

THE
PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

JUNE, 1855.

Miscellaneous Articles.

HOW SHALL MAN BE JUST WITH GOD ?

No. II.

IN our former article concerning the Rev. Albert Barnes' Tract on the question, How shall man be just with God? we made no allusion to the reasons he assigns why faith is made the instrument of our justification. This omission was occasioned first by the want of room, without extending the article to a greater length than is suitable for the Magazine; and secondly, by a desire to give those reasons a more mature consideration before submitting our thoughts to the public.

As introductory to our remarks, we will quote a part of an editorial notice of this tract from a late number of the Christian Intelligencer, a Reformed Dutch newspaper, published in New York. The paper is conducted with ability, and its spirit is kind and conservative. Says the editor :

"In undertaking to show why faith is so important in the work of salvation, the very *cardo rerum*, he occupies a number of pages in unfolding such heads as these : ' 1. Faith acts an important part in the affairs of the world. 2. It is the strongest conceivable bond of union between minds and hearts. 3. It is adapted to meet all the ills of the world.' All this is mere darkening counsel—mere distracting the attention from what is chief in importance. If none of these positions were true, faith would be none the less appropriately the means of justification. The old and just view of the subject is, that justifying faith derives all its efficacy from its terminating on Christ; and to dwell as much as Mr. Barnes does on its inherent intrinsic excellence, is to run the risk of building again what he has destroyed, and bringing in under a new name justification by works. If faith saves us because it is confidence, and confidence is such a wonderfully good and useful thing, then after all we are not saved gratuitously, and thus there is another gospel. We do not charge this on Mr. Barnes, for other parts of his book have the genuine evangelical stamp, but we do charge that his illustrations of the worth of faith have a very dangerous tendency, and taken by themselves would go far to mislead an inquiring soul from the way of salvation."

“In the Papal Church, all born within its pale are regarded as members, and children are admitted to ordinances on confirmation and confession. The way to the Eucharist is through the priest and his penances.

“In the Episcopal Church, in confirmation, the children assume the vows made for them by their sponsors in baptism, and are afterwards entitled to the Lord’s Supper, to which they receive access through the Rector.

“In the Presbyterian Church, the children of professing parents are regarded as sustaining a covenant relation to the visible church, and as entitled to baptism, as were the children of the Jews to circumcision, but an evidence of their conversion is required to entitle them to the Lord’s Supper. The Session are made the judges of that evidence, through whom admission must be sought to ordinances, as in the Episcopal Church through the Rector, and as in the Catholic through the priest.

“The Presbyterian Church is, throughout, a representative body—a representative democracy. In the same sense that the General Assembly represents the *whole* Church, does the Session an individual Church. The act of the Session is the act of the Church, until reversed by a higher court. As the Session suspends or excommunicates without any appeal to the people, so does it admit to the communion. When the Session examines and receives a person to membership, the act is consummated which numbers the individual with the company of believers, and which introduces to church-fellowship and church privileges. This is our theory; and this is the practice of our Church in all places where there has been no departure from our ancient and simple rules.

“To this practice, without propounding for admission, and without receiving publicly, or consenting to a confession read to them—which may or may not conform to our Standards—save in the cases referred to in chap. ix., sect. iv., we would advise all our churches to return, which have deviated from it, where it can be done without interrupting their peace and harmony.”

Household Thoughts.

DIRECTIONS FOR FAMILY WORSHIP.

THE Apostle’s words, “*Let all things be done unto edifying,*” show the earnest and settled conviction that piety must thrive by the religious intercourse of men. They are a general direction as to religious exercises where several persons are together. It requires that the things done and the way of doing them, be most

for the spiritual benefit of all present. We shall apply the precept now to the exercises of family devotion; and draw it out in some of those simple and plain directions, to be followed by those who desire to regulate their households in the fear of God, and to make the most of their spiritual privileges and gifts.

