

he remarked, "These are the things that make men so loath to die."

On what rapid wings has this last year sped its course! How sure and certain an approximation to the close of this earthly existence! Every year adds to what is past and leaves less to come. *What is your life? It is even as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.* What is it, when compared with the amount of labour to be accomplished, and the magnitude of the interests at stake? What is it, compared with the facility with which it may be interrupted, and the ten thousand causes of decay and dissolution it is destined to encounter?—What is it, when compared with the ever enduring existence to which it is an introduction? How fugitive! how frail! Hardly has the weary traveller laid himself down to rest, when he is summoned away to pursue his journey, or called to his everlasting home. *We spend our years as a tale that is told.* The flying cloud, the evanescent vapour, the arrow just propelled from the string, the withering grass, the flower whose beauty scarcely blooms ere it is faded, and whose fragrance is scarcely perceptible ere it is gone, are apt similitudes of the life of man.

I am but a wanderer, a pilgrim, a sojourner on the earth. Though every thing is cheerful about me I feel to-day exiled and alone. A thousand recollections crowd upon my mind to remind me of the past, to prepossess me of the future, and to lead me to some just conceptions of the present. This world is not my home. I have made it a resting place too long. I hear a voice to-day, in accents sweet as angels' use, whispering to my lonely heart, *Arise, and depart hence for this is not your rest!* I am away from my father's house. I have felt vexations and trials. I have experienced disappointments and losses. I have known the alienation of earthly friends. I am not a stranger to dejected hopes. I know something of conflicts within. But now and then I have a glimpse of the distant and promised inheritance, which more than compensates me for all. It is no grief of heart to me that I have no enduring portion beneath the sun. I am but a passing traveller here. I would fain feel like one who is passing from place to place, and going from object to object, with his eye fixed on some long-wished-for abode beyond; while every successive scene brings me nearer to the end of my course and all these earthly vicissitudes endear to me the hopes of that final rest. To live here, however happily, however usefully, however well, must not be my ultimate object. I was born for eternity. Nay, I am the tenant of eternity even now. Time belongs to eternity. It is a sort of *isthmus*, or rather a little *gulph*, with given demarcations, set off and bounded by lines of ignorance; but it mingles with the boundless flood—it belongs to eternity still. A great change indeed awaits us. We must drop this tabernacle and go into a world of spirits. But we shall be in the same duration. I must live for eternity.

In entering on another year, I know not from what unexpected quarter, or at what an unguarded hour difficulties and dangers may come. O that I could enjoy more of the favour of God, more of the presence of the Saviour, more of the sealing of the ever blessed Spirit! O for more of a calm, approving conscience, and more of the delightful influence of the peace-speaking blood of Jesus Christ! From some cause or other, I begin this year with a trembling heart. I fear I may lose my way. I am afraid lest I should turn aside from the straight path; lest I may repose in the bowers of indolence and ease; lest I may sleep on enchanted ground; lest I should be ensnared, if not destroyed by unhallowed curiosity; lest I should be betrayed by my own presumption and self-confidence. I can remember some who have forsaken the way and fallen into snares; and the sad memorials of their folly are strewn along my path. Why should I hope to pass unwatched or unmolested? The enemy is not asleep. Many a time have I been baffled by his artifices. Rest where I will, and shall rise when I may, he is always at my side. And shall I dream of peace? Shall I not watch and pray?—Will not presumption and sloth cost me dear?—Blessed God! hold thou me, up, and I shall be safe! Pity thy erring creature. Forgive thy wandering child. Keep, and with the bounties of thy grace, bless thy poor suppliant. Preserve him another year.—Let him not be conformed to this world. Give him a warm and humble heart. Let nothing interrupt, or retard his progress toward the Zion above!

I would live another year, if it be my heavenly Father's will. And yet I would not live to sin, and fall, and reproach my Saviour and his blessed cause. Better die than to live to no good purpose! I would live till my work is done—cheerful when it is most arduous, and grateful for strength according to my day. But I would not be afraid to die. Shall the child desire to be away from his Father's house? Shall the traveller, already weary, choose to have his stay in the wilderness prolonged? It were a sad sight to see a Christian die, with regret—to see him go home, as if

he were going to a prison! O let me think much and often of my heavenly home!

