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REV. E. McLEOD.

"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."

Peter.

[Editor and Proprietor.]

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The Intelligencer.

GLEANINGS FROM THE GREAT HARVEST FIELD.

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JOHN ELIOT, THE APOSTLE OF THE INDIANS.

This remarkable man was one of the earliest and noblest missionaries of the Reformed Church. He had been distinguished at Cambridge for his literary attainments, and formed one of that memorable band who, despairing of religious liberty in England under the arbitrary rule of the Stuarts, emigrated to the New World, planted there a nation and a church, and left to their successors that which they so much valued for themselves—Freedom to worship God.

The colony of Massachusetts was one of the settlements which these Pilgrim Fathers founded in the distant West, and it is remarkable that in the charter granted to it by Charles I. in 1629, there is express allusion made to the intention of the colonists with respect to the heathen surrounding them. It ordains that the emigrants "may be so religiously, peaceably, and civilly governed, as that their good life and orderly conversation may win and incite the natives of the country to the knowledge and obedience of the only true God and Saviour of mankind, and the Christian faith, which is our Royal intention, and by the Adventurers' free profession is the principal end of the plantation."

About twelve years after the new colony was founded John Eliot became its spiritual teacher, and soon his heart began to yearn over the Native American Indians. The device on the seal of the colony was an Indian, with these words inscribed on his breast: "Come over and help us." It is said that this circumstance, coupled with what he saw of their wretched and savage state, determined him on devoting his time and talents to their evangelization.

The tribes of the Indians were scattered over the face of the country, sustaining a wild life by hunting amongst the forests and the prairies, and constantly engaged in bloody feuds with one another. Longfellow, in the "Song of Hiawatha," has drawn a graphic picture of a gathering of these fierce but noble savages, who have been designated the "born gentlemen of mankind."

"Down the river, o'er the prairie,
Came the warriors of the nation,
Came the Delaware and Mohawk,
Came the Choctaw and Catawba,
Came the Chickasaw and Cherokee,
Came the Pawnee and Shawnee,
Came the Mandan and Quapaw,
Came the Huron and Ojibwa,
All the warriors drew together,
And they stood there on the meadow,
With their weapons and their war gear,
Painted like the leaves of autumn,
Painted like the sky of morning;
Wildly glared each other,
In their hearts the flocks of ages,
The hereditary hatred,
The ancestral thirst of vengeance."

The chief, display a kind of savage magnificence in their dress—decorate their robes and vestures with the dyed hair of the moose deer and the quills of the porcupine, and wear fantastic head dresses adorned with the feathers of birds, or the ears or horns of wild animals. The scalp-locks, or portion of hair which grows on the top of the head, is prized above all the rest, and is the favorite trophy which, together with the flesh the conqueror cuts off with his scalping-knife from the head of his prostrate foe, and then, by way of fringes, to his own apparel.

His bow and his canoe are the chief possessions of the North American Indian. On the back of the former he plunges in amongst the herds of buffalo, or darts upon his enemies, sending the arrow or the spear with unerring aim to his victim's heart. In the latter, which is made of birch bark, he will dash to and fro, or glide across the silent lake fishing as he goes, or else competing with the members of his tribe in dexterity and speed.

The religion of the strange races is in keeping with their stern and solitary grandeur. They have a vague idea of a Supreme Being, whom they call "Gitch Manitou," or the Great Spirit, the "Master of Life," and an idea more distinct of a multitude of inferior spirits, who are all evil and malignant, and whom they endeavor to appease by offerings and sacrifices. No trace, however, of any temple or place of worship is found amongst them. Their highest hope is to reach, after death, the great hunting fields where the sun always shines, and the game is ever plentiful, and where there is endless dancing and feasting.

