

## Pastor and People.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

### LIGHT AND SHADOW.

SHADOW.

The winds are moaning low among the graves  
And o'er the dead the willow gently waves  
Her weeping bough.  
The rustling grass bends in the autumn air,  
Sighing in woe a penitential prayer  
For those laid low.

The withered leaves upon the pathway lie  
From yonder brake, the lonely night birds cry  
In mournful tone.  
Forsaken nests bedeck the crumbling walls  
And the fast-fading daylight falls  
On hillside lone.

Deserted, dark and dreary is the place,  
Lost, faded hopes and joys have left their trace  
In sculptured stone.  
Bright stars that rose in life's serenest sky,  
Then set in night, nor ever made reply  
To anguish'd moan.

O, Death, thy agony, who, who may tell?  
Is there no clime of bliss where man may dwell  
That thou art not—  
No balm to soothe the wounded, bleeding heart,  
No voice to bid the tears that trembling start  
To be forgot?

LIGHT.

Glad earth has wakened with the voice of spring;  
Soft opening leaves their flickering shadows fling  
O'er dancing rills.  
In the warm sunlight basks the golden bee,  
While glad birds flit and flit from tree to tree  
On purpling hills.

Those silent graves are clad in verdure new,  
With lily fair and violets' tender hue,  
In sheltered shade.  
The Lord has not forgotten those who sleep,  
The glistening dews in loving mercy weep  
Where they are laid.

Each bursting bud speaks of that life to be,  
Where hearts unite, and where no troubled sea  
Shall separate.  
Death is not loss but gain, an entering in  
To endless life, a glad release from sin,  
A golden gate.

Ye may, ye may forget, yet will not I,  
I deck the fields with life, I mark the cry  
Of those who weep.  
I bid the nestling flowers with spring revive,  
And when they weary, it is I who give  
My loved ones sleep.

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### THE MOTHER'S HEART.

BY REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D., GALT.

The mother makes the home. That is the sphere in which she puts forth her power. She lives her heroic life there, doing the thousand little things of which no note is taken by the eyes of a stranger, and doing them all for pure love. The home—that royal palace of the child, for it matters not to it whether it is a place with low roof and bare white walls and sanded floor, or a place with lofty ornamented ceiling, walls covered with the choicest paintings, and floors soft with the richest Axminster carpets—its abiding place is in the warm affection of the mother's heart. The mother's heart makes the home. According to the powers and principles that rule in her soul does the home take on its character. She is the presiding genius there. She in the queenliest way sways an undisputed sceptre over every interest that finds footing there. And what a world that is to work in! It seems narrow, but in reality it is only the centre of a circle whose circumference may take in the utmost confines of the globe, for wherever the children go they carry with them the thoughts breathed into them there, and the impressions made upon them there. It seems short-lived, its age is only for a few brief years, and then dispersion comes to carry the family group apart, but in carrying them apart they do not lose, they cannot lose, the garnered and precious memories of those early years of love. These live on through time into eternity. It seems unimportant, the life of the little ones unfold like the summer flowers; yes, but they are cultivated unconsciously by the spirit, and the speech and the manners of those about them. Everything is for them a living seed. What made Robert Moffat a missionary? Was it not his mother, as she read to her children accounts of the missionary work of the Moravians? When she

had set the boys' hands to work at darning stockings or sewing on buttons for themselves, she engaged their ears and hearts by these accounts of Christian enterprise.

What made John Wesley a man of prayer and a powerful preacher of the Gospel? Was it not his mother, as she took him apart, at least once a week, and prayed with him and for him, so showing to him her faith in the efficacy of prayer and her true affection for himself?

What made John Ruskin such a power for righteousness in his time, every book of his being a strong protest against some prominent evil, and a mighty plea for the good which that evil overthrew? Was it not his mother, as she insisted on his reading and memorizing the Word of God, so that he became indoctrinated with its truth and charmed by its justice?

What made Philip Henry, the father of Matthew Henry the commentator, so devout, so pious, so rich in godly experience and wisdom, so influential upon the times in which he lived and upon the character of his son? Was it not this fact, which Matthew records in his father's memoir? "His mother was a virtuous gentlewoman, and one that feared God above many. She was dead to the vanities and pleasures of the court, though she lived in the midst of them. She looked well to the ways of her household, prayed with them daily, catechised her children, and taught them the good knowledge of the Lord betimes."

We might go on, almost without end, calling the roll of honourable names that have graced the annals of the world, finding in each case the mother's influence to be paramount and unparalleled. There is no force equal to it. No marvel that Jane Taylor sings of it in that sweet poem for a child: "My Mother." It is not wonderful that William Cowper should celebrate in song the virtues of his mother, when his cousin sent him her portrait. That opened afresh the old fountains, and caused them to flow, sending their waters into the clear light of heaven. It rises far above the earth:

Yet oh, the thought, that thou art safe, and he!  
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me,  
My boast is not that I deduce my birth,  
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;  
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—  
The son of parents passed into the skies.

