

society's outcasts perished by the wayside, or when a doomed felon expiated his crimes on the accursed tree. For such there was no "myrrh and aloes," or "linen clothes;" but, dying the outcast's death, they found refuge at last in an outcast's unhallowed grave. In the pious task, therefore, of Joseph and Nicodemus, we recognize something more than a transient pity for one who had suffered much. It may be said, humanity would prompt them to give Jesus burial; but no such feeling led them to inter the felons who had perished by his side; and so we recognize in their act the workings of a faith which, through the deep humiliation of Jesus, caught glimpses of his coming glory; which saw clearly the injustice of his condemnation when viewed from the human side; but which saw, at the same time, though dimly, its awful meaning when viewed in connection with the purposes of God; and who shall say that there was not, with all this, a presentiment, at least, of the wondrous sequel to the burial which they gave?

I love to contemplate the work of these pious friends. Everything about it seems fraught with suggestive thought. We instinctively contrast the gifts presented to Jesus as he entered the world, with this gift as he leaves it. The wise men brought the sweet frankincense; Nicodemus brings the bitter aloes and myrrh. Both were appropriate: one the tribute of welcome at his coming, the other the sad tribute to his memory when he was gone; but I cannot repress the thought that the myrrh and aloes—love's tribute to the dead Christ—exhaled a sweeter fragrance to heaven than the frankincense that hailed the living King of the Jews. And then look at the richness of the gift, "an hundred pounds weight!" There is a spirit, like that of Judas, ready to say of such matters, "This might have been sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor;" and a narrow-minded utility would say,—*"Is not this far more than is necessary?"* But love never asks, *How little will do?* but, *How much can I give?*

From the preparations thus made for the burial of Jesus, there is another lesson which we may profitably carry away: It is sometimes said,—*"When a man is dead, it matters not what becomes of his body."* I cannot think so. The body should be honored because it is the garment of the soul, still more because it is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and also because we believe that a time is coming when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption," and that which "is sown in weakness" shall be "raised in power." We should give our departed friends honorable burial, not only as a tribute of affection to their memory, but as an act in keeping with that precious article of our faith: *"I believe in the resurrection of the body."*

The next step in the narrative brings us into the presence of strange and painful contrasts: *"In the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre."* Wondrous mystery of human existence here! Life and death—the garden and the sepulchre—always associated. The first garden over whose happy groves the shadow of death was thrown; the sepulchre of Macpelah, in the midst of the fruitful field of the Sons of Heth, where Abraham, the "heir of the promises," buried his dead out of his sight; the garden of Gethsemane, with its wealth of olive trees—symbols of