

## THE PURPOSE OF BEING.

## FOR WHAT PURPOSE DO WE LIVE ?

**I** ASK this question of *the man of pleasure*. He answers, "I am of opinion that 'a man hath no better thing under the sun than to eat and drink and be merry'—to make the most of a life of which preachers and moralists are continually ringing the knell in his ears ; and if he cannot escape care, at least to do his utmost to drown it. I consider that man to succeed in spending life best, who succeeds best in banishing reflection—who floats as the summer's down upon the shining surface of the stream of life and sports with the butterfly upon every gaudy flower that expands its sweetened cup before him. I am determined to have my good things in this life, and to take my chance for what may follow, 'let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.'" So he reasons—and that morrow comes, and he dies. The *man of pleasure* passeth away—but whither doth he pass ? Does he pass, think you, from his own selfish and earthly pleasures in this world to pleasures in the world to come ? Before we can believe this, we must believe that the Word of God is a fable—that the christian's faith is a delusion, and our trust a spider's web ! Alas, no ; he passes to the dark and dismal dungeon of devils, to that fearful region reserved for "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." Now he is awfully made to feel that "the pleasures of sin are but for a season"—that "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Let me turn to another character—*the man of business*. Not the man who has been taught of the Spirit to sanctify his worldly calling, be it what it may, by the Word of God and prayer—to be "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord"—but the man who is *so* busy in his worldly concerns and temporal avocations, as to find no time on his hands, and no room in his heart, for anything beyond the present fleeting existence. And we put to him the question, "What is *your* great purpose in life ?" His answer is ready—"Certainly not for such follies and vanities as the man of pleasure is chasing—a child can see *that* man is mistak-