

CHRISTIAN MIRROR.

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF RELIGION AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

"MANY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO, AND KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED."—DANIEL XII. 4.

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[FOR THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR.]

LINES

ON THE DEATH OF E. C. S.

BY MRS. J. R. SPOONER.

AND art thou gone! has death's cold hand again,
With iron grasp, rent dearest ties in vain?
Art thou already in the silent grave—
And youth, and goodness—love, could not thee save?
Still in the morning of thy days, so soon
Thy sun went down, ere it had reached its noon.
O, death! thou hast all seasons for thine own—
Since now again thine arrows have been thrown.
The wound was scarcely healed, made by thine hand,
Which touched one dear one in a distant land;
And now, another victim's claimed by thee—
The youngest branch upon the parent tree.
They loved in life, but now in death are laid,
Far, far apart—and the first grave was made,
By stranger's hands upon a foreign shore,
In tropic climes, and where old Ocean's roar,
By day and night yet sounds the funeral knell—
More sad and solemn than the passing bell.
Great God! how wondrous are thy ways to man!
We know but "part," and "darkly" see thy plan—
Through eye of faith, we know thou doest well;
But why 'tis so, is not for man to tell.
The time will come, when all shall be revealed,
Which now, by love eternal is concealed—
When we shall see our Maker "face to face,"
And each shall stand in his appointed place.
Though we must mourn, for nature has her tears,
Yet let us joy, that he has passed the fears,
The suffering, sorrows, tending on the way,
Of life's too thorny path, from day to day—
We thank thee, Father! thou didst grant him strength,
And showed him light, through the dark valley's
length—
So strong his faith, and hope, and trust in God,
He meekly bowed his head, and kissed the rod.

GENERAL LITERATURE.

THE BEREFT.

(CONCLUDED.)

YEARS passed on, and no shadow had as yet been cast on the path-way, or dimmed the prospects of our young friends. But in the enjoyment of happiness so undisturbed, they would soon have forgotten that they were *Pilgrims*. In the world we must have tribulation, and the followers of Jesus must all feel the weight of the cross. An infant daughter was added to other blessings—a lovely gift; like its mother, fair and beautiful in feature, and like the chiselled ivory in form. The little Caroline was but one week old, when the father received a summons to a distant city, on important business connected with the interests of his Master's kingdom. His presence was essentially necessary, and at any other time he would not have hesitated a moment about the course he ought to pursue. He now felt that he ought to go; but as he looked on his infant daughter, and the feeble frame of his wife, the yearning of the husband and father, almost triumphed over the servant of the church. He did not inform his wife of the circumstance; but, spreading the matter before the Lord, he determined to communicate it to her the next morning. With the quick eye of affection, Caroline had observed the anxious expression upon his countenance, and inquired the cause.

"Speak, Herbert," she said—"You think, because my health is feeble, I must not share your anxieties. Recollect that my faith is not unfeebled by this indisposition, but grows stronger in the hour of bodily weakness." When she heard the circumstances, she exclaimed—"My dear husband, can you for one moment hesitate? Go, and may our Master's blessing go with you. Your presence is the solace of my lonely hours, the light of my sick room; but I could not love you so well, loved I not Jesus and his service more.—You leave me with every comfort—a quiet home, my kind mother constantly with me, and many friends near at hand; and, best of all, you leave me with our God.

At the dawn of the next morning, Herbert stood beside his wife. She was awake, and extended her hand to him. "One duty, my husband, remains to be performed, and then we shall be separated for the first time. Our little Caroline must be dedicated to her Saviour in the holy ordinance of baptism. I have fondly looked forward to the Sunday morning when I should present her at the altar where we pledged ourselves to each other, but it is better not to defer it. I trust she shall be spared to us many years; but it may please her Father to call her to himself even before your return, and I would have our lamb included now in the fold of the great Shepherd."

The little family assembled. The font of pure water was placed beside the bed, and the voice of prayer arose. The parents renounced for their offspring the "pomps and vanities of this wicked world," and the little one was received into the congregation of Christ's flock.

In a few days Herbert found himself in the midst of his clerical brethren at C——, and his feelings were soon intensely engaged in the business that had called them together. His thoughts often turned homeward, but not with anxiety, for he felt that the banner of divine love overshadowed the dear inmates of the parsonage, and that all was "well" with them.

