

# THE DYING HOURS OF GOOD AND BAD MEN CONTRASTED

'Tis immortality,-'tis that alone,  
Amidst life's pains, abasements, emptiness,  
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill. - Young

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## PREFACE

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The object of this little volume is to place before the reader, at a glance, the dying hours of good and bad men; and thereby to enable him to see more clearly the value of the Christian religion. "Religion makes people die well," is a true saying, as the numerous testimonies in the following pages will show. Perhaps in no instance is the value of religion more fully exhibited, than it is in the final departure of the saints. Then, when everything else fails, we see what it can accomplish. It

"-can make a dying bed

Feel soft as downy pillows are,

While on His breast I lean my head,

And breathe my life out sweetly there."

By beholding, too, the deathbed scenes of infidels and wicked men, we shall see the value of that religion which they have neglected and despised; and for doing which they met a dreadful end.

The last hours of men are frequently referred to with great interest. Says William Cowper, "Few things are more interesting than deathbed memoirs. They interest every reader, because they speak of a period at which all must arrive, and afford solid ground of encouragement to survivors to expect the same or similar support and comfort when they come to die!

The author has received special advantage in preparing this little work, by consulting "The Power of Religion on the Mind in Retirement, Affliction, and at the Approach of Death;" "The Tree and its Fruits;" and "Sprague's Sermons on Dying Hours" -works of great value, which should be extensively read.

The following pages are particularly recommended to youth. That they may lead some to prepare to live and die right, is the hope and prayer of the author.

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## DYING HOURS.

### *The Rev. John Wesley*

Was born at Epworth, Lincolnshire, England, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1703. He was early taught the principles of the Christian religion. His father was a minister of the Established Church, and rector of Epworth—a man of superior learning and stern integrity. His mother, who principally superintended his early education, was a woman of extraordinary sense and piety.

His childhood and youth were remarkable. At the age of six and a half years the parsonage-house in which his father resided was burned; and he escaped, almost miraculously, from perishing in the flames. Such was his seriousness and propriety of conduct, that, at the age of eight years, he was admitted to the sacrament of the Lord's supper. When eleven years old he was placed in the charter-house school, in London, where he made great progress in learning. At seventeen he was elected to Christ Church, Oxford; and at twenty-one "he appeared the very sensible and acute collegian, possessed of a fine classical taste, and the most liberal and manly sentiments." He was ordained deacon, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 1725, being twenty-two years of age. He continued in the ministry sixty-five years, and was fifty-two years an itinerant preacher.

"His attainments as a scholar—had he possessed no other distinction—would alone have entitled him to high respect. He was a critic in the Greek language; and he both spoke and wrote Latin with remarkable fluency and correctness to the end of his life. At the university he studied Hebrew and Arabic. In Georgia he conducted public worship both in French and Italian: and he offered to render the same service, in their own tongue, to a regiment of Germans at Newcastle upon Tyne, during the rebellion of

1745. His skill in logic was proverbial, and must strike every one who reads either his practical or his controversial works. They present finer examples, illustrative of the principles of this most useful art, than those of almost any other of our English authors. His correct and elegant literary taste; his readiness of apprehension; his ability to comprehend and simplify the most abstruse and perplex subjects; are manifest in the whole of his voluminous writings. There are many passages in his works which, for depth and justness of conception, and strength and beauty of expression, would not suffer from a comparison with the most admired selections that the English language can furnish."

He was a great lover of mankind. Says one of his biographers:—"The great purpose of his life was doing good. For this he relinquished all honor and preferment: to this he dedicated all the powers of body and mind. At all times, and in all places, in season and out of season; by gentleness, by terror, by argument, by persuasion, by reason, by interest, by every motive, and every inducement, he strove to turn men from the error of their ways, and awaken them to virtue and religion. To the bed of sickness, or the couch of prosperity; to the prison, the hospital, the house of mourning, or the house of feasting; wherever there was a friend to serve, or a soul to save, he readily repaired to administer assistance or advice, reproof or consolation. He thought no office too humiliating, no condescension too low, no undertaking too arduous, to reclaim the meanest of God's offspring. The souls of all men were equally precious in his sight, and the value of an immortal creature beyond all estimation. He penetrated the abodes of wretchedness and ignorance, to rescue the profligate from perdition. He communicated light to those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death. He changed the outcasts of society into useful members; civilized even savages; and filled those lips with prayer and praise that had been accustomed only to oaths and imprecations."

The elegant and pious Cowper has expressed many of his excellences in the following beautiful lines:-

"O, I have seen (nor hope, perhaps, in vain,  
Ere life go down, to see such sights again)  
A veteran warrior, in the Christian field,  
Who never saw the sword he could not wield.  
Grave without dullness; learned without pride;  
Exact, but not precise; though meek, keen-eyed.  
A man that could have foil'd, at their own play,  
A dozen would-be's of the modern day:

Who, when occasion justified its use,  
Had wit as bright-as ready to produce;

Could fetch from records of an earlier age,  
Or from philosophy's enlighten'd page,  
His rich materials, and regale your ear  
With strains it was a privilege to hear.  
Yet, above all, his luxury supreme,  
And his chief glory, was the gospel theme:

There he was copious as old Greece or Rome;

His happy eloquence seem'd there at home:

Ambitious not to shine, or to excel;  
But to treat justly what he loved so well."

He wrote more, preached more, traveled more, and suffered more, than almost any other man who ever lived. His labors have been blessed beyond a parallel. He is properly called the founder of Methodism. He was called a Methodist, by way of reproach, by a fellow of Merton College, 1729. He formed the first Methodist class, 1739, and died March 2d, 1791, leaving about three hundred itinerant, and one thousand local, preachers, and eighty thousand persons, in the societies under his care. Within about one hundred years, those known by his name, and who subscribe to the doctrines that he taught, have reached the number of nearly two millions. Besides these, what vast numbers of his followers have gone to heaven during that period; and how many, who were brought to Christ through the instrumentality of his spiritual children, have been, and are now, connected with other Christian churches!

As he was always ready to labor for his Master, so he was ready to die. "He continued in his work till the latter end of February, 1791, when his strength entirely failed; and, after languishing a few days, during the whole of which he presented a most edifying example of holy cheerfulness and resignation, he died on the 2d of March, in great peace. When the hand of death was upon him, he oftener than once repeated, and that with solemn emphasis, the lines,-

'I the chief of sinners am;  
But Jesus died for me ;'

and, as the result of that faith in the Lord Jesus, of which these words were the significant expression, he again and again exclaimed, "The best of all is, God is with us!" How blessed thus to die!"

A few more of his dying sayings will show more fully his triumphant departure.

"Three days before he died, referring to an illness which he had in Bristol, in the year 1783, he says, 'My words then were,-

"I the chief of sinners am;  
But Jesus died for me."

"One said, 'Is this the present language of your heart ? and do you feel as you then did?' He replied, 'Yes:' when the same person repeated,-

Bold I approach th' eternal throne,  
And claim the crown through Christ, my own,'

and then added, 'It is enough: He, our precious Immanuel, has purchased all.' He earnestly replied, 'He is all! He is all!'

"In the evening of the same day, while sitting in his chair, he said, 'How necessary it is for every one to be on the right foundation! We must be justified by faith; and then go on to perfection.'

"On the next day he said, 'There is no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus;' and referring to the text, 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich,' he emphatically said, 'He is the foundation, the only foundation, and there is no other.' He also repeated, three or four times in the space of a few hours, 'We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.'

"On the day before his death, after a very restless night, he began to sing,-

'All glory to God in the sky,  
And peace upon earth be restored;  
O, Jesus, exalted on high,  
Appear our omnipotent Lord!

'Who, meanly in Bethlehem born,  
Didst stoop to redeem a lost race,  
Once more to thy creatures return,  
And reign in thy kingdom of grace.

'O wouldst thou again be made known;  
Again in thy Spirit descend,  
And set up, in each of thine own,  
A kingdom that never shall end!

'Thou only art able to bless,  
And make the glad nations obey,  
And bid the dire enmity cease,  
And bow the whole world to thy sway.'

Here his strength failed; but, after lying still awhile, he called for a pen and ink. They were brought to him; but his hand, which had been the means of conveying comfort and instruction to thousands, could no longer perform its office. 'Tell me,' said one, 'what you would say.' 'Nothing,' answered he, 'but that God is with us.' In a little while he broke out in a manner which, considering his extreme weakness, astonished all present, in these words,-

'I'll praise my Maker while I 've breath,  
And, when my voice is lost in death,  
Praise shall employ my nobler powers:

My days of praise shall ne'er be past,  
While life, and thought, and being, last,  
Or immortality endures.

'Happy the man whose hopes rely  
On Israel's God: he made the sky,  
And earth, and seas, with all their train:

His truth for ever stands secure;  
He saves th' oppress'd. he feeds the poor;  
And none shall find his promise vain.'

"During the same day, when he appeared to change for death, he said, with a weak voice, 'Lord, thou givest strength to those that can speak, and to those that cannot. Speak, Lord, to all our hearts, and let them know that thou loosest the tongue.' He then sung,-

'To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
Who sweetly all agree ;'

when his voice again failed.

"Several friends being in the house, they were called into the room, and all kneeled down to pray; when the fervor of his spirit was manifest to all present. In particular parts of the prayer his whole soul was engaged in such a manner as evidently showed how ardently he longed for the accomplishment of their united desires. When Mr. Broadbent prayed, that if God were about to take away their father to his eternal rest, he would continue and increase his blessing upon the doctrine and discipline which he had long made his aged servant the means of propagating and establishing in the world, an unusual degree of earnestness accompanied the loud Amen of the dying patriarch and saint. When they arose from their knees, he took hold of their hands, kindly saluted them, and said, 'Farewell! farewell!'

“Some time after he strove to speak, but finding that the friends who were present could not understand him, he paused a little, and then, with all his remaining strength, cried out, ‘The best of all is, God is with us.’ Lifting up his arm in token of victory, and raising his feeble voice in a holy triumph not to be expressed, he again repeated, ‘The best of all is, God is with us.’

“When his parched lips were moistened, he devoutly repeated his usual thanksgiving after meat:-‘We thank thee, O Lord, for these, and all thy mercies. Bless ‘the church and king; and grant us truth and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for ever and ever.’

“In the course of the same day, at different times, he said, ‘He causeth his servants to lie down in peace.’ ‘The clouds drop fatness.’ ‘The Lord is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.’

### *‘I’ll praise-I’ll praise-‘*

“The next morning the closing scene drew near. Joseph Bradford, his faithful and well-tried friend, prayed with him, and the last word he was heard to utter was, ‘Farewell!’ While several of his friends were kneeling round his bed, without a groan, this man of God, this beloved pastor of thousands, entered into the ‘joy of his Lord.’”

Thus died the immortal Wesley. Surely his end was peace! Having been a blessing to thousands, and having erected an imperishable monument to his piety, fidelity, and success, he triumphantly passed to his reward. Blessed man! whom the world now delight to honor; thou hast entered thy Master’s joy; thou art crowned in the heavenly paradise:!

“Happy soul, thy days are ended,  
All thy mourning days below;  
Go, by angel guards attended,  
To the sight of Jesus go.  
Waiting to receive thy spirit,  
Lo! the Saviour stands above;  
Shows the purchase of his merit,  
Reaches out the crown of love.”

The Christian religion only can give us victory in death. Infidelity leaves its supporters in the last hour unprotected and in despair. Of this its fearful records furnish abundant proof.

## ***Altamont.***

The following graphic description of the death-bed scene of an infidel is from the pen of the celebrated Dr. Young:-

“The sad evening before the death of the noble Altamont, I was with him. No other one was present but his physician, and an intimate friend whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said, ‘You and the physician are come too late. I have neither life nor hope. You both aim at miracles. You would raise the dead!’

“Heaven, I said, was merciful-

“‘Or I could not have been thus guilty. What has it done to bless and save me? I have been too strong for Omnipotence! I plucked down ruin.’

“I said, ‘The blessed Redeemer,-

“‘Hold! hold! you wound me! This is the rock on which I spit; I denied his name.’

“Refusing to hear anything from me, or take anything from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, till the clock struck; then, with vehemence, he cried out, ‘O time! time! It is fit thou shouldst strike thy murderer to the heart. How thou art fled for ever! A month! O for a single week! I ask not for years; though an age were too little for the much I have to do.’

“On my saying, we could not do too much; that heaven was a blessed place-

“‘So much the worse. ‘Tis lost! ‘tis lost! Heaven is to me the severest part of hell!’

“Soon after, I proposed prayer.

“Pray, you that can. I never prayed. I cannot pray; nor need I. Is not heaven on my side already? It closes with my conscience. Its severest strokes but second my own.’

“His friend being much touched, even to tears, at this, (who could forbear? I could not,) with a most affectionate look, he said, ‘Keep those tears for thyself. I have undone thee. Dost thou weep for me? That’s cruel. What can pain me more?’

“Here his friend, too much affected, would have left him.

“No, stay. Thou still mayest hope. Therefore hear me. How madly have I talked: how madly hast thou listened and believed! But look on my present state as a full answer to thee and to myself This body is all weakness and pain; but my soul, as if strung up by torment to greater strength and spirit, is full powerful to reason; full mighty to suffer. And that which thus triumphs in the jaws of mortality is doubtless immortal. And, as for a Deity, nothing less than an Almighty could inflict what I feel.’

“I was about to congratulate this passive, involuntary confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles of his present belief, extorted by the rack of nature; when he thus, very passionately, said:-

“No, no! let me speak on. I have not long to speak. My much injured friend, my soul, as my body, lies in ruins- in scattered fragments of broken thought. Remorse for the past throws my thoughts on the future. Worse dread of the future strikes it back on thee past. I turn, and turns and find no ray. Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, thou wouldst struggle with the martyr for his stake, and bless Heaven for the flames: that is not an everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable fire.’

“How were we struck! Yet, soon after, still more. With what an eye of distraction, what a face of despair, he cried out,-

“My principles have poisoned my friend; my extravagance has beggared my boy; my unkindness has murdered my wife! And is there another hell? O, thou blasphemed and indulgent Lord God! hell itself is a refuge, if it hide me from thy frown.’