"Jerusalem, my happy home!  
Name ever dear to me!  
When shall my labours have an end,  
In joy and peace in thee?"

Jerusalem my happy home!  
My soul still pants for thee;  
Then shall my labours have an end,  
When I thy joys shall see."

Let me then often climb the mount of contemplation, and prayer, and praise, and there try to catch a glimpse of the glory to be revealed, and get my cold heart affected with a view of its yet distant endearments.—Love to God—communion with God—devotedness to God, these are the foretastes of heaven. If through the cares and duties of secular life, I cannot preserve an invariable tendency of mind toward that holy world—let it be a more habitual and frequent tendency!—I feel the sorrows of this guilty insensibility, this languor of spiritual affection, and long for those hallowed moments when the meltings of contrition, the fervours of desire, the vividness of faith, and the hope full of immortality shall shed their sacred fragrance over my spirit, and make me pant for heaven. Nor let it be a transient emotion, kindled by some momentary excitement, or awakened by some impulse of the imagination; but marked by all the ardour of passion and all the constancy of principle. Spirit of the Redeemer! shed abroad thine own love in this poor heart of mine, and thus seal it to the day of eternal redemption. Let me greet every truth, every providence, every meditation that shall invite me to more intimate intercourse with heaven. Let me dwell upon the communications sent down from that blessed world to cheer my fainting spirit and revive my courage by the way. Let me welcome those messages of divine providence that are designed and adapted to intercept my constant view of earth, and bring the realities of eternity near. Let me grieve at nothing that makes me familiar with heaven. Let me never mourn when some little stream of comfort and joy is dried up, and I am driven more directly to the fountain. Let me take a fresh departure for the land of promise from the beginning of this New Year. I would fain look upward with a more steadfast eye, and march onward with a firmer step. Nor would I lose sight of the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, but go where it goes, and rest where it rests.

And who, who will remain behind? Who will be content to have his hopes bounded by the narrow scenes of earth? Gasp, fellow traveller to eternity, go up to some selected eminence of thought, where the splendors of the holy City shall break upon your view. This world is not your home, any more than mine. It cannot comfort you, more than it has comforted me. You may be called away from all its scenes as soon as I. Your journey to the grave may be shorter even than mine. Nay, this year, thou mayest die.

#### TRUTH BEAUTIFULLY EXPRESSED.

The following passage, beautiful in its truth, and in the expression of that truth, is from the editor of the Baltimore American. It will be felt and appreciated by every parent, and most heartily do we commend it to the attention of children.—*Boston Recorder.*

"If children could only be made aware of the heartfelt delight with which parents behold the development of talents and noble sentiments in their offspring, with what avidity would they seek the means of expanding the sphere of their intelligence, and cherishing the moral sentiments that impart dignity to the human character. From infancy to manhood the welfare and happiness of the child is the sole object of the parent's solicitude. Under all circumstances, through good or evil fortune, the present and future condition of those whom they may have reared in the cradle, or dandled on the knee, is the polar star to which their affections point with undeviating constancy.

Should their path through life be prosperous, the possession of wealth and distinction is only precious in their eyes, as affording the means of conferring on those who are in future years, to be their representatives, the honours that attend riches and exalted character, and should adversity be their lot, and difficulties beset them, they are forgotten in the hope that circumstances may ensure a better fate to their children. The child may be affectionate and tender, but the filial relation is not susceptible of the intensity of affection which belongs to the parental tie. It is this depth of love that enables the old to pass from the stage of life without regret. They feel that in their children they will continue to live, and that, however this world and its concerns may be lost to them, succeeding generations will recognize in their offspring portions of themselves. With what unspeakable delight does a father behold the first manifestations of exalted intelligence in a son, and how does he dwell upon actions that bespeak nobleness of pur-

pose and soundness of integrity. If these feelings of gratification are inexpressibly delightful, so on the other hand the emotions with which he views indications of an opposite character, are utterly painful.

