The Church.

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Poetry.

THE NEW YEAR.

Another Year!—and yet the past must in my memory live;
It brought such hours of bliss to me as this may never give.
Why do the thoughtless sons of earth rejoice to welcome thee
Since each one as it passes o'er, fades in eternity?

The chiming of the distant bells, borne on the night wind's sigh,
Softly they peal a sad sweet knell, that warns us thou art nigh.
They seem to echo back again the voices of the dead,
And waken in my heart bright dreams of days for ever fled.

One parting sigh to thee, Old Year, one tear to thee I give;—
One passing thought of vain regret to think that I outlive
Those joy-fraught days of bliss thou gav'st,—I must forget them now,—
And gladly hail the coming Year with an unclouded brow.

New Year! what mingled train of thought these magic words can wake!
What flights of fancy we indulge! what aerial castles make!
And e'en the sounds that now are greeting thy first-blushing morn,
Proclaim another child of time has seen its opening dawn.

And as thy fleeting weeks pass on again the woods will ring,
And the sky-lark trill her sweetest songs, rejoicing in the Spring.
As soaring through the blue expanse of heav'ns vaulted dome,
She meets the morning sunbeams, ere to our world they come.

Then with the Summer's balmy air the bees come murmuring by,
And all is calm and peaceful as the sleep of infancy.
When the wildly-rushing torrent becomes a singing rill,
And the cool breeze stirs the aspen leaves, while all around is still.

But these sunny hours will pass away,—alas, they may not last,
And Autumn o'er the flowery earth her golden mantle cast;
The varied Seasons as they change bring forth new charms for me,
And each in turn becomes a type, oh rolling year, of thee.

Thou, too, wilt have thy pleasures, and perchance thou mayest fling
Thy sunniest rays upon me now, and make me fondly cling
To thee, as I have done to the bright year that now is gone;
And mourn thy transient days of joy as but more quickly flown.

New Year, I greet thee with all hope, and wherefore should I grieve
O'er the vanished dreams of fancy this loving heart would weave.
Thy choicest treasures scatter round, my path on earth to bless,
And may'st thou bring to young and old a share of happiness.

—*Felix Farley's Bristol Journal.*

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN CORNWALL, 7TH DECEMBER, 1845, ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. J. G. B. LINDSAY, THE RECTOR; AND IN WILLIAMSBURG, HIS LATE MISSION, 14TH DECEMBER, BY THE REQUEST OF THE CONGREGATION, AT WHOSE DESIRE IT IS NOW PRINTED.

BY THE REV. E. J. BOSWELL,

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Rev. xiv. 13.—I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

The holy Apostle, in the words preceding the text, has been declaring the fall and utter ruin of some grossly idolatrous religion or nation, and then immediately declares, that, at such a period, the people of God would have the greatest need of exercising that patience of which their divine Lord affords so brilliant example. The observation of the Apostle here is similar to the words of our Saviour, "In your patience possess ye your souls." The words of the text immediately follow. It is manifest therefore, I think, that they were addressed originally to persons represented as being under persecution, and they were intended for the comfort and edification of such. But, inasmuch as all Christian people are subject during their lives to many difficulties and trials, and as it is equally true now, as when it was first declared, "that through much tribulation we enter into the kingdom of heaven," it is not to be doubted that these words were intended also for the consolation of those who might at any time afterwards embrace the Gospel of Christ, as all need, more or less, comfort during this our time of trial. With this view of these words we intend, by the blessing of God, to endeavour to apply them, to you now here present, more particularly as although, on the one hand, they afford great and solid comfort to the pious believer, they, on the other hand, afford perhaps the most serious subject of consideration to such among you as do not live "worthy of that high calling, whereby ye have been called of God in Christ Jesus." It may be true that the same awful subject may be presented to the Church in other portions of the sacred Scriptures, but in none, as it appears to me, in the same startling manner in which it meets us here. Before entering on their consideration, let us hear these words again: "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

