

**DEATH**  
**SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY,**

I CORINTH. XV. 54.

---

**A SERMON**  
**PREACHED IN THE FREE CHURCH,**  
**CALCUTTA,**

AFTER THE FUNERAL OF

**SIMON NICOLSON, ESQ., M. R. C. S.**

**SENIOR SURGEON, H. E. I. C. S.**

BY THE

**REV. DAVID EWART.**

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**PRINTED BY J. THOMAS, BAPTIST MISSION PRESS;**

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## A S E R M O N

ON 1 CORINTH. XV. 54, LAST CLAUSE.

DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.

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BELOVED FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,—You must all be acquainted with this extraordinary portion of the Apostle Paul's writings, and with the line of argument which he pursues. His argument is most conclusive, his deductions from it are most consoling, and the revelations which he adds are fraught with triumphant joy to all who, through sincere faith, become heirs of the promises. The Apostle, filled with lofty and overpowering thoughts regarding the triumphs of the grace of God, through the finished work of Immanuel, breaks forth into strains of exalted hope and holy exultation:—"So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written '*Death is swallowed up in victory.*' O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of Death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

We trust that our remarks upon the few words chosen as the text will, to a certain extent, open up the whole of this subject. May the Lord vouchsafe his enlightening and guiding and sanctifying grace, while we endeavour to call your attention to the following topics naturally suggested by the passage :—

1. *Death*, as a dominant and all-powerful *tyrant*; and, apart from the consolations of the gospel, the *king of terrors*.

2. *Death* subdued, and swallowed up in victory.

3. The *Victor* in this mighty contest with death.

And, 4. *Those* who shall reap the benefits of his triumphs.

I. The history of fallen man is the history of the triumphs, and despotic reign of Death. ‘The wages of sin is death.’ The breach of Jehovah’s command,—which man had power to keep, but under strong temptation disobeyed,—brought death into the world and all our woe. Death, as if impatient to reap the extensive harvest before him, commenced his reign by snatching, as his first prey, the victim of fraternal malice and violence. Sin originated malignant feelings,—malignant feelings gave rise to violent deeds—and from Abel’s early fate to the wide spread battle-fields of modern days, Death reaps the vast harvest of fratricidal violence. The lonely shepherd lay in placid slumber on the first field of blood; but it was the slumber of death caused by a brother’s hand; and his lips seemed still to say, in meek expostulation, *Why hast thou done it, my brother?* On the wide spread battle-field, there are thousands who slumber in the stillness of death. But there are also thousands and tens of thousands, who writhe in the agonies

malignity has filled the breasts of both the slayer and the slain. It is a wide spread havock, a fearful indication of the awful effects of sin, upon those whose physical mechanism and corporeal power, whose mental faculties, and moral feelings combine in attesting that they are the creatures of God, the workmanship of eternal and infinite wisdom.

But the violence of man to man is not the only weapon wielded by Death. He has varied means. He wieldeth the terror that stalketh forth by night; and dischargeth the arrow that flieth by day. He graspeth the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon-day. He guideth the worm that gnaweth in secret, and withereth the sweet bloom of youth. He soweth the seeds of those ailments which bring on a premature and second childhood, and a life of dying; or which rob advanced years of those faculties and that self-command which make the aged venerable, and the accepted instructors, in wisdom, of men in the vigour of their prime. He snatcheth without mercy the babe from the bosom of the mother who nourisheth it;—he seizeth, in the opening dawn of youth and manly wisdom, the parent's hope. He relentlessly cutteth down the mightiest among men, in the prime of their years, and in the midst of their usefulness. He spareth nor age nor sex. Youth, beauty, talent, usefulness, distinction, high rank, and high character command no respect from Death; arrest not his relentless hand, quench not his certain and unerring shafts. To what depths of sorrow may all this indiscriminate, and, as it were, heartless and unsparing exercise of power lead? What gushing

of which the world knoweth not, and with which the stranger intermeddleth not? But who can tell the anguish of those who sorrow as having no hope? It is true that the human mind becomes callous and seared under the depressing influences of galling misery, the darkening effects of gloomy superstition, and the hardening influences of ungodliness, infidelity and atheism. But where the feelings of humanity are still preserved, where the hopes of a future world have been kept alive, or freshly and more distinctly awakened, where there is the felt certainty that not only is it appointed to all men once to die, but that after death cometh the judgment; what intense, what ineffable anguish must fill the hearts of sorrowing relatives, when it is felt, that an eternal separation has taken place,—or feared, that a reunion can be effected only where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched?

