

edly careless of all that pertains to God, and the soul's highest welfare, are not visited with discontent, nor with any distrust which disturbs them, nor with any inward pain which shows itself. The language of the Bible even may be cited, that "the wicked are not in trouble, as other men are." Examples may be pointed out of persons who are easy, and contented, and cheerful, whilst they lead lives notoriously selfish and sinful. Now, in such cases, it would be idle to deny that a happiness exists. But what is its character and extent? What can be its character, seeing that its existence obviously depends on the deadness of the higher sentiments? What can be its extent, when earthly elements, only, enter into it? If truth, rectitude, love, piety, and divine communion were understood and appreciated, its very existence were impossible, for there could be no felicity where these were not respected. Such happiness, then, must be low in its character, and contracted in its extent. I will not say that it is precisely similar in kind to the enjoyment of the lower animals, for many qualities enter into it which are unknown to them. But, assuredly, it does not stand as far *above* this, as it does *below* the felicity which springs from faithfulness to the highest laws of our being, and to the heavenly disclosures which have been made to us. He who is loyal to conscience and to God—who cherishes in his soul the love of truth, purity, and goodness—who seeks, by the holy offices of devotion, to keep his spirit in communion with Christ, and with the infinite Father—who puts forth all his powers, and seeks the help of the Highest, to arise to the true dignity of his nature, and reach the heavenly destiny set before him—enjoys a happiness of which the negligent, the selfish, and the wicked man can have no conception in his condition of moral blindness and spiritual deadness. The sinful man has, by the fact of his sinfulness, limited his capacity for happiness. The avenues through which the purest bliss comes to the soul are in him obstructed and closed. The animal man receiveth not divine things. They are foolishness unto him. He cannot understand or enjoy the blessedness which comes therefrom, any more than the deaf man can draw inspiration from music, or the blind man derive delight from the beauty of color. Now, in this very circumstance, we have farther evidence of the great evil and deep malignity of sin. It undermines the foundations of man's true happiness, and then blinds his eyes to the tremendous injury it has inflicted on him. It makes a wreck of all that is high and holy in his nature, and be-