

EXTRACT

From a sermon on the occasion of the death of CHARLES F. ALLISON, Esq., preached at the interment of his remains at Sackville, N. B., Nov. 2nd, 1858. By Rev. J. R. Narraway, A. M.

"Ah! few are the spectacles so attractive to the thoughtful mind, as the intelligent peacefulness of the good man's end. The scene of his departure is the antechamber of the Great King. No soul-harrowing memories stretch the heart and conscience of the dying Christian upon the rack of torture, as he solemnly and deliberately evokes the many-coloured remembrances of the past—subduing recollections of his Saviour's tenderness, pity and care—how he shielded him in fight, and solaced him in grief, and sustained him in his feebleness, and blotted out his sins, and cleansed him from their stains—come thrillingly back upon him, and fill his heart with inexpressible delight. Not forgetful of his unfaithfulness and numberless infirmities—their remembrance but heightens in his esteem the mercy and the power of his Almighty Saviour. The promised presence of Jesus is felt in the disrobing room of death, gently loosing the silver cord, and not rudely stripping him of his garb of clay. Angels, bright angels are there, ready to give warm greeting to their liberated brother, when the last earthly fetter shall have been sundered. Fair visions of faces, well remembered in other days at the family altar, or the sacramental feast, come and go, eager and expectant in the blended twilight of earth's deepening darkness and heaven's brightening morn. Soft musical whispers come floating around him, and chiding his tarrying, winningly plead, O! sweet, loving spirit, come with us away. Rich gushes of harmony of seraphic minstrelsy flow in over his soul, and thrill it with pleasure ecstatic. The heavenly city looms out on his sight, and wide unfolds its pearly gates—and its flashing streets and its jasper walls, and its gorgeous fanes, and its garnished home, and its crystal streams lie bathed in the brilliance of an effulgent sun that will never set; and the wondering saint admiring cries—

"Oh! 'tis better far to die."

Breathing his tender farewells to the dear ones that remain behind, he yields himself joyfully to the cherubic guards that wait to waft his spirit home, who, spreading their wide waving pinions beneath him, soar aloft to the city of life—a new flame ministers in the Sacred Presence. Oh! who restrains the prayer, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

"Thus, safely and timely, victoriously and peacefully, passed our brother to his rest. Who doubts his reception there? Said a dear little child who loved Mr. Allison, after she had poured forth the sorrows of her little heart, upon being told of his death on the day of his decease, "Ma, when we go to heaven be sure to ask where Mr. Allison is, because he is so near the throne that perhaps we shall not see him unless you ask Jesus." O! yes near the throne he doubtless is! Not, it may be, among those loftier sons of bliss who loudest chaunt their songs of joy, but there where Mary sits again at Jesus' feet, or loving John is lost in contemplation deep, or gentle Lydia's heart is filled with grace divine. Why there? Whence our hope? Many were the excellencies that adorned his character, and precious were the services he rendered to humanity, but not upon these do we base our hope. Years ago, our lamented friend, drawn to the footstool of mercy by the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, found peace in believing. Born again into the family of God, he became an heir of heaven through Christ. Thus renewed in the spirit of his mind, he lived a life of faith in the Son of God. The merits of Jesus appropriated by the faith of a penitent heart were available in his behalf, both in life and in death. These merits thus received, thus retained by our departed brother, are the ground of our belief that dying in the Lord he is forever blessed.

"Nor do we cherish a doubt that the Great Master called His servant away at the fitting time. His life-work was done. His eye was undimmed—his natural force unabated. Altho' he had nearly filled up the measure of three score years and ten, he was mercifully preserved from the querulous infirmities of advanced age. We shall remember him now, not as having outlived his usefulness with enfeebled body, and feeble mind, the object of respectful affection—not thus shall we recall the memory of this true Christian gentleman, this lofty-minded Christian patriot, but

as when taken from us with the generous affections of his large heart all unchilled, and the clear sagacity of his intellect all unclouded.

"For some time before he was withdrawn from us he was devoutly seeking the richer baptism of the Holy Spirit—he sought to have his soul replenished with all the fulness of God—enriched with all the mind that was in Christ. Humble and lowly as was his wont at the throne of grace, he claimed the promise of the all-cleansing blood. During the whole of his brief illness he seemed to be thirsting for God. And though he was not permitted to traverse the territory of the last enemy without sustaining an assault, he was able gratefully to testify that God gave him the victory.

"The fight was over—

"He sank in blissful dreams away,
And visions of eternal day."

Thus hath heaven enriched itself at our loss. How great that loss! Thine greatest, widowed wife, and thine fatherless child! Ye knew him, where to know him was most tenderly to love him—within the magic circle of home's soft amenities. We make way for you—we yield precedence to your sorrows—they are doubly sacred. But after you, we are rivals in our grief. We mourn him as the munificent Founder of our noble Academic Halls. This princely man, who scarcely, I suppose, counted his thousands by tens, felt himself honoured for his country, to do that which no man in British North America, who counts his thousands by hundreds hath found the soul to attempt.

"Ye men of wealth, was not his a glorious ambition? Seek ye not to share a fame like his? Oh! they will miss him sorely for a time—his unbought service—his wisdom in council—his meekness and self-abnegation—his open heart and open hand. Youthful aspirants for Academic honours will miss his gentle mien—his placid, sympathizing glance.

"We mourn him on behalf of the great Christian enterprises of the day, of which he was a generous supporter. Christian Missionaries number one large-hearted friend the less. We mourn him in behalf of the suffering poor, for whose distresses he had a pitying heart, and a helping hand.

"But, ah! we mourn him most, may I not say, as a devoted officer and member of this sorrowing church. High-minded Circuit Steward, faithful class leader, humble Christian, whoever found thee absent from the post of duty, when it was possible for thee to be present? In the great congregation, at the weekly class, at the holy sacrament, in the week-night prayer meeting, whoever found thy place vacant through indolence or neglect? Liberal in purpose, pure in motive, truthful and cautious of speech, and of unblemished integrity of action, who can estimate the value to us? Thou hast gone safely and peacefully home. Yea, and despite our grief, thou hast gone at the fitting time. We would not recall thee, blessed spirit. Rest thee in the Redeemer's bosom! The Lord gave thee to us, and precious was the gift. The Lord hath taken thee from us, and blessed be the name of the Lord. We follow. We shall meet again above. Thou wilt not be forgotten by those who tarry. For ages wilt thou be remembered on earth. While the name of Methodism lives, thine will be fragrant among men. When, from the blue wave of the Atlantic, to the sea-washed shores of the wide Pacific, great nations shall dwell in peace and power, precious youth, who have drank of the life-waters unsealed by thy benevolence, scattered throughout the vast expanse, shall keep thy name and memory fresh.

"Ever and anon thy works shall follow thee whither thou art gone—for multitudes, by the Divine blessing made wise unto salvation in the noble Institution founded by thee, shall join thee on the bliss-bathed Mount of God."