“Soon after, his understanding failed. His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or ever forgotten. And ere the sun arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont expired.”

O the horror of such a death! It is dreadful to contemplate. Who does not dread even the thought of thus passing into eternity? O infidelity! is this all that thou canst do for thy votaries? Is this thy treatment in the last moments of life?

Had it not been for infidelity, the life and death of this noble youth would have been far different. Dr. Young well observes, “His transient morning might have been the dawn of an immortal day. His name might have been gloriously enrolled in the records of eternity. His memory might have left a sweet fragrance behind it, grateful to surviving friends, and salutary to succeeding generations. With what capacity was he endowed! With what advantages for being greatly good! But, with the talents of an angel, a man may be a fool.”

Other instances of the dreadful results of infidelity, as exhibited in death, might be given. Mr. Hervey has given one of which he was an eye-witness. It is as follows:-

“I was not long since called to visit a poor gentleman, erewhile of the most robust body, and of the gayest temper I ever knew. But when I visited him, O how was the glory departed from him! I found him no more that sprightly and vivacious son of joy which he used to be; but, languishing, pining away, and withering, under the chastising hand of God. His limbs feeble and trembling; his countenance forlorn and ghastly; and the little breath he had left sobbed out in sorrowful sighs. His body hastening apace to the dust, to lodge in the silent grave, the land of darkness and desolation. His soul just going to God who gave it; preparing itself to wing away to its long home, to enter upon an unchangeable and eternal state. When I had entered his chamber, and had seated myself on his bed, he first cast a most wishful look upon me, and then began as he was able to speak, ‘O that I had been wise! that I had known this, that I had considered my latter end. Ah! Mr.-, death is knocking at my door; and in a few hours more I shall draw my last gasp; and then judgment -the tremendous judgment! How shall I appear, unprepared as I am, before the

all-knowing and omnipotent God? How shall I endure the day of his coming?’

“When I mentioned, among other things, that strict holiness which he had formerly so slightly esteemed, he replied, with a hasty eagerness, ‘O, that holiness is the only thing I now long for. I have not words to tell you how highly I value it. I would gladly part with all my estate, large as it is, or a world, to obtain it. Now my benighted eyes are enlightened: I clearly discern the things that are excellent. What is there in the place whither I am going but God? or what is there to be desired on earth but religion?’ ‘But if this God should restore you to health,’ said I, ‘think you that

you should alter your former course?' 'I call heaven and earth to witness,' said he, 'I would labor for holiness as I shall soon labor for life. As for riches and pleasures, and the appliances of men, I count them as dross, no more to my happiness than the feathers that lie on the floor. O, if the righteous Judge would try me once more! If he would but relieve, and spare me a little longer; in what a spirit would I spend the remainder of my days! I would know no other business, aim at no other end, than perfecting myself in holiness. Whatever contributed to that—every means of grace, every opportunity of spiritual improvement—should be dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver. But, alas! why do I amuse myself with fond imaginations? The best resolutions are now insignificant, because they are too late. The day in which I should have worked is over and gone, and I see a sad, horrid night, approaching, bringing with it the blackness of darkness for ever! Heretofore—woe is me!—when God called, I refused; when he invited, I was one of them that made: excuse. Now, therefore, I receive the reward of my deeds: fearfulness and trembling are come upon me: I smart, I am in sore anguish already, and yet this is but the beginning of sorrows! It doth not yet appear what I shall be; but sure I shall be ruined, undone, and destroyed with an everlasting destruction!'

“This sad scene I saw with mine eyes, these words, and many more equally affecting, I heard with mine ears: and soon after attended the unhappy man to his tomb.”

We may inquire, Is this the way infidels die? So it seems. How differently does the Christian die! Wesley exclaimed, “The best of all is, God is with us!” And Paul said, “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” The Christian often rejoices in prospect of death. He often longs “to depart and be with Christ :”-

“O! how I long to quit thin mortal shore,  
And in those boundless regions to explore  
New scenes of wonder, glorious and sublime,  
Where rising prospects with new beauties shine:

To see my Saviour, clasp his godlike feet,  
Veil'd in silence near his flaming seat;  
Behold his pierced side which bled so free,  
And view the wounds which once he bore for me.”

### ***Rev. John Fletcher***

Was born in Switzerland, September 12, 1729. He was brought to a knowledge of salvation through the instrumentality of the Methodists in England; and continued to the last in intimate connection with them. He was a faithful and tried friend of Mr. Wesley, and ably defended his sentiments. Next to the founder of Methodism, he was the ablest advocate of the Methodist doctrines; and his controversial writings, which are somewhat extensive, are now considered a rich legacy to the church.

He was one of the holiest men that ever lived. Whatever he did seemed to evince a pure heart and a holy life. In the controversies in which he actively engaged, every line that he penned seemed to bear the impress that it flowed from a heart filled with love. Another such a controversialist has scarcely been known since. His life in all respects was a life of purity; and but few, it is believed, since his Master “tabernacled among us,” have so fully followed his example, “in going about doing good.” Mr. Wesley makes the following statement respecting him:-

“I was intimately acquainted with him for above thirty years; I conversed with him morning, noon, and night, without the least reserve, during a journey of many hundred miles; and, in all that time, I never heard him speak one improper word, nor saw him do an improper action. Many exemplary men I have known, holy in heart and life, within fourscore years; but one equal to him I have not known— one so inwardly and outwardly devoted to God. So unblamable a character in every respect I have not found either in Europe or America; and I scarcely expect to find another such on this side of eternity.”

He preached the gospel twenty-five years in Madeley, England, with great fidelity and success, and then went to his reward. There is something peculiarly striking and touching in the circumstances of his death. His last hours were remarkable for the power of religion which they exhibited. Perhaps I cannot better bring the circumstances of his death before the youthful reader, than by referring to the account given of them by his excellent companion, Mrs. Fletcher.

The sabbath previous to his death, he attended church, and administered the sacrament to more than two hundred communicants. The manner in which he commenced the services was truly affecting. He walked up to the communion table with these words: "I am going to throw myself under the wings of the cherubim, before the mercy-seat." The people were much affected, while they beheld him offering up the last remains of a life that had been lavishly spent in their service. Groans and tears were on every side. He became much exhausted, and was under the necessity of restings at times, by leaning on the sacramental table. He, however, succeeded in going through with the exercises of the occasion, interspersing them with affectionate exhortations' and frequently calling on the people to sing appropriate hymns. It was a memorable season.

He retired from the scene to his chamber, where he soon met the "last enemy." Mrs. Fletcher, fearful that his end was near, asked him several questions, all of which he readily answered.

"On Wednesday," says Mrs. Fletcher, "he told me he had received such a manifestation of the full meaning of the words, 'God is love,' as he was unable to express. 'It fills my heart,' said he, 'every moment: O Polly, [Mrs. Fletcher's given name,] God is love! Shout! Shout aloud! I want a gust of praise to go to the ends of the earth! But it seems as if I could not speak much longer. Let us fix on a sign between ourselves. Now,' said he, tapping me twice with his finger, 'I mean God is love.'" Thus did the dying saint wish to express that God was love, when unable to speak.

He continued rapidly to fail. But while his strength permitted, he would converse on the subject of religion. He felt a great interest for the spiritual welfare of his family physician. "O, sir," said he, "you take much thought for my body; permit me to take thought for your soul." When so weak as to be unable, as was supposed, to speak aloud, on Mrs. Fletcher's repeating the words "God is love!" instantly, as if all his powers were awakened, he broke out in a rapture, "God is love! love! love! O for that gust of praise! I want to sound!" Here his voice failed. His pain was extreme; but he bore it with patience. If his sufferings were but named to him; he would smile and make the sign.

He always took a peculiar delight in these lines,-

'Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,  
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries;"

and whenever Mrs. Fletcher repeated them, he would answer, "Boundless! boundless! boundless!" and when it became extremely difficult for him to articulate, he exclaimed,

"Mercy's full power I soon shall prove,  
Loved with an everlasting love."

His end now appeared to be near. Says Mrs. Fletcher, "I perceived him dying

very fast. His fingers could hardly make the sign, which he scarce ever forgot, and his speech seemed quite gone. 'I said, My dear creature, I ask not for myself-I know thy soul-but for the sake of others; if Jesus be very present with thee, lift up thy 'right hand.' Immediately he did. 'If the prospect of glory sweetly opens before thee, repeat the sign.' He instantly raised it again, and in half a minute a second time. He then drew it up, as if he would reach the top of the bed. After this his hands moved no more. On my saying, 'Art thou in pain?' he answered, 'No.' From this time he lay in a kind of sleep, though with his eyes open and fixed. For the most part he sat upright against pillows, with his head a little reclining to one side. And so remarkably composed, yea triumphant, was his countenance, that the least trace of death was scarcely discernible in it. Eighteen hours he was in this situation, breathing like a person in a common sleep. About thirty-five minutes past ten, on Sunday night' August 14<sup>th</sup>, his

precious soul entered into the joy of his Lord, without a struggle or groan, in the fifty-sixth year of his age."

The following lines, applicable to him, were written by Mr. Charles Wesley, on the death of one of his friends:-

"With poverty of spirit bless'd,  
Rest, happy saint, in Jesus rest;  
A sinner saved, through grace forgiven,  
Redeem'd from earth, to reign in heaven !

"Thy labors of unwearied love,  
By thee forgot, are crown'd above;  
Crown'd, through the mercy of thy Lord,  
With a free, full, immense reward!"

Who would not die like Fletcher, and have his last end like his? Like his friend, brother, and fellow-laborer, Mr. Wesley, he died in Christian triumph. The following beautiful lines were written, after reading his Life; and they are so expressive of the feeling and desire which, I trust, the reader has experienced in perusing the above account of his triumphant exit, that I cannot but present them to his consideration:-

“Departed saint ! as here I trace  
Thy pure, devoted love,  
Thy growth in every Christian grace,  
Imparted from above;  
Thy deep humility, thy faith,  
Thy charity, thy zeal,  
Thy active life, thy peaceful death-  
These to my heart appeal.

“Delight and shame at once they wake-  
With low, yet pleading tone;  
The first excited for thy sake,  
The latter for my own.  
I can but see how brightly clear  
Thy lamp was wont to shine:  
I can but think, with grief and fear,  
How dim and faint is mine.

“Yet the same Lord for both has died,  
For both has ris’n again;  
The light which was thy guard and guide  
Would make my pathway plain.  
O for faith, hope, and love, like thine,  
That I might follow thee:  
Saviour! thy power is still divine,  
Display thy power for me!”

### ***Rev. George Shadford.***

The Rev. George Shadford was born in England, Lincolnshire, January 19, 1739. At an early age he became a subject of converting grace. He united himself with the Methodists, and feeling it his duty to preach the gospel, he unreservedly gave himself up to that great work. After laboring for about six years successfully in different parts of England, he came as a missionary to America. He landed in Philadelphia, and immediately entered upon the work of his mission. His labors were greatly owned of God in the salvation of souls. Many were brought to Christ by his instrumentality in New-Jersey, New-York, Baltimore, and Virginia. In the latter place he gives the following account of one of the converts: “ Among these was a dancing-master, who came first to hear on a week day, dressed in scarlet; and came several miles again on Sunday, dressed in green. After preaching he spoke to me, and asked, if I could come to the place where he lived, some day in the week. I told him, I could not, as I was engaged every day. I saw him again at preaching that week, and another man of his profession. When going to preaching one morning, a friend said to me, ‘Mr. Shadford, you spoiled a fine dancing master last week. He was so affected under the preaching, and feels such a load of sin upon his conscience, that he moves very heavily; he cannot shake his heels at all. He had a profitable school, but has given it up, and is determined to dance no more.’ I said, ‘It is very well; what is his name?’ He said, ‘He is called Madcap!’ I said, ‘A very proper name for a dancing-master.’ But I found this was only a nick-name, for his real name was Metcalf He joined our society, found the guilt and load of his Sin removed from his conscience, and the pardoning love of God shed abroad in his heart. He lived six or seven years after, and died a great witness for God, having been one of the most devoted men in our connection.”

He was called to suffer much for his Master. In one instance, while on his way to Maryland, he came near perishing with the cold. He says, “I was one night lost in the woods. Being in the winter, it was very cold, and the snow a foot

deep. I could find no house, nor see any traveler, and I knew I must perish if I continued there all night. I alighted from my horse, kneeled upon the snow, and prayed earnestly to God to direct me. When I arose, I believed help would come. I stood listening a short time, and at last heard a dog bark at a distance; following the sound, after some time I found a house.”

Owing to certain political difficulties which existed in the country at this time, Mr. Shadford felt it his duty to return to England, where he continued to labor, as his health would permit, till the close of life.

His afflictions were great. He was deprived of his eyesight for several years. During this time he was patient and useful. His sight was restored by a surgical operation. When it was said to him, “Now you will have the pleasure of seeing to use your knife and fork,” he replied, “I shall have a greater pleasure, that of seeing to read my Bible.” This luxury he enjoyed; for when he was permitted to use his sight, the first thing he did, was to read the word of life for three hours—reading and weeping with inexpressible Joy.

His health gradually declined for some time before his death. Being unusually ill, one of his friends called to see him. He says, “I inquired about his health; when he said, with great fervor,-

To patient faith the prize is sure;  
And all that to the end endure  
The cross, shall wear the crown.’