He had been several days at C——, when a letter from home was handed him, and he perceived with surprise the well known hand of his wife. Caroline had exerted herself to write, that she might with her own pen assure him, that all were well at home. She expressed her deep interest in the important business that engaged him, and closed the few lines with a renewed assurance of her fond affection, and perfect trust in heaven.

Herbert read these words with gratitude, and with increased interest finished the work on which he had been sent.

The next week he turned his face homeward with a cheerful heart. The journey occupied three whole days; but on the afternoon of the fourth, he drew near the vine-covered piazza of his little cottage. As the green lawn before it, and the white fences that encircled it, rose upon his view, he inwardly prayed that he might be prepared for any sorrow that the Almighty might have in store for him. It was a kind admonition of the blessed spirit, and it helped to sustain him in the sad event.

The carriage stopped at the gate, and Herbert descended with a light step. No voice greeted him, and a dreadful weight fell upon his heart as he looked up and perceived that each window-shutter was closed. He rushed forward, and meeting no one below, hastily passed on to the chamber of his wife. At the door the mother of Caroline met him—she threw her arms about his neck, and burst into tears.

Herbert was now prepared for the worst! He entered the chamber, and the lifeless forms of his wife and child were before him!

He sunk upon the floor for a time insensible.

When consciousness returned, he gave way to one deep long paroxysm of grief.

But in time the Christian triumphed over the man. "Father! thy will—thy holy will be done," were his first articulate words. The tumultuous heaving of his bosom subsided, as he knelt beside his wife, and poured out his soul before God.—His compassionate Saviour answered him while he was yet speaking;—a voice almost audible seemed to say—"She is not dead, but sleepeth," and as the rich consoling promise arose in his mind, a degree of peace that cannot be described stole over his feelings.

Caroline was apparently well when she wrote to him, but the next day there were symptoms of fever that were communicated to her child before the physician was aware of their existence. Her disease increased with fearful violence. The brain became affected, and of course she was at times insensible. Letters were despatched to Mr. Singleton, but they could not reach him.—The husband and the wife were to meet no more until the morning of the resurrection.

On the fifth day of her illness, Caroline slept for some time, and when she awoke, her friends perceived that reason had returned. She spoke to each of those around her, and asked their prayers—"Not," she said, "for my recovery, but that the Lord will deal gently with me, and enable me to glorify Him in the hour of death. Mother," she added, "forgive me all I have ever said or done to wound your feelings; and forgive me that I have left so much undone that might have added to your happiness—forgive me, for Jesus' sake;—now kiss me, dearest mother—nay, do not weep—it is the Lord's will, and we must not even seem to oppose it."

"Tell Herbert," and she paused,— "tell Herbert that at first I prayed I might be spared until his return—but that now, through divine grace, I feel willing to go even without seeing him, for Jesus calls, and his voice alone is dearer than my beloved husband. Tell him to remember the seal—to keep it beside this." and her trembling hand drew her Bible from beneath her pillow—"beg him, to be as faithful to his Saviour as he has been to me, and then, we shall meet there." She turned her mild blue eyes to heaven as she spoke, and then they closed for ever!

The spirit of the child was reunited to that of the mother in the course of a few hours, and they slept together in one long, cold embrace.

The same kind Christian brother of whom we have before spoken read over the remains of the mother and infant, the sublime service for the burial of the dead. Dust was committed to its kindred dust, and the stricken mourner returned to his lonely cottage, where every light was now dim but that of the Saviour's countenance, which shines with double radiance in the season of affliction.

His friends urged a change of scene, and the family of Caroline affectionately entreated him to make his home with them. At the cottage every thing reminded him of his loss, and the recollection of past happiness made the present desolation greater. But he gently declined their request. He felt that the Lord was now especially conversing with him, and that it was his duty to wait and listen.

With heaven-born hopes and heavenward eyes, the lonely pilgrim awaited the days of his appointed time. But though "cast down," he was "not destroyed." Religion, the religion of the Cross, glittered like a gem on his dark-robed fortunes, and pointed them to fairer worlds, where the love that grew here amidst clouds, will be made perfect in a light that knows no shadow, and where he and his departed Caroline would again have one home, one altar, and one resting-place.