

ing the frivolity, and worse than frivolity, of the age, nevertheless daily and hourly contribute to the mischief, without any apparent consciousness of inconsistency, it is difficult to explain. A person establishes, perhaps, one of these libraries for the first time in a country town. He supplies the younger and less busy part of its inhabitants with a source of moral injury from which they had been exempt. The girl who, till now, possessed sober views of life, he teaches to dream of the extravagances of vice; he familiarizes her ideas with intrigue and licentiousness; he sows her disposition for rational pursuits; and prepares her, to be, for a victim of debauchery. These evils, as such as these, inflict, not upon one or two, but upon as many as he can; and this person lays his head upon his pillow, as if, in all this, he was not offending against virtue or against man!—*Dymond's Essays.*

MOTHER'S DEPARTMENT.

Parental Care.

Much depends on you in consequence of the great and permanent influence of early training. The trees of the forest, the flocks of the field, and the birds of the air, are susceptible of this influence. A young tree may be trained in almost any shape. And how much may be effected by early training on the brute creation and the feathered tribes! Elephants and horses have been taught to perform acts that seemed almost like the effects of reason. Dogs are instructed to assist their master in sporting, to point out and fetch their game; thieves have taught them to steal; farmers train them to watch their flocks, and, in some cases, to bring their cattle from the field. Hawks have been trained to assist the fowler in catching other birds. While so much may be effected by early training, even on the brute creation, how much more important must be its influence on children, possessed of rational powers—powers so much more susceptible of receiving and retaining instruction!

In addition to all these considerations, the Scriptures make it fully evident that much depends on parents. Parental care and training are there represented as of high importance. Their influence is described as very beneficial, and as approved by God; and the neglect of parental duty as very hurtful, and as abhorred by him. God said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he had spoken of him," Gen. xviii. 19. And as Abraham would exert such an influence on his descendants, God honoured him by not hiding from him, what he was about to do, Gen. xviii. 17. On the other hand, God's displeasure was strongly manifested against Eli, because he reprobated not the wickedness of his children; but instead of exerting his authority as a parent and a judge, gently complained of their wickedness, in the easy, and almost indifferent style of many fond and foolish parents. "Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil doings by all this people. Nay my sons, for it is no good report that I hear," 1 Sam. ii. 23, 24. Though himself a pious man, of him God said, "I will preform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons have made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever," 1 Sam. iii. 12—14. How awful were these denunciations, incurred together by the neglect of parental duties! While God honoured Abraham, and thus frowned on Eli, he testified that much, very much, as to what children become, depends upon their parents.

The views now presented might be confirmed by reference to facts in all ages. In innumerable instances, have pious parents been the means of training up their children for God and happiness; and from generation to generation, religion has descended, just like an heirloom, from parent to child. On the contrary, in other instances, past number, the wickedness of parents has been acted over again by their children, and then again by theirs. Thus sin and misery have continued to flow on from age to age. O reader, forget not that whether your children shall be blessed and saved, or cursed and lost, for ever, depends in a great degree upon you.

A consideration of solemn importance, in connexion with

the preceding statements, is furnished by the fact, that it not only rests with you to train up your children in the way they should go, but that God has entrusted them to you for this very purpose. "Children are an heritage of the Lord," Ps. cxxxv. 3; they are his gift, not the product of chance. This truth is repeatedly taught in the sacred volume, Gen. i. v. 1, 25; xv. 3; xvi. 2; xxv. 21; xxx. 1, 2; 1 Sam. i. 5, 11; Ps. cxxxv. 9; Luke. 24, 25. Every one of your children is a treasure, committed to your care by God; an immortal being, that may glorify and enjoy God for ever, is entrusted, in the first stage of existence, to your management. If any one receives an important trust from an earthly sovereign, his responsibility connected with a treasure received in trust, not from man, but God! If he was a wicked servant, who hid his one pound in a napkin, Luke xix. 20—22; how much more wicked is he who neglects such a trust as a child, possessed of a deathless spirit, worth more than mountains of silver and gold! But this servant carefully preserved his one pound, though he improved it not. Wicked as he was, had he wasted his lord's money, he would have been more wicked. What then is the greatness of that parent's guilt, who having a child entrusted to him by God, instead of teaching that child to love and serve the Lord, trains him up, by example, if not by precept, to serve Satan, and to perish forever! Millions of parents are thus unfaithful to the trust God commits to them. Would you be thus unfaithful? You tremble at the thought.

The responsibility of parents is increased, by God's entrusting their children to them, when most susceptible of receiving the impress of the mould into which they are cast. He commits them to you, when the character is most ductile, and the mind most docile. So much is this the case, as to little children, that the Lord represents it as a peculiar excellency, in which his disciples must become like them. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xviii. 3. Whatever else in little children he designed his disciples to copy, doubtless their teachableness especially deserves imitation. By the way, it may be observed, God requires such a docile and confiding disposition in all his children. What they have to do, in reference to doctrine and duty, is to ascertain what their Father has declared in his word, and to receive all he declares simply on his authority. Were God to entrust your children to you, to be trained up for him, in the state of mind which exists in the un instructed at fifteen and twenty, it might be a very difficult, and all but impossible task. But this is not the case. They are entrusted to you at a time when you may communicate their earliest impressions; may teach their earliest lessons; and before others can endeavour to pervert them may employ a thousand efforts to train them against all seducers: to instamp holiness upon their characters, and to fix their hearts on God. You have the first opportunity of exerting an influence over their infant minds. And with this, you possess many other advantages. Your children love you. In trouble they flee to their parents, as their best friends. They desire to please you. However little parents may know, their infant children esteem them oracles and models of wisdom. That a father or mother made an assertion, with a little child, sufficient authority, for the most absurd and incredible statements. Let a father tell his little child, that the house they inhabit was built by a fish, that swam from the sea, and brought the materials on his back, and the child would believe him; with him it would be sufficient authority, that it was asserted by his father. In their earliest age, and in this confiding state of mind, God entrusts your children to you. He facilitates your duty, but enhances your obligations and responsibility, by the ductility of their minds, and the docility of their dispositions. And he requires you, thus assisted on one hand, and placed in a more solemn situation on another, to excite in their breasts sacred feelings, and to communicate to them salutary instructions.

God confides your children to you, not only when the best impressions may most easily be made upon the heart, but in the most important stage of their existence. In childhood or youth the character is usually formed, not only for time, but eternity. Eternity amidst its strange, unimagined scenes, through the immense period of endless duration, will present no season so important, in many ways, as the present stage of your children's existence. In this life it must be determined what they are to be, and where they are to be for ever. And, in all likelihood, while under your care, their character and state will be fixed for life. Thus their existence through all eternity, may, most probably, take its colour and its character, as holy and happy, or sinful and miserable, from what they are in the few early years of mortal life. The character borne in the eternal world, will continue for ever the