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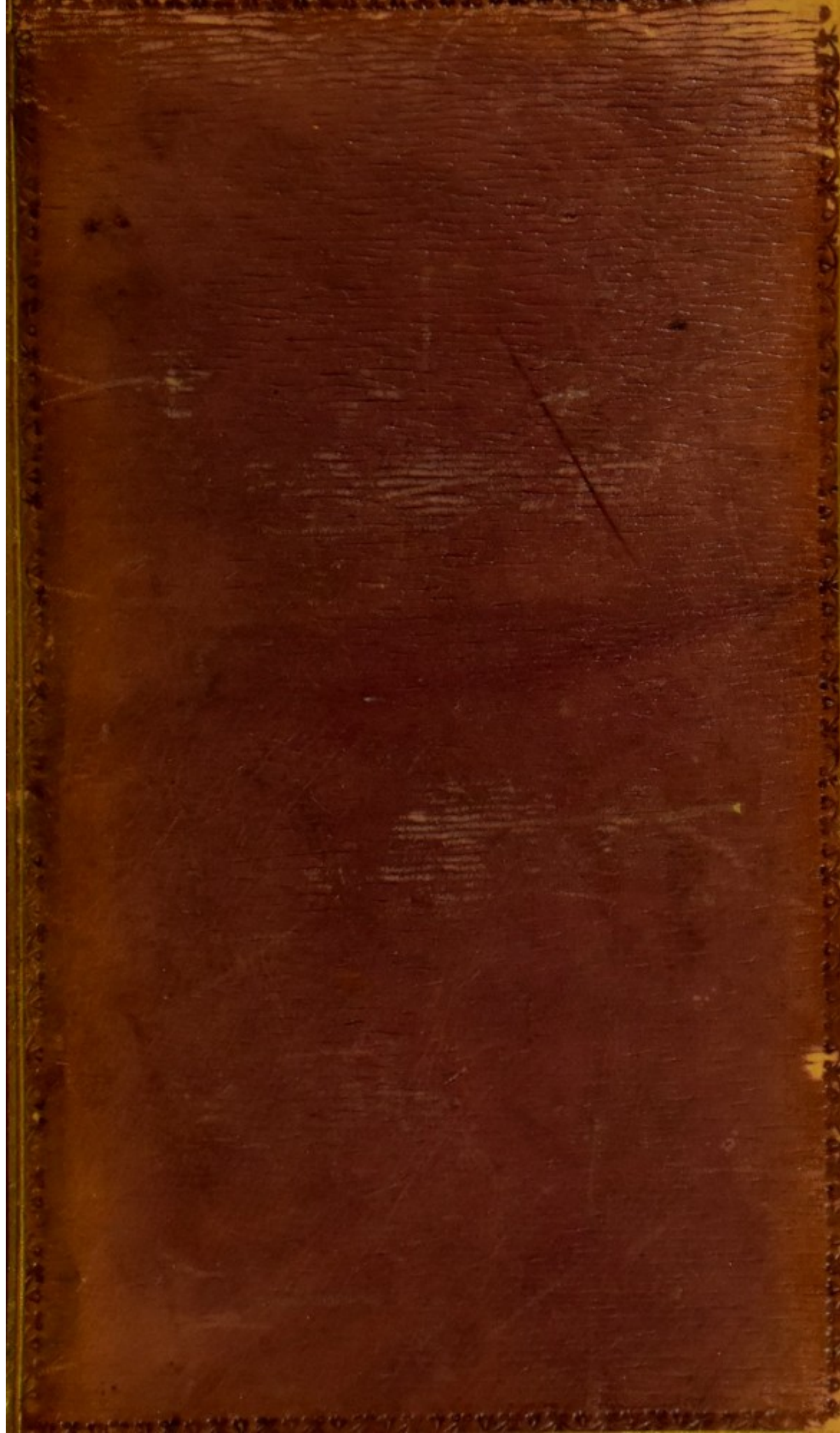
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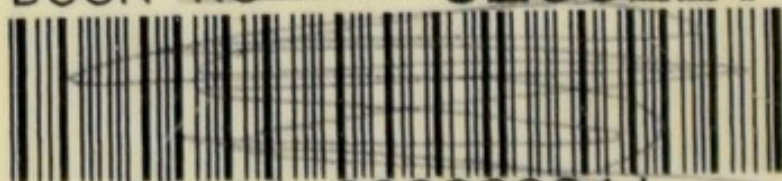
