

Mothers have an untold power over the hearts of their children ; they have the key, and when none else can bring down the stern heart, they may unlock the fountain of tender emotions. As the gardener forms and bends the vine, so the mother her child, and it is not known how much the mind and character of a child are influenced before it can even lisp a word ; but impressions received from a mother can never be effaced. Woman has a certain intuitive power of entering into the innermost feelings of the heart, and binding up the wounded tendrils which contact with the world have rudely bent ; but by none is this power possessed as by a mother. The criminal in his cell, hardened and inaccessible at every other point, trembles and falters, and becomes a child at the mention of the mother of his tender years. If we study the biographies of men who were intellectually or morally wise, we may generally trace their excellence to maternal influence exercised in youth.

I had once a mother ; she was a beautiful angelic spirit, and although early bereft of her, there are many pleasant *circumstances connected with her life, around which memory loves to linger.* She generously attended to the wants of the poor, sought out scenes of sickness and distress, and with gentle words kindly encouraged the despairing and forlorn. Oh ! if I could but recall my mother, how carefully would I guard each word or thought, that they might not cause her gentle heart to grieve ; for there are certain wayward acts of childhood which rush unbidden to my memory, slight, perchance, they may have been, yet I would fain forget them. I well remember when we walked out, to take a last farewell of the grave of my sister ; my mother's cheek was pale as she spoke of her own death, and urged me to seek the Saviour, who was so precious to her, in my early years, that I might be able to say with Ruth, "Thy God shall be my God." Sometimes I fancy my mother's spirit hovering over me, and it is this which has soothed my heart, and cheered many a lonely moment since her spirit soared away. When I hear the music of the wind rustling amongst the leaves at sunset, I fondly imagine it is my mother singing again the songs of childhood ; she was a glad and attentive observer of nature ; she loved the minute as well as the sublime ;