

regard the claims and happiness of those around them, and by so doing, they promote their own. Home becomes to them a centre of attractions; they unite more cheerfully their exertions to promote its comfort; and become bound to its inmates by a stronger attachment. If affliction and adversity come, they will lend their aid in their alleviation; and will cling together affectionately in the homestead, when their parents are called to their reward. From such connections of filial love and friendship flow some of the purest pleasures of mortality. But when we add to them the influence of divine truth early received upon the soul, the hallowed exercises to which the spiritual tastes have been formed, the pure hopes which shine upon the future as light from the throne of God, we have the existing elements of individual happiness produced in their most energetic and durable forms.

Again, the faithful discharge of parental duty is the surest foundation of domestic peace. It is impossible to preserve peace and order among any number of human beings, but through the authority of an acknowledged superior. For this reason, God has placed even the wife in subjection to the husband, although in other respects she be his equal. Happy for the prospects of Christian families, that it cannot be a question who among them is the strongest, that he may be the head, nor who is the wisest, that he may command; for God, himself, has decreed that every man, that is, head of a family, shall rule his own house, and by consequence that its inmates shall be in subjection to his authority, "*not with eye service as men pleasers, but doing the will of God from the heart.*" If we look into those families where strife and discord most prevail, we shall discover that it principally arises from a disregard to those principles. The head of the family never could rule his own spirit, and how can he rule his household? Habits of subordination were never formed in the children, self-will has become uncontrollable, and the perpetual jarring of interests, over which, the fear of God diffuses no mollifying influence, presents one of the most disagreeable pictures exhibited to the observation of man. But in the house where a Christian parent affectionately exerts his authority, where the wisdom of his sway has secured the confidence and affection of the inmates, how many little brawls are silenced by a look! how many disputes are settled by a word ere they are well begun! how readily self-will bends to the sway of one who has been loved and obeyed from infancy! Even here, it is true, authority may sometimes be seen putting on his sterner aspect, when disobedience appears in her stubborn one,

but it will pass away as the thunder cloud, and leave the sky as serene and bright as before. And good government in the family, like good government in the state, preserves its tranquillity and advances its well being.

Lastly, as a motive to the discharge of parental duty, we affirm it to be the surest origin of social virtue and good citizenship. A state is only an aggregation of families, and the part is only a miniature of the whole. The subordination rendered to a parent invested with authority by God, will very easily be transferred to the magistrate, also deriving his authority from the same source. The good instruction, the righteous example, the salutary rule, experienced under the parental roof, are the best preparatives for those public duties which every man owes to the commonwealth. In a well ordered family every member labours not for selfish ends, but for the good of the whole; and how easily may this habit be transmuted unto the purest patriotism, when the youth enters on the arena of public life, and regards his country as his home! On the contrary, the political agitator could desire no better nursery for discontent and faction, than families where the authority of a father is scorned, and his commands set at defiance. And I can easily fancy to myself the disobedient lad emerging from the circle of a family where his self-will never brooked restraint, where his mind resisted all instruction, and strutting forth with all the airs of what he mistakes for manhood, though the down of youth is yet upon his cheeks, and taking his place without shame among grey-headed men, and cavilling at their sober notions of liberty, and independence, and government, and reviling dignities in their presence, and exceedingly clamorous for political changes, and ready to join kindred spirits to subvert all law, and authority, and rule. I say, the demagogue could wish no better school for the forming of his instruments than the home where a parent's authority is set at naught. While the surest guaranty of social order, of love to country, of devotedness to its prosperity and defence, of enlightened submission to its rulers, is the faithful and general discharge of parental duty, and the stamp of wisdom and virtue which it impresses on the rising generation.

With such considerations as these before you, Christian parents, negligence would involve the highest criminality. Remember, then, the authority with which God has invested you, and the purposes for which it is bestowed, and seek the grace of God so to lead and guide you, that this testimony may be borne concerning you which God has recorded of Abraham—"I know him, that he will