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REV. E. McLEOD,

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"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."

Peter.

[Editor and Proprietor.]

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## The Intelligencer.

### TO MOTHERS.

"When they leave for the week-day school, I followed their infant footsteps with prayer." In the vicinity of I—there was a pious mother, who had the happiness of seeing her children, in very early life, brought to the knowledge of the truth, walking in the fear of the Lord, and ornaments in the Christian Church. A clergyman, who was travelling, heard this circumstance respecting this mother, and wished very much to see her, thinking that there might be something peculiar in her mode of giving religious instruction, which rendered it so effective. He accordingly visited her, and inquired respecting the manner in which she discharged the duties of a mother, in educating her children.

The woman replied, that she did not know as she had been more faithful than any Christian mother would be, in the religious instruction of her children. After a little conversation, however, she said:

"While my children were infants on my lap, as I washed them, I raised my heart to God, that he would wash them in that blood which cleanseth from sin. As I clothed them in the morning, I asked my heavenly Father to clothe them with the robe of Christ's righteousness. As I provided for them food, I prayed that God would feed their souls with the bread of heaven, and give them to drink the water of life. When I have prepared them for the house of God, I have placed their bodies might be fit temples for the Holy Ghost to dwell in. When they left me for the week-day school, I followed their infant footsteps with a prayer, that their path through life might be like that of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. And as I committed them to the rest of the night, the silent breathing of my soul has been, that their heavenly Father would take them in his embrace, and fold them in his paternal arms."

Then the influence of the silent, unseen exertions of a mother: an influence which will be felt, when those external accomplishments, and flowing enjoyments, which many labour to give their children, shall be forgotten, or remembered only as the means of facilitating a rapid descent to the world of sorrow. In this little story two things strike our attention: these efforts were made early, and with a reliance on the divine blessing. This mother felt that she received her children from God, and was accountable to him for the manner in which she trained them up. She knew that her labours would be vain, unless God should in mercy grant her the aid of his spirit to sanctify and save the soul; therefore, through all the duties of the day, and all the interesting periods of childhood, she looked up to a God who is ever near to those who will call upon him, and who will listen to their cries. How happy must be that household whose God is the Lord; what heavenly joys beams from every countenance, and with what glorious hopes do they look beyond the grave to that mansion provided for them in their Father's house; and three happy must be that mother, who, in the fear of God, and in reference to eternity, has thus performed her duty.

Then the feelings in a mother's bosom, which are known only by a mother; the tie which binds her to her children, is one compared with which all other ties are feeble. It is to these feelings that the fact just stated will speak a language which must be understood; and it must strike a note on this chord that will vibrate through every fibre of the soul. While appeals are often made to him who has long lived in sin, that fall like the sound of the empty wind upon his ear; and the voice of warning thunders in its truth to hearts of adamant; the appeal now made, is to an ear which is not deaf, to a heart which can feel.

The noise and tumult of the active world often drown the "still small voice" of the Gospel, which sounds in the ears of the man of business; and worldly wisdom and strict calculation sometimes lead men to neglect the question, "What will it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his soul?" But the fact is designed for a different situation in life; for those who do not mingle in the bustle and hurry of the world, who are retired to a more quiet, though not to an unimportant sphere. In some hour of silent meditation this may fall into the hands of a mother; and the duties it recommends can be performed even while engaged in the common business of the family.

It is no fiction of poetry that,

"Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined."

When the mind begins to open, and the attention is first arrested by the objects that surround us, much depends upon her, who, in that tender period, shall make the first impressions upon that mind, and first direct its attention.

It is then that the mother has an access and an influence which cannot be attained at any other period. The first inquiries of the infant must be answered by her who gave it birth. As he gazes upon those twinkling stars that glitter in the evening sky, and asks, "Who made those shining things?" it is a mother's duty to tell the little prattler of that great and good Being who dwells in the heavens, and who is the Father of all our mercies.

And as the mind enlarges, the mother tells the little listener of that Jesus who lay in a manger, and died on the cross. And when she softens its pillow for its nightly slumbers, and watches its closing eyes, it is her privilege to hear it say, "Our Father," and direct it to love that Father whose name it so early perceives. Let this golden opportunity pass, these days of childhood roll away, and the mind be filled with false stories, or sportive songs, and the precious immortal is trained for some other state than the paradise above.

