



Presbyterian. His. Society





**THE FEMALE LABOURER IN THE VINEYARD.**

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A

**FUNERAL DISCOURSE,**

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

*MISS ELIZABETH ROBERTSON.*

PREACHED IN THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

CHARLESTON, AUGUST 26, 1827,

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BY

**T. CHARLTON HENRY, D. D.**

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CHARLESTON:

OBSERVER OFFICE PRESS.

1827.

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*The following brief discourse was not designed for the Press. The author, who has not time to enlarge or correct it, has permitted a Relative of the deceased, at his earnest and repeated request, to print—not to publish—a few copies of it.*

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# SERMON.

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REV. XIV : 13.

It was a direct communication from on High by which the language in our text was given——“ *I heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth : yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them.*” It was the harvest cry. The note of preparation for the thrusting in of the sickle. It was for the reaping of the earth : for the gathering into Heaven’s garner, in the end of the days.——“ *Write !*”——that it may be a matter of record—that Saints to come, may read and know, and understand. “ *Write*”——that ‘ they who die in the service of the Lord are blessed.’ Record it—that ‘ they shall rest from their labours of love, and from their toil and their

care.' And write the confirmation of the great Sanctifier of hearts—" *yea, saith the Spirit.*"

Brethren, there is much that is discriminating in my text. It speaks of peace, and rest, and glory, when it announces the blessedness of the accepted of God. It tells the shout of welcome that hails the adopted soul. But it refers to that soul, as one who died in the service of the Most High; and whose works were those of a co-worker with God. It is not the transition from worldliness to spirituality. It is not the ascent of one reeking from the pleasures and hopes of the earth.

Oh if there be much that is cheering in the lofty promises of Him who "tasted death," that man condemned might live, there is much, too, that renders them a pausing ground, where each should stand, and ask, "Lord is it I?" And where each has an issue between his conscience and his soul.—

The suitableness of the language before us to the subject of a Funeral occasion, will distinctly appear in its application.

Who has not felt in the departure of the Christian, that when the Funeral obsequies are over, and the dust has been committed to its mingling, and a brief period has passed between us and the act, there is a breathing time, in which the

impulses of passion subside? We look around, and there is a sensation of loneliness. We enter into scenes of activity again; and the duties which the departed used to perform, are to be accomplished by some one else; and the burden becomes heavy in its admonitions of our loss. We remember the offices he sustained, and he dies afresh in our sight, every time we look for a supply. There were certain cares he undertook—and when we ask, ‘who shall sustain them?’ the breaches are multiplied. A new division of duties ensues.—And as they are taken up, the memory of the departed becomes more faint; and all that remains of him that we loved, is the soft light of his recollected example, that keeps its influence when the exemplar is gone.

Such is the general tale of even the pious dead. The places that knew them, know them no more: and they sink back, and blend with the confused shadows of the past.

It is at such breathing time, as that I have mentioned, that we have now arrived after the decease of a Christian Sister. We are to fill up the breaches which her departure has occasioned—a task we shall imperfectly accomplish. But we have to do more than this. The providence which called her away is not merely one which leads us to contemplate the past: it bids us look

to the future. It proposes the Prophet's question with personal application—"Watchman, what of the night?" It asks where, and who, and what, are we? It is not a fruitless ebullition of sorrow that we are called to offer. All afflictions that end here are covered with the frown of Heaven. It is an admonition penned by inspiration itself,—“in the day of adversity, consider.”

