

THE SABBATH.

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The Sabbath





FAMILIAR ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

No. I.



THE
S A B B A T H .

“The Sabbath was made for man.”

By HENRY A. WORCESTER.

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TO

ALL PERSONS DESIROUS OF A MORE

ENLIGHTENED AND ORDERLY OBSERVANCE OF THE

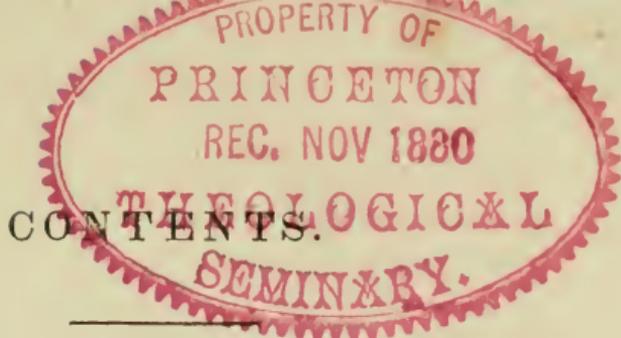
CHRISTIAN SABBATH,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THEIR FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.



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THE SABBATH.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

“Truth presented in natural imagery, is only dressed in the garments which God has given it.”

SAMPSON REED.

How unpleasant the contrast which many a young student has felt on leaving the sphere of *home*, and entering upon the secluded and very unnatural mode of education now pursued in the colleges of our country! No longer encouraged by the expressions of parental love or filial affection, he suddenly comes into the almost exclusive association of youth of his own age and sex; who, being drawn together for the same common object, and, generally, actuated by no higher motive than personal distinction, too often regard each other only with the jealousy of ambitious rivals. How many an ingenuous youth has long

pined, even among his associates, as if in solitude, for the more free, congenial atmosphere of home ! How many the thoughts and reflections, which pride or self-respect constrains him to conceal, till the tedious days of the first term pass away, which debar him from again participating in the spontaneous joys of his native fireside, — where he can give the most unrestrained expression to every sentiment !

By degrees, however, these early sensibilities become blunted. As the student contracts habits of study and reading, his pleasures become less social, but more intellectual and solitary, — till he is at length tolerably reconciled to his secluded, unnatural situation. The common ground of science and literature affords an ample plane on which to meet all his fellow-students, so that he is never at loss for a topic to beguile a leisure hour, either in his walks, or at his private room. And often those, whose views and feelings are found, on further acquaintance, to be most congenial, gradually draw together and become more intimate, so as to revive and cherish, to some degree, those social affections and friendly sentiments which are the spontaneous growth of each one's *home*, and on the exercise of which his happiness so much depends.

But as a general thing, there is little *real* friendship among young students. And notwithstanding the interest felt in their studies, and the charms of a student's life when viewed at a distance, they

are all looking forward to the termination of their course with anticipations of pleasure ; and few, very few, are not glad to bid farewell to college life with all its attractions, and to separate from their fellows in order to return to their own native homes, or to enter upon the active scenes of life. And as they settle in their respective professions and enter into those relations of domestic life, which spring more directly out of the affections, it is surprising how rapidly the memory of their fellow-students fades away ; and how seldom they even think of those with whom they spent four long years of their youth on terms of such frequent and daily intercourse.

Sometimes, however, it is happily otherwise. When congenial minds happen to meet, their long term of studies and daily habits of intercourse, tend to develop each other's character, and bring out all their various feelings and sentiments. And, in several instances, I have known those acquaintances, which were at first only accidental, gradually become more and more intimate, till they ripened into a mature and lasting friendship—that continued through life, a source of mutual happiness. Of this character I am happy to say, was the issue of an acquaintance with my early friend and fellow-student, Henry Clifford.

Mr. Clifford, the father of Henry, lived in a neighboring town only about twelve miles distant from the college at which he had placed his son to

receive an education. Living at so convenient a distance, Henry, at his father's request, got excused by his tutor several times during a college term on Saturday afternoons, in order to spend the Sabbath at home with his friends — returning early Monday mornings to join in the studies of his class. Nearly three years' acquaintance had already rendered us very intimate, when, as is natural to every parent, Mr. Clifford expressed a wish to become personally acquainted with one whom his son often spoke of as his most intimate companion, in order to know whether to encourage him in the acquaintance. Accordingly I received an invitation to join my friend at some convenient time, in one of his afternoon walks into the country, and spend the Sabbath with him in his father's family.

“Great events often turn on little causes.” And surely I look back on the day spent in that well-regulated and happy family, as having had no small degree of influence on my subsequent life.

It was a delightful afternoon, in the month of June, that I accepted my young friend's invitation. We were joined in our walk by a mutual friend and classmate, Charles Livingston, whose father was an intimate friend of Mr. Clifford, and whose mother and sister were then spending a few days in Mr. Clifford's family. A pleasant walk, beguiled by the observations we made on such minerals and plants as came in our way, and that served to illustrate the studies to which we were then at-

tending, brought us to the end of our little journey. Presented by Henry as his friend, I was received as such, and at once put at my ease as an inmate in the family. How different our impressions when first introduced to strangers! We sometimes have an instinctive feeling that we are in a congenial sphere, and as at home; although there may be scarcely any external expression of it. At other times the most labored and officious attentions to all our wants, and every external expression of kindness cannot banish the feeling that we are as among strangers. My reception was cordial, and I felt it to be sincere; though there was but little effort at external expression.

“We are happy to see you, Mr. Williams,” said Mr. Clifford, “and hope you will not require us to treat the companion of our son as a stranger while we have the pleasure of his visit.”

The ease of manner, and the quiet and elevated sphere that seemed to pervade the whole family, caused me to feel that I was in the home of him, in whose society I had long felt at home as a fellow-student.

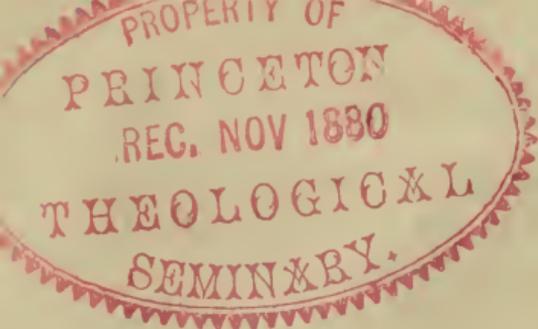
Mr. Clifford was to appearance an intelligent, well-bred gentleman, somewhat past the meridian of life, of a quick, penetrating eye, and frank, open countenance; and, as I subsequently learned, he had been actively engaged in an extensive mercantile business for many years. Though not rich, he was in good circumstances, and his well-conducted business gave a regular and liberal

income for the support of his family. He had been living with an amiable wife some more than twenty years, who had rendered him the father of seven children, of whom Henry was the eldest living;—their first born having died when but two years old. Feroline, then a lovely blooming girl, about seventeen, was next to Henry. Of the four remaining children there were two sons and two daughters. George, the next in age to Feroline, was a bright boy, at this time nearly prepared to enter college. Then came Ellen and Jane, two sprightly girls attending school. And Charles, the baby,—as the youngest is called till a dozen years old—was a little *prodigy* for one of three and a half years.

To the education of their children Mr. and Mrs. Clifford were wholly devoted, and spared themselves no exertion or expense within their means. And what gave effect to all their endeavors they seemed to be entirely united in them. It is not my design to enter into a detailed account of all I subsequently learned of this engaging and happy family. I simply wish to record from recollection the sentiments and views of Mr. Clifford on several subjects on which we happened to converse; and I know of no better way of doing it, than, having now introduced the reader to the family, to allow him to take with me a familiar review of the Sabbath I spent there. This will relieve me from giving a mere dry abstract statement of his views;

and allow him to appear before the reader, and often speak for himself in the original circumstances in which the conversations occurred.

After having spent a delightful evening in the family of my new acquaintance, as I retired to bed, Henry remarked that, in accordance with their custom, the family would take an early walk together in the morning before breakfast, and invited Livingston and myself, if not too much fatigued by our afternoon's walk, to rise in season to join them, — adding, at the same time, that Mrs. Livingston and Julia were to be of the party.



CHAPTER II.

MORNING WALK.

“Wisdom finds tongues in trees ; books in the running streams ; sermons in stones ; and good in every thing.”

SHAKSPEARE.

ACCORDINGLY at the hour appointed we were ready to join the family in the proposed excursion, and the sun did not appear till we had been all refreshed by having attained the top of a neighboring hill, at least a mile and a half from Mr. Clifford's house.

To a well-regulated mind nothing has a more inexpressible charm than an early walk in a pleasant summer's morning. We have then just awoke from a state of insensibility when all around us was dark, still, and lifeless. The mind and the body are alike refreshed and invigorated by repose. All creation too seems to awake with renewed life ; the trees and herbage are refreshed and glistening with the dews of morning ; trees, shrubbery, and flowers exhale stronger fragrance and richer odors ; the mingling notes of birds enliven the grove, and all animals seem to awake with renewed life from the season of rest.

But on the morning of the SABBATH, at this season especially, it would seem that every devout mind must be brought into harmony with the prospects and the blending notes of praise around it. There is often something so quiet and so still — so peaceful and so holy in the return of the Sabbath at this season, that it seems as if all nature were in effort to allay the turbulence of the human mind, and lull to sleep all the feelings and all the restless passions excited during the week ; and on this day, set apart for the duties to devotion, inspire man with the spirit of love and praise to his Maker.

The route chosen for our walk this morning was nearly three miles in circuit, (a distance which may surprise one not accustomed to the ease with which such a walk may be performed after a little practice.) We went on one of the principal roads which pass through the village, for nearly one mile, and then turned into a lane, or by-way, which led through fields and woodlands for about the same distance, to another road on which we were to return.

This, Henry remarked, was one of his father's favorite walks, as there was on the way a prominent hill which afforded a fine prospect of the country, and which he was very fond of ascending ; and he often stopped there some minutes to enjoy the surrounding prospect, frequently too in season to see the sun in its first appearance.

In these morning walks on other days it was the

custom of Mr. Clifford to enter into a free and familiar conversation with his children on the various topics that came up on the way.

It had ever been a prominent object in the education of his children, to cultivate in them the habit of attentive *observation*, and whenever engaged in reading, or in studying a book on natural history, or natural philosophy, to require them to observe with attention whatever came in their way that served to exemplify the principles which it contained.

In this manner his walks with his family for recreation and exercise, were rendered very instructive and useful. The natural sciences, he was satisfied, were too much neglected in the common course of education. He had therefore procured for his children suitable books adapted to their age on the various subjects of *natural history*, and such branches of *natural philosophy* as were suited to their capacities. He required them to read and study under his own inspection, and he himself appeared to take great delight in the exercise; so that before the age at which these studies are usually begun, each one of his children had acquired so familiar an acquaintance with the elements of botany, mineralogy, and the natural history of animals, birds, and insects, that they were familiar with the names of the various minerals, trees, and plants that came within the range of their observation, and could easily classify and

describe them. And few birds or insects were strangers to them at a dozen years old. Indeed he endeavored to throw off all other cares when on a walk with his family, and make the outward prospect around them a theatre of observation, and endeavored to call up and illustrate the principles they were learning at home, or from books at school, by pointing out such examples as came in his way, or directing them to seek for others. Nothing however seemed to be premeditated in these walks. The conversation seemed to arise spontaneously out of the objects before them. It varied and changed with the prospect. Now a mineral was picked up which was to be classified, and described ; he saw they all understood it, and then that mineral was dropped. Another had observed a flower, or caught an insect that was not known or familiar, this was then to be discussed and thrown by, or retained and carried home as a specimen for their little cabinet of illustration. Such was the course pursued in his every day walks with his family. Their powers of observation, therefore, were quick and active ; and scarcely an object of natural history fell in their way which was not at once recognised as an old acquaintance and assigned its place, or else marked as a stranger for future study.

But the conversation on Sabbath morning, when the weather permitted him to walk with his family, took a different turn ; he did not even then repress

all observation of natural objects, but rather took this occasion to lead his children to *reflect* on what they had already learned and observed, than to *add* to their knowledge. And the familiar acquaintance which they were acquiring of natural science, afforded him a most happy introduction for giving them moral and religious instruction. He then endeavored to point out to them the *uses* of knowledge, and to illustrate in what manner each subject which they were studying might be of use to them, and to show the peculiar influence it was calculated to have on the mind and the heart in forming the character.

Those composing the party this morning did not all walk so near each other as to admit of general conversation on any one topic. While on the way, in several detached groups, the conversation was quite discursive. Mrs. Clifford having remained at home to attend to domestic affairs, Mr. Clifford walked with Mrs. Livingston. The subject on which their conversation then happened to turn was one very naturally suggested by the occasion — *nature and revelation*.

“Your custom of taking such a walk on Sabbath morning is a singular one,” said Mrs. Livingston, “but as I have the strongest assurance in your life and character that it cannot be imputed to an irreverence for the Sabbath, or to any disrespect for the doctrines of the Bible, I felt no scruples in accompanying you this morning, al-

though contrary to my usual habits of spending the Sabbath.”

“I am well aware,” replied Mr. Clifford, “that my habits in this respect for many years have not been in agreement with the prevailing sentiments and customs of religious people in this country.”

“As you redeem the time, however, by early rising, or rather by devoting only those hours of the morning to your walk which are so generally wasted in sleep on this day, I surely cannot censure your custom as one unbecoming the sanctity of the Sabbath,” said Mrs. Livingston.

“You have anticipated what I look upon as a very external excuse for doing so,” said Mr. Clifford. “It however satisfies most people that there is no great harm in it, or at least, that it is no worse than wasting the same time in bed. But I have other and positive reasons for the custom. The fact that my neighbor neglects to improve or abuse a privilege is no excuse for my doing the same.”

“Surely not,” said Mrs. Livingston. “But I should be glad to hear your *positive reasons* for this singular custom,” she added, just as we all ascended the summit of the hill, before alluded to, and drew up near each other in order to join in expressing our admiration of the delightful prospect of the adjacent country.

It was indeed a delightful landscape, combining a great variety of rural scenery. The sun had

just arisen, mild and serene. On every side of the hill there was an extensive view of the country round. To the east was a rich meadow with many cultivated farms, through which a gentle river wound its circuitous course. Here and there were clumps of forest trees left standing which were enlivened by the mingling notes of birds; and at a distance on every side were to be seen, farm-houses, orchards, flocks of sheep, cattle, and all that gives life to a variegated landscape.

“It has long been my endeavor,” continued Mr. Clifford, “to familiarize my own mind and the minds of my children with the great but very simple truth that the Author of *nature* and the Author of *revelation* is the same great and good Being. And that the attributes of God, our Heavenly Father, are to be seen in his *Works* as well as revealed in his *Word*. And in illustrating all their studies concerning nature, I have constantly endeavored to impress upon their minds that the *Works* of God are as truly a medium of revealing Himself to man as his *Word*. It has long appeared to me that this great principle is too often overlooked, and that the Sabbath is often made not only tedious and irksome, but even gloomy, from our mistaken views of its nature and the true mode in which it should be observed. It is true, I do not neglect giving my children instruction in the Bible at home. But I find that instead of diminishing their interest in the study of the Bible, I can greatly

increase their interest by connecting with it instruction drawn from another source, all tending to the same great end.”

“You see yonder bright sun rising again to enlighten the world. You see how bright and beautiful the extensive prospect around us now appears. How joyful and animated all nature seems on this holy morning. And surely does it not seem proper for man, who alone is gifted with reason, to rise from his bed and throw open his mind to the influence of such a prospect; to see the Divine Wisdom and Love that are so embodied forth in the works of nature, and to contemplate their Divine Author as present in all his works! If to any one habit more than another, I should ascribe the uniform happiness of my life, it would be that of constantly referring all things in the works of nature, immediately to their Divine Author, and looking to Him, not only as the great Architect, but as the continually animating Soul of the universe — thus of contemplating Him as every where present in all his works.”

