

## COUNSEL TO THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—Permit one who feels deeply interested in the all-important subject—the welfare of the immortal soul—to address you. Have you ever thought for one moment that you have a soul, and that that soul must live for ever? All that so interests you here shall be taken away—the heavens rolled together as a scroll, and all that is bright and beautiful, even the earth itself, shall be burned up. You may urge the common excuses—“Time enough yet,” or you “have not had time.” My dear young friends, pause and reflect upon the many instances of mortality that are daily taking place around you. You cannot with safety delay seeking an immediate interest in the salvation offered in the gospel.

Have you not had time to prepare for the ball-room and the dance? Have you not had time, and sought with eager avidity, to read the light and trifling novels and publications of the day? Have you not found time for foolish and vain conversation; and have you not found time to engage in the sinful practice of playing cards, or other amusements equally sinful? My object is not to condemn, however, but to urge you, with affectionate solicitude, to pause and consider the worth of your immortal soul. Your soul must exist for ever; aye, for ever, either to ascribe anthems of praise to redeeming love, at the right hand of God, or sink lower and lower in the awful depths of eternal ruin. Think how awful the condition is of a condemned criminal, shut up in an earthly prison. But what is this, compared to an allotment in the prison-house of everlasting despair? Here there is some hope of pardon to the guilty, but in the latter hope shall never enter. From that dread sentence there is no appeal. Let me, my dear young friends, persuade you now in the morn of life to seek an interest in the pardoning love of God, so that when you are summoned away from earth, you may be prepared to have a joyful entrance into mansions of everlasting rest.

Oh, think, my young friends, of the mercy displayed

On Calvary's summit—then be not dismay'd;  
In the morn of thy life the Saviour will bless,  
And guide thee secure to the “haven of rest.”

## EARLY PIETY.

There was a young man well known to the writer, who had very great talents. He could speak on almost every subject but one. He read many books, knew many languages, and thought a great deal on all he heard and saw. Yet strange to say, he never or seldom spoke of God. He never loved, nor sought Him. He had finished his education, he had travelled to distant lands, and had gathered great stores of learning, when consumption came. It pleased God, in his mercy, to grant him a long period of ill-

ness, and in the early stage of his disease, God taught him the uselessness of all the learning which he had spent his life in gaining, compared with the knowledge revealed in scripture—the knowledge of the one true God, and of Jesus Christ, his Son, the only Saviour of sinners. Now, his high intellect and proud heart were subdued. He bowed humbly before God, and in the meek disposition of a little child, prayed for the teachings of God's Spirit, and God heard and answered his prayers. One day just before his death, a friend was reading to him the twenty-third Psalm. The dying young man listened as he read these words, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” Ps. xxiii. 4. “Stay,” said the invalid, “stay; yes, God is with me; but I think the valley would not have been so dark, had I sought him earlier!”



FILIPPO NERI AND THE STUDENT.

A story is told of a very good and pious man, whom the church of Rome has enrolled among her saints on account of his great holiness. He was living at one of the Italian Universities; when a young man, whom he had known as a boy, ran up to him with a face full of delight, and told him that what he had been long wishing above all things in the world was at length fulfilled, his parents having just given him leave to study the law; and that thereupon he had come to the law school at this University on account of its great fame, and meant to spare no pains or labour in getting through his studies as quickly and as well as possible. In this way he ran on a long time; and when at last he came to stop, the holy man, who had been listening to him with great patience and kindness, said, “Well! and when you have got through your course of studies what do you mean to do then?” “Then I shall take my doctor's degree,” answered the young man.

“And then?” asked Filippo Neri.

“And then,” continued the youth, “I shall have a number of difficult and knotty cases to manage, shall catch people's notice by my eloquence, my zeal, my acuteness, and gain a great reputation.”

“And then?” repeated the holy man.

“And then,” replied the youth,

“why then, there can't be a question, I shall be promoted to some high office or other; besides, I shall make money and grow rich.”

“And then?” repeated Filippo.

“And then,” pursued the young lawyer, “and then I shall live comfortably and honorably, in health and dignity, and shall be able to look forward quietly to a happy old age.”

“And then?” asked the holy man.

“And then,” said the youth, “and then—and then—then I shall die.”

Here Filippo lifted up his voice, and again asked,

“And then?” Whereupon the young man made no answer, but cast down his head, and went away. This last *And then?* had pierced like a flash of lightning into his soul, and he could not get quit of it. Soon after he forsook the study of the law, and gave himself up to the ministry of Christ, and spent the remainder of his days in godly words and works.

The question which St. Filippo Neri put to the young lawyer, is one which we should put frequently to ourselves. When we have done all that we are doing, all that we aim at doing, all that we dream of doing, even supposing that all our dreams are accomplished, that every wish of our heart is fulfilled, still we may ask, What will we do, what will be, then? Whenever we cast our thoughts forward, never let them stop short out his side of the grave; let them not stop short at the grave itself: but when we have followed ourselves thither, and have seen ourselves laid therein, still ask ourselves the same question, *And then?*

## A SKETCH OF FANCY.

Cast your thoughts forward, in imagination, to the judgment, and behold a mother at the right hand of God. With anxious solicitude she gazes upon each one receiving sentence from the righteous Judge. Imagine a mother's love permitted to enter heaven. Her soul expands with new delight; her crown of rejoicing becomes more radiant, and her palm of victory is waved with renewed delight before the throne of God, as she beholds her dear children, whom she had left behind to combat the ills of this mortal life, without her maternal care and pious example to lead them in the paths of rectitude, virtue and religion, arraigned before the bar of God, to receive the plaudit of “Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.” Imagination fails—language cannot portray the ecstatic joy that shall thrill her soul, as she welcomes them within the portals of the New Jerusalem, there to unite their voices everlastingly in ascribing anthems of praise to redeeming love.

Methinks I see her raptured stand,  
With open arms and outstretched hand,  
To receive her fainting child.  
No more by doubt or fear distressed,  
I see them now amid the blest,  
A family in heaven.