

sorrow. Then, when this gloom overspreads the brightness of our visions, and this cloud is thrown upon the joyousness of our earthly hopes, we are reminded of the world's character of uncertainty ; and taught by a better lesson than theorists and moralists can furnish, that " we have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves ;"—that the joys of life, and life itself ; are as brittle, and fading, and perishable as " the grass that withereth, and the flower thereof that falleth away."

Uncertain and unsatisfactory world ! Which of you, my Brethren, has not had experience of days and hours when you found it to be so ? Who has not learned by trial the mournful reality of its rapid fluctuations ? Who has not experienced interruptions most sudden and sad to their worldly gladness ? What parent, or child, or friend, or brother is exempt from trial, in turn, of the frightful desolations which death creates ?

Be assured that, in the course of manifold and trying duty, none have more impressive and saddening experience of these vicissitudes and sorrows than the minister and ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the compass of a few years of ministerial labour, in how many cases is it his painful duty to watch the dying struggle, and to hear the dying Amen to the last spoken prayer ;—how many of the loved ones of his flock does he precede, in the awful solemnities of the funeral procession, to the opened sepulchre,—there to reiterate the appalling lesson of man's mortality in the return of dust to dust and ashes to ashes ! How many blanks in the rows