

in the house of the wicked, but he blesseth the habitation of the just," Prov. iii. 33. And here we come upon

### III. WOMAN'S TRUE SPHERE OF WORK AND INFLUENCE IN THE CHURCH.

While elders and deacons seem to have been the only two classes formally set apart officially to the work of the church, they were not the only classes that worked for the church's up-building. In Rom. xvi. Paul greets both men and women, whom he regarded as co-workers; and at the very head of the list stands Phœbe, a devout Christian woman, and active worker in the church of Cenchrea. Priscilla and Aquila—a married couple—are also named, but the wife's name preceding that of her husband, as being, what many wives are to-day, the more earnest and active worker of the two; while he makes mention of many another godly woman, true helpmeets in the Lord's work.

In the church to-day many new spheres of labor are opening up which women can occupy with great advantage, and bear noble testimony to the Lord. It is an obvious fact that were it not for women who, like their sisters in the olden times, love to linger around the cross, visit the sepulchre of our Saviour, or minister to Him in loving deeds, many of our prayer-meetings might be closed, our Sabbath-schools would have few teachers, many of our church organizations would soon cease to have a name, our congregational life would wither away, our social meetings, mission work, district visiting, in short, Christian enterprise in every department, would be suspended. While woman's instinctive sagacity, her keener perceptions, and tenderer sympathies peculiarly fit her for nursing the sick and visiting the afflicted, always a large part of Christian work; while woman's missionary associations promise to develop greatly the energy and efficiency of the church in this greater department of labor, and many noble women are now going out to the foreign field to tell of Jesus and the resurrection, we rejoice in all their Christian activity and wish it multiplied a thousandfold. We regard all this as an omen for good, and would not say a word that would detract from its importance.

### IV. THE HOME HER MAIN SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.

Notwithstanding all this, we hesitate not to affirm that it is in