

admirable texture, are the most liable to be the victims of such enslavement. And thus it is, that you will often see the member of a family the most brilliant and the most loved go off into speedy destruction, while the stolid and the selfish among them kept the common way safely if not to fortune. The creature that was sensitive, impressible, and sympathising, but not favourably surrounded, retained impressions, which the more indifferent never even felt; they festered in his soul, and they consumed, and they killed it. There have been minds, which prosperity could not have damped; which obstacles could not have deterred; which vice could not have corrupted; minds that with faith and bravery could have faced all outward and all moral evil; that would have come fresh from the darkest adversities, and pure from the worst scepticism and egotism that infest the world; that yet have sunk by youthful perversion. Persons there have been who could have borne pain, who could have hungered, and thirsted, gone bare-footed and bare-headed; who could have generously endured the insolence of office, the proud man's contumely without admitting for an instant to their feelings a taint of envy or of hatred; who could have quietly submitted to whatever came with the hour, and patiently waited for better times; but of moral deformities that had early eaten into memory; of ungraceful and unholy images that got root too soon in the plastic fancies; of conflicts and distractions that unsettle their affections; of subtle diseases from the beginning enfeebling their moral sense: all weakening, dividing, pulling down the loftiest struggles of the intellect—of these, they cannot strip themselves: they are corded and chained by them—and the strongest in their grasp are often as Sampson shorn of his might in the hands of the Philistines. But for such counteractions what lights many minds might have been that have gone out in darkness! And, but for the absence of evils such as these, many minds would be in darkness, that now are lights forever to the world. Luther's early home was poor: had it been bad—what a change it might have had upon his destiny: instead of leading the Reformation, he might have perished as a drunken demagogue. Latimer's early home was likewise humble; but of its lowly piety he gives affecting descriptions in his own rude but heart-sweet eloquence. Had it been vicious, instead of dying a world-wide martyr, he might have died a village jester. Here then is a great lesson to woman. She it is who is most in the home: she it is who is first with the child—longest—last

In what I have spoken—brief though it be—I have given a solemn exhortation on woman's influence, a subject about which there is much vapid rhetoric, but little sound instruction. The pure, the reverential guardianship of childhood, that is especially given to woman; and than that there is nothing more holy on earth, and nothing more important.

The relation which home bears to the community is so simple that it needs but slight allusion. Home is the epitome of society; for society is but an aggregate of families. The individual is formed in the small community of home for the great community of the world. The need of authority and the virtue of obedience is first learned in home, and this is the greatest of social lessons. If individuals have cultivated in youth habits of a generous obedience; they will not in maturity regard an obtrusive self-will, either as dignity or independence; and they will temper the loyalty of good citizens with the amenity of good Christians. And so, too, the fraternal spirit of home will flow out with the wider charities of life. If not utterly depraved, we are kind to our brothers and our sisters: their good qualities we admire, and we do not look on their defects, but with pity. If they are in want, we relieve them; if in pain, we soothe them: if they sin, we use our best efforts to reclaim them; failing in our efforts, we would never punish without mercy, and at the worst we lament, when we cannot restore. If we would only carry this spirit into all our social ethics, what grace it would give to duty. Our deeds could not be in the bare letter of formal precept, but in the genial affection of family relationship; and reverence, and brotherhood, and mercy would be the ties of the family-compact.

But this is Home as Nature has made provision for it, and as right culture might render it. Taking things as they are, truth and reality demand that we should view the subject from another aspect, and this, also, we can do but partially. We say not that numbers of existing homes do not transcend in peace and happiness more than it ever entered into our heart to conceive: but so do, we fear, existing homes, or *dwellings* rather, as far transcend all we can imagine, in disorder and misery. The multitudes of the homeless are enormous; the multitudes are enormous, that are worse than homeless.

Go through the dwellings or the streets of any city. Behold the numbers of the neglected young—whose existence concerns scarcely a living heart; whose infancy had no care; whose vices caused no sorrow; whose depravity gave no