Alas! my friends, sin has given to Death dominion not only over the body, but also over the soul. There is a spiritual death,—a separation of the soul from all communion and intercourse with its Maker. The soul becomes dead to every holy feeling, an utter stranger to godliness. Its energies are expended without any reference to the glory of the Creator, or the possibility, nay certainty, of standing before his tribunal at the last day. God is not in all its thoughts; and his glory is no part of its aim. All this, unless a change ensue, bringing light and salvation to the darkened soul, results in eternal separation from the Father of Mercies and the God of Grace;—a death which dieth not, the horrors of the fires which are not quenched. The Creator might have left his creatures, universally, to this destiny.

Though he had done so, his goodness would have remained unimpeachable, and his justice would have been manifested in all its grandeur. But his infinite mercy had to be manifested also, and this was effected in the great remedy provided for sinners. Death was overborne, vanquished, and shall ultimately be swallowed up in victory. But this brings us to the second division of our discourse, in which we consider,—

## II. Death subdued and swallowed up in victory.

The boasted knowledge, and philosophy of ancient Greece could not disclose any information to soothe, by the pleasures of hope, the miseries and sufferings of fallen men. Universal gloom prevailed. They felt themselves to be the victims of a certain and unalterable destiny. They must all die; and the last obsequies might all be performed with minute accuracy, according to the received superstitions, and their manes might be considered by the ignorant multitude to rest in peace. But yet, all beyond death and the funeral obsequies was a land of darkness and desolation; and to every thinking person, any thing like rational consolation was utterly wanting. The doctrine of the soul's immortality gave rise to many speculations, and reasonings, but the utmost that can be said regarding the *result* of these might, perhaps, be equally assigned as a reason for their having originated:—there was a fond desire, a longing after immortality. This, not only led the learned and philosophic to reason and to theorize; but it helped them to the conclusions to which they attained. In other words, man instinctively felt that there was a vital principle within, which the

and complex machinery could not affect. But this amounted merely to a surmise. Hence the desire to establish it by proofs ; and hence the reasonings of Plato and Cicero and others. An authoritative basis of argument was, however, wanting. The premises, on which the whole deductions are founded, had their origin in the instinctive surmises, and longing desires of man ; and the deductions, drawn from them, cannot be regarded as more certain than the premises from which they flow.

But *light and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel*, what the wisest and loftiest intellects of philosophic men could not solve,—what they could not teach with any degree of authority, is taught, with clearness and with power, by men who had no affinity or intercourse with the learned of Greece and Rome. The peasants and fishermen of Galilee ;—and, more recently one who had spent his youth in studying the subtleties, and endless niceties of Jewish law and tradition, and had begun to put forth the energies of his manhood, in a vigorous and relentless, but vain attempt to put down and uproot the growing influence of the doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth whom his followers called the Christ :—these men, the peasants and the fishermen, and this Pharisee, the child of narrow prejudices, unfold with simplicity and authority the mystery of death, disclose the awful fate of those who are unrescued from his power,—but at the same time clearly reveal how Death has been deprived of his sting, and the grave of his victory. The effects of sin have been counteracted. The reign of Death over the soul, where the soul seeks for deliverance, may be successfully resisted, and made altogether to terminate. Only the willing slaves of sin need be

the thralls and victims of Death. The tyrant hath still power over our mortal bodies, but the very exercise of this power brings to an end his own dominion; for, all beyond, to those who receive the Gospel and its means of grace, is peace and joy,—faith becomes the vision of ineffable glory, hope brightens to the enjoyment of unspeakable blessedness, and love sheds around its universal influences, in the brightness of eternal day. Even on this side the grave all is changed, the gloom of doubt gives way before the brightness of hope awakened by the disclosures of the Gospels and Epistles: And the fearful thought, which, ever and anon, as the conscience was aroused, filled the whole soul with anguish and dismay,—the wages of sin is Death,—Death temporal, spiritual and eternal,—gives way before the blessed assurance that the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. The comforted soul then takes up the language of the fervid Apostle, and exclaims, in the joy of freedom from Death's terrors, and Death's everlasting agonies;—O death! where thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is perceptible in these disclosures of scripture, a characteristic of our holy faith, which, perhaps, is but little thought of, by many. In the first division of our subject we have endeavoured to describe the great and crowning calamity which hangs over the destiny of fallen man. The second division discloses the source whence, in his hopelessness, man can derive