The "medicine-man" is at once the oracle and the physician of the tribe. His advice is sought on all occasions of importance as well as in cases of sickness; and incantations, drumming, and herbs made up his stock-in-trade. He dresses himself in the skin of some wild animal, and carries in one hand his mysterious rattle, and in the other his magic spear. The influence of these medicine-men is immense, and they may be considered as the religious guides of their unhappy countrymen.

Every Indian must have a "mystery-bag," which is often an object of worship, and is always held in the most reverent esteem; for it is in its honour, sacrifices are offered to propitiate it, and the severest penances undergone to appease its wrath. This bag is made of an animal's skin, chosen in the following mysterious way: When a boy is about the age of fourteen he leaves his father's wigwam, and wanders alone into the woods. There, in some secluded spot, he throws himself upon the ground, and remains for several days without food, calling on the "Gitch Manitou," until, at last, he falls asleep from exhaustion. The first animal he dreams of is the one whose skin he believes to be divinely appointed for the material of his medicine-bag. Returning to the tent, and partaking of some food, he sallies forth to kill the designated animal, and having procured the skin, decks it with ornaments, wears it as his guardian spirit, and he never relinquishes until the day of his death. No price would induce an Indian to sell this treasure, and if he should lose it, he can only replace it by that of an enemy killed with his own hand.

Such were the people amongst whom Eliot determined to labour. For this end he prepared himself by assiduously learning their difficult language, and then proceeded, with a few of his friends, to a place some miles distant from his own house, where a chief named Waban, and a company of Indians, met him by appointment. For three hours he discoursed with them on the

sublime truths of revelation, answering their inquiries, and evincing an earnest desire for their welfare. During this and subsequent interviews they manifested such interest and attention, that Mr. Eliot induced the General Court of Massachusetts to give a grant of land to the Indians on which to build a town, where they might cultivate the arts of civilised life, and enjoy the blessings of religious instruction.

This town was called Nootonaton, which means "rejoicing," and soon became a centre of influence on the surrounding tribes. The Indians in the neighbourhood of Concord expressed a desire to follow the example of their countrymen at Nootonaton, and invited Mr. Eliot to come and preach the Gospel to them. Their sachems, or chiefs, drew up some laws by which they pledged themselves to abide, and of which the following are samples:—

1. That no powowing, or conjuring, should be allowed amongst them.
2. Whosoever should be drunk should pay a fine of twenty shillings.
3. Whosoever was convicted of stealing should restore fourfold.
4. Whosoever profaned the Sabbath should be fined twenty shillings.
5. That wilful murder and adultery should be punished with death.
6. That no persons should beat his wife under a penalty of twenty shillings.
7. That they would lay aside their ceremonies of howling, and greasing their bodies, &c. &c.
8. Lastly, they would pay in their wigwams, and say grace before and after meals.

In a short time several of these towns arose. In 1703 there were no fewer than fourteen of these settlements. Though Mr. Eliot retained his pastoral charge amongst the Europeans at Roxbury, he constantly visited these Indians, and travelled to distant parts of the country to preach to the wandering tribes. In these journeys he was often exposed to great privations, and to imminent peril from hostile chiefs and medicine-men. "I have not been dry," he writes in one of his letters, "night nor day, from the third day of the week to the sixth, but have travelled from place to place in that condition; and at night I pull off my boots, wring my stockings, and on with them again, and so continue. The rivers also were raised, so that we were wet in riding through them. But God steps in and helps me. I have considered the exhortation of Paul to his son Timothy: 'Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ'—with many other such-like exhortations."

One of the most interesting towns founded by him was Natic, about eighteen miles from Boston. In the midst of it was built one large house in the English style, the lower room of which served as a schoolroom through the week, and a church on the Lord's-day. The upper room was a kind of store-room, in which the Indians kept their skins and articles of value; whilst in one corner was a small room for Mr. Eliot, and a bed for his own use. It was here that, in the year 1660, the Christians Indians had the Lord's supper administered to them for the first time, after giving an account of their knowledge and belief of the Christian religion.

