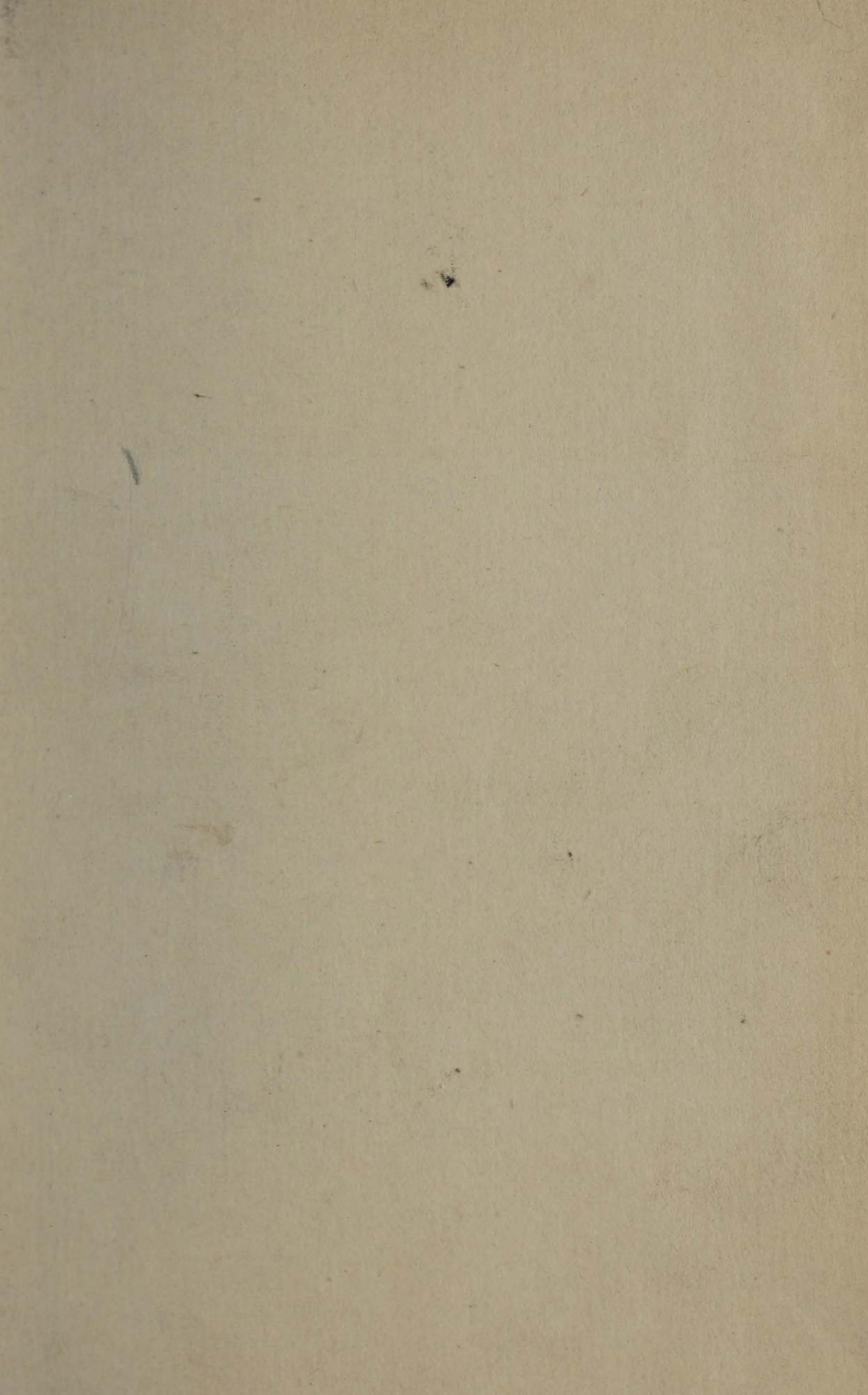




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OF

CAPTAIN EDMUND SNOW,

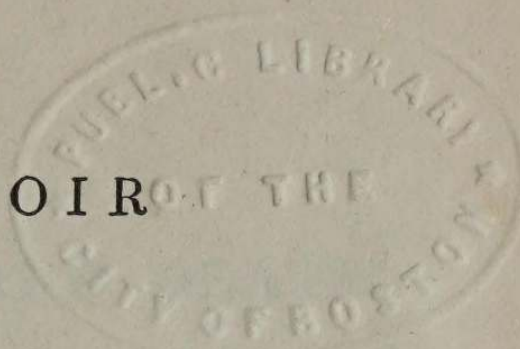
LATE OF ORLEANS, MASS.

