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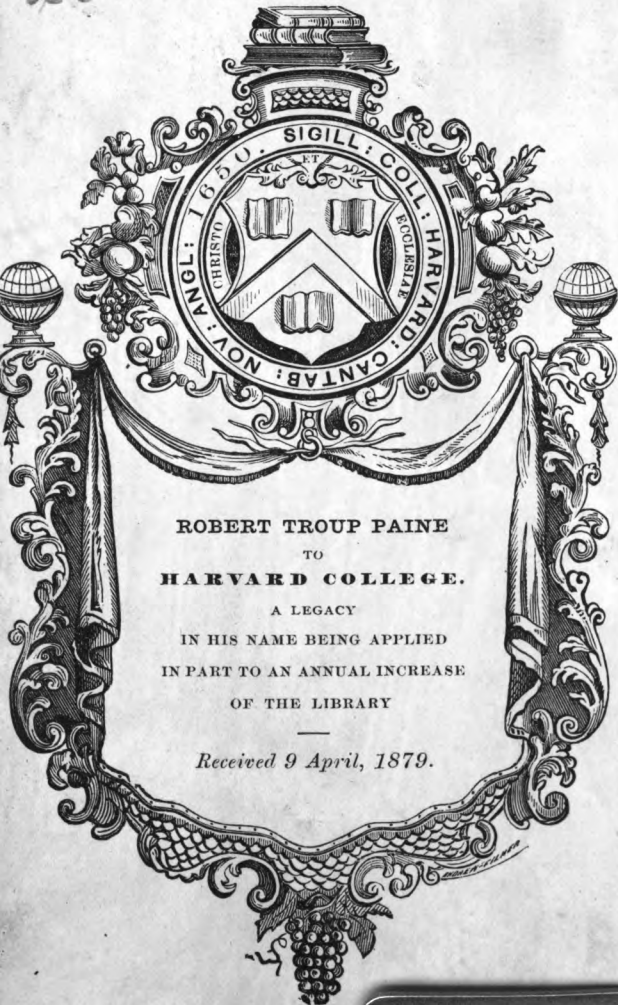
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LIFE OR DEATH
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LIFE OR DEATH,
VALUABLE TO THE CHRISTIAN.

A Discourse,

PREACHED ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF
WILLIAM EDGAR BAKER,
SEPTEMBER 27, 1846.

BY
CHARLES K. IMBRIE,
PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
RAHWAY, N. J.

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As the object of this publication was to secure some memento of the deceased, a considerable portion of the discourse, not strictly necessary to this end, has been omitted, for the sake of brevity. This will account for the disjointed appearance of some of its parts. It was first delivered at Rahway, August 23, and afterwards repeated, with slight alterations, in the Broome Street Church, New York, of which the deceased was a member, by request of the young men of that church.

## DISCOURSE.



“FOR TO ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST AND TO DIE IS GAIN.”—  
PHILIPPIANS I. 21.

You have here depicted in a line, the noble attitude of the true Christian. He is a man who stands on the confines between this world and the next. He looks abroad upon both. *Life* is valuable, very valuable to him ; for in it, he has that which angels might covet—the opportunity to glorify Christ. “To live is Christ.” *Death* is valuable, very valuable to him ; for it introduces him to the unveiled presence of his father, God. On the one side,

he sees that he can show to an ungodly and gainsaying world, the complete control which the Lord Jesus has over his heart.— Here he can labor to bring others to taste that grace, whose transforming and sustaining efficacy he has felt throughout his own soul ; here, by an upright life, he can prove that this despised gospel *does* teach men that, “denying ungodliness and unholy lusts, they are to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world ;” here he can show that in the furnace of affliction, One walketh with the Christian “like unto the Son of God ;”—and though the world sneers at the doctrine, that while the Christian lives, it is not he that lives, but Christ that liveth in him, he can here stand forth as the proof that faith *does* draw a living power from her absent Lord, and that, like the full moon shedding down its calm light on the earth, he feels the existence and the brightness of his absent “Sun of right-



eousness," from whom he derives all his power.

But, on the other side—*there*, is the welcome of his Lord and Saviour and the end of his labors, sorrows, temptations—there is the end of sin—there is all his heart has so long wished for—perfect freedom from the least defilement—there is the company of the blessed—there is the full enjoyment of God to all eternity.

\* \* \* \* \*

You see thus, what a lively interest the Christian has in both worlds. It is noble for him to live—it is glorious for him to die. He, alone, of all men, can *wisely* hesitate between the two. The man of this world hugs his earthly treasures as his *all*, and dares not think of the world to come ; but the Christian loses not his interest in the one or the other. Earth is always worth living for—for Christ's sake, and heaven is worth dying for—for Christ's

sake. Yes, my hearers, amidst the disgust and the insipid pleasures of the crowd, to whom this world is their all, the Christian is the only man who at times hardly knows which to choose, whether life or death. At one time, forgetting even his own future glory, as he looks upon the desolation of Zion, he exclaims, with Isaiah, "For the grave cannot praise thee—Death cannot celebrate thee; the living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day." Or, with Paul, oppressed with cares, worn out with labors, tried even to death with persecutors, and yet seeing a value in life for Christ's sake, he cries, "What I shall choose I wot not—I am in a strait betwixt two."

You see here, my hearers, that the Christian is ready for and rejoices in *anything*: he is ready for life—he is ready for death. If God appoints him life, he rejoices in it— if that life is to lead him through severe sufferings, he bears them patiently for

Christ's sake—if it is to be worn out with labor, he rejoices still;—but when, in the midst of his labors, he hears the voice of God, suddenly calling, “Come up hither,” then, indeed, is his joy turned into exaltation. There is for him no more labor, no more sorrow or sighing, no more trials. The door opens wide, and he sees in prospect the glory of God and the Lamb. He sees the glorious company of the saints, with golden harps in their hands. Soon, he is to be among them—and that longing aspiration, which has so often swelled his heart and burst from his lips in the midst of bitter trial, is at last to be realized,—

Jerusalem, my happy home !

My soul still pants for thee ;

Then shall my labors have an end,

When I thy joys shall see—

words, which to us have this day a new interest thrown around them. They stand as the last record of a feeble hand, that now

lies at rest in the grave—the last recorded aspirations of a soul tried by fire, who is this day in the midst of the glory for which he longed.

But what are the characteristics of the piety of the Christian, who stands in this enviable position? I reply—

That to be such a Christian, one must have a clear knowledge of Christ as the way of salvation. “I am,” says Jesus, “the way, the truth, and the life.” This truth must have taken full possession of his soul.

\* \* \* \* \*

I reply again, That the Christian in the text has full confidence in Christ's proposals of mercy. When he hears “Come unto me all ye that labor,” he takes Christ at his word. He knows that Christ will not dishonor his own promise.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Christian in the text, is one also who has given himself fully to the Lord Jesus. He has seen the glory of this salvation. He has proved what Paul meant by the unsearchable riches of Christ. "I will follow Christ," says he, "whithersoever he goeth." He delights in His company, in His kingdom, in His service. "Whether he lives, he lives unto the Lord, and whether he dies, he dies unto the Lord."