“I know not whether there is more of poetic merit or true religious sentiment in those beautiful lines of Wordsworth,

— “But he had felt the power
Of Nature, and already was prepared,
By his intense conceptions, to receive
Deeply the lesson deep of love which he,

Whom Nature, by whatever means, has taught
To feel intensely, cannot but receive.

Such was the Boy — but for the growing Youth
What soul was his, when, from the naked top
Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun
Rise up, and bathe the world in light ! He looked —
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth
And ocean's liquid mass, beneath him lay
In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touched,
And in their silent faces did he read
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
Nor any voice of joy : his spirit drank
The spectacle : sensation, soul, and form
All melted into him ; they swallowed up
His animal being ; in them did he live ;
And by them did he live ; they were his life.
In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,
Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request,
Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
That made him ; it was blessedness and love ! ”

The tone and manner in which Mr. Clifford repeated these lines, had an influence almost inspiring on us all. I never before had so perfect an idea of what is meant by *realizing* poetry. His mind seemed to be so attuned as to fill the words with corresponding sentiment and life almost to overflowing.

“ But,” said he “ we must now continue our walk, and break away from a subject which only

enlarges as we attempt to grasp it, and which has no limits to our finite minds.”

What he had said, however, or rather the *manner* of it, seemed to have an inspiring influence. I could not divert my own mind from the subject. And the few hints he had dropped, gave the same turn to the thoughts of the whole company, and afforded abundant matter for conversation during the rest of our walk, till we returned, all being well refreshed, to Mr. Clifford's house.

CHAPTER III.

BREAKFAST AND MORNING DEVOTIONS.

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

AFTER a suitable time for washing and completing the toilet, the bell rang as a summons for all the family to meet in the breakfast room where the table was already laid.

It was the usual custom of Mr. Clifford to have a chapter in the Bible read every morning before breakfast in a very deliberate and devout manner. Every member of the family was furnished with a Bible of his own, and a portion of the chapter selected was read by each one in turn. And, when they had all knelt and joined in repeating the *Lord's Prayer*, they seated themselves at the table for breakfast.

After having done the honors of the table, Mr. Clifford, addressing Mrs. Livingston, remarked, “I have long regarded the habit of going through the external forms of family devotion of comparatively little use, unless the heart is engaged in the exercise ; or even of reading the Sacred Scrip-

tures, unless the understanding is active to comprehend the doctrines taught in them. An unenlightened sentiment of devotion, or a blind reverence for the Sacred Scriptures, does no more affect the real character of man, than the outward forms of pagan worship, or a reverence for the Koran, or the Veda. We are really Christians only so far as we comprehend the doctrines and precepts of the Sacred Scriptures, and make the life and character of the Lord Jesus Christ the example of our own."

Influenced by these sentiments, Mr. Clifford not only taught his children to reverence the Bible as the Word of God, but he also labored to render them well instructed in its doctrines. To give them a correct and clear understanding of the literal sense of the Word was his first object. A large and convenient map of Palestine was always hanging in the room, and a dictionary of the Bible was at hand for reference. As a means to this end, he had also taken care to have them well instructed in ancient geography and natural history, as well as in the manners and customs of the different nations referred to in the Bible. And it was his daily custom to spend at least one half hour at the table every morning, in such conversation with his family as arose out of the portion of Scripture which had been previously read as a devotional exercise. He aimed not only to give them a *rational* understanding of what they had

been reading, but he also took occasion to apply it, or to draw from it such *practical* remarks as were suited to their respective states. To the gospels of the New Testament he had devoted himself with particular attention, and they had gone through them many times. But as he had continued this practice of reading the Scriptures for several years, the members of his family were now familiarly acquainted with all parts of the sacred volume.

The portion of Scripture read this morning happened to be the sixth chapter of Matthew. Perhaps with some reference to his guests, instead of dwelling on the literal meaning of the chapter read, Mr. Clifford selected for remark only that part which related to the subject of *prayer*. And having explained in a familiar way the directions of the Lord to his disciples immediately preceding the words which he gave to them as the *form* of prayer, he requested Henry to explain what idea we should attach to the words "*Our Father who art in heaven.*"

"The nearest natural relation is here used to signify the relation of the Lord to men," replied Henry.

"Very well," replied the father, "but I wish you to tell what *idea* you form of the Being addressed by the name of *Father.*"

"As children derive their existence from natural parents, and are long dependent on them, so by

this image we are taught and are always to be *reminded*, that we derive our existence from God, as our Great Father in the heavens, on whom we are always dependent for all things."

"This is indeed true also," said Mr. Clifford, "but the subject of my inquiry related to the *idea* which we are to form of God, and under which we are to approach and worship him."

Here Mrs. Livingston inquired "whether we ought to think of God at all as existing in any *form*."

In reply to her Mr. Clifford said, "I cannot conceive the least idea of a being, except it be merely an abstract quality, unless I think of that being as existing in some *form*. And if I attempt to think of God and worship him without at the same time conceiving of him as existing in some form, all idea of a *personal* God perishes, and the mind sinks imperceptibly into *naturalism*, and at length ends in *atheism*. There seems to be but two general ideas under which God is worshiped at all; all others being but modifications or derivatives of these, viz., *naturalism*, or God as existing in, and identified with nature, but without a separate personal existence; and what is called *anthropomorphism*, or God as existing in the *human form*, and as possessed of attributes from which human attributes are derived. The latter is certainly the philosophy of the Bible with respect to the nature of the Divine existence. The Sacred Writings begin

and end with this idea. Not only are the human form and attributes ascribed to God every where in the Old Testament, but the Scriptures open with the distinct announcement that ‘ God created man in his own image and likeness.’ And the great central doctrine of Christianity is, that God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself—that the divine dwelt in the human, *bodily*. And, in order to raise and give us the most exalted idea which we can possibly form of the mode of the divine existence — and of the idea under which God is to be worshiped, Jesus Christ when on the earth, selected three of his disciples, and took them apart, and when he had led them up on an exceedingly high mountain, he was transfigured before them, he unveiled himself, and showed to them his divine appearance as he is to be seen in ‘ his kingdom, his face shining as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.’ This I regard as the most exalted idea under which God can be approached and worshiped. And this, as it appears to me, is the *idea* which we should endeavor to form, and under which we should approach him when we repeat the words, ‘ Our Father who art in the heavens.’ ”

“ You have interested me so much in presenting this view of the subject, that I must beg of you, if it will not be interrupting the order of your usual course, to give me a brief exposition of your views on the whole of this most interesting *form* of prayer.”

“My usual custom,” said Mr. Clifford, “is to call the attention of my whole family more directly to the subject by asking some one of them a question which requires a definite answer. But at your request I will deviate from my usual course, and proceed to give a very brief explanation of each petition in its order.”

“*Hallowed be thy name.*” A name is a word which is applied to a person or to a thing to signify its *quality*. And a person or a thing is rightly named when the name does truly express the character and quality of the person or the thing. Thus all the different *names* applied to the Lord in the Sacred Scriptures, only express his attributes and the different relations in which he is there revealed. But in a more enlarged sense, by name is signified not merely the literal term applied to a person, but whatever reveals and makes known his peculiar character and attributes. Thus, in this enlarged sense, as applied to the Lord, it signifies all *things* by which his true character and attributes are made known to man — his *Works* as well as his *Word*, all *things* as well as *words* by which his attributes are revealed. And in the highest sense to the divine Humanity called the Son, which he assumed and glorified, and which so perfectly reveals the Father’s character and likeness. And his name is to be hallowed, treated as holy, because so intimately associated with the idea of him whom it reveals.”

“*Thy kingdom come.*” The Lord is called a king in the Sacred Scriptures, because he is the author and source of all *Truth*, which is the *Law* of his kingdom. And his *kingdom* in the heavens and on the earth, is the practical acknowledgment of his truth as a law that is to be obeyed by angels and by men.”

“*Thy will be done, as in heaven so also upon the earth.*” The will of the Lord is Love — universal Love to all. From Love only, he creates, preserves, and continually operates and governs. And his will is done when we act from the same spirit of Love from which the Lord acts. In the heavens — that is, in the minds and lives of the angels, the kingdom of the Lord, — his truth, reigns, and his Love prompts to, and operates in, every action. And his kingdom comes, and his will is done upon the earth as it is in heaven, when men live as the angels live — when in humility they open their understandings to the divine Truth, their hearts to the influences of the divine Love, and when all they perceive to be true, and all they feel to be good, is freely brought forth and manifested in their lives.”

“*Give us this day our daily bread.*” Bread literally means one kind of food — in an enlarged sense, all nourishment for the body. This is its natural signification. But it is used to signify by correspondence, spiritual food — all nourishment for the soul — that which nourishes spiritual life —

namely, all those perceptions of Divine Truth and good affections of Love, called the '*bread of God* which cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world.' Asking is an *acknowledgment* of our dependence. And as we are always required to ask for our *daily* bread when we pray, we are taught to live *continually* mindful of our dependence on the Lord, both for natural and spiritual sustenance and life."

"*And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.*"

"This petition," said Mrs. Livingston, "I often hesitate to repeat as it reads, and sometimes I am disposed to insert a word which would render it more expressive of my own feelings and desires. I fear that if it should be answered to the letter we all should be hardly dealt with. For who exercises the same forgiveness towards his enemies for which he prays from his Maker? I am, therefore, often disposed to pray thus, 'forgive us our debts,' not as we *do*, but as we *should* 'forgive our debtors.'"

"The words are right as they stand," replied Mr Clifford. "It is only so far as man does exercise forgiveness, that he *can* feel that he is forgiven. The Lord is Love and mercy itself. He imputes sin to no one, but is ever ready to exercise free forgiveness towards all. But so long as man is selfish, unforgiving and revengeful, the character of the Lord appears the same to him. It *ap-*

pears to him as it is seen reflected in his own character. When he is himself unforgiving and revengeful towards his enemies, the Lord appears so to him. When he comes into the exercise of forgiveness, the character of the Lord to his appearance undergoes a corresponding change, and he feels that he is forgiven. In a word, it is only an *appearance* which originates in his own depravity, that the Lord is ever angry with him, or is ever unforgiving. The real truth is, that his character must always appear to be corresponding to the state and character of man. And that his true character can be seen only so far as man partakes of his likeness, and comes into the exercise of forgiving love. Continually, therefore, in prayer for forgiveness, should man be reminded of the *conditions* of his forgiveness. That it is on no other grounds than that of simply exercising the same forgiveness towards his enemies for which he prays to the Lord. And that, if he, from the heart, forgives not men their trespasses, neither will his heavenly Father forgive (or *appear* to him to forgive) him his trespasses. Notwithstanding all the learned controversies about the *Atonement*, and about the conditions of forgiveness, and justification with God, the whole truth is summarily, but fully expressed in the words, "*forgive and ye shall be forgiven.*" "For with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

"*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*"

“Here again,” said Mrs. Livingston, “there is a seeming inconsistency in the language used in this petition, as well as in several other passages in the Bible. In one place it is said, ‘*God tempted Abraham,*’ but the explicit declaration of the Apostle James is, ‘*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed.*’ If God does not tempt man, why is temptation ever ascribed to Him? Or why are we required to pray that he would ‘*lead us not into temptation*’ if the only cause of the temptation is (as the Apostle James declares) in ourselves — our own evil propensities and lusts?”

Mr. Clifford replied, “One is the *real* truth, the other is the *apparent* truth — or the truth as it appears to man in a merely natural, unregenerate state of mind. It is really true that the Lord tempts no man, but that man is tempted only when drawn away of his own lusts and enticed. The cause of the temptation is always in himself. But it does not always appear so to him. It appears to him that external associates and circumstances were the cause of his temptations to sin. He reasons in this manner, ‘Had I not been placed in these peculiar circumstances, or influenced by bad associates, I should not have been guilty of the sins I have committed.’ Thus he looks *out* of himself for the cause of his sins. He attributes

the formation of his character, not to any latent evils, or bad propensities in himself, but merely to the external circumstances and associates which were the cause of awakening and bringing them out into open manifestation. And when he prays, '*Lead us not into temptation,*' these words are understood by him as meaning, Withhold me from such associates, and from going into such circumstances as will cause me to commit sin. But as he advances in spiritual life, he gradually learns by experience the *real* truth, that the only cause of his temptations to sin, are within himself — are his own evil propensities and lusts, which external circumstances and associates only excite and manifest to him, — that apart from these evils within himself, external circumstances and associates can have no power over him. And consequently he then desires to be delivered from these evils *within* himself, which he now sees to be the cause of his temptations, but which his external circumstances and associates were the means of first exciting and manifesting to him. Thus the language of the petition is perfectly adapted to every state, though differently understood, according to the difference of state and degree of advancement in the regenerate life."

"*For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever.*" These words are a form of acknowledgment, that the laws of order, or divine truth, which is signified by *kingdom*, and all *power*

to obey it, and all *praise* and *honor*, are to be ascribed to the Lord alone.

“*Amen*,” is but a solemn asseveration of the truth of what has been uttered.”

“Thus you see, that when rightly understood, this simple *form* of prayer, comprehends every request, which, in a good state of affections, we can make to the Lord. And, instead of disobeying the direct command of the Lord, not to imitate the Pharisees in making *long* prayers to be seen of men — and using a vain repetition of words, it is our duty to conform to his instructions, and rather than multiply words, endeavor to bring our affections into that state of true *resignation* to the divine will, in which this form of prayer will be seen to express every desire which we ought to cherish, — and in which it will be seen to be as the perfect *body*, of which the real sentiments of veneration and love to the Lord, united to a true resignation to his will, are the *soul*.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE UNION OF MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL CULTURE.

Intellectual culture, and moral discipline, must be united. The renovating influences of religion must impregnate the streams of knowledge as they descend from the hill of science, or else they will carry only moral disease as they flow through the land.

MR. CLIFFORD always felt a deep and a lively interest in the great subject of education. But while he witnessed with pleasure the advances made by our schools in improving the understanding and cultivating the taste, he often deplored the neglect of moral and religious culture. And he lost no occasion to inspire the young with correct *motives* of action, and to teach and impress upon them the true *ends* of acquiring knowledge.

When we had all retired from the breakfast room into the parlor, he entered upon a familiar conversation with Livingston and myself respecting the state of our college. Although not liberally educated himself, he had during life devoted much time to systematic study and miscellaneous reading, and was now well informed in most of the sciences taught in our literary institutions.

Having drawn from us a pretty full statement of the condition of the institution to which we belonged — the course of studies which we were pursuing — and the many particulars as to the details of the mode of instruction pursued, — he inquired, “And what now appears to be the *end*, or the great *moving principle* held up before you as the motive to exertion? There are, doubtless, a great variety of motives, and perhaps as many shades and degrees of purity in them as there are individuals; but what I mean is, what appears to be the *esprit de corps* of your institution — that which is inspired and appealed to, by the example and the influence of your instructors?”

“If I understand your question aright,” said Livingston, “I should say that it was *honor* — or ambition for literary distinction. The chief topic of conversation among our students, is their relative standing as men of talents and scholarship; — and this appears to be the only *common measure* applied in the estimation of character.”

“I was afraid that it was too much the case,” said Mr. Clifford. “But are not serious efforts made on the part of your instructors to correct this false principle, and to inspire you with higher motives of action?”

“We do, indeed,” said Livingston, “sometimes in a grave lecture hear the principle of ambition proscribed as of evil tendency, and on the Sabbath we are often seriously warned and exhorted not to

yield ourselves to its influence. But then even the mode in which this is done, I have thought rather tends to inspire us with emulation to imitate the speaker's style and manner, than to cause us to reflect on our own states, and make a personal application of his remarks to ourselves. I am often reminded by the manner of what Cicero says even while listening to the most solemn exhortations from the pulpit on the Sabbath: 'Even those philosophers who have written on the subject of despising fame, have been careful to inscribe their own names in the books they have written.'"