assured hope of everlasting life. Is there not, in all this, something so exactly suited to man's necessities and circumstances, a plan so prepared of design, as it were, to bring peace and hope to his troubled and despairing soul, as to constitute an internal, and self-evidencing proof that he who constructed the plan of salvation which the Gospel propounds, is He who knoweth the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men? And is it not upon evidence such as this, that many a humble believer rests all his hopes for time and eternity? He cannot enter upon the philosophy or the literature of the subject; but he feels that he is a sinner estranged from God, and in danger of the fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation from the justly offended Judge. He beholds in the Gospel a remedy which exactly meets his case. It tells him that Christ came to seek and to save them that are lost;—that God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life:—that as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, —even to them that believe in his name:—whosoever believeth in him is not condemned. It tells him that Jesus is the resurrection and the life,—the way and the truth and the life, and that He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. It tells him that there is no salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. He consequently feels that here is a refuge and resting place for his soul, and like blind Bartimeus, he comes, in simple and humble faith, and assured of the Saviour's willingness and power, cries

out, in the earnestness of his spirit, Have mercy on me, thou son of David.

III. But these remarks already bring distinctly before our minds the great Agent in achieving this conquest of Death. To many it may appear superfluous to call attention to the Saviour as the great Author and Finisher of our faith, in a separate head of discourse. But we confess that, in our humble opinion, the error in this respect is most frequently on the other side. There is, in general, too little distinct allusion to the Redeemer, in preaching of the benefits and hopes conferred on man by the system of grace and salvation, propounded in the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. In the inspired record it is different. The scriptures constantly ascribe every result, so far as the rescue of man is concerned, to the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. The gift of God is eternal life, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*. Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, *through our Lord Jesus Christ*. These, and many similar passages, bring distinctly before us the glory of our Lord in achieving our deliverance. There was a contest with the powers of hell and the grave. He maintained that contest, and bruised Satan under his feet, and made the grave the avenue to eternal life. At length the graves shall give up their dead. The bodies that slumber in the tomb shall rise. "The dead shall be raised incorruptible," and those who live on earth, when the trumpet sounds "shall be changed." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that was written, Death is

swallowed up in victory." But all this is the work of Immanuel. He finished transgression and made an end of sin and brought in everlasting righteousness. He led captivity captive, and ascended up into glory. He now reigns Supreme: and "he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet; and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death." "Death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire. This is the second Death." The whole, from first to last, is the achievement of Christ. To him be the glory and the praise. He hath humbled himself that we might be exalted. He hath died that we may live, "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself likewise took part of the same; that through Death he might destroy him that had the power of Death, that is, the Devil, and deliver them who, through fear of Death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Let me entreat you, my friends, to acknowledge the glory of Christ, and to receive Him in all the majesty and perfection of His mediatorial character. Remember his strong crying and tears, and the sweat which fell as great drops of blood upon the ground. Remember the mental agony which led him to exclaim "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." And fail not to turn your thoughts to the mysterious scene on Calvary, when He who had wielded the power of Omnipotence, and constrained the elements to obey him, cried in the extremity of his agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." His soul was made an offering for sin. Satan, Death and Hell, exulted in imaginary triumph. But it was only for a brief space.

head was bruised. Death and Hell were led captive ; and when Messiah shall come in the glory of his Kingdom, surrounded with his holy angels, and shall sit upon the throne of his kingdom, for judgment, then shall Death be finally vanquished ; and the saints of God shall beam forth in the brightness of eternal joy, and the great theme of their heavenly songs shall be, the glory of the Lamb, the praises of Immanuel. "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests ; and we shall reign on earth." "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." We cannot too stedfastly look to Christ. We cannot too highly exalt his name. We cannot over-estimate the importance of his work on behalf of man. O resist not his calls of mercy. Enter into union with him. There is safety, peace, hope, and eternal life in no other. But,

