

increase till they behold Him in whom they will rejoice throughout eternity.

Here, then, is the religion which brings us to God,—assures us of our reception of pardon at his hands,—eases our consciences of a sense of deserved punishment,—and instructs us in the knowledge of the Divine will. Tell us, ye wise men, what there is in all this to lead us to melancholy. Does not religion, instead of creating gloom, even in the estimation of reason, fill the soul with a pleasure of which philosophy never dreamt, and which the votary of mere worldly amusement cannot possibly enjoy?

The religion for which we contend, is not the enthusiasm of which we so often hear, but is founded on a volume that affords a thousand proofs of its divinity. Hence it is frequently spoken of as being the exercise of faith, or “the belief of the truth.” And what is there in the Bible that is calculated to make us unhappy? Were the Gentile nations, who were involved in the thick gloom of moral darkness, happier than we are; or are the parts of the globe where idolatry and superstition now govern men, more blessed than those who possess the Scriptures? Does not the Bible prove an eminent blessing to the world? But for this, in what a state must we have remained! How ignorant of God! How exposed to the design of our spiritual foes! How awfully gloomy and uncertain the prospect of another world! How sublime are the doctrines taught us by this sacred volume! what a revelation of mercy does it make! and what a world of eternal glory and happiness does it reveal for all who believe in its facts; set their love on its Author; and walk in the ways he has marked out!

It is true that infidels have objected to the Bible, but for what reason? Because it opposes their sins,—it shews the inseparable connection between transgression and punishment.—it declares man to be in a lost and

ruined state, and invites him, as a guilty sinner, to the cross of Christ for pardon. Now it is true that there is something in all this very humbling to a proud and carnal heart; there is much to destroy the happiness which men are seeking; and till a change takes place in the heart, till a man is begotten again by the exercise of faith in the word of truth, he must remain unhappy. But let him examine the evidences of this book, let him receive it as the word of Jehovah, and what a change does he experience? Every doctrine in the sacred volume gives him pleasure, because it shews him the grace of God providing for his salvation, his purity, and his joy; every fact it records is an attestation that they who are opposed to God are miserable; while those who enjoy his friendship see all the events of his providence conspiring for their good; every prophecy yields him happiness, because while “it confirms the truth the more,” he sees all the perfections of Deity engaged in the fulfilment of his word; every miracle increases his confidence, for it displays the Creator opposing and overturning the laws of nature to add to the enjoyments of his people; every invitation makes him happy, because it draws him nearer to the source of felicity, and makes him welcome to drink with holy joy out of the wells of salvation; every promise affords him encouragement amidst the trials of life, gives him peace in the midst of confusion, and affords the promise of unspeakable and eternal bliss beyond the grave. And is not the belief of the Bible then calculated to make us happy? If it be not, what is?

For has it not a tendency to fill us with the noblest and purest pleasure, to have a flood of celestial light thrown upon our path, that we may know the nature, the character, and the way to enjoy the friendship of Deity? Does not the soul rejoice in