

THE HOME OF THE SOUL.

What a beautiful thought was that of Moses, the man of God, "O God! thou art our dwelling-place in all generations!" Changes are continually occurring in this world; "man, being in honor, abideth not;" kingdoms rise and fall; the day is coming when the earth and all the works that are therein shall be burned up; they shall wax old like a garment, and as a vesture they shall be changed; they shall be folded up and laid aside as worn-out clothing, to be used no more in the same fashion; but the eternity and immutability of our God and Saviour shall ever remain the same for our consolation and refuge.

The holy apostle affords us the example of staying himself upon the same consideration. Since such is the steadfastness of the Most High, every word of his is reliable, every promise is worthy of unintermitted trust. That promise can no more fail, than Jehovah himself can cease to exist. Our Lord has confirmed it, when he said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Whatever changes or reverses therefore may take place in sublunary affairs, though we may lose house and home, and our worldly all, we have in our Maker a changeless dwelling-place. The bosom of God is the *Home of the Soul*.

So saith St. John, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God." To dwell in God, or to have God for our dwelling-place, implies reconciliation, for "how can two walk together," much less dwell together, "except they be agreed?" It implies nearness of access. "They that they are far from thee shall perish, but it is good for me to draw near unto God." It implies trust and confidence. No one would build on the fluctuating sea. But "the Lord is my rock and my fortress; who is a rock, save our God?" "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." It implies a right of some sort, for a man's dwelling-place is his own. Every man's house is his castle. He is presumed to have the right of occupancy and use. So the pious calleth, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee." And God refuses not to acknowledge the claim. "Be not dismayed, for I am thy God." "Hear, O Israel, I am God, even thy God." It implies permanency. A dwelling is not an inn, or a lodging-place for a night. Neither is it a temporary harbor for an emergency; but a constant and habitual residence. Men are, indeed, ready enough to run to God in a storm, and to quit him as soon as the storm blows over; but to fly to him for refuge and treat him as a mere convenience, is a very different thing from making him our dwelling-place at all times. "Trust in him at all times, ye people; pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us."

The future condition of the children of God must be infinitely preferable to their present state. The clay tenement which we now inhabit is but a temporary lodging. The mansion to which we are going is "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."—There is all the difference between a palace and an inn. The moment then that announces our release should not be so gloomy as it is often represented.

"Why should not he, whose touch dissolves our chain, Put on his robes of beauty, when he comes As a deliverer? He hath many forms; They should not all be fearful. When his call Is but our gathering to that distant land, For whose sweet waters we have pined with thirst, Why should not its prophetic sense be borne Into the heart's deep stillness, with a breath Of summer winds, solemn, yet lovely?"

If our hearts were what they should be, we would feel like the happy school-boy, when he quits his tasks at the holidays. At every homeward step familiar objects greet his eye. The church-spire rises in the distance.—Scenes thicken fast associated with some interesting recollection. The old trees, each of which has its own personal history, bend to welcome him. His father's house comes in sight, and his heart bounds with pleasure; his feet cannot fly fast enough to bring him home! Once within the doors, what embraces! what congratulations! what shouts of joy! O Christian! if we have not similar exultations at the thought of going "home"—home to our Father's house—I fear me it is because we are conscious of being truants and delinquents; and sin, with its leaden load, retards our steps.

There have been those who have thought with lively pleasure of God as the home of the soul. The last entry of David Brainard in his diary was, "O my dear God, I am speedily coming to thee I hope! Hasten the day, O

Lord, if it be thy blessed will." Mrs. Rumpff's last words were, "I have been a stranger on the earth, but I return to my true country." "And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end."—*Presbyterian*.

Thoughts of a Collector.

In the exercise of my office as collector, I called recently upon a brother, in behalf of one of the great benevolent institutions of the day. He promptly expressed his interest in the cause, and a willingness to do what he was able to promote it. I felt encouraged by such expressions, and anticipated a large donation; but when his name was written and the sum affixed, I was disappointed. I need not mention the amount; but compared either with his means and the world's wants, I could not but regard it as very small.

As I passed on my way, the following thought occupied my mind. 1. That his gift was not commensurate with his personal obligations. The lines have fallen to him in pleasant places. He possesses a goodly heritage. His family enjoy every necessary, almost every desirable worldly blessing. And what is more, he and his sit under the droppings of the sanctuary, with the Bible in their hands, and the institutions of religion around them. And above all, he and a part of his household, through the abounding grace of God, are personally blessed with the consolations and hopes of the Gospel. How strongly could the appeal be made to him, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

2. His gift was not commensurate with his expenditures for other things. He is a man liberal in every necessary expenditure. His house is furnished, his children are educated, his business conducted, and even his tastes and inclinations gratified, without too closely counting the cost. All these demands, and many more, are promptly met, and no complaint of poverty uttered; but when the Saviour and a dying world prefer their claims, he gives a pittance, and says, he would gladly increase it if he were able! And in this he is not alone. How freely is wealth lavished upon business and pleasures, and how meagre, in comparison, is the little stream that flows to "make glad the city of God."