His mind seemed fully occupied with the great and interesting realities of eternity, and his greatest pleasure was in meditating and talking of the love of God. On the Lord’s day morning, I called to see him, and found he had slept most of the night; from this we flattered ourselves that the complaint had taken a favorable turn, and were in hopes of his recovery. But his physician said, his disease was fast approaching to a crisis, and it was impossible for him to recover. Upon this information, Mr. Shadford broke out in a rapture, and exclaimed, ‘Glory be to God!’ Upon the subject of his acceptance with God, and assurance of eternal glory, he had not a shadow of a doubt. While viewing the eternal world, he was asked, if all was clear before him? he replied, ‘I bless God, it is;’ and added, ‘Victory! victory! through the blood of the Lamb!’ He again repeated, ‘What surprise! what surprise!’ I suppose he was reflecting upon his deliverance from a corruptible body, and his entrance into the presence of his God and Saviour, where every scene surpasses all imagination and the boldest fancy. Two friends, who were anxious for his recovery, called upon him, and when they inquired how he was, he replied, ‘I am going to my Father’s house! I find religion to be an ange in death.’ A pious lady was particularly desirous of seeing him; and she asked him to pray for her. He inquired ‘What shall I pray for?’ She said, ‘That I may meet you in heaven, to cast my blood-bought crown at the feet of my Redeemer!’ He said, with great energy, ‘The prize is sure.’ His last words were, ‘I’ll praise, I’ll praise, I’ll praise!’ and a little after fell asleep in Jesus, on March 11, 1816, in the 78<sup>th</sup> year of his age.”

How many of his spiritual children will greet him with songs of triumph in that day! How many stars will bestud his crown! With what unspeakable delight will he say to the Master, “Here am I, and the children that thou hast given me!” O to die thus !-what a privilege! When a saint thus departs, we can say with the poet,-

“Hosanna to Jesus on high !  
Another has enter’d his rest;  
Another has ‘scaped to the sky,  
And lodged in Immanuel’s breast:

The soul of our brother is gone  
To heighten the triumph above;  
Exalted to Jesus’s throne,  
And clasp’d in the arms of his love.

“What fullness of rapture is there,  
While Jesus his glory displays;  
And purples the heavenly air,  
And scatters the odors of grace;  
He looks-and his servants in light  
The blessings ineffable meet:

He smiles-and they faint at his sight,  
And fall overwhelmed at his feet.”

But let us change the scene. How have unbelievers died ? The following instances may throw some light upon that question.'

## ***An English Nobleman.***

The following letter was written by an English nobleman, on his deathbed, to an intimate friend:-

“DEAR SIR,-Before you receive this, my final state will be determined by the Judge of all the earth. In a few days at most, perhaps in a few hours, the inevitable sentence will be passed, that shall raise me to the heights of happiness, or sink me to the depths of misery. While you read these lines, I shall be either groaning under the agonies of absolute despair, or triumphing in fullness of joy.

“It is impossible for me to express the present disposition of my soul; the vast uncertainty I am struggling with! No words can paint the force and vivacity of my apprehensions. Every doubt wears the face of horror, and would perfectly overwhelm me, but for some faint gleams of hope which dart across the tremendous gloom! What tongue can utter the anguish of a soul suspended between the extremes of infinite joy and eternal misery? I am throwing my last stake for eternity, and tremble and shudder for the important event.

“Good God! How have I employed myself? What enchantment has held me? In what delirium has my life been passed? What have I been doing, while the sun in his race, and the stars in their courses, have lent their beams, perhaps only to light me to perdition?

“I never awaked till now. I have but just commenced the dignity of a rational being. Till this time, I had a wrong apprehension of everything in nature. I have pursued shadows, and entertained myself with dreams. I have been treasuring up dust, and sporting myself with the wind. I look back upon my past life, and but for some memorials of infamy and guilt, it is all a blank-a perfect vacancy! I might have grazed with the beasts of the field, or sung with the winged inhabitants of the woods, to much better purpose than any for which I have lived. And, O! but for some faint hope, a thousand times more blessed had I been, to have slept with the clods of the valley, and never heard the Almighty's fiat, nor waked into life at his command! I never had a just apprehension of the solemnity of the part I am to act till now. I have often met death insulting on the hostile plain, and, with a stupid boast, defied his terrors; with a courage as brutal as that of a warlike horse, I have rushed into the battle, laughed at the glittering spear, and rejoiced at the sound of the trumpet, nor had a thought of any state beyond the grave, nor of the great tribunal to which I must have been summoned. It is this which arms death with all its terrors; else I could still mock at fear, and smile in the face of the gloomy monarch. It is not giving up my breath, it is not being for ever insensible, at which I shrink; it is the TERRIBLE HEREAFTER-the SOMETHING BEYOND THE GRAVE, at which I recoil. These great realities which, in the hours of mirth and vanity, I have treated as phantoms, as the idle dreams of superstitious beings; these start forth, and dare me now in their most terrible demonstration. My awakened conscience feels something of that eternal vengeance I have often defied. To what heights of madness is it possible for human nature to reach! What extravagance is it to jest with death! to laugh at damnation! to sport with eternal chains, and recreate a jovial fancy with the scenes of infernal misery! Were there no impiety in this kind of mirth, it would be as ill-bred as to entertain a dying friend with the sight of a harlequin, or the rehearsal of a farce. Everything in nature seems to reproach this levity in human creatures.

The whole creation, man excepted, is serious-man, who has the highest reason to be so, while he has affairs of infinite consequence depending on this short, uncertain duration. A condemned wretch may with as good grace go dancing to his execution, as the greatest part of mankind go on with such a thoughtless gayety to their graves. O, my friend, with what horror do I recall those hours of vanity we have wasted together! Return, ye lost, neglected moments! How should I prize you above the eastern treasures! Let me dwell with hermits; let me rest on the cold earth; let me converse in cottages, may I but once more stand a candidate for an immortal crown, and have my probation for celestial happiness. Ye vain grandeurs of a court! ye sounding titles and perishing riches! what do ye now signify? What consolation, what relief, can ye give me?

“I have a splendid passage to the grave; I die in state, and languish under a gilded canopy; I am expiring on soft and downy pillows, and am respectably attended by my servants and physicians; my dependents sigh; my sisters weep; my father bends beneath a load of years and grief; my lovely wife, pale and silent, conceals her inward anguish; my friend, who was as my own soul, suppresses his sighs, and leaves me to hide his secret grief. But, O! which of these will answer my summons at the high tribunal? Which of them will bail me from the arrest of death? Who will descend into

the dark prison of the grave with me? Here they all leave me, after having paid a few idle ceremonies to the breathless clay, which perhaps may lie reposed in state, while my soul, my only conscious part, may stand trembling before my Judge. My afflicted friends, it is very probable, with great solemnity, will lay the senseless corpse in a stately monument, inscribed with

'HERE LIES THE GREAT--;'

but could the pale carcass speak, it would soon reply,

'False marble, where?

Nothing but poor and sordid dust lies here!'

While some flattering panegyric is pronounced at my interment, I may, perhaps, be hearing my just condemnation at a superior tribunal, where an unerring verdict may sentence me to everlasting infamy."

Who would not avoid such a death! What are riches, honors, pleasures, and all the pomp of earth, with such an end? Ah! much better share the poverty of Lazarus, and like him die, and be "carried by angels into Abraham's bosom!" How trifling are riches when the soul is called into the presence of God! Look at the deathbed of

### **Cardinal Beaufort.**

The cardinal was of royal extraction, the son of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, and was commonly called, the "rich cardinal of Winchester." He was void of principle, and guilty of the most infamous deeds. "History informs us, that he prevailed on the king to grant him letters of pardon for all offenses contrary to the statutes then enacted in England."

The wise son of Sirach exclaims, "O, death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man who is at ease in his possessions!" Of the truth of this sentiment we have a remarkable proof in the last moments of this ambitious cardinal. When he was arrested in the midst of his career, and the terrors of death were marshaled in horrid array before him, he thus complained and vented his afflicted soul to his weeping friends around him:—"And must I then die? Will not all my riches save me? I could purchase the kingdom, if that would prolong my life. Alas! there is no bribing death. When my nephew, the duke of Bedford, died, I thought my happiness and my authority greatly increased: but the duke of Gloucester's death raised me in fancy to a level with kings; and I thought of nothing but accumulating still greater wealth, to enable me, at length, to purchase the triple crown (The popedom). Alas! how are my hopes disappointed! Wherefore, O my friends! let me earnestly beseech you to pray for me, and recommend my departing soul to God." Thus did this wretched man pass into eternity. He died in 1447.

O when will men learn where to seek for true happiness! when will they seek that consolation and support they need, living and dying! "O that men were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" The saint only has hope in death. The "righteous shall be held in everlasting remembrance "

### ***The Rev. Thomas Taylor***

Died October 15, 1816, in Lancashire, England, aged almost eighty years. He entered the itinerant ministry under the direction of Mr. Wesley in 1761, and continued in it with great zeal and success for nearly fifty-six years. He was deeply devoted to the cause of his Master, and there was nothing that that cause required at his hand, but what he was willing cheerfully to perform. To suffer for his Lord was his delight:-

"Who suffer with our Master here,  
We shall before his face appear,  
And by his side sit down."

His death was sudden. He **“Ceased at once to work and live.”**

“He experienced little or nothing of the formality of dying. His strong and well-formed body was greatly worn by age; but like a machine, well constructed in all its parts, and all those parts so skillfully united as to wear alike, it continued to be a suitable, and, upon the whole, a comfortable, habitation for his spirit, till at last

‘The weary springs of life stood still.’”

The following account of his last days are given by his esteemed friend, Mrs. Holland:-

“On Tuesday evening, October 8, 1816, Mr. Taylor arrived at Birch House, in Lancashire, in his usual state of health and cheerfulness. Wednesday morning he observed that he did not think he had passed so comfortable a night for twelve months. He attended to his studies as usual, and occasionally walked to see a few poor people.

“On Saturday night he had two violent attacks of his complaint, which obliged him to sit up till he was a little recovered; but though he felt himself much enfeebled, he accompanied Mr. Holland to Bolton the next morning, where he preached from, ‘Our light afflictions,’ &c. 2 Cor. iv, 17, 18. It was observed by his hearers, that he was particularly animated, and that his views of glory, in the discussion of the subject, were more than usually bright. He dined at Mr Rothwell’s, where he evidenced a spirit of lively gratitude and animated praise. But the effects of his morning exertions became so visible in much weakness and bodily pain, that his friends judged it improper for him to undertake the evening service. No entreaties, however, could dissuade him from his purpose of setting out for the Old Chapel; in going to which, he was obliged frequently to pause, and once for the space of nearly a quarter of an hour. Having arrived at the chapel, he went to Mr. Grindrod’s, where he remained a short time, in order to get breath; during which time another minister began the service. When he had concluded prayer, he found the veteran saint ready to enter upon his office, which he did, by taking these words for his text, ‘Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose soul is staid on thee.’ He seemed to have forgotten his weakness, and to have unusual liberty in explaining the passage. In one part of the discourse he raised himself, and said with great emphasis, ‘I should like to die like an old soldier, sword in hand!’ He again preached with animation in the evening, from 1 Cor. ii, 12.

“Through the whole of the evening he was particularly cheerful, and often very spiritual. He retired about eleven, and, intending to accompany Mr. H. to Manchester the next morning, he shaved before he went to bed. On Tuesday morning, Mr. Holland, thinking that he lay longer than usual, as he did not hear him stir, tapped at his door, but no answer was returned. He entered the room, and found him lying by the bed-side at full length, more than half dressed, but perfectly composed as in a quiet sleep; the chariots of Israel and the horsemen had come, and the prepared saint had ascended with his bright convoy.”

Thus was his desire granted; he fell with sword in hand! He fell victorious in the battle-field. The Christian poet, Montgomery, has written some excellent lines on his death, entitled, “The Christian Soldier’s Death.” They are as follow:-

“SERVANT of God! well done,  
Rest from thy loved employ;  
The battle ts fought, the vict’ry won,  
Enter thy Master’s joy:

The voice at midnight came,  
He started up to hear;  
A mortal arrow pierced his frame,  
He fell-but felt no fear.

“At home amidst alarms,  
It found him in the field;  
A vet’ran slumbering on his arms,  
Beneath his red-cross shield:

His sword was in his hand,  
Still warm with recent fight;  
Ready that moment at command  
Through rock and steel to smite.

“It was a two-edged blade,  
Of heavenly temper keen;  
And double were the wounds it made  
Where'er it glanced between:

'Twas death to sin-'twas life  
To all that mourn'd their sin;  
It kindled and it silenced strife'  
Made war and peace within.

Stout hearts before it fell,  
Subdued by wrath and love;  
'Twas dreadful as the flames of hell,  
Bright as the beams above:

Heroes were wont to name  
The weapons of their might;  
This was the brand of matchless flame,  
The WORD OF GOD, in fight.

“Oft with its fiery force  
His arm had quell'd the foe;  
And laid, resistless in his course,  
The alien armies low;  
Bent on such glorious toils,  
The world to him was loss;  
But all his trophies, all his spoils,  
He hung upon the cross.

At midnight came the cry,  
'To meet thy GOD prepare,'  
He woke-he caught his Captain's eye,  
Then, strong in faith and prayer'  
His spirit with a bound  
Burst its encumb'ring clay  
His tent at sunrise on the ground  
A darken'd ruin lay.

“The pains of death are past,  
Labor and sorrow cease;  
And life's long warfare closed at last,  
His soul is found in peace.  
Soldier of Christ, well done!-  
Begin thy new employ;  
Sing, while eternal ages run,  
Thy Master and his joy.”

## ***Bishop George.***

The Rev. Enoch George died in Staunton, Virginia, August 23, 1828. In early life he became pious, and, under a strong conviction that it was his duty to preach the gospel, entered the traveling ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. His success gave the fullest demonstration that he was not mistaken in his calling. In 1816 he was elected bishop in said church, in which office he continued until his death. His piety was deep, and was strikingly exemplified in life and in death.

“Strong in the great Redeemer’s name,  
He bore the cross, despised the shame;  
And, like his Master here,  
Wrestled with danger, pain, distress,  
Hunger, and cold, and nakedness  
And every form of fear.”

The truth of the following passage, from his writings, is clearly seen in his last hours:-

“View the disciples of Jesus in death! It is then that their principles and hopes are brought to the severest test. Nothing can be more convincing to the careless, or encouraging to the pious, than the dying triumphs of a Christian. When the unceasing pressure of pain tortures, and strength fails, and the spirits ebb; when all earthly things recede, and the solemn light of eternity dawns; when the last agonies rend asunder the soul and body;-to see the man under such circumstances, smiling amid the ruins of dissolving nature, committing himself without fear or dismay to his ever-living Redeemer, and in effect saying to death, ‘Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy, when I fall I shall arise;’—it is then, and under such circumstances, that the power of religion is displayed.

