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A DYING GIRL.

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see vol 12

FAMILY MEMORIAL;

OR page 168

A FATHER'S TRIBUTE

TO C. C. Dean
M.D.

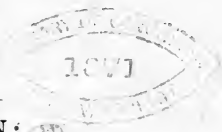
THE MEMORY OF FOUR CHILDREN.

413

BY STEPHEN MORELL,
OF LITTLE BADDOW, ESSEX.

Rec^d. at D^{ist}. Oct 7 '1837

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THE
FAMILY MEMORIAL,

ETC.

INTRODUCTION.

THE voice of God's providence, which is often afflictive, but always wise, righteous and good, demands the attention of all. When we see the opening bud of life destroyed ere yet its beauties had been fully developed; and when we read the awful inscription, "Childhood and youth are vanity," written by the finger of God upon the walls of our houses, in the very apartments that were enlivened by youthful cheerfulness, and consecrated by the early and simple beginnings of youthful piety; and when we attend those in whom many a reasonable and

happy expectation had been centred, to the house appointed for all living, leaving them in the dark and deep solitude of the grave, we utter, in solemn sighs, the lessons we had been so reluctant to learn, and we exclaim, "Lord, what is man!"

Never does the beauty of any object in nature strike us so powerfully as when contrasted with its opposite; and the darkest clouds of providence often present to our minds the grace of God which bringeth salvation, with a lustre which, perhaps, under other circumstances, we should never have discovered. The same events in the order of providence which humble us, may also elevate us; that which effectually teaches us not to glory in man, may constrain us to glory in the Lord, especially when the object is to recommend a Saviour to dying sinners, and to teach them (if it may please the Spirit of all grace to prosper the humble attempt) to glory only in the cross of Christ.

The simple unembellished narratives which are now presented to more public notice, but

with an especial view to the young, have proved a treasure beyond value to the members of a family whose comforts and prospects once seemed to be inseparably connected with that endeared intercourse which death has broken, and which cannot again be placed within their reach. Not that this review of past times and of gratifying scenes, supported by mutual faith and mutual love, can replace what God has displaced ; but that the merciful exhibition of sovereign grace, which shed so bright a lustre even upon the gloomy path of death, has eclipsed the inferior light of earthly anticipations, while it has directed the eye of faith to that perfect state in which sin, and pain, and death are alike unknown. That which is lost, and that which was expected, are in some measure forgotten in the contemplation of that which is realized, as we humbly trust, by those who are gone, and may through faith and patience be attained by those who yet remain. It has been the good pleasure of Him whose ways are mercy and truth, who worketh all things after the

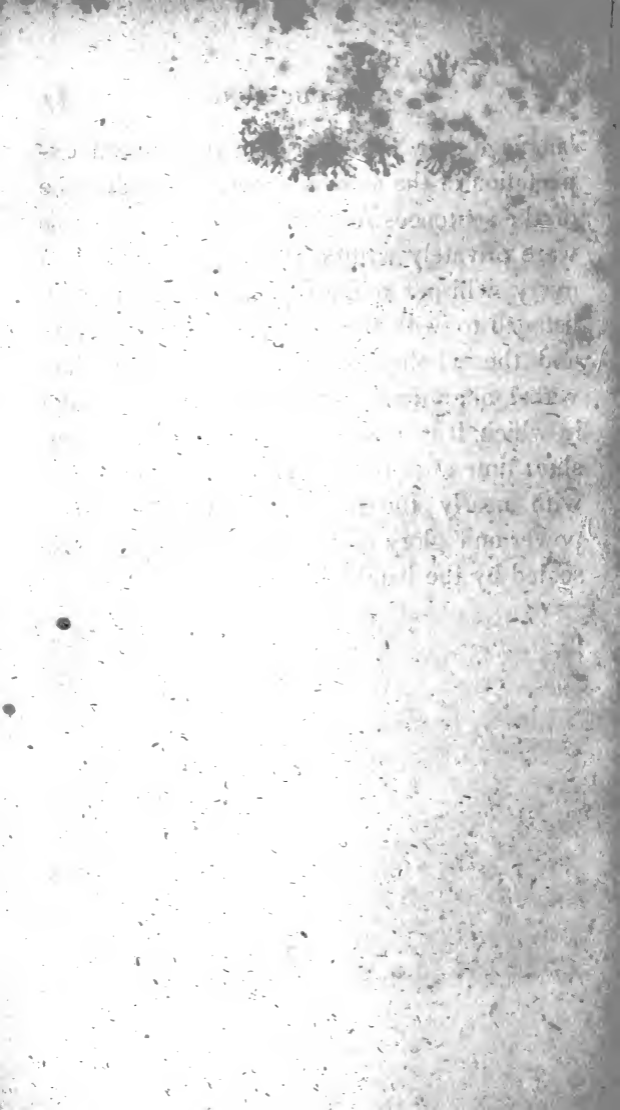
counsels of his own will, who giveth not account of his ways to man, and to whom no Christian, in a proper state of feeling would dare to say, or wish to say, "What doest thou?"—it has pleased Him to remove from a united and happy domestic circle, amidst all the solemnities of death, four of their number, dearly beloved, within the space of less than nine years. The eldest son, Stephen, second of the family, who had recently been ordained to the pastoral office at Norwich, died in the month of October, 1824, nearly twenty-four years of age. The third daughter, and fourth of the family, Lætitia, in the month of November, 1827, at the age of twenty. The third son, and eighth of the family, George James, in the month of June, 1830, at the age of sixteen years and three months; and the fifth daughter, and seventh of the family, Mary Ann, on the 4th of September, 1833, at the age of twenty-one. It is our mercy to be able to say, "These all died in faith!"

Doubtless such affecting strokes were felt

most keenly. To say (had it been the truth) that no sorrow was awakened, or that no tears were shed, would be a declaration alike dishonorable to our common nature, and to our Christian professions. True religion, instead of destroying the just and lawful sympathies of humanity, is calculated both to correct and to strengthen them. On the contrary, to refuse to be comforted under the chastening of the Lord, is sin; it is the unavailing effort of a rebellious heart. When we smart under the rod, we ought to kiss it, and to adore Him that appointed it; we ought to suffer, but we are forbidden to faint. The apostolic injunction on this subject is sufficiently explicit, and ought to be regarded by all Christians as a standing rule of duty: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope," 1 Thess. iv. 13; and he gives, immediately afterwards, the most satisfactory reasons for this seasonable and comfortable admonition.

It is not proposed to fill the following pages with any rehearsal of the shortened lives of those whose peaceful end will be faithfully described. A very few years spent in seclusion, and filled up with little variation, amidst those exercises and studies which are but a preparatory training for future maturity, can present but little, either of incident or instruction. A short statement, therefore, in each case will suffice, merely as introductory to the specific object intended; which is, to show the power and triumph of faith in the seasons of affliction and death. The certainty of this result, though perhaps at the distance of many weeks, afforded to us those opportunities of close and deliberate conversations, which in many cases cannot be attained. We could ascertain with satisfaction the religious sentiments, the solemn impressions, the hopes, and fears, and joys of those who were themselves fully apprized of their approaching end. Not only does the writer hold himself responsible for the general accuracy, but, in most instances, for the precise

language that was uttered in the assured expectation of the solemn event. Indeed, some of the sentences recorded in these memorials were privately written at the moment, when every whisper and every breath is usually listened to with the most anxious attention; and the whole was penned with very few verbal alterations, in the form and language in which it is now published, within a very short time after the lips that had been opened with nearly the last breath to testify the power and glory of a precious Savior, were sealed by the hand of death.



THE
FAMILY MEMORIAL.

STEPHEN MORELL.

THE first and only desire of his parents on the birth of their son STEPHEN, was that his life, if spared, might be devoted to God, in the service of the sanctuary ; and when, in very early days, he afforded what appeared to us satisfactory proof of mental capacity, sufficiently promising, the hope was willingly indulged that the object of our earnest desire might perhaps be realized. With this view every attention within our reach was paid to his education.

Still I consider that it would have been an act of daring presumption, or rather awful impiety, to have forced a youth into the Christian ministry, without endowments of a

far nobler and higher order than those of good capacity, a good education, or even brilliant talent. I pretend to nothing more than what ought to be common to every Christian, when I say that many a humble effort was made in the days of his childhood, to communicate useful and especially *scriptural* knowledge to his mind ; occasions were embraced that might be instrumental to awaken deep religious impression, and prayers were offered without ceasing to the God of all grace, that he would by the mighty energy of his own Spirit, render our feeble attempts successful. The state of his mind and of his heart was watched amidst alternate hopes and fears, with deep anxiety and unremitting attention. None but those who themselves feel the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, in connection with the unknown worth of an immortal soul, can conceive of the sacred silent emotion of a parent's heart, when the first certain intelligence is brought to his ear concerning the piety of a beloved child, and it is announced to him, "Behold he prayeth."

This important fact was ascertained at an early period, and confirmed in the progress of succeeding years. His disposition was upon the whole reserved, and seldom could we obtain from his lips any knowledge of the impressions of the heart; yet there appeared uniformly that conscientious feeling, and that inclination towards religious duties and privileges, which could not fail to increase the hope that he was become a new creature. It has been our privilege, however, to learn from his own pen what was the real fact at this early period. In a letter of advice, addressed to a young friend, after he had been engaged for many months on public duties at Exeter, he thus writes:

“My next piece of advice is, that after you have seriously considered the dignity and the natural degradation of your immortal spirit; after you have deeply thought over the immensity of meaning which is comprised in that one word ETERNITY, that you fix on some specific time, and then, with solemn prayer, make a dedication of yourself to

Christ, and surrender your immortality into his hands, for it is too precious a treasure to be kept in your own. The happy effects, which, by the blessing of God, may result from such a solemn act of dedication, I do humbly hope my experience tends to demonstrate. I remember when I was about your age, deeply impressed with religious feelings, I retired to a secret spot, and, falling on my knees, gave myself up to our Lord Jesus Christ, praying that he would preserve me for life and for ever. To this act my thoughts would often recur, and though it grieves me to say that the vividness of these early feelings in after years subsided, yet the solemn impression was never effaced, and to this day I look back upon the scene with mingled thankfulness and humility."