IV. Who are those who shall reap the benefits of his glorious triumphs ? Not the fearful, not the unbelieving, not the abominable, not murderers, whoremongers, and sorcerers, not idolaters, not liars. "These shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone ; which is the second death." Not those who trust in their own righteousness, and with presumptuous profanity, seek to modify the gospel, in order that it may correspond with their own proud imaginations, and preconceived, though unfounded, opinions. Not those who conform to the world, and seek to amalgamate things that are utterly

and to make the pure system of gospel-morality acceptable to godless worldlings by divesting it of its holiness. Man cannot partake of the rich provision procured for him, and secured to him, by Christ, until he submit to the laws of the kingdom. He must first become as a little child. The loftiest intellectual power must bow down from the heights of its pride, and submit in lowly humility to be taught the first principles of godliness,—implicit reliance for pardon on the merits of our glorious Immanuel, and for sanctifying grace on the influences of His Spirit. The most benevolent and the most generous among the sons of Adam, must place no reliance upon their benevolence and generosity; because these virtues may reign and hold their kindly influence over a mind utterly devoid of holiness. It is only where Divine and irresistible grace has led the soul to take refuge in Christ; it is only where the Spirit of the living God has produced a new creature, and having convinced the worldling of sin, and its consequent misery hath renewed the will, and given a new bent to all the energies of the soul; it is only where sin is loathed as exceeding hateful in the sight of God, and holiness earnestly sought after, as that without which no man shall see God,—that true religion can have its seat in the heart. The sinner must come to Christ, as one who is heavy laden, a slave under the tyranny of sin and death; as one who desires to become, by the renewing grace of God in Christ Jesus, a servant of righteousness unto holiness,—to be made a branch in the Vine which is Christ, that being purified of the Father, he may have the fruits unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

of his doings but as the gift of God, through faith in the only Mediator.

The humblest peasant may receive the privileges of Immanuel's blood-bought triumph; and the proudest monarch is not excluded from them. The most illiterate and untutored of the human family may become a partaker of the inheritance of the saints; and the most profound philosopher is not debarred from the privileges freely offered to all. But the peasant, the monarch; the illiterate, and he who soars to the highest points of this world's philosophy, must come on common grounds. They must come as sinners, as those who have every thing to learn, as regards the way of salvation. They must come, wishing to see Jesus,—desirous to be taught by Him who alone teacheth savingly and unto knowledge,—desirous of relying implicitly upon his atonement, finished and perfect in all things;—desirous of casting themselves upon his intercessory power, and of approaching the throne of the eternal as humble suppliants, in his name. They must look to Immanuel as their Spiritual Head, their Captain of Salvation and their King. How else can they be rescued from the thralldom of Death and Hell? How else can they maintain the contest they must wage with the powers of darkness? How else become more than conquerors, and triumph with Immanuel? O friends! what encouragement. "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." The Lord make you athirst and bring you to the fountain of living waters. The Lord enable you all to overcome, through

the grace that is in Christ Jesus our Lord ; that you may be sons and daughters of the Most High, and partakers of the Heavenly, the unfading glory.

But I will not, now, further enlarge on these topics ;—a special instance of the blessed effects of God's all-powerful grace, demands our notice this day. A patriarch has lately been removed from the midst of us, and considering his standing as a public professional man, and the connection which he has all along had with this congregation ; considering also his age and character, it is highly proper that some public allusion should be made to him. And there is a special reason why allusion should be made to him in this congregation. Not only was he one of the very earliest adherents to the Free Church in Calcutta ; but you are aware, my brethren, that our venerable friend died an elder of the Free Church. He was elected one among the first set of elders, appointed in the congregation here, while John Macdonald was officiating pastor ; and, as long as he was able, he attended the meetings of both Session and Presbytery. But, after his infirmities increased, feeling that he could not aid his brethren, either in active work, or in deliberation, he begged to be released from the duties of an elder in this congregation ; to which request the Session acceded, feeling that thereby the mind of their venerable coadjutor would be released from a painful feeling of responsibility.