‘How our hearts burn’d within us at the scene!  
His God sustains him in his final hour!  
His final hour brings glory to his God!  
Man’s glory Heaven vouchsafes to call his own.  
We gaze! we weep mix’d tears of grief and joy!  
Amazement strikes! devotion bursts to flame!  
Christians adore! and infidels believe!’”

His end was remarkably peaceful. To several brethren, who called to see him a short time before his death, he said, “If I die, I am going to glory! For this I have been living forty years.” He made arrangements for the settlement of his temporal affairs with much composure. He requested that the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters of the Gospel by St. John might be read. On hearing them, he made some appropriate remarks on the sentiments contained in them, and exclaimed, “What a body of divinity and valuable truth is contained in those chapters?”

His soul was filled with great joy.

On one occasion he said to a friend, who expressed a desire for him to live longer, “Why do you not wish me to go to heaven from Staunton?” His sufferings at times were great, but he bore them patiently. “Glory! glory!” was his theme. To his attendant physician he said, “I shall soon be in glory!” In the ecstasy of his feelings he appears to have been greatly abstracted from the world, and absorbed in meditations on the enjoyment of the society of glorified spirits-so much so as to have lost himself in the raptures of the glory just ready to break upon him, if he were not already favored with a vision of angelic attendants. He said to a friend, “Who are these? Are they not all ministering spirits? My dear departed wife has been with me, and I shall soon be with her in glory.” As several brethren entered the room to see him, he raised his arms to embrace them, and said, “Brethren, rejoice with me; I am going to glory.” As his strength failed, his joys increased. He clapped his hands and exclaimed, “Shout glory to God !” At another time he said, “I have been many years trying to lead others to glory, and now thither I am going. For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain.” Thus he expired. Surely

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate  
Is privileged beyond the common walks of virtuous life,  
Quite on the verge of heaven.”

“Christ triumphed for his saints,” says John Angel James, “by his own death, and he is continually renewing the victory in them, amid all the sufferings and decay of their own dissolution.” “Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

## **Joseph Addison.**

Joseph Addison, the celebrated writer, was born at Milston, in Wiltshire, England, in the year 1672. He was educated at Queen’s College, Oxford. He possessed deep piety as well as splendid acquirements. His writings have been universally admired, and will long continue to occupy a prominent place in English literature. His contributions to the Tattler, Guardian, and Spectator, are considered among the finest specimens of English composition.

Dr. Johnson says of him: “He employed wit on the side of virtue and religion. He not only made the proper use of wit himself, but taught it to others; and from his time it has been generally subservient to the cause of reason and truth. He has dissipated the prejudice that had long connected cheerfulness with vice, and easiness of manners with laxity of principles. He has restored virtue to its dignity, and taught innocence not to be ashamed. This is an elevation of literary character above all Greek and Roman fame. As a teacher of wisdom he may be confidently followed. He employed all the enchantment of fancy, and all the cogency of argument, to recommend to the reader his real interest—the care of pleasing the Author of his being.”

He took great pleasure in contemplating a future existence. He says, “The prospect of a future state is the secret comfort and refreshment of my soul. It is that which makes nature cheerful about me; it doubles all my pleasures, and supports me under all my afflictions. I can look at disappointments and misfortunes, pain and sickness, death itself, with indifference, so long as I keep in view the pleasures of eternity, and the state of being in which there will be no fears nor apprehensions, pains or sorrows.”

It is said by Mr. Murray, that “the virtue of this excellent man shone brightest at the point of death. After a long and manly, but vain, struggle with his distempers, he dismissed his physicians, and with them all hopes of life; but with his hopes of life he dismissed not his concern for the living. He sent for Lord Warwick, a youth nearly related to him, and finely accomplished, but irregular in conduct and principle, on whom his pious instructions and example had not produced the desired effect. Lord Warwick came; but, life now glimmering in the socket, the dying friend was silent. After a proper pause, the youth said, ‘Dear sir! you sent for me: I believe and hope you have some commands; I shall hold them most dear.’ May the reader not only feel the reply, but retain its impression! Forcibly grasping the youth’s hand, he softly said, ‘See in what peace a Christian can die!’ He spoke with difficulty, and soon expired. Through divine grace, how great is man! Through divine mercy, how stingless death!”

Dr. Young, it is said, wrote the following lines in reference to the last hours of this great and good man:-

“He taught us how to live, and, O! too high  
A price for knowledge! taught us how to die!”

## **Voltaire.**

Voltaire, a French writer of considerable note, and an atheist, was born February 20<sup>th</sup>, 1694, at Chatenay, educated at the Jesuits’ college at Paris, and died May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1778. He possessed talents, but misapplied them. He spent much of his time in treating with contempt the Holy Scriptures, and ridiculing the Christian religion.

The death of this wretched man was as might have been supposed. He said to his physician, Dr. Tronchin, but a short time before he expired, “I am abandoned by God and man. Doctor, I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months’ life.” The doctor replied, “Sir, you cannot live six weeks.” “Then,” said the dying man, “I shall go to hell, and you will go with me!”

The author of the History of the French Clergy, Abbe Bareul, has given an account of the closing scene of this impious man. “It was,” he says, “during Voltaire’s last visit to Paris, when his triumph was complete, and he had even feared he should die with glory, amidst the acclamations of an infatuated theatre, that he was struck by the hand of Providence, and made a very different termination of his career.”

“In the midst of his triumphs, a violent hemorrhage raised apprehensions for his life. D’Alembert, Diderot, and Marmontel, hastened to support his resolution in his last moments, but were only witnesses to their mutual ignominy, as well as to his own.

“Here let not the historian fear exaggeration. Rage, remorse, reproach, and blasphemy, all accompany and characterize the long agony of the dying atheist. His death, the most terrible ever recorded to have stricken an impious man, will not be denied by his companions in impiety. Their silence, however much they may wish to deny it, is the least of those corroborative proofs which might be adduced. Not one of the sophisters has ever dared to mention any sign given, of resolution or tranquillity, by the premier chief, during the space of three months which elapsed from the time he was crowned in the theatre until his decease.

“It was on his return from the theatre, and in the midst of his toils he was resuming in order to acquire fresh applause, when Voltaire was warned that the long career of his impiety was drawing to an end.

“In spite of all the sophisters flocking around him, in the first day of his illness he gave signs of wishing to return to God whom he had so often blasphemed. He called for the priest, who ministered to Him whom he had sworn to crush under the appellation of the wretch. [He had often applied this term to the blessed Saviour.] His danger increasing, he wrote the following note to the abbe Gaultier:-

‘You had promised me, sir, to come and hear me. I entreat you would take the trouble of calling as soon as possible.’  
Signed, Voltaire, Paris, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>, 1778.

“D’Alembert, Diderot,(It is said on good authority, that D’Alembert and Diderot died with remorse of conscience similar to that experienced by Voltaire) and about twenty others of the conspirators, who had beset his apartment, never approached him, but to witness their own ignominy; and often he would curse them, and exclaim, ‘Retire! It is you that have brought me to my present state! Begone! I could have done without you all; but you could not exist without me! And what a wretched glory you have procured for me!’”

Then would succeed the horrid remembrance of his conspiracy. They could hear him, the prey of anguish and dread, alternately supplicating and blaspheming that God against whom he had conspired; and in plaintive accents he would cry out, “O, Christ! O, Jesus Christ!” and then complain that he was abandoned by God and man. The Hand which had traced in ancient writ the sentence of an impious and reviling king, seemed to trace before his eyes, Crush then, do crush the wretch. In vain he turned his head away: the time was coming apace when he was to appear before the tribunal of Him whom he had blasphemed; and his physicians, particularly Mr. Tronchin, calling in to administer relief, thunder-struck, retired, declaring that the death of the impious man was terrible indeed. The pride of the conspirators would willingly have suppressed these declarations, but it was in vain. The mareschal de Richelieu fled from the bedside, declaring it to be a sight too terrible to be sustained; and Mr. Tronchin, that the furies of Orestes could give but a faint idea of those of Voltaire.

Cowper speaks of him thus,-

“The Frenchman first in literary fame,  
(Mention him if you please-Voltaire? The same.)  
With spirit, genius, eloquence, supplied,  
Lived long, wrote much, laugh’d heartily, and died!  
The Scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew  
Bon-mots to gall the Christian and the Jew.  
An infidel in health; but what when sick?  
O then, a text would touch him at the quick!”

## **David Hume.**

David Hume has been regarded as the great champion of infidelity; and perhaps few have labored with greater zeal to destroy the influence of the Christian religion. He wrote in defense of almost every crime which has degraded human nature.

He died as he lived. Says Dr. Johnson: “Hume owned he had never read the New Testament with attention. Here, then, was a man, who had been at no pains to inquire into the truth of religion, and had continually turned his mind the other way. It was not to be expected that the prospect of death should alter his way of thinking, unless God should send an

angel to set him right. He had a vanity in being thought easy." He spent much of his time, as death drew near, in PLAYING AT WHIST AND IN CRACKING JOKES. Horrid indeed! But, with all his efforts to die "easy," conscience would awake. We are assured, on good authority, that "Hume died in extreme agony and horror of mind. His nurse, a truly respectable woman, has detailed the dreadful secret, and expressed her fervent desire never to witness such another deathbed scene."

***Who would say, "Let me die the death of an infidel, and let my last days be like his?"***

On reading the account of the deathbed scenes of such characters, methinks I hear the reader exclaim, "Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his!"

**Rev. George Roberts**

Experienced the converting grace of God in early life, and devoted himself to the Christian ministry. He was among the first Methodist preachers who came to New-England, (he came in 1790,) where, through much opposition and suffering, he labored with great success. Through excessive labors and toils his health failed, and being unable to perform much ministerial service, he located in the city of Baltimore, where he became a physician, preaching occasionally, as his health would permit.

He was an able preacher, and greatly beloved. Such were his controversial powers, that error seemed to flee before him, and his antagonists found themselves unequal to the contest, though many of them were able and powerful. To defend the truth was his delight. It might be said of him as it was of Barnabas, "He was full of faith and the Holy Ghost."

He was signally honored of his Master, in being made the instrument of "turning many to righteousness." Hundreds will, no doubt, greet him in "that day," as having been instrumental in their salvation. He will "shine" in the heavenly firmament "as the stars for ever and ever."

He died in Baltimore in Christian triumph; being eminently sustained in the last conflict.. "His last hours," says his son, "were eminently triumphant, though eminently painful physically. For twenty-four hours prior to his death, he had a most violent convulsion every ten minutes, by the watch; and for twenty-four hours preceding the last day he had them every half hour. Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that he came out of each with his intellect apparently more vigorous than when it seized him. During the intervals he shouted aloud, almost every moment, the praises of redeeming grace. This fact was the more striking from the consideration of his having never been known to exult much during his previous life. He was distinguished by the even-ness and quiet of his temper and frame. A night or two previous to his dissolution I urged him to spare himself, and offered as a reason for it, the possibility of his disturbing the neighbors. He immediately replied, 'Be quiet, my son: be quiet, my son! No, no! If I had the voice of, an angel, I would rouse the inhabitants of Baltimore, for the purpose of telling the joys of redeeming love. Victory! victory! victory ! through the blood of the Lamb!' 'Victory through the blood of the Lamb!' was the last sentence that trembled on his dying lips."

Such is triumphant dying! What but the power of religion can enable the soul thus to triumph when the body sinks to the tomb? The poet confidently, though truly, exclaims,-

"The holy triumphs of my soul  
Shall death itself outbrave;  
Leave dull mortality behind,  
And fly beyond the grave!"

**John Howard.**

John Howard, the friend of the poor and unfortunate, was born at Hackney, England, in the year 1726. He became a Christian in his youth, and through life was a devoted servant of his Master. He was unwearied in his exertions to relieve the suffering and destitute. He "adopted the cause of the prisoner, the sick, and the destitute, not only in his own country, but throughout Europe."

On leaving his country, to prosecute his work of mercy, he writes, "To my country I commit the result of my past labors. It is my intention again to quit it, for the purpose of revisiting Russia, Turkey, and other countries, and extending my tour in the East. I am not insensible of the dangers that must attend such a journey. Trusting, however, in the protection of that kind Providence which has hitherto preserved me, I calmly and cheerfully commit myself to the disposal of unerring Wisdom. Should it please God to cut off my life in the prosecution of this design, let it not be uncandidly imputed to rashness or enthusiasm; but to a serious, deliberate conviction, that I am pursuing the path of duty; and to a sincere desire of being made an instrument of greater usefulness to my fellow-creatures, than could be expected in the circle of a retired life."

The celebrated Burke says, "I cannot name this gentleman without remarking that his labors and writings have done much to open the eyes and hearts of mankind. He has visited all Europe-not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, nor the stateliness of temples; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern art, nor to collect medals, or collate manuscripts-but to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hospitals; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt; to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and to compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries. His plan is original; it is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of discovery; a circumnavigation of charity. Already the benefit of his labor is felt more or less in every country."

On leaving England for the last time, a friend expressed to him his apprehension that they should never meet again. He replied, "We shall soon meet In heaven ;" and, as he expected to die of the plague in Egypt, he added, "The way to heaven from Grand Cairo is as near as from London."

"While this great and good man was laboring for the relief of distress it pleased divine Providence to suffer him to fall a victim to a disease, supposed to be the plague, at Cherson, in 1790. He was perfectly sensible, during his last illness, except at short intervals, till within a very few hours before his death. He was fully prepared for the event, and often said that he had no wish for life, but as it gave him the means of relieving his fellow-men." On being told by his physicians that he had not long to live, he said, "It is well: whatever pleases God pleases me." Noble testimony! How expressive of Christian resignation! Thus did the pious, philanthropic Howard, close his labors for the good of man!

