

THE CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH :

THOUGHTS

ON THE

Relation of Baptized Children to the Church,

&c., &c.

"Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."—Eph. vi. 4.

No subject presents stronger claims to serious regard than the condition of the children of the Church, and their claims to christian nurture and faithful guardianship. The importance of possessing true and scriptural views of this question of relationship and duty can scarcely be over-estimated. Its discussion embraces the doctrine of human depravity—the unconditional benefits of the Atonement—the responsibility of the Church, and serious enquiry, respecting the most effectual means of saving the young, from the tendencies of a sinful nature, and the snares that are spread to lure them, "far from the paths of peace." In its doctrinal aspects it is also a subject of embarrassing delicacy. He that can approach it without feeling this has yet to learn the vastness of his theme; and has never fully realized the difficulties of a question, around which so many conflicting opinions surge in ceaseless collision. Whatever theological conclusion we adopt, we place ourselves in opposition to names justly revered for piety and learning. But in the discussion of such a question as this—though not unimpressed with the respect due to the opinions of others—no reverence for great names should silence a conviction.