Mr. Eliot afterwards published these confessions of faith, and they attracted much attention in England, and also that the first native pastor, Daniel Takwontait, preached the Gospel to his countrymen.

Mr. Eliot's labours in training schoolmasters, instituting schools, and preparing works for the press, were of most arduous kind; but he told the secret of his success, when, at the end of the grammar of the Indian language which he had compiled, he wrote these memorable words:—"Prayers and pains, through faith in Christ Jesus, will do anything."

His greatest work, however, was his Mohogan version of the whole Bible. This was the fruit of his own untiring labours, and the right arm of his power. It is remarkable on two accounts: it was the first Bible ever printed in America; and, to say the least, is not a single individual now alive that can understand a word of it. The race for whom it was prepared, and to many of whom it was so blessed, have perished from the face of the earth, and the Bible of Eliot remains in the Museum of New York as a literary curiosity, and a memorial of missionary labour on behalf of a race that have melted away like snow.

It is fashionable, and would fain be considered philosophical, to speak of the native races as if they must inevitably perish before the white man; but the Choctaws, the Mohawks, and other tribes, which are Christianised and increasing, refute the theory. The grand secret why so many races have perished before the white man, is that he introduced his vices into the midst of them, and took no pains to respect the natural rights of the aborigines. Again and again we read in Eliot's journals and letters his lamentation over what the "fire-water" and the dissipation of the white man were even then bringing on the red man. But another cause operated also in the case of Eliot's Indians. Some went to fight, owing to real or fancied wrongs, went to war with the English; and this led to extermination and extermination on both sides. Many of the towns of the "Praying Indians" were broken up, and a feeling of discouragement weakened those that were left behind. Mr. Eliot still laboured amongst them with untiring zeal, but they never recovered the blow. In 1684 their stated places of worship in Massachusetts were reduced to five, and various circumstances combined to diminish their numbers in subsequent generations. It was well, however, that before these races passed away there were men like Eliot, who imparted to them the news of a "better and an enduring country," and told them of an "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeeth not away."

Eliot lived to be eighty-six, and nearly to the end he continued his labours. During his last illness, when speaking about his work amongst the Indians, he said, "There is a dark cloud upon the work of the Gospel amongst them. The Lord revive and prosper that work, and grant that it may live when I am dead. It is a work I have been doing much and long about. But what was the word I spoke last? I recall that word—my doings! Alas! they have been poor, and small, and lean doings; and I will be the man who will throw the first stone at them all!"

The last words that fell from this humble and devoted man were, "Welcome, joy!" Others have followed him in the same field who have been more successful than he, but to him belongs the honour of having initiated the great

work of the Gospel amongst the red men of North America, and to him has been accorded by all men since his death the title which in his lifetime he repudiated as being too honourable—"the Apostle of the Indians."

BEARING THE CROSS.

A Christian woman of our acquaintance had been called to pass through deep trouble. She had been for years an eminent Christian, but now her faith seemed to fail. She had often comforted others, in great affliction, but now she refused to be comforted. For days no smile came upon her face, and no words of cheerfulness to her lips. She had been robbed of all charm, and she performed her duties with a weary and listless look, as if it would be an inexpressible relief to lay them aside, and sink into the grave for rest. Her friends were troubled by this strange apathy, and sought by various means to rouse or to beguile her, but all alike in vain.

At length a relative sent her a little volume of poetry, in which was the following beautiful piece. She took the volume from the table, turned to this poem, and read it slowly through. Tears slowly gathered in her eyes—the expression of the face changed, she heaved one long sigh, and the cure was wrought, or at least begun. She murmured no more, but accepted submissively the cross given to bear, and lifted it with a serene courage. The weary look and listless step returned no more, and she lightened her own grief by a willing ministry to others.

It was a time of sadness—and my heart, Although it knew and loved the better part, Felt wearied with the turmoil and the strife, And all the needful discipline of life.

