

CATHARINE WARDEN;

OR, THE

PIOUS SCHOLAR.

A Narrative from Real Life.



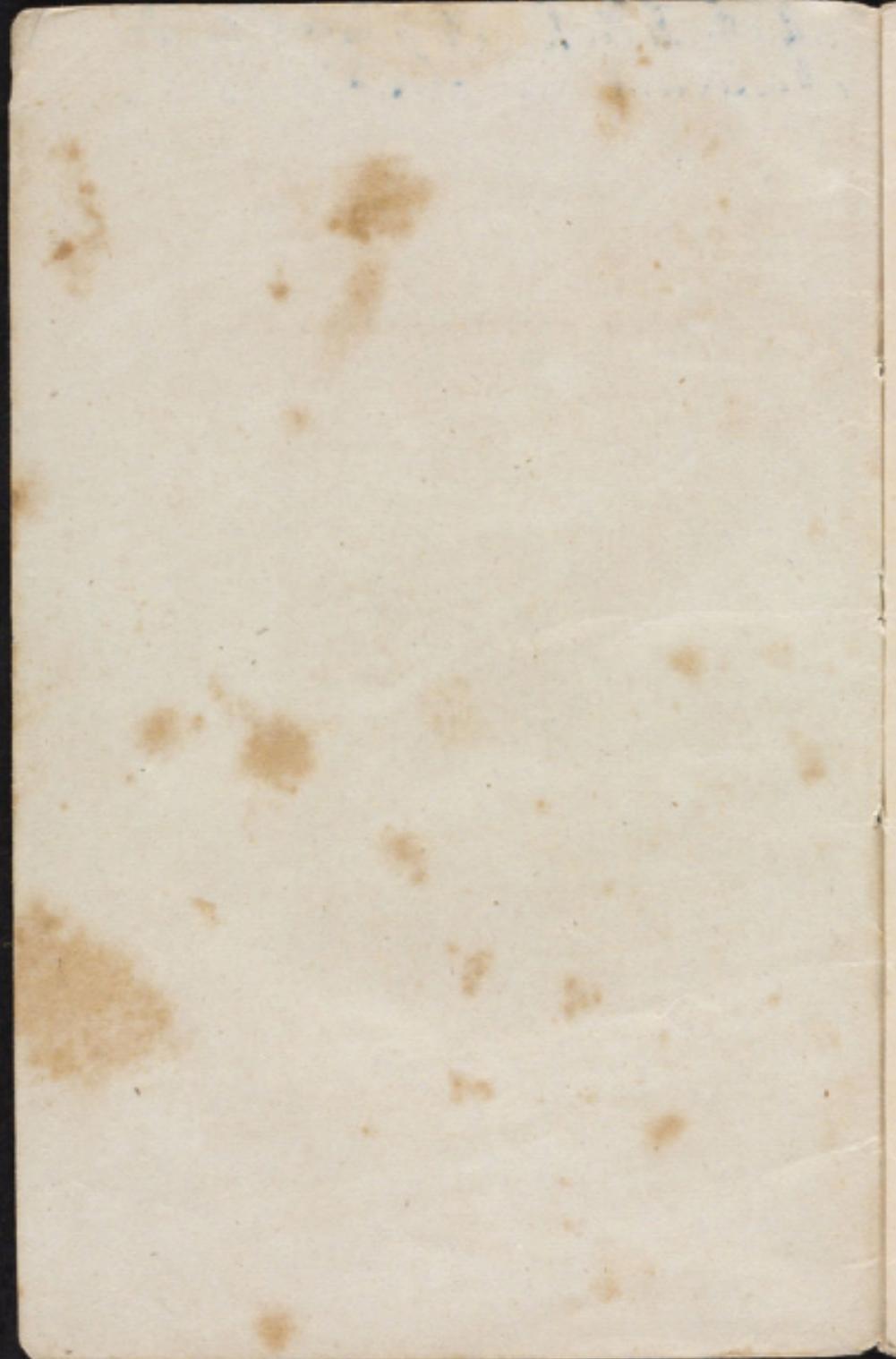
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BY THE REV. WM. DUNN, A. M.
CUPAR OF ANGUS.

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CATHARINE WARDEN.

OR

THE PIOUS SCHOLAR.



PART FIRST.

On my returning home from my first college session, was solicited by a number of families, in the neighbourhood of my father's dwelling, to undertake the education of their children in a private school, which was then destitute of a teacher. It was not difficult to persuade to do this, as the labours of the school occupied me only a few hours each day, and permitted me to prosecute my own studies at my leisure hours in my father's house.

I commenced my new charge with a heart comparatively free from the vexations and anxieties of the world. All my thoughts were occupied with my own studies and the care of my little flock. I soon found myself surrounded with a considerable number of cheerful, healthy children, most of them very attentive to what was set before them to learn. This sweetened my labour, and made my hours pass very agreeably. The sun seemed to run his course more rapidly than usual. There is something very agreeable in teaching children. Their native simplicity—their cheerful obedience—their eagerness to please—their generous emulation, are truly gratifying. Happy would it be for themselves and for the world if they would carry more of these with them through life than is generally done. There is much in the power of parents, of teachers, and of masters, in aiding them by representations of the true and heavenly nature of religion, as they grow up. And nothing can be more important, whether we regard the glory of God, the honour of our Saviour, the good of society, or the happiness of the individuals themselves, than to strain every nerve to train up the young in the ways of godliness. If the attempt is made in a judicious manner, though it should not have the desired effect in every case, it will always be rewarded with some share of success. I am very much pleased with the following sentiment: (I think by the pious Dr. Doddridge, somewhere in his works:) "*There is no parent (says he) who engages earnestly in the pious education of his children, but will be rewarded by the salvation of some of them.*"

On Saturdays, as is the practice with many teachers in Scotland, I spent most of the time in teaching my



little flock the principles of religion. I viewed them as so many young immortals, for any thing I knew, on the very brink of the grave, and all of them standing in need of redemption. I was conscious of my inability for this task, and yet I knew I could not answer to God for the neglect of it. I made them commit to memory Catechisms, portions of the Psalms, and other parts of the sacred Scriptures. It was my aim to make them understand what they had committed to memory, not only as subjects of belief, but as incitements to action—subjects that directed them in their conduct toward God, toward their fellow-men, and in the manner in which they ought to attend to the eternal salvation of their own souls. All of them were attentive, many of them displayed considerable eagerness in the acquisition of religious knowledge, and some of them seemed not a little affected by the representations of our sinful state by nature—the tender mercies of God—the sufferings and death of our Saviour—and that divine change which he produces on the souls of believers in the day of regeneration.

