

THE HOME OF GOD'S ELECT.

What Will Be the Employments of the Dwellers There?

AGES OF SERVICE AND PRAISE

The Teachings of Reason and Revelation as an Interesting and Important Question, as Interpreted by Revs. L. G. Stevens, B. D., R. Wilson, Ph. D., Costello, L. G. MacNeill, M. A., D. Mac-

The Holy Scriptures, accepted by Christians as a revelation of God and His Son Jesus Christ, while very full and broad in dealing with the being and occupations of the life that now is, are singularly and no doubt divinely and purposely reticent concerning both the employments and the state of being of those who enter into the eternal life.

The Scriptures minutely describe the resurrection both of Lazarus and of Jesus. Yet we have no account of where they had been during those days of absence from the body, and of what they had seen and done.

But in such an ethereal spiritual body, will the individual preserve his identity? Yes. In His resurrection body Christ preserved His identity and was instantly recognized, with one or two exceptions—and then it was not that His body was suddenly changed, but purposely "their eyes were hidden that they should not know Him."

Of a dear departed friend who himself enjoyed and caused others to share with him the blessed antepasts of heaven, a philosopher and poet thus wrote:

we have heaven referred to both as a place "from whence," and a condition of "mind"—while both the occupation, "citizenship," and state of being—"glorious body"—of the redeemed, are emphasized.

The being and employment of the redeemed! If a puzzling inquiry, or rather one which cannot fully be answered, it is certainly a most fascinating subject to every thoughtful, investigating mind. We are curious, and reasonably so, to know what kind of bodies we shall have, and what we are to do with them.

Generally speaking, heaven is regarded as a place of rest and quiet, of release from the ills and burdens of life, of freedom from care and anxiety, a place where temptation and trial are unknown, and the losses, crosses, disappointments and discouragements of earth are never experienced.

But neither praise nor search for knowledge constitutes the chief employment of the redeemed—we must seek for something more comprehensive, something which includes these and every other employment.

A good and pious bishop, in the early days of the church, at a conference of his clergy, introduced for their meditation the subject of heaven. Beginning with the eldest he asked them to sum up each one in a single verse of Scripture, their idea of heaven, that feature in its life and work which appeared to them of greatest interest.

But there remains a further interesting question to discuss briefly—What shall we do in heaven?—what is the employment of the redeemed? That little piece of childhood poetry—containing at least one line of bad theology—

And with the angels stand, A crown upon my forehead, A harp within my hand,

heavenly music is utterly repellent, may, with his celestial, heavenly body, with its new and enlarged capacities for worshiping God, and in the way God may choose—that very man may be a leader among the jubilant choirs who shall sing Jehovah's praise.

Another will be the acquisition of knowledge. "Then," says the scholarly St. Paul, who would not count himself "to have apprehended," pressing on to the goal, thirsting yet more and more for new fields of investigation and study, especially if it concerned the being and character of God.

But neither praise nor search for knowledge constitutes the chief employment of the redeemed—we must seek for something more comprehensive, something which includes these and every other employment.

Is not that a noble—the noblest—idea of heaven—loving, faithful, obedient service? Jesus was the servant of God as well as the Son of God. His meat and drink was, and always will be, to do the will of the Father that sent Him.

And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him, that God may be all in all. It will be a noble, willing, obedient, happy employment,—one whose ramifications will be infinite, and whose service everlasting.

Over all, through all, its thoughts shall fly—A glorified and eternal thing, Forgetting what it was to die.

FROM GLOBE UNTO GLOBE.

An Eternity of Growth in Knowledge of Nature, Providence and Grace. If the language of the Bible is to be interpreted in accordance with well-established rules, and the terms and phrases employed therein are to be accepted in their generally received sense, then heaven is a place of active and varied occupations.

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While all are agreed that the future life will be occupied in praising God, there is great diversity of opinion as to the manner in which this delightful duty will be discharged. The notion that God will ever be seated on a throne, high and lifted up, and around him will be gathered the millions of the redeemed, whose unceasing song will be: "Glory, hallelujah," is certainly not sustained by the sober study of Scripture.

As we expect to spend eternity in the company of pure and holy beings from this and other portions of the Almighty's empire, it is every way fit and proper for us to learn all we can about our future home, the character of those with whom we are forever to associate, and the exercises in which we shall engage.

The Bible enjoins upon us here and now intelligent service, and to aid us in our work we bring the results of our research in the varied departments of Nature, Providence and Grace.

And will the angels who sang at creation's birth, and who so gladly minister to our comfort and safety now, be silent then, and refuse to tell us what they know of such subjects? No! A thousand times, No!

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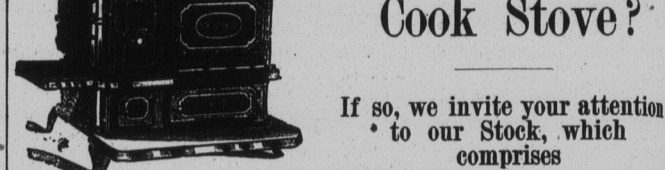
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