

and generosity, if what is demanded interferes with no strong wish, or will, or object of ambition, but with a heart as hard as steel, the moment he is asked to surrender for the benefit of others what really is any object of strong desire to himself. Obedience to parents is the discipline appointed by Providence for the early and healthful development of the affections—for the early and healthful subjugation of *self-will* to the *higher order of affections*. It is by a trusting, respectful, dutiful obedience to a wise and kind parent that the affections are best developed. And he who has never learned this obedience has lost almost the best privilege and opportunity of childhood.

Just so with the Divine Being. Trust and reverence and gratitude and love to God will never exist in any strength, until we learn to surrender our self-will to his holy and just and merciful will. In the perfected character, one obeys because he loves; but the first steps which lead into the temple are by the pathway of obedience. Therefore should a child learn to obey God. Therefore should it be taught to question itself, whether its habits, its passions, its feeling and purposes are such as God would desire to see in his children,—to do it, of course, not as a slave before a master, but as a trusting and dutiful child to an affectionate parent. In doing this, the child will learn to surrender its self-will to the highest law and holiest love. The best sentiments of religion will be cherished and established in its heart. And above all, it will from childhood associate the practice of duty in its daily life with the approval of God. It will be saved from the disastrous mistake of separating morals and religion, and will feel that they are as closely united as the stream and the fountain,—as motive and act.