We begin with the beginnings of the household, and remark—

1. That every married pair, who are or wish to be Christians, should pray and worship God together the first day of their existence as the head of a household, and should conscientiously maintain the practice thereafter with all that belong to their family. This they are bound to do as they regard their highest good. Whether they observe the Lord's Supper or not, makes no difference in this matter. Every human being who knows the God of heaven and hears his Word, is bound to pray to Him and worship Him. Every such person is solemnly bound, indeed, with humble faith in Christ, to eat and drink with Christ's believing people, in remembrance of Him. We can conceive, however, and often meet with some peculiar states of mind in which persons may be saved, though in their doubts and perplexities, perhaps under unwise teaching, they may not commune at the Lord's table. But no man can conceive a state of mind in which a person can be saved, who has no heart to pray and worship God; and where a married couple either are or desire to be Christians, their united profession, or their united desire, should be expressed in united prayer, with all that so belong to their household as to be under their control. Or, if only one of the parties has these Christian desires for himself and all his, and if this be the husband, then is *he* required, by the law of Divine grace, in his office as ruler in his house, to begin the duties of that office, by instituting daily Divine worship as a part of the order of his household. If the wife only be, or desire to be the Christian, she is required to maintain such household instruction and worship as the circumstances under her control may recommend, with the approbation or allowance of the husband.

2. As children arise, the religious arrangements of the household must at once have respect to them. The great work of Christian parents is to secure religious impressions in the minds of their children. And how early these impressions may begin, it is impossible for the parent to tell. It may not be wholly unimportant for the seemingly unconscious babe of half a year, that the domestic arrangements should begin to provide for his being quietly awake, and always present at the hour of prayer; for, religious being as he is, he may receive an impulse towards the unfolding of the germ of religious reverence in his infant soul from the posture and the tones of Divine worship, as early as an impulse towards the unfolding of natural affection from parental smile and prattle. Christian mother, mark that early moment when the countenance of your babe for the first time opens and brightens passively under your smile, or when the tender lip contracts and quivers under your frown; and

be sure that *then*, too, there is another susceptibility which you can reach, though you may not fully understand or explain it. The spirit of a covenant-keeping God is there, according to the promise, and on that rests the hope of good to children through means of grace, even in the infant state. The ordinance of baptism, administered to the infant, at the instance of the believing parent, and in the exercise of living faith at the time, is effectual upon the child, as the occasion on which the Holy Spirit exerts more power in the soul than He otherwise would. How earnest, therefore, should be the prayers of the Christian parent, and his use of all suitable means of favouring the operations of the grace of God in the heart of his child. There can be no doubt that the beginnings of good impressions in children, under proper culture, are wholly imperceptible by us, and that the first impressions that we discover, are always very far from being the first that exist.

3. In suiting religious exercises to little children, the parent should secure the active attention of the child to such exercises at the very earliest period;—as soon as his attention can be commanded to anything. While yet in the mother's arms at table, or when placed for the first time in his elevated seat at the family board, let him learn patient and submissive silence during a few words of prayer. This should be exacted of him, and that without the least allowance, and commonly after two or three times only, and frequently after the very first time, he comes into it of his own accord. And the practice should be invariable at every meal. Let not this be thought a trifle, and unworthy of such formal notice. We have occasions in abundance to notice the good effects of such discipline. It is not a trifle for the little member of the kingdom of God that, as he sits at the table, with keen appetite for his sweet repast, he must pause a moment, and keep silence with clasped hands; and that he looks with solemn reverence into the calm and serious face of the parent during a prayer of half a minute. For that is the beginning of a habit of reverential silence to be carried out in the longer services of family devotion, and in public worship, where parents often have such trouble with their little children for want of this discipline at home. And all such discipline, carefully and resolutely pursued, forms a part of the true religious culture of children.

4. On the same principle, the children of a family should take part in the religious exercises as early as possible, such as reading the Scriptures, and the sacred song, where that can be used. Let it not be thought a matter of indifference that the attention of the child should be called to such a service, even before he can understand the words. Children learn the meaning of many other signs, before they learn the meaning of words. The solemn forms of worship, the reading of the Scriptures, the reverential kneeling, the prayer, nay the very coming together of the family, their remaining together in silent order, during Divine worship, is a

language to the heart of the child which he understands better than he can show, and feels beyond what the parent can ever know. Long before words carry any meaning to his thought, the whole aspect and force of the exercise carry meaning to his heart. There is a forming, moulding process going on in such cases, not indicated by mere growth of knowledge, or clear, systematic thought, but apparent rather in the subdued, reverential respect for religious things, while he does not know the things as religious; an unconscious and almost passive conformity of the infant mind to those solemn services on which, in his future course, so much of his religious growth and comfort is to depend.

Here observe, especially, how much may be lost with children by not beginning this religious discipline early, and giving the little child a place and a part in religious exercises, while yet so young that many would not suppose him capable. To leave an infant out of the room with the nurse, because he might be troublesome or noisy, is a mistake. If old enough to make voluntary trouble by his prattle or his ill humour, he is old enough to be taught silence at proper times. And the art and resolution to secure submission on such occasions, are an attainment which a parent cannot too earnestly cultivate. It is not the art of inventing little quiet diversions with a watch or a trinket for the moment; it is causing submissive silence in obedience. And this, so easily done, at the beginning (and the beginning is much earlier than is generally supposed), saves almost endless trouble afterwards to the parent, by laying a firm foundation for obedience, and all right self-discipline in the child. And if this is delayed, as is too common, the opportunity is gone. The seedtime of true obedience is past; and it is hard for family discipline to recover lost time. When the boy has not been taught occasional silence during prayer, till he is old enough to toss his marbles, or shove the chairs, or shout, or chatter for his own diversion, the best moment for such discipline is past; for then there is a will to be resisted and overcome, instead of the mere involuntary restlessness of infancy. When once a will has erected itself in the child against the parent, and the discipline takes the form of a conflict, the work of discipline is begun too late; the struggle is painful, the good temper of both child and parent is endangered or lost, and the good result is hardly ever complete.

In these remarks we discern the laws of the human formation by following the established order of nature, and endeavouring in the right way to do the right things at the right time. This is obedience to divine laws; and on such obedience we may look for the blessing of the Lord; the blessing of providence on obedience to the laws of providence, and the blessing of grace on obedience to the laws of grace.

5. Having spoken thus of providing that children should have a part in the religious services of the household, we further remark

that they should be carefully taught to view the exercises as strictly religious. There are many incidental benefits from the practice, all of great value; such as the promotion of household order, improvement in respectful and serious behaviour among children, increasing knowledge of the Scriptures, and even improvement in reading and sacred song. But the great thing is to worship God. The whole arrangement should be so ordered as to carry the aspect of divine worship. All work or play should be dropped. All the family should be together, and in solemn silence before the service begins. This, to small children, will be more edifying than any other feature of the occasion. If any sport among the children or other excitement from worldly matters has gone before, pause a moment, till all within as well as all without is quiet, and every heart feels itself in the presence of God, and is prepared to worship him. In proportion as the service loses the character and the spirit of divine worship, and sinks into a drill for family discipline, its sacred charm and its divine force are gone. That such a service may truly nourish holy reverence, it must be so conducted that the things that are seen, and make up the outward appearance and ceremony of the occasion shall suggest the things not seen and eternal to those of the age of reflection, and even inspire a sympathetic solemnity in the smaller children.

6. The exercise should be conducted with the subdued and calm solemnity becoming sinners concerned for their eternal salvation. For the full effect of the service, it must be pervaded by the spirit of penitence and hope. We may seem to have almost an oblique design in these remarks, hardly consistent with a personal and earnest interest in religion. We may seem to recommend working for effect. But remember how our Lord puts personal interest and usefulness together. Be holy as your Father is holy; and, Let others see your works, for their good. And we are speaking here of a family; of parents, who have a personal, Christian interest in their household; to you whose children are not "others," separate from yourselves, but are part and parcel of yourselves, in other things as well as in religion. And the eye of the humble Christian parent will be on Christ for his children as well as for himself. How moving the scene when the father and the mother, with their little child before them, feel that all the three are one; having a common nature, and that a nature which comes short of the glory of God, and must be renewed by the Holy Ghost through Christ; when the parents feel the humiliating truth that they have sinful natures, and that their little one has the same, and when they commend themselves and their child with peaceful hope to the Lord of pardoning mercy. Do not be too confident, Christian parent, that your little one in the cradle has no feeling for such a scene. We cannot tell when the spiritual sense begins to open. As you watch the opening bud, which will swell in a few days now

with the life of spring, you cannot see the beginning. Long before any motion appears to your eye, there has been a preparation under the same living forces which cause the visible motion at the proper time. For all this preparation there must be the genial warmth and light. Let the infant live in the atmosphere of humble faith and penitence from the first; just as you would wish the warmth and moisture of the soil to surround and penetrate the seed, from the moment of planting. Then will the same influence, accompanied, according to the promise, by the grace of God, guide all the growth, and form the character in the image of Christ. Seek to mould inwardly; not merely to control by outward constraint. Let the whole scene of family devotion be pervaded by the subdued solemnity of an occasion when the house is, as it were, opened to the inspection of the All-searching eye, and every heart feels the Divine presence. For by such solemnity it is, not less than by direct effort, that the work of the Lord in the household is to be carried on. The knowledge of sin, the feeling of our sinfulness, the consciousness that we have the sentence of death in ourselves, and the seeds of death as the fruit of our sin, this feeling of dependence on mercy, leading us daily to the throne for pardon, this is the beginning of the fear of the Lord in the household as in the individual. Let it have simple, unaffected utterance in the orderings and all the motions of Divine worship in the family; for it is the grace and power of Christ in you waiting occasions to work in all that belong to you.

7. Read the Holy Word with a devout and meditative spirit. And for such occasions, and indeed for most of our sacred purposes of Scripture reading, we gain more by reading in the contemplative way than in the inquisitive. There is more of the heart engaged, and more present enjoyment. Look at Scripture scenery as it lies open to the eye; and many an eye can contemplate that, though it cannot criticise minutely any particular. Do you not enjoy the beautiful landscape although you cannot tell the lines and angles by surveying; and just as well as if you could? The Scriptures are pictures to be looked at with the eye of faith, not merely a field for the chain and compass of the intellect. They present landscapes of heaven in earthly colors. They reveal heavenly beauty smiling through earthly faces. They glow with the spirit more than they charm with the letter. They are spirit and life—radiant spirit; warm, exhilarating life; and the life is the light of men. Let the family devotion, morning and evening, be a dwelling for a time in that light. Let the humble faith of the parents with open eye behold it as the glory of the Lord Jesus; and they will see the sacred, living radiance reflected on all who are with them. For in that electric circle of the Spirit, heart touches heart. The life and warmth of each may go round. O let life be there, and not death; light, and not darkness.

Read Scripture to commune, to meditate, to contemplate; not

so much for duty and service as for exercise and refreshment. Far more of the deep and glorious mystery of the divine word is unfolded to the calm contemplative view of pious faith, than to scientific criticism; though that also has its great use. How much better to be imbued with the spirit than to be expert in the letter. Our children, trained in Holy Scripture, may be retentive of chapter and verse, accurate in the grammar, at home in the geography, enraptured with the poetry, alive to the sublimity, and even skilled in the doctrine; but they must drink of its spirit. In the morning and in the evening lead them thither as to the wells of salvation; as to the table of living bread.

8. An important benefit from family worship may be found in sacred song. Little do we seem to know the value of divine song in spiritual culture. Thousands of Christian people are indifferent whether they or their children can sing. It was not always so, and will not be. It is only one of the short-comings of our peculiar time and country. Piety begat psalmody as its first-born of refined and refining art. As it belongs to the human nature to put forth the musical faculty in man, so it belongs to the Divine Spirit to use that faculty for raising man to the heavenly state. Its fitness for family edification is peculiar. Its capacity is vast and varied beyond our thought. The most thoughtless own its power by instinct. Doth not nature itself teach the mother to soothe her troubled babe with a lullaby; and the father to tilt his playful boy on his knee with a glee? And where can depressed and troubled human nature profit more by soothing and exhilarating sounds than in the songs of Zion; where heavenly thoughts dissolved in earthly harmonies, distil upon the soul through the delighted ear? Let the Christian family lift its one heart of holy joy to heaven, in the voice of its sacred song.

Some of our families have long cultivated music as a branch of education; seeking it for their children as an accomplishment; and their musical instrument is quite the most elegant and costly article in their house. But do they ever use that and their voices in the praise of the Lord, to enliven, expand, and elevate holy affection? How the lovely harmony of voices and instruments of music, adorns and enriches the public worship of the church. And what is the family but a church in the house?

All the spiritual powers of Christ in his people rejoice in the sounds of sacred harmony. They rose in the lofty and majestic anthems of the Jewish temple service. They broke forth in the inspired hosannas of the children, in the Saviour's mysterious triumphal entry in Jerusalem, where, according to the prophet and the words of the Saviour himself, there was perfect praise out of the mouths of babes. Let the babes of every generation and of every family be taught to raise sweet harmony in thankful adoring praise to the Lord; and he will accept and bless them, and bless the parents who thus lead them.

9. Finally, the prayer. This is the most important part of the family service, but it is also the chief difficulty with the unpractised head of the household. The reading and the sacred music would not deter. But it is harder to lead in the prayer. This would, however, be less a hindrance if rightly understood. For when one thinks himself incapable of praying before others to edification, he is thinking of elevated language, like that of pulpit prayer; and is magnifying his own house into a place of public concourse, and his family into an assembly. But he is *not* called upon to pray "before others." He is alone with his wife and children, who are not "others," as his neighbors are, but a part of himself. He talks freely among them; and his prayers will be the very best for them and for himself, when, with a warm heart of devotion, he prays as he talks, though he pray but one minute; and three minutes would be quite enough, where there are young children. The classic propriety of language required in the pulpit is not needed for the household, where it is not in familiar use. The prayer for home must be homely; not indeed in the current sense of that word, but as uttering the sentiments, the wants, the interests, the hopes, the very language of home. If this be remembered, it will relieve some who cannot feel at home in attempting to pray in their families; and some, perhaps, who mistake the nature of family devotion, and lessen its interests and profits by effort at comely speech and remote thought. Let prayer in the family be family prayer. It will then be most engaging to all concerned; for it will have the flavour and charm of home, sweet home.

No other person, Christian parent, can pray in your house with your family alone, so much to edification as yourself. A minister never feels so much embarrassed in praying in the pulpit of a neighboring minister, as in the private dwelling of a neighbor who prays in his family. The interests and circumstances of the children and of all the other members, should be noticed where they are at all remarkable; and it will be all the better if the exercises are regarded not as performed by one part of the family for the benefit of another, but as belonging to all. This makes it family devotion. Teach the children so to understand and use it.

Christian householder, you are the head, support, and guide of your family. Think not that your children can get elsewhere those religious benefits which you ought to provide for them at home. It belongs to you to put your children into daily communication with heaven. Have you a personal interest in Christ? Impart it to your family by constantly showing it before them, and engaging their sympathy in your pious faith. They are exposed to death. Do not leave them to perish. It belongs to you to call the physician, and open your doors that he may come in to them. Say not, I am not a Christian, and this family duty can hardly be expected of me. You are a sinner, and the very person that ought to pray. You lead your family in sin; lead them in repentance. Have you

no time? It is your chief business. Better omit all other things than this. But all other things will be the better done for doing this. No time to sow in spring! No time to reap in harvest! Then will the harvest soon be past, and the summer ended, and your household not be saved.

J. W. Y.

Historical and Biographical.

A SKETCH OF THE EARLY ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN CALIFORNIA.

THE great interest which has been felt in California since its connection with the United States, and the prospective bearings which it seems destined to have upon the commercial prosperity of the Union not only, but also upon the future character of the Eastern shores of Asia, invest everything that relates to its past history, no less than to its present condition, with attractiveness and importance. That history would be incomplete without some notice of the early Roman Catholic Missions planted upon the shores of the Pacific.

Although Sir Francis Drake took possession of part of the coast as high as 37° (or, according to Bancroft, 43°), and called it New Albion, in 1579, the credit of prior discovery is due to Cortez. He discovered the peninsula and navigated the gulf in 1536, and conceived the most magnificent anticipations from its pearl fisheries, and its fertile soil. But being compelled to return to Mexico, to quell some commotions which had broken out there, he unwillingly laid aside his project of settling California, and for near half a century nothing further appears to have been done. In January, 1683, an expedition was fitted out by Marquis de la Laguna, Viceroy of Mexico, and landed in March on the southeast coast, giving to the port the name of Our Lady of Peace, and building a fort there. The expedition was accompanied by two Jesuit Fathers, Matthias Gogni, and Eusebius Francis Kino, the last of whom was a German. His name has been by some spelled Caino. But the settlement did not prove fortunate, and the two missionaries were obliged, after a while, to abandon California, and retire into the provinces of Cinaloa and Sonora, where the missions were more promising.

This account is taken from the celebrated *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*, condensed and translated by Mr. Lockman, under the title of Travels of the Jesuits. On account of the rarity of this work, and the scantiness of materials elsewhere, it is intended to draw largely from its pages; and when its narratives cease, from other sources. The total account given in Newcomb's recent Cyclopaedia of Missions is comprised in one brief and very unsatisfactory sentence, viz.: "The Upper California missions were conducted by Franciscans, and till a recent period were in a very flourishing state, but are now destroyed." (p. 303.)