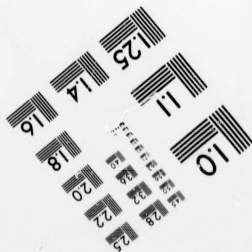
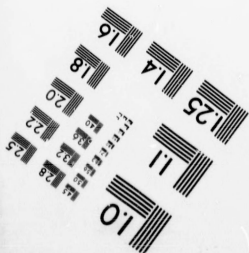
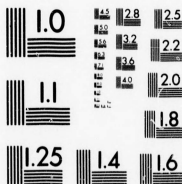


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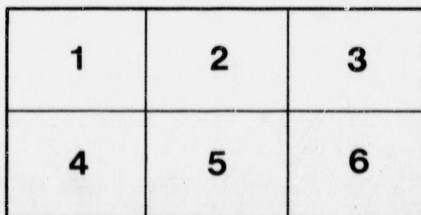
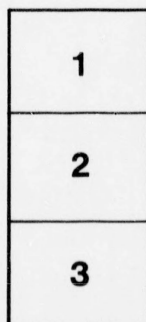
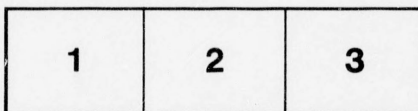
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Penn
IN MEMORIAM.

A DISCOURSE

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

THE LATE A. W. LILLIE, Esq.,

AND DELIVERED IN THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, GUELPH,

ON

SABBATH EVENING, OCTOBER 18th, 1868,

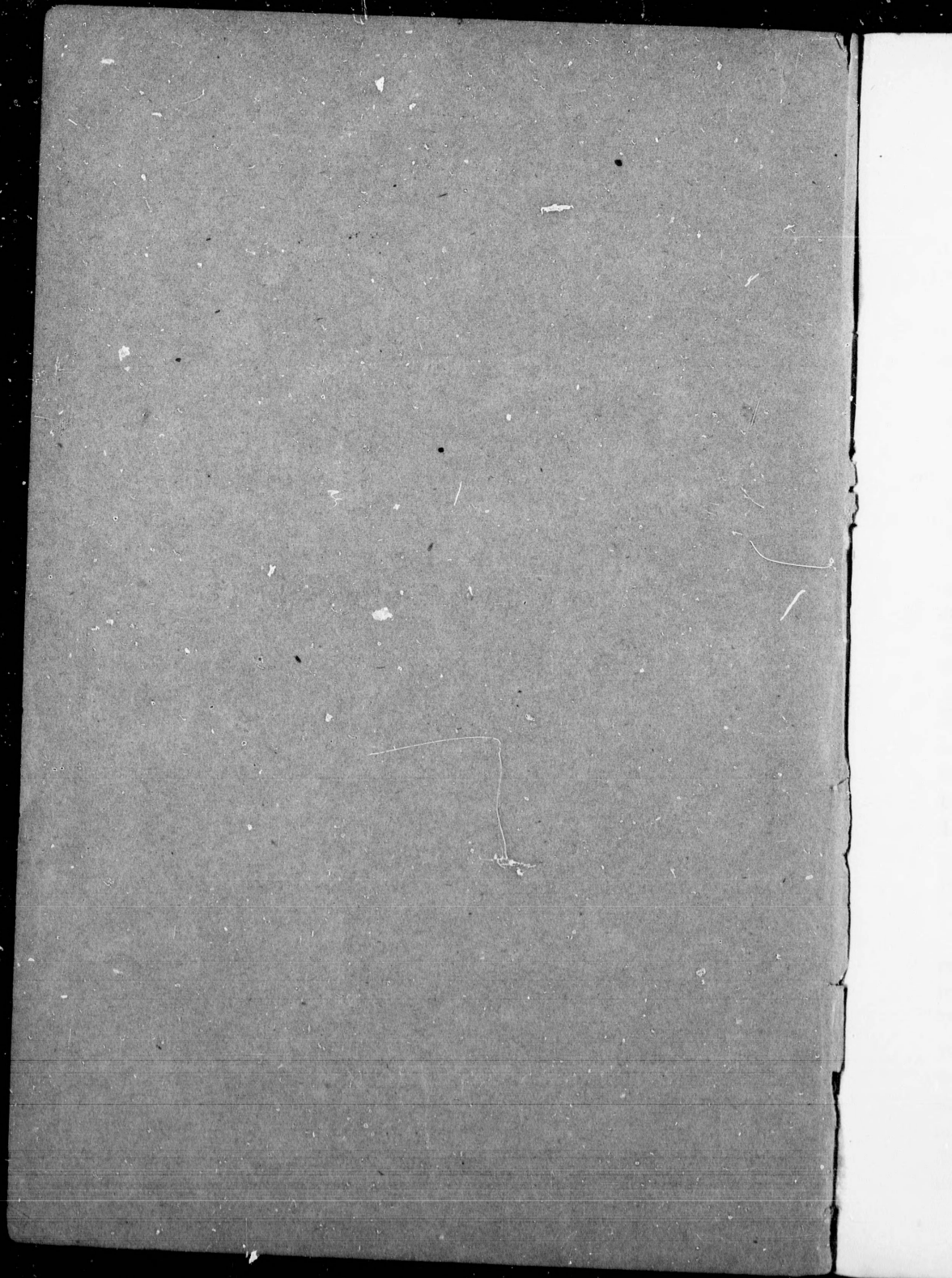
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REV. W. F. CLARKE, PASTOR.

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IN MEMORIAM.

A DISCOURSE

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

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AND DELIVERED IN THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, GUELPH,

ON

Sabbath Evening, October 18th, 1868,

BY REV. W. F. CLARKE,

PASTOR.

3108

To my much esteemed Tutor and friend, the Rev. A. LILLIE, D.D.
THIS MEMORIAL
of a beloved son and of the grace of God in him, is affectionately
inscribed.

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HEB. II: 4. "*He being dead yet speaketh.*"

There is manifest propriety in the endeavour to improve those providential occurrences, which startling and impressive in their character, are pregnant with most momentous lessons of instruction. Great public calamities, or sudden or sad bereavements, are legitimate sources of warning, rebuke and exhortation. The religious teacher is not restricted to the Bible for his themes of pulpit address. The books of nature and providence are open to him as well as the book of Holy Scripture, and these three form a series of text books, all of which have God for their author, truth for their contents, and human salvation for their object. Death is not voiceless when it happens in the ordinary course of things, and mows down such as come to the grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season. There is even then a breaking up of nature, a sundering of tender ties,—altogether a tremendous change, constraining us to ask *whence* and *why* is all this. In reply to these questions, we learn that sin has wrought the dreadful wreck we behold when the grave swallows up its prey, and that death is God's loudest preacher of his own righteousness, and of our duty to repent and believe the gospel. Some one asked Archbishop Leighton if he had been to hear a sermon. "I met a sermon," he answered, "for I met a corpse." And another has well observed, "The best preparation for our own funeral, is to meditate seriously and prayerfully over another's grave, and take home with us the solemn truths it enforces."

If thus "the great teacher Death," admonishes us when in the natural order of things he appears on the scene, he does so far more impressively when his coming is premature and unlooked for. When he blanches and chills the beautiful face of infancy; when the young sicken and die; when the grave closes over those who have not yet lived out half their days; when "one dieth in his full strength, with his breasts full of milk and his bones moistened with marrow;" when parents are called to close the eyes of those whom they expected to have watching beside their own death couch; when life becomes a broken column; when visions of love and hope are

quenched in sudden blackness;—at such a time, Death loudens its voice, until “dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.” “Be ye therefore ready also,” reverberate through every chamber of the soul, and arrest the attention even of the most unconcerned and giddy amongst the children of men. Surely the pulpit should echo these voices, and the sacred teacher seek to fix their influence and memory in the hearts of those who sit under his ministry.

But I am not left merely to my own sense of personal and official duty in the present case. It is at the instance of the departed that this task is undertaken. Early in his illness, and while yet reason held its throne, he dictated this message to me; “Tell Mr. Clarke not to preach a funeral sermon for me, but to improve my death for the good of others.” Those to whom the delivery of this message was entrusted, concur with me in understanding it to mean, “Do not bestow eulogy and commendation on me, but make use of my example as a lesson to survivors.” Such a circumstance invests what we are now engaged in with special interest. Rightly viewed what a solemn scene this is! The pulpit is always filled by one whom it befits

“To preach as though he ne'er should preach again,

To preach as dying unto dying men;”

but there is not a dying man merely,—there is *a dead man* in the pulpit to-night, who speaks to you through lips at present warm with life as his so lately were, but soon to be (and who knows how soon?) cold and still as his now are! In the language of the text, “HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH.” I am, but as it were his mouthpiece and echo, as he discourses to you the lessons of his untimely and lamented decease, and you are to hear not so much the living speaker, as the dead one,—rather you are to hear what God the Lord will speak through him whose tongue Death has for ever silenced.

1. He speaks to us, *first*, concerning *life's uncertainty* and the *world's vanity*. These trite homily truths became invested with reality, when, as now, they sound forth from the newly-made coffin and grave of one who so short a time ago bid as fair for health and life as any of us, but has passed away to be no more seen among men. We weave bright visions of the future, we form sweet lies that are to last a lifetime, we devise business plans that reach forward

far into the future, we count on long years of pleasure here, but Death makes ruthless work in our earthly paradise. What fell desolation his presence brings with it! "Man dieth and wasteth away; yea man giveth up the ghost and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down and riseth not; 'till the heavens be no more they shall not awake nor be raised out of sleep." It is very affecting and very dreadful to think of a person being hurried out of the world by a sad accident or brief illness, and for ever separated from all his former associations and activities;—his cheerful face never again to be seen in the domestic circle; his merry laugh never again to wake the echoes in responsive hearts; his hand never again to return the warm grasp of friendship; his voice never to be heard again; his form never to be seen again. Alas! "How frail at best is dying man, how vain are all his hopes and fears!" "As a flower of the field so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." Poets have long sung of the brevity of life. Euripides speaks of the "little work of life;" Homer of "men living a little while and then coming to an end," and Horace gives this counsel, "Be mindful of how short a life thou art." History records it as a proof of wisdom in the father of Alexander the Great, that he required himself to be aroused every morning with the cry, "Phillip thou art mortal!" What wonder the Psalmist expresses himself concerning human frailty as we find him doing in the 39th Psalm: My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned; then spake I with my tongue, Lord make me to know mine end and the measure of my days what it is; that I may know how frail I am! Behold thou hast made my days as a hand reedth and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity." Surely every man walketh in a vain show; surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches and knoweth not who shall gather them." When amid the excitement of the Bristol election his competitor died, Burke exclaimed: "What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!" How eager and anxious we become in this pursuit of the shadowy things of the present world! See men compassing land and sea; toiling and travelling day and night, their hurried gait and anxious look showing that they are ill at ease, and yet how vain it all is,

Now and then one gains a pinnacle of success, but it is a comfortless peak where he painfully balances himself and shivers in bleak loneliness. Here is a man who cannot sleep for eagerness to make money, anon the same man has gained wealth and its very abundance will not suffer him to sleep. The thief may steal, the ocean engulf, or the fire consume all that he has made, and he trembles at the dread of poverty. Full soon he must lie down stripped of all with no comfort but the reflections: "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked must I return thither." "Vanity of vanities all is vanity!"

2. He speaks to us concerning the *folly and danger of neglecting Salvation*. These also are familiar topics of pulpit exhortation. We preach a salvation which while purchased by the precious blood of Christ, and freely offered to every creature in gospel invitation and promise, must nevertheless be sought after if it is to be obtained and enjoyed. It comes to no heart unsought and unasked. It is not like the air, light, sunshine and rain, which come in and take possession without our will or wish being consulted. Though all things pertaining to human redemption, were finished in purpose and preparation from the foundation of the world, we have a part to act, and a work to do. The pursuit of salvation involves the abandonment of sin, and choice of holiness. It necessitates a new birth unto righteousness. It forms a turning point in our moral history. No heart is ever gladdened by it until a full surrender is made to Christ, and he is enthroned in the affections as Lord and King. Salvation is thrust on no one. No one is saved by accident. The sinner must come to Christ, and impressed with the urgency of the matter, cast himself at the divine Saviour's feet, a suppliant for mercy, and expectant of it. To know that salvation may be had for the asking and the seeking is not enough. To purpose at some indefinite future period an earnest pursuit of it is not enough. "Now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation." To bring the matter to a final issue in the actual embrace of Christ, is a prominent object with all faithful preachers of the gospel. With a view to this we urge many powerful motives. The present value of salvation, the joy and peace that follow believing, the sweetness of a Saviour's love, the safety of such as are in Christ, and among the