\* \* \* \* \*

Such, my brethren, is the character of the mature Christian: and God has favored us with the sight of one, who in the bloom of health and onward through severe sufferings to the hour of dissolution, stood in this noble attitude, and could say in the presence of you all, "To me to live is Christ and to die is gain"—one, who closed the last yearly record of his life with these memorable words, that stand as the type of his whole character: "It often occurs to me that I am

perhaps too indifferent to the continuance of life in this world. For what is life?—a mere entrance into an existence which is eternal. My most earnest desire is, that I may spend life to the glory of my Maker, with submission to all his Holy will ; and when Death comes, that I may welcome him, rejoicing in the prospect of entering into the mansions of everlasting rest, clothed in the robe of the blessed Redeemer's righteousness." Happy spirit ! Let us rejoice that he has found a heaven of rest at last. It is to this character, as illustrated in his life and his death, that I wish to call your attention.

Young as he was, our departed friend had loved Christ and served Christ long. He began that service in his tenderest years. Indeed, from his own remarks, we find that he was the subject of the Holy Spirit's influences as far back as his recollections ex-

tended. His fondness for God's word, his grave and conscientious deportment, were remarked by all who knew his childhood. At the age of thirteen years, I find him, when at school, far from home, and surrounded by thoughtless companions, rising daily from his bed, while others were sleeping, and in company with one or two others devoting the early hours to reading the Bible. This he reveals, with the confidence of a child, in one of his letters at the time to his mother. So early had he already perceived the value of God's truth, and I may add, so early had God begun to prepare his soul for the severe trials he was called to endure. The flower was destined to fall before the summer was half gone, and therefore God gave it an early spring, and infused into it a vigorous growth, that it might bloom the earlier and gladden our sight with its mature beauty ; and that the rough wind which must scatter its leaves and rend it

from our sight, might fling abroad the sweetness of its dying perfume, to linger with us in the garden of the Lord.

Shortly after I see the same youth, in this city, stealing away from the crowd of his companions, with his books under his arm, to spend his hours of recreation in the house of God, where the operations of His Spirit were then distinctly manifest. Yes, within these very walls,\* my hearers, did this youth come to hear the Gospel. He sat here upon these seats day after day, hoping to find light shed upon his soul. Sweet bird! that already begins to flutter its feeble pinions and seeks to soar towards its native home in the skies. The fire is already kindled, and the tapering flame begins to rise upward to its source in Heaven.

We now have a glimpse of the progressive strength of his religious feelings. In a re-

\* Central Presbyterian Church, Broome Street.



cord of his life, penned by his own hand, and which lay between him and his God, he gives the secret workings of his own heart. "My education," says he, "both at home and at school, had been conducted on religious principles, and religion had made an early and deep impression on my mind. In the beginning of 1831 (12 years of age) our country was blessed with revivals of religion. My father's house was opened for prayer at an early hour. At this time my mind was much exercised on my soul's salvation. I had always entertained tender feelings on the subject, but now they were most intense. I ventured to indulge a hope of having given my heart to God; but my mind was cloudy on this head. So I lived on, persuading myself that I was a Christian, (and I might have been such), but lost much of my tenderness of feeling. I did not give up my closet exercises, but they were often cold, heartless, and formal. In this state I con-

tinued until the year '34. There was then a revival in the Dey Street Church, to which my parents belonged. Here my religious impressions were revived. I repented my past indifference and dedicated myself anew to God. Previous to this, my love to Christ was faint, my service poor and heartless. The sins of my past life came up before me in dread array—although others thought me very exemplary. But my prayer now was, 'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' I entered upon that blessed way, and found joy and peace in believing."

How ever alike is genuine repentance! and how true is it that the very fairest of us (when the law of God comes home with convincing power to the heart) dies under the reviving of sin, and sees, and feels himself in the sight of God to be loathsome.

How true is it also, that every sinner is saved in the same way—by free grace; and that the plea of *every* returning soul—the child of the constant impulses of the Holy Spirit; the most unblemished outward character; as well as the most hardened criminal—is ever the same, “God be merciful to me a sinner.”

In the spring of 1834, our deceased brother, with seventy-one others, publicly professed Christ in the Dey Street Church. He was then fifteen years old. From that time his whole life bore evidence to the genuineness of his conversion; nor can any who knew him doubt that the ruling principle of his life was that of Paul. For him to live was Christ.

Three years afterwards he began the yearly record of which I have spoken; and the earnest prayer with which he begins that record was but the rule of his life. “Omniscient God! may I be enabled to act

with an eye single to thy glory. May I live near to Thee; may I do whatever Thou in thy providence mayest appoint, and at last receive me into eternal rest, there to praise Thee for ever.”

Our departed friend carried this principle of living for Christ into everything. The minutest affairs of life seem to have been regulated by it. Says one who knew him intimately: “I have ever held him up to my children as the model of a Christian gentleman.” Says another: “My acquaintance with him will always testify to the peculiar beauty and excellence of his character. His gentleness and affectionate disposition; his patience under suffering—all distinguished him as one of remarkable loveliness.” Says a third: “I have known him long, and I never knew him to speak unadvisedly with his lips.” Some even who knew him but slightly, have volunteered the expression of

their admiration of the loveliness of his character, and their sympathy for his loss.

But most of all have I been moved by his own testimony. His affectionate disposition often gave itself vent in expressions of kindness to his parents and sisters. In a letter to his mother, on his twenty-fifth birth-day, he pours forth the grateful feelings of his bosom, and then, in the warmth of his heart, he adds: "Notwithstanding I have too much reason for asking your forgiveness for many acts of waywardness and want of attention, yet I trust it may afford you satisfaction, to declare for myself, that I never have engaged in any deed, or been in any place, to the best of my recollection, the knowledge of which would have caused sorrow to my mother's heart." Young men! who of us would be willing to bring his virtue to *such* a test!

His consideration for others was ever predominant. In the midst of his severest

afflictions, and at a moment when hope hung in a balance between life and death, I find him saying in the same secret record of his own thoughts: "I have but one wish that makes life desirable; it is the wish to smoothe the declining years of my parents, who ever have exerted themselves for my welfare, and to aid them in the direction and education of my dear brother and sisters." This was but a type of the same spirit that manifested itself towards friends, visitors, domestics, and strangers. In all things he sought the welfare of others, not his own.

The *cheerfulness* of his piety was remarkable. There was no gloom, no misanthropy. You will bear me witness that even in the midst of his sharpest trials, he ever manifested a cheerful spirit. Indeed he often withheld the statement of his sufferings (even more than affection thought advisable), lest he might needlessly distress the sympathizing hearts

of those he loved. So constantly calm and cheerful was his deportment, that a stranger would never have suspected he was the subject of trials so severe.

