

blindness or fatuity about God, as that he might not be sisted at the bar of heaven's jurisprudence, and there meet with a clear principle of condemnation to rest upon him.

22. The second important bearing of this principle is on the subject of religious education. For what is true of a savage is true of a child. It may rightly feel the ethics of the relation between itself and God, before it rationally apprehends the object of this relation. Its moral may outrun its argumentative light. Long anterior to the possibility of any sound conviction as to the character or existence of a God, it may respond with sound and correct feeling to the mere conception of Him. We hold, that, on this principle, the practice of early, nay even of infantine religious education, may, in opposition to the invectives of Rousseau and others, be fully and philosophically vindicated. Even though the object should be illusory, still on this low supposition there is no moral deterioration incurred but the contrary by an education which calls forth a right exercise of the heart, even to an imaginary being. But should the object be real, then the advantage of that anticipative process by which it is addressed to the conception of the young, before it can be intelligently recognised by them, is, that though it do not at once enlighten them on the question of a God, it at least awakens them to the question. Though they are not yet capable of appreciating the proofs which decide the question, it is a great matter, that, long before they have come to this they can feel the moral propriety of giving it solemn and respectful entertain-