None of them, however, were so much affected with the representation of these things as little Catharine Warden, a child of ten years of age. I have often seen her turn round to hide the tear that was stealing

down her cheek, while I was discoursing to others. Her feelings indeed were keen, but it was more than a matter of mere feeling with her. Her knowledge of spiritual things soon became remarkable for her age. Part of the exercise of her class, during the week, was to read the sacred Scriptures; and in preparing the lesson, she was most diligent and assiduous. She was deeply interested in what she read, and eager to understand it. In consequence of the interest she took in the subject, she soon came to read with a propriety, an ease, and a pathos, that is seldom attained by children, and never but by those who understand what they read. However much divine grace may be covered by the rubbish or the dust of a present world, it is exceedingly lovely, when it appears, particularly in youth. As its origin is from above, so its tendency is heavenward. "*That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*" Wherever divine grace is implanted, it operates nearly in the same way, whether in youth or in advanced life. It produces a fear of sin, and desire of deliverance from it—a love of God and the Saviour, and an earnest desire to know more and more of them, and of the nature of redemption.

Not many weeks after my commencement, on calling the attention of this child to that question in the Catechism—"What is sin?" I asked her if every person has sinned? With a heart apparently very deeply impressed, she answered—

Yes; our whole life is a course of sin.

Do we ever abstain entirely from sin, while in this world?

No, sir; there is sin in all that we do.

Is there any way in which we can be delivered from sin?

Yes, sir; the Son of God came into our world to deliver us from sin.

Her next two answers were still more unexpected and satisfactory. Many people, if they were asked what Christ has done to save us, would reply, that he came into the world and died upon the cross to save



us; but they seem astonished when they are told that he did, and is still doing much more to save us. They do not perceive what more he did, or is necessary to be done to accomplish our redemption. On asking this child what Christ has done to save sinners, her answer was—

He fulfilled the whole law of God for us, suffered and died for us, and is making continual intercession for us.

Is there any thing more that he does to save us?— Here she seemed at a loss, as if she would have said there was no more; but upon my asking her if he produced any change upon our hearts, perceiving what I meant, she immediately answered—

O yes; he changes our hearts by his spirit, and makes us like unto God.

I was so agreeably surprised with these answers, that my heart was filled with gratitude to God, who

out of the mouths of babes and sucklings is still perfecting praise.

Upon asking her the two following questions, her answers were equally ready and appropriate.

Do you recollect any Scripture that proves that Christ Jesus fulfilled the whole law of God? On this she recited the 21st verse of the xlii chapter of Isaiah, "*The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law and make it honourable.*"

Do you recollect any Scripture which proves that Christ changes our hearts in the day of conversion?

"*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*" "*Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"

Having required her to remain a little after the other scholars were dismissed, I asked her if she was afraid of sin, and when she began to think seriously about it? She answered, that she had long had some fears of sin; but ever since I had told her of its evil nature, and that it had exposed us to the displeasure of God, and what must be the condition of all who die in sin, she often lay awake a great part of the night, thinking that if she died in sin she must go to hell, and that then she would never get out of it again. She said, however, that at these times she often prayed to God to enable her to believe in Christ Jesus, and to make her good, and to keep her from all sin. I embraced this opportunity of informing her of the tender mercies of God—of his love to sinners—of the power and willingness of Christ Jesus to save them; and that those that come unto him he will in no wise cast out. The people of

God, when Solomon dedicated the temple unto the Lord, did not return to their tents more joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that the Lord had done for David, his servant, and for his people Israel, than this little child did to her father's house, upon hearing of the way of salvation through Jesus Christ.

It is easy to teach, when the Spirit of God leads the way and prepares the heart. He opens the ear to instruction, and endows the heart with spiritual wisdom.



PART SECOND.

In that country where my labours (I may say) in the vineyard of the Lord commenced, there is abundance of coal; and the father of little Catharine was a collier. In that part of the country the colliers are much superior in civilization, in morals, and religious knowledge, to what I have heard of the same class of men in many other parts of the country. Few of them are addicted to drunkenness; all of them have for a long period been very attentive in giving their children a good education according to their abilities; most of them are very exemplary in keeping the Sabbath, and punctual in their attendance upon the public worship of God

The mining of coals, and of iron ore, which also abounds in that part of the country, is a very healthful employment, and those who engage in it can earn good wages without overworking themselves. The young men are therefore healthy and blooming; and those who have families can keep them in as respectable a manner as any labouring class in the community. Many of them have feued ground, built houses, and have considerable gardens attached to them. The father of my little pious scholar lived in an old house, which had stood perhaps for a century, and had been among the best houses in the country in the day in which it was built. A pretty large garden belonged to it.

I mention this garden for the following circumstance that took place in it, the most comforting circumstance that could take place upon any spot of this inferior world: a little child seeking earnestly from God, in prayer, that which was lost by our first parents in the garden of Eden—the image of God, and that happiness which is inseparably connected with it. Except upon Mount Calvary, never perhaps did any of the inhabitants of heaven look down with greater complacency upon a spot of this disordered world, than upon this garden, where this child was eagerly employed in reading the word of God, and praying over it for the salvation of her soul.

It was on the Monday after the interview mentioned in the preceding pages, little Catharine, after she had gone home from school, and had eaten dinner, stole out with her Bible concealed under her apron, and retired to a sequestered spot in the garden, under a shrub, that she might neither be perceived nor annoy-

ed by any one, and there read the sufferings of Christ Jesus, as they are recorded in the 23d chapter of Luke, to which passage I had previously directed her attention. When she had read the prayer of the thief upon the cross, "*Lord! remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom!*" it so affected her tender heart, that she kneeled down and prayed to the Saviour to remember her, and prepare her for his kingdom.