In this text, the first thing worthy of our attention is the solemn declaration of this voice from heaven, that they who die in the Lord are blessed. We are not to understand from this that the blessedness of good men does not commence till they die, for this would be to suppose that which is contradicted in almost every page of the Word of God. Righteousness, or living unto God, has promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come. All things evil, equally with all things good, work together for the benefit of those who worship, and fear, and love their Maker.—The pious have great joy and peace in believing.—Although it is true, they may have their sorrows, yet can they look beyond them, and the sight enables them to rise superior to any event, however afflictive, which may betide them here. Great is the blessedness in this life of those who fear the Lord. But so much greater is the blessedness of those who *die* in the Lord, so far surpassing all that they could possibly enjoy here—their frail nature being so corrupt—that, without any very great error of speech, death may be called a commencement of their blessedness. And how far surpassing all human ideas is that blessedness! The great Apostle of the Gentiles, copying the language of the Prophet Isaiah, says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God has in store for them that love and fear him." Without going beyond this Book of Revelation, we shall find abundant proof of the blessedness of the pious dead. The holy Apostle saw the saints above, arrayed in white linen, and he is informed, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white, in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. The Lamb shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, and there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads, and they shall reign for ever and ever." It is very true, we may not be able to comprehend the entire meaning of all this, nor exactly in what the blessedness consists, for, as this same Apostle says, "we know not what we shall be;" but the Church, from the first, has expected from the above passages—and no one can read them without believing—that the blessedness of those who die in the Lord will be very great; yea, such as is unspeakable in any language of this world.

We may learn also from these words, that this blessedness commences immediately at the death of the pious; so that there is no intermission between the tribulation of this life and the blessedness of the life to come. The dead in the Lord go at once from the congregation of the Church Militant to that of the Church Triumphant. As they, all their lives, have endeavoured to glorify God, so God instantly makes them glorious in their deaths, and they are among the saints in light. Precisely as our Saviour instructs us, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus: they both died; one is instantly carried to paradise, and the other is at once in hell. Therefore it is that death may be well called a sleep. Life is said then to end, when the breath leaves the body. But it is only this life present. The souls of the pious dead still live. That life which before had been hid with Christ in God, they then, when dead, begin to enjoy in its fullest extent, and, for the first time, completely understand in all its blessedness what the Apostle meant by those words, "Ye are dead, *and your life is hid with Christ in God.*" The sacred Scriptures contain no such most uncomfortable doctrines, as that the souls of the dead are ever in the sleep of death. They are distinct from the body, and partake not of its corrupt nature. They are immortal, like Him who gave them. They come forth from God and partake, so far as regards their immortality, of the divine nature. Our bodies are made of the earth, and, like all things earthly, are liable to corruption; but God breathed the spirit of life into man, and that which causes us to live, being of God, is, like himself, to live for ever. Whensoever therefore the last great enemy, death, attacks us, it reaches but our corrupt part, while the soul returns to Him who gave it, to remain either in joy or in misery. At once then at death the body of the pious man dies; but his spirit goes direct to the presence of his Maker, to enjoy that blessedness which his Saviour, whom he has loved and served so well, has long since gone before to prepare for him.

Although, as I have said, we cannot exactly comprehend the whole extent of the blessedness of such as die in the Lord, yet the text gives us one particular, in which it clearly intends that it does partly consist—"That they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." The principal labour of the Christian is the resisting the assaults of the devil, howsoever they may be made. The text undoubtedly refers to the labours of the primitive Christians, in their endurance of persecution; and persecution then was as much the work of the devil, whereby he endeavoured to make Christians apostatize from the religion of Christ, as now are the various sins by which he tempts us of the present day to renounce our baptismal privileges and vows. But passing by the original meaning of the words, they are still true as regards those who now die in the Lord. They do rest from their labours, for after death there is no more temptation. The warfare of the soldier of Christ is over, and the victory has been won. Thenceforth he lives where the wicked one must cease from troubling him, where righteousness and perfect peace for the first time, as regards him, have fully met together. He dwells, where shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie. No sin, consequently, can come nigh him. He, thenceforth, is perfectly renewed in spirit and in mind, and stands complete in Him who lived and died for him. There the pious man ceases from his labours, from his watchings, his cares, his temptations, his failings, and, if he has been careful to do the perfect will of his Saviour, from his fastings too; and he is made like unto the Son of God, totally, in every respect, even in his entire exemption from sin, and the possibility of committing it. But his blessedness consists too in this, that his works do follow him. Those who best know themselves, are fully aware of the great imperfections which accompany all they do. Even in their best works, there would, upon examination, be found something that would not please even themselves, how much less pleasing must it be to God!—All pious men are ready to acknowledge themselves unprofitable servants. They will take up the language of the Apostle, and confess themselves to be among the chief of sinners. But the works they have despised, and considered as of no profit, yet follow the doers of them to the abodes of bliss. And how will it astonish the dead in Christ, that what they have esteemed as of so little profit, should nevertheless be accounted worthy of being esteemed by their God and Saviour? It is then, after dying in the Lord, that the good works of the pious will be sweet to their remembrance. Then will they perceive, in all its force, the blessedness of doing the will of the Lord. Their good deeds, like those of the Centurion Cornelius, have gone to heaven before them for a memorial before the Lord, and now does the recollection of all their endeavours to serve the Lord faithfully follow them, and they are and shall be blessed in the recollection.—They will then receive a thousandfold in return for all their tribulation, and temptation, and resistance to it, for all that they have given up for the Lord's sake.

