

the two. For the second house had but one small room for the whole family, and that room was mostly underground. It had, indeed, strong walls, and was built of marble, but it had no windows, and but one small door, and that was made of iron. What a contrast there was between the wide and lofty mansion, so bright and handsome, and the low building under the willow-tree, which one would scarcely notice! Yet these two houses were built for the same people. This one was for the living family; the other for the dead. For the low house under the tree is the vault into which their bodies are to be placed, as one after another shall be called away from life.

The vault was soon finished, and it was ready long before the large house. And into which of them do you think the rich owner himself went first to take up his abode? Strange as it may seem, he was ready for the vault before the fine dwelling was ready for him; and many months before the spacious rooms of the new house were fit to be inhabited, its builder was laid in the narrow, dark, and cold apartment, which he will not leave until the earth shall give up its dead at the last day.

This is a fact which ought to fix the attention of the young. To you, everything in life seems bright and happy, and promising great enjoyment, and you forget its end, or imagine it is too far off to be thought of. The house of the living is so large and beautiful, that it hides from our sight the house of the dead.

But always remember, that like the man I have been telling you of, you may have to lie down in the silent grave before you have entered upon the pleasures of life which you are expecting. If you will be wise, you will live and act in such a manner as to be prepared both for life and death; to enjoy the one, and not to fear the other. The Saviour has declared, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." This is true in the most important sense possible. The true believer, whose sins are pardoned, and who is accepted in Christ, has the promise of a house which is not made with hands, but is eternal; not in this perishing world, but in the heavens. And the passage from this life to that, is not to die as the world speaks of death; it is to fall asleep on earth, and awake with God.

Happy are they who remember their Creator in the days of their youth. When the Saviour was on earth, His kind words were, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." He has the same heart of love now; the voice of invitation still speaks through the Divine Word. It is the voice of Christ, the Wisdom of God, who thus speaks, "I love them that love Me, and those that seek Me early shall find Me. Riches and honour are with Me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and My revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: that I may cause those that love Me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures. Now, therefore, hearken unto Me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep My

ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors. For whoso findeth Me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate Me love death."

Let me leave with my readers the wise and kindly counsel of the Christian poet, James Montgomery, whose word to all, and especially to the young, is "Be wise to-day."

*To-day is added to our time,  
Yet while we sing it glides away;  
How soon shall we be past our prime,  
For where, alas! is yesterday?*

*Gone—gone into eternity;  
There every day in turn appears;  
To-morrow—on! 'twill never be,  
If we should live a thousand years.*

*Our time is all to-day, to-day,—  
The same, though changed; and while it flies,  
With still small voice the moments say,  
"To-day, to-day, be wise, be wise."*

*Then wisdom from above impart,—  
Lord God, send forth Thy light and truth  
To guide our feet, inspire our heart,  
And make us Christians from our youth.*

## OUR FATHER'S BRINGING UP.



YOU contracted with Christ, I hope, when first you began to follow Him, that you would bear His cross: fulfil your part of the contract with patience, and break not to Jesus Christ.

Be honest, brother, in your bargaining with Him; for who knoweth better how to bring up children than our God? For (to lay aside His knowledge, which there is no searching out) He hath been practised in bringing up His heirs these five thousand years, and His children are all well brought up, and many of them are honest men now at home up in their own house in heaven, and are entered heirs to their Father's inheritance.

Do not forget that the form of His bringing-up was by chastisements, scourging, correcting, nurturing. See if He maketh exception of any of His children. No! His eldest Son and His Heir, Jesus, is not excepted. Suffer we must; yet, I persuade myself, your sufferings are but like your Saviour's (yea, incomparably less and lighter), which are called but the bruising of His heel, a wound far from the heart.

Be content to walk through the waters betwixt you and glory with Christ, holding His hand fast, for He knoweth all the fords; you may sink under, but you cannot drown, being in His company; and you may all the way to glory see the way bedewed with His blood who is the Forerunner.

Samuel Rutherford.