

of Christ's mystical body, animated by His spirit and endowed with the life He brought down from Heaven. Time, indeed, is needed to develop the life. But as the natural reason awakes, and the will begins consciously to choose between good and evil, it is to be expected, nay it is plainly God's intention and wish that the supernatural life should also become self-conscious, and thereafter remain "in the hands of its own counsel." What a tremendous responsibility! And considering the weakness and inexperience upon which the responsibility will rest, how great concern and interest ought to possess the child's friends and guardians that all should go well from the very start.

What should add to this concern is the consideration that the child is dependent on them, as for the food which supports the body and the early education of the affections, mind and will, so also for the knowledge of the rudiments of divine truth, and the first lessons of Christian virtue. We know what may happen, what in the ordinary course does happen, when parents are deaf and the dictates of nature in the former respects—stunted growth, sickness, premature death in the one case, failure in life, degradation and crime in the other. And for these when they occur, neglectful parents are justly held accountable. Are those who neglect the spiritual instruction and training of their little ones less accountable for the after consequences? These are measurable by God alone. For only God knows the height and extent and noble proportions of the temple He was prepared to build for Himself in the heart of the child, had the parents done their duty by the foundations.

In all work that is progressive, and in which one part rests upon another, the loss of an opportunity for good in one stage is a cause of defect in all those that follow. Weak foundations make the whole building unsafe. But