

NOT DEAD BUT SLEEPING.

"And all wept and bewailed her: but He said, weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth."—*St. Luke*, 8th chapter, 52nd verse.

"*In the midst of life we are in death*;" thus the sacred voice of our holy church most appropriately admonishes us, in that most solemn moment when she stands with us beside the grave of some departed member of her communion, engaged in the last sad ceremonial of love and duty: committing the body to the ground, "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust." Yes, beloved brethren, **IN THE MIDST OF LIFE WE ARE IN DEATH.** How familiar are the words, how often have we heard them read in our sublime burial service, when present on the occasion of some funeral; but it is then most truly we realise the truth and feel the full force of this most awakening declaration, when some near and dear relative or friend is suddenly removed from us by death. Such has been the case among ourselves within the last few days. A dear relative, a beloved friend, a faithful, important and highly esteemed member of this church and community has, in the dark inscrutable providence of the all-wise God, been suddenly taken away from us. It is, my brethren, as you may all possibly remember, but a very short time since she appeared here among us, —then "*in the midst of life*,"—joining us in holy worship of our common Father and God, and in the more deeply solemn and sacred duty of sacramental communion. But a few short days have passed, and *now* she is no more on earth, no longer among us; the will of an all-wise God hath suddenly arrested her earthly race, called her body to the dust, and her spirit, as we trust, to his blessed presence and his heavenly rest. Such was His will, the will of our heavenly Father, *who dealeth with us as with sons, correcting us for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness.* "Clouds and darkness are round about him," the workings