sinner; or, if able, whether He is *willing*? Turn your believing eye to the cross; behold Him bleeding and dying upon the tree; and listen to His words—"*Look unto Me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye*

*saved ; for I am God, and there is none else! "**
 Trusting not in *your own righteousness*,—every shred of which is defiled by sin—the whole garment a mass of filthy rags,† a ‘cobweb’‡—a ‘fig-leaf’ §—the covering ‘too narrow’ for a sinner to wrap himself in ||—trust only in Jesus, who has merit enough, and love enough, and grace enough to ‘save’ even you ‘to the uttermost’ extent of sin, and from the lowest depth of guilt.

The present spiritual immunity of the believer from death, turns upon the wonderful declaration of the Apostle—“*who* (Christ) *hath abolished death.*” Death is here spoken of as ABOLISHED. In what manner has Christ thus “abolished” death in the experience of His saints? In the first place, by *repealing the law of death.* Death is the natural and just penalty of a law broken. Now if a law be repealed, it is no longer in force, and consequently exists no longer in its pains and penalties. Christ, the Law-Giver, became, on behalf of His Church, the Law-Fulfiller. He was

* Isa. xlv. 22.

† Isa. lxiv. 6.

‡ Isa. lix. 4-6.

§ Gen. iii. 7.

|| Isa. xxx. viii. 20.

"born of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law."

His perfect obedience to the law relieves His people for ever from its obligation, and, consequently, from its death-penalty. Christ has thus 'abolished death,' by abolishing the law of death on behalf of His Church. Again, He has abolished death, not only by repealing the law of death, but *by His own actual and penal death*. He could only abrogate the law by *dying*. The majesty of the law must be upheld, and its righteousness vindicated, either in the persons of its subjects, or in that of a substitute. Christ, as the Surety and Mediator of His people, died in their stead and for their sins, thus honouring the law, and emancipating them from it as a penal enactment. Consequently, the whole character of death is changed as it regards all who believe in Jesus, and thus avail themselves of the benefits of His passion. They *must* die; but oh, how transformed and modified the entire nature and aspect of their death! It ceases to be *death*. Losing its repulsiveness and terror, as it

has lost its condemnation and sting, the departure of a saint of God becomes the very poetry of death—a *falling asleep in Jesus*. What a beautiful and soothing image! “*And he fell ASLEEP.*” “*Them which are ASLEEP.*” “*Them also which SLEEP in Jesus will GOD bring with Him.*”

Thus has Christ “abolished death” in the experience of all His saints. Bearing their *sins*, He extracted the *sting* of death, which is sin—sin unatoned, sin unpardoned. Where sin is cancelled—atoned for by Christ’s death, and washed away by His blood—the ‘last enemy’ may launch his dart, but—it is stingless! Thus, dying for us, Christ has so repealed the penalty of the law, that the whole character of death is changed—it being no more a penal curse, but, as we have shown, a soft and holy slumber. “*Destroying him that had the power of death, that is, the devil,*” “*Christ has delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*” Such is the believer’s present relation to death. And oh, how blessed! Through it we *must* pass

—but what a shadow ! The “king of terrors” must claim us as his subjects—but how broken his sceptre ! The “last enemy” must be met—but how conquered the foe, how pointless his dart ! We *must* die, but it is only to languish into life ; for, “*blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.*”

But in Heaven “*there shall be no more death.*” This will be literally the case. There will be no more *natural* death. The present dissolution of the body is essential to the perfect freedom and exaltation of the soul. Thus, the death of the believer becomes a covenant mercy, a sweet and holy privilege. It unbars his gaol, and the prisoner is free ; it opens the cage, and the bird wings its flight, singing as it soars, to heaven. But the resurrection or spiritual body of the saints will be free from all the seeds of death. No *sin* will be there ; and this will involve the absence of all the dread *effects* of sin—the inroad of infirmity, the wasting of sickness, the torture of pain, the throes, and convulsions, and sweat of death. O sweet attraction of Heaven ! “The bitterness of

death is passed," and we die no more for ever ! The life we now derive from our union with Christ, possesses the germ of "everlasting life." What said Christ Himself? "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.*" * Faith in Christ puts us in possession of a *present* salvation ; the believer is *now* saved ;—as entirely pardoned, as completely justified, and as fully adopted as he will be when he enters into glory. The spiritual life of the quickened soul on earth is the first pulse of the everlasting life in heaven. Grace below is the dawn of glory above. The believer has an antepast of heaven, and possesses, though not to the same degree, yet in the same nature, the joys, happiness, and privileges of the "*spirits of just men made perfect.*" Who, with any scriptural reason, will dare question the certain and final salvation of each "vessel of mercy, afore-prepared unto glory?" What an impeachment of every perfection of Jehovah to deny it ! What dishonour done to the Saviour,—what disowning of the Spirit, to doubt it for a mo-

* John. iii. 36.

ment ! But if we are grafted into Christ by the Holy Spirit, through a living faith, who shall separate us from His love ? “ *Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us.*” Listen to the asseveration of Christ Himself, touching the present safety and final salvation of His own elect. “ *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all ; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand.*” Let these decisive answers scatter to the winds every doubt and fear, and strengthen your confidence in Christ. Your grace may be weak, your faith slender, your love faint, your spiritual life feeble ; nevertheless, “ *He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*” It shall never be said of Jesus—“ *This man began to build, and was not*

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able to finish." Hell shall never possess an heir of Heaven, nor Satan exult that he was stronger than Jesus. Hidden with Christ in God, He must perish, ere your spiritual life can, thus indissolubly bound up with His. *He that seeketh my life seeketh thy life,"* said King David unto Abiathar. "*Because I live, ye shall live also,"* said David's Prototype to His disciples. The spiritual exercises of your soul, however trying, supply no arguments against its final and eternal safety. Your increasing self-acquaintance, and consequent feeling that you are growing more sinful rather than more holy,—that you are going backward and not forward in the divine life,—the growing sensitiveness of the conscience to the slightest touch and taint of sin,—are scriptural evidences and most sure indices of the *reality* of your religion, of the *advance* of your soul in its higher life. Doubt not, then, O believer in Jesus! your final and eternal salvation. The dimmest sight of Jesus is a life-look; the stealthiest touch of His robe, is soul-healing; the feeblest spark of love to