While it pleased God in the riches of his grace thus to meet our earnest desires, though it was yet thought improper to speak to him on the subject of the ministry, his own mind, as appeared afterwards, was seriously employed in meditating the same important design ; this

he for the first time ventured to suggest, with tremulous voice, in or about the sixteenth year of his age. Now did we begin to hope that our prayers had been heard; the grand essential qualification, without which, it were good for any man called a Christian minister that he had never been born, had been granted: nothing seemed to forbid the prosecution of the long cherished hope; every thing seemed to encourage it. Early in the year 1818, he was admitted into the communion of our Church, and the written account of his religious views and feelings which was then addressed to the Church was highly satisfactory; not on account of any extraordinary display of talent or of knowledge, but because of the early and progressive influence of religious principle described by himself with all simplicity. A very short extract from this letter will be read, I hope, by young persons, with benefit.

“From my earliest years I have enjoyed advantages, as it regards divine things, and with grief and shame do I add, how little

have I improved them ! I can truly say that at a very early age, impressions; and deep impressions, were made upon my mind. I cannot but think that at the age of nine or ten, the convictions of sin and its fearful consequences were more deep and solemn than they have ever been since. At that time religious ordinances were a delight : gladly did I hail the return of the Sabbath, and often have I been in tears whilst listening to the remarks of a pious and affectionate father, on the evening of that day. But alas ! soon, too soon did I wander far astray, and left the fold of God. I tremble when I state that for a long course of time every thing like a religious feeling had subsided, prayer and the reading of the Scriptures were neglected : still do I delight to bless His name who in his mercy has not left me spurning his proffered grace, and trampling on the blood of a Savior. I have felt my sin and guilt in having neglected and slighted the advantages I had enjoyed ; I do feel the importance of flying to the Savior, and seeking for mercy

through his atonement ; and it is my earnest desire to grow in grace.”

Towards the close of this year, (1818,) he entered upon the usual course of studies for the Christian ministry, at Homerton College, and diligently availed himself of the advantages which that venerable and excellent institution has so long supplied for the benefit of British Churches, and which has been so successful in furnishing the minds of young men for the sacred calling, under those excellent tutors, the Rev. W. Walford, and Dr. J. P. Smith, the latter so justly distinguished for what must ever be considered the grand qualification of Christian pastors, a profound acquaintance with all the important subjects of Christian theology. The term of his studies having been completed, he passed the whole of the year 1823 at Exeter, where he was permitted to witness some encouraging fruits of his ministry ; and in the month of June, 1824, in compliance with the unanimous invitation of the ancient and venerable church at Norwich, he was ordained to the pastoral

office among them. His people were affectionate, his prospects bright—alas! complaining nature would fain exclaim, Too soon were they blighted: more justly shall it be said, How soon were our expectations, cheering and promising as they appeared, superseded by the greater and better things which God had provided, but which our faith, while yet the dark cloud was suspending, could with difficulty embrace!

Although it appeared but too evident, when I attended the pleasing solemnities of his ordination, that his health was not good, the hope was willingly indulged that his apparent indisposition was but temporary, and would soon be removed; this hope too was encouraged by one of his letters towards the end of July, informing us that the cough, from which so much had been apprehended, was removed, and that he hoped to visit us in a few days to spend the following month among his friends. Our anticipated interview, however, was by no means gratifying; before his arrival the former symptoms of

disease had returned with increased strength ; his appearance was discouraging, and his spirits were oppressed, as though already foreboding the scene which was soon to be realized. He said, in allusion to the state of his health, " I know not what this may lead to : how many young ministers have lately been cut off ! " It was not more than a week after this our first interview, that he was attacked, while on a journey, with that fatal hemorrhage which was to hasten his removal from all infirmity, in the space of two months.

The first thought that was forced upon my own mind on his return, and which could not then have been uttered was, " Ah ! my son, you have come home to die ! " Under this impression I rejoiced to find him, even in this early period of his affliction, calm and patient. At times, as was natural, he expressed a feeling of disappointment under his peculiar circumstances, but even for this he reproved himself, and entreated me to pray that he might possess perfect resignation : he said he

was not unhappy, but found much enjoyment in communion with God. Yet, he added, "I do not experience that strong consolation which some have felt, and I believe it is because I have too much neglected to pray. I have not restrained prayer before God. No, I have conscientiously, and I trust devoutly, embraced the privilege of a throne of grace, and have often enjoyed it; but I have not been so frequent, nor so fervent, in my approaches to God, as I now see I ought to have been; and that, I believe, is the reason why, though I am not unhappy, yet I do not enjoy a high degree of comfort in my affliction."

During the weeks that followed, he retained the same tranquillity of mind, while the elevation of his feelings and the degree of his delight in God progressively increased: often did he speak of his delightful communion with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ; and several weeks before his death, he remarked, in strong and pointed language, that his happiness in the exercises

of devotion was "unutterable." He adverted frequently in conversation to those great truths which constitute the glory of the gospel, and in which his mind was firmly established. Christ and his cross was all his theme. Although he was at this time evidently disinclined to curious and speculative discussion, yet, when speaking of the divine glory of the Savior, and the efficacy of his death as an atonement for sin, he would, at times, pursue a train of forcible reasoning. "I was at one time," said he, "much harassed and distressed respecting the person of Christ, not satisfied to believe simply on the testimony of God, in the Scriptures, what my understanding could not comprehend. It was the pride of intellect. I ought to have considered that God manifested in the flesh is the great mystery of godliness, and a mystery it must be to mortal minds, yet well attested. Dr. Price's writings are exceedingly insidious and ensnaring, particularly in representing the opinions of men whose views of this subject are as wide as the poles, as being the same

in the main. Christ is God to me, is the idea on which I was dwelling, and as such I receive him, and honor him. On close examination, I find all the essential names and attributes ascribed to him, all the power of Deity exerted by him; and, though I cannot comprehend the glorious mystery, I believe that he is God, not by delegation, but essentially God. Every man is required to honor the Son, *even as*, that is, equally as much as they honor the Father, but it would be impossible to do this without believing him to be essentially God, even as the Father. The ambassador of an earthly sovereign might be received at a foreign court, as a point of etiquette, with the same forms of respect as though he were the king himself, but the feeling could not be the same, and were I to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as God's representative merely, I might reverence and love him as such; but I could not, it would be impossible, to honor him *even as* the Father, and yet we are commanded to do this."

Not less decided was his language on the subject of the atonement, and of the continued intercession of the Divine Mediator, to which he often adverted as a source of consolation, and to the influence of the Spirit which he fervently sought, and evidently enjoyed.

I have been the more solicitous to advert to these great points of Christian doctrine, because the scenes which are now to be described, "Joy unspeakable and full of glory," were most evidently the happy effect of a faith no longer to be shaken by vain imaginations, on this mystery of godliness.

In the course of his protracted illness it is natural to expect that allusion would be frequently made to the Church at Norwich, over which he had been so recently ordained: "What a privilege," said he upon one occasion, "will it be, if I am ever again permitted to address them! how I shall enjoy my pulpit! I hope my preaching will be more spiritual than ever. I am learning experience in this school!" At length, however, it be-

came but too evident that every such hope must be relinquished. "I think," said he, on the Saturday before his death, "I shall never see Norwich again; I have for some time thought that I shall lay my bones in your ground. I believe that my case is dangerous; but I have trusted, and do trust in God. I have sincerely committed my soul into the hands of Christ, my Savior and Intercessor. I have done it often, I have done it fervently; and he has, I doubt not, accepted the surrender: so that I hope, (I may say, I believe) that I am prepared to stand before my God. Nature recoils at the thought of death; it is awful! it is solemn! and it seems hard to have every earthly tie broken! but I do not feel afraid to die; and I know that this is not presumption."

On the next day, his last earthly Sabbath, he was enabled in the morning to attend public worship. The text was, "It is good for a man that he should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God." In the evening of the same day, when all the family

were assembled, alluding to the subject to which he had listened with much comfort, he addressed us all in nearly the following words: "I have hoped for the salvation of God, and still do hope; but I must also wait, and I wish to wait patiently. My state now is that of the apostle Paul, when he said, 'To live is Christ, and to die is gain;' but *he* had peculiar reasons for the enjoyment of his hope, and the desire he expressed to depart and to be with Christ; he could not have a doubt after he had been caught up to the third heaven, and had seen unspeakable things. I too should like to glance at those glories! Perhaps this may appear curiosity, but every thing here seems so low, so gross, so mean: to realize salvation requires strong faith, and the hope of it can only be conceived of by actual experience." This conversation he closed, without rising from his chair, with a deeply solemn and fervent prayer for himself and for us all.

During the whole of the next day, Monday, he remained perfectly serene, speaking often

of the glory of Christ. "What a mercy it is," I said, "that you have the knowledge of God to support you under this affliction." "Yes," he replied, "and of his Son Jesus Christ; I never like to separate them; this is my great comfort; I am astonished at the consolation I enjoy. In this corner, in this sick chair, I have been permitted to commune sweetly with my God. Some time ago, I was harassed with fears, and with some skeptical feelings, but, thanks to God, they are gone. I have been thinking to-day, I may perhaps yet live and pass a few years here in comfort and usefulness; but I am willing to depart and to be with Christ. Oh! were it not for the grace of God, and the atonement made by our Savior, and the faith by which I can rest upon it, I should be at this moment most miserable."