And while I thought on these as given to me My trial-tests of faith and love to be, It seemed as if I never could be sure That faithful to the end I should endure.

And thus, no longer trusting to His might In whom I walk by faith and not by sight, Doubting, and almost yielding to despair, The thought arose, "My cross I cannot bear."

"Far heavier its weight must surely be Than those of others, which I daily see: O, if I might another burden choose, Methinks I should not fear my cross to lose."

A solemn silence reigned on all around— E'en Nature's voices uttered not a sound; The evening shadows seemed of peace to tell, And sleep upon my weary spirit fell.

A moment's pause—and then a heavenly light Beamed full upon my wondering, raptured sight, Angels on silvery wings seemed everywhere, And angels' music thrilled the balmy air.

Then One more fair than all the rest to see— One to whom all the others bowed the knee, Came gently to me, as I trembling lay, And "follow me," He said, "I am the way."

And speaking thus, He led me far above; And there, beneath a canopy of love, Crosses of divers shapes and size were seen, Larger and smaller than mine own had been.

And one there was, most beautiful to behold, A little one with jewels set in gold: "Ah, this!" methought, "I can with comfort wear, For it will be an easy one to bear."

And as the little one I quickly took, But all at once my fancy bethought it shook; The sparkling jewels—fair were they to see, But far too heavy was their weight for me.

"This may not be," I cried, and looked again To see if any here could soothe my pain: But, one by one, I passed them slowly by, Till on a lovely one I cast my eye.

Fair flowers its sculptured form around entwined, And grace and beauty seemed in it combined; Wondering I gazed, and still I wondered more, To think so many should have passed it o'er.

But, O, that form so beautiful to see, Soon made its hidden sorrows known to me; Thorns lay beneath those flowers and colors fair; Sorrowing I said, "This cross I may not bear."

So it was with each and all around, Not one to suit my need could there be found; Weeping, I laid each heavy burden down, As my Guide gently said, "No cross, no crown."

At length to Him I raised my saddened heart; He knew its sorrows, bade its doubts depart; "Be not afraid," He said, "but trust in Me; My perfect love shall now be shown to thee."

And then, with lightened eyes and willing feet, Again I turned my earthly cross to meet; With forward footsteps, turning not aside, For fear some hidden evil might betide.

And there, in the prepared, appointed way, Listening to hear, and ready to obey, A cross I quickly found, of plainest form, With only words of love inscribed thereon.

No longer could I unbelieving say, "Perhaps another is a better way." Ah, no, henceforth my one desire should be, That He who knows me best should choose for me.

KEEP A LIST.

1. Keep a list of your friends; and let God be the first in the list, however long it may be.
2. Keep a list of the gifts you get; and let Christ, who is the unspeakable gift, be first.
3. Keep a list of your mercies; and let pardon and life stand at the head.
4. Keep a list of your joys; and let the joys unspeakable and full of glory be first.
5. Keep a list of your hopes; and let the hope of glory be foremost.
6. Keep a list of your sorrows; and let sorrow for sin be the first.
7. Keep a list of your enemies; and however many there may be, put down the "old man" and the "old serpent" first.
8. Keep a list of your sins; and let the sin of unbelief be set down as the first and worst of all—*Journal and Messenger.*

SIR MATTHEW HALE.

We have found eminent Christians in all ranks and degrees of life, proving that there is no station so great or so mean wherein the Lord may not be served and glorified. From the king to the peasant have been drawn examples of holy living and holy dying. Our present character is an example of the Christian judge.

He lived in times when it was very difficult to be a Christian at all; but to be one in high places required very special grace and strength. Divine. The infamous Judge Jeffreys was a contemporary of Sir Matthew Hale; they represented the extreme ends of the scale of vice and virtue.

