

REST.

As the word is used in the Bible has a reference not only to the tranquility of a nation delivered from all her enemies, but to the tranquility of the individual. Solomon was a man of rest, not only because he reigned in peaceful times, but also because he was a man of composed and deliberate turn of mind. In proof of this statement we might refer to his remarkable request from God (1st Kings, 3. 9.) "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad, for who is able to judge this thy so great people?" No man but one calm and deliberate could proffer such a request. And for the same reason, I apprehend he was called Solomon, which name comes from a word which is translated (Ps. 38. 3.) by the word rest, and means something "complete" or "finished," and hence peaceful. Not that I mean to affirm that Solomon was; by any means a perfect man, in the sense of being free from imprudence and guilt, for that supposition is contradicted by every page of his history. But we must learn to distinguish between an object and its use. Thus a vessel may be complete, as perfect as a vessel can be, and yet it may be made the instrument of almost any wickedness. So a man may lack moral principle and yet be complete in all his faculties and powers. He may have a composed well-balanced mind, and be deliberately bad.

But suppose that a man had the possession of a pure and holy nature, and perfect in every other respect, having "grown into the fulness of the perfect man of God in Christ Jesus," then he could not but have tranquility of soul. And what may better describe the state of mind than the little word *rest*? It throws us back to the sea of time. It recalls the changeful scenes of sunshine and shade, of calm and of storm, of impulse and of passion, and it speaks of them all as past, and alone there remains "a great calm." A calm swept of all the impurities of earth; like the calm of nature after a storm, a "sweet savor of rest" is breathed forth on every side.

Thus we think of the rest of the better land. No air stifled with the confined and fetid breath of disease and sin can enter into our conceptions of that land. The tears of earth may be pearls in heaven. And graceful as hang the rain

drops on leaf and branch, yet more beautiful shall be the joys of Eternity amidst the everlasting calms. Within the breast as without, all shall be peace. For where everything is complete what can there be to disturb. Perfect the character, and place it in a perfect state, and dis-peace becomes an impossibility.— And such we know heaven to be. It shall be peopled with perfect beings, for they shall be all like Christ. And they shall have a perfect character, "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." And so, as we hope to be admitted thus into the presence of God for ever, and to be partakers of his joy, ought we strive after a perfect character here. And in proportion as we reach it so shall we have a "peace of mind that passeth all understanding." A well balanced mind, a spotless character, a pure conscience, and a loving heart, being the possession of all, cannot but give peace within. Unrest cannot dwell in such a mind, and such will be the portion of all.

"A hope so great and so divine
May trials well endure,
And purge the soul from sense and sin,
As Christ himself is pure.

THE FREE'D BIRD.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

"Return, return, my bird!
I have dressed thy cage with flowers,
'Tis lovely as a violet bank
In the heart of forest bowers.

"I am free, I am free, I return no more!
The weary time of the cage is o'er!
Through the rolling clouds I can soar on
high,
The sky is around me, the blue bright
sky!

"The hills lie beneath me spread far
and clear,
With their glowing heath flowers and
bounding deer,
I see the waves flash on the sunny shore—
I am free, I am free,—I return no more!"

"Alas, alas, my bird!
Why seek'st thou to be free?
Wert thou not blest in thy little bower,
When thy song breathed nought but
glee?"