"And then what avail precept and principle which are habitually and daily contradicted by practice? We are gravely told in a lecture that ambition is a wrong motive, and seriously exhorted in a sermon not to yield to its influence;—but what influence can this have on our conduct, when, at the very next exercise, perhaps the very same person in the capacity of an instructor, marks our relative standing among our associates when we recite, and thus appeals to the very same principle as a motive of action, which he before had condemned as bad and of evil tendency."

"I am very glad," said Mr. Clifford, "to find that you are not blind to the inconsistency of such a course."

"It is one thing, my child," said Mrs. Livingston, "to be sharp-sighted, and able to detect errors and inconsistencies in others, and a very

different one to avoid the same ourselves. And I fear that, although so ready to see and acknowledge the inconsistency of this course, you do not escape being as seriously affected by it yourself as your fellows. I have labored much to try to inspire you with higher and different motives — not, indeed, wishing to abate your ardor and zeal in your studies, but to cause you to pursue them with an entirely different end in view.”

“It is all but impossible,” said Charles, “for any one not to be affected by the strong influences which there surround him, and I am also led to think that it is right for our instructors to stimulate and encourage our progress in science by appealing to our selfish ambition and love of fame. The motive, to be sure, is *selfish*, but still greater attainments are made in science and literature than would be without appealing to this motive of action.”

“This is a subject on which I have bestowed much reflection,” said Mr. Clifford, “and the result has been a conviction that *intellectual* culture is not a blessing, either to the individual himself, or to the community, only so far as it is under the control of moral principle, and religious motives of action.”

“All moral evil may be traced to the abuse of that knowledge which is above the state of our moral affections. Of all states none is more hopeless than that of the mere ambitious sciolist — the

man whose understanding is raised far above the level of his affections — who seeks for knowledge merely for the sake of distinction and display, and who is for ever engaged in argument from the mere love of dispute and controversy. Such a one sees no beauty in truth for its own sake. In all his studies into the works of nature, which embody so much of the divine wisdom and goodness, instead of being reminded of their divine Author — of the sun that shines above — alas, he sees only the comparative length of his own shadow — he hears nought but the sound of his own footsteps. If his motives are selfish and corrupt, talents and education are but the sword of mischief in his hands, which enables him to perpetrate acts of villany and vice on a larger scale. And by them he is enabled to breathe moral poison more effectually into the veins of society around him.”

“But do you not think, Mr. Clifford,” inquired Mrs. Livingston, “that intellectual education is, on the whole, a blessing to society?”

“When rightly understood,” answered Mr. Clifford, “it is undoubtedly the greatest and best blessing to man. But I am now speaking of intellectual education to the neglect of corresponding *moral* and *religious* culture. And I am much afraid that society is not to be rendered happier by the present mode pursued in the education of our youth. My only hope is, that I am deceived in the amount of moral and religious principle instilled into their minds.

“ Knowledge and talents are power, and enable man to accomplish his end, be it good or evil. If supremely *selfish* in the state of his affections, education does not change the current of his life ; it only opens a deeper and a broader channel in which it flows forth. If bent on wealth, the same selfish passion which prompted the ignorant man to acts of petty theft or robbery, when united to talents and education, will find a more successful development in counting the dishonest gains of trade, or in evading the toils of the law. And by whatever means it is acquired, great wealth will give such a man an artificial standing in society, it will create dependants around him, and, in a thousand ways, give him a bad influence on the community.

“ Our daily intercourse with men in business brings us acquainted with those who seem to be dishonest to the extent of their wits, — who lose no opportunity to take every advantage of their neighbours, — and, in view of their disposition, we see that we have the greatest reason to thank God for limiting their power to do evil by the narrow compass he has given to their understanding, — and that they do so quietly lay their heads on the lap of ignorance, and that it is made so easy to them.

“ Again, if ambition, or the love of dominion, be the ruling passion, while limited and kept in check by ignorance or a feeble understanding, it is comparatively harmless ; but when united to

talents and high intellectual attainments, we can prescribe no limits to its evils.

“As we turn over the pages of history and review the past condition of mankind, as we sigh over the tales of war and distress, and the calamities of the great mass of society in all nations of past ages, to what does the historian point us as the cause of the evil? It is to selfish ambition united to talents and education — to *intellectual* culture, to the neglect of corresponding *moral and religious* improvement. What, for example, gave to Alexander power to overrun the earth with all the evils and desolations of war? What but the superior mind of his ambitious father, Philip, that had prepared and disciplined his army, and the education which he received from the great Aristotle, that gave him talents to command it, and enlarged the sphere of his ambition? It was his superior talents and education, that enabled Julius Cæsar to sieze the reins of power in Rome, and trample on the liberties of his country. The same cause has but so recently put the sword of the French nation into the hands of Robespierre, and has now transferred it to Napoleon Bonaparte, who is filling Europe with all the horrors of war. These are, indeed, some of the most striking examples of this false principle. Yet it may also be seen illustrated in its minor forms, and in different degrees, by the present distress and miseries, in all the civil governments of the world. What is

it that now keeps up such systems of oppression and disorder in the government of all nations — compelling the many to toil for the few — that makes the ruled the slaves of the rulers, while these are but the slaves of their own passions? It is this same false principle, giving to men the superior advantages of *intellectual* improvement, to the almost total neglect of the heart — the *moral* and active powers which are to direct and control the understanding.

“And I greatly fear that we shall not long be required to look for examples out of our own country. If men of strong ambition, great talents, and intellectual attainments exist in a free republic like ours, when their talents are under no moral restraint; but selfish ambition alone directs and controls them, then will there be scenes of continual turmoil and strife. The aspirants after the honor and rewards of office will continually breathe the venom of party spirit and civil discord among the people — foment divisions among the several states — corrupt the press, and unite in clans and parties to barter and sell offices as merchandize. And this beautiful fabric of our government — this new temple of civil liberty, in theory so beautiful! may yet become but a den of such political thieves, and then what will become of our liberties?”

“You must excuse, Mrs. Livingston, the enthusiastic ardor with which I speak upon this subject,” said Mr. Clifford, “I am only desirous to make an

effectual impression on the minds of these young students, and to awaken in them serious attention to this principle.”

“I am very much gratified to hear the principles which I have constantly endeavored to instil into my children, so forcibly and ably illustrated,” said Mrs. Livingston.

Here Charles inquired, “Do not the evils aluded to result from the advantages of education and intellectual improvement being restricted and confined to the few, while the great mass of the people are left comparatively ignorant, rather than from a defect in their motives of action? If all were equally well educated, each one would see what was for his interest, so that one would be a check upon another, and thus prevent aggravated abuses, though all were governed only by motives of selfish ambition.”

“The selfish and depraved passions of men,” said Mr. Clifford, “when excited, are not restrained and governed by their *reason*. If devoid of moral principle and religious restraint, a community of *equals* in talents and intellectual attainments cannot subsist together in society. When Alexander said, that ‘the world has not two suns, neither can it bear two conquerors,’ he spoke, like a disciple of Aristotle, the true language of ambition. If *equally* ambitious, and *equally* talented, each one would aspire to the same stations of power and of influence, and they would be either

driven apart by a mutual reaction, and live solitary like beasts of prey, — or else provocation would call forth resentment, insult would be followed by revenge, and mutual extermination would ensue. When ambition alone is the propelling motive of action, a man can have no rest till he has risen above all whom he regards as less talented than himself. It is not till he feels his own inferiority of talents, that he is content with a subordinate station, and thinks it sufficient glory to serve another. As soon as he thinks himself equal to his chief, he will serve him no longer. Then alienation and war commence between them.

“It is not, therefore, to an *equality* of talent and education, that we can look for order and harmony in society. But so long as men are equally governed by selfish ambition alone, it is by the *diversity* of talents — in the greater and less degrees of intellectual power, that the disturbing forces of society can be balanced and counteracted by opposing principles. The man who is possessed of talents superior to all others in the same community, if only equal in ambition, will easily gain the ascendancy; he will gradually become the centre of motion and of power, while those of inferior grades of talent, will, in their several stations, be content to acknowledge him as their superior, while they are permitted to play subordinate parts in the same system, and revolve around him as planets or satellites, according to their several degrees of ability.

“I might continue the subject,” said Mr. Clifford, “much farther, and show the pernicious influence of talents and education on society, when under the control of selfish motives through the medium of *literature*, and in all departments of *authorship*. Men view the subjects on which they write or speak, not as they *are*, but as they *appear* to them. And it is their own moral state which gives the coloring and the hue to every subject they contemplate.

“When an author, be he an historian, a poet, a philosopher, or even a divine, writes under the influence of a merely selfish ambition, he writes not for truth, but for fame, or for the pecuniary reward of his labors. He will, therefore, accommodate himself to the state and to the prejudices of the sect or party for whom he writes, adopt such opinions and sentiments as will not be repugnant to those to whom he looks for approbation and support. Hence we see the world is becoming filled with books which this love of distinction and prostitution of talents are bringing into existence; — books, which are only the offspring of party prejudices, of a narrow sectarian spirit, or of a low and squeamish moral sentiment. Books, in no wise adapted to elevate or to instruct, but merely suited to catch the gale of popular favor, and secure to the author a party, or a sectarian support; — while, at the same time, they are not only corrupting the taste, but made the vehicles of er-

roneous sentiments, and convey moral poison into society.

“ While we see that the human understanding is capable of such an indefinite degree of expansion and improvement, — that knowledge is *power*, and that intellectual education is but the means of its development, how can we feel indifferent to the state of the moral and active powers — to that which is to direct and control the intellect, and cause it to become the great instrument either of so much good or of so much ill.

“ It will, perhaps, assist you to apprehend more clearly my views of what the aim of education should be, if we refer to the divine character as the standard for imitation. The attributes of God are equal in degree — his love is equal to his wisdom — his knowledge or his power does not exceed his benevolence — in Him they blend and unite in undivided perfection. Man was created to be a finite recipient of the divine attributes; but he becomes an image of his Creator, only so far as he receives of his attributes in *equal* degree — only so far as his benevolence is *equal* to his understanding and his knowledge, — only so far as his *moral affections* are as benevolent as his *understanding is enlightened* by knowledge. This is the union of goodness and truth — that state of order which God is in effort to effect in all men; and what God is in effort to join together, man should not put asunder.”

CHAPTER V.

ON GOING TO CHURCH.

“ O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
’Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company ! —
To walk together to the kirk,
And altogether pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay ! ”

COLERIDGE.

AT the first summons of the bell, Mr. Clifford and his family were in readiness to set out for church. The distance which they had to walk was such, as, when punctual in leaving at that hour, allowed them sufficient time to be all quietly seated ten or fifteen minutes before the public services commenced. And at all seasons of the year, unless detained by the extreme inclemency of the weather, or by sickness, he was punctual at church with his whole family.

In a subsequent conversation with him on the subject of *public worship*, Mr. Clifford freely communicated his sentiments as follows.

“ Religion, as it aims to exalt and purify the

affections of the soul, as well as to enlighten the understanding, and thus to direct and control the springs of action, is not only the best bond of civil society, but the only true safeguard of all social and domestic happiness. And public worship on the Sabbath, is one of the most direct and efficient means of keeping its principles alive and operative in the minds of all classes of society.

“ In the temple consecrated to religious worship on the Sabbath, the rich man and the poor man, the learned and the ignorant, meet on a common plane, and recognise each other as brethren — children of the same great Father of all. There, all worldly distinctions of rank and fortune should be annihilated and forgotten. Every unhallowed desire should be chastened and subdued. Whilst each one endeavors to realize that he is now in the more immediate presence of Him, in view of whose majesty and glory it becomes us to indulge no affections but those of deep reverence and love.

“ In this hallowed retreat from a world of selfishness and depravity, no jarring elements, or sectarian differences of sentiment, should be allowed to disturb for a moment the harmony of our worship, or strike a single note of discord. The mind of him whose office it is to minister at the altar — to lead our devotions and to unfold the doctrines of eternal life, should be pure, and elevated above all efforts at paltry display. He should

be too earnestly engaged in discharging the office of his mission, to discuss with sectarian zeal merely abstract and speculative differences of opinion before a miscellaneous congregation, who are ill-prepared to follow a metaphysical argument, but all of whom require to be fed with the plain, substantial bread of life. Having first overcome all opposition to the truth in himself, and being thus prepared to lead the way, he should so present the truth, and adapt it to the state of his flock, that 'his sheep will hear his voice and follow him' as their spiritual shepherd. And through him, as a humble medium of the Lord, they should be enabled 'to go in and out and find pasture.'

"I have always found it impossible to make a sudden transition from one state of affection to that which is very different, without doing violence to my feelings. Indeed, it is evidently in accordance with the nature of the mind, that these changes should be *gradual*. When, therefore, we come at a late hour into the house of public worship, we not only interrupt the devotions of others, but our own minds also are not prepared to join with proper feelings, in the exercises of divine worship. We require some time to come into a frame of mind suited to religious devotion. I have, therefore, for a long time, regarded it as one of the duties connected with religious worship, not only to be punctually seated before the exercises of worship commence, but to be seated with my

whole family, so much before this time, as to enjoy a short season of *silent meditation*, and of still communion with my own mind. I find this a profitable season to withdraw my thoughts more effectually from all outward and worldly cares — to realize for what object I have come into the house of worship — and whom I am about to address in prayer.

“The influence of the truth on my mind, I have learned by experience does not depend so much on the clearness and force with which it is delivered, or, even on the affections of the minister, as upon the state of preparation in my own mind. My own affections must be open to instruction — my attention given — or nothing has an abiding place in the mind.

“It is, therefore, as much our duty to take heed *how* we hear, as *what* we hear — that we should come into the house of worship with such a sense of the sacredness of the duties in which we are about to unite, as shall restrain the wandering look, and the prying gaze, and give that external composure to the countenance, and that meek expression to the whole demeanor, which ever become the house of worship.

“From those who are governed by no higher motives than fashion, or merely external considerations, we are not to expect a reform to commence ; — but surely it is lamentable to consider what vague and indefinite ideas prevail on the subject of

religious worship, among those who profess a deep interest in religious truth. Instead of having, what appears to me, a true standard before them on the nature and uses of true worship, — instead of endeavoring to come together in a state to join devoutly in spiritual worship at its regular and proper seasons, and regarding the exercises of worship merely as the *means* of their advancement, most professing christians at the present day, seem to regard them as the *end*. They seem to multiply their number so as to distract and fatigue the mind, — and to have fallen into the habit of attending them merely with their outward presence. They appear to go to church as to idle pastimes — like listless spectators — without even thinking of the *end* in view, and without feeling that they themselves have a part in the exercises of devotion.

“How different,” said Mr. Clifford, “is the general custom from what it should be on this subject. When we assemble in the house of worship, instead of feeling that we are spectators, we should feel that we *ourselves* have a part to sustain in every exercise. That the form used is to be filled, not by the minister alone, but by every one present.

“When, for instance, the minister who leads the devotions of the church engages in the exercise of *prayer*, instead of leaving him to go through with the form for them, it is for each one present to bring his own mind into a devout and prayerful

frame. Knowing that we cannot add to the knowledge of the Lord respecting our wants, or even change his purposes respecting our desires by prayer, (only so far as it has an influence upon *our own state*, and *prepares us* to receive from him,) we should endeavor to come into the most feeling sense of our dependence upon Him, and of our relation to Him. Though we may be joining in prayer *with* others, we should not for a moment, be unmindful that we are praying *to* the Lord. We should endeavor to prostrate our wills before Him — we should externally assume that posture in our devotions, which the feelings of true reverence will involuntarily give as the posture of sincere prayer. And the form of words used in public prayer, should be such as are most suited, as a means to produce the affections of prayer in the minds of all — of raising their thoughts above self and the world, and of preparing the mind to receive the instructions imparted from the Word into corresponding affections.

“So also should it be in the exercise of *sacred praise.*”

Here I remarked, How pleasant it appeared to see all the members of his own family join in that interesting exercise.

“True,” said he, “they are all able to do so, although several of them have not what is called a natural ear — or a natural voice for music. The truth is, that with proper early instruction, every

child may, and should be taught enough of music, to join in all the ordinary exercises of public worship. I have often found it a most delightful exercise, and a source of the most happy influences in our domestic circle. And then at church, it is of the greatest importance that all children should be brought up to feel that they have a part to sustain in every exercise. But I am diverted by your allusion to my family. It is important for *every one* to feel that he has a part to sustain in each exercise of worship. And O, how delightful, too, it is to be able to join in the devout songs of praise to the Lord in the assembly of his people! to join in concert with those who can ‘sing with the spirit and with the understanding also!’ What the posture and the language of *prayer* are to the feelings of devotion — sacred *music* is to the sentiments of holy joy and sacred *praise*. It is the natural language of these affections. And as the language of prayer is to be repeated as giving *expression* to the feelings and desires of the soul, or else as the *means* by which we may be assisted to receive the true affections of reverence, and a feeling sense of our dependence on the Lord; so the exercise of devotional music is to be used to give external *expression* to the feelings of holy joy and sacred praise, or else as the *means* of awakening these emotions in the mind. And when we engage in the exercise of sacred praise in public worship, the heart, if not the voice of each one, should be

attuned to the sentiments, and its chords should vibrate in harmony with the subject.

“And when we hear the Sacred Scriptures read, or the spiritual doctrines contained in them unfolded in their application to the regenerate life, we should ‘take heed *how* we hear.’ Our minds should be laid open to the full and deep impress of what we hear. It should be received as addressed to our own individual states, and as what we should apply to ourselves. And when we retire, we should carry it along with us, stored up in the mind for future reflection and application to life.

“When such is the state of those who unite in religious worship, a corresponding *sphere* is created, a sympathetic influence seems to pervade the assembly, and the Lord is felt to be present with them, and in the midst of them. The spirit of truth can then accompany the preaching of the word, and like a copious shower of rain descending through a warm and a genial atmosphere, or like the milder influences of the distilling dews of evening, its doctrines can descend in a manner adapted to the states of all, — giving strength to the weak, consolation to the afflicted, confidence to the wavering, and causing all to feel renewed life by being elevated for a season above self and the world, and brought nearer to Him who is the great fountain of influent life to the soul.”

CHAPTER VI.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

Food taken into the stomach does not nourish the body, until it undergoes digestion, is taken into the blood, and assimilated in the system — corresponding to these are the transformations which truth received into the memory must undergo, before it can give nourishment and vitality to spiritual life.

HAVING provided suitable entertainment for those visiting at his house, Mr. Clifford, in accordance with his established habit, excused himself for an hour, after returning from church, in order to retire for the purpose of *self-examination*.

Nothing appears to evince more clearly the depravity of the human heart, and the shallowness of religious sentiment in the church at the present day, and how little ground there is for religious truth, even in those who profess to be governed by a faith in things unseen and eternal, than the trifling and even volatile conversation which we so often hear immediately after the most solemn and affecting discourses from the pulpit on the Sabbath. I can well remember the impressions I received from this prevailing habit, while yet in my childhood. My own mind was often deeply interested

and affected by the truths which I had heard. And, instead of returning immediately into the society even of our own family circle, I frequently wished to retire and meditate on the subject, and consider it in its practical application to myself. Such being the impressions left upon my mind, my feelings have been often shocked at the light and frivolous conversation in which almost all allowed themselves to indulge. The passing news of the day — the gossip of the neighborhood whispered into the ear on the way to church — the appearance of a stranger — the form of a fashionable dress or bonnet, was often the first, and apparently the uppermost subject on the mind even of the members of the church.

Surely it is not because we do not hear, but because we do not take heed *how* we hear, that we remain in such spiritual ignorance. We often hear too much, but give to what we hear no reflection. We make religion to consist merely in attending religious meetings, and hearing without giving attention to the duties of self-examination, or making any application of the truth to our own state.

This almost universal habit had not escaped the observation of Mr. Clifford. But what he saw and felt as an evil in others, he sought for in himself, and endeavored to correct it. He therefore made it his almost invariable custom, after returning from church on Sabbath morning, to retire by himself in order to reflect on the subject of the sermon,

and make a practical application of the truth to his own state of mind.

His pious mother had trained him up from a child to write down the text and the heads of the sermon in his journal. And she had also encouraged him to transcribe from memory such portions of the sermon as he could recall to mind, immediately after returning home.

This gave him the habit of fixed attention to what he heard, and it also gave him great facility in recalling it afterwards.

As he advanced in life, he found this habit of great advantage. Not because he then thought best to transcribe the sermon into his journal, but he still wished to recall to mind, and review with attention the doctrine and the sentiments it contained. If, at any time, he detected what appeared to him as inconsistent, either in the doctrine, or the reasoning by which it was supported, instead of speaking of it openly to the detriment of Mr. Wakefield, his pastor, he would take an early opportunity to inquire of him, if he had rightly understood the subject. And if he found on inquiry, that he was not mistaken, he would then freely state his objections to him. And they would enter upon a free and candid inquiry into the subject, which often resulted in their mutual benefit.

But the great point which Mr. Clifford always kept before him at these seasons, was that of *self-examination*. Taking such parts of the sermon as

had a practical bearing on his own state, he held them up before his mind in order to compare his feelings and habits of life with them.

Here was the secret of Mr. Clifford's growth and advancement in religious life. He practically *applied* his religious teachings to himself. He held up the truth which he heard before him — saw and compared himself, with all his deficiencies, by that as a standard. Here, he would say to himself, I have been deficient in some duty. There, again, I performed the duty externally, but it was not done in a right spirit — it was done too much as a mere duty, not because it was loved. In some other respects, perhaps, he could perceive he had made some progress. There was no standing still with him. He never rested, or felt satisfied with his attainments. Forgetting the things behind, he was pressing on to something higher and better. He was deeply impressed with the belief, that the tendency of true spiritual religion was to make us pure in heart, even as Christ is pure. He saw and felt, too, that if we really endeavor to follow the Lord in the regeneration, we shall have to contend with foes *within* as well as without. That it requires many painful conflicts to subdue our evil passions and selfish desires, and to bring them all into subjection to the laws of divine order. What every Christian has to learn by experience, he had learned ; — that many were the “foes of his own household” — the evils and

the false persuasions of his own mind. But still he kept constantly in view, that the *end* of the Christian's warfare is *peace*. Even in the darkest hour of spiritual temptations, he was cheered by the promises and encouraged by the example of his Lord and Master. "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled."

The kind of preaching which Mr. Clifford most enjoyed, was that which presented the doctrines of religious truth most clearly in their *practical* relations to life and conduct — which aimed at reaching the springs and motives of action — which shrunk not from declaring the whole truth, and which, while it gave no unnecessary pain, aimed at probing the disease to its centre, in order to work an effectual cure.

One custom peculiar to him, was not to suffer any one exercise of the Sabbath to press on another so soon as to destroy or impair its appropriate influence. He was well acquainted with the philosophy of the mind, and he knew that nothing could ever be gained by over-tasking its powers — that the most important and interesting exercises may become tedious and useless, either by being too frequent in their recurrence, or too much prolonged in duration. After much reflection and observation, he had come to the conclusion, that one exercise on the Sabbath expressly for *religious*

worship, was as beneficial in its results as more. And he accordingly did not attend meeting for *worship*, except at the morning service.

He wished to hear religious truth then presented in a clear and forcible manner, so as to leave a deep and an *abiding* impression on the mind. He desired to have solid matter for reflection. But then he knew, that if he would profit by his pastor's instruction, he must make a practical *application* of it to his own state of mind. Instead, therefore, of allowing the impressions he received at morning worship, to be immediately effaced, by the repetition of another exercise of the same kind, he took time to *reflect* on what he had heard. He endeavored to digest and make it his own, so that it became spiritual food, forming the flesh and the blood of his spiritual life.

Before coming to a determination, however, to adopt this course, he had some conscientious scruples, and several serious conversations with Mr. Wakefield, his worthy pastor. He said to him one day in conversation on this subject, "I often find my mind to be much confused and weary, after returning from a *second* or *third* meeting for *religious worship*. I have not time during the intermission to give the first sermon sufficient reflection, so as to feel prepared for another subject. And when I attempt to think them over together, to review the subjects, and apply the sentiments to my own mind, I am often reminded of a person

who unwisely takes a second dinner, while the first would naturally be undergoing the process of digestion ; the result of doing which is, to interrupt the order of nature, and to debilitate rather than give strength to the system.”

Without wishing to dictate or to prescribe his course of duty, he very frankly expressed to Mr. Wakefield his own views on this subject. “If you,” said he, “instead of attempting to write two or three sermons a week, would concentrate all your studies into one, and bring forth a sermon that is mature, replete with instruction, and containing spiritual food for reflection, it would, as it appears to me, produce a more healthful and orderly growth in religious life.

“In the first place, if you preached but one sermon on the Sabbath, your meetings would be more punctually attended, and your discourses would be listened to with greater attention. And again, your own attention would not be distracted by a variety of subjects during the week, but you could give such mature reflection, and systematic order to your sermons, as would render them much more instructive ; and, besides, you would have strength and ability to cause them to make a deep and abiding impression on the mind. And my own experience has taught me, that one such discourse, in which religious truth is presented with clearness and force, and in a manner to make a deep impression on the mind, is incomparably

better in its effects, than to have the attention distracted and wearied by continually listening to a variety of wordy declamatory efforts, which contain but little matter for future reflection."

"But what would you have my people do in the afternoon?" said Mr. Wakefield.

"Do," said Mr. Clifford, "in the first place, I would give them something to *reflect* upon in the morning sermon, and then teach them *how* to reflect, and give them *time* to do so."

"Alas," replied Mr. Wakefield, "I fear you are not aware how few there are who care enough about a sermon to give it any reflection."

"True," said Mr. Clifford, "but I have thought that the present mode of preaching and of spending the Sabbath, directly calculated to destroy the little inclination there is still remaining to give serious reflection to religious truth. In the first place, but little that is practical is given them to reflect upon; and then they are allowed no time to reflect upon that, before they are required to attend upon another exercise of the same kind."

"But what course would you suggest?" inquired Mr. Wakefield.

"After allowing proper time for reflecting on the subject of the morning sermon," replied Mr. Clifford, "I would have a different kind of exercise in the latter part of the day, which would call up new and *different* trains of thought and reflection, while it would leave undisturbed the deep and

inward feelings and impressions awakened by the morning service. The sentiments and feelings of *worship* are peculiarly appropriated to this service. Then, the spiritual doctrines of religion should be presented in their *practical* application to the regenerate life, and in a manner too, to awaken deep reflection, and give rise to strict self-examination. This state I would leave undisturbed by again attempting to awaken a similar kind of sentiment and reflection. But there might be an exercise for *doctrinal* instruction — or for *social* conference on doctrinal and practical subjects, which would not at all interfere with the influence of the morning service. At that time the more advanced members of the church might meet and freely converse together on subjects and principles then engaging their attention. The youth and children could be brought together in classes according to their ages and degrees of advancement, and have a systematic course of religious instruction laid out, adapted to their various states; so that all the members of the society, who could be brought to feel any interest in the subject, would be provided for."

"I am convinced," said Mr. Wakefield, "that the course you recommend is far better, and I only have to regret that the public sentiment, and confirmed habits of my people are such, as do not admit of adopting it at once in practice."

Mr. Clifford did not fear the reproach of being *singular*; he knew that every man who is at all

enlightened in advance of his contemporaries, has that to encounter. He resolved, therefore, with the approbation of Mr. Wakefield, to enter upon this course ; and in his own family to adopt that mode of spending the afternoon of the Sabbath, which he thought would be most conducive to their improvement.

The time which, as we have observed, he himself devoted to reflection and self-examination, he required his children to spend in the same manner that he had been accustomed to do in his youth. Immediately after returning from church, each one of them was required to record the text, and to transcribe into his journal such portions of the sermon as he was then able to recall. To what account this was turned, the reader will see in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

CONVERSATION AT DINNER ON THE SABBATH.

“The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.”

PUNCTUALLY at two o'clock, the usual hour, the bell rung as a summons to a well-served dinner. It was the usual custom of Mr. Clifford to sit at dinner with his family a whole hour. Instead of meeting them at the table with all the cares and anxieties of business on his mind, he endeavored to throw off every thought on these subjects, to relax his mind in the quiet sphere of social enjoyment, and enter into free conversation with his wife and children.

After having gone through with the honors of the table in connection with his wife, he entered into free and familiar conversation on such topics as he deemed most useful and instructive to his children. But, on the Sabbath, the standing subject of conversation while at table, was the *sermon* of the preceding morning.

Without varying from his custom in consequence of having company at dinner, he began as usual : “Well Jane, my daughter, can you name good Mr. Wakefield’s text this morning ?”

“Yes, papa, I remember it easy to-day, for it was part of the fourth commandment.”

“What were the words, my child?”

“‘Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy,’ Exodus, 20th chapter and 8th verse.”

“Very well. Can you, Ellen, now give us the heads of the sermon?” inquired Mr. Clifford.

“After some introductory remarks,” replied Ellen, “Mr. Wakefield said he should, ‘*first*, endeavor to explain the *signification* of the Sabbath in the Jewish church — *secondly*, that he should remark on the *distinction* between the *Jewish* and the *Christian* Sabbath — and *thirdly*, that he should speak on the *mode of observing* the Sabbath — on what is to be understood by *keeping it holy.*’ ”

“Very well,” said her father, “and now, George, you may read what you have transcribed into your journal of what was said on the first head.” George then read from his journal as follows :

“In the *representative*, or typical church of the Jews, time was divided into periods of *seven* days, *seven* years, and *seven times seven*, or forty-nine years. Of these periods of time, the first six days, and the first six years, they were commanded to labor, and do all their work, but they were required to abstain from all labor, and to rest during the seventh. These periods of time in that church, represented states of mind. The six days and the

six years of labor, represented the labors and combats, or spiritual temptations, which are to be passed through during our regeneration;— the seventh day, and the seventh year, the rest and peace which follow the labors of self-denial.”

Here Mrs. Livingston said, “ I should be happy to have you, Mr. Clifford, explain further what was said in this part of the discourse. The explanation was new to me, and I should be glad to understand it better.”

“ The Jewish church,” said Mr. Clifford, “ was not a true spiritual church, but the merely typical representative of such a church. Its outward rites and ceremonies of worship, were such as could only represent by external signs, and natural symbols, true spiritual worship. A similar explanation is to be given of the division of time in that church into periods of seven days, seven years, and seven times seven years. This division of time into these stated periods, was to represent by correspondence, the various changes of state through which every man must pass while he is being regenerated and prepared for heaven.”

“ But will you have the goodness to explain,” said Mrs. Livingsion, “ what we are to understand by the *natural*, and what by the *spiritual* or *regenerate* state.”

“ All men are born into the world,” replied Mr. Clifford, “ with an hereditary ruling affection, which is *selfish*, or which prompts them to seek their own

good, and to disregard the good of others ; — while they continue to live, and to act from this, as the ruling affection of life, they are said to be in a natural, or in an unregenerate state. But when, from an acknowledgment of the authority of the divine law, man denies himself the gratification of this affection, and lives in a state of voluntary subjection and conscientious obedience to the truth, as the law of his life, he is then said to be in a spiritual or in a regenerate state of mind. The love of self with its gratification, is the life of the natural man — obedience to the truth, from the love of others, and from an acknowledgment of the Lord as its source, is the life of the spiritual man.”

