

Some, indeed, through fear of death, are all their lifetime subject to bondage. Their weak and disordered nerves, their morbid and excitable fancies, start at the rustling of a leaf. No wonder, then, if their souls are overcome when they think of taking a last look upon this fair world, of grasping the hand of friendship for the last time, and of taking the fearful plunge, which throws them at once into the hands of that unsparing conqueror, whose heart never yet relented. No wonder that they cling to the world with a desperate grasp, and almost cease to feel the attractions of heaven. But let faith now put into nature's hand her magic wand, and it will be the traveller's passport through the dark valley, and the smitten waters of Jordan shall divide, and a ray from heaven come in to trace out his pathway. Let the Christian endeavor, while faith is in lively exercise, to render death familiar by frequent meditation, and he will find, that —

“Death and his image, rising in the brain,
Bear faint resemblance — never are alike ;
Fear shakes the pencil, fancy loves excess,
Dark ignorance is lavish of her shades,
And these the formidable picture draw.”

He will find that the physical pains of death he has over-rated, and that often, instead of an unknown dreaded agony, it is the sweet and quiet termination of all mortal suffering. If he must close his eyes on all the loved objects of time and sense, it is only to open them upon the infinite glories of heaven. If beloved earthly friends can accompany him no farther than the brink of the dark passage, yet friends still more beloved — his God, his Saviour, his Sanctifier — stand on the other side with arms outstretched to receive him. Ah, yes, it is the same Saviour who has himself, in the nature and with the feelings of a man, passed alone through that gulf,