

impression—is finely exhibited in that magnificent lyric, said, by a writer in “Blackwood,” to be the finest in the language,

“Stand the omnipotent decree,
Jehovah's will be done.”

This noble hymn was written at a time of great agitation. London had been shaken by an earthquake. Many feared that nature's end was fast approaching; but, as expressive of the security of the righteous man, Wesley wrote in a strain of exulting confidence, grand and solemn as the trump of God:

“Lo! the heavenly spirit towers,
Like flame o'er nature's funeral pyre,
Triumphs in immortal powers,
And claps his wings of fire.”

In the section “describing heaven” we have hymns of almost unrivalled excellence, which furnish good illustration of the adaptation of cadence and harmony to theme and thought. In the exquisite lyric, “Away with our sorrow and fear,” there is a beautiful transition from “sorrow and fear,” with which the first stanza commences, to the vision of golden splendour upon which the eye rests at its close:

“The house of our Father above,
The palace of angels and God.”

In many of these incomparable hymns the last line of each stanza forms a climax; and, as in the line just given, sweetly lingers upon the ear as if some musical voice murmured, “The palace of angels and God.”

“The holy to the holiest leads;” and never does the Christian bard reveal more of that sacred fire which touched his lips and brightened his vision of faith than when, in anticipation of beatific blessedness, he reverently looked within the veil. Three of the hymns “on a future state,” which could be more appropriately connected with those “describing heaven”—“How happy every child of grace,” “And let this feeble body fail,” and “Come let us join our friends above,” are absolutely unrivalled in elevation of thought and felicity of expression. At one point “the world of spirits bright” seems open, the harpers harp upon their harps; and as if in rapt communion with glorified saints,