

hereafter, the something beyond the grave at which I recoil. Those great realities, which, in the hours of mirth and vanity, I have treated as phantoms, as the idle dreams of superstitious beings, these start forth and dare me, now in the most terrible demonstration. My awakened conscience feels something of that eternal vengeance I have often defied.

"To what heights of madness is it possible for human nature to reach! What extravagance is it to jest with death and to laugh at damnation! To sport with eternal chains, and recreate a jovial fancy with the scenes of infernal misery!

"Oh with what horror do I recall those hours of vanity which I have wasted! Return ye lost neglected moments. How should I prize you above the the Eastern treasures!—Let me dwell with hermits; let me rest on the cold earth; let me converse in cottages; may but once more stand in a candidate for an immortal crown, and have my probation for celestial happiness."

Alas! to hear the approach of the waves of eternity with such confessions as these—to acknowledge that life has been a failure, that the future is dark, that the soul is preadmonished that something dreadful awaits it—how sol-
emul how awful! How pitiable the expressions of the departing Col. Gardiner, "Would I were that dog;" of Randolph of Roanoke, "Remorse, remorse, remorse!" of the voluptuous Sir Francis Delaval, "Let my example warn you of the fatal error into which I have fallen;" of the ambitious Cardinal Mazarine, "Oh my poor soul! what will become of thee? whither wilt thou go?" How does it touch the heart with commiseration to hear the brilliant Madame Du Defiant declare in one sentence her infidelity, and, in another, refute the declaration by exclaiming in despair, "Tell me why, detesting life, I yet, dread to die!" or to read the melancholy assertion of the erring Byron, made near the close of his life, "I have often wished for insanity, for anything to quell memory, the never-dying worm that feeds on my heart!"

Are we building our heavenly hopes on a foundation that will stand in the presence of eternal realities? Soon at the longest, we must play our part in the last great tragedy of life.—We live surrounded by the elements of dissolution. Of those elements our frail bodies are made, and they must soon perish. "Like the dream of a distracted person," says Jeremy Taylor "a man goes off, and is forgotten." "A dream of a shadow," sang Pinder of life; and the Hebrew Psalmist, "We spend our years as a tale that is told." Almost before we are aware, our years will draw to a close, and the threshold of eternity will lie before us. Will our

last hour usher us into misery or felicity? Overwhelmed with remorse for a wasted life, shall we tremble over the brink of eternity as the sere leaf trembles in the autumn wind, over the precipice that girts the sea? or filled with the love of God, shall we rejoice in the assurance that we have a glory begun within us that is forever to endure.

H. B.

TALENTS.

"Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness."—MATT. XXV. 30.

Have you read of the servant who hid in the earth

The talent his master had given,
When, by diligent use, to redouble its worth,
He ought to have faithfully striven?

My child, you have talents,—God gave them to you,

And will surely require them again:
Take care not to waste them; if ever so few,
Let them not have been given in vain.

You have *speech*; then remember to watch your words well,

And let them be gentle and kind;
It may seem a small matter, but no one can tell
The comfort a word leaves behind.

You have *time*; every minute and hour of the day

Is lent by your Father in heaven:
Make haste to improve, ere it passes away.
This talent so graciously given.

You have *influence*, too, though it seems very small,

Yet in greater, or lesser degree,
You affect the improvement and comfort of all.
With whom you may happen to be.

And the child who in earnest endeavors to live
As an heir of eternity ought,
By his silent example a lesson may give,
Which by words he could never have taught.

Then consider the talents intrusted to you,
And may they be daily improved;
Let your services be hearty and free, as is due
From children so greatly beloved.

(From "Thoughts in Verse.")