

placing them where they can overbalance all wicked influences and have the predominance over the evil. This is our situation, and how does it become us to act as the repositories of these favors? Should we sink into sin and iniquity, or should we continue to improve in the knowledge of God and to increase in those principles which lead to exaltation? We should endeavor to eradicate evil from our midst. What is our prayer? Is it not that those who work wickedness may be rooted out, and that those who work righteousness may be left to inherit the land? But how often do we see in our own experience little departures from these principles of right? Men swayed this way and the other by the influence of evil, just as brother Cummings said, though it may be ever so slight, yet it gives the Enemy the advantage; it leads men astray, takes them into darkness and error. We can see the individual who is thus swayed as he becomes completely darkened in his mind, and finally we see him stray from the fold of Christ.

This is the way with some of our young men who have been brought up by good, pious and righteous parents; and it is also to be regretted that we sometimes see those fathers who have been long in the Church lead their children to do evil by their improper examples, and not, perhaps, designing to use that kind of influence which will lead their offspring to the commission of crime. But, I apprehend that when a child comes to maturity he will have to stand and act upon his own volition; when he comes to this state he has both the knowledge and the power to act for himself, and in that case the responsibility attaches to the child and not to the parents. How often do we see children following in the path of their parents? If the parents are industrious we naturally expect that the children will follow in that path,

but if parents learn their children to do that which is not right, they are apt to grow up in sin. I believe that the child is naturally honest, but when this feeling to do wrong first penetrates the mind of the child it causes it to look and wonder in astonishment, and it can scarcely comprehend what the parents mean. I have thought frequently upon this subject, and I have seen circumstances where the child could not comprehend the evil or the cheat that was intended, when it would appear to be bereft of its senses and to be completely astonished when it comprehended what was intended by its parents. Now the child has the utmost confidence in its parents, and when it comes to maturity that confidence will be retained, provided the parents do not forfeit it. I believe that the child is astonished when it discovers any departure from truth on the part of its parents; I consider, therefore, that the responsibility, to a great extent, is with the Elders and those who are over the people in the community. If confidence be impaired in the parents, then all the children have to look to for instruction and guidance are those who hold authority among the people. I know there are people here who are lawless and who do not consider the rights of their neighbors, and it is as it was said anciently, "My people do not consider." Parents do not consider that the eyes of their children are upon them, reading in their looks, acts, and words that which will be incorporated in their own nature and manifested in their future career. Children are continually watching, and they imitate everything they see, and, in fact, generally speaking, they are very great at imitation. Then, how circumspect and how careful should parents be to instill righteousness and holy principles into the young and tender minds of their