Her mother had missed her, and wanted her to perform some little work, or take care of her infant child, that her hands might be more disengaged to attend to family affairs. She called for her, but no answer was returned. She then repaired to some of the neighbours' houses in search of her; but they had not seen her since she went to school in the morning. The mother then thought that her child must have been straying in the fields with other children: she ran to some of their haunts by the side of an adjoining rivulet, but Catharine had not been there. On returning home she chanced to step into the garden, and to her astonishment, she found her child engaged in prayer to God.



She stood for a little while motionless and speechless, filled not only with gratitude and comfort, but with self-condemnation and self-abasement, on a comparison of herself with this child. Love had now taken the place of anger, and banished it from her bosom.

At this time Catharine's eye had caught her mother's, and seeing her standing silent, she thought she was angry with her. She rose from her knees with a trembling heart, and before her mother had thought of what to say, with a tear in her eye, she begged her mother's pardon, and said, "I know I should have been working, but I will run now to my work, and will soon make it up." Divine grace always produces obedience to superiors, affection, and submission. It is the best security for the performance of the various duties of life.

The mother, with truly parental affection, said, "I am not angry with you, Catharine, but I wish you had told me where you were going, and what you were about, that I might not have interrupted you." She replied, "I was ashamed to tell you what I was about to do, and I was afraid that you would not have allowed me to go."

"God forbid, my child, that I should have prevented you from attending to the salvation of your soul. I wish I had more time to attend to these things than I have; but, God knows, the cares of this world often banish from my mind the more important cares of the world to come. What is this you have been reading?"

"It is the sufferings of Christ, which Mr. —— explained to me to-day after the other children went out, and I was praying to the Saviour to remember me."

"You shal. henceforth read to me in your leisure

hours, (said her mother,) and when you wish to pray, you shall have the use of the little closet, and none of the other children shall be allowed to disturb you."

When her father came home, Catharine was sent out by her mother, with some message, that she might the more freely inform her husband of the occurrences of this day. And if ever the hearts of parents were filled with joy and comfort over a child, theirs were so. They both acknowledged their obligations to God, that he *should* thus deal with any child of theirs, and endow her with such grace.

The father now mentioned how carefully Catharine had read the Scriptures to him the day before, being Sabbath, while her mother was at church, and how the tears stole down her cheeks while she read these words of our Lord—"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." On hearing what it was that affected her, he said, is not this amazing kindness in the Son of God, to invite *little children to come unto him*, and to take them up in his arms and bless them!

O yes, said she, for I had often thought that he would not receive such little children as I am, who are so sinful, who have so little knowledge, and can scarcely pray to him at all.

But you now see that he receives much younger children than you are, since he took them up in his arms.

Yes, it rejoices my heart; for I see I may be received also, if I could believe upon him. But father, these must have been good children.

No doubt they were, my child, after Christ blessed them; but none, either young or old, are good till then.

I know that we have all sinned, come short of

the glory of God; and that we do nothing as we ought, without God's help.

Who was it that told *you* that?

It was Mr. —, on Saturday.

Did he not tell you, also, that the Son of God came into our world to deliver us from sin, to give us a new heart, and to make us holy?

Yes; he told us that the Son of God took our nature upon him, obeyed the law of God for us, and bore our sins when he suffered upon the cross; and he pointed out to us the passages of Scripture that inform us about the sufferings of Christ Jesus, and the blessings he has procured for us. He also desired us to pray earnestly to God.

Mother. I wonder you did not tell me these things last night.

Father. You know I was out all the evening after you came home from church, conversing with poor M.



D. whose soul, I understand, has fled this forenoon from its clay tabernacle to the world of spirits. But I laid up these things in my mind, and have since been pondering them in my heart. What you have now told me fills me with wonder and gratitude. May God continue his tender mercies with the child, and carry on the work

which he has begun, till it be finished in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That evening her mother found Catharine weeping after she went to bed. Upon inquiring into the cause of it, Catharine replied, I am thinking what a careless creature I am; how little I think of God, and of my own salvation. When I come from school, I run to my stocking-knitting, or to my sewing, or to my story books, and then to my bed, without thinking of God, except in my prayers: after a pause, says she, it will not do to neglect my work, neither; we must work while we are in this world; but there is surely a middle way; I may attend to my work awhile, and then read good books, and think of God and my Saviour.

The mother was no less affected with this speech from her dear child. She told her not to vex herself, nor to be afraid; that the most eminent saints of God would have much to blame themselves with while in this world, but that God would pardon their sins, through the merits of Christ. To comfort her, she promised to give her time from her work to read good books, and to meditate upon them. This considerably settled her mind, and after repeating the following verses, Catharine laid herself down to rest, trusting in God.



I'll go, and with a mourning voice
Fall down before his face ;
Father, I've sinn'd 'gainst Heaven and thee,
Nor can deserve thy grace.

He said, and hasten'd to his home
To seek his father's love ;
The father sees him from afar
And all his bowels move.

He ran and fell upon his neck,
Embrac'd and kiss'd his son ;
The grieving prodigal bewail'd
The follies he had done :

No more, my father, can I hope
To find paternal grace :
My utmost wish is to obtain
A servant's humble place.

Bring forth the fairest robe for him,
The joyful father said :
To him each mark of grace be shown,
And every honour paid.

Thus joy abounds in paradise,
Among the hosts of heaven ;
Soon as the sinner quits his sins,
Repents, and is forgiven.



PART THIRD.

Catharine was from her infancy healthy, vigorous, and cheerful; but none of these things could be any security against an early death. God plants and pulls at any age. He has set bounds to man's life that he cannot pass. Up to these we may come, and beyond these we cannot go. By some over-exertion which she had made, she was seized with an inflammation in the lungs, and some parts of the viscera: which, though it appeared to yield for a time to the power of medicine, was never completely removed. She lingered for about two months, during which I had those interesting conversations with her which form the principal subject of the following narrative.

