

ness, the evil accruing to children from a weak, a careless, or a wicked mother, is equally incalculable. Of all the calamities which could befall an unfortunate family, that of an indiscreet, negligent, criminal, irreligious mother, would seem to me the greatest. Hence, Solomon so emphatically observes — “A child left to himself bringeth” (not his father but) “his mother to shame.” His misconduct reflects peculiar disgrace upon that parent, who, from her situation and duty, has been placed by nature, to watch over his early years; to train him up in the paths of religion, of virtue, and of peace. An unceasing anxiety with regard to the interests of the young, a little reading of biography, some observation of characters, and a great deal of conversation with wise and experienced men have led me to this conclusion, that in almost every case, the children of a prudent, intelligent, faithful, virtuous and religious mother become prosperous, happy, and honored in the world; whilst those of a negligent, ignorant, or sinful mother, rarely attain common respectability, and much less eminence or distinction. Doubtless, some exceptions to this general principle might be easily pointed out, but they could not invalidate the testimony of “the cloud of witnesses,” which might be adduced upon the opposite side of the question. Every person who has carefully looked into the world, with a view of tracing the formation of human character, must be convinced, that the influence of fathers is neither so great nor so extensive. The unhallowed example of many a worthless father has been rendered totally innoxious by the wisdom and vigilance of a virtuous mother; whilst the most judicious arrangements and the most indefatigable exertions of the best fathers have been en-