Do you say that you are ignorant, and are not capable of giving instruction? As your child clings to your bosom and directs his inquiring countenance to you for some interesting story, you know enough to tell him of some hero or king; and can you not tell him of the King of Zion, the Prince of Peace? And what more could the learned philosopher tell this infant mind?

You are unknown and obscure, did you say? But you are known to your child, and your influence over your child is greater than that of a legislator or general. "Set your heart right, and you may act without restraint, especially when secluded from the world, in the retirement of your family. Observe? You are immortal. You must go to the judgment; and every whisper of your life will be exhibited before an assembled universe." Settle down? What if the eye of the world does not

follow you into the domestic circle? That child has a soul, worth more than a million globes of gold. That child, too, may become a legislator, or a judge, or a pastor in a church. Take care, you who are a mother! You act under a dreadful responsibility. You cannot sit without watching some string that will vibrate after your head is laid in the dust. One word of pious counsel, or one word of sinful levity or passion, uttered in the hearing of your child, may produce an effect on your children's children. Nay, its influence may be felt on the other side of the globe, and may extend into eternity. Your words are received with confidence, and "My mother told me so," is an argument of sufficient weight to convince the child of the most important truths.

Here you have an influence which no other creature can have, and can exert it in circumstances the most favorable. It is not to open to a son the stores of science, that may qualify him to rank among the learned and the wise of the world; it is not to adorn a daughter with those accomplishments which shall attract the attention of those who crowd the hall of pleasure, or move in the circle of refinement and fashion.

But the object is far more noble, more worthy the undivided attention of those who live for immortality. That child who now prattles on your knee, or sports around your dwelling, may yet tell some perishing heathen of Jesus of Nazareth; may yet be an able soldier in the army of Immanuel, and may plant the standard of the cross on the shores of Greenland, or under the burning sun of Africa. Look at facts. What first led the pious and eminently useful John Newton to the knowledge of the truth? The instructions of his mother, given at the early period of four years, fastened upon his conscience, and led him to a Saviour.

Can you estimate the effect of his labors? Not till you can compute the usefulness of Buchanan and Scott, who were converted by his instrumentality—till you can see the full blaze of that light which the former carried into the heart of heathen India; and witness the domestic comfort and brightening hopes occasioned by the labors of the latter. Who taught young Timothy, an early laborer in the vineyard of Jesus Christ, the first lessons of religious truth? Who led Samuel, a prophet and a martyr, while he was yet young, to the house of the Lord, and dedicated him to the service of God of heaven? A praying mother.

Though the seed thus sown in childhood may not spring up and bring forth fruit while under the maternal eye, yet we must not conclude that it is lost. A clergyman recently met a seaman in the street of a neighboring city, and pressed upon him the duty of attending to the concerns of his soul. The hardy mariner burst into tears, and exclaimed, "Stop, stop, don't talk to me so; it is just as my mother talked to me when I was a boy." A mother's counsel had followed him through all his wanderings, and the still words of her who prayed for him retained their hold on his conscience. The time has come when it is esteemed a greater honor to be the mother of Brainerd or a martyr, than of Caesar or Napoleon. And suppose the mothers of these men, whose characters, though so widely different, are so universally known, should, from their unchanging state, look upon those sons whom they have nourished; what would be the view presented to them? Who would not choose to have given birth to the Christian heroes? It is not for this short state of existence only that you are to train your children. The little group that now cluster around you are destined for immortality. When the world on which they stand shall have passed away, and its pleasures and its honors shall be forgotten, then they whom you have introduced to this state of being will begin to live. Their characters are now forming for eternity, and you are aiding to form them.

Though you may not design it, though you may guide your child, that if you can do them no good, you will not do them injury; yet you exert an influence which is felt, and will be felt when your head is laid in the dust. Let, then, this appeal to a mother's feelings be heard, let it come to your own bosom, and ponder it to a throne.

Do you know the way to a throne of mercy; and can you kneel before it, and forget the children of your love? Can you watch their closing eyes, and not commit them to your God? Can you labor that they may enjoy the good things of this fleeting world, and not pray that God would prepare them for that upon which they will soon enter? You see them growing around you without hope, and without God in the world; though you may be unable to do more, can you refuse to pray, that he who in a peculiar manner extends the arms of mercy to those in the morning of life, would take them to his embrace, and prepare them for his kingdom?

You have seen the hand of disease fasten upon them, and have passed days of anxious toil and nights of sleepless solicitude to arrest their malady; and have cried from a bursting heart, "Oh, spare my child!" You have seen the object of your tenderest affection sinking in the arms of death, and with heart and with anguish have said with the nobleman, "Come down, ere my child die." And when the last duties of parental affection were performed, and the grave had closed over the child of your bosom, you have perhaps looked back to the time when it was under your care, and mourned that you thought no more its immortal part, that you prayed no more for its precious soul.

If you have passed through scenes like these, if you have thus felt, then remember those now in life and health, and improve the opportunity now given you.

The time for your exertion is very short. Soon your children will arrive at that period of life when a mother's influence will be very feebly felt, unless it has been early exerted. Would you find in them a rich source of consolation when your head becomes white with years, and your body be bending to the grave? They will not now come running to him who can sanctify and save the soul. Should you go down to the grave and have these objects of your love in a cold, unfeeling world, what better can you do for them than to secure the friendship of One who sticketh closer than a brother, and whose love is stronger than death?

The tender tie which now binds you to them will soon be dissolved; you cannot resist the stroke which shall tear them from your bosom. You may have felt the pang—your heart may have been filled with sorrow. O then, if you ever pray, if your soul ever went out to your Father and your God, in humble petitions, tell them of your children who know him not, when you

know what it is to wrestle in secret with the God of Jacob, give him back in faith your children. Then you may hope, through grace, to say, in that other world to which you are going, "Lord here am I, and the children thou hast given me." Shouldst thou paper all into the hands of a mother who never prayed even for herself, she must, she cannot but pray for those to whom she has given life. Prayerless mother! spare, O spare your child; stop where you now are, on the threshold of eternity, and remember, as you gaze on that countenance which smiles in your bosom, that you have never prayed for its soul, which will live for ever. Have you a mother's feelings, and can you still neglect it?

Oh, give me poverty, give me pain; leave me friendless and forsaken by the world; but leave me not to the embrace of a prayerless mother—leave me not to the care of one who never raised her weeping eyes to heaven, to implore its blessings on my head.

Are you a mother, and can you close your eyes upon the scenes of earth, and remember that you never raised, even in your silent breathings, the desires of your heart to heaven, for a child, perhaps your only darling?

In some lonely hour, when the labors of the day are ended, and you have performed the last act of kindness for your sleeping babes, kneel, if you never have before, kneel before Him who seeth your heart in that silent hour, and utter one short prayer, one broken petition of penitence, faith, and love to the Saviour of sinners, for your dear children.

Note.—A donation of forty dollars was received, in 1859, from the Connecticut branch of the American Tract Society, for perpetuating this tract.

### TO-MORROW.

It is not wrong to think of to-morrow—no, nor of the to-morrows of our remaining life; yet not boasting ourselves of any of them.

We are not to live as men to whom to-morrow is nothing, or to whom the future to-morrows of life are nothing. Our coming days and years are much to us, whether they be few or many; and they ought to be thought upon.

It is not wrong to form plans for to-morrow, or for coming months and years. We cannot regulate our day without some reference to the morrow; we cannot regulate the present without taking the future into account. We should act as the unerring brutes, were we to form no plans, and exercise no forethought at all. When the sower sows his seed, he is not thinking of months to come, and laying plans for harvest and winter? And Scripture often refers with commendation to his forethought. Nay, Christ compares himself to a sower of the seed. The husbandman plants the tree, but his planting it has reference to years yet to come, before he can expect the fruit of what he plants. Yet God commends his diligence, nay, likens himself to a husbandman.

We have something to do with to-morrow. There is a link between it and us too strong to be sundered. We are the children of yesterday, the men of to-day, the fathers of to-morrow. It looks us in the face, and we cannot turn aside, nor shut our eyes. What it is to be, we know not; but that it is to be, we truly know. It will come whether we desire it or not. A long roll of yesterday is behind us—a long roll of to-morrow is before us.

Were we leaves or blossoms, dropping from the stalk and passing out of being, it would matter little what to-morrow might be. But we are more enduring than the leaf, or the oak tree grows upon; and the contents of endless to-morrows are to us no subject of myth or of heedlessness. To-morrow must come, and that which it contains is much to us.

There is no reason why to-morrow should be a shadow, or a terror, or a solicitude. Full of uncertainties it must be, but not on that account full of anxieties, taking it into our hands, and wresting it out of the hands of Him in whom we live, we do make it a thing of fear. But leaving it in his hands, it presents to us tranquillity, no trouble; joy, not sorrow. It need not be a spectre or a gloom to any of us.

Nor is it by dawning reason in pleasure, or sleeping in the soul in wine, that we overcome these fears, and disengage these spectres of which to-morrow is so often the haunt. There is a more excellent way. We look at it as a thing that belongs to God more than to us, and we are satisfied to leave it in His hands.

Leave to-morrow in God's hands until it comes; and when it does, take it out of His hands, and receive it as His gift. So shall it always dawn upon you with a smile, and be like an angel beckoning you to new service for God, new fellowship, and new recompense.

How, then, shall I feel towards it to-day? As one friend towards one to absents. Do not imagine enmity. It is silly, it is cowardly, to do so. Nay, it is unjust; unjust to yourself; unjust to that God who has kept to-morrow in His own hands, in order that you might not spoil it by getting it into your own. Do not take for granted that to-morrow must be your enemy, because it is to-morrow and not to-day; or that it must be dark because it is future. Let down cheerfully and trustfully. God will take care of to-morrow.

How shall I meet it when it comes? Shake hands with it at once, and salute it cordially. If you meet in the desert a strange Arab, and feel doubtful about him and his purposes towards you, go up to him frankly, stretch out the hand and say, *Esalamalekum*. "Peace be on you." He will give you his hand and return the salutation, *Esalamalekum*. "On you be peace," probably adding, "and the mercy of God and His blessings." He and you are then friends, and you may either part or journey on together in safety.

Thus meet each new day. Salute it, and it will return your salutation. You and it will journey onward in peace, whether the way be rough or smooth. Do not look askance upon it, as if doubting its friendliness. Go up to it lovingly as well as bravely. It will meet you in the like spirit. Throw yourself upon it, and it will embrace you in its arms. Open your eyes cheerfully on its new light. Who are you, that you should fret, and sulk, and be gloomy, when God is bringing up His bright sun into your sky to be your guide and guardian angel for another day?

The God of yesterday, the God of to-day, is he not the God of to-morrow? Fools that we are, to think that God lives not in to-morrow; that His interest in

us ceases with to-day; and that when another sun rises we shall be without a God, deserted and friendless, left to ourselves to make the best we can of an unknown future.

The Christ of yesterday and to-day, is He not equally the Christ of to-morrow? On, my friends, a parallel, to think that he can forsake us, or ever cease to wish us well! In love He bought us; in love He sought us; in love He called us; in love He blest us; and in love He will guide us to the end.

Let us see Christ in to-morrow, and to-morrow in Christ—so shall we be well. Let the knowledge of His love brighten each of its hours as it passes along. No day shall thus come to us unmiss. We shall find good, and not evil, everywhere. Even when clouds drive over us, or storms make us shiver, we shall find in the sunshine above them a sufficient joy. Thus shall we be nerved for work, and do that work with our whole heart. We shall not be damped or disheartened, but toil in good earnest and with a brave heart. The Master's presence and smile in each to-morrow will be found enough.

### PRAYING WIVES.

[From "Five Years of Prayer and the Answer," by Rev. S. Trueman Prime, D. D. Published by Harper & Brothers.]

The following is the public testimony of a young man who had been a Free-thinker, and who was led to reflection, and subsequently to Christ, through the example of a wife who was a Christian. He was permitted to express to him her own feelings, but he lived near to Christ, and at length drew her husband with her to the cross: "It is only a short time that I have hoped that I was a Christian. I was always, as I called myself, a moral man. To be this was all that I supposed necessary for happiness here or hereafter. In religion I was a Free-thinker. I made little account of Christianity in the world; I thought all professions of religion a mere sham; I thought all that would be required of a man was a moral life; I prided myself on mine. I was well read in all the creeds and forms of religion of the day. My head was full of arguments against religion; I felt that no one was able to confute them. Two things made a deep impression upon my mind—a sentiment and an example. I married a young, pious wife. She never argued with me on the subject of religion; she knew that this would do no good. I could have overthrown her with arguments, but she reproved me every day by her consistent Christian life. I felt the power of that reproof. If she had been more consistent, I would have got along better with myself; but she said nothing, and kept living religion out in her life. The subject of religion was my mind—a sentiment and an example. I married a young, pious wife. She never argued with me on the subject of religion; she knew that this would do no good. I could have overthrown her with arguments, but she reproved me every day by her consistent Christian life. I felt the power of that reproof. If she had been more consistent, I would have got along better with myself; but she said nothing, and kept living religion out in her life. The subject of religion was my mind—a sentiment and an example. I married a young, pious wife. 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