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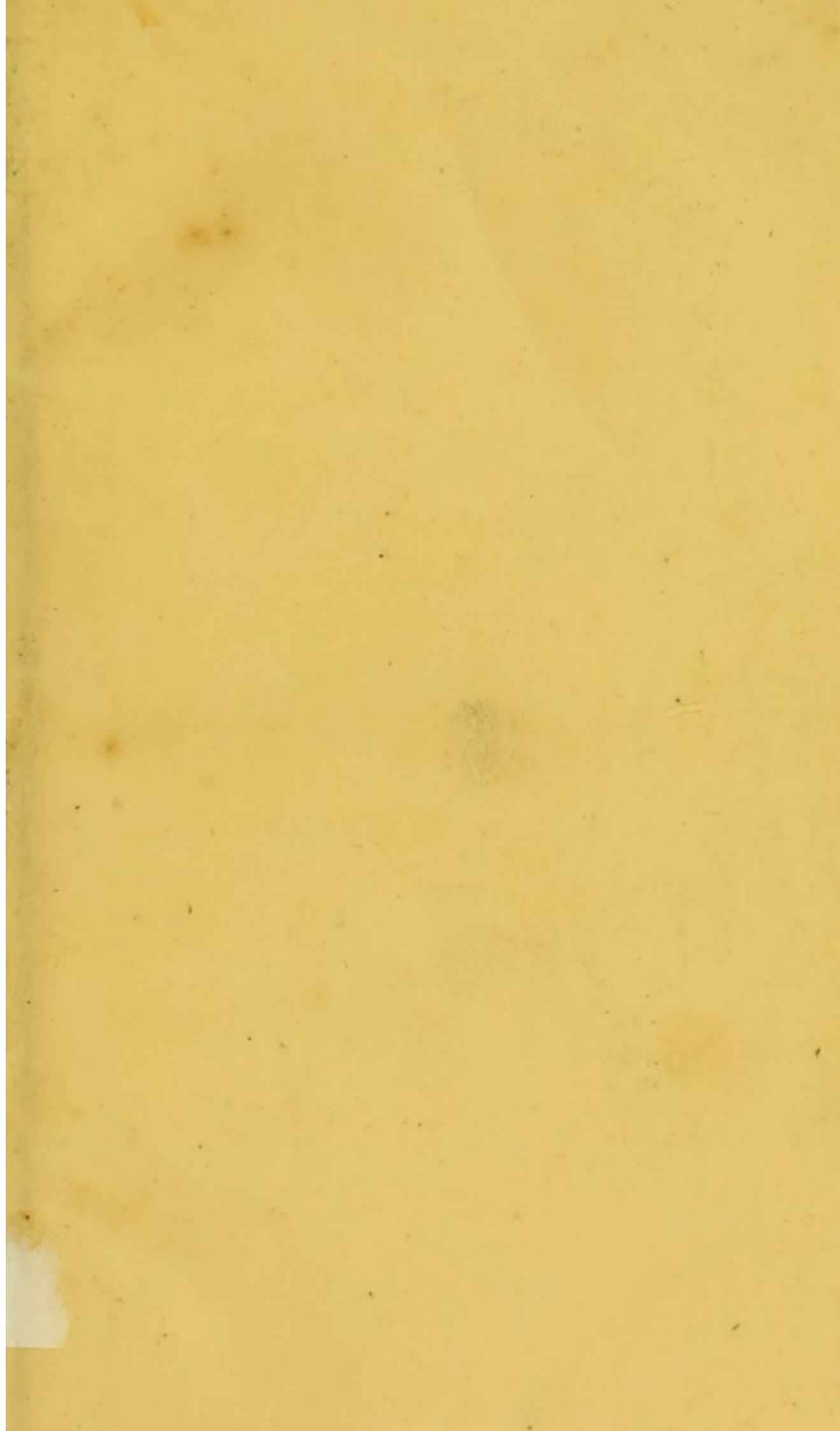
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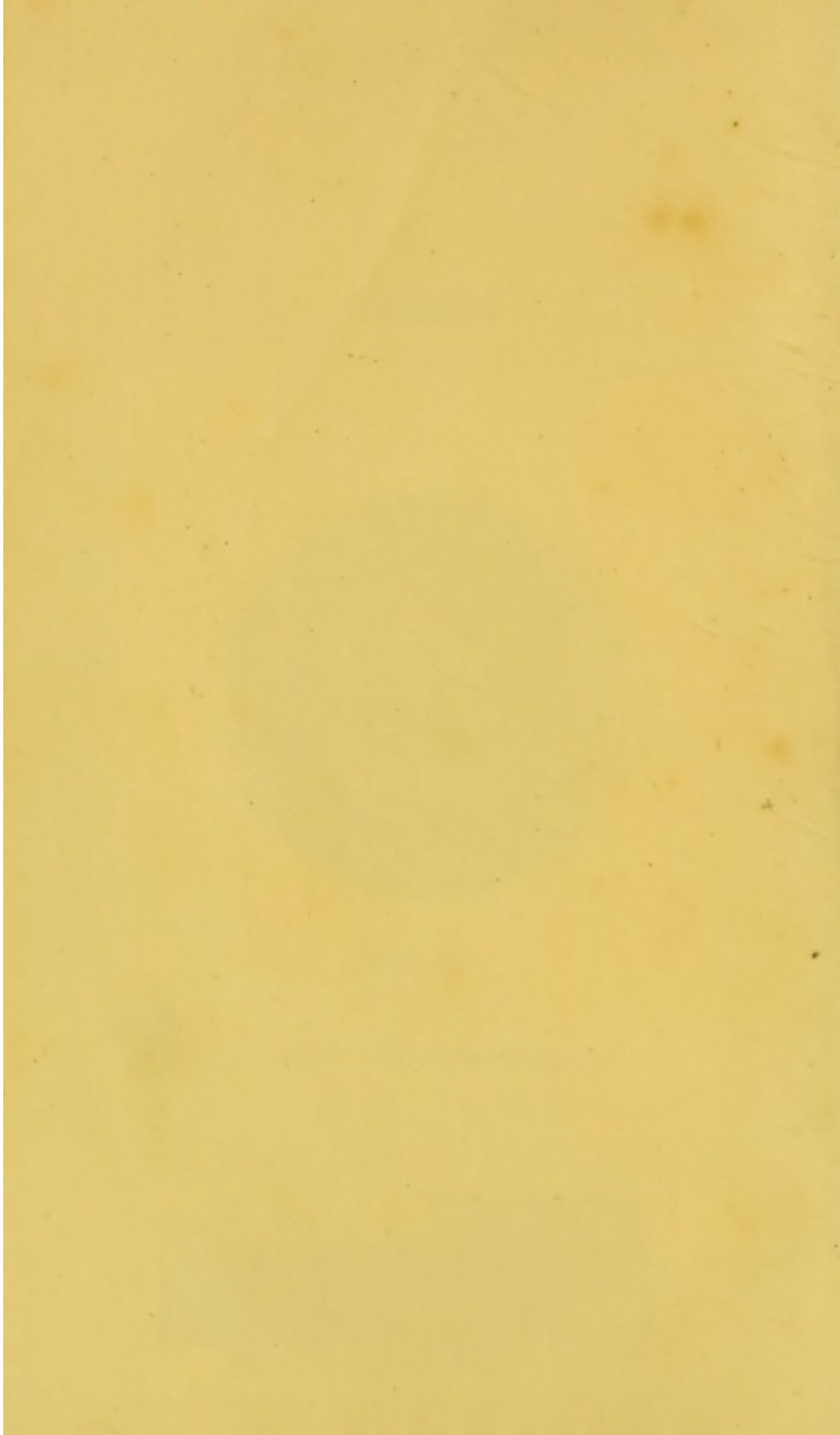