This declaration of the heavenly voice deserves, as you will have perceived, the most serious and attentive hearing from the pious; and not less attentive to it should be the sinner. The first should hear it, as affording great comfort under all their difficulties, and a lasting encouragement to persevere stedfastly unto the end, remembering that not one of the works they do in the service of God will be forgotten of him, but be noted down in his book as a memorial of them, until the day when Christ shall say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The wicked also should hear it, but with fear and trembling, for it tells them in the plainest manner that none can enter into heaven but he whose life has been a living up to his profession. It informs them that, in spite of all their hopes and dependence upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, there is no hope, not the slightest, for him, who, despising his baptismal privileges, lives the life, not of godliness, but of sin, and has made his members the servants of unrighteousness. The blessedness of the dead consists, as the text tells us, in a resting from their labours, and in their works following them. But what are the labours of the sinner, that he can rejoice after death in having ceased from them? The whole labour of his life has been pleasure. His pleasure has been to increase his worldly store, or to partake of those things which the world calls pleasure. How then can he be blessed, who is thus taken from all he has set his heart upon? That man cannot be called blessed who is doomed to death, that he may be a partaker in those things which his whole life has proved he cares not for, and places no value upon. And does the sinner shew, by his life, that he cares for or sets any value on the pleasures of heaven? If he did, would he not have shewn, by some one act or other, that he did so? It would not then be a state of blessedness for the sinner to be made a partaker of the pleasures of the saints in light. So far from it, that had the sinner his choice, he would live for ever in the same low grovelling pleasures in which he has spent all his days. Therefore, so far does the text hold out no hope of final blessedness to a sinner. But there is stronger proof still. The works of the dead in Christ do follow them. And so indeed will the works of the wicked follow *them.* But will they be the cause of an increase of blessedness? Can they tend to their comfort at all? When they hear the Judge say unto them, on account of their works, "I have never known you, ye workers of iniquity, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," where then will be the blessedness which they sometimes now hear of, but do not appear to value? So far from their works being any occasion of happiness, they will prove to be only an occasion of reproach, and shame, and everlasting burnings. Then will the wicked come to understand fully the exceeding sinfulness of their sins; how strangely they have rebelled against their God. And what was their greatest pleasure during life will be unto them, after death, the most unbounded source of misery, and that for ever. In vain then will be all their good intentions, their promises of amendment.—These will only increase their condemnation, because they will be complete proof of their having known the necessity of living godly, but that they would not.—So far from being blessed, their own conscience will be their principal cause of misery, for they will feel that the blessedness of those that die in the Lord might have been theirs, for God had given them every power necessary to enable them to follow after holiness, but that they had not the will to use it, and, therefore, through their own faults, they will be condemned to the gnawing of the worm that never dieth, and to the burning of the fire that shall never be quenched.