Him is an earnest of Heaven; and the faintest breathing after holiness is a *jet* of the 'living water,' welled in the soul, and 'springing up into everlasting life.' Take these, the lowest marks of grace in the regenerate—*glory* is the goal towards which they aspire, and in which they will ultimately be absorbed. Not one of the sheep given by the Father to the Son shall perish; not a sinner redeemed by His blood shall be lost; not a child adopted by His grace shall be absent; not a jewel excavated from nature's mine by His grace shall be missing in that day when the Shepherd shall gather together His flock, and the Father shall bring home His family, and the Saviour shall cluster around Him His redeemed,—in that day when the King of Sion shall appear, His diadem studded, and His breast-plate blazing, with the precious stones of His especial and peculiar treasure.—“*They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up My jewels*”—(margin) “my peculiar treasure.” Oh, yes; all the ship's company shall reach the

shore of Heaven at last ; though with "*some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship, it shall come to pass, that all shall escape safe to land.*" *

" Oh ! could it ever come to pass
That Christ's own sheep might fall away,
My feeble, fickle soul, alas !
Would fall a thousand times a day :
But Jesu's love is firm and free,
Through time and to eternity.

" On this sure promise I depend,
In humble hope and strong desire
That He will love me to the end,
And keep in every flood and fire :
Will for me work, and in me too,
And guide and guard, and bring me through,

" No other stay have I beside ;
If Christ can change, then I must fall :
Till then, I look to be supplied
With grace, with life, with love, with all.
Rich souls may glory in their store ;
But I—that Jesus saves the poor !"

O blissful thought of the glorified saints!—
" I am no more to *die* ! I have crossed Jordan's
cold flood—I have passed the dark valley—I

* Acts xxvii. 44.

have fought my last fight—I have overcome my last enemy—my bonds are loosed, and I am free! O Death! thou thyself art dead, and I live for ever!—once thy trembling, humiliated victim, now thy triumphant glorified victor, trampling thee beneath my feet! “There shall be no more death.”

The absence of death in Heaven will be *the cessation of all painful apprehension with regard to the departure of those we love*. With what anxiety we often watch the slow, insidious progress of disease in those whose life is essential to our happiness;—yea, which seems a necessary condition of our very existence! Oh! it is painful, it is agonizing, to mark the advance of the “last enemy,” “like a staunch murderer steady to his purpose;” approaching near and yet more near with soft, but most sure, foot-fall—and our hearts die within us. But this bitter trial is not without its sweet alleviations; this dark cloud not unilluminated with some bright sunshine. Is the sick one one whom Jesus loves? Is the de-

parting soul dying in the Lord? Listen to the language breathing from that couch :

“I'm fading slowly, slowly as the day
Fades into even, and the quiet night ;
But, with the body's sinking and decay,
The spirit gathers new and holy light ;
A brief, brief time, and I shall be at rest,
For ever sheltered in the Saviour's breast.”

But this will be done away in Heaven. The quick eye of love will detect no symptom of disease ; the clinging heart will feel no apprehension of death. Gazing on the deathless forms of the glorified spirits, now clad in resurrection-robcs, no fearful forebodings will haunt the mind that sickness will imperil or the grave hide from us the treasure of our heart ; for “*there shall be no more death.*” The bud bursting into flower—the blooming flower opening into beauty—the olive branches adorning our table—the graceful vine entwining our home—the venerable oak spreading its benign and graceful shadow over all,—will then defy the nipping frost, the withering blast, the sweeping scythe and the felling axe of death.

Rachel shall no more weep for her children refusing to be comforted, because they are not. No more shall "the desire of our eyes," the wife of youth's wedded love, be removed with a stroke ; no more will the heart be made desolate with a widow's lonely anguish ; nor the white-haired father go forth uttering his wail of anguish, and weeping as he goes,—“ O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom ! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son ! ” With the utter abolition of death, these mournful and terrible results will entirely and for ever have passed away.

But let us take a more *spiritual* view of this negative image of glory. There will be no more *deadness of the Divine life of our soul*. No truth is more certain than the deathless nature of the life of God in the soul of the regenerate. That life is as indestructible and imperishable as the Divine Source from whence it emanates. But, undoubted as is this fact, it is equally true that it may — through unmortified principle of sin, unwatchfulness of Christian walk, the re-

straining of prayer, the power of the world, the encroachments of the creature, the idolatry of self, the neglect of the means of grace,—sink to a very low ebb. Spiritual torpor may steal over it, weakening its pulse, checking its growth, congealing its warm ascending aspirations after God, and Christ, and holiness, and heaven; thus diffusing over it the chill and insensibility of death, extorting the mournful lamentation—“O my leanness! My leanness! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” But, oh, blessed thought! there will be no coldness nor lukewarmness nor deadness of the soul in heaven! Praise to God will not then, as it often does now, freeze into icicles upon our lips. Love to Christ will not then, as it often does now, prove fickle, and frigid, and false. Oh! it is a blessed and holy thought, that there will be no ebb, no fluctuation, no chill, in the life of the glorified soul. Winter’s frost and summer’s heat, the congealing and the drought, will then give place to a spring of perennial bloom, and to a summer of eternal sunshine. Unbelief

annihilated—carnality destroyed — selfishness effaced—sin will find no fuel for its flame, and death no material for its working. Oh, the rapturous prospect of inheriting “everlasting life!” subjected to the influence of no moral atmosphere—changeable, unkind, and fatal. This assurance of life, never impaired,—of love, never chilled,—of zeal, never drooping,—of service, never tiring,—of song, never ceasing,—entirely revolutionises and transforms our present condition of lamentation and sorrow, imparting dignity to lowliness, wealth to poverty, joy to grief, health to sickness, hope to despair,—and converts our every deformity and uncomeliness into a moral grace and beauty which angels might admire, but in vain may imitate.