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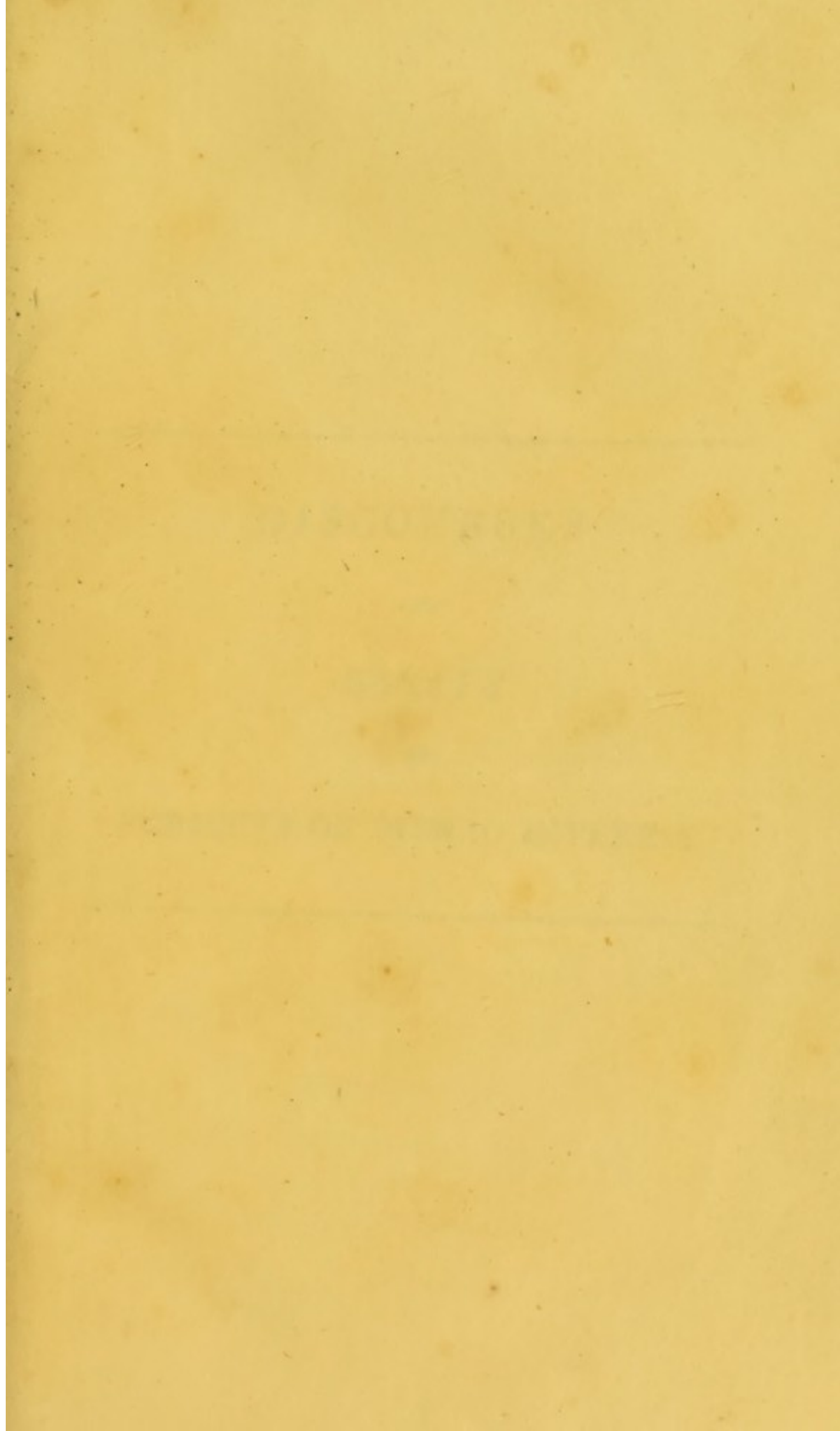
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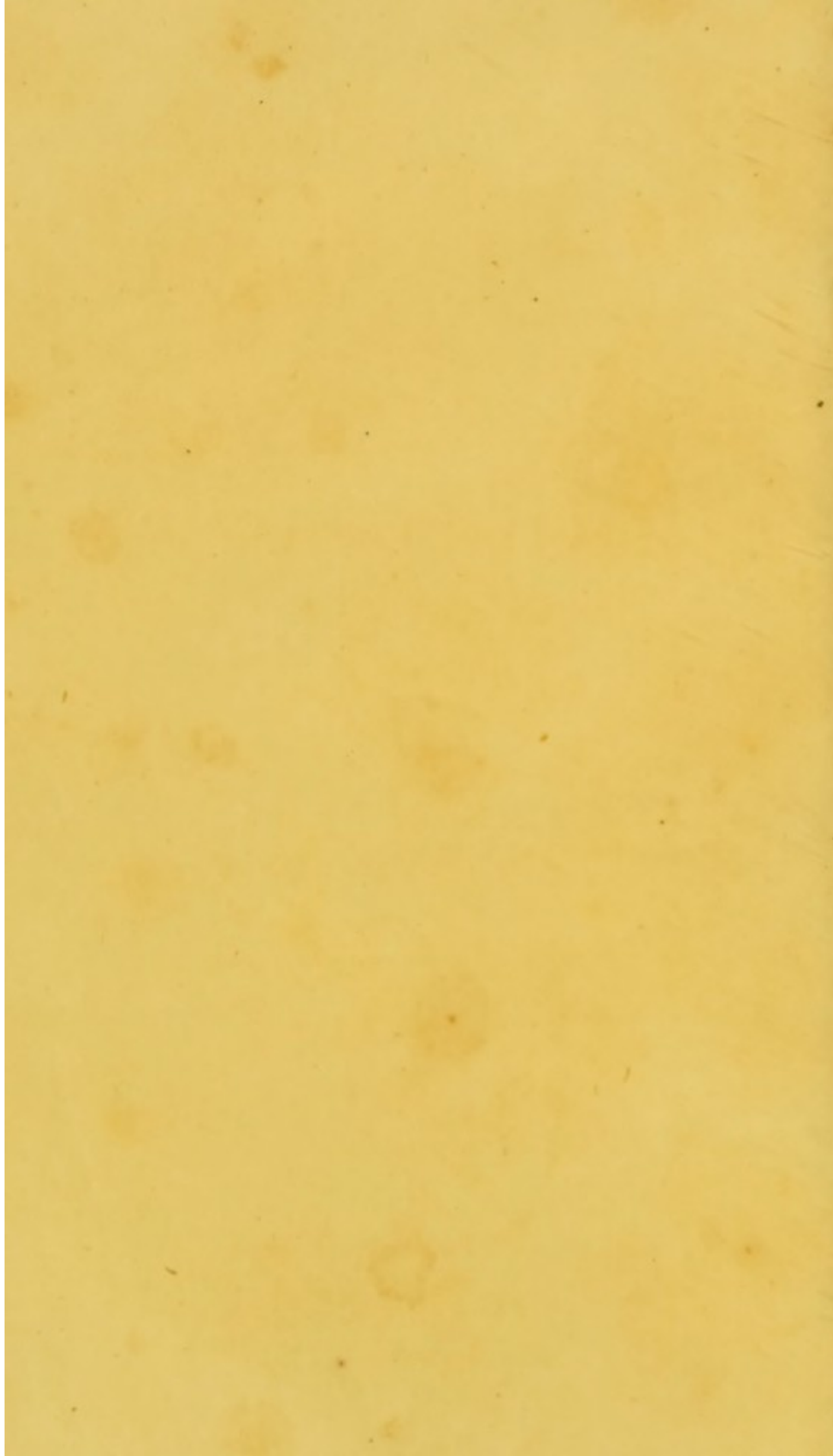


