

and the affections. In many instances where the outward conduct continues the same, the real change of character is equally great.

I have said, in nine cases out of ten, that such will be the result ; perhaps I might have used even stronger language, for there are very few persons who are not under the necessity, sooner or later, of that strong moral exercise, through which, by the blessing of God, the worldly and selfish heart becomes religious. Sometimes it is a violent and short struggle, sometimes a slow and laborious self-discipline ; sometimes we can tell the day and the hour when it begins, and sometimes we almost doubt whether it has commenced or not, until it is accomplished. But with nearly all, in some way or other, the change must be accomplished from the earthly to the spiritual, from the worldly to the religious, from the selfish to the self-denying character, after we have come to the years of conscious self-direction.

In a few instances, equally rare and beautiful, the development of our nature is so healthy, that the soul, almost from the first, asserts its rightful supremacy. This is sometimes the result of pure Christian influences, the wise training of parents, the example of good and pious teachers, which may be called the human agency by which the Divine Spirit is working. Sometimes, even when surrounded by the worst influences of sin, in the dens of iniquity, or in the high places of worldliness, the child is seen to grow up with almost stainless purity, through some mysterious guiding of which it is not conscious, but which leads heavenward, as by an angel's hand. In such cases there seems never to be a struggle between the flesh and the spirit. The soul grows up to the heavenly life, al-