

E. M. ...

AFFECTIONATE REMINISCENCES

OF

AN ONLY DAUGHTER

AND

FIRST-BORN SON.

BY THEIR BEREAVED FATHER.

"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."—Prov. iv. 18.

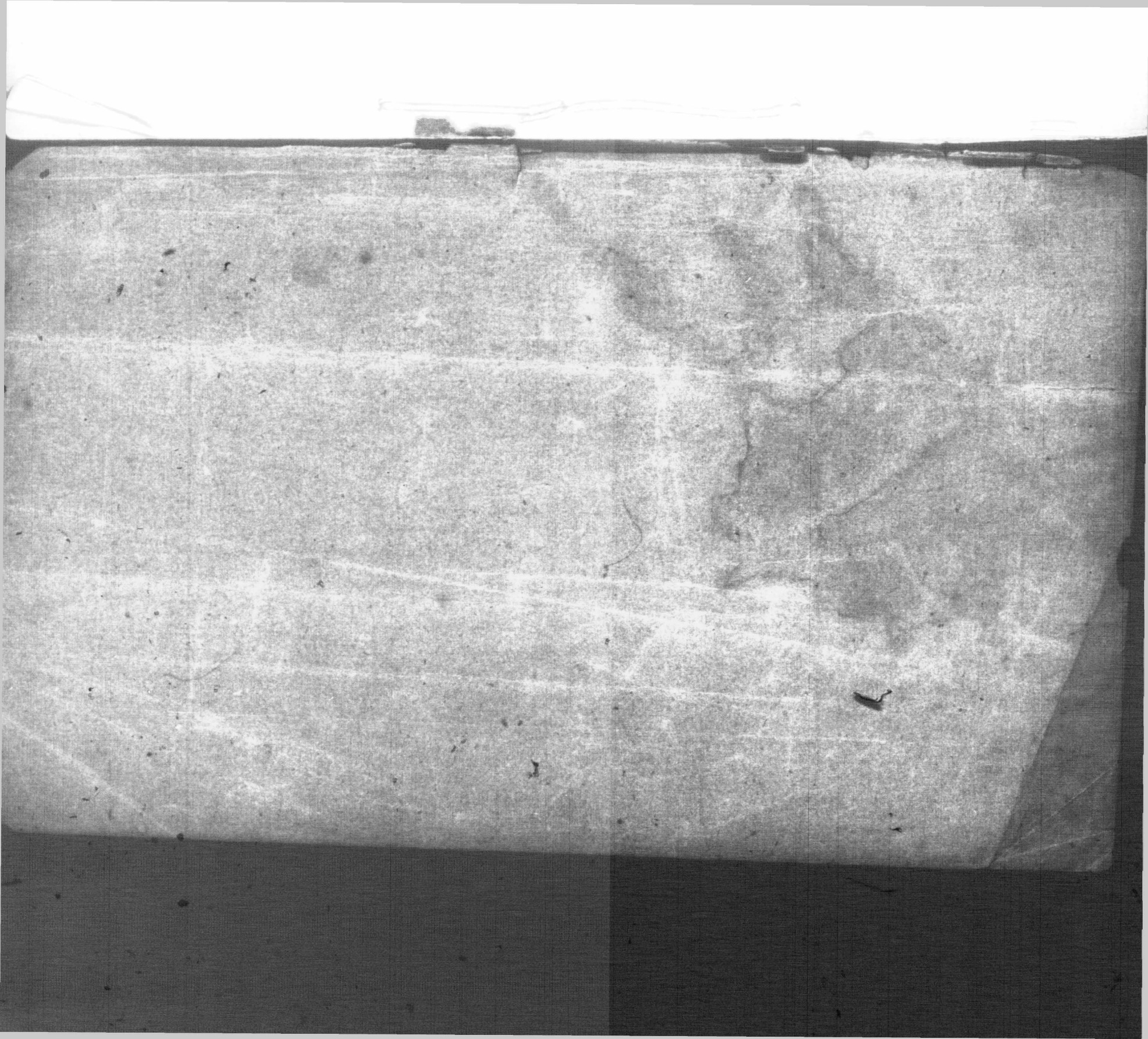
SAINT JOHN, N. B.

PRINTED BY BARNES AND COMPANY,

PRINCE WILLIAM STREET.

1866.

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MEMORIAL SKETCH

OF THE LATE

MRS. MARY ANN B. McHENRY,

OF

SALISBURY, ALBERT COUNTY,

NEW BRUNSWICK.

BY HER FATHER.

SAINT JOHN, N. B.

PRINTED BY BARNES AND COMPANY,

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1865.

DEAR FRIEND--

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2. As a tribute
3. As an impre
4. As a timely

Saint John, Deco

TO THE READER.

DEAR FRIEND—

Please accept the enclosed mementoes of loved ones departed :

1. As a token of personal esteem and good will.
2. As a tribute of deep parental love for those who have *gone to the better land.*
3. As an impressive illustration of the triumphant power of the Christian faith.
4. As a timely admonition to all, especially to the young, saying *Be ye also ready.*

Respectfully yours.

I. E. BILL.

Saint John, December 15, 1865.

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MRS. MARY ANN B. McHENRY.

HER BIRTH.

She was born at Nictaux, Annapolis County, N. S., April 27th, 1829; the second child and only daughter of Rev. I. E. and Isabella Bill. Her father had been ordained to the pastorate of the Nictaux church on the 20th of March preceding, and was at the time of her birth engaged in a most extensive revival of religion, which was filling the whole land with happy converts, and inspiring all christian hearts with prayer and praise. The infant daughter of the youthful pastor, under these circumstances, naturally became an object of intense interest to the people, and the good old fathers and mothers in Israel, as well as the more youthful disciples, sent up many fervent prayers, that she might early share in the rich blessings of redeeming love. The earnest intercessions of the sainted Bishop, then the senior deacon of the church, presented with such glowing affection, for the pastor's new-born daughter, are still fresh on memory's page. In her very birth, therefore, she was encompassed with the atmosphere of hallowed supplication; and the importunate entreaties, presented before the altar of sacrifice in her behalf at that tender age, were in due time answered.

HER EDUCATION

commenced in the nursery, under the guidance of a christian mother; and the first lullabys that fell upon her infantile ear, were adapted to awaken the religious element. All the associations were of kindred mould, and special care was taken that no counteracting influences, which the vigilance of doting parents could prevent, should be allowed to thwart the endeavour to train their precious treasure in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

At the early age of four years, Mary Ann took her first lessons in a primary school, taught at Nictaux by Mr. Henry Hall; but young as she was, she had been prepared, under the training of her mother, to class with those who were years older; her extreme dif-

confidence, however, was such that for the first month she was only heard to speak once above a whisper. On the retirement of Mr. Hall, W. H. Troop, Esq., took charge of the school; and for several successive years, in the day and sabbath school, she enjoyed the advantages of his faithful and successful labours.

On the removal of her parents to Fredericton, at the close of 1839, to take charge for a time of the Baptist church in that place, Mary Ann entered the Female department of the Fredericton Seminary, then in charge of an accomplished English lady, by the name of Miss Bennet, who had been brought out from England by the late Rev. Frederick Miles to fill that important position. On the retirement of Miss Bennet, her place was ably filled by Mrs. W. Needham, and the daughter therefore continued to enjoy the best advantages which the Seminary could impart, until her father's return to Nictaux. Having no prospect of a school at Nictaux adapted to her advanced stage of progress, an arrangement was made by which she was placed under the care and tuition of Mrs. Miles, now the beloved wife of Rev. R. W. Cushman, of Boston. All that love could suggest, or mature capability could execute, was cheerfully done in this connection to perfect the work which had been so well commenced. As might be expected, under the instructions of one so competent and so deeply interested, the pupil's progress was most rapid and satisfactory. On the marriage of Mrs. Miles, the daughter returned to her parents at Nictaux, where she remained until the autumn of 1844, when she was taken by her father to Boston, and placed in the Baptist Seminary at Charleston; and while pursuing her studies in that excellent institution, she took private lessons of a highly accomplished English lady, in some of the ornamental branches.

HER TEACHING CAPABILITIES.

For the twofold purpose of perfecting herself in her own school studies, and imparting the advantages which she had enjoyed to others, in the 17th year of her age she opened a superior school for young ladies in her father's house at Nictaux. This, so far as we know, was the first Baptist female school of superior type opened in Nova Scotia. It was soon filled by a class of young ladies, who prosecuted their studies with commendable assiduity, and with highly satisfactory results. Several of these are now filling

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prominent positions in society, and in this connection exhibit in unmistakable lineaments the impress which they received from their youthful preceptress at Nictaux.

HER RELIGIOUS LIFE.

