

Family Circle.

DOMESTIC WORSHIP.

The preservation and spread of religion should not depend exclusively on the particular order of men known as ministers, however important their function may be. All Christians, in their respective stations, ought to co-operate with those who are by designation "workers together with God." It ought to be a matter of thankfulness that the number of ministers, properly so called, who enter into the spirit of their office, and preach the truth as it is in Jesus, is exceedingly increased. But compared with the field, and the vastness of the work, the laborers are yet few. And few they would be found, if multiplied a thousand fold, and we should still need the property, the talents, the influence, the example, the exhortations, the prayers, of all the subjects of Divine grace. And can their services be dispensed with now? God is not the God of confusion, but of peace; and he has said "Let everything be done decently, and in order." It is his providence that determines the bounds of our habitation, and furnishes the several stations we occupy; and into these we are to look for our duties and opportunities—Men are often led out of their own proper sphere of action in order to be useful; but it is ignorance, if not discontent and pride, that tempts them astray; as the stream of a river is most lovely and beneficial when it patiently steals along its own channel, though it makes not so much noise, and excites not so much notice, as when it breaks over its banks, and roars and rolls as a flood,—so good men are most acceptable and useful in their appointed course—Wisdom will estimate every man by what he is, not out of his place and calling, but in them there we naturally look after him, there we unavoidably compare him with his obligations, there we see him habitually, and there he gains a character, or goes without one.

It is to be feared that some, even of the strictest professors of religion, have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. It blazes at a distance, but it burns dim at home. In a day like the present, there will be many occasional calls of public duty; but it will be a sad exclamation to make at a dying hour, "My own vineyard have I not kept!" In the spiritual, still more than in the temporal neglect, "He that provideth not for his own, especially those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." You wish to "serve your generation." It is well that it is in your heart; but let it be "according to the will of God." And how does this require you to proceed?—From public relation into private, or from private into public? Does it order you to waste time and strength, to go a distance, and begin laboring where difficulties will be too great and means too few, to allow of your improving the waste back to your own door? Or, to be gin near, to cultivate onwards, to clear and fertilize the ground as you advance, so as to feel every acquisition already made converted into a resource to encourage, support and assist you in your future toil? "You long to be useful." And why are you not? Can you want either opportunity or materials—you, who are placed at the head of families—you, who are required to "rule well your own households;" to "dwell with your wives according to knowledge;" to "train up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" to behave towards your servants, as "remembering that you also have a Master in heaven?" Behold, O man of God! a congregation, endeared and attentive, committed to thy trust! Behold a flock whom you may feed with knowledge and understanding, and before whom you may walk as "an example in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity!" Behold an altar on which to offer the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and of praise!—Here "observe these things, without preferring one before another;" here "teach an exhort, and reprove with all long-suffering and patience;" here officiate, and "ye shall be named the priests of the Lord, men shall call you the ministers of our God."

The remark of Baxter is worthy of our regard:—"If family religion were duly attended to and properly discharged, I think the preaching of the World would not be the common instrument of conversion." And Gurnall says: "The family is the nursery of the church. If the nursery be neglected, what, in time, will become of the gardens and the orchards?"

The examples of the faithful; the commendations which God has bestowed upon them in his word; his promises and threatenings; the obvious and the numberless advantages resulting from domestic devotion, as to a personal religion and relative government with regard to those that preside in the family; and as to instruction, restraints and motives, with regard to relations, children, and servants;—all this must surely be enough to induce any man capable of conviction, to terminate with a broken heart the mischiefs of neglect; and to "swear unto the Lord, and vow unto the mighty God of Jacob—Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eyelids; until I find out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob."

