

Sunday Reading.

AN ELOQUENT CONTRAST.

The Rev. H. Grattan Guinness, recently presented a discourse, entitled, "Pictures of the Present and Future," from the words found in Rev. xxi, 4. "For the former things are passed away." Of his style some idea may be found in the following extract:

I pass on to declare to you there shall be no more death there. Here ranges the destroyer, Death, his name, armed cap-a-pie, as they say, from head to foot, with deadly weapons. He has arrows that can reach every heart. He carries with him plague, pestilence, famine, sickness, etc., to slay and destroy. He plucks young flowers, cuts down the old boughs. He blights the aged oak with a blast of lightning, and he tears down the little creeper. Death spares none. Death kills or takes away the life of all—mark that. But there death shall be unknown. Why, this world is a world of death beds. You do not hear them, many of you. Many of you do not go to see the dying, but we do see many death-beds, and we know the world is a world of death-beds. And what a variety of death-beds! At no distant part from you, on a pallet four inches from the ground, lies one who is dying; his cheek is pained, his eyes glassy, and his hand tremulous. There, in that little cradle, a poor, weak thing, breathing out its last gasp. There, in that hammock on the distant vale, is one who is yielding up his soul to God. There, in that grand palace, amid those curtains and carpets—tread softly—who now see one who was once strong, who now is weak—one mighty, now helpless. Here lies one, a parent; the last hand of death upon him—There lies another; death lays his bony fingers upon her heartstrings. It is a world of funerals, too, everywhere, from that white casket covered with a white pall, borne by pale mourners, to that black one covered with a black pall, carried to the dark tomb. He round the world, you will find funerals everywhere.

Just look at that vessel floating over the calm sea; the wind rises and she steals her way along. Look at that solemn scene on deck. They are reading; do you hear the hushed murmur of prayer? There, on that grating, seen up in his hammock, lies one who was once alive. Now the burial service is over; the body is thrown out; there is a splash in the water, and the vessel wings her way like a thing of life over the billows. She is gone, and where is the dead? The world is a vast graveyard, for in it lie the bones of all. From the dust of Adam, long since scattered to the winds, to the dust of the last saint or sinner who has just expired—from the bleeding bones of the martyrs that lie in the caves, and extremes of the Catacombs, to the skulls of those that lie in the catacombs of Paris—from the dust of those who have moldered in the vast pyramids of Egypt, to the body of him that lies in the last made grave—from the mound of grass to the mosque of gold! But in that world death shall be unknown. Transport couriers thither—look up, look around. Who are these about you? Living beings. Shall they ever die? No. Fads? No. Wither! No! Drop! No. Is there change? No. Sorrow? No. Who is that who has wiped away the trace of the last tear from the last saint? That is Jesus, the Prince of life. And mark you, he gives to them the gift of life; for all these sorrows, these changes, these labors, these sufferings, these sins, these death-scenes, "are passed away" among "the former things," which shall be remembered.

HELP THAT NEEDY ONE.

We are always able to help the needy as long as we are able to help ourselves, if we are only willing. If all professed Christians would set up this principle, many widows and orphans, now miserable, would be in a state of tranquility.

My readers, look around you and see if you can help any who need your help. Yes, says one, there is a widow destitute near me, but she is wicked, and never goes to church, consequently, I do not feel under any obligation to help her. If I thought she was a Christian, I would help her, but as it is, she must help herself.

Now, if she has a soul, and the salvation of that soul would add to the honor of a crucified Redeemer, it is your duty, first to administer to her wants, relieve her sufferings, thus gaining an influence over her; yield it to the salvation of her soul, adding one to the number of the blessed above, reflecting honor upon yourself and upon the cause of Christ.

EPARE: THE SINNER.

"Away reader," he exclaimed, "down in the deep, dark glen, gathered around the cold rocks, under the shelter of the wild precipice, are Scotland's persecuted fathers with their families, to hear the word of life. Every man bears his gun and the sword is by his side. A stalwart scoundrel keeps his eye to the hill-tops, and down to where the gale winds into unseen ravines. Elevating his arm, the intimation of expected danger is given. A signal from the outpost confirms it. The worshipping band gather closely together. One sees the oppressors with their gleaming arms and bloodshot eyes. The sinner is near. Then, standing on an elevated rock, the venerable pastor spreads his hands to heaven, and with quivering voice, but dauntless heart, exclaims 'O God, spare the sinner (sinner) and take the rife!' It is thus I too would plead to-day, at death comes thither our ranks, burying us to the judgment—that the sinner may be spared till he has accepted the ransom offered by his Redeemer, and the rife be taken first away.—*Dr. Galtier.*

A SINNER CANNOT BE HAPPY.

No outward condition however desirable or exalted in the estimation of the world, can make a sinful creature happy. This fact is illustrated and confirmed in the case of our first parents, who were incomparably miserable, even in Paradise. That garden of delight had not altered; its loveliness was not yet blighted by the curse; its scenery was still as beautiful; its air as soft and fragrant; the songs of its birds as blithe and gay, and everything as full of God, as when man, fresh from the hand of his Creator, was placed there to dress it and to keep it; yet once happy occupants were to the last degree miserable. It wailed them nothing that they dwelt in Eden—till the Lord God still walked in the garden at the end of the day. Every path they trod, every tree and bower seemed them, God's presence only filled them with dismay.

There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

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