

THE HOME CIRCLE.

BY M.

No. 4.—A WORD TO MOTHERS.

Mothers, if you desire your children to honor you through life, to be ornaments to society, to lisp your name in the cold embrace of death, be careful to train their infant minds by precept and example, in the way of virtue, morality and religion. You must not say go, but follow. The majority of the "great men who have adorned human nature and reflected a halo of glory upon their country, have been those who in infancy learned to clasp their tiny hands and kneel at a mother's side, and dedicate their hearts to God." It is said that the last words of the celebrated and lamented Henry Clay, were "My mother—mother—mother."

Hence, parents should be careful how they train their little ones. The potency of a mother's influence in forming the character of a child is beyond dispute. "What man is there who cannot trace the origin of many of the best maxims of his life, to the lips of her who gave him birth? How wide, how lasting, how sacred, then, is that part of woman's influence! Who that thinks of it, who that believes that any good may be produced or any evil prevented by it, can need any arguments to prove the importance of the character and capacity of her who gives its earliest bias to the infant mind?

"Holy, thrice holy, is the part through life to thee that's given;
Well may the Poet say, thou art the link 'twixt earth and heaven.
Such art thou, Woman, when thy mind equals thy loving form,—
When not thy dearest foe can find one trace of passion's storm!"

Notwithstanding, how few seem to realize woman's true mission! "How many forget that her hands are small and soft, and all unfitted to grapple with the hard, iron man, yet full of a most wonderful skill to mould the pliant material of childhood!" It is sad, that so many mothers "are insensible to the high mission whereunto they are called; that so many let the fair garden given them to tend lie clothed with weeds, and every good plant to struggle in a feeble or gnarled growth!" "In a defective home education lies the groundwork of much of the evil that afflicts society. If the thoughts of parents were more centred in their homes, and as earnestly exercised in the devising of ways and means for rightly educating the moral and intellectual natures of their children as in procuring food and raiment for the perishing body, they would render a service to society far greater than if they had built a city or founded a nation. If mothers wisely developed the higher and better sentiments of their sons, and cultivated in them, as far as that were possible, gentleness and forbearance towards others, there would be fewer unhappy wives in the coming generation."

Mothers cannot be too careful how they exercise the powers that God hath given them. If this world is ever to become better and happier, woman must be a prime mover in the great work. It rests with her, in a preeminent degree, to give tone and elevation to the moral education of the age, by deciding the degrees of virtue that shall be necessary to afford a passport to her society.

V61 I, No 4, May 1882