

society, and exercise rights. Life must have a *right object* to fulfil its high commission. There are various ways of occupying it,—of wasting its opportunities, and consuming its powers; but there is only *one way* of devoting it to its divine end. It is a serious thing to live, and it is of eternal moment what we live for and how we spend our *one life*. God's glory is the true end of man, and not to seek it is a perversion of being and a sacrilegious robbery of God.

SECOND—THE CHRISTIAN'S DEATH.

"*To die is gain.*" There is something peculiarly Christian in such a view of death, for death, viewed in itself, is appalling. It is so unnatural, so distressing, that our nature abhors it. None of us should ever choose to die simply for the sake of dying. For,

"Come in whatever form, O! Death,—
And thou art terrible,—the tear, the groan, the knell,
The pall, the bier, and all we know or dream
Or fear of agony, is thine."

It is because of its issues that good men love to die; because there is another life beyond the grave, an eternal life with Jesus. It was this view of dying that drew from John Foster the eloquent remark: "What a superlatively grand and consoling idea is that of death! Without this radiant idea, this delightful star, indicating that the luminary of eternity was about to rise, life in my opinion would darken into midnight melancholy. O! the expectation of living here and living thus always, would be a prospect of overwhelming despair; but thanks to that decree that dooms us to die, thanks to that Gospel which opens a vision of endless life, and thanks above all to that Saviour who has promised to conduct the faithful through death to the Paradise beyond, the sick room of the dying believer is on the threshold of Heaven." Sublime is such a view of death. How sweet to lie down in death with all the consciousness of imperfection which accompanies the most holy in this life! For such a sinful creature thus to lie down in the cradle of the dying body, rocked to sleep by a Saviour's love, and then to wake up in the light and perfection and ocean splendor of glory,—O! if this be dying, to die is infinite, infinite gain. And this is the view which the Apostle wishes us to take,