

HEAVEN A WORLD OF FREEDOM FROM SICKNESS:

A

S E R M O N ,

DELIVERED IN

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ST. CATHARINES,

JULY 10, 1846,

ON OCCASION OF THE FUNERAL

OF THE LATE

MR. ELIJAH HOLLISTER PHELPS,

AGED 19 YEARS, 3 MONTHS, AND 6 DAYS.

BY THE

REV. J. W. BAYNES, A. M.

PASTOR.

ST. CATHARINES, C. W.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

This sermon, prepared in unusual haste for the occasion which required it, and requested by the friends of the deceased for publication, is submitted to the candor of all who may peruse it, in the humble hope that it may be blessed of God for their spiritual welfare.

S E R M O N .

“The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.”—*Isaiah* 33: 24.

THERE is something indescribably solemn and important in death. However long and calmly it may have been anticipated, either by the friend departing, or by those who may be left behind, yet, when Death comes, it creates sensations and circumstances which no other cause can originate. It severs the closest ties. It cuts that mysterious bond of love which unites families and individuals together. It separates the intelligent, immortal spirit from the perishable body which was previously its medium of action amongst mortals; and whilst, by this event, the spirit escapes from a state of trial and suffering, it leaves that body, which has long been an object of solicitude and attention, a mass of putrifying dust, now rapidly tending to an undistinguishable mixture with the common soil which we tread under our feet every day. A blank is created in society, in the family, (and, if the deceased formed part of the professing people of God,) in the church. All that remains to mortals, is the RECOLLECTION of the form and conversation,—of the manner and affection,—of the individual who is taken away. The voracious grave receives the corruptible body, and no trace remains, except in memory, that the departed friend once existed, as we do now. Thus, “friend after friend departs: who hath not lost a friend?” Yes: deceased friends are lost to us, when they are called away by death. Then, the husband or the wife, as the case may be, is destined to pursue the journey of life alone. Then, the child can no longer lean on the faithful arm of the ever-caring parent, nor the parent dote upon his son or his daughter. Then, the eyes of an affectionate congregation no longer see their teacher in the desk which he has filled with regularity, and with an earnest desire to benefit their souls, labouring to prepare them to meet, with composure and triumph, that very event, which has now bereft them of his unwearied and faithful instructions. Death is a spoiler and robber, in a most emphatic and affecting degree. “The fathers, where are they ?

and the prophets, do they live for ever?" No: Death has reigned over all the generations of mankind, and has removed them, one after another, from this world, as a theatre of action; leaving their places to be filled, and their joys and sorrows to be inherited by their successors. This process of dissolution and succession is continually transpiring. Death is as busy in removing mortals, as God and his providence are active in furnishing the world with a succession of new inhabitants. It will soon be our turn to die. Yet a little while, and the place that now knows us, will know us no more for ever. Our last year, and month, and day, and hour, will shortly arrive. Yea, we may be, even now, arrived at our last year, or month, or day. For when the Heavenly Warner would admonish us of our mortality, the limitation is confined to ONE HOUR. "In such an hour as ye think not, the son of man cometh: therefore, be ye ready." This is the plainest and most important lesson which every one should receive when they come to a funeral; namely, that they are mortal, and must soon experience a similar change, to that which has already passed upon the deceased friend, whose remains they attend to the grave. Thou, O mortal man or woman, must shortly die!

Yet while death is the loss of the deceased to friends who survive—depriving them of the society, the friendship, the love, the guardianship, or the instructions of those who are called away, it is ever to be regarded in a different view from that which is first presented to our senses and our reason. This view is that of annihilation. The bodily presence of a friend is absent, and that body is about to resolve itself into its original shapeless elements. A vacuum is formed, which, speaking generally, may, indeed, be filled by another—but which can never again be filled in the particular family circle, or in the circle of friendship, where it has occurred. In this sense, therefore, there is a vacancy and an irreparable loss. But does the event which removes a mortal from our sight and our companionship, diminish the number of intelligent beings in the universe? In other words, Does the soul die with the body: and that thinking, intelligent, affectionate friend, who conversed with you so lately; who expressed his love and regard to you so recently; cease to exist? No. The word of God declares, that he does not; but that Death is only a change in the mode of our existence, and not the extinction of that existence itself. Thus, one inspired writer, speaking generally of this event and its consequences, says, "Then shall the dust return to the earth, as it was," or whence it originated; "and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." And another, speaking of his own anticipated dissolution, declares

his firm belief, That as soon as ever his spirit took its departure from the body,—as soon as ever the mysterious tie was severed which unites the immortal soul to its frail tenement of flesh,—that soul should be in the presence and enjoyment of the infinite God.