The inference to be made from this subject is, that there can be no hope of future happiness, unless a person has led a life of holiness, and has been fruitful in every good word and work. Therefore this text would seem to be fatal to the hope of all those who trust to death-bed repentance. This trust has arisen in a great measure from the method of preaching the faith in Christ, as practised now for some time past. And preached as it has been, and is still too often, it is a most gross fallacy. The word of God, expressly, in so many words, asserts that Christ came into the world to make an atonement for the sins of the world. Consequently faith is necessary, in order that the benefits of Christ's sacrifice may be applied to us. And were that all, then indeed a death-bed repentance might be quite as efficacious as repentance at any other time of life. But the Holy Scriptures go a great deal further, say a vast deal more as to the cause for which Christ came into the world. The Apostle St. Paul tells us expressly that the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to teach us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, *in this present world*, and that Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people *zealous of good works.* That we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world. Not that we are to spend our lives here in any way we please, in all the lusts of the world, and as regards our hearts, without God, and then, upon our death-bed, being terrified at the thoughts of dying, and meeting our Maker face to face, to endeavour to make our peace. There is not a word in the Bible to support any such idea,—but the word of God clearly informs us, that henceforth,—that is, so soon as we are dedicated to the service of God, and are able to choose the good from the evil,—we should no longer serve sin, but having been renewed in the spirit of our mind,—that is, having had new power given us, even the power of living according to godliness,—we should place our affections upon heavenly things, and with the Holy Ghost dwelling in us, for our counsellor and guide, we *should so pass through things temporal* that we lose not the things eternal; or, in the words of the Saviour, that we are so to use the mammon of unrighteousness, as that when we fail, the Blessed and Glorious Trinity may receive us into everlasting habitations. So the Apostle having successfully proved the resurrection, concludes from that, not that we should continue in sin, but he says—Be ye therefore, because you must arise, and stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive a reward of the things done in the body, [illegible] ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,—that is, in good works,—forasmuch as ye know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. So our Lord, in the account he gives of the way in which the last judgment is to be conducted, gives no foundation of a hope that anything less than a life spent in holiness, or good works, can be of any avail,—but supposing the fact of repentance from their works, he rewards the pious with everlasting life: supposing that the wicked had not repented, because they had done no works meet for repentance, he condemns them to everlasting death. In the same spirit the Apostle, in the book of Revelation, tells us, he whom he saw sitting on the throne, declared that the fearful, and the unbelieving, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. And again in the same spirit, but still more clearly, we read in the same book these words:—"I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last: blessed are they *that do his commandments*, that they *may have right* to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For *without* are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." This is the declaration of Jesus himself, and nothing can be more plain. He whose works follow him, or they that do his commandments, are blessed, and have right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gate into the new Jerusalem. They who do not keep the commandments of God, even the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, but pass their time in the commission of sins, are shut out of the heavenly city, and have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. All this is the doctrine, because it is the language, of Scripture. And we must know that this is very different from the belief of most persons, if we judge them by their acts. What now is more common, than to see men, and women too, on their death-beds, whose lives have been a disgrace to themselves, as they have been also a dishonouring of our holy religion, and who are the cause of many persons blaspheming that holy name by which they are called; yet after having passed so godless a life, raised up to the height of fanatic phrenzy, and appealing, not in the calm serene consciousness of a life well spent in giving glory to God,—not like the Apostle, rejoicing in the testimony of their conscience, nor like him appealing to their having done that which was commanded them,—but appealing to and relying simply upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, which every act of their life has shewn they despised, or, what is much worse, pronouncing with the strongest protestations, that their sins have been forgiven them—that now they are happy—that they can see their Saviour coming to them, and hear him calling them to himself, and a great deal more which would shock the ear of every truly pious person; or, feeling secure, only because now, where they find themselves arrested by the strong arm of the Lord, they by some method or other, can bring themselves to say that they are perfectly resigned to the will of God, and then——And what then, my brethren?—recovering from their sickness, to lead the same wicked course as before, equally regardless of their repeated vows to amend, and of the mercy of God in giving them longer time to repent, and thus again despising his mercy, and giving to all who will receive it, evident proof of the vanity of what in their case was only the sorrow of the world, that worketh death, and not that godly sorrow for sin which worketh repentance not to be repented of, and thus shewing too as we might, from the language of Scripture, have expected, that the blessing of God does not rest but upon those who have been *obedient* as well as faithful.

