

of instructing their children in religious things to Sabbath school teachers. Moreover, the instruction given in the Sabbath school occurs only at intervals—once a week, and often in rural districts, only in the summer months. Besides, it is a well-known fact that our deepest and most powerful impressions are received during our first eight or ten years. Now, how few children, comparatively, are at that early age privileged with Sabbath school instruction. And even were Sabbath schools established within the reach of every family, and were every family to send their children to receive religious instruction in these schools, it would not relieve them from the responsibility which rests upon them as parents. Why? For the simple reason that God will hold them responsible. There are few commandments in the law that are more frequently insisted on than parental training. Abraham was commended because he "commanded his children and household, and instructed them to keep the word of the Lord;" while Eli was blamed for not restraining his sons. We have it set before us in Deuteronomy, where the Lord, speaking by Moses to the children of Israel, saith, "Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart, all the days of thy life, but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons." The Israelites were enjoined, at the giving of the law, to teach all the words which God commanded diligently unto their children. They were to instruct their children what were the origin, the object, and the end of all these ordinances. One of the Proverbs of Solomon was to the same effect: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." And we have also the exhortation of Paul to the same effect, addressed to parents, to "bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." We have the example of Lois and Eunice in training young Timothy, who from early childhood was instructed in the Scriptures.

Further, the teaching of a parent implies a more powerful influence than that of a Sabbath school teacher. There are those who say that we "are no, to teach a child truth till he can weigh the evidences of it." I would ask such persons if they themselves act upon this theory? Is it not a fact, that the general practice of mankind in all ages has been, is now, and ever must be, the very opposite of this theory? Are not the truths of our holy religion sufficiently reliable for a child to believe and practise, under a parent's teaching and guidance, even before he is capable of attending upon Sabbath school instruction? The precepts which God has given us in His Word for our guidance, seem to take it for granted that they are. The natural relation of the parent to the child declares that they are; and these both teach that the parent is in duty bound to search out truth for his children, and having found it, to instruct them in it, even in their tender years.

The parent has his children daily under his eye, and they are bound to him by ties stronger and more tender than those which bind them to their Sabbath school teacher; and hence, the parent can teach with greater authority. He can control his child's opinions, and by act in training his child and giving him his earliest impressions of religious truth, he can guide him in the way which he conscientiously believes to be right. At this early period of his life the child has no religious views but those which he has received from his parent. Here is where the parent should begin the religious instruction of his child; when first impressions are forming, before the child is capable of attending the Sabbath school.

Parents should feel that an important charge has been placed in their hands, and that their Father in heaven will yet require a strict account of the manner in which they have discharged their duty to the precious and immortal souls of their children. They should commit their little ones to God, and place implicit trust in Him in reference to their conversion and eternal welfare; and their trust should be in proportion to their own faithfulness in instructing them. Were parents to believe the truth, instruct their children in the truth, and exemplify it before them in their daily conduct, then might they expect to see their offspring growing up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord," loving Christ because He first loved them, cultivating His spirit, walking in His steps, believing His doctrines, obeying His precepts, and in due time making a public profession of their faith in His name by uniting with the church of their fathers, and to the end of their days warmly attached to, and liberally

supporting, the schemes and institutions of that Church.

But let parents remember that they must instruct their children by *example* as well as by *precept*. They must lend the influence of their example to confirm the truth of their instructions; and for this purpose they must exemplify the religion they teach by their "walk and conversation before the world." And inasmuch as a parent's example is daily before the eyes of his children, his influence in this respect must of necessity be more powerful than that of the Sabbath school teacher. How must the parent feel when imparting religious instruction, where there is an evident contrast between the precept and the example! And how must the child feel, who cannot fail to make the comparison, and put his own construction on it! Must not the child regard religion as a mere farce? And the tendency of this is to produce unbelief, which shuts the heart against the influence of the truth in after life, and which may be the means of the soul's eternal destruction. Parents should beware of such an influence. Religion must be exemplified in their life, and this will influence the minds of their children more than all the knowledge it is possible for them to impart without it.

But *precept* and *example* are not *all* that are necessary; these must be accompanied with believing, earnest prayer to God. I do not for one moment suppose that Sabbath school teachers do not pray on behalf of the children committed to their care; but how many children are there, of tender age, who are not committed to their care. This is the special duty of parents. Precious and immortal souls are placed in their charge, to be trained for God. Prayer in the family tends to promote religious instruction. Parents should pray *with*, as well as *for*, their children. Angels of light hover round that dwelling where an altar to God has been erected, by night and by day; He whom the angels praise and adore, and whom we love, reverence, and obey, is there to bless.

Well then, since God will hold parents responsible for the religious instruction of their children, and since the teaching of a parent has a more powerful influence than that of a Sabbath school teacher, we conclude that "the Sabbath school is not a substitute for parental instruction."

A VISIT TO THE VATICAN.—III.

BY THE REV. DONALD ROSS, B.D., LACHAR.

