

ever had ? His heart hourly grows cold beneath a heavy load of discontent ; his trembling steps drag heavily on ; at last, in some least expected hour, he vanishes, hardly able with his last breath to invoke a mercy he never sought, or utter that name of tender assurance,—strange to his heart and stranger still to his lips,—God, my FATHER !

Better, far better, to decide any way, to hear the voice, “ No man can serve two masters.” “ Go and sell all that thou hast.” “ He that will not forsake all he hath cannot be my disciple.” Give an unlimited preference to duty over every earthly interest, and settle the question at once and forever. While the heart is quick, the aspiration fervent, the conscience living, and the will not finally fixed — then decide for or against God, for or against the soul. With a *resolved* mind, God and providence, the ministry of Christ and social influences, can work. With a wavering spirit they can neither do nor hope anything. The firmest granite they can build up or wash away, but the shifting sea-shore sand, the drifting cloud, the passing vapor, the restless wave, the flitting autumn leaf, they can neither build up nor tear away. And remember, while you hesitate, God may decide. While you deliberate, the time for resolve may pass away irrevocably, as with the old man in the story. You may be cut down as a cumberer of the ground before another spring. Death may give in the judgment life would not. The opening of the book of judgment, if not of the sealed book of duty, may determine the great — ay, the greatest question. The gates of the unchangeable future may slowly, silently unfold, to take in the lingerer at the threshold of life !

My brother ! hear me. Let this matter now be settled.