

Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother.”

Whosoever shall render a filial obedience and maintain practical piety, he belongs to the kindred of Christ. What a vast family is this ! and who are they that compose it ? The good, of every age and condition ; the pure and the humble, of every Church ; the believing and the faithful, who, under whatever name, are “ pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus ;” the apostles who followed the steps of the great Master, and the confessors who sealed their faith with their blood ; the servants of God who have gone about doing good, and the meek who in the patience of humility and amidst the sufferings of disease have possessed their souls, till the day of deliverance came, and they exchanged earthly trial for heavenly joy ; they of whom we have read, while our hearts beat with admiration, and we were solicited by their example to consecrate ourselves to high and holy endeavor ; and they whom we have known in their work of love and life of faith, and whose departure, when they left us, we felt had made the world poorer ; and those who now stand in their various offices around us, walking before God in the integrity of their souls and instructing us by the heavenly character of their lives ; — all these belong to that kindred which Jesus has described in the words we have quoted. And if we also belong to it, then are they also our spiritual relatives. What an honorable relationship ! What a kindred this, reaching over many lands and embracing two worlds !

Nor do those whom we have enumerated constitute its whole extent, or glory ; for Jesus is himself included within its circuit, and of all these kindred souls in heaven