Aware that the points of our consideration are both numerous and full, when one who held an eminent and active station in our society has left us, I will select a single subject of serious pondering. And it shall be one of which the particulars in our text remind us.—Oh, I know too well that the lugubrious images of death seldom produce a permanent benefit. I know that the scenes of a death hour, and the mournful rites of a funeral, rarely reach deep into the heart of the impenitent sinner; or, I might say, as far as my own observation has extended—never. Such an effect is within the circle of possibilities, I am ready to admit. But that circle is small. Any effect here, which bears a remote resemblance to spiritual good, is that of the Law, and not of the Gospel. It is the weakest tendency of the Law. It is an exhibition of its penalty. It alarms, and it grieves. But it

does not even convince of sin. It reaches no principle in the heart of such a survivor—for there is none to be reached. It opens the fountains of tears, and they wash away the lesson that was faintly written; and the sinner returns to his idols again. Our world abounds with monuments of this truth : and more than one before me, may say—“ *it is I.*” And then for the Christian—it is something beyond the assurance of his mortality he is to learn. If he be reminded of the blessedness of the “ dead who die in the Lord,” he is taught, likewise, to scrutinize his own title to a hope so elevated; to examine the moving springs of his life, and to improve from human examples, in all that resembled his ascended Redeemer.

The blessedness of the Christian is obviously connected with his services: Such is the intimation of our text. Not that these services possess merit in themselves: but that so far as they exist,—so far as they arise from purity of motive, they indicate a holiness of disposition, and a desire for the glory of God. One of the first questions which the Redeemer asked after his resurrection was, “ *lovest thou me ?*” and he told the evidence of that love, when he enjoined an active and practical benevolence—a spirit of operative obedience.

The subject, then, before us, may be comprised in a few words—THE FEMALE LABOURER IN THE VINEYARD OF GOD: a title which, without invidious reflections, might have been justly applied to ELIZABETH ROBERTSON.

I am not ignorant that at the present day, when schemes of benevolence are extending far and wide, and the young and the old are acting in concert; when the tenderer sex not only associate to promote the knowledge of the truth, but have sealed it with their own life's blood among the Heathen;—in such a period of the world as this, I am not ignorant that the voice of opposition has been frequently heard against all measures of female benevolence. It is not seldom said, in the utterings of such opposition, that there is a departure from a proper sphere; that there is an unfeminine agency—that that there is an assumption of a province which belongs to others—and a bold intermeddling, unbecoming the sex. But in all this, there is either a latent enmity to the Gospel itself, or there is an ignorance of the truth that is lamentable indeed. The Word of God is strenuous in insisting on the discharge of social and domestic duties: and yet do we know that females ranked among the disciples of Christ: that they were, in their own departments, assistant labourers

with the Apostles : that the Apostles speak of them as such : that they contributed of their time and their means, to promote the furtherance of the Gospel. We know, too, that when all this ceased to be, superstition had marred the purity of the truth. These are memorable facts, which Scripture; and the history of the Church, have set out in full relief.

We go further than this : We say that wherever the light of the Gospel has most fully shone, there the female is the most fit companion of her husband, the best instructor of his children, and the useful member of society. Where that light does not shine, there is she proportionably degraded, from the rank of companion, to the station of vassalage. A debtor for all the high privileges she possesses, to the influence of Christianity ; or the most unhappy of sufferers, in its absence.

I know that the answer to all this is not so much in sober reasoning as in sarcasm.—But ridicule is not argument ; and yet it is here the weapon in ordinary use. And I have thought that the sneer against one engaged actively in the cause of Jehovah—directing her energies to the very point to which the Holy Spirit is looking—while no domestic duty was omitted—might well induce an Angel to cover his face with his

mantle to hide his sorrow, for the freaks of the thoughtless.

It is where there is imprudence,—it is where there is a perversion—it is where there is a forgetfulness of delicacy of character—it is where there is officiousness and presumption—that censure should light. But never where deportment and conduct are consistent with the dignity of a Christian Female.

The rest is plain: that every one of us is called into a scene of activity: that we shall be summoned to give an account of the talents entrusted to our care, whatever they may be; and that a positive and imperative precept it is, “whosoever knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is *sin*.”

If these positions, then, be just, we shall not be ill-occupied in considering the sphere of duty in which our departed friend was accustomed to move.