He conversed freely the next day in the same strain of tranquillity and hope. "As to earthly expectations," he said, "every thing now is embittered, and I have no wish to live. I have no other joy than that which

arises from the belief that my Redeemer is interceding for me, and I believe, I think I can say, I feel assured, that I shall be accepted in him. I have often, with sincerity and earnestness, committed my soul to him, and he will in no wise cast out them that come to him. I do desire now to depart: there is no sin in indulging such a wish, is there? As to this body, I am a poor weak creature, but" (with energy) "*strong, strong* in religion, strong in faith. My comforts are greater than I could have expected or conceived; the happiness, the real joy I experience, is to myself wonderful. I long, yes, I do long to depart and to be with my God and Savior, whom I fervently love; yes, I do love him with a love—a love—" I said, Past expression. "Yes! I could not find language strong enough—I am now looking forward to eternity without trembling, and why should I tremble? My affections are not on the earth, they are in heaven—my soul is with Christ, the great Intercessor." He then again adverted to the glory of Im-

manuel. "I know that Jesus Christ is really, essentially God, not a God by delegation, the Scriptures reveal it, and I feel it. Take away that refuge, and all my delightful hopes would be lost, I should be entrusting my soul with a mere creature. Do you think I shall be permitted to exchange this inferior world for the glory above? Is it not too great a favor?" I replied, "Do you doubt it?" "But," he answered, "there may be reasons in the mind of God why such a favor should not be granted at present!" I told him I had understood him as meaning whether it would be granted at all. "Oh, no!" said he, "I cannot doubt that! I have committed my soul to the Redeemer! But I long for the happy time! I should be glad, if agreeable to his will, to break these trammels of mortality to-night, and to enter a state, spiritual, pure, refined, fit for an immortal soul. My affections are in heaven."

Addressing some friends on the subject of his approaching dissolution, he said, "I am prepared, and if there is a preference it is that

I should die : I should rejoice to know that I might be permitted this afternoon to learn the mysteries of eternity."

Seeing one of his brothers enter the room, he said : " I wish to converse with you a little,—it is my duty as a dying brother to adjure, to adjure you to attend to religion, I want to know that you pray ! Do you pray ? Do you pray in reality ? I do not mean, do you *say* prayers, but do you solemnly ask of God the forgiveness of your sins ? Do you love to pray to him ? Is it a burden or a pleasure to you ? I earnestly entreat you to attend to meditation, to think, to devote a portion of every evening to this exercise, recount the actions of the past day, this will be of infinite service to you." He would have added more, but his strength failed him.

In the evening his mind was peaceful, and he often asked if it seemed probable that the Lord would grant him so great a favor as to release him that night, adding, with great calmness of mind, " I could wish and pray for it."

The next day, which was his last, he came down stairs as usual, and frequently conversed in the same delightful strain, full of tranquillity and hope. We could all perceive, every hour, increasing debility. In the evening, he sat up later than usual, freely and fluently prolonging the conversation, and without much fatigue. After some allusion to his temporal affairs at Norwich, and giving directions respecting the disposal of his books, he added—“I have now nothing—nothing on earth to make me anxious—I have been enabled to give up all—I have been standing on a narrow slip of ground—eternity behind—eternity before—it is awful!—it is solemn to plunge into eternity! but I do not fear it!—I know the strong arm on which I can rely. I know the wing on which I shall be borne.” Some reference being made to the Savior in reply to the above remarks, he said—“I want no other proof of the Divinity of Christ than the power by which he has kept my soul, and will keep it until the day of his glorious appearing. I must always connect with his name

the great atonement he has made for sin, whereby he has cleansed my soul, deeply dyed in depravity and guilt. I have committed my soul to him. I hope I have not deceived myself. No, I feel that I have not! I am not a hypocrite—I am sure I am not—I should wish once more to repeat this act of faith, and then, if it please God, to say—Farewell! I should like to understand the secrets of eternity before to-morrow morning.”

HIS DESIRE WAS GRANTED.

After he had retired, he slept a few hours, but somewhat disturbed. When he awoke, he was more restless, both in mind and body, than he had ever been before. “Yet I have trusted in God,” said he, “and I *will* trust in him to the last.” Then I said—“He will never forsake you.” “I hope he will not,” he replied, “but I have not the comfort I enjoyed yesterday. *That* was a happy day!” He then offered a fervent prayer to God that the cloud which hung over his mind might be removed. A friend dearly beloved by him-

self and by us all, who was present, requested me to pray ; which I was enabled to do in the enjoyment of strong hope. He soon became composed and happy. Grasping my hand, he said—"I am better, I am comforted." In a little time, with a serene smile upon his pallid countenance, he expressed the highest delight and confidence in God: "Blessed God!" he exclaimed, with a strength of voice which filled us all with amazement. "Never—never can I praise thee sufficiently for what I experience at this moment! This great joy! this holy joy! this unspeakable joy! It is exquisite! none can know, none can conceive the happiness I possess, the peace with which my soul is filled, but the sincere disciple of Jesus Christ my Intercessor. I now feel that I love God with a fervent, spiritual, holy love. Is this delusion? Is this enthusiasm? No! it is all real. Dear Savior! give me strength to bear even joy, such joy." He rested for a few moments; and then addressing me in a lower tone, as though he had been reflecting on the language he had just uttered,

he said—"One would almost think this the language of enthusiasm, but it is not; it is solid and genuine. But oh!" again raising his voice, "what mercy and grace, that *I*, a poor sinful, rebellious creature, should be permitted to experience such sublime delight!" I said it appears almost too much for the body.—"Not *too much*," he replied, "but enough, and yet this is but a glimpse. Oh! is there no outlet, whereby one may pass to that joyous state I have before me? Is this—this the happy time—shortly—within a few hours—when I may be permitted to flee from this troublous world?" Exhausted nature now fell asleep, then, shortly after, awaking, with great composure, and with a smiling look, he took his final leave of those dearest to him upon earth, in these words:—"I commend you to God the Judge of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant!" He continued for a short time raising his hands at intervals, and with a countenance expressive of holy rapture—unmingled happiness. The cough returned: from this paroxysm his

strength could not recover; and, after an ineffectual effort, he laid his head upon his pillow. One short struggle, and all was still.

So fades a summer cloud away,
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er;
So gently shuts the eye of day;
So dies a wave along the shore.

I AM unwilling to withhold the following extracts from a letter written by the subject of the preceding narrative, a few months before his decease. It was addressed to a young friend on the death of his only sister. The train of his own reflections at that time, compared with his actual experience so shortly afterwards, will powerfully strike the mind of every attentive reader.

Norwich, May 4, 1824.

MY DEAR FRIEND :

THE severe and painful dispensation of Divine Providence, which has deprived you of a beloved sister, and covered a whole family with mourning, induces me to take the liberty of addressing you by letter, not so much with the intention of pointing out the sources of consolation, opened up in the inspired volume, as of conveying to you the assurance of my warmest sympathies, and most unaffected feelings.

When the heart is wounded by grief, and the spirit overwhelmed with sorrow, friendship is bound to mitigate the pang by expressing its own sentiments of commiseration; and if this be the duty of a merely ordinary friendship, much more does Christianity render the same obligations imperative, commanding us to "weep with those that weep." Should these lines tend, in the smallest degree, to blunt the edge of sorrow, to relieve the pressure of painful emotion, to promote a spirit of calm resignation, or to convey repose to a suffering mind, my object will be abundantly answered. Events like those which have happened in your family are indeed

acutely felt; nor does the strongest confidence in God, or the most eminent attainments in religion forbid our tears to flow. The gospel, by providing us with "strong consolation," does not take away the poignancy of natural feeling, or check the play of those weeping sensibilities with which our nature is endowed.

It does not impart a stoical indifference which is contrary to nature, but it whispers the soft words of hope, it unfolds the scenes of immortality, it carries our thoughts to "Mount Zion, the city of the living God," to the multitudes of the redeemed who are released from all their sorrows, whose spirits are enrobed with glory, and whose lives are adoration and praise. Nature feels, and weeps, and mourns, but faith looks forward to another world, and thus raises us above nature. Thus, my dear friend, I trust, it is with you and your afflicted family. The mother sinks beneath the stroke, but the Christian rises above it; the father conceals not his silent anguish, the brother weeps with bitterness of soul; the many relatives of the dear departed, now an angel of light and blessedness, mingle their tears with his; but in all these instances may I not say that the saint is trium-

phant, and that religion enables you to endure the heart-rending separation, giving a tinge of plaintive pleasure to the gloom wherewith every countenance is marked ; and affording to you all, a full and unwavering certainty that brothers and sisters, parents and children, relatives and friends, part only for a time, and will meet again in that land of celestial glory where “ adieus and farewells are a sound unknown ? ” It is, it must be a trying separation, in your case : and, believe me, I have wept for you, though unable to weep with you. It is hard thus to suffer the violent rending asunder of those fond and familiar ties, which a sister’s affection had entwined around a brother’s heart. It is unutterably distressing to see the tenderest object of our regard sinking down into the cold arms of death ; to watch the feeble struggles of expiring nature ; to mark the last faint flush of life ; to gaze upon a mass of bloodless clay, exclaiming—“ That *was* my sister.”

The thought follows me continually—“ She is gone forever.” Dear departed saint ! neither relatives nor friends ought to mourn her entrance into glory ; our loss is her gain. We sigh over the former ; may God enable us to rejoice

with her in the latter ! For there is a bright side even to the darkest scene, and the death-bed of the just is a hallowed spot, radiant with celestial glory, and approaching to the very outskirts of immortality. He who took upon him our nature submitted also to our infirmities, and entered within the cold grave ; thereby qualifying himself for sympathizing with his people even in the solemn article of death ; and spreading the sweet radiance of hope over the tomb, which he himself passed through, and made the gate of heaven. By dying, he abolished death, and by rising again, and ascending to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God, he hath brought light and immortality to light. In Adam we all die, in Christ we are all made alive. The image of the earthly is graven upon perishable materials, which soon crumble into ruins ; it is a vapor, which the morning sun dispels, a mere shadow, vanishing away into nothingness ; but the image of the heavenly is a glorified resemblance to the quickened body of our Redeemer painted upon the heart in celestial colors that will never fade, lasting as eternity itself, and durable as the throne of the everlasting God. Oh ! what grand and astonishing

prospects does the "word of life" open before our minds! and how do these hopes of immortality by Christ, a risen Savior, mitigate the pang of sorrow, and calm the throbbing hearts of disconsolate mourners!

