

THE CANADIAN UNITED PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

VOL. III. TORONTO, FEBRUARY 1, 1856.

No. 2.

Miscellaneous Articles.

FAMILY WORSHIP.

I. What is comprised in it? II. What are its advantages? III. What are the reasons why so many neglect it? A few remarks in answer to each of these questions may not be altogether without effect.

I. What is comprised in family worship?

1. It comprises the singing of God's praise in our families.

Singing the praise of God, in public and private, is a very important religious exercise, if it is not absolutely essential to the service. This exercise has a soothing, cheering, and soul-elevating influence on most persons. It excites our religious affections, raising them above things seen and temporal to things heavenly and eternal. If we view this service as it has respect to God's character and glory, its character and importance will appear. The most elevated views of God's character are presented in the sweet songs of Zion; they contain every truth worthy of the character of God. They present views of the divine character, so sublime, awful, and attractive, that, by the blessing of God and the influence of the Holy Spirit, they become a powerful means in softening the hard heart, subduing rebellious dispositions and bringing the soul into a holy, humble, and quiet state. By such an exercise, the whole services of domestic worship become more spiritual, elevated, and heavenly. Then if we view this exercise as it respects our own feelings, it becomes most important and desirable. The very exercise tends to cheer the depressed, and to calm the troubled soul, as well as to confirm and embolden the fearful. Here are precepts, scriptural and all-important, applicable to all duties. Here are warnings applicable to all the varied scenes and situations of life; consolations sufficient for all our wants and woes. Again this act is enjoined in Scripture. In how many places are we called on to "praise the Lord," and to "sing praises unto our God." It may be objected that these and similar precepts which enjoin us to teach and admonish one another "in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our heart to the Lord," have respect to public worship, and are not applicable to private or family worship. In reply to this objection, we would ask—Is there anything inapplicable or unsuitable to family devotion that is so clearly enjoined on the people of God in their Church capacity? All know and acknowledge the importance of this exercise in the assemblies of God's people. It is that part of the service of the sanctuary in which all are expected to take a part, and when all "sing with