It would display lamentable ignorance and indifference, therefore, were we not, on occasions like the present, to endeavour at least, to take such glances into the invisible world, as by the light of revelation we are both qualified and encouraged to take. And, surely, if any thing is calculated to assuage the anguish caused by the death of a friend or relative, it must be the sweet assurance of the present state of perfect happiness of a recently afflicted and beloved fellow-mortal. To this train of thought, I have been led, by meditating on the text before us, which, though not originally intended to represent the condition of the redeemed, departed souls, now in heaven, may be appropriately and beautifully applied to that condition. “The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.” Let us then, First, Turn our attention to the world to which we would apply the language of the text, to shew that there is reality in it, and consequently that it is not a fanciful application which we would make of the words before us. Secondly, Let us see who the inhabitants of that world are. And Thirdly, Let us consider their happy and glorious condition. All which springs naturally from this text, in the application which we make of it to-day.

First. LET US TURN OUR ATTENTION TO HEAVEN. That there is such a world, no believer in revelation can for a moment doubt. The references to it in the scriptures of truth are numerous and distinct : not, indeed, minutely describing its nature ; but asserting its existence. Almost all we know of it is, that it is a world of resplendent glory, where the eternal Jehovah especially resides, and where he scatters joy and happiness throughout a vast assemblage of holy intelligences.

It is desirable that we should regard heaven then, not merely as a condition, or peculiar state of being to be enjoyed ; but also as a place, where that condition or state can be participated. Such a view of heaven, whilst it accords with the fact as it exists, is eminently calculated to strengthen our faith in its truth and reality. We are very much the creatures of sense. All our perceptions ; all our habits ; and most of our views, are those of sense. We have never been conversant with any other world but this in which we live : except, indeed, as we are required to exercise FAITH in unseen realities. And being thus creatures of sense, all our habits and modes of thought are most conversant and familiar with sensible objects. To conceive of heaven, therefore, as a place, and not merely as a state or condition, will be helpful to our belief in its reality and glory.

Has God occasionally manifested his glory to mortals, as to Moses at the burning bush in Horeb ; and on the summit of Sinai ; and also in the ancient temple at Jerusalem, in the shekinah, above the mercy-seat ? and is it not reasonable to suppose, that if he has thus revealed himself to man, a sinful creature, in this far distant province of his boundless empire, that there is a world which he has especially appropriated to himself, where he lives in happiness and glory ? The great Redeemer declared that he came down from heaven, when he visited this world for the purpose of effecting its redemption. Moreover, bodies from this earth, which necessarily occupy place and space, have been admitted into heaven from hence. The bodies of both Elijah and Enoch have been translated thither. And we know that the glorified body of Christ is there also ; for he spoke of returning to heaven, as well as of coming down from it. The testimony of inspiration on this subject is this : “ For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true ; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Believers in Christ have the promise and assurance that they shall possess spiritual bodies after the resurrection, which shall be admitted to the world of glory. For “ there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body.” And, difficult as it is to conceive a spiritual body, yet it will unquestionably possess form, and shape, and locality.

All these views help us to think of heaven as a world of glory,—as a place of spiritual and eternal enjoyment. And they are all abundantly strengthened and confirmed, by the language of Christ to his afflicted disciples, who were depressed with sorrow at the prospect of his departure from them. When the Redeemer told them, that he must shortly leave them, sorrow filled their hearts. But he dissipated their griefs, by assurances of bringing them ultimately to the glorious world to which he was about to depart, and by his prayers to his Father in heaven that this might be their happy experience. “ Let not your heart be troubled ;” he said, “ ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions : if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also.” His prayer for them is equally significant : “ Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.” There is a glorious world, then, which we call HEAVEN.

