

In fiery slumber glares the world around!
 'Tis o'er; from yonder cloven vault of heaven,
 Throned on a car of living thunder driven.
 Array'd in glory, see TH' ETERNAL come!
 And, while the universe is still and dumb,
 And hell o'ershadow'd with terrific gloom,
 T' immortal myriads deal their judgment doom:
 Wing'd on the wind, and warbling hymns of love,
 Behold! the blessed soar to realms above;
 The curs'd, with hell uncover'd to their eye,
 Shriek—shriek, and vanish in a whirlwind cry!
 Creation shudders with sublime dismay.
 And, dream-like, melts before her God away!

DISCOURSE.

BY THE REV. MARK Y. STARKE, DUNDAS.

The sting of death is sin.—1 Cor. xv. 56.

That there is a sting in death,—that it is looked forward to by men with feelings of awe, of terror, or of loathing, or, it may be, with a mixture of all these sentiments, is a proposition that will, we believe, find a ready assent in the minds of all. It is nevertheless true that universal as this feeling is, it assumes very different and opposite characters according to the causes in which it originates. That springing from just and proper sources, this feeling is highly beneficial in its nature and tendency, reason and scripture alike warrant us in believing; but that very frequently—I might almost say, universally—it is cherished in a greater or less degree, upon unreasonable and anti-christian grounds, and assumes a pernicious and irreligious character, is not less true. The distinctions to which we allude are so often overlooked or neglected, even by highly religious persons, that we hope under the blessing of God our time will not be unprofitably spent in attempting to dissipate some of those unreasonable and irreligious fears which embitter life and render the approach of death terrible to many; while they at the same time interfere with the right improvements of the one and the necessary preparation for the other. In directing your attention to what really is the sting of death, we may class the factitious causes of the unreasonable fear of death into those which spring from the corporeal and external circumstances and accompaniments of death, and those which arise from the separation which death occasions to us from those interests, pursuits, ties, and affections, which must, more or less, occupy and engage us during our present state of being. First, in regard to the fears of death,

arising from the bodily and external circumstances, by which it is attended, there is much which is revolting to our feelings in these circumstances. There is the pain which so generally precedes death, there is the gradual decay and final destruction of the bodily powers, with frequently an apparent weakening or suspension of the mental faculties so commonly characterized by the affecting term of "second childhood;" there is the stillness and gloom of the death-bed chamber, the mournful looks of sorrowing friends and relatives, the solemnity of the last rites, the committal to the grave, the corruption, the final dissolution, and apparent annihilation of the frame which we are accustomed almost to identify with our existence, which has had part in our pleasures and our pains, our joys and our sorrows, our hopes and our fears, our sympathies and affections, in as far it is the medium of our connexion with external nature, and of communication with our fellow creatures. All these cannot perhaps be regarded with entire indifference by beings constituted as we are; and these considerations are so much calculated to impress the imagination, that if encouraged and dwelt upon they tend to excite feelings of a most powerful nature, which we may not always be able to suppress or restrain. Now before allowing ourselves to cherish in our own minds, or to raise in the minds of others, sentiments of such a nature, it becomes us to consider well their bearing and tendency. In as far as contemplating and looking forward to the dissolution of the body has the effect of leading us to regard it as of inferior importance, by shewing us the folly of priding ourselves upon its comeliness or strength, of nourishing passions, and seeking pleasures and gratifications connected with it alone, or, in the words of the Bible, of ministering to the flesh, and making preparation to fulfil the lusts thereof, when we must soon resign that flesh which so many live but to pamper and to indulge—in so far, we say, as contemplating the dissolution of our mortal frame excites and impresses us with such ideas and such feelings, it is in the utmost degree important and beneficial. But then remark that the contemplation of death in such a general light imparts to it no sting, clothes it with no terrors. It rather dissipates the terrors and diminishes the loathing with which we would otherwise look forward to it, by leading us to disconnect the idea of our present corrupt and mortal bodies from that of our existence, and to look forward to the spirit's bursting the shell of its earthly encumbrances, and in the freedom of a new, an immortal, a glorious body, soaring amid the sunshine of a brighter creation. Such a manner of contemplating death is not of course