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SOMETIME.

[Ascribed to Mrs. Mary Riley Smith, by Old Farmer's Almanac, 1886.]

Sometime, when all life's lessons have been learned,
And sun and stars forevermore have set,
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash before us, out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans are right,
And how that seemed reproof was love most true.

And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,
God's plans go on as best for you and me;
How, when we called, he heeded not our cry,
Because his wisdom to the end could see.
And even as wise parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God, perhaps, is keeping from us now
Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.

And if, sometimes, commingled with life's wine,
We find the wormwood, and rebel and shrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine
Pours out this portion for our lips to drink.
And if some friend we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
Oh, do not blame the loving Father so,
But wear your sorrow with obedient grace;
And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends his friend;
And that, sometimes, the sable pall of death
Conceals the fairest boon his love can send.
If we could push ajar the gates of life,
And stand within, and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key.
But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart!
God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.
And if, through patient toil, we reach the land,
Where tired feet with sandals loosed may rest,
When we shall clearly see and understand,
I think that we will say, "God knew the best."

"That ye Sorrow Not Even as Others who have no Hope."

SAMUEL T. SPEAR, D. D.

The term "bereavement" as ordinarily used, applies to those sorrows of the heart that have their occasion in the death of near and dear friends, especially those who constitute so large a part of the charm, the blessing and the bliss of domestic life, and are bound together by the tenderest ties of affection. It is only when death enters this circle, and strikes down the objects of our warmest earthly love, that the sorrows of bereavement are felt in their most pungent form. Tears then flow. The heart of the strongest man is then broken. The coldest stoicism is compelled to yield. The sensibilities are shivered as if smitten by a bolt from the skies. Our kindred dead are not, and cannot be thought of with feelings of indifference. Their absence does not destroy our memory. Death has not diminished, but rather enhanced their charms. We recur to them as they once were, and try to think of them as they are in that mysterious realm whither they have fled. The heart, still clinging to them, and often rehearsing the tale of its own bitterness, sighs for the touch

"Of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still."
Alas! that hand ministers no more.
That voice is heard no more. That cheering and cheerful presence is no longer present. The awful, and for this life, final separation has come, and with it all conscious intercourse between the living and the dead is at an end. No one who has felt it needs to be told that this, to the living, is a most heart-rending experience. It is not possible to understand it without having felt it, and hard-

ly possible to overstate it. It goes to the very depth of the soul, and fills it with its own sorrow. These griefs are no discredit to human nature, and surely no evidence of weakness, but rather of the strength of our love. If we did not love, we should not weep.

What, then, shall we do with these stricken, bleeding, saddened hearts, when thus assailed by the death of those we loved in life, and love not the less because they are dead? How shall we deport ourselves in such a terrible emergency? What shall we think, what shall we say, and how and where shall we seek relief and comfort?

1. The first answer to these questions is that we must accept the situation in which providence has placed us. We have no power not to do so. The facts themselves are just what they are; and it is beyond our power to make them otherwise. The dead are dead and gone; they have spoken their last words on earth, and with us exchanged their last thoughts. We cannot bring them back, or reproduce them in actual life as they were before death. Time may mitigate the severity of our grief; but the grief itself will always remain as a remembered, and to some extent, a present sorrow. We must bear it. We cannot successfully contend with the facts or with our own nature, and must, hence, as best we can, accommodate ourselves to both, pursuing the remainder of life's journey in submission to what we cannot change. There is absolutely no other course open to us.

2. A second answer is that we should, with the griefs of bereavement, mingle the distinct recognition and devout acknowledgement of the rightful supremacy of God, as the providential ruler over all the events of the world. A heart, deeply smitten with these griefs, pre-eminently needs this thought, not as a cold abstract speculation merely to make a sound creed, but as a profound and thoroughly realized belief that carries with it one's confidence and affections.

One who thinks of God as the Supreme Factor in the whole problem of our present life, and at the same time knows who he is, and what are his attributes and relations to his creatures, will, by the very terms of the thinking, convey to his heart a useful lesson in respect to resignation to the divine will, and also bring to it a royal comfort in that resignation. He will at once see that the providence of life and that of death are in the best possible hands. He will not need to understand all God's reasons for what he does. It will be enough to know who he is and what are his attributes, without undertaking to sit in judgment upon his providence, and without asking him to give any "account of his matters." This may not absolutely banish all sorrow, or wipe away all tears, but it will mingle with these tears and sorrows the comfort that comes from the thought of God. The heart can get along much better with this thought than it can without it. There is a solid pleasure in the thought. It enables us to say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." It puts these words in our lips: "Not my will, but thine, be done." It makes God himself a comfort to the soul. It teaches us to trust him where we cannot trace him. It disposes us submissively to accept his appointments whether we understand them or not, and that, too, whatever may be their

immediate effect upon us. It makes the mind content with the supremacy of God.