3. His gift cost him no self-denial. He might have spared much more without the sacrifice of a single comfort or even luxury. It may not be easy to determine to what extent we ought to practice self-denial in order to aid the cause of Christ; but it would seem, with the wants of a world before us, and the spirit of the Gospel in our hearts, we should not cease to give till we reach, at least, the point where sacrifice begins. The spirit of religion leads to self-denial, and demands it, both for the glory of God and the good of men. We are but stewards; all we have is the property of another. Even we ourselves are not our own. And shall we dwell in houses of cedar, while the ark of the Lord remains under curtains?

4. Is the benevolence of this brother, and of the church generally, *Christ-like*? "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor." Were the example of Christ imitated by his professed followers, our benevolent institutions could not long be embarrassed by lack of money and of men. The same spirit that led Him to leave the glory which he had with the Father, and come hither to save a world lying in wickedness, would certainly lead those who are able, to leave their homes and go to the ends of the earth on the same benevolent mission. And it would lead others to supply freely the means of sending them. Has the church—have I—in this matter the spirit of Christ, and is it exhibited as the times demand?—*New York Observer*.

Lending to the Lord.

Dean Swift was once asked to preach a short charity sermon. He complied with the request. The sermon is perhaps the shortest one on record. We will quote it entire.—"He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord." Sermon: "If you like the security, down with your money." The effect was electrical. An unusually large collection was taken up immediately afterwards.

A physician who is not a professor of religion, in a neighbouring city, has for many years exhibited an unshaken faith in that declaration. He told me that he had made many experiments on it, and the Lord hath fulfilled his words, "That which he hath given will He pay him again," in every case. One of the "experiments" came under my observation.

"It was a bleak and chilling day in the winter of 1847—8. The doctor was going his rounds, and met a poor colored boy in the street. He was nearly frozen to death. He accosted the doctor, and asked him most piteously for a little money, stating at the same time that his master, an old Quaker, had excluded him from the house, and compelled him to remain in the barn; he could stand it no longer, and desired to go home—twenty miles up the river. The doctor now had the materials for another test of the promise.—'You shall not suffer if I can help you,' was his cheering reply to the boy. He requested him to call at his office, and went to a neighboring hotel and told the landlord to keep the boy until further orders. Late in the evening, the boy again appeared at the office, and stated that the landlord had said, 'We don't keep darkies over night.' The doctor immediately started out in search of new quarters, and after some difficulty found a coloured woman who was willing to keep the boy for a few days. In a short time, the river, which had been closed with ice, was open. The doctor paid the bills, gave the boy a crown-piece, and bade him God-speed. That is what he calls lending to the Lord. Now for the payment. When he called at the house of the coloured person to pay the bill, he accidentally met an old lady who scrutinized him closely, and at length said, 'Ain't you Dr. B—?' 'Yes,' was the reply; 'but who are you?' 'No matter about my name; I owe you a pound-note which you have long since forgotten, and which I did not intend to pay you till I saw what you have done to that poor boy. The Lord bless you for your kindness! Next week you shall have your money.' She came according to her promise, and offered the money, but the doctor was unwilling to take it, as he had no charge on his books. She forced it on him. He afterwards simply remarked, 'My meeting that woman was not a mere accident; the Lord always fulfils his promise. I generally get my capital back with compound interest.'

The Bank of Heaven is not yet insolvent. Money can be safely invested there. "Ye have the poor always with you."

[From the New York Recorder.]

On Scandals.

