

VII.

One of the objects of these remarks is to impress upon the reader the importance of the personal element in the growth and development of the moral sentiments. The earlier and later experiences of infancy and childhood acquire a living force through the fact that it is in a definite personality that they are gathered up to a united whole, which no scientific or philosophical analysis can dissect into its manifold and varying constituents.

It is only the synoptic and comprehensive view which gives reality and force to the combined influence of these incidents of our earliest life. To this we must add the not less important fact of example. Without the conscious or unconscious observation that those persons who surround us are under the same obligations or constraint as they impose upon us and follow in their action similar rules, the precepts and injunctions of a parent or teacher will have little or no lasting effect; they will not create habit, but at best only a sullen submission to rules which are disregarded as soon as the physical constraint is removed. For habits are formed only through repetition, and this ultimately rests on imitation.

The restless and inquisitive mind of the child which in modern systems of education is far more and earlier stimulated than it used to be, soon manifests the desire to know the reason of a great many rules of conduct which are at first willingly or unwillingly, but unquestioningly followed. To this must be added the