

benign influence on every land ; not till " the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth," and the cannons, and swords, and spears, and battle-axes of the warrior shall be broken to shivers, and forged into ploughshares and pruning-hooks. " Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever. And all people shall dwell in peaceable habitations, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places." —*Dick's Philosophy of Religion.*

### INFLUENCE OF HABIT.

A machine put in motion for the first time, does not work smoothly until (in technical phrase) it is "broken," or worn into a perfect adaptation of its several parts. Then it performs as well as the nature of its construction will permit.

The human body when first called into exercise, is feeble, or awkward, or sluggish in its movements, until, by frequent use, its several powers are brought into adjustment, and when thus "broken," the perfection of manhood is attained.

A machine works well after it has been once "broken," as long as its direction continues the same, but when that is changed, it must be re-broken before it will perform in the best manner.

The man whose physical energies are developed in the pursuit of a particular occupation, finds pleasure in continuous exertion, especially when habit has produced its familiarising effect. But when his employment is suddenly exchanged for another which calls for a new direction in the exercise of his strength, like the machine he must be "re-broken" before his handy work will be executed with the greatest facility.

The same principle prevails exten-

sively in the operations of the human mind. When that has been unaccustomed to vigorous action, and is for the first time directed to some subject of inquiry which demands a close investigation, the exercise is for the most part irksome or unpleasant ; and it requires a vigorous purpose in such a mind to keep the thoughts upon the subject long enough to become acquainted with its nature. The perceptive and reasoning faculties must be "broken," and the force of habit lend its aid to render the process of continued investigation either pleasant or profitable.

When the mind has long been accustomed to a particular class of subjects, if there be nothing disagreeable in their nature, continued action in regard to them is found to be a pleasure ; and any new direction of the mental energies, by which old associations are excluded and new ones of diverse tendency introduced, will embarrass or distress the mind until, aided by the force of habit, it begins to act with freedom and enjoy its wonted pleasure in the process of investigation. There are, however, a few rare minds whose habits of thought are in such perfect keeping, that every subject which presents itself excites an interest corresponding to the amount of thought which it may demand ; but the multitude experience a positive inconvenience or displeasure in being obliged suddenly to change the current of their thoughts.

This view of the power of habit over the mind will, if we mistake not, explain a few of those anomalisms which are so frequent in the experience of persons who have under different circumstances been subjects of the renewing Grace of God.

Some of these do not at first experience intense delight in the several duties of religion. They read the Scriptures, they pray, they meditate, they confess Christ before men, they