In addition to this, his piety made him most unobtrusive. The grace of God had laid the axe at the root of natural pride. He loved not, he sought not *distinction*. The retired, shady walk of life was the object of his choice. This was observable in all his deportment. I have been struck, however, with one development of it. After leaving the University, where he was graduated with distinguished honor, his attention was turned to the subject of the ministry. This, after mature deliberation and prayer to God, he declined entering. His reasons we find in his private record, and are these. "After thinking much on the subject, I have arrived at the conclusion (whether just or erroneous, I know not), that my talents are not of that

peculiar stamp calculated for public life. At the very outset my ability for composing is limited. I have *ideas* sometimes, which, if they were only expressed, would perhaps appear new and striking—but on attempting to delineate them, language is wanting; and on coming to delivery, I am utterly at a loss. Mere bashfulness I suppose could be overcome, but something *more* is requisite. I lack animation, self-control, and other qualities needful for a speaker. Nor can I say that I have had that continued, increasing desire to preach the gospel which has filled the bosoms of some. At times when I have listened to some energetic preacher, controlling as it were the attention and minds of his audience—while I have been reading or listening to some soul-stirring description of the sad state of the world, and the call for the living preacher from every quarter, I have almost determined on the ministry. But again, on casting my eye upon some in-



stances of misdirected talent, and looking on my own insufficiency, my heart has utterly failed. Under these considerations, I have thought it my duty to enter upon some other avocation." Such was his judgment. Whether just or not, I shall not determine. They show at least his own severe scrutiny of himself—his amiable modesty, and his retiring diffidence which shrank from publicity. "I have endeavored," says he in another place, "to study my powers and disposition, and am inclined to think, that my sphere is to lie in a retired walk of life. I have no desire to make a bustle in the world, but to fulfil the objects of my being in a suitable manner." Again, "I do not have those aspiring feelings and ardent expectations which are entertained by most young men entering into life. I prefer looking back to looking forward." Again, he writes in private: "My prayer is, 'give me neither poverty nor riches.' My utmost

wish is, to gain the means of purchasing a rural home, with a moderate competence.

‘ And at my life’s last setting sun,  
My conflicts o’er, my labor done—  
Jesus! thy heavenly radiance shed,  
To cheer and bless my dying bed.  
And from death’s gloom my spirit raise,  
To see thy face and sing thy praise.’ ”

Thus effectually had the grace of God brought our brother, young as he was, “to love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.”

Our departed brother was remarkable for habits of self-examination. The close of every year of his life, was a special season of solemn review in the presence of God. This, I doubt not, was a chief cause of his rapid advance in piety. “I have often considered,” writes he, when eighteen years of age, “the utility and propriety of such a

habit, which I shall endeavor hereafter to fulfil. I shall make a record of the events and changes of an over-ruling Providence, and a faithful mirror of my own heart. As it will be kept from the eye of others, and known only to the omniscient God and myself, I sincerely and solemnly invoke His kindly aid and direction that I may be enabled to see myself as I really am." This plan he faithfully pursued to the last year of his life. The prayer with which he begins the record, God answered. His humility was deepened, his faith was strengthened, and he was sustained in a dying hour. His death-bed was that of one, who had long known from experience, that Jesus was his supporting Saviour, and God his reconciled Father.

I need not add what you all know—that he was diligent in every good work. The Sabbath school knew him as a faithful and laborious teacher. He ever made it a prin-

ciple of his life to devote a portion of his property to the cause of God. In every enterprise for the spread of the Gospel, he took great delight, while his letters and journal are interspersed with remarks of gratitude to God, for every revival of religion he was privileged to witness. He writes, "I have, I think, no higher aim for the members of my family than that every one of them may be members of Christ's body." Truly he loved the peace and prosperity of Zion.

Now in all this, it may be said, much allowance must be made for natural temperament, natural amiability, sedateness, and good judgment. It is true that he was naturally amiable, and there are in his earliest letters, hasty touches, thrown off in a child-like style, which evince a consideration that would do credit to maturer years. But after all, what was the principle of his life? Hear him speak, and see opened in his own heart, the fountain from which this pure

stream flowed. "The principle upon which I wish to decide a question of duty is, in what can I do the most good to my fellow-men, and advance in the best manner, the glory of God. I want to pursue that which will not be averse to a life of nearness to God. *Troubles, trials, and sufferings* accompany man through this vale of tears." How prophetic in his own case! "If my hope were not in God, I should fail of all resolution, but, relying upon *His* arm, I can go forward. He has promised that, 'as thy day is—so shall thy strength be.'" Thus speaks he—was it then mere amiability—was it the force of mere natural disposition? Think so, if you will, but I ascribe his upright conduct to a higher motive. He had laid his *all* at the feet of Jesus, and for him to *live* was in *everything* *Christ*. But time would fail me to speak of all his excellences, his purity, his meekness, his love for God's word, his patience. It may be said, and

written upon his tomb, as the truest and best epitaph: "If there was any virtue; if there was any praise, he thought on these things."

I come now to show him manifesting the same principle in the endurance of his trials. In these, as in everything, his life, his strength was Christ Jesus. The trial of his faith was precious, though tried by fire. He endured, because by faith he saw that unseen Saviour whom he loved. A little more than two years since, God led him to the brink of the dark waters. For some months he had but little thought of the depth and bitterness of the flood through which he was to pass. At first, the over-arching trees as he entered the dark path, scarcely excluded the light of the sun, but the shade grew darker and darker as he advanced, until his feet touched the cold and silent waters, when all was involved in midnight until the river was crossed, and then the



light of eternity broke upon his rejoicing spirit. At one time indeed, a gleam of sunshine streamed through and enlightened his path. For a moment, friends rejoiced with him. But it was for a moment *only*. Blackness soon brooded thicker than ever, and joy was again to animate his bosom, only with the breaking of eternal day.

But though all was dark without, he had light within. God walked with him in the dark valley, and he had an experience of that truth, such as none but those who are tried like him can have,—“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.”

Perhaps all present are acquainted with the fact, that our friend's disease was what is called in technical language *Osteo-sarcoma*. This disease occasioned an extensive swelling on the right side of the lower jaw,

and could be arrested only by the cutting out of a part of the jaw itself. Upon careful inspection, the tumor was found to extend from the middle of the chin even to the articulation. Consequently the entire half of the jaw must be extracted; an operation as formidable as can well be conceived.

His calmness throughout the whole of this trial was indeed admirable. When every means of relief had been tried; when the conviction had become settled that there was but one fearful alternative—an alternative between death and this operation, as uncommon as it was painful and dangerous; when the hearts of relatives were wrung with agony at the thought of such an alternative; when (as you all well remember) every heart among us bled, in the anticipation of his trial, *his* soul was calm, trusting in the Lord. His whole deportment seemed to say with his Master, “the cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”



And whence, think you, derived he such support? It was from prayer to the same God, to whom he was now drawn nearer and nearer than ever by his trial, and in whose grace he was now to experience a power to which he had before been comparatively a stranger. At times indeed, nature would give way. Such an occasion has been brought to my notice. It was when the necessity of the fearful operation had become quite certain. He and his friends were convinced that the trial must be endured. You may judge then of their constant heaviness of heart. One Sabbath morning at family prayers, that beautiful hymn of Christian confidence: "Through all the changing scenes of life," was read to be sung. Our afflicted friend sang the first verse and the second, until he came to the following: "Till all who are distressed, From my example, comfort take"—he could go no further, his emotion choked his utter-

ance, and in a moment all present were bathed in tears.