He was born in the sixth year of James I., into a pious family, where he was trained in upright and religious habits. His father, says Bishop Barrow, "was a man of that strictness of conscience that he gave over the practice of the law because he could not understand the reason of giving colour in pleadings, which he thought was to drink a lie. And some other things commonly practised seemed to him contrary to that exactness of truth and justice which belittled a Christian; wherefore he withdrew himself from the Inns of Court, to live upon his estate in the country." It is to be feared that such righteous tenderness of conscience is not very rare in our own enlightened days.

"Thus was Sir Matthew Hale descended rather from a good than from a noble family; and yet what was wanting in high birth and noble blood was more than made up in the true worth of his ancestors. But he was soon deprived of the happiness of his father's care and instruction, for as he lost his mother before he was three years old, so his father died before he was five; so early was he cast upon the providence of God."

But as the Lord fulfils his own promise of being a Father to the fatherless, notwithstanding the continual unbelief of human beings, he took good care of this boy, and appointed him (by his providence) worthy guardians. The first intention was that Matthew Hale should enter the ministry. He was a close student at school, and for some time at the university, until he was unfortunately attracted to the theatre. But he had common sense enough to perceive how hurtful to him this amusement was, how it wasted his time, and filled his head with pernicious nonsense; and proved his resolute character by determining, when he came to London, that he would never go to a play again. He kept his vow.

Afterwards he thought of being a soldier, and fighting in the army of the Prince of Orange. An accident prevented this purpose. His estate was threatened with a lawsuit, and he was obliged to look into matters legal, and one of the lawyers he consulted was the celebrated Sergeant Glanville, who admired the young man's clear head and solid judgment, so that he advised him not to waste himself on soldiering, but turn to the law as his profession. When he was twenty years old he entered at Lincoln's Inn; and resolving to make up for lost time, he studied at the rate of sixteen hours a day.

It was difficult for a young man to enter into any company at that period and not contract habits of drinking. Mr. Hale was at a party of students one evening, when a gentleman of their number called for so much wine that he fell down as dead among the rest, to their great consternation. While the others were trying to revive him from his death-like stupor, Mr. Hale went into the next room, and prayed fervently that God would restore his friend; and made a solemn vow that he would never again countenance such a scene, nor even drink a health as long as he lived. The young man recovered; and this was Matthew Hale's second vow.

His plan for the regulation of his time was remarkable for its exactitude. All his life was laid out with the regularity which a man uses in parceling forth treasure; he knew the priceless value of time, and acted accordingly. His very moments were to him as gold dust. Thus he has been always with the men who have done great things.

"Morning, To lift up my heart in thankfulness to God for renewing my life. To renew my covenant with God in Christ, by renewed acts of faith receiving him, and rejoicing in the height of that relation. Resolution of being one of his people and doing him allegiance. Adoration and prayer. Settling a watch over my own infirmities and passions, and over the senses laid in my way. Day employment must be of two kinds. 1. An ordinary calling, to serve God in it, it is a service to Christ, though never so mean. 2. Our spiritual employments; to mingle somewhat of God's immediate service during the day.

"Refreshments—meat and drink, moderation, seasoned with somewhat of God. Recreation—not our business; and no games, if given to covetousness or passion.

"If alone, beware of wandering or vain thoughts; let thy solitary thoughts be profitable: view the evidences of thy salvation, the state of thy soul, the coming of Christ; it will make thee humble and watchful.

"In company, do good to them; use God's name reverently; beware of leaving an ill impression; receive good from them if more knowing. If caught in sin, beg pardon. Gather resolution of more vigilance. If well, bless the mercy and grace of God that hath supported thee.

Such is an abstract of this young man's rule of conduct; and it was not merely on paper; it was carried out in his life.

He had been remarkable for rich and handsome dress, and now he passed rather into the other extreme; so that he was one day taken by the pressmen to be a sailor in the navy. At that time it was lawful to carry off men against their will to serve the king—a terrible tyranny. Sir Matthew Hale was saved by some gentlemen coming by who knew him. He wore better clothes afterwards.