Secondly. LET US SEE WHO THE INHABITANTS OF HEAVEN ARE. "The INHABITANT shall not say, I am sick." Heaven has inhabitants; and inhabitants, too, in the highest and best sense of the term HABITATION. It is not a world of fluctuation and of change, like that in which we now live. Stability and permanence are some of its essential characteristics. The glorious occupants of that exalted state, are destined to enjoy all that it contains throughout a boundless immortality. It concerns us then to know who they are that are now the inhabitants of heaven, and who will, in future, be admitted to so desirable a state of existence.

God, the glorious Author of all being and blessedness, inhabits the heavenly world. A great prince amongst mortals, who has extensive dominions, the different parts of which he occasionally or frequently visits, has yet some particular portion reserved where he generally resides, and maintains his royal state, and his court. So, in an infinitely superior manner, does the King of kings and the Lord of lords, maintain his ineffable dignity, and surround himself with innumerable hosts of glorious and happy intelligences in the highest heavens. "Thus saith the Lord, heaven is my throne and earth my footstool." "In the year that King Uzziah died," says the prophet Isaiah, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." In the visions of the apocalypse, the inspired author declares concerning heaven, "I saw no temple therein;" that is, no material temple, corresponding with that which once stood in Jerusalem; "for," he says, "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Here then, Jehovah has established his throne; and hence he administers the vast concerns of his boundless empire.

But the eternal God enjoys not this glorious condition in solitude. He delights in the diffusion of happiness. He has made heaven, as well as earth, and probably all worlds, to be inhabited. He has constituted different orders of beings, with a variety of capacities, and qualified them to perform different portions of his will. There, in glorious forms, are several ranks of angels, and at least one archangel. They are thus distinguished by one who was caught up to the third heavens, and heard things which it was not lawful, or possible, for man to utter—"thrones, dominions, principalities, powers." There, are cherubim and seraphim. Some of these have been seen by mortals on different occasions—yet always appearing in the most agreeable and happy forms, and so far resembling human beings as

not always or readily distinguished from them. Abraham once entertained three angels in his tent. Peter was delivered from prison by the instrumentality of one of these exalted beings. When Christ's temptation in the wilderness was ended, angels came and ministered to him. They were equally seen at the incarnation, the transfiguration, the resurrection, and the ascension of our adorable Redeemer. Thus proving at once their existence, and a portion, at least, of their employment. And they are all thus eligible. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" And when they are not so employed, they are in the immediate presence of God, studying his character, contemplating his uncreated glories, celebrating his praise, and expressing their obligations to him for his beneficence and love, of which they are the perpetual and conscious objects. In the vision of heaven with which the prophet Isaiah was favored, and to which reference has already been made, the prophet having spoken of the high throne of God, says, "Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried to another, and said, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." And the beloved disciple John, in the vision of heaven which he was privileged to enjoy, says, "I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

Nor are these innumerable hosts of holy and happy beings, who were created for the enjoyment of the world of glory, its only inhabitants. From the death of Abel to the present hour, it has been receiving a constant accession of new occupants from the earth on which we dwell. The soul of every truly good man, who sincerely repents of his sins, and who turns to God, his once offended Father, through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, is admitted to heaven, immediately upon the death of the corruptible body; as also the souls of all that large portion of the human race which passes away from this stage of action and of probation before they have arrived at years of individual accountability; together with the immortal spirits of all those who, either from accident or from the permissive providence of an all-wise God, have been deprived of reason previously to the period when their accountability would have begun.

When the Christian dies, he is absent from the body, indeed ; but his condition is immeasurably improved, for he is present with the Lord. In the loss of a beloved child by death, King David consoled himself with the indulgence of the hope of re-union in a higher sphere. "I shall go to him," he said, "but he shall not return to me." And the same distinguished personage thus expresses his expectations of realizing the presence and enjoyment of God after his own dissolution ; "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness : I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness." The Lord Jesus spoke of those who are admitted to heaven, as sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God. And he told the penitent malefactor, that on the very day of his dissolution, he should be received to glory. When the martyr Stephen was expiring, he had the confident expectation of being immediately admitted to heaven ; and hence his dying prayer, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Moses and Elias, long after the death of the one, and the translation to heaven, soul and body, of the other, appeared with Christ on the mount of transfiguration. They, doubtless, came from heaven, where they had existed in glory inexpressible, from the period of their leaving this world, to that of their re-appearance on it.

