

John Ferris

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"HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

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POETRY.

From the Token for 1840.
"SHOW US THE FATHER."

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

Have ye not seen Him, when through parted snows
Wake the first kindlings of the vernal green?
When 'neath its modest veil the arbutus blows,
And the blue violet bursts its mossy screen?
When the wild rose, that asks no florist's care,
Unfoldeth its rich leaves, have ye not seen Him there?

Have ye not seen Him, when the infant's eye,
Through its bright sapphire window, shows the
mind.

When in the trembling of the tear or sigh
Floats forth the essence, trembling and refined?
Saw ye not Him,—the Author of our trust,
Who breathed the breath of life into a frame of dust?

Have ye not heard Him, when the tuneful rill
Casts off its icy chains, and leaps away?
In thunders echoing loud from hill to hill?
In song of birds, at break of summer's day?
Or in the ocean's everlasting roar,
Batling the old, grey rocks, that sternly guard his
shore.

When in the stillness of the Sabbath morn,
The week's dread cares in tranquil slumber rest,
When in the heart the holy thought is born,
And heaven's high impulse warms the waiting breast,
Have ye not felt Him, when your voiceless prayer
Swelled out in tones of praise, announcing God was
there

Show us the Father! If ye fail to trace
His chariot, when the stars majestic roll,
His pencil, 'mid earth's loveliness and grace,
His presence, in the sabbath of the soul,
How can you see Him, till the day of dread, [read.
When, to assembled worlds, the Book of Doom is

* See St. John xiv. 8.

EDUCATION.

LETTER ON SOME POINTS CONNECTED WITH THE
RELIGIOUS TRAINING OF CHILDREN.
BY A PARENT.

[Concluded.]

I have heard it stated, in regard to a Sabbath school admirably conducted by a most zealous and devoted teacher and servant of the Lord in my native land, by one advanced in knowledge and experience of the truth—and I have myself felt fully the force of the remark—that he never visited that school without a feeling of deep humility at his own comparative ignorance and his own comparative deficiency in the practical experience of religious truth. Where the heart is as yet unhardened by evil, unsophisticated by the world, and where the affections are ardent, sincere and generous, are not the truths that God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten Son to save perishing sinners by enduring the punishment consequent upon their transgressions, and that Christ willingly took upon him this benevolent office, and suffered and died that he might reconcile us to God through his blood, and restore us to happiness, most likely to be apprehended and appreciated? At all events a foundation of such views and impressions will be favourable for the erection of the christian fabric, and to its stability. Parents have the best opportunity of instilling such views; and surely this consideration ought to be a stimulus to them to prepare themselves for fulfilling this duty in the most effectual manner. Mutual regard and affection render the task of the teacher and of the taught more pleasing and efficacious. Instruction is communicated with greater freedom and plainness, and received with greater willingness; the task becomes a pleasure to both from the influence of mutual love; and how can the time or intelligence of a parent be better employed than in implanting and fostering the seeds of early piety in their off-spring, or what object of greater interest to the well conditioned mind can be conceived? It is indeed the most appropriate and the most important occupation of the parent. Yet how little are the obligations to the duty felt? To devolve the task on mercenary teachers can never relieve them from the charge. The parent may indeed, from ignorance and from immoral character, be unfit for his office. In such cases it may be for-

fortunate for the child that the charge is devolved upon persons better qualified. Yet ought it ever to be impressed upon the minds of parents that they are responsible to God for the duties incumbent on them in the parental relation. In presenting their children at the baptismal fount, they have confessed the ties of nature and the obligations of their christian calling, they have dedicated their offspring to God through the Saviour, and have vowed to use their utmost exertions and endeavours by His grace, to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And does the parent delight to behold and foster the increasing stature, the growing intelligence, and ripening affections of his child, and shall he not more sensibly rejoice to witness and promote his moral and spiritual progress? Can any strange teacher unfold the lessons of gospel knowledge and gospel piety with the same effect as a parent? From whose lips will they flow with so appropriate and so powerful an application? Can any task be more pleasing to the mind, imbued with the doctrine and spirit of christianity, than to rehearse and exhibit to so beloved a charge, the wondrous history of God's dealings with our rebellious race, to watch the varied interests which beam in the countenance, while he relates how Adam, the friend of God, walked in the enjoyment of the privileges of an earthly paradise, till disobedience and sin wrought death and all his woe—how God notwithstanding, proclaimed a covenant of mercy—how wicked Cain, filled with envy at the reward of his brother's righteousness raised his murderous hand against him, and wandered a fugitive and a vagabond, under the reproach of conscience, and the curse of God—how the wickedness of man increased upon the earth, till it called down the wrath of God in almost universal destruction, preserving the family of the righteous Noah amid the waters of the flood, that he might fulfil his covenant and his promise to generations yet to come—how Joseph, sold into bondage, became the deliverer of his brethren and his aged father from the famine—how their posterity became bondmen in Egypt, and were rescued by Moses, the heaven-preserved and heaven-inspired deliverer of his nation—of the wanderings and sufferings, the rebellions and repentance of the people in their journey through the wilderness, and their arrival after forty years of hardship and struggle in the promised land—of Samuel and David, the Shepherd King, and Solomon the powerful and the wise—of the building of the temple—of the rebellion against God of the people, and of their being sent captive to Babylon—of the prophets foretelling the glorious appearance of the Messiah and his eternal reign—of the fulfilment of this event—of the Saviour's lowly birth—of his humble state—of his being amid all his work and labour of love, despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief—of his betrayal, his agony, his death upon the cross, his nuding love, his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension to glory, where he ever lives at the right hand of the Majesty on high, the Mediator between God and his offending creatures, our Advocate and Intercessor with the Father.—All these form subjects of pleasing instruction, of warm interest, and of profitable knowledge to the youthful mind; by the very interest which they excite, planting more deeply the roots of principle, and fostering and nourishing the seeds of piety and virtue. And the impression is mutual: the warm and ardent feelings of the child often give life and vigour to those of his instructor, as a person will never feel the power of the truth more effectually himself than when he feels that he successfully impresses it upon the mind of another; especially where interest in the object of his instructions dictates and animates his efforts.