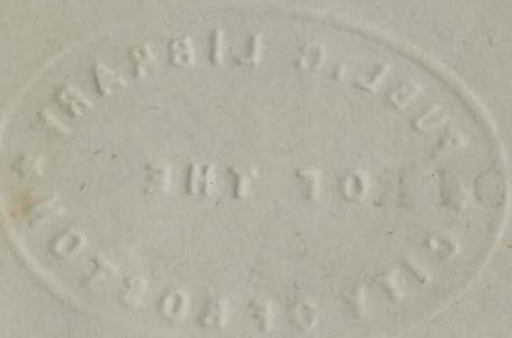
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LIFE, EXPERIENCE, AND DEATH

OF

CAPT. EDMUND SNOW.

CAPT. EDMUND SNOW, a native of Orleans, Mass., was born in the year 1786. He commenced following the sea, at the age of sixteen, and continued it principally for thirty-five years, during which time he was engaged in the different branches of fishing, coasting, packeting and the merchant service. A large proportion of this time he was master of a vessel. In times of danger he was generally self-possessed and resolute, and if he observed any of his crew fearful, he was accustomed to say, "Do your duty like men, and hope for the best." It is, perhaps, surprising, that he was never wrecked, or lost a hand, although he was often exposed to perils in the deep; as the following extracts from his correspondence will show. The first at hand is dated

FREDERICKSBURG, Jan. 1, 1820.

Dear and loving wife,*

I arrived at this port on the 27th of December, after a very rough passage. We had two gales of wind, during which we lay to; the first lasted forty-eight, and the last, ninety hours. On the 30th came on a snow-storm; during the night the river froze over, and we are now fast, and it is very cold. I shall write again before I leave; so I conclude by wishing you a happy new year.

EDMUND SNOW.

His homeward-bound passage was still more disastrous, as he came near perishing with cold in sight of his native place.

* Capt. Snow was the husband of two wives, by the first of whom he had seven, and by the last, three children.

PROVINCETOWN, Feb. 8, 1820.

Dear and loving wife,

I once more have the opportunity to write to you, and blessed be God for it. I have experienced very cold and severe weather; lost both cables and anchors in sight of Norcet harbor, and have arrived at Provincetown in distress. It will take more than all the vessel made, to put her in repair; but I have the hardest of it, for she has no feelings, and I have. Remaining your loving husband till death, I conclude.

EDMUND SNOW.

The subject of this notice was naturally tender in his feelings and kind in his disposition. These traits were ever manifest in his intercourse with others, unless his hostility to religion led him at times to exhibit less lovely qualities. He was, moreover, a very shrewd man. It was in his power to turn every thing of a serious nature into ridicule; and it was his delight to do this. He has been known to draw from an anxious sinner his feelings, simply for the sake of wantonly sporting with them in his presence. This was one of the first sins which he felt disposed to confess to man after his conversion. It is rare to meet with a person so trifling as for many years he was; and being of a social turn, his influence both with the young and the old was great. Few Christians had courage to encounter him. Indeed, it is believed, that in several instances, after solemnly and prayerfully resolving to admonish him, they have approached and made the attempt, only to be foiled at last.

Occasionally his hostility to religion manifested itself in a manner more violent than that of ridicule. Once, while connected with a packet, as his vessel lay by the wharf at Boston, some religious tracts were left on board, in his absence. On his return he was greatly enraged at the distribution, and declared if he had been present he would have used violence on the person. It was a favorite saying with him, that, in his opinion, "Christians differed from other persons only in this, that they were more disposed to cheat and wrangle!" After his conversion, he was accustomed to say, "Those who love the Lord Jesus, I regard as my particular friends; I love them all; next to my Saviour, I love them best."

The subject of this notice had, it would seem, many providential warnings to prepare to meet his God, which were unheeded, being called, successively, to follow to the grave a father, mother, brother, sister, wife and six children. Several of these died in the triumphs of faith, and were assiduous in their efforts, and earnest in their prayers, for his conversion; particularly was this the case with his wife and daughter. He

enjoyed usual health, till the summer of 1836, when a cancer appeared on his face, which ended his days. The following is a relation of his experience dictated by himself several months after his conversion :

“ My attention was first seriously called to the subject of religion eighteen years ago, while on a homeward-bound passage from sea, during which time I did little else but read my Bible for several days. On my arrival, I found in progress a revival of religion, and learned that my wife had experienced a change of heart. I now became still more anxious, and frequently attempted to pray ; but having no disposition to cherish these feelings of conviction, and hearing it often said, that it was a sin for impenitent persons to pray, and also that we could do nothing to save ourselves, I soon gave up all effort, and at last settled down on the conclusion, that we had nothing to do towards securing our souls’ salvation. On this ground I rested for several years. All the while my heart was utterly opposed to every thing good. I now lived on the failings of Christians, and every misstep in them rejoiced me. This state of things at last prepared my mind for the reception of error ; and for several years past I have believed, so far as it was possible to make myself believe it, the dangerous doctrine of Universalism. I have thought myself so confirmed in it, as to say, that I was willing to die by it.

“ More than a year ago, I was called to see a beloved daughter leave the world. I knew she had something to sustain her which I did not possess, and I inwardly rejoiced at it, although I pretended not to believe in a change of heart. I had all along expected she would warn me of my condition, but delaying it till she became very feeble, I at last hoped to escape. In this, however, I was disappointed ; for, amid the agonies of the dying struggle, she faintly called out, ‘ Father ! ’ I approached her, when she whispered, ‘ Remember—’ and was so exhausted, that she could say no more. Very soon she called again, ‘ Father ! ’ I approached, and put my ear in a position to hear her words, when she summoned all her strength, and said, ‘ Remember you must die ! ’ This was the last and all she said to me, but it went like a dagger to my soul. The effect of this warning, however, wore away, and I became again involved in the things of the world.

“ The next thing which called up my attention, was a cancer on my face, to consult a physician respecting which I went to Plymouth. For several days before leaving home, I was very uneasy in my mind. I said to myself, ‘ suppose I should not recover ; have I any thing to sustain me in death ? No, I have not. Is there any such thing as religion ? Yes, I know there

is. And how do I know it? I know it from the Bible; I know it from the dying testimony of my daughter.'

"The first night after my arrival at Plymouth, I entered into conversation with a patient there, who was afflicted in a similar manner with myself. I said to him, 'I am fearful about my case; and I am not prepared to die.' I soon found that he could not give me the instructions which I then needed and desired, although he seemed favorable to religion. My distress now became great, in view of sin and my ruined condition. I prayed to God for help. The terrors of hell gat hold of me. I cared not who knew of my wretchedness, for I felt that I must have religion cost what it would. Some Christian friends, learning my condition, came to visit me. I requested them to pray with me and for me, and to ask all who had an interest at the throne of grace to intercede on my behalf. Still, my distress of mind increased.

"About this time, two of the ministers of the place conversed with me. They, like other Christians, pointed me to the cross of Christ; but all to no purpose. For nine weeks, I felt the burden of sin heavy upon my mind. At last I thought I would not be confined in the house any longer; and, without the knowledge of my physician, went out, to find some persons who could converse and pray with me. Having succeeded in the attempt, I told them my condition,—that I felt myself to be a great sinner, and longed to find the Saviour. After having spent the evening in a family, conversing with a Christian woman, I returned to my lodgings, feeling more deeply distressed than ever, and retired for the night, all the time begging for mercy. My whole soul was in commotion; there were feelings passing in my mind which I can never describe. I can only compare the scene within to a tempestuous gale subsiding at once into a sweet delightful calm. Raising myself in bed, I exclaimed, 'What is this? is it the love of God, or what is it?' After a while, I lay down, and being exhausted, fell asleep. When I awoke, my first inquiry was, 'Where is my Jesus?' In the morning, I felt no solicitude, except for fear that the Spirit had departed from me. I dared not hope that my peace was made with God, I had such a sense of sin and guilt; and hastening to see the woman, with whom I had conversed the evening before, told her I knew not what to think of myself. She then inquired, if I did not experience a change in my mind after I left the night previous, stating at the same time, that, while engaged in prayer on my behalf, she thought she had an assurance that God was good to his promise, and would appear for my deliverance. In the afternoon of the same day, I had wonderful manifestations of the love of Christ, and could not refrain from breaking out in expressions of

praise to God. As the sound of my voice fell on my ears, I was astonished at myself.