I. *She was active in those benevolent institutions in which it was in her power to be useful.* The inquiry with the sincere Christian is not respecting his convenience in connexion with his pleasures; not how far this or that employment may suit his taste; but simply how far good may be achieved. There are many who are willing to lend their aid to works of benevolence, provided

pleasure or amusement may be connected with them. There are many who, for the sake of social intercourse, are willing to unite in the same. But it is a lamentable truth, that there are very many, whose first question in every opportunity of promoting the advancement of Christianity, is, how far it will interfere with temporal and unnecessary pursuits? how far it will lay a restraint on other gratifications? and who, therefore, the moment they ascertain that some degree of self-denial is demanded, consider themselves absolved from all obligations. "There is a lion in the way," saith the child of indolence. "It interferes with other pursuits," says the lukewarm professor of religion. "It demands a sacrifice too costly," says the selfish. "It encroaches too much on both time and thought," says the inconsiderate. "It is requiring more than I see many others do," says the half-convinced and reluctant.

Oh, how easily we forget the first principles of true religion! The precepts of self-denial are a fable in the sight of many. The value of an immortal soul is forgotten—or sinks into a petty trifle, not worth the sacrifice of a little hour. Thus are there many in every community, who swell their own self-gratification into a matter of more worth than the glory of God, or the good of

an undying spirit. Many, who while they profess to love Him who gave himself for them, bid him carry on his own cause, while an example of the most practical selfishness forms a barrier to its progress. Would that all such might remember—a true love of duty gives an inclination to discharge it. And where that love exists, duty is the first point consulted; where it does not exist, sinful inclinations decide. The conscience is satisfied; because it is searing under a wilful neglect. The worlding lives for himself under the cloak of a profession—buries the talents committed to his care; and fearlessly passes on to the reckoning that awaits him. That precept which we have already quoted, if he dared ponder it well, would tingle in his ears. “He that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” Alas, what arrears of iniquity, then, are there against many of us! It is sin that destroys our peace. It is sin that prevents our enjoyment. What wonder, then, that thousands who complain of the want of pleasure in devotion, utter such complaint, while they keep up the transgressions of neglect: Shew me ardent piety, and I will shew you activity in the cause of the Saviour. Shew me enjoyment in religion; and I will shew you a temper that looks

around to ask, "Lord what will thou have me to do?" and that, on the first discovery of duty, goes forward to discharge it.

I have rarely seen an example in which this truth was better exemplified than in our lamented friend: She entered rashly into nothing. She pondered well the proposals for institutions of active benevolence. She examined their bearing and consequences. She endeavoured to ascertain all that prospectively related to them.—And having done this, she never shrunk from lending her own efforts of time, property, and influence. From that Sabbath School, in which she held so prominent a station,—through other societies, in which she was a judicious and active officer,—her name will long be remembered with Christian affection, and unqualified respect. Her monument is in the hearts of all who associated with her there. And it needs no flattering inscription to remind us of who and what she was.

II. The active benevolence of the departed was *STABLE*. Stability is the soul of principle. It is the test of sincerity. It is the evidence of genuine devotedness. There are those who are willing enough to enter into new schemes with eagerness and alacrity: Yet who, when the novelty is worn off, suffer their zeal to wear

away with it. And infectious and chilling as langour is, they impart the coldness of their remissness and neglect to others around them. It is emphatically said, that "one sinner destroyeth much good." With equal emphasis, it may be affirmed, that one undecided and vacillating professor of religion carries a pestiferous influence into the circle in which he moves. Oh, how easily we forget that a work undone may, without our consciousness, be a work of evil, with all its contemplated and intended good! We are indeed to count the cost of our attempts, as we are that of our profession: But we are to remember that abandoning a building which we have begun, entails dishonour on ourselves, and injury to others.

