

And He did die. See ! they bear Him pale, helpless, still, dead, to His burial; and, wrapped in the snowy linen grave clothes that loving hands have provided, with tears in their eyes, and sore sad hearts, they lay Him gently to sleep the sleep of death, in the sombre silent tomb, till the morning of the resurrection.

V. THE MUCH FRUIT.

"But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

The one wheat-grain dies. It ceases to be. You look for it, but you cannot find it. You find perhaps an empty husk, a cast-off skin. But in its stead, and out of its grave, out of its death, comes forth much fruit—the thirty-fold, the sixty-fold, the hundred fold.

And is it not better to have the thirty-fold, the sixty wheat-grains, the hundred, than but the one? Is it not better to-day to have the world's vast wheat-fields, the millions fed, and the one wheat-grain die, since it is to have so grand a resurrection.

And the Christ dies on the cross, and goes down into the grave, that there may be the much fruit of the gospel, the millions saved, the world redeemed. How dreadful, how shuddering, the dying; but how grand, how blessed, the rising! The wheat-grain is not lost. The Christ lives, lives evermore, lives in millions of resurrected lives.

The grandeur of Christ's resurrection is not, that on the third morning after His death He burst asunder the bands of death, unsealed the tomb, and came forth in power to live and love. It is this rather, that in Him, and with Him, and because of Him, there arises so much—the ages, the nations, a dead world, an innumerable multitude of living earnest souls. Everywhere we see a glad resurrection going on, a putting off of the death of sin, and a putting on of a new glad life. The reason is, the dead Christ lives, lives in all this wide world-life, this vast church-work and spiritual energy, this waking up to power that throbs and pulsates in all lands.

Thus, out from yonder sepulchre, where lay the dead Son of God, burst forth the glad harvests of the world's salvation, and the glory to come, and how much the fruit.

Now, in conclusion, we may find here, I think, two or three practical thoughts. And one is, let us not spare ourselves. God did not spare His one Son. Our Lord did not spare His one life, His blood, Himself. We think we have the wheat. No such wheat as ours. We have more of truth than others have. We have ability, genius, skill, talent. Yes, we have the wheat that no one else has, and we are proud of it, and we want to keep it. We put it in a box of curious design, and only now and again we bring it out, not to sow it, but to let it be seen, to

make a display of it, to let the gem of our genius sparkle, to let our talent dazzle the eyes of the wondering gaping world.

Ah! wheat is not to be kept; it is to be sown. God is not to be hoarded. Talents are not to be buried; they are to be used. If you have ability in any way, let the world have the benefit of it. If you have something to say that others need to hear, it is laid upon you to say it. If you have an eloquence in your soul, voice it in some way. If you have thoughts that are throbbing within you for utterance, tell them or write them, and let the world have the benefit of them. You cannot do a worse thing for yourself, nor for the world, than to bury your talent, hoard your gold, cover up your light, box up your wheat, spare yourself, save your life. You are standing in your own light, quenching the fire of your own grains losing all the grandeur of life. Our Lord wisely says: Save your life, and you lose it; lose it for His sake, and you save it. And you can understand that: Keep your wheat, and after a while you lose it; but sow it; and then you find it. And so with genius, ability, worth, truth. If you want your gold to shine, keep it in circulation. And if you want to shine yourself, do all the good you can, spare not yourself. Better to wear out than rust out.

"It abideth alone." If the first wheat-grain had been content to abide alone, what a loss to the world, what a curse to itself! If the Christ had been satisfied to abide alone; if he had kept himself to himself, and not tried to do any good, to save any one, to help any one, what a loss to the world, and what a loss to himself! See him yonder with adoring myriads of redeemed souls around him! Oh the joy!

And are you, my hearer, content to abide alone, to live for your poor little wretched self? You are not trying in any way to do good, to sweeten any bitterness, to help any one to a better life, to befriend any cause. No one ever takes you by the hand and says: "Thank you for the kindness; you cannot understand how it helped me in my need. Thank you for those earnest words; they saved my soul! I owe all I am or ever will be to them. When I stand at God's right hand, I will tell the Lord that next to himself, you are my saviour."

Think of going alone to Heaven. People will ask who he is as they see you or the streets of new Jerusalem, for people are known there for the good they did, and no one will know you. You relieved no want. You cheered no sad life, no comfortless home. You visited no sick one. Your money found its way to no charity, no mission scheme. You did no good and you are alone.