“I now longed to return home, to tell all my friends what God had done for my soul, and to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come. In this respect, my wishes have been gratified. Most of the time since my return, which is now more than six months, although my pains have been great, I have enjoyed peace within, which I never before experienced. I have no expectation that I shall ever recover. My only hope is in the atoning blood of Christ, and I often long to depart and be with him. *I wholly and for ever renounce all belief in the destructive doctrine of universal salvation, and I solemnly warn my family and friends, and all the world beside, so far as they shall ever become acquainted with these my dying views and belief, never to listen to the preaching of such delusive sentiments.* As a testimony that these are my sentiments, feelings, and experience, I, this fifth day of July, 1837, subscribe my name,

EDMUND SNOW.”

After giving the above relation, he offered a prayer, in which he thanked God that he had been enabled by unusual strength and freedom from hindrances, that day, to leave behind this testimony, and begged that it might, in some way, tend to the glory of His name; after which, he selected for reading, the following hymn :

JESUS, at thy command,
I launch into the deep;
And leave my native land,
Where sin lulls all asleep;
For thee, I would the world resign,
And sail to heaven, with thee and thine.

Thou art my my pilot, wise;
My compass is thy word:
My soul each storm defies,
While I have such a Lord!
I trust thy faithfulness and power,
To save me in the trying hour.

Though rocks and quicksands deep
Through all my passage lie,
Yet Christ will safely keep
And guide me with his eye:
My anchor, hope, shall firm abide,
And every boisterous storm outside.

By faith I see the land,
The port of endless rest;
My soul, thy sails expand,
And fly to Jesus' breast!

O may I reach the heavenly shore
Where winds and waves distress no more.

Come, Holy Ghost, and blow
A prosperous gale of grace:
Waft me from all below,
To heaven, my destined place.
Then, in full sail, my port I'll find,
And leave the world and sin behind.

The state of Mr. Snow's mind during his absence from home, may be still farther learned from the subjoined extract of a letter, dated

PLYMOUTH, December 20, 1836.

Dear and loving wife and children,

I write these few lines to inform you that I am no better, but worse. I expect that your anxiety for me is great. The world has lost all its charms; all I want is faith in Christ, that I may reign with him: and may you and our children seek the Lord Jesus. I pray that we may be fitted for all events of Providence. I wish to come home, while I can talk to you and my friends and neighbors; for I find we all need true faith in Christ. We must all die in some way, and if we are prepared, it is but little matter how. I desire that you seek your souls' salvation. Tell all that are out of Christ, to seek him; it is high time. Tell Capt. C—— if he has a work to do for God, to do it faithfully; and I desire him to remember me in his petitions to the throne of grace. I want to see all my friends, both Christians and sinners. O Christians, be faithful, and sinners, stop, consider and hear for yourselves and not for others. If I stay here, I shall write again.

I remain your loving husband, till death,
EDMUND SNOW.

Ever after his conversion, Capt. Snow seems to have had an irrepressible desire to be made instrumental in advancing that cause which he had done so much to destroy. He felt that it would be a great satisfaction to know that he was the means of saving one soul. For this he labored and prayed, and the Lord granted his desire. One who was near his age and had shared with him the perils of the deep, was excited by his faithful conversation to attend in earnest to the concerns of his soul, and now blesses God for raising up such a person, to be the means of his conversion.

This success only encouraged him to renewed efforts, and of the hundreds who visited him during his sickness, rarely an individual departed without being most tenderly and ear-

nestly entreated to make their peace with God immediately. He literally warned them night and day with tears; and not unfrequently, where he observed a want of disposition to heed his admonition, he would throw himself at their feet and there plead with and weep over them. Thus was one at least, who has since expressed a hope in the pardoning mercy of God, first awakened. And many, it is believed, received impressions from his pungent appeals, which will not soon be effaced. Eternity alone can develop the connection between his labors and that revival which occurred during his illness, in which, more than fifty souls hopefully experienced religion. His exhortations, though most faithful, were given in such a manner that none could be offended.

