

And do our hearts, my brethren, vibrate in sympathy with that of the apostle, or is the thought of departure chilling and agonizing? It is not strange that he who is young in years and in Christian experience, to whose unpractised eye the world spreads out so many fascinating scenes, should find his heart shrinking at the thought of death; nor that he who is in the midst of business and usefulness, basking in the sunshine of public favor, and linked to the world at a thousand points, should find the wrench terrible that separates him at once from so many cherished objects. But if we are advanced in Christian experience and in years; if a large part of the objects that once interested us have either ceased to fascinate or have been transferred to the eternal world; if increasing infirmities admonish us how soon the soul's material tenement must be taken down, surely we ought no longer to view death as an enemy, but as a friend come to deliver us from sin and sorrow, to unbar our prison doors, knock off our fetters, and to let the soul go out to breathe henceforth the vital air of heaven. No Christian, whatever his age or condition, ought to be wholly destitute of these feelings. But they especially become him who has long been in the school of Christ. He is in the condition represented by my last illustration; and his soul ought to swell with strong emotion whenever he turns his eyes towards the heavenly world. There are collected many of his earthly friends, and all his heavenly friends, beckoning to him to come to their sinless and unchanging home. O, what a group of beloved objects are congregated there, and how ought we to look upon the day of death as the time of coronation and victory!

“When life in opening buds is sweet,
And golden hopes the spirit greet,
And youth prepares his joys to meet,
Alas, how hard it is to die!