We have, my brethren, in the word of God, some examples of a death scene. Let me refer you to one, that you may see how a Christian speaks when he has death in view, and you will at once perceive how different his language is from that of a person who has never thought of repenting till, as he supposes, his death is nigh at hand. The example I bring before you is that of the Apostle St. Paul. In prison, and in momentary expectation of a bloody death,—seeing too, what, beyond doubt, was a thousand fold worse than any death, his own children in Christ Jesus, as he delighted to call his converts,—seeing these carried off daily and hourly, by scores at a time, to suffer the most horrid torments, and with the cries and cheers of the blood-thirsty multitude ringing in his ears; under all these most horrible circumstances, what is the language of the holy man? Calmly reflecting upon his life, since his conversion, and his conscience testifying that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he had had his conversation in the world,—he writes to his beloved disciple Timothy these words,—and none more affecting, nor more beautiful in every respect, can be found written by inspired or uninspired men. He writes—"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. *I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith.* Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me in that day." Here the appeal is made to, and his assurance rests upon, simply his past life. But now how often and often is the preacher of a funeral sermon able to give no better, nor any other proof of repentance, than a few declarations of belief, and resignation, made by the dead person, on his death-bed, and most generally because the Minister of the Gospel is not often sent for till then, in his dying moments. It is, without exception, the most soul-deadening, and soul-condemning idea, that the Devil ever put into the mind of man; and hence it is, even from the idea that people can repent when death comes, we see so few examples of living soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. So scarce are such examples, that it is most refreshing to the Minister of Christ to be able to hold out for your imitation any one such, and the life and conversation of your late Minister, so far as an acquaintance of some years enables me to judge, will afford us one.—It is true, he was a Minister of the Gospel of Christ, and therefore, from his office, he was compelled to be engaged in spiritual affairs. It is not as the Clergyman I intend principally to speak of him, because we know that this may be the occupation of a person, and yet he be devoid of all personal piety. Still, even in his official capacity, we shall find much which will lead us to suppose him entitled to the blessedness of those who die in the Lord. A man in the ministry has two courses of conduct before him, either of which he may pursue. He may do just sufficient to save himself harmless from any rebuke of his Bishop; or, remembering that he is the Minister of Christ, and that to him is entrusted the care of the souls of the adopted children of God in Christ Jesus, and that an account of these will be hereafter required of him, he may determine, by God's grace, to do his duty in such a way as to approve himself to God, and acquire that rejoicing, which is the effect of an approving conscience.—You know, doubtless much better than I can tell you, which was the course pursued by our lamented brother, your late Minister. He did his duty as before God. What he considered necessary to be done, either for the benefit of Christ's Church, or of the souls of those committed to his trust—if, indeed, the benefit of these can ever be separated, and I think they cannot—you know he did, most perseveringly.—He was never backward in the performance of any thing which he thought necessary to be done for the [illegible] until the period when God was pleased to take him, he may be called, with the greatest truth, a devoted Minister of Christ. He, by the grace of God, giving him a good will, and working with him, when he had that good will, did his duty in that station of life to which God had been pleased to call him. Even his death, however much in itself to be lamented, gives us one strong proof, among hundreds of others, of his rigid determination to do his duty, at whatever risk to himself. It was occasioned by a disease caught while visiting a family afflicted with the same.

But did he carry this regard to God, this determination to perform his duty, into his private walk and conversation. Does the blessedness, pronounced upon the pious dead, belong to him in this view of his character. Here again, we see in him, an example of an endeavour to follow in those steps of the Saviour, which he has left to his disciples to walk in. There can be no doubt, in his case, that the religion of the Lord's Day was followed by a christian life during the week. He was the practiser of those christian virtues, which he taught, and inculcated upon, his congregation. In all the relative duties as a subject, husband, father, master, or friend he endeavoured to do his duty, and set an example worthy of imitation. He offered not his prayers in the Church as the Minister of the congregation only. He bore in mind, that he, as all other members of the Church of Christ, was to be a priest in his own house, therefore the day was commenced, and evening closed, with prayer and praise, thus being an exemplification of the truth of the Prophet's words, that the Lord will create on the dwelling-places of Mount Zion a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. Knowing too that all other Christian virtues being practised, yet that they are not esteemed, that in the eye of God they are all nothing worth, and dead, without charity, we find him always ready to practice this more excellent way of the Christian, whether we confine the meaning of the word to mere almsgiving, or give it that more extended sense, it bears in our Saviour's parable. In the Apostle's words we may say that his charity was that, which suffereth long, and is kind, doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked. It was proved by his anxiety to gather back into the Church those who had strayed from her fold. It was proved by his anxiety to walk according to the rules of the Church, so that he might not cast a stumbling block in the way of any, and from so guileless a life, we may easily conclude, what his death bed was. He was full of an assured hope. He knew whom he had served, and whom he had trusted, and that Christ was able to save that which he had committed to him, at the last great day, and thus being strong in faith, with the joyful testimony of his conscience, although it would have been more profitable for the Church, had God granted him a longer continuance among us, yet knowing that for himself it was far better to depart and be forever with the Lord, he quietly, peacefully and willingly fell asleep in Christ. Thus his life and death are before you, and you will agree with me, I think, that he was an example of holy living, and of holy dying, and that we may safely take upon us the words of the text, and apply them to him, and say, that he is indeed blessed, being dead, because he died in the Lord, and that having ceased from his labours, his works will follow him, and give him a right to enter into the new city, the heavenly Jerusalem, and when at the last great day, Christ shall come to make up his jewels, he will be numbered with them, and thus be presented faultless before the throne of God with exceeding joy.

