

had been recently left a widower in charge of eight children; the youngest an infant, and the oldest scarcely fifteen years of age. A consequence of this was that the children were scattered abroad and never afterwards reunited, in full number, as a family. I was left, temporarily, in charge of my father's late partner. Mr. C—, was advanced in life, a widower, without children, his domestic affairs being managed by a niece,—young, fair, and consequential, but not unkind. Indeed, I was treated with great kindness of a certain sort, throughout, a negative kindness, which supplied all my real wants, and granted me many indulgences, but no attention was paid to my moral or intellectual training. The old gentleman never refused me money when I asked for it; i. e., a yorke-shilling or sixpence to buy fruit or confectionery. Finding this, I suppose, my requests had become too frequent, and one day, giving me a small coin he said, "I shall never give you money hereafter, except upon holidays or *Sundays*." This last limitation struck me as singular. I think I had never asked him for money on a Sunday, for though wanting both precept and example of a religious kind, I had not been able to divest myself of the sense of the sacredness of that day to which I had been trained: and although I very seldom attended any place of worship, yet I did not think it right to be much abroad on Sunday, or to engage in any play or sports. One day, I could not get money on a Sunday morning by asking, why should I not ask, and having it, why should I not spend it? Thus it was not long till I was able, though at first under a deep sense of guilt, to glide down to a fruit and confectionery shop, which I knew was kept open on the Sabbath, and make my purchases. Here, or along the way, I would meet with companions willing to share with me, or perhaps to invest for larger supplies. Plainly my reverence for the Sabbath, and with it, respect for all holy things was diminishing, and the fruit of my religious training was rapidly slipping away from me; "*And no man cared for my soul.*"

Whilst things were in this state, after an absence of many months, my father who had settled in a distant town, made me a visit. I was delighted to see him, but I am afraid my joy was founded, to a large extent, if not chiefly upon my hope of getting money from him: for I had come to love it, and was getting impatient with the sparing manner in which it was dealt out to me. It had never occurred to me, notwithstanding the family misfortunes, which I did not understand, that my father would have any difficulty in controlling any amount of money he might desire, and I quite expected that my pockets would be well filled, and was not slow therefore, in presenting my request. This led to explanations of all the past. My father did not rebuke me, at least not very severely, but he led me down to the only stationer's shop in the village, and caused to be displayed before me the entire stock of books for children. It was a meagre display, both as to the quality and quantity; and yet I dare say it fairly represented the juvenile literature of the day. Our grand-fathers seemed to believe that it was unnecessary perhaps impossible to teach their children to *think*, and to *feel*, until they approached maturity. Till then it was sufficient if they were

amused and pleased. Hence the literature prepared for them were little picture-books, primers, containing for the most part doggerel verses, each one of which was illustrated with a coarse wood cut. Those before me consisted of "Old Mother Hubbard and her dog," "The death of Cock Robin," "The House that Jack built," and a few others of the same character. None of these however, took my fancy, for the reason, probably, that I already knew them mostly by heart. On the paper cover of another, however, a little thicker than the rest, I observed the figure of a ship under full sail. This was an object entirely new to me, and the explanations that followed filled me with surprise. The largest craft I had ever seen was a log canoe, capable of conveying two men across the mill pond, and the largest sheet of water was the mill pond. But here was a vessel that could carry a thousand people with their horses and cattle, over vast seas a thousand miles wide. I gladly accepted this book, and I read it with great attention. I had hoped it would give a full description of the ship. It did not do this, but it did more. It opened before me as it were, chinks in a blank wall through which I seemed to see, in the dim distance a vast outer world filled with objects of the deepest interest of which hitherto I had had no conception,—great cities, great ships, vast oceans, strange foreign countries, etc.—and a desire to know of these, and all things which were awakened which has never before been satisfied. This was the beginning of my intellectual life. I am now conscious of a very great change which then took place in me. I ceased to be the absolutely thoughtless child. My life, thenceforth, was something more than mere vegetation. I listened attentively to conversations which I happened to overhear, especially if they were of a narrative kind. But chiefly I longed for books that could afford me knowledge which however I could not obtain. One day, Mary, my patron's niece, before alluded to, observing my restlessness, said to me, "Why W—, why don't you read the stories in the Bible?" Casting my eyes upon the great volume which always lay upon the table, but which I had never seen any one open, I enquired, "Are there stories in the Bible?" and she turned me up the story of Joseph. I devoured it with unspeakable eagerness. I pursued the history onward—The Exodus—The wanderings—The settlement in Canaan—The Judges and the Kings to the very last; and then returning to the first of Genesis I read with wondering attention the history of the creation—The antediluvians—The flood—The patriarchs. And then the historical parts of the New Testament; including the awful Revelation, which I regarded as historical in the same sense as the former. Indeed for the three or four following years the Bible was my library. I scarcely read any other book, for the simple reason that I could not get them. I have since,—and always, congratulated myself upon this circumstance. And I cannot but feel something like pity for any who missed the opportunity to read the holy Book,—and be engrossed in it,—with the simple faith of childhood, before doubts had been suggested, before any difficulties had been presented. Oh, this is a privilege devoutly to be desired for all our children and our children's children.

## Denominational Pulpit.

### THE CHRISTIAN DEAD.

*A Sermon Preached by Pastor J. D. King, in the Baptist Chapel, Yorbville, on Sunday Evening, October 28th, 1877.*

OCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF DAVID BUCHAN, ESQ.

"And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—Revelation xiv. 13.

DEATH is at all times a solemn subject to dwell upon; but there are seasons when the solemnity of this subject is increased by peculiar attendant circumstances. The present is one of these seasons. A faithful, zealous, indefatigable servant of Christ has, in the all-wise providence of God, been suddenly snatched away from our midst, leaving a beloved family and numerous friends to mourn his loss. Solemnity and sadness must both rest with unusual weight upon our spirits, as our thoughts are directed to the event which has brought us together. For the one let us seek no relief, it will be profitable to cherish it; but to alleviate the other let us remember that we have no reason to sorrow as those "who have no hope." Our loss is indeed great; but can we be so selfish as to forget that what is so deeply distressing to us is so altogether glorious for the departed? Are we not assured that he is one of that spirit happy number, on whose ashes the spirits of heaven may look down with holy satisfaction, and over whose grave may be sung as the fittest and noblest requiem,—*"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them?"* Let us then moderate our grief! And may the Lord, the Spirit, the Teacher of his Church, grant us his presence and power, so that the thoughts suggested by this passage may contribute to our present and eternal profit.

I. It is important to consider, in the first place, the character of those upon whom this blessing is pronounced. You will observe that it is not pronounced upon the dead because they are *dead*. We sometimes hear from thoughtless lips, the utterance of an anguished heart, "I wish I were dead,"—as though death were not, in itself, an unmitigated evil, but a blessing to be desired. Death is a change, when viewed in its proper light, most awful and solemn. Look at its origin! It comes to us stamped with the anathema, and vocal with the anger of the Almighty, as a part of the curse which, as far as the body is concerned, must be borne alike by all. It will be remembered that it was threatened as a consequence of sin; that it was inflicted only by reason of its commission; "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, because all have sinned." Then look at its victims! Among the dead you find not merely the sons and daughters of affliction, who had been tossed to and fro till they sighed for a change; nor the decrepit and aged who had lived on till life had ceased to yield enjoyment, and its springs had utterly failed; but you find many