“Do then the six days of labor signify the natural state, and the Sabbath of rest the spiritual state ? ” inquired Mrs. Livingston.

“Not exactly so,” said Mr. Clifford. “But I was going on to explain further, and make an application of this natural division of time to represent those changes of state, which take place while *being* regenerated, or while coming into a spiritual state of mind.”

“When a child shall have passed the period of instruction and of subjection to his parents, and arrived at the age of freedom, and moral responsibility, he will be left free to form his own character — that for which he is responsible. If he then act from his hereditary selfish affections, and

disregard the known laws of God, and violate his conscience, he will continue to be a merely natural man. Or, if, from merely selfish motives, he live in external obedience to the laws of moral and civil life, though a better citizen, and a better member of society, still he will be merely a *natural* man. But if, on the other hand, he shall then endeavor to live in conscientious obedience to the truth which he may have been taught, shall deny himself when tempted to violate it, and make that the law of his life, then his spiritual life will have begun. Spiritual or regenerate life commences by a *voluntary* obedience to the truth as the acknowledged law of God. But spiritual life will then have only begun. Many days of *labor* are to be passed through before he will come into a state of spiritual *rest*.”

“The six days of labor, then,” said Mrs. Livingston, “represent the labors of self-denial — or the opposition which is felt between the two opposite principles of the mind — the love of self, and the love of our neighbor, while man is passing from the natural to the spiritual state.”

“Just so,” said Mr. Clifford. “Before we can be brought to give up our own wills, and to act from love to others, a great work must be done within us. All our latent evils must be brought out and shown to us in such a manner, that we shall see them and be led to forsake them. There is a sense in which we must lay down our own lives, and

forsake all that we have, before we can be fully regenerated, and become true disciples of the Lord, so as to enter into the rest signified by the Sabbath.”

Here Charles remarked, “There is a continued succession of weeks, or of these same periods of time, and I should like to inquire, if it would not interrupt the order of your explanation, whether a person who is *being regenerated*, must always be passing through the *same* alternations of state. If so, it would seem that he is not making any progress.”

“The work of man’s regeneration,” said Mr. Clifford, “is a great work. It consists of many days and nights, weeks and years, before it is fully accomplished.

“You recollect that time was divided into periods of seven days, seven years, and seven times seven years, or the period of the general jubilee, when a new series again commenced. This great period was that which represented the full completion of the work of man’s regeneration, and preparation for the heavenly rest, — that state when the love of self is effectually broken and subdued, and the Lord reigns in, and governs the whole life.

“But before coming into this state, there are many successive states to be passed through. Each individual act of serious self-denial, occasions internal struggles, or spiritual combats in the

mind—a state of spiritual labor, which is represented by the six days' labor in the Jewish church. But when we have effectually overcome the evil, and are brought to feel more deeply our dependence on the Lord, and to act from a spirit of love to our neighbor, then we come into a corresponding season of spiritual *rest*—into the state represented by the Sabbath. Many are the successive alternations of state through which we must pass. Our evils, or spiritual enemies, are an innumerable host, which cannot be overcome at once, 'but by little and little,' must they be driven out. It is only by repeated and successive combats with them, as they are individually manifested, that they will be at last overcome and exterminated, so that the spiritual truths of the church, represented by the sons of Israel, can come in, take possession of the land, and enjoy the Sabbath of spiritual rest."

Feroline was then requested to read from her journal what she had transcribed from the sermon, on the *distinction* between the Sabbath of the *Jewish* and *Christian* churches. She then read as follows :

"There is precisely the *same* distinction," remarked Mr. Wakefield, "between the Sabbath of the Jewish and the Christian churches, that there is between the two churches themselves. Internally, or considered as to their origin and spiritual design, these two churches are the same; but, externally, or as to their outward form, they are

very different. They were both, and equally, revelations from the Lord, and established by divine authority. Their design is the regeneration of man. But the Jewish dispensation was not a true spiritual church. It was only the external or typical representative of such a church. As respects the Jews, it had no internal spiritual character. They were external natural men, and only made the *medium* of receiving and of giving to the world, the mere outward *form*, or typical *representation* of a spiritual church. But the Christian church is a higher, a more spiritual dispensation. For the Lord Jesus Christ by whom it was established, spiritually *fulfilled in himself* all that was typically represented in the Jewish church. That is, he fulfilled the Sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament, by taking upon himself our nature, and while being glorified, passing through all those different states which were typically represented in the corresponding external forms, and significatives of the Jewish church. And as far as man follows him in the regeneration, he will also pass through corresponding states, and come into the internal spiritual state of mind which was outwardly represented by the Sabbath of the Jews. The nearest approach to this state of spiritual rest to which the merely natural man can approach, is such a state of natural rest as was enforced on the Jews. But as man becomes spiritual, as he follows the Lord in the regeneration, he will come into the

fulfilment of this external form. The Sabbath will not be merely a day of abstinence from labor and natural excitement and pleasure, but a day of inward peace and positive enjoyment. The spiritual affections of love towards man will flow forth freely into corresponding external acts and expressions of joy.”

“The distinction then between the Sabbath of the Jews and the Lord’s day,” said Mrs. Livingston, inquiringly, “is, that the one was the mere outward *form*, of which the other is not only the form but the *reality*?”

“I should rather say,” answered Mr. Clifford, “that the Sabbath of the Jews was the nearest form, which the merely natural man can be made to observe and keep, of the state of spiritual rest signified by the Sabbath. Had the Lord conformed strictly to the ideas of the Jews respecting the Sabbath, they would not have accused him so frequently of breaking it. But when he brought forth the affections of divine love into the works which he wrought, and into the doctrines which he taught, ‘This man cannot be of God,’ said the Jews, ‘for he keepeth not the Sabbath day.’ But I am already remarking on the *third* head of Mr. Wakefield’s sermon — *on the mode of observing the Sabbath* — or, *what is to be understood by keeping it holy.*”

The sentiment had been advanced by Mr. Wakefield on this head, that the ideas which men

form of the Sabbath, correspond to their ideas of heaven.

Here Mrs. Livingston inquired "whether the ideas of men respecting the Sabbath, and the proper mode of observing, it must not necessarily change as they were advancing in the regeneration, or from a natural to a spiritual state."

"Undoubtedly they must," answered Mr. Clifford. "The strict pharisaical manner in which the Jews, and some sects of Christians but little in advance of the Jews, observe the Sabbath, is in perfect accord with the ideas which they, and all other natural men, seem to have of the nature of holiness. Having no true idea of an internal Sabbath — a state of spiritual rest, they regard only the outward form and appearance. Instead of looking on the Sabbath as a state of spiritual conjunction with the Lord and with heaven — a state of that true inward happiness which springs from the union of goodness and truth, of inclination and duty, they seek only to put on such a sanctimonious garb and appearance as accords with their gross and natural ideas of the nature of holiness. Hence come that rigid punctilious adherence to all merely external rites, and formal observances — that banishment of cheerfulness and social enjoyment — that painful austerity and gloom with which the day is often invested, but which corresponds so perfectly to their idea of heaven."

“Your remarks,” said Mrs. Livingston, “remind me of the good woman, who, when correcting her son, attempted to appeal to his fears and render him submissive, by telling him, that unless he reformed and became a better boy, he would never go to heaven. — I don’t care whether I ever do, said the child, for it is *always* Sabbath day there.”

“The poor child only expressed what I fear has been but too often the sentiment of all children brought up under the prevailing rigid puritanical views of the Sabbath,” said Mr. Clifford.

“As I was remarking, they seem to have but little more idea of filling the Sabbath with its corresponding spirit, and of freely bringing forth on that day, spiritual affections into the works of charity, and into the forms and relations of social life, than the Jews had. Like the Pharisees among the Jews, those rigid and external sects among Christians, have set up a standard of holiness, requiring those punctilious outward observances, and a continual round of attendance on public worship, by which they test the virtue of all actions. Any departure from this standard draws forth their censure and condemnation. And should a more spiritual Church now arise in the midst of them, which should really keep the Sabbath, as the Lord’s day — and bring forth freely true spiritual affections into the forms of charity, use, and true social enjoyment on the plane of religious affections, the same accusations would be brought against such a

Church which the Jews so often brought against the Lord, for working miracles, and in a free social manner imparting instruction on that day — ‘This man cannot be of God, for he keepeth not the Sabbath day.’”

“I would not, however, object to their mode of observing the Sabbath, or their views respecting it, when considered merely in relation to *their* state. Their views of the Sabbath are such as the merely natural man must have of all religious truth; and such as the lowest form of Christianity, which is suited to his state, must necessarily teach. We ought not, therefore, to take from them this degree of acknowledgment, or this outward mode of observing the Sabbath, until they are prepared for something higher. But we should object to these views of the Sabbath being enforced as a standard for others. For, after the work of regeneration shall have really commenced, and man has begun to learn by experience the nature of true holiness, he will, by degrees, come into higher views of the Sabbath, and into a corresponding external mode of observing the day.

“The Lord, to appearance, lay dead during the Sabbath of the Jews. And he is spiritually dead in the merely external, formal Sabbath of the natural man, and a pharisaical Church. But, as spiritual life begins and grows in the mind, the Lord will appear to arise from the dead; his character will open, and become exalted within the

mind ; we shall have clearer views of spiritual truth, and corresponding perceptions of the mode of bringing it forth into life ;— we shall learn by experience, ‘ that the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.’

“ As the consequence of advancing spiritual life, and the internal union of inclination and duty — of goodness and truth in the soul, our ideas of holiness must change, and our external mode of keeping the Sabbath must undergo a corresponding change. The limits of our horizon will be enlarged. Those rigid and narrow views, those dark and gloomy associations connected with the Sabbath, will pass away. Those external bonds of irksome restraint will be broken ; and instead of being a day of weariness and painful confinement, it will become a season of internal peace and joy, and of corresponding works of charity and expressions of happiness and delight. So that what were at first but the walls of our prison, will become transformed into the circumference of our pleasures.”

CHAPTER VIII.

VISITING THE SICK — A SCENE.

“ Almighty God ! ’tis right, ’tis just,
That earthly frames should turn to dust ;
But, O the sweet, transporting truth —
The soul shall bloom in endless youth.”

Woodworth.

AFTER rising from dinner sufficient time was always allowed for the necessary attention to a lesson in the Bible, as preparatory to the instruction about to be given. At an appointed hour in the afternoon several children and youth of the neighborhood regularly came in to join those of Mr. Clifford’s own family, making a Bible class of about twenty in number.

Mr. Clifford devoted a full hour, and often a longer time, in efforts to instruct and interest those who looked to him as their spiritual teacher and guide. And this he regarded as one of his most useful fields of labor.

But the interval of time between dinner and meeting his class in the Bible he usually employed either in visiting the sick, or in dispensing charity among the deserving poor in his neighborhood.

He therefore excused himself after dinner as having an engagement at that hour ; and, on leaving, said to Henry, that possibly he might be detained till past the usual time for the class to meet ; in which case, he desired him to take the charge of it, as he often did in his father's absence. Then addressing himself to me, " Mr. Williams, I have a mile to walk to visit a sick family, and as it is a pleasant afternoon, perhaps you would not object to accompanying me."

I readily assented, and we were soon on our way.

" The poor family which I am going to visit," said Mr. Clifford, " is one that has seen deep affliction. It now consists of a widowed mother and six young children.

" Ten years ago," continued he, " Seth Patrick was a strong active man for labor, and I often employed him to perform such service as he was able to render. But owing to the prevailing custom of giving a daily dram to laborers he soon acquired an appetite for spirit, which gradually increased upon him, till at length he became very intemperate, and was generally regarded as a hopeless subject for reformation.

" I knew that he naturally possessed a good disposition, and that he had strong natural affection for his wife and children. I therefore resolved, under providence, to make an effort to bring him back to his former habits, and save him as a blessing to his family.

“Accordingly one Sabbath afternoon, just five years ago this month, I walked over to see him at the same house to which we are now going. I resolved to approach him in a kind, affectionate manner—to avoid every thing that would be likely to irritate, or to appear like reproach. I really felt for him as a man who had been led astray, and I had no wish to conceal from him that I did feel deeply interested in his welfare.

“I found him at home, and, what had now become unusual at that hour of the day, he was perfectly sober. His wife had gone out to meeting, and he was remaining at home with the two youngest children.

“After a little conversation I frankly told him the object for which I had come to see him. I had never used the language of reproach to him, and my treatment of him had always been such that he seemed to regard me as his friend, notwithstanding my frequent reproofs for his conduct.

“I now reminded him of his former good health, and how easily and happily he got along in the world, before he gave himself up to his present course of life. I gradually led him to see and to acknowledge, that his present debilitated health and impoverished condition, were entirely owing to the change which had taken place in his habits. I told him plainly if he continued his present course, that he must soon, and very soon too, die—die, leaving behind him the name and character

of a poor abandoned drunkard. ‘While you continue this course,’ said I, ‘you must be miserable *here*, and, O, what must be your state *hereafter*!’ I then pointed to his little daughter whom he was holding in his arms, and said, ‘How, Mr. Patrick, can you think of leaving such a beautiful, lovely child to the cold charity of the world—to no inheritance but beggary, and her father’s ignominy?’ I saw that he was affected. The tear started in his eye, and his quivering lip showed that his heart was moved. He soon recovered and became self-possessed.”

“Mr. Clifford,” said he, “you have always showed yourself a true friend to me. You have always treated me with Christian kindness. You have never followed me with reproaches. But you know not—and I pray you may never know, the cravings of a drunkard’s appetite—his strong and burning desire—his conscious degradation and guilt—and at times, his awfully desponding gloom. All reproaches I have ever met with scorn. All compulsory efforts at reformation I have treated with contempt. You are the only man who has approached me in the spirit of Christian love. And you have faithfully discharged your duty to one who is regarded as an abandoned man. And I am now resolved that your labor shall not be thrown away upon me. From this time I will listen to your advice, follow your directions, and forever abandon the use of rum.”

“ I put but little confidence in sudden conversions. There must be a time, however, when reformation begins, and it was not for me to say that this hasty resolution might not prove the beginning of a new life. I was indeed afraid it might fail, but I gave him encouragement, procured work for him, and with a guardian care watched over him and endeavored to keep him out of temptation. I saw that he was in earnest. He had made a good resolve, and it was my duty to help him keep it. And, to sum up his story in a few words, he did so. From that day he became a sober, industrious man — was constant to his family, retrieved his circumstances, and was not only getting along well in life, but he afterwards gave evidence of a more deep and inward reformation; and I have reason to hope was governed by a conscientious regard to the principles of the Christian religion.

“ But six weeks ago, by an imprudent exposure he took a severe cold — a violent fever soon followed, and his disorder was so rapid that I saw him but once before his death. He was then low, and knew that his case was critical. I conversed freely with him. He appeared calm and resigned; and I have good reason to hope that he died, not only an externally reformed man, but a humble Christian, leaving a disconsolate wife with six small children to lament his death.

“ By my assistance three of them are now provided with good places; but the mother has the

youngest three still to provide for by her own labor.

“Three weeks ago, Ellen, the youngest but one, was taken very ill, and has continued to fail ever since. I saw her the last Sabbath, and from what I have heard during the week, I expect we shall find her very low.”

As Mr. Clifford was repeating these last words, I saw the smoke rising from their humble cottage through the trees. Jane, her older sister, a little girl about nine, came running in haste to meet us. “O, Mr. Clifford,” said she, “little Ellen is *very sick*. Ma says she fears she cannot live. She is in great pain and much more sick than she was last Sabbath. Do you think Ellen will die, Mr. Clifford?”

“I hope she will not, my child,” said he, taking hold of her hand, and engaging in conversation with her to console her grief.

