

tality of the gospel; if he disregards alike the threatenings of the law, and the sweet voice of the gospel, God has recourse often to severer measures; throws afflictions in his path—brings him to an apprehension of his condition by the affliction of some severe catastrophe.

I again ask then, has God been speaking to any of you by accidents? Has any in this assembly met with one severe accident in his life, and yet has he soon forgotten it as an idle tale? Has he not taken any warning from it? Is he yet as unmindful of the frailty of his nature as ever, and as indifferent about the time when the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved. To such an one I would affectionately yet earnestly say: Take care lest thou feel by painful experience that there is a gradation in God's severity. That accident which has befallen thee, if forgotten, and unimproved by thee, may be but the precursor of another severer still; and well mayest thou be apprehensive of its speedy approach, and of its ruinous consequence, for "He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. XXIX. 1.)

II. But I hasten on to the consideration of the second head of our discourse, and that is the glorious object of the Christian's hope,—“an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

Our Lord, in His last consolatory discourse to His disciples, makes use of the same similitude to cheer their hearts. He says, “In my Father's house are many mansions.” In these and some other parts of Scripture heaven is set forth to us under the similitude of a house, or a home. The meaning of this phrase, and the comforts which it is fitted to impart to the afflicted Christian, may be more fully represented in the words of the paraphrase:

“I to my Father's house return,  
There numerous mansions stand,  
And glory manifold abounds,  
Through all the happy land.

I go your entrance to secure,  
And your abode prepare:  
Regions unknown are safe to you,  
When I, your friend, am there.”

There is something very sweet and very comforting in the word “home.” Many beautiful associations cling around this endearing term *home*. The patriot for many years toiling in a foreign land, thinks on the home of his youth, and which, if God spares him, he expects yet to make the home of his old age, and he for a time feels young again. His thoughts rush across the wide ocean and feast on scenes of youthful innocence,—on the reciprocal love which ever shed happiness around the domestic hearth,—on the smiling faces of affectionate friends who oft exchanged with him words of affection and of sweet consolation. The weary, weather-beaten travel-

ler thinks on home, and the affectionate hearts which mourn his absence there, and which he knows will gladly welcome his return, and the dreariest nights on the journey pass over him unheeded. Now the term *home* has emphatic and most glorious significance in the ear of the Christian. It is to him peculiarly sweet, because in contradistinction to all earthly homes, it receives the epithet “heavenly home.” His treasure is in this home, and hence his heart is there also. This grand idea makes the Christian rejoice, in what situation soever in life he may be placed. It was this consoling idea that made the Apostle joyfully exclaim: “For I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content.” We are generally inclined to think that contentment is only found in the higher ranks of life, in the lordly mansion, in places of splendor and magnificence; but when we thus think we are mistaken. Enter into many a poor peasant's cot, who by his hard and honest industry at his mean employment—as some would call it—is scarcely able to supply the necessaries of life to his numerous, dependent family, whose name and existence, it may be, are scarcely known ten miles from his humble home; and, even in this poor cot, contentment may have a far more undisputed reign than in the lordliest mansion. Contentment, real contentment, is from above and not from below. Real contentment is the legitimate offspring of true Christianity. Where Christianity reigns in her heavenly purity, contentment is ever sure to follow; where she does not reign, outward splendor can at most make it but a temporary and spurious kind of contentment.

The Christian may be a homeless wanderer on earth. His lot may be hard; earthly friends may turn a deaf ear to his tale of grief, and send him away empty; but such refusals instead of disheartening him, only bring to his recollection that joyous hour when the earthly house of his tabernacle, which is thus afflicted and tormented, and ready to be dissolved, shall fall, and he shall be admitted into the heavenly inheritance. And observe, there are two things affirmed here of the Christian's home—of heaven; these are its durability and eternity.

“Not made with hands,” that is human hands; then heaven cannot be tinged with human imperfection. Human hands, guided by human ingenuity, have accomplished much in this life. Human hands have executed specimens of taste and architectural skill which have been justly admired in all ages; but yet the finest works of art, whether on a large or minute scale, when carefully examined, betray imperfection. But the “house not made with hands,” which is the Christian's home and heritage, cannot be subject to any defect. The beauty and harmony of this blissful abode, human language cannot even approximately delineate. The Apostle, with all his eloquence, and all his enthusiasm, could