To see the object of his paternal solicitude over whom he has watched day after day, and year after year, falling off from the path of virtue and deaf to the appeals of honourable motives is to him a source of bitterness, of regret to which no temporal blessing can furnish an antidote. Honours may await him, and the confidence and love of his fellow beings may for a moment cheer his path through life, but when he reflects that this honour and this love are to be changed into contempt and dislike in the person of his own child, he feels as if it were better to be deprived of all than to witness so heart rending a contrast. If there be reserved for human life a joy more exalted than all the others, it is that of beholding its last moments cheered by the fondness and affection of a worthy and virtuous progeny, and if there be a pang more agonizing than any other, it is that of a dying parent, whose last thought rests upon the crimes of a depraved but fondly loved child."

#### The Gleaner.

*Munificent Donation to the General Assembly's India Mission.*—On 4th July last, a collection, amounting to £5, was made in the parish church of Dunscore in aid of the General Assembly's schools; and in the same place, on the 29th ult. after very lucid and impressive sermons, by the Rev. Dr. Gordon of Edinburgh, another collection was made for the General Assembly's Foreign Missions, when the liberal sum of £7, exclusive of the ordinary collection for the poor, was realised. We have great pleasure in being able to add, that the minister of the parish received a letter, at the same time, from Mrs. Crichton of Friars' Carse, announcing that the trustees of her late husband had resolved to appropriate to this most pious object the munificent donation of £1000, to be paid next Whit Sunday. We understand that it is Mrs. Crichton's earnest wish that this money should be applied for the formation of three bursaries, to yield a permanent fund for educating native preachers, to be called the Crichton Scholarships. This will add another to the many beneficent charities to which the late Dr. Crichton's fortune has given birth, and it is an example worthy of imitation.—*Dumfries Herald.*

#### BOOKS FOR THE BLIND.

Our readers are aware that Mr. Alston has already completed the printing of the New Testament, and many other works, in raised Roman letters, for the use of the blind. Some time ago he commenced the arduous task of printing the Old Testament; and having finished the book of Genesis, he proceeded on a tour of all the Institutions for the Blind in England and Scotland, in order to ascertain the extent to which they were willing to aid him in this important work. With the exception of one, the directors of all the Institutions expressed their readiness to assist him by taking a proportion of the different volumes in their progress through the press. Encouraged by this consideration, he made application to Lord John Russell, as Secretary for the Home Department, for assistance from the Royal bounty to aid him in the accomplishment of this benevolent object. We are happy to state that the application was transmitted to the Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, who have been pleased to direct that an issue of four hundred pounds be made to him from the Royal bounty, for the purpose of assisting him in the prosecution of the work.—*Scottish Guardian.*

#### EDUCATION IN RUSSIA.

There have been, it appears, established in the Russian empire during the last five years, 1 university, 9 gymnasia (grammar schools), 49 district schools (some for the nobility and some for citizens), 289 parochial and 112 private schools, besides 26 boarding houses for nobleman's sons, in connection with the grammar schools. The number of scholars has been increased by 25,000 and forms now, in the schools under the Ministry, a total of 95,566. But the number of persons receiving instructions in the whole empire is stated to be nearly as 1 in 45. The number of students in the University of St. Petersburg during the last academical year was 413. Of these 192 were noblemen, 65 sons of superior officers, 19 sons of clergymen, 40 of the mercantile classes 31 sons of tradesmen, &c. and 5 foreigners. There are at this university 42 professors and tutors. The university library has lately been enriched by the purchase of the collection of Professor Schafer of Leipzig; which among other valuable works contained 633 Russian, not before in the library. The Imperial library now contains 425,621 printed volumes and 17,236 MSS. The University of Kasan is increasing in importance for Oriental literature. It has long had professorships of the Mongol and Chinese languages; lately one has been added for the Armenian, with a salary of 4500 rubles. *Athenæum.*