As we have seen, she came upon the stage of existence at a time and under circumstances in all respects adapted to awaken and to foster the religious element; and special care was taken by those who felt that her life and happiness were identified with their own, that the books she read, the circle in which she moved, and the associations in which she mingled, should all tend in the same direction; but there was no very marked manifestation of deep religious sensibility until her removal with her parents to Fredericton. At the opening of her father's ministry in that town, it pleased God to pour forth his Spirit copiously upon the people. A deep and general religious awakening took place, and scores were brought to a knowledge of the truth. Among the number were several of the pupils of the male and female departments of the Seminary. Her oldest brother, Asahel—now with his Saviour—became the subject of deep religious conviction, and an intense desire was felt that she too might experience the regenerating grace of the Gospel. Prayer was heard, and the dear girl, then in the 12th year of her age, was filled with a sense of her need of Christ. After days and nights of earnest seeking, the promise, they that seek shall find, in her case was gloriously fulfilled. Early one bright and beautiful morning, she came from her chamber, rushing to her father's arms, exclaiming, "Dear pa, the Saviour has appeared for my soul; he has pardoned my sins, and filled my heart with his love." As she gave utterance to this language, her countenance was radiant with the new-born happiness that reigned within. Her parents loved her sufficiently before, but now she seemed wedded to them by a new bond of affection, bringing with it a rushing tide of holy, heavenly joy. Shortly after this happy change, she related her experience to the church; was joyfully received as a candidate for the ordinances, and, in company with several of her associates, was baptized in the font of the Fredericton chapel by her father, in the presence of a crowded and deeply affected congregation. Reception evening came, and she, with twenty-nine others—thirty in all—received the right hand of fellowship into the church. How im-

pressive the scene ; how glorious the hour ! The candidates were equally divided—half males and half females ; the ladies were all robed in white, as emblematical of the purity of their Christian profession. The congregation was immense ; the lamented Miles made his last public address, and gave out in his own peculiar style that beautiful hymn beginning—

“ Come, let us join our cheerful songs
With angels round the throne ;
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
But all their joys are one.”

The Spirit of the Holy One descended and filled the place. The pastor felt the powers of the world to come resting upon him ; saints rejoiced and sinners trembled, and the work of God proceeded in mighty power. Surely the sayings and doings of that night were inscribed upon the tablets of eternity. Among the rejoicing ones were the first-born son and only daughter of the happy pastor, both of whom have gone to their rest, and are now participating in the blessed immunities of the “ church of the first-born, written in heaven.”

This striking change in the child of many prayers, was no fitful impulse, but a deep wrought work by the Spirit of the living God—a work which produced fruit, rich and precious, in subsequent life. While she was teaching her school at Nictaux, several of her pupils became deeply anxious about their soul’s salvation, and they will long remember with what sympathy and love she pointed them to the cross, and offered believing prayer to God in their behalf. The religious impressions made in that school through her instrumentality, were duly appreciated by her pupils, and will, we doubt not, be as enduring as the records of eternity.

HER MARRIAGE.

On the 14th of September, 1851, she became united in marriage to Thomas McHenry, Esq. ; removed to St. John, N. B., and not long after was received by letter from the Nictaux Church into the Germain Street Baptist Church. The former Mrs. McHenry having left two daughters, she was thus early called to assume not only the duties of a wife, but the responsibilities of a mother. Those who knew her best, and who were the most deeply interested, felt that she met these new responsibilities in a manner perfectly satisfactory to all concerned.

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In married life she became the mother of six daughters ; and a few months before her death, she gave birth to her first and only son. To the guidance and training of these children, she devoted the best energies of her nature. She felt that they were hers, to educate for time and for eternity ; and she possessed the power in no stinted measure of imbuing their infantile minds with her own sentiment and spirit, and of stamping them physically, intellectually and religiously, with her own image. So perfect was her discipline, that her children knew no will but hers. It was not the discipline of fitful passion, of physical or mental torture ; but it was emphatically the discipline of intensified maternal love. When orders were given, no one questioned their propriety, or asked for an explanation, but all hastened to obey with cheerful promptitude and genuine filial affection. In all her domestic relations, love was the ruling power. Amid the wreck of worldly possessions, and in the dark, chilling night of adversity, love sat in queenly majesty upon the throne of her loving heart, sending forth its beams of light and hope to cheer and to console. If the sunlight of prosperity shone upon her path, she received it as a gift from God, to be improved to his glory ; and when crossing providences blighted her earthly prospects, she bowed in humble submission, saying, " Shall I receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not evil."

The rapidity with which her children multiplied, and her deep devotion to their happiness and education, prevented her from acting a very prominent part beyond the domestic circle. But here in her own chosen, loved home, she infused sentiments, displayed virtues, and implanted principles which, through surviving loved ones, will extend to future generations ; bloom and bear their fruit in the unsullied regions of a blissful immortality.

HER ILLNESS AND DEATH.

From infancy to mature age she was favoured with excellent health, and had as fair a prospect apparently of long life as the most robust amongst us ; but within the last three years, although for the most part able to attend to her usual duties, there were indications of failing health. But not sufficiently marked to awaken any very serious apprehensions until since the birth of her last child. Her confinement was attended with unusual debility, and not long after she was attacked with what appeared to be a severe

cold, producing cough and fever, accompanied with profuse perspiration. From this she partially recovered, sufficiently so to visit her parents in St. John, where she spent the most of the month of August, in the hope that a change of air would re-invigorate and fully restore her to health. For the first week the effect upon her general health was favorable; but she again declined, so that on her return home to Salisbury she was more debilitated than when she left. September passed and October came, bringing no improvement, but increasing debility. In fact, by this time her symptoms had become so marked that she calmly came to the conclusion that her lungs were fatally assailed, and that she must soon bid adieu to all earthly connection, and enter upon the unseen and the eternal.

On the 13th of October, she unfolded her convictions to her parents, who, up to this time, had cherished the strongest hopes of her recovery. In this letter, among other things, she remarked:—"I have been ailing for three years, and it is just now coming to a crisis. Still, I may get well and live for years, or I may be hurried away in a few months. God only knows; to Him I commit myself and all those dearer than my own life. *They will be taken care of. I know it, I feel it.*

"Now, my dear parents, I want you to look the matter calmly in the face. Our separation can not but be short at best; and don't let us spend what time we have in gloomy forebodings, and melancholy imaginings; but rather let us look forward to that 'house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,' which Jesus has prepared for his own. * * * Dear Ma, Oh! shall I ever see her precious face again? My dear husband is well, but there is a load at his heart. There is nothing I want but he supplies, and his goodness knows no bounds."

Notwithstanding the distinctness of these affecting utterances, still fond parents clung to hope, and wrote her accordingly, but she replied in the same strain of assurance that her days on earth were numbered.

Dr. Preston, of this city, was her medical adviser, and while his treatment yielded no permanent benefit, it nevertheless frequently afforded temporary relief from suffering. Her friends of course were anxious that all which the best medical skill could suggest should be tried. At this stage it so happened that her husband

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was able to call in the advice of Dr. Howath, an eminent physician of Boston. After examining her case thoroughly, he decided that her lungs were fatally diseased; but his religious instruction and counsel afforded her so much satisfaction that she wrote and spoke of his visit as having been a special blessing to both body and mind.

On Friday, the 20th of October, her father was able to leave her sick mother long enough to visit his languishing child, and to his amazement, found that the forebodings indicated in her letters were but too well founded. It only remained for him, therefore, to apply such promises, and to administer such consolation, as might, with the Divine blessing, sustain and comfort his dying daughter on her passage through the dark valley to the invisible state. The circumstances of the case were acutely painful, inasmuch as her mother was prostrated on a bed of sickness, too ill to visit her suffering child, or to allow the father to be absent from her sick room any length of time. The only alternative, therefore, was to use the mail and the telegraphic wires in keeping up such interchange of thought and sympathy as the nature of the case suggested.

Accordingly, her father, on the Sabbath evening after his return, filled with mingled emotions of sorrow and of joy, informed her by letter that his deeply interesting visit to her sick room had furnished him with two sermons, which he had that day delivered in Germain Street Chapel. The first, in the morning on the *believer's triumph over death*, from the passage in 1 Cor. xv. 57, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The believer's triumph over death through Christ, viz. :—*through the teachings of Christ, the work of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the revelation of Christ to the soul by faith, and through the final victory of Christ over death in the resurrection of all believers to eternal life.*

The second, in the evening, on the *christian's desire to participate in the blessedness of the heavenly state*, from Heb. xi. 12. "But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly!" The christian prefers heaven to earth, because heaven is untainted by sin, because it is free from the sorrows of earth, because its communion is uninterrupted by death, because its attainments in knowledge are of the highest degree, and because its immunities are all perfect and eternal.

The leading thoughts suggested by this arrangement of the two

discourses were incorporated in the letter, and despatched with earnest prayer, that the Holy Spirit might make the application.

On the 27th of October her father visited her again ; and found her gradually declining ; but cheerful and happy in the prospect of future bliss. On the day following he was compelled to leave her, to fulfil an engagement at Shediac. As he could not see her on his return, he wrote her as follows :—

“ Shediac, October 30, 1865.

“ MY LOVING DAUGHTER—I very much wish I could call and see you to day ; but the illness of your dear mother compels me to return home with the least possible delay. It was fearfully windy and rough here yesterday, but I had good congregations morning and evening, and a deeply interesting day. The Sabbaths of earth, when rightly improved, are sweet and precious, highly emblematic of the eternal rest—

‘ Where congregations ne’er break up,
Where Sabbaths never end.’