Some excellent lines have been written on his death by Dr. Aiken, which we here present to the reader:-

"Howard, thy task is done! thy Master calls  
And summons thee from Cherson's distant walls.  
'Come, well-approved! my faithful servant, come!  
No more a wand'rer, seek thy destined home.  
Long have I mark'd thee, with o'erruling eye,  
And sent admiring angels from on high,  
To walk the paths of danger by thy aide,  
From death to shield thee, and through snares to guide.  
My minister of good, I've sped the way,  
And shot through dungeon glooms a leading ray,  
To cheer, by thee, with kind, unhop'd relief,  
My creatures lost and whelm'd in guilt and grief  
I've led thee, ardent, on through wondrous climes,  
To combat human woes and human crimes.  
But 'tis enough-thy great commission's o'er;  
I prove thy faith, thy love, thy zeal, no more.  
Nor droop, that far from country, kindred, friends,  
Thy life, to duty long devoted, ends:

What boots it where the high reward is given,  
Or whence the soul triumphant springs to heaven?"

## **Edward Payson.**

The Rev. Edward Payson, a distinguished Congregational minister of Portland, Maine, was the son of the Rev. Seth Payson, and was born in Rindge, N. H., July 25, 1783. He graduated at Harvard College in 1803, and was ordained, as the colleague of Mr. Kellogg, Portland, December 16, 1807; he afterward became the sole pastor of a new church in that city.

“During about twenty years he was exclusively devoted to the work of the ministry with increasing usefulness, being the instrument of the conversion to the Christian faith of hundreds of his hearers.”

“In his distressing sickness he displayed, in the most interesting and impressive manner, the power of Christian faith. Smitten down in the midst of his days and usefulness, he was entirely resigned to the divine will; for he perceived distinctly, that the infinite wisdom of God could not err in the direction of events, and it was his joy that God reigneth. His mind rose over bodily pain, and, in the strong visions of eternity, he seemed almost to lose the sense of suffering.”

His dying sayings were numerous-too numerous to mention in this short sketch. The triumphant manner of his departure may be seen from a letter, addressed to his sister a few days before his death:-

“Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission. The Sun of righteousness has gradually been drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as he approached, and now fills the whole hemisphere; pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun; exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering, with unutterable wonder, why God should deign thus to shine upon a sinful worm. A single heart and a single tongue seem altogether inadequate to my wants: I want a whole heart for every separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion.”

*What glory in dying thus! To pass away amid such a halo of it is truly transporting!*

## **George Pickering.**

The Rev. George Pickering was born in Talbot county, Maryland, in 1769; brought up in Philadelphia; converted in St. George's Church in that city at the age of eighteen; joined the Methodist traveling connection in 1790, and continued in that connection, without interruption, for fifty-seven years. His travels, labors, and privations, were great; yet he “endured as seeing Him who is invisible.” He was generally known and greatly beloved in the church—a man of pure character, of strong faith, and ardent zeal. Many are the seals of his ministry. During the last year of his life he was the oldest effective Methodist preacher in the world.

His brethren in the ministry speak of him thus: “He was kind-hearted, affable, and highly cheerful. His distinguishing traits of mind were, penetration, clearness, decision, a tenacious memory, an inventive genius, a prompt yet cautious judgment, prudence, a peculiar quaintness or humor, and an elevated taste. He was spiritually minded in an eminent degree. His faith was unwavering. He seemed deeply impressed and pervaded with the truths of revelation, which were his constant study. A spirit of prayer, in a strong and bright flame, burned upon the altar of his heart, and his sense of heavenly things often glowed with rapture. He was a popular preacher, a sound divine, a cheerful and self-sacrificing itinerant, an able and patient ruler, and—what is of the greatest importance—he was successful in bringing souls to Christ. He was a living pillar in the church.”

He died at his family residence at Waltham, Massachusetts, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1846, at the age of seventy-seven. A few days before his departure several of his brethren called to see him. An account of the visit is thus given:—“Such was his extreme feebleness that visitors, and even audible devotional exercises, had been almost entirely inadmissible in his chamber. At his own request, we were permitted to approach his bedside. A scene there ensued which no pen can describe. As it was impossible for him to address the visitors individually, one of them was designated to speak to him in behalf of all; but under the necessary restriction of doing so in the briefest possible manner. On taking the hand of

the aged sufferer, he opened his eyes, and showed his recognition of the brother, addressing him by tears of affection. The following brief conversation ensued:-

“Beloved father, a number of your ministerial brethren are present, and have requested me to express to you their Christian affection and sympathy.’

“He replied, with strong emphasis and tears, ‘I thank you; you all have a high place in my affection.’

“They are happy to learn that in this your extremity, you still rejoice in hope of the glory of God.’

“ Yes! O yes!’

“That you feel that the sting of death is extracted?’

“Yes! O yes!’

“And that you can resign yourself fully into the hands of your Lord?’

“Yes, O yes; glory be to his name!’

“Grasping the hand of the brother addressing him with still firmer hold, he then, with tears and sobs, exclaimed,

“You all have my high esteem and affection. Tell, O tell the brethren, to preach Christ and him crucified-an all-able, all-powerful, all-willing, all-ready Saviour-a present Saviour, saving now’. Preach, “Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.” O, tell them to preach holiness; holiness is the principal thing. God enable you to preach holiness!’

“His emotions overcame him: he attempted to say more; but the brother conducting the conversation closed it with appropriate remarks.

“The scene was touching and sublime -a hoary and heroic veteran of the cross was standing between both worlds, about to disappear from his fellow-laborers for ever on earth. Full of years, and virtues, and services, he was now victorious over death, and giving his departing counsels to his brethren. We broke away from the room, so near the gate of heaven, with deep emotions, and assembled in the parlor below, where we sung,-

‘On Jordan’s stormy banks I stand,  
And cast a wishful eye  
To Canaan’s fair and happy land,  
Where my possessions lie.

O the transporting, rapt’rous scene,  
That rises to my sight!  
Sweet fields array’d in living green,  
And rivers of delight !”

During most of the time of his last illness he was peculiarly joyful and triumphant. The hero of so many moral battlefields died as he lived-victorious. His last distinct utterance was, “All my affairs for time and eternity are settled. Glory be to God!” And the last whisper caught by his attendants was the word “GLORY!” “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints!”

***Now look at the following cases, and see how unbelievers and apostates die!***

### **Thomas Paine.**

Thomas Paine, a political writer and deist, was born in Norfolk, England, in 1737, and died in New-York, June 8, 1809, aged seventy-two years. This unhappy unbeliever died in great misery. In consequence of his disgusting vices, he became an outcast from all respectable society. He is said to have been irritable, vain, filthy, malignant, dishonest, and drunken.

Says Mr. Cunningham: “Few men have been more bountifully favored with the gifts of nature and expansion of intellect, than was Thomas Paine. His essays on the political rights of man stand as a lasting monument of his genius,

and exhibit a mind girded with strength; yet, notwithstanding this, his great success, and acknowledged ability in effecting a political revolution, he revolted against God and common sense. His 'Age of Reason' was his age of folly! He shut his eyes against rational evidence, denied the truth of the Christian religion, and became a skeptic. This infatuated infidel was left to the fruits of his own doings; he degraded himself, and died a fool.

"An intimate friend and relation of mine visited Paine, during his sufferings, a short time before his death; the object of which visit was, as far as possible, to ascertain the true state of his mind, and to administer consolation to him in this trying moment. On being introduced to him, this friend found him much distressed in body and mind. Another friend, who visited him for the same purpose, says that he never saw a man in so much apparent distress. He sat with his elbow on his knee and his head leaning on his hand; and beside him stood a vessel, to catch the blood that was oozing from him in five different streams, like spider's webs—one from the corner of his mouth, one from each eye, and one from each nostril. This friend endeavored to get him into conversation, but was only answered by horrid looks and dreadful groans."

Frequently, in his distress, he would call out, "Lord Jesus! help me." Dr. Manley asked him whether, from his calling so often upon the Saviour, it was to be inferred that he believed the gospel. He replied, "I have no wish to believe on that subject." He expired in great agony. Such are the fruits of infidelity. Dreadful indeed to contemplate. How many, like Paine, has infidelity ruined!

"With what dreadful vehemence," says Jay, in one of his Evening Exercises, "did the writer once hear a fine young man, while dying, exclaim, again and again, 'O, curse you, Voltaire!' O! how many have Paine, Voltaire, and other infidels, taught to live and die like themselves! For ruining so many hundreds, they will be cursed by God and man in time and in eternity!

### **Thomas Hobbes.**

Thomas Hobbes, a celebrated philosopher, was born in 1588, in Wiltshire, England; was educated at Oxford, 1608; became tutor to the earl of Devonshire, and, in 1640, retired to Paris, where he performed much of his literary labor. He possessed superior talents, but they were not employed in the cause of God. His doctrines, religious and political, are most pernicious in their consequences. Whether he was an atheist or not, he sneered at the Christian idea of a God, and contemned the Holy Scriptures. The earl of Rochester and many others had imbibed infidel principles from his writings.

He received no comfort or support from his philosophy. He was wretched beyond description; troubled by day and by night. He could not bear the thought of dying, and labored to avoid the subject as much as possible. But die he must. When he found that he could live no longer, he said, "I am about to take a leap in the dark. I shall be glad to find a hole at which to creep out of the world." Poor deluded man! Where now is his infidel philosophy? It is a poor light to his feet "through the valley and shadow of death." Alas for infidelity!

### **Francis Spira.**

Francis Spira was a resident of Venice, a man of wealth, a lawyer by profession, and of good reputation. A few years after the death of Martin Luther, he espoused the reformer's opinions, and advocated them. This became obnoxious to the Popish clergy, and he was brought before the pope's legate, charged with dangerous innovations. He must recant, or suffer what his enemies might inflict upon him. After a hard struggle with conscience, he finally signed a recantation, by which he was discharged. Soon, in reflecting on what he had done, he became overwhelmed in despair. His friends offered their assistance; physicians were sent for: "Do you think," said he, "that this disease is to be cured by potions? Neither plasters nor drugs can ease a soul lying under the wrath of God." He would exclaim, "O! miserable wretch! O! miserable wretch!" For about eight weeks he was in great anguish, and died in despair! Far better had he followed the example of the aged Polycarp, who, when commanded to abjure Christ, said, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never did me wrong; how can I blaspheme my King, who hath saved me?" He suffered cheerfully for his Master. How dreadful to deny Christ! Who can but shudder as he contemplates the doom of apostates? May the reader never experience it!

## *Wilbur Fisk.*

The Rev. Wilbur Fisk was born at Brattleboro', Vermont, August 31, 1792. He graduated at Brown University, Rhode Island, in 1815. Soon after he became a Christian, and gave himself up to the work of the Christian ministry. His talents were of a high order; his piety, deep and genuine. As a writer, he excelled; as a preacher, he was popular and successful. But few men in this country have attracted more attention as a public speaker. He was principal of the Wesleyan Academy, at Wilbraham, for several years; after which he was elected president of the Wesleyan University, which station he sustained at the time of his death. Much may be said of this great and good man, but our object here is simply to notice his last hours.

How did the devoted, eloquent, and beloved Fisk, die? His biographer, in speaking of his death, says, "O what a death was that! No powers of mine are adequate to do it justice. So calm, so sublime, so patient, so triumphant; since it must take place, it was worth a lifetime to witness it. When it was announced to him that there was no hope of his recovering, he was perfectly calm, observing, 'Death had no terrors to him ;' and began to arrange his temporal affairs, as if only preparing for a pleasant journey. While all around were drowned in sorrow, he alone was calm, serene, and happy. He was Dr. Fisk to the last. There was no falling off from his dignity, no obscuring

of his excellences. On the contrary, every virtue, every trait, seemed to acquire new lustre-increasing radiance:

'Thus while the veil of flesh decay'd,  
His beauties brighten'd through the shade;  
Charms which his lowly heart conceal'd,  
In nature's weakness were reveal'd.'

"His sufferings were extreme for fourteen days before his death, in consequence of obstructed respiration, but no murmur was heard from his lips. Patience in him had 'its perfect work.' His humility was remarkable. He said, 'I feel that I am a sinner saved by grace, and if I get to heaven I shall have as much reason to sing that song as any there.' He trusted alone in the merits of the atoning Lamb for salvation. He said, 'Jesus! O lovely name! No name so charming! He saves his people from their sins! I am a sinner; therefore the name of Jesus suits me best! My soul is centred in the love of God in Christ Jesus.' Speaking of his confidence in the truths of the Bible, he said, 'They are God's truths, and will bear the light of eternity.... Vain reasoners tell us the body and soul will go down into the dust together. But it is not so. So far from anybody pressing my soul down to the dust, I feel as if my soul had almost power to raise my body upward and bear it away. And it will at last by the power of God effectually bear it to heaven: for its attractions are thitherward.' On one occasion, after being replaced in his chair, being unable to lie down, he said, 'From the chair to the throne!' At one time, when he seemed about expiring, he said, 'I believe I am going;' and in a few minutes said,

'There is my home and portion fair,  
My treasure and my friends are there;

\_some of them, at least, and the rest are on their way.'"

"Two days before he breathed his last," says Dr. Holdich, "I was conversing with him as to his prospects of the future. He was, as usual, full of peace and tranquil hope. He was suffering severely from his agonizing weariness and difficult respiration. I observed that it was a great consolation to know that these distresses could not last forever: that a rest remains for the people of God, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. He responded with peculiar emphasis, 'Bless God for that!' The next day, on entering his room, I found him lethargic. Consciousness was ebbing fast away. It was difficult to rouse him so as to fix his attention. Nevertheless, I went up to him, and putting my hand in his, said, 'I have come to see you, sir, once more. Do you know me?' With his dying hands he faintly grasped mine, and distinctly whispered, 'Yes,-glorious hope!' These were the last words I heard him speak. I believe they were the last he consciously uttered. He was fast sinking into a state of coma, from which his spirit was not aroused until it awoke replumed and glorified in the celestial world. And though the death-struggle was terrible, yet that purified spirit seemed to leave behind it the stamp of its own glorious destiny. He that beheld that corpse in the habiliments of the grave would say, 'That was the casket of a splendid jewel!'-so much did it seem to smile upon the occupant which had gone to take possession of a nobler house above. The very happiness of heaven seemed to be reflected in the countenance of the dead."

