

But, if a mother is a mother in Israel, the influence she exerts on her children are of another and contrary kind. Samuel is the son of that Hannah who often, in secret prayer, conversed with God in regard to him; Augustine, the son of Monica, a pious woman, who often poured out the anguish of her heart before God in prayer for him. The same thing we find in Michael Bruce and Robert Pollok, sons of pious mothers—the one singing the lovely, the soft, and the sweet sentiments of heavenly song; the other the bold, the grand, and the lofty strains of a still higher song. We might here note, in other respects, the general and plastic influence of mothers on their children. Dr. Thomas Brown, the distinguished metaphysician, received the rudiments of his education from his mother. Cuvier, the great naturalist and physiologist, traces his celebrity to his mother. Hear him speak of her in her formative influence on him: "I used," he says, "to draw under my mother's superintendence, and to her I read aloud books of history and general literature. It is thus that she developed in me that love of reading and that curiosity for all things which were the springs of my life." Nor is it different in the case of Hamilton, the celebrated martyr. He grew up surrounded with all the sweetness of a mother's love, and from his childhood the image of his mother was deeply engraven on his heart. This tender mother, who afterwards engaged his latest thoughts on the scaffold, observed with delight in her son a craving after superior culture, a passion for science, a taste for the literature of Greece and Rome, and, above all, lively aspirations after all that is elevated, and a movement of the soul towards God.

A mother, who is a zealous and active Christian, is certainly a great and blessed instrument of God in a family towards their spiritual and

eternal interests. She is decried as to her character and effect by the Word of God in this language: "*She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed.*" Here the prime function of a mother is sowing the seeds of virtue in her children, out of which will grow up the graces of the spirit to adorn them; or laying the foundation of virtue in them on which will be raised the superstructure of a noble Christian character; but she does far more than this in the religious education of her children. The vitalizing, strengthening, and beautifying influences which she exerts upon them within the domestic circle, in the formation and development of their religious character, so long as they are under her immediate management and personal control, continue to act upon them with similar effect when they have left their home, and are far from her, engaged in the business of life and affected with different influences. There are happy influences which accompany the children of a pious mother; influences which are as permanent with them as the being they received from her; influences which foster, on the one hand, what is good in them, and which counteract, on the other, what is evil, both within and without them.

There can be no doubt, abstractly considered, as to the general principle here averred; but, do actual facts, the test of all true theory, confirm it with their testimony? Hear them in attestation of the same thing as a veritable truth. Timothy is a practical proof of it in various aspects;—the high excellency of his Christian character, its being the outgrowth of his knowing in childhood, through his mother, the Scriptures, which made him wise unto salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus; the deep sincerity of the faith fostered within him by the unfeigned faith which dwelt first in