“ Bless God, my dear child, that you have a delightful assurance of mingling in the delights of that glorious Sabbath of rest. *Rest from sin—from sorrow—from pain—from tears—from toil—from temptation. Rest in the loving bosom of the dear Redeemer—in the beatific visions of the eternal Divinity.* Who that loves Jesus would not be there ? The more you read and think about heaven, my love, the stronger will be the tie that will bind you to that celestial state. Read often the xiv. and xvii. chapters of St. John’s gospel, the xv. chap. of Paul’s epistle to the Corinthians, and the vii., xxi. and xxii. of the Revelation by John the Divine. O how rich, how precious are these portions of the inspired records ! If you feel too feeble to read, then your husband and children will read them for you. They are the words of your blessed Saviour recorded for the comfort and joy of his chosen ones in all ages of the church ; and when we can take hold of them by a vital, saving faith, and apply them to our own hearts, we feel as if heaven had begun below. What is death but the simple gateway to all this *happiness, dignity and glory !* Why then should we not bid the messenger welcome ? He comes with a message of love from our exalted Lord, saying, ‘ Child, come home.’ We will not, therefore, dread the power of the King of terrors, for his sting is taken away, ‘ Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ ”

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On the 2d of November she wrote:—

"DEAREST PA—I had set apart this afternoon to write you a good long letter, but company prevented me from fulfilling my purpose. Dear friends are multiplying their tokens of goodwill, and what can I thank but the goodness of the Lord. I have been desiring lately more than I did to live; still I feel to submit all to my blessed Saviour—

'He is my soul's bright morning star,
And he my rising sun.'

Are you coming up on Saturday? I was so disappointed in not hearing from you to-day. Dear ma, my heart is full of love for her. I hope she continues improving."

The father was still prevented from leaving home by the continued illness of her mother, and therefore on the evening of Sabbath, the 5th Nov., he wrote her as follows:

"MY PRECIOUS DAUGHTER—I have just returned from our evening service in Germain Street, where I addressed the people from the 10th verse of the 46th Psalm, 'Be still, and know that I am God.' The divine existence declared, *I am God*. A solemn duty enjoined, based upon that existence: *Be still, and know that I am God*. Amid the overwhelming afflictions which have fallen to my lot, these are the bright truths which cheer me—these the sources of my consolation—these the foundation of my hopes. To see and know God in his creative energy, in his providential dispensations, in his redeeming love, is to see and know what will assuage our keenest anguish, dry up our tears of deepest grief, hush our murmurings, and fill us with joyous hope. What am I, that I should reply against my Maker's will? 'Clouds and darkness may be round about him, but justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne;' He governs in wisdom, in justice, and in love. 'Too wise to err, too good to be unkind.' How precious is that sweet hymn of Cowper, upon the providence of God:—

'God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.
'Ye fearful saints fresh courage take!
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercies, and shall break
With blessings on your head.
'Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face.'

"Sweet thoughts! may they be inscribed upon our hearts by the Spirit's saving power. O for more faith to take hold of the verities of the God-head! It does indeed seem strange that those who love you with the purest, strongest affection, should not be allowed to be with you, my dear child, in this hour of your weakness. I know your dear mother feels this to be a severe deprivation; but an all-wise One has so decreed, and we must bow in humble submission. 'Be still, and know that I am God.' We thank the Lord with our whole heart that your dear husband is able to spend so much of his time in administering to your comfort; that your daughters are all love and obedience; that kind friends come in to show their heartfelt sympathy and goodwill; but best of all, is the presence of your loving Redeemer, to lighten your pathway, and to fill you with hopes and evidences of future bliss.

"The sweet little son too must feel the withering touch of disease. Well, my love, heaven is a better place for him than earth. He is a lovely flower to transplant in the heavenly garden, and to bloom and flourish in the eternal Eden. There he will soon grow to angelic size, and to the perfect stature of a man in Christ Jesus. His infant soul has not been tainted with actual sin, but he will sing with you the same song, because redeemed with the same precious blood." * * *

"Monday morning, the 6th. I could fly this morning, dear love, to your bed of sickness to speak words of solace to you, and to send a prayer to heaven for your loved babe upon the verge of heavenly glory; but I must not, cannot leave your dear mother for an hour. She may get to heaven before you, and be ready at heaven's gate to bid you welcome, and to say to her glorious Lord, 'Here am I and the child which thou hast given me.' Blessed meeting! Think not of the death-pang, love, or of the grave's gloom, Jesus has taken away the sting. 'O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?'

'The graves of all the saints he blessed,
And softened every bed;
Where should the dying members rest,
But with their dying head!'

"But O think of heaven, bright, glorious heaven. Do you remember the morning, my darling, in Fredericton, when you rushed to your father's arms, exclaiming, 'The Saviour has appeared for my soul, dear pa, and pardoned my sins.' That was the happiest

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“ There I shall see his face,
And never, never sin ;
And from the rivers of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in.”

“ I must stop here, I shall weary you with this long letter. Your dear ma sends her great heart of love to you and yours. Farewell, my precious daughter ; may the choicest blessings of the everlasting covenant be yours ! Amen !”

To this letter she replied, Wednesday, the 8th, as below :

“ DEAREST PA—I wrote to go by the mail yesterday, but was too late. Meantime I received your precious letter, to which I cannot, by any means, do justice in reply.

“ I am so glad to hear dear ma continues comfortable. It does seem at times as if I could fly to her side to minister to her wants, and cheer her in this hour of affliction ; but God wills it otherwise, and we must submit. How little we ever imagined that mother and daughter would go within so short a time of each other. O pa, how it makes me long to be gone. If baby is going to die I would like to outlive him. He looks very poorly to me, but Bessie thinks there is not the least danger. Dear creature, I should love to take him with me, and then I should know he was safe from all harm. Still his father seems anxious to have him live, and perhaps he would do as well as other children. He is in the Lord's hand, and whatever he does with him will be right. My own health continues the same from day to day. No pain, nothing but weakness. I am able to walk across the room, and to sit up better than half the day. I can do a little sewing, but not much. Bessie is the greatest comfort. Such pleasant company, and she does so many things for my comfort. * * *

“ Oh how glad I shall be when the hour comes for me to lay aside all these things, when my Father shall say, ‘ Child, come up hither.’ If it were to-morrow, how my glad heart would leap at the summons. Ma, dear, our separation is only for a little while—a little while, and together we will walk the streets of the New Jerusalem, singing songs to the Lamb, who hath redeemed us. And dear Asahel will be there to welcome us. Oh ! shall we not be happy ? I am selfish, forgetting the dear ones left

behind ; but they will soon follow. Would it not be blessed if we could all go together. The dear children, except babe, are all in perfect health. They little know what is before them ; I shall tell the older ones soon. Farewell, dear Pa, I have written this in bed this morning. Ever so much love to darling ma. Tell her to keep up a good heart : we shall soon meet to part no more forever !

"YOUR LOVING DAUGHTER."

The lady that she calls Bessie, and to whom she became so strongly attached, is Mrs. Captain Henderson of this city—a very intimate and dear friend, who in this season of affliction kindly and nobly performed the part of both mother and sister.

The Sabbath before her death, she wrote :—

"DEAREST PA—I was so delighted with your long letter, and of your daily mode of life. * * * * * I have been very comfortable all the week, and yesterday felt so strong that I over-exerted myself, and had a restless night, so that I don't feel quite so well to-day. Darling baby continues to improve. The Doctor says he won't die yet. * * * How I wish I could fly down to you ; but God wills it otherwise, and we must bow uncomplainingly to his righteous decree. God grant that my precious mother's comfortable state of body may continue. The children are singing lovely hymns ; enough to raise one to heaven. O pa, a Sabbath in Heaven ! I am reading 'Heaven our Home,' a most lovely book ; it gives one such good ideas of the employments of that blessed state. I must say good bye, dear ma and pa. Let me hear from you as often as you can, but don't neglect that dear mother one moment for the sake of writing to me. Just send a despatch, I will do the same. With fondest love,

"YOUR OWN DAUGHTER."

Her last letter was dated on Wednesday, the 15th November—two days before her death. In this she says : "I have been delighted from time to time to hear of dear ma's comfortable state. What a blessing to be so free from pain. I am particularly favored in this respect. Not the least pain ever troubles me. I have been very comfortable indeed for the last week. Some days so well that I do a little too much, and then I have to be careful. * * * I cannot add ; I have written this in bed ; next time I will write longer. How long the time seems, dear pa. I little thought I

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should be here now ; but it is his will, and I must cheerfully acquiesce. Good by, my precious parents ; let me hear from you often.

“YOUR LOVING DAUGHTER.”