*The memory of Fisk still lives in the hearts of thousands. May we meet him in the "better land!"*

### **John Dickins.**

The Rev. John Dickins was a native of England, born and educated in the city of London. He united with the Methodists in the United States in 1774, and was admitted as a preacher among them in 1777. He traveled extensively in Virginia and North Carolina during the American revolution. On the return of peace he was stationed for some years in the city of New-York. For several years he superintended the book business of the Methodist societies, sending out into every state of the Union many thousands of volumes on experimental and practical religion.

He was a good scholar, a sound and clear reasoner, and a plain, practical preacher. He died in Philadelphia of the malignant fever, Sept. 27, 1798, in the fifty-second year of his age. The fever of which he died, became somewhat prevalent in the city, which led many to leave it; but he resolved on a different course, as appears from the following letter, addressed to Bishop Asbury:-

“MY MUCH-ESTEEMED FRIEND AND BROTHER,-I sit down to write as in the jaws of death: whether Providence may permit me to see your face again in the flesh I know not. But if not, I hope, through abundant mercy, we shall meet in the presence of God. I am truly conscious that I am an unprofitable, a very unprofitable, servant; but I think my heart condemns me not; and, therefore, I have confidence toward God. Perhaps I might have left the city, as most of my friends and brethren have done; but when I thought of such a thing my mind recurred to that Providence which has done so much for me, a poor worm, that I was afraid of indulging any distrust. So I commit myself and family into the hands of God, for life or death.”

It is said, that “on his tomb might be engraved, and over his sleeping ashes with truth be pronounced, **HERE LIES ONE, WHO,-IN THE CAUSE OF GOD, NEVER FEARED OR FLATTERED MAN!**”

This faithful Christian and minister closed life in great triumph, as appears from a letter written by his widow, addressed to Bishop Asbury, bearing date October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1798:-

“O the precious memory of my dear husband will be preaching to me as long as I live. I believe him to have been one of the most upright and holy men, for twenty years past, that has lived. Indeed he was a light to those that knew him. Never, never let any reflect upon him for staying in the city at this awful time; for he could not leave it; and the Lord watered his soul with divine comfort. With what composure did he receive the stroke at the hand of his God!

“On the first day of his sickness, about three hours after he was taken, he called me to his bedside. ‘My dear,’ said he, ‘I am very ill; but I entreat you, in the most earnest manner, not to be the least discomposed or uneasy. Tell the children I beg of them not to be uneasy, for divine Wisdom cannot err. Glory be to God, I can rejoice in his will, whether for life or death! I know all is well. Glory be to Jesus! I hang upon thee! Glory be to thee, O my God! I have made it my constant business, in my feeble manner, to please thee; and now, O God, thou dost comfort me!’ Clasp his hands together, with tears running down his cheeks, crying, ‘Glory be to God! Glory, glory be to God! My soul now enjoys such sweet communion with him, that I would not give it for all the world! Glory be to Jesus! I have not felt so much for seven years. Love him; trust him; praise!’”

### **Jesse Lee.**

The Rev. Jesse Lee, a man of precious memory, was born in Virginia, in 1758; was brought to a knowledge of the truth in his fifteenth year; and joined the Methodist ministry in 1783. He was among the first Methodist ministers in the country: he traveled extensively, preaching the gospel as he went, “the Lord working with him by signs following.” He first introduced Methodism into New-England’ and in other parts of the United States. His labors and sufferings were great, but he met them cheerfully and patiently. Opposition and persecution attended him at almost every step, but he was just the man to meet them. Firm and zealous, with his eye fixed on duty, he could surmount obstacles and endure discouragements. He confidently expected success, and success was his! Few, in any age, have turned more “to righteousness.” He was a man of rare talents, of native genius, of ready perception, and of indomitable perseverance. His name is imperishably written wherever Methodism is known in this country. He has been styled, The Apostle of Methodism in New-England.

His death took place Sept. 12, 1816, in Hillsborough, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. He died rather suddenly, yet full of hope. Most of the time, during his short sickness, his mind was in ecstasies. Glory appeared in view. On one

occasion he said, "Glory! glory! glory! Hallelujah! Jesus reigns!" At another time he requested that a letter might be written to his brother, "to let him know that he died happy in the Lord." He took an affectionate leave of all present, and requested them to pray-it was a solemn season-soon after which, "without any signs of distress, but with the utmost tranquillity of mind, his spirit took its flight to the regions of the blessed "So ended the life of one whose memory is loved on earth, and will be for ever cherished in heaven.

## ***Richard Hooker.***

Richard Hooker was born near Exeter, England, in 1653. "He possessed great learning and sound judgment; and distinguished himself by a celebrated work, entitled, 'The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity.' He was a meek and pious man, and spent his days in laboring to promote the glory of his Creator, and the happiness of men."

He died in the forty-seventh year of his age. A short time before his departure he said, "I have lived to see that this world is full of perturbation; and I have been long preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the awful hour of making up my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near. And I have, by his grace, loved him in my youth, and feared him in my age; and labored to have a conscience void of offense toward Him, and toward all men." At another time he said, "God hath heard my daily petition; for I am at peace with all men, and he is at peace with me. From this blessed assurance I feel that inward joy which the world can neither give nor take from me. My conscience beareth me this witness; and this witness makes the thoughts of death joyful. I could wish to live to do the church more service; but I cannot hope for it; for my days are past as a shadow that returns not." Shortly after uttering these expressions he went home to God. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord!" "It shall be well with the righteous."

## **George Villiers.**

George Villiers, duke of Buckingham, is said to have been a man of great wit, and the richest man at the court of Charles II. A short time before his death he wrote the following letter to Dr. Barlow:-

"DEAR DOCTOR,-I am always looking upon you as a man of true virtue; I know you to be a person of sound judgment. For, however I may act in opposition to the principles of religion, or the dictates of reason, I can honestly assure you, I had always the highest veneration for both. The world and I may shake hands, for I dare affirm we are heartily weary of each other. O, doctor, what a prodigal have I been of the most valuable of all possessions-time! I have squandered it away with a persuasion it was lasting; and now, when a few days would be worth a hecatomb of worlds, I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of half a dozen hours.

"How despicable is that man who never prays to God but in the time of his distress! In what manner can he supplicate that omnipotent Being in his affliction with reverence, whom, in the tide of his prosperity, he never remembered with dread? Do not brand me with infidelity, when I tell you I am almost ashamed to offer up my petitions to the throne of grace; or of imploring that divine mercy in the next world, which I have so scandalously abused in this. Shall ingratitude to man be looked on as the blackest of crimes, and not ingratitude to God? Shall an insult offered to the king be looked on in the most offensive light; and yet no notice taken when the King of kings is treated with indignity and disrespect?"

"The companions of my former libertinism would scarce believe their eyes, were you to show them this epistle. They would laugh at me as a dreaming enthusiast, or pity me as a timorous wretch, who was shocked at the appearance of futurity. They are more entitled to my pity than my resentment. A future state may well strike terror into any man who has not acted well in this life; and he must have an uncommon share of courage, indeed, who does not shrink at the presence of God.

"You see, my dear doctor, the apprehensions of death will soon bring the most profligate to a proper use of their understanding. I am haunted by remorse, despised by my acquaintance, and, I fear, forsaken by my God. There is nothing so dangerous, my dear doctor, as extraordinary abilities. I cannot be accused of vanity now, by being sensible that I was once possessed of uncommon qualifications; as I sincerely regret that I was ever blessed with any at all. My rank in life made these accomplishments still more conspicuous; and, fascinated with the general applause which they procured, I never considered about the proper means by which they should be displayed. Hence, to purchase a smile from a blockhead whom I despised, I have frequently treated the virtuous with disrespect; and sported with the holy name of Heaven to obtain a laugh from a parcel of fools, who were entitled to nothing but my contempt. Your men of wit, my dear doctor, look on themselves as discharged from the duties of religion; and confine the doctrines of the

gospel to people of meaner understandings; and look on that man to be of a narrow genius who studies to be good. What a pity that the holy writings are not made the criterion of true judgment! Favor me, dear doctor, with a visit as soon as possible. Writing to you gives me some ease. I am of opinion this is the last visit I shall ever solicit from you. My distemper is powerful. Come and pray for the departing spirit of the unhappy

“BUCKINGHAM.”

“Surely it shall be ill with the wicked, for the reward of his hands shall be given him!” Contrast the death of Fisk, Dickins, Lee, and Hooker, with that of Villiers, and then we ask, Would you die the death of a libertine?

### **Rev. John Summerfield**

Was born at Preston, England, January 31, 1798; was converted to God at the age of twenty-one, and entered the Methodist ministry in 1818, when twenty-two years of age. He early attracted attention as a public speaker; multitudes would flock to hear him where it was known he was to speak. He landed in this country March 17, 1821, and immediately entered upon his ministerial labors. His pulpit oratory soon called out thousands to hear him; and he was sent for to deliver addresses before many of the different benevolent societies of the country.

Says one, who knew him well, “Soon after he was engaged in his Master’s vineyard, a correspondence between us commenced, from which I learned, that incessant demands were made upon the time and services of this incomparable youth; for quickly his ‘praise was in all the churches.’ Indeed, so numerous and pressing were the invitations from all quarters, that my fears were soon excited, lest his feeble tenement should early fall beneath the weight of his abundant labors. For while the listening multitudes were charmed and transported with the exhibition and development of such extraordinary powers, they apparently forgot that the treasure was deposited in an ‘earthen vessel;’ that so rich and rare a jewel was encased in so frail a casket.”

His preaching was often very powerful: his eloquence at times was overwhelming. The effect it sometimes produced is thus described by Mr. W. B. Tappan:-

“ I saw the evangelist of God ascend  
The holy place. He stood in the beauty  
Of meekness. He spoke, and on my heart  
Fell accents glowing with the prophet’s fire.  
I heard thee, mighty one! and was afraid,  
Yea, trembling, listen’d; for methought no voice  
Of mortal mold could thrill my bosom thus.  
O, sweet as angels’ music were the tones  
That breathed their Gilead on the wounded heart;  
Strengthen’d the weary-bade the broken come  
To Siloa’s fountain, and in faith be whole.  
I wept o’er blighted hopes; but thou didst draw,  
A willing captive, my admiring soul  
With thee, to brighter regions, where the dream  
Of full fruition lives, nor is unreal.  
I feared death-but thou didst deck the foe  
In lovely garb; with softest beauty clad,  
I saw him beckoning to the narrow house  
Of rest, where spicy odors balm the air,  
And resurrection’s halo crowns the dead.  
God speed thee, favor’d one ! Thy diadem  
Is wreathed of gentleness, and thick bestrown  
With pearls of nature’s forming-they are tears,  
Yea, tears of rapture, holy, and untold.”

John Summerfield will never be forgotten. He has left imperishable traces of his piety and labors on earth-traces which will be seen and admired by all coming generations-and has gone to shine as a star of the first magnitude in the

heavenly firmament. He fell in the midst of his days-at an early age; but his "end was peace." No one can read the expressions which fell from his dying lips, without seeing exhibited the power of the Christian religion to comfort and sustain in nature's last conflict. During his final sickness the divine glory shone around him, and his mind, most of the time, was occupied with heavenly things. About ten days before his death he was visited by Bishop Soule, who said to him, "I trust, John, all is peace." He replied, "I have a hope of which I trust I need not be ashamed." After prayer by the bishop, he said, "Bless the Lord; all within me shouts his praise:" and added, "great is the weakness of my body." The bishop observed, "Well, my dear brother, you have been doing the will of the Lord, now you are suffering; so that in doing and suffering you are serving the Lord." To which he replied, "I bless God! the will of the Lord be done;" and then said, "Bishop, farewell! if I do not meet you again on earth, meet me in heaven!"

At another time he requested that no 'anodyne might be administered when it appeared the time of his dissolution was approaching. "Administer nothing," said he, "that will create stupor, as I wish to be perfectly collected, so that I may have an unclouded view." "O!" said he, "I fear not so much the consequences of death, but nature's last struggle: flesh shrinks when we contemplate that. When the spirit is separated from the body, it stands, after the dislodgment, trembling and quivering. O! it is that, it is that convulsive struggle, which harasses the mind!" On being told there would be grace sufficient, he replied, "Well-yes-well-all is well." A short time before he died he said, "I doubt not but many will expect a dying testimony, but I know not how this may be with me: I would, however, give the answer of Whitefield to a female friend; when she asked him what his dying testimony would be, Whitefield replied, he had preached Christ, a living testimony." He

expired without a groan or struggle, June 13, 1825.

Thus died the eloquent Summerfield: "A man," says his biographer, "whose name is not only written in the Lamb's book of life," and his piety recorded on high; but one, the fragrant memorial of whose virtues deserves to be cherished by the church below, as exhibiting in a high degree the spirit which characterized his evangelical namesake, mentioned in the Gospel-even "that other disciple whom Jesus loved."

## **Edward Hyde.**

"If ever Christianity," says Robert Hall, "appears in its power, it is when it erects its trophies on the tomb; when it takes up its votaries where the world leaves them, and fills the breast with immortal hopes in dying moments." The truth of this passage is seen in the death of Edward Hyde.

He was born in Norwich, Conn., and in the days of youth became a subject of

converting grace. In early life he entered the 'Methodist ministry, and to his holy calling he devoted all his powers. Nor did he labor in vain. Many, through his instrumentality, were brought to a knowledge of the truth.

Being unable, by ill health, to perform, to a great extent, his ministerial duties, and desiring still to be useful, he became steward in the Wesleyan Academy, Wilbraham, Mass., where he continued until death closed his earthly career. He met the "king of terrors" with much tranquillity and Christian triumph. He rejoiced that his end had come. He seemed to realize the sentiment of the poet,-

"I would not live alway: no, welcome the tomb,  
Since Jesus has laid there I dread not its gloom;  
There sweet be my rest, till he bid me arise,  
To hail him in triumph, descending the skies."

