

have pleasure in confirming what we thus say by the sentiments of men who have gone before us, and whose names are precious in the remembrance of the Church. We would refer to the "Epistle to the reader," by the godly Manton, accompanying the Confession of Faith, and in which he is dealing with heads of families in his own day. "Wherever thou goest," he says, "thou wilt hear many crying out of bad children and bad servants, whereas, indeed, the source of the mischief must be sought a little higher; it is bad parents and bad masters that make bad children and bad servants; and we cannot so much blame their untowardness, as our own neglect in their education. The Devil hath great spite at the Kingdom of Christ, and he knoweth no such compendious way to crush it in the egg as the perverting of youth, and the supplanting of family duties. He striketh at all duties, those which are public in the assemblies of the saints; but these are too well guarded by the solemn injunctions and dying charge of Jesus Christ, as that he should ever hope totally to subvert and undermine them. But at family duties he striketh with success, because the institution is not so solemn, and the omission is not so liable to public censure."

Another of our pious and learned ancestors is quoted by the distinguished author of that Dedicatory Epistle, as thus bewailing corruptions in the Church of God: "A principal cause of these mischiefs is the great and common neglect of governors of families in the discharge of the duty which they owe to God for the souls that are under their charge, especially in teaching them the doctrines of christianity. Families are societies that must be sanctified to God as well as churches; and the governors of them have as truly a charge of the souls that are therein as the pastors have of the churches; but, alas, how little is this considered or regarded! Doubtless, many an excellent magistrate has been sent into the community, and many an excellent pastor into the church, and many a precious saint into heaven, through the happy preparations of a holy education, perhaps by a woman that thought herself an insignificant member of society. Would parents but begin betimes, and labour to affect the hearts of their children with the great matters of everlasting life, and to acquaint them with the substance of the doctrine of Christ, and, when they find in them the knowledge and love of Christ, would bring them to the pastors of the church, to be tried, confirmed, and admitted to further privileges, what happy, well-ordered churches might we have! It is for want of laying this foundation well at first, that, when becoming parents themselves, they are so ignorant as most are, and that so many, especially of the younger sort, swallow down almost any error that is offered them, and are ready to follow any sort of deriders that will entice them, so as it be but done with earnestness and plausibility."

These words, written two centuries ago, scarcely suit less our own times. We might close our address with them, but that we would fain strengthen our affectionate remonstrances with those of our members or adherents who more require these suggestions, by meeting with all affectionate consideration the plea put forward, not alone by carelessness, but by a seeming modest diffidence. Some, we know, allege their inability to communicate religious instruction, or to lead their households in prayer. They feel that, having so much need themselves to learn, it is presumptuous in them to teach. We must remind you, dear brethren, that for the soul to be without knowledge is not good. An apostle, while charging that some in the early Church had not the knowledge of God, reproves this ignorance: "I speak this to your shame." And surely, ignorance of christianity is specially to