Yet the expression of so much feeling was but the swelling of a tender heart. In every real emergency grace was equal to his day. Hear him in a letter only two days before the operation. "The stroke which now appears so heavy is, doubtless, a 'blessing in disguise.' You speak of my circum-spect conduct. I cannot agree with you. If I know anything of my own heart, there is much in it that requires severe chastisement. Besides, if God afflicts, he has furnished us with an abundance of oil and wine, and without price, to pour into our galling wounds. Oh! that He may be pleased to make this trial a blessing to all concerned. The truth is, it is a difficult lesson for us to learn, that this is not our 'abiding city,' and we continually need trouble and affliction to remind us of the fact. Let us

not, therefore, grieve when the rod falls, but endeavor to profit by the dispensation."

We will now follow him to the scene of his trial. When the time had arrived, and when he was every moment expecting a call to the place of suffering, you might have entered that parlor,\* and seen every lip quivering and heard every heart palpitating, but *his own*. Calm and cheerful in conversation was he even then. He knew what was before him. He knew that a moment's inadvertence on the part of the surgeon might hurry him into eternity. He knew that the parting "farewell" from that parlor door, might be the last words of friendly recognition in this world. He knew that from yonder table his spirit might soon take its flight to another world. And yet, he says, "I am ready," and amidst the gleaming array of instruments, he lies down

\* 413 Broome street.

without a moment's hesitation—in the hope of continued life, yet at the risk of instant death. Or rather, I should say, he knew *not* what was before him. For as his own language afterwards expressed it : “ My sufferings under the knife were not so much from what I actually endured, as from the constant harassing anticipation that some more dreadful pain was every moment to be inflicted.”

But all was ready. He had reviewed his life ; he had cast himself afresh upon the Redeemer ; he had sought help in prayer to God, and his prayer had been answered. He felt that he grasped a hand that was mighty to save, and he was prepared for any event. “ How do you feel, my son ? ” inquires his anxious father. He replies with the faith of one who knows he is leaning on an everlasting arm—“ All is peace, father.” Thrilling words ! which spoke all the comfort that even a father could desire. But follow him to the chamber of trial. The

operation is, at last, finished—every pain has been endured without a motion. In the words of an experienced surgeon,\* then present, “There was certainly something there which better deserved the name of ‘heroic,’ than anything I had ever before seen, or heard of, or imagined, within the scope of human fortitude.” From the beginning to the ending of the operation—for one hour and a half—the sufferer lay with his hands crossed, and not the slightest evidence of pain,\* or of impatience, or of fatigue, escaped him, either by language, gesture, or expression of countenance,—“an operation unequalled in the annals of surgery—alike triumphant to the surgeon, to American genius, to the admirable subject, to the cause of truth, of morality, and of sound religion,” and, I will add, to the power of faith in Christ Jesus.

\* See note.

But hear now his own language. Experienced surgeons are standing in wonder at his constancy; friends, just admitted, are mute with horror as they look upon the ghastly wound which has been inflicted: but he still lies motionless. Prayer is yet rising from his heart in silence to God. At length, the wound is closed; and after three hours' endurance, permission is given to speak. A sympathizing relative bends over him, and whispers his commendation of so much fortitude. The sufferer will not receive the praise—he raises his languid eyes, while his tongue feebly mutters through his bleeding wounds, "Give God the glory." How sublime the victory of faith!

You may be anxious to learn what record he has left of his feelings on that mournful occasion. I may answer—almost none. The simple account of the operation, followed by these few lines, dismisses the whole subject. "The manner in which I was

supported through the tedious and painful operation, will call for the devoutest gratitude to God until my dying hour."

But his trials were not yet ended. The gleam of sunshine was soon to pass away. Almost as soon as he had recovered from the long weakness subsequent to the operation, grounds for apprehension began to arise. Cutting pains admonished him that the severe application had, after all, failed to effect a cure, and that Death, unrobbed of his prey, was stealing on him apace. *Then*, my hearers, if you know anything of the human heart, then was the time of trial. And bitter trial it was. Was it at all strange, then, though he never gave way to despondency, that cheerfulness would at times forsake him? Is it strange that you might occasionally have seen the silent tear trickling down his cheek as he sat at the cheerful fireside? Often when at table, and all around him were engaged in lively con-

versation, you might have observed him almost overcome with sorrow. His heart seemed filled with grief, and he could scarcely hide his emotions. The repast being over, you might have seen him quietly wending his way to his own room ; and if you had then followed him, as some frequently did, to his door, you would have heard him offer up earnest supplications to the throne of grace, mingled with deep groans which could not escape the ear of the passer-by. And yet, in these moments of severe trial, stand by his side, and see him in secret pen these words :—“ Since my return home, the pain in my face has caused me some disquiet. If I am to pass again through the furnace of affliction, I pray for God’s sustaining grace. What, indeed, but this can support poor feeble man ? I trust that I feel in some measure as I should, in reference to my late affliction, and recognise it as from the hand of a heavenly Father, who afflicts not wil-



lingly. But oh! far short do I come. May God in his goodness prepare me for whatever he may be preparing for me during the year upon which I have now entered." I cannot forbear mentioning, also (for it is truly characteristic), that in the midst of all this intense anxiety, his mind never loses its balance, nor does he forget his duties. There appears at every step, the same calm interest in whatever concerned the members of his family, the same desire to make arrangements for usefulness in life, and the most touching appreciation of the efforts of sympathizing friends. At such a time, when deep anxiety (one would think) might have excused him for inattention to such objects, his pen overflows on every page with gratitude to God for the comforts of his situation, and the keenest sense of the most trifling act of kindness. Even in the darkest hour of trial, every page is a record of God's mercies.

As you all know, these harassing apprehensions gradually darkened into increasing certainty; and it was deemed expedient for him to try the benefit of a southern climate. He left his father's house to pass the winter in New Orleans. On his way he writes, "I cannot describe to you, my mother, I leave you to imagine—the feelings which crowded upon me after the excitement of departure and the bidding you all 'farewell.' I will only say, that my situation was as trying as it was new—not in leaving home, but in leaving under the circumstances—uncertain as to the object I had in leaving, and not without some fear lest I might be circumstanced so that home alone should be the place for me. But endeavoring to banish all gloomy forebodings, I determined to go forward with trust in our Heavenly Father's wisdom and a cheerful acquiescence in His will. When duty is plain, I know not how to dwell upon oppos-

ing arguments." How true is it, my hearers, "He shall be kept in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on God."