A short time before his departure, the students of the Academy entered his room to receive the dying counsels of one whom they all regarded as a father. And what a scene! About two hundred youths now gathered round the dying saint, and on him they were to look for the last time. The scene was affecting beyond description. They were faithfully exhorted to become Christians in the days of their youth. While prayer was offered, and several united in singing an appropriate hymn, the presence and glory of the Lord filled the room. Every heart felt; tears flowed freely; while many rejoiced greatly for the divine presence that was there realized. It was a memorable scene! Many were there taught "how a Christian can die."

A minister who called to see him a few hours before he died, writes thus:-"That man of blessed memory, Edward Hyde, was well known in New-England. I was with him but thirty-six hours before he died. He was much emaciated, and as

weak as an infant; but he was ripe for heaven! Holiness was his theme in life, his theme in death; and holiness will be his theme for ever.

“As I opened the door and cast my eye upon him, without waiting for me to reach his bedside, he exclaimed, ‘I am standing on the banks of Jordan, and waiting for a passage.’ ‘I thought,’ said he, after a little pause, ‘I should have gone three days ago,’ alluding to an ill turn which he then had, when he and his friends thought he was dying; ‘but I am yet here: but within three days more I expect to be in glory.’ He then said, ‘I have solid peace;’ and added, ‘The doctrines which I have believed and preached for many years are now my support.’ We joined in singing those beautiful lines of Watts :”-

“ Jesus, the visions of thy face  
Have overpowering charms;  
Scarce shall I feel death’s cold embrace,  
If Christ be in my arms.

“Then while you hear my heart-strings break,  
How sweet the minutes roll,  
A mortal paleness on my cheek,  
But glory in my soul.

“Death cannot make my soul afraid,  
If God be with me there;  
Soft as the passage through the shade,  
And all the prospect fair.

“O could I make my fears remove,  
These gloomy fears that rise,  
And new the Canaan which I love,  
With unclouded eyes:

“Clasp’d in my heavenly Father’s arms,  
I could forget my breath;  
And lose my life amid the charms  
Of so divine a death.”

“While we sung these lines, and united in prayer for the last time, it seemed that the room was filled with the glory of God. Never shall I forget that hour. I truly felt that

‘The chamber where the good man meets his fate  
Is privileged above the common walks of virtuous life,  
Quite in the verge of heaven.’”

His last words were, “The chariot is come, and I must go.”

“O may I triumph so  
When all my warfare’s past,  
And, dying, find my latest foe  
Under my feet at last.”

## **Elijah R. Sabin**

Was received as a preacher among the Methodists in 1799, and died in Augusta, Georgia, May 3d, 1818. He united with the New-England Conference, and labored

in various parts of New-England with much success. Revivals generally attended his labors. In 1817 his health rapidly declined, and he was advised by his physicians to try the effect of a southern climate. Accordingly, he proceeded as far as Augusta, where he terminated his labors on earth.

His last hours are thus described by Rev. S. Dunwody, preacher in charge at that time of the Methodist church in Augusta: -“I found him, April 26, 1818, much weaker in body than formerly. He requested me to ask the prayers of the church in his behalf, that he might be more abundantly filled with the fullness of God. On Monday afternoon he observed that he had a calm confidence in God; but not such a sense of the divine fullness as he wished. In the mean time his bodily strength was so far exhausted that he could scarcely speak above a whisper: about sunset he obtained an uncommon manifestation of divine love. He broke out in praising God in such a manner as astonished all around him; his strength of voice was increased so as to be heard all over the house. He called upon us all to help him praise God, and sent for some more of the brethren to come and see the happy state of his mind. ‘This,’ said he, ‘is worth praying for.’ One of his expressions was, ‘If this be dying, it is very pleasant dying.’ To a number of us, who stood round his bedside, he said, he would not exchange his situation for the healthiest among us. Sometimes he would hold up his hands, and say he could see the angels and hear them sing, and that he could see the crown of glory reached out to him. He continued in these transports of joy for three hours or more; his pains then became violent, and we all thought that his end was fast approaching. He seemed himself to be in raptures of joy at the thought of a speedy departure; and finding his pains subside, he seemed disappointed, and said he hoped to have been in heaven. Next morning he asked the time of day, and on being told it was half-past eight o’clock, he said he hoped to be in heaven by twelve. His life, however, was prolonged a few days more. He afterward observed that possibly he was too anxious to be gone, and that it was best calmly to await the event of the divine will. His weakness continued to increase. Feeling himself drawing very near eternity, he was heard to say, ‘O the pain, the bliss of dying!’ and then, in a few minutes, his happy spirit took its flight to that rest that remaineth for the people of God.”

### **Earl of Chesterfield.**

The Earl, of Chesterfield was one of the most accomplished scholars of his age. He sought for all the pleasures of the world, and he informs us that he enjoyed them. But he lived and died like a fool. Though learned, polite, and witty, he was full of deceit and opposition to God. He says:-

“My reason tells me, that I should wish for the end of it [life ;] but instinct, often stronger than reason, and perhaps oftener

in the right, makes me take all proper methods to put it off. This innate sentiment alone makes me bear life with patience! For, I assure you, I have no further hope; but, on the contrary, many fears, from it.”

Poor man! Is this all the comfort thou hast derived from all thy accomplishments ? What a confession for a deathbed! He adds, “I can hardly persuade myself that all that frivolous hurry and bustle, and all the pleasures of the world, had any reality; but they seem to have been the dreams of restless nights.” Ah! they can render no support to the dying soul. They truly now appear like “dreams!” Who would spend life in acquiring those things, which, in a dying hour, appear like the “dreams of restless nights?” “O that men were wise!”

### **Peter Dean.**

#### **DEATH OF A HYPOCRITE.**

Peter Dean was a native of London, and for several years resided with the rector of Berwick, and appeared to be deeply pious. He was a preacher in the Methodist connection a short time. He married a person of considerable property, and settled in business in London.

“When this poor, unhappy man, thought himself on the verge of eternity, and the king of terrors stared him in the face, he confessed that he had been influenced by no other motive, nor had he any other end in view, in becoming an itinerant preacher, than to obtain a rich wife! ‘And,’ he added, ‘the Lord has given me my desire, and his curse with it; and now I am ruined for ever!’ From that time he refused to be comforted, and would take neither food nor medicine. He abandoned himself to black despair, and seemed resolved to die! For some time before his death his countenance would suddenly change, and be very horrid to look upon; he himself was conscious of it, and sometimes would go to the glass, and would then turn and say to his wife, ‘Now look at me; now will you believe?’ A few days before he died, his wife and a deeply pious person were sitting with him in his room, when they heard something beat him violently on the breast: they heard the blows, but saw nothing! He immediately cried out, as if in great agony, and upon examination they found his breast quite black with the strokes he had received! After this, he one day feigned himself asleep, and Mrs. D. and her companion, that he might not be disturbed, left the room. Perceiving that they were gone, he put forth

all his strength, and rolled himself headlong on the floor. On hearing the noise they instantly returned, and, awful to relate, found him dead!" How true it is, that "the wicked are driven away in their wickedness?"

## *Death of a Young Man,*

### **A NEGLECTER OF SALVATION.**

In the summer of 1817 a camp meeting was held in East Hartford, Connecticut, (now called Manchester.) About eight thousand people were present, and about one hundred converted to God. The Rev. D. Dorchester, in giving an account of the meeting, says: "There is one circumstance connected with the meeting, which, if noticed, may be useful.

"D-, a young man, about eighteen years of age, attended the meeting, and on Sunday evening, while the Lord wrought powerfully among the people, some of his young associates sought and found the Saviour. D felt the need of religion, and the preachers and friends endeavored to prevail with him to seek the salvation of his soul: the subject was urged by entreaties, expostulations, and tears; but all in vain! his reply to them all was, 'I will wait till I get home.' He started for home with his mother in usual health. At about five o'clock, P. M., he arrived within a few yards of his father's house, when suddenly springing from the wagon, he exclaimed, 'Mother, I am dying; I am dying: I shall not live one hour! O that I had sought religion at the camp meeting!' A physician was called immediately; but vain was the help of man: his flesh soon assumed a purple hue; death had planted the arrow that no human hand could extract; and his friends could only wait with awful anxiety, and hear, with the most painful sensations, the regrets that he uttered, till the next day, at about eight o'clock, P. M., when he breathed his last. But though dead, he utters an awful voice! 'Procrastination is the thief of time,' and the murderer of precious souls. Let me 'run and speak to that young man,' and say, 'Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation!'"

## *Death of Chloe.*

The following account of the death of a young lady, should awaken a desire in every youth to immediately prepare for the dying hour:-

"Before us lay the struggling, agonizing, dying Chloe, inwardly burning to death with the raging fires of inflammation; her mind excited to the highest degree of anxiety in view of the terrors of approaching death; while she felt the horrible consciousness of being unprepared for the solemn exchange of worlds. The minister had prayed, but no relief was found. The mother had been entreated to pray; but overflowing tears, from a soul full of distress and terror, comprised all the assistance she could afford to a child sinking in despair. The attendants were weeping, but none of them could help the dying girl. And, what was very remarkable, she made no attempts to pray for herself, while her cries for prayer to save her from hell were incessant.

"Believing that death was about to cut short his work, I proposed to her the following question:-'Chloe, will you now accept of the Lord Jesus Christ as your only Saviour from sin and hell, and submit your soul into his hands for salvation?' With a faltering voice she answered, 'No, I cannot!' Astonished at the answer, I rejoined once more by inquiring, 'Why are you not willing, and why can you not NOW with your dying breath accept of Christ for salvation?'

"With evident appearance of being in full possession of her rational powers, but with a still more feeble and tremulous articulation, looking me full in the face, she answered, 'IT IS TOO LATE!'

"These were her dying words. Not another word was spoken to her. Not another syllable did she attempt to utter. She shuddered, groaned, gasped, and ceased to breathe. Her immortal spirit took its flight in less than two hours after I first entered the room."

Will any, who read this little volume, neglect a preparation for eternity, and die as did this young lady? O, could she speak to you to-day, she would say, "Prepare to meet thy God!" Neglect not this preparation till IT IS TOO LATE!

### **Rev. Robert Bolton**

Died December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1631, aged fifty-nine years. He was a faithful and devoted minister of Christ. His last illness was painful and protracted, but he was abundantly sustained. He met the last foe with Christian fortitude. Multitudes came to see him “depart.” One of his parishioners wished him to describe the comforts he found in trusting in the Redeemer. “Alas!” said he, “do you look for that of me now, that want breath and power to speak? I have told you enough in my lifetime; but to give you satisfaction, I am, by the wonderful mercies of God, as full of comforts as my heart can hold, and feel nothing in my soul but Christ, with whom I heartily desire to be.” Taking leave of all, he died rejoicing in hope.

### **Sir Matthew Hale,**

Lord Chief Justice of England, was born in 1609. Few have done more for the good of the world than this great man. He manifested great submission to God’s will in his last moments. “When his voice was so sunk that it could not be heard, his friends perceived, by the almost constant lifting up of his eyes and hands, that he was still aspiring toward that blessed state, of which he was now to be speedily possessed. He breathed out his soul in peace.”

### **John Locke,**

A celebrated philosopher, and one of the greatest men that England ever produced, was born in the year 1632. He was firmly attached to the Christian religion, and was zealous in promoting it. He studied the Bible with close attention. As his dissolution drew near, he showed that he was fully prepared to meet it. The day he died, he advised all about him to read the Scriptures. When about to expire, he spoke of the goodness of God: “he especially exalted the care which God showed to man in justifying him by faith in Jesus Christ; and, in particular, returned God thanks for having blessed him with the knowledge of the divine Saviour.”

### **Isaac Watts,**

A learned and eminent minister and poet, was born at Southampton, in 1674. His writings have been a great blessing to mankind. He died in peace in the 75<sup>th</sup> year of his age. Just before he expired, he said, in conversation with a friend, “I remember an aged minister used to observe, that ‘the **most** knowing and learned Christians, when they come to die, have only the same plain promises of the gospel for their support as the common and unlearned;’ and so I find it is the plain promises of the gospel that are my support; and I bless God, they are plain promises, that do not require much labor and pains to understand them.”

### **Rev. James Hervey,**

A pious and ingenious minister, and a popular writer, was born in 1714. His works, entitled “Meditations among the Tombs,” and “Reflections in a Flower Garden,” have been much admired, and extensively read. He died in 1758, aged forty-four years. As death drew near, He said, “Here is the treasure of the Christian. Death is reckoned in this inventory; and a noble treasure it is. How thankful I am for death, as it is the passage through which I go to the Lord and Giver of eternal life! These light afflictions are but for a moment, and then comes an eternal weight of glory. O! welcome, welcome, death! Thou mayest well be reckoned among the treasures of the Christian. To live is Christ, but to die is gain.”

### **Rev. John Knox,**

The great Scotch reformer, was born at Giffard, Scotland, in 1505. He was a man of strong faith, and fearlessly performed what he considered his duty. When his body was laid in the grave, the regent pronounced his eulogium in these words:- "There lies he who never feared the face of man." He met death with great composure. At one time he said, "Come, Lord Jesus! sweet Jesus; into thy hands do I commend my spirit." A friend prayed with him when near his end, and on being asked if he heard it, he replied, "Would to God that you had all heard those words with such an ear and heart as I," and added, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" He then passed to his reward.

### **Rev. John Leland,**

A learned minister, and known principally by his writings in defense of Christianity, was born in Wigan, England, in 1691, and died in 1766, in the seventy-fifth year of his age. He closed life with the following words: "I give my dying testimony to the truth of Christianity. The promises of the gospel are my support and consolation. They, alone, yield me satisfaction in a dying hour. I am not afraid to die. The gospel of Christ has raised me above the fear of death; for I know that my Redeemer liveth."