rest the folly and peril involved in delay. But, alas, how vainly are these things urged in the case of many with whom gospel truth is "familiar on their lips as household words." It is not that they deliberately and finally refuse to be saved. On the contrary they sincerely intend the attainment of salvation. But they delay the matter. They are not quite ready to close with Christ. A thousand objects of present allurements engage them and though salvation is the great business of life, they put it off, until a multitude of less important affairs are disposed of. As the poet Young says:

"The thing they can't but purpose they postpone."

And how replete with danger is this postponement,—danger lest "the one thing needful" should dwindle into seeming insignificance—danger of worldly absorption,—danger of provoking God to take away his Holy Spirit,—danger

"Lest life's bright golden beams should die,
In sudden, endless night."

The case of our departed friend speaks to us most eloquently and touchingly on this point. When stricken with death as he believed, and in so critical a state that his medical advisers on being peremptorily conjured to divulge the whole truth about him, frankly stated that he might expire at any moment, the appalling discovery burst upon him of utter unpreparedness to die. There he was face to face with the grim king of terrors,—in the very valley of the shadow of death,—but unable to say to the Almighty Shepherd and Bishop of souls, "Thou art with me, Thy rod, and Thy staff they comfort me." In these trying circumstances, he gave me a brief but marvellously clear and comprehensive account of his religious history; and in its leading features, it is the history, oh! of how many hundreds of thousands! It was in substance this. "I was religiously brought up, and in my early years had many seasons of deep conviction, and earnest longing to be a Christian, but I held out against these feelings and put off the matter. I grew indifferent, and at last in the pride of literary attainment and pursuit, I grew sceptical. Under the preaching of Dr. Stuart Robinson my faith in divine truth was re-established. I believed in Christianity more firmly than ever. I often felt the power of its truths, and many times was almost persuaded to be a Christian. Again and again I was upon the point of yielding to the force of re-awakened conviction. When my brother

William died, I felt more deeply than ever on this subject. In bidding me farewell, he made me promise to read the Bible daily and to meet him in heaven. But I got absorbed in my profession, was ambitious to rise, read law instead of my Bible, forgot my promises and my vows, and here I am a dying man, without hope in Christ!

It was indeed a touching and heart-melting recital! Rarely, if ever in the course of my ministerial experience, have I met with a case in which so vivid a consciousness was had of imminent exposure to the consequences of unbelief and neglect. Along with perfect realization of his condition, there was an awful calmness as of one who measured the full extent of an impending calamity, and was bending every energy of a thoroughly wakened mind to a consideration of the question "is there any possibility of escape?" It was the momentous enquiry that stirred to their lowest depths the thousands of hearts that on the day of Pentecost asked with intensest anxiety; "*Men and brethren what shall we do?*" Not the dread of death merely, but the grace of the Holy Spirit woke that question, and there seemed compressed into it, all the earnestness begotten by a lifetime's disobeyed convictions. Oh! it was unutterably solemn to see a fellow-mortal and friend standing thus "on a narrow neck of land," on a precious inch or two of crumbling foothold,—between two boundless seas,—one the ocean of time, with its tide fast running out, and the other the ocean of eternity with its tide fast setting in!