An anecdote told of his student-life is amusing. He was bargaining with a draper for some cloth, and the man told him he might have it for nothing if he would promise him a hundred pounds as soon as he was Chief Justice of England. He actually lived to see Sir Matthew Hale promoted to that dignity.

Not only did he study law with the steadiest perseverance, though it is, perhaps, the driest of all studies; but every science that came within his grasp he grasped at eagerly. Consequently, both as lawyer and judge, he was remarkable for his ability of understanding the varied cases that came before him: he asked surgeons questions that came to the root of the matter; he solved questions

in arithmetic that puzzled clever accountants. His acquisitions were so multifarious as to be a marvel. "How did he gain them all?" asked idler men. By indefatigable industry. "He rose betimes in the morning; was never idle; entered into no discourse about news, and no correspondence by letters, except about matters of business or learning. He spent very little time in eating and drinking, for he never went to public feasts, so he gave no entertainments, except to the poor. He always ended his meals with an appetite; so that he lost little time at it, and was disposed to any exercise of his mind immediately after: by these means he gained much time, that is otherwise unprofitably wasted." It was, indeed, one of his written rules when he became a judge—"To be short and sparing at meals, that I may be the fitter for business;" which in a generation given to the excesses of the table, and which afterwards saw Judge Jeffreys inflamed with drink preside at a trial, was the more necessary.

His not talking of news preserved him from peril during the troublous times of the civil war. He was assigned as counsel to the three most remarkable sufferers of the crisis—the Earl of Strafford, Archbishop Laud, and King Charles I. Cromwell raised him to the bench, as judge in the Court of Common Pleas; and he preserved his place and his integrity by his strong sense and wise actions. Once that the Protector had caused a jury to be packed, he would not try the cause at all, but sent all parties about their business; whereas Cromwell was very angry. "You are not fit to be a judge," he said. "That is very true," was the meek reply of Sir Matthew Hale.

When Charles II. returned to England, he was made Lord Chief Baron. It was usual to knight the lawyer advanced to this post, but Mr. Hale avoided coming before the king for some time, as he did not care for the honour. The Lord Chancellor sent for him one day, and when he came, he bade the king waiting; so he received the magic touch of the sword which made him a knight.

As proof of his uprightness we are told that a duke came to him in private one day, and told him some particulars of a cause in which he was concerned. Sir Matthew Hale would not listen to him, because he was to be the judge, and he would not allow his mind to be influenced beforehand. The duke was very angry, and complained of him to the king. "Be easy," said Charles II.; "if I went to him myself on such a business, I believe I should meet with the same reception."

Once, during an assize, a gentleman who had a case called on Sir Matthew Hale a present of a buck for his table. When the judge heard the case called on, he asked if the gentleman was not the same who had sent him venison? and when he learned that he was, Sir Matthew said he could not allow the trial to proceed until he had paid him, and actually did so. Thus careful was he to avoid the very appearance of evil.

The wickedness of Charles II's reign is well known. His atheism and impiety gave him good and great man much concern. He did all he could, by example and effort, to reform those who came about him. His house was a model of a Christian family. Personally, he was a burning and a shining light. Knowing what a barrier against sin is the proper keeping of the Lord's day, he was most particular on that score. Every one has heard his exhortation:—

"A Sabbath well spent brings a week of content, And health for the toils of to-morrow; But a Sabbath profaned, whatever may be gained Is a certain fore-runner of sorrow."

In 1671 he obtained the climax of his earthly dignities, by being made Lord Chief Justice of England. Evil as the king and his counsellors were, they knew the value of his unswerving probity and incorruptibility. His health did not hold long afterwards. He died on Christmas-day, 1700.

He always had a special love for this anniversary, and for seventeen several Christmas-days he wrote poems appropriate to the event. The last of these is a paraphrase on the Song of Solomon:—

"Blessed Lord, And lead me now according to thy word; And let my aged body now return.

