

There *will* be a reunion in God's good time, we know not how, we know not when, we know not where. But we do know by Whom. It will be by the highest power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Holy Scripture often points to the departure of the faithful, if not in very words, as a sleep. Removal from earth is a temporary rest from employment; we are sure, at least, that the eyelids of the body are closed, we are not so sure about the state of the soul. When God has not spoken let not man be rash. "To be with the Lord" is to be nearer than our present existence allows. And that is "far better." It is better for the *body* to be removed from this vale of tears when Christ wills, that it may hereafter "be like unto His glorious Body, according to the mighty working, whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself." It is better for the *spirit* to be relieved of the burden of the flesh, in order that it may return to its vessel hallowed for its presence.

Why then, dear reader, should we see so many bewildered faces when one of these many loved ones falls asleep in Jesus? Have not the black coffin, the black crape, the black gloves, gotten the mastery over our Christian hope? Have we not indulged a *natural* feeling when we have allowed the urn,

and the obelisk, and the broken pedestal, and the weeping willow to be placed over the bodies of the faithful departed? Yes, but where have been our deep Christian *principles*, when all that is gloomy and mortal fills our inmost souls?

True, nature rebels, when God summons. But that body which has been regenerated, adopted, and renewed* by the good Spirit of God has become the temple of the Holy Ghost. It no longer belongs to us, nor to earth. Praised be God! It is bought with the precious blood of Christ. Rather rejoice in the Lord that another body has been sown in God's acre to be raised in incorruption. "O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

When then, dear reader, the still small voice of God next speaks to you through the removal of a brother or sister in the Lord, do not give way to grief. Look above to your ascended Saviour now pleading at the right hand of the Eternal Father for you and yours—and pray for that bright and glorious Resurrection hour when all faithful bodies and souls will be knit together, again, and for ever, in Him their Head.

*Collect for Christmas Day.

NATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.—By the grace and good providence of God, England has become, in these latter days, much as Jerusalem was of old, a centre of religious light and knowledge. And, as throughout all the provinces of the Roman empire there were Jews of the dispersion, so is there no quarter of the habitable globe in which our colonies are not found, and to which our enterprising countrymen have not penetrated. Hence the responsibility of this country towards her colonies in the first instance is enormous. Entrusted as she has been with the pure faith, unleavened by superstition, and with the most primitive and soundest form of ecclesiastical discipline—she has a debt to her widely-spread dependencies, of which she cannot acquit herself without the most zealous and unremitting efforts on the part of her sons.—*Dr. Goulburn.*

NATIONAL progress is the sum of individual industry, energy, and uprightness; as national decay is of individual idleness, selfishness, and vice. What we are accustomed to decri as great social evils, will, for the most part, be found to be only the outgrowth of our own perverted life; and though we may endeavour to cut them down and extirpate them by means of law, they will only spring up again with fresh luxuriance in some other form, unless the individual conditions of human life and character are radically improved. If this view be correct, then it follows that the highest patriotism and philanthropy consist, not so much in altering laws and modifying institutions, as in helping and stimulating men to elevate and improve themselves by their own free and independent action as individuals.—*Smiles' Self-Help.*