

ken from us our beloved friends to reflect upon our conduct and behaviour to them, *while they lived*—to feel how many things we have omitted, that we might have done for their virtue and happiness—and to wish that they might be again restored to us, if it were only to afford us an opportunity of demonstrating the full extent of that affection which we bore them, but which, as we now apprehend, we did not express so assiduously, so tenderly, and so earnestly, as we now fervently and grievously *wish* we had done. How tenderly would we cherish, how unweariedly would we labour to bless and to do good to those, who, alas! on earth can no more *feel our love*, or receive any expression of our tenderness and affection!

But think not that such feelings are vain and unavailing. There is—there is yet much that may be done on your part, to bless and to delight those whom indeed ye can no more behold or serve on earth, but whose spirits in heaven will rejoice, when they behold you living and acting in such a manner as they may approve—when they behold you treading with perseverance the path of virtue and piety, and followers of *them, who, through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises*. Would you add to their joy in heaven? Be wise, be virtuous, “and whatsoever things are pure, lovely and of good report—think on those things, and do them.” This will be the most acceptable testimony of your affection—the best pledge that ye can give of your love to those, who are now—*beyond the reach—above the need—of any of those offices of friendship, which are acceptable or useful to our fellow mortals*. Do not oppress the soul with the gloomy and appalling idea, that the friends, whom you love—*now more truly and tenderly love than when they were alive*—are lost—are unconscious—are, as if they had never been—but rather think that their better being is now commenced—that now only they have begun to live, since they are delivered from the fears and miseries of mortality—from this state of sin, woe, and death; let us think of them, as those, who are conscious of our present state; of all that we are, of all that befalls us, who are the spectators, the constant and anxious spectators of our life and our conversation, who look with tender solicitude on all our ways, on all our actions—who are grieved when we sin and depart from the path of duty—who are delighted when they behold us doing those things which are right, and well pleasing in the sight of God. With this view, cherish in your hearts a tender and sacred recollection of your departed friends; not for the purpose of indulging a morbid melancholy, a sullen and unmanly sorrow, but to awaken every virtuous energy of the heart, to dispel that weakness of grief, which melts and enervates the mind—to arm the soul with fortitude and patience, to quicken the seeds of every great and noble virtue, and, from the things that are seen and temporal, to *elevate the eye of faith to the habitual contemplation of those things which are unseen and eternal*. “Wherefore seeing *we also* are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and