

## HOME.

In these days of unrest, attention is largely diverted from the special blessings of home life. Men easily lose sight of the healthful repose, the perfect rest from conflict, which makes the life of home the sweetest symbol of heaven. Some of the peculiar advantages of our American civilization are full of very serious dangers. An immense territory, a spirit of adventure, a love of travel, the unexampled rapidity with which large cities spring from the very wildernesses as if by magic, the novelty of all things and the consequent lack of sacred associations which resist change—these, and many other causes, greatly lessen, where they do not entirely destroy, that peculiar feeling which finds its expression in "Home, Sweet Home." Nay, even closed furnaces, or radiators, or steam-pipes, are not without a serious effect upon domestic comfort, or at least domestic coziness. Compare, for instance, the pathetic longings of the wanderer in Goldsmith's "Deserted Village":—

"In all my wanderings round this world of care,  
In all my griefs—and God has given me my share—  
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,  
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;  
To husband out life's taper at the close,  
And keep the flame from wasting by repose.  
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,  
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill;  
Around my fire an evening group to draw,  
And tell of all I felt and all I saw.  
And as a hare, when hounds and horns pursue,  
Pants to the place from which at first she flew.  
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,  
Here to return, and die at home at last."

Here we have it—in that exquisitely musical verse in which even yet Goldsmith is without a rival: "To keep the flame from wasting by repose." The modern American is always burning the candle at both ends. "God giveth His beloved sleep," but the young children in an American house sit up late, see company, have their sweet eyes dazzled and their nerves kept quivering by

brightly lighted rooms and eager conversation. Everything is hurry. People are always getting, or trying to get, the money which they allow themselves no leisure to enjoy. Conversation becomes mere chatter. Letter-writing is becoming a lost art. Correspondence is by means of the telegraph or the telephone; and a letter is good for nothing, or next to nothing, unless one can linger over it, both in the writing and the reading. Life is robbed of its sweetest charm, its truest refinement, if it is deprived of confidential and unserved intercourse with those whom one loves and can trust. Both strength and grace of character, like sturdy trees and fragrant flowers, must have a chance to grow; and growth needs darkness and winter and repose as well as sunlight and wind and stimulus. Home means rest, familiarity, love, truth, a fruitful waste of time, self-forgetfulness a thousand acts of happy self-sacrifice. It is the true life, the end-in-itself, for which almost everything else is a mere instrument or preparation. It is old-fashioned doctrine but none the less true. The real test of what a man verily is, is his home life. The man who cares nothing for home, who does nothing to make home happy, who is forever longing for new faces and new scenes, may not necessarily be vicious; but he is "in a parlous state," and the ready prey for the great enemy of souls. And the wife who cannot make a home may be very beautiful and brilliant, "the observed of all observers," the "belle" of her city, the best known name in "society," but after all she lacks that something, that pearl of great price, without which she comes short of a true womanliness.—*The Churchman, N. Y.*

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