For I have lived enough, mine eyes have seen Thy matchless salvation, both here and hence. So long, so dearly loved—the joy, the hope Of all the ancient patriarchs, the scope Of all the prophecies, and mysteries Or all the types unveiled, the histories Of Jewish Church unrivelled, and the bright The world's Redeemer, blest Immanuel, Thine and the world's Redeemer, exterior; After this vision, my sight but they!"

There is scarcely a finer or more grandly self-governed character in our English history than this holy Judge Hale. His temper was naturally irritable, but so perfectly controlled that only by the colour rising in his face could its existence be guessed. A certain man did him a great injury, and some time afterwards came to him for some legal advice. It was given faithfully, but no fee would be accepted; and when he was asked how he could use the man so kindly that had wronged him so much, he replied, "Thank God, I have learned to forgive those that trespass against me."

Some people who pretended to be a prophet had given out that the world would certainly come to an end in the year 1666. Judge Hale was sitting in his court, when a very awful storm of thunder and lightning came on. The strongest hearts were terrified, and a murmur ran through the people that now indeed was the Last Day arrived. "All men forsook the business they were about, and betook themselves to their prayers; but the Judge was not a whit affected. A man present remarked that his thoughts were so well fixed that he believed if the world had really come to an end, it would have given him no considerable disturbance."

As a close to this paper, we quote another of Sir Matthew Hale's Christmas poems:—

"But art thou come, dear Saviour? Hath thy love Thus made thee stoop, and leave thy throne above The lofty heavens, and thus condescend to dress In dust to visit mortals? Could'st thou less A condescension serve? And, after all, The mean reception of a crutch and staff, Dear Lord! I'll fetch thee thence; I have a room; 'Tis poor, but 'tis my best; if thou wilt come Within so small a cell, where I would fain Mine and the world's Redeemer entertain; I mean my heart. 'Tis staidish, I confess, And will not meet thy longing, Lord, unless Thou send before thy harbingers; I mean Thy pure and purging grace to make it clean, And sweep its unky corners; then I'll try To wash it, with a purging eye. And with thy love, I'll fetch some flowers that grow In thine own garden: Faith and Love to thee, With these I'll dress it up, yet view my lack; Is done, the room's not fit for such a guest. But here's the cure; thy presence, Lord, alone, Will make this still a court, the crutch (sinner) a throne."

A GLIMPSE OF THE DARK VALLEY.

WHAT IS THE STING OF DEATH? We are accustomed to speak of the "Prayer of death," and the "agonies of a dying hour." This is a mistake as far as physical suffering is concerned. The "sting of death" does not commonly consist in the bodily anguish of the last moments. However painful the mortal disease, there is every reason to believe that the moments immediately preceding death are free from bodily pain. As life ebbs, sensibility goes with it. So gently did a certain eminent chemist die, that a teaspoon of milk which he held in his hand was not even upset; the dead hand held it still.

Death is commonly a fading out of the faculties like the coming on of the evening twilight. When Dr. Adam, the learned rector of the Edinburgh High School, was in his last moments, he murmured—as if he fancied himself in his class-room—"Boys, it is getting dark; you may go home." When a friend of mine was dying, he said, "Hold the lamp up nearer to me; 'Tis growing dark." It is this fading out of the faculties that often renders it so difficult for the dying one to recognize the old familiar faces grouped around the bed.

Of all violent deaths, crucifixion is the most terrible. Its laceration of the flesh, its poignant inflammation of the wounded parts, its horrible strain upon the quivering hands and feet, combined with the raging fever and thirst which it engenders, all render it the most frightful punishment to which cruelty can doom its victim. The easiest of violent deaths is by certain narcotic poisons. Drowning is far from painful. Those who have been resuscitated tell us that their sensations were exhilarating, and the watery grave seemed to them a luxurious bed. Freezing to death is similar to falling off into a quiet, heavy slumber. But the recovery, the thawing out, is described as an agony the most excruciating. So does a backslider find it very easy to sink into a spiritual torpor; but when God "brings him to" by chastisement and pungent soul-conviction, the process involves intense spiritual agony.