'The spirit which so lately animated its tenement of corruption, which gave lustre to the eye, loveliness to the features, and expression to every movement, has only burst from an earthly prison, expanded its wings of light, and flown away to kindred spirits of purity and love: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord!" they sleep in Jesus, they awake in his glorious likeness, they sing the anthems of immortality. One moment shuts the door of mortal frailty, and opens the gate of eternal blessedness. How astonishing the change effected at the instant of dissolution! The expiring saint looks around her upon the countenances of grief and sadness which stand waiting her exit with breathless anguish; she beholds their tears; she listens to their broken and suppressed sighs; she is conversant only with pains and groans, and expiring shivers; she feels the mistiness of death spreading over her eye; earth recedes; its mournful objects swim indistinctly before her eyes; one

dying struggle ; one convulsive effort ; and then —“in a moment—in the twinkling of an eye” —what ravishing scenes of glory burst forth to view ! A single point of time, a space less than a moment, has shut out the frailties of mortality and introduced her to the dread mysterious sublimities of another world.

You, my dear friend, saw the last moments of a beloved sister, but you were not privileged to behold her commencing glory : you saw not the angel convoy waiting to receive her emancipated spirit ; you saw not the beam of light which broke in upon her mind, as the last deep sigh left mortality behind : you saw not her celestial extacies when greeting spirits hailed her entrance into heaven ; you saw not her rapturous smile when, landed on the shores of immortality, she gazed upon the person of her beloved Savior, passed through the thronging crowds of the blessed,

“ And meekly took the lowest seat,
Yet nearest her Redeemer's feet.”

Had you seen these spectacles of wonder, could you have lamented her death ? could you

have wished to recal her from such entrancing joys? If the Bible be true, these are not fictions, but glorious realities, and though not actually beheld by mortal eyes, yet they are as certain as if your bodily senses had been conversant with them; for they rest upon the veracity of that God who cannot lie, and they are confirmed by the dying experience of those who sleep in Jesus. "We are come unto 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 firstborn which are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant."—"Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

Your sincere friend,

STEPHEN MORELL.

LÆTITIA MORELL.

SCARCELY had two years passed after the affecting, though merciful scene of the preceding narrative, when our apprehensions were awakened, by the appearance of consumptive symptoms, that his sister LÆTITIA would quickly follow. She was in her seventeenth year, and on a visit far from home, when the event of her brother's death took place. She hastened back to attend his funeral. She felt much, but was able to bow with submissive cheerfulness to the will of Heaven, and it was little apprehended then that she would herself so soon become the victim of disease and death. In the month of February, 1827, the designs of Providence began to be developed, and after a few weeks her situation became such as could leave no doubt of the result. It was not expected that a frame, always delicate and now greatly weakened by disorder, could be sustained through the changing sea-

sons, and nearly to the expiration of the year. Such however was the good pleasure of God; and the long season of expectation was also a season of profitable instruction, and joyful hope.

From a child, she had known the Scriptures; and, at a very early period, she seemed to love the truth, and to live much under its influence. No time or circumstances can be referred to, as being the commencement of her religious life, but her character had now assumed that decided form which encouraged the belief that she was indeed "born of God." In the month of December, 1824, being then seventeen years of age, she gave herself up publicly to the Lord and to his church. She was, for two months after the commencement of her illness, totally unaware of its character or tendency, and although she could discover, from the many hints that were dropped, the apprehensions of her family, and concluded that probably some danger attended her disorder, she still remained unconscious of its really threatening aspect, until the fact was faithfully

and expressly communicated to her by one of her sisters, early in the month of May. "I hope my dear Lætitia," said her sister, "you will not be distressed, when I tell you that we fear your disorder is consumption." "No," she replied, "I hope not; but your information surprises me: I did not think that I was consumptive: and I am afraid that I cannot think of death without some alarm." No alteration appeared in her general demeanor as the result of this conversation; she retained her usual cheerfulness, and was enabled to cast herself afresh upon that Redeemer to whom she had long before committed her eternal interests.

Finding her one morning in tears, and apprehending distress of mind, I said—"Why do you weep? you know the promise—All things shall work together for good to those that love God."* "Yes!" she replied; "I know that this affliction is for good; I have

* The passage is not literally quoted, but the sense is obvious.

found it so already ; I do believe in Christ, and know that salvation is in him ; but what distresses me is, that I do not *feel* powerfully even what I do know and believe. With respect to this affliction, I think I do not at all murmur, and I earnestly beg for patience and submission." The effect of this conversation appeared to be very important to herself ; it was blessed of God, and after this time, during the long season of protracted illness, she was permitted to enjoy uninterrupted tranquillity and peace.

"I am not filled," she said upon one occasion, "with dread in the prospect of death, neither am I free from fear ; I have long understood the way of salvation as it is taught in the Bible. I know all that is necessary, and I *have done*, as to outward duties, all that is needful ; but there has been often so little feeling and impression that I doubted my sincerity ; yet I have always intended to be sincere, and I do hope that I am so ; I have earnestly prayed to God to make me so, and *then* I know that all is well."

There were few circumstances throughout the period of this lengthened affliction, which afforded us more satisfaction than the thankfulness she often expressed, and even the astonishment she seemed to feel, that her sufferings were so light. "I cannot complain," she said: "God is dealing so kindly with me!" The question was put,—“Are you not distressed at being thus confined in the house, and so young?” “One evening,” she answered, “I had such feeling, when I saw my sisters preparing for a walk: it was very pleasant weather, and I thought, how I should enjoy it, if I could walk with them, and the tear dropped from my eye: I know it was very wrong! I am thankful it was but a momentary impression, and I have not been so disturbed since. I now feel quite resigned.” In reply to the common inquiry whether she was comfortable in her mind, she replied—“I am very comfortable, but I do not enjoy those strong consolations which many have experienced in my situation. It is, I think, because I do not place confidence enough in God: I

have not sufficiently estimated his goodness ; and I have thought that very great enjoyment was too much for such an one as I am to expect, but I have sought the presence of God more earnestly of late, and for several days have been enabled to think more of the Savior's love ; my mind has been attentively and closely engaged, and I feel very happy. I used to dread very much being awake for some hours together, in the night ; but now I do not regard it, and frequently am able to meditate delightfully. I have sometimes thought of God and heavenly things till I longed to be there. What a joyful state heaven must be ! How delightful, to be really able to praise God ! We know nothing about praise here. It now appears to me a great privilege for young people to be taken away from the snares and sins of the world ; it is the thought of being entirely free from corruption that renders the thought of heaven so truly delightful !”

Towards the month of September, the disorder, which had for eight months been grad-

ually impairing the frail tabernacle, assumed a more threatening form. We all apprehended that a very few weeks would close the scene on which our eyes had so long been fixed with intense and anxious interest. Some branches of the family had made arrangements for a short journey, which she had herself anticipated some months before, with great and pleasurable expectation. "Ah!" she said to me, being now in an exceedingly weak state, "I once hoped to enjoy this excursion; it is a merciful exercise of Divine Providence that conceals from us our disappointments. If we could have foreseen the circumstances, under which I am now placed, it might have been an occasion of great grief to us all. I hope my sisters will not be disappointed, but as to myself I feel not regret; I am looking for death without fearing it, and I had rather be as I am."

Anxious to ascertain the full import of this language, which, even allowing for the consolation of faith so evidently enjoyed, appeared very strong and extraordinary, I said—"Do

you really mean that you prefer your present state of affliction and weakness, to the society and enjoyment of a pleasant journey, and a visit to friends whom you so much love?" "Yes," she replied, "I do prefer it with *my* prospects. I am afraid of confidence, but I could almost say, I am sure that all is well; I have trusted in God, I have committed my soul to the Lord Jesus Christ, and I know in whom I have believed: I have been so supported, and even comforted, in my affliction, that it can hardly be called a chastisement. It was appointed to purify me; though I have been sincere in faith, I was not fit for another world; but God always purifies his children that they may be made meet for the promised inheritance." A few days after this conversation, when suffering under extreme debility, she said—"I am hardly able to pray; and am totally unable to keep my thoughts fixed with attention, on any one subject, but *hope* does not leave me; Satan, I believe, attempts to deprive me of it by suggesting that I am under a delusion; but I believe my heart is sincere; I think

I am not deceiving myself. If it be a sign of real religion to delight in hearing and talking of God, and Jesus Christ, and heaven, I have that evidence, for I do greatly enjoy such conversation, and desire no other. A kind friend asked me if I could find any thing to amuse me; it was very tender and thoughtful: I could have replied, The Bible is my only amusement, and it is enough."

Life was still protracted beyond expectation; having passed nearly through the month of October, the impression became fixed upon her own mind, that the desired moment was at hand. "I think," she said, with evident gratification, "a very short time now must bring me to my grave!" She conversed much on the subject of Divine love and future glory, anticipating the heavenly state as being a constant scene of activity: "This," said she, "is a view of future and eternal things on which I love to meditate, so far as I am able. I have been to-day examining my hope; and I find that I can abide by it; it is a good hope, and I have no fear that my God will forsake

me." She alluded frequently to the days of her childhood, and the seasons of impression, which were now had in remembrance with much advantage: often did she express her thankfulness that the Lord had inclined and enabled her to seek him in very early life. When conversing with her on this subject, and the probable benefit of keeping a record of our own feelings and progress in knowledge and holiness, she said—"I began some years ago to keep a diary; it had been strongly recommended; but I have burned it lately, because, though I was most anxious to insert in it nothing but the truth, I think it is almost impossible to write even the truth in relation to religious enjoyment, without seeming to convey in it something more than the exact reality, and I feared lest any persons should hereafter see what I had written, and think too highly of me."