From these examples, we may see something of the character of the individuals who are admitted to heaven from earth, and have our faith confirmed as to the reality of their continued existence and enjoyment of happiness after the dissolution of the body. Indeed, both these important topics are most clearly taught in the sacred scriptures, either in plain declarations, or by unavoidable deductions. Where would be the redemption which we are encouraged to expect in Christ, if we had no hope beyond the grave ? It is comparatively but a small portion of this redemption and its concomitant blessings, that we CAN enjoy in the present world. The death of Christ as an atonement receives its chief value from man's immortality. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But we are not miserable : Christians have the greatest reason to be happy. And they are, actually, the happiest people on earth. Why ? Because they know, that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, they shall have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. They rejoice, therefore, in hope of the glory of God. And so far are they from supposing that death will annihilate them, that they have a desire to depart, that they may be with Christ, which is far better. "He that believeth on the Son of God shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

Vast accessions are, therefore, continually being made to the ranks of the redeemed. Whenever a sincere penitent and true believer dies, he is received to everlasting habitations. The excellent of the earth,—the pious,—the devout,—the humble,—the prayerful,—the heavenly minded,—are continually leaving the shores of mortality, for the more hospitable and peaceful abodes of bliss, and love, and joy, which are created by the presence and favor of the infinite God. For, in his presence there is fulness of joy; at his right hand there are pleasures for ever more.

Yet, whilst, on the one hand, these views of the inhabitants of heaven are cheering and consoling;—whilst we may and ought to rejoice in the thought that any of our guilty race may be qualified for glory and admitted to its participation;—there are other thoughts which necessarily press upon the reflective mind, in connexion with the subject under contemplation. Those other thoughts to which I allude, involve the continued impenitence of some of our fellow-beings, notwithstanding all the warnings and admonitions of the word of God to repent and return to him; they involve, the destitution of faith in Christ, and of the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost; they involve, the want of that personal holiness and of those dispositions which accord with the heavenly regions: all which are required in the Scriptures, as necessary pre-requisites for admittance to glory. All who die, therefore, in this state of impenitence, of unbelief, of unpardoned sin, and of an unsanctified nature, must be excluded from the regions of light and blessedness! This, in itself, would be dismal. But it is not all. The loss of heaven, and exclusion from it, is destined to be followed by consignment to hell. Concerning heaven, we are most positively assured, (Rev. 21 : 27,) that, “there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” The voice of eternal truth has declared, that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord,” to his satisfaction and joy. To some, therefore, the final Judge will say, “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Surely then the possibility of failing to attain to glory should produce great searchings of heart in every human being, to ascertain their real condition and prospects; and should urge to the most diligent and anxious efforts to flee from the wrath to come, and to lay hold on eternal life. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” But “he that believeth not shall be damned.”

Thirdly. WE HAVE YET TO GLANCE AT THE HAPPY AND GLORIOUS CONDITION OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE HEAVENLY REGIONS: more especially of that portion of them who are admitted to those everlasting habitations from this world of sin and sorrow. And our view of their condition can be but a glance at it. We have neither the powers of mind necessary for a minute knowledge and investigation of this topic; nor have we the data upon which to found extensive and correct information. It is but little that is recorded of heaven, even in the Book of God: scarcely any more than to assure us of its reality, and the possibility of attaining it, or to make it a continued object of desire and hope.

The brief language of the text, as APPLIED to the world of glory of which we speak, is in perfect accordance with many other portions of the scripture which we know were INTENDED to describe it. In what does this agreement consist? In privatives. Heaven is said to be a world distinguished from this by the absence of numerous evils which mortals deeply and constantly feel. And perhaps in this method of contrast we can obtain the best possible idea of it in our present circumstances, inasmuch as we cannot escape our liability to the endurance of evils, except by the event which will raise the good man from earth and bring him to the possession of unutterable joy. In heaven, we are assured there will be no sun to scorch and smite its inhabitants; no sea to divide them from each other into different and distant communities; no night to endanger to the depredations of enemies; no sorrow of any kind; no tears, or sighing, or crying; for, saith the scripture emphatically, "The former things have passed away."

