

unto it. It teaches that the Holy Spirit has throughout all ages revealed to man a knowledge of God's will, and that to-day there dwells in the hearts of all mankind a spark divine that inspires the whole human family to seek the good and true,—to shun the false and base. Thus in the characters of children we find that which is as "the Kingdom of Heaven," in an impulse to develop,—a longing for knowledge and a willingness to be taught. The seed of goodness is in them, and as a flower needs but the sunshine with the developing influences of the soil and air and cloud to enable it to mature according to its inner law of life that alone can make it grow. So the spiritual character of a child, fostered by the love of parents and instructors who work with God, will develop *according to an inner law of life* toward "the beautiful, the true and the good." Fortunate indeed is the child whose parents and teachers are wise enough to assist in this work of development. Blessed indeed is the parent that is discreet enough not to stand in the way of the free operation of the Divine leading in the soul of the child by a presentation to him of the broken cisterns of the Evangelical creed.

Theodore Parker tells us of a childhood experience of his that well illustrates the action of a wise and good mother: One bright, sunny morning when he was a very little boy he strolled into the fields adjoining his home to spend an hour in play. Around, all nature was beautiful in its spring attire of verdant grass, myriad tinted flowers and blossoming trees. The air was vocal with the songs of birds and the heart of the boy was filled with joy and gladness. Presently he noticed a bird's nest in a clump of grass in which was a brood of tiny birds. Nearby the mother bird fluttered on the ground unmindful of her own danger in her anxious care for her young. Thoughtlessly the boy threw a stone at her and, by chance, it hit the bird and killed her. Almost instantly, realizing what

he had done, and reflecting upon the consequences of his act, an entire change of feeling came upon him. He was a glad and happy boy no longer. The beauty of the sky and field and tree no longer brought joy into his heart. The merry song of birds no longer cheered him. Slowly he turned his steps homeward, but had not gone far when he remembered the nest of helpless birdlings that his thoughtless act had rendered motherless. The thought of how they would watch for the parent bird's return until at length a lingering starvation would end their little lives brought anguish to the heart of the boy. Rather than this should happen it would be better for to kill the helpless things at once, and so with a great ache in his heart he turned again to the nest and, twisting the necks of the little birds, he completed his work of destruction. And now, step by step he retraced his way to the house from which, less than an hour before, he had started out a merry, happy boy, but now so heavy hearted that he came into the presence of his mother sobbing with grief. To her he related the entire story of his wretched work, telling her of the sorrow that replaced the happy feeling with which he had started out. Placing his hand upon his breast, "Mother," he said, "what makes me feel such a pang within my heart, I never felt so bad in all my life before?" And then the mother, with a wisdom born above, replied: "My son, you are standing face to face with God! That is the way your Heavenly Father speaks to you. Never forget, my child, when experiences such as these come to you that it is the voice of God that chides you." Thus the wise mother enlightened the mind of her boy to a consciousness of the Divine Life within him. Would that all boys and girls could have the advantage of such spiritual training, such an awakening to the method of God's revelation to His children. Not in some mysterious way, some strange and supernatural experiences, but in the