As to the objections arising from fear, shame,

a want of time, the unfashionableness of the usage, or its interfering with visits or dissipation; all this, in a being who yet owns himself to be a moral and accountable creature, is unworthy of argument, and would be too much honored by the attempt of refutation. There is one thing, however, that deserves notice. It is the apprehension of inability to perform this duty. With respect to some, if not many, it is no breach of charity to conclude, that this is an excuse rather than a reason. It is disinclination, or, at least, the want of a more powerful conviction, that hinders them from adopting this salutary usage, rather than incapacity—There are few cases in which the old adage is not to be verified,—

"Where there's a will there's a way"

You feel little difficulty in making known your distresses or wishes to a fellow creature, and the Lord looketh, not to the excellency of the language, but to the heart. The faculty would be increased by practice and the Divine blessing, and I cannot but earnestly recommend the use of free and extemporaneous prayer where it is practicable. There is in it a freshness, a particularity, and appropriateness, an immediate adoption and use of circumstances and events, which cannot be found in the best composed forms. Yet there are those who have only a slender degree of religious knowledge, or discover a natural slowness and hesitancy of utterance, or feel a bashfulness of temper, so that they cannot gain confidence enough even to make a proper trial. And this diffidence is often found, even with persons of education and understanding. Indeed, such are more likely to feel difficulty than the vulgar and illiterate, whose ignorance is friendly to fluency, and whose confidence is not perplexed by modes of expression, and embarrassed by the influence of reputation. Now, in cases of inability or extreme difficulty, we would most earnestly recommend the use of forms in preference to neglect. After using these helps for a season, most persons would be able to proceed without them.

FRIENDLY ADVICE, BY "A FRIEND."

- 1. Devote some portion of the day to the reading of the holy Scriptures alone in thy chamber, and pray constantly to the Almighty, that he would enlighten thy mind to understand them.
2. Endeavor to keep thy mind in such a state that thou mayst turn it to think upon God many times in the course of the day, and pour out thy petitions to him in secret for preservation.
3. Never do anything privately which thou wouldst be ashamed of if made public; and if evil thoughts come into thy mind, endeavor to turn from them, and not follow up the train of them, or indulge them for a moment. always endeavor that thy very thoughts may be acceptable in the sight of God, to whom they are always open.
4. Be careful not to read books of an immoral tendency, as novels, romances, &c; and endeavor to discourage it in others; they are poison to the mind.
5. Be punctual in attending a place of worship.
6. Be very careful what company thou keepest; have a few intimacies, and let them be persons of the most virtuous character, for if a young man associate with those of bad character, he infallibly loses his own.
7. Be very circumspect in all thy conduct, and particularly towards females.
8. Study the interest of thy employer, and endeavor to promote it by all fair and honorable means in thy power. Study the duties he expects from thee, and fulfil them faithfully as in the sight of God.
9. Endeavor to improve thyself in thy studies in the intervals of leisure.
10. Never do anything against thy conscience.

I have no time to add more than that my prayers are put up for thy preservation; and that as long as thou continuest to conduct thyself in a virtuous and honorable manner, thou wilt find a steady friend in.

THE TEETH.

Parents should consult their family dentist at least two or three times a year, or as often as they may perceive the least derangement in the mouths of their children. There are few parents who acquaint themselves sufficiently with the dental organs to know when the first set of teeth loosen and come out, or when the second make their appearance, at which time the teeth should be carefully watched, so that the first symptoms of decay may be detected and eradicated before it has proceeded too far; for upon the preservation of the first four permanent double teeth, (two of the upper and two of the lower jaw, which usually appear between the fifth and sixth year,) depend in a great measure the symmetry of the lower part of the face.

THE WIFE.

That woman deserves not a husband's generous love who will not greet him with smiles as he returns from the labors of the day—who will not try to chain him to his home by the sweet enchantment of a cheerful heart. There is not one in a thousand that is so unfeeling as to withstand such an influence, and break away from such a home.

Geographic and Historic.

CHINA.

From an article in the last North British Review

In general, the habits of the Chinese population, especially in the country districts, are peaceful and submissive. In the large towns, however, especially in Canton, there are frequent tumultuous ebullitions of the mob.—Their contempt and hatred of foreigners cannot be easily restrained, and the appellation "Faque," or "foreign devil," is a term of common reproach. Canton, however, affords not a favorable specimen of Chinese manners. In the more northern cities, and in the country districts, a stranger may safely mingle with the people, without any other inconvenience than that arising from their excessive curiosity.—They are almost uniformly kind, hospitable, and good-humored.