But that negation which the text contains, more particularly demands attention,—namely, the absence of sickness from the heavenly regions. "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." Freed from sin, disease can have no influence upon the inheritors of glory. For the remaining portion of the verse containing the text may be equally applied to the inhabitants of heaven, as the words which especially occupy our attention. "The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity;" or, changing the prophetic character of these words into one of actual possession,—“they HAVE BEEN forgiven.” And, being freed from sin, the cause of all evil and of all disease,—the effect ceases, of course.

Time would fail to recount all the names even of all the sicknesses to which mortals are exposed in consequence of sin—the sin of our first progenitors, and our own individual sins. Nor is this at all necessary or desirable on the present occasion, inasmuch as we are assembled at the funeral of one, who, in himself, has endured, as it were, a world of sickness. For thirteen years he has been a constant sufferer. During this protracted period, our deceased young friend has scarcely known the feeling of freedom from pain; and during most of this period he has endured untold anguish. But he bore his afflictions with a degree of patience which has seldom been displayed by so young a person, and especially by one who would otherwise have been in the possession of means of gratification beyond those which are enjoyed by many.

What a wondrous change must admittance to heaven be, to one in his circumstances! He has been sick, as we may say, always. But now he can say, "I am sick," no longer. Pain is succeeded by pleasure, lassitude by activity, and sickness by immortal health, beauty, and vigour. The tears are wiped from his eye,—the anguish is extracted from his heart. And now, with all the glorious forms of angels and of the spirits of just men made perfect, he worships and adores his God and Redeemer in the most exalted strains of rapture, gratitude, and praise.

Do I speak confidently of his present happiness? I rejoice to be able to do so, on the most substantial and scriptural grounds. If there

is reality in religion, and if reliance may be placed on the clearest evidence of facts, he has, we believe, entered that glorious world of which we speak. He was always of an amiable disposition, and of a pure morality. But these could not save him—these could not bring him to glory. We must look for other means of preparation for heaven and admission to its joys. And, blessed be God, we look for them not in vain, as we believe, in the case of this deceased youth. About three or four years ago, he professed to have experienced that change of heart and of affections which the word of God requires ere a guilty soul can rejoice in hope of the glory of God. He made a good confession of his faith in Christ before many witnesses. He has been enabled, through grace, to maintain that profession unsullied by any inconsistency to the end of his short pilgrimage. And now, having been faithful unto death, he enjoys the graciously promised reward of a crown of life. His lameness, arising from a severe case of hip complaint, with its accompanying weakness and pain, prevented him from enjoying with the church the means of grace and salvation which he professed to love. But the Master whom we serve knows our exact circumstances, and takes them into account. In many cases, he sees the spirit willing whilst the flesh is weak; and in such cases receives our desires and aims instead of our actual services.

Deprived, as he was, from enjoying the external means of grace, God seems to have employed his afflictions to do for him what is often accomplished in other ways. Those afflictions have doubtless formed a refining process to meeten him for the inheritance of the saints in light. During the last winter and spring, when he was more enfeebled than usual, I had frequent opportunities of conversing with him on the subject of his personal feelings in reference to religion, and of his hopes and prospects of heaven. And I now rejoice that I can bear testimony to the satisfactory manner in which he answered my inquiries, and spoke of his circumstances and anticipations. He was a youth of a retiring disposition, and of few words. But during the few last weeks of his mortal career, whilst confined to his bed, and in the near prospect of eternity, all his natural timidity and reserve was removed, and he conversed concerning death and eternity with the greatest freedom and pleasure. He was perfectly aware of his approaching dissolution, and all his senses, and his intellect, seemed quickened and excited, as the mortal tabernacle was approaching the period when it had to be taken down: a most convincing and beautiful proof of the separate existence of the soul after the death of the body, and of its glorious immortality.