It is indeed a promise of ineffable mercy by which a crown is tendered to the Christian.—But that promise is enriched when we remember that the Redeemer is pledged to aid us in our endeavouring to win it. And yet that crown is to be conferred only on a most important condition—a condition which is never to be separated from it—it is this: "be thou faithful unto death." Not a fidelity which is wavering: not a zeal that is fitful in its works: not a benevolence that is freakful: but regular in their agency, the offspring of principle: in their per-

manency resembling that affection of Jesus of which it was said, "having loved his own, he loved them unto the end." Ah! his love has never changed! It has followed us on in the midst of all our ingratitude and folly: it has pursued us when frivolity condemned us. Had it been otherwise—had he dealt with us as we by him, our spiritual place would have been of palpable darkness. Or, had he found the work of redemption too painfully hard, and left it undone, we had lived only for Death,—we had died only for Tophet. Christian labourer, the service you profess to espouse is *his*, and not your own: his, who knew not in the work of your redemption, or in his gracious promises, either "change or shadow of turning."

In the character of the departed there was something distinguishing here. There was no vacillation; there was none of the weakness of indecision. I venture to say, that it was rare, if ever, her presence was missed from an institution in which it was demanded, unless an imperious and paramount duty presented a higher claim. These were matters she deemed too important for trifling: And her integrity was too spotless to be stained with petty and quibbling excuses for neglect.

Her soul loved the work of her God, and she pursued it with intentness. Even in the approach of a trying hour, her eye had not lost sight of it, when she had left directions relative to the part she had sustained.

III. Our friend was CONSISTENT. How much this term implies! how little it is understood! Without consistency, it is more than possible to build up with one hand, while we pull down with the other. The world expects a corresponding demeanour in a life of active benevolence. And the world has a right to do so. What then is the quality of which we speak? It is one which blunts the edge of opposition, and gives an elevation to the character it embellishes:

1. *Consistency demands that the cause of benevolence in which we engage, is that of God, and not of ourselves: not that of party: not that of vanity or ambition.* It was a bitter sarcasm of a late caviller that “the active piety of females is the piety of a party—the excitement of feeling—a license to obtrude—the idleness of gossiping, that occasions more disputes than the benevolence excuses.” But this is a blow not at benevolence itself; but at selfishness cloaked by hypocrisy. It is too late now to attach to Christianity the evils of its professors. Wherever there is an exclusive spirit, and a meddling tem-

per, and a fault telling tongue, the very garment of benevolence renders them more disgusting. But where a meek and gentle disposition—an unassuming deportment, and a retiring temper, blend in the female labourer, there is an influence in their attraction which commands alike our respect and our love. We see a heavenly devotedness unmixed with a jealous and earthly spirit.

II. *Consistency forbids that we sacrifice one duty to accomplish another.* The female who neglects her own sphere—who is remiss in the domestic offices which fall to her lot—who is careless of the cultivation of her own mind—is chargeable with either fanaticism or ambition; and we do, and we ought, to look out for the consequences of both. And in this high and holy matter, there neither is, nor ought to be, an excuse for either. If there be neither husband nor father to complain, *community* will — And the community will detect such an evil, in the very pride which covers it. And, believe me, the same keenness of suspicion which arraigns the conduct of disinterested men, will make a more palpable discovery here. There is the same process in the moral world, which exists in the natural: things will take their level in time, if they do not at once. The water will rise no

higher than its fountain; or the artifice which raised it, will be discovered. The world—and here it agrees with the Bible—will not consent to our acting out of our sphere. And it will ascertain and condemn, when we do so. I apply this remark to both my positions; that of obtrusion; and that of departing from the circle of our proper duty.

III. *The consistent labourer in the vineyard of God will be familiar with his closet.* He that is otherwise *may* be, but is not *likely* to be, an instrument of good to others. We may be active; but personal devotion is the true source of experimental devotedness. Familiarity with the closet will give us an appetite for duties without. They mutually aid and promote each other.—The one prepares us for the world; and the other for retirement and meditation. If we take our views from the Word of God, we can have no high idea of piety without activity: but shame and confusion will follow that activity which has not the unction of prayer—fervent, heartfelt prayer.

I appeal to those who knew her, how well these brief but comprehensive maxims were exemplified in our departed sister, as far as it was possible to judge. In her whole agency there was nothing of *party*. Mildly, but affectionate-

ly, she reprov'd where she saw it. And the folly of gossiping reach'd her own bosom when it was intended for others.

