

THE MISSIONARY RECORD

OF THE

Free Church of Nova Scotia.

VOL. I. HALIFAX, N. S., JANUARY, 1850. No. 13.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

ISAIAH 38TH., 1ST.—*In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.*"

There are some lessons connected with this message to Hezekiah which it may be instructive to attend to; for of the certainty that we shall die, we can speak, though not of the time of our death; and let it be nearer or more remote, it may be said to all: "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live."

And, first, we learn, that the most exalted in worldly rank and station die—There is no exemption from death—"There is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit; neither hath he power on the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war." Hezekiah was King of Judah. He was a King and was descended from Kings.—But his being so could not ward off death. He was mighty as well as exalted. He was a warrior. He led his own armies to battle. He was generally victorious in his wars. We are told that he "prospered whithersoever he went forth; and he smote the Philistines even unto Gaza." But this great man, this mighty man, was sick, and must die. "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death."—Death is not always preceded by sickness, but commonly it is. And the proudest, the mightiest, the greatest, must bow before the power of disease—and at length yield to the stroke of death. Those who are surrounded by the greatest heraldic pomp, whose insignia and badges of rank, it might be supposed, would ex-

clude the fell visitant—within the line of whose marshalled attendants, on the floor of whose gorgeous palaces, death, it might be supposed, would never tread—whose glittering splendour, it might be imagined, would bribe away death, or forbid his intrusion, as if he could not taint the atmosphere, or sully the pride, of such noble houses,—they must bow under disease, and shake hands with death.—Death may come, indeed, in an "obsequious livery of plumes and velvet and cloth of gold":—without that he may not enter palaces. But it is death, undisguised death, after all. The King is no more exempt from death than the peasant, and in that mortal struggle, the highest and the lowest are on an equality. What matters greatness at death? The crown is a bauble then. The King of Terrors spares no King because of His crown, any more than the peasant because of his poverty. He strikes all ranks. When sickness comes, rank, wealth, power must yield—and it is but a mortal that we see contending with its throes, and grappling with its might. Enter that chamber: it is on a lonely isle of the sea:—with none of the insignia of royalty about him, and but a few faithful attendants beside him in his exile:—and who is that, with brow accustomed to command, and eye that had glanced over a hundred fields of battle, and hand that wielded the mightiest sceptre on earth, and lips that had spoken in highest council, and from whose word monarchs learned their fate—with the palor of sickness and the damps of death, powerless and silent before a potentate mightier than himself? Oh, has not death a signal conquest there? His conquest is no greater than were the soul of the obscurest mortal taking its flight