

that the hearts of men are becoming better. There may be a softening in the features of wickedness; but there is no substantial and decided change.

Education is regarded by many as the grand panacea for the moral evils under which the world labours; and education, even of a common secular kind, we are far indeed from undervaluing. Next to religion, it is the greatest boon that a people can enjoy. Its advantages are too obvious to need to be specified. But we cannot admit that it is equal to the task of making mankind new creatures. It will do for the many, when they obtain it, no more than it has done for the few who already possess it. But do we observe that the circumstance of a person's having been well educated is any guarantee that he is either wholly, or to a great extent, free from sinful propensities? Are not persons of the highest education often the slaves of covetousness, or wholly given to sensual indulgence? Are not jealousy and bitter envy often exhibited among the learned, as much as in the most illiterate circles? Have individuals a less tendency to pride and worldly ambition, in consequence of being well educated, than they would otherwise have had? Is it not rather, for the most part, the reverse? Secular education, therefore, whatever advantages it may have,—and they are many,—is not the philosopher's stone that can transmute an iron age into a golden one.

But what nothing else can do, the Gospel of the grace of God effects. It slays the wickedness of the human heart. Sin receives its death-wound from the arrow dipped in the blood of the Lamb. The huge leviathan laughs at other weapons, and it shakes them like mere hay and stubble from its iron scales; but it is powerless to resist the sanctifying influence of divine truth, brought home to the understanding and the heart through the Holy Spirit. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature :