THE HOME OF GOD'S ELECT.

What Will Be the Employments of the Dwellers There?

AGES OF SERVICE AND PRAISE

on an Interesting and Important Ques-, as Interpreted by Revs. L. G. Stev-B. D., R. Wilson, Ph. D., Costello eston, L. G. Macneill, M. A., D. Mace, D. D., Elder T. H. Capp, G. Bruce B. A., Robert French and A. MacDougall, Ph. D.—Attractive Ideas and Eloquent

The Holy Scriptures, accepted by Christians as a revelation of God and His Son Jesus Christ, while very full and broad in life. As if to rebuke a prurient curiosity and perhaps because otherwise we should be blinded and bewildered, the Bible leaves the door both of heaven and of hell, only very partially open, ajar-but as we peep through we see enough both to stimulate abjectest fears. Jesus has told us of "many zells us, "It doth not yet appear what we l-its study, work, care, ambitions, its ear has not heard, neither have entered works and experiences of manhood. We have yet many things to say to it, but it

been during those days of absence from the 200dy, and of what they had seen and done. And if, as is possible, they were questioned by interested and curious friends, or by incredulous enemies, in the language of Yes. In His resurrection body Christ pre-Tempson's In Memoriam, "there lives no served His identity and was instantly rerecord of reply." The question before us cognized, with one or two exceptions—and deals with heaven—not so much whether a then it was not that His body was suddenly place or condition of soul or both—as whether we can determine the being and employments of the redeemed. I may say, Just how our identity will be maintained, it is a real substantial place—not that God is not everywhere, inhabiting eternity and is the place where God specially dwells, and firm which radiate as from a centre, the permeating and all-embracing influences of Wis power and love. "That where I am, there ye may be also." "Thy will be done are the curth as it is in heaven." The Bible is some and John and Paul, "the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellows with the saints and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God." Another said, the vision and companionship of the Saviour: "These were as also I am known." Moses and Elias and John and Paul, "the glorious companionship of the problem, and I heard the voice of harpers harping with the saints and of the household of God." Another said, the vision are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever. He goeth." Another, praise: "And I heard the voice of harpers harping with very explicit in its references to heaven as a real place-not an ethereal abstraction. an airy everywhere—it is the place "Where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

But no less is heaven a state, a condition of soul. When the ambitious wife of ambitious sons, desiring for them a place at His right and left hand in His (to their and lost boy and will find him:—"I shall about heaven. With a glowing face he anind earthly) kingdom, He answered go to him, but he shall not return to me."

(correcting their mistaken notions of time and loss boy and will find find the shall not return to me."

And next to meeting our blessed Saviour, (correcting their mistaken notions of time And next to meeting our blessed Saviour, and place) "To sit on my right hand and how many of us will wish to go directly on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall past the millions of millions of departed be given to them for whom it is prepared of any father." Christ's heaven, while it impolves locality and external occupations, farewell (if we were granted that privilege) involves locality and external occupations, There is great force and beauty in that prayer of Frances Ridley Havergal: tion; or perhaps, in the very first moments of the ternal life, to seek from some departed message to our earth, as He may have been *Prepare me, O Lord, for the things thou one, now reunited to us, a long prayed for art preparing for me." Heaven being not only a place but a constitution of the things thou one, now reunited to us, a long prayed for and satisfying forgiveness. only a place, but a condition of soul, it follows there must be preparedness of soul "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." With all reverence be it said, God cannot, from His very nature and being, admit a bad, impure man into His abode. We fairly realize this thought both of place and condition, when we say "It is a very heaven upon earth," or "a hell upon

It all within is right, All without is well.
If all within is wrong,
All without is hell.

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

Of that good man let this just praise be given, Heaven was in him, before he was in heaven.

"Many walk," says the apostle, "of you even weeping, that they are the enemes of the cross of Christ; whose end is struction, whose God is their belly, and and worshipping God. The redec sarthly things. For our conversation-our be happy, but because of their happinesspoliticuma, our citizenship—is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, dance of the heart the lips will sing the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change Music, as we well know, in the animal and His glorious body." In this far-reaching happiness. Untuneful and dumb here on earth, the very man to whom the idea of

we have heaven referred to both as a place heavenly music is utterly with his celestial, heaven -while both the occupation, "citizenship," and state of being-"glorious body"-of the redeemed, are emphasized.

The being and employment of the re-

deemed! 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 sign to God's acre our dearly loved ones, what we are to do with them. As we confathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, sweet little children in their freshness and tigation and study, especially if it concerns innocence, the son or daughter with budding promise of brilliant prospects, the aged and careworn and wrinkled—all the blessed dead who have died in the Lord—we naturally and longingly think of where they now are, and what they are and what 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 conscerning both the employments and the state a natural body and there is a spiritual of being of those who enter into the eternal body." We have here an immaterial soul and a "terrestrial" body—we shall have there an immaterial soul and a "celestial" body. Those who insist that the resurrection means the restoration of gross nally progressive life, of eternally expandmatter are always getting back to the idea of flesh and blood—an idea at which the best spiritual instincts revolt. The whole a poet, addressing a dear departed friend analogy of Scripture, the requirements of mansions," but He has not revealed their form or places. Other masters have been nature are satisfied not in the "vile body," mainute, explicit in their descriptions of the fature heaven; but the word of God plainly of the celestial is one, and the glory of the ppear what we terrestrial is quite another." And unless that celestial state is to be a condition just not understand it any more than the little like this terrestrial one, where being will child can all that is implied in the life of be repeated under exactly the same circum stanees, we can have no possible use f someibilities. Its little eye has not seen, the earthly body—it would be a clog and has not heard, neither have entered hindrance. "As we have borne the image into its heart the things which God hath of the earthy," so, then and there, " prepared for it in the glorious thoughts and shall bear the image of the heavenly. "When He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." eannot bear them now. And so with us, Very little is said in the gospels of Christ's ployment. Mildren of a larger growth, it will not be resurrection body; but in its power to antil we reach heaven that we shall enjoy
the sweet surprise of a perfect explanation."

appear and disappear, to seem tangible, and yet able to penetrate space, "the doors The Scriptures minutely describe the being shut," its swiftness of transit from resurrection both of Lazarus and of Jesus. place to place, its sudden and various Yet we have no account of where they had phases of appearance—from all this we can

But in such an ethereal spiritual body, will the individual preserve his identity? ioned like unto His glorious body, whereby not everywhere, unabiting eternity and meanite space, dwelling in every diverse had able even to subdue all things unto and distant part of His universe—but heaven the subdue all things unto Himself." Whatever the change, "when world" - each and every one will be identified, recognized; not a line that is identified, recognized; not a line that is characteristic of the real personality will be effected. King David will go not only to The aged bishop, turning to the last and effaced. King David will go not only to the "innumerable company of angels" and for a triumphant and heavenly congratula-

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

I want to be an an (which we can never be, however much we

wish) And with the angels stand,

has only tended to emphasize from ou earliest years that false conception that heaven is what the witty infidel has characterized "a great singing school." To the man who has no ear for music, for the concord of sweet sounds, the idea of spending an eternity in hymning and harping praises to God, brings unconscious-perhaps con-

scious-dissatisfaction. But he does not rightly interpret the scriptures, in their frequent references to the music of heaven as a means of praising whose glory is in their shame, who mind sing hallelujahs, not in order that they may body, that it may be fashioned like unto

new and enlarged capacities for w —that very man may be a leader among the jubilant choirs who shall sing Jehovah

"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 inves the being and character of God, "Then shall I know, even as also I am known. Heaven will be a glorious place for the scholar, for the intellectually able and earnest, to all who thirst for knowledge and improvement. And in the many mansions o the Father's House, the distant regions of creation, worlds and systems stretching out into the boundless immensity of space, and in the countless multitudes of beings who inhabit them—we may believe that ample provision will be made, and that eternally for the widest and most far-reaching excursions of intellect. Heaven will be an eter ing knowledge. This idea of progress in knowledge is thus beautifully expressed by

On the first anniversary of ins death. A year of progress in the lore
That's only learned in heaven; thy mir
Unclogged of clay and free to soar,
Hath left the realins of doubt behind,
And wondrous things which finite though
In vain cassayed to solve, appear
To thy untasked inquiries, fraught
With explanation strangely clear.
Thy reason owns no forced control
As held it here in needful thrail,
God's mysteries court thy questioning so

God's mysteries court thy questioning soul And thou mayst search and know them all.

