

## OUR TRUE FRIEND.

IF a person who is in sore trouble has a friend who, if he only know, would esteem it a great joy to comfort, and help to remove the trouble in question, and still the troubled one should neither write nor speak to the friend about it, we should in such conduct see no proof of friendship; and yet this is the conduct of not a few in reference to Jesus, who call Him friend. They go to others, and talk long enough, and loud enough too, but they tell Jesus very little. And yet, how eager is He to hear all about their troubles; He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"; "Cast thy burden upon the Lord"; "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee." Oh, how people turn trouble over and over in their own minds, instead of casting it upon their Friend; how they bury it in their own wounded hearts, instead of in the depth of God's mercy. A person whose heart was almost broken said the other day, "I will tell all to Jesus." She actually started to do so, but Mrs. Halt-by-the-way told her to wait a little longer; and she has been waiting ever since, and her trouble has got none the less. One Mrs. Melancholy has been in a sad plight for the last year; she calls Jesus friend, but somehow or other she has the sad habit of hugging closer and closer her sorrows to her own heart. She called in the minister the other day, and together they told Jesus of the sorrow she was in; and there was such a change, the woman's face became radiant with bliss; but as soon as ever the door was closed and the minister gone, she began to sigh and fret; she actually wouldn't let her Friend Jesus keep her burden. Oh, what poor troubled ones came to Him in the days of His flesh, some for themselves, and others for their friends; some with physical, some with moral, and some with mental troubles; and He opened wide His loving, strong arms, and relieved them all. And what He did then, He wants now to do.—*The Teacher's Theme.*

## THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. — Numbers xliii. 10.

THE death of the righteous can belong to none but the righteous. If your career is not like his, your close cannot be. To begin and continue like him is the only way to end like him. "God will render to every man according to his deeds, to them who, by patience continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, eternal life. But unto them that do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil." And there is no deviation from that law; it cannot be evaded, it cannot be

repealed, it cannot be suspended, it cannot be modified, it must have its course, for it is the exponent of the changeless character of God. There may be the resemblance of a righteous man's death. The worst of characters sometimes have that. Not seldom indeed is there calmness and strength in the death of the wicked; and we have heard it said of the vilest of men, "His end was peace." And on the contrary, good men sometimes die amidst fear and tumult—their sun goes down in cloud and storm, and the perplexed and baffled spectator is left to ask, "how dieth the wise man? even as the fool"; but these are only the outward circumstances of death, its scenery and surroundings; the great realities are hidden from our view; and the real difference between the two is infinite.

Live like the righteous, brethren, and like the righteous you will die. It may not be triumphantly, but it will be safely. The outward circumstances will be nothing; even the mood and feelings of the hour will be nothing. All will be right if the heart is right. You may even die with a struggle, and in the dark; there may seem to be wanting all

the evidences of the death of the righteous: no matter; you will die safely if you have lived purely; and the life which has been one long aspiration after the purity of God, will find at death its instantaneous answer in the spiritual perfection to which it has aspired. We cannot forget that the most righteous man that this world ever saw died in the dark—"Jesus Christ the righteous." Oh, that death! it was the death of a righteous man, of a man who had no sin and knew no sin; and yet it was a death of surpassing grief, and ignominy, and pain; not like the death of a righteous man; for the world gnashed its teeth upon Him as if He had been a criminal, and both heaven and earth seemed to treat him as an outcast and undone. But oh! He was a righteous man, and this was the explanation of it. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

No life of righteousness had been possible to us, without the death of that righteous man, but since "He has died unto sin," we may "live unto God"—live like Him, inspired with a principle of eternal righteousness, and through that death and its sanctifying influence we may die like him—full of patience, courage, faith, devotion—in pain, it may be—in darkness, it may be, but still safe, acceptable, and blest; and thus in the truest sense of all we may die "the death of the righteous"—the death of Christ, and "our last end may be like His."

J. W. B.

Nothing can be politically right that is morally wrong. A good man is the next best thing on earth to a good woman.

Truth is too simple for us; we do not like those who unmask our illusions.

God sends His rain in gentle drops, else flowers would be beaten to pieces.