Her father's last letter to her was dated the day following, November 16th :—

“MY DAUGHTER LOVE—Many thanks for your sweet lines by mail to-night. How merciful our heavenly Father is, to preserve you so free from pain. It is my constant prayer that he will deal gently with you, and give you an easy passage over Jordan's flood. How many suffer so much more than you do. Praise the Lord for distinguishing mercy. Dear child, our hearts cling to you with all but superhuman affection. At times we feel as if we must hold you back ; but why should we ? Heaven so sweet—so delightful—so precious ! Why should we not be willing that our precious daughter should go at once and enjoy it in all the fulness of divine perfection ? Tell dear Asahel, when you meet him in that blessed world of light, that his fond parents love him as much or more now than when they gave him the last fond kiss of earthly love. O what greetings ! what anthems of praise ! what visions of glory are before you ! The Lord grant you, sweet daughter, an abundant entrance into the heavenly rest. * * * Your dear mother says, ‘ She never thought it possible she could be so resigned to part with you.’ How true the promise, ‘ As thy day is so shall thy strength be.’ She sends her deepest love. * * * Good night, my darling love. I hope you will have a peaceful night.”

This letter she did not receive until a few hours before her death, but she was able to read it, and to enjoy its contents. Peradventure it may have shed one ray of light along the pathway of the dark valley.

HER LAST DAY.

On Thursday night her cough was exceedingly troublesome, and she was very restless. About 7 o'clock on Friday morning, she became suddenly worse, and it was supposed that she was dying. Her husband was absent : a messenger was dispatched for him. He arrived at 11 A. M. She had revived ; but he sent a telegram immediately to her father, informing him of the sudden change for the worse ; but her mother was too ill to be left. He could, therefore,

only commit her, as he had done a thousand times twice told before, to the care of the great shepherd, in agonizing, believing supplication.

Her stricken husband, in writing to her father on Saturday, thus describes her last hours:—"From the time of my arrival at 11 A. M., until 6 P. M., she was easy and comfortable, and slept quietly for an hour or two. Rev. Mr. Rees called and prayed with her at 5 o'clock. At six she thought she could take a cup of tea, and get up to have her bed made; but just as Bessie handed her the cup, she said: '*Lay me down—this is death. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!*' She suffered for about half an hour, and then said to me, 'I am easy now—the cough is nothing,' and then quietly breathed out her life, with little if any pain. She died shortly after 7 P. M. She spent much of her time in prayer, and displayed remarkable resignation and faith to the end; indeed she was anxious to depart.

"I have not time to add. Our hearts are overwhelmed; and while we rejoice in her triumphant and happy death, we cannot but feel that the stroke which takes her from us is heavy, and the sense of bereavement must be lasting."

Such, then, was the last day of one who early consecrated her heart to the service of her Redeemer, and who from that hour, amid the ten thousand ensnarements of earth, endeavored so to live as to be prepared to die. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

We need scarcely say that the above correspondence, when written, was not intended for the public eye; but knowing the anxiety of hundreds in these Provinces and elsewhere, to have from the pen of the departed the true state of her mind in the prospect of an immediate entrance into the heavenly world, and to know also the particular circumstances attending her last days upon the earth, we have ventured to furnish such portions of the correspondence as we hope will be regarded as a kindly response to such wishes. It will be remembered that this memorial is addressed, not to the eye of a frigid criticism, but to the hearts of true sympathizing relatives and friends.

HER FUNERAL

This took place from her late residence in Salisbury, at half-past 2 P. M., on Monday, 20th November. The day was beautiful, and the community of Salisbury very generally attended, to give expression to their grief over the early removal of one who, though to

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them a comparative stranger, yet known sufficiently to awaken the deepest respect for her memory. At the house, Rev. Mr. Rees, pastor of the church, gave out an appropriate hymn, and offered a deeply affecting prayer; after which the bereaved family and friends took their leave of the loved one, now cold in death. The deepest sympathy was manifest as the sorrowing husband, with his six beautiful daughters took their last look, and impressed the farewell kiss upon cheeks for the first time insensible to the gushings of conjugal and filial love. It only remained for the stricken father to discharge the duty imposed upon him by her sick mother, as he left her bedside in sorrow that morning, "Smooth her dear face with your hand, and kiss her marble brow for her poor mother." This sacred mission was fulfilled, and then the coffin closed, and was borne away in slow and measured footsteps to the old Baptist chapel on the Coverdale side, where a solemn discourse was delivered by Rev. P. O. Rees, from Matt. xiii. 43, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." A prayer, which touched all hearts, by Rev. J. A. Smith of Hillsboro', followed, and then the remains were borne to their final resting place in the old cemetery near the chapel, where the lamented Joseph Crandal, and many more of like precious faith, are sleeping their death-sleep. It so happened that the place of sepulchre was on the very spot where the first Baptist Church of Salisbury was erected long years ago. Beautiful shrubbery and clusters of evergreens surround the place. The pastor again offered prayer, and gave out that beautiful hymn:—

"Unveil thy bosom, faithful tomb!
Take this new treasure to thy trust,
And give these sacred relics room
To slumber in the silent dust.

"Nor pain, nor grief, nor anxious fears,
Invades thy bounds; no mortal woes
Can reach the peaceful sleeper here,
While angels watch the soft repose.

"So Jesus slept; God's only son
Passed through the grave, and blessed the bed.
Rest here, blest saint; till from his throne
The morning break, and pierce the shade.

"Break from his throne, illustrious morn;
Attend, O earth, his sovereign word;
Restore thy trust; a glorious form
Shall then arise to meet the Lord."

While the grave was being filled, the choir, under the guidance of J. S. Colpitts, Esq., sung in plaintive melody—

“ Peacefully lay her down to rest,
Place the turf kindly on her breast ;
Close to her lone and narrow house,
Gracefully wave ye willow boughs ;
Quietly sleep, beloved one,
Rest from thy toil thy labor is done.

“ Sweet is the slumber beneath the sod,
While the pure soul is resting with God.
Flowers of the wild wood your odors shed
Over the holy, beautiful dead.
Rest till the trump from the opening skies,
Bid thee from dust to glory arise.

“ Peacefully sleep, peacefully sleep,
Sleep till that morning, peacefully sleep.”

Having thus peacefully laid her down to rest until the morning of the resurrection, sorrowing kindred retired, feeling an indescribable loneliness, which could only find vent in gushing tears of bitter grief ; while strangers left the new made grave, wondering why one so pure, so amiable, so lovely, so accomplished, so noble, so generous, so religious, so filled with all the virtues which refine, elevate and adorn the female mind ; and withal so useful, and so much needed on earth, should be thus cut down in the prime of her womanhood ?

“ Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives,
Nor dares the favorite angel pry,
Between the folded leaves.”

But one, at least, among the sad group of mourners, seemed to hear a voice from heaven, saying—“ Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord ; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors ; and their works do follow them.”

SUPPLEMENTARY.

Some days prior to Mrs. McHenry's death, she communicated to her two step-daughters in New York her convictions in full in reference to the nature of her disease, and as to what would be the probable results. This sad intelligence filled their loving hearts with the most pungent grief ; but before their replies of touching sympathy came to hand, she had gone to her rest. They, however, breathe such deep toned love and respect for their mother, that we shall be pardoned for giving the letter of the elder daughter as illustrative of the sentiments of both.

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Brooklyn, Nov. 18, 1865.

MY PRECIOUS MOTHER,—I cannot tell you how sad your letter made us all. Oh, I cannot realize that you are so sick: we had hoped even against hope, and yet we know you must be very ill, or you would not have written as you did. Oh my dear, dear mother, God alone knows how dear you have been to me, and though years have passed since we met, I have never lost the mother love and home love I felt when we first parted; and now if we can meet no more on earth, all we can say is God's will be done, not our will, oh Father. Oh, my mother, this has brought me so near to my Saviour, has made Him so precious to me. I cannot rebel as I once did when sorrow came, for I know we shall meet beyond the river; perhaps sooner than we should have met on earth. Oh, what a precious hope is ours, Bella and Mary both partakers of it too. We know that though parted for a season, we have an eternity to be together.

I thank God that He has given you such trust in Himself and His promises; we can without fear cast all our burdens upon Him, for He careth for us. My mother, I cannot—dare not repine; I know the country where you are going has no sorrow, no care, no night no tears there; only seeing Jesus and so many loved ones there, and my other mother too, she will meet you; for what you have been to her children, you will know each other there.

For all you have been to me I can only thank you; words cannot express the love and gratitude I owe. You know what I would say, but cannot. If I could see you, could be near you now! but that does not seem to be God's will, but we shall meet before long. At the most we have but a little longer to stay.

Dear Bella and Mary, they can realize it all so much; oh, we must all love each other more than ever, and the little ones too, and my dear father, God will comfort them all. I hope he may be to them what he has been to me the past few days—"a very present help in time of trouble." "A Saviour ever near." * * * We shall long to hear from you: will not Bella or Mary write? Aunt will write to you next week.

Oh mother! dear, dear mother! words fail me now. I can only pray for you, my mother. Good bye.

AMELIA.

These imperfect lines are affectionately inscribed to the
 Rev. I. E. Bill and his worthy wife, also to Thomas Mc-
 Henry, Esq., in sympathy with their loss of a beloved
 daughter and cherished wife,

By theirs truly,

G. W. M. CAREY,
 Germain Street Baptist Church.

"Lay me down gently, this is death ;
 O come, Lord Jesus, quickly come !"
 To thee I now resign my breath,
 Take me, dear Saviour, take me home.

