

## THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

## THE DUTY OF PARENTS.

THE heart of a child can feel the soft gush of love that flows from a heart made glad with the rich and sweet love of Christ. Oh! that each one of you would learn to bring his child, as soon as born, to the throne of grace, and to the arms of Christ. You owe much to your babes—they will one day be men as you are, work at the same trade, have the same foes to war with, and the same God to serve. If you would not wish them, when they are grown up, to be a plague and a curse to the land of their birth, oh! bring them when young, to the feet of Christ—give them to God, yield them up to the Lord that bought them with his own blood. Teach them, as soon as they can learn, the ways and the works of God. Take them to look at the bright arch that spans the vault of the sky, and tell them who it was that said, 'I do set my bow in the clouds.' Tell them that this bow is a proof to us of God's love and truth, and that he will no more drown the world as once he did. Bid them gaze on the sun with its clear warm rays, and the moon with its pale beams, and tell them it was God who made those two great lights, one to rule the day, and one to rule the night: and that that same God came down to earth and was made man, and took our sins, and bled for us, that he might make us shine as the sun in the world to come. You may pass from star to star in the deep blue sky, and tell them, 'He made the stars too;' and the hand that now guides all those bright worlds, and holds them up in their march through the sky, is the same hand that was once held out to babes. Tell them that he holds the winds in his fist, and the sea in the palm of his hand; that there is not a tree, or a plant, or a leaf, which his hand did not shape, a form of grace which his skill did not mould, or a world or a drop which his art did not frame, nor a spot in the vast realms of space on which his eye does not rest.'—*Gems of Protestant Truth.*

## PROFANE SWEARING.

HENRY YOUNG STILLING was the son of a poor man, half tailor, half schoolmaster, in a small village in Westphalia; and this poor, weak, unfriended, pious boy, led by strange jumps and curious cross-ways of Providence, rose from one dignity to another, till at last he became Aulic Counsellor to the Grand Duke of Baden, Operator of Cataract to all the blind in Germany, and a prominent religious writer among the Moravians. His life was long—from 1740 to 1861—but he lost not one pleasant line of that primitive simplicity of character, the great virtue of that pious race from which he sprung. During the first twenty years of his life, he saw and heard little but the unassuming and pervading piety of a Moravian community. How he was startled by the first profane expression he heard!

He was about eight years old. He sat on a chair, reading a book and looking very serious, as was his fashion. Stahler looked him in the face, and said, "Henry, what are you doing there so seriously?" "I am reading." Have you learned to read so young?" The child expressed surprise, and read aloud, with great fluency, giving, at the same time, the proper emphasis and expression to every word. Stahler was astonished. "May the devil take me," said he, "if I ever saw the like of that." When Henry heard this oath, he sprung suddenly up, trembled and looked fearfully round. When, however, he saw the devil did not make his appearance, he said, "O God! how gracious art thou!" Turning round to Stahler, he said "Man, hast thou seen Satan?" "No," replied he. "Then never call on him again," said Henry, and went into another room.

Happy that parent who has so educated his children that the first oath they hear thus shocks them, and makes them forsake the swearer's presence—and happy he who by assiduous teaching and example succeeds in making his children fear an oath to the close of their days.

An irritable parent can never manage discipline with propriety; but is ever prone to correct, whereas discipline should never be administered in a rage. Parents, I beseech you control your temper, and acquire a calm undisturbed disposition, for this only can fit you to rule your household with impartiality, wisdom, justice, and love.

## RELIGIOUS LITERATURE.

## THE PATERNAL CHARACTER OF GOD.

We do not rightly appreciate this world, if we consider it as more than the nursery for eternity. As concerns this life, and the things of this life only, we are not long in arriving at maturity; such maturity at least as is compatible with our present finite and imperfect capabilities, and necessary for the appointed purposes of this brief and preliminary state of being. For these purposes only the teaching and experience of a few short years enables us to "put away childish things." (1st Cor. xiii. 11.) But there is no period of our mortal existence at which, with reference to our eternal welfare, we can be said to have passed the infancy of being, or be safely left to shift for ourselves. Our state here, even to the close of the longest life, is but a state of continued tuition and dependence, when viewed in relation to the ultimate object, and the never-ceasing duration of our existence.

Nor is it sufficient merely that we feel this world to be only a nursery for eternity. It is essential also, that we should be duly impressed with the infinite superiority of the Teacher and Guide over those who are to be taught and led—superiority in wisdom, goodness, truth; in short, in every attribute which qualifies one intelligent being to be the director of the destinies of another. For we may assume it as a truth which no reasonable person will be disposed to controvert, to which certainly no well-informed Christian will object, that the difference, as to helplessness and want of capacity, between a new-born babe and the most intelligent of earthly parents, is inexpressibly less than between that parent and the Supreme Being. It would greatly assist meditations on the parental character if we kept this truth constantly in view; not as a barren though undeniable fact, to be recognized only in theory, but as an active principle, exerting a daily influence on all our conceptions of the Deity. However humbling the consideration may be to the proud and presumptuous spirit of the natural heart, however prone we may be to imagine that our moral or intellectual Babel may be made to approach very near, if not actually to reach the heavens, the word of truth invariably sets forth the strength of man as utter weakness, and his wisdom as mere "foolishness" (1st Cor. iii. 18, 20); and why? Because it speaks of these in relation to him who is all-wise and all-powerful: so that the declaration would have been incomplete, the description inadequate, had it ascribed to man any strength or any wisdom of his own, when compared with Him who sitteth in the heavens, and "filleth all in all." (Eph. i. 23.)—*Sir Edward Parry.*

