

our shame in these days; for no age has enjoyed more help, whether for the work of instructing others, or of curing our own ignorance. But, that you may not be qualified to teach the deep things of God, is no reason why the young may not receive at your lips the first principles of the oracles of God,—may not be made familiar, as we doubt not you yourselves would scorn to be thought not to be, with the story of Eden, and the story of the cross;—with the lessons of inspired wisdom embodied in the proverbs of a Solomon, and the gracious sayings of a greater than Solomon. Who of you is unable to read with your families the simple Word? How few have not access to the commentaries of men whose labours have been devoted to the interpretation of Scripture, and the condensing and arranging of its precious contents for the use of persons of all ages and capacities? Nor should we omit to take this opportunity of specially commending to the use of families those very forms of sound words which the Epistle just quoted was designed to introduce favourably to the reader: we mean the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, both larger and shorter. Nowhere, perhaps, will you find so much of divine truth set forth in such well weighed human language, while at every point you are referred to the very words of Inspiration, as the ultimate rule of faith. We fear that the reading of these is too much neglected, both by old and young, among the members of our churches. Earnestly do we desire that no family should be without a copy of these, our acknowledged subordinate standards; and, in particular, that, on occasion of application being made for admission to sealing ordinances, recourse were had to such helps to an intelligent and profitable observance of either sacrament.

By like considerations would we meet the plea of inability to lead in family prayer. In the earlier part of our address we supposed the case of some families finding a difficulty or impossibility in assembling for worship twice a day; and as we said on this question of time and frequency, that, an assembling can scarcely but in rare exceptional cases indeed be supposed impracticable, and the entire omission not easily reconciled with the existence of serious religion in the breast at all; so, on the question of talent or ability, we feel as if the supposition were monstrous that a head of a house should plead incompetence to bow the knee along with his loved ones, and, even in words of his own, to utter the confession of sin, or the prayer for mercy to the God of families. But to say that he cannot find expressions appropriate in which to clothe the sentiments of anxious dependence, of humble penitence, of filial trust before his Father in heaven, and then to say this while in the most familiar portions of God's own word, in every simple, brief and easily remembered form, is provided to hand the confession, and the thanksgiving, and the petition that suits every possible case in human experience, may well bring into question the sincerity of the man who advances such a preposterous excuse. Have you not at hand the best of prayers?—brief but comprehensive, which the child may learn, but which no grown man is too old to profit by. Let the parent utter at least *this* reverently at the domestic altar, if he utters no more, before he shall claim that his excuse of incapability is to be accepted. But have you not the great and precious promises? Can you not hold up these to the Promiser, and plead with Him and put Him in remembrance? Ah, do you believe in a heaven to gain or lose, and in a wrath to come, and can you find no words in which to deprecate the danger, and invoke the grace for your own offspring, and with them? Do you lack words in which to call in the physician's presence, or describe the malady when sickness in-