After a few days of severe suffering in that distant city, he felt constrained to return home. At this point, his hope of recovery seemed to be almost gone. "My pain," he writes, "is almost intolerable. I have never suffered so much from any cause. I am awake at night repeatedly from one to three hours, rolling in intense suffering. It grieves me to tell you this, knowing the extent of sympathy which all at home will feel for me. But I cannot deceive you. If this continue, I shall deem it necessary to return home, there keep quiet and abide the result, which we must leave in the hands of an all-wise Parent."

Thus was beam after beam of the bright star becoming extinguished, and we watched to see it "melt away into the light of Heaven."

In a few weeks he is again at home—still subjected to nights and days of torturing pain—still the subject of alternating hopes and fears. Hope is at last almost eclipsed, and at this solemn moment we peruse with heightened interest the record of his feelings. “My friends entertain hopes that my disease is disappearing. For myself, I see no change for the better. It often occurs to me that I may be subject to a long and distressing course of suffering, before the disease proves fatal. I endeavor, however, to avoid brooding over such imaginary troubles. It is a satisfactory reflection, that in the providence of God, I am so situated, that if my course in this world is nearly run, my loss will be but slightly felt. My most earnest desire is, to spend life to the glory of my Maker. May I be submissive to all His holy will. And when death comes, may it summon me to everlasting rest in heaven.”

Truly to him to live was Christ. His

life was from Christ; his strength was in Christ; his hope was in the Lamb of God; his prayer in the midst of the fiery trial, to glorify Christ, whether by life or by death.

And now you are prepared to ask, was his death gain? Come then to his dying bed-side, and judge for yourself. There you see him lying in the extremity of weakness. The color has fled from his cheeks, and new symptoms of disease are aggravating his sufferings. I approach him and ask: "Are you satisfied that God should do with you just what he will?" "O, yes," he replies. "You remember that the Apostle, comparing our present sufferings with future glory, calls them *light*."

A week previous to his decease, he walked one afternoon into an adjoining room with much difficulty, and on returning nearly fainted. After this, he never sat up, and could talk but little on account of the sore-

ness of his mouth. Short sentences, such as the following, would occasionally escape his lips, "Lord Jesus, give me patience." "I pray the Lord that I may not fret so much." And yet, my brethren, no one ever heard him murmur. In answer to his mother's questions, "Do you feel ready to go, or would you prefer to stay?" he replied, "Yes, ready to go, which is far better."—"Do you feel the Saviour near?"—"Yes," he said, adding, "Our light afflictions are but for a moment."

He, one evening, called one of his sisters to his bed-side, and, after giving her some advice, he remarked, "and so we must all go one by one; but I hope we shall meet in that upper world, where there is no more sickness nor pain."

On Saturday, August 1st, he was asked, "Have you any message for your absent sister?"—"Tell her God is ready to receive me, if I should be taken suddenly." He

asked the following morning what day it was, and being told it was the Sabbath, he lay still for some time, and then, thinking he was alone, he covered his face with a fan and prayed audibly. Some detached sentences were heard. "Lord, may I grow in grace—give me patience—may I resign my spirit sweetly unto Thee, if taken suddenly." One asked him, "Is the Saviour near to you to-day?"—"Yes, the Lord is precious." She then remarked, "William, it is a great comfort to us, that you can cast yourself so entirely upon the Lord." He replied: "Yes, yes, upon the rock of salvation." His mother inquired, "Is your mind collected enough to think upon any Scripture?"—"Yes," said he, "the Lord reigns—let the earth rejoice." His mother remarked, "There can be no fear of death when the Saviour is so near." He replied, "Perfect love casteth out fear."

On the following day, about one o'clock,

bleeding at the nose commenced. This could not be stopped at once, and very much increased his weakness. In the night he called for his friends, and begged them to hold his hands. His aunt inquired if he wished to say "farewell." "Yes," he answered. His mother remarked, "I hope we shall meet in heaven."—"Yes," said he, "the saints are gathered"—and his voice failed. Soon after he said faintly, "A little while ago I thought it was all over." He then slept a little, and on awaking, his aunt repeated to him, "Jesus can make a dying bed, Feel soft as downy pillows are," when he clasped his emaciated hands, saying: "Yes, O yes, that's true, that's true." One said, "William, is the Saviour precious?"—"Yes, very precious." Shortly after he was heard to say, "In the morning I shall enter"—and again his voice failed.

He manifested much affection for every member of the family, frequently calling



them near him. At one time, after inquiring for his brother, and being told it was night and his brother had gone to rest, he said, "I thought he would like to see me once more;" which shows he felt his end to be very near. During the night, he frequently addressed the Saviour as being very precious to him. When his aunt repeated the fourth verse of the twenty-third Psalm, he said with emphasis, "Yes, comfort." On observing his friends were weeping around him, he exclaimed, "Rejoice, rejoice," as if to say, Weep not for me, but rejoice that I am so soon to receive the crown of righteousness that fadeth not away.

He remained perfectly conscious unto the very last, though not able to articulate distinctly. At ten minutes after six o'clock on Tuesday morning (August 4th, 1846), he gently fell asleep in Jesus.

"Asleep in Jesus—blessed sleep,  
From which none ever wakes to weep

A calm and undisturbed repose,  
Which none but he that feels it knows."

Thus lived, and thus died WILLIAM EDGAR BAKER—a trophy of divine grace—"an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile"—a shining light that dawned at earliest morning, and shedding its bright beams even through the heavy vapors that beset its path, set while it was yet day, making the dark clouds in which it sank to rest, refulgent with the light of Heaven—a young Christian, rich in the grace of God, who could say with Paul, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Yes, my brother! Thou wast indeed a fruitful bough, "a fruitful bough, planted by a well, whose branches run over the wall. The archers sorely grieved thee and shot at thee, but thy bow abode in strength, and the arms of thy hands were made strong, by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

And now, what instruction shall I draw from this living epistle, written by the finger of God?

I bring you, my friends, to stand by his grave and learn there the honor of having a child made a living witness for Christ, and dying, an heir of glory. You who are seeking for your children wealth and station and applause—what is there in all this comparable to having your children living for the glory of God, and dying with the voice of triumph on their lips! Yes, indeed, even under such heavy afflictions, God honors the parents whom he calls to endure such sorrow. I know that you have been sorely tried. But, after all, are you not most fully compensated? Look at what, by God's grace, he *was*. There is not a blot to darken the bright images which memory treasures in your hearts. And the sweet perfume which his presence shed forth, will it not linger through your dwelling in unalloyed sweet-

ness? Look at what he *is!* a blest spirit at rest in the bosom of his God. Would you then bring him back again? Would you now wish that one drop of his bitter cup had been extracted? Or would you desire that he might have glorified Christ's grace the less—so that your hearts might have been spared these agonies? It is not every one whose child God honors thus—to speak forth the triumphs of faith in a dying hour. Praise God then, that he committed such a jewel to your keeping. Praise God that he permitted your eyes to see it glow with heavenly lustre, in the purifying fire of trial. Praise Him that he has gathered it all resplendent to reflect His own blessed image for ever in heaven.