I was called to visit her soon after she was taken ill. The parents, with hearts deeply affected, thanked me for the attention I had paid to their child, and related those circumstances which did not take place under my own eye

I found her very comfortable, but very weak. Her mind was so composed, yea, elevated, that you would have thought it was already existing independent of the body. It was indeed soaring in a region of its own, and seemed to be but little affected by the weakness of

the body in which it was still confined. She seemed rather to rejoice than to be grieved on account of her illness, as it released her from the avocations of the world, and gave her more time to attend to the eternal concerns of her soul. She had committed to memory many of the psalms, and hymns, and some portions of the sacred Scriptures, which had been pointed out to her at school. The repeating of these, the reading of select passages of Scripture, and some little pious books, were her delightful exercises during her illness.



When I called upon her, I found she had been repeating part of the xvii. chapter of John's Gospel to

her father. I asked her if Christ prayed for any but those who were his disciples at the time when this prayer was offered up? She very promptly answered, that he prayed "*not for these alone, but for all them who should believe on him through their word.*"

Can any be saved except they believe in Christ?

No, sir.

How do you prove that?

"*He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.*"

Should you ever believe in Christ of yourself?

No; I never should.

How do you prove this?

God tells us immediately after the fall, that "*every imagination of man's heart was only evil continually.*" And Paul tells us, that "*the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can be?*"

Who is it then, Catharine, that leads you to believe?

It is the Spirit of God, sir.

How does he so?

He shows me the evil of sin, the excellency of Christ Jesus, and inclines me to receive him as my Saviour.

Does the Spirit of God, then, leave you when you believe?

No; I need his assistance through the whole of my life.

Is not the salvation of every believer, then, very secure, since Christ has procured it, and the Holy Spirit applies it, and carries it on till it is perfected at the hour of death?

her mind was as much engaged in the exercises of her husband and her child as possible. It was her grief that she could not spend more time in these exercises.

Affectionate and dutiful as husbands may be, how few of them think of this important duty, which they owe to their partners in life! Namely, to aid them by their spiritual conversation. The cares and labours of women are incessant. Often when they would wish to have a little time to converse with their God, their family affairs will not allow it; especially when there are a number of children, as were in this family, and their circumstances do not admit of their keeping servants. Even on Sabbath, that day of sacred rest, they cannot engage uninterruptedly in the sacred and private exercises of devotion, as their husbands can do. The husband can say to his worldly cares, as Abraham said to his servant, "*stay thou behind me here, while I go and worship the Lord, yonder.*" But his partner in life cannot lay aside all her cares of the family. This surely renders it as necessary as it is incumbent upon husbands to aid their companions in life, in their spiritual improvement, by frequent religious conversation.

I feel much also for the situation of servants, particularly female servants, which is still worse. They have little, and, in many families, no time during the week to devote to reading and pious meditation; and how very little time have many even on Sabbath! If this were to continue only for half a year, it might be more easily borne; but the situation of those who are servants for years, truly claims our attention and our pity. Their souls are precious, and death may soon end their day of grace. Heads of families, who have servants and children under their care, have a precious

field which they not only may cultivate to the glory and honour of God, and the eternal salvation of those who are under their charge, but which God requires them to cultivate; and part of every Sabbath evening ought to be employed in this delightful and important exercise. And not to dwell at present on the obligations we are under to this exercise, or the glory of God that might result from it, and the happiness to the souls of men, which are unquestionably the most powerful arguments in its favour, heads of families would find their *temporal* interests in it. I know nothing that can unite the hearts of servants to their masters, or of children to their parents, more powerfully in love and affection, and render them faithful and diligent in the discharge of their duties, than to see that their masters and parents are earnestly solicitous for their present comfort and their eternal felicity.



PART FOURTH.

On my next visit to this family, I found little Catharine's bodily strength much exhausted, but her spiritual strength and her spiritual comfort had greatly increased. She had in a great degree got the better of that bashfulness which prevented her from uttering her sentiments fully, both during health and in the commencement of her distress. She now expressed both her fears and her consolations more fully and without restraint. Perfect love casteth out fear at any age, and the more we are conversant with God, the more heavenly-minded do we become; and the more do we rise above the influence of the present world.

The minister of the gospel, under whose pastoral care this family was, had visited them in their affliction. He had afforded much consolation both to the parents and the child, and returned himself much comforted and edified.

None know, but those who are engaged in labours such as his, what comfort it affords us to see the work of the Lord prospering in our hands. In this day, when the people of God are so much mingled with the servants of Satan, it is particularly comforting to see our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ sealing his chosen ones and setting them apart for himself.

Never did I meet with a more grateful and inviting reception from my fellow men, than I did from this family at this visit, and particularly from little Catharine. I met the pious and affectionate mother coming towards the door when I entered, wiping the tears from her eyes. She held out both her hands to grasp mine, but not a word for some time could she utter. As soon

as she was a little composed, I asked her how my little Catharine was now? A little time more elapsed before she could answer. Her first words were, "Ah! your little Catharine! she is yours indeed; and she is God's! but she will not long be mine, at least in this world. There is a great change now. When you last visited us I had great hopes that she might recover, but our hopes are all gone: yet if ever there was one upon earth that had reason, not only to be resigned to the death of a child or relative, but to rejoice in it, it is I. Death will be to her great and unspeakable gain. It is however a hard task to be perfectly resigned under such a dispensation. When I saw my child making such progress in her education, and her mind so much set upon spiritual things, I pronounced myself the happiest of women, and counted on the years I was to enjoy her company. But "God's ways are not as our ways, neither are his thoughts as our thoughts." I am totally unworthy of such a blessing. Well did she say yesterday, "*O mother, weep not for me; soon shall my Saviour render me happy in the mansions of heaven.*" I have great reason to weep for myself. The salvation of my soul has never been such an object of attention to me as this little child's has been to her. She knows more of Christ Jesus, and of the excellency of his grace, than I do. Oh! how little do we think of our souls, and of what vital religion is!

