

noblest work into our hands. We accept the precious trust. We will try to stamp on this soft, plastic heart the impress of a godly example. We will shelter this young life under Thy mercy-seat. We will bear with it as Thou bearest with us. We will be truthful, that it may never learn falsehood. We will nurse this soul in its infancy with the 'sincere milk' of love, that in after years it may bear 'strong meat' for strong service of God and righteousness. Oh! God, make our lives in harmony with Thee, that this young life may reflect thine imago in reflecting ours."

To such pious fidelity God offers the only wages that can satisfy the claims of love. He pays the heart's claim in the heart's own coin. What wages could repay Hannah's prayerful care like the sight of Samuel's after-career as Israel's upright Judge? Moses standing on the mount was the "wages" of the poor Hebrew mother who cradled him in her basket of rushes. St. Augustine's mighty service for the Gospel was the best reward that God could give to Monica. John Wesley's mother was repaid for all her patient discipline when her son built the world-wide tabernacle for Methodism to worship in. George Washington was God's reward to Washington's good mother, as Archibald Alexander, and Brown of Haddington, and Lyman Beecher found their "wages" in the noble sons who took the Gospel-banner from their aged hands.

When I have seen a happy father and mother looking on the prizes their children brought home from school, or enjoying the home that filial love had provided for their old age, then have I seen how God rewards parental patience and fidelity; when I have seen pious parents beholding their children as they stood up before the altar to profess Christ in the freshness of a youthful consecration, then I have said to myself, "God is paying those parents their wages." They once dropped the seed with faith and tears; now, their sheaf is large and golden. God rewards a mother's fidelity and a father's godly example with accumulating interest through all eternity.

Alas! I have seen other "wages" too, paid dearly for, by parental impiety or neglect of duty. Eli's sin was repaid in Eli's sorrow. I have seen a frivolous, prayerless mother paid in the wages of a broken heart. And when to many a father's door a drunken son has been brought home from Sabbath-breaking debauch, it was only the wages of his own sin which a just God was paying him. The "wages of sin is death"—and of no sin more surely than parental. It is death to peace of mind—death to domestic happiness—death to the neglected or misguided souls of their offspring.

Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee Thy wages—is the inscription which God's hand writes on every cradle. "When I dressed my child each morning, I prayed that Jesus would clothe it with purity," said a godly mother to one who inquired her secret of good training. "When I wash it, I pray that His blood will cleanse its young soul from evil; when I feed it, I pray that its heart may be nourished with truth, and may grow into likeness with the youthful Jesus of Nazareth." Here was religious training from the cradle. It began with the dawn, and its course was like the sun, growing more full-orbed in beauty until the "perfect day." That mother received her golden wages in the early conversion, usefulness, and honour of all her children. "Go thou and do likewise."

A YEAR'S TROUBLES.—Sometimes I compare the troubles we have to undergo in the course of a year to a great bundle of fagots, far too large for us to lift. But God does not require us to carry the whole at once. He mercifully unties the bundles and gives us first one stick, which we are able to carry to-day, and then another which we are able to carry to-morrow, and so on. This we might easily manage, if we would only take the burden appointed for us each day; but we choose to increase our trouble by carrying yesterday's stick over again to-day, and adding to-morrow's burden to our load before we are required to bear it.—
John Newton.