Let me adduce this bright example as the positive proof, that early dawning and gradually growing piety is as genuine—yes, and may be as productive—as the piety which

begins with riper years. There seems often to be a doubt on this point. On the one side, there are two considerations which throw an attractiveness around conversion in mature life. The one is, that the very contrast, between the life before and the life after conversion, tends to magnify the grace of God. The drunkard becomes sober—the man of the world becomes the self-denying Christian. All was darkness, and behold, suddenly the light of day has sprung upon the night. Again; the difference affords favorable opportunity to pass judgment upon one's real condition—the man can remember and say, "I was blind—now I see." On the other hand, the very circumstances of children's piety prejudices us against very early conversions. We are not in a very favorable position to judge. The child, though a pious child, is a child still. We do not enter into his feelings—we do not always see, therefore, the clear evidence of grace. And

again, this gradual dawning light, by its very nature, prevents our detection of the moment when it arose. The child himself, now become a man, recollects almost nothing of his earliest years—hence he can relate nothing. All that he can say is, I see the beauty of Christ now, and I love him in sincerity.

For these reasons, some are rashly prejudiced against such conversions. Nay, some of the subjects of such conversion are themselves thrown often into doubt.

Now I bring you, my hearers, to this witness for God. Here was one who loved prayer always ; having ever a regard for God's word, a hatred to sin, a love for Christ and his people, and avoiding everything that was evil almost from his cradle. The child in everything was but the "father of the man."

Now, was not his conversion genuine? Did not the grace of God in him sustain the

sharpest trials? Was there anything in life or in death to which the power of Christ in him was not equal? And yet you see he was doubtful as to the time when the Sun of righteousness dawned upon him. Let me urge you then, Christian parents, Sabbath school teachers, look and long for early piety in your children. Cherish and draw forth the early buds of promise. Do not be discouraged because the appearance is but weak. The tender "blade" that first bursts through the earth, is fragile in the extreme. As yet, all is but promise—there is little appearance of growth, it may be scarcely of life, and yet the power of God is there, or it never would have sprung into life at all. First must be "the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Water it and till it, and it shall bear you fruits of increase. My hearers, let us take comfort in this gradual progress. The broad river that began in the streamlet of the mountain, may

run as deep and its waters be as rapid, as it goes from strength to strength, and its end in the ocean be as peaceful—as the broad, calm lake, that springs up in the hills, and which without any entrance is always broad and full, you know not how.

I close with an address to one other class of my hearers. Young men, what have you to say to this? I have a special claim to your hearing. Our friend was young—a young man like yourselves; he was also one of you. You have heard his voice from your choir, leading your devotions in the sanctuary—he has now exchanged his seat here for one in the sweet choir of heaven. I bring you to view the life and death of this young Christian to prove to you the glory, the sustaining power of the religion of Jesus. Dare you stand upon his grave and say that Heaven is not a reality, or that the power of faith in Christ Jesus is a fable? You are buoyant with the expectations of life's



charms. So was he. The world offers its every inducement, to bind you to its interests. So it did to him. You are young and strong; passion is impetuous; and death is at a distance. So it was for years to him. And what is the testimony which his experience now addresses to you from the grave? You have tried the world. He tried the world, and Christ also, and what is his living and dying testimony? "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them as nothing that I may win Christ, and know the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings—that when Christ, who is my life, may appear, then I also may appear with him in glory."

Young man! you will have trials as he had; you will need a support as much as he. You, too, must die. Now gather together all the world can give you, after a life of

devotion to it, and what can it afford compared with the gain of that servant of God? What are your most elevated aims to the glory of living and dying for Christ? What comfort in trial will it give you, in all the round of its resources, like the comfort of having your heart stayed upon God? Where will you get triumph on a dying bed, like his who commits his soul to sleep, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit?" Look at that suffering, rejoicing saint, and tell me, whether there is not, after all, something really covetable in a life of prayer and piety, and a death of peace? Is it—is it really undignified, unmanly, to serve God while you live, and to rest in God when you die? This Saviour may be yours as well as his. You have the same invitations, the same promises. You may know all that he knew of the nobleness of a life for Christ. You may feel as he did, in all your trials, the

sweetness of communion with God, as of a child with a father : and the light of the cross may shed its rays over your dying bed, as it did over his. You may bid the last farewell with eyes radiant with hope, and comfort mourning friends with the consolation that you are at rest. In a word, strange as it may seem to you, it may be as really true of you as it was of him, that "to live is Christ and to die is gain."

Will you, then, make this Jesus your friend? Will you hear Christ's voice pleading with you from the grave of his servant, "who being dead, yet speaketh?" Will you hear that spirit, looking down on you from heaven, and urging you to know the great peace of believing in Jesus?

Would, my young friends, that these dying, rejoicing words, "Precious Jesus," might tempt you to make the "pearl of great price" your own! I have no higher prayer for you than this—"May your death be the

death of the righteous, and may your last end be like his."

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*The following are the Hymns that were sung on the occasion.*

THOU art gone to thy rest, brother !  
We will not weep for thee ;  
For thou art now where oft on earth,  
Thy spirit longed to be.

Thou art gone to thy rest, brother !  
Thy toils and cares are o'er ;  
And sorrow, pain, and suff'ring now  
Shall ne'er distress thee more.

Thou art gone to thy rest, brother !  
Thy sins are all forgiven,  
And saints in light have welcomed thee  
To share the joys of heaven.

Thou art gone to thy rest, brother !  
Death had no sting for thee ;  
Thy dear Redeemer's might did gain  
For thee the victory.

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FRIEND after friend departs ;  
Who hath not lost a friend ?  
There is no union here of hearts,  
That finds not here an end !  
Were this frail world our final rest,  
Living or dying none were blest.

Beyond the flight of time,  
Beyond the reign of death,  
There surely is some blessed clime  
Where life is not a breath ;  
Nor life's affections transient fire,  
Whose sparks fly upward and expire.

There is a world above,  
Where parting is unknown ;  
A long eternity of love,  
Formed for the good alone ;  
And faith beholds the dying here  
Translated to that glorious sphere.

Thus star by star declines,  
Till all are passed away ;  
As morning high and higher shines  
To pure and perfect day :  
Nor sink those stars in empty night,  
But hide themselves in heaven's own light.

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WHY do we mourn departing friends ?  
Or shake at death's alarms ?  
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends  
To call them to his arms.

The graves of all his saints he blessed,  
And softened every bed ;  
Where should the dying members rest  
But with their dying head ?

Thence he arose, ascending high,  
And shewed our feet the way ;  
Up to the Lord our flesh shall fly  
At the great rising day.