Notwithstanding our own expectation of a speedy removal, it was the pleasure of God to sustain the expiring powers of life till the middle of November, 1827.

Nature was too nearly exhausted during the last fortnight, to allow of much continued intercourse; she often expressed her joy that the warfare would be so soon accomplished; and especially referred to the lively impressions of the love of Christ which cheered her soul. "I am too weak," she said, "to meditate much; often when I try to pray, my mind becomes weary; but there is a promise that all things shall work together for good, and I shall find it so, when once I am landed on the heavenly shores; yet I often enjoy now a sweet distant glimpse of heaven. A thought darted upon me not long ago—'What if all should not be right!' for death is awful, but I said—Why should I fear? God is faithful, and I have committed myself to the care of the Lord Jesus Christ. How gently the Lord is dealing with me! I suffer but little in body, and am perfectly comfortable in mind. If I had strength to show it, you would perceive that I am very cheerful in my spirits." This was indeed very satisfactorily evinced, for her countenance uniformly expressed en-

joyment, and every person that visited her was received with a smile.

Alluding to the privileges of the Lord's day, (it was I think, her last Sabbath,) she said—
“It is many weeks since I could enjoy a Sabbath here; but I comfort myself with the thought that I shall soon begin an eternal one. I should be glad to be released, if it were the Lord's will, immediately. Who knows? perhaps I may awake to-morrow in heaven! and we shall be separated for a very short time; it will not appear so long to me as to you! You will be measuring time by days, and nights, and weeks. I shall have no time to measure. Mine will be one eternal Sabbath. I was just thinking, amidst all my weakness—Christ is precious still: if I had not known him, what could have been my situation now? I should have been looking for more sorrow, instead of a perfection of bliss.”

On the morning of the 12th, when I entered the room, she seemed to suffer much, and to labor hard for breath, but she looked at me and smiled. “Well, my dear girl,” I said,

“you appear comfortable.” “I am happy!” she replied, “but can hardly keep life in me; I am not afraid however that God will forsake me; I feel assured that he loves me, as I hope that I have been taught to love him; how good he is to me; he has not once hidden his face from me!” In the course of this day, seeing her afflicted mother in tears, she exclaimed with considerable exertion of voice—“Mamma! why do you weep? I am not in much pain; consider how greatly many persons suffer; mine cannot be called suffering, and I shall hardly be sensible of death! It will be but one gasp; and in a moment I shall know the happiness of heaven.” “I cannot help feeling,” her mother replied, “though I am thankful that God has prepared so many of my children for himself: when you are gone, I shall have five of you in heaven.” “Yes!” she replied, “and all through Christ. I shall meet my brother, and ——,” mentioning several young friends by name. She continued through the following night frequently sinking as though life was at its last ebb, yet express-

ing now and then her comfort in the Lord. "I do not, I cannot feel low spirited." About eight o'clock in the morning of the 13th, she became exceedingly restless, though she said that she suffered no bodily pain. It was evidently the approach of death. I said to her—"This you know is the last enemy; and you have had many worse enemies than death to encounter." She replied in her last words—"I am not afraid of death! but I would not pray to be released before the Lord's time: he knows the proper time! I beg for patience." She continued more than an hour breathing with difficulty, and then, fetching a deep sigh, or, to use her own expression on the preceding day, "one gasp,"—she departed.

GEORGE JAMES MORELL.

ANOTHER interval of three years was graciously allotted to us by the favor of Providence, to enjoy the comforts of the domestic circle undisturbed, to review the scenes which were past, but not forgotten ; and to seek, as I do hope we all did, those supplies of heavenly grace which alone can secure a useful life, and a victorious death. So far as our observation could form a judgment, there appeared to be nothing as to the health of the remaining branches of the family to awaken our apprehensions that we should soon again renew those feelings which although so mercifully supported by the abundance of grace, are in no slight degree sorrowful. Faith may teach us to say, It is the Lord, but nature will weep. The last year, 1830, opened upon us with a smile ; but not two months had elapsed, before those symptoms of debility began to appear, which in the full recollection of former events,

excited painful suspicion that another son, GEORGE JAMES, would soon fall the victim of disease.

Having been of a very diffident and reserved disposition, he passed the few years of his life without attracting much observation. He was fond of reading, and, during the last two or three years, spent much time in retirement, studying works of general usefulness, and, as we afterwards discovered, writing scraps of poetry and other pieces of a more grave and lengthened description. We could not, however, ascertain, by conversation or by any other means, what his character really was with respect to religion. His general conduct was conscientious, and we had reason to believe assuredly, that he read the Scriptures habitually, and maintained the practice of private prayer.

The state of his mind at this time may be seen in the following short extract from some of his numerous papers found after his decease. It was written when his thoughts were occupied with the prospect of business. "I am

now about to be ushered into the tide of life : O may God give me grace to bear all the little difficulties I must expect to meet with, in a true Christian spirit ; and, above all things, may he enable me to exercise always that sweet temper which Christ displays so fully. Twenty years hence, and where shall I be !”

After being apprenticed to a miller, he became more open in character, and of late very free in conversation, when we soon found that his information, both with respect to religious and other subjects, was much greater than had been supposed ; but our highest gratification arose from the disposition he manifested, to exert himself as opportunity might offer in the cause of truth and religion.

Alas ! how soon were the hopes that had just been awakened, arrested and dissipated ! In the month of February, he was obliged, in consequence of a threatening cough and great debility, to renounce his occupation, and apply to the means which it was hoped would be efficacious, and accomplish a speedy recovery. Soon, however, it appeared that the

Lord's ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. The astonishingly rapid progress of a disease evidently consumptive, quickly admonished us of the afflictive event, which after a few months we were to realize.

A general outline of the scene which followed is thus given by one who was his constant attendant till the lamp of life was extinguished. "During an affliction of more than three months' continuance, while suffering much from weakness and debility, no expression of complaint nor of impatience was heard from his lips. But though uniformly tranquil and submissive, it was not till within the last few weeks of his life, that he expressed his confidence in that Savior to whom he had so often committed the keeping of his soul in the season of health. One evening when he was too weak to sit up, he requested one of us, (his sisters,) to come to his bed-side; and from that time he appeared to wish us all to know how happy he felt in the prospect of leaving this sinful world. "I feel convinced,"

said he, "that I shall never recover from this affliction, but I may live some months yet. I hope the Lord will give me patience to wait his time. When I first thought myself dangerously ill, I felt that I was not prepared for death; but now I can say, I had rather die than live. How much suffering I shall escape by being taken so early out of the world, and how much sin! How delightful it must be to meet our dear friends in heaven; I shall see there Stephen and Lætitia. Ah! and Jesus the Savior. I shall be better off than you who remain here." When conversing at another time on the bliss of heaven, he said—"I conceive that when my spirit leaves the body it will fly immediately to Jesus, and he will present it spotless to his Father: it will then be perfect." He always appeared to wish for a speedy removal, though very careful lest he should express any desire hastily. One morning, with evident pleasure, he said,—"My father says he does not think I shall linger very long; I know impatience is my chief sin, but I have prayed for patience, and

hope I am resigned to the will of the Lord." He was, during the last fortnight, particularly anxious to see many of his young friends and to converse with them on the vast importance of religion; he usually urged the necessity of fervent prayer, saying—"I have had many weeks for reflection, but perhaps this may not be granted to you." He always fixed his eyes stedfastly on those with whom he was conversing, as though anxious to see whether their minds were solemnly impressed.

A few days before his death, he said, with perfect composure,—“I shall soon be laid in the Meeting Yard; and sometimes fancy that I see you all following me, and standing at my grave; I dare say you will feel it.” “Yes,” it was replied, “there will be many tears shed then.” “But,” said he, “there need not: you must think how happy my spirit will be then: I am now ready to pass through the swellings of Jordan.

Could I but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er;

Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright me from the shore.

On the Lord's day morning previous to his removal, he said—"I have been thinking of that beautiful hymn,—

When, O dear Jesus, when shall I,
Behold thee all serene ;
Blest in perpetual Sabbath day,
Without a veil between."

Repeating the last line with great emphasis,—“‘without a veil! without a veil!’ How delightful will it be to see Jesus ‘without a veil between.’ I think I have obtained a view of the celestial city by the eye of faith.”

He was troubled very much in the last few days of his life with shortness of breath, yet he was very cheerful: the day before his death, he said, with much emphasis—"Oh! if I knew nothing of religion, I could not endure this." On the last morning, he said—"I think I could sing." On being reminded of those lines :

I can do all things, and can bear
All sufferings, if my Lord be there.

“O yes,” he replied, “I can sing that.” The spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. In this happy frame he continued to the end of the conflict; his merciful God did not for one moment forsake him: but made even the dark valley of death the entrance into everlasting life.

In addition to the above account, many, very many, were the remarks made by him expressive of penitence, faith, and hope.

At a very early period of his illness, I was anxious to converse with him decidedly on those subjects which were now become the only topics of real importance. He was not at that time very communicative; he assured me that he was not distressed on account of his affliction; he trusted his heart did not murmur, nor was he anxious to recover for the sake of life itself; but he wept much, and said—“I fear I am not right.” “What causes this fear?” I inquired. “I hope you have

been looking to the Savior, and can you not now trust entirely in him?" "Yes," he said, "I do; I do; but I fear I am not sincere! I have loved God, and I do not love him as I ought to do." This conversation was continued for some time, and occasionally renewed. His mind gradually became more tranquil, and he was frequently very cheerful; but, as stated before, it was not till within the last two or three weeks of his end that he was enabled to cast off all reserve. Then he began to converse very freely, and always satisfactorily, and welcomed with a smile every person that visited him, always conversing till he became exhausted. Every friend that called was struck with the placid and even happy expression of his countenance. He greatly enjoyed the prayers which were frequently offered by his bed-side, often uttering an exclamation of delight in the midst of the solemn exercise, and frequently said immediately afterwards—"Oh! glorious! glorious!"

