

Gift! Jesus Christ has redeemed us from the curse; and the Creation in earnest expectation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. The Creation was marred but not destroyed by sin. It is capable of recovery and restoration. God did not forsake the work of his own hands. He withdrew the light of his face, but not wholly. The night was lightened with a trail of glory; our air re-echoed the songs of angels; our earth was trodden by the feet of Jesus: nay, he slept in that new-made grave in the Garden; and so all this earth is holy ground, redeemed by the life and the death of the GODMAN. "Earth, (says Augustine,) like a foster-mother will share in the glory of the child it has reared." Christ will not forget the scene of his sufferings and sorrows—of His dreadful contest with the powers of Hell and His illustrious victory—any more than He will forget His people whose dust still slumbers in the grave. The very dust of His people is precious; He takes care of it; He will raise it again; and at that time He will banish forever every trace of the baleful blight of Sin, and "there shall be no more curse." We have His word for this who is Faithful and True; be it our joy to take Him and his word.

If the world in many of its aspects is joyful and surpassingly beautiful even now as it writhes under the curse, what must it not be when the Last Day's awful conflagration shall purge away the dross, when destructions shall have come to a perpetual end, when there shall be no more curse, and God shall again smile in ineffable love on the work of His own hand restored to perfection and unmingled bliss.

This is the end towards which we may look forward confidently and joyfully. The creation has suffered for us; but with us it shall be restored to more than pristine loveliness. But let us mourn in bitterness of spirit on account of our sin which is so unutterably hateful to God. How could he more forcibly show his abhorrence of sin than by thus laying the curse upon man and the world he inhabits? How could He more mercifully demonstrate His infinite love than by giving his Son to redeem to Himself a people from our accursed race, and to pur-

chase to Himself this Earth accursed for sin? What more blissful or glorious consummation can be sought, or even imagined than this, when it shall be proclaimed, "And there shall be no more curse!"

It is through Christ alone that the curse can be withdrawn. He was made a curse for every one who believeth on Him. Cleave to Him then with eager everlasting love;—for from the moment that you are one with Him for you there "shall be no more curse." And this is Christ's proclamation to all who feel the weight, the anguish, the sore distress of that curse: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." There is even now no curse for them that love Christ Jesus.

To believe on Him, to love and serve Him, is to begin Heaven on Earth and inaugurate a high and noble career that shall have its full developement in that perfect day to "which no yesterday gives place and which no to-morrow urges." (Augustine.)

But while "there shall be no more curse" in the new heavens and the new earth, while the redeemed shall enjoy the full outflowing of God's infinite love,—there must still rest the tremendous weight of that curse on all the impenitent—on lost men and rebel angels—in the dolorous prison of Hell. Through the horrible alchymy of sin God's light is turned for them into utter darkness; His love into hatred and wrath; His beatitude into boundless woe! For them the curse is not repealed but intensified, accumulated, bound to their being for all the future. How earnestly should we seek to escape this doom, and also to show the way of escape for our fellow-men! Why should we die—why should any one die—since Christ has died and is now living, after the conquest of death and all the powers of Hell? He has established His church and given the means of grace, on earth that no one may die. He gives the Holy Spirit to regenerate, to quicken, to sanctify. O Christian, spare thou neither word nor deed by which that time shall be hastened when "There shall be no more curse!"