And now my brethren, remember that such as he was, I warn you, you must be, if you would have the blessedness of dying in the Lord—or if you know, that he was faulty in any respect, there you must be such as he was, and better, where you think he went wrong.—Such a course of conduct alone can insure you, through Christ, the final blessedness of the Saints made perfect. Be assured, that he among you, who despises the long suffering of God in permitting you longer to live, and expects to be viewed only on a death bed repentance, such among you must not be surprized, if they find themselves at last most miserably disappointed. But there is another thing to be observed. In a death bed repentance, you suppose that beyond doubt your last illness will be of a few if not of many days continuance. Is this always the case? Do not the various painful deaths visited upon different persons and their pains depriving them of the necessary ease, and opportunity of trying to make their peace with their Maker, teach you that the death bed is not always a place of preparation, for a happy meeting with God, and for passing eternity in blessedness? Have you not heard, or perhaps seen, that God sometimes in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, cuts short the life, and then again where is the time for preparation. This may be your fate. Some sudden stroke, may take you off in the midst of all your sins, and so you be ruined forever. Let me then impress upon you the absolute necessity of holy living as the only certain preparation for a holy and blessed dying—that God expects you to *live unto him* as well as to die unto him. Therefore remember the words of the text—"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord—that they may rest from their labours and their works do follow them."

A few words to the survivors and I have done,—you must know better than any other persons, the manner of life and conversation of our departed brother. You therefore know best the way in which he served God. To you all, and more particularly to those of his own especial household, I would hold forth his example for imitation. No doubt in your own minds, you fully purposed to remember, and follow his manner of life, his purpose, faith, long suffering, charity, patience. But the world has its temptations, more especially for the young, and without constant watchfulness, and prayer, these may be led astray. And if it be permitted to the Saints in light again to suffer affliction for any thing that may pass here below, conceive, if you can, how intensely he will be afflicted, if you should fall away from your own steadfastness, or if through your fault and want of care, his now fatherless children should be ignorant of their privileges as the adopted children of God, and break their baptismal covenant. Follow then his example—and let the grace of God rule in your own hearts and strive to train up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Commit thy way to God with prayer, and he will bring it to pass. Death has deprived you of his company. You are anxious to meet him again—as the only possible way of attaining the end of your wishes, strive by supplication, and prayer, to follow in his steps—and thus shall you again be united to him, and enjoy his society, and reign with him forever. Go ye therefore and do likewise—and what ever ills betide you, you will have a friend, that sticketh closer than a brother—and when death comes to take you home, it will be, like his, a removal from a state of trial, to one of entire peace and blessedness and that forever.

THE WAITING OF THE INVISIBLE CHURCH.

(From Archdeacon Manning's Sermons.)