Then let the last loud trumpet sound,  
And bid our kindred rise,  
Awake, ye nations under ground,  
Ye saints, ascend the skies.

## NOTE.

*From the American Republic.*

## AMERICAN SURGERY.

The world may be challenged for a superior exhibition of surgical skill, than is so graphically described in the following communication of Dr. Payne, Prof. in the University Medical College of this city, which we give below. A professional report of the same, over the signature of the distinguished operator, may be found in the preface to Townsend's translation of Velpeau's Surgery. Dr. Mott claims for himself and his country the merit of having first performed this operation for the removal of an *osteosarcoma* in the inferior maxillary bone.

"The case to which you refer is briefly reported in the January number of the N. Y. Jour. of Med. by some person, who, like myself, was present at the operation. The subject is there stated to have been 'a fine intelligent young man, whose *heroic deportment* greatly facilitated the operation.' But there was something in the case of Mr. Baker which certainly better deserved the encomium of 'heroic,' than anything I had ever before seen or heard of, or even imagined as within the compass of human fortitude.

"To appreciate properly the 'heroic deportment' of young Baker, you must imagine yourself to have been a spectator; follow the able surgeon in all the capital steps, and in all the minor details of the operation, and watch attentively the 'deportment' of the subject. He was laid

at a convenient elevation upon a table, his feet crossed upon each other, and his hands lapped. I mention this position, because he did not move his feet, nor displace his hands during the operation.

“Now observe the operator; first making a long and deep incision amongst the muscles of the neck, then tearing his way down to the carotid artery, and throwing and tying the ligature. It was, in itself, one of the most capital operations in surgery; but, owing to the dexterity with which it was performed, and with an operation still before us far more difficult, and tedious, and dangerous, this grand step towards the exsection of the jaw lost much of its usual interest to the sufferer; who, however, sustained it without the slightest evidence of pain.

“Next came the circular incision, reaching all the way from the joint of the maxillary bone, down along its lower edge, up to the middle of the chin. This was done by one rapid, immense sweep of the knife; but there remained the same imperturbable composure of the patient. Not a sigh, not a groan escaped; no muscle moved—the very eye did not wink. Then followed, as you may well suppose, a prolonged, tedious, painful dissection, in which it became necessary to exasperate the suffering by securing many bleeding vessels; till, finally, the operator was ready for his saw. But nothing had yet happened to elicit a single manifestation that the patient was not in a profound slumber, excepting that his eyes were open and that he occasionally swallowed.

“But, before sawing the bone at the middle of the chin, it was necessary to remove one of the incisor teeth, and this was so firmly rooted that a straight forceps slipped in the hand of a capable assistant. Another pull, however,



brought with it the tooth; but in neither attempt was there any more indication of suffering than in drawing a nail from a board.

“Then came the process of sawing, and this was calculated to greatly annoy the patient from a slight accident which happened to the saw and which prolonged this part of the operation. Still, however, the same ‘heroic deportment’ distinguished the patient forbearance of the sufferer, the same unexampled complacency continued to mark every lineament of his face, his very eye displayed nothing but gentleness, softness, and calm resignation.

“The bone being separated at the chin, the dissection was resumed amongst the important parts; and though conducted with all possible skill and rapidity, it was necessarily tedious, as well as hopelessly painful, and therefore, still calculated to try the firmness of the stoutest heart. A great extent of all kinds of tissues were divided, and of course, no small proportion of nerves. Bleeding vessels continued to be secured, the difficult division of the articulating ligaments performed with as much facility as its difficulties would admit; and after the removal of the jaw, remaining portions of diseased muscle, &c., were cut away, and which tended not a little to embarrass that ‘heroic deportment’ which had marked every stage of this great and triumphant operation.

“From its beginning to its ending, which occupied one hour and a half after the first incision, till the final extirpation of all the diseased mass, the sufferer did not manifest the slightest evidence of pain, or of impatience, or of fatigue, either by language, gesture, expression of countenance, winking, groaning, sighing, or any other imaginable method by which the mesmerite might be disposed to evade the

overwhelming rebuke which the recital of this case cannot fail to inflict on his love of the marvellous, or his love of mischief, or his yet more culpable designs on human credulity.

“I have said that there was something physiologically interesting in the foregoing case, beyond its simple merit of an ‘heroic deportment,’ and that it goes to the very depths of mesmeric assurance and duplicity. It was this :

“On feeling the pulse of the patient twice during the operation (the last time after the lapse of an hour), I found it calm, undisturbed, and with about the same frequency it had before the operation was begun.

“Thus ended an operation, unequalled in the annals of surgery ; alike triumphant to the surgeon, to American genius, to the admirable subject, to the cause of truth, of morality, and of sound religion.

“I remain, very truly,

“Your friend and ob’t serv’t,

“MARTYN PAINE.”

REMARKS  
AT THE CLOSE OF A SERMON,  
PREACHED ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF

MATILDA,

DAUGHTER OF CORNELIUS BAKER,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE AFTER A SHORT AND SEVERE  
ILLNESS, DECEMBER 11, 1850.

BY REV. *David* D. MAGIE, D.D.

PASTOR OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
ELIZABETHTOWN, N. J.

## REMARKS.



THE subject of this discourse was the happiness of the saints in heaven. This was contemplated in four aspects—the place, the character, the society, and the employment.

After discussing these several topics, the speaker said that one of his beloved youth had, within a few days, gone to that happy world. He then gave the following sketch of her life and death.

There was much in our departed young friend, to make her an object of tender and affectionate interest to all about her. She

had a happy combination of both natural and acquired qualities. Her person was agreeable, her countenance animated, her voice sweet, her disposition lively, and her heart confiding. There was almost too much delicacy in her taste and refinement in her feelings for a long stay in this rough world. If I should attempt to describe her as she appeared when I first saw her, and as all our subsequent intercourse convinced me she truly was, I should say that everything seemed blended in her character, which serves to make up the sum of female excellence.

No wonder that she was the light of her father's fireside, the joy of her mother's bosom, and the centre around which the affections of her sisters and brother and a large circle of friends delighted to gather. It seems scarcely too much to say, she was formed on purpose to enjoy and diffuse happiness. But I must not dwell on matters

of this sort. Had I nothing further and nothing better to say of the beloved one whom we have recently buried out of our sight, this early and unlooked for death would have plunged us into the deepest sorrow. The crowning excellence of this dear one was her earnest, decided, and growing piety. In this respect she speaks, though dead; and by facts too well known to be forgotten and reminiscences too affecting even to lose their interest, she beckons us onward and upward. We, who survive her, cannot afford to lose the benefit of such a life and such a death.