As we entered the cottage Mrs. Patrick met us at the door, but was so deeply affected with grief as to be unable to speak; for Ellen had just expired. She attempted to address Mr. Clifford. “My child” — she said, but could say no more, and her grief found vent in tears. In a moment she recovered, and led us to the bedside, and felt of the face and hands of her child to see if she was indeed gone — or whether there were any symptoms of returning life. She stroked aside the dark flowing locks from her lovely face. Her

body was still warm, but her pulse had ceased to beat, her eye was closed, for the spirit had departed to return no more.

The mother was then too much under the first transports of grief to command her feelings. Nature must have its course, and Mr. Clifford did not for some time attempt to offer her the consolations of religion.

Two females of the neighborhood were called in, and Mr. Clifford relieved the mother by taking the charge, and giving necessary directions for all that was to be done.

By the time the corpse was laid out, the bedding removed and the room ventilated, the mother had become more composed, and we all went into the room where the corpse was laid.

After we were seated, Mr. Clifford, addressing the afflicted mother, said, "Your child has indeed left us. But she has gone to Him who said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' I know that you must feel deeply this separation from your child. I too have been a mourning parent, and can sympathize in your sorrow. I have known by experience the pangs of parting with a first born child. But it is at such times as these that we feel the consolations of religion. Though removed from your sight, we are taught by Him who cannot deceive, that she still lives — that she lives in a world where she will be kept from evil and from sin. She is now

to be placed under the guardian care of those angels, who, says our Lord, 'do always behold the face of my Father.' Fear not that they will be to her better than earthly parents can be. They will instruct her in true wisdom, and lead her in the ways of heavenly life. You should not therefore mourn for her, but let a living faith in the great truths of the Gospel lift your soul above this natural sorrow, and inspire your mind with filial confidence in the wise providence of your heavenly Father. He has indeed seen best to take away your child. But though removed from your sight, she still lives under his guardian care. He knows better than we can what is best, and we should endeavor to be resigned to his will, and trust in the wisdom of his providence that all things are ordered for our good. You should therefore think of your child, as having gone to her heavenly Father, as being now instructed by the angels in his more immediate presence, in his house of many mansions.

“But let us now turn to ourselves, and see what lesson this dispensation of providence is designed to teach us. Our thoughts and affections are all prone to this world — to be taken up and confined to the objects and cares of this life. We often lose sight of the great end of our being, and forget our relation to the spiritual world. And we sometimes require even what appears to be a severe trial, or violent shock to our natural feelings, in order to break the spell, disengage our thoughts from earth,

and open our minds to the living realities of the spiritual world. And nothing has so great an influence upon our state, and tends so directly to carry our thoughts into the other life, as the removal of those friends and relatives, whom we tenderly love. Our affections and thoughts follow them, 'for where our treasure is there will our hearts be also.'"

Then making a more particular application to the state of the afflicted mother, he continued, "First, your husband was taken from you; and now, your darling child is called to follow him into the spiritual world. In these afflictions the hand of the Lord appears heavy upon you. Perhaps, your affections were too much bound up in them, and your thoughts too much confined to the things of this life. But as he who seemed to be your dependence and support was first taken, and as your dearest child is now removed, your thoughts cannot but go with them, and these objects of affection will now become the connecting link between you and the world to which they are gone. Your mind must now be more open to the great realities of the spiritual world, and to a sense of your more immediate dependence on the providence of the Lord. Your mind will naturally be anxious and troubled about providing for your own wants and the wants of your surviving children. But you must remember that the providence of the Lord extends to all our necessities, that not a sparrow

falls to the ground without His notice. You should therefore be led to feel more directly your dependence on Him — and to cast all your cares and burdens on the Lord. For in all our afflictions, and in all the dealings of his providence, whether they appear prosperous or adverse, he has constantly our own good in view — to break our hold on this life, and so far to carry our thoughts and affections into the world to come, that we shall look on the present life only as a scene of preparation for the next ; — to subdue our worldly affections and self-reliance, and to bring us into that state of filial love and obedience to his will, and into that nearness of spirit to him, that our understandings will always be opened to see his hand employed, in all the good or seeming ill which checkers our path through life.”

The tones of affection, and the manner, no less than the sentiment of these remarks, seemed to have a tranquillizing influence upon us all. This the afflicted mother especially felt. She appeared to be so much drawn into the sphere of her Christian friend, as to be gradually lifted above her afflictions. Her grief subsided, and her mind became composed and calm. With a resigned countenance she drew near to the body of her child, and stroking her hand gently over its lovely features, she said, “ Yes, Mr. Clifford, this was a hard stroke for my poor heart. This was my dearest child. My heart was bound up in her, — I fear

she was becoming my idol, and God has been compelled to take her away, no less for her mother's good, than her own. But I would not now recall her. I thank God I can now say, 'Not my will, but thine be done.' "

Her mind was so much affected by what had been said, that she seemed to be pervaded by a quiet sphere of resignation to the divine will, and a state of inward settled peace. And the expression on her countenance was that of a subdued, though a resigned and a confiding spirit. As we left this humble cottage, I was more deeply impressed than ever before with the power of Christian truth, when administered in love, to find its way to the human heart—to reform vice—to give support and consolation in affliction—and even to lift the mind above the influence of the deepest sorrow, by inspiring the soul with a filial confidence, and a settled trust in the overruling wisdom and goodness of our allwise and merciful Father.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

“ The entrance of Thy Word giveth Light ;
It giveth understanding to the simple.”

As Mr. Clifford had anticipated, we did not return in season to meet his Bible-class at the appointed hour. But in accordance with his request Henry had taken the charge of it ; and, at the time of our return, he was engaged in free conversation with the older members of the class endeavoring to satisfy some inquiries on the subject of *original sin*, which had arisen out of a passage in the 18th chapter of Ezekiel, the subject of their lesson the same afternoon.

We went directly into the room, in which about twenty children and youth from the families in the neighborhood were assembled. They were all seated, each with a Reference Bible in his hand, at a convenient distance around a table in the centre of the room, on which lay a Commentary, a large Dictionary of the Bible, and such other books of reference, as well as maps, as would help them to a better understanding of the Sacred Scriptures.

Mr. Clifford adopted the following mode of instruction. He gave out a certain portion of Scripture, which all were expected to study attentively; and he usually commenced the exercise by hearing the younger members of the class, repeat the passage from memory, — being very attentive that they repeated the *very words* as they stand in the Bible. He then read it over very carefully himself, and in a familiar manner endeavored to explain it as he went along — hearing and answering such questions as naturally arose out of the subject.

He thought that children and youth should early be taught to make a *distinction* between the Sacred Scriptures and all other books — to look upon and revere them as the *Word of God*. He was therefore particular to cultivate the habit of first committing them to memory just as they read. It was by no means a *blind* reverence which he aimed to cherish for the sacred volume; but after they had committed the portion assigned for the lesson accurately to memory, he endeavored to exercise their understandings upon it. He questioned them severally to see what ideas they had formed of it. He tried to awaken and draw out their own reflections. And when they had become deeply interested, and he had gained their whole attention, he seized the time to give them such plain, practical instruction as was suggested by the subject, and as they seemed to require. And his remarks not only often took a strong hold of their feelings,

but they were calculated to give a strong bias to their future characters.

He understood human nature too well to think it sufficient, that a child should be merely taught to understand a subject *intellectually*. And though he did not neglect to *instruct and inform* the understanding, he aimed at more than merely to do this — he endeavored to gain their affections, and interest their feelings in the subject — to correct the moral habits and repress the first outward manifestation of their evil propensities and passions. This often led him to allude to facts which had come to his knowledge — to point out defects in their conduct and habits — and in various ways aim at their moral improvement.

No person had more implicit confidence in the Sacred Scriptures, when studied with a docile spirit, to make men wise unto salvation. And as it was his own happiness to study and practise them, so it was his delight to impart a knowledge of them to the rising generation.

He lived before the Sabbath school had formed such an era in the Christian Church, but he had already anticipated this very important institution by the manner in which he devoted himself to the religious instruction of his own children, and those of his neighbors, who were allowed to receive his instructions.

His views of the Sabbath, as we have already seen, were somewhat peculiar to himself. He

never excused himself or any member of his family from attending public worship on Sabbath morning, except for the strongest reasons. But he did not usually attend a second meeting for *public worship* on the same day. The afternoon he thought should be devoted to the moral and religious instruction of his children, and those committed to his care. His views on this subject were enlarged and extensive. He longed to see the time arrive when the whole congregation should form one great, well organized Sabbath school, over which the pastor should preside.

His plan was something like this: that the whole congregation should be formed into separate divisions, and that each division should be under the instruction of a separate teacher. These divisions might all meet at the same time in the afternoon, either in the same place, or in different places as most convenient. But an hour or two before the general divisions met under their respective teachers, the teachers themselves should meet and form a separate class, which should be under the immediate charge of the pastor himself. And the pastor ought to look upon and regard this as one of the most important duties of his office. He might then direct, and, through them as mediums, give the same course of instruction to all his congregation, be made acquainted with their difficulties, and have opportunity to answer all inquiries, without being obliged to repeat them to each indi-

vidual separately. The course of instruction and the books selected should be such as would give unity and method to the whole, while, at the same time, they should be adapted to the different states and capacities of all ages. In this manner the Scriptures might be studied and explained, and the great doctrines contained in them systematically taught and illustrated every Sabbath, in a manner calculated to awaken interest and elicit inquiry so as to be rationally understood.

The lamentable fact that almost all men are deplorably ignorant of religious truth, had not escaped the attention of a mind so observing as that of Mr. Clifford. Even the better class of society, and the members of the Church, have but little rational knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures, and read them with a blind reverence rather than in the spirit of free inquiry — with a desire to comprehend, and in order to practise the doctrines they contain. And but few have interest enough to inquire even into the dogmas and tenets of their own respective sects. Consequently their prejudices and bigotry (which are always in proportion to their ignorance) are correspondingly great. While such is the condition even of those most interested in the subject of religion, the studies and labors of a truly enlightened and good pastor, if they had one, would be lost on the greater part of the congregation. Very few are prepared to desire or to receive elevated spiritual instruction from

him. Still fewer are qualified to comprehend and follow his reasoning. And whenever he attempts to awaken their interest and fix their attention, he can do it only by descending to their level, in superficial and empty declamation, by alarming their fears, or making pathetic appeals to their passions.

Illiberal prejudices and bigotry, we know, are the inevitable consequence of such a state of ignorance among the people. Each sect or denomination, therefore, looks upon itself as the only peculiar people of God — cantoned out and chosen as the only fit subjects for the kingdom of heaven. And they but too often manifest their zeal and interest for religion, more by misrepresenting and abusing the sentiments and characters of each other, than by a life governed by the principles of the gospel.

Now Mr. Clifford thought the only effectual way in which a change can be effected, was by enlightening the great mass of the people in religious truth. They must be induced to read and inquire for themselves. They must be taught to think, and, with a liberal spirit of free inquiry, look into, examine, and compare the sentiments of different denominations.

But he saw that it was hopeless to attempt to change the character of men who had grown up in ignorance and bigotry, and who had become strongly wedded to sectarian sentiments and opinions — that they would neither be taught by

another, nor use their own reason to reflect for themselves. The only way, therefore, was to turn to the rising generation, and endeavor to implant the seeds of truth in the susceptible mind of youth, and early give them such a direction as would lead to free inquiry and impartial examination for themselves.

And nothing, he thought, was so directly calculated to remove those evils, as educating and bringing up the children of all denominations in such a way as would give them a familiar acquaintance with the Bible — thus bringing them back to the elements of all true faith — to that which all Protestant Christians, however widely they differ, acknowledge as the only foundation of their doctrines. The work he knew was a great work, and that it could be but very gradually accomplished. Several generations might pass away before the end would be fully attained. But this course he saw, must in time undermine and break up all these narrow contracted views; and, at length, bring all, who were interested in knowing the truth, together on the broad plane of free inquiry, and give them a liberal and charitable spirit as well as a rational and enlightened faith.

And even now are we already beginning to see the truth of these expectations realized. Much indeed remains to be done. But a great revolution, we can see, is already in progress. How changed, both in spirit and in faith, is the Christian church,

from its condition fifty years ago ! There is a more enlightened spirit of free inquiry. The peculiar tenets and dogmas of the several sects do not now interpose so high and so impassable barriers to association and intercourse as formerly. Indeed, the spirit of free inquiry, and that greater enlargement of reason, which have been derived from an increased attention to the Sacred Scriptures, are already turned to a rational examination and free discussion of the long established dogmas and tenets of the several sects. They are now being canvassed, and brought forth at the bar of Divine Truth, and allowed to stand or fall, as they can bear the daylight which shines from a rational understanding of the Word of God.

The unsettled and changing state of the Church is now a common subject of wonder and remark. It sometimes appears as if it were approaching an entire dissolution. Old levels seem to be heaving up and breaking — deep and radical changes seem to be taking place. But the *real Church* is in no danger amid all these changes and commotions. It is only casting off the chains and shackles of its past bondage. The Church is indeed being *revolutionized*. Its former external and sectarian character is passing away. It begins to feel renewed life ; — the silent power of truth, which comes from a more enlightened understanding of the Sacred Scriptures, is the vital principle within — causing such an inward growth and expansion of the mind,

that it can no longer be held in its past states of prejudice and bondage. Indeed, a new centre is already being formed, to which all who have the spirit of free inquiry and love for the truth, are beginning to converge. And in the midst of that centre, the *Sacred Scriptures* are enthroned as the medium of all truth to the Church, as well as the medium of its vitality and power.

But whence this change, and this changing state in the condition of the Church? It is now eighty years, as we are taught, since that remarkable event transpired in the spiritual world, which was foretold in the Sacred Scriptures, and which is there spoken of as the "*consummation of the age*;" — (the original terms being erroneously translated to signify "*the end of the world.*") At that time a crisis was formed in the first dispensation of the Christian Church. A judgment then took place, by which the world of spirits was restored to a better state of order, and so arranged as to become the medium of higher and better influences to the Church on earth. This was the beginning of a *new era* in the Church, and in the world. From this time renewed life and power has been seen and felt in the human mind. The sun of the coming day has not yet risen on the world, yet its dawning light begins to appear, and the nameless influences of approaching morning already begin to awaken the Church from the slumbers of the past, enable it to see the truth in the early twilight, and

inspire the Church with a disposition to arise and obey it.

At the same time also the Divine *Word* — “the Book” which was seen by John in his vision “in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne, which was written *within*, and on the *back side*, and sealed with seven seals,” began to be opened. For through Emanuel Swedenborg, that distinguished servant of the Lord, the true principles were then first taught by which the *internal sense* of the Word, that which is signified by what was “*written within*,” can be clearly seen so that the spiritual doctrines of the Christian Church can be now *rationaly* understood and confirmed by an enlightened reason, and a true understanding of the Word of God.

Mr. Clifford was one among those individuals in different countries into whose hands some of the works of that enlightened author early happened to fall. Though soon convinced of their truth, yet thinking the world not prepared to receive and acknowledge the principles taught in them except by gradual and almost imperceptible degrees, like Oberlin, he read and studied them in private, formed from them his religious faith and his practical views of Christian life, and endeavored to exemplify them in his own character. And, like that distinguished apostle of the Lord, whenever opportunity offered, it was his delight as well as his duty, to bring them forth in a manner suited to

the wants and the degree of preparation seen in his religious friends and associates.

He saw clearly that a very great change must of necessity take place, before the world would come into a state to receive these doctrines. Still, though surrounded by comparative darkness and disorder, he nevertheless saw and felt them to be true. And though their progress must be gradual and slow, yet he had an unwavering faith that the time would eventually come, when the truth itself would be acknowledged and established in the Church, — when the influences through the Church of the New Jerusalem in the heavens, would descend, and be so powerfully and so orderly transmitted to the Church on the earth, that the time would be fulfilled, “when the tabernacle of God would be with men, and they would become his people, and God himself would be with them — their God.”

