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Poetry.

"For He shall deliver the needy when he crieth."

One day, one weary day and night,
This winter rain
Hath swept in cheerless, chilling might
Against my pane,
Against my single broken pane.

All day the dripping from my eaves
Makes a sad mean,
Like dropping leaves, dry, withered leaves;
A wailing tone
Falls on my ear—a wailing tone.

The ashes on my hearth are cold,
My fire is dead,
And through the roof so worn and old
Rain drips upon my bed;
Upon my half-clad child in bed.

She had no supper yester-even,
My sweet first-born,—
Not e'en the crumbs rich children leave
Were hers this morn—
My baby had no bread this morn.

Alas! I cannot see her die
For lack of bread!
Is there no angel hovering nigh
Her lowly bed?
No pitying angel near her bed?

No kind Samaritan at hand
With oil and wine,
To snatch from hunger's famished hand
This child of mine?
This precious, only child of mine?

Hush, baby, hush! God sends to thee
Sweet sleep and rest,
Against thy thin cheek tenderly
My lips are pressed—
Thy soft curls lie upon my breast.

'E'en now the patter of the rain
Comes to my ear
Mingled with gentle, soothing strains
Of spirits near—
God's messengers of light are near.

They tell me that our Father's arm
Supports us still,
And, trusting it will shield from harm,
We wait His Will—
We wait our Father's holy will.

—W. & R.

Religious.

The State of the Impenitent Dead.*

(Continued.)

DEATH AND LIFE.

Nature of Death, the penalty of sin, as indicated (1) by the narrative in Genesis, (2) by the use of the term Death in the New Testament.

To ascertain the nature of death, the penalty of sin, we may first examine the language of Jehovah to Adam before the fall: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," Gen. ii. 17. Here Adam is threatened with certain death in case of disobedience. The verb is made emphatic by repetition; as if God had said, Death, certain death, shall be the reward of transgression.

But this threatening, however emphatic and ominous it may be, does not in itself indicate the nature or contents of death. God, to be sure, may have explained its nature to our first parents; but, if so, his explanation was not put on record for our instruction.

Yet there is a clause in the verse before us, which may perhaps furnish no little aid to those who would discover the contents of this threatened death. "In the day of thy eating of it, thou shalt surely die." Disobedience was to be followed by immediate punishment.

If, now, we examine the narrative in Genesis, we shall discover the first fruits of the fall in the souls of Adam and Eve. Shame at their own nakedness, and dread of Jehovah's presence, both springing from guilt, began at once to be felt. Thus it was

*Abridged from Dr. Hovey's recent work having this title.

the soul which experienced the first stroke of retributive justice. Its fellowship with God and consequent blessedness were lost. And for this result, so fatal to the well-being of man, ample provision had been made in the properties of his spiritual nature. The ministers of divine justice had been stationed in every part of the town of Mansoul, and no sooner was sin admitted, than they began to frown upon the guilty place, filling it with terror and confusion.

But this great penalty, following close on the heels of transgression, and provided for in the original constitution of the soul, was not the extinction of conscious being, but the extinction of conscious well-being—was not the loss of existence, but rather the loss of true spiritual life, which is the normal and blessed working of a moral nature. It was a dissolution of man's spiritual relation to God; a separation far more disastrous than that of soul and body in physical death.

And when "in the breeze of the day" God called the guilty pair before him, what was the sentence which he pronounced? Upon the woman birth-throes and subjection to man, and upon the man wearisome toil until his body should return to the dust. Nothing is here said of death, except in the final words, "Until thou returnest to the ground," etc.; and no one will pretend that these words comprise all the evil which was threatened as the penalty of sin, when God said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." For if we may interpret the threatened punishment of transgression by the recorded effects of it upon the feelings and conduct of our first parents, this penalty had two elements, suffering and loss, and took effect, chiefly at least, in the soul rather than the body. On the positive side, there were shame and remorse, followed by toil and pain; and on the negative side, there were the loss of fellowship with God, and of the fruit of the tree of life, together with all the advantages of paradise.

