

THE CONTRAST

BY DR. THOMAS'S DAUGHTER.

With strange perversity, we often feel
Great love for that which will no blessings deal;
And should some worthy friend, with kindly zeal,
Dare a remonstrance in our ear to steal,
And speak of wasted sentiment and thought,
And love that no one good will ever brought,
And say that we should always look about
For our best int'rest, and not idly wait
For sad experience to teach us when too late
To profit by its excellence;
'Twould prove wise counsel, and though hard to take,
'Twould in the end us much the wiser make.
What is our int'rest true? our minds enquire:
To find this out is our heart's chief desire.
Some think it lies in things of time and sense—
A wrong conclusion, based on ignorance
Of God's own plan, our fall'n race to save,
From bondage, sin, corruption, and the grave.
Here, let us for awhile the contrast view,
'Tween earthly things and heav'n born love so true.
Plain, this truth is known to be established,
That in the nature of all human fabrics
One principle is laid, since Eve transgress'd
The law of Eden, and her shame confess'd,
That evil doth with all good things alloy,
Which the devil has so worked as to annoy
The sons of men, by adding to each joy
A sting to pierce the heart, when pleasures nigh
Entice the soul sin's pleasant paths to try.
Still more, we see, with clearer illustration,
The devil has this plan in operation,
To brand as evil all our best intentions,
And call that good which only evil sanctions;
Also to cause our heav'nly interest
To be o'erlooked by those we love the best;
And hold before our view mach good to gain,
But keep us always foll'wing on its train.
And in pursuit of good we never tire,
But good ne'er comes till we have lost desire.
This plan we've called the devil's, but explain
That sin in human nature bears this name;
This term the Lord has used to designate
The rebel spirit in our race innate.
This rebel spirit nature breathes in man,

Till from above a heavenly love expands
The hearts of those who form a chosen band
By offers free, of pard'ning grace to all
Whose ears are tun'd to hear the heav'nly call.
This glorious call, with richest promise fraught,
Still speaks of love—such love as ne'er was brought
To bless our hearts from any other source,
So perfect, so complete; its changeless course
From th' object of its choice knows no reverse.
It comes from *Him*, our “Ark within the vail,”
Who stands to plead (time causes not to fail),
With earnest tones—unutterable groans,
To intercede before the Father's throne
For those whose pray'rs as sweet incense ascend
To the “*Most Holy*,” where our High Priest attends.
When nature's sun, with fertilizing beams,
Brings forth the flow'ring herbage—mountain streams
Break from their icy bondage to the field;
The earth is caused abundantly to yield
Her fruit in harvest: so the vital germ
Of living “faith toward God” (we humbly learn)
Is made to bud and blossom and increase
Till gathered sheaves show harvest labours cease,
By that expansive, vitalizing love.
Shed in quick'ning radiance from above.
Such love divine, no human heart can know
Its nature, not to receive, but to bestow;
Not to love those who loudly do proclaim
Their own self-righteousness and holy fame;
But to the humble, lowly, contrite heart
It comes with strains of mercy; and apart
From all reward or recompense, it seeks
The mourning outcast and the wand'ring sheep;
The heavy laden, weary, and oppress'd
Are offered freedom and eternal rest.
Nor is that love content to leave us there:
His ever-watchful eye and loving care
Doth follow us through all our pilgrimage,
To chasten and afflict, but yet to save,
Till we to perfect stature into *Him*
Do grow at last, and come to know no sin.
The eye that Israel keeps doth never close,
It slumber knows not, nor will it repose;
Jerusalem! that once beloved name,
Is still to be remembered by the same
Eternal one who in his hands engraved
Her character; though she is still enslaved.
Yes, for the conqueror's chain, and trampling foot,
Her children sacrificed King David's “root”

And "offspring," that resplendent "morning star"
Of Jacob, shedding glorious light afar.
Oh! had she known the things which peace did bring,
How warmly she had welcomed Israel's king!
How would his tender, sympathising care
Have gathered all her children, shelt'ring there,
With tender carefulness, like birds of air!
But then, her day was past; no more the voice
Of pleading mercy gave her still a choice.
Her doom was seal'd, when with one frantic cry
They said "Let him be crucified," and die:
"On us and our descendants let his blood
Remain;" and with relentless rage they stood,
Till satisfied with doing all they could
To bring about their end by base falsehood.
With lamb-like innocence and patience fill'd,
Observe, the noble victim's voice was still'd
Till on the way to Calvary He view'd
The daughters of Jerusalem bedew'd
In tearful sorrow; then he spoke, and said,
"Weep not for me, but for yourselves instead."
Now fast approach'd the long predicted hour
Which was to witness the eternal pow'r
That dwelt in flesh depart, and leave the frame
Where long had dwelt Jehovah's glorious name.
When thus forsook, he cried in agony,
"Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani."
His dying groan did rend the temple vail,
And cause the earth 'neath loads of sin to quail
Before offended Heav'n; and make known
The judgments near, for what mankind had done.
His blood thus expiates high treason's crime,
No more a sacrifice throughout all time.
He our sin-offering was, our guilt He bore,
Our "mercy-seat" we ever more adore.
Our minds are fill'd with wonder, and amazed,
We humbly bow in gratitude and praise,
To think on love like this to fall'n man,
While still a rebel 'gainst th' Almighty's plan.
Oh! may our feelings glow with ardent love
Toward our gracious King and Lord above;
For soon he will appear our hearts to cheer
And dwell for ever with his people here.