Almost daily he said—"How happy I feel! it seems wonderful that any sinful creature

should ever become so happy." On one of these occasions, with a view of examining the foundation on which this uniform feeling of enjoyment and hope was built, I said—"And what renders you so happy? Is it because you are better than many other persons?" "No!" he replied, "worse! I have been very wicked." "You have not been a wicked youth," I said, "in the usual sense of the term. You have not lived a wicked life." "I know it," he replied, "but, (and he wept much,) a wicked heart, wicked thoughts, wicked temper, and this distresses me."—"Yet," I said, "you are happy now." "I am, I am," was the answer, "for I know that I have committed my soul to Christ, and done it with great sincerity. Indeed, I do not, I cannot doubt."

On the Saturday before his death, he appeared very considerably revived, many friends who visited him remarked the great alteration that had taken place. No favorable conclusions, however, were drawn from this circumstance; but in the evening when sitting by his

side, I alluded to it, and asked—what would be his feelings if there were to appear any prospect of recovery? he replied—“I do not know, I hope I should glorify God: but I think I should now feel disappointed, but there is no fear of it, the disorder is the same.” Shortly afterwards when in offering prayer in his behalf, I entreated the Lord that even now, if it might be his pleasure, health might be restored; he whispered—“No! No!” and afterwards, when in continuance, the petition was presented that the downward path to the grave might be smoothed—or rather the path upwards. “Yes!” he exclaimed, “upwards, upwards to heaven.” He said afterwards that he had much enjoyed this season of devotion, but he did not wish me to pray for his life.

The Monday following was his last day; his weakness was extreme. We expected that a very few days would bring him down to the grave; no one attempted to converse much with him, except now and then inquiring whether he still enjoyed inward peace, to which he instantly replied that he was very

happy. In the afternoon, being informed that a friend from a distant place was visiting us, he desired to see him, and, exerting his feeble powers, he conversed freely, speaking of his joyful hopes, and the precious Savior to whom he owed all his expectations. Our friend, after remaining with him more than an hour, took his final farewell. His breathing now became very distressing, and soon after six o'clock, perceiving him very restless, I asked him—"Are you distressed at all in your mind?" He replied,—“No.” “Are you quite happy?” “Yes.” “Then you are not afraid to die?” “No.” Ten minutes elapsed, and, without any convulsive struggle, he ceased to breathe, entering, we confidently hope, into the joy of his Lord.

MARY ANN MORELL.

COMMUNICATED IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

AT length it has become my mournful duty, ought I not rather to say, my merciful privilege, to give you the information which you are looking for, and daily expecting.

My dear Mary Ann has obtained her final release from all suffering: she has entered into perfect rest, awaiting, as it respects the mortal part, the glories of that day when proclamation shall be made—Time shall be no more. This event, to herself so happy, to us so severely afflictive, took place on the 4th inst. (September, 1833.) On the 29th she would have completed her 21st year. Although she could rejoice, and did greatly rejoice in the God of her salvation, as we could satisfactorily discover from broken sentences and short ejaculations uttered with difficulty, her debility has been so extreme for a consid-

erable time past, and the power of nature so exhausted, that we could not enjoy the privilege which we have been indulged with in former instances, of frequent and lengthened conversations. This would have been cheering, but why should we complain? we have the delightful recollections and convincing testimony of years to assure us of her well grounded hope in God, and her sincere faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.

Till within the last two years, her health appeared to be firm, her natural disposition was cheerful, and the deep interest she took in the great cause of the Redeemer, especially of late, in the progress and prosperity of our Sabbath school, and in visiting and conversing with our poor neighbors, was but a habitual expression of the direction of her mind, and its consecration to the Master whom she delighted to serve.

In the early part of last year, 1832, she was for several months unwell; not seriously ill; but in the course of the summer, all the symptoms of disorder disappeared, except a

very slight cough which had not entirely left her. In the month of September, according to our usual custom, the children of the Sabbath school were assembled together, and after receiving the little attentions that are common on such occasions, remaining perhaps nearly an hour in the open air; their poor parents and many of our friends who were present were addressed, and the teachers spent the evening with us, in our own house. This was a very delightful season to my dear child: her spirits were much excited, her energy exceeded her strength. The day was bright, but cold; and all the renewed symptoms of disease quickly appeared, which could not be arrested.

An attack of hæmorrhage a few weeks afterwards proved a signal of the sorrows that were to follow. During the winter, and until the month of April, 1833, she was a close prisoner, seldom leaving the room (our usual dwelling), but to retire to rest. She was generally cheerful throughout this long confinement, and the disorder, in its most threatening aspect,

was so considerably checked as to encourage in us all some hope of an ultimate recovery.

This was the season on which we can now reflect with peculiar interest and unfeigned gratitude; for although we could not deem it proper to converse with her on the subject of death, or to intimate our own apprehensions, which were never entirely removed, as to the result, she frequently adverted to it herself with great composure; and even when her own expectations were most raised, she considered her state as very precarious, spoke of her future life here, if she should be spared a few years, as most probably a state of perpetuated sickness, and declared her unfeigned thankfulness to her Father above, for the needful and beneficial discipline under which she was placed. Frequently indeed, and sometimes with tears, she lamented her long and necessary absence from the house of God, especially as she lived adjoining the place she earnestly desired to visit. Yet she uttered no complaint, and often expressed her humble hope and unshaken confidence in the divine

Savior with whom she had with unfeigned sincerity committed her soul.

It was, you will naturally conclude, not a little afflictive to ourselves, that the hopes we had fondly indulged of some improvement in the advancing season were not realized; the fatal disorder appeared to be rather, though almost imperceptibly, increasing at the time to which we had been looking forward with anxious hope for its removal. A change of air and scene was strongly urged by our medical friend; and she spent a few weeks in a distant part of the country with a much endeared associate. The several letters we received during this short interval yielded us no consolation, and on her return in July, the progress of emaciating disease was too apparent to allow the indulgence any longer of even a distant hope.

She soon became fully sensible of her situation, and declining any further efforts, with a view to recovery, spoke with great tranquillity and composure of her approaching dissolution.

From this time, early in the month of August, her powers of conversation ceased, but a sweet smile, which was seldom disturbed, sufficiently indicated the settled peace of her mind. In answer to my inquiries, made at several and distant times, she said that her mind was naturally too sensitive for this world, that she should not have been fit for this life had she been spared; that every thing in which she was interested here created too much excitement; that her desire of life was now entirely removed; that her hope in Christ was firm and unmoved; that she was not distressed with any clouds hanging over her mind, and that even when most afflicted with bodily suffering, her soul was joyful in the Lord. She said once to some young ladies who visited her—"You perhaps think me unhappy, but I had rather be as I am than as you are." When a friend once asked—"Is Christ precious?" she said—"All in all."

On the evening of September 3d, the last conflict was evidently approaching. She was unable to converse, but replied to our inquiries

with a slight motion of the head and a happy smile : having committed her to the Lord, in a very short prayer, I took my leave of her. Soon afterwards by her desire I was recalled, she grasped my hand with unusual firmness, and with a look of inexpressible satisfaction whispered her joy. Without expecting an answer I inquired whether she was happy, to which she replied, deliberately and audibly—"Papa, I cannot feel unhappy." For two hours she remained restless, but apparently not distressed with acute pain, and expired about three o'clock in the morning.

I shall not attempt to describe our own feelings on an occasion so mournful, yet so satisfactory : my own spirits have been exceedingly depressed. Yet the Lord is a strong tower. I will be glad in the Lord, and rejoice in the God of my salvation.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

THE few following suggestions are respectfully but earnestly offered to serious consideration.

First. The importance of preparation for death. A living man may indeed be wretchedly capable of employing, and amusing his mind with numerous speculations on the great subjects of the Christian revelations; but a dying man needs solid, well established truth. He cannot then conceal from himself the awful fact that he is a degenerate creature, that he is accountable to the Judge of all, before whom he must shortly appear, for a most alarming accumulation of sins, which he has been heaping up against himself; and the question, which perhaps he has never before entered into with sufficiently awakened interest, now becomes deeply important—"How can man be just with God? Without a satisfactory answer to this momentous inquiry,

(and it can only be derived from the testimony of God,) the review of life, even in the case of characters most distinguished by what is amiable and upright, will plant the dying pillow with thorns; or, if conscience should still fail to discharge its faithful duties, that must be wanting which is necessary to secure perfect tranquillity, and yet more, to cheer the soul just entering upon its eternal abode, with the bright lustre of a "hope full of immortality." It is an incontestable fact, that the record of God concerning his Son, which fixes our faith upon a Savior of divine power, and an atonement for sin of certain efficacy, has produced those spiritual and holy aspirations, and those elevations of joyful hope, which it were vain to seek among those who believe not in Christ as "God manifest in the flesh."

It is a fact, that faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, considered as the divine and eternal Son of God, and our implicit confidence in the efficacy of his death, considered as sacrificial, have effected in the solemn season of death,

an exaltation of holy and joyful feeling not conceivable by any but eye and ear witnesses. The same ground of such happiness has been examined; the only cause referred to by those who enjoyed it has been declared in short sentences full of meaning. "I know in whom I have believed? I have committed the keeping of my soul to Christ? I have often with sincerity, surrendered my soul to the care of Jesus! Were it not for the knowledge I have of Christ, and the faith that rests upon him, I should be at this moment most miserable, instead of most joyful!" Such are the sentiments and their effects related in the preceding narratives, and in those of a great cloud of witnesses, partakers of like precious faith.

