

less of danger and deaf to entreaties to save himself, until the destruction which he saw threatening him, and stood resolutely facing with folded arms and head erect, overtook him there; or of one who, labouring long and arduously in the midst of daily peril to accomplish some great good for others, sank down at last exhausted and quietly expired, just as he had completed his gracious task, and while those whom he had forgotten himself to serve were crowding to bless him. They read and think, how delightful to die thus, or thus; even so could we choose, would we die. But what sympathy have they either with the profound conscientiousness that inspired in the former case, or with the warm and deep philanthropy in the latter? None at all! They perceive with a thrill of emotion the beauty of the two sacrifices, and envy the glory of them; but of the serious faithfulness, or of the tender and loving soul out of which they grew, there is scarcely a throb in their bosom. It would not be in them to copy, should they ever have the chance, much as they would like it for the felt grandeur of it. When, however, St. Paul craved to die the same death as Christ died it was from inward assimilation to and fellowship with Christ, in His whole spirit and behaviour.

But, then, do you not see that such assimilation and fellowship would have kept him inevitably from any craving of the kind, since Christ's crucifixion was owing to His spirit of re-ignation and willingness to be or do, to receive or suffer whatever fidelity to the interests of His kingdom might involve? and in proportion, therefore, as the apostle partook of this spirit, he would not *choose* his lot; upon no one way of making exit from the world would he set his heart.

With the true martyr spirit in him, his only thought would be, let my end be that by which the truth shall best be served, whether it be through slow wasting sickness upon a bed, or through sharp

agony amidst scorn and contempt upon a gibbet. It is not for me to wish aught for myself; all I care to wish is that under whatever circumstances of living or dying God may be glorified in me. Being what he was, it could not be St. Paul's desire here that he should suffer in the same manner as his Lord. He may seem to you, then, to be desiring that his death should resemble Christ's in the moral temper which it exemplified, in the grace and sweetness with which it was borne; that however it might be appointed to him to pass away, by casualty or old age, by lingering illness or the headsman's stroke, he might be able to display similar fortitude and patience, similar concern for others, similar self-possession, and charity, and trust in the Almighty Father.

Now, it is a worthy aspiration to wish to die nobly as to wish to bear or do anything nobly, yet there is no reason why we should be specially anxious about the spirit and the state of mind in which we depart hence. My spirit and state of mind in the act of dying is no more important than my spirit and state of mind at any other instant, in any other scene or situation. I do not care to be holier then, than I care to be to-day at dinner-time or to-morrow in attending to my business; and as a noble soul may occasionally trip and stumble in living, losing for awhile calmness, loyalty, or rest in God, yet in nowise to make shipwreck of himself, but soon to recover and rise again, so may he in drawing near to the end; and so it often has been, the weakest and worst of him showing itself in the crisis of death, nothing becoming him less than his expression on going out of the world.

We need not be particularly solicitous to quit life worthily. Our particular solicitude should be to behave worthily and to grow worthier in life, from day to day. And the yearning of the apostle here, was not that he might die courage-