And what better terms than life and death could have been chosen to characterize the different states of the soul before and after so dreadful a catastrophe. Love, light, fellowship with God, gave place to bitterness, alienation, darkness. The normal and blessed action of the spirit was reversed forever. The moral magnetism, which should have drawn it evermore towards the Centre and Source of all goodness, was destroyed, and like the arch fiend in Milton's sublime epic, it "took its solitary way into the realms of Chaos and old Night." It was lost, separated from God; and this, we think, was the all-comprehending and tremendous penalty of sin. Bodily death was but the shadow of this spiritual ruin. Like birth-pangs and oppressive toil, it fitly accompanied the more dreadful doom of the soul.

We do not, however, claim that all this is indubitably taught by the narrative in Genesis; but we do claim that, according to this narrative, the chief penalty of sin was inflicted upon the soul and not upon the body. And from the words "in the day that thou eatest thereof," interpreted by the subsequent history, we also conclude and maintain that the clause, "thou shalt surely die," was not employed to denote extinction of being, but to denote a forlorn and miserable existence; that is to say, we hold that the term death, when used by sacred writers to signify the penalty of sin, refers to the destruction of well-being rather than of simple existence.

But is there anything in the word of God, apart from the history in Genesis, to confirm this view? Is there any evidence that the term death, when applied to the soul, may signify something else than a termination of its conscious life? Any proof that the affirmation of eternal death may virtually be the affirmation of eternal existence?

In reply to these queries, we first appeal to these words of Christ: "Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead," Matt. viii. 22. Here the first term in the original refers to those who are *spiritually* dead, that is, to unbelievers in Christ; while the second refers to those who are *physically* dead. This view of the words is taken by

nearly all respectable interpreters, and it gives not only the most obvious meaning of terms as here employed, but a meaning which has also borne the test of repeated and severe scrutiny. No other view so well accords with the manifest scope of the passage.

We pass next to the language of Christ to the church in Sardis: "I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest and art dead," Rev. iii. 1. The seven churches of Asia were addressed by the Saviour, through his apostle, in order to rekindle their zeal for God, and make them watchful against error and steadfast in the faith. Some of them had lost their first love. Some of them observed the formal duties of Christianity, but had little or no spiritual life. Their works did not spring from faith, and were therefore dead. See Heb. vi. 1; ix. 14. The church in Sardis was thus dead. It had the form of godliness, but not the life and power.

Turning now to the writings of Paul, we find him saying to the Colossians: "And you, being dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him;" Col. ii. 13. and to the Ephesians: "You who were dead in trespasses and sins—hath he quickened," Eph. ii. 1, 5. The obvious teaching of these passages is that both the Ephesian and the Colossian Christians were, previous to their regeneration, morally dead, and that by regeneration they had obtained spiritual life.

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul makes use of this expression: "She that liveth riotously is dead while she liveth;" 1 Tim. v. 6, literally *living she is dead*. Death and life are here predicated of the same person, at the same time alive. The apostle declares that being dead is compatible with being at the same time alive. But the life here spoken of is plainly one of conscious existence; and hence the death referred to cannot involve a negation of such existence. It must rather be the opposite or negative of some higher life, some better condition, and finer flow of being. That is to say, it must be spiritual death, the insensibility, darkness, and misery of a soul alienated from God.

With the passages already considered might be associated many others, Rom. vi. 13; xi. 15; Eph. v. 14, etc. in which some form or derivative of the verb (*to die*) is applied to the unregenerate in this life; but it would be superfluous to accumulate evidence on the point. It can hardly be denied, that "death," "being dead," "dying," etc., are by the Scriptures predicated of the soul no less than of the body, and that, when affirmed of the former, these terms do not generally, if ever, involve an extinction of conscious being. And this application of the word death to the conscious spirit of man, in other parts of the sacred record, confirms our exposition of the penalty denounced upon sin in Genesis.