CHAPTER X.

WALK AND CONVERSATION IN THE GARDEN.

“Blest be the Church, that, watching o’er the needs
Of infancy, provides a timely shower,
Whose virtue changes to a Christian flower
A growth from sinful Nature’s bed of weeds!”

Wordsworth.

ADJOINING Mr. Clifford’s house was a spacious garden, regularly laid out and well stocked with trees. The walks were wide, and bordered with shrubbery and flowers. At the remote end of the large central walk was an open, circular arbor, furnished with seats, and well protected from the rays of the sun by the luxuriant foliage of a sweet-scented grape vine.

After finishing his instructions on Sabbath afternoon, Mr. Clifford often walked in the garden with his wife and children an hour before tea. And they were sometimes joined by such members of the class as were on terms of intimacy with his own children.

“It is a very pleasant day, papa,” said little Charles, taking hold of his father’s hand and pulling him towards the door after Henry had finished

his instructions, "and I hope we shall now have a good walk in the garden." Accordingly after a few minutes, the whole family with their guests, and several members of the class, making up quite a large company, were seen walking leisurely in the alleys of the garden in scattered groups, some engaged in conversation on the subject of the lesson, others on the plants and flowers of the season, or on other topics suggested by what was before them.

After a while they all met, as by accident, at the arbor, where Mr. Clifford with his wife and Mrs. Livingston were already seated; Mr. Clifford was engaged in conversation, endeavoring to explain to Mrs. Livingston the doctrine of *original sin*, which had just been the subject of remark before the class.

"As the young folks have now all come to join us," said Mrs. Livingston, "I wish you would begin the subject anew, for I am already much enlightened by your remarks on a doctrine which it has always been very difficult for me to understand."

"I was just saying," said Mr. Clifford, addressing himself to Henry, "that a garden affords a very happy figurative illustration of the subject which you were attempting to explain to the class as I returned."

"On this point of doctrine," said Mrs. Livingston, "much has been written. I have read much, but have never met with a clear and satisfactory explanation."

“But what do you understand the doctrine of *original sin* to be, as it is taught by those who profess to believe in it?” inquired Mr. Clifford.

“That I may not misrepresent their belief, I will answer in their own language — that which is adopted as the *confession of faith* for the *orthodox* churches in this country,” replied Mrs. Livingston, “and which my good father required me in early life to commit to memory.”

“1. God having made a covenant of works and life thereupon, with our first parents, and all their posterity in them, they being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, did wilfully transgress the law of their creation, and break the covenant by eating the forbidden fruit.

“2. By this sin they, and we in them, fell from original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

“3. They being the root, and by God’s appointment standing in the room and stead of all mankind, the guilt of this sin is *imputed*, and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.

“6. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal and eternal.”*

“It is indeed but the part of Christian charity to treat with forbearance the characters of those who differ from us in faith,” replied Mr. Clifford.

* Ratio Disciplinæ. Confession of Faith, chap. 6.

“But what moral qualities do those impute to God who believe, that by his appointment our first parents *stood in the room and stead of all mankind*, and that the guilt of *their sin* is *imputed* to their unborn *posterity*. Such a doctrine appears too absurd to reason, and too shocking to moral sense to require a serious refutation.”

“There will always be confusion on this subject,” continued Mr. Clifford, “until we make a well defined distinction between actual *sin*, and that original, or rather *hereditary depravity*, which leads to sin.”

“Sin is a free and wilful violation of a law known as the rule of duty. It is impossible therefore that a child should incur the guilt of sin, until he is capable of knowing the law and perceiving the distinction between right and wrong; till then, he is not a *moral agent*.”

“This appears very clear,” said Mrs. Livingston. “But is there no *other* original sin than the first sin of each wilful transgressor of the known law of God?”

“There is no other original *sin* and nothing for the possession of which a child is in the least degree *guilty*, or liable to punishment,” replied Mr. Clifford. “But mark well the distinction between *sin* and that *hereditary depravity* in our nature which leads to sin. This is the subject I was going to illustrate.”

“Before proceeding to the illustration,” said

Mrs. Livingston, "I beg you would define more definitely the meaning of *hereditary depravity*."

"By *human depravity*," replied Mr. Clifford, "I mean that disordered state of man, by which he is inclined to evil rather than good. By *hereditary depravity*, I mean that disorder which is *transmitted* from parent to child, in consequence of which the child is *inclined* to evil, but for the possession of which by inheritance, he is not in the least degree *guilty*. It is his calamity — not his crime. That which tends to palliate rather than increase the guilt of actual sin.

"Every man does practically believe in the doctrine of the hereditary transmission of moral dispositions and affections, as well as in intellectual and physical qualities — or that the moral state and character of the child are affected either for good or evil by that of his parents previous to his birth. If they were in a state of purity and order, the child would have no hereditary bias to evil. The more entirely and deeply they are depraved, correspondingly strong do we expect to find the bias to evil in the child. Education and moral influences we know may do much to counteract or qualify the hereditary dispositions and character of the child, but still, notwithstanding there may be some apparent exceptions, this is the *practical* belief of all men. A belief which influences *all* rational men in forming every intimate connection of life.

“Now let us take the state of the ground, which in the spring of the year is to be formed into a garden, to represent the hereditary state of a child at birth. If descended from parents and ancestors who for many generations have been uniformly depraved and irreligious, he will of consequence inherit bad dispositions — or strong inclinations and tendencies to evil. His state will be comparatively like a soil which for many successive years has been neglected, till it is barren, or filled only with noxious weeds. If, on the contrary, the child is born of virtuous and religious parents, who have descended through many generations from ancestors of a similar character, he will possess by inheritance a corresponding state or similar dispositions. The *original* stamina of his mind, will be comparatively like a soil that for several successive years, has been well cultivated and enriched; and in which no weeds have been suffered to ripen and deposit their seeds. Thus the condition of the soil from which you attempt to form a garden in the spring of the year, will happily illustrate by analogy the original state and character of the child at birth.

The gardener in the spring first prepares the soil, and then plants the seeds of those fruits, plants and flowers he wishes to cultivate. If the soil is then rugged and barren, or covered with thorns and briars, it first requires much labor to subdue and prepare it for the reception of the seeds which

he desires to plant. But if the soil has been well subdued, and under good cultivation for a succession of years, comparatively easy will be the task to prepare it. So, comparatively, it is with the original state of the child. His preparation to receive instruction — to have the seeds of truth implanted in his mind, will be greatly influenced by the state and character of his parents and ancestors. If for a succession of ages the seeds of error only have been allowed to take root in the mind, and bear the fruits of actual sin, the offspring will come into the world with a nature hereditarily still more corrupt. And the peculiar evils which have prevailed in his parents and progenitors, will be those to which he is naturally most inclined. But if it shall have been their effort to subdue their hereditary evils, and, from a religious principle, to bring their lives into a state of conformity to the divine laws of order, then will there be a corresponding susceptibility in the mind of their offspring to *receive* instruction, and to be brought into a state of obedience to the truth.

“By this illustration, however, let me not be understood as teaching that hereditary evil even in the best of children, is ever *wholly* subdued, so that the seeds of truth are of *spontaneous* growth. I am speaking now only *comparatively*. All possess a nature hereditarily depraved, but depraved in different degrees. The life — the ruling love of the parent, is recommenced in the child, and unless

the original state and bias of his mind should be changed or modified by education, he would naturally grow up with a character similar to that of his parents. But enough, perhaps, has been said to illustrate what is meant by *hereditary depravity*, as distinguished from *actual sin*.

“ When the soil is subdued and fitted for the reception of the seed, the gardener plants the garden, and leaves his work to the genial influences of the sun, and the refreshing showers of the season. But the same influences which cause the seeds planted with the utmost care, to swell, germinate, and shoot forth a tender blade, are at the same time operating to cause the latent spontaneous weeds to spring up and grow. Many kinds of weeds appear sooner than the seeds which are planted, and they grow with rank luxuriance — even without care. Indeed, if suffered to remain, they soon choak and destroy the tender plant at its first appearing. The gardener must early eradicate those which first appear, or all his future labors will be useless. Nor is it enough to do this once. Often, and repeatedly, must it be done. No sooner does he eradicate and destroy one kind of weeds, than he finds others beginning to appear. So that he must watch with constant vigilance, and toil without remission during the whole season.

“ Just so it is with the religious education of your child. The instruction — the seeds of truth which you early implant in his mind, are from the

first in danger of being choaked and overpowered by hereditary evils, by the seeds of depravity and error, which from the first, and continually during the whole period of childhood and youth, must be eradicated and kept in subjection.”

“But,” inquired Mrs. Livingston, “are not the seeds of truth and virtue hereditary — or inherent in the native state of the child, as well as the seeds of error and vice?”

“You see,” replied Mr. Clifford, “the present state of the ground within my enclosures. It has been for some years my continual effort to cultivate and dress my garden with the utmost care. But still I find, notwithstanding all my efforts and vigilance, that spontaneous weeds, from seeds which either did not come up the preceding year, or else were brought from some neighboring field, appear every spring and require renewed attention. Though my own garden is now as you see in its present flourishing state under my renewed culture the present season, just observe on the other side of the street the condition of my neighbor’s, who is now absent from home, and who has suffered his garden to remain untilled this present year. In the early spring that soil was in the same state of preparation as my own, but now you see spontaneous weeds growing up in rank luxuriance, but only here and there are a few sickly plants and flowers among them that sprang from seeds deposited in the soil last year, but which are

not so well adapted to it as to exclude the growth of spontaneous weeds.

“Whether it will ever be that the plants and flowers which alone are good for food, and pleasant to the sight, and which it is our effort to cultivate, will be *spontaneous*, and not require to be planted anew every season, and then protected from the more luxuriant growth of native weeds, may be a matter of mere speculative curiosity. But as the ground was cursed so as to bear thorns and briars in consequence of man’s disordered and sinful state, so we are taught to hope that as he shall gradually return to a state of perfect *order* and purity, ‘that the wilderness will again be made like Eden, and the desert like the garden of the Lord.’ But it does not appear sufficiently plain to teach with confidence, whether in that primeval state of order all was *spontaneous*, and sprung from the soil without planting and culture, or whether it was a part of man’s duty included in the divine command, to ‘*keep the garden and to dress it,*’ to *plant* as well as to protect and dress the garden.

“But dropping the figure to reply directly to your question, it appears that the hereditary state of the child as affected by the regenerate state of his parents, consists in a *better adaptation to receive instruction*—to be rightly affected by the truth which he is *taught*, rather than by any spontaneous or instinctive perception of it, without its being first implanted by instruction. Indeed, it

seems to be the order of Divine Providence that the child should be taught every thing: like animals of instinct he is not born into the science of his affections, or into knowledge of any thing. And though he were not hereditarily depraved, still it does not appear that he would have an intuitive, or an instinctive perception of the truth — only that he would be in a state better fitted to receive instruction — more ready to apprehend the truth when presented, and more easily kept in subjection to its influence.

“The child is just as passive in receiving his hereditary character as this garden — has no more agency in causing his hereditary state and natural disposition to be what they are. How then can he be in the least degree responsible for them? Neither has he any more agency in determining the society and circumstances of his birth and education during infancy and childhood. How then can he be responsible for the habits in which he may be brought up, or for the doctrines and sentiments of religious belief in which he may have been educated? For all these he is not responsible, or in the least degree guilty, however depraved and erroneous they may be, until he shall have been taught, and shall have clearly seen them to be so. His first *sin* — that for which he is himself responsible, and guilty — consists in freely acting contrary to his own perception of what is right and true. Consequently, if he should never be *taught*

the truth, he could never be guilty of actual sin. And the degree of his guilt must always be relative to the degree in which his mind shall have been enlightened in the truth.

“It is not now my intention to discuss the time and circumstances of the first act of sin. It is sufficient to know that it cannot be till the child has arrived at a state of *moral accountability*, and has a clear perception that the act in which it consists is contrary to what is true and right. And the doctrine that the child is *guilty* of any other sins than those of this character — or that the sins of his *first parents* are in any way *imputed* to him, so as to render him guilty of them, ‘whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law,’ is destined soon to be numbered among the errors of past ages, and to live, it is to be hoped, not in creeds of the *living*; but preserved only as a monument of past ages — a striking example of human weakness and spiritual blindness.”

At this time the announcement that tea was ready, put an end to our conversation, and we were soon seated around the table, where instructive conversation still continued to be happily blended with great freedom and sociability.

CHAPTER XI.

SOCIAL CONVERSATION ON SACRED MUSIC.

“There prevail at present two kinds of music, as diverse as their origin — profane and religious. — In the one, there is often something of sensuality ; in the other, of sadness. There is a point in moral improvement, in which the sensual will be subdued, and the sorrowful disappear ; which will combine the pleasure of the one, with the sanctity of the other.”

SAMPSON REED.

WE have now followed Mr. Clifford through the day, and seen how he so varied the duties and employments of the Sabbath, as to give development to all the moral and religious affections without inducing weariness by the too frequent repetition, or by the too long continuance of the same exercise.

One point only remains to complete the design of this little volume, viz. to illustrate Mr. Clifford's views on the nature of the social intercourse, and of the recreations suitable to the Sabbath. And perhaps I cannot do this in a better manner than to introduce the reader at once into the drawing room, where, at an early hour in the evening, several of his intimate religious friends, who were in the habit of the most free intercourse, had already assembled.

“Before we engage in conversation on the subject proposed last week, for this evening,” said Mr.

Hodgson, one of his friends, "I must beg the favor of Miss Feroline to play and sing in solo that beautiful ode of Addison's with which she so much delighted us all the last evening we met here. I do not know *how* it is ; I am not philosopher enough to account for it, but the music which I have sometimes heard here has a very peculiar influence upon my mind — an influence not transient and momentary, but one that is *prolonged*. Indeed, the effect appears to continue and live as in the very centre of the soul ; and often, as if touched by an unearthly hand, the chords of the heart seem to vibrate anew, and at intervals the same tones seem to revive with even increased power over the mind."

Accustomed to regard music as little else than a genteel accomplishment, of little importance except as a convenient mode of introducing a young lady into society to the best advantage, — embarrassing, indeed, thought I, must be the circumstances in which Miss Feroline would now take her seat at the organ, after expectations awakened by a compliment so great, but still so perfectly undesigned.

With unaffected simplicity, however, Feroline took her seat at the organ. I saw, in the gentle, subdued expression of her countenance, a mind superior to affectation or vanity. It was the expression of early piety in a mind richly cultivated, and exquisitely alive to the beautiful and the true in nature and in art.

The ode was indeed very beautiful, and the music to which it was set, was happily suited to give the best effect to the sentiment. But though I had heard it sung a hundred times, I never before had the least idea of the grandeur of the poet's conception. Every idea now seemed to be brought perfectly before the mind, and every sentiment it contained to be *realized*, to be embodied forth in the expression. The voice, style, manner, every thing, was lost sight of. Only the conceptions of the poet were before her. Nature and education had given her power to sympathize with the poet, — to take his conceptions, and to feel as he felt. Nothing, therefore, seemed studied or artificial. Her music was the most free and simple expression of what she really appeared to understand and feel.

When she had finished the ode she left her seat, and immediately something required her to be absent from the room, but the performance was still before the mind. Every tone that gave expression to its varied sentiment was still repeated in echo. Never did a painter convey by colors a more perfect expression of the conceptions of his own mind, than did the performer by her tones and manner the real sentiment and conceptions of the poet.

After a few minutes of involuntary silence, occasioned by the influence of the music, Mrs. Livingston said, "I can now well sympathize with you, Mr. Hodgson, and excuse the degree of warmth

with which you spoke of the power of music, which I confess appeared to me rather enthusiastic at the time."

