

was, for weeks before his death, unable to articulate, it seemed at first as if this were one needless trial very grievous to be borne. But now it is seen that this very trouble has brought a store of comfort to those left behind, because all the last words, the last messages, the last wishes and hopes and thoughts were written down by his own hand, and form an abiding treasure of consolation, a lasting memorial of the brave and noble spirit in which his sufferings were endured.

Let this then ever be our refuge amid all the storms of life, that God is our Father, that the Lord Jesus is our Divine elder Brother, that the Holy Spirit is our everpresent comforter, and that in the household of God what seem the saddest partings are only the blessed advancement of those we love to a higher honour and a greater bliss. So may we thank God that He has brought them to himself, though it be by a path of pain and sorrow, and enabled them, even through much tribulation, to wash their robes and make them white in the Blood of the Lamb. They cannot come again to us, unless indeed God send them as ministering spirits with blessed messages of love,—but we may go to them by the ways of Holy Communion which the head and Father of us all has appointed for all the members of His household. Meanwhile *we* do not

forget *them*, and *they* do not forget *us*. Though when their bodily sickness has closed in death the public prayers of the church cease on their behalf, do we therefore no longer remember them when we draw near to the throne of grace, and above all when we approach God's altar? Do we not love them still, and care for them still, and count them still our own, and desire the consummation of their bliss, and pray that we with them may be made partakers at last of the perfect joys of heaven? Of them we sing, with tears that have lost their bitterness.

O happy saints! for ever blest!

At Jesus' feet how safe your rest.

Yet in those mansions where they wait there is not repose alone, but progress also, and so we believe and pray that they may go on from strength to strength, from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, from love to love, till the days of their waiting are ended, and we all are caught up together to meet the Lord in the air,—and so shall we and they ever be with the Lord.

"Blessed are they whose earthly life is over,
Whose hands from ours the loving Lord hath drawn;
Whose graves to-day with flowers we gently cover,
Feeling their happy spirits near us hover,
And seeing faint afar the heavenly dawn.

Blessed are they, so near our earthly keeping,
And yet so far from all our earthly woe;
Who just beyond the toiling and the weeping,
Beyond the little waking and the sleeping,
Joy in the better life we wait to know."