

MANY MANSIONS.

"But now they desire a better country—that is, an Heavenly one."—
John xiv. 17.

IT is in the upper room at Jerusalem that Jesus speaks to His disciples these words of peace and comfort. Judas has received his sop, and left the room. The "Hallel" is not yet sung; and while Jesus, knowing exactly what Judas is about, and what must presently befall Him, waits the completion of all that is to come to pass. He pours into the ears of His disciples the assurance of the fulness of His love, the richness of His grace, and the eternity of His purposes concerning all who will believe on Him. They are sorrowful in the knowledge that He is very soon to leave them. How soon, or in what manner the separation is to take place, they know not. If they knew, their hearts would be even more overwhelmed with sorrow.

In the tenderest love Jesus soothes their troubled minds by assuring them of the home prepared for them beyond the changing scenes of the present life. He comforts them by a promise of the ample abode provided for them in the Father's house above. He pictures to them Heaven as a house, a permanent abiding place, embracing the ideas of security from enemies, rest from worry and weariness, and a homely state of comfort in the Father's love. To such a home as this He tells them He is going, to make their entrance into it all the happier when in His own good time He will call them there.

What is the meaning of "many mansions"? Some people find in it a thought of a vast house with many apartments, and take their idea from the numerous chambers provided in the Jewish Temple for the Priests and Levites. It is true that a literal translation of the Greek words will carry this idea; but it is just as true that the words will as well bear the rendering "ample accommodation," or "much abiding place," as "many mansions." Whatever words we may use to express the idea, the meaning of our Saviour is evidently that there is abundant room in Heaven for all who love to follow Him, and that the redeemed and glorified will have in the upper "mansions" not only all the space they can desire to occupy, but with it everything that can minister to their highest and noblest desires.

Jesus here presents Himself as the Way to the upper mansions of glory which are in His Father's house. The doubtful-minded Thomas, uncertain of the future, and probably disappointed because the temporal kingdom which he had expected Jesus to set up on earth did not look very promising, expresses a doubt as to the possibility of reaching the upper mansions. He knows not where they are. He fears he will be lonely when Jesus shall leave him. He dreads to take the journey alone and in the dark. It is to allay such fears in the mind of Thomas, and in the minds of all who, like Thomas, have doubts and fears, that Jesus thus declares Himself "The Way." Just as a sure path leads to its certain destination, so, by following Jesus, we are led up to God. There are paths in our life which would lead us astray; paths which branch off in the dark in unknown directions, and by taking which we may fail to reach our destination, and bring up somewhere else. There are forks of the roads where the guide-boards are lost, or the directions painted on them are wrong. There are names of streets on our city lamps, but the lamp-frame may be turned partly round, and the names may indicate just the opposite of what they ought to, and so lead the passenger into a street crossing the one he wants to take. But Jesus Christ is THE TRUTH. He never led anybody astray. Were it doubtful work to follow Him, this discourse of comfort would be of no account to us. He that hath seen Christ hath seen God. The footsteps we follow lead us up to our Father and our God. We take no risk in accepting Him as our Guide. He leads not only to a continuance of existence, but to eternal life. He, revealed to us in the first chapter of this Gospel as the life and the light of men, lights us on our way to the eternal light and a life which shall outlast and triumph over death.

What then if trouble comes? There is an abundant abiding place for us, beyond its reach? What if we wander? We shall be eternally at home in the "many mansions." What if it is dark here? Christ leads us through the darkness up to the light; into His glory.

Glorious light ahead for the beclouded Christian. Rest for

the weary teacher. Home for the houseless child. All through the love of God in Jesus, the Way, the Truth, the Life. By Him we come to our Father, In Him we find our eternal home of joy and rest and peace and comfort.

GIDEON OUSELEY.

IN a biographical memoir of this celebrated itinerant preacher, recently issued by the Wesleyan Conference Office, Mr. Arthur has shown himself a master of the true art of book-making. The memoir was written under the most disadvantageous circumstances, sources of information being few and almost unapproachable, and Mr. Arthur's own ill-health and failing sight being of themselves difficulties almost unsurmountable. The book is full of loving utterances; and the thrilling incidents in the life of the one-time gambler, drunkard, and profligate, but who afterwards became so eminently useful in his Master's service, cannot fail to be intensely interesting.

The two following incidents will give our readers some idea of the humorous side of his character:—

OUSELEY AT A FUNERAL.

As a priest was reading mass, and the multitude were on their knees, a stranger suddenly rode up. Dismounting, he knelt in the midst of the congregation with manifest solemnity. As the priest went on reading, in a tongue of which the people knew not a word, the stranger caught up passage after passage, selecting, though unknown to his hearers, those portions which conveyed directly Scripture truth or solemn warnings. He suddenly turned the words from Latin into Irish, and repeated aloud after the priest. Then, with deep feeling, he cried at the end of each passage, "Listen to that!" The priest seems to have been overwhelmed and awed, and the people completely melted. When the mass was ended, and all rose up, Mr. Ouseley, with a face beaming with affection, urged upon the people the necessity of having their peace made with God, telling them they must become reconciled to Him, and that it was possible so to do by real repentance and true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. As he was taking his departure the crowd cried to the priest, "Father, who is that? Who is he at all?" "I do not know," said the priest; "he is not a man at all. Sure he is an angel; no man could do what he has done." Long afterwards he (Mr. Ouseley) met a peasant, and, accosting him, had a conversation, which we give in the words of Mr. Reilly:—"My dear man, would you not like to be reconciled to God—to have His peace in your heart, and stand clear before the great Judge when He will come in the clouds of heaven to judge the world?" "Oh, glory be to His holy and blessed name! sir, I have this peace in my heart; and the Lord be praised that I ever saw your face!" "You have! What do you know about this peace? When did you see me?" "Don't you remember the day, sir, when you was at the berrin (burial), when the priest was saying mass?" "I do very well. What about that day?" "Oh, gentleman, you told us then how to get that peace; and I went, blessed be His holy name! to Jesus Christ my Saviour, and got it in my heart, and have had it there ever since."

APTNESS IN PREACHING.

On one occasion, when Ouseley was preaching, the crowd began to throw heavy missiles. He stopped, and after a pause cried out, "Boys, dear, what's the matter with you to-day? Won't you let an old man talk to you a little?" "We don't want to hear a word out of your old head," was the prompt reply. "But I want to tell you what I think you would like to hear." "No, we will like nothing you can tell us." "How do you know? I want to tell you a story about one you all say you respect and love." "Who's that?" "The blessed Virgin." "Och, and what do you know about the blessed Virgin?" "More than you think; and I'm sure you'll be pleased with what I have to tell you, if you'll only listen to me." "Come, then," said another voice, "let us hear what he has to say about the holy mother"; and there was a lull, and the missionary began. "There was once a young couple to be married," and then he told, in homely language, the story of the wedding in Cana, and wound up thus:—"The Master tasted it, and lo and behold you! it was wine, and the best of wine too! and there was plenty of it for the feast—ay, and it may be, some left to help the young couple setting