

*extensive*, because it naturally and necessarily leads us to contemplate man in his relation to time and to eternity,—in his relation to God, as a creature, a subject, and a prodigal son. It leads us to contemplate man in his relation to all other fallen, or unfallen beings in this world, and in all other parts of the universe to which we are now related, or to which we may in after ages be related, and with whom we may have close and everlasting intimacy. It is an *attractive* as well as extensive subject. The greatest the wisest and the best of men have turned their thoughts in this direction in all past generations. There is something in this grand theme, fitted to interest, expand and fascinate the dullest and most untutored mind. It has a charm in it at once for the meanest and mightiest of the sons of men. It is fitted to attract and ennoble, to enrich and elevate the greatest and most gifted of the sons of men, and overwhelm with admiration and profound interest and awe the strongest intellect. It is also a preeminently *practical* subject. When we study man, his constitution, his dignity, his degradation, his motives, his duties, his future destiny, we are not studying a subject, or contemplating an object far removed from ourselves. We are not watching the movements of some far distant planet with its teeming population. We are not plunging into empty space, and clasping in the arms of our imagination some wild and worthless speculation. We are not discussing some dry abstract proposition in dogmatic theology. But we are considering a subject which has to do with ourselves. We as individuals constitute the subject-matter of our subject. Our own being, our constitution, our consciousness, the acts of our own minds and the characters which we are forming, the influence which we are personally exerting, and the destiny which awaits us, rise up before us as the objects of our contemplation, and the subjects of our study.

On one occasion the psalmist gave utterance to the following beautiful and sublime language, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained: What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." The patriarch Job, too, asks the question, "What is man that thou shouldst magnify him? And that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him? and that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?" The im-