

family. The promise of a heaven beyond the limits of time was received into his soul as an indubitable reality, and all vices and sins were presented to his eyes, marked with scrolls, that exhibited them as the sources of misery, pollution and death. He was then surrounded with a holy atmosphere, and breathed, as it were, the air of heaven; a father's care, and a mother's love, were ever busily engaged in moulding the spirit of the little heir of immortality. But when he has acted a while on the stage of the world, and become expert in the tactics of an earthly warfare, the traces of his heavenly lore are soon obliterated, scared in the struggle for precedence and power, and buried under a heap of ungovernable passions, till he is found in the latter days of his manhood a devotee to the world, which he has been cheated to adore, and a wary and practised defender of his spirit against all the influence & argument of the logic of heaven, except when on some remarkable occasion, his thoughts are rolled back by a secret suspicion of his weakness and error, to the state in which his life so auspiciously dawned, and then for a moment the extinguished flame is rekindled on the altar, and seems as if its incense were to reach beyond the clouds. When the heart has become entirely preoccupied, when it has resisted with prosperous effort the notices of conscience and admonitions of wisdom, and has advanced by slow and imperceptible degrees to a settled state of religious indifference, it behoves us to remember that it can then be affected only by an agency superior to nature, to nature trodden to an impenetrable consistency. For such is the nature and crescent tendency of evil, that it becomes knarled and knotted with the length of time it subsists, till it can flourish in the summer breeze and maintain every branch and bough unbroken, for all the violence of a wintry trial, and only fails in its inveterate obstinacy when it is wasted and hollowed out by the hand of death.

In addressing you thus, you will ascribe it to a sense of the responsibility of our sacred vocation. You will not be apt to suppose that the tone of your religious character is hereby depreciated beneath the standard which either in truth or in public estimation is highest in the community of which you form a part. It is to the purity and depth of your religious feeling that we are to look for the enlightened conviction necessary to the bold advocacy of measures which are requisite for the improvement if not for the respectable existence of the society into which pro-