

The closet is also a sacred place, because there the pious mother retires for secret prayer and here she initiates her youthful offspring to follow her living example, and bend their little knees before the throne of God.

II. But Christian influence transfers itself from the fireside to the Church, and when wanting at home you will look for it in vain in the church. There is an anecdote told of a fastidious lady, who having taken offence at the minister or office-bearers of the church, for some paltry matter, refused to drop her mite into the collection as she passed. One of the office-bearers who noticed the lady pass with a polite bow but no money, followed her straight into her pew, and said, "Give us less of your manners and mair of your siller, my lady." How different the spirit manifested by contrite worshippers. With the Psalmist they say, and feel what they say; "How amiable, O Lord of hosts! Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house, they will still be praising Thee."

Christians actuated by such a spirit, are at all times ready with their counsel, their money, and their prayers, to support and extend the blessings of the Gospel. Christ is interested in his people's happiness, and on that very account is he interested in their Christian liberty. From spontaneous and willing hearts they cheerfully contribute of their means to the Lord, and are strangers to the bitter pangs of the miser, which he inflicts on himself, from a fear lest he should become too generous and have nothing at last, and the fear of the secret contempt of wiser and better neighbours to which, so long as he has human nature about him, he cannot be altogether insensible. Jesus delights more in beholding the poor widow casting in her two mites, than in all the contributions of her wealthier neighbors, and she feels far happier too, not because she is about to starve by voluntarily depriving herself of all her living; but

because she estimates spiritual things above the value of meats and drinks, and regards Christ and his cause greater than all worlds. On these grounds, the poor widow had greater joy in the manifestation of her Christian liberty, and a higher commendation from the great master himself, than all the rest received. The Church then is the heavenly place, where on Sabbath and at other times you receive high principles and motives to actuate your souls aright, and direct your lives in a Christian channel, heavenwards.

III. The influence of the Christian is seen upon a still wider sphere, as exemplified by these Missionaries who may be said to labour in the wide wide world. The Missionary in distant lands is not merely a local official, but his influence is exerted at every stage in his route, and wherever his name and labours are known throughout Christendom, good is thereby done. Before one becomes a Missionary in the true sense, he is not to cast his eye with a covetous glance on the length and breadth of his native land, and selecting some salubrious spot, say: "Let me spend the remainder of my lifetime there;" nor on the other hand, is he with the morbid imagination, corrupted taste, and perverted judgment of the Papist, to make choice of the scorching heats of India, or the piercing colds of Siberia; because these climates forsooth, would speedily torture his body, and bring disease and death to his morbid frame.—Ah, no! the Missionary's choice is to be determined by considerations infinitely higher than these. He has made a sacrifice of his talents, his genius, his health, his all! and lays them upon the altar of devotion to God and the holy fire descending from heaven consumes them all in his estimation, leaving him nothing but a heap of ashes. Then like the prophet Isaiah, when he beheld the beatific vision in the Temple, and when the seraph touched his lips with a live coal taken with the tongs from off the altar, and laying