"She is not dead," she only sleeps ;
 'Tis night, but not of starless gloom,
 Through the short night her Saviour keeps
 Her dust reposing in the tomb.

Not dead, but sleeping ; cheering words,
 Chasing our sadness, doubts and gloom ;
 She wakes to wear love's silver cords,
 And golden bands, and beauty's bloom.

We are immortal in our love,
 Heart clings to heart, hand holds to hand ;
 From buried joys we look above
 To raptures in the deathless land.

Not dead, she sleeps to wake again,
 To wear a crown, to sing a song,
 To swell the high and holy strain
 Ascending from the white-robed throng.

Come quickly, Jesus ! bring the morn
 Of light and love to my friend's heart,
 Then shall he clasp a radiant form
 From which his soul shall never part.

Hast thou not promised soon to come ?
 Lord Jesus, we thy word believe ;
 From death and dust, from griefs and groans,
 We look to thee, that we may live.

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A BRIEF MEMOIR

OF THE LATE

ASAHEL BILL, B. A.,

OF

NICTAUX, ANNAPOLIS COUNTY,

NOVA SCOTIA.

BY HIS FATHER.

"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead,
yet shall he live."—JOHN xi. 25.

SAINT JOHN, N. B.

PRINTED BY BARNES AND COMPANY,

PRINCE WILLIAM STREET.

1868.

(Extract

MESSRS.

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A BRIEF MEMOIR.

(Extracted from the "Christian Messenger" of March, 1848.)

MESSRS. EDITORS :

I have recorded some of the reminiscences of the short, but in some respects, eventful life and triumphant death of our much lamented son Asahel, which I send to you. If you perceive anything in them of public utility, you will oblige me by giving them a place in your valuable paper. The reader will pardon the occasional ebullition of parental affection interspersed in the narrative. He was our first born, and the amiability of his character, the docility of his disposition, his prompt and cheerful obedience, together with the possession of talents of a high order, had all conspired to render him the idol of our affections. The reader, therefore, must not be surprised if the portrait of such a son, when drawn by a father, should be to some extent tinged with the father's love.

It may be thought that I have gone too much into detail, and dwelt at too great a length upon circumstances comparatively trivial ; but it will be remembered that every incident in the life of a departed friend, tenderly beloved, however trivial or unimportant in itself, is always pondered with intense interest by those who live to deplore their loss. I felt that I was called upon faithfully to record his delinquencies in a religious point of view, as a beacon for others in similar circumstances, and to show also that it is not enough that young professors of the religion of the cross merely abstain from those practices which are regarded as disreputable and improper in the judgment of irreligious men ; but if they would preserve their consciences in peace, they must shun the appearance of all evil, and maintain the dignity of their christian profession by a close walk with their Saviour.

Affectionately and sincerely, yours,

I. E. BILL.

EDITORIAL REMARKS.

We have seldom read a more interesting sketch of Christian Biography than the one we insert in our present number, from the pen of our valued brother, Rev. Ingram E. Bill. It might naturally be expected to contain no small degree of interest, for it is the tribute of an affectionate Christian father to the memory of a beloved son. Whatever indeed might relate to such a son, could not but be interesting. He was a youth of fine natural talents, much improved by early and sedulous culture, and for several years of his life living under the influence of motives which must necessarily have imparted a new and exalted value to all his purposes and actions. In such a record of parental regard, we meet, as we might expect, every feeling of natural love forcibly developed, with all the still more powerful and overruling tendencies of a mind illuminated by spiritual perceptions, brought to bear upon the deeply engrossing subject under review. The slight acquaintance which we ourselves enjoyed with the subject of the memoir, enables us to appreciate in some degree what must have been the feelings of the writer. We can well recollect the pleasure we experienced two years since at the annual exhibition of the College at Horton, and the impressions we received from the highly creditable evidence of opening talent displayed by the young graduate, having then just completed the course of mental discipline which was to prepare him, as it was fondly thought by his numerous friends, for the arduous scenes and duties of future life.

We mean not, indeed we need not, attempt to offer a word to enhance the interest of the obituary itself. To all who read it, and especially to those who were at all acquainted with the peculiar circumstances of the case, anything we could say with such a view would tend rather to take away than add to the interest it must excite. There are, however, a few thoughts of a general nature which the subject itself suggests, which we think may be useful in a practical point of view. We may learn from this, as from other similar instances, how mysterious are the ways of the Lord. A youth of high promise, the child of many prayers, after years spent in anxious preparation for some field of future usefulness and activity, at the very moment of its accomplishment, is cut down by the hand of death. Our duty under so dark and distressing a dispensation, however difficult in point of performance, and how-

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ever often referred to, is nevertheless plain and certain. Humble and cheerful submission to the behest of Him who does all things for the best—the eternal interests of his people—is what we are called on to exercise. The facts of the case before us are striking, as demonstrating the reality of religion. The principle of saving faith is planted in the soul by God himself, and nourished and kept alive there under the most adverse influences; and notwithstanding the natural depravity of the heart, the wiles and devices of Satan, and the temptations of an ensnaring world; the whole of them oftentimes besetting the soul with their united forces, and even for a time rendering it, in spite of its struggles, in a measure subject to its sway. In the final issue, however, all these hostile influences are trodden down, the soul is released as a bird from the snare of the fowler—the heavenly principle asserts its supremacy, and the subject of divine grace triumphs in a complete and enduring victory.

The truth and candour apparent on the face of the narrative, increases the value of the instruction it conveys. Not all the fondness and partiality of a parent can offer a sufficient temptation to conceal the infirmities or the sins of a beloved child. As in the Book of Truth, where instances of personal character are described, the whole truth is told. Faithfulness to God, to the memory of the departed believer, and to the souls of survivors, demanded this. The beloved youth, now for ever removed, from the scenes of earth, sought not when living to conceal his wanderings and departures from God; nor are they sought to be concealed or glossed over now that he is gone, by the pen most deeply interested in drawing the picture of all that was most lovely and engaging in his character.

Another reflection that arises from the perusal of the notice under remark, is the sensitiveness of the truly Christian mind in regard to sin. How tender was the conscience of this young disciple, when recalled from his backslidings. How earnestly did he bemoan his departures from God, ascribing them to their true cause—his unfaithfulness to the grace bestowed upon him! How fervently did he seek pardon for the past, and when hope and joy returned, how gladly did he attribute all to the mercy of his heavenly Father, freely and undeservedly bestowed upon him! Although he had suffered a worldly and trifling spirit to gain an

ascendancy over him ; had restrained prayer before God, and lost much of the savour of heavenly things, yet he had not been left to fall into open sin, or publicly to bring reproach on his professed faith. All this, however, formed no excuse in his mind, or lessened the poignancy of his regret for past negligence. Surely, then, the truth is too obvious for a moment's doubt, that those who read the deep exercises of soul of this lamented youth, and yet are themselves destitute of religion ; who live without prayer for forgiveness, or remorse of conscience, while God is not in all their thoughts, and his plain and positive commands are flagrantly and openly, and it may be hourly sinned against with a high hand, have reason to tremble.

We cannot but trust that the chief design which, it is evident, the valued brother who penned this Obituary had in view, in a brief relation of the life and death of a beloved child, may be blessed of God to the spiritual good of many of our youthful readers. Especially that his class-mates and youthful associates, who were warmly attached to him in life, and deeply mourned his death, may be induced, in view of the striking instance before them, to yield up their hearts to God, that whatever may await them here, they may at last partake of that eternal rest which, we doubt not, is now the inheritance of the friend they have lost.

ASAHEL BILL, the subject of this memoir, was born in Billtown, Cornwallis, May 14th, 1827. As soon as he became capable of thought and reflection, he gave indications of an aptitude for the acquisition of knowledge, and of a thirst for books. His memory at that age was very retentive—so much so, that before he could read a word he had treasured up many pages both of prose and verse, which he was accustomed to repeat with much apparent pleasure, merely from hearing them read or repeated by his mother. In his fifth year he commenced going to school, and for several years during his early youth continued to apply himself with unusual assiduity and success under different instructors ; his progress being such as to give the most entire satisfaction to parents and teachers.

On my removal to Fredericton, which took place when Asahel was in his 13th year, I placed him at the Baptist Seminary there, then under the able superintendence of Mr. C. D. Randall, now

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Principal of the Collegiate Academy at Wolfville. He was with Mr. Randall about a year and a half, during which period his progress was such as to prepare him to enter upon a College course.

