

DEATH UNTO DEATH, LIFE UNTO LIFE.

“To the one we are the savour of death unto death ; and to the other the savour of life unto life.”—2 Cor. ii 16.

BY

DR. MACKERN.

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LIFE UNTO LIFE.

She came in, leaning on the tender and loving support of her husband, frail and faded as a plucked and withered flower. The lack-lustre eye, the dejected features, pallid and weary, told the tale of ruin within; the faint flush flitting over the cheek—the mere mockery of the vanished roses of youth and health, now gone, never to return, never more on this side of the grave. The most unobservant could discern the gravity of the condition, the merest tyro in physic could say for her there was no remedy. But love in the lover by her side would hide all this from his eyes, though in this poor weakened

body you might hear again repeated the very words out of Job's mouth, "My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me."

Love, the poor human love, had been active in its way to cover its object with all dainty and goodly things, to hide away the ugly ravages of the inexorable disease, and had spread over and around the poor breaking vessel the costly silks of the merchant, the warm furs, and the delicate veil to cover and shroud the wan face. The light of jewels sparkled on the trembling finger, but how plain to one who looked at the bald facts of the sad case, that this poor show and effort to hide the truth was as one who speaketh flattery to his friends, and yet could say the eye of love is dim by reason of sorrow.

The office of the physician in such a case is to give all the help and

comfort which the conditions render possible, to give all reasonable encouragement and hope which science may discern, and art find remedy to ensure.

But, when this was done, I turned to her and spake of Him who hath, as sent of God, brought up life and incorruptibility from the grave—not direct from heaven as man would suppose, but strange, unexpected place, out of the grave—His grave! I told her of the tender love and wondrous grace of God the Father, who sent the Son to seek and save the lost, of the devotedness of Him who came to do the will of God the Father, of the Son of God, with life in Himself, who broke into the house of death, the house appointed for all living, to rob it of its victims, even as Lazarus, who lay four days with corruption for his father, and the

worm for his mother and his sister (Job. xvii. 14); him who was afterwards seen reclining at the same table with the One who raised him up from among the dead, the One who could say of his own Person, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." A wondrous story, ever fresh to the needy, weary heart thirsting for the truth—the glad tidings of the grace of God—in Him who said "I am the truth, the way, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

But, alas! with this dying one it fell upon a shut ear. The word about the crucified and risen Christ fell among thorns, and the seed was choked by the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. Like the drowning one, she clung to the nighest straw, and despised the life-

boat with its sure and certain security; would listen eagerly for any remedy for the poor, frail body, but turned wearily from the Word of Eternal Life. She saw no beauty in Him to desire Him!

Days after, the sorrowing husband came alone to tell of failing strength, and the thick coming proof that the house of life of her whom he cherished, as the wife of his youth, was fast breaking up, the bitter end was at hand.

As he was about to leave I said to him, in effect, "Now we have spoken of the poor perishing body, how about her immortal soul? You heard what I said to her, do you think she has received it as the WORD OF GOD?"

He looked at me sadly, but remained silent, though his heart was full.

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“What!” I said, “no response to such a message from God, when all of nature is slipping from her feet? no answer, no need expressed?”

His silence still gave the expressive negative. I repeated as to myself, “What! no result from such a message?”

And now he looked up and smiled simply as he said, “Yes.”

“How? where?”

“*In me.* I have received it as the **WORD OF GOD** for my own soul.”
—2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.