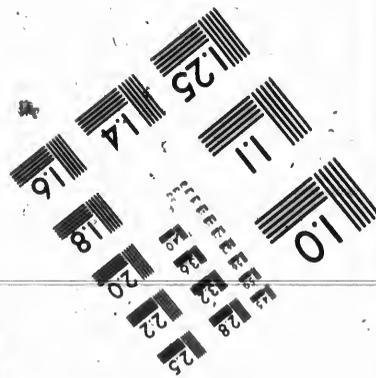
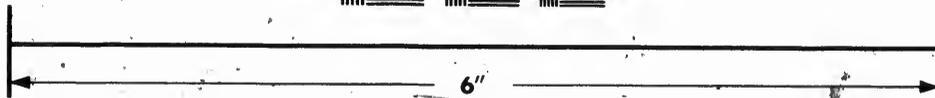
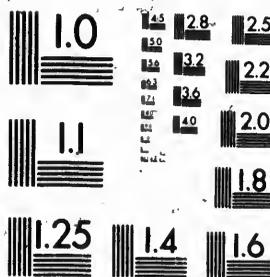


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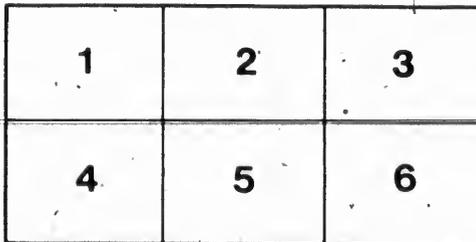
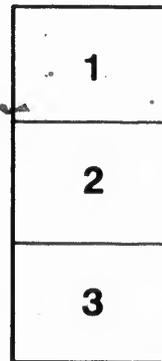
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REV. ROBERT M^CGILL, D. D.,

MINISTER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MONTREAL,

BY THE

REV. JOHN COOK, D. D.,

MINISTER OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, QUEBEC.

“Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels:
and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.”—
LUKE XX, 36.

MONTREAL:

H. RAMSAY.

1856.

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MONTREAL: H. RAMSAY.
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OF
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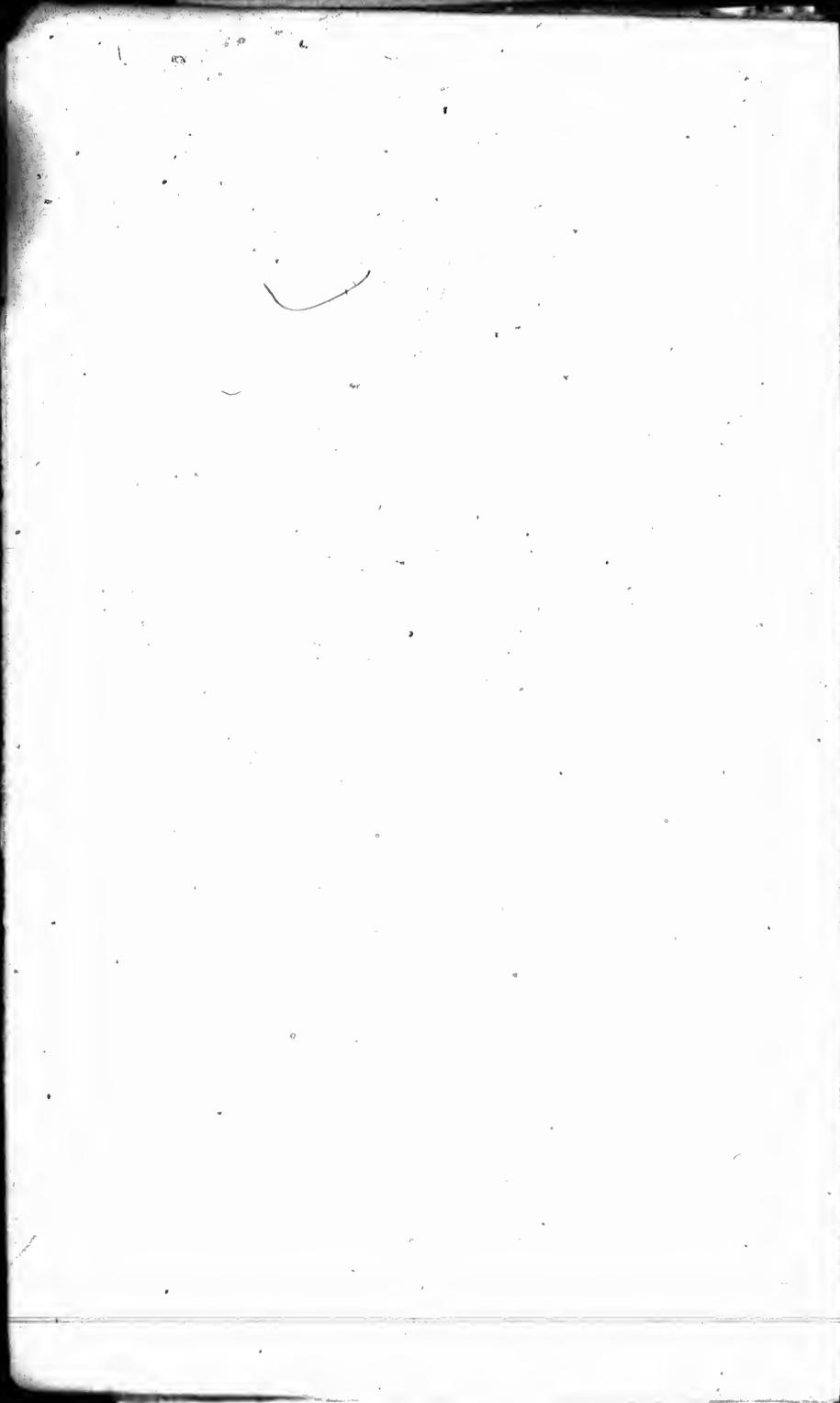
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LUKE XX, 36.

“Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels: and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.”

It is the future state of the blessed in Heaven, of which the Saviour speaks in these words; and there are two ideas in them, in regard of that state, on which it may be profitable for us to dwell for a little. The First is, that in that state, there shall be no such change, at any subsequent period, in the manner of the soul's being, as that produced by death. The Second is that of endless existence. The latter of these is so transcendently great, that it does, as it were, cast the former into the shade, and the mind scarcely dwells on it at all. Yet is it important in two points of view: First, as fitted to minister comfort to the believer. Secondly, as throwing light on the nature of the future state, and giving us an important element of distinction, between that state and the present.

It is I say, in the first place, fitted to minister comfort to the believer. There is no truth of which the believer has received more ample assurance, than that the change produced by death, is, in the case of every child of God, a blessed one, more blessed than it is possible for the mind in its present state of knowledge, adequately to conceive. And yet, it is a change which is not to be contemplated without solemn awe and apprehension. The very terms in which it is habitually spoken of, show what is the feeling of nature in regard of it. It is spoken of as a journey through a dark

and gloomy valley ;—as a passage through a deep and rapid river, the swellings of whose proud waters threaten to overwhelm the soul ;—as a battle, in which the soul has to contend with a most formidable adversary. Independent altogether of the question of the soul's acceptance with God, and its moral state as before him, it is a change so violent in itself,—soul and body, the essential and closely linked together elements of man's nature, being thereby dissociated the one from the other,—and it is a change so painful in its accompanying circumstances, being ever attended with weakness, and decay, and suffering,—and it is a change so mournful in its immediate and visible effects, leaving the body, like a despoiled and deserted tenement to fall into utter ruin, and separating the soul from all wonted and familiar objects and pursuits, from the love of kindred hearts, and the light and enjoyments of this present life, no wonder that, through fear of it, some are all their lifetime subject to bondage, and that to all, the approach of it is matter of solemn apprehension. And is it not then comfortable to know, on the unfailing word and testimony of Him who came forth from the Father, to declare eternal truth to man, that to such change the children of the resurrection,—those who have been accounted worthy to enter that better world which Jesus has revealed in the Gospel, are no more to be subjected. Throughout the whole future being of the believer, he shall never be visited again with such a trial of his faith and patience. Neither for himself nor for others dear to him, shall any have cause to dread the approach of death. On the morning of the resurrection every trace and memorial of its ravages shall be finally effaced, and soul and body be re-united, never again to part, but each to be, throughout eternity, to the other, what was

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designed in the beneficent and holy purpose of the Common Father of all. Thou then, Oh believer, who hast some dread of death in thyself, or who art mourning over separations which death has made, look forward to the future state. There, there is no more death. The plans of Providence, in regard of the saints, require not that they should be again subjected to it. Thou shalt fear it no more for thyself. Thou shalt no more have thy heart rent because of it, in others. That is the state of life,—“neither can they” who have entered on it, “die any more.”