Once, after delaying for some time to visit him, he sent for me. I therefore took the earliest opportunity to call. He then said he had been very desirous to see me, because he felt he had a message which he must deliver, observing, at the same time, that it had been impressed on his mind, after having conversed with several aged professors of religion, some of whom he feared, had never been converted, that he must entreat of me, as a minister of the gospel, solemnly to warn them of the danger of deception. He closed by saying, he hoped I should not be offended at this suggestion; 'for,' said he, 'you know, if they are on the right foundation, it will do no injury to examine the ground of their hope; but if they are not, what a dreadful thing it would be to die in their delusion!'

The following letter to a friend in Schenectady was dictated by him when very feeble, and exhibits his state of mind at the time:

ORLEANS, July 18, 1837.

My Dear Sir,

You had reason to think that I might not be in the land of the living when you wrote. I have for some time been expecting that every day might be my last. I am now desiring the time to come. I trust it is through the grace of God, that I am what I am. This I think I can say with all my heart, that the things which I once loved, I now hate, and the things which I once hated, I now love. I hope I feel truly resigned to the will of my God, and am confident that as the outer man decays, the inner man grows stronger and stronger.

There is considerable sickness in this place, and several deaths have recently occurred.* Some who have visited me since my sickness, have departed hence, to be here no more, and others are now near their end. O may I not be too anx-

* More than thirty cases of typhus fever have occurred in Orleans the past season. The number of deaths has been greater than usual, by nearly one half.

ious to depart! I feel as if I could breathe out my soul in talking of the goodness of God. Free grace, *Free grace*. I hope you will go on your way rejoicing; and may we one day greet each other where we shall meet to part no more. I beg a continued interest in your prayers. And now, my dear sir, I must bid you farewell, a last farewell. EDMUND SNOW.

Mr. Snow was eminently prayerful. Like Elijah, he walked with God. For some time during his sickness, he lived principally on liquids, it being difficult for him to receive solid food. And when the simple cup of milk was set before him, he would not partake of it till he had raised his heart and voice, so far as he was able to utter broken parts of words, expressing thanksgiving for God's bounties, and imploring grace and strength for the soul. When he selected a portion of Scripture to be read, it was always accompanied with prayer. It was by constant communion with God that he maintained that heavenly spirit which was so manifest to all who conversed with him, and that deep self-abasement, for which he was remarkable. "There are two things," said he, "which fill me with wonder, whenever I reflect on them. I am astonished that Christ could ever have had mercy on so great a sinner as myself. And when I think how reasonable his service is, I wonder that I could have stood out so long in refusing to serve him."

When his disease had so far progressed as to render it distressing to behold him, it was wonderful to observe the sustaining power of religion. So far was he from murmuring at his lot, that he seemed filled with unutterable praise. Amid sufferings, which none but those who feel can understand, he said, "If this had come upon me before I had the aids of religion it seems to me I could not have sustained it; but now I feel consolation from God,—yes, consolation from my God, running free through every vein; salvation, through free grace in Christ. Soon I shall be where I can praise him without pain or imperfection."

The Sabbath before his death, he said, "The nearer I draw towards heaven, the less strength of my own, and the more of Christ's, I seem to have. I trust I shall soon have a robe that will outshine the sun, and never decay. If this were my last, what a glorious day it would be. O, why are thy chariot wheels so long in coming?" A few hours before his dissolution, he said, "I feel like a little child of God." The expression is peculiar, and in the connection, the idea seemed to be, that he felt in the hands of God, like a little, helpless infant in its parent's arms, not only quiet and submissive, but perfectly safe. After he was so far gone as to be unable to speak, he

raised his hand as a token that he was happy. It was in this state of mind that he fell asleep in Jesus, on the 25th of October, 1837, at the age of fifty-two.