Nor must we fail to enumerate, as an illustration of this negative of Heaven, the absence of all antichristian persecution, suffering, and death, the record of which supplies so large and so dark a chapter of the annals of God’s Church. The history of the Church of Christ is the history of *persecution*—its most instruc-

tive and thrilling chapter that which records the faith and patience and sufferings of the "noble army of martyrs." It is to be feared that the *martyrology* of the Christian Church is but imperfectly studied. And yet, where does there exist, in the volume of her history, a more touching, illuminated, and impressive chapter than the annals of those who for the truth's sake, and for Christ's sake, loved not their lives unto the death? Nor has this part of her history yet closed. The certain and speedy coming of Antichrist, as the signs of the times unmistakably indicate, will be the advent of such a fiery persecution as she has never yet known. The Apostle thus foretells his coming: "*Then shall that Wicked be revealed, . . . even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.*"* The fearful persecutions consequent upon the reign of this Antichristian Man, are thus clearly fore-

* 2 Thes. ii. 7-10.

told by our Lord : “ *There shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved ; but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.*” Already, to the spiritual and studious eye, the cloud, though no larger than a man’s hand, is gathering over the horizon. The rapid increase, wide-spread diffusion, and menacing attitude of error and superstition—dogmatic and ceremonial—are indices of the approaching storm too significant to misinterpret, and too visible to overlook. Never was there such a union of a credulity that believes everything, with a scepticism that believes nothing, as at the present day. Infidelity and superstition are confederate—Pilate and Herod made friends—in impugning the integrity of Divine Revelation,—and in setting up a worldly, popish ritual in the place of that pure, divine worship of God without which none can worship Him in spirit and in truth. The bitterness, the threatening and separation exhibited by those

thus abandoned to a "*strong delusion that they should believe a lie,*" clearly indicates, not the want of the will, but of the power, to rekindle the flames of fierce persecution—more fierce and devouring than have in any age made havoc of God's Church. But, O sweet thought! In Heaven the absence of death will be the absence of all deadly persecution of the saints. The last spark will die, the last shaft will be thrown, the last accusation will be made,—for there shall be no more death.

It is a significant and interesting declaration touching the existence of this negative character of the New Jerusalem that, upon the glorified spirits *the second death will have no power.* The absence of this terrible doom is thus graphically described: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection ; on such *the second death hath no power* but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." The "second death" will be a more terrible infliction of divine wrath than any that preceded it. But

from this, all who share in the privilege and blessedness of the "First Resurrection" will be saved. Let it be—with the apostle—our aim to "know the power of Christ's resurrection" in our souls, and then, "if by any means we might attain unto the 'first resurrection' of the saints, for us the second death will be powerless." There are, in reality, three deaths to which men are exposed—death moral, death natural, death eternal. Delivered by Christ from the power of the *first*, and from the condemnation of the *second*, we shall escape the bitter pangs and horrors of the *third*. But what, my reader, if we know nothing of having "passed from death unto life?" What, if we have not become "new creatures in Christ Jesus?" What, if we have not washed in His blood, and robed in His righteousness? What, if we live in our sins, and die in our sins, and stand before the bar of God with all their guilt upon us? Oh, then, upon us the "second death" will exert its tremendous, unmitigated, eternal power, and we shall, with all who do wickedly and die in rejec-

tion of Christ, "*dwell with the devouring fire, with everlasting burnings,*" "*where the worm*" of an accusing conscience "*dieth not, and the fire*" of divine wrath "*is not quenched.*" We know not what eternal death is;—but we know some things respecting it. It is far away from heaven—those blissful plains where eternal joy dwells. It is far from hope—'hope that here comes to all.' It is the abode of all the abandoned and profane and vile—the collected guilt and wickedness of this world. It is a place where no sanctuary opens its doors and invites to heaven,—where no Sabbath returns to bless the soul,—where no message of mercy comes to the sinful and the sad. It is a world unblessed, like this, with the work of redemption. On no second Calvary is there a Redeemer offered for sin; and from no tomb does He rise to life to bless the sufferers with the offer, and to furnish the pledge of heaven. No Spirit strives there to reclaim the lost, and on no zephyr is the message of mercy borne, whispering peace. No God meets the desponding there with promises

and hopes, and from no eye is the tear of remorse ever wiped away. There is no such Friend as Jesus; no word of mercy; no day-star of hope, no father, mother, daughter, pastor, angel to sympathise; no one to breathe for the lost the prayer for pardon; no great Intercessor to bear the cry for mercy up to the Throne of God. It is death—lingering, long, interminable death—the dying sorrow prolonged from age to age; onward—onward toward eternity—ever lingering, never-ending! Lamb of God! Saviour of sinners! I fly to Thee! put me in a cleft of the Rock—hide me in Thy pierced side—shelter me beneath Thy shadowing cross—wash me in Thy blood, and invest me with Thy righteousness. Bending from Thy Throne in glory, throw around me the arms of Thy love, and let me hear Thy voice calling me Thy child! Then, Lord Jesus! the first death will have for me no sting, and the second death no power.

A few deductions from this subject will close the chapter.

In anticipation of our departure out of this

world, *let us deal more closely with a living Christ than with a coming death.* It is indeed a terrible event of our being—a solemn thing even to die in the Lord. But faith in Christ can raise us superior to the natural dread and moral fear of death, enabling us to contemplate our last end with dignity and composure, yea even with longing and hope. O precious truth! Jesus died and rose again, that we may “not see death.” And when death comes, Jesus will come with it—yea, will come *before* it, anticipating its deadly shaft by the succourings of His grace, by the manifestations of His presence, and by the unveilings of the blessedness, glory, and song into which the departing soul is about to enter. “Then, O believer! grapple with death and thou shalt get the first fall; but thou shalt rise again, and come off victorious at the last. Thou must go down to the grave; but though it be thy *long home*, it shall not be thine *everlasting* home. Thou wilt not hear the voice of thy friends there; but thou wilt hear the voice of Christ there. Thou

mayest be carried thither with *mourning* ; but thou shalt come up with *rejoicing*. Thy friends indeed will leave thee, but thy God will not. What God said to Jacob concerning his going down into Egypt, He says to thee—“ *Fear not to go down ; I will go down with thee ; and I will surely bring thee up again.*” O solid comfort ! O glorious hope ! wherefore comfort yourselves and one another with these words.*

“Death, the old Serpent’s son !
Thou hadst a sting once like thy sire,
That carried hell and ever-burning fire.
But those black days are done ;
Thy foolish spite buried thy sting,
In the profound and wide
Wound of a Saviour’s side.
And now thou art become a tame and harmless thing—
A thing we dare not fear,
Since we hear
That our triumphant God, to punish thee,
For the affront thou didst Him on the tree,
Hath snatched the keys of hell out of thy hand,
And made thee stand,
A porter at the gate of Life, thy mortal enemy.
O Thou who art that gate, command that he
May, when we die,
And thither fly,
Let us into the courts of heaven through Thee.”

