

Thou art my mother and my sister !” O, then, welcome the grave ! be it eternal, still it is welcome ; for “ there the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest.”

Let Christian faith fail, and then this world’s wickedness and weariness are intolerable ; and the more thoughtful a man is, the more miserable he becomes. You may read the book of Ecclesiastes and learn there what life was before Christ, and what it would still be without him, — vanity of vanities ! And for us in this age of the world, it would be worse than for Solomon ; and him, royalty and wealth and genius could not save from feeling that “ better is the day of death, than the day of one’s birth.”

What miseries there are now, which to endure rightly require all one’s Christianity, and which, without that, would convert and concentrate all the feelings of our hearts into a fierce despair, — pain often making the short span of a life a prolonged spasm of agony, — poverty in aggravation of the body’s sufferings debarring one of the needful remedies, or the necessary food, or those many comforts which are requisite to make man’s unfurnished life endurable ; and this, too, in a world where the lilies of the field are arrayed in glory, and where the fowls of the air, — your Heavenly Father feedeth them.

Let a man be without Christ, let him know of himself no more than he learns from nature, and he must feel himself a mockery in the world. Let it have happened how it may ; it has happened, and it is so, that most men endure life and not enjoy it ; and this evil is largely augmented by the knowledge of it, by man’s having been created capable of discerning the evil of his lot, and bemoaning it, and of contrasting it with the happier world