

Selected for the Colonial Churchman.

AN ADDRESS TO MOTHERS.*

"We cannot," said a mother to me as she held her infant in her arms, "we cannot go to the Legislature; we cannot stand in the pulpit: we cannot be known; we must toil at home?"

"Cannot go to the Legislature?" Aye,—but if God had planted the same deep love of her country in woman's heart, that He has for her child, He would have committed to her hands the petty interests of politics and of time; but no—he has committed into her hands the future destiny of nations and of empires—all that we hold dear on earth, and what is more, the interests of the soul when time shall be no more. Oh mother! do not mourn over your lot—that distinctions of earth are not yours,—that the honors of men are not yours, for you have interests committed to your charge too sacred to be polluted by being mingled with the honors of this world. Do not grieve in secret, at times, that the inscrutable God, has assigned you an inferior station made your will subject to that of another, and made your glory to consist in bowing in meekness while you drink the bitterest cup which humanity knows,—your children will bless and honor you more and more as they leave your roof, till they gather round your grave as the most sacred spot on earth, and God will reward you most abundantly. He will remember the sorrows which your heart could tell to none but him.

The mother of Timothy Dwight did not know that she was rearing up a son who should be the direct means of instructing between two or three thousand pupils,—of forming some of the brightest stars that ever shed their light on this land, and of producing writings which shall continue to form, and mould the character of men for generations yet to come.

Oh! if the fire on our altars ever goes out—if ever another Jeremiah shall sing the funeral notes over our nation's grave, it will be because the mothers of this land have forgotten their duties and their power, and have ceased to baptize their offspring with prayer. In their inobtrusive and silent sphere of operation they may be sustained by the peculiar and lofty consciousness, that in communicating the eternal principles of truth to minds created for immortality, they are doing what can never cease being felt, and when the kingdoms and empires of earth are melted away and are forgotten, when the eloquence and wisdom of senators, with the courage of warriors shall have passed away, their labours will be known, and acknowledged, and eternally be seen to be unfolding in new and glorious results.

The great object before the mother, then, is to train up her child for eternity—for the service and presence of God to everlasting ages.

If this be the scale on which you measure, you have something that will sustain you at all times and on all occasions.

Do you watch your infant daughter, and wish her to become beautiful? Think again.—Of how much consequence is it, whether her dress at school be beautiful for a single day or otherwise? Is it any? And is not the body the dress of the soul, to be worn but a day.

You wish your boy to be healthy. Suppose him to be on a journey among strangers, of what consequence is it whether he travel as a poor man's son, or a rich man's. The journey of life will soon be over, and he will never be asked whether he were rich or poor.

Do you wish your child to become honored among men? And is it of any great consequence whether, as he passes through the streets, he have the applause of beggars and of the vile, if all the good in the land will honor him.—Let your child have heaven honor him—the redeemed church, and angels, and Christ, and God the Father, and of what consequence are the honors of the world?

But you wish your son to do good! He will;—he will become a Newton, an Edwards, or a Brainerd, if God sees best, and if God needs his services.

* By the Rev. John Todd.—Continued.

here, but even if he does not see fit to use him as an instrument of great good here on earth, train him up for the skies, and he will be used as a glorious instrument of promoting his honor hereafter. You may not rear up an apostle here, but you may rear up an angel hereafter. You may not see him the object of admiration here, but hereafter you may see him stand among the sons of light at the right hand of Jesus!

And now the question is, how can a mother do this?

I will endeavor briefly to answer this question, and also a second, viz:—Why she should try to do this?

First, How can a mother train up her child for God?

I reply, she must be a woman of prayer,—of daily prayer fervent, habitual prayer,—and for these reasons:

I. She needs wisdom.

The child must receive its first impressions and thoughts from its mother. She needs wisdom, when and what and how to teach it this or that. She wants to know how to reach the mind, how to impress it, how to guide it, how to discipline it. We call this kind of wisdom skill; but it follows in answer to prayer, for God only can impart that wisdom, and the mother who does not seek it of him, may be sure she will never have it.

She will not be led to say just the right things, in just the right time and manner.

II. The mother of all things needs self-discipline.

Without this, how can she forego the pleasure within her reach, if she leave her child in other hands and free herself from the responsibility? How can she watch over her child day and night, in sickness and in health, with a patience which never tires, and with a vigilance that never, for a moment, slumbers? The trials which press upon a mother are constant, unremitted, and except by prayer unalleviated. Who can at all times, and under all circumstances command her own temper and feelings, subdue and discipline her own heart? Oh! mother—you must not chide in anger,—you may not speak with impatience, you may not rebuke with angry severity, you may not correct in passion. Your patience must never tire, your passions must never rise, self-command must never for a moment seem to be relaxed,—self-control must never even falter! This severe self-discipline you can seek and find only in prayer. Nothing else can give it, nothing else can retain it when given.

