

agency was concerned, voluntarily giving up their power to influence the people to the practice of virtue. Is it any wonder that gross darkness existed throughout the length and breadth of Europe? Surely not. It was similar influences also that caused Symeon Stylites to make his life as miserable as possible, by taking up his abode on the lofty pillars erected for his use, and remaining there exposed to the fury of the elements, and in as uncomfortable positions as could be thought of. Of course there is no one now who would not smile at such fanaticism, and term it outrageous; and Symeon's name will be spoken as a by-word for ages to come; yet his spirit is not dead; it lives; we all possess a portion of it and call it by another name, and cherish it as a noble inborn desire for a more glorious field of action than the performance of life's common duties furnished.

We do not recognize him as the father of it, but so much of it seemed to have been possessed by him that he was enabled to break away from the world, and to act in life according to his highest ideal of the existence of man.

Let us practise virtue for its own sake, in whatever sphere we may move, be it never so humble, and not that men may see it; for surely it is its own reward.

Death is Hope.

DEATH has always been considered the "king of terrors," and the finale of life is characterized as the "last struggle," while in reality with it all struggle ceases. Said a man of influence and wealth a few days ago: "Only one thing troubles me, and that is death." How many can say "amen" to that? Everybody seems to have a chilly dread of death.

It seems quite time that this pale ghostly monarch who has for ages struck terror to the bravest hearts, and made cowards of us all, should be discredited; at least that we may look upon him with less horror, and learn to meet what is inevitable with the composure of a philosopher; and perhaps at last we may look upon him rather as an angel of mercy than a tyrannical conqueror.

Superstition has veiled this personage (death) of which we are so ignorant, in mysterious

horror, and so exaggerated the awe and terror within us at the mention of its approach, that christians though we are, we look forward to its certain coming with consternation rather than with joy, at the thought of a soul passing from death unto life.

This is all wrong, and though it be urged that those are natural feelings, and relate merely to an inherent repugnance to having our bodies pass into the original dust, and to lose cognizance of the material world, yet why should we grieve that instead of seeing things darkly, we shall behold all things clearly! Instead of knowing a part, we shall know the whole. The grave can never be totally dark since Christ lay there, for through all the darkness of that "bourne from which no traveller e'er returns," comes back a ray of light, showing us that He has conquered—and we shall also conquer by his power. And though life is sweet and it is positive delight to feel the healthy pulsations of the life blood, to be conscious of thought and power of will, though God be very good to us here, and showers rich blessings upon us, even fills for us the measure of bliss; still such is the hope in death that the christian when the beatings of the heart grow faint, and the clammy sweat gathers on the brow, and the grim monster is clasping him in his embrace, may say: "Put out the lights, there is nothing now but heaven."

Jesus has taken the sting out of death, and stripped the grave of its victory. The halo of light which he shed over the grave as he arose from it, still brightens that otherwise gloomy abode. Combining this thought with the language of the 48 Psalm, 14 verse: "For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." What is there to fear? In place of grieving our lives away because death is staring us in the face, let us rejoice—in the midst of the present state of things—that there is a divinely appointed way of changing them, and that way is death. Ah, but says one, death is the hardest of all ways for changing life. But in contradiction to this is the language of scripture: "He giveth his beloved sleep." A rest from the cares, toils and disappointments of life. What a hope brightens before the christian as