Her own family was never neglected. In the latter months of her life, the infirmities of one who was dear to her engross'd her attention. And she felt, as she should have felt, that her first duties were *at home*. The stay and the staff of an aged relative, she never relinquish'd her post while her presence was needed. Yet even here, not a few can testify, that when she could not be on the open field of action, she acted the part of a *DORCAS*. It were an unchristian statement to say that her liberality was unbounded—for the liberality of the Christian *has* its bounds in expediency and judgment. But I have had opportunities of knowing that it was judicious, full, and unostentatious.

Her heart panted for the evidence of a saving change in many whom she loved. And her sympathies gave rise to emotions which an intimate would know and understand. God grant that the private utterings to which such emotions gave rise, may be visible in the fruits for which she longed on earth! Ah there is no true religion that does not yearn for the redemption of those who are specially dear to our hearts. I hazard but little when I say, that relating to her

own soul, as well as the souls of others, prayer was the key of the morning, and the bolt of the night.

Such was our lamented friend in life. And the sketch of duties I have drawn from the living example. There is wrong in overweening eulogy, as well as in defamation of the dead. I should tremble in being the instrument of either. To the best of my knowledge, I have thus far pencilled with truth: and I have laid every restriction on feelings of my personal partiality.

To some, it may be discouraging to gaze on an example which their circumstances may never permit them to imitate closely. We have many whose means are far short of those of our departed Sister in Christ. And many whose time is far more engrossed by domestic duties. But Christian consistency forbids all that is inordinate, and all that is out of its place. He that has *one* talent in the Scriptural sense of the term, is not required to gather interest for *ten*. The frown and the curse will be, where we improve not what we have: where we make our pastime, or our ease, or our sensual comfort, the excuse for neglect—whatever name we may give it. There is a blessing for him who can give no more than a cup of cold water, in the name of Jesus, and in the spirit of love to him. And there

was one who had feeble means of honouring the Redeemer, to whom he paid the exalted compliment—"she did what she could." Oh, for that tribute in the day when by a light from the throne of God we shall see the proudest of human flatteries in their character of reproach!

We arrive in this period of our discourse, at the event which has called for it. The hour comes when the gaities of life are done, and the pleasures of life are ended, with the most favoured of this world's votaries. And the hour comes, too, to the labourer in the Vineyard, when his sun sets, and he returns from his work—and the record of both follows them to the Audit above. It is a brief winter's day at least. But when that hour has come, the note of many a complainer has changed. It is no more "let me die the death of the righteous"—this was the cry of life's vigour—there is a note that is new—"oh, that I had lived the life of the righteous!" Female accomplishments, and attractions, and beauty—the charm, and the snare—wither under the damp touch of a dreaded finger.

Yes; there is a prophecy sure as it is unheeded, that sounds aloud: "An end is come; it watcheth for thee, lo, it is come!" and its fulfilment shall pass alike through the pomp of circumstance and power, and the retirement of po-

verty. It baffles our best calculations: it stains the fairest of our earthly hopes, with the mark of uncertainty.

Oh, I know how we err when we attempt to tell the nature of a death-hour. I know that there is folly in all anticipations here. Remorse may not gather around the death-bed of the impious. The lethargy of disease may stupify the brightest of faculties. Or self-deception may play her part as effectually there, as in the flush of health. We err when we speak of the necessary exultation of the departing Christian. On him too disease may have its power. Or a moral constitution that is incapable of exstasy, may find no miracle to create it then. Or a dark providence may curtain the season, with the same mystery that covered many a day of health. I know it was so with the sweetest of Britain's Christian bards. In the apathy or self-deception of the abandoned sinner, there may be a pleasing delusion to his associates. And in the torpor or cloudiness of the pious dying, there may be sorrow in the bosom of the endeared spectator. But I know that while his strength shall be equal to his day with the child of God—and while I can confide in that promise, "I will neither leave thee, nor forsake thee"—I am equally sure, that there is no special pledge for

special enjoyments in any given season on earth. Safety shall track the way of the heirs of Heaven,—and yet it is possible that the foot may tremble as it is raised to dip in the waters of Jordan. Whatever reason for comfort I might have in the instance recalled before us, I would alike bar, by this statement, the hopes of the presumptuous, who have seen the careless calmly die, or the fears of the timid who have seen the exemplary droop in that fearful moment.

