

4 THE CITY WITH FOUNDATIONS

them with just this sense of ceaseless change amid the unchanging monotony of the desert; and this sense of the uncertainties and shiftableness of human life has been stamped for ever into the language of our religion by the wandering fathers of our faith.

Both the city and the tent have their contribution to make to religion—the city with its suggestion of social activities and obligations, the tent with its suggestion of frailty and change. The one is a prophecy of the heavenly Jerusalem where men dwell together as brethren in unity; the other is the fragile symbol of our earthly life, which oftentimes seems to have no foundation anywhere, but shifts its place with the changing days, and finally vanishes away. City and tent alike have had their place in the shaping and colouring of religious thought, and the service of the tent is not likely to be forgotten, for its image is ever before us. Here to-day and gone to-morrow; that is the message of the tent. Nothing to do but pull up the tent-pins, and the home has vanished as at the touch of a wizard's wand. There is no home in all the desert; all the desert is a home. There is no home but God.

Such were the thoughts that may often have risen in nomad hearts. Such, at any rate, is the thought which the writer of the brave epistle to the Hebrews sees in the heart of Abraham, as he wanders about