Upon this the father joined us; and vigorous as his mind was, his heart swelled, and his eyes filled with tears. "Our hopes, sir, of Catharine's recovery are at an end; and as for me, it is difficult to say whether the feelings of grief or of gratitude are most powerful in my bosom. God has been very merciful to us. I

may, in my feeble measure, appropriate the exultation of Mary to myself. "*My soul doth magnify the Lord. He that is mighty hath done great things for us, and holy is his name.*" This child has been my instructor. I have learned more of the nature of vital religion, and more of its power, these few weeks past, than in all my life-time before. I now see how a child of God can be heavenly. How, in his feeble measure, be like unto God. Vital religion expands and elevates the soul; it enlightens and strengthens the eye to behold the glorious blessings of the gospel; it repels the undue influences of this inferior world; enables those who possess it to raise their affections to things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. In fact, it gives new life, new prospects, new desires, and new enjoyments. It brings down heaven to earth, and enables the believer to live with his Saviour. If I do not now go on with vigour in the Christian life, I must be of all men the most blamable.

When I approached little Catharine, she raised herself hastily, as if she would have flown to my arms, saying, I have thought long to see you. I must soon leave you and all things in this world.

Are you averse to die?

At times I rejoice to think that I am dying, that I may be with my Saviour, to behold him as he is, and never more to separate from him: but then I think, how can such a weak and sinful child as I am really behold the Son of God?

She then repeated the following lines of the paraphrase:

When rising from the bed of death,
O'erwhelmed with guilt and fear,

I see my Maker face to face ;
O how shall I appear !

When thou, O Lord ! shalt stand disclos'd,
In majesty severe,
And sit in judgment on my soul,
O how shall I appear !

But Catharine, said I, do you not recollect some other of the hymns which I have often heard you repeat, and which are suitable to your present state. She immediately repeated the following:—

Lord, at thy feet asham'd I lie,
Upwards I dare not look ;
Pardon my sins before I die,
And blot them from thy book.

Remember all the dying pains
That my Redeemer felt,
And let his blood wash out my stains,
And answer for my guilt.

Yes, she continued, and it is my comfort that

The holy word of God
Informs me where to go
For grace to pardon all my sin,
And make me holy too.

Is there any thing else that makes you unwilling to die ?

Sometimes I cannot think how I can leave my father and my mother, my sisters and brothers. If they could go with me I would *like it better*.

Would you rather wish them to go with *you*, than that you should remain with *them* ?

Yes, for then we shall all be happy, which we never can be here.

You know, Catharine, said I, it is God's way to take first one and then another, from this inferior world; he will bring all your pious relatives to heaven in his own time.

I hope he will. I think my father and mother are ready for heaven, but I am afraid of my sisters and brothers; they are so careless about good things, and so ready to run into what is evil.

But is not your Saviour able to make them wise unto salvation?

O yes; it was the Saviour that made me think of the evil of sin, and fly to him for salvation.

Is it on him alone, then, that you rest for salvation?

O yes; on him alone: for

No hope can on the law be built,
Of justifying grace;
The law that shows the sinner's guilt,
Condemns him to his face.

Jesus! how glorious is thy grace!
When in thy name we trust;
Our faith receives a righteousness
That makes the sinner just.

How admirably is the scheme of redemption calculated to afford comfort to the awakened sinner, and to the people of God, at the hour of death! It is truly a new and a living way, and always inviting. Though the sinner be cast out of God's sight, yet by believing in Christ Jesus, he may look again towards God's holy temple. In vain is it for us to attempt to dispel the sinner's fears and to soothe his troubled conscience to

est in any other comfort we could attempt to hold out to the child of God at the hour of death. His good works, and his amiable dispositions, are comforting, if they be evidences of grace; but it must be upon the merits of Christ, and his interest in these merits, that any of the human race can find solid comfort in the prospect of appearing before his God. Then the work of the Saviour, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, appear in their native excellency; in their suitability to every situation the believer can be in, and their sufficiency for him at every period. Resting upon these, in the very hour of death he can say, with the Psalmist, "*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*"

The state of this little child had now become such as deeply to affect every pious heart. Her body was coming rapidly down to the grave; but her soul was gathering strength from its union to the Saviour, and comfort from the prospect of soon beholding him as he is, and sitting down with him for ever and ever in the mansions of bliss. It was soaring on the wings of faith, as if eager to leave us, and all the insignificant things of the present world. Could she have put language upon her state, she would have said, with Paul, "*I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me*"



PART FIFTH.

Not many days after my last visit to little Catharine, a pious woman in the neighbourhood came as a messenger, requesting me, if possible, to visit her that day, before I returned home, as it was evident she could not long survive.

Is she still capable of conversing ?

Yes, Sir ; but she cannot continue it long at a time.

Is her mind still comfortable ?

Comfortable ! It is as it was, heavenly. She fills all of us who visit her with astonishment, and the most aged Christians are edified and comforted by her. This day, upon her mother saying to her, O Catharine, I must soon part with you, she replied, with the utmost composure, Yes, mother, we must part, but I hope the separation will not be long. You know Mr. — told us that we ought to be reconciled to this ; some of us must go first, and I rejoice that I am the first to go, I hope, to the family of God above, where we shall meet soon, never, never to separate. O mother, praise and adore the Saviour for me ! He hath raised me from sin to holiness, from death to life. Trust upon him for your own salvation. Live with him as the source of your comfort. “ *He is altogether lovely, he*

is the chief among ten thousand." "Whom have I in the heaven but him and my heavenly Father, and there is none on earth that I would desire besides them. They are the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." We are sinful creatures; go to Christ to be delivered from sin. We are weak creatures; go to Christ for strength. We are indigent creatures; but with Christ there is unbounded and never-failing riches. "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich."

I soon dismissed my little flock. In repairing to the house of mourning, or I should rather say to the house of instruction, I had a view of the surrounding country



to a great extent. Every field was either reaped, or nearly white to the harvest. The whole vegetable world was losing its verdant hue. Some parts of it were come to maturity, and others were assuming symptoms of decay. The leaves of the once fragrant birch were now becoming yellow, were soon to lose their hold of the tree, and mingle with the dust. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." As I hastened to see my little scholar, these reflections were forcibly suggested;—"All flesh

is as grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." What numbers are there of the human race who only look into this world and pass away! They weep a moment over the desolations which sin has made in it, and then take their flight to a better region, where sin and sorrow are unknown. Like birds on their passage, which only perch for a little upon a branch, and look around them, as in pity, on the surrounding objects, these children pay only a transient visit to our world. It is God, who in his tender mercy takes them away from the evil to come. Numbers, who are grown up to maturity, would gladly follow them. The sentiment of the Psalmist is theirs. "O that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and the tempest." Such considerations as these ought to reconcile pious mothers to the departure of their little ones. Could they draw aside the veil of sense, and look into the heavenly world, they would see abundant reason to rejoice over the circumstances that now cause them to mourn.



The reapers were cutting down such part of the grain as appeared ripe, which reminded me of God's dealings to his people. He takes home with himself those whom he has fully prepared for the heavenly state, and in his tender mercy leaves others for a time till they arrive at greater maturity. But observe, O thoughtless sinner! The weeds that were growing among the ripe grain were all cut down with it. Though the tares are allowed to grow for a time with the wheat, they are cut down at last, and bound up in bundles, to be burnt. O that men were wise! that they knew the uncertainty of time, and the vast importance of it! What would the dying sinner, who sees nothing but hell before him, not give for one of those Sabbaths which he has spent in vain! Reader, if thou hast yet no evidence that thou art a child of God, take hold of God's strength and be at peace with him, before it be too late. It is of no importance what you gain in this world, if you lose your soul. What will all the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world do for you at the hour of death, and throughout the endless ages of eternity? You, and your successors in their turn, must leave all the riches of this world to be burnt up in the general conflagration. Take hold then of Jesus Christ for the pardon of your sins, and for your acceptance with God. The riches of his grace will then be your comfort now, your support at the hour of death, and your portion for ever.

Upon entering this house of affliction, I had a striking display of the struggle between the influences of grace, and the feelings of nature. The Spirit of God had taught these parents that they ought cheerfully to resign their child unto God when he called for her;



but nature had its own arguments, and we must treat them very delicately. The whole family seemed to cling to Catharine, as if they would attempt to detain her. But "*no man hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit, neither hath he power in the day of death.*" And as no man can retain his own spirit, neither can any creature do it for him. Catharine alone, of this family, seemed to be not overcome with her circumstances. Her mind was composed, and her countenance serene; she was sensible she had nearly done with this world, and was looking forward to that felicity which is by no means adequately expressed by a crown and a kingdom. What simile can exhibit that which, in the present life, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man fully conceived.

She was now too feeble to sit up without help. She could only stretch forth her hand to grasp mine; and never shall I forget her keen and penetrating look. I am happy, said she, to see you once more, that you may pray for me, and that I may request you to praise my Saviour for his amazing love to me. I cannot express my thoughts of the love of God, and the Saviour

to such a sinful creature as I am! Truly, salvation is wholly of love. Tell all the scholars what Christ has done for my soul. O entreat them to seek the Saviour in their youth. What would have become of me had not the Son of God delivered me from sin? I must now have gone to hell, and been banished for ever from the presence of my God and Saviour. I asked her, do you not now hope to dwell with him for ever and ever.

I do.

What is the ground for your hope?

It is what God has promised, and what he has done for me.

What has he promised?

He has promised to put a new spirit within us, and to give us an heart of flesh.

What has he done for you?

He has made me hate sin, and fly to the Saviour for deliverance from it; he has made me desire to love him more, and to serve him better than I have ever yet done

Why do you desire to love God and to serve him?

Because he deserves all my love and my services, and I can never be happy but in serving God.

Does he make you happy in his service even in this world?

Yes; the comfort I have had in reading and meditating is so valuable, that it cannot be described. It makes me fear nothing in this world, and care for nothing in this world, and rejoice in the thoughts of soon being with God and beholding his glory.

Her frame was too feeble to allow her to say more. After endeavouring to give her some encouragement

from the precious promises of the gospel, that she might enjoy that repose which her feeble frame so much required, I retired to the garden, to the spot where she frequently repaired to hear the word of God, and pour out her heart to him in prayer and gratitude. If there be a place upon earth that can attract our regard, it must be that place where God deigns to hold communion with his children. Whatever place that is, it is "the house of God and the gate of heaven." This world would be but a dreary wilderness, were it not for the presence of our God. It is only in consequence of God's tender mercies to his children, and his incessant care of them, that he takes any particular interest in this inferior world.

The evening was spreading around her dusky mantle when I returned to the house, and found little Catharine drawing rapidly to the close of her earthly existence. I could not therefore think of leaving the family that night. About eleven o'clock she seemed to gather fresh strength and vigour. She raised her head from the pillow, and sat up without help, which she had not been able to do for some time. The fond mother's heart was elated, thinking that her child might still recover a little before she went hence to be no more in the land of the living. But the father and I deemed it only a last effort of nature before the soul took its flight to the world of spirits.

To one of her little brothers, who was standing very dejected at her bed-side, she said, with an indescribable earnestness, Oh! Robert, seek God and your Saviour before it be too late. You see that I am dying, and you too must die soon; and how dreadful must it be to be banished from the presence of God for ever and

ever. You know you too often keep the company of bad children; and if you continue to do so, hell will be your portion at last. Pray to your Saviour, to deliver you from sin, to grant you his grace, and prepare you for heaven. O how wonderful are the mercies of God, in leading me to the Saviour, who bore my sins, that I might be delivered from them for ever! who died for me that I might live!—who came down to our world that I might be raised to heaven!

I asked her if she was still comfortable in the prospect of death. Her reply was, I would not, for all this world can afford, wish to live any longer in it. I rejoice to think that I am going to my Saviour, never more to be separated from him. But O! how shall such a child as I am be able to behold the Saviour's face, or even to join with saints and angels in the exercises of heaven! After pausing as in deep thought for a little time, she said,

I thank you, sir, for telling me so much of Christ—and of that salvation which he has accomplished for believers; and of the glorious blessings which God has prepared for them that love him. She was about to say something to her father, but her strength failed her. After a short pause, she repeated the following verses, slowly, but accurately:—

When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise.

