

sorrows of mourning relatives and friends on such an occasion, as the happiness of the righteous at death, and in the eternal world; a subject which is here introduced and illustrated by Mr Snodgrass with his accustomed talent and eloquence.

Whilst it might appear from the varied circumstances and events of human life, and more especially from the sufferings of the righteous, and the enjoyments of the wicked in the present world, that there is no marked difference in the dispensations of Divine Providence, towards mankind at large, that as the wise man declares, "all things come alike to all," "it is nevertheless true that the "righteous is more excellent than his neighbour," and that "the memory of the just is blessed." Like the rest of mankind the just are liable to death, the appointed lot of mortals; and their death is sometimes attended with the most trying circumstances, when it happens not in youth, or in old age, but in the prime of life, and in the midst of their usefulness. But let death come to them when it may, their condition is happy: for then their spirits return to God, to dwell forever in his presence.

While God thus sanctifies the memory of the just, by taking them to himself, he preserves their memory among the living. Even when their names may cease to live with the generation to which they belonged their characters will exert an influence on posterity long after they have vacated the sphere of their labours: "For the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

Such is a brief and imperfect outline of the structure and reasoning of this consoling discourse to St. Paul's congregation, Montreal. Being published for private circulation only, it is not likely to come under the notice of many of our readers. We have therefore extracted one or two passages which are not less beautiful and appropriate in style than instructive and convincing in argument.

#### THE DEATH OF THE JUST.

"Our attention is at once arrested by the occurrence of an event, which—construct or qualify it as we may—we must account an evil, underlying and colouring every view of the subject. That event is the death of the just. We deem it a hard-ship that they must cease to be our friends and companions on earth—that we must be deprived, by their departure from the land of the living, of all the benefit of their personal intercourse, their kindly offices, their encouraging example. It is a matter of bitter and abounding regret that at every turn we should meet the blanks which their death occasions, and be called upon to mourn the loss sustained in every sphere of usefulness to which they were devoted, and to feel the lasting and irreparable isolation in which they have left us. It is a saddening thought, that those features which showed intelligence and sympathy at every movement have become stiffened and still—that we can no longer hear the words of wisdom and love to which we have been accus-

tom to listen, as, in tones of cheerfulness and pleasantry, they relieved and improved the passing hour—that a stop has been put to those abundant deeds which testified how active and busy were the hands that toiled in ceaseless obedience to the impulses of a willing and generous heart—that all that the just man was, and that the just man did lives only in the too treacherous though ineffaceable remembrance of sorrowing friends. It is a sore trial to our affections that those we love, and in whom we confide, and on whom we depend, should be taken away from us. Our faith in the righteousness of the Almighty's dispensations is strongly tested, when we find that all the noble qualities which enter into the composition of the just man's character are not sufficient to ward off the anguish of great and protracted bodily suffering, or to spare him from an untimely grave.

"This is a great evil by which we are exercised. In all circumstances it is so. It is peculiarly so when the just man goes hence in the prime of life and in the midst of his usefulness. With the most submissively disposed of us, it is a work of time to be reconciled to so great a disaster. When our departed friend has deservedly acquired pre-eminence for all that is included in the enviable distinction of being a just man—one that feared God and was of good report—when he hath approved himself to be a man of high principle and unwavering fidelity, of unostentatious demeanour, and gentle, conciliating manners—when his life has just been long enough to evidence a most reliable devotedness to the interests of true religion, and to gain the confidence of all classes in the community, from his rareness of forethought, his ability to advise in the most perplexing circumstances his willingness to undertake, and his aptitude to manage—when we know how disinterestedly and zealously he toiled in the prosecution of laudable public affairs, and how unobtrusively, by the naive force of his character, he gave them a direction and infused into them a spirit the most effective and most commendable—when such a man—the affectionate husband and pious parent, the valuable citizen, and the consistent member of the church of God,—is carried away from the scene of his labours and in the midst of his years, we feel as if the society he blessed and improved were deprived of a pillar ere a substitute is provided; as if the best and strongest link in the circle of our friendship were dissolved, and, Who shall unite the ends thereof?—as if our highest interests were impeded, and, Who like him shall espouse them? This, this is a sore and trying evil. 'Help Lord! for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.'"

#### THE MEMORY OF THE JUST BLESSED.

"While God sanctifies the memory of the just by taking them to himself and keeping them by himself, when they are removed from the world, by a variety of means, he preserves their memory among the living, and thus operates in a diversity of ways to our comfort and advantage. If we have cherished any sense of admiration for the character of the departed, if we have been privi-

leged to enjoy the advantage of their friendship, if we have directly benefitted by their wisdom and energy, we will fondly preserve the memory of their virtues, and God will bless it to our good. Thus we may live over again the delightful scenes of intercourse which we spent in past companionship. We will recall the profitable conversation in which we were wont to engage. Emergencies will arise to prove the justness and value of the counsel we received. Occasions will occur suggestive of the manner in which they just would have acted. All this will have a purifying influence on our lives. We will praise God for having favoured us with so beneficial an example; and if there be any deficiency in our gratitude, we will strive to make up in so far as it was in imitation of Christ, eminently THE JUST. Though removed from the land of the living, the just are still present in the existence of many a salutary impression, and blessed influence. They being dead, yet their words are a language, solemn and awful, which the living voice cannot repeat. All that they said and all that they did is still, with more power, according to the susceptibility of the minds, directing the current of our thoughts, and biasing the tenor of our ways. Impressions effected by contact with the moral and the spiritual are much more durable than those which are produced by the physical. They are wrought into our nature and have much to do in the formation of our character, while the removal by death of those from whom they have been received tends to deepen and confirm them. The kind features of departed friends may soon fade from our recollections as they do from our eyes, but the elements of their character—their dispositions, habits, and principles—cleave to our very souls. And the great day of disclosure alone will show how much we are indebted to this very circumstance, for the attainments we have acquired, the good we are enabled to do. Long after the blanks which they leave shall have ceased to be continually and painfully palpable, when we more miss them on the streets, or in the business, or the house of God our characters continue to exhibit more or less fully the refinements of their lives—the result of affectionate and trusty friendship.

"But it is not alone in the personal recollections of familiar friends or favour of comrades the memory of the just is preserved and blessed. With the generation to which they belonged names may cease to live. In a few years it may be impossible to trace the names of the righteous to the individual and representative agents who performed them. The forgotten useful schemes may be forgotten. The visible goings of cordial sympathy and active co-operation which give an impulse to the improvement and progress of the day may sink into oblivion. But the characters of the just will exist and influence posterity long after those who exhibit and sustain them shall have vacated the sphere of their labours. Though the place which gave birth, and the community which gave the efficiency, and the spot that receives their bodies may be erased from the surface of the earth, the page of current story, yet will a virtuous and beneficial energy be transmitted from age to age and communicated from place to place. The moral and spiritual survive all material to perpetuate their existence. The deep lines of the chiselled marble shall be obliterated, but the virtues they record shall not perish. The good biographer may be wisely employed, and may greatly assist, to particularize details, to preserve the vividness of rare and singular, and may enable posterity for centuries to read the works of the mighty dead to their own advantage; but ere that pen indites a word of influence of their holy lives has taken effect on the hearts of living men, and has been laid upon the current of human sympathies, destined to carry on and on into the endless future of spiritual existence. Oh, my brethren, if this be true, who can estimate the precious-