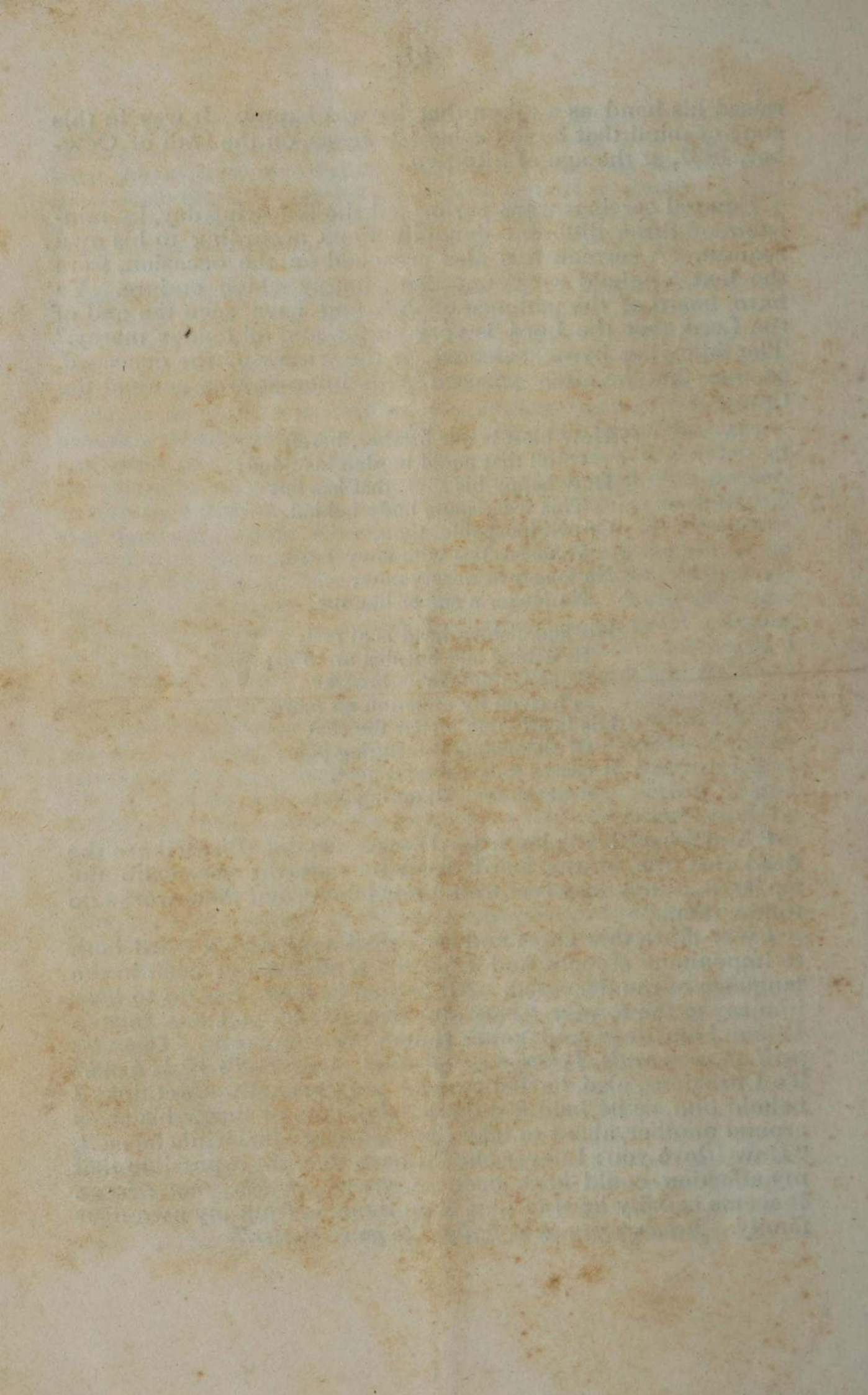
Funeral services were performed the following day, by ministers of three different denominations, according to his own request. A sermon was also preached on the occasion, from the text, "Behold we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." The following hymn, selected by the widow of the deceased, as one that he often perused with interest, was sung at the time:

How blest is our brother, bereft
Of all that could burden his mind;
How happy his soul, that has left
This wearisome body behind.
Of evil incapable, thou,
Whose relics with envy I see,
No longer in misery now,
No longer a sinner like me.

His languishing head is at rest,
Its aching and burning are o'er;
His quiet, immovable breast
Is heaved by affliction no more.
His heart is no longer the seat
Of sickness and torturing pain;
It ceases to flutter and beat,
It never shall flutter again.

"And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

I will close this short and imperfect notice by a word both to impenitent sinners and Christians, addressing each in the language of the deceased. All bathed in tears, I seem to hear him say to the former, "Now, my dear friend, you *must* repent. When I am dead and gone, remember my words. *Upon the peril of your souls, I charge you to meet me at God's right hand.*" To Christians, also, he being dead, yet speaketh. Methinks I behold him, as he held fast the hand of one, or threw his arms around another, about to take their leave of him, while he said, "How I love you: I never should have thought it possible that my affection could have been *so strong for Christian friends.* It seems equally hard to part from them as from my own dear family. *I charge you to be faithful to your Master.*"





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