

age, a sudden and total change took place in her management. During the early months of its infancy, she considered it to be her duty to do every thing in her power to make the child comfortable and happy. She would endeavor to anticipate all its wants. She would be obedient to the wishes of the child. But by the time the child was one year of age, she considered it old enough to be brought under the salutary regulations of a well-disciplined family. I am aware that many parents will say this is altogether too early a period to commence the government of a child, and others equally numerous, perhaps, will say that it is too late;—that a beginning should be made at a much earlier period. In fact, the principle, which really ought to guide, in such a case, is this, that the authority of the mother ought to be established over the child, as soon as it is able to understand a command or prohibition, expressed by looks and gestures. This is at a much earlier period than most parents imagine. Let the mother who doubts it, try the experiment, and see how easily she can teach her child that he must not touch the tongs or poker; or that when sitting in her lap, at table, he must not touch the cups and saucers. A child may be taught obedience in such things then, as well as at any period of its life. And how much trouble does a mother save herself by having her child thus early taught to obey. How much pain and sorrow does she save her child by accustoming it, in its most tender years, to habits of prompt obedience.

Guard against too much severity. By pursuing a steady course of efficient government, severity will very seldom be found necessary. If, when punishment is inflicted, it is done with composure and with solemnity, occasions for punishment will be very unfrequent. Let a mother ever be affectionate and mild with her children. Let her sympathize with them in their little sports. Let her gain their confidence by her assiduous efforts to make them happy. And let her feel, when they have done wrong, not irritated, but sad, and punish them in sorrow, but not in anger. Fear is a useful and a necessary principle in family government. God makes use of it in governing his creatures. But it is ruinous to the disposition of a child to control him exclusively by this motive. How unhappy must be that family, where the parent always sits with a face deformed with scowls, and where the voice is always heard in tones of severity and command. Such parents we do see. Their children fear them. They are always under restraint in their presence; and home becomes to them an irksome prison, instead of the happy retreat of peace and joy. But where the mother greets her children with smiles, and rewards their efforts to please her with caresses, and addresses them in tones of mildness and affection, she is touching those chords in the human heart, which vibrate in sweet harmony; she is calling into action the noblest and the loveliest principles of our nature. And thus does she prepare the way for every painful act of discipline to come with effectual power upon the heart. The children know that she does not love to punish. In all cases in which it can be done, children should thus be governed by kindness. But when kindness fails, and disobedience ensues, let not the mother hesitate for a moment to fall back upon her last resort, and punish as se-