

suffering greatness, how keenly, on the other land, must David, in exiled majesty, have felt the attacks of Shimei! Yet, in the depth of woe, he said, "Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him,"—a strong orientalism of speech, implying, 'The Lord hath put David in circumstances which give this Benjamite the occasion of his guilty "cursing."'

As it was not the thought of mere separation, so neither was it anything in *the circumstance of dying*, that gave intensity to the father's grief. It is not desirable, indeed, to die amid the hurry and fierceness of battle, especially amid all the humiliations of unsuccessful warfare. Nor is it pleasing to be denied the rites of honorable sepulture. But the passionate sorrow of David was not that the beautiful frame of Absalom was buried under a heap of stones in the wood of Ephraim. It is of little moment *where* our dust is deposited, if it may but rest in hope. But for a son to die in vile rebellion is a grief of griefs!

Now Absalom was beyond David's warnings and prayers. The voice of paternal love could not break the long silence of his ignominious grave, or solace for an instant his unhappy spirit!—And, ah! who shall tell this rebel's thrice-aggravated misery!—Who can follow that disembodied shade, entering the gloomy regions, and addressed by enchained and howling tenants of that abyss,—Art *thou* also become like unto us?—thou, a son of David,—thou, whose ears have listened to thy father's solemn harp,—"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."... But "as for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness."—thou, who hast heard, in childhood and advancing life, of HIM who is David's Lord as well as David's Son,—thou, degenerate offspring of one who built the tabernacle, who brought thither the ark with shoutings, who "returned to bless his household,"—thou, the child, of innumerable prayers and vows,—art THOU become LIKE UNTO US?

Once lost, lost for ever! When all the revolutions of time are gone, the spirit of Absalom survives in ever-renewing, ever-increasing capability of woe. "Would God I had died for thee!" groans the heart-stricken sire. "Through mercy I might have been rescued from the bitterness of the second death: but *where, O where is the soul of Absalom?*"

The connexion between the most painful instance of that father's unfaithfulness and this calamity, is neither hidden nor remote.—