But secondly, this declared absence of death throws light on the nature of the future state, and gives us an important element of distinction between that state and the present. It has been said by an apostle, that Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. Undoubtedly this was said chiefly with reference to the strong and clear evidence, afforded by the doctrine, and by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, of the reality of a future state. But to some extent it may be said also of the revelations made by Christ, in reference to the nature of that state. It is true, that the revelations of all scripture, on this point, are comparatively few, and imperfect,—imperfect, not in regard of the object, for which they were made, but in regard of what our impatient spirits would like to have. They do but very partially lift the vail which hides the future world from the view of living men. It is only hints, which they give, of its nature and glimpses of its glory. Yet of these revelations, there are not any so clear and definite, or that convey such precise ideas to the mind, as those we derive immediately from Jesus himself, either in his heavenly doctrine, while he dwelt on earth, or in his own person, after he rose again from the dead. Of

this, the passage before us is an instance. In it the Saviour answers a question, put to him, by the Sadducees, who were the free-thinkers and semi-infidels of those days, and which question was designed by them, covertly to cast contempt and ridicule on the whole doctrine of a future state, though, in reality, it did only exhibit their utter ignorance of the nature and conditions of that state. And he gives in his answer,—first, in the statement, that in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, and secondly, in the statement of the text, that the children of the resurrection cannot die any more, two of the points of difference between the present state and the future, which enable us to form the most definite conceptions of the nature of that difference. The institution of marriage affects, modifies, nay, it may almost be said, forms all society, dividing the whole race into small circles of kindred, in which a special affection and a special government prevail. And death, the unfailing lot of all, does also impress a peculiar character on this present state of being, rendering all society fluctuating, and rendering insecure and temporary all mere earthly objects of pursuit. It is not possible for us to comprehend; or fully follow out all the change in feeling, and in the relations of the redeemed to one another, which must be the consequence of the absence of these,—the one affecting all life,—the other bringing, and known and expected to bring life to an end. But it is obvious, that on the fact of such absence, there might be founded much not unlegitimate speculation on the peculiarities of the future state,—its society, consisting permanently of the same individuals;—its loving spirit, each in affection, embracing all, as of one holy family;—and its security against interruption or loss in these acquirements, to the

making of which, they who dwell in it are devoted. On such speculation we seek not, however, at present to enter, only calling on you to mark the definiteness of the notices which the Saviour thus gives in regard of a future state; and the importance of them,—and proceeding to the Second leading idea contained in the text.

I have said that this idea is transcendently great. It is too great indeed for us to take it fully into our minds. The finite mind cannot comprehend in its calculations that which is eternal. Yet is it right that we should dwell in earnest and holy meditation on that “eternal life which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ,”—right, that we may in some measure learn, and be impressed with the benignity and grace of the Giver;—right, that we may have our notions enlarged of the extent of the blessings conferred on mankind through the mediation of Jesus;—right, that we may know the high destiny which awaits the believer;—right, that there may be kindled in our souls an ardent and ever growing desire for a gift so precious, and for such present and immediate earnest, as God is pleased to give unto his children, that in due time, we shall enter on the enjoyment of it. I say, enter on the enjoyment of it. In one sense it is begun already. The life of the soul; its capacity of thinking and of feeling, shall never be interrupted. Over that the grave has no power, and the sting of death cannot reach it. But the eternal life, which is the portion of the children of God, who are also the children of the resurrection, implies unspeakably more than such endless capacity of thought and of emotion. That might, or might not be a blessing. That might be a curse beyond all conception terrible. That is the very property of our nature, which renders most dreadful the contemplation of a state, in which

sin and sinful passions, and sinful habits have unchecked dominion in the soul, and conscience is ever judging them, and condemning them, and producing the agony of remorse because of them. It is not life alone which constitutes the blessing, but the nature of the life. Even an eternal continuance of this present life, fondly as we cling to it, amidst all its troubles and trials, could not satisfy the soul. Nay, the soul seriously reflecting could not contemplate it without terror. The immortal spirit longs for something different,—something better,—something far higher and nobler, purer and more satisfying in its nature. Man's spirit, though fallen, is not so darkened and degraded but that it refuses to be contented with the measure of enjoyment and attainment which it can reach here. And were we assured of the permanence of this present state of being;—did no ray of hope shed its blessed light, on another and a better, revealing it to our faith, and promising it to our wishes,—were the spirit of man to be bound down to the earth and its pursuits, in unceasing continuance, who would not be ready to join in the mournful repinings of the Patriarch, "My soul chooseth strangling and death rather than life. I loathe it. I would not live alway. Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul: which long for death, but it cometh not, and dig for it more than for hid treasures; which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad, when they can find the grave."