But there is a distinction here which, for the most part, prevails, and which of all others is most easily forgotten. Where terror steals over the heart of the impenitent, it is gathered from beyond the fearful verge. Where fear sinks the spirits of the pious its source is nearer: it is the revolting of nature from the crisis of dissolution, and it may collect its cold to the very chilling of faith. There is something in the thought of a separation of the soul from its habitation, which we do not understand. What and how, it is,—are questions which we do not comprehend.—And there are minds which this mystery attracts, despite of themselves. And they hover around it. And they give to it artificial terrors. And imagination, most ready here, lends her aid to invest, they know not what, with a gloom they know not why.

Touching then the *article of Death*, we can speak ordinarily of nothing certain—nothing assured. And I am bold to say, apart from the index of the life, we can learn nothing definitely from it. It is part of our earthly probation; but it possesses no distinctive moral character that points to the future. There may, therefore, be as great an error in inordinately desiring exultation in death, rather than the evidences of a well grounded hope, as there is in many a mistaken professor of religion in seeking seasons of joy, rather than proofs of his sincerity, or of the genuineness of his graces.

But if the Word of God do not encourage us by special promises to look for certain clear views in this trying hour, as a guaranteed prelibation of the joys to come, it does what is better. And it is an humble dependence upon *that*, which after all, constitutes the basis of true peace at this moment: Yes; it does what is better: it anchors the hopes beyond this world.—There are three words on a page of this volume which of themselves distinguish Christianity from all other systems of religion: and in their comprehensiveness and their energy they contain all that a trembling spirit should ask: hear them—and suffer their power to pervade your thoughts in time—to prepare them for Eternity—“DEATH

IS YOURS !”—Death that was the *curse*, so terrific and so appalling, is transformed into a *blessing* ; and the property of that blessing is *yours*. No sting is there. No victory to the grave : the victor is the child of faith.

Oh, it is sweet to watch by the instructive bed of a departing heir of grace ; and to mark the anticipations of joy in the almost unearthly mind ; and to drink in counsel that seems freshened by its nearness to Eternity. These are honoured hours ; and I can look upon many of them as goals in my pilgrimage. But whether this may be or not with us, the Christian has a more sure ground of confidence, that should teach him to confide in his God. It is true that the act of dying is painfully mysterious ; and the more so, because in all things else we have the well told experience of others ; but though thousands depart around us, none come back to tell us what it is to die. Yet turn to these pages again : if there be nothing direct on this matter there, there is a passage that sheds its light into every hour.—“ *The steps of a good man are ordered by his Word ;*” and if it be so in the movements of life in health, is there a point of desertion ? Is he left to take this step unordered and alone ? Oh, no ! It will be the declaration of Jesus himself——“ I undertook for him,—and here he is :

I led him through the wilderness—I conducted him through the gates of the grave—there I deserted him not—I kept him company through the dark valley—and here he is—Angels, welcome a spirit redeemed!”——“As for me, so for him,” “lift up your heads, oh ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors,” an “heir of glory comes!”——

Yet back to this point again. Notwithstanding all we have said, there is a hankering in nature to know something of the embattled hour. We would learn the last accents of one beloved. And we attach to them, it is possible, even a superstitious value. We ask—and the question is hardly repressible——“how did he die?”——

Christian Females,——ye who shared in the friendship of our departed sister, or in the companionship of her labour of love—would you ask “how did she die?” The answer is significant and just—she died as she lived. Her leading characteristic in life—and it never forsook her—was *dignity*. She died as she lived, without a change of character. It was DIGNITY in DEATH.——Not an acceptance of the term which applies it to ought of pride, or lofty bearing; or to a conscious sense of any worth in herself; for she never manifested either. A meek and humble dependence on the Redeemer had

characterized her conversation and life. But it was accompanied by a deportment and mien which contradicted all possible suspicion of a littleness, or weakness, of natural character.—There was nothing artificial—nothing assumed—to be thrown off, and to leave exposed to the sight, deformities which artifice had concealed. Without a sinister end in view, she had no reason, and no temptation, ever to appear other than she was.

