

FAMILY WORSHIP.

Some years ago the state of religion was reported as so low an ebb in the Free Church of Scotland, as to excite in the hearts of many, emotions of painful anxiety. The result of much conference and inquiry was the conviction that *Family Worship* was extensively neglected; and it was not difficult to perceive the connection between this fact and the declension of piety in the Church. Indeed it is often hard to distinguish, in the moral as in the natural world, between cause and effect; to determine which is to be regarded, in such a case as this, the occasion, and which the consequence. Was the family altar thrown down because the piety of the people was low? Or was religion languishing because the families had ceased to call upon God?

The facts were manifest; and they were such as to cause shame and confusion of face to those who desired to see religion revived and the glory of the church advanced.

In the earnest hope of accomplishing something for the correction of this evil, and awakening the minds of Christians to the importance of praying more for the revival of religion, a circular letter was sent forth on the subject of family worship; the duty and desirableness of its observance were presented in earnest and forcible terms, and the blessing of God followed the effort. The hearts of the fathers were turned with quickened interest to the subject, and great was the change that soon ensued in thousands of cottages in the hills and vales of old Scotia.

But this was not all. Many there, as here in this land, professed to be unable to conduct family worship to the edification of others, and greatly desired some book to guide them. Another effort was made to supply this want, and no less than *one hundred and eighty* clergymen were induced to prepare and furnish four prayers each, to be gathered into a volume, and this volume was published, and within a single year about twenty thousand copies of it were bought by the people, that they might have its aid in their families. (It is now reprinted in this country by the Carters.) So large a number of pious men contributing to the work, would give to it a variety that no one man or two, or ten could possibly produce. In the volume almost every reader will therefore find prayers adapted to his own wants and feeling. The various shades of Christian experience and character, the sighings and cryings of the desponding heart, the strong emotions of pious joy, desires for sanctification, positions for the conversion of sinners and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, are all exhibited in such terms of supplication as every heart that is under the power of divine grace will delight to employ.

The result of this work has been signally happy. If God has threatened to pour out his fury on the families that call not on his name, so has he, in this case, displayed his willingness to visit with salvation the houses where his worship is maintained. Since the revival of family worship, there have been also wonderful revivals of religion in the churches; Christians have been quickened in the divine life; sinners have been converted, and the days of glory and triumph have returned to the Free Church of Scotland.

Now for the application. In thousands of families in this country, we have great reason to fear that the worship of God is neglected. Business presses in the morning. Weariness oppresses in the evening. The love of many has become cold. A heavy "blessing" at the table is the only form of prayer in many houses. God is grieved. Religion languishes. The curse has come. Let the alarm be sounded. Let us hear that the neglected and broken altar is restored; that morning and evening incense is offered unto Him who was our fathers' God, and will be ours unto all generations that call upon his name.—Such a change would be glorious. "Return

unto me and I will return you with the Lord." Where are the days of revival? Why are they not now among us, and why are we not rejoicing in their light and beauty? Perhaps the neglect of family worship may have more to do with the present wide-spread dearth and desiccation than we were disposed to believe.—*N. Y. Observer.*

LUTHER'S PRAYER BEFORE THE DIET OF WORMS.

It was not to man that Luther looked for strength. "He who when assaulted by the enemy, holds out the shield of faith," said he one day. "is like *Persus* holding the Gorgon's head. Whoever looked upon it died. Thus ought we to present the Son of God to the snares of the devil." On that morning of the 17th of April, he had his moments of disquiet in which the face of God was hidden from him. His faith failed; his foes were multiplying before him—This preyed upon his imagination. His soul became like a ship tossed about in a storm, laboring amidst the billows, going down into the depths, and anon rising again towards heaven. In that hour of bitter grief, in which he drank of Christ's cup—that hour which was to him like the garden of Gethsemane, he cast himself on the ground and gave utterance to those cries, interrupted by sobs, which none can understand but such as can represent to themselves the depths of that anguish from which they went up unto God. "Almighty, Everlasting God! how terrible is this world! How it would open its jaws to devour me, and how weak is my trust in thee! Oh, but the flesh is weak and Satan is powerful! If my hopes are to repose in what is powerful in the eyes of the world, then it is all over with me! The die is cast the sentence is pronounced . . . O God! O God! . . . O thou my God! . . . be Thou helpful to me against all the wisdom of this world! Do thou it, it is for thee alone to do it . . . for the work is not mine but thine. I have nothing to bring me here, I have no controversy to maintain, not I, with these great ones of the earth! I, too, would like that my days should glide along happily and calmly.—But the cause is thine . . . and it is righteous and eternal! O Lord be helpful unto me! Thou art faithful, thou art unchangeable! It is not in any man that I trust! that were vain indeed! All that is in man gives way; all that comes from man faileth, O God, O God . . . dost thou not hear me? My God art thou dead? . . . No, thou canst not die! thou only hidest thyself. Thou hast chosen me for this work. I know it. . . Well, then! be up and doing, O God! . . . Be thou upon my side, for the name of thy beloved son, Jesus Christ, who is my defence, my shield, and my fortress." After a few moments of silent conflict, he continued thus: "Lord, where dost thou rest? O my God where art thou? . . . Come, come, I am ready! I am ready to forsake life for thy truth. . . Patient as a lamb. For it is a righteous cause, it is thine own! . . . I will not go away from thee, neither now, nor throughout eternity! . . . And though the world should be full of demons, although my body, which is the work of thine hands, should be doomed to bite the dust, to be stretched upon the rack, cut into pieces . . . consumed to ashes. . . My soul is thine! Yea, for this I have the assurance of thy word. My soul is thine. It will abide near thee throughout everlasting ages. . . Amen! . . . O God help thou me! . . . Amen."—*Gillies' Historical Recollections.*

THE MEN FOR THE TIMES.

If David was a type of Christ, then may not Saul, after he was forsaken of the Lord and be-

came the adversary of David, be regarded as a type or representation of the "enemy of all righteousness?" After David ascended the throne at Hebron, though he had not received the whole kingdom, the "house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker." At length there came from every tribe bands ready armed for the war, to turn the kingdom to David. These, at least by accommodation, may be made to represent the ministers of the Gospel ready armed for the war, not with carnal but spiritual weapons, to turn the kingdom to Jesus, the great king to whom David was the type.

Regarded in this light, then, the heads of the tribe of Issachar may be looked upon as models of the Christian ministry. They "were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred, and all their brethren were at their commandment." They were not merely learned men, they were men of the times. They not only understood the law, but they kept up with the movements of the day—not, indeed, rushing on headlong with the crowd; but they understood them, and knew how to adapt their own conduct to the changing face of things. Their wisdom was practical—they knew what Israel ought to do. A minister of the Gospel not only needs to be learned in classic lore, in science and in theology—he must have practical wisdom, a good judgment, a knowledge of human nature, and an acquaintance with the times, so as to know "what Israel ought to do," else how can he guide sacramental hosts in their onsets upon the kingdom of darkness.

But this is not all. The men of Issachar had influence. They possessed the entire confidence of the tribe, so that every man of them was at their commandment. A rare combination of excellence, truly, they must have possessed, so to secure the confidence of their tribe, that where ever they led the way, the rest would follow. This is what is wanted in these troublesome times. Not men of giant intellects, destitute of common sense. Not brilliant men, capricious, impulsive, and imprudent—men of words not of deeds; but men in whom the various faculties are developed in due proportion, to qualify them, like Washington, for leaders, whom none will fear to follow. We do not want Joabs, to rush headlong to the fight for the sake of pre-eminence; nor men who will rashly jeopard all for an inferior object, like the three men who broke through the camp of the Philistines to get a drink of water for their chief. Many such impetuous men there are; but who will follow where they lead? Give us the men who have understanding of the times, to know what ought to be done, and who have all their brethren at their commandment, not by constraint, but by confidence which they can inspire by their own good sense and practical wisdom.

To be able to control the popular elements of society at a time of trouble and commotion such as that in the early part of David's reign, when the kingdom of Israel—the Church of God—was rent in twain, required no mean abilities; yet these men did it. Just such men as we want now, in these times of change and commotion, when society seems ready to dissolve into its original elements, that the tribes of Israel may move in one solid phalanx against the kingdom of darkness.—*N. Y. Observer.*

INDIA—MOHAMMEDANISM:

Its Influence on Domestic and Social Life.

1. *Polygamy.*—This is generally destructive of domestic happiness. Though it is probable that in the great majority of families it has no existence, yet it influences all. The husband may always threaten it—the wife always fears it. And since a man may have legitimate children by several women at the same time, and even polygamy is legally supplemented by female