

subject. In the first place, new attachments are rarely formed by us, of much strength, in advanced life, because the laws of our nature forbid it. In the second place, God removes the Christian's friends, one after another, as he can bear it; so that, if he be spared to advanced life, he finds himself almost alone on earth, with but few ties to be sundered when his turn comes to depart. How full of benevolence is such a dispensation! Could we form strong attachments in riper years, we might, even at the last, find ourselves so fastened to the world that the final separation would be full of anguish. But now he cuts one earthly tie after another; so that, when the time of our own separation comes, this world has almost lost its power over us, and the few remaining cords that bind us to it are easily sundered. On the other hand, all our departed friends have gone to that same world whither we must go; and there they form a centre of attraction of strong power. We know that those of them who have entered the celestial city will issue from its portals, and, clothed in immortal beauty, and with the warm and holy affection of glorified spirits, will welcome us to our everlasting home. O, what mercy is here! Come, thou disconsolate mourner, whose heart has been made so often to bleed by the departure of beloved friends, see how God is preparing to make your own departure easy, by sundering beforehand the ties that bind you to the world, and gathering your friends together in the great centre of holiness and happiness, to draw you thither with irresistible force. With such a power to draw you away, and with so feeble a force to retain you, how slight will be the final pang! how triumphant your passage through the dominions of death!

But the details that have now been given will justify a more general inference. We may regard the astronomical illus-