If we shed tears, as we must, when our kindred die, and leave us to plod our way to the grave without them, let them not be the tears of those who have no God to think of, and no God of whom they do think, and whom they love and trust. We should think of him while we weep as well as of those for whom we weep. That is no time to have him absent from the mind. That is just the time to cast our care upon him, remembering that he "careth for us." No one will do this without being consciously helped in bearing his sorrows. The burden will be less to him than it otherwise would be. He will treat God as a friend, and God will be his friend and comforter.

3. A third answer is that we should devoutly turn our thoughts to the holy Scriptures, and hear God speak to us in his Word. The Bible itself is the Book of books to give comfort to one who is suffering from the pangs of bereavement, provided always that he himself is on good terms with the God of the Book, and is willing to commune with him through it. It will supply him with better thoughts than he can originate and authenticate for himself. It will assure him that death is not the final terminus of our conscious being, and that this short day of life is only preliminary to that which is to come, and that, no matter what may be its circumstances of joy or sorrow, its great importance depends upon the issues thereof in another world. It will bring before him the doctrine of God in Christ, with a gracious plan for the salvation of sinners, and with a divine providence so administered in this world as to make "all things work together for good to them that love God." It will set before him a shining Heaven, as the place of final rest when all the sufferings, sorrows, and tribulations of this life shall be forever ended. It will teach him that those who "die in the Lord" are greatly the gainers by an exchange of worlds. It will pledge to him the continued care of God, through the whole journey of life, by a providence without him, and by a providence of grace within him, until he shall win the victory, and at last be more than conqueror "through him that loved" him. It will present God to him as his heavenly Father by the adoption of grace, holding toward him the paternal relation, dealing with him as a child and an heir of salvation, seeking in all things to make him a partaker of the divine holiness, fitting him for "the inheritance of the saints in light," and finally receiving him to glory.

These comforting, cheering, animating, hopeful, soul-inspiring and soul-elevating thoughts constitute what Paul calls "the comfort of the Scriptures." There is great comforting power in these Bible thoughts. They give us glorious and pleasant things with which to occupy our minds, and are calculated to warm the affections of the heart. They strengthen one for endurance, and invigorate his patience. They awaken gratitude, inspire hope, and make us spiritually happy in spite of our sorrows. They pour a flood of joy upon a soul that might otherwise be inconsolably miserable. They scatter the shadows that darken even the darkest day of

life. They displace thoughts that depress, oppress, and afflict the mind, either expelling them, or giving them a new and much more cheerful coloring. There is nothing which one who is sorrowing over his kindred dead more needs to do for his own comfort than devoutly to betake himself to the Word of God, thoughtfully to read the Book divine, and prayerfully meditate upon its contents. The experiment will soon teach him that the God of the Book is his best companion, and that the comforts which in this way come into the soul are superior to all other comforts. He will understand what Paul meant when he spoke of God as "the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort." He will have a quietude, composure and serenity of mind which nothing earthly can give, and nothing earthly essentially disturb.

The writer has tried this resort for himself, and that, too, amid the griefs of repeated bereavements, and knows by a blessed experience what the Lord has done for his soul. He here records his testimony to the power of the Bible or rather the power of God through the Bible, to comfort a suffering and bleeding heart. When those whom he loved on earth were taken from him, leaving his social family life a perfect wreck, God came to him by his grace through his Word, and in that Word spake to him words of comfort. God opened the eyes of his understanding to read and appreciate that Word as they had never been opened before, and as perhaps they never would have been opened under different circumstances. Yes, child of sorrow, burdened, blasted, and broken with the griefs of bereavement, go to the Bible, and read it diligently, thoughtfully, prayerfully. You will not do so in vain. That Book will give you more light and comfort than all other books put together.

"Within this ample volume lies
The mystery of mysteries;
Happiest they of human race,
To whom their God has given grace,
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray;
To lift the latch, to force the way,
And better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn."