Now if such perfect peace, such superior and holy joy, in the prospect of death, has never been effected by means of any other views of Christ, and his salvation, than those for which we are now pleading, we must infer the appropriateness of such a provision of grace to the reception of man, and we must for the same reasons conclude that it is according to the will of God.

When I learn that God, in order to bestow his grace, proceeded in a way at once worthy of himself and secure to his creatures, has found a ransom, has provided and accepted an atonement for sin, equal to the claims of perfect purity and infinite righteousness, and equal to the necessities of the most guilty of our race, I feel that a foundation of hope is laid on which a humble faith may rest with the fullest assurance, and that the only danger left is "proud unbelief." In this faith we shall be sweetly constrained to live the life of the righteous, and our latter end will be like his. But dark must be the night of death, when the heart has rejected the certain but only refuge provided for sinners by the high authority of God; and when the soul still guilty, and still unholy, cannot see the light of life.

Secondly. The duty of submission, and even cheerful submission to the discipline of Providence is a subject that cannot be overlooked amidst the solemn events which have been brought under our notice. It surely will not be deemed arrogant, if the writer of these

memorials venture to suggest to his fellow Christians a few remarks on this subject. It deeply concerns all persons, and his own mind has been in some measure trained by a course of unerring instruction. Resignation is not merely a most desirable attainment, but it is, beyond all dispute, a very decided and evident Christian duty. It may be said, and most truly, that we cannot command our own feelings; but it shall be said too, and ought to be proved that religion can. The provisions of the gospel are made expressly to meet our circumstances of sin and ruin; and, placed for a season in a world where nothing is certain but uncertainty, where nothing can be enjoyed with confidence, where the messenger of God is seen in every direction, going his rounds, and often breaking up the most united companies of mortals, we cannot resist the conviction that the gospel is a treasure beyond value, and that, if any thing within our reach is important, it is, that our hearts be prepared to meet the will of God by the power of faith, and by the high acquisitions of genuine reli-

gion. But let it be well considered, *the moment of necessity is not the moment of preparation*: religion ought to be already in full and active operation.

When the firmest bonds of nature are broken, and friends are severed from each other, by the resistless sword of death, our only possible refuge is to be able to say, from the heart, "Thy will be done:" till we can do this really, it will be utterly vain to seek relief. But very much will depend upon the previous habit of the mind, and the means by which our mutual attachments have been nurtured and maintained. If our ardent affections have been indulged, without the salutary correction of religious principle, we may justly apprehend that the consoling influence of that principle will be wanting in the day of separation.

The birth of a child ought to be the commencement of our care for his soul, of our fervent supplication that Christ may be formed in him. We can pray for our children before we can instruct them. Should the lovely, idolized babe be smitten, far from enviable is

the situation of the parent standing with flowing tears over the cold clay, the still beauteous form that cannot be reanimated, yet enduring the sharpest pang in the remonstrances of her own conscience,—the sad reflection—“Not one petition have I sent to Heaven for the soul of my child!”

We must carry this train of reflection a little further. What if the God of all families should demand, not one child only, but a second, a third, and a fourth, in quick succession; and these children not mere infants, but sons and daughters, who, though young, had become capable of receiving some instruction, and of feeling the solemnity of prayer! Who, that has any Christian knowledge would not lament for the man—the father—the cruel father, whose sorrows on an occasion already sufficiently distressing, must be increased a thousand fold, amidst the bitter self-condemning recollection of the years that have rolled away without having assembled these dear objects of his affection together, to invoke the blessing of Heaven upon them, at the domes-

tic altar. Is it thus, O ye parents, is it thus that you hope to become prepared for the fiery trial? Jehovah has said—"Him that honor-eth me I will honor, but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." But if we would be amply supplied with the means of a quiet spirit, a resigned heart, when our earthly hopes are blighted, and when nature would weep bitterly for our children because they are not, there is yet another step that must be taken while they remain under our training: we must endeavor to lead them into all truth. He who feels the infinite importance of all revealed truth himself, will not consent to leave his children uninstructed; he will not be willing that they should die unacquainted with Him who is the way, the truth, and the life; he will not withhold his attempts to direct their thoughts to the Redeemer of souls, under the pretext that man can do nothing, that the Lord knoweth them that are his, and that if they are not the fore-ordained children of God, no efforts within his power can avail any thing; a mode of reasoning well suited to the

deceived unspiritual heart, but which cannot overcome the energies of real life in them that are born of God.

Such a man having received the love of the truth, and enjoyed in many seasons of necessity its cheering influence, will not suffer those whose safety and happiness are dear as his own soul, to remain uninformed with respect to those great points of Christian doctrine which are, in his own estimation, the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation: knowing the true state of human nature, prone to choose the evil and reject the good, he will not speculate upon the souls of his children, giving their minds no direction of a religious character, that they may at a suitable age exercise an unbiassed judgment and form their uncontrolled opinions.

A very little reflection must convince us that the case above supposed cannot be realized; and if it were possible, it ought not to be attempted; for if it is confessedly important to bend the youthful mind into a posture favorable to common morality, with a view to

their character here, of how much greater importance is it to train it in a direction favorable to their safety and well-being hereafter. Nothing can so effectually quell the tumult of parental grief under the loss of adult children, as to see them perfectly resigned in the certain expectation of death; and to receive, from their own lips, testimonies of a rational, because a religious joy in the well established hope of eternal life. We have seen, and do testify, that a confident faith in those truths which we are anxious to advocate, can accomplish this: and we *know* that if any consideration can soothe our sorrows, and render us cheerfully submissive under the rod of the Almighty, it is the consciousness of having been successfully instrumental in preparing those, whose real happiness we should have studied, had they continued to live, for the greater happiness of death.

It may seem almost needless to suggest the necessity and the efficacy of prayer, especially in seasons of deep affliction. It is indeed a privilege too great to be valued by the rules

of human calculation, that we are permitted to cast our burden upon the Lord, that we may hope to find effectual relief at the throne of grace. Yet how often is the attempt made, how frequently is supplication offered with terror even to excess, for excess is more than possible in such cases as we are now contemplating, but without effect! Many Christians can remember a time, when, in prospect of great apprehended calamity, their prayer was offered night and day without ceasing, but their hearts were not comforted; they could entertain no thought, present no petition, but expressive of an absolute desire that the dreadful affliction might be averted. It was in reality, but an attempt, under the disguise of prayer, to dictate to the Supreme Ruler what course to take. In the mean time, the deep oppression, the heavy burden, remained unmoved and unrelieved; such prayer was fruitless even to themselves. At length they discovered the arrogance of their own hearts, they deeply lamented the rebellious opposition that reigned within, their stubborn feelings

were subdued ; the same desires were indeed still entertained, and still expressed before the Lord ; but it was in an humbled tone, with submission to the Divine will ; and now they were comforted. Prayer is always a duty, always a privilege ; but let us take heed how we pray.

Seldom are Christians placed in a situation which so much requires all the aid of religious principle, or in which it can be so honorably and so ornamentally exhibited, as when they labor under the pressure of sorrows. This is the trial of their faith, the grand conflict between the claims of afflicted nature, and the higher claims of regenerate nature ; often it is seen that the flesh is weak even when the spirit is willing, and when the heart does truly submit. We should do violence to the demands of Christian charity and sympathy, were we to utter an indiscriminate censure of the feelings, perhaps too much encouraged, of those who are swallowed up with overmuch sorrow ; rather let us weep with them ; let us bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the

law of Christ. Yet it must be remembered, that we have a character to maintain in the presence of God and of the world; the character of obedient and submissive children. We have resources of which unbelievers are utterly destitute; we are in possession of advantages which if not neglected, are sufficient for every extremity; obligations at once beneficial to ourselves and honorable to our God, are laid upon us; and it should be a principal object with us to prove that we have not received the grace of God in vain; all men should see that whatever may be the allotments of divine Providence, we are not, on the one hand, without feeling, nor, on the other, without gratitude.

It does not accord with our profession of faith in the truths and hopes of the gospel, to suffer ourselves to become the centre where all joys or sorrows are to meet; we may possibly make ourselves of too much importance: in which case, were our fondest desires granted, it would be to our hurt; or should they be blighted, we might become inconsolable.

The "sacredness of sorrow not to be disturbed," is an expression frequently used; but upon serious reflection it will be found that the idea conveyed by it ought not to be entertained; it may produce much evil; it is rather the language of the poet than of the Christian. No description of sorrow can be called sacred but that which is after a godly sort, a sorrow unto repentance not to be repented of, this will do much towards relieving the other, and we shall be prepared to adopt with gratitude the language of an eminent and inspired writer.—"It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Not improbably, many persons apprehend that they would fail of the respect and affection justly due to their deceased friends, did they not mourn for them long and bitterly; they imagine it is a duty to give themselves up to grief; there is a description of unhallowed pleasure in melancholy sorrow which they love. Let this feeling be carefully and honestly investigated, and it will, in many instances, be found to betray a sentiment very different from that which is expressed;

it will prove not so much a mourning for the dead, (espécially where a good hope concerning them can be indulged,) as for the violence that has been done, by the hand of Providence, to their own feelings. It may not be easy to suggest a course of reflection that would effectually relieve our minds in the case of those who have afforded but little, if any, scriptural ground of hope, that they were prepared to meet their God. An immortal soul lost, is an awful thought, and if we hear the voice within reproaching us for our own negligence, reminding us of the many efforts that might have been made, that ought to have been made, and persevered in, to awaken their feelings and lead them to a Savior, but which, alas! were not made, we may well be overwhelmed with grief; but even then there is one thought to which we can have recourse with respect to those who are removed—they are in the hands of Him who is holy and just, and who cannot do wrong.

