

fond embrace, by the cold, inexorable grasp of death? But much as we would give and do to restore them again to the occupancy of the vacant places they have left behind them, even though we may have a strong, well-founded assurance that it would be for the worse to them, the thought is vain. We must go to them, they cannot return to us. Who would replace the ripened fruits when they drop from the tree on which they grew? Wait till the reviving spring returns, and the green leaves and fresh blossoms will tell us that new productions are at hand. So too, sound in the faith of the Gospel and strong in the Christian's hope, reading as we must, and learning as best we can, the solemn and important lesson taught us by the transient presence of departed relatives and friends, let us be thankful that the shortness of the time is not an unmitigated evil, but that its sternest features are softened and subdued by the prospect, a little while hence, of a glorious resurrection, when the spirits of them that sleep in Jesus, joined to new and incorruptible bodies, shall begin to dwell in the realms of bliss, and enter upon a fellowship and a converse, pure and endless as the light of everlasting day.

"A few short years of evil past,  
We reach the happy shore,  
Where death-divided friends at last,  
Shall meet to part no more."

If, brethren, this be our experience of the shortness of the time as regards the past, what should be our thoughts of it as regards the untried and unknown future? That which will be has already been. The days to come, whether they be many or few, shall in their progress be as rapid and evanescent as the days which are gone. And then with reference to the future, while it must necessarily resemble the past in point of brevity, it differs from it in one noteworthy respect. To each one of us it is awfully uncertain how many more years or days we have to spend on earth. We can tell how long we have been in the world, but we know not the end of our allotted term, whether it be near or distant. Very soon at the latest the earthly house of this tabernacle must be dissolved. To-day we are spared to begin another year. Shall we all be permitted to see the close of it? If so, our experience must be different from what it has been during the last twelve months. Some who were permitted this day last year, to exchange congratulations with the living, are now numbered among the dead. With this as our warning, let us enter upon the duties, enjoyments, and trials of this new year, and let us be assured, it will be all the more profitably spent and none the less happy, if we preserve in our souls a constant sense of the shortness of the time that remains. ✕

My beloved friends, I have one thing more to say. The short time that remains is all we have for the great, momentous work of

preparation for eternity, and if it be my privilege to wish you abounding happiness, in this place I can venture to do so only in connection with that work, for any happiness here will be as short as time itself, if it spring not from the belief of God's truth and sanctification by the Holy Spirit. Have you begun this serious work in earnest. Persevere zealously and prayerfully, and the Lord, who creates and renews the spirits of his people, will assuredly perfect that which concerneth you. Have you been so many years in the world and have you not yet entered upon this work? You have been perilling your highest interests. You have left the concerns of eternity to the dread uncertainty of a moment. Now your everlasting happiness is at stake. Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? "Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Look unto Jesus the sinner's friend, look and your souls shall live. May the great God who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, bless you abundantly with temporal goodness, but especially bestow upon you all manner of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. And to Him be all the praise both now and evermore! Amen.

#### FROM OUR SCOTCH CORRESPONDENT.

A great man has fallen in Israel. Dr. Robertson, the Convener of the Endowment Scheme, is dead. No minister in Scotland appeared to have such an iron constitution, and yet he has been taken from us at the age of fifty-eight, and before his great work was completed. He had gathered the materials; had commenced the building; and now, another, and let us hope a master-workman, must enter into his labors and place the capstone on the work. It is fortunate that a Vice Convener was appointed at Dr. Robertson's especial desire, and that so able a man as the Rev. Mr. Smith, late of Trinity Church, and now of Leith, was secured to co-operate with him, and to attend to many of the details of the scheme. Mr. Smith, I believe, had thoroughly mastered his colleague's plans in all the various stages at which they have arrived, and become imbued with his spirit. That he should now equal him in energy, in influence with high and low, and in enthusiasm, which was always contagious because ever fresh, is perhaps more than can be expected. Yet in one sense it ought to be much easier to finish the work now than if the heroic originator were still living. For what an appeal can be made to all to come forward, each to put his stone to that cairn which is most fitting that the Church should raise to him; the proud monument of 200 churches in destitute localities so endowed and equipped that from their pulpits the Gospel shall be preached unto the poor for ever without money and without price.