O how shall words, with equal warmth,
The gratitude declare,
That glows within my ravished heart!
But thou canst read it there

Seeing her strength nearly exhausted, I repeated the last verse of that Hymn to her.

Through all eternity to thee
 A joyful song I'll raise :
 For, oh ! eternity's too short
 To utter all thy praise.

She caught these words :

O, eternity's too short
 To utter * * *

Her head sunk down on her mother's bosom, while she was sitting beside her to hold her up, and without a struggle or a groan her soul took its flight to the world of spirits.

This took place about one o'clock on the Sabbath morning. Thus, while God was affording another sabbath of rest and comfort to the Christian traveller here below, he released this little traveller from the fatigues and privations of the present journey, and raised her to a more glorious sabbath in the mansions above.

What consolation is it to the child of God, in travelling through this wilderness, that there remaineth a rest for him ! A complete and eternal rest, where there is no weakness or imperfection to grieve him ; no toils nor diseases to wear him down ; no insinuating sin to allure him and draw him aside ; no deceiving Devil to insnare and ruin him ; no depraved and envious world to corrupt and perplex him. Well may the Christian bear with patience and fortitude the little inconveniences of the present life, with such a complete enlargement and eternal rest before him.

But let me remind every reader, that this rest is to be obtained only by a saving interest in Christ Jesus.

"Come unto me, says the Saviour, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Let no convinced, awakened sinner, however, harbour despair. Numerous or highly aggravated as his sins may have been, if he comes to the Saviour for deliverance from them, the Saviour will on no account send him empty away.

Little children, into whose hands this narrative may be placed, come to Jesus as your Saviour, in the morning of life. How happy will it be for you to begin life with him, to enjoy his protection through all the dangers of this world, and his presence during the long and never-ending ages of eternity! You delight in the company and the amusements of your companions, but there is no company equal to that of your Saviour, no pleasures equal to those you will enjoy in his service. He will be your counsellor in circumstances of distress or difficulty, where none else could direct you—he will be your guardian from the many enemies to which you are exposed, and he will afford you the consolations of his Spirit, which are neither few nor small. His care, his tenderness, and his compassion toward such as you, were thus beautifully expressed. "I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me." And when he appeared in the world, astonished at the unfeeling conduct of his disciples, who would have prevented children from coming to him, he *sharply reproved them*; and gave such as you this unlimited access to him: "*Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not*;" adding this remarkable reason for it, "*for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*"

Having endeavoured, for a time, to console this bereaved family, with a view of the tender mercies of God towards them and their child whom he had taken home to himself, I returned home in the silence of the night, contemplating the power of divine grace, and the amazing blessings which God has in store for them that love him. He who has never attended a child of God in his dying hours, has never yet experienced one of the most improving situations in this present life. It reminds us of what we are, allied both to heaven and earth, of what we have to undergo; "*our dust must return to the earth as it was, and the spirit must return to God who gave it.*" It convinces us more than ten thousand sermons, of the misery of those who die impenitent, and of the blessings of those who die in the Lord. It convinces us of the importance of this divine truth:—" *It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting; for this is the end of all living, and the spiritually alive will lay it to heart.*"

On the day of the funeral, a number of the children of the school attended the body of their late companion to the grave, and dropt the tear of affection when it was buried in the dust. Next day I called their attention to some of those circumstances I have related for their spiritual improvement. Who can tell but that the piety of her life, the solemnity of her death, and the comfort which she experienced at last, may, by the blessing of God, make an impression upon some of their souls, that shall never be effaced; an impression that may lead them to serve God in life, and prepare them to meet him to their comfort and consolation at the hour of death.

I next day visited this afflicted, but spiritual family

I found them very suitably exercised under this dispensation of divine providence. The feelings of nature were indeed leading them to mourn; but the principles of divine grace in their souls, and their views of the merciful dispensations of God towards them, were raising their souls in gratitude to God. It was difficult to say whether their humility and their self-abasement, or their gratitude and reverence, were most powerful and visible in their deportment.

The father adverted to the acknowledgment of Jacob, as suitable to their case. We are not worthy of the least of all the mercies of God, and his goodness which he has bestowed upon us. He has increased our family, and hitherto preserved all of them to us, except this one, whom he has been graciously pleased to receive into the family of heaven. The amazing goodness of God has hitherto passed almost unnoticed by us. I now see this world quite in a new light. All that it contains is transitory and uncertain, the fashion of it passes away, but "*The mercy of God endureth for ever.*" I see more than ever the importance of human life. Our time is short, but the business of it is very great. It is nothing less than the redemption of our souls, and preparation for heaven. May God of his mercy make us wise unto salvation, and prepare us for death when it approaches.

The mother said, "I have long thought my little Catharine was too wise to live long." I observed to her, that this was a common expression in such cases; but that it was not only incorrect, but unmeaning. The view that we ought to take of such a matter is, that when God is about to take home his children to himself in early life, he carries them forward in their spiritual

preparation. As their time is to be short, he carries them forward in their work that it may be accomplished. All the works of God are worthy of himself, and he can prepare his children for heaven at any age. It is remarkable, that although many of the children under my charge were very attentive to the instruction they obtained, and some of them not a little impressed with spiritual things, yet none of them gave such evidences of divine grace as the child mentioned in the preceding pages, and another little girl of six years of age, who also died during my stay with them. She was the daughter of a very wealthy, ancient, and pious family, in the neighbourhood of my father's dwelling. Though only six years of age, and distant from the school more than a mile, of very rough road, nothing could detain her from it. Her mother would by no means have allowed her to go such a distance at her age, had it not been that she travelled along with me; and I led her by the hand, both in going and returning home. Little did I think when I was leading her, by only a foot path, over rough places, and past the dangers that lay in her way to her earthly father's house, that I was to be honoured of God to direct her in the way that leads to her Heavenly Father's house in the world above! But so it was. While I directed her to spiritual things, her whole soul was engaged in them. Her attention to spiritual things was remarkable, not only for a time, but during the whole period of her stay at school, and during the illness that issued in her death.

