

who live, nearer to those who die. Except the grain of corn fall into the ground and die, it cannot spring forth into life. And until these poor human hearts have been buried under grief, their best affections cannot be developed in their divinest strength.

It is true, therefore, that our real happiness may become greater by its seeming diminution. We say it with hesitation, and almost with trembling; yet it is true. It is true, not only as an abstract proposition, but as a practical experience. Not by the number of our blessings, nor by their greatness, but by our capacity of enjoying them, is our daily happiness to be measured. If you would make men contented with their lot, the better plan sometimes is not to increase, but to diminish their store. They are discontented because they have too much. Take away one half, and they will learn to enjoy the rest better than they had ever enjoyed the whole. Cheerfulness of heart is often prompted by lessening the outward sources of delight, and compelling the heart to be the source of cheerfulness to itself. If we were required to name, among all whom we have known, those who have retained the most perfect cheerfulness and sweetness of temper, we should probably name some whose lives have been the continual experience of pain and suffering. Let there be Christian faith as the foundation, and in almost any given case, if our object were to train a human soul to habitual contentment and cheerfulness, and therefore to the enjoyment of life, the better course would be to place it under the discipline, not of unvaried prosperity, but of frequent pain and loss, and sometimes of severe suffering and bereavement. It is one of the sublime mysteries of the soul, that out of weakness we are thus