

themselves,—what the relation of their children to the Church claims at their hands can never, in ordinary circumstances, be transferred to those of any other parties.—The assistance of others, the aid of the Sabbath School, and even the Day School, teacher may be called in, but the parents themselves will be held accountable for that treatment of them required at their hands.

On the other hand, their position claims special attention from the Church itself: "Children born within the pale of the visible Church, and dedicated to God in baptism, are under the inspection and government of the Church." Being members of it, and under its inspection and government, ought they not to have a place in the records of every congregation, not merely in having recorded their baptism, but in the roll of its members? If they are members it is surely not treating them as their position requires; nor is it doing justice to the principles and position in the world of the Church itself, to shut them out of the records of Session or Synodical returns. Not only should they be thus recognized as members, but office-bearers, and communicants should manifest a kindly recognition of and tender interest in them as the lambs of Christ's flock. Elders and Pastors should, with vigilance and pains-taking, see that parental duties are not neglected, and, by Bible Classes and Sabbath Schools, as well as from house to house, endeavour to "train them in the way in which they should go," and in knowledge of the doctrines of the Bible, and the principles of government and discipline which Christ, the King of Zion, has established in his Church. What, it may be said, would you have them made bigots, by drilling them in the principles of Presbytery? There is no danger whatever of this; for if the Lord Jesus Christ, as King and Head of his Church, has, as is maintained, laid down in the Bible these principles of Government and order for the regulation of Christian society, then, by faithfully instructing them in these things, as well as what is doctrinal, they will be Presbyterians, not from prejudice or bigotry, but intelligently and from principle; and perceiving the advantages of such government over other forms, they will be more warmly attached to the Church of their fathers, and preserved from being "carried about with every wind of doctrine." As they grow up to years of discretion, ought they not also to be frequently addressed from the pulpit on the interesting and responsible position they occupy, pointing out the high privilege granted them, in the providence of God, in casting their lot within the pale of the visible fold of the Redeemer; the solemn manner in which they were given up to God in infancy; the obligation, their parents, came under in their baptism, and urging them by all these considerations personally and publicly to take upon themselves Christ's yoke, which is easy, and his burden which is light! In short, as a writer has well said, "all things should be so conducted as to render the child conscious of his Church relations, and to point his mind forward to the time when he will, for himself, be called to assume the privileges and responsibilities of membership; just as minors in the State look forward to the time when they will reach the franchise and obligations of matured citizenship. They should feel that, in either case, they may forfeit the high boon by their miscarriage; and, in the event, will be exposed to corresponding penalties and privations at the hands of the proper authorities. When they approach majority the Church should spare no efforts of instruction, exhortation, rebuke and encouragement, which their cases may severally require, in order to awaken dormant graces into exercise, and inspire those pious views and feelings which prepare and dispose them to come to the Lord's Supper."

Were the children of professing Christians thus treated, both by parents and the Church, would there be so many young people found in the congregations, careless about Church privileges, if not turning away from Christian communion to communion with the world in its vanities and pleasures? But "emerging from childhood, with opening powers of mind and conscience in active exercise; and surrounded by countless and powerful temptations, the young, too often, are left without a proper sense of their obligation to God, and are suffered to pass over a number of years in the utter neglect of many duties to which their early dedication had pledged them. The result is easily declared. Children learn to cherish an increasing aversion to practical godliness, and they fall a prey to the destroyer. Untrained in the way in which they should go, they depart from it even in youth, and, although 'the children of the kingdom,' they grow up ignorant of its privileges, and only fitted for final rejection. Would parents deprecate this dread consummation for their offspring? Let them lead them early in the way of holiness; and ere the world assails with its allurements and engagements, and before temptations from other quarters gather strength let them engage them in the active service of religion, and exhibit it to them as their highest honor to be with them who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes." And if the Church would see its children remain within its pale, grow up to be consistent, useful and honorable members, and not, by proving false to their true position and privileges, become one with the world without, let pastors, elders, and communicants faithfully discharge those duties of kindly recognition, vigilant oversight, paternal exhortation and importunate prayer, which their relation to the Church evidently claims. When parents and the Church thus mutually and faithfully care for the young, may we not with some confidence expect that there will be few, and these the exceptions, who will not, when they come to years of discretion, acknowledge Christ as their Master, engage in his service, and enjoy with his people the privileges of his kingdom? "Train up a child in the way wherein he should go, and," the general rule is, "when he is old he will not depart from it." "Faithful is he who hath promised;" and while no training of itself can make them Christians, he will not, where parents and office-bearers are faithful in the discharge of duty, withhold his sovereign grace by which alone the means can be made effectual, and they made all they should be. Let them be encouraged, then, faithfully to obey Christ's injunction—"feed my lambs,"—for "the promises are" not only "to you," but also "to your children." Praying the Redeemer may, in accordance with that ancient prediction of him, "gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom," and that the efforts of his servants in feeding this interesting portion of his flock, may be crowned with abundant success. I am, yours truly,

Kingston, April 15, 1857.

ON SINGING PRAISES.

Were there no express commands on this subject, the duty of singing praises to God might be inferred from what is known of other creatures. The lower creation is vocal with its Maker's praise. The mountains clap their hands, and the little hills rejoice on every side. The deep-toned thunder, and the hoarse noise of the ocean's waves, mingle, in their ascent to heaven, with the music of the murmuring rill, and the still sweeter minstrelsy of the grove. If from the lower we ascend to the highest forms of created existence, we find angels and seraphs tuning their golden harps, and singing

their songs of praise to Him who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.

Is man alone to be dumb amidst the general song of the universe? If, indeed, he had no ground for gratitude, if he were the recipient of no mercies at the hands of his Maker, there might be some apology for silence. But it is otherwise. As the workmanship of God—as the object of His providential care—as interested in the great work of Redemption—he is placed under special obligations to record his gratitude to God in songs of praise.

In accordance with these views, we find that, in all ages, the singing of praises has formed an important part of the worship of God. In Old Testament times believers were accustomed, in this way, to record their gratitude for mercies received. The banks of the Red Sea re-echoed the song of the ransomed Israelites. The praises of Jehovah resounded in the temple of Jerusalem, and were heard throughout the dwellings of Israel. In New Testament times we read of the Saviour and his disciples joining together in singing an hymn of praise; and never has the Christian Church ceased to celebrate in song the praises of God. Nor when earthly temples are dissolved, and the earth itself has passed away, shall the tongues of the redeemed be silent. God's people shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. Within the walls of the New Jerusalem, and amidst the splendours of the heavenly temple, it will be their delightful employment to sing for ever the Song of Moses and the Lamb.

If there be any who require still further proof of the duty of singing praises to God, we would refer them to such distinct statements of Scripture as the following: "Sing praises to God, sing praises. Sing praises unto our King, sing praises." Psalm xlvii, 6. "O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth His salvation from day to day." Psalm xcv. 1 & 2. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Col. iii. 16.

The singing of God's praises, which may thus be shown to be a duty on all who can sing, might also be shown to be productive of very beneficial results. It was when the voice of praise was lifted up in the temple, at its dedication, that the whole house was filled with the glory of the Lord. In like manner, it may be expected that those families and congregations who are accustomed to praise, as well as pray to, God, will be favoured with special manifestations of the Divine favour. The singing of praises is, moreover, fitted in itself to banish from the mind feelings of sorrow, gloom, and melancholy. It tends to allay the evil passions of envy, malice, anger, and revenge. It serves, on the other hand, to awaken feelings of love, sympathy, gratitude, and devotion. It thus prepares the mind for engaging with greater pleasure and profit in the other exercises of religious worship. And in this connection it should never be forgotten, that in celebrating the praises of God, we may obtain, more than in any other department of Divine service, a foretaste of the happiness of heaven, whose arches resound with ceaseless songs of praise.

Notwithstanding the obligations and benefits of this duty, it is to be lamented that, in many professedly Christian families, the voice of praise is seldom or never heard. For this there might be some apology, if in any family there were no members who could sing. Cases of this kind, however, are very rare. In other cases we regard neglect of this exercise as a grievous sin, and would therefore appeal to heads of families to give to the whole subject their serious and prayerful consideration. We