Advancing in life, she had combined the dignity of the Matron, with the suavity of the prayerful Christian. Long accustomed to contemplate the change, her mind was familiar with it. For years gone by she had prepared the garments of the tomb—the envelope that now covers her frame in its dark, cold chamber.

She seemed to have caught a prediction of truth from the first pulsations of fever. And although she rejected no means which medical skill provided, she avowed her persuasion of their utter inefficiency. The racking of a painful disorder never encroached on her serenity, or ruffled her unvarying calmness. Had death been an enemy, he were met with the cool collectedness of a fearless combatant. Her house was already “set in order.” She had little to do, but to await a summons from which she had

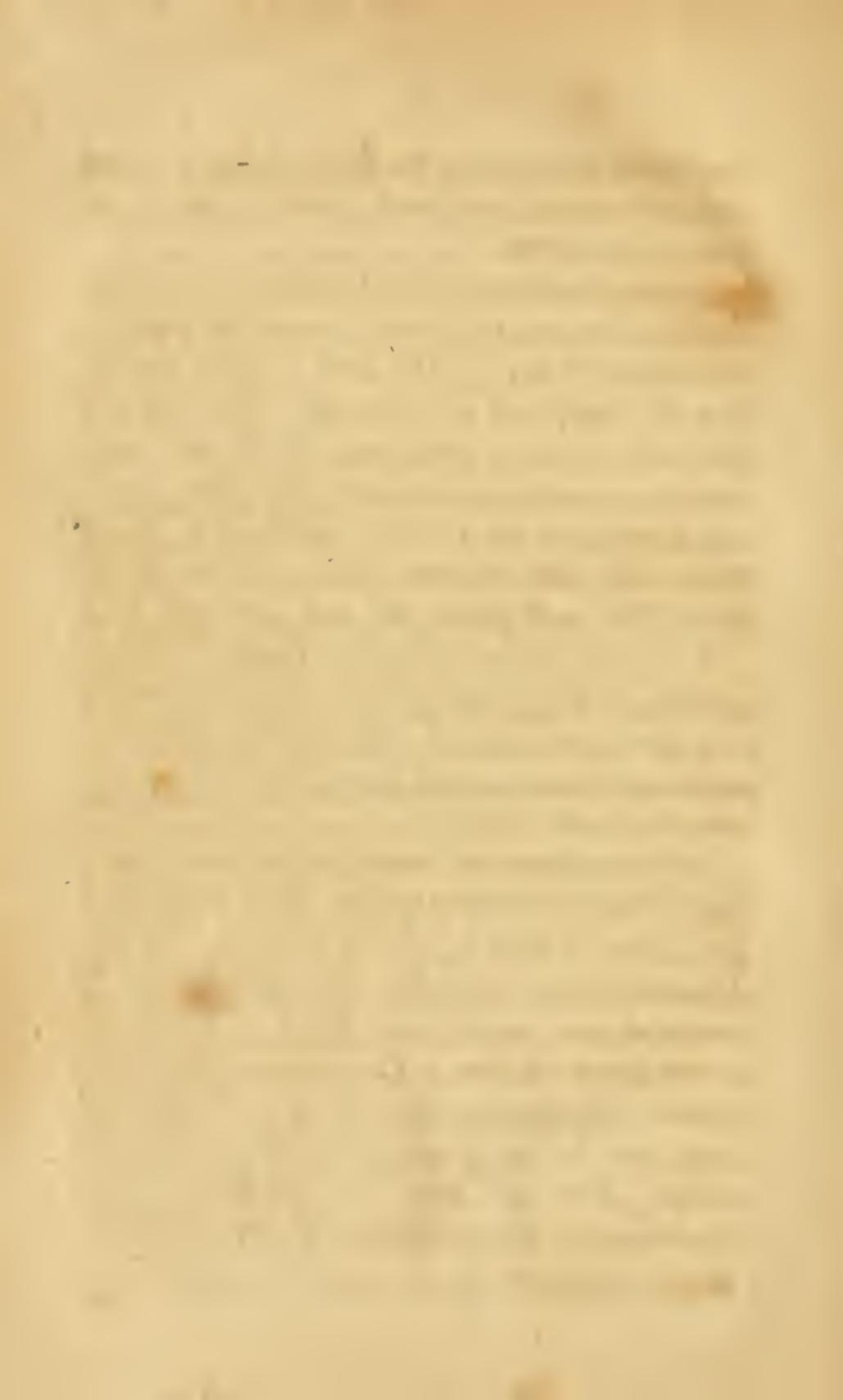
neither inclination nor disposition to shrink.—“My confidence is in my Redeemer,”—she said, “and that confidence is sure.” One who knew not the worth of a hope from Heaven, and understood it not, would have found in her firm and deliberate manner and tone, the support of a philosophical resolution; but it was the philosophy of Heaven’s disciple—it sustained the heart as well as the mind. I know not that we may predicate our ideas of a dying hour, from the moral or physical constitution; but had I done so, my anticipations would have been realized to their very letter, in *Elizabeth Robertson*.