At Fredericton, he professed an experimental acquaintance with religion. At a very early period of life, he discovered symptoms of strong religious impressions. As soon as he became capable of conversation, it was apparent that his mind was often dwelling on spiritual things, and as his mental faculties expanded, these impressions increased. Death and heaven were subjects to which he listened with great interest. When he was in his fourth year, the death of the Rev. T. H. Chipman occurred at Nictaux. He seemed deeply affected on the occasion. It suggested to him the idea that his mother might die also. This thought greatly alarmed him. So powerful was this impression at the time, that his sleeping as well as his waking hours appeared to be engrossed with the thoughts of another world—and what seemed still more striking was, that associated with these early religious impressions, was a desire to be a preacher of the gospel. Long before he entertained any hope that he was converted to God, when asked what he wanted to be if he lived to be a man, his reply invariably was, "A preacher of the Gospel." So much did this subject occupy his mind, that he was in the practice of amusing his school associates during the daily recess, by going through the ceremony of singing, praying, and preaching, in a manner which, to his audience, composed as it was of children about his own age, was highly interesting. I may here remark that these exercises were engaged in not for the purpose of turning sacred things into ridicule, but to give vent to emotions that were habitually working in his mind.

He seemed at this very early stage of his life, to have a strong sense of moral obligation to his Maker. When inclined to do a wrong act, we had only to say to him, "My son, if you do so, you will offend God," and the remark was quite sufficient to deter him.

On one occasion, I remember he had been guilty of telling me an untruth. I took him to my study, and reasoned the case with him, shewing him how exceedingly wrong it was to tell a falsehood, and declaring that unless he very humbly begged my pardon, and promised never to do so again, that I should not forgive him. This he was very ready to do. I then proceeded to tell him that he had

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not only grieved and offended his parents, but he had greatly offended his Maker, and he must get down upon his knees with me, and I would pray to God to pardon him, and then he must pray for himself. He felt this to be a very severe ordeal, but he submitted. I presented the case in prayer to God, and having done so, I called upon him to confess his sin to the Almighty, and ask forgiveness. This he did in a manner highly appropriate to the occasion in a child of his age. The remedy applied was somewhat out of the ordinary course of parental discipline, but it was perfectly efficacious.

I here take occasion to remark that all I have seen of parental government from that day to this, goes to confirm me in the sentiment which I have long cherished, that moral suasion and religious influence are essential elements in the discipline of the youthful mind, and in most cases are far more effective than those coercive measures which are too often resorted to, or those harsh words and threats, which under the influence of passion, are generally addressed to the most servile passions of the child.

But to return. Those impressions upon the mind of our child induced the hope that the day was not far distant, when he would yield his heart to the claims of redeeming love. This hope was not realized until the period before referred to. Shortly after I entered upon my pastoral duties at Fredericton, it pleased God to pour out his spirit upon the church and congregation under my care. A number had experienced religion before any thing unusual happened upon the mind of Asahel. While actively engaged in seeking to impress the consciences of the people with the magnitude of eternal things, and while witnessing the blessing of God upon my feeble efforts, I could not but feel a very deep concern for the salvation of my own dear children. Repeatedly and fervently did I carry their case to a throne of grace, and pray God for Christ's sake to have mercy upon them. Never shall I forget the joy which thrilled my bosom when this dear boy said to me, in heart-felt agony for his sins, "Pa! I want to be a Christian, but I fear my sins are too great to be forgiven." The instruction of his Sabbath-school teacher tended in some good degree to strengthen these impressions. While he was thus exercised, one nearly allied to him expressed a wish to be baptized. He said, "Do wait a few days, perhaps the Lord will have mercy on me,

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and then I shall be prepared to go with you." It was some time before he ventured to indulge a hope that his sins were forgiven. He seemed deeply humbled under a sense of the depravity of his heart and life, and afraid to venture his soul upon the Redeemer. But at length he was led to such a perception of the way of salvation by the cross, as inspired him with hope that his sins, though great, were blotted out—and that he was personally interested in the salvation of the Gospel. Shortly after this change occurred, he related his Christian experience to the church. It was considered highly satisfactory, and he was cordially received for baptism. Several of his associates in school, with others, were received at the same time. With mingled emotions of hope and fear, I administered to him the sacred rite. His boyhood, his little acquaintance with the world, and with the wiles of Satan, excited many fears that he might not honor the solemn profession which he was making before the world. He remained at home the best part of two years after his baptism, during which time it is only just to say, that his religious course was very consistent. He was careful to maintain the duties arising from the new connexion which he had formed.

At the age of fifteen he left home for the purpose of commencing a Collegiate course. My fears were again revived. I knew that a separation from home, a removal from parental watchfulness, in part at least, and a connexion with boys, many of whom made no religious profession, were all unfavourable to him in a religious point of view. But his aptitude for the acquisition of knowledge, associated with an ardent desire to pursue it, inclined us to give him the best advantages in our power, in the hope that at some future day his talents would be directed to the welfare of others. Accordingly we sent him to Acadia College. He passed his examination before the Board of Professors, and was considered by them competent to enter College. His advancement in his studies was fully equal to our most sanguine expectations. His themes for the last two College exhibitions which he attended, were got up in a style and delivered in a manner highly creditable to himself and his instructors, and excited general applause.

One thing was a source of heart-felt sorrow subsequently to himself, and of deep regret to all his friends at the time, that while he advanced in knowledge, he did not progress in the divine life. He

mingled too much with the worldly and impenitent—became imbued with their spirit—yielded to the temptations of Satan—and wandered from the narrow way. The consequence was, his confidence in the Saviour was greatly weakened—so much so, as he informed me himself after his return home, that during his last two terms at College, he abandoned all hope that he had ever been converted savingly to the truth. This state of mind is by no means peculiar to a College life,—it is a melancholy fact that it is by far too general with young professors, and is found to be a very serious drawback upon the prosperity of our churches. During his last term at College, I was informed that all was not right in reference to his religious course. I immediately addressed a letter to him, in which I strongly urged him to repent of his backslidings, and to return to his Saviour. This letter contained the following appeal :—

“ If you have thus been led astray, my dear boy, I call upon you by the love of your parents’ hearts, by the unnumbered prayers which they have offered to heaven for you, by the admonitions which you have received from them from earliest childhood up to the present time, by the solemn profession which you have made in the sight of God, by the prospect of a dying hour, and a judgment-day, humbly to confess your faults to your parents and to your God, and to forsake every sinful practice now and forever. I have written this plain letter not for the purpose of wounding your feelings, but to remind you that those who watched over you from childhood with all the fondness and anxiety of parental affection, are still caring for you, and are so interested in every step you take, that nothing can inflict so much pain on them as to know that you are doing ill ; and nothing excites such a thrill of joy in their bosoms as to know that in all respects you are doing well.”

This letter was sent to him a short time before he closed his College Course. His reply throughout was of the most gratifying character. The following are extracts :

“ My Dear Parents : With feelings of the deepest emotion I am now addressing you. My father’s letter has caused a pang of sorrow and anguish impossible to describe.”

He then proceeds in the most open and frank manner to confess his delinquencies, and in the strongest terms to deplore his back-

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slidings, and closes his letter with the following touching sentence :—

“ I have erred, but I confess it, and beg forgiveness both from my parents and from my Maker ; and if the remainder of my life, spent in the most bitter repentance, can atone in the slightest degree for my sins, I say from the bottom of my heart it shall be given. My emotions are too strong to allow me to say more.”

I give the above extracts for the purpose of showing that although he had backslidden from God, he was not hardened in sin. Although he had strayed from the narrow way, he still felt that it was a bitter thing to disobey the Almighty : and that when aroused to a just perception of his obligations, he deeply deplored the past, and firmly resolved to cleave again to the mercy seat. Having completed his college course, he graduated in June, 1846, in the 20th year of his age. On his return home he was looking thin in flesh ; but we supposed this was occasioned by very close application during his last term, that a little recreation would soon recruit him, and that he would ere long be able to enter upon some useful employment ; but how were we distressed to find that he was the subject of a cough, which seemed exceedingly stubborn, and that day after day, and week after week, passed away without producing the slightest improvement in his health. We had learnt from his own letters and from other sources, that he had several attacks of cold during the winter, but had no belief that there was any thing serious. But it soon became apparent that there was something unusual preying about his constitution. We applied to several physicians, but medicine produced no alteration for the better, and we became strongly to apprehend that he was the subject of a pulmonary affection, which would soon result in his removal from us. I sought to impress upon his mind the necessity of a speedy preparation for the event. He seemed perfectly conscious that his life was in jeopardy, but he had no confidence that he was prepared for the issue. He felt that he had backslidden from God, and had no strength to return. Most earnestly did I implore the mercy of God in his behalf ; again and again did I promise in solemn prayer, if God would only manifest his forgiving love to him, and give him an evidence of his acceptance, that I would most cheerfully give him up. I put Baxter's Saints' Rest, and Dwight's Sermons, upon the heavenly state,

and books of this description, into his hands, and exhorted him not to rest until he should feel that his peace was made with God. I fancied that I perceived a gradual improvement in the state of his mind, but as yet there was nothing very marked. By the month of January he was so far weakened by disease, as to be confined a part of every day to his bed. On going to his bed one day, as he informed us afterwards, he felt inclined to sleep, but could not. The thought crossed his mind that he had read somewhere that if one were desirous to sleep and could not, he should fix his mind upon some important subject. It was suggested to him that he should think of the love of God. No sooner did his mind turn to the contemplation of this attribute of the Deity, than he was perfectly overwhelmed with a sense of its infinitude. Its boundlessness came before him in a way that it had never done before, and there was connected with this view of the immensity of God's love, a deep sense of the enormity of his sins, and the base ingratitude of his heart. His own language was, "I feel as if I want to weep my life away at the foot of the Cross." The remainder of the day was spent in deep humiliation and self-abasement. In the evening it was so overruled that brother Cunningham came to see him. It was a most seasonable and profitable visit. Asahel unbosomed his heart to him, spoke freely of the exercises he had had through the day, and seemed deeply imbued with the spirit of genuine contrition. The salutary conversation and fervent prayers of this faithful servant of God, tended in no small degree to deepen those impressions which were working so powerfully upon his mind. From this time his confidence began to increase. He felt that there was redemption for him in the blood of the Lamb. The invitations of the Gospel became exceedingly precious to him, and at times he could rejoice in the hope of eternal life. With the revival of his religious feelings, there was associated an earnest desire, should God spare his life, to devote himself to the Christian ministry. In speaking of this one day, he said to me, "Father, preaching the Gospel is the most glorious work that a human being can be engaged in. I do not know that I desire to live for anything else, but to preach the gospel of Christ to poor sinners."

I had now a new struggle to endure. I had thought if God would only restore to him the joys of his salvation, that I would

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cheerfully resign him to the arms of death ; but now that this was done, he became entwined with new and still stronger cords around my heart. If he could only be restored, thought I, who knows but that he may carry the bread of life to famishing souls, and when my poor head is numbered with the clods of the valley, he may stand on Zion's walls to declare to listening thousands the unsearchable riches of Christ? From his childhood I had cherished a strong desire that he might be a useful minister of the Gospel. He now seemed to have all the elements necessary to constitute him a preacher of righteousness, except the enjoyment of health. Often did I feel that there was no land of moral darkness or of idolatry, however distant, to which I would not willingly commit him as an ambassador of the Cross of Christ, if his health could only be restored. But an inscrutable but all-wise Providence had set boundaries over which he could not pass. His days on earth were numbered. The vigor and bloom of youth had given place to a wasting constitution and to the hectic flush. Consumption had fastened its deadly fangs on his vital organs, and diffused its blighting influence through every part of the system ; and although he continued without much suffering during the winter, the work of destruction was slowly but steadily advancing.

Early in February he received a deeply interesting letter from Dr. Crawley, one of his instructors at College ; and as this was exceedingly refreshing to the mind of the departed, and as he perused its salutary instructions again and again with peculiar pleasure, as being dictated by one for whom he cherished the warmest affection and highest regard, I trust I shall be pardoned for inserting an extract from it, together with the reply :

“MY DEAR ASAHEL—It seems hard for some minds to do what they most wish to do. I rejoiced in the prospect of visiting Nictaux lately, because I should see you and converse with you. In imagination I had already had many conversations with you ; but I came away without a word of the kind I wished. Then I resolved I would write, and yet never until now have made a beginning. Your father's most gratifying letter to Mr. Chipman, in some respects effects what I wish to obtain by writing ; in others greatly increases my desire to hear from you. I am persuaded by that letter that you are endeavoring to 'set your affections on things above.' This is what I mainly desired to know. But then what

tenfold interest does this my persuasion awaken. One longs to be among those who are permitted to be the happy means of raising your thoughts above a world now perhaps rapidly sliding from beneath you; with those who have communed with a spirit that shortly, it may be, will commune with spirits above, without a veil between. I hope I do not distress you by seeming to assume too much on your account. I trust you are penitent, I trust you are persuaded of the faithfulness of God: if so, you hear Him saying in Christ, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out,' and this voice you perceive to be cheering, and just applicable to you; what then is this but 'the way, the truth, and the life?' The past doubtless has much to deplore, and yet what can the past be that may not be turned into occasion of repentance, and so of faith in Him who saves the penitent. I rejoice therefore in the hope that you have hope, and that this hope is Christ. What can we wish for you better or happier than this, except indeed that this hope may grow stronger and stronger.

"I can imagine how in the midst of weariness and weakness the enemy may often intrude with his wily insinuations, always in some shape directed against the sinner's remedy, to lessen its value or deny its applicability. May you, my dear Asahel, be strengthened still to trust. 'The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' What intense meaning is here; what intense meditation, what intense confidence does it merit.

"I wish, dear Asahel, to say one thing while you are here on earth; and yet perhaps it is foolish to wish it. I have always felt towards you, from the first time I saw you a little boy at your father's, a peculiar regard. It increased in strength when you first came to reside here; and more at your second visit, when you came as one having found the Lord, and if it suffered disappointment for a time, it now increases with accelerated force as I think of your suffering under the hand of the Lord, and yet sustained, blessedly sustained, by that same hand. I love to think of you, to hear of you, and to pray for you; and if there are any moments when you can use your pen, how deeply interested and rejoiced I should be to hear from you.

"I hope these allusions to your enfeebled state may not seem to you as though I took no interest in your recovery. It is not so: I feel the deepest interest in it. Few would hail the hope of it

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with more joy. But then I know how uncertain is life, especially to one such as you are, and I feel how needful it is both for you and your parents that our look should be upward.

"Farewell! Watch at the gate of the Lord. He is very near; and when nature is decaying, and all seemingly going against the usual modes of human hope and confidence, then is just His time, and it is at such times that He does often assert His supremacy by raising the mind despite its decaying tenement, and making heaven shine the brighter the more earth fades.

"I would that this sickness might not be unto death. But the Lord's will, whatever it be, must be best. In 'His will be done' may you find your highest happiness, and your friends their chief consolation. "Affectionately yours.

"Acadia College, January 28, 1847."

This letter so replete with Christian sympathy, so abundant in religious consolation, administered largely to his spiritual comfort, and drew from him the following reply:—

Nictaux, February the 10th, A. D. 1847.

"My Dear Mr. Crawley: Through the goodness of the Lord I am permitted to use my pen in answering your kind letter, which I received yesterday. I cannot help expressing my gratitude for the interest which you take in my welfare, both bodily and spiritual. Though we have a friend in heaven 'who sticketh closer than a brother,' yet how delightful is it to know that here on this earth there are those whose joy it is to comfort, advise, and pray for us. In this respect I have great reason to be thankful. All that I can wish for is supplied by my kind parents, and their prayers daily ascend to heaven in my behalf, mingled, as I believe, with the petitions of distant friends, who although they may be separated from us, can yet be heard by the gracious ear of the Almighty. Your wish, I doubt not, sir, is to know the precise state of my feelings, and to whom should I unbosom myself more readily than to one who, in the absence of natural ties, feels as a father toward me.

"When I look back upon my past life, I feel astonished at my amazing sinfulness. Even after I was stricken by the hand of the Lord, I continued for a long time hardened and impenitent. My conscience seemed asleep, utterly regardless of the solemn warning held out to me, in the deprivation of my health. Surely 'it was of the Lord's mercy I was not consumed.' By degrees, however, se-

rious thoughts forced themselves upon my mind, and I was gradually led to feel the hopelessness of my condition without a Saviour. But the past came before me as an insuperable barrier to my salvation. I was afraid that I had by my awful backslidings, grieved away the Holy Spirit, and I should be given over to a hardened heart and reprobate mind. Did I attempt a train of thought on eternal things, I would suddenly find my imagination wandering on the most foolish and trifling subjects, so that I almost despaired of success in seeking the Saviour. But by reading the Bible, and other religious books, I derived much consolation. Such promises as this given by our Lord's own mouth, 'him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out,' would for a time dissipate all doubts as to the willingness of God to receive me. I felt it, as you say, to be just applicable to my case, There was no exception. The offer was made to all, 'the vilest of the vile and the chief of sinners.'" Still my confidence was weak until it pleased God suddenly to discover to me the amazing immensity of his love, and the consequent malignity of my nature in despising such pure, unbounded benevolence. Then I felt as I never had at any previous time. The tears of contrition, if never before, I trust then did flow, and my convictions of the entire readiness of God to save me, were of the most sanguine nature. But seldom is it that I possess so much confidence in my acceptance as would make me willing to die without some special warning. This I know must be attributed to my perverse nature and to the malevolence of Satan. One thing which affords me much satisfaction is this, I think I have much at heart the eternal well being of others, especially those I have associated with at College. How rejoiced would I be to hear of their conversion and devotedness to God. As you insinuate perhaps they will listen to the words of one who once their intimate companion and fellow sinner, now has every reason to expect that the time of his departure from this world is drawing near and whose views of eternity must needs be clearer than their own. Oh! how I regret my course of life when with them. We may meet again, but if not, oh let us prepare to meet in heaven. Warnings are held out on every hand. My own case and that of dear John Pryor's should make them seek a preparation for the worst. Oh may they listen to the voice of conscience, which I am persuaded they sometimes hear, and obey its dictates. If so, when the dread

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realities of eternity burst upon their view they will not be dismayed, but hail the appearance of the Judge as the time of their triumph.

"I most deeply sympathise with Mr. Pryor in the loss of his dear son. The call to me was loud, 'Be ye also ready.' I trust John is now in a happier state than exists on this earth. If so, what cause for sorrow? Sometimes I feel as if I would rather 'depart and be with Christ.' I should then escape the snares of Satan, which are set for the unwary. But God's will is the best, and if I live may I serve Him, and if I die may it be with a preparation to serve Him in a better world.

"I remain, my dear sir,

"Yours with sincere affection and respect.

"Dr. Crawley, Acadia College."

Through the month of March there was no visible change in his health for the worse, and we occasionally flattered ourselves that the return of warm weather might prove favourable. But the dreariness of winter passed; spring came, the earth revived, the flowers and trees blossomed, all nature was dressed in her new attire, and put on her loveliest hue, but our poor boy revived not. His strength declined, his flesh wasted, and we were compelled to feel that he must soon go to his final dwelling place. I remember on one occasion as he was looking out of the window upon the beauties of nature, he remarked, "This is a lovely world; but what are all its glories compared with Heaven?" His thoughts were continually centering upon the blessed world. When he read his Bible, he loved to dwell upon those passages that speak of the heavenly state. The 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters of John's Gospel, were peculiarly interesting to him. If he read other books, he generally selected such as describe the circumstances and enjoyments of the celestial kingdom. His mind continued calm, peaceful, and resigned, for the most part, until six or seven weeks prior to his death. Satan was then permitted to assail him with his fiery darts. Long shall I remember the violent conflict that he had with the subtle foe on one occasion. Our bed was near his—a partition only separated—and the door was left open, that we might hear in case he wanted anything, or be taken worse. Sometime in the night I heard him exceedingly restless. I listened and found that he was engaged in prayer. He appeared to be in great distress. I arose and went in his room. "Is any thing wanted,"

I said, "my son?" "I am in great trouble of mind," he replied, "God has hid his face from me. My confidence is gone, and my sins are like mountains crushing me down. Pray for me, my father." I offered prayer in his behalf, and then sought to apply to him the invitations and promises of the Gospel. Seldom, if ever, have I witnessed such a violent conflict. It seemed as if the arch devourer was making his last and most deadly onset, determined by a desperate effort to make him his prey. The poor fellow writhed in unutterable agony. Said he "All the sufferings of body that I ever felt, are not to be compared with what I now feel in my soul." After remaining some time with him I thought I would leave him to his own reflections, feeling assured that the Lord would not forsake him. I went to my room, not to sleep, but to watch the issue of the fearful conflict in which my poor son was engaged. After a suitable time I returned to his room. As soon as he heard me enter, "Oh father," he exclaimed, "the Saviour has appeared for me, and He is more precious than ever. I feel now that I can put my whole trust in Him. Blessed be His name." He continued, "the application of that passage, 'Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,' has removed all my fears." This to him and to me was a most glorious triumph. The battle was not of long duration, but it was one of mighty energy. In imagination I could almost see the fiery darts of satan threatening the destruction of my dear boy, both soul and body. "I cannot live long in this state," he, in agony, exclaimed. The cloud was dark and dense, but my confidence in the arm of the Almighty was never stronger than in this fearful moment, and when the victory was achieved I could but say with him, "Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name."

From that time until his death I am not aware that he had a distressing doubt in reference to his interest in Christ. His path, indeed, seemed like that of the just, "shining more and more unto the perfect day." He lingered without much bodily pain until the Thursday evening prior to his death. He was sitting in his easy chair taking his tea, when suddenly his strength failed him. I took him in my arms and laid him on his bed. From that moment he sunk rapidly. On Saturday he had a very ill turn; so much so that we thought him dying. The family, with other friends, gathered around him. The image of death seemed stamped upon his

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brow. "Father," said he, looking at me very calmly, "you had better pray." We bowed in supplication. It was a solemn moment. I had often visited the dying couch, and mingled my sympathies and prayers with suffering humanity in the arms of death, but for the first time was I engaged in prayer with a beloved child grappling with the king of terrors. The first prayer which I offered for him as he lay in helpless infancy, the scenes of his prattling boyhood, the interest with which we had watched his expanding intellect and ripening manhood, the anxieties which we had felt on his leaving home, ^{to enter} upon a college life, and the avidity with which we had seized every means for promoting his education and for securing his advancement and usefulness in life, all came with a vividness and freshness to the mind as if they had occurred but yesterday. In a few short moments I seemed to live them all over again. My sanguine hopes, my fond anticipations, were now to be shrouded in the darkness of the tomb. It occasioned a struggle that none but a parent's heart can feel: But the throne of grace was accessible. I committed him to that gracious Being who had given him to us, feeling that he had a right to take him when he pleased. No sooner had we risen from prayer than he commenced addressing us separately in the following affecting strain: "I hope, my dear parents, you will be comforted; the promises of God are all-sufficient for you. You, my dear sister, must be resigned to the will of God, and put your trust in Him; and you, my dear little brothers, must prepare to meet me in Heaven. The separation," he added, "will be short. I trust we shall all be prepared to meet in that blessed world. Oh! I feel that I shall be the first to bid you all welcome on the other side of Jordan." He revived again, and continued comfortable until next morning, which was the Sabbath. He had another ill turn, and we thought he would soon leave us. He was perfectly calm and collected. I said to him, "Do you see no gloom in the grave my son." "Not any," he replied. "I regard it simply as a resting place for my poor diseased body, where it will be soon eaten up by worms. But it cannot confine the immortal spirit, the only truly noble part of man. That will be wafted by angels into the Celestial City, and will expand for ever in the fulness of the Deity." He revived again, but was too ill for me to leave him to attend meeting. The entire community seemed deeply interested, and many flocked to take

their last look. It was supposed that nearly a hundred persons called in through the course of the day. He was too weak to say much to any of them—but to some he gave the timely admonition, "Prepare to meet me in heaven." Early on Monday morning he had another attack similar to those preceding, except that he was more reduced; but as his bodily strength diminished, his faith in the Redeemer increased. I inquired, "My son, have you no terror in death?" "No," was the answer; and with great emphasis, he added, "The tyrant is crushed." He continued to suffer very much through the day. Once or twice he expressed a desire "to depart and be with Christ," but then chiding himself, he said, "I ought to be willing to suffer this distress, it is small compared with what others have suffered, or with what I deserve." My Saviour bears more than one half of it for me. "I wish I could sing," he added. "What would you sing?" I asked.

"How long, dear Saviour, Oh! how long
Shall that bright hour delay?"

was the touching reply. He rested more easily through the night, but continued rapidly to sink. His cough had ceased for several hours. About 12 o'clock on Tuesday it came on again, but there was no strength to raise. He remarked, "My lungs have given out," and shortly after added; "This is death. Welcome, welcome, welcome. Come, Lord Jesus—come quickly."

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

Nature struggled to throw off the phlegm, but was too weak for the effort. We rendered him all possible assistance, but we were powerless. The messenger had come for him, and he must go. His voice faltered, but his mental faculties were never more vigorous, and his faith was looking within the veil. "Do you see heaven's gate opened for your reception, my dear boy?" I enquired. The power of utterance was gone; but he lifted up his emaciated arms as high as he could reach, then pointed with his finger towards heaven, his countenance at the same time beaming with a peaceful smile. It was indeed a most eloquent demonstration of the omnipotence of faith, to triumph in the embrace of man's last enemy. He gave signs that he wished to embrace us. Father, mother, sister and brothers received the pressure of his lips when nearly cold in death. It was the last kiss. In a few moments all

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was over, and his ransomed spirit, loosened from its crumbling tabernacle, took its flight to a purer region, and entered, I doubt not, upon its career of celestial blessedness in its glorified state. Tears of lamentation and sorrow flowing fresh, bathed his clay-cold cheeks; but these were mingled, I trust, with a spirit of heartfelt resignation to the righteous decision of the Almighty, enabling us to say, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Friday came, and Brethren Cunningham, Viditoe, Parker and Rideout, with a numerous congregation, were in attendance, to pay the last tribute of respect to the departed. The body was borne by sixteen young men to the grave. We followed in slow procession until we were all gathered around his lonely dwelling place. When the coffin was let quietly down, a moving prayer was offered by Bro. Rideout, and the cold earth covered it from our sight. We repaired to the house of God, the praises of the Almighty were sung, the Word of the Lord read, prayer again offered, another hymn sung, and then Bro. Cunningham proceeded to address us from that most solemn and delightful passage, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live." These words had been selected by the departed about two months before his death. He said they were very precious to him, and he should like to have them preached from at his funeral. I could but feel they were peculiarly appropriate. The truths which they suggest were elucidated and enforced by our esteemed brother in a luminous and impressive style, and he was listened to by a very numerous and attentive congregation, who seemed deeply impressed with the affecting scene which they had witnessed, and with the searching and forcible appeals of the preacher. Brother Viditoe followed in a solemn and appropriate address. Brother Parker offered a melting prayer, and the Choir closed the exercises by singing that beautiful hymn,

"Thou art gone to the grave,
But we will not deplore thee."

Many, I doubt not, felt that it was better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting. God grant that the funeral of our dearly beloved son may be the means of awakening in many bosoms an earnest desire for a preparation for another world.