## THE HEAVENLY INHERITANCE.

CHILDREN of God, what shall I urge on you as your first duty, on thus surveying the glorious inheritance reserved for you? Does not the apostle direct me in the words of the text, "Giving thanks unto the Father?" Yes, surely you cannot come down from the mount, from which you have been taking a Pisgah view of the promised land where you inheritance lies, and catching even a glimpse of its glory, without lifting up a song of praise to that Father of all mercies who, before the foundation of the world, prepared for you this inheritance; who sent his own dear Son to earth to purchase it for you, and has sent his Holy Spirit into your heart, to make you meet for its everlasting enjoyment.

Indeed, when you reflect that the Father's wholly unmerited love is the foundation from which all these blessings flow, what should your whole life be, but one uninterrupted act of thanksgiving to the Father, giving him thanks by the most willing obedience to his commandments, the most entire devotedness to his service, the most cheerful confidence in his love, and the most cheerful resignation to his will. I repeat the words "the most cheerful," because I consider cheerfulness, in trust and resignation, the very soul of thankfulness towards God.

And should not you, believer, child of God, thus cheerfully and thankfully confide in such a Father's love, and acquiesce in such a Father's will? Can

you distrust, for the provision or comforts of your journey through the wilderness, as far as needful, that love which has provided for you such an inheritance, purchased at such a price, to be enjoyed at its close? or repine at any of his dispensations, however afflictive, by which he is making you meet for its enjoyment? Gratefully then reflect that in every trial with which he has chastened you, in every furnace of affliction through which he has ever made you pass, this has been your heavenly Father's gracious design: that all your sufferings, bodily or mental, in their nature and measure, their degree and duration, have been arranged by him for the accomplishment of his love, with a beautiful adaptation to your peculiar character.

And when you consider how large a measure of whatever meetness you possess for your heavenly inheritance, you have acquired under the teaching of the Holy Spirit in the school of sanctified affliction, can you forbear giving thanks unto the Father, most heartily thanks, for those very trials which have blighted all your hopes of earthly happiness, but which you have so much cause to regard as special proofs of your heavenly Father's love, since he has graciously made them so instrumental in working out for you "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?" Sure I am, such will be the feelings with which, when you stand upon Mount Zion and look back on your journey through the wilderness, you will survey these trials; and that some of your sweetest songs of praise will then be lifted up, on their account, before the throne. Anticipate now, I affectionately conjure you, the feelings of gratitude with which you will then regard these trials; and begin now, before the throne of grace, the song of thankful praise on their account, which you will then pour forth with such rapturous joy before the throne of glory.—*Rev. E. White's Sermon—'Meetness for the Inheritance.'*

## THE PRAYER OF FAITH.

ALAS! how soon, how immediately, a creature that lets go his sustaining prop, becomes the sport of every tempest! In vain he lifts himself up, in vain he strives with all the powers of a natural man; his strength has gone from him; he is defenceless, and there is none to help him. It is with the spirit, as with the body; in God it lives, and moves, and has its being; if the uniting cord is slackened for a moment, the increased feebleness of a sinner shows it. Is he fighting as a good soldier? he drops the shield of faith, and the Philistines come upon him and bind him. Is he, like Elijah, on his journey to the mount of God? he falls into a slumber, and then this child of weakness needs one mightier than an angel to wake him; and if, in the raging storm, he parts with his trust, it grows too rough for him, as it did for Peter, and despair threatens him with a sepulchre. But now comes the prayer of a perishing man, the blessed refuge of every destitute disciple. The soldier sends it up to heaven in his extremity, and with it he breaks in pieces the Philistines' bands; the burthened traveller remembers it in his distress, and it is heard, and the wearied man goes on rejoicing; and in the midst of the deepest waters, when an adverse wind is blowing hard about us, and we have thrown away our confidence, and lost the light of the day-star, then, when the poor afflicted one is just beginning to sink, the prayer of faith shall ascend from him, that cry of distress which is known and understood in heaven, "LORD, save me."—*Rev. F. G. Crossman.*

## THE THRONE OF GRACE.

If you are a Christian, the throne of grace is yours. Your Father is seated on it. Your Saviour has sprinkled it with his blood. The Holy Spirit draws you secretly to kneel before it; and the promise, when there, is, 'Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.' What an honour to approach the King of kings! Were we to have an audience with an earthly monarch, we should deem it an era in our history, and boast of it through life. But you and I and others may have audience with the King of the universe. Nay, we have liberty to approach him at any time.