In whatever direction we look through the valley of the shadow of death, we do not find that the sting of the last hour consists in bodily suffering. Ye who have mourned the departure of your heroic sons and brothers on the battle-field must not imagine that the pang came from the fatal bullet. A gunshot wound is apt to numb the sensibilities. After his mortal wound the soldier commonly thinks less of the wound than of anything else. His thoughts are of the fight, the flag, and the country for which he dies; they are of the loved one far away, the gray-haired mother, the meek-eyed, or the treasure in the cradle; or else the heart is most full of that ineffably precious Saviour who will fill the gory bed of so many a soldier of the cross. "Keep your eyes on the flag, boys!" exclaims one of our dying heroes. "I'm sure over that, I may die with my face to the foe," murmurs another as he falls asleep in Jesus. "Stand by the flag and the cross," whispers the gallant young Schneider, as his boyish life runs away into a pool of blood.

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep."

has been the last utterance of more than one of our dying heroes, as it was one of the first utterances they ever learned from a mother's lips.

It is not the sting of physical agony that makes a dying hour dreadful. It is not the fading vision, the shortening breath, the fever thirst, no, not the sword, the bullet, the axe, or the stake, that have made dying moments terrible. To a child of God, even the coffin, the shroud, and the vault should have no more terror than the little crib in which a mother lays her boy with a good night kiss on his silent lips.

I will tell you where lies the sting of death; it is from within. With it the dissolving body has no more to do than the body has to do with repentance or with conversion. The sting of death is a wasted life—a hopeless eternity—*lost soul!* "I turn, and turn, and find no ray of hope!" exclaimed a dying reprobate. "O thou blasphemous, yet most indulgent Lord God! hell itself is a refuge if it could hide me from thy frown." Is there no "sting" in such an outcry of despair as that? Is there no sting in the last moments of every Christian soul who has wasted life upon his own lusts, and has nothing but that squandered life to meet at the Judgment seat? Yes, indeed; but the sting of every sinner's death is sin. As I look into the Valley of the Shadow of Death I see no spectre there but sin. The valley is only dark where he treads. The only groans of heart-anguish I hear are from his unpardoned victims. His is the worm that never dies.

It was not in vain boast that Paul exclaimed, "O death, where is thy sting?" To a sinless being death could have no terror; nor should it possess any to him whose sins are pardoned. Death is the full flowering out of a believer's spirit, no longer sheathed in its mortal bud. Death is the home-coming of God's adopted child to his Father's house. Is there any "sting" in casting off this mortal coil to be clothed on with the garments of glory? Is it any "sting" to mount into our Father's chariot and ride home, as the schoolboy takes his father's carriage to come home for his vacation joy? Is there any sting in departing to be with Christ?

It is a luxury to live, as long as the soul is alive to God and duty—as long as there is full occupation for our powers and affections. But as soon as the tree stops bearing, then it is time to be transplanted to the better soil of heaven. When the life-work is done—when the powers begin to fail—when the shed for Christ's garner is all gathered—then, O for a summons to enter into the harvest joy!

"'Tis a blessing to live; but greater to die,
And the best of this world is its path to the sky."
—*Evangelist.*

NEED OF A SAVIOUR.—It has been found, in all ages of the Christian Church, that the persons who are the most diligent and prayerful students of God's holy Word, and who possess the fullest measure of the Spirit of God, have been the first to see their need of more; that the best and holiest of men have had the deepest sense of their unworthiness, and have most cordially assented to the Scripture, which "hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (Gal. iii. 22).

THE ONLY EVIL.—"I have never ceased and shall never cease to say, There is only one evil—sin; everything else is dust and smoke."
—*Chrysostom.*