* Boston.

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But when we contemplate death as the believer's door from earth to heaven, his passage out of grace into glory, bitter and devouring as is this foe, we can exclaim, with truth yet more significantly than Samson, "*Out of the eater came forth meat, out of the strong came forth sweetness.*" Could we catch the voice of the glorified one, over whose turf we rain our warm tears of grief, would not its utterances be like these?—

"Would you know where I am? I am at home in my Father's house, in the mansion prepared for me there. I am where I would be, where I have long and often desired to be—no longer on a stormy sea, but in a safe and quiet harbour. My working time is done, I am resting; my sowing time is done, I am reaping; my joy is at the time of harvest. Would you know how it is with me? I am made perfect in holiness; grace is swallowed up in glory; the top-stone of the building is brought forth. Would you know what I am doing? I see God; I see Him as He is, not as through a glass, darkly, but face to face; and the sight is transforming;

it makes me like Him. I am in the sweet employment of my blessed Redeemer, my Head and Husband, whom my soul loved, and for whose sake I was willing to part with it all. I am here bathing myself at the spring-head of heavenly pleasures and joys unutterable; and, therefore, weep not for me. I am here keeping a perpetual Sabbath; what that is, judge by your short Sabbaths. I am here singing hallelujahs incessantly to Him who sits upon the throne; and rest not day or night from praising Him. Would you know what company I have? Blessed company, better than the best on earth—here are holy angels and the spirits of just men made perfect. I am set down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, with blessed Paul and Peter, and James and John, and all the saints; and here I meet with many of my old acquaintance that I fasted and prayed with, who got before me hither. And lastly, would you consider how long this to is continue? It is a garland that never withers; a crown of glory

that fades not away ; after millions of millions of ages it will be as fresh as it is now ; and, therefore, weep not for me." *

At length the door is opened, and, free from pain and sin,
With joy and gladness on his head, the pilgrim enters in ;
The Master bids him welcome, and on the Father's breast,
By loving arms enfolded, the weary is at rest.

The pilgrim staff is left behind—behind the sword, the shield ;
The armour, dimmed and dented, on many a hard-fought field ;
His now the shining palace, the garden of delight,
The psalm, the robe, the diadem, the glory ever bright.

The blessed angels round him, 'mid heaven's hallowed calm,
With harp and voice are lifting up the triumph of their psalm :
" All glory to the Holy One, the infinite I Am,
Whose grace redeems the fallen ! Salvation to the Lamb ! "

Another son of Adam's race, through Jesus' loving might,
Hath crossed the waste, hath reached the goal, hath vanquished
in the fight ;
Hail, brother, hail ! we welcome thee ! join in our sweet
accord ;
Lift up the burden of our song—Salvation to the Lord !

And now from out the glory, the living cloud of light,
The old familiar faces come beaming on his sight ;
The early lost, the ever loved, the friends of long ago,
Companions of his conflicts and pilgrimage below.

They parted here in weakness, and suffering, and gloom ;
They meet amid the freshness of heaven's immortal bloom ;
Henceforth, in ever-enduring bliss to wander hand in hand,
Beside the living waters of the still and sinless land.

* Matthew Henry,

Oh, who can tell the rapture of those to whom 'tis given
Thus to renew the bonds of earth amid the bliss of heaven?
Thrice blessed be His Holy Name, who, for our fallen race,
Hath purchased by His bitter pains such plenitude of grace.

In what way the spirits of the glorified are permitted—if at all—to minister to the saints on earth, is an inquiry often urged, but never satisfactorily answered. We have no “Thus saith the Lord”—no revealed *data*—to guide us to a scriptural and rational conclusion in the matter. That they are employed in a service in Heaven, we think is perfectly clear; for we are told: “*They SERVE Him day and night in His temple;*” but that that service extends to earth we think it would be difficult to show, since it is hard to suppose that a spirit, not created like an angel’s, could act but by and through material organs. Would not, too, a supposed service of the blessed saints on earth interfere with the authorised and revealed ministry of angels? But whether the spirits of just men made perfect are sent on embassies of mercy and grace to us or not—and it is not clear that they are—this much we do know, they are not unconscious of, nor indif-

ferent to, the progress of Christ's kingdom and truth in the world ; "*they serve Him.*" Their sensibilities are all awake, and their powers all developed, and their time all employed in a way, doubtless, congenial with their nature, befitting their position, and glorifying to God. Let us be satisfied with the revealed ministry of angels, and, above and beyond all, with the higher ministry and presence of Christ, the Lord of angels, in the fulfilment of His precious and assuring promise, "*Lo ! I am with you alway !*"

Does the dying eye of a saint of God, poised upon the wing for eternity, light upon this page ? Departing one ! fear not the foe—shrink not from dying—dread not the grave ; Christ stands between you and death. Think of what awaits you ! In a few moments of time, the world of glory and holiness, of love and song will burst upon you—and the *first object* that will meet your eye, fix your gaze, and ravish your heart will be—the glorified form of JESUS, bending upon you the most ineffable

smile, and receiving you with the most loving welcome.

