

## EARLY SALVATION.

BY REV. E. DAVIES.

MANY parents seem to think that their children must go into sin about so far before they can have confidence to lead them to Christ. That they must taste the bitterness of sin before they can enjoy the sweetness of religion. This is a fatal fallacy, and many young people have thereby been ruined for ever. Nay! Nay! a thousand times, nay. Let the children be led to Christ at ONCE, and have a religious training, and have a religious atmosphere of light and love thrown around them, and let them thus be brought up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

When will the parents and guardians of children follow out the words of Jesus, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of heaven?" Religion is just adapted to childhood, and childhood is just adapted to religion. There is such a sweet simplicity about childhood that makes children so ready to embrace religion when it is brought *intelligently and attractively* before them.

But who shall do this great work?

1. The responsibility is upon the parents, and this can never be transferred to the teachers, yet in many cases the parents neglect it. And, alas! many parents are not pious themselves, and therefore cannot lead their children. Then some pious parents, from a foolish bashfulness, or from a real or an imagined disqualification for such work, *cannot or will not* attend to this duty. A father said to me, in Knoxville, "I can do nothing with my son. He will not mind me." I thank my God that, in my room, that dear boy was gloriously converted. So we see that in many cases.

2. The teachers and guardians of children must lead them to Christ. Some children cannot bear to have their parents talk to them about religion, who will listen to some one outside the family. Then sometimes the parents have failed to live before their children in such a way as to recommend religion. One boy had a praying mother, who used to lose her temper so often that he exclaimed, "If that is religion, I do not want it."

For these and other reasons the children must be led by other hands. But alas! that so many children are not led either by parents or teachers, and they are left to go on to ruin. Among the examples of early piety we may mention Josiah, Samuel, Timothy, Polycarp, Augustine, Chrysostom, Lady Huntingdon, Dr. Doddridge, Hester Ann Rogers, Bishop Hedding, and multitudes more, who have lived and died to bless the world. And this is one great inducement to labour for children, because they may live to bless the world after we are dead.

"Children our kind protection claim;  
And God will well approve,  
When infants learn to hush His name,  
And their Redeemer love."

## STUDY SPIRITUALLY.

NEVER forget that the word of Christ is designed to nourish and purify the spiritual life. Come to it with the same design. Mere intellectual study will not find its richest treasures. Even Sophocles, a heathen poet, has said:

"A heart of mildness, full of good intent,  
Far sooner than acuteness, will the truth behold."

To aid this spiritual study, form the habit of *at once turning into prayer* what you read. This will enable you both to reach the hidden riches of the Word, and also add interest and freshness to prayer, for the want of which it often becomes dull and formal.

Form the habit of committing *Scriptures to memory, especially the devotional parts*. In the days of sorrow, of declining years, and of death, you will esteem them more precious than gold. It was a most instructive aspect of that hour in which Arnold, of Rugby, passed from abounding health to the silence of death, that he repeated with such calm earnestness his favourite passages of Scripture. Mrs. Augustus Hare, one of the most intelligent and lovely Christians of modern times, was carried by slow and painful stages from Rome to England, that she might die at home. She wrote: "Yes, I know the Psalms. Many a time it keeps me quiet for hours to know and repeat them. I should never have got through my journey, if I had not had so many to repeat, to still my impatience." LET THE WORD OF CHRIST DWELL IN YOU RICHLY.

THE INFLUENCE OF HOME LIFE  
UPON THE  
PROSPERITY OF OUR CHURCHES.

BY J. PERKINS.

IS not this a subject which demands the serious consideration of our churches, and one which has far too little thought bestowed upon it? If we look into the homes of the members of these churches, what do we find worshipped in the majority of them? Professedly, the true God; in reality, the god of this world in one or other of his various guises, parents and children alike bowing down to fastidious bidding. Is it not as Cowper says?—

Accomplishments have taken virtue's place,  
And wisdom falls before exterior grace.  
We slight the precious kernel of the stone,  
And toil to polish its rough coat alone."

Are we not all prone to reverse Christ's precept, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and to put first the seeking of our own kingdom, whatever that may individually be? It may be wealth, social status, self-ease, or the higher one of the cultivation of the intellect; but, in some form or other, each seeks his own rather than the things which are God's.

Is not the example of Lot too often followed in our day? He looked out for material good, disregarding spiritual advantages. Perhaps he said he did it for the welfare of his family. See how sadly, allured by the world's temptations, his wife and children fell from righteousness and God.

How weighty the responsibility of parents! How urgent their duty to exert every influence in their power to bear upon the right formation of the characters of those to whom our churches look for new impulse and strength! They especially have need to pray for a "wise and understanding heart," that they may rule aright the souls which God has given them to care for, teaching them by precept and example to lead a life of loving self-denial.

If parents would have their children grow up into noble and godlike men and women, they must show them by their own lives the beauty of such a character, ever remembering they are chosen as the lights which should give light to all in the house—not an unsteady, flickering light, which makes one doubt whether it would not be better to be in darkness altogether, but a steady flame, showing clearly good from evil.

Who would not wish to be the father or mother, who, like the leaven in the meal, should so work and influence the whole household that it should become one living, moving mass, working on and on until, not only the household, but the church to which it belongs, and at length the whole world, is leavened, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ?

I cannot help thinking that Christians of this age are making a great mistake. They build houses for God, and they train ministers, but too often neglect the ruling wisely their own houses—houses that should be pre-eminently God's. When we look at the worldliness of our so-called Christian homes, can we wonder at the worldliness of our churches? Is it not too true, that, both as regards our homes and our chapels, we are more ambitious to make the external clean and respectable to the eyes of man, than the internal to the eyes of God? Do we say it is done for God's glory? Alas! what a sad mistake. His glory depends not upon our making as much show as our neighbours, not upon the building of chapels to emulate State churches, not upon eloquent sermons nor upon audible and long prayers, but upon the meek and consistent lives of His children, upon their following in the footprints of Christ, separate from the spirit and maxims of the world. We too often talk as if religion should proceed from our places of worship, as we call them; whereas it should proceed from the home—that should be our truest place of worship.

When it shall be so, then we shall have no need to complain of lukewarm churches. Our Sabbath services will be more devoutly conducted in every way. Our Sunday-schools more efficient; our prayer-meetings more earnest and heartfelt. Then may we expect the fulfilment of that promise, "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."