III. The mother must be decided.

It is not difficult to be decided, were this all: but to be decided and firm while the feelings and the voice are so soft as the notes of a lute, is difficult. Your child has no judgment. Hundreds of times every week, and many times every day, he must be denied, and have his wishes and his will submit to yours. When he is well, you must, of necessity, be constant—by thwarting his inclinations, forbidding him, or commanding him; and when he is sick, you must force him, and stand further than ever aloof from indulgence. Even when you feel, that he is on the bed of death you must controul him, govern him, command him, and see that he obeys! Your own decision, energy, and firmness, must never waver for a moment in his presence. While a mother's heart pleads for indulgence, you must have a resolution which will lead you to do your duty, even while the heart bleeds, and the eyes weep. That noble mother—who held her child while its leg was amputated, and did it with a firmness that he dared not resist, and with a tenderness that made him feel that she did it for his good.—who does not admire? These two qualities, decision and firmness, are seldom found in man. He is either too stern, or too lenient. But the mother! she can possess them both, and have them both in exercise at the same moment. But she must have the aid of heaven. She must seek it in prayer, at the foot of the throne, and there she will find it.

I could point you to a son who cherishes the memory of his mother as something inexpressibly dear and sacred. She was a widow, and he, her only

son. When a young man, he said something or did something in the presence of a sister and a cousin, both young ladies, highly improper. His mother told him of his fault mildly and kindly, and requested him to make an apology to the girls. This he declined. She insisted upon it, and even laid her command. He refused. She next requested him to go with her into his chamber in the third story. He complied. She then very coolly took the key and told him, she should lock the door, and he would neither see her face, nor receive food, till he submitted. The next day she called at the door of the prisoner, "my son, are you ready to comply with my request?" "No mother." The next day the same question was asked and the same answer returned. The third day, she went to the door, and says, "James you think by holding out thus, your mother will yield, and come to your terms: but you do not know her. I am in the path of duty, and I shall not yield, till the timbers of this house decay and fall, should I live so long!" That evening he would have sent a message to his mother but had no messenger.

On the fourth day he promised to do whatever she required. She opened the door, and her pale, sickly looking boy embraced her with tears, asked her pardon, and submitted to her requisition. He has since been seen to shed tears of gratitude over that decision and faithfulness, and to assert with the utmost confidence, that it was this firmness in his widowed mother that saved him from irrevocable sin.

IV. She needs perseverance.

The trials of a mother are constant, unknown, and undescribably great. One of the warriors of the ago tells us that in the evening after a most awful battle, he went out on the field among the dying and the dead; but nothing affected him so much as to find an officer slain, and his faithful dog, lying at his breast, under his cloak, and howling in his agony. This has been admired as a beautiful picture of faithful attachment; but it is nothing in comparison with what the eye of God daily witnesses, as it looks down into the family circle and notices the thousands of mothers hanging over their dying children.

The duties of the mother begin in the morning; they end not with the day, they incessantly call upon her till she reaches the grave. Others may have respite; others may for a time throw off care, and anxiety, and responsibility. But the mother can never do so. She must be unwearied and faithful when no eye sees her to applaud; must sow her seed when she sees no immediate prospect of a harvest; must expect no return and no reward for her labors for years, and it may be, for life. She can adopt no theory which is not to be reduced to immediate and constant practice. How can she have this faith, and this perseverance unless she be in the habit of communion with God? The Bible and prayer must be her strength and her weapon. With these, she can carry her babes through the deserts where fiery serpents beset her path, and they shall not be bitten.—Without these, she has all the sorrows, anxieties, and griefs of a mother, without any thing of those consolations which God bestows in answer to prayer. Do you wish a wisdom that is profitable to direct, a patience that never forsakes you,—a firmness that never leaves you,—a faith that always bears you upward and onward, looking for your rewards hereafter—you must seek these by prayer. Without this, you can neither govern yourself, nor your child, nor persevere.

The child will receive impressions from the daily and hourly example of his mother, which will do more to form his character; than any, and all the instructions which you may give him. The example before his eyes, will, for several of the first years of his life, be his education. Now there are certain impressions which you should be very careful not to make upon your child, if you would train him up on the great scale of spending eternal ages in the service of God.

Be careful and not lead your child to feel that the world is the great object for which he lives.

The first impressions which the child necessarily