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DISCOURSES

AND

ESSAYS

ON

SUBJECTS OF PUBLIC INTEREST.



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DISCOURSES

AND

ESSAYS

ON

SUBJECTS OF PUBLIC INTEREST.

BY

STEVENSON MACGILL, D.D.

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

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1819.

DISCOURSES

AND

SUBJECTS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

OF THE

REV. JOHN W. B. ...

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PREFACE.

THE “Remarks on Prisons” were published about nine years ago. They are now re-published, because the First Edition has been sold, and the Author was desirous, in his limited sphere, to promote what appeared to him just views on this important subject. The Discourses were also published formerly: But the Notes subjoined to some of them, the Essays “on Bridewells,” and “on Provision for the Poor,” are now published for the first time.

THE
COUNTY

The following is a list of the names of the persons who were appointed to the office of Justice of the Peace for the County of ... in the year 18...

The names of the persons appointed to the office of Justice of the Peace for the County of ... in the year 18... are as follows:

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ON

PRISONS.

IN considering the objects to which we should attend, in the erection and management of prisons, it is of importance for us to fix precisely in our minds, the proper ends to which prisons should be destined.

The justifiable ends of a prison, seem, to me, to be the following: to keep in custody the accused, till the period of their trial; to keep in custody the condemned, till the sentence of the law be executed; and, lastly, to punish offences by confinement.

To imprison a fellow-creature, on the mere accusation of guilt, can be only justified from necessity. Accordingly, in the case of lesser crimes, other

means are employed, to secure the appearance of the accused on the day of trial. But, in the case of great crimes, the punishment of which would be more severe than the forfeiture of any obligation which could be given, nothing can be done to secure the ends of justice, but to confine the person of the accused. This, however, it is never to be forgotten, is a grievous hardship. It affects the character, the estate, the present comfort, and future welfare of a person who is not found guilty, and may be innocent. It must never, therefore, be inflicted, until the necessity be legally ascertained; and, when inflicted, no unnecessary evils should be permitted to augment it. The evil should be softened, as far as is consistent with the public safety, and the necessary regulations of a general place of confinement. Such accommodations as are consistent with these objects, should be afforded. If not held innocent, such prisoners are, at least, not to be held guilty. They are, on no account, to be placed on the same level with condemned criminals; to be doomed to the same treatment, or to be forced into their society.

The imprisonment of persons condemned, is obviously necessary, till their sentence be carried into execution. Persons of this description, have not only forfeited their liberty for a period, but may

justly receive such farther marks of degradation and displeasure, as may declare the nature of that state to which, by their crimes, they have sunk, and may operate as useful means to deter others from similar guilt. Such circumstances of degradation, and even of personal hardship, during their confinement, may be justly rendered a part of that punishment which their crimes have incurred. It is obvious, however, that even with respect to these persons, justice and humanity require, that no evils be added, which are not implied in the design of their imprisonment, and the nature of their sentence.

These observations apply, with equal force, to the case of persons, the direct punishment of whose crimes is imprisonment. The law may connect such circumstances of hardship with privation of liberty, as their crimes have merited, and the interests of the community may require. But what these circumstances are, the sentence of the judge should pronounce. Such evils as the law did not contemplate in the punishment of their crimes, whether they arise from the harshness and caprice of superintendants, a bad establishment, or careless management, are equally contrary to equity, humanity, and good government.

The confinement of persons for debt, is a case which still remains to be considered. The just causes for imprisonment, on account of debt, seem, to me, to be chiefly the following: to prevent the debtor from leaving the country, before a fair account of his estate has been given, and his conduct been fully investigated; or, as a punishment of negligence, profligacy, fraud, obstinacy, dishonest schemes, or any criminal actions, which the debtor has committed.

The first of these is similar to the case of imprisonment on the accusation of crimes, till the period of trial: The second is of the same nature with imprisonment as a punishment for crimes.

