

word" (1 Peter iii. 1), and none have the opportunity of doing good so much in this way as women. Humanly speaking, the salvation of a household often depends upon the women.

To bring men, for example, to attend the means of grace, and regularly hear the Gospel, is one grand object that a true minister sets before him. Every minister who "does the work of an evangelist" must know how difficult it is to get some people to attend. There are always obstacles raised and objections started. If the men come one month, they do not come the next. It reminds one of our Lord's expression, "compelling them to come in." And what is the reason of this? Often, far too often, I firmly believe, the simple account is discouragement from wife or mother at home.

If women ask me what way they can be useful, I answer, unhesitatingly and decidedly, first and foremost by encouraging religion at home. Show your father, or husband, or brother, that you take a pleasure in seeing him attend to his soul. Let your manner and your words show him plainly that you want to help him forward and not to keep him back. Let your household arrangements be so managed that he shall see you will make any sacrifice rather than keep him from the house of God.

The fire of good inclinations often burns very faintly in the conscience of a hardworking man. Let his wife or mother see that she stir and feed it. Let her beware, lest she be a wet blanket to put it out. The road of religion is a rough and up-hill journey. Let her strive to take up every stumbling-block, so far as in her lies. The cup of self-denial is a bitter one to weary flesh and blood. Let her labour, as far as possible, to make it sweet.

But, after all, there are a hundred little ways in which a woman can be useful in her own home, of which time would not allow me to speak particularly. Much is to be done by kind tempers, by gentle words, by meekness, by patience, by unselfishness, by attention in little things, by considerateness about little peculiarities, by thoughtfulness about little wants, by bearing with infirmities, and by "not an swering again." All these things tell in the long run. These are the constant droppings which can wear away the stone, the daily returning habits which influence men's minds. Whatever women may fancy, men's character is exceedingly influenced by their homes. Tell me the general character of a man's home, and I generally know something of the man.

It is a true saying, and a sad one, "Cold homes make full public houses." I firmly believe that disorder, unkindness, and ill-temper at home drive many a working man into bad company, and make him seek relief in drinking or frivolous amusements. I have sometimes gone into the

homes of poor men late in the evening, and found everything in confusion just before the husband came in from work—children dirty, unfed, and crying—nothing ready, nothing comfortable, nothing in its place. In such a case, I cannot wonder if the husband turns out ill. I am persuaded the true account of many a poor sot I see is just this—"made a drunkard by his wife."

If a woman would be useful, let her strive to make her home a happy one. Whether she be mother, wife, or daughter, let her make this her aim, that all the members of the family shall say, "There is no place like home."

Let her strive to make the evenings of the day pleasant. It is the time when most men are wearied and worn with the labour of the day. A wise woman will endeavour to have a stock of cheerfulness in reserve for that time. Ah! these may seem small things to some readers. But you have much to learn of human nature, if you do not know the difference it makes to a tired husband, father, or son, if he finds a cheerful, pleasant, smiling face at home.

If a woman would be useful let her look well to her home duties. Whatever place she may fill in a family, let her resolve that, by God's help, she will fill it well. I count it nothing for a woman to be active out of doors, however good her work may be, if she does not, at the same time, glorify God at home. Home is a woman's peculiar sphere, and let home, therefore, have her first attention. She ought to endeavor to keep all the machinery of the family in perfect order. She must try to help, to counsel, to restrain, to direct according as need may require. She ought to make her husband, or father, or son, or brother feel that all is going on well in his absence—a post for every one, and every one at this post. There are a hundred little things in every family which need daily attending to, and none can attend to them so well as women. Little as they are they can harass and vex a man's mind; and if he can be freed from their burden by a woman's thoughtfulness, it is no little gain to the peaceful working of the family. The scratch of a pin may be a trifle, but it can keep an elephant awake. Paul mentions it as a special duty of a woman, that she should "guide the house." It is said of the excellent woman in Proverbs, that the heart of her husband "doth safely trust her"—he knows that all is going on well while his back is turned. It is a high character that is given of Sarah, when Abraham could reply at once to the inquiry, "Where is Sarah?"—"Behold, in the tent."

If a woman would be useful at home, let her watch well her opportunities of doing good. If she would do good to the soul of husband, father, or brother, let her pray continually for the spirit of wisdom and discretion. Of all people, she ought to remember