

the threshold of the *Santa Casa* he ceased not to repeat in the transports of his gratitude : « Here Mary lived ; here Jesus spent his youth to the age of thirty years ; here is the dwelling of the Holy Family ! »

Why did the Almighty thus miraculously preserve this modest house of Nazareth ? Doubtless it was not only because its walls witnessed the great mysteries of the Childhood of Jesus and the sublime virtues practised in the first place by the Word incarnate and also by the immaculate Mother of God and the just Joseph. It seems to us that it was God's will to teach Christians respect for the domestic hearth by leaving under their eyes the spectacle of the virtues that sanctify it.

May the Christian home therefore be a true shrine ! In fact what is the paternal home to man ? There he comes into the world ; there his childhood is spent in joyous play ; there he grows in wisdom and grace ; there he spends the greater part of his life as Jesus did in Nazareth. May the paternal home be sanctified ! There the Christian mother preaches to her children the first truths of salvation : one God in three persons ; a God infinitely good who is our Father and whose children we are ; a God of charity who has made himself our brother in the Incarnation and who has saved us from hell by dying for us on the Cross ; a mother of God who is likewise our mother and whom we call Mary, *our life, our sweetness, our hope*.

May the domestic hearth be sanctified ! It is usually the scene of our sweetest joys as also of our greatest sorrows. There we love to spend the days of our old age ; there we prepare for earth, receive communion for the last time and draw our last breath ; from thence we go to the house of our eternity. Yes the Christian home is a shrine wherein we should behave as in the house of God, as in a church. It is a holy place like Jacob's ladder, the foot whereof rested on earth while the top reached to heaven. The Christian prayers said in that home are the mysterious steps by which the angels bring us divine graces ; the virtues practised in it are the steps by which souls ascend to the heavenly home. The Pontiff of this domestic church is the father of the family who, in the midst of his children, should offer to God the incense of prayer and cause heavenly blessings to descend upon their heads.

Oh how very desirable it is that the head of the family should be the owner of his home ! An old adage says that to possess a home is to possess a golden treasure. Attach yourselves to the soil, ye fathers of families, become property-owners. In Canada farmers on wages are