For myself, I freely confess, that I have irresistibly cherished, towards that noble and stately old man, feelings of the profoundest veneration ; not unaccompanied with deepest sympathy with him

many among us have cherished similar feelings. Simon Nicolson was no ordinary man. In his better days, he possessed the highest order of intellectual power, and rose to the highest place in a profession where there are many competitors. In his later years, he has, in a great measure been laid aside from professional occupation ; but, in this, we recognize the gracious hand of a merciful and ever-gracious God. Unfitted for the active duties of his profession, and freed from the incessant labours of a widely extended medical practice, he had more time for genial intercourse with his domestic circle, and for conversation and reflection on the subjects of highest concern to man. We have every reason to believe that the opportunities and privileges thus vouchsafed were not in vain ; and that the man of powerful intellectual grasp, bowed with the humility of a little child to the blessed intimations of the gospel of the grace of God.

Simon Nicolson first saw the light of day, about twenty-two years before the close of last century, in the quiet seclusion of one of our Scottish manses. He was born in the manse of Kiltarlity, one of the very large parishes which constitute the county of Inverness. Of this Parish, his father was minister ; and we believe that his grandfather had occupied the same position. In this secluded highland Parish, no doubt his boyish and many of his youthful days were spent ; and doubtless he often roamed abroad among the sublime specimens of Scottish scenery which are there presented to the eye of the admiring spectator, softened, chastened, and made more impressive by being combined with the beauteous rural scenery of the lower woodlands, and fertile straths. He must have left his native Parish at an early

age, to prosecute his studies in the noble profession to which he had devoted himself. His medical education, we understand, was commenced under a practitioner in the town of Inverness. But he must soon have removed to London, to pursue his studies under the great masters of medical science in that capital. He became a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, at an early age; for we have reason to believe that he was in practice in London, and had attained to a high medical reputation, even before he received an appointment for India. His appointment to the Medical Service of the Hon'ble E. I. C. was dated sometime in 1805; but, for reasons connected with his engagement as private Surgeon to the then Duke of Portland, he was allowed to remain in England, for nearly two years after the date of his commission. He consequently arrived in India in 1807, in the 29th year of his age. Thus has this venerable man been spared to move out and in among the society of this Capital for almost half a century; for, with the exception of a short time spent at the Cape, all, or nearly all the period of his long residence in India, was passed in this city, in great usefulness and much benevolence; and in the possession of a powerful influence, which he invariably exercised with great soundness of judgment, and much disinterestedness for the welfare of others. The eminence to which he attained in his profession is known to all, who can remember him before the infirmities of age came upon him. Many instances could be given of the almost intuitive perception, with which, in the diagnosis of disease, he could fix, with precision, on the radical ailment; but this is not the place

of many in India have been, under God, prolonged by the judicious and skilful treatment of our departed venerable friend. And let it not be forgotten that within what appeared to many, at first sight, a somewhat stern and haughty exterior, there beat one of the kindest, most generous and benevolent of human hearts. Simon Nicolson in the discharge of his professional duties was ready at every call ; and, at least since we remember, set apart a portion of every day, during which his consulting room was open to all comers ; who gratuitously received, if their circumstances required it, the benefit of his high professional skill.

The able discharge of his professional duties, and the benefits conferred upon the community by his high medical attainments and skill have been most kindly and honourably mentioned, by the most exalted personage in this vast portion of the British empire. Some short time ago, when our venerable friend intimated his desire to be released from the duties of Superintending Surgeon of the General Hospital, the most Noble the Marquis of Dalhousie most generously and kindly addressed to him a private letter, in which, in his Lordship's own classic and expressive style, the Senior Surgeon's services were acknowledged in the kindest and most gratifying manner. Again, when he had resigned his appointment, and retired into private life, only a few days before his death, the Hon'ble the President of the Council of India, in Council, was pleased to forward to him a similar document, acknowledging his great and long services, in the highest and most commendatory terms.

But it is more within our sphere to speak of the venerable

man as a child of God, a converted man; for such we have the strongest evidence for believing him to have been. Yet, alas! during many years of his life, he seems to have paid little attention to religious duties, and to have lived forgetful of God, and of the only way of eternal life and salvation. However, while yet in the full possession of his mental and bodily energies, he seems to have been graciously led, by a succession of circumstances, to think seriously of these the most important of all subjects of consideration. Mrs. Nicolson had gone to Europe, and returned with his daughter, who had completed her education, and came to rejoin the family circle in India. Both of these ladies possessed, although the younger was yet but in her youth, a more than ordinary share of sound sense, and high religious principle. Their influence had a most beneficial effect upon his mind and led him to attend the house of God. In the beginning of 1838, John Macdonald, who had several years been a minister of the gospel in London, and was the son of one of the most distinguished of our Scottish Highland Ministers, arrived at Calcutta as a Missionary to the heathen. Circumstances which need not be detailed here, led to Mr. and Mrs. Macdonald's being frequent visitors at the house of our departed friend; and, on one occasion, to their staying there for some days. The aged physician, for he was then about threescore years of age, formed a sincere and lasting attachment to the young Missionary, and admired the consistency of his conduct, and the piety of his conversation, and eagerly drank in his words. The merciful One thus prepared the way for the gentle and gradual working

had long delayed to come, himself, to the Physician of souls, to be healed of his spiritual maladies, and receive rest and peace for his soul.

After a few short years came the disruption of the Church of Scotland, and the consequent movement in the Scottish Missions in India; both of which events are yet fresh in the remembrance of us all. Simon Nicolson and his family were among the first to come forward, as avowed adherents of the Free Church. And no sooner did he understand what the determination of the Missionaries here was, than, fearing lest pecuniary embarrassments might at once ensue, he placed at their disposal a large sum, with the assurance that more would at once be forthcoming, if required. This sum was afterwards, with his consent, divided between the funds of the local Free Church, which it was immediately determined to institute, and the funds of the mission which now unitedly became the mission of the Free Church of Scotland. He was one of the first in Calcutta to sign adherence to the Free Church, and so long as he was able, took an active part in the organization and up-building of this congregation; and to the day of his death he was one of the most liberal subscribers to the Funds of the Free Church Mission; besides contributing hundreds of volumes to its Institution Library.

For nearly four years after the disruption, our venerable friend enjoyed the ministry and private friendship of John Macdonald; and so deep an impression do many of the remarks, spoken to him by my late beloved colleague, seem to have made, that he retained the recollection of them to his dying hour. Some here, may remember the very instructive and impressive discourse

delivered by Mr. Macdonald on the occasion of Mr. Mackail's admission to his charge here. The fine old man had that discourse printed at his own expense; and some may remember with what bland dignity and delight he distributed it to the retiring congregation, with his own hand.

But before this period, he had been sorely tried in the death of his eldest son, an able and promising officer, who fell in the battle of Ferozshahar. Soon after the arrival of Mr. Mackail, the constitution of our venerable friend began to show a tendency to that severe disease, which ultimately laid him aside from active life. Ere the end of August 1847 he had a severe shock of paralysis, so that, when his friend, John Macdonald, also fell ill, he was unable to go to see him; and when that servant of God was summoned away, his aged friend sorrowed for him as for a son; and ceased not to indicate his affection and interest in him even to the last.

A few months later, another and a still severer trial befel him in the death of Mrs. Nicolson, after a severe and protracted illness. But spiritually, we believe, all these changes did him good and tended to bring him nearer to the source of light and life. After he was unable regularly to attend church, Mr. Mackail used to visit him regularly on Mondays and had scripture reading and prayer with him. But, doubtless, it was from the daily converse he had with the members of his own family that he derived, latterly, the greatest benefit; and he himself towards the close of his life, read scarcely any other book than the Bible, and some treatises containing short portions of truth, as for instance, Groome's little Things.

As he approached the close of his career, he seemed to increase in simple faith and humble reliance on the Redeemer; and the slightest allusion to divine mercy and grace as freely offered in the gospel almost always affected him to tears; and often would he say, when hearing a remark on the gospel provision, in conversation, or when something was read to him, Aye, John Macdonald used to tell me so.

It seems as if his merciful Father had spared him through the feebleness of the last seven or eight years, that he might mature him more and more for departing and being with Christ, which is far better.

Often, during his last days, did he signify that his whole reliance was upon the blessed Redeemer; and, mercifully saved from bodily pain or any suffering of any kind, exhausted nature seemed gradually to ebb, until he fell asleep in Jesus, so imperceptibly, that it was some time before his actual departure could be ascertained. He had some days previously, left kind messages for his son and daughter who you know are both in Europe.

My friends, few among us can expect to attain to our venerable friend's period of life. Nay, we know not what a day or an hour may bring forth. Let us then give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. Let us redeem the time, because the days are evil; and we know not what shall be on the morrow. But we know that our Redeemer liveth, and that he is mighty to save. Blessed be God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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