

far beneath it, by giving to the animal part of our nature the governing voice in directing and prescribing the employment of life.

3. *Lastly.* We observe that the proper employment of our life must be such as to offer *violence* to none of our powers. This remark is evidently included under the first, or, at least, is a corollary from it; but on account of its importance it seems entitled to a separate consideration. Violence may be done to the bodily powers by over-exertion; to the intellectual by neglect. The social affections are hardened and destroyed by being frequently brought into contact with objects that are repugnant to them. The moral powers suffer a similar injury from a similar cause—the conscience becomes “seared as with a hot iron” by a systematic disregard of its sacred admonitions. These are sometimes regarded as sins of little turpitude, (that is, where their sinfulness is admitted) because they terminate upon ourselves, or because they are of a negative rather than a positive kind; but there can be no doubt that they are sins of very high aggravation. For, the effect of such conduct upon the powers in question is as opposite to the will of God as it possibly can be—its tendency is to *destroy* them. Like all “sin, when it is finished, it bringeth forth death,” so far as its influence extends. The course which God intends the human powers to run, is from nothing onwards to perfection, rising higher and higher, in endless progression; but the course referred to carries them backwards to the point from which they started. And can any thing be more directly in opposition to the will of God? Whatever tends to weaken or destroy any of the powers which he hath given us, is of the nature of suicide—it is a