

has been largely abandoned, and sincerity to a great extent forsaken. Falsehood has been found to serve the short-sighted purpose of the hour, and men have become false and insincere. Hence throughout a great portion of human intercourse, men feel that they are not to be mutually relied on. Selfishness disturbs the balance of virtue, and where self-interest is supposed to interfere, it is held peculiarly necessary to be cautious in extending our confidence. A current maxim of worldly prudence enjoins us to suspect every one. I do not dispute its aptness in the present condition of society. But, surely, it is not a maxim calculated to augment the ease or happiness of him who holds it, and acts upon it. To proceed upon the idea that we are surrounded by falsity and insincerity, is like making a journey in doubtfulness and the dark. We are always subject to uneasiness and alarm. It is in the broad sunlight of truth and rectitude alone, that we can have that confidence which brings felicity and cheerfulness. Do I perceive a face in which the traces of suffering are visible—where the marks of unspoken pain are legibly drawn? This, too, is the effect of sin. The rightful sovereignty of reason and conscience has been overthrown in that soul. These have been cast from their place of eminence, and some wild passion, or ill regulated desire, has assumed away. But conscience will not readily acquiesce in such a usurpation. She puts forth her remonstrances, solemn, startling, and sharper than any two edged sword. Her utterances are given with the sanction of heaven upon them, and they make themselves heard and felt. Hence an inward warfare is established, painful above all others to him who is the subject of it. The voice of conscience, to-day asserting the right, leads him to make resolutions, which the power of passion, ruling in the wrong, induces him to break on the morrow. The pain felt in such trials none can understand, save those who experience it. It robs the soul of serenity and peace, and, however concealed, will inscribe its sad characters on the outward man. The happy and contented spirit assumes a happy and contented expression, which the vexed spirit, stung by its own sins, or borne down by earthly cares, can never make its own. At the bottom, then, of all human discontent, and complaining, and distrust, and suffering, lies sin. This is the root of all the evils which afflict our race. This, the source of all our real misery.

An exception may be taken to some of these remarks, founded on common observation. It may be said that many men who are avow-