Will the reader be surprised to learn that my mind was considerably agitated on receiving this invitation to an audience with his Holiness. Try to put yourself in my place and you will understand why my feelings should have been excited at the prospect of taking part in such a ceremonial. I was to be presented to the sovereign of an ecclesiastical empire vaster than that which owned the sway of the mightiest of the Cæsars—a Pontiff, who, had he lived in the middle ages, would have inflicted a deeper humiliation upon kings and emperors than even the haughty Hildebrand. But it was not solely the anticipation of all this that made "gentle sleep, nature's soft nurse, refuse to steep my senses in forgetfulness." It was rather the thrilling experiences through which I had passed during the day that made me wakeful. I had been occupied in minute examination of the ruins of the Forum, in endeavoring to identify the sites of the grand basilicas, temples and porticos that once adorned it and made it the very centre of all the glories of imperial Rome. I had been pacing up and down through this

"Field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood,
Where a proud people's passions were exhaled,"

in days of yore. I had been treading the pavement of the Sacred Way which runs through its centre, and along which the conquering Romans used to pass in splendid triumph to the Capitol. I had been sitting underneath the Arch of Titus which spans the Sacred Way, and whose sculptured figures so eloquently tell the story of the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem, and depict the laureled legionaries bearing in procession the sacred vessels of the temple. I had descended into the Mamertine prison in which St. Paul is said to have been confined previous to his martyrdom, and was overwhelmed with awe as I surveyed, by the lurid light of tapers, the massive walls that echoed his voice as he sang the praises of God. When I had finished my explorations I sat down in the Forum on a fragment of a broken column and abandoned myself to reverie. I gave my imagination wings, and soon a mighty resurrection from this "chaos of ruins"

seemed to me to have taken place. As if at the waving of an enchanter's wand, columns, temples, porticos, statues, arches, such as were its glory in the golden age of Augustus, started up around me. The whole place appeared to me to be crowded with those lordly old Romans listening to the immortal accents of Cicero as he denounced the wicked conspiracy of Cataline, or to the adroit address of Mark Antony by which he inflamed his countrymen to revenge great Cesar's death. Sweeping down the arc of history I kept linking fancy unto fancy until the storming of the city and the firing of its majestic monuments by the savage Goths came trooping before my mind's eye, when I started up trembling with emotions which refused to be calmed. Some will, perhaps, say that all this was but weak sentimentality. It may have been so; yet, looking back through the sobering vista of sixteen months, I am not ashamed to acknowledge my weakness in this respect. I know there are men whose nature is so destitute of the imaginative element that they would pass unmoved through scenes whereon were enacted deeds which will continue to shape the destinies of mankind until the latest generations, but I do not envy them. I call to mind the oft-quoted saying of Dr. Johnson, who was not given to indulging in sentiment; "that man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona," and, he might have added, whose conviction of the transitoriness of earthly majesty and grandeur and glory would not be deepened amid the stupendous desolation of the Roman Forum. At any rate my nature was profoundly stirred by my contemplation of the thrilling historic events which the surrounding stones and dust had witnessed many centuries ago, and visions of those intensely dramatic incidents were rushing through my brain all night long.

But the morning dawned at last. Heavy masses of cloud were drifting lazily over the heavens and pouring down their contents in torrents. Whether this was Pope's weather or not, I am unable to say. It was not such a day as one would have chosen to attend a reception. But by ten o'clock it became brighter and more auspicious; and at a quarter to eleven the rain had nearly ceased. We set out, after having performed our toilet according to the official instructions we had received—gentlemen in full dress, ladies in black garments and long black veils upon their heads without bonnets. The wearing of gloves is not permitted by the etiquette of the Papal Court. Away we drove through the narrow winding streets crowded with foot passengers, with here and there a hack or a nondescript vehicle drawn by a donkey. Itinerant vendors were exercising their lungs, while the tall buildings echoed back their strange musical cries. At different points adours, not wafted from "Araby the blest," filled the air. The streets are kept remarkably clean and are very solidly paved. We crossed the yellow Tiber under the frowning battlements of the Castle of St. Angelo, and swept up through the spacious and magnificent square of St. Peter's, which is flanked by the grand semi-circular colonades of Bernini—fitting approach to the noblest ecclesiastical structure in Christendom. We alighted under the colonnade at the public entrance to the Vatican. Beggars emerged from their hiding places behind the pillars and appealed to us for a gratuity, expecting, I suppose, that our hearts should be enlarged while we were on our way to receive the blessing of his Holiness! Cunning fellows! How they took advantage of the situation! Being in a placid mood we dispensed among them a few *soldi*, for were they not the children of the "Holy Father" who had invited us to his gorgeous palace, and under whose wise and beneficent rule they had been encouraged to earn their living in this eminently respectable way! Two of the Swiss Guard, in their strikingly picturesque uniform of red and yellow, which is said to have been designed by Michael Angelo, stood on duty at the entrance, armed with helmet and halberd. We showed them our "biglietto," and they permitted us to pass on. We began to ascend the Scala Regia or Royal Staircase. One of the four landings one of the guards was stationed. Having reached the top we were ushered into a large room called the "Sala dei Swizzeri," whose walls are richly frescoed. Here were assembled quite a number of these quaintly uniformed soldiers eagerly chatting with one another, and eight or ten ordinary servants—splendid looking fellows, too—arrayed in a rich costume of purple velvet, with knee-breeches and silk