Widely and mercifully different is the situation of those who have been enabled to com-

mit the bodies of their children or friends to the grave with well founded confidence that though absent from the body, their spirits are present with the Lord. It is as much our duty as our privilege, where such grace has been manifested, to wipe away the tear; to dismiss the gloomy and sorrowing disposition which is but earthly, and to be joyful in the Lord. Our prayers have been that they might be born again; that they might be endowed with a believing heart; that they might be prepared by the Holy Spirit of God for the inheritance of the saints in light; and that they might be received into the everlasting habitations of the faithful. And shall we be overwhelmed with sorrow because our own prayers are answered? because the blessings which above all things we desired, have been granted? If indeed we suffer our thoughts to dwell frequently and fondly upon the earthly state of those who are no longer of the earth, we shall find no rest, nor shall we attain to the grace of a humble and holy resignation. If we labor to preserve in our recollection an

exact and vivid impression of their general appearance, of their features, of their smiles, of their individual peculiarities, if we resolve to have something before our eyes, some little idolized reliques to aid our recollection of them in their earthly character; if we reflect incessantly upon their attainments, or their defeated prospects; if we think what they probably would have been, where they would have been, what delightful intercourse might have been maintained had their days been prolonged, we attempt, though feebly and unavailingly, still to detain upon the earth what God has called to heaven; we shall thus feed our own tears, and nourish the propensities of a complaining heart. Let us dismiss from our thoughts with pious resolution all that once belonged to them as creatures of earth; let us attempt, by the aid of such information as God has been pleased to afford us, to realize them in their new capacities; and think of them as spirits of light, and we shall be happy.

Thirdly. Let the young listen with solemn, awakened attention to the voice, at once ad-

monitory and encouraging, which addresses them in these pages. It is their character, their preparation for an early death, if such should be the will of God, their eternal well-being, that is especially consulted by the writer. How often have you read the important injunction—"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth!" How often has it been urged upon you amidst prayers and tears, by those who most loved you; by some whose prayers are now ended, and whose last prayer was that you might become alive indeed unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. You surely remember to this hour the solemn expostulation, the urgent advice, the fervent prayer, the impressive look of your parent, your brother, your sister, your friend, when preparing to quit their earthly house, when eternity was already within their view. Have you revived this impressive scene? Have you applied your minds devotedly to the great concern so powerfully recommended? Were it not that an address is seldom made to the young, without reminding them that they are

not too young to die, and that a truth so common may possibly be dismissed, as other important truths are, because it is too evident to be disputed; I would lead you to the youth of sixteen, the young woman of twenty, the young man of twenty-four, that you might receive a salutary lesson from their dying lips. It would not be easy for you to reject without effort, the urgent advice offered to you under such circumstances: your own lips would involuntarily whisper the awful truth, when retiring from the last interview,—“I too may die!” and however common the remark, you would feel it to be of no common importance. But leaving for the present this most awakening reflection, it cannot be denied, except in the very spirit of infidelity, that the first step you ought to take with a view to life, as well as to death, is that of which you have seen the encouraging examples, in the preceding narratives; it is—To surrender yourselves, thoughtfully and deliberately, to the care and guidance of the great Friend of man, to place yourselves voluntarily under solemn obligation

to follow the Lord fully. To this great duty you are invited, by every consideration that can be connected with the life that now is and that which is to come, while it is the only course that can be approved by the dictates of sound reason and the suggestions of a reflecting and enlightened conscience.

Is it possible that young persons of common respectability and information, should sink into the low and ignoble ambition of being called, “a young man of pleasure,” “a young woman of fashion,” “a fascinating companion.” You well know that the highest honor attainable by mortals is to be the recognized sons and daughters of God; and you know the conditions attached to so distinguished a privilege;—“Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” Thus only can you maintain the character, so essential at once to your honor and to your safety; should your days be prolonged upon

the earth, it will be any thing but gratifying in the evening of life to review the former times of vanity, and to attempt to enumerate the hours that were miserably destroyed in the circles of gaiety and fashion; or, if you should then be sufficiently degraded in the scale of rational beings to be capable of indulging such recollections with a forced approbation, with a still lingering relish for what ought never to have been even tasted, it will be a lamentable example of the fatal power of the world to change the rational man into a mere sensitive animal. Can you be ambitious of such dignity? On the other hand, should you be cut off in the midst of your days, in the flower and bloom of youth, you may assure yourselves that the remembrance of what you have been accustomed to call pleasure, will in no slight degree aggravate the sense of dying pain. This cup of sorrow will not be presented to you, this bitter mixture of misery and disgrace will not be forced upon you, if you begin and pursue your earthly course as every rational being ought to do, by a conse-

eration of your powers to Him in whom you live and move and have your being ; and by a solemn dedication of your soul to that Savior whose blood cleanseth from all sin, whose gracious intercessions will never fail, and who is able to keep what you commit to him until the day of his glorious appearing.

But let it be supposed that you have been brought up under the eye of parents who cared for your souls, having the fear of God before their eyes, who therefore instructed you in the great principles of the Christian faith, and enforced these principles by their example and by their prayers ; yours is no common privilege, and the natural inference is, that you have not become associated with the openly profane, and that you would rather shun than seek the company of the gay trifler ; you would be both ashamed and afraid to be found in the crowd, among the lovers of pleasure more than of God. Do you therefore conclude that all is well ? do you imagine that there is nothing in your character, yea, in your very nature, to occasion solicitude ? Are you

satisfied that if your journey through the world should prove but short, your interests in the eternal world are already secured? Ah! perhaps you have not taken a serious and scriptural view of this momentous concern. Attend with solemnity to the following inquiries, and answer them successively to your own consciences. Have you not only refrained from much of the actual sin that is so thoughtlessly indulged, so ruinously beloved by many of your youthful neighbors; but have you also with religious decision given yourselves to the Lord? Have you deeply felt your situation as fallen creatures? Have you unfeignedly mourned over the impurities of your hearts? Have you discovered that you, as well as others, need the benefit of the great atoning Sacrifice? Have you actually made the requisite surrender of your souls to the only Almighty Savior? You are sufficiently acquainted with the infallible instructions of the Gospel to know, that all hopes derived from the comparative morality of our lives, must prove delusive in the day of trial. Indeed it is not

without reason and the fullest conviction that you are entreated to examine yourselves carefully on these principles.

If there be a description of character that may justly awaken at once our affection and our regret, it is that of the steady young man, agreeable in his manners, moral in his habits, diligent in his calling, but alas! a stranger to devotion! a neglecter or despiser of Christ, who seems to possess almost every thing that could be desired by his most attached friends, but the "one thing needful." All who sincerely love you are anxiously looking for the moment when they will see in you an evident and just concern for the life of your souls; and they tremble, lest even your morality should betray you, and lest you should, after all, belong to the world instead of belonging to God. May it be irresistibly impressed upon your mind and conscience—That whatever propriety of moral habits may be preserved; whatever knowledge may be acquired, whatever talent may be possessed for business, or other useful purposes; whatever decent re-

spect may be paid to all the externals of religion; all this, and even much more, must fail you in the solemn moments when you will need strong consolation. If the matter be rightly considered, it must appear most awful, when young persons approach the age of maturity, without having become decided as religious characters. When every thing but the active service of God is pursued with steadiness and energy, and perhaps with proportionable success, there must be something, very much, that is wrong, and that bears a threatening aspect as to the scene of a dying hour, and the ultimate issue of this probationary life. Enough has been placed before you in this little volume to prove, that while every thing short of real spiritual religion in the faith of the Son of God, must be but vanity, considered as a ground of hope towards God,

Jesus can make a dying bed,
Feel soft as downy pillows are.

This testimony is now presented to you with confidence, with earnestness, with affec-

tion: but without the knowledge of Him who alone is "the way, the truth, and the life," and without a heart reposing upon Him, you will certainly find, even after a long enumeration of pleasing and valuable qualities, that one thing, and that one thing every thing, is wanting.

END.





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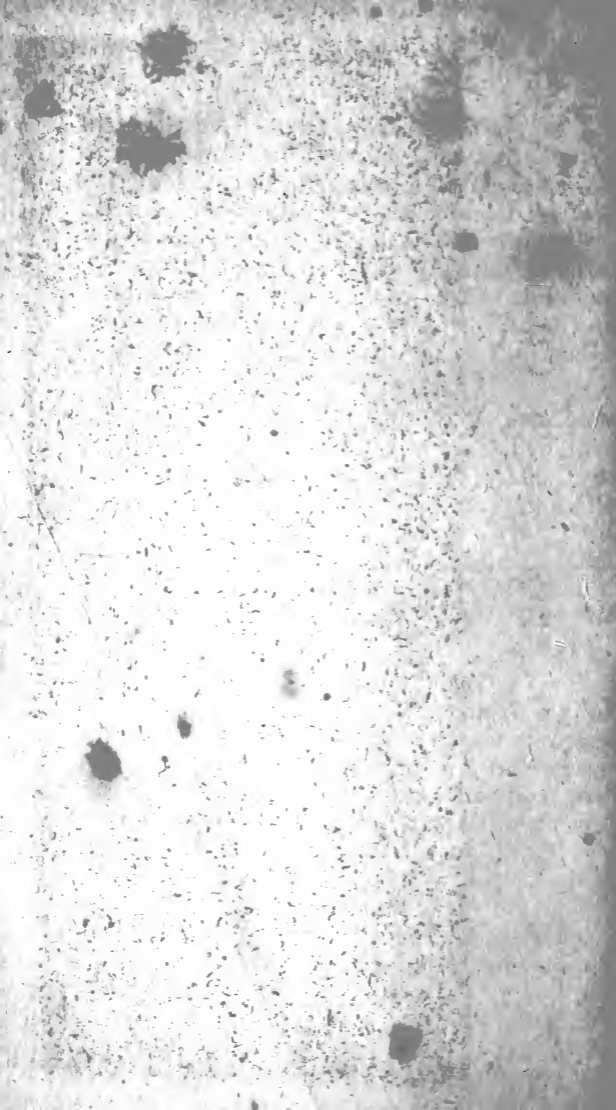
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