

Patrick Dixon
Book

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"The Lord God is a Sun and Shield."

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FAMILY GOVERNMENT.

BY THE REV. BISHOP ANDREW.

[Continued.]

We shall now contemplate you as parents. See that mother as she presses to her bosom her first-born. She has just become a mother; how fondly she looks on the little helpless creature that lies in her bosom! What a tide of maternal feeling gushes through all her soul, in view of the new relations and affections which now spring up around her! Fancy is busy, and hope is buoyant in the mother's heart as she fondly weaves the web of the future. Have you seen that father too, as he took his first-born into his arms, and gazed upon it with all a father's yearning? Did you see him as he looked fondly upon the wife of his youth, and then upon the precious pledge of their mutual love? It is a hallowed moment, full of sacred and thrilling interest; nor would we interrupt its joyousness, nor cloud the brightness of its anticipations: but we may just recommend to the happy parents to raise a joyful hosannah to God, and devoutly and earnestly invoke the divine blessing upon this new-born heir of immortality. Unitedly dedicate your child to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in solemn prayer; and as early as circumstances will permit it, repeat the dedication in the solemn ordinance of the house of God. When your child becomes old enough to take notice, it may be of importance for you to observe carefully the developements of thought and temper, and commence early and gently, but firmly, the work of training. Children can often be controlled in their tempers and habits at a very early age by judicious management; and the earlier you lay the foundations of education in the mind and heart of your child, the better both for yourself

and him. All children have not the same disposition; and as the management must to a great extent be regulated by the temperament and predominant characteristics of those to be governed, it is the wisdom of parents to study these early indications with great care, and to conform the system of government to the peculiar characteristics of each child. Every discreet parent who has had to manage half a dozen children, knows that precisely the same kind of management will not answer for all. There must be occasional variations to suit peculiar circumstances. The timid must not be controlled precisely as the froward and self-willed are. This is a perfectly plain case; and yet it is feared that this view is not always regarded by parents. It is so much easier to make absolute general rules, and to force every thing up to obedience by the sternest sort of discipline, than it is to make patient explanations, and temperate and judicious discriminations, that many, to avoid trouble, ruin their children. Your child is supposed to be old enough to understand your instructions. It is therefore high time that you had settled your system of government; for recollect there *must be system*, or there can be no good government. There must be laws definitely settled and steadily adhered to, or your house will be the scene of wretchedness and confusion. Now then let the father and mother prayerfully and carefully talk over this matter. Settle on your plan of government in view of your child's present and future existence. Let there be a mutual understanding and agreement between you, so that there may not be subsequently any interference in your administration. Your code of laws must of course at first be short and simple; and you must take pains to make the child understand, as far as he is capable of doing so, not only the meaning of your laws,