

tery was very encouraging, and speaks well for the Presbyterianism of the West.

The Presbytery having met in the afternoon,—agreed, on account of the small number of members present and the utter impossibility of Mr. Clarke proceeding to Yarmouth, to defer meet-

ing there until summer, when it is hoped that not only all the members in the west, but some from the eastern part of the Presbytery will attend.

The next meeting was appointed to take place in Chalmers' Church, Halifax, on the second Wednesday (being the 12th) of Feb., at 11 o'clock, A. M.

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## FIRESIDE READING.

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### PERIL OF A PRAYERLESS FAMILY.

There are times when your children think—deeply think, of the subject of religion. They inquire what they must do to be saved. They are pressed with the great truths of eternity, and they desire to know the path that leads to immortality. Every parent knows that such thoughts are right; and that their *first* days are their *best* days, to attend to the cares of the soul. And few are the parents who would not express a desire that these serious thoughts should ripen into the settled peace and purity of the Christian. They are the sweet openings of the buds of spring, the putting forth of lovely flowers, and may be nurtured to produce a rich harvest of piety. How shall this be done? what will be the most effectual deepener and promoter of these feelings? It is clear that if the object of the parent was to secure the ascendancy of these feelings, no way could be found so effectual as daily religion in the family. Let the child see that his seriousness has the countenance of a father and mother—that it falls in with their views, and accords with their most ardent desires, that to cherish these feelings would be to pour balm into their bosoms, and to fill their lips with praise—that there is an altar for the morning and evening sacrifice to deepen them, and there is no earthly influence that could be so effectual to ripen these feelings into the love of God. It seems to be a power expressly organized to accomplish this great work on the soul of the child. And on the other hand, let there be no family altar, and no sacrifice of praise in the habitation, and it is easy to see what is to be the result on the mind of a child anxious about his eternal welfare. True, he

feels, and deeply feels. He prays, he trembles, he weeps. He lifts the eye to heaven in a state of deep anxiety, and waits for a guide to conduct him to the Saviour of men. The world to him is losing its charms. Temptation is shorn of its power. Fashion, wealth, and splendor, are dimmed of their lustre, and the spirit pants for immortality—for brighter peace—more perennial joys than this world can give. What is demanded then to fill the whole soul with peace? What but the family altar—the deep seriousness of religion there—the pleading father, the bending circle, seeking for common salvation? And if there be no such altar how cold and chill all that influence in a family! If the world be all, and fashion only has its seat there, or wealth is the grand object, or a mother's lips invite to the theatre and the ball room, and never speak of prayer; and a father's hand guides only to scenes of gain or ambition, who can fail to see the result? How soon all seriousness shall disappear! How soon the Spirit of God shall be grieved! How soon a new current will be given to the affections, and the Son of God shut from the view, and the Prince of darkness establish again his broken and enfeebled reign. Stronger fetters shall bind the captive to the chariot of the dark monarch of despair; and all the influence a family be imparted to, roll along his empire over the soul. And if to this we add what *may*, and does often exist, in a family without prayer, cold and cutting remarks about religion; perversion of its doctrines and duties; derision of the work of God in saving man; apparent respect, but real sarcasm, the work is done, and the enemy of man has gained his object. The most sad narrative, perhaps, that could