The eternal, indestructible life of the soul in the future state, is not merely life in opposition to unconscious being, but it is the life of holy and happy beings, placed in circumstances which give ample scope for the employment of all their energies, for the developement of all their powers, —for the satisfying of all their desires. It is the life of

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man, according to the text, put on an equality with the angels. I say, it is the life of *man*. It is the same nature which is to exist in the future state as in the present, though it shall be refined and glorified. And it is the life of that nature,—the eternal continuance and exercise of the essential powers and properties of that nature which is promised in the future state. It is forgetfulness of this fact,—it is the dreamy and unauthorized imagination of a change, not merely *upon* our nature, so that we shall be free from sin, but *of* our nature, so that it shall become something different from what it is,—so different that we can form no right conception of what it shall be, which deprives the contemplation of the future state, of the interest which fully belongs to it, and renders us less sensible than we should otherwise be, of the greatness of the gift of eternal life. But take our nature as it is, save and except in its subjection to sinful passions, take it in its essential properties,—take it in all that by which it is distinguished and distinguishable from other natures, and then conceive the result of its continued and glorious being; and contemplate it in the light of that immortality which is promised to it.

Take the intellect for example, That is one glorious distinction of man among all living beings in this world. God hath made him wiser than the beasts of the field, and given him more understanding than the fowls of heaven. That is one source of his most exalted pleasures. Thereby he subordinates the very elements of nature to his control, and makes them minister to his wishes. Yet it is only a short time in which it can be cultivated and exercised here. A large portion of life passes away ere it reaches its maturity and strength. And it weakens and gives way with the approach of age and its infirmities. What then would be its attain-

ments,—its exercise, its triumphs, the stores of knowledge which it would accumulate, the importance of the conclusions to which it would come in its enquiries, and the power which such knowledge and such conclusions would communicate to it, if the time for its activity, and the field for the occupation of that activity were unlimited? How great would not all these be, even were there no account to be taken of the improvement and advance of the intellect itself by such exercise of it,—and we did only regard the period of time for such exercise! How much greater, when by a law of our nature, unceasing in its operation, the very power of the intellect itself is heightened and increased by the exercise of it, and from one attainment and one triumph, it not only does more desire, but it is absolutely better fitted to advance unto, another! Take into your minds this view of our nature, even our intellectual nature, gifted by God, through the mediation of the Saviour, with eternal life, and how unspeakably glorious it is! How clear and powerful must not the understanding become—and what a source of pleasure, as it expatiates over the wonderful works of God. The difference between an infant of a few months and the most profound of the philosophers of this world, is as nothing to the difference between the highest point to which any mind can reach here, and that to which even a few of the days of heaven shall bring the glorified saint. And what then shall be the result of ages and ages more of that endless life, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord? As God places no limit to the being, so neither does He place any limit to the possible progress of the nature with which we are endowed, either in the attainment of knowledge or in the power of acquiring it. The capacity of making such unlimited progress is an

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essential property of our nature. The future state is to develop, not to destroy it.

Or take, the social nature of man—those affections, which bind him to his fellow men, and make him take delight in their sympathy, and in their happiness, and from which a large measure of his present enjoyment flows. Here there is much to check the exercise of these affections. There is inward selfishness which is at war with them, and would repress them. And there is the experienced selfishness of others, giving a kind of licence and vindication to our own. Then they are repelled,—the social affections, by the unworthy nature of those around us. They are chilled by ingratitude. They are wounded by the separations which the necessities of life render unavoidable. They are a source of bitter anguish when death comes to make a final separation in this life from those we love. Suppose all these obstacles to their unrestrained exercise removed, and removed for ever;—let the taint of inborn selfishness be finally taken away;—let the society in which they are called to expatiate be all lovely and loving;—let there be a perfect sympathy of affection in every member of that society;—and let the union of loving hearts be eternal. Oh! how would there expand in such a state, the social affections of our nature,—how powerful would not they become by their habitual and continual exercise,—and how large the enjoyments which they would prove the means of pouring into the human spirit. To what height would not that love reach which abideth for ever! And by its ever increasing power, more even than by the increasing strength and attainments of the understanding, must not the glorified saint advance ever nearer to the throne of the Eternal, and though still at an infinite distance, reach to a closer con-

formity with that blessed God, who is love, and dwelleth in love—and they that dwell in love, dwell in Him?

