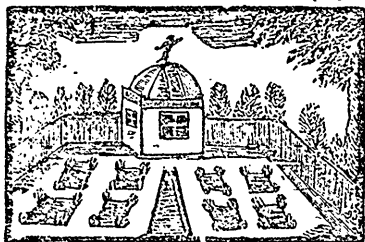


opposite, and buttoning his pocket up before he went into the street, he said to one of the workmen near him, "I always do this whenever I hear men swear, as I think that any one who can take God's name in vain, can also steal, or do anything that is bad."



THE TWO HOUSES.

He once knew a rich man who determined to have a very large and beautiful house built for himself. He bought a lot of ground in a beautiful part of the city, and took great pains to have the house built in the best manner. There were many spacious rooms and wide halls. It was planned so as to be warm in winter and cool in summer. No expense was spared to have it as comfortable and complete a dwelling as could be made. No doubt he looked forward to many years of enjoyment in his new and elegant house.

At the same time that this large house was preparing for himself and family, he had another built for them. And there was a great difference between the two; for the second house had but one small room for the whole family, and that room was mostly under ground. It had, indeed, strong walls, and was built of marble, but it had no windows, and but one small door, and that was made of iron. What a contrast there was between the wide and lofty mansion, so bright and handsome, and the low building

under the willow tree, which one would scarcely notice! Yet these two houses were built for the same people. The one was for the *living* family; the other for the *dead*. For the low house under the tree is the vault into which their bodies are to be placed, as one after another shall be called away from life.

The vault was soon finished, and it was ready long before the large house. And into which of them do you think the rich owner himself went first to take up his abode? Strange as it may seem, he was ready for the vault before the fine dwelling was ready for him; and many months before the spacious rooms of the new house were fit to be inhabited, its builder was laid in the narrow, dark, and cold apartment, which he will not leave until the earth shall give up its dead at the last day.

This is a fact which ought to fix the attention of the young. To you, everything in life seems bright and happy, and promising great enjoyment; and you forget its end, and imagine it is too far off to be thought of. *The house of the living* is so large and beautiful that it hides from our sight *the house of the dead*. But remember, that, like the man I have been telling you of, you may have to lie down in the silent grave before you have entered upon the pleasures of life which you are expecting. If you will be wise, you will live and act in such a manner as to be prepared both for life and death: to enjoy the one, and not to fear the other. The Saviour has declared, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." This is true in the most important sense possible. The true believer, whose sins are pardoned, and who is accepted in Christ, has the promise of a house which is not made