To the relatives of the deceased there is all that is refreshing in the review of her life and her death. Ye are infinitely far from sorrowing as those without hope.—Oh, for the operation of that faith that renders the departure of the Christian a tranquilizing lesson from Christ! Behold! Heaven has a new attraction in this addition to its society! Death has snapt another tie—and ye are looser to earth. Ye are less bound here. Ye are more loudly called away. Into what bosom then, could selfishness steal, to murmur and wish back a spirit that has begun its travel of glory, to the disappointments, the cares, and the griefs of our blighted earth? Not one. There is not one that would pluck away

the crown that sits on the head of the accepted soul, and expose that head again to the bleakness of our world.

Female members of this Church, it is not too much to say you have lost a prominent leader in the labour of love. The field of your cultivation is thinned of its labourers. But you saw and understood the consistency of life and death, and the connexion of one with the other. Look not, I pray you, for a holy confidence in the untried hour, disconnected from a review of the past. *We must* gather the past into that hour. "As the tree falls so it lies." Whatever worldly notions we may entertain—to whatever exemption from the work of God we may think ourselves entitled, the truth must appear at last, despite of all our sophistry.

In this melancholy bereavement, time, short at best, seems abbreviated more. Oh, believe me, the value of time is known only to the true Christian—but especially the opportunities of practical and active benevolence. Opportunity is the cream of time. Time may endure for a season; but opportunities go by. Would God, then, that in an expressive sense ye may die daily. That ye may eye Heaven in your works—speak its language, and forget the language of Ashdod.



[The lamented Author of this Discourse did not intend it for publication. His motive for *printing* it, is stated at the commencement. At some future period, he had designed using it as the outlines of a more full and extended Essay on the duties of Females in the Vineyard of Christ. But he did not live to accomplish his object;—nor did he live to see this “imperfect article,”—as he called it,—through the press. He had corrected the first sheet, when he was arrested by that disease which, in ninety hours, terminated his earthly labours. On his dying couch, and but little before he expired, he breathed out an ardent prayer that it might prove a blessing to those into whose hands it should fall. He enjoyed, to the last, sweet peace in the prospect of death, and, in the name of his Saviour, he triumphed gloriously over the King of Terrors. He fell asleep in Jesus, on the 5th of October, 1827, at 4 o'clock, A. M. Aged 37 years and 13 days.—*Ed. Charleston Observer.*]