Take again the moral nature of man, his sense and choice of what is right. How much more perfect shall the former become, his sense of what is right? How much more decided the latter, his choice and love of what is right, as ages and ages more roll on, in which he is ever seeing things more clearly in their true light, and ever acting steadily on the light he enjoys. That is the progress even in this world. Every succeeding day after a man has begun to do right, he sees more clearly the reasons, the wise and good reasons there are for doing it. Every day fresh reasons are accumulating upon him. And the apprehension of these reasons confirms his choice, and renders him steady in his conduct. And so shall it be in the heavenly state. More and more shall the soul, freed from the bias and the prejudices produced by sin, and having that singleness of eye through which the light passes pure into it, and fills it, see and know the excellence, the supreme and transcendent excellence of heavenly virtue. There will appear in it, more and more, an eternal fitness and conformity with right reason. There will be more fully manifest the inspeakable advantages, individual and general, which are unseparably connected with it. There will be felt a greater relish and love for it, because of its more fully experienced suitableness to, and congeniality with the whole nature of man. And so the saint will become ever more saintly—because delighting more and more in the law of God after the inward man. And herein too will he approach nearer to that absolute moral perfection which is in God himself, in virtue of which perfection, it is, we know, impossible for God to do or to think what is wrong—even as

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it is said by one apostle, that it is impossible for God to lie, and by another, that God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth He any man. The habit of virtuous choice and virtuous action growing, strengthening, becoming more confirmed and more powerful, not only from day to day, but from age to age, must produce a stability in virtue, the nearest possible approach in man to that absolutely unchangeable holiness which is in God.

Once more, take the religious nature of man in virtue of which he feels his relation to God, and to the Saviour. Even in this life, the believer feels the inexpressible importance, and in the exercise of faith, the inexpressible blessedness of that relation. There are times and seasons in which the thought of that relation fills him with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. But how vastly clearer will such views become, and how much more exalted will be the satisfaction experienced, as age after age reveals God more perfectly, and age after age gives more abundant opportunity to test the fulness of enjoyment there is in the knowledge and love of God, and to drink of those rivers of pleasure which are at his right hand for evermore. Even in this world, as the believing soul grows in the knowledge of God, and in the experience of his goodness, it loves God more,—it rejoices more in its relation to Him—it is more attracted to the contemplation of Him,—it draws its life, the very enjoyment of life, that is, more directly from Him. And so the children of God being the children of the resurrection, because admitted to see and know God more perfectly—to see and know God, as he is revealed in the person of the glorified Saviour, and to advance in such knowledge, must ever be drawing more closely towards Him, in that dependent and reverential

love, which is the bond between the creature and the Creator, and the perfection of the religious spirit in man.

Intellectually,—socially,—morally,—religiously,—to be not only free from the stain of positive evil, but making advancement, for ever, and for ever,—becoming more wise,—more loving,—more virtuous,—more godly, this is that eternal life, which is through Jesus Christ, the gift of God. So to love,—so to make progress and advancement,—for according to man's nature, as that has been constituted by God, the two are identical,—life and progress—progress in good or evil,—so to live, I say, and so to make progress, were it for ten times ten thousand years, or even for one thousand years, how glorious a destiny would it not seem,—how glorious a destiny would it not be? and to what heights of heavenly knowledge,—of holy love, of perfect virtue, and experience of God's grace and favour, might not the soul arrive in that long period! How great and glorious would not one become, on whom such a boon was conferred! Yet on the humblest of those who believe in Jesus, there is a boon conferred, with which that can stand no comparison. The life of knowledge, of activity, of love, of godliness, of progress and advancement, bestowed on the believer, through the mediation of Jesus, shall never come to an end. When ten thousand times ten thousand years shall have passed away, they will seem no more, in comparison of what is to come, than as a single day,—and the attainments which have even then reached, shall seem only the first rudiments of what yet lies before to be aspired unto, and to be made! "Oh my blind and darkened spirit," is not each one now ready to say, "Is this the gift, thou mindest so little, amidst thy strivings after the perishing trifles of this passing world? Why art thou thus dead to

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the high capacities of thy being? Why so insensible to the glorious destiny, which Jesus hath appointed for his people? Yea, or why art thou so cast down by the sorrows of the fleeting day of this mortal life? Awake, awake, to the feeling of thine immortal nature! Hearest thou not the voice of Jesus, complaining and remonstrating, "Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." Lord, I come I come to thee, I desire life,—that life which it is thine alone to give. I desire to live *to* thee now, in faith, in love, in meek submission, that I may live *with* thee, and be thine forever in that state, in which, thy people "cannot die any more, for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