It was no fiction of a disordered imagination,—no nightmare of a heated brain that occasioned the solicitude I have pictured. It was the same living reality that David saw when he passed through the agony he describes Ps. 116. 3: "The pains of death gat hold upon me, I found trouble and sorrow"; it was the same experience that the Philippian jailor had when a moral earthquake shook his unconverted soul and he "called for a light, and sprang in and came trembling and fell before Paul and Silas, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And bethink yourselves, my hearers, how many of you, were death's cold hand feeling for your heartstrings to-night, would find yourselves in just such circumstances as I have been describing? Children of pious parents,—subjects of many religious impressions,—undecided ones who have often been so near the kingdom of God, that the wonder is you did not cross the threshold and step into it,—gospel-hardened procrastinators whose hearts have petrified amid the very

flow of the waters of life,—ye who may say in view of numberless times of deep conviction and golden opportunity, “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved,”—how would *y. u* feel if suddenly confronted with death?

But, 3. “He being dead, yet speaketh” concerning *the wondrous grace of a waiting, willing, seeking Saviour*. That blessed Christ, “whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus,” “came to seek and to save the lost.” He is full of pity, love and tenderness. It is the business of the Christian ministry to proclaim at once His power and grace. He is exhibited in the Divine word as standing at the door of the human heart, knocking for admittance, and His whole bearing toward a sinful world betokens *anxiety to save*. We d dlate on all this without effect in the hearing of such as are secure and unalarmed, but it is gospel in deed,—good news, glad tidings,—to those who have been brought to feel the want of a Saviour. “They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.” It was delightful to feel authorized to set forth the Lord Jesus in the circumstances I have narrated, as “able to save to the uttermost,”—as possessed of “power on earth to forgive sins,”—as the Divine provider of that feast of salvation which is announced in the gracious words, “Come, for all things are now ready,”—and as the issuer of that gospel invitation, so welcome and precious to the perishing, “whosoever will let him come and take the water of life freely.” For a time our friend heard these things with a sort of wistful incredulity, while a sense of unworthiness and shame came upon him so strongly that he scarcely dared think these promises could be for him. “Is it possible there can be hope for such a sinner as I have been?” “Oh! doesn’t it seem mean for me to have rejected Christ so long, and now when I feel myself to be a dying man, to ask Him to save me,” are samples of utterances that showed how real and deep was his compunction, how sincere and thorough his conviction of unworthiness and guilt. For a while, there seemed danger of despair setting in. But God was gracious to him, and enabled him to see the willingness and love of the compassionate Redeemer. The story of the penitent thief on the cross was advel el to, and he seized with eager avidity the encouragement it affords. “Ah,” he exclaimed, “that fits my case exactly.

Life is ebbing away with me as it was with him, and Christ is as willing to hear my prayer as He was to hear his." "But then," he added, "he did not reject the Saviour all his life as I have done." He was reminded that Christ Jesus came into the world to save, even *the chief of sinners*,—that the God with whom we have to do "giveth to all men *liberally and upbraideth not*,"—that our warrant to come to Christ is not our goodness but our *very badness*, that the worse the case, the more glory redounds to the physician who effects the cure,—and finally, that unchangeable and eternal truth has given the pledge, "him that cometh I WILL IN NO WISE CAST OUT." Perplexing enquiries such as, "How am I to come to Christ?" "What is faith?" "How shall I know that God accepts me?" were met by the simplest of directions. "Come to Christ as to a kind and loving friend; come to Him as the Almighty God perfectly able to save you; come to Him as the great propitiation for sin who has tasted death for every man, and therefore for you; come just as you are; come without waiting for fitness, preparation, or qualification; come in the spirit of those words,

"Just as I am without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bids't me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God I come."

Faith is the heart's reliance on gospel promises. Treat them as true. Rest on the unchanging word of the living God. Take Christ to be your Saviour. Accept *Him* and believe that he accepts *you*. You are as welcome as ever poor sinner was to embrace the great salvation." Suitable portions of Scripture were read to him, and prayer was offered in which he joined with much apparent earnestness. At length, sudden and glorious as a flash of heaven's own light, the way of salvation was made plain to him. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "I see it all now. It is clear as noon-day. I can trust in Christ. I *know* he accepts me. I am perfectly happy. I can die in peace now. My sins are all forgiven." The transition was perfectly amazing. It was as if the all-glorious Christ,— "Sun of Righteousness" as he is, had suddenly burst forth amid a scene of darkness, doubt, and fear,—instantly dispersing every cloud and even chasing

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away every trace of mist, enabling the entranced soul to sing,

"Not a cloud doth arise,
To darken my skies,
Or hide for a moment the Lord from my eyes."