"First Things."

Baron Stow in his excellent little volume under this title has taken up the events and treated on them in order as they occurred after the Ascension of our Lord. After the first prayer meeting, we have the first election, (of Mathias to the apostleship). Then, after "the first effusion of the Holy Spirit" is an excellent chapter on "the First Sermon," by the apostle Peter. This is considered under its three characteristics. 1. Boldness and earnestness of manner. 2. Soundness of reasoning. 3. Closeness of application. Under the latter head we find the following instructive and beautiful passage.

"He makes no explanation of his motives; offers no apology for his directness and apparent severity; takes no pains to convince them of his sincerity; expresses no regret for the necessity which compels him to be faithful; endeavors not to shelter himself behind the terms of his imperative commission. He does not say, 'I know that there are among you some very honorable exceptions;' he retracts nothing; he

softens nothing; but he manfully speaks out the whole truth, and leaves it in the care of the Holy Spirit to do its appropriate work.

It is easy to see that an impression is made. In every part of the attentive crowd heads are drooping. Truth has entered deeper than the intellectual nature; it has pierced the vital part, and there are writhings and tears. None speculate now; none cavil now. All feel themselves arraigned at the tribunal of Him whom they have crucified, and listening to the prosecuting officer as he defines the charges and substantiates their guilt. The final judgment seems to be antedated.

At one point in the discourse we are startled by an appeal which shows the preacher's intrepidity. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Mark how he brings forward into distinct prominence the doctrine of the Divine purposes in close connection with man's free agency. He is not afraid to advance both doctrines in one sentence; he is not careful to show their consistency with each other; he is not anxious lest he should give offence to rationalists; he is not thinking of any supposable incongruity. Their Scriptures teach the one beyond dispute, and they believe it; their own consciousness attests to the other, and they feel it. Nothing in the whole range of theological truth burns deeper into the soul than these two ideas conjoined—God's eternal decree, and man's responsibility. Either, by itself, leads to false conclusions and wayward conduct. To one alone the metal of the depraved soul never yields. Combined, like the two dissimilar currents, oxygen and hydrogen, in the compound deflagrator, they produce an intensity of heat which even the adamant cannot resist. As this double truth is poured into thousands of open ears, and finds its way to thousands of sensitive hearts, we do not see that any are angry, either with the preacher or his doctrine. On the contrary, there is a general melting; the word is with power.

But the preacher has not done. The impression made must be deepened until it shall bring out developments of a thorough work. "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under Thee." When his hearers shall be so far humbled as to make their submission to Christ unreserved, then he will pause. Till then, he pours upon them Heaven's truth, with no shrinking, no faltering. The whole scene is one of moral sublimity.

We hear him through; he is not long, for he is soon interrupted by an outburst of feeling from the suffering crowd. Many are keenly pierced in their hearts, and can endure no longer the anguish. Peter and his associates have new work; but they are not unprepared for it. They are suddenly in the midst of a revival. Their hearts and hands are full. May God direct and support them! They are inexperienced in this service; but they have the Holy Spirit for their Guide and Comforter.

We have no difficulty in understanding the secret of this efficiency. We learn where is the hiding of this power. As we see the multitude bend beneath the majesty of truth, like a forest before the mighty wind, we do not think of attributing the effect to any human power. We admire the preacher, bold, earnest, faithful; but we know that the efficient cause of such results lies not in him or his eloquence. We admire the discourse, strictly evangelical in matter and tone, brief in exordium, condensed in argument, overwhelming in appeal; but we have heard discourses in other places, from other men, as clear in the statement of truth, as cogent in reasoning, as pointed in application, without any such results; and we are satisfied that, although the address is admirably adapted as a means to an end, the effect produced is not to be traced to the unassisted power of