Why should we mourn, my friends, when a believer, ~~one~~ who has not only made profession of Christian faith, but proved it to be genuine, by the scriptural tests of a loving spirit; and a holy life and conversation, is called to enter on that higher and nobler state of being? Is the life that now is to be compared with the life to come, which is promised to the believer? Assuredly we are not to despise or undervalue even earthly life. Life in the humblest of God's creatures, as it is a mysterious, so it is a precious thing. Man cannot give it. Man cannot restore it when it is taken away. Even in creatures vastly inferior to man in the scale of being; there are tokens of a very abundant measure of happiness, connected with it, and growing out of it. But *man's* life, that is a higher and a nobler thing. In it, there is not merely animal enjoyment—in it, there is the exercise of reason, and the play of social affection,—and the working of principle and the sentiment of devotion. In it, there are transcendent capacities of love and of enjoyment. In it, there are relations formed of

unspeakable tenderness. Ah ! it is in every case, a great and solemn thing, when this earthly life comes to an end, whether it be in the mansions of the rich, or in the hovels of the poor. There are hearts wounded and broken by it. There are hopes quenched by it. There are ties dissolved by it. Even when the end comes slowly, and there can be discerned the tokens of its approach, increasing in number and clearness, it is a mournful task to watch the closing eye, and listen painfully for the sound of a breathing which is to be repeated no more. And how much more heavily it strikes upon the heart, when it comes suddenly and without a warning of its approach,—when the stroke falls at an unexpected season, and death interposes its terrible barrier between us and the friend or brother, on whom he hath laid his hand, so that we can see and hear, and have intercourse with him no more. But what though this life passes away? Believers lose not life itself. They enter on another, better and more glorious,—in the presence of Christ,—in the society of angels and spirits of the blessed made perfect. Though the earthly house of their tabernacle be dissolved, they have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. To them the valley and shadow of death is the pathway to heaven. And then what saith the Spirit of them ? “Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord ; they rest from their labours and their works do follow them.” Shall we mourn and be in bitterness because they have finished their course and kept the faith,—because they have won the crown of life which the Lord hath prepared for them that love him,—because they have entered on the glorious inheritance of the saints ?

My friends, we may not mourn for *them* ; but we may mourn for *ourselves*. There is nothing in the spirit of the

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Gospel, or in the teaching of its great Author, which requires us to be insensible to the losses we sustain by the ravages of death, and *yours* is now a heavy loss, over which you do and may justly mourn. The pastor whom God has been pleased to remove from amongst you, was one endowed in no common measure, with the gifts and graces, necessary for the highest exercise of the Christian ministry. He had by nature a clear and powerful understanding, and it was early disciplined and improved not only in the regular course of education prescribed by the Church, but in the progress of studies much more laborious and extensive, than it is common, or often convenient for students for the ministry to prosecute. He had at an early period of life acquired correct views of evangelical truth.—and knew that truth, not merely by study, and as a science, but, by personal experience, in its power over the conscience and the affections. From the commencement of his public duty, as a Preacher and a Minister of the Gospel, he had, doubtless amidst many imperfections and failings, which none was more ready to acknowledge and deplore, yet clearly, steadily, habitually, an end in view, and that the end proper to his sacred calling,—the glory of his great Master, and the salvation of immortal souls. There is reason to believe that in the first charge to which he was appointed in this Province, and in which he laboured for sixteen years, his ministry was largely blessed to many,—and it is certain, that in discharging the duties of the pastoral office, he gained the affection and confidence of the people.—that he was instrumental in no ordinary degree in exciting their interest, and calling forth their liberality, in behalf of any enterprize of Christian benevolence ;—that they deeply regretted his departure from among them,—and that they

continued to regard him with unabated respect and affection.

To you he came ten years ago,—in the prime of manhood, in the full vigour of his mental faculties, and prepared, not merely by the study of abstract truth, but by a ripe and lengthened experience, to perform among you the duties of the Christian ministry. And the prevailing feeling amongst you, this day, testifies to the worth of his character,—to the value of his services, to the power of his ministrations, to the zeal and fidelity and conscientious activity, which he manifested in the work of the Lord. That he spoke with power and fervency and affection, from the place which I now occupy, whether in calling sinners to repentance or in seeking to stir up the languid graces of those whom he believed to be genuine disciples of the Saviour, and to raise among them the standard of Christian morals, and of Christian exertion, is known to all. But it was not only in the pulpit that he stood forth as the minister of Christ. Always, he carried about with him the remembrance of his office, and his special work, and more than many of us his brethren dare say we do, he seized the opportunities which presented themselves, to convey spiritual instruction, advice and warning. That he was assiduous in the more private duties of his office—in visiting the members of his congregation, in giving counsel or encouragement, or reproof, as the circumstances required,—in attending to the wants, and relieving the distresses of the poor and the needy,—above all, in waiting on the sick and the dying, to impart to them the consolations of religion, and with earnest tenderness to commend to them the power and grace of the Saviour, there is but one testimony from all. It is much—much for a people to value, and