4. The fourth and final answer is that, whether we are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus or not, we should make the griefs of bereavement the means of our spiritual benefit. The godless and thoughtless man whose wife, or child, or father, or mother, or brother, or sister, has just been laid away in the grave, would be worse than a brute if he were unaffected by his own loss. He will be cruel to himself if he does not make the loss the occasion for considering his own mortality, and also the urgent need of preparing to meet his God in the final judgment. The hour to him is a solemn one. It cannot be otherwise. God speaks to him in the death of his friend, and warns him to be wise. He will make a great mistake for himself if, in this peculiar hour, he fails to heed the warning and seek and secure his own salvation. He will suffer all the bitterness of grief with no benefit to his own soul. Many have done this, while some have had the wisdom to think of their ways, and turn their feet into the path of life.

Those who are already in the fold of Christ and on their way to Heaven, who have lost dear friends, and whose hearts have been bowed down under the weight of the affliction, should also hear the

voice of God speaking to them. He has laid his hand upon them by an impressive providence; and they ought to learn something from it, and be made the better by it. It should be more to them than merely a scene of grief and sadness. The sorrows that bring with them a spiritual benefit, that subdue, chasten and cultivate the soul, that correct errors in one's life, and that ripen saintship and fit it for the skies, are the sorrows that give more than they take. The quality of the good they give is vastly superior to that which they take away. Tho' for the present "not joyous, but grievous," they, nevertheless, afterward yield "the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them which are exercised thereby." The moral benefit outweighs the pain, and is more than a compensation for the latter. A providence that dispossesses one of his earthly joys in any form, and thereby more perfectly enthrones God in his heart, has done him no damage. What he has gained far exceeds what he has lost.

And whether this shall be the result of affliction in the loss of dear friends, depends upon the manner in which we treat the affliction. We may make it the means of the richest blessing and grace to the soul; and if we do, then the language of the Psalmist will fit our lips: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes." Then the language of Paul will express our experience: "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed." To mourn over the dead is the instinct of our nature. To reap a spiritual benefit from that which causes us to mourn is alike a solemn duty and a gracious privilege.

That man is in a sad plight, whose sorrows are lost sorrows—all pain with no blessing—whose character is unimproved thereby, and who is more anxious to get rid of his sorrows than to derive moral profit therefrom. The more our afflictions and sorrows bless us in the spiritual sense, the better will we be able to bear them. If we make God our comforter by drawing near to him, and his Word our guide by devoutly reading it, they will not so embitter life as to destroy its cheerfulness and serenity, or array the heart in rebellion against him who doeth all things well. The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, will still be left to the soul. Dr. Young has well said:

"Heaven gives us friends to bless the present scene,
Removes them to prepare us for the next."
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Our engagement at Crystal Springs this year, was for Monday and Tuesday last. Rev. Dr. Enoch Stubbs, C. G. Thomas and Dr. Johns preached on the Sabbath. Dr. Stubbs gave almost exclusive attention to the doctrine of holiness, explaining it and illustrating it by beautiful similes and figures. His very countenance when preaching is a sermon on holiness. He is a teacher. He wears well. He preached every day, and took part in other services. Presiding Elder Cogswell was active as ever. The grounds have been enlarged and improved. Several new cottages will be built next year. It is a delightful retreat.—*Michigan Christian Advocate.*

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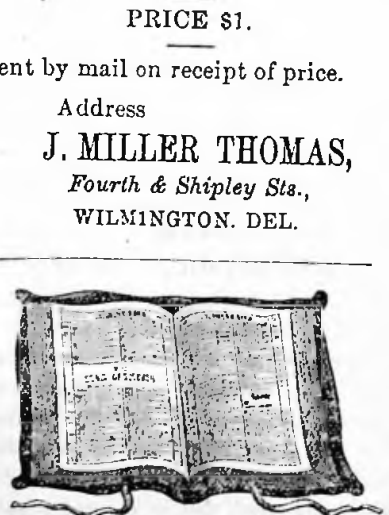
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Wilmington & Northern R. R. Time Table, in effect July 8, 1888. GOING NORTH. Daily except Sunday.

ADDITIONAL TRAINS. Daily except Saturday and Sunday, leave Philadelphia (B. and O. R. R.) 4.30, 5.30 p. m., Chester (B. & O. R. R.) 5.01, 5.20 p. m., Wilmington 6.15 p. m., B. & O. Junction 6.26 p. m., Newbridge 6.39 p. m. Arrive Dupont 6.57 p. m.

Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. SCHEDULE IN EFFECT APRIL 29, 1888. Trains leave Delaware Avenue Depot: EAST BOUND.

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AT REASONABLE PRICES,

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