

the eye lingers on the countenance of a relative or friend whom absence has endeared to us ? Whence the pleasing sensations with which the interchange of kind attentions dilates the domestic circle ? " Sadness and melancholy are connected with solitude ; gladness and pleasure with the concourse of men. The track of a Laplander on the snowy shore, gives joy to the lonely mariner ; and the mute signs of cordiality and kindness which are made to him, awaken the memory of pleasures which he felt in society."* All these sentiments and feelings may be traced to an original capacity for the relations in which we are actually placed. In this connection also, we may take into view the foundation which has been laid by our beneficent Creator for some of the purest gratifications which can enter the human breast ; I mean, the pleasures which result from the active charities of life.

The author of Revelation has with admirable skill accommodated his injunctions to the place which man occupies on the surface of the globe. There is, perhaps, no class of duties more frequently or more earnestly inculcated than those which spring from our social relations. It is not by any means my design to insinuate that the interesting and sublime attitude which man assumes as the creature of God and the heir of immortality, is overlooked. On the contrary, the relations in which we stand immediately to God, and the obligations thence arising, are made the foundation of all relative duties. They are never kept out of view in the system of Christian morals, and their influence is felt more or less throughout the whole detail of scriptural instruction. Love to God is elevated to the rank of a first principle in the Christian character, and that morality is denounced hollow-hearted and superficial, which rests not on the stable basis of Christian truth. But while our higher and nobler relations are thus unequivocally and habitually recognised, it is a certain fact that the duties involved in the social connections of man; hold a most conspicuous place in the great scheme of Christian

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