to thank God for, when any man gives himself heartily and honestly and perseveringly to these sacred duties,—but most of all, when it is a man of powerful understanding—of extensive acquirements—of benevolent disposition—of devotional temper—of deep and personal experience of divine things. Such a man it was your privilege to have. I trust you felt the value of this privilege, while he was with you : and that now, that he is taken away, you will show your sense of it, not merely by cherishing a respect for the memory of your departed minister, but by your habitual remembrance of his teaching, and by seeking to be followers of him, wherein he was a follower of Christ. Let it be remembered, privilege does always involve responsibility. I can tell you, that amidst much, which he felt to be discouraging in the condition and prospects of the Church, that which depressed him most, was any sign among you, of coldness and indifference to spiritual duties and spiritual exercises, and what gladdened him most, was any token among you, of spiritual revival, and if it be given to the departed to have any knowledge of what passes in this earth, it will add to the joy of a spirit, redeemed, as we humbly trust, through the blood of that Saviour, whom he preached, that you live in the service, and by the faith of Christ.

Apart from the domestic circle, of the sorrows of which under a bereavement, so recent and severe, I venture not to speak, your loss is that which it is natural first to take into account. And yet it is not the only loss that is to be contemplated, nor is it perhaps the greatest. The removal of your late minister is a loss to the general community, in which he lived and laboured. For he was a man of a large and public spirit,—and he was ever ready to lend the weight of

his character, and his influence, and to give the counsel suggested by his long experience and excellent judgment, to any undertaking which had in view the general improvement of society. He took an active part in every charitable enterprise. He readily co-operated in the management of those societies, which have for their object the circulation of the Scriptures, and the extension of the knowledge of the Gospel among mankind. Nor was he restrained from any good work, by a narrow and sectarian spirit. He had communion in sentiment and affection, with all whom he believed to love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, and his brethren in the ministry of the Gospel in this city, belonging to other communions, are, I am persuaded, as sincere mourners this day, as those of us with whom he was more specially connected.

But the great loss, the greatest indeed,—because the most difficult to be supplied, is to the Church of which he was an attached and devoted minister. From his first appearance in the Province, he took a deep and active interest in all that concerned its extension and its efficiency. He stood forth boldly and perseveringly, during the long conflict which terminated in the acknowledgement of the right of the Church of Scotland to an equal share of those secular advantages, which had previously been confined exclusively to one communion. He long devoted himself to the publication of a religious periodical in which the civil claims of the Church, its religious doctrines, and ecclesiastical order were eloquently advocated. He was among the first promoters of the scheme for educating young men in the Province, for the sacred office of the ministry, and was a trustee of Queen's College from its commencement. He was present at its first meeting, and his attendance on Church

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Courts, and in his efforts to render their deliberations subservient to the spiritual improvement of the people. He was disposed to exercise a strict discipline in the case of those invested with the ministerial office. He was zealous in the cause of missions, both to the Heathen, and to spiritually destitute localities in the Province. In the unhappy division of 1844, while he could not see it to be his duty to leave a communion, in which he had the most perfect liberty not only to preach the Gospel, but to carry out his own views of ecclesiastical order and government, he yet, not without some provocation to do differently, continued to think and speak kindly and affectionately, of those who took a different course from himself, nor did he ever, I believe, say a word, the tendency of which was to throw any obstacle in the way of that union of all Presbyterians; not only in Canada, but in the British North American Provinces, which he earnestly desired, and which, though he has passed away without seeing it, and others of us are likely to do so, it may confidently be expected, that common sense, and Christian charity, and a regard to the interests of pure and undefiled religion will ultimately bring about. For my part, I can truly say, that I know not any among my brethren, with whose views as to the true good of the Church or the means of promoting it, I had more entire sympathy, nor do I think, that by the removal of any single individual, a heavier blow could have been inflicted on the Church.