"The power of true music is indeed wonderful," said Mr. Clifford, "and I can almost believe the ancient fables related of Orpheus — that even the stones and the trees were so enraptured by the tones of his lyre, as to be gifted with the power of motion, so as to follow him in order to listen to its strains."

"But still," said Mrs. Livingston, "I am at loss to determine in what such power of music consists. To me there is something mysterious in the subject. I have sometimes heard the sweetest tones of voice united to the highest degree of mechanical skill in the performer, with no other than a very transient and momentary effect. It may have been pleasant at the time, but its influence was lost as soon as the tones died on the ear."

"The secret power of music," replied Mr. Clifford, "that which enraptures and takes captive the soul, and long holds it in willing abeyance, has a more inward source than the voice and the most perfect command of an instrument. It must come from the mind, and have its origin in the very affections of the soul. It is nothing else than the affections of the soul brought forth into corresponding words, tones, and modulations of the voice; accompanied, perhaps, by an instrument to aid and give it more fulness of expression. We cannot but sympathize with the true language of na-

ture whenever we hear it. When real grief and sorrow come forth into sighs and tears, or joy and merriment into laughter and sport, we cannot withhold our sympathies. We are insensibly affected by the same passion. But an artificial representation of natural passion has no such power over the mind only so far as the actor does himself at the time *really* feel what he expresses. The art of acting on the stage consists in the acquired powers of the actor to give himself up for the time, to an actual possession of the passion and character he personifies. An actor may have the most perfect conception of the character he is to represent, but with the best qualities of voice and physical powers for action, unless he give himself up to the entire possession of the subject, so as to really enter into the poet's conceptions and sympathies, till they, for the time, become his own, his acting will be powerless, and it can take no hold of the sympathies of his audience.

“It is the same with music. Music is but the external expression by tones of the sentiments and emotions of the soul. The performer, therefore, can have real power over others, only so far as he does truly enter into the sympathies and realize the conceptions of the poet himself. But so far as he does this, and has acquired that command of his own powers which enables him to bring forth these sentiments into a true corresponding form of words and tones of utterance, there must be life and power in his music.”

It appears that Mr. Clifford had endeavored to keep this principle constantly before his mind in the education of his children in music. He early, even from childhood, taught them to sing such juvenile airs as were adapted to their state. And as they advanced, while he left it to the teacher to discipline the voice, and to impart a knowledge of the science and practice of music, he would never suffer them to sing or perform on an instrument, without first endeavoring to give them a clear and strong conception of the sentiment of the piece before them — and of the manner suited to its performance. Nor was this all. He might do this and still leave them merely cold affected imitators. He went farther. He endeavored not only to understand the conceptions and sentiments of the poet, but to *feel* them himself. And then he found it easy to transfuse by sympathy his own sentiments into their minds, and to awaken in them corresponding emotions. Thus he led them on to that perfect, unaffected simplicity of manner, which resulted from yielding themselves up to such an entire possession of the sentiment and conceptions of the part, as caused them to forget themselves, while giving to them a natural and perfect expression.

As we have already said, instead of engaging again in such exercises of *religious worship* as were suited to awaken only feelings of *devotion*, it was Mr. Clifford's usual custom, on Sabbath evening, to meet several of his intimate religious

associates on the plane of free social intercourse, in order to enjoy the recreation of sacred and social music, and to engage in conversation on subjects suited to the occasion.

It so happened that the subject of *sacred music* had been conversed upon at the preceding meeting, and it devolved on one of his friends to embody in the form of an *essay* and read this evening, the substance of the remarks which were then made. He then read as follows :

“ Music is the natural language of the affections. It is to the affections of the *will*, what the language of words is to the thoughts of the *understanding*. Every kind and degree of affection, therefore, has a corresponding form of expression which gives to music all its difference and variety. This leads us to see at once the difference between *secular* music and *sacred* music. Secular music is the free expression by sounds and numbers of the *natural* affections and passions. Sacred music, on the other hand, is the expression of the *religious* affections and sentiments, of such affections as are not spontaneous, but which arise in the mind when the natural affections are under restraint, or have been chastened and subdued by religious principle.

“ All the difference and variety in secular music originate, in a corresponding difference and variety in the natural affections. The lively emotions of joy cannot be expressed in the minor tones and slow numbers which are suited to the affections of grief and sorrow. Neither can the feelings of

grief and mourning be uttered in the quick and lively notes adapted to joy and gladness. The natural passions of love and friendship, of courage and patriotism, of joy and grief, freely flow forth into corresponding external forms of expression, and give to secular music all its difference and variety. The words of the song, and the music to which it is sung, are only the external form expressive of the affection or sentiment from which it originated.

“So also all of the difference and variety in *sacred* music, originate in a corresponding difference and variety in the *religious* sentiments and affections. Though the ruling affection of the life may be good, yet the state of the religious affections will be various, and often changing as man is progressing in spiritual life. Although he may be well established in his religious faith, and the general current of his affections may be those which spring from love to God, and charity to the neighbor, yet he will be subject to alternations of state while passing through the different stages of his regeneration. Today, the mind may be in a state of temptation,—in darkness and in doubt, and weighed down with a sense of its evils. In slow and minor tones would this affection flow forth, in words like these :

‘Hear my cry, O God ;

Attend unto my prayer.

From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when
my heart doth faint.

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.’

“ Tomorrow, the cloud of darkness may disappear, and light may shine on the troubled spirit. The emotions of joy and thanksgiving which arise, will prompt to livelier and quicker tones, suited to corresponding words :

‘ O give thanks to Jehovah, for he is good.

For his mercy is for ever.

Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people.

And praise him in the assembly of the elders.’

“ Again, when the mind is made bare for the full impression of the works of the Creator, and the understanding is able to perceive his wisdom and his goodness as displayed in them, the affections will involuntarily flow forth in corresponding words, tones, and numbers. And the blended emotions of wonder, delight, gratitude and praise, will be manifested in the tones and numbers in which the words are uttered — in the music of the sounds, as well as in the thoughts contained in the words themselves. Indeed, words, apart from the proper tones of expression, cannot convey to another the emotions of the mind. How entirely different the effect produced on the mind by merely reading scientifically that Psalm, beginning with the words, ‘ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth the works of his hands,’ from what it is when the same words are chanted in a tune suited to give them a just expression, by one whose devotional affections seem to flow forth freely into the language and the music.

“ The mind has a sympathetic relation and com-

munication with every thing which it is habitually accustomed to contemplate. And the affections and emotions, which arise in the mind, are qualified by the objects which it contemplates, and infinitely varied by them. And when these affections and emotions are truly expressed, they will give to speech a corresponding difference of manner and tone of expression ; and to music, all its variety. And speech and music become perfect, only so far as they are fitted to give free and full expression to the feelings and emotions, already in the mind, and are adapted to awaken the same feelings in the mind of another.

“ Hence we see the impropriety of uttering, or of singing language expressive of *different* affections and emotions in the *same* tone of voice, or in the *same* tune of music. The tone and manner of speech, and the style of the music should ever vary and correspond to the affections which inspire the language.

“ Sacred music, it has been said, is the just and true external expression of the *religious* sentiments and affections. The Psalms, in particular, and many other parts of the Sacred Scriptures, are the *poetry* of those sentiments and affections — language descriptive of them, and inspired by them ; and which can be fully and rightly understood and appreciated only when under their influence.

“ Without some degree of the same feelings and sentiments they cannot be correctly read or sung. They are language descriptive of all the varied religious affections of which man can be the sub-

ject—whether they be those of spiritual joy or grief—temptation or victory—seasons of fasting and sorrow, or of thanksgiving and rejoicing—whether they arise from the contemplations of the wisdom and the goodness of the Lord in the *works* of creation, or whether they spring out of the wonders of his redeeming love. And we cannot rightly understand the language, and fully express it either by speech or by singing, only as we ourselves become the subjects of such sentiments and emotions. To a man in a perfectly *natural* state of mind the language of the Scriptures appears to have no such meaning. And it would be absolutely impossible for him to read or to chant them (except from imitation) so as to give any correct idea of the sentiments which they are given to express. He cannot learn to speak the language of Canaan while he remains in Egypt; nor to chant the songs of Zion ‘while in a strange land.’ But as he is endeavoring to keep the commandments, and as he is actually advancing in the regenerate life, he will find that his own experience becomes his interpreter of the language. As he studies and reads the Scriptures, he will find his own feelings, sentiments and emotions, there portrayed and described. He learns by experience that he is himself becoming the subject of all these various feeling and emotions. And when he reads those parts which are descriptive of the exercises of his own mind, his affections will flow forth into them, and fill the language in such a manner, as to convey to another something of its true meaning. The words

then read will become filled with the spirit and the life of his own mind.

“ So also it is with *singing* or *chanting* the language of the Scriptures. It cannot truly be sung, and be filled with its spirit and life, only so far as man is prepared to sing with the spirit as well as with the understanding — only so far as by experience the affections are in harmony with the words. And when we see our own sentiments and feelings portrayed in the words which we use, they will almost involuntarily flow forth into them ; and when this is done, in corresponding tones and numbers, then are the songs of Zion no longer sung ‘ in a strange land.’ ”

“ The sentiments advanced in the *essay*,” said Mr. Clifford, “ appear to be in the main correct. It seems, however, that there is a point in moral improvement, in which both secular and sacred music will be so much changed from their present state, as to blend and unite, in which the tones of the one will be in unison and harmonize with those of the other. But this will not be, till truth shall have gained the victory, and religion have completed her triumphs ; till all that is sensual in our natural passions shall have been subdued, and sentiments of purity and innocence, shall descend into the natural degree and social pleasures of life, from the union of goodness and truth in the spiritual mind.

“ The wide difference which now exists between sacred and secular music, results from the disordered and ascetic state of the church, from sepa-

rating religion from social life. In the existing state of both kinds of music, there does indeed appear to be the same profanation in attempting to unite and blend them on the same occasion, that there is in mixing things sacred and profane. But as the church shall advance, and its regenerating influences descend, may we not expect a corresponding change to take place in the character of our music and all our social recreations, as well as in the moral sentiments and social affections, to which they should be adapted.

“Religion should indeed chasten and purify all natural sympathies and social affections — not annihilate and destroy them. It should have the same regenerating influence on all our social amusements and recreations, in order to adapt them to our state. And though they will never be the same, yet sacred and secular music will approximate so as to unite in harmony, just as man advances in the regeneration and the spiritual acts in agreement with the natural man.

“And surely when social intercourse shall arise out of such a plane in the church, religion will not be required to appear clothed only in the dark garments of mourning, nor will the sentiments of sacred praise be expressed only in tones of sadness and sorrow. But cheerfulness will unite and join hands with devotion, free social intercourse will blend with Christian fellowship, and social pleasures and recreations will form an intimate alliance with mental improvement and religious acknowledgment. Indeed, religion will not have ac-

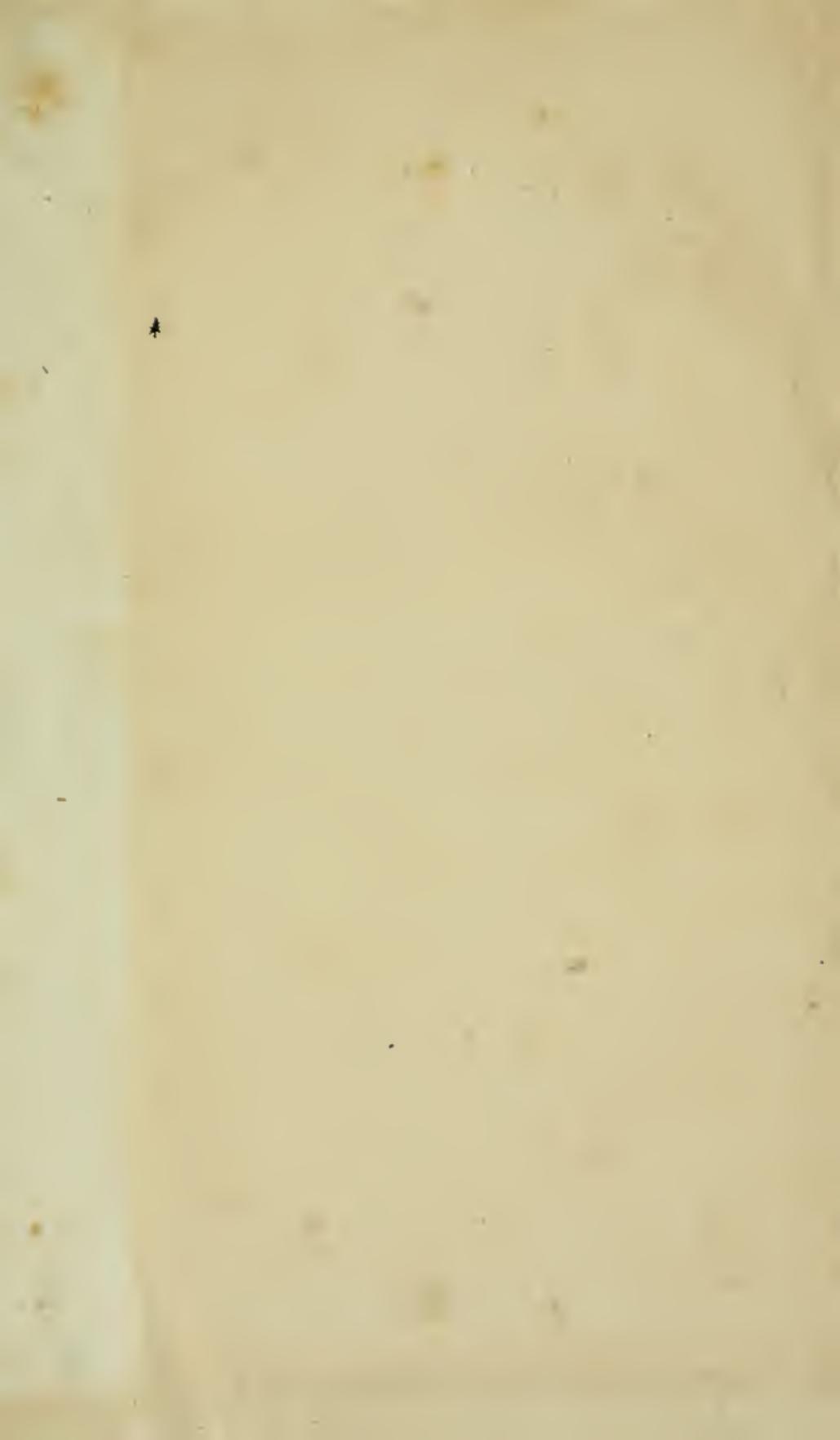
complished her work, until our natural sympathies and social affections shall have become so far purified from all that is gross and sensual, that they can freely flow out into corresponding expressions of joy and delight, and we shall have attained that degree of moral innocence and purity, in which a sense of the divine presence will impose no restraint upon the free expression of our social pleasures and delights.”

Several pieces of music were then selected, and sung. They were admirably adapted to awaken and call in exercise, as well as to give expression to such sentiments as were in accordance with these remarks, and which this social meeting seemed well suited to cherish and improve. At an early hour they separated, and I was soon left alone to my own reflections.

I shall now attempt no elaborate description of the influence this visit had on my mind. Suffice it simply to remark, that it has not been without its use. The Sabbath ever since has appeared in a new light. The remarks of Mr. Clifford on the different subjects discussed, though not in accordance with the views in which I had been educated, or my former habits, were often reviewed and attentively considered. And I shall be happy to learn, that this little volume may have had a similar influence in aiding the reader to understand more clearly the signification of the Sabbath, or in assisting him to come into a more enlightened and orderly mode of observing it.

THE END.





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