

**THE EDUCATION OF THE
HEART: BRIEF ESSAYS ON
INFLUENCES THAT MAKE
FOR CHARACTER**

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The education of the heart: brief essays on influences that make for character by William L. Watkinson

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WILLIAM L. WATKINSON

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FOR CHARACTER**

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The Education of the Heart

Brief Essays on Influences
that make for character

By

WILLIAM L. WATKINSON, D.D.

*Author of "The Blind Spot," "The Bane and the
Antidote," etc., etc.*



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The Education of the Heart

I

THE PROCESSIONAL OF LIFE

Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.—*Ps. 119 : 54.*

THE New Year will be good throughout if we step to this music. There are strong reasons why the statutes of God, His laws, and His commandments should be highly prized in the house of our pilgrimage. They show *the true path*. Elsewhere the psalmist pleads: "I am a stranger in the earth; hide not Thy commandments from me." Life is strange to us, and at every step we need counsel. The divine statutes amid a thousand false tracks show the royal pathway leading straight to rest. If we strike out paths for ourselves, there will be little singing. The statutes of God constitute *our complete defense*: "The house of my pilgrimage." A world of danger is pictured in this image of human life; but from the manifold peril we find immunity in the great leading

thoughts and signals of God's most holy word. Despite ambushed banditti, ravenous beasts, mirage and simoom, drought and famine, we shall be absolutely safe in the highway of law. "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the ransomed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." The statutes of God discover *the secret of blessedness*: "Thou art the blessed God: teach me Thy statutes." The sacred law is the condition of blessedness, not its limitation. The subordination of our will to the order of the material universe is obviously the condition of physical health and happiness; and the submission of our will to the order of the eternal universe is not less assuredly the secret of fulfilled and perennial joy. We gather the flowers of Paradise on the austere slopes of Sinai; the gate called Beautiful is the strait gate; the narrow path of self-denial is the golden street in which the angels walk. The statutes of God assure us of *the glorious goal*. The precept is a promise; the divine law is full of the sense of eternity: "To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." We are not doomed to be buried in the wilderness; in every act of obedience to the spiritual commandment we blessedly taste