It is obviously right, and for the general interests of society, that creditors should be able, by some method, to secure the person of a debtor, till his conduct, and the state of his affairs have been investigated. Yet, when cautionary security can be procured, sufficient for the personal appearance of the debtor, or when no presumption of flight, or just grounds of suspicion are apparent, confinement should not, in the first instance, be employed. When confinement seems necessary for the security of the creditor; such accommodation as is consistent with se-

curity, and the general police of a prison, should be afforded. For, it is ever to be remembered, that the debtor is only suspected; he may be honest, and only unfortunate. Punishment should not be inflicted where guilt has not been proved, nor additional evils added, without necessity, to him who may be already bowed down with misfortunes. It appears to me also, that after a debtor has made a fair surrender of his estate, his creditors should have no longer any power over his person. A negligent, profligate, or fraudulent bankrupt should be punished; but, he should be punished after a trial by impartial men, and according to the sentence of a judge. Thus, while the unfortunate would be protected from the caprice and cruelty of irritated and disappointed men; the gambling speculator with other men's property, the profligate spendthrift, the unprincipled swindler, and betrayer of confidence, would be held up to just opprobrium, and not confounded, as they often are at present, with the honest and unfortunate. The creditor also, would enjoy a greater probability of payment from the future labour and exertions of his debtor; credit would, in the ordinary pursuits of active life, receive equal security; and the public would enjoy the benefit of the industry and talents of many able though un-

fortunate citizens, who are, at present, kept languishing in a jail, useless to themselves, their families, and society.

If the unfortunate, however, may be thus, at the will of every creditor, imprisoned; care, it is evident, should be employed, not to confound them with the guilty.

These observations, lead us to consider prisons as destined principally to two objects: Confinement for Security, and Confinement for Punishment. In many places, these two leading objects are united: where distinct houses are erected for them, the latter are denominated Bridewells and Houses of Correction. Many views are applicable equally to both;— nevertheless, their objects being different, they should be separately considered. The thoughts which follow, are chiefly directed to prisons of the first description.

I. The first object, without doubt, presented to the attention, in considering the erection and management of prisons, is the means which are necessary to secure the person, and prevent the escape of the prisoners.

Attention to this object must pervade every part of the building, and every rule which is appointed

for its internal regulation. It is a spurious humanity, often the effect of affectation, which raises complaints against those hardships, which the very object of a prison renders unavoidable. Every plan of alleviation, must always be rendered consistent with the design for which prisons are erected, nor must we indulge even the most amiable feelings, at the expense of the general interest. It is pleasing, however, to observe, that the humanity of the present age, joined to its superior skill, has abolished many of those means for securing prisoners, which in former times were employed. The dark and deep-sunk dungeon is now abolished. Iron chains, goads and bolts for rivetting of prisoners to the ground, are now used less frequently. By a proper plan of building, such means become unnecessary. In many of the prisons both at home and abroad, irons, in no form, are employed except when prisoners are riotous. They occasion, at all times, great inconvenience, and often pain, to the prisoner; and, therefore, unless when indispensably necessary, should never be employed as a mean of security; but to put in irons persons who have not been condemned, is peculiarly cruel, and contrary to the spirit of our laws, except in cases of extreme necessity.

II. The HEALTH of the prisoners should be carefully attended to, in the erection and management of prisons.

Imprisonment, of itself, from its natural effect on the spirits, will, in many cases, injure the constitution. This circumstance should render the community more anxious to provide such means of health, as the nature of a place of confinement will permit; and still more to guard against practices and customs which must be directly pernicious. It is no part of the punishment designed for prisoners of any description, that they should be given up to rheumatisms, scurvy, dropsies, fevers, and consumptions; that their strength should be wasted with sickness, their constitution undermined, and their lives embittered with excruciating pains, with debility of body and of mind, and their necessary consequence, poverty and wretchedness. Yet, in such an unfortunate manner, have many of our prisons been constructed and managed, that often the unhappy prisoners have been punished, not only with confinement according to their sentence, but with diseases and sufferings of the most direful kind; sometimes with death, aggravated by every horror. If justice and humanity revolt at such treatment, even of the guilty, what feelings should

be awakened by the thought that it may be possibly the fate of the innocent and unfortunate! Every consideration which the human heart should feel, imperiously demand that such evils should be remedied; and that both in the situation, the arrangement, and management of prisons, the most careful attention should be paid to the air, exercise, cleanliness, and diet of the prisoners.

1. The situation selected for a prison, should be airy and dry. Nor is it enough, in judging of it, that the inhabitants in its neighbourhood are healthy. The state of persons who are moving and changing their place in the course of every hour, is vastly different from that of those who are in a state of confinement. Security should be also had, that the situation which is at present good, should not be afterwards injured by adjoining buildings, or neighbouring nuisances. It is of importance, in the choice of a situation, to attend even to the most frequent current of the winds. As prisons will be commonly in the neighbourhood of great towns, a situation should be chosen, from which the air of the city will be generally blown away. Grounds which afford either a damp foundation, or which are exposed to fogs, should be avoided. The excellent Howard, for obvious reasons, prefers a spot

which is near a river or brook. “ But, he observes, I must annex this caution; that it be not so near, as that either the house or yard shall be within the reach of floods. This circumstance was so little thought of at Appleby in Westmoreland, when their new gaol was built, that I saw the walls marked from nine inches to three feet high by floods.” In general, perhaps, it would be prudent to consult medical men of knowledge and judgment, on a subject of so much moment to the health of our fellow-creatures.