A great proportion of the lower orders of the community fare but poorly, and have great difficulty in making out their daily bread, while hosts of beggars are to be found in all the cities. For these a tax is levied in Amoy, and perhaps in other cities throughout the kingdom, the collector of which is called "the king of the beggars." The tax is partly optional with the prayers, and is directly under the cognizance of the government. "The king," who is duly elected from among the number of the beggars, calls on each householder at the beginning of the year and ascertains the monthly subscription which he is willing to give, in order to be free from the annoyance of their visits or alms, and the clatter of the sticks by which they import relief. For the sum of five or six hundred cash a month (4½) he gives a good piece of paper, inscribed with three copies of the characters or "great good luck," inclosed within an outline of a jar or jug, this is affixed to the door post as a sign of immunity, and is renewed at the commencement of every year. Any beggar overlooking this bill of exemption, and entering a shop for relief, may be seized by the householder, and be beaten on the spot. "The king," after giving a certain proportion to the mandarins, and appropriating a certain fund for the support of the incorporated society of beggars, continues to appropriate the remainder to his own use, and to become a rich man. The beggars are covered with tattered rags, wear long dishevelled hair, and are not very particular in the mode of satisfying their hunger.

"I observed," says Mr Smith, "one of these beggars pass the shop of a confectioner, and stealthily slip a cake into his hand, and throw it into his sleeve. One of the partners who saw the theft, ran out and followed the thief, caught him by the hair, made him restore the cake from the folds of the sleeve, and then, by a species of lynch-law, very common in a country where ordinary law is expensive, and bribes must precede justice, gave the beggar a severe beating, and let him depart, amid the applause of the crowd, the good humor of the tradesman himself, and a remarkable nonchalance on the part of the offender."

The Chinese cities have a general resemblance to each other. They are irregularly built, crowded within a small space—have a dirty appearance, have few large or fine streets, but innumerable narrow lanes, and are generally traversed by canals in all directions, and are surrounded by walls and ramparts. There are few public buildings which make any show, with the exception of pagodas and temples, which are common both within the walls and in the suburbs. Mr Smith thus describes his first impressions of Canton—

"The recently arrived stranger naturally manifests surprise and incredulity on being told that the estimated population of Canton exceeds a million. As soon, however, as he visits the close streets, with their dense population and busy wayfarers, huddled together into lanes from five to nine feet wide, where Europeans could scarcely inhale the breath of life, the greatness of the number no longer appears incredible. After the first feelings of novelty have passed away, disappointment, rather than admiration, occupies the mind. After leaving the open space before the factories, or, as the Chinese call them, the thirteen hongs, and passing through Old China Street, New China Street, and similar localities, the names of which indicate their propinquity to the residence of foreigners, we behold an endless succession of narrow avenues, scarcely deserving the name of streets. As the visitor pursues his course, narrow lanes still continue to succeed each other, and the conviction is gradually impressed on the mind, that such is the general character of the streets of the city. Along these, busy traders, mechanics, barbers, vendors, and porters make their way while occasionally the noisy abrupt tones of vociferating coolies remind the traveller that some materials of bulky dimensions are on their transit, and suggest the expediency of keeping at a distance, to avoid collision. Now and then the monotony of the scene is relieved by some portly mandarin, or merchant of the higher class, borne in a sedan-chair on the shoulders of two, or sometimes four men. Yet, with all this hurry and din, there seldom occurs any accident or interruption of good nature. On the river the same order and regularity prevail. Though there are probably not fewer than 200,000 denizens of the river, whose hereditary domains are the watery element that supports their little dwelling, yet harmony and good feeling are conspicuous in the accommo-

dating manner with which they make way for each other. These aquatic tribes of the human species show a most philosophic spirit of equanimity, and contrive, in this way, to strip daily life of many of its little troubles, while the fortitude and patience with which the occasional injury or destruction of their boat is borne, is remarkable.