It is gratifying to me now to remember, how on various recent occasions, when I had the opportunity of long and confidential conversations with him, he expressed his opinion that his work was drawing to a close. There was, however produced, a presentiment of what was about to happen in his mind. And the effect, as it seemed to me

was to produce a greater leniency in his judgment of others, and a more habitual anticipation of the life to come. And though the change came sooner, than perhaps even he anticipated, yet he seems throughout to have regarded his last illness in a more serious light, than that in which others viewed it. It is more to the tenor of a holy and christian life, than to words spoken in the immediate prospect of death, that we are to look for the evidences of christian character, and the grounds of christian hope in respect of the departed. Yet it is satisfactory to know that when a day or two before his death, he was spoken to by a friend, of the great source of consolation, his answer was in the words of the Psalmist. "Yea though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me," and that, after a severe attack of illness in which he had expected to sink, he said to her who was affectionately watching over him, "I thought I had fallen asleep"—and then added, as if to make clear his meaning, and to show his faith and hope,—“asleep in Jesus,” while probably his last faint powers of life and sensibility were put forth to express his joining in the prayers which were offered at his bedside. Blessed be God if we sorrow, we sorrow not as those who have no hope, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him."

Would, my friends, that I could now give voice and utterance, and expression to the admonitions and the warnings which the dispensation of Providence, you are now deploring, does so impressively suggest. But these you have in the words of divine inspiration, "Behold *now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work,

nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." Oh let each put to himself the question what have I to do—to do in relation to God, and judgment, and eternity? Is this the testimony which conscience is constraining some to give: "We have been living without God. We have been doing our own will. We have been seeking our own pleasure. The world has been all to us. The word and will of Christ, nothing. If true repentance is necessary to salvation,—a living faith in the Saviour,—if a renewed heart, if sanctified affections.—then we are in every way unfit to die." Then alas, you have all to do—and the time for doing it is short and uncertain. Be warned, be entreated to flee from the wrath to come. Every hour as it passes into eternity,—every sign and token of the unceasing flight of time,—every memorial of the numberless chances to which human life is subject,—every deathbed at which we stand—every opening grave, re-echoes the *now* of the apostle—the earnest admonition of the preacher, and sternly rebukes the inaction and indecision of the soul, in matters which concern its everlasting well being.

Or is this thy testimony of thyself, thou to whom an awakened conscience is plainly speaking,—that thou art in doubt of thy state before God. Thou canst not say that thou art at peace with Him. Thou hast not attained to the full assurance of the divine mercy and love to thy soul, which the Scriptures promise, and which the saints of the first ages enjoyed. Thou art harassed with doubts and fears about the relation in which thou standest to God,—the interest thou hast in Christ, and thy right to hope for final admission into His kingdom. This is no *right* state to be in. That cannot be a right state, which implies a deficient and im-

perfect exercise of the faith without which it is impossible to please God, and with which God has been pleased to connect the enjoyment of all needful spiritual blessings. And it cannot be a *happy* state. In anwise, seek to get out of it. Pray to be delivered from it. Is not death at hand? Who knows when he shall come? Who may turn aside from his grasp? Is it not meet thou shouldst be prepared to appear before thy God? And does it not behove thee now to plead at the throne of grace the promises of divine love, and to be seeking to make thy calling and election sure?

Or is there who can say, "I feel that I am at peace with God through Jesus Christ. I have gone with humble and broken heart to the Saviour, and have found mercy. He has given me the spirit of adoption, and shed abroad in my heart the love of God. Now, through the grace of Christ, I can look forward without dismay to my removal from this world. Now, through the grace of Christ, I can look forward with joyful hope to the glory that shall be revealed." Even such should feel, that still they have much to do, and which the very sense of the inestimable blessings they have received should constrain them to do. Have they not still in their nature evil affections, which require to be more thoroughly mortified, and evil habits from which they must be more completely disenthralled? Are there not works of righteousness and charity to be done, by which God may be glorified and their brethren benefited? Is there not misery to be relieved? Is there not ignorance to be instructed? Is there not sin to be discountenanced? Is it not a duty to abound more and more in the fruits of righteousness, and so to adorn the heavenly doctrine? What said the Great Master himself in the days of his humiliation, and in the anticipation of his own approaching death? "I must work the

work of Him that sent me while it is day. The night cometh when no man can work."

Who art thou then, that bearing the Christian name, hast in thee the spirit of Him, whose servant thou professest to be? Who art thou that lovest and longest to honour Him who died for sinners? I charge thee follow in his steps, and whatsoever lieth on thy conscience to be done, do it promptly,—do it faithfully,—do it zealously. Lose not the opportunity which God gives thee of serving Him, and doing good to men. Thou who hast known the grace of Christ, and the consolations of His spirit, and hast tasted the good word of God—thou surely art bound to be up and doing. Slothfulness in the Lord's work befits not thee—thy profession, thy privileges, thy hopes. And this thou art bound to remember that thy time for serving God here is short. Soon the grave shall close over thee. Soon the place that knows thee now, shall know thee no more for ever. Work while it is day. Be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, and thy labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

