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THE DISCIPLINE OF LIFE AND CHARACTER.

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PART I.

WHAT is the meaning of man's life on earth? Various answers may be given to this question; but they may generally be resolved into two. From one point of view he is an animal, the highest and noblest species in the animal kingdom indeed, yet only a higher than the other kinds of animals, produced by the same process of evolution which had previously brought forth the lower types: From another point of view, which we hold to be the true one, man is a divinely originated creature, made in the image of God, having an animal nature by means of which he is connected with the world in which he lives and with the lower forms of life over which he has dominion, but also having a spiritual nature by which he is akin to God and capable of fellowship with Him.

Whichever view of man's nature we may adopt, on one point we must needs be of one mind. Man is here, that he may realize the idea of his being, of his nature. If he is merely a finer kind of animal, then his train-

ing must be directed to the development of all the parts of his constitution in the most complete and harmonious manner. If he is a creature moral, spiritual, intelligent, free, immortal, then all these elements must be taken into account in his education, and must have assigned to them a position and influence corresponding with their relation of authority or subordination. The reality of such a constitution of human nature is not here under consideration, and in truth it is hardly necessary to argue the question. The coarse materialism which made mere quantity of pleasure the supreme test of rule of life has almost passed away. There is no school of thought, requiring serious attention, which denies that there are in man higher and lower powers and functions, that certain parts of his nature are manifestly entitled to command, whilst other parts are as clearly intended to be in subjection. We are all agreed that appetite should be governed by reason, and not the reverse.