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UTILITY OF KNOWLEDGE IN RELATION TO A FUTURE WORLD

The following chapter is taken from a work entitled "The Improvement of Society," written by Thomas Dick, now living in Broughty-Ferry, near Dundee, Scotland, one of the greatest Christian philosophers and authors of the present day. His works on "Mental Illumination," "Celestial Scenery," "Philosophy of Religion," "Philosophy of a Future State," and a variety of other subjects, have given him a name and a fame that will not soon perish. The subject of this chapter is of capital importance, as embracing views and reasons highly calculated to enlist our whole energies to promote virtue and destroy vice both in ourselves and society generally, since the character we form in this *primary or preparatory state* shall not be lost forever. We solicit a careful examination of his premises and conclusions.

"Man is a being destined for eternity. The present world through which he is travelling is only a transitory scene, introductory to an immortal existence. When his corporeal frame sinks into the grave and is resolved into its primitive elements, the intellectual principle by which he was animated shall pass into another region, and be happy or miserable, according to the governing principles by which it was actuated in the present life. The world in which we now reside may be considered as the great nursery of our future and eternal existence, as a state of probation in which we are educating for an immortal life, and as preparatory to our entering on higher scenes of contemplation and enjoyment. In this point of view, it is of importance to consider, that our present views and recollections will be carried along with us into that future world, that our virtues or vices will be as *immortal* as ourselves, and influence our *future* as well as our present happiness, and consequently, that every study in which we engage, every disposition we now cultivate, and every action we perform is to be regarded