

Woman's Work.

"Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe : . . . Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.—*Joel* iii. 13, 14.

UNDER the shadow of a great sorrow, and fresh from the scenes of a dying bed, we approach the duty of preparing the work of this department. A dear brother, Rev. Dr. S. J. Hunter, has been suddenly called to his reward. A beloved sister, an active member of our W. M. S., with her two little ones, is "walking through the fire" of sore bereavement. And the Church truly mourns a faithful and devoted minister. We may well rejoice, however, that in this fiery furnace of trial "the form of the fourth" appeareth, the Divine Jesus, whose presence upholdeth, and whose love comforteth. More deeply than ever comes the conviction that life is real, and that it is a very solemn thing to live. Life is an opportunity, it is a sacred trust, and we cannot too frequently reflect on our use of it. Perhaps, nowhere more than in the presence of the Christian's death-bed may we get a just conception of the worthy objects of life. As only at such a time do earthly things reveal their real trivialty.

We have often thought it sad to see the faithful Christian depart this life under the cloud of unconsciousness; and have coveted the clear, calm, leave-taking, and the joyous foretaste of prospective bliss, which is sometimes witnessed, and which seems to wreath the dying in a halo of light and glory; leaving to the bereaved a lasting treasure of precious memory. But we have learned that though cruel disease obtains power over reason, there may still be precious memories; and holy thoughts born of a mind and heart devoted to God may, even in the height of delirium, give inspiration and stimulus to those around.

The servant of God whose body was the victim of a disease which chained him to his bed, was heard, in delirium, exhorting to righteousness, addressing Conference, recommending young men for ordination, pronouncing the benediction, and providing for his pulpit. It was our privilege, also, to hear him give an address apparently intended for a meeting of ladies of different denominations, united in some charitable or missionary work. The thought seemed to be the beauty of a spirit of harmony, and unity in prosecuting work for the Master; its beneficent effect upon the unconverted, and its sublime aspect as opposed to the forces of the enemy. Listening to these remarks, which must have occupied from five to seven minutes, we coveted the stenographer's pencil to catch the well turned sentences, so impressively delivered, that one hearing but

not present, would scarcely believe to be the utterances of a man in delirium. Closing with the earnest prayer that a loving spirit of harmony might possess all who labor to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, the speaker apologized for his voice, pronounced the benediction, and with a fervent "Amen," dropped his head upon the pillow.

Ah, we thought, how beautiful! that even in the raging of disease over the mortal frame, the pure spirit revelled in holy thoughts, and counselled to holy deeds. In the presence of such a death, we feel the grandeur, power and beauty of the truly Christian life.

The life lived here in preparation for that beyond, is a condition of growth and expansion of all the higher powers which shall go on in a blissful eternity. It is the "eternal life" begun below.

How great our opportunity and how rich our privilege! What more worthy our best endeavor! To live in communion with Christ. To adjust our home life and our social life, in their detail, so that our whole environment shall be in harmony with the teachings of Jesus; to bring the life of earth nearer to the life of heaven, by increasing its purity, ennobling its purposes, developing its charity; by doing our part in the removal of iniquity, and the exalting of righteousness. Would that each follower of Jesus might realize the great fact: "I am my brother's keeper." Every vestige of influence a Christian possesses should be used, not only to advance and uphold all good, but also faithfully and boldly to dethrone and overcome all evil. No compromise with the weakening sins of worldliness. All of life for Jesus. The life of the heart, the life of the home, the life of society, properly so called, the life of business and the life of statesmanship. All should and may be lived, in the highest sense, for Jesus, the world's Redeemer and King.

No shadows yonder!
All light and song;
Each day I wonder,
And say, How long
Shall time me sunder
From that dear throng?

No weeping yonder!
All fled away;
While here I wander
Each weary day,
And sigh as I ponder
My long, long stay.

No partings yonder!
Time and space never
Again shall sunder;
Hearts cannot sever;
Dearer and fonder
Hands clasp forever.

None wanting yonder
Bought by the Lamb,
All gathered under
The ever-green palm,
Loud as night's thunder
Ascend the glad psalm.—*H. Bonar.*