### **Rev. Samuel Walker**

Was a pious and useful minister of Christ. In his last hours his soul was filled with rapture. "I have been," said he, "upon the wings of the cherubim! Heaven has been in a manner opened to me! I shall soon be there!" He again said to a friend, "O, my friend, had I strength to speak I could tell you such news as would rejoice your very soul! I have had such views of heaven ! But I am unable to say more."

### **Rev. Richard Baxter,**

The author of "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," was born in Rowton, England, Nov. 12, 1615, and died Dec. 8, 1691. He was faithful in life, and triumphant in death. When about to cross the "swellings of Jordan," he exclaimed, "I am almost well!" The celebrated Gibbon said that "Hume died like a philosopher." Baxter died like a CHRISTIAN! Let me die like the latter!

### **Rev. Thomas Scott,**

The commentator, was born in Lincolnshire, England, Feb. 16, 1747, and died April 16, 1821. He was pious and learned. He exclaimed, in death, "This is heaven begun. Satan has attacked me; but now he is vanquished."

### **The Earl of Rochester**

Was born in Oxfordshire, England, 1647. He was one of the greatest scholars and poets of his age. Falling into dissolute and vicious company, he soon lost all sense of religious restraint, and became corrupt in principles, and depraved in manners. He became an infidel by reading the writings of Hobbes. He experienced religion at the age of thirty-one. In his death, when pain was excruciating, he said, "God's holy will be done!" He spent most of his time in rejoicing. A short time before he expired, he said, "I shall soon die. O how joyful! how I long to die!"

### **Rev. John Holland**

Was eminent for his piety and devotion to the cause of the Redeemer. To his friends who surrounded his deathbed, he said, "Come, death approaches. Let us gather some flowers from the Bible." Having spent nearly two hours in conversing upon the truths of the Bible, he paused, and suddenly exclaimed, "What is this brightness which surrounds me? Have you been lighting a candle?" "No," said his attendants; "the sun shines." Said the dying man, "It is my blessed Saviour that shines."

### **Rev. Richard Watson**

Was born in Lincolnshire, England, Feb. 22, 1781, and died Jan. 8, 1833. He early became a preacher among the Wesleyan Methodists, and became distinguished in his profession. He wrote several valuable works. For some time before he died, his sufferings were intense, but grace enabled him to triumph. When near eternity, he said, "The atonement is the sinner's short way to God. On this rock I rest-I feel it firm beneath my feet. O the precious blood of Christ! It is all mercy. I long to quit this little abode-gain the wide expanse of the skies-rise to nobler joys, and see God!"

### **Rev. Francis Asbury,**

One of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was born in Staffordshire, England, Aug. 20, 1745, and died in America, March 31, 1816, in the seventyfirst year of his age. He was a man of deep piety, and greatly beloved. His labors were abundant. It is supposed that he preached in this country about eighteen thousand sermons, and traveled, chiefly on horseback, about one hundred and fifty thousand miles, and ordained not less, probably, than three thousand preachers. His death was sudden and peaceful. A few minutes before he died, a minister asked him, "if he felt the Lord Jesus Christ to be precious. He seemed to exert all his remaining strength, and raised both his hands as a token of triumph." "The righteous have hope in their death!"

### **Rev. Freeborn Garrettson**

Was born in the state of Maryland, Aug. 15, 1752, and died Sept. 26, 1827. He was a faithful and laborious minister. For more than fifty-two years he labored in his Master's vineyard. His dying sayings are numerous, showing his triumphant departure. His last sentence was, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!" Soon after, clasping his hands, and raising his eyes to heaven, he uttered, "Glory! glory!" and then "fell asleep in Jesus."

### **Rev. D. M. Chandler,**

A minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, died Oct. 2, 1839, aged twenty-eight years. "On being told he was dying, he gently laid his hand on his breast, and, in a few moments, exclaimed, 'This is the most consummate state of happiness I ever saw. O, glory be to God!' He afterward talked with great composure; sent his dying message to his friends, and said, 'I am almost in sight of the country;' kissed his beloved wife and sweet little babe; spoke concerning his funeral; and went home to God."

### **Elizabeth Walbridge,**

Connected with the Methodist Connection in England, and known as "The Dairyman's Daughter," died in Christian triumph. "The Lord," said she, "deals gently with me. Thank God-victory-I, even I, am to be saved!" She called to her father, mother, and sister, and exclaimed, "I am going !-all is well-well- well."

Thus we have seen how the Christian dies. "O how refreshing, delightful, and encouraging to us, on our way to Zion, to perceive around us those who are 'living unto the Lord,' with their eyes and hearts fixed upon the heavenly inheritance! And ah, still happier sight, and yet an awful rejoicing, to behold a Christian 'dying unto the Lord;' to witness the triumph of our holy faith in nature's last hour, and Satan's last buffeting; to observe the trophies of divine love adorning and cheering the melancholy bed-the tranquil smile, the unwearied trust, the patient, contented, thankful resignation, the uplifted hand and eye, the illuminated countenance, the peaceful spirit, all the while ready to wing its flight! Go, boasted science! go, vain philosophy! and visit the deathbeds of your votaries; mark well the doubts and fears betraying themselves under the mask of a bold profession; mark the impatience and vexation, the present burden and miserable foreboding; go, and discover your infidel champions, the proud Goliaths of your kingdom, trembling and quailing under the lifted stroke of death, and despairing under the load of unforgiveness of sin, under the terrors of an avenging God! Go to your despisers of the crucified Jesus-to those who have been too wise to seek, or too busy to find him; see them, as I have seen them, stretching out their hands in agony, and saying, 'Is there no one to save a fellow-creature from destruction?' Then, when ye are sickened with such scenes, repair to the bedside of a departing saint, and see how a Christian can die. Go, and study a lesson more instructive and more precious than all your pages of human lore and learning; go, and learn from a lovely example, HOW TO LIVE AND HOW TO DIE."

# Dying Sayings

“BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHO DIE IN THE LORD.”

(Most of these dying sayings were collected by the Rev. O. C. Baker.)

Christianity appears in its true glory in the comfort, support, and triumph, it affords its votaries in a dying hour. There it shines forth in its peculiar brightness. There it enables its subjects to exclaim, “O death, where is thy sting!”

The dying hour is said to be an honest hour. It is a period in which we view things in their proper light. Christians, with the prospect of “immortality before them, and no longer influenced by those concerns and passions which obscure the understanding, and harden the heart, must be supposed to view their objects through a proper medium, and to speak the language of truth and soberness.” We add the following sayings of dying saints to those already furnished:-

“Glory to God! Jesus smiles and bids me come. Victory! victory! Tell the preachers at conference that I died in the triumphs of faith; that my last doctrine is free salvation.”-Fletcher Harris.

“No fear; happy. Hail, King! Heaven heaves in view.”-Stephen Jacob, aged 31.

“Glory to God! I feel a hope that reaches beyond the grave. Glory to God! I am more established in the doctrines I have preached than ever I was before.” -William Ross, aged 36.

“If I die I shall go to glory. There is victory in death, and death in victory.” -Charles Prescott, aged 28.

“My dear friends, I am so happy I know not what to do with myself. Glory, glory, I am happy! My happiness is unspeakable! O for more breath to praise my divine Master!”-Enoch Johnson.

“Peace! peace! Victory! victory! complete victory!”-William Ormond, aged 34.

“I am not afraid to die, if it be the will of God. I desire to depart and be with Christ; the church will sustain no loss by my death, for the Lord will supply my place with a man that will be more useful. Thanks be to God! through his grace I have continued to live and labor faithfully to the end.

‘Farewell! vain world, I’m going home;  
My Jesus Smiles, and bids me come.’”

- Nicholas Watters, aged 65.

“The goodness and love of God to me are great and marvelous, as I go down the dreadful declivity of death.”-George Dougharty.

“The fear of death and hell is wholly taken away, and I have a hope of immortality.”-William Keith.

“Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; take my enraptured soul away. I am not afraid to die. I long to be dissolved, and see the face of God without a dimming veil between. Death has lost its sting.” -John Smith, aged 55.

“I am going, I am going. Blessed be God for victory over sin, the world, and the devil. I have gained the victory, and expect my disembodied spirit will join the band of music above, and bear some humble part in praising God, and stand with the one hundred and forty-four thousand on the sea of glass, to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.”-Abner Clarke, aged 26.

“O what glorious prospects lie before me! Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord; get all you can in the way to heaven. My God is mine, and I am his. I have been in the dark mountains, but King Jesus has given me complete victory. Glory, honor, praise, and power, be unto God.”-George Askin.

“Can this be dying? I never felt so happy. I am free from pain, both of body and mind.”-William S. Pease, aged 25.

“Brother, heaven has come to me; it is in me, and all around me. I am filled with God and glory.”-John Shaw, aged 25.

“Yesterday I examined myself closely, and I saw my way before me as clear as the rising sun.”-Henry Holmes, aged 44.

“Perfectly happy; death is my friend. I live in Christ, and Christ is all to me. Farewell! farewell! I have all I desire. Glory! Hallelujah!”- Christopher Thomas, 33.

“A short time before he expired, he remarked, ‘I want a conductor to heaven,’ and a moment after exclaimed, triumphantly, ‘I have one, a sublime one!’”- Liman L. Booker.

“The religion which I have professed and preached has comforted me in life, supported me in affliction, and now enables me to triumph in death.”-Edwin Ray, aged 29.

“After having preached, and dismissed the congregation, he sat down, being deprived of the use of his right side. Two of the brethren went to him in the pulpit. As they approached, he held out his hand, and said, with a smile, ‘Do not be alarmed, or affrighted; the Lord has blessed me. I had as soon die here, and in this way, as anywhere. My soul is happy. Glory be to God! Hallelujah! Glory!’”-lot Warfield, aged 55.

“Having been asked, ‘Is your way clear?’ he replied, ‘As clear as a sunbeam.’”-William H. Stevens, aged 30.

“When one asked him, ‘Are you afraid to die?’ he seemed surprised at the question, and said, ‘Surely, you do not think me a hypocrite.’ ‘But you are really dying,’ said another. ‘Then,’ he replied, ‘all is well!’”-Thomas Neill, aged 27.

“My body is in an agony of pain, but my soul is happy, happy, happy!”-Christopher Frye, aged 57.

“I have always expected to have a reasonable degree of comfort in a dying hour, but I never expected to enjoy such a deep, settled calm, as I now feel.”-Thomas D. Allen, aged 34.

“The storm of life has at length blown over. The last tornado has passed by. The victory is gained, and heaven is mine! Sweet heaven of rest! It is mine! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! My life has been spent, these fifty years past, in the ministry, but I do not regret it. All my sufferings in that laborious employment will render the heaven of eternal rest the sweeter.”-Samuel Bebbins, aged 68.

“Glory, glory! Now, brother, I am ready. I am ready to die or live, and suffer all the will of God. Tell my brethren they must be holy. Tell my brethren in the ministry, that, in order for success in their work, they must live and preach holiness.”-Ariel Fay, aged 29

“All is well!”-Bishop M’Kendree, aged 79.

“All is clear! all is clear!”-Joseph Rusling, aged 51.

“If I die, there is not a doubt upon my mind but that all is safe; my confidence is strong in the Lord. ‘These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work out for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’”-Albert G. Wickware, aged 32.

“Yes, I am, I am going to my home in heaven.”-Philetus Green, aged 32.

“My dependence is not upon my own works; it is on the rock Christ Jesus crucified.”-Nelson Reed, aged 89.

“Tell my friends, if I die, I shall go straight to heaven; how beautiful! how glorious! I am safe.”-Elijah Steele.

“A few days before the lamented Cookman embarked in the ill-fated steamship President, he said to his children, ‘Now, boys, remember if your father should sink in the ocean, his soul will go direct to the paradise of God, where you must meet him!’”-Charles G. Cookman, aged 41.

“Attempting to raise himself in bed, and looking heavenward, he said, ‘O let me go home.’ His friends preventing his rising up, he submitted, and said, ‘Well, I will go quietly and sweetly to-night.’ It was even so.”-John Rice, aged 37.

“Being asked the state of his mind, ‘O.’ said he, ‘I feel like an atom floating upon the ocean of glory; I shall soon pass away, nor scarcely know the change.’” -Thomas L. Young, aged 32.

Having noticed the dying sayings of several Methodist preachers, we will now notice a few others.

“Methinks I stand, as it were, one foot in heaven, and the other on earth! Methinks I hear the melody of heaven, and by faith I see the angels waiting to carry my soul to the bosom of Jesus, and I shall be for ever with the Lord in glory; and who can but rejoice in all this?”-John Janeway, aged 24.

“I am not afraid to look death in the face. I can say, ‘Death, where is thy sting?’” John Dodd.

“I repent I did not do more for Him. O that I had the tongues of men and angels to praise him!”-Halyburton.

He said to some friends, "You have been used to take notice of the sayings of dying men: this is mine, That a life spent in the service of God, and communion with him, is the most comfortable and pleasant life that any one can live in this world."-Matthew Henry.

"O that all my brethren did know what a Master I have served, and what peace I have this day! I shall sleep in Jesus; and when I awake, I shall be satisfied with his likeness."-Rutherford.

Lord, hold thy hand, it is enough; thy servant is a clay vessel, and can hold no more."-John, Welsh.

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are,  
While on his breast I lean my head,  
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

He repeated, "My head on Jesus' breast. There I breathe my life out sweetly; O how sweetly! Into thy hands, O Lord, I commit my spirit."-Henry S. Rise.

"Victory! victory!"-Erskine.

What was it that has caused so many to rejoice and triumph as their departure drew near? It was the religion of the Bible. It was this that enabled Erskine, Payson, Hyde, Fletcher, and others, to meet death with shoutings of victory. With this valuable treasure no person need "take a leap in the dark." It will light up our pathway to the grave, and throw a lustre around the tomb. Amid its brightness you will pass "through the valley and shadow of death." Infidelity leaves us in the dark. Shun it as you would the "blackness of darkness." Hobbes wished to "find a place at which to creep out of the world." Poor man! With religion he might have left the world rejoicing. Blessed treasure! "Pearl of great price!" Reader, seek it for your portion, and it shall be well with you living and dying.

THE END.