As I do not intend, however, to enter upon the particulars of her story at present, I shall reserve them till a future opportunity. In the mean time I commend

all my young readers to the good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep. May they all be "followers of them who, through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises."

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHO DIE IN THE LORD. At his second and glorious appearance, all "they that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him;" they shall then go with him to the Zion above, "with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away."



REV. JOHN COWPER.

THE brother of the amiable and excellent poet, Cowper, was a man of very considerable learning; critically skilled in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, and acquainted with several others; he was strict in his moral conduct, and sweet in his temper, yet, till he drew near the close of life, a stranger to the ways of peace. After he was made acquainted with the grace of God, he learned to despise all those attainments which were once highest in his esteem, not, indeed, as useless, when sanctified and employed to the glory of God, but when sought after for their own sake, and with a view to the praise of men. On one occasion he said to his brother, "I have been building my glory upon a sandy foundation; I have laboured night and day to perfect myself in things of no profit; I have sacrificed my health to these pursuits, and am now suffering the consequence of my

misspent labour. But how contemptible do the writers I once highly valued now appear to me! 'Yea, doubtless, I count all things loss and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord.' I must now go to a new school. I have many things to learn. I succeeded in my former pursuits. I wanted to be highly applauded; and I was so. I was flattered up to the height of my wishes: now I must learn a new lesson."

At another time his mind seems to have been engaged in reviewing his past life, and he thus addressed himself to the nurse, who sat at his bolster. "Nurse, I have lived three-and-thirty years, and I will tell you how I have spent them. When I was a boy, they taught me Latin; and because I was the son of a gentleman, they taught me Greek. These I learned under a sort of private tutor: at the age of fourteen, or thereabouts, they sent me to a public school, where I learned more Latin and Greek, and, last of all, to this place, where I have been learning more Latin and Greek still. Now, has not this been a blessed life, and much to the glory of God?" then directing his speech to Mr. Cowper, he said, "Brother, I was going to say I was born in such a year; but I correct myself; I would rather say in such a year I came into the world. You know when I was born."

The truths of the Gospel had become his delight, and on one occasion he said to his brother, "This bed would be a bed of misery, and it is so, but it is likewise a bed of joy and a bed of discipline. Were I to die this night, I know I should be happy. This assurance I hope is quite consistent with the word of God. It is built upon a sense of my own utter insufficiency, and the all-sufficiency of Christ"

SIR FRANCIS WALSHINGHAM.

IN Queen Elizabeth's reign lived Sir Francis Walshingham. After a life of bustle, activity, and honour, his mind became deeply impressed with the importance of religion. To his fellow-secretary Burleigh, lord treasurer of England, he wrote thus: "We have lived enough to our country, our fortunes, our sovereign: it is high time to begin to live to ourselves, and to our God." This giving occasion for some facetious person to visit and try to divert him, "Ah!" said he, "while we laugh, all things are serious around us. God is serious, who preserves us, and has patience towards us; Christ is serious, who shed his blood for us; the Holy Spirit is serious when he strives with us; the whole creation is serious in serving God and us; all are serious in another world; how suitable, then, is it for man to be serious! and how can we be gay and trifling?"



SALMASIUS.

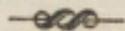
SALMASIUS was a man of most extraordinary abilities; his name resounded through Europe, and his presence was earnestly sought in different nations. When he arrived at the evening of life, he acknowledged that he had too much, and too earnestly, engaged in literary pursuits; "O!" said he, "I have lost an immense portion of time; time, that most precious thing in the world! Had I but one year more, it should be spent in studying David's Psalms and Paul's Epistles." "Oh! sirs," said he to those about him, "mind the world less, and God more: 'The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, that is understanding'."

GROTIUS.

GROTIUS was a man of profound genius and wonderful learning; yet his literary attainments seemed but dross when he drew near eternity. He is stated on one occasion to have made the following declaration: "I would give all my learning and honour for the plain integrity of John Urick," a poor man of great piety, who spent eight hours of his time in prayer, eight in labour, and but eight in meals, sleep, and other necessaries.

To one who admired his great industry, he returned an answer to this effect: "Ah! I have wasted my life in laboriously doing nothing."

Such were then his views respecting that learning which had attracted for him distinguished honour; but he sought comfort from another source. He expressed his faith in Jesus Christ, and declared that his hope rested upon him. When the publican spoken of in the Gospel was mentioned to him, he humbly replied, "I am that publican," and soon after expired.



COLLINS.

COLLINS is well known as one of the most celebrated English Poets. In the latter part of his mortal career, he withdrew from study, and travelled with no other book than an *English Testament*, such as children carry to school. When a friend took it into his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a *Man of Letters* had chosen—"I have only one book," said he, "but that is the best."



Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.

HEAR what the voice from heaven proclaims
For all the pious dead ;
Sweet is the savour of their names,
And soft their sleeping bed.

They die in Jesus and are bless'd ;
How kind their slumbers are !
From sufferings and from sin releas'd,
And freed from every snare.

Far from this world of toil and strife,
They're present with the Lord ;
The labours of their mortal life
End in a large reward



The Saints rest in their graves.

SAINTS in their graves lie down in peace
No more by sin or hell oppress ;
The wicked there from troubling cease,
And there the weary are at rest.

Thrice happy souls who're gone before
To that inheritance divine !
They labour, sorrow, sigh no more,
But bright in endless glory shine

There shall we join the blissful throng,
 And meet our dearest friends again ;
 And all eternity, our song
 To Jesus raise, and with him reign.



Triumph over death.

And must this body die ?
 This mortal frame decay ?
 And must these active limbs of mine
 Lie mouldering in the clay ?
 Corruption, earth, and worms
 Shall but refine this flesh,
 Till my triumphant spirit comes,
 To put it on afresh.
 God, my Redeemer, lives,
 And often from the skies
 Looks down, and watches all my dust,
 'Till he shall bid it rise.
 Array'd in glorious grace
 Shall these vile bodies shine,
 And every shape, and every face,
 Look heavenly and divine.
 These lively hopes we owe
 To Jesus' dying love ;
 We would adore his grace below,
 And sing his power above.

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