But neither praise nor search fo knowledge constitutes the chief employ-ment of the redeemed—we must seek for something more comprehensive, something which includes these and every other em-

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. The first said, the absence of sorrow: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be The next replied, the any more pain." thought of rest: "There remaineth there-fore a rest for the people of God." Another, who had narrowly escaped death by a terrible shipwreck, said, no terrifying wever, in passing, that I believe heaven is impossible for us to answer. "He shall substantial place—not that God is change our vile body that it may be fashvanderer on the face of the earth, replied "No more strangers and foreigners, but fe and Elias and John and Paul, "the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of marytrs, the holy church throughous their harps and they sung as it was the w that to him the joy of heaven would be reunion with the loved and lost: "I shall youngest of the clergy present, asked what

Is not that a noble—the noblest—idea of heaven-loving, faithful, obedient service? Jesus was the servant of God as well as the always will be, to do the will of the Father and taught us to pray, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." All the employments of the redeemed are summed up in this thought of service. It is the "great est" of all employments. The Master-Himself a servant—said: "He that is greatest shall be your servant." And the welcoming salutation and introduction into the ranks of the redeemed is to be: "Well done, good and faithful servant." "And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him, that 3od may be all in all." It will be a noble, willing, obedient, happy employment,—one whose ramifications wi Death will be a change—and but a change of mere environments. The soul will withdraw from the gross material organism 'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was" -to its kindred elements, to recom bine and perform the same office for yel other souls, yet unborn-"and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

Above all dread, hope, hate or fear, It lives, all passionless and pure; An age shall fleet like earthly year, Its years as moments shall endure.

Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thoughts shall fly—
A glorious and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

L. G. STEVENS.

If the language of the Bible is to be terpreted in accordance with well-estab employed therein are to be accepted in their generally received sense, then heaven is a place of active and varied occupations. Such is not the popular idea, but the popular idea of many things is not the correct one. The Bible is appealed to in defence of opinions that cannot be sustained by a tittle of evidence, and theories are propounded in the most dogmatic manner, which, when examined in the light of reason and revelation, are found to be without foundation, and like

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 templosses, crosses, disappointments and dis-couragements of earth are never experienced. All this is doubtless true, and to the worn and wearied children of men is a comfort and a joy. Did it offer no more ald be well worth seeking and would amply repay us for all the effort necessary to secure it. If religion, by miti-gating the miseries of this life, is worthy our best endeavors, it is surely much more so in their entire removal in the life to come. But heaven is more than a negation; it has also its posititive side, and, not content with promising immunity from all evil, it speaks in enrapturing terms of the sublime and varied occupations of its glorified inhabitants. 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 one not sustained by the sober study of Scripture. Such service would be un worthy the worshippers, the place, and the purpose for which it would be engaged in as well as contrary to the genius of the human mind and the usage of the church. be ruinous, the best sermon ever listened to would become dull and uninteresting if often repeated, and experience and ob prove beyond a question that servation exercises to be attractive must be varied. To this universal rule even heaven itself will furnish no exception, for the sweet singer of Israel informs us that while, "In Thy presence is fulness of joy, at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

As we expect to spend eternity in the

and other portions of the Almighty's empire, it is every way fit and proper for us to learn character of those with whom we are forever to associate, and the exercises in which believe that death will make any material change in either our mental or moral conbe broken, what we will be at death we will be immediately after death, and the roundings. In this life mind is ever active. the powers of the soul are in perpetual play. mood is simply an impossibility. If then there is in us this living, acting principle, inquiry and search for knowledge, and if death will not destroy this feeling, then it and will provide such employments as will best meet the requirements of the case

intelligent service, and to aid us in ou work we bring the results of our research in the varied departments of Nature, Providence and Grace. Nature is doubtless a grand study, and he who mingles in her Gents' Tweed Rubber Coats, Silver and Plated Good guage of her unbreathing things cannot fail to be a wiser and a better man. But. after all, how little do we know even of our own earth, of its origin, its age and its destiny, and many are the questions that have been asked, but have never been answered, and never will be on this side the grave. The best and purest of the sons of Adam, from the days of Moses and David until now, have turned their inquiringly towards the heavens, and have looked long and wistfully at these stupend ous orbs that roll in silent grandeur in the unmeasurable expanse, and have wondered what they were, whether or not they were the homes of intelligent beings, and whe ther they were good and holy as the angels or sinful and rebellious as the children o earth. Is this ignorance to be perpetu ated? Are we to be kept in the dark con cerning these things forever? Will th earnest questionings of the devout geolo gist and astronomer never be answered, and will the problems that perplex and puzzle them never be solved? Is hones inquiry never to be gratified, and is the patient and prayerful student of Nature to be doomed to eternal disappointment 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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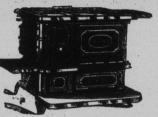
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