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THE MARTYR SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY.

The word Martyr is a Greek word and literally signifies a witness. But like many other terms, it has undergone several modifications, and has at last subsided into a constitutional symbol for a suffering witness and particularly a suffering witness for the gospel. Speak of the "martyrs" now, without any qualifying phrase or comment, and immediately it suggests to the mind those heroes who bled and died for the cause of Christ, either in the early ages of Christianity or about the period of the Reformation. In this sense it is occasionally used in the Scriptures. Acts xxii. 22. "And when the blood of the martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by and consenting to his death."

Such heroes have been loudly and justly raised in every age and country. Their names have been enrolled in the callander, not only of the brave and free, but of the saints of the Most High. Their graves have been honored as hallowed spots, and visited from afar by the devout but frequently superstitious pilgrim. Lofty monuments have been reared over their precious remains. Tablets of marble purer than that of heroes, proclaiming their virtues and telling the eternity of their deeds. The lonely valley in which they secreted themselves from the

tyrant and persecutor, the hill side on which they suffered, the moor or glen in which they bled and died, and the mountain top on which they fell battling for their privileges; all these are looked upon by many as consecrated localities; and although nothing may be heard in some of these dreary spots save the wild cry of the curlew, imagination will sometimes take hold of the peasant wandering there, and make him think he heard the wail of these sons of God coming on the blast of the whirlwind, or mingling with the careering storm. But however honored these noble defenders of the faith may be upon earth,—and we say they cannot be too much, provided they be not superstitiously honored,—still could we draw aside the veil which separates time from eternity, and obtain but one glimpse into the glorious mansions on high, much more exalted would we discover to be the estimation in which they are held there. We would see rewards past reckoning heaped upon the various servants of the Lord—the faithful minister, the upright judge, the true christian patriot, the disinterested philanthropist, and the christian philosopher;—but noblest among these noble ones would appear the martyr for Jesus, and crowned with "a crown of glory that fadeth not away." And while from thence we might hear wafted, as if on the breath of heaven, the song of the redeemed