

betwixt those who are united in the close relation of husbands and wives, parents and children." As an evidence of this, we invite your attention to the remarkable fact, and would press it on your serious consideration, that wherever the shower of divine influence, which has been falling on various parts of our beloved land, has descended and left its holy impression, long decayed family altars have been rebuilt, and the fire of family devotion rekindled upon them, and in multitudes of other houses the voice of rejoicing and salvation, the peculiar characteristic of the tabernacles of the righteous, is now heard, where previously God was neither feared nor worshipped. Both the revival and commencement of spiritual life have been inaugurated by the erection of the family altar, the melody of family praise, and the voice of family supplication, on the part of thousands. Now, if the piety of God's people has in all ages manifested itself in acts of family devotion, does not its habitual neglect argue something wrong on the part of those professors who are chargeable with it? Does it not show a mournful want of spirituality—a lamentable deficiency of the living power of Christianity?

But now we invite you to consider the blessed effects which the worship of God in your families is fitted to produce. It is eminently calculated to exert a hallowed influence upon yourselves, and, through you, upon the Church and upon the world. By the blessing of God, it will prove an eminent means of grace unto yourselves and household. Its regular performance will diffuse a divine peace throughout your souls, arising from the consciousness of having discharged your duty. The morning devotions will exert a blessed influence upon all the labours, and transactions, and events of the day; while the evening exercises will have a hallowed tendency to calm the mind, and prepare for the repose of the night. Whatever happens to any member of your family in the course of the day, or during the night, will be sweetened and sanctified by reflection upon the devotions in which you engaged. But a particular and direct influence on your character and conduct will also be manifest. The act of summoning your family, morning and evening, to exercises of devotion, will naturally operate as a continual monitor to you, im-

pose a useful restraint upon you, and lead you to walk holily and unblameably. It will strengthen your sense of the obligation of domestic duties, forcibly remind you of what you owe to every member of your family circle, and cement the ties of conjugal and parental affection. As to the members of your family, its tendency, by the blessing of God, will be to form their minds to the love and practice of religion. Occupying a place, as it were, in a school of religious instruction, where the whole contents of the Sacred Volume are in due course laid open before them, and prayer devoutly offered in their hearing, your children and servants will increase in the knowledge of the Divine will, and "be continually reminded of their relation to God and the Redeemer, of their sins, and their wants, and of the method they must take to procure pardon for the one and the relief of the other," and impressed with a deep conviction of the necessity and importance of prayer. "Where a principle of religion is not yet implanted in the hearts of your children, family prayer, accompanied with the reading of the Scriptures, is, with the Divine blessing, the most likely means of introducing it. Where it already subsists, it is admirably adapted to cherish, strengthen, and advance it to maturity. In the latter case, it is like the morning and evening dew at the root of the tender blade." Nor will these happy effects be confined to your own household. The Church will participate in them. Fostered under such holy influences, families become nurseries of the Church of Christ, from which trees of righteousness, reared and tended first in them, are transplanted to, and flourish in the courts of the Lord. From them the ranks of the ministers of the gospel are filled up and increased, the elders of the Church are derived, and by them the places of the fathers are supplied; and thus one generation to another praises the works of the Lord, and declares his mighty acts. The world also participates in the blessed influence. Tending to enlighten the mind, purify the heart, form the character, and regulate the life of all the members of the households in which it is regularly observed, domestic worship, universally practised, would soon change the present aspect of the world. And though it is far, very far, from being so, yet, in the same way, the