To return from the wide expanse of the river population to the streets in the suburbs, the same spirit of contented adaptation to external things is everywhere observable—and it is difficult which to regard with most surprise—the narrow abodes of the one, or the little boats which serve as family residences to the other. There is something of romance in the effect of Chinese streets. On either side are shops, decked out with native ware, furniture, and manufactures of various kinds. These are adorned by pillars of sign boards, rising perpendicularly, and inscribed from top to bottom with the various kinds of saleable articles which may be had within. Native artists seem to have lavished their ingenuity on several of these inscriptions, and, by their calligraphy, to give some idea of the superiority of the commodities for sale.—Many of the sign boards contain some fictitious emblem, adopted as the name of the shop, similar to the practice prevalent in London two centuries ago. On entering, the proprietor, with his assistants or partners, welcome a foreigner with sundry salutations; sometimes advancing to shake hands, and endeavoring to make the most of his scanty knowledge of English. They will show their saleable articles with the utmost patience, and evince nothing of disappointment if, after gratifying his curiosity, he departs without purchasing. At a distance from the factories, where the sight of a foreigner is a rarity, crowds of idlers, from fifty to a hundred, rapidly gather round the shop, and frequent embarrassment ensues from an incipient or imperfect knowledge of the colloquial medium. In these parts the shopkeepers know nothing but their own language, are more moderate in their politeness, and as a compensation, put a less price on their wares. To write one's name in Chinese characters is a sure method of enhancing their good favor. Sometimes no fewer than eight or ten blind beggars find their way into a shop, and there they remain, singing a melancholy dirge-like strain, and most perseveringly beating together two pieces of wood, till the weary shopman at length take compassion on them, and provides the quiet of his show by giving a copper cash to each, on receiving which they depart, and repeat the same experiment elsewhere. The streets abound with these blind beggars, who are seldom treated with indignity. A kindly indulgence is extended to them, and they enjoy a prescriptive light of levying a copper cash from every shop or house they enter. It is said that this furnishes a liberal means of livelihood to an immense number of blind persons, who, in many instances, are banded together in companies or societies, subject to a code of rules, on breach of which the transgressor is expelled the community, and loses his guild.

In every little open space there are crowds of travelling doctors, haranguing the multitude on the wonderful flowers and healing virtues of the medicines which they expose for sale. Close by, some cunning fortune teller may be seen with crafty look, explaining to some awe-stricken simplication his future destiny in life, from a number of books arranged before him, and consulted with due solemnity. In another part, some tame birds are exhibiting their clever feats, in singling out, from amongst a hundred others, a piece of paper enclosing a coin, and then receiving a gram of millet as a reward of their cleverness. At a little distance are some fruit-stalls, at which old and young are making purchases, throwing lots for the quantity they are to receive. Near these again are noisy gangs of people, pursuing a less equivocal course of gambling, and evincing, by their excited looks and clamors, the intensity of their interest in the issue. In another part may be seen disposed the apparatus of some Chinese tonsor, who is performing his skilful vocation on the crown of some fellow countryman unable to command the art and force of the artist at a house of his own."

THE ABDICATION OF THE CICESBEOS.

At the name of Pius IX. hundreds of families, divided by dissensions, have been reunited, and the peace of the domestic hearth has been re-established, have restored to their hearts those feelings which should never have deserted them, and the Romans have even returned to the faith of conjugal virtue. In the seventeenth century the reign of great men was succeeded by that of the Cicesbeos, who banished all domestic peace and purity in such a manner, that the Italians, oppressed by foreigners, or barbarians, as they still call them, were necessitated to succumb to the attacks of coxcombs. The wife had forfeited all pretension to the character of a companion to her husband, or the friendly associate of his existence, and the husband no longer found in her a counsellor in his doubts and difficulties, a support in his adversity, or a consolation in despair. This wretched state of immortality had become habitual, when Pius IX., by the simple effect of the revolution which he implanted in the vital part of the Roman States, restored domestic peace and conjugal fidelity, and the Cicesbeo now belongs only to the history of the degradation and the foulest days of Italy.