

heaven-born feelings of benevolence let us sympathise with the solitary mourner, lay ourselves open to the influence of those thousand ills which wring the soul to anguish, and listen to the heart-rending cry of penury and wretchedness. Advancing in the career of beneficence, scenes will present themselves to the compassionate eye which in opposition to our former prepossessions can hardly fail to sober our conceptions of things. Poverty and distress seen through the veil of a moral painting may be invested even with charms. But survey them in actual life and a very different impression is produced. What a variety of shades does the principle of corruption in man assume ! What a mass of misery does human life present to our view ! The obvious tendency of such practical surveys of human life is to check the emotions of pride, and to cherish the principle of humility in the widest sense of the term.

Habits of brotherly kindness and charity have also a tendency to enlarge our knowledge of human nature inasmuch as they lead us to observe man in a variety of situations ; to mark the diversities of the human character, the influence which external condition has on the heart, and the impression which deeds of beneficence make on different minds. The discoveries thus made may be practically applied to the improvement of our own hearts. They may be instrumental in weakening our attachment to present objects, in elevating our minds to those which are spiritual and divine, and in leading forward our views to that state where evil both natural and moral shall be forever unknown.

III. The exercise of brotherly kindness and charity furnishes a practical evidence of the truth and value of real religion.—In every age of the Church, much evil has resulted from the tendency which men uniformly discover to form too speculative and abstract views of religious truth. That religion, like every other subject of intellectual inquiry, admits of systematic arrangement, and may be presented to the mind in its just relations, is unquestionable.