It was a time of Divine manifestation, akin to that which the Apostle Paul recalls in the expressive words, "When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me." It was indeed a revelation so wonderful, that again and again the privileged subject of it exclaimed "I never thought it possible for mortal man to see and feel what I do now. Oh it is glorious beyond expression!"

For some six hours or more, he lay in a state bordering on ecstasy, and yet in such perfect possession of his mental powers, that every thing he thought of seemed to stand out with amazing sharpness and distinctness of outline. He calmly arranged his worldly affairs and wondered meantime at the serene composure with which he could now survey the prospect, before so painful to him, of leaving dear ones whom he loved better than life. A business letter to his partner, a portion of which he wrote with his own hand, want of strength compelling him to dictate the remainder, gives evidence of his perfect intellectual soundness at this stage of his illness. He was urged to seek rest in sleep, and tried to do so, but activity of mind and joy of heart kept him wakeful. It was well, for during those few hours of rationality he gave evidence of the great spiritual change that had passed upon him, which is more precious than riches to those who loved him. The fruits of the Spirit "love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith," showed themselves very plainly. Grateful love to Christ prompted the desire to do something for Christ. While willing to die, yet having like Paul "a desire to depart and be with Christ," he longed to do some good in the world ere he left it forever. He bemoaned with much tender outpouring of heart his long-continued indecision, spoke of his ingratitude in turning his back so many times on the Lord's Supper,—"but," said he, "I never did it without a twinge, and if God *should* spare me, I'll never do it again." He spoke with much warm affection of relatives and friends, exhibited intense yearning over such of them as were still undecided as he had been, mentioning especially

one very dear friend of whom he said, "he is sceptical as I once was, how sorry I am for him, oh! if I get well how I will talk to him," and declared his resolve, if restored to health again, to testify to all who knew him that he was as he phrased it, "a changed and a saved man." He referred to his profession, in the practice of which he remarked that he had always endeavoured to act on high and honourable principles, but said he, "I see now as I never saw before, how much good a Christian lawyer may do." Who could resist indulging the fond hope and offering the earnest prayer in submission to the Divine will, that God would spare him, and make him yet a power for usefulness? As I stood beside his bed, I dreamed dreams of his recovery,—of the consecration of his fine talents to Christ,—of the influence he might exert among the young men of his class and station, concerning every one of whom it may be said so truly, "The Lord hath need of thee," and not a few of whom are like that one of whom it is written: "Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

But it was not to be. The Supreme Disposer of all events had wiser plans for him than those framed by human minds and hearts. After a few days' eclipse of reason, very painful to witness, the scene closed on earth to open in heaven. "He was not, for God took him,"—"took him" to renew the raptures of "first love" in the skies, "took him" to hear the voice of many waters and as the voice of a great thunder, and the voice of harpers harping with their harps," "took him" to lift up *his own voice* in that song for "new" which none but those redeemed from earth *can* sing, the "SONG OF SONGS" that shall eternally ascribe "salvation to our God that sitteth up on the throne, and unto the Lamb, "took him" to be "forever with the Lord!"

"Forgive blest shade the tributary tear
That mourns thine exit from a world like this;
Forgive the wish that would have kept thee here,
And stayed thy transit to the realms of bliss."

It is impossible for any believer in the providence and grace of God to contemplate these circumstances without mingled emotions of wonder and adoration. The manner of his illness, the knowledge he had of his condition both physical and spiritual, the vigour and

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clearness of all his mental perceptions and impressions, the calm yet thorough realization that was given him of the truths that suited his case, the intelligent and vivid apprehension of the gospel, and the complete revolution in his views and feelings when Jesus was revealed; constrain the exclamation "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." Instrumentally, I doubt not, the disclosure to him of the alarming nature of his illness by his physician, was the chief means employed by God to lead him to salvation. It brought him face to face with death, and pressed on him the alternative "NOW OR NEVER." Medical men are alternately blamed for withholding and for imparting such disclosures, and it must be a delicate and perplexing question with them how to act in such cases, but in view of a knowledge of the facts in the present instance possessed by no other human being, I unhesitatingly affirm that if ever there was a real kindness done by one man to another, it was when the physician told our deceased friend how critical a condition he was in. The information could not but induce alarm, but alarm when not over-mastering, is the very feeling to impel the action which an emergency demands. With a mind so constituted as was that of our deceased friend, the intelligence given did not excite a nervous bewilderment, but roused to intelligent precaution, and earnest preparation for the event that seemed imminent and inevitable. Such an idea as that the intimation of his danger threw his mind off its balance, and induced the delirium that subsequently set in, or had anything whatever to do with it, is wholly unsupported by facts. That delirium came in the natural course of disease, and supervened upon several hours of calm peace and unspeakable joy. Suppose that under the delusion of no present danger, our friend had lost the few precious hours of reason that preceded his mental eclipse, what terrible consequences might have followed. We have his own testimony on this point. He had a transient but alarming attack of illness the night before his final and fatal seizure, and in reference to it he more than once exclaimed after he had found the Saviour, "Oh if I had died last night, what a dreadful thing it would have been!" Let God be praised who so ordered it, that he distinctly saw the approach of the last enemy, and had time to gird up his loins for the terrible encounter.

The circumstances I have narrated bring us into direct and felt

contact with the *supernatural*. The *supernatural* is conspicuous in every genuine conversion, whether it be gentle and gradual like that of Lydia "whose heart the Lord opened" or boisterous and sudden like that of the jailor at Philippi. It is present in every christian experience whether it consist of a slowly-trickling rill of peace and comfort, or a mighty river of joy that suddenly ove-leaps its banks, and as in the case of our departed friend, deluges the soul with the bliss of heaven. It is *the* prominent agency in the salvation of every sinner. The saved are Divinely "turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." There, where the classically lost soul stands amid the wreck of its earthly hopes and joys, and of its self-righteous aims and trusts, trembling with apprehension of the wrath of God, I behold the Divine Lawgiver reproducing Sinai with its thunders and lightnings and earthquakes; and there where that same soul stands redeemed, believing, and joyous, I behold the Divine Saviour reproducing Calvary, whose every sight and sound is a harbinger of peace and a herald of love. And this is not theory merely, for it can readily be brought to the ordeal of individual experience, that unfailing test of truth. My hearers, God is able and willing thus to save you and me, so that we shall be witnesses to his grace and power. From lowest depths of sin, from darkest realms of doubt, from rockiest wildernesses of heart-obscurity, from deepest abysses of dependency, from profoundest slumbers of spiritual indifference, from the uttermost helplessness and hopelessness of self-despair, he can bring us to himself, and make us bask in his light and love. I have little to say now to the careless,—if any can be careless amid these echoes from the grave, there is little hope of them,—but if there be here a soul that is distressed and overwhelmed with a sense of its sin, let me bid you hearken to the voice from heaven which proclaims to those who are farthest from the joy of the Divine presence, "Look unto me and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." O respond; "*From the end of the earth* will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I," and your cry shall enter ears that were never deaf to penitential prayer, and move in your behalf hands that are mighty, yea *almighty* to save.

4. But I hasten, fourthly and briefly to observe, that "he being dead yet speaketh," concerning the covenant faithfulness of God. Our deceased friend was a baptized child, a child of many vows and many prayers. When he was an infant, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was invoked to be his God, and parental faith laid delibere and firm hold of that "promise" of the ancient, everlasting covenant which is "unto us and to our children, and to them that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call";—"I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." This promise is the only ground of hope Christian parents have that their children

will ever be saved. Without it parentage would be a terrible uncertainty, and life to pious heads of families a torturing rack. The idea of our children being regenerated in and by baptism is a woeful delusion and fatal snare, but the grace pledged in the divine covenant is a blessed reality. And oh! it is good to see, as in the case before us, that grace asserting itself and proving how real and efficacious it is. What encouragement there is here to Christian parents to supplicate the throne of grace in the spirit of those moving lives:

"Dear Saviour, if these lambs should stray,
From thy dear care's enclosure's bound,
And, lured by worldly joys away,
Amid the thoughtless crowd be found;

Remember still that they are Thine,
That Thy dear sacred name they bear,
Think, that the seal of love divine,
The sign of covenant grace they wear!

In all their erring, sinful years,
Oh let them ne'er forgotten be,
Remember all the vows and tears
That made them consecrate to Thee!"

This example speaks eloquently to the baptized children of the church as well as to their parents. What a privilege it is to have a pious ancestry. That plea is of no slight avail in prayer.

"God of our fathers, be the God
Of their succeeding race."

When Jacob was in common trouble his cry was, "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac." When David was wrought up to special earnestness, his argument was, "O Lord, I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid." Infinitely better than a wealthy, educated, or famous ancestry, is a pious one. Cowper was right when he wrote,

"My boast is not that I derived my birth,
From loins enthroned and monarchs of the earth,
But, higher far my proud pretensions rise,
The son of parents passed into the skies."

It is thus with some of you. Your parents have passed into the skies. And as they bend from their exalted home to observe the loved ones they have left behind them, do they see in you "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises," or wanderers from the fold of God? Others of you have pious parents yet living upon earth whose language concerning you is, "My son,"—my daughter "if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice even mine." Have you assumed for yourself the vows they made for you! Have you ever said concerning the Lord God of your fathers,

"Thy God is our God forever and ever?" If not, oh! be conjured to do so now. Hear and obey the voice from heaven which asks: "Will thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?"

5. Finally, "he being dead yet speaketh" concerning the living power and untold preciousness of Divine truth. We live in an unbelieving age. Modern upstart rationalism has tinctured society with its irreverent and infidel spirit, so that many despise the grand old look of God, and the religion it teaches. Contemptuously pushing from them the Christian system, they are ready to ring the knell and attend the burial of "old faith" as they disrespectfully style the time and eternity-honoured scheme of redemption through the blood of the cross. Well, we accept the term of contempt and weave it into a garland of honour.

"Old Faith" we cling to thee! Thou art indeed old, yea hoary with age. Thou wast old when the world was young. And thou shalt live to be older. "*The eternal years of God are thine.*"

We do not despise thy grey hair! They are a crown of glory to thee! Thou hast lasted while myriad mushroom faiths have sprung up, died, and been forgotten. Thou didst live in Abraham's days, and through thee he became a pilgrim and stranger on the earth, "looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Thou hast come down to us certified by a long list of worthies of the olden time, who "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, cut of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." "Old Faith" we love thee! Thou hast a home in many a true and trusting heart. And there is work for thee yet among the dwellers on earth. Many who despise thee now will woo thee when heart and flesh fail, and ask thy help when they pass the dark stream which separates embodied from disembodied spirits. Thou only canst act the part of guide to man when the Great Creator

"Shall bid his trembling spirit fly,
Into a world unknown."

"Old Faith" be with us in the walks of life. Take us often aside and tell us about the "things not seen" with which thou art so familiar. Save us from superficial theories which make the love of the world strong, and the love of God weak—from false lights which "lead to bewilder, and dazzle to blind."

"O lend thy realizing light,
Till clouds disperse and shadows fly,
The invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye."

not, oh! be conjured
heaven which asks:
My Father, thou art

concerning the living

We live in an un-
tinctured society
who despise the grand
contemptuously push-
ing to ring the knell
respectfully style the
through the blood
and weave it into

aged old, yea hoary
young. And thou
and are thine."

a crown of glory to
faiths have sprung
in Abraham's days,
ger on the earth,
the builder and maker
by a long list of
subdued kingdoms,
ed the mouths of
edge of the sword,
in fight turned to
love thee! Thou
And there is work
who despise thee
ask thy help when
died from disem-
of guide to man

Take us often aside
which thou art so
make the love of
false lights which

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D. M. Nichols