He conversed with his friends to the very last; and was continually engaged in acts of devotion, of prayer, and of praise, during the whole course of his last sickness. A few weeks before his death he commenced a journey which he fondly hoped might prove beneficial to his health; but still he appears not to have been very sanguine in his expectations; for, whilst feeling the sinking of nature and the approach of death, at a distance from the parental roof, he remarked to a sister, that when stepping over the threshold of the door on the morning that he left home, the thought occurred to him, that he would never re-pass

it as a living mortal. And when proceeding from Chippawa to Buffalo by the steamboat, (he afterward told the same relative,) he was deeply impressed with the thought, that the same boat would soon bring back his lifeless remains—an anticipation which was realized in the course of a few weeks. He said, that had it been left to his option, he should have chosen to die at home; but that if he might have his friends around him, to administer to his wants, and smooth his dying pillow, it was no matter from what part of this earth his spirit might enter upon the realities of eternity. Frequently he declared, that he had no fear of death; that its sting was extracted, and that it had no terrors for him. He spoke of death with the utmost calmness and composure; and made extensive arrangements as to the manner in which he would have his effects disposed of to different friends and relatives after his decease. And his language and spirit in saying and doing these things were remarkable in a person so young as he was, and with so much to attach himself to life. Amongst other things which he left behind, were two Bibles which he had purchased for the purpose—bequeathing one of them to an aged relative, and the other to an aged friend who had long been employed in his father's family, and directing his sister to inscribe their names severally in each, adding, that it was his dying request that they should never again touch the intoxicating cup, but prepare to meet him in heaven. And it is devoutly hoped that they will comply with these dying charges.

He expressed regret that he had not stored his mind more copiously with the truths and promises of the word of God. For, he said, he now felt the loss,—inasmuch as passages did not flow into his mind with that readiness and promptitude which he observed was the case with others. He seemed to mourn over his deficiency in this respect with true contrition. And his lamentation over his loss is eminently calculated both to reprove the neglect of the Bible in others, who have not his weakness to contend with, and to urge to the more devout and constant perusal of the invaluable contents of the sacred scriptures. Those who would be prepared for every event, whether of prosperity or of adversity, of life or of death; those who would be thoroughly furnished for every good word and work, must make the "holy oracles" their study day and night, and treasure up the words of God in their memories and hearts.

He was very anxious that all his acquaintances, relatives, and friends, whom he might ever have offended by any inadvertent word or action, would extend to him their forgiveness; as he freely forgave any thing and every thing which might ever have been said or done against himself. In this he certainly discovered a sensibility of mind—a tenderness of conscience—which every Christian should be anxious to cultivate and to display.

He sent special messages to some young men, his particular friends, to beware of the temptations to worldliness and sin to which he knew they were exposed, entreating them to be upon their guard against every spiritual foe, and especially to seek grace and power from on high, to preserve them from falling into the snares of Satan. And he also sent a general message to the youth of St. Catharines, with whom

he was extensively acquainted, charging them to take warning by his early death, to beware of reckoning upon an uncertain futurity, and to be sure not to put off preparation for eternity to a period which to them might never come.

To those relatives who were left at home, and who were not privileged to surround his dying bed, (for this was indeed esteemed a privilege by those who enjoyed it,) he sent a message, urging them all to put their trust in the infinite Jehovah, and to prepare to follow him to heaven: whilst, to those about his bed he would say, "Weep not for me; I shall be far better off than remaining with you; I am going to a far better home than the one which I leave behind, where I shall be free from every care, and pain, and want, and sorrow, for ever."

He blessed God for his afflictions—for the life of suffering and privation which he had been called to experience,—and said, "If God had given me health, I might have remained in impenitence, unbelief, and sin; but he has afflicted me, in love to my soul, that I should see the vanity of earth, and seek an inheritance in heaven: and I praise him for all his dealings of providence towards me." When he heard of the death of a friend, who, it was feared, had left the shores of mortality unprepared for admittance to glory, he said, "O what a dreadful thing is it, to be without hope in the Divine mercy, through Christ, the Mediator and Advocate of man!" And then expressed the grateful emotions of his heart, for the hope blooming with immortality with which his soul was inspired.

On one occasion, when suffering greatly, he said, Jesus is my Comforter and Friend. And at another time, when coughing and labouring for breath, he said he longed to die, that he might be where his blessed Saviour was,—where there would be no coughing—no suffering of any kind.

But although he was very desirous to depart, he was afraid of the indulgence of a spirit of impatience, resolving, with the patriarch Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." He was eminently in a waiting posture—desirous to go, yet willing to stay, just as long as his heavenly Parent should think fit to detain him amongst mortals. When he thought himself dying, he marked the beatings of his own pulse, and seemed pleased to find them feebler and fewer, each time of examination, than when he last examined them. Even the blood settling under his nails, he noticed as an indication of the near approach of death, in which he greatly rejoiced.