“ That blessed interview, how sweet !
To fall transported at His feet,
Raised in His arms to view His face,
Through the full beamings of His grace ! ”

There are awaiting you millions of cherubim and seraphim, with harps all tuned to celebrate your arrival—the arches of heaven resounding with their song. Lining the heavenly shore in advance, outnumbering and outshining the angel choir, will be the glorified spirits of patriarchs and prophets, of apostles and martyrs, prepared to receive their sister spirit home. In front of all will be the loved ones you lost, but now will have found, the first to hail your advent to that blissful world, where, clasped in their embrace, death will sunder you no more for ever ! O the joyous meeting ! O the loving welcome ! O the sweet communion ! O the heavenly banquet, and the “ new,” the ravishing, the never-ending “ song,” the HALLELUJAH CHORUS of the skies ! Departing one !

fix your eye only upon JESUS—and you “shall not see death.”

“ There is no death ! Thou blessèd Lord art holding
Our last worst enemy in endless chains ;
And with Thy powerful arm of love enfolding,
My soul fears not his terrors nor his pains.
The dreaded foe hath lost his power to sting,
Not death can harm one sheltered by Thy wing.

“ What though death pierce my flesh ? Thine own he
wounded,
Wounded for me ! Then blessèd, blessèd pain !
For in mine ears, Thy glorious word has sounded,
‘ The dead in Christ shall life eternal gain.’

“ With Thee, dear Lord, I do not fear to die,
’Tis but ascending in Thee up on high ;
To live, to reign with Thee, to leave Thee never
To see Thee, hear Thee, praise and love for ever.”

“O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING? O GRAVE,
WHERE IS THY VICTORY?”

NO TEMPLE.

"And I saw no temple therein ; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof."—REV. xxi. 22.



WORLD without a temple, a heaven without a sanctuary, would, at first sight, appear a negative image incongruous with its holy character, wanting in one of its grandest attributes and sweetest attractions. With the hallowed and precious memories of the services and delights of the earthly sanctuary clustering around us—the place, perchance, where we first heard "the joyful sound," experienced the first pulse of spiritual life, felt the first thrill of holy joy, and caught the first believing sight of Jesus—we find it difficult to picture to our minds a Heaven of which it is said—"I saw no temple therein." It sounds as if

no Sabbath, no worship, no Redeemer, no God, were there! But let us not misinterpret this expressive negative of the New Jerusalem. Rather let us endeavour, by the Holy Spirit's aid, to evolve its deep and holy meaning, while we contemplate Heaven in its two aspects—as having *no Temple*,—and as being *all Temple*.

To guard against any misconception of this view of our subject, and thus clear our way to a proper understanding of its nature, let the following thoughts be carefully weighed. This absence of a Temple in Heaven by no means implies the absence of all worship, as constituting in part the happiness, and in part the employment, of the glorified spirits. It would seem clear, even from the partial revelations we possess of the blessedness of the glorified saints, that *worship* forms their most prominent, if not their only, function in Heaven. A door is opened in Heaven, and gazing within by faith, what see we? We behold the “four and twenty elders fall down and WORSHIP *Him that liveth for ever.*” What hear we? The sweetest

music that ever awoke the echoes of earth, fall upon our ear—" *And they sung a NEW SONG, saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and blessing.*" Here is worship of the divinest, holiest, and sweetest character. Singing the "*song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb,*" they are engaged in the highest devotion, and present the purest worship that ever bathed the throne of God with its incense-cloud. Oh, how faint, how poor, and how sinful, are our highest, holiest, and sweetest devotions here, compared with those inconceivable, pure, and sublime raptures which fill the souls of the glorified spirits in Heaven! Say not, then, that if Heaven is without a temple, it is therefore without worship! Pants not thy spirit, O thou praiseful believer, to exchange earth's low worship for the lofty devotion, the perfect adoration, the swelling harmonies, the sublime "TE DEUM," of Heaven?

The existence of worship involves the pre-

sence and manifestation of the Divine Being. The worship of the glorified spirits is no blind unintelligent homage. To no unknown, unseen God is the homage of their souls offered. Heaven is replete with the unveilings of Deity, the manifestations of the Saviour, the glory of the Godhead. Oh, the splendour of that beatific vision! Who shall behold it? "*The pure in heart shall SEE GOD.*" The tabernacle of God is now with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall see His face, and they shall be His people. What, then, are we to understand by the words—"And I saw no temple therein?" If there be a Divine object of worship, and a holy act of worship, and a devout assembly of worshippers, how is it that there is *no temple*? We answer,—

There is no local or particular place of worship in Heaven. Christ did indeed say, "*I go to prepare a PLACE for you ;*" but Heaven is a state as well as a place, and the Divine presence so fills its vast, its boundless space, that no one part can be regarded as more the temple

of God than another. O sweet thought! Let me take the wings of the morning, and fly to the remotest sphere of Heaven; even there I shall be blessed with His presence, and robed with His glory, and bathed in the ocean of His love, who dwells in the high and lofty place, inhabiting eternity. Is it not, in a sense, so now? Where does Divine providence lead me in which I am exiled from the Divine presence? Whither may I wander in this lower world, and find no temple, and build no altar, for the worship and service of my God? What may be the sense of my solitude, the depth of my grief, the pressure of my want, the anguish of my spirit, the suffering of my body, and no throne of grace, no meeting-place be near, to which I may approach, and lose all my sorrow and my need in God? "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."