A prison should be so constructed as to allow the prisoners the benefit of fresh and wholesome air. To secure fresh and wholesome air, should be a great object of attention, in the erection of every building which is to be inhabited: But it is of particular importance in a prison. Inhabitants of other houses are as frequently in the streets and fields as in their own dwellings. The prisoner is confined to his dreary habitation, and cannot seek the relief of a free respiration, by a change of place. Fresh and wholesome air, which is of importance to every man, is especially important to him. It is necessary, not only to the preservation of the health and comfort of individuals, but to the recovery of those who are sick, and to check the tendency to infec-

tion. To secure this important object, in the erection of a prison, the rooms assigned for the prisoners should be placed on the second floor, rising higher than the surrounding walls. The dimensions of every room should be such, as will admit a quantity of air sufficient for the free respiration of the prisoner; and a sleeping-room should be allotted to each person. By the operation of well-known laws in nature, the most fatal effects attend confinement in places too small for the inhabitants. Of this, the well-known fact which took place in the hole at Calcutta, affords a melancholy proof. "In 1756, out of one hundred and seventy persons, who were confined during one night, one hundred and fifty-four were taken out dead. The few survivors ascribed the mortality to their want of fresh air." Besides giving attention to the dimensions of the rooms, and assigning a sleeping-room to each person, it is of the utmost importance, to provide for every room, and every corner of a prison, the means of free ventilation. For this purpose, the window of each room should, if possible, look to the open fields; and the house should, in general, be single, with a passage running the whole length of the building, so that every room might occasionally have air from each side. In a parish with which

I am acquainted, are two villages. One of them may contain above one thousand inhabitants; the other only about two hundred. In the large village, the houses are of one story, a passage runs through the middle, and opens generally, by what is called the back-door, into a small garden. Each house has one or two families. In the small village, the houses are of two and three stories; they are double, and may contain, on each floor, two or four families; no passage runs through them, nor can a free ventilation be enjoyed. The populous village is healthy; the small village is so sickly, that, during many years when under my observation, it had, in itself, more diseases among its few inhabitants, than existed among the extensive population of the other. While on this subject, may I not be pardoned for expressing my ardent wishes, that those who may be able to remedy the evil, would give attention to the condition of those wretched hovels which the labouring classes in great towns are obliged frequently to inhabit? Pent up in the narrowest and dirtiest lanes, in houses damp, confined, airless, crowded and huddled together, more like places for cattle than for men; they breathe a foul and putrid air, and lose all spirit and desire for cleanliness, decency, and order. The ef-

fect of such circumstances, not only on the health and comfort, but morals and character of the people, is great. Those habits of decent neatness, so important, not only to comfort, but to dignity of mind, and a maintenance of character, are lost; because the opportunity of forming or maintaining them, is not given. The woman loses the desire to please, and sinks into a slattern. Home affords few inducements to the husband, after the labours of the day. His family presents a scene of filth and disorder. Spiritless and unhappy, he is tempted to seek abroad, the comfort which his own dwelling cannot give; and habits of drinking not unfrequently complete the wretchedness of his condition. If such be the effect on the parents, need I enlarge on what must be the state and character of the children! Can it be inconsistent with the liberty of the subject, or the rights of private property, to guard against such evils? To fix, for example, a certain width for the streets, and lanes, and passages of a town, within which they shall not be contracted; to oblige proprietors to set apart places for dunghills, and means for carrying off stagnant water from the houses they let, according to their number and population; and to appoint rules for keeping clean, not only the larger streets, but the

narrowest lanes and corners of the city. These might all be objects of public police; and few objects, I am persuaded, would produce a greater effect on the comfort, health, and manners of the people.

To have an opportunity, occasionally, of going into the open air, and enjoying the benefit of exercise, must also, it is obvious, be of great importance, not only to comfort, but to health. The example of many prisons, both in England and on the Continent, sufficiently shows, that this can be granted with the completest security of the prisoners. Courts, therefore, should be annexed to every prison, in which the prisoners, at convenient and stated hours, might have the opportunity of taking exercise in the open air. These courts should correspond with the different wards of the prison, and the different classes of persons who are confined. In populous districts, where the prisoners will be, probably, numerous, a court should be appropriated exclusively for Females; another for Debtors; a third for the Accused; and a fourth for the Condemned. In the generality of prisons, where the number of prisoners is small, it might be thought hard to provide courts of large dimensions for a few of each class. When circumstances do not permit a large appropriation of

ground, a similar, though not equal advantage, might be obtained by fewer courts, if different periods of the day were allotted for different classes of prisoners. And, in general, perhaps, it might be more advantageous, to have a few large and airy courts for exercise, than a greater number which are narrow and confined. In such cases, however, the strictest attention would be necessary to the right division and allotment of hours. Without this, not only the most hurtful effects would follow to the moral interests of the prisoners; but those of a better character being unwilling to mix with others, and to be exposed to the rudeness of their manners and conversation, would be deprived of that benefit which was designed, and which the more worthless, by such means, would almost exclusively enjoy.

2. **CLEANLINESS** is of the first importance to health. It is particularly necessary to persons in a place of confinement. The air being more confined, is more easily infected with putrid exhalations; nor are the noxious effects of uncleanness of person, counteracted by exercise, or fresh currents and changes of atmosphere. It is particularly necessary to be attended to in prisons also, on account of the low and regardless habits of the generality of

prisoners. Besides, the feeling excited by confinement, leads to indolence and the neglect of their persons, even in men of a better order. Unless means be afforded, encouragement given, and rules steadily enforced, for the maintenance of cleanliness, both in their rooms, their clothes, and their persons; dirtiness, in its lowest forms, and with effects peculiarly hideous, will prevail. This important object must, without doubt, greatly depend on the internal economy and management of the house. But the best rules will be inefficient, unless such attention be paid, in the construction of the building, as may render good regulations not only practicable, but easily observed. For this purpose, the rooms and their furniture should be of such a kind, as may be kept clean without difficulty, and as may afford little harbour for dust or vermin. The prison should also, in convenient places, be abundantly supplied with water. Necessary closets should be provided for every floor, and wide and well constructed sewers should be connected with every side of the building. To each court, should be appropriated a pump-well and a bath. To these, a general wash-house and a boiler should be added. The state in which many persons are brought into prison, renders the bath highly useful; the boiler is necessary for cleansing

their clothes, both at entrance and during their imprisonment. Howard recommends that an oven should be also employed. "Nothing," says he, "so effectually destroys vermin on clothes and bedding, nor purifies them so thoroughly, when tainted with infection, as being a few hours in an oven moderately heated."