She became pious in early life. Scarcely had sixteen years passed over her head, ere she consecrated herself to the service of God and publicly took the name of a disciple of the Saviour. In the days of her youth she remembered her Creator. The first fruits of her affections were devoted to Him, who loved her and gave himself for her. In this

respect our young friend was like Samuel, Josiah, Harriet Newell, Mary Lundie Duncan, and thousands of others, whose memorials are treasured up as sacred legacies by the church of God. Her first connexion was with the church at Rahway, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Imbrie. Some three years since, the family removed to this town, and she, with five others including her parents, two sisters and brother, became members of this church. Happy influences surrounded her from the earliest moments of her life. Blessed with a pious ancestry, the faith which so elevated and regulated her deportment, and which shone out so luminously on her dying bed, was the same faith which had dwelt in those who had gone before. I regard her case, as another illustration of God's readiness to fulfil all the pledges of his own covenant. A child of many prayers and accustomed from her earliest years to revere the name of her

Saviour, she was soon and effectually won by the attractions of his matchless love. Jesus took possession of her tender heart, before it had become ensnared by the follies, or corrupted by the vices of the world. This, it appears to me, was to her a peculiar mercy. There was that, in the natural buoyancy of her spirits, and in her large capacity for giving and receiving pleasure, which would have exposed her to many evils, had not her heart been protected by divine grace. Her Saviour saw this, and early turned the full tide of her warm emotions towards himself.

Again, her piety was cheerful and fervent. I am but expressing the honest convictions of my bosom, when I say that she loved her Saviour with an unusually strong and tender affection. Her confiding heart appeared to rest in his embrace, as its proper home and dwelling-place. Not that she met with no difficulties, was exposed to no temptations,



felt no struggles, saw no dark days, and never had her hope shaken. The contrary of all this, I have reason to know, was true. About two years since, I received a note from her, expressing in modest and delicate terms, her deep sense of personal deficiency, and the fears she sometimes felt lest her heart had never been truly renewed, and requesting counsel and direction from me, as her Pastor. This led to a very free and interesting interchange of thought, both orally and by letter. And never shall I forget the mingled delicacy and confidence of her deportment; how ingenuously she opened her mind, and with what soothing power the words of truth fell upon her ears. All this was the more interesting to me, as she had made a profession of religion in another church.

But we have other and better evidence to rely upon, than any language she used, or any confession she made. Her Bible—her

precious Bible—the gift of a venerable grandmother, herself but recently gone to the world of glory, has been sent me since her decease, and its well used pages reveal the secret of her inward strength. It is pleasant to note the texts marked by her pencil, and to become acquainted with those truths in which she had held sweet communion with her Saviour.

Then, too, her piety was progressive. She was not of those, unhappily too numerous in all our churches, who run well for a while and afterward are hindered. We have the fullest assurance that her path grew brighter and brighter to the very last. It has been my privilege to examine a list of what she calls “subjects for daily prayer,” and I must say, it exhibits a maturity of christian character and a comprehensiveness of pious thought, unusual, I fear, at any age, but especially so in early youth. Nothing seems to have escaped her notice. Sailors,

criminals, the heathen, the poor, the persecuted, those blinded by sin, missionaries, the awakened, the sick, backsliders, and scoffers at religion, are all brought under review. For all these, did that sweet spirit speak to her Saviour in prayer. It is delightful to think of such intercourse, carried on for such a purpose, between heaven and earth.

The last few months of her life were spent in peculiar nearness to her Saviour. On the 2d of November, she made and recorded a resolution, to secure one whole hour in the early morning for devotion. Her wish was to have this season before breakfast devoted to reading, meditation, and prayer. Nothing scarcely could show more clearly the strength of her religious emotions and the high value she placed on the privilege of drawing nigh to God. Delightful thought! Here is a young, timid, gentle maiden, rising, like her Master, a good while before day, to pour out her heart in prayer. The

mornings of the last few weeks of her life were thus spent.

Finally, her piety sustained her on the bed of death. I have witnessed the death of many a precious saint, and always with feelings of lively gratitude. But there was something in the sweet serenity of this young friend—her entire freedom from pain and the cloudless prospects afforded her—that rendered her chamber a privileged place indeed. God had evidently been preparing her for this for some time. Intending to transplant her early to a happier clime, he began by detaching her heart from the world, and fixing it as never before, on things above.

More than four years ago, she recorded her deliberate wish that she might die young. This thought she repeats again and again. I mention it, not because very important in itself, but because it shows that she was no stranger to thoughts of the last enemy.

Think not that this beloved friend was the victim of disappointment, or had grown sick of life. Not at all. That warm heart, so happy in all its domestic and social relations, and so alive to impressions from sight and sound, was not tired of the world. Her bright eye and animated countenance testified to this. It was her Saviour beckoning to her from the bright world above, and saying, "Friend, come up higher." This it was that made her wish for the wings of a dove. To depart and be with Christ were far better. Hence, when the hour came for her to die, she had nothing to do but die. When asked by her mother, if she had any fear of death, "Not one fear, mother," was her instant and calm reply. Everything was so quiet and placid, that I could not but wish that all the youth of the congregation might have witnessed the scene. Without a struggle or a groan, the sweet spirit passed away. It was truly a falling asleep.

What consolation is there here for these afflicted friends! You are not called, in this trying hour, to look for repose in the bare sovereignty of God, and thus bow before his uplifted hand. There is more of the father than the ruler in this dispensation. Look up, ye bereaved parents and ye fond sisters and brother, and mark the sweets which have been so abundantly mingled with what otherwise would have been a very bitter cup. You are not called to sorrow as those who have no hope. After lending that dear child and precious sister to you for a while, the Saviour has said to her, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Would you hold her back? no, no. Her language to you is, "If ye love me, ye will rejoice because I have gone to my Father."

She is gone, but not lost. Matilda is, in one sense, as much your child, your sister still, as when her voice cheered you and her

smile gladdened your hearts. She is now with the brother\* she loved so tenderly, and together will they be looking out for the arrival of other members of the family, as you shall finish your course and are ready to receive your crowns.

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FAINTER her breath and fainter grew,  
Until she breathed her last ;  
The soul was gone before we knew  
The stroke of death was past.

Soft was the moment and serene  
That all her sufferings closed ;  
No agony or struggle seen,  
No feature discomposed.

The parting struggle all was mine,  
" 'Tis the survivor dies ;"  
For she was freed and gone to join  
The triumph of the skies.

---

\* William Edgar Baker.

## RESIGNATION.

LET us be patient ! These severe afflictions  
Not from the grave arise,  
But oftentimes celestial benedictions  
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors ;  
Amid these earthly damps  
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers  
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no death ! What seems so is transition ;  
This life of mortal breath  
Is but a suburb of the life elysian  
Whose portal we call death.

She is not dead,—the friend of our affection,—  
But gone unto that school  
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,  
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,  
By guardian angels led,  
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,  
She lives, whom we call dead.



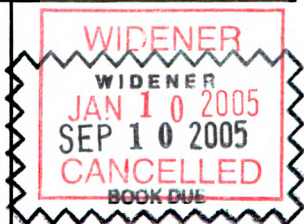
Day after day we think what she is doing  
In those bright realms of air ;  
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,  
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken  
The bond which nature gives,  
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,  
May reach her where she lives.

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