The evangelist saw *no material temple* in Heaven. Such a spectacle would have been perfectly incongruous with the character of the place. A spiritual world, every physical and objective element in its worship must necessarily be absent. A material temple, with a service to a certain extent material and tangible, is a necessary adjunct of earth. Jehovah recognised and illustrated this, when He commanded Solomon to build it, and furnished him with the plan,—God Himself the Architect, and Moses the builder, of that stupendous and sacred edifice. But what hallowed reminiscences and what precious memories are associated in our minds with the material sanctuary! If there is one spot upon earth more sacred and more dear than every other, it is the House of God, which often to us has proved the Gate of Heaven. With what fervour does the pious heart echo the words of the Psalmist, "*How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts ! my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord ; my heart and my flesh*

crieth out for the living God. Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young ; even Thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy House ; they will be still praising Thee." "Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy House, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth." Spiritual, pure, and sublime as will be our worship in the heavenly sanctuary, vivid and grateful will be the memories of the services of the sanctuary on earth. "There it was," exclaims one, "I first heard of Jesus." "It was there," says another, "I first saw the blood that cleansed me from my guilt, and brought peace to my burdened soul!" "There," testifies a third, "my imperfect knowledge of God was enlarged ; my spiritual life was deepened ; my failing faith was strengthened ; and my love to the Saviour was intensified and inflamed." "It was in God's House," is the language of yet another, "that I was comforted in deep sorrow, sustained in sore trial, strengthened in duty and service, and was taught to

drink, with meek and cheerful submission, the cup which my Father gave me." And oh, how precious will be the memory of those soul-refreshing, heart-kindling, Christ-endearing seasons, when, clustering around the Supper of the Lord, we remembered the precious Person, and commemorated the atoning sacrifice, of Him whose Divine love dissolved our hearts, while the solemn symbols of His death moistened our lips! "*And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was BORN in her.*"

There is no *heretical temple* in Heaven. That there should be such on earth, forms one of the darkest and most fatal facts in its history. The architecture may be perfect, the edifice imposing, its service attractive—soft music may float through its arches—fragrant incense perfume its air—gorgeous vestments dazzle the eye—and brilliant lights throw their lustre over all—yet, if beneath its fretted roof, and along its Gothic walls, resound the echoes of false devotion; if the inspiration of the Bible is impugned, and the Godhead of the Saviour

denied, and the Sacrifice of the cross is ignored, and the regenerating grace of the Spirit is set aside, then the upas-tree yieldeth not fruit more poisonous, or casteth not a shade more deadly, than the teaching and the influence of that temple, thus devoted to the promulgation of doctrines fatal to the salvation of man, and derogatory of the glory of God. But, O blessed thought! in Heaven no Pagan fane, no infidel temple, no Romish mass-house, no heretical sanctuary, shall rear its dark head, or cast its gloomy shadow. All is truth, and all are truthful! There revelation is seen in its fulness, Christ's Deity adored in its grandeur, the Atonement acknowledged in its purity, and the holiness and music of the gospel—unshaded and unimpaired—is reflected from every spirit, and breathes from every harp.

There is no *sectarian temple* in heaven. The existence of denominational sanctuaries on earth seems a natural and necessary part of the present imperfect state of the Church of God. Nothing, perhaps, more truly and strongly

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indicates its but partially sanctified condition, than the many unhappy divisions into which the Body of Christ is broken. "*I am of Paul, and I of Apollos,*" is too much the shibboleth of those who yet belong to one Body—acknowledge one Head—are the temples of one Spirit, and bend the knee in worship before one God and Father of all—are travelling to one home, and hope to join through eternity in the one anthem,—"*Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen!*" Oh, if there is one attraction of Heaven sweeter than all others,—save the being for ever with the Lord,—methinks it is that of the perfect Church. There are no sects in Heaven—no rival Churches—no ecclesiastical divisions—no sacramental barriers—no exclusive orders—no spiritual caste, or clan, or party; nothing to create one jarring note in its finished harmony, or to distil one drop of bitter in its perfect love. With a prospect so

enchancing, a hope so glorious, who will not strive to promote that spirit of love, unity, and fellowship in the Church on earth, which will receive its perfect consummation in the Church in Heaven? Oh, if a blush could crimson the cheek, or a tear moisten the eye of a glorified saint, methinks it would be the memory of the sectarian badge he narrowly wore on earth, and of the coldness, distrust, and alienation which he bore towards one whom God loved, and for whom the Saviour died. How might shame and confusion of face cover us—not that we held our conscientious convictions firmly, but that we held them *exclusively*; not that we loved our own Branch of the Christian Church much, but that we did not love the whole Christian Church *more*.

There will be no *idolatrous temple* in Heaven; “*The idols He will utterly abolish.*” Evangelical missions to the heathen world—now the sublimest sphere of the Christian Church—will then have accomplished their great, their God-like work; the heathen will have been given to

Christ for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. Until that long predicted, long prayed and looked for period arrive, be it our sweetest privilege, as it is our most imperative duty, to aid by our wealth, influence, and prayers, those Christian and evangelical enterprises, which are the glory of the Church, designed to impart vigour and swiftness to "the angel flying in the midst of Heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." In promoting the kingdom of Jesus in the world, we are effectually promoting the kingdom of Jesus in our souls. There is a present blessing and a reflex influence in what we do for God and for man. There is no waste in a service for Jesus. The ointment we pour upon His head—in our loving recognition of Him in His poor and suffering members—will diffuse its fragrance and awaken its song through eternity. Oh for more compassion for souls! Oh for more zeal for God, and self-denying service

for Christ! What are we—what am *I*—doing for Him who has done so much for me? Are my intellectual powers sanctified to the vindication of His truth? Is my wealth consecrated to the advancement of His kingdom? Are my rank, influence, and time, all laid down at His feet? Have I humbly submitted my proud reason to revelation, and my faith to Christ—bowing down to Him as the Lord of my intellect, the Sovereign of my heart, and the Saviour of my soul? No unreasonable requirement is this, that my faith should accept what my reason cannot fathom; that my heart should believe what my understanding cannot grasp; that I should “become a *fool* that I may be *wise*,” receiving the mysteries of God’s word with the reverence, trust, and docility of a “little child.” Such are the simple and immutable conditions propounded by the Great Teacher Himself. “*Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.*”*

* Luke xviii. 17.

no other terms can we be saved. It is divinely written, "*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*"* But, submitting your mind to the Spirit's divine teaching—your heart to the power of Christ's grace—your whole being to the influence of God's love—lo ! He "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, will shine into your heart, to give you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Thus, submitting your intellect to the gospel of God as a humble learner—believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as a penitent sinner—and loving God with the fervent and supreme affection of an obedient child, to you will unveil the mysteries of the kingdom of God's grace on earth, and ere long, the full, unclouded splendour of those mysteries in the kingdom of His glory in heaven.

