

**LIVE JOYFULLY; OR,  
THE DUTY AND MEANS  
OF BEING HAPPY**

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Live Joyfully; Or, the Duty and Means of Being Happy by Joseph Belcher

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**JOSEPH BELCHER**

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BY THE

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"INTERESTING NARRATIVES FROM THE SACRED VOLUME, ILLUSTRATED,"

ETC. ETC.

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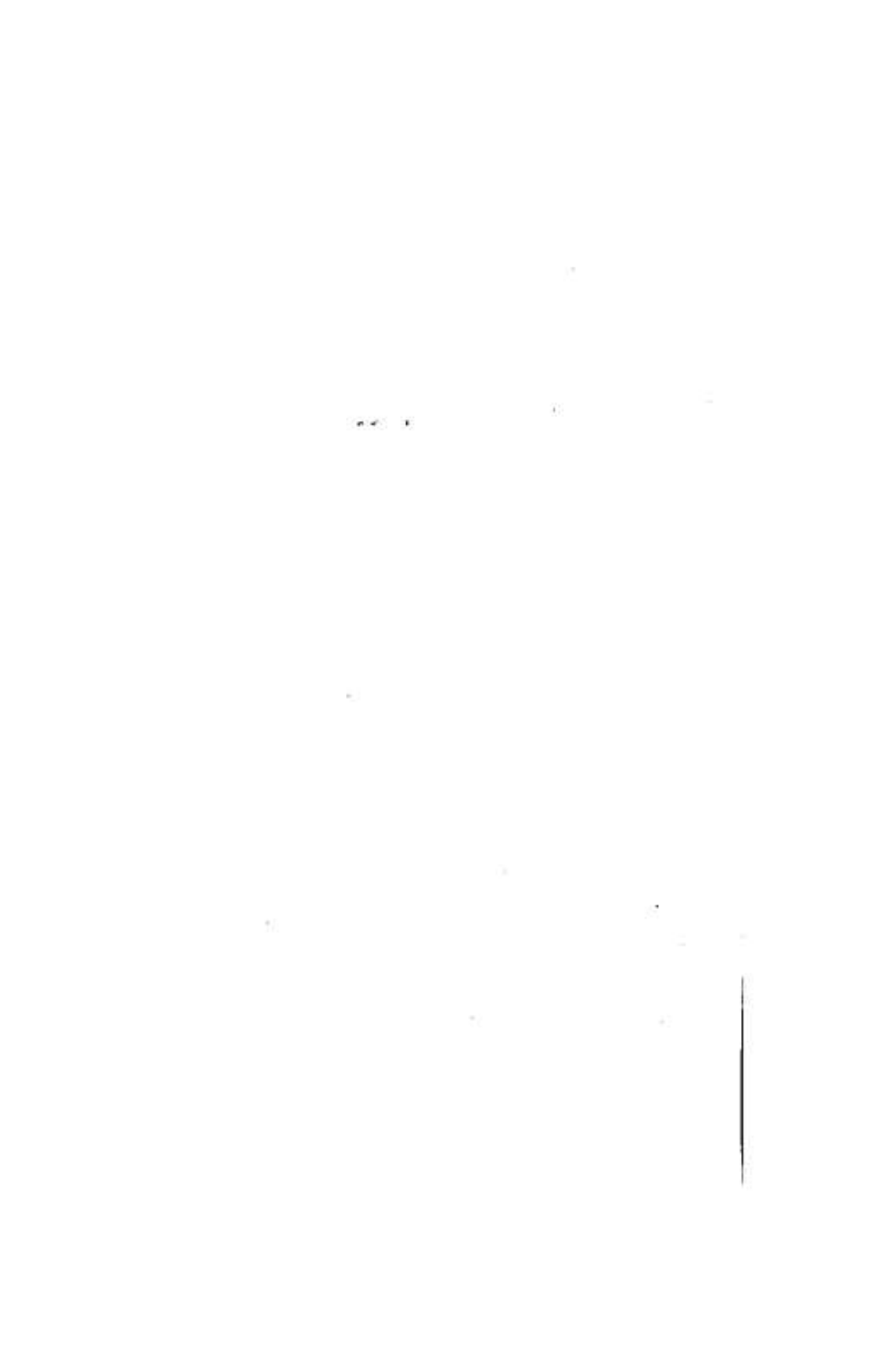
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# LIVE JOYFULLY!

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## CHAP. I.

### MAN CAPABLE OF HAPPINESS — PURSUES IT IN IMPROPER PATHS.

What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy—  
The soul's calm sunshine, and the heartfelt joy.

“LIVE JOYFULLY!”—Such was the counsel given by Solomon, the wisest of mere mortals; and we are neither disposed to explain away the injunction, to affix to it a qualified sense, to *spiritualize* it, as a certain censurable practice has sometimes been called, nor in any other way to lessen the force of it, considered as the high command of Heaven. It is true that some persons, who have entirely misunderstood the nature of true religion, have represented it as unfavourable to enjoyment, and as cherishing a spirit of moroseness and

melancholy. If it be so, defend religion, and extend it who may, we will not. Could the statement be proved, that it takes from man one source of real happiness, or that it exposes him to one real evil, we would renounce it for ourselves, and do what we could to scout it from the world. But the result of examination—the facts we have been able to collect—the observations we have made—and the effects we have felt arising from its cultivation, have proved that the service of God and the enjoyment of happiness are the same thing.

Will the reader indulge us with his attention while we endeavour to state a few facts which appear to illustrate the nature of happiness, and to enforce its attainment as a duty? We think it by no means difficult to prove that he who lives and dies in a state of misery has neither accomplished the design of his creation, nor fulfilled the benevolent will of the great Author of his nature.

And, in the first place, we would observe that God has formed man capable of the enjoyment of happiness. We are aware that

human beings have fallen from their primeval state of innocence and glory. We know that the nature of man is polluted, that his moral sense is depraved, and that he naturally chooses evil in preference to good. We are deeply conscious, too, that by his conduct man has closed the door of felicity against himself, has provoked the awful and infinite anger of the Sovereign of the universe, and has dared omnipotent justice to consign him to remediless and eternal woe. We have wept over the intellectual and moral powers of man as in ruins; we have traced all around us the melancholy results of rebellion against God, in the sufferings which humanity endures; while we have contemplated the future with a fear which conscious rebellion against the Judge of all only could inspire.

But what then? Man has yet a soul which bears so much of the image of the Deity as to be immaterial, to pant for objects more spiritual than earth can give, and to desire something unspeakably grand and important beyond the grave. He yet has powers