

particularly amongst the Jews, in those times the cemeteries of the dead were generally without the walls of the town. From the great respect which was paid to the bodies of the dead, arising from the belief, which was founded on Revelation, of the resurrection of the human body at the last day, they were also most careful not to molest for a long time the graves of the departed, so that their burying grounds were of much larger extent than ours, and not included within the walls of fenced towns. Another custom, also, is necessary to be known concerning the habit in which they bore the body to its long home. The bier was borne upon the shoulders of men, and upon it lay the corpse of the deceased, attired in its grave clothes, with the face exposed to view until it came to the place of burial, which by the Jews was called the house of the living. Then the lid of the coffin was nailed down, and the body resigned to the earth, with words of distress expressive of utter helplessness, and with signs significant of the resurrection.

As our blessed Lord and his company, which it appears were not a few, approached the gate of the city, they were carrying forth the body of a young man, "the son of a widow." This was the severest blow which death could inflict to bereave a lonely widow of her only son, the staff of her old age. By one stroke, therefore, the consolation of her widowhood is cut off, and her memorial is perished from the earth, and the glorious hope of a mother in Israel is gone for ever. The Lord saw her

as she went weeping by the bier of the deceased. He needed no interpreter of her sad calamity, and her sad calamity needed no advocate in his breast. "When he saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, weep not. And he came and touched the bier; and they that bore it stood still." This was a moment of great wonder and awful surprise to the poor widow, the mourners, and the multitude. They are stopped in their short and solemn journey by a perfect stranger, who forbids the bereaved widow to weep, and lays his hand upon the bed upon which the body of the son reposed. Fit prelude of dignity and tenderness to the mighty act which follows, and now summonses the attention of the multitude, which being held in mute amazement and swelled in deep expectation of what was to follow, the Creator, and Lord of life, and the Redeemer from death, then gave forth his solemn WORD into the ear which had been for days sealed in death, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise!" These were the first words spoken on raising the body, and their mysterious meaning was known only to the great Speaker himself. The lifeless clay heard the Word and arose! That which was numbered with the clods of the valley was once more numbered with the sons of living men. Help came to the son of the bereaved, and to his now thrice happy mother. The ear stopped by death awoke to the voice of man, and the eye sealed by death awoke to the light of heaven, and the stiffened joints resumed their living power, and the bloom of health reanimated the