But, Heaven is *all Temple*—"for the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple thereof." A

* 1 Cor. ii. 16.

slight grammatical alteration may increase the force of this expression. In the original Greek, the verb is not in the plural; the "Lord God and the Lamb" constitute one and the same nominative singular; so that the words may be rendered, "Jehovah the Almighty God is its temple, and the Lamb." The New Jerusalem, unlike the Old—where but one house was reared expressly for divine worship, and to which the inhabitants alone repaired—will be *all Temple*—nothing but a temple—from every part of which—from its Divine centre to its illimitable circumference—incense shall be offered unto His Name, and a pure offering. Even now, the believer can realise God in Christ as His true Sanctuary—His Divine Temple everywhere.

In the busiest mart or the deepest solitude—in the silent chamber of sickness and in the shadowed house of mourning—at eventide and at daydawn—on the land and on the sea—at home and abroad, God in Christ is the accessible Sanctuary of His saints. There—at

that moment and on that spot—the devout heart may breathe its holy aspirations, the sorrowful unveil its lonely grief, the needy make known its pressing wants, the erring confess its deepest guilt. “*And there will I be unto you,*” says God, “*as a little Sanctuary.*” “*In all places where I record My name, I will come unto thee and I will bless thee.*” And where in the vast creation of God is His great and holy Name not recorded? To what object does the eye of man turn, or upon what spot does he plant his foot, and God’s Name not appear in its own divine grandeur? It is engraved indelible on the granite rock—dazzles resplendent from the snowy mountain—smiles in beauty from the beetling cliff—towers in majesty in the hoary forest—thunders sublimely in the roaring cataract—whispers softly in the evening breeze—breathes from every flower and smiles in every sunbeam. Thou art *near*, O God! and all creation a sanctuary, and every object an altar where Thy presence may be found, and Thy great and glorious Name worshipped and adored! Deem

not thyself deserted of thy God, thou lone and desolate one! Separated from thy brethren, like Joseph; exiled from thy home, like John; rejected of man, like thy Saviour,—yet thou canst not be where thy Heavenly Father bends not upon thee His eye of love, where the arms of Jesus, thy Elder Brother, do not encircle thee, and where the “still small voice” of the Divine Comforter does not whisper words of peace to thy spirit. God bows His ear to thy softest prayer, Jesus interprets the language of thy silent tear, the Holy Spirit hears thy pensive sigh floating upon the viewless wind; and thus known to each Person of the ever-blessed Triune—God is the rough and shaded path along which, weary and footsore, thou dost travel.

But let us take a closer view of this representation of Heaven as being all temple. We read—“*And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof.*” The further thoughts which this glorious apocalyptic vision suggests are precious and animating. We are reminded,

first, that there will be no *localising of the heavenly worship*; that no particular part will be more consecrated for this purpose than another; because the whole will be one vast holy and sublime temple, since the Lord God will enlighten it, and the Lamb be the light thereof. Filled with His august presence, illuminated with His dazzling glory, fragrant with the incense of His love, and resounding with the music of His praise, the spirits of the just made perfect will from every region fully and “continually behold His face, and serve Him day and night in His temple.” Thus, all Heaven will be a temple, because all Heaven will be—GOD.

Another thought is, the *full glory and presence of the Lamb*. The beauty and embellishment of this Divine Temple will be—JESUS. Through the temple of His glorified humanity—for aught that we know—the glory of God will still be seen. That the Son will, when the mystery of God is finished, surrender the Kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all, is perfectly

clear ; but not so clear is the idea that, independently of the mediatorship of Christ, we shall continue to see and worship God. It is the opinion of the writer that the Humanity of Christ will still be the medium of the divine presence and communication of the divine glory to the saints. But, be this as it may, we shall see God and live. Magnificent thought ! Sublime prospect ! If the divine presence in the earthly sanctuary is so precious and inspiring, what will that presence be in the heavenly ? O Lord ! may our worship of Thee below resemble more closely our worship of Thee above : and since Thou wilt be our Temple in Heaven, be our Sanctuary on earth, that, when we tread Thy courts, we may feel, "How dreadful is this place ! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven."

"In time of service seal up both thine eyes,
And send them to thy heart :—that spying sin
They may weep out the stains by them did rise ;
Those doors being shut, all by the ear comes in.
Who marks in church-time other's symmetry
Makes all their beauty his deformity.

- “Let vain or busy thoughts have there no part,
Bring not thy plots, thy plow, thy pleasures thither.
CHRIST purged His temple—so must thou thy heart.
All worldly thoughts are but thieves met together
To cozen thee. Look to thy actions well,
For churches either are our heaven or hell.” *

But, oh! what a magnificent vision awaits us—the glory of the Lamb in the Heavenly Temple! Methinks the first sight on the soul's entrance into glory will be the enthroned Redeemer. All thought and admiration, all love and worship, all song and service, will centre in Him. There are moments in our present imperfect state when we associate Heaven with the loved being who has passed from our embrace within the veil, and we think only of the happy and endless reunion with the departed one—it is a pleasant and a lovely thought, and God would not rob us of it. But we leave all of earth on earth when we exchange earth for Heaven. The moment we pass within its gate of pearl we become perfectly heavenly. *“As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.”* Not that we shall love these precious ones

* George Herbert.

less, but we shall love Jesus more. Not that we shall not be filled with wonder at their perfect beauty, but we shall be yet more profoundly lost in wonder, admiration, and praise of HIM whose beauty beautified all, eclipses all, and whose love, transcending all love, will have brought us there! When the late Archbishop WHATELY was on his dying bed, a clergyman sitting at his side and looking at an exquisite *bouquet*, inquired, "Does your grace think there will be *flowers* in Heaven?" "As to that I know nothing," replied the dying prelate; "but this I *do* know—JESUS will be there!" Yes, Jesus will be there! and that will be enough! Oh, how we shall admire—love—and adore Him! To do so now is our heaven upon earth; but to see Him as He is, to love as we then shall love, to worship as we then shall worship—oh, it will be the "Heaven of Heaven" to our souls!