The night before he died, (for he departed a little after midnight,) he thought was the last which he should have to spend on earth. In this, however, he was disappointed. And he felt and expressed the disappointment, as the day began to dawn, and the first rays of the sun entered his chamber; for he had supposed, that ere that period his liberated spirit would have been surrounded by the effulgence of the world which is lighted by the glory of God and of the Lamb. But, shortly after, when his aged father entered the room,—that beloved parent whom he never again expected to see on earth,—after a pleasing recognition, he said, "Now I see the reason why I have been

kept amongst you a little longer than I expected or wished to be detained. God has so ordered it, that I might once more behold and speak with my ever dear father." Thus did this amiable dying youth recognize the hand of God in an incident which might have escaped the observation of more mature and experienced Christians. But this cannot excite the wonder of those who are accustomed to mark the operations of the grace and Spirit of God in preparing souls for a state of perfect knowledge and holiness. Many a young Christian has been taught more, and has learnt more, on a bed of sickness, during a few weeks or months, than he has acquired in all his life besides. A soul on the verge of heaven, is privileged to acquire much of the spirit of the world to which he is tending, before he enters upon its glorious realities. This is a state of preparation; and here Christians are "meetened for the inheritance of the saints in light."

Frequently did this expiring youth devoutly and earnestly cry—"Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus; come quickly." And frequently did he look to the Saviour,—the author and finisher of faith,—and seek succor in this hour of need; expressing himself in language like this: "O Jesus, Saviour, comfort me; support me; strengthen me; make me patient to wait thy time." And his prayers were heard, and were graciously answered. He enjoyed living consolations in dying moments. He was enabled to look within the veil, whither the forerunner had for him entered, and to anticipate the glory yet to be revealed. And when he actually came to die, when "fond nature" had "ceased its strife" with the immortal spirit, and found it impossible to detain that spirit from its final rest, he passed, without a struggle or a groan, to the world where "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." When he was in the article of death, amidst the conflict of expiring nature, he was asked, If Jesus was with him? to which he replied, "O yes; I am safe; perfectly safe."

Thus happily did this youthful disciple of Christ pass away from earth. Who can doubt, but that he immediately entered into glory? "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

It would be entirely superfluous, in a case like the present, to attempt to offer to the bereaved parents and relatives of the deceased, any considerations intended to induce resignation, or to supply comfort. For these considerations, I know, are, and have been, fully appreciated and enjoyed by them. His suffering life, and his peaceful and triumphant death, are calculated to produce a right state of mind in surviving relatives. Who would bring him back from his high seat in glory? Rather, let us gird up the loins of our mind; be sober, and hope to the end; for the grace that will be brought unto us, (if we are diligent and faithful,) at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Brethren, "give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,"—to whom be glory, world without end. AMEN.

The following Hymns were sung by the Choir, during the Funeral service.

HYMN I.

Christ's presence makes Death easy.

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

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

Oh! if my Lord would come and meet,
My soul should stretch her wings in haste;
Fly fearless through death's iron gate,
Nor feel the terrors as she pass'd.

Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there.

HYMN II.

The brevity and uncertainty of life.

OH! what is life? 'tis like a flower,
That blossoms, and is gone;
It flourishes its little hour,
With all its beauty on:
Death comes, and, like a wintry day,
It cuts the lovely flower away!

Oh! what is life? 'tis like the bow,
That glistens in the sky;
We love to see its colours glow,
But while we look, they die:
Life fails as soon: to-day 'tis here,
To-morrow it may disappear.

Lord, what is life? if spent with thee,
In humble praise and prayer,
How long or short our life may be,
We feel no anxious care;
Though life depart, our joys shall last,
When life, and all its joys, are past.

HYMN III.

The blessedness of those who die in the Lord.

HEAR what the voice from heaven proclaims,
For all the pious dead!
Sweet is the savour of their names,
And soft their sleeping bed.

They die in Jesus, and are bless'd;
How kind their slumbers are!
From sufferings, and from sins releas'd,
And freed from every snare.

Far from this world of toil and strife,
They're present with the Lord;
The labours of their mortal life
End in a large reward.