The love of the mother's heart never dies. It is imperishable. It is intensely interesting to trace it. Behold the young lad going away from home, even in the cold North, in Scotland, where love lives less upon the lip than in the heart, at such a time it flows forth into crystalline speech. When Walter Inglis went away from his moorland home in Brothersheils, his mother went with him to see him on the way. Over the lonely moor they went, and when the time for parting came, mother and son kneeled down upon the heath, and the mother prayed for the son, commending him to God, who alone could keep him from the evil powers about him. That done, the parting word was said: "Now, my dear bairn, if you go astray you will bring down your old mother's gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." How grand is that! Nothing on earth grander. What a fine subject for a picture? The Scotch mother's farewell. This is not a singular case, but it is a typical one. Robert Moffat's leaving Inverkeithing for Chester had in it the same religious concern for his welfare on the part of his mother. She engaged him to read a chapter of the Bible every day, which eventually turned to his salvation. Dr. Thomas McCrie, when going to Edinburgh University, not being at that time a Christian, his mother accompanied him to a distance, and ere she parted from him, led him into a field and prayed for him and gave him counsels for his guidance. That prayer changed his life.

One of the painful things in the life of Thomas Carlyle is found in this fact, that after his great mental struggle which brought him, *where?* his mother's love, intense and formulated on the old Presbyterian dogmas, found in him, and from him, no hearty ringing response. She kept writing to him, kept praying for him, grand old woman that she was, true to her noble faith in Jesus Christ. But to the day of her death no assuring word ever proceeded from her son, to bring peace to her heart. But this very silence makes the mother's love more eloquent. Ah, it shines forth like the noonday sun.

It is because of this ministry of genuine, generous love that "her children rise up and call her blessed." The mother's heart is the source of the care that

crowns the child through all his early days, of the wisdom that invests the life of the youth, of the joy and gladness that accompany his manhood and old age. It is the principal formative force in the upbuilding of human character. Nothing can equal this "mothering." If it be enjoyed only during a limited space of time, as was the case with Moses, yet such impression is made as is not easily effaced or forgotten. Mothers cannot think too deeply or too seriously of this. Their life is in reality the life of the child. Every child naturally partakes most of the mother. Every child's most with the mother, and most under her influence. Every child being most the object of her attentions, and her 10,000 little kindnesses, is most tenderly drawn to her, and most strongly imbibes her thoughts and goes in her ways. She to an almost unspeakable extent determines the destiny of the child.

Two remarkable testimonies may be adduced here in confirmation of this power, and that too from an unexpected quarter; namely, from the lips of two celebrated Frenchmen, Napoleon and Mirabeau. Napoleon said: "France needs nothing so much to promote her regeneration as good mothers." When Mirabeau was asked at what time he would begin the education of a boy, he is reported to have replied: "I would begin twenty years before he was born by educating his mother." Every intelligent person agrees with these utterances. The mother makes the man and so the world.

Canada needs good mothers. Has she got them? The best part of her religious element is composed of believing godly women. They are the chief part of the membership of the churches, the principal part of every prayer meeting, the mainstay of missionary enterprise in the Sabbath school, in mission churches, in collecting committees, in organizations. What would the Churches be without godly women to-day, Poor, shrunken, shrivelled things. Let us thank God for the good women that are in the homes of Canada.

And let them be cheered on in the noble works to which they have put their hands. We cannot succeed without them. Let them know that they labour not in vain. The quiet unobtrusive work they do lives, and will stand forth confessed and acknowledged by and by. Patience! and the harvest will be gathered in, an abundant and heavy crop. No failure can come in your work. Seeming failure may come, but real failure, never! never! All God's promises come to the support of the faithful, earnest prayerful mothers, who seek the spiritual good and upbuilding of their children. They speak to them assuringly. "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." He who works with God always wins.

EXPERIMENTS have been made to determine the distance to which it is possible to work the telephone. This question has been answered by Dr. Wietlisbach. According to his estimate, a telephone line 1,250 miles long costs above £50,000, and it is impossible to speak over this distance. To make it pay, such a line must earn five shillings per minute, and hence a short conversation would cost two or three pounds. The telegraph works at about one-tenth the cost at such a distance. Up to about 300 miles the telephone beats the telegraph; at about 310 miles they run neck and neck; and over this distance the telegraph is the winner.

IN one of his latest sermons, which appears in the *Christian World Pulpit* of this week, Mr. Beecher, in dwelling upon the influences that help to make character, remarked: "I am what I am, in part, in consequence of old Charles Smith—as black a negro as ever made midnight ashamed of itself. In some directions he did more for me than my father's pulpit or the memory of my mother. Although I am not a negro, nor the son of a negro, I am the son of Charles Smith, the negro, in many essential elements of my life. Oh, you have strange relations, if you only knew them all! The teacher that is a teacher is not he that hears recitations, but he that enters into the docile mind and teaches its wings how to open and fly, and its feet to walk, and brings the man to a consciousness of the rebirth."