For the maintenance of health, it is also farther of importance, that to every prison should be attached a small infirmary for the sick. This is obviously proper, not only for the recovery of the diseased, but to prevent infection from extending its noxious influence among the healthy. The upper part of the prison will, in general, form, for this purpose, the safest and most commodious retreat, secure to the sick greater quietness, and a freer air, while it removes them to a distance from the great body of the prisoners. It is unnecessary to add, that where an infirmary is necessary, medical aid must also be provided.

These provisions will be of small effect, unless accompanied with corresponding regulations.

I suppose it to be the duty of every jailer, to inspect each morning, every quarter of the prison. In the course of this inspection, it is his duty to observe, that the windows of the sleeping rooms be

opened for the admission of fresh air. Two hours, at least, each day, should be allotted to each class of prisoners, for enjoying, in their different courts, the benefit of air and exercise. Inquiry should be made into the health of every prisoner on his admission, and a survey taken of the state of his clothing and his person. If required, let his clothes undergo a thorough cleansing, and his person be purified and sweetened by the bath. When unable to furnish what is necessary himself, the humanity of the public should provide coarse but decent clothing, and bed-clothes suited to his condition. Let me not be thought too minute, when I add the following observations: Every prisoner should be obliged to keep his person clean, and his apparel as neat as his circumstances will permit: he should be obliged, if able, to sweep his own room each morning; when unable, other prisoners, for a small reward, should perform the office for him: once, at least, in the week, each room should be washed; and twice in the year, the walls should be white-washed with lime: when the beds are of straw, the straw should be frequently changed; the sheets of the prisoners should be shifted once in the month, their linens on every Sabbath: each court being provided with abundance of water, should be washed at least once

in the course of every day. Speaking of some of the prisons of Paris, Howard makes the following remark: "Most of the courts are paved, and they are washed three or four times a-day. One would hardly believe, how this freshens the air in the upper rooms. I felt this once and again when I was in the chambers; and an Englishman, who had the misfortune to be a prisoner, made the same remark." It is most truly observed, that the habit of cleanliness is not only conducive to health, but to decency, order, diligence, and good manners. This is confirmed by the remark of Captain Cook, who declared, "that such men as he could induce to be more cleanly than they were disposed to be of themselves, became, at the same time, more sober, more orderly, and more attentive to their duty."

How surprising is it, that amongst a people so just and humane as the British, those objects should have received so little public attention! The evils existing in our prisons, the benevolent Howard, many years ago, laid open, in plain and moderate language, yet in a manner fitted deeply to affect the mind. In many places, he excited attention, and great improvements were made. But in many places also, and in places where attention might chiefly have been expected, little has been done,

and the most flagrant abuses continue to exist. In London, the seat of government, and where, from the number and character of the prisoners, it is of the first importance, not only to individuals, but to the nation, that the state of prisons should be made an object of regular and systematic attention, evils of the worst nature continue to prevail. Who could have thought, that, after all his labours, Howard should have had to record, in his last publication, such facts as the following?—"Newgate—No alteration! In three or four rooms, there were near one hundred and fifty women crowded together, many young creatures, with the old and hardened, some of whom had been confined upwards of two years; on the men's side, likewise, there were many boys of twelve or fourteen years of age, some almost naked. In the men's infirmary, there were only seven iron bedsteads; and, at my last visit, there being twenty sick, some of them naked, and with sores, in a miserable condition, lay on the floor, with only a rug. There were four sick in the infirmary for women, which is only fifteen feet and a half by twelve, has but one window, and no bedsteads, sewers offensive, prisons not white-washed." The Fleet, the King's Bench, and many others of the principal prisons, he marks, in like manner, with

the emphatic words, “no alteration!” I believe that several alterations have been made since that period; but how few are yet in that state which justice, humanity, religion, an enlightened policy, would dictate. At present, I consider the subject with a view to the health of the prisoners; and is, even now, that object attended to in Newgate, for example, as might be expected in one of the first prisons of the capital of such a kingdom as Britain? Unless it be greatly changed since I had an opportunity of visiting it, the accommodation for debtors and for females, is deplorable. In the account given of it in the *Picture of London*, where mention is made of some important improvements, during the sheriffalty of Messrs. Smith and Phillips, we find still the following facts: “The rooms (for debtors) are twenty-three feet by fifteen; the number of inhabitants, is from twelve to twenty in each room. The debtor’s side contains, sometimes, three hundred; and, for this number, a court is provided of fifty by thirty-two feet. In four other yards, felons are lodged, and in another, women felons; a wretched place, in which, in three wards, are sometimes kept upwards of one hundred women * !”

* Since the first edition of those remarks was published, various publications have directed the public attention to the wretched state

If such be the state of prisons in London, what may be expected to be the general state of them throughout the kingdom? I fear that this object will never meet with that general attention which it deserves, while an interest to disregard it, exists among those to whom the charge of it belongs. Many good regulations have been made, respecting prisons, by Parliament; but of what avail are laws, if proper means are not employed to enforce them? By the excellent act, 24th of George III. justices of peace are empowered to build and repair jails, when necessary, and to assess the counties for the expense. But let me not be thought illiberal, when I observe, that men often cease to be moved with evils to which they are accustomed, and which do not affect themselves; that individuals, considering the remedy of them not to be their special business, seldom will make it an object of their attention, and still less of their exertions; and, that still less will these exertions be generally made, when the object

of prisons in the United Kingdom. The state of the Borough Compter, a London Jail, as represented by Mr. Buxton, almost exceeds belief. It proves an observation which I have often seen verified, that evils of the most dreadful kind are daily taking place in our neighbourhood, without exciting our attention, without even an idea of their existence! Extend this observation to the evils existing in India, of which many who had resided there declared their ignorance and disbelief.

is likely to meet with opposition, and to *affect the purses of the very men who are to carry the object into effect.* Evils which do not affect ourselves, are likely to subsist a considerable time, before the generality of men come forward to remedy them at their own expense, especially when that expense would be considerable. The justices are, in reality, parties in this question; and they ought not to be the sole judges and executors in a business, against which they have an individual interest. But these laws, with all the good regulations which they contain, for a reason with which I am unacquainted, *do not extend to Scotland!* That *British* statutes, on a subject of this nature, should not extend to Scotland, seems very extraordinary. Some reason, without doubt, must have induced a humane legislature to make the exception. At present, I am certain, neither the wealth nor the spirit of the country, would operate as an objection; and, that some regulations are necessary in this country, as well as in England, no man, who has attended to the state of prisons in Scotland, or the imperfect state of the law respecting them, can doubt for a moment.

