

night and frost. He will seek his pleasures abroad, and the light will fade out of his countenance when the time comes again to enter his home. If he grows up affectionate and dutiful, it will be a moral miracle. On the other hand, if parents are his best friends, if they are made glad by his virtues, if he trusts them and is always sure of their sympathy, if his relations with them are happy, cheerful, confiding, and of a kind to encourage and foster his good purposes, he must be exposed to very bad influences abroad, or he will almost entirely grow up into an affectionate, confiding, and probably virtuous man.

The universe, to follow out the illustration, is but a large home, over which presides the Infinite Father. If the child is lead to regard God as throned ever amidst thunders and lightnings, his features clothed with frowns,—as if, constituting merely the police of the world, he employed his omniscience only in spying out and bringing to condign punishment the sins of his creatures,—an awful power from whose hands there is no escape,—what can be the real sentiments which will be awakened in the child's heart? The universe will be to him a terrible prison, in which there is no concealment, and from which there is no outlet. His most awful idea—one which, as it comes, will take the light out of the eye and joy out of the heart—will be the idea of God. Religion will be, not a good in itself, but a contrivance to escape the yawning gulf into which he is sliding. Such ideas fairly wrought into the heart of a child of any sensibility, and unaccompanied and uncounteracted by other ideas, will go far to blight the moral life. It will make religion a service of fear, with power enough perhaps to subdue the will, and enslave, but not win, the heart.