

EDUCATION.

ON THE INDIFFERENCE OF PARENTS AS TO THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN.

Children are born to an endless existence, and time is the threshold which opens their souls into this illimitable eternity. This short and single step of life is to them fraught with the most momentous consequences. The well-being or the wretchedness of the soul depends upon it. Watchfulness and enlightened care during this short moment of time secure happiness and peace; while carelessness and indifference entail on the individual pain and misery, without mitigation and without end.

Religion is the only solid footing upon which this important step can be made with safety, and every parent is entrusted by God with the special duty of superintending and directing his child in the acquirements of its truths. The attainment of religion and religious principles, therefore as involving the most important interests of the child, ought to be one great and leading object with every conscientious parent. Food, raiment, riches, nay, even health itself, and every thing else which relates solely or principally to the conveniences and comforts of time, must be but secondary and trivial in the parent's estimation. Nothing of a temporary and fleeting nature ought for one moment to stand in competition with religion, which the Almighty has appointed as the only means of preparing for, and securing an interest in, the the important and unchangeable realities of a happy eternity.

To every enlightened and judicious Christian, however who looks abroad into the world, the contrast betwixt this admitted truth, and its adoption in real life, is most marked and melancholy. Parents,—even professing Christian parents,—are seen on every side of us, mindful of the lesser parts of their duty, but forgetful of the greater. They are anxious, and careful and constant, in securing and promoting the bodily health and the temporal comforts of their little ones;—and indulging, not improperly, in the gratification derived from the neatness of their apparel, the activity and sprightliness of their motions, the mental energy or quickness of observation indicated by their remarks, and the genteel address, modest demeanour, manliness of conduct, or dignity of sentiment, which they can sometimes perceive in these objects of their tenderest affections.—But, alas! in how few instances do we perceive a similar anxiety about religion?—In what particular line of conduct towards their children can we trace anything like an equal share of exertion for their spiritual welfare? These temporarities,—good in themselves no doubt, but yet but temporal,—seem to absorb all their care, and to the promoting and perfecting of which, at least nine tenths of their exertions are devoted. O how painful!—how humiliating!—to see rational creatures thus amusing themselves, and playing antics with immortal souls, as if they were mere babies' toys, and made only for amusement! Souls which are doomed to enjoy or to endure an eternity of blessedness or woe; and whose only chance of attaining the one, and of escaping the other, is inclosed within that delicate bubble of life and time, with which their

inhuman parents are so thoughtlessly sporting; seemingly unconscious, that the slightest accident or disarrangement of particles may in a moment burst the airy compound, and consign the darling objects of their folly to endless or irretrievable ruin.

Their are, however, many honourable exceptions to this general neglect. Parents who feel, as well as profess to know the value of souls, will not allow their attentions to be absorbed by the things of the world; and though careful, and even troubled about many things, they will never forget that, for their children, as well as for themselves, there is but one thing needful. They value their children, not as they value toys, by the pleasure and amusement which they at present communicate, but as destined to be their companions and friends in another state. Their love for their children is of too noble and dignified a kind to admit, for a moment, of any degree of comfort or satisfaction at the idea of perpetual separation at death. Their views and hopes extend beyond the grove, and, in the spirit of true christian pilgrims, they not only rise above the world in their own affections, and steadily and daily look beyond it for their settled enjoyments, but they also labour assiduously to bring their little companions,—those limbs of Christ's flock, which their heavenly father has given them to feed,—to indulge the same desires, to cherish the same hopes, and to endeavour, by all means, with themselves, to secure an inheritance, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and which fadeth not away.

To such parents, we would, with all the warmth of brotherly affection and esteem, say, "Our hearts are enlarged towards you." We rejoice, that the Lord has put it into your heart to do this thing; and would gladly remind you of the promise made by the God of truth, that the child who is thus trained up in the way he ought to go, will not, when he is old, depart from it. but we would most affectionately remind you, at the same time, that the religion of your child must be the same in kind, if not in degree with your own. You know, and you feel, that your religion has its seat, not in the head but in the heart,—and so must the religion of your child. You know, that your religion consists not in empty sounds, nor mere professions, but, as the fruits of a living faith, in denying yourself to sin, and living to holiness and to God; and that all the satisfaction of religion which you enjoy, arises purely from a knowledge of the love of God as exhibited in Jesus Christ, and the daily delight which you receive, in being enabled by his grace, more and more to conform your life to his will and to live to his glory. Now this is the only way in which he, as well as yourself, must go, if ever you expect to meet each other in heaven. This is religion;—and anything short of this is spurious and false. Beware then of resting in that kind of verbal instruction for your child, which has been so improperly misnamed a Religious Education, or of being satisfied with that religion which is so only in name.

NARRATIVE.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE?

Continued.

In the meanwhile his daughter Emilia, whose personal charms were highly extolled by the "butterflies" of the day, received instructions

in the showy accomplishments of music, dancing and drawing, on which so much time is expended in natures age. But Emilia's parents, like too many more could perceive that their daughter wanted those essential qualifications, without which, the utmost skill and attention of a master can effect but little for his pupil. She was a good girl, but had "no ear" for music, and her voice was barely "passable," and as for drawing—no similitude of anything in heaven above, or in the earth beneath could be discovered in her portfolio. There were trees like cabbages, and castles like band-boxes, and figures, miscalled human, which small as they were, if they could have been charmed into life, would have terrified the whole village. But then she danced very fairly; that is to say, she could go through the ceremony without attracting much notice. For that we have little to say of her. We have frequently in later years thought that, if her mind had been cultivated in youth, she would have been a different character; for we are not of the creed of the Mahometans, but believe that women have souls; and it is grievous in our eyes to witness how sadly they are sometimes neglected by parents.

Matters were in the state we have described at the Rectory, when we were under the necessity of losing sight of the family for several years. It had been our misfortune to lose our parents when very young, we were consequently under the orders of our good uncle before mentioned. We were then about eighteen years of age, and as is customary with unfeathered bipeds at that period, thought very highly of our own abilities, and felt no sort of doubt that we should make a very considerable figure in the age we were about to live in. We had "done schooling," and our uncle intended us for the army; but we preferred the navy, for a much better reason than we have been able to give for many of our preferences in after life, namely because the flag of our country was then roaming upon the ocean, conquering, and to conquer, and, "like an eagle in dovecote, fluttering" its enemy. We had already, in our minds eye, a fine severly four, of which we purposed taking the command, and performing very extraordinary feats in the Channel, which we selected to be the scene of our exploits, in consequence of the facility with which we could run our prizes into Portsmouth or Plymouth, and thence run up to London to arrange the affairs of our prize-money and promotion, and run down to sea our uncle, and refresh the old gentleman with the recital of particulars which it would be impossible to put into the Gazette. This was all very fine, our uncle said, but still he never would talk seriously about the navy, although he confessed that the life of a soldier, & the state of our army, were not then exactly as he wished them to be. Therefore he deferred presenting us with a pair of colors until we had seen something of the world; and he made no secret of his policy, but told us his plans and reasons in that open, straightforward, manly manner, for which (as well as his other virtues) we always respected him, and shall ever reverence his memory. The idea of "seeing the world" intoxicated our young imagination, and the few first days, after a journey to London was announced, were spent in great and consequential hurry, and running to and fro, and doing nothing. But when the last day that we were to spend among the endeared scenes of