

affectionate faithful home instructions. The practical effect of their whole conduct and conversation, both on the Lord's day and *all* the days of the week, is to undo whatever may have been done by the earnest labours of the pulpit. What must such children think of those fluent prayers that they hear every night at the family altar? What of the consistency of those parents who utter such solemn mockeries? Oh! it is better never to pray at all for the conversion of their offspring than to ask God, in solemn tones to *save* them, while you are using your whole influence to harden and destroy them. "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou unfaithful servant."

In eternity it will be a terrible thing for many a man to meet his own prayers. Their very language will condemn him; for he knew his duty, but he did it not. Those fervent prayers, which the good man laboured to make effectual, will be "shining ones" in white raiment to conduct their author in to the banqueting-house of the GREAT KING. But the falsehoods uttered at the throne of grace will live again as tormenting scorpions in the day of the Lord's appearing. "Be not rash with thy mouth, nor let thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God," is an injunction that forbids more than irreverence in prayer. It forbids us, by implication, to ask for that which we do not sincerely desire. Above all, it forbids the asking from God those blessings which we are hindering by our neglect, or thwarting by our selfishness and unbelief.

IMPROVEMENT OF TIME.

Take care of the corners or *fragments* of your time. Bear in mind here, as in all other things, "the power of littles." Many a person who would be ashamed to think of sitting idle for a whole hour, will lose more time than that almost unconsciously, during a day, in small portions. And on the other hand it is astonishing what may be made out of those quarters of hours, which are so often allowed to slip uselessly away. A short trial would convince you of this. Let some simple piece of work, or useful book, be appropriated to those intervals which you know are likely to occur between your regular engagements, when you are alone or in the family, and you will be surprised to see the progress soon made in either.

Be *methodical* in laying out your time, so far as this is in your power. We must not be slaves to method, yet I believe nothing of much value, generally speaking, can be accomplished without it. While ever humbly acknowledging ourselves to be at the disposal of our God, yet let us endeavour, looking forward to each day as it rises, to be able to say with the apostle, "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do *this* or *that*." Even in tedious sickness, as has been well observed, it is wonderful how the weariness of long days may be lightened, by having regular times for such variety of employments as an invalid is capable of. Many of you, I know, have regular duties, dependent more on the arrangements of others than your own. Be faithful and diligent in these, but so far as any of you can choose for yourselves, my earnest advice is to plan beforehand, as seems most suitable, your hours for study, work,