And now, from all this, we see what ought to be the master-aim of our lives; that is, to make sure of our fellowship in that mystical number. We see that it is not enough that we belong to one visible Church. Many partake of the visible unity who in the invisible have no portion. The Church is like a sacrament, [illegible] Church has both a body and a soul: the body is that one, uniform, organized, universal polity, of which the succession of the apostles is the essential first condition: the soul is that inward unity of energetic faith, hope, and charity, which knits all saints, from the highest to the lowest, in one spiritual family. These are the fruits, or result, of the visible unity; as the likeness of Christ is the effect of the holy sacraments in the faithful receiver. The visible unity is a sacramental means to the formation of this fellowship of sanctity. All regenerate men are saints in capability, but these are saints in fact. The former may be, the latter are, conformed to Christ's likeness. The difference is the same as between a moral nature and a moral habit: the nature may be passive, or be perverted; the habit must be developed by energy, and sustained by the powers of moral life. There is therefore no difficulty in testing ourselves. Every man can tell whether his life is energetically pure and holy or not. With saints of old, martyrdom was the test, or saintliness of life, by which they bore martyrdom in the will, though they were never crowned with it in the body. And we, too, have no need to be doubtful of our state. The sure sign is the likeness of Christ growing in our hearts, waxing ever brighter from childhood, in boyhood, youth, and riper years; ever shining out more clearly as He draws nearer. This is His own countersign. Plainly the sinful, the slothful, the double-minded, the worldly, that is, all who under the strong assimilating power of the world, are growing into its likeness, are aliens from the soul of the one Church, and are as yet severed from the mystical number which He is gathering out. It is true that we cannot draw any line so strongly marked as to cut off with absolute and visible certainty those who do, and those who do not, belong to that unseen fellowship. As there is twilight between noon and midnight, so are there infinite graduations of character: and yet this is certain, that no man that is not either freed from the power of sin, or repenting of his sin-soiled state, has any warrant to believe himself of that number. Many, indeed, there are of most imperfect sanctity; namely, those who are puffed up with vanity and ambition, and love of the pomps of life, its honor, power, high bearing, great friendships, and the like; and likewise those who are opinionated and self-confident, fond of controversy, and prone to a controversial temper; or again,, tinged with self-complacency, and addicted to a self-sparing, soft, relaxed religion, which clings to the alluring, but shrinks with dislike from the severer precepts of the faith. Now all these, and the infinite shades of character contained in them, or related to them, may belong to the unseen fellowship; but their title to it is ambiguous, and their end doubtful. For all such the way is, not to strain after a high-toned devotion, till they have laid the deep basis of a thorough repentance. Their chief danger is, the weakness of an unnatural growth, which has got above its healthy powers. The imagination and the intellect have stimulated the forms of faith and sanctity, and they are in danger of persuading themselves that they really are what they are so well able to delineate. Repentance is the threshold of the invisible sanctuary where the saints are gathering, and here they must fall down before they think to enter. None but they that have either a pure or a broken heart shall see God.

Be careful, therefore, above all things to commit yourselves to the great movement of God's providence in His Church, by which He is drawing His faithful within the curtains of His pavilion. Be not content to stand without, albeit in the precinct of the visible Church; there are more that gaze upon the outward ritual in which the earthly Church pays homage to her Lord, than enter into its mind and mystery. Pray Him to give you the white robes of sanctity and fellowship with the saints unseen, that you may wait in patience, lying under the altar, dead with Christ.—Let daily worship, and the ever-returning sacrifice of the holy eucharist, be your life and food. We are fallen on an evil age; an age of bitterness and wrong, and deaf inexorable slander, accusation, and strife, and separation. Martyrdom, and all its high and stirring fears, is gone, and the wearisome harrassing of a petty warfare has fastened on the Church. We are fallen on an age in which the chief zeal for truth is, that, men have not so absolutely ceased to care for it, as to keep from quarrelling about it. Almost are we tempted to cry out, Would that a season of stern trial might sift the Church of all shallow, petulant, self-loving, boastful men, that the true and loyal hearts might be made manifest, and, by one decisive trial, short as it is sharp, win their crown of life. But not so; God has willed otherwise. We must wait, and not be weary; we must bear all the fretfulness and provocation of earthly tempers and false tongues for a little season. Meanwhile, the perpetual worship of our unseen Master, and the communion of hidden saints, and the fellowship of the invisible Church, must be our strength and stay.

