

**ON THE FORMATION OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHARACTER:
ADDRESSED TO THOSE WHO ARE
SEEKING TO LEAD A RELIGIOUS
LIFE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649662203

On the Formation of the Christian Character: Addressed to Those Who Are Seeking to Lead a Religious Life by Henry Ware

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

HENRY WARE

**ON THE FORMATION OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHARACTER:
ADDRESSED TO THOSE WHO ARE
SEEKING TO LEAD
A RELIGIOUS LIFE**

FORMATION
OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

PREFACE.

IN presenting to the religious public this little book, the writer has only to say, that he undertook it because he thought that a work of this character was needed and would be welcome. During his active ministry, he had often felt the want of a book on personal religion, different, in some respects, from any which had fallen in his way; and when compelled by ill health to relinquish his pastoral cares, he attempted to beguile some of the languid hours of a weary convalescence by efforts at composing such an one. The result has come very far short of the idea which he had formed in his mind. The book was written at distant and uncertain intervals, upon

journeys and in public houses, and has been now revised for the press in the midst of other cares, which have allowed no time for giving it the completeness he desired. Yet, as it belongs to a class of writings of whose importance he has the highest sense, and the multiplication of which, as well as the increase of a taste for their perusal, he esteems in the highest measure desirable,—he ventures to hope that this slight effort will not be wholly lost; and that it may at least do something towards exciting others to a preparation of more efficient works, which shall nourish the spirit of devotion, and extend the power of practical faith.

Cambridge, May 16, 1831.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I.	
<i>The Nature of Religion, and what we are to seek.</i> —Religion described—exemplified in the character of Christ—an arduous attainment—caution against low views	5
CHAPTER II.	
<i>Our Power to obtain that which we seek.</i> —The capacity for religion in human nature—education—the natural and the spiritual life—man's ability to do the will of God—false humility—salvation by grace	19
CHAPTER III.	
<i>The State of Mind in which the Inquirer should sustain himself.</i> —Sense of unworthiness—anxiety of mind—rules to be observed respecting retirement, conversation, public meetings	24
CHAPTER IV.	
<i>The Means of Religious Improvement</i>	47
1. <i>Reading.</i> —Duty of seeking religious knowledge—its advantages—time to be given to it—the Bible—to be read for instruction in truth—for self-application—selection of other books	47

II. <i>Meditation</i> .—Its object—habitual thoughtfulness—seasons of meditation—enjoyment to be expected in them—caution—three purposes to be answered	68
III. <i>Prayer</i> .—Its necessity and value—importance of set times—method to be observed—subjects—posture—language—frequency and brevity—ejaculatory prayer—faith, fervor, perseverance—answers to prayer—topics—in the name of Christ—caution—spirit of devotion	82
IV. <i>Preaching</i> .—A divine institution—necessity of preparation for hearing—a critical disposition—reflection on what has been heard—on keeping a record of sermons—weakness of memory—a taste for preaching to be preserved	119
V. <i>The Lord's Supper</i> .—Its object two-fold, profession of faith, and means of improvement—who to partake, and when—an affecting and comprehensive rite—an opportunity for silent worship—conclusion	130

CHAPTER V.

<i>The Religious Discipline of Life</i> .—The means of religion not to be mistaken for the end—watchfulness, daily duties and trials—discipline of the thoughts, dispositions, passions, appetites—conversation—ordinary deportment—guard to be kept over the principles—and over the habits	149
--	-----

FORMATION
OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

INTRODUCTION.

I AM anxious to bespeak the reader's right attention before he enters on the following pages. They have been written only for those who are sincerely desirous of knowing themselves, and are bent upon forming a religious character. They can be of little interest or value to any other person, or if read with any other view than that of self-improvement. I venture therefore to entreat every one, into whose hands the book may fall, to peruse it, as it has been written, not for entertainment, but for moral edification; to read it at those seasons when he is seriously disposed, and can reflect upon the

important topics presented to his view. I am solicitous to aid him in the formation of his Christian character, and about every other result I am indifferent.

I would even presume, further, to warn one class of readers, and that not a small one, against a danger which lurks even in their established respect for religion. † That general regard for it, which grows out of the circumstances of education and the habits of society, may be mistaken for a religious state of mind; yet it is perfectly consistent with religious indifference. † A man may sincerely honor, advocate, and uphold the religion of Christ on account of its general influence, its beneficial public tendency, its humane and civilizing consequences, without at all subjecting his own temper and life to its laws, or being in any proper sense a subject of the peculiar happiness it imparts. This is perhaps not an infrequent case. † Men need to be made sensible that religion is a personal thing, a matter of personal application and experience. Unless it is so considered, it will scarcely be an object of earnest pursuit, or of fervent, hearty interest,