

satisfaction of knowing that they are thus sowing seed which will ripen in heaven. Let them be assured, that when they come to die, upon nothing will they look back with so much unmingled gratification as the hours thus devoted to God's service.

But here we would caution parents against the very dangerous error of supposing, as some are very apt to do, that it rests with the Schoolmaster and Sabbath school teacher to do all for the religious training of their children. Never can any amount of exertion on the part of these make up for the want of parental instruction, or divest parents of their obligations. Parents are the natural guardians and instructors of their children, and if they neglect to perform their duties towards them, the labours of others will be but of little avail. It is a deficiency which nothing else can supply; and much we fear of the misery, the vice, and immorality which presently prevail may justly be traced to the neglect of parents in this respect. Is not the scripture command sufficiently plain, "Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,"? O, that parents would only reflect how awful is their responsibility—how much substantial good they have it in their power to confer upon themselves, their families and upon society—and how much untold misery and wretchedness the neglect of parental duties entails upon themselves and others.

Would not all men, with one accord condemn the conduct of that man as unnatural and inhuman, who should altogether neglect the temporal welfare of his family? And yet how many are there, who, while they exhibit much anxiety about their children's success in life, do nevertheless, manifest the utmost carelessness and unconcern about their truest and best interests—their spiritual and eternal welfare? Is not this gross infatuation, on the part of those professing themselves to be Christians? It is quite proper that parents should carefully watch over their children's temporal well being, and it is natural that they should delight to see them likely to prosper in the world; but many, too many, seem by their conduct to overlook this very important fact, namely, that the foundation of all sound education, and of all real prosperity both here and hereafter, is the moral and religious training received in childhood and early youth. The heart of the child must be cultivated as well as the head, and the family circle is not only the best but it is the only school for this purpose. Parents can do for their children what no other human being in the world can. If this, therefore, which is by far the most important part of education, be neglected by the parent, the schoolmaster may indeed produce a good scholar, but if he labours alone and unaided, it is beyond his art to produce a good Christian. Even after you have trained up a child to the highest pitch of perfection, what guarantee have you that

his talents and acquirements will be properly applied? Really, none whatever. After much expence and trouble, you may only have produced an accomplished hypocrite. The Devil was subtle; and the more gifted a person is that is trained upon this false system, if the heart is unsanctified, the more will he resemble Satan.

We may here notice a very common error, and one, too, which extends its baneful influence to the education of the young. We find in the world many people disposed to place too much of their admiration upon mere gifts, and to pay but little respect to the graces of character. They are more ambitious to gain the praise and admiration of the world for possessing great abilities than for being pious, holy and good. Now, this is a great error! For what, we would ask, would be the condition of the world if under the government of a God who wanted the attributes of goodness and holiness? It is the most fearful thing a man can contemplate. And so if society—and society is only so many families united—if society were almost wholly composed of individuals who wanted the elements of goodness and holiness, who, in the expressive language of scripture, were "without God in the world," what an awful prospect for the human race? Imagination could not depict the horrors of such a state of things. Well has our Saviour said to his followers, "Ye are the salt of the earth," for if all sincere Christians were removed from the earth what a fearful scene would it present! Moreover, holiness is far higher than mere intellectual acumen, because by being holy we more nearly resemble the character of God. Parents therefore, should consider these things, and remember that holiness will remain with their children after every other thing—riches, honours, influence, possessions,—and all the vanities of time, shall have passed away. It is a deathless plant which age cannot wither nor time destroy. It will outlive time and defy the sting of death, because it is that which is truly great and lasting—that which alone is immortal.

Heads of families, pause, reflect; consider. Think upon the magnitude of your obligations and the extent of your responsibilities. It is for you now to decide whether the children you so fondly love are hereafter to become the followers of Christ or the servants of Satan. The opportunities which you now enjoy, once lost, can never be recalled. No second spring-time will ever return to them. Remember also, that your children are capable of receiving moral culture long before they are fit to be sent to school. Long before this period they will be imbibing numerous impressions from everything around them; and such impressions will be the most durable and lasting. Show them, therefore, above all things the benefit of a good example. Now is the time for sowing those seeds which, under the divine blessing,

may ripen unto salvation. You know that if the natural soil is left to itself, it must grow something; if good seed is not sown, weeds will spring up. Even so with the mind of childhood and youth. If left to itself, the great enemy of souls who overgoth about seeking to do evil, will come and sow tares therein, and when the great harvest time arrives, these will be cut down and cast into the oven. O, remember, that every child whose religious education is neglected is like so much seed left for Satan to cultivate. Begin then, we beseech you, if you have not already done so, a regular course of catechising in your family and steadily persevere in the good work. You will not have to labour alone and unassisted. Prayer will bring down the aid of the Holy Spirit. And you will thus also be earning for yourselves the love, respect and esteem of all good men, in whose prayers you will not be forgotten.

II.—AIDS TO PARENTAL CATECHISING.
Parental instruction, though the chief, is not the only department of Family Catechising. Undoubtedly, for the first few years of the child's existence, the instructions of the parent are superior to those of every other being in the world. But in developing and carrying forward the course of religious instruction thus begun, there are other means to be called into operation such as Reading classes, Bible classes, &c. We are here however to confine our attention to catechising. The other methods, though all very useful and important in their own way, in promoting Scriptural knowledge can never properly stand as a substitute for the catechetical mode of question and answer, which is preferable to every other method of instruction. It is true, that the conducting of catechetical classes properly falls within the province of the Pastor of a congregation, but in not a few instances this most important duty seems to be entirely overlooked; and in many cases the clergyman complains that amid other more immediate and pressing calls upon his attention, he can spare but little time for this purpose. In this respect ministers of the Gospel are differently situated; some can spare time, others cannot. Hence the necessity of having a body of lay Catechists, forming an intermediate link between parent and pastor, assisting both in the religious education of the young without interfering with the proper duties of either. The arduous duties of clergymen with large congregations would thus be very considerably lightened, and the exertions of parents to see that their children are properly taught at home in order to be prepared for examination by the visiting Catechist, would be greatly stimulated. An intelligent band of such men, really in earnest, might change the destinies of this country. Nothing could be simpler than the machinery for such a purpose. Each parish might be divided into Districts, and these again subdivided into Sections, each Catechist visit-