" Dear Lord Jesus, keep me ever
In Thy presence, near Thy side ;
Nought my soul from Thee can sever,
In Thy ways will I abide :

Thou the life art of my living,
And all strength and power of mine
I am still from Thee deriving
As the vine-branch from the vine.

“ Could my state on earth be better
Than beneath His watchful care,
To whom I am daily debtor
For all blessings that I share?
Could my happiness be surer
Than in resting near my Lord?
Could the future be securer
Than He’s made it by His Word?

“ Is there any earthly master
Who, like Jesus, could or would
Rescue me from death’s disaster
With his own most precious blood?
Should I not be His possession
When He gave His life for me?
His, by my own glad concession,
Now and through eternity?

“ Yes, Lord Jesus, I will love Thee
In my gladness, in my grief;
From Thy service nought shall move me;
I will serve Thee all my life,—
Ever to Thy voice replying,
Ready when death comes to me,
For the soul may welcome dying
Whose humble trust is fixed on Thee.

“ Lord, be near, my soul to strengthen,
As my day on earth goes on,
Till the evening shadows lengthen
And the night is coming down :

“Then, Thy gracious hands extending,
In the fulness of Thy love,
Whisper, ‘Child, this life is ending,
Come and rest with me above.’” *

If the presence of Christ and the glory of God in the earthly sanctuary are so precious and glorious, oh, what will that world be which is all Temple, because it is all God! No longer the dawn of glory and the gate of Heaven, it will be the meridian of glory and Heaven itself, in unclouded splendour, fulness of joy and perfection of worship. The central Object will be JESUS—“Jesus in the *midst*.” This has ever been the place of Jesus. He was the centre of suffering on Mount Calvary—“Jesus in the *midst* ;”—and He will be the centre of glory on Mount Zion.—“*In the midst of the throne stood a Lamb, as it had been slain.*” Every eye will be fixed upon Him—every heart will meet in Him—every song will be of Him—and at His feet every crown will be laid. My soul longeth for the wings of a dove, that it might fly away and behold Jesus in His glory.

* From the German.

“O thrilling thought! that I shall be
With Him who shed His blood for me,
Where nought from Him shall sever;
Where I with sainted hosts above,
O’ershadowed by the Holy Dove,
Shall banquet on His boundless love,
And know those words—‘for ever.’
O thrilling thought! to see Him shine,
For evermore to call Him mine,
With Heaven, ALL Heaven, before me!
To stand where angel myriads gaze,
Amid the illimitable blaze,
While He the Godhead full displays,
To all the sons of glory!”

A practical and solemn question will close these pages. Are we as temples of God through the Spirit, preparing for the Temple-worship of God in Heaven? The worship of Heaven begun in time is prolonged through eternity. The hour is approaching when the questions of place and mode of worship will diminish into impressive insignificance weighed with the questions, “Am I born again?” “have I Christ in me, the hope of glory?” is my hope of salvation wholly in His blood and righteousness? am I a true, holy, spiritual worshipper in the sanctuary below?” But if, on the contrary, we

reverence not God's day, forsake His house, and exclaim of His service and worship, "What a weariness!" how can we, in the nature of things, be admitted to the society, the employments, and the worship of that world of which the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple thereof?

You are, perhaps, my reader, the Lord's prisoner—the "prisoner of hope." Suffering and infirmity prevent your attendance at the house of God—the place you long have loved and frequented—and you exclaim, with the Psalmist, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Be still! the God who loves you is not restricted to places, or means, or forms; but as He has appointed you that couch of suffering, that bed of sickness, even there He will be to you as a little sanctuary. Bowing down to your weakness, He will catch the softest prayer, interpret the language of your silent tears, accept and answer the feeblest desires of your heart. Oh, what pure, fragrant, and acceptable worship

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may ascend to Him from your sick and lone chamber,—even the worship of a broken, Christ-loving, God-longing heart, to Him the most acceptable of all worship. The deprivation of a blessing may be to you a richer boon than the blessing itself. Thus, beloved, is Jesus disciplining and preparing you for the higher, holier, sweeter worship of that world of which the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple thereof. Cheer up! soon thou wilt weep the last tear, and sigh the last sigh, and sin and sorrow and suffer no more—gazing in admiration and love upon the King in His beauty, and reclining in the sweetest repose for ever on His ineffable bosom. Until then, let faith often climb Pisgah's sacred height, and survey the golden shore, and the sunny hills, and the fragrant fields, that lie across Jordan's river. Ere long thou wilt reach the margin and death will ferry thee over; and thou wilt "Come to Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and

church of the First-Born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant; to the glorious company of the apostles, the godly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs, and thou shalt be—FOR EVER WITH THE LORD.”

- “Row me over, row me over,
I would see the other side—
Hasten, boatman, quickly hasten,
Let me breast the rising tide.
- “ ‘Lady, hear the billows raging,
Listen to the driving storm;
Wait until the sea is calmer,
Wait until the coming morn.’
- “Row me, boatman, row me over,
I will never fear the storm,
While the Dear One hails my coming—
See, oh, see His lovely form.
- “ ‘I see no one who waits your coming;
All is wild, and dark, and drear;
Hark! the waves are breaking wildly—
Lady, dost thou know no fear?’
- “Fear! O boatman, name it never,
When it is the Lord’s command;
He can calm the angry waters
With the waving of His hand.

" ' I see no hand above the billows,
I see no form on yonder shore ;
I will never trust the waters
Till the midnight storm is o'er.' "

" Hark ! a voice is sweetly calling,
Calling from the other side ;
Hear'st thou not its gentle accents
Floating o'er the swelling tide ? "

" "'Tis the song of ocean, lady,
Listen to it never more ;
Come to me upon the morrow—
When it calms I'll row thee o'er.' "

" Cannot wait until to-morrow—
He commands, I must obey ;
Where He hails me is no morrow,
But unchanging, endless day. "

" If thou wilt not row me over,
Place the helm within His hand ;
He will guide the frail bark over,
Over to the promised land. "

" He's a true and faithful Pilot,
Ever ready at command ;
Ne'er a soul that trusted in Him
Failed to reach the gilded strand." *

* Baker.

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