

they so often seem to feel, that it is of little moment whether they obey or not.

We do not often hear of mathematical prodigies, who, without having mastered the reasoning and processes, of what are called the fundamental principles, can proceed at once to work out the problems of the higher mathematics. It is at very rare intervals that we meet persons who seem to have knowledge at first hand. And when we come to conduct, which, you will remember, Mathew Arnold pronounces to be "three-fourths of life," and which is the measure and expression of moral and spiritual development, is it to be expected that the young, who must take counsel of older and wiser people concerning their mathematical and scientific and literary problems, should be so wise, so sufficient unto themselves as to need no guidance in the intricate and often perplexing problems of their individual development and their relations to others? Yet this is what disobedience implies—an assumption of superior wisdom. I wish it were possible for the young to see that obedience to a sympathetic power outside themselves, is the best preparation for the years which, in the distance look like a time of glorious freedom from restraint, but which in reality are the beginning of responsibilities which youth cannot conceive to the individual. Obedience often secures physical safety as well as spiritual good; but the highest importance to the individual, of a habit of obedience, is the moral training it gives, which corresponds to the muscular training of the athletic. For the time comes when we are no longer held subject to the requirements of outward authority. Then, are we introduced to unrestrained freedom? are we placed beyond the reach of "thou shalt?" O, no! it is only a shifting of the responsibility from the parents or instructors, whose commands have supplemented our wavering purposes or our weaker wills, to ourselves who must

henceforth provide both incentive and executive power. "Thou shalt" ceases, only to give place to the imperative, "I ought!" And he who has responded promptly to the outward command, "thou shalt"—the command of those whose wisdom he has confided in, will find himself now in training to obey the command that henceforth he is to hear sounded within his own soul—"I ought." This, believe me, dear young people, is the deep significance of obedience to sympathetic authority, that it is training for the very fibres of the moral nature. Every time we overcome a temptation to go our own way, to do or to leave undone in defiance to this sympathetic authority, we score a point for that future day when our purpose, to win in the great race of the great game of life, will depend for success upon our power to hold ourselves fixed to a chosen course of activity and conduct. Obedience is training for strength. Whose are the souls that have drawn all men after them, that have lifted the world to higher levels of thought and action? They are the obedient strong souls who have listened for the voice of Divine Guidance, who to every call of the Lord, have answered as did Samuel of old, "speak, for thy servant heareth."

Whose are the souls that answer to our deepest needs, who shine for us in the dark days that are a part of life's schooling; who enter most sweetly into our joys; who know most tenderly our sorrows? They are the steadfast souls, trained to self-command, with hearts at leisure from themselves, anchored in the life of God. To this height of attainment are we all called, not at a single bound may we reach it; but we may go "from strength to strength." Each day's life with all its "fumbles" and stumbles may be toward that goal. With faces turned toward the heights of being, life fills itself with interests that no contests of the athletic field can match. The power and grace and beauty of physical development have their day and pass