

the young catch it? If we wear the clothing so lightly, need we wonder that our children go a step further and cast it off altogether? If the father reads his newspaper, and the mother her novel, more persistently and devoutly than they read their Bibles, if the success of political party is nearer the thoughts and dearer to the heart than the success of the gospel; if the concert and the circus and the soiree are attended regularly and lovingly, and the prayer-meeting or missionary-meeting irregularly and reluctantly, what else can we expect but this very thing that our Church statistics so plainly and painfully reveal.

Let parents who read these words remember that Christian families are Churches on a small scale, and that the heads of these families have as truly a charge of the souls that are therein as pastors have of the Churches. "Would parents," says one of the Puritans—Thos. Manton, "but begin betimes and labor to affect the hearts of their children with the great matters of everlasting life, and to acquaint them with the substance of the doctrine of Christ, and when they find in them the knowledge and love of Christ, would bring them to

the pastors of the Church to be tried, confirmed and admitted to the further privileges of the Church, what happy, well-ordered Churches would we have! Then one pastor need not be put to do the work of two or three hundred or thousand governors of families, even to teach their children those principles which they should have taught them long before."

Neither the eloquence and pains of pastors, nor the diligence of Sabbath-school teachers, nor prayer-meetings, nor revival-meetings, can stand to the Church for gathering in recruits in the stead of the piety of the parents. Touch with injury the root of a tree, and before long you will read the story of the wrongdoing in the topmost branches. The roots of the Church of Christ are suffering injury in the neglect of family religion, and in the secondary position into which parents put Christ in the arrangement of their households, and we are beginning to see the effects in the statistics to which we have referred. "TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY IN WHICH HE SHOULD GO, AND WHEN HE IS OLD HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT."

Living Preachers.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

By REV. W. BROCK.

"And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."—2 Cor. viii. 5.

For the word "hoped" in this text, we should have had the word "expected." Paul had made an appeal to the Macedonians on behalf of a certain claim, to which appeal he had no doubt they would cheerfully respond. They responded to it at once, and so generously that they excited his surprise. They contributed not only what he expected but a great deal more. And they did it in gratitude for the love of

God, and in subordination to the will of God. Freely had they received, freely would they give. By the Divine grace they had been made to differ from other men, to the Divine glory they would act differently: making it manifest that they were not their own.

The Macedonians, according to our text, first devoted themselves to Jesus Christ, and then they unreservedly identified themselves with the disciples of Jesus Christ. Belonging to Him, they, of course, belonged to them. And thus they present an example which many among yourselves will do well to follow.