And see, also, how broad a light this throws on our duties towards all around us. The first debt we owe them is, to endeavour by all means to draw them into the same blessed fellowship. We owe this to every member of Christ's visible Church, but, above all, to such as are bound to us by ties of an especial nearness, whether by blood or by the benediction of the Church. There is no other lasting basis of friendship or affection but this only, that our spirits be knit in the unseen unity of saints. All else is mere falsehood.—"Two men shall be working in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left;" so shall all fellowships be cut asunder but those that meet in God. In the choice of friends, in all great changes and casts in life, let this be your rule. Such is the mysterious action and re-action of moral beings on each other, that no one can say what may be the end of an ill-chosen fellowship. "What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"—On one side or the other the power of assimilation must prevail. How often has the earthlier mind drawn away a high and ripening spirit from the fellowship of saints? And O fearful fall which draws others in its ruin! Watch, then, and pray, that you may not only enter into the mystical sanctuary of saints and go no more out, but gather in also all your loved ones, that there be no parting any more. Though God tarries, yet all things hasten on. Day by day we are nearer our last change. The unseen Church is crying "How long?" the Church in warfare ceases not continually to pray for the consummation of the elect. And albeit so short, yet this fleeting life to them is as a long and lingering night, which holds off a blessed morrow. Though the time be not yet, nevertheless there are tokens of changes coming on the earth. The shadows are lengthening out, and the day of its toilsome life is well nigh spent. Oh, when He comes, and the dead are judged, and the names of those that have overcome, which are written in the Lamb's book of life, are read one by one in our ears, how shall our hearts thrill to bursting, while we hear phophets, apostles, martyrs, and saints, bid "come up hither;" and all our beloved ones, a friend, a sister, a husband, each in turn called out and clad in white robes for the marriage-feast! What if we should be left out at last? What if our name be "not found written in the book of life?" Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified."

THE ERRORS OF THE TIMES, AND THE DUTY OF UNION.

(From a recent Charge by the Lord Bishop of Llandaff.)

And now, my reverend brethren, in addressing you for the sixth time, and, considering the ordinary period of human life, not improbably for the last time, permit me to take a freedom which may expose me to the imputation of vanity from the world, or of attributing too much weight to my own opinions, but which you will, I trust, receive with greater indulgence.

I would entreat you, then, to peruse with attention the last Charge which I delivered in this diocese, written about the time when these Oxford Tracts began to attract general attention. The occasion led me to meditate deeply upon the causes of that hold which Papal corruptions and Papal dominion still retained, in an age when the wide range of intellectual pursuits had for centuries opened the minds of all educated men, and had dislodged so many prejudices and errors that had prevailed during the middle ages. Why, it was natural to ask, amidst the general advancement, has no progress been made in subverting the false tenets and degrading superstitions of Rome?

And not only so, but, on the other hand, how comes it that so large a portion of the Protestant world are split into endless divisions and sects, many of them agreeing in the fundamental truths of Christianity, and rejecting like ourselves popish corruptions, and yet *not* like ourselves religiously preserving the unity of the Church, as being a body constituted by Christ himself, and claiming allegiance and attachment from every member, according to the earnest and repeated injunctions of its founder?

The solution of both these difficulties appeared to me to be the same, and to be alike traceable to this single error, slowly indeed and gradually formed, but at length boldly professed and imperiously enjoined, that the unity of the Church consisted in having ONE visible head or governor of the whole upon earth.—Now this is a notion for which there is not the slightest foundation in Scripture, nor the slightest evidence in the history of the Church during, at the very least, the first five centuries. Yet, during all that period, as well as ever since, to maintain the unity of the Church has been held to be a duty of sacred and eternal obligation. In one of our own prayers we recognise it as stamping an inalienable character upon the body, perfectly in unison with the whole economy of the Gospel dispensation—that there is "but one body and one spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may all be united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity." How is it that in all this enumeration of the elements and principles of unity, taken from Scripture and from ancient liturgies, the government of the Church throughout the world by *one bishop*, should never even be hinted at, I do not say as essential, but as forming any constituent part of this divinely commissioned institution? The claim indeed has long been proudly and arbitrarily asserted. But it rests on no evidence—it will bear no examination. It was, however, in times of darkness and ignorance blindly submitted to in the western Church, as a dogma involving the very essence of the faith; and to dispute it was thought equivalent to a denial of our Redeemer. But that the pontifical supremacy is an innovation, a creature of man's invention, all history proclaims: and this illusion being once dispelled, the whole fabric of superstitions and corruptions built upon it falls at once to the ground.

On the other hand, the overthrow of this imaginary claim, which had so long held European Christendom in subjection, led too many of the Protestants to shut their eyes altogether to the *real* unity of the Church. Thus the same confusion of thought became the source of pernicious error in each case. The Papist thought unity was destroyed if the Pope ceased to govern;—the Protestant held, that because that dominion was usurped, there was no *form* of Church government on earth which had Divine authority, or to which the allegiance of Christians was due.