I learn that the scandal which has just occurred renews the becoming sorrow, which similar occurrences have created in your mind. I sincerely sympathize in it, for all that affects you is interesting to me. That which is most to be lamented in these unhappy occurrences is, that the world, which is but too prone to censure religious people, concludes on such grounds that there are none good in reality. Some take pleasure in believing them, and enjoy a malicious triumph; others are troubled, and in spite of secret prepossessions in favour of piety, remain in the world from their mistrust of religious people. They are astonished to see a man who wore the semblance of religion, and who was perhaps true to his profession when in a retired situation, relapse into his former habits, when exposed to strong temptations. Do they not know that men are frail, that the influence of the world is contagious, that there is no safety for the weak but in flying from danger? Is it astonishing to see a tree torn up by the wind, which had not taken deep root? And are there not hypocrites in morality as well as religion? Should spurious virtue lead us to doubt the existence of that which is real? When the world triumphs at such an event, it is a proof that it does not understand the character of men, or the nature of religion. We ought to be grieved at such events, but we cannot be surprised if we are thoroughly acquainted with human nature, and understand the limited sense in which all the good we do can be called our own. Let him who standeth take heed lest he fall; and let not him who is still grovelling on the earth triumph in the disgrace of one who seemed to walk well. Our security is not in erring men, nor in ourselves, as frail as they are; it is in God only, who is truth immutable. Let men prove themselves to be but men,—falsehood, guilt, and nothingness; let them yield to the influences of iniquity; the truth of God will not be overthrown, and the world will be the more abominable for having corrupted those who wished to be virtuous.

As to hypocrites, time will unmask them, and their conduct is always contradictory.—They are hypocrites that they may reap the rewards of hypocrisy. They live for luxury and pleasure, or else for interest and ambition.—We shall see them manoeuvring, flattering, and

assuming every character. True piety is simple, consistent, and devoid of all affectation or mystery; it affects neither notice nor obscurity, it covets neither honor nor success; it avoids every form of evil; it allows itself to be condemned in silence; it is easily satisfied; it has no plans, nor cabals, nor pretensions. Notice it, or neglect it, and still it is the same. Hypocrisy can imitate all this, but it will do it very coarsely. When we are deceived, it is either from a want of observation or a want of acquaintance with real piety. People who have no knowledge of diamonds mistake mock jewels for real ones, but it is nevertheless true that there are real ones, and that it is not impossible to distinguish them. Before we yield our confidence to persons who are apparently virtuous, let us see if their deportment is simple, serious, and unaffected, firm and unmoved in danger, but active and decided when any essential point is to be gained.

A Convert from Heathenism.

An Asiatic correspondent of the New-York Baptist Register, gives the following account of a remarkable conversion from heathenism. Such facts furnish proof that the gospel, wherever preached and published, "is the power of God unto salvation."

In the village of Khanditur, there resided a man named Shihu Sabu. No missionary had visited the place, but one day he saw a garywan with two pages of a gospel, which he begged of the man. He told him a great deal which was quite new and strange, but he did not know where the two leaves had come from, or of what book they were a part. Some time afterward he went on a pilgrimage to Pooce, and whilst there he heard a missionary preach; after preaching, he gave away books, and the man determined to have some, that he might know more about the things mentioned in the two pages. As there was a great crowd around the missionary, Shihu put his clothes and basket down by the road-side, and putting his hands together, struggled through the crowd and managed to get a book; he at once began to read and inquire about the meaning of what he read; the missionary seeing his deep interest, gave him some books which he took to Khanditur, they were made very useful to himself, as well as to some of his friends, who began to leave off their idolatrous practices, and consequently were persecuted by their heathen fellow-villagers. After some time Shihu determined to become a Christian, but he met with the greatest opposition from his relatives. Nothing could exceed the tenderness and grief with which they hung around him, and besought him by every tender remembrance not to leave them; they even put his infant daughter in the road before him, saying, that if he became a Christian, it should be over her body. A large number of natives went into the river, and surrounded him and the missionary; he was however firm, and as soon as he was baptized, immediately they left. One and another from the same village followed his example, and now they have a chapel erected, a church has been formed, and from it four very efficient Catechists have been sent forth to labour amongst their heathen fellow countrymen.

Most of the early converts in Orissa, were men of respectable standing in native society; they have been very firm and consistent in their Christian career, so that their example has told powerfully on their heathen countrymen.

Bronchitis.

Debility has a marked influence in the production of diseases of the follicular glands; constitutional debility, especially if it be the result of severe and protracted mental labor, conjoined as it not unfrequently is with mental anxiety, may prove a fruitful source of follicular disease. Few causes tend more powerfully to depress the vital energies, to weaken the nervous system, and dispose the organs to take on the action of disease, than mental inquietude, united with intense application to study. To this cause of disease it is, that many of the clergy of our country are exposed; and it is for this reason, among others, that so large a proportion of clerical men, in comparison with those of the other professions, are affected with follicular laryngitis. In these remarks, I refer not to that portion of the clergy, who, located in our cities and larger towns, receive, many of them, ample remuneration for their ministerial labors, but to that more numerous class, who, settled in the towns and villages of the country, are compelled to sustain themselves and their families upon salaries which, with