3. THE FOOD of the prisoners, forms an important article under this head, which still remains to be considered.

In England, the poor debtor is allowed, by law, two shillings and fourpence per week; convicts, two shillings and sixpence, for their maintenance. This incongruity seems to be remedied, by a statute of the most salutary nature, passed in the thirty-first year of his present Majesty's reign. By this statute, it is provided, "it shall be lawful, for the justices of peace, at their general or quarter sessions, or any adjournment thereof, from time to time, to order such sum, or sums, of money, to be paid out of the county rate, towards assisting such prisoners, of *every* description, as, being confined within the said jails, or other places of confinement, are not able to work, or, being able, cannot procure employment sufficient to sustain themselves by their industry, or who may not be otherwise provided for, by virtue of any law, statute, or of any custom or order, *such food and raiment*, as the said justices shall, from time to time, think necessary for the support of *health*; and such money shall, accordingly, be applied in conformity to directions to be given by the said justices." By the same statute, justices are empowered to make bye-laws, for enforcing, among prisoners of *all* descriptions, *cleanliness, temperance, decent and orderly behaviour*.

In Scotland, the statute expressly says, that the prisoners are to be kept at their "own expenses." But in the case of poor prisoners, who are criminally *convicted*, the statute ordains, "commissioners and justices, at their quarter-sessions, to rate every parish for a weekly proportion, for the entertainment of those poor prisoners, providing they do not exceed the sum of five shillings Scots money." By this statute, only persons *convicted* had a maintenance provided by the public. This defect was supplied by the general statute of George I, for securing the peace of the country, by which it is provided, that certain assessments of counties shall be applied, "for defraying the charges of apprehending of criminals, and of *subsisting* them in prison, until prosecution." No provision is made for debtors. But it is provided, that, on an oath of poverty being taken, the magistrate may require the creditor who imprisons, to alimnt the debtor, at a rate not under threepence per day ; if this be refused, after ten days, the debtor may be released.

The allowance for food is, I believe, with a few exceptions, and these of a partial kind, given to prisoners of every description, in *money*.

This practice is, in my judgment, the worst which could be followed, both for the prisoners and

the public. The sums allowed for food, produce much less to the individuals, when given separately, than when united for their common maintenance. Such sums also, are frequently employed, by the unhappy prisoner, not in procuring wholesome food, but in ministering to his idle and vicious habits. They become also the mean of bribing the under jailors to violate the most salutary regulations. Thus also, the upper jailor is tempted to sell to prisoners those articles which they wish; and often, instead of restraining, to encourage their vices. And it affords plausible reasons, for introducing to the prison, at the hours of meals, the most disorderly persons, who add their talents and exertions, to defeat the best plans, and keep up the spirit of disorder and profligacy.

I have no hesitation, therefore, in maintaining, that no money should be given, by the public, to prisoners; and, that the maintenance allowed should be distributed to them from a general kitchen, according to a fixed rotation of plain and wholesome victuals. This kitchen might either form a part of the general building, or, with its appropriate cellars, a separate court, attached to the prison, and having with it an easy communication. It should be managed under an establishment of its

own. The stores should be provided by the public, through the clerk of the prison, under the superintendance of an inspector. The preparation and distribution of the victuals, should be made under the direction of a respectable matron. And the whole of this, and every part of the system of the prison, should be so arranged, as that the jailor should have *no interest in defrauding the prisoner, or in violating any useful regulation.*

That such a plan may be easily carried into execution, appears from the example of our poor-houses, infirmaries, and bridewells. Among them, we find no complaints of the food; nor of the difficulty of excluding spirituous liquors, and their consequent disorders. If it should be thought hard to confine individuals, who are able to maintain themselves, to the common allowance of the prison, the proposed plan might, at least, be carried into effect with those prisoners who are supported at the expence of the public. Even with this limitation, it would produce much good, and prevent or diminish many great evils. I conceive, however, that no such limitation should be adopted; that every prisoner, whatever be his rank or his fortune, should receive his maintenance from the kitchen of the house, and, with the restrictions to be afterwards mentioned,

from the ordinary allowance of plain and wholesome food, appointed by the public.

To remove, as much as possible, every objection, I would allow of a distinction to be made into two kinds of diet. For the richer, I will not say better, kind of food, let the prisoners make a weekly payment; and, in some cases, this may operate as an incitement to industry. Let this sum be paid to the clerk of the prison, and carried wholly to the account of the public; but, on no consideration, let a sale of victuals be permitted to the jailor, or any individual. If this be permitted, an interest will immediately be created, to minister to the vices and depraved habits of the prisoners. I would also allow a difference of food to be made, when the medical superintendant of the prison should declare a particular diet to be necessary for the health of individuals. But, with these restrictions, a general plan of diet, provided from the common kitchen, should extend to all the prisoners.

If you allow partial indulgences to be purchased by money, at the pleasure of every individual, you will not be able to check abuses, prevent vice, and preserve good order, either among the prisoners or the jailors; you will render the system of the prison too complex and difficult for proper superintendance;

bribery will be more easily accomplished ; opportunities of evading the rules of sobriety and good order, will be continually afforded ; and the hope of profit, by the expences of the prisoners, will operate on the jailor, as a temptation, not only to make improper distinctions, but to encourage extravagance and vice. Is it not also contrary to the public interest, to connect the idea of a prison with luxurious entertainments ? Does it not diminish the fear of a jail, and, consequently, the motive to avoid those dangerous circumstances which lead to such a calamity ? And are there not many idle and profligate persons, who will consider confinement with indifference, if, in company like themselves, they can wallow in all their accustomed indulgences ? The waste, extravagance, and luxury, which have been sometimes seen in prisