

POETRY.

LITTLE GEORGE'S WISH.

"I wish I could see Jacob, mother,"
Said little George, as he
Looked kindly in his mother's face,
While standing by her knee.

"I wish to ask good Jacob, mother,
If he would please to lend
To me the ladder upon which
The angels did descend.

"I thought how I should love, mother,
To see those angels fair,
On wings of light so beautiful,
Soaring above me there.

"And it seems to me, dear mother,
The angels then might see
Your little boy, and kindly come
To speak a word with me.

"And, if you could but spare me, mother,
Might I not with them rise.
And, mounting upwards, join the hosts
Of angels in the skies?"

"I wish I could see Jacob, mother,
I know that he would lend
To me the ladder upon which
The angels did descend."

"Dear boy," the mother said, while tears
Fast filled her loving eye,
"Good Jacob long ago hath joined
The angels in the sky.

"If thou, my son, like him of old,
The blessed Lord wilt love,
Thy guardian angels, all unseen,
Will watch thee from above.

"And, when the night of life draws nigh,
Death comes with friendly care,
Thy spirit shall ascend to Heaven,
And join good Jacob there.

"But, oh! a long and weary way
Before us all may lie,
Ere we may hear the angel choir
In that bright world on High.

"May holy thoughts, my gentle boy,
Like angels, ever come
And dwell with thee, while journeying
Unto thy heavenly home!"

"And, when thy pilgrimage is o'er,
Mayst thou at life's last even
Exclaim, as holy Jacob did,
'This is the gate of Heaven!'"

THE PILGRIM'S SONG.

God help thee, weary traveller, and guide thee on
thy way,
In danger be thy refuge, in weakness be thy stay;
When storms around thee threaten, or snares thy
steps attend,
May He be thy Deliverer and save thee to the end.

Thy path is rough and stormy, thy comforts few
and rare,
Thy garb is poor and homely, thy tent is worn and
bare;
Like thy great Lord an outcast, a wanderer here
thou art,
Yet, sharing in His sorrow, in His joy thou'lt have
a part.

Shouldst thou by fraud or violence be led to leave
the way,
May He pursue thy footsteps, too prone, alas! to
stray,
Restrain thee in His mercy, light up thy darkened
mind,
Dry up thy tears of sadness, thy broken spirit
bind.

When comrades fail or grieve thee, or vanish from
thy sight,
May He, thy Friend and Brother, be near to lead
thee right;
A table in the desert may He with bounties spread,
Supply thy feet the cooling stream, with oil anoint
thy head.

When lengthened nights of darkness involve thy
soul in gloom,
And death's deep-shaded valley presents to thee
the tomb,
Then may the light of morning again shine on thy
way,
And thou with hope and courage press on to end-
less day.

When thou passest through the Jordan, may He the
stream divide,
Go with thee through the river, roll back the
swelling tide;
Safe land thee as a pilgrim on Canaan's blessed
shore,
Receive thee to Mount Zion to triumph evermore.

Till then, God help thee, traveller, and guide thee
on thy way,
In danger be thy refuge, in weakness be thy stay;
When storms around thee threaten, or snares thy
steps attend,
May He be thy Deliverer, and save thee to the end.

SELECTIONS.

ALL THINGS IN CHRIST.

"He that spared not His own Son, but freely delivered
Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also
freely give us all things.—Rom. viii. 32.

In this passage it is implied that Christ is God's
greatest gift to man, and the apostle infers that
He, who has given the greater, will not withhold
the lesser gift. If, therefore, I have received
Christ, I have the pledge of Almighty God, I
shall never suffer the lack of any thing which is
needful for me either in time or in eternity. I
have no right, therefore, to be careful and troubled
either in regard to spiritual or temporal things.
If I have Christ, I shall have "all things." I
may not have what I think I need, but I shall
have what is far better. I shall have what infinite
wisdom and infinite love sees that I need. I
would not substitute my wisdom in the place of
God's wisdom. I would leave the ordering of my
lot to Him, resting upon His promises, and
strengthening my faith by the constant reference
to his greatest gift.

THE DEATH OF AN AGED PASTOR.

[From Sermon by the Rev. John Kerr on the
death of Dr Kidston of Glasgow.]

THE world we live in is one of ceaseless muta-
tion. Every setting sun brings its changes, wheth-
er we perceive them or not. Day by day "our
age is departed, and removed from us like a shep-
herd's tent." We pitch our tabernacle every night
nearer death, nearer judgement. The departure of
each friend who enters the world of spirits is in-
tended to give us this admonition. Leaving, they
leave this lesson. "Thou also shalt become weak
as we; thou shalt become like unto us." The
death of a Christian minister comes with a wider
circumference and deeper significance of warning
than almost any other. It visits every house in a
large community with its note of change, and
knocks loudly at every heart. The pulpit speaks
in death, as in life, to all who gather round it.
The absence of its wonted occupant is the last and
most solemn of his admonitions—the silent elo-
quence of that preacher, Death—who, more im-
pressively than the wise man, writes "vanity of
vanities" on all this sublunary life. The depart-
ure of an aged minister gives an emphasis to this
lesson even more profound. For sixty years
change invaded every seat in this house of God,
but it spared the central one. The teacher's place

seemed to have made a covenant with death; a
stranger might have visited this congregation at
the interval of half a century to find the same face
there; and in the ceaseless revolutions around it
one fixed place appeared to have been found, as
in the firmament of stars, moveless amid surround-
ing mutability. But now that fancy is dissolved,
the ancient landmark is removed, which these
fathers had set for us. First came one stroke, and
then in rapid succession another; and this place
that knew them shall know them no more. Once,
yea, twice, has God spoken to assure us that there
is no place exempt from death's inroad; "that
time and chance (to speak with men) happen alike
to all." Now we have been brought to the heart-
felt acknowledgement, "We are strangers before
Thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our
days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is
no abiding." This one change calls to mind
many; it stirs up the dead for us; it leads the eye
to wander from seat to seat, and ask the question,
"Our fathers, where are they?" There are high
places of weeping in the path of life that summon
us to look back, and none more sacred and touch-
ing than those that lead us to meditate on the
waste that death has caused in a religious com-
munity. The overthrow of empires, and fall of
ancient dynasties, are impressive; and yet fre-
quently they roll overhead like the thunder peal,
and leave the homes of men unharmed, that the
sun may smile on them when the storm is past.
But change in a Christian congregation reminds
us of the quenching of domestic fires, of the dis-
persion of family circles, of coldness and desola-
tion lighted at the altar of God. Within five brief
years, just closed, two ministers and six elders
have been called by death from our midst; and
how many more have joined them from the ranks
of membership! When we cast our eye further
back, how few survive of those that saw him, who
has just departed, enter on his ministry! The
names of them that are asleep are more by far
than of them who are alive and remain. 'Tis long
since the congregation of the dead has had the
majority. Men of faith, and prayer, and active
zeal, who carried many a year the ark of God,
are numbered with a generation past. Families,
once numerous, have left not a name; or some
solitary mourner, with Rizzpah-like grief, lives to
guard their memory. Voices that sung God's
praises are hushed in silence. Those who walked
to the house of God in company are resting to-
gether in the narrow house; and fathers and breth-
ren, and fellow-partners in the journey of life,
whom we have loved as our own soul, "have
been led captive of him who opens not the house
of his prisoners." What hearts have been rent in
these partings, that bleed afresh as memory
touches the wound, and that shall never be fully
healed till the great day when the grave shall
hear the word *Restore!* As the Saviour stood
before the sepulchre of Lazarus, it is said with
touching simplicity, "Jesus wept;" and where-
fore? It was not, as John Howe has observed,
over that one grave: "For He knew His own
purpose, and foresaw the certain and glorious
case of this dark dispensation." No, but in that
single death he saw many. In the weeping
mourners around His eye beheld all the woe and
desolation which sin and death had brought into
this fair world; and then that large heart of His
was melted—He groaned in the spirit and was
troubled." This one recent grave may so lead us
back to many a mouldering heap around it—

"The air is full of farewells for the dying,
And mournings for the dead."

We have been, like the Apostle, "in deaths oft."
It is not forbidden to call up the forms of the de-
parted, although, like Samuel to the unhappy
king of Israel, they came to tell us that we must
soon be with them. The sorrow is salutary:—

"O let the soul her slumbers break,
Let thought be quickened and awake;
Awake to see
How soon this life is past and gone,
And death comes softly stealing on,
How silently!