

— a more sacred tie than that of blood ; spiritual sympathies are the ground of a union more intimate than any which can be founded on earthly circumstances ; religion makes the nearest friends. The value of domestic connexions is not denied. It is rather admitted, by adopting the titles of these connexions as signs of the spiritual bonds which have their origin in faith and duty. The nearest and dearest of those connexions which centre in home, the scene of love and joy is yet not so precious, says Jesus, as the mutual attraction of hearts which have acknowledged the influences of my Gospel, reconciling and binding them to the Father. They are the truest friends, who help us to God's will. Those are the most sacred and most enduring sympathies, which are entwined around the same stock of piety ; even as vines of different names, growing along the same support, stretch forth their tendrils to one another, and are woven into inseparable union.

The sentiment of this declaration is liable to no charge of extravagance. It is sustained by the analogies of the very home which it may at first seem to undervalue. Strong and tender as are the ties of kindred, it is the living together, the sharing of the same lot, the participation in common cares and labors, trials and pleasures, that binds those under the same roof together with the invisible chains of love. They become endeared to one another through the consciousness of being acted upon by the same influences, which, like electric wires, convey common emotions to their hearts. We may trace this law of sympathy still farther. In the same family we find intimacies and friendships growing up out of similarity of taste or occupation. The heart is not content with natural and