But while the duty and labours of the parent are paramount, other means are not to be disregarded.—For seconding and carrying forward the work begun by them, schools are established, and teachers appointed, who by the entire and exclusive devotion of their time and their acquirements to this object, can effect for many pupils what some parents would not do, what many are unable to do, and what many who, though both able and willing, could not, from other avocations and engagements overtake and accomplish. The advantages of intellectual education, as I before said, are great. He who denies his child these denies him a fair start in the race of life which he will scarcely afterwards make up; and no less does he deny him a fair start in the pursuit of moral excellence.—For intellectual attainments, though they may be frequently abused, will always insure, where rightly employed, a higher standard of moral attainment, and a larger capacity of usefulness. The more sound

knowledge that a man possesses the firmer will be his principles, the more secure and steadfast the foundation of his faith and hope, the more effectually will he secure the respect and regard of men, and the more efficient, will be his means of promoting the great object of glorifying his Saviour in advancing the cause of his gospel, and promoting the best interests of his fellow men. As the best inheritance which a man can leave to his children is a good name, so the best gift which he can bestow upon his children is a good education; by which I mean the means of acquiring knowledge and the principles to improve it. Mere intellectual education without religious principle, carefully inculcated and firmly rooted, may be a curse rather than a blessing. While it leads to the height of worldly eminence it may lead to the ruin of the soul, by putting away in pride the only source of true wisdom which can save the soul. But where intellectual acquirement is united with the spirit of piety, man rises to the noblest eminence of his condition—the highest point of religious attainment, the highest sphere of moral usefulness. And is it not the privilege and the boast of the land of our birth, that the means of education are so diffused, so open to all, that scope is given to the development of talents and of piety in the most obscure and humble rank? How many who have been regarded as the ornaments of learning, who have filled the most prominent and useful stations in the church of Christ have had no other advantage than a parent's fostering care, and the teaching of a Parish or Sabbath School, united with their own ardent diligence, excited by the principles and motives instilled into their minds by early admonition and example! And let me, my friends, excite you by the hope that your children may be honoured and useful, to devote yourselves, in as far as your circumstances and capacity will permit, to the faithful fulfilment of your baptismal vows to train up your children in the knowledge and fear of the Lord, as giving the best guarantee and assurance that they will not depart from them. Knowledge and good principles, drawn from and founded upon God's word, will be by his grace the surest defence of the youthful mind against the snares of an evil heart and an ungodly world, and the firmest ground of encouragement and hope throughout all their earthly pilgrimage; and above all, it will prove their best preparation for that eternal and unchangeable state of being, which after the lapse of a few short years, at most, must open upon them.

As an important auxiliary to the exertions of parents, Sabbath-schools for the instruction of the young in the knowledge of divine things, have been very advantageously employed. But let it ever be remembered by parents, that the responsibility is not thus taken off themselves—that Sabbath-school instruction is rather designed to aid and carry forward than to supersede, parental instruction and discipline. Let it be impressed upon the minds of the teachers in such institutions that they ought in as far as possible to fill the place of the parent both in the objects and in the manner, of instruction. Their labours must be dictated by devotion to the cause of Christ, a desire to promote his glory, by zeal for the salvation of souls, and an anxious wish to be instrumental in raising up a seed among their, as it were, adopted children, to serve the Lord. They must exercise the love, the gentleness, the authority of a parent, in order to be successful, and they must seek to manifest in their own temper and conduct the holy efficacy of the doctrines and precepts which they inculcate. They will find their reward in the consciousness of talents and advantages dedicated to the cause of the Saviour, and to the best interests of their fellow creatures.—*Canadian Christian Examiner.*
DUNDAS, JUNE 24th, 1839.

Judge Erskine made a very impressive charge to the grand Jury at the Dorchester Assizes, last week, upon the necessity of a religious education. He said the question of general education was one of the greatest importance; it had occupied the minds of the most eminent men, and it was to be regretted that some unobjectionable plan for affording necessary instruction to all classes had not been devised. It was known, however, from experience, in this country, and more so from the state of other countries, where extended plans had been carried into operation that mere education, unaccompanied by the instilment of sound religious principles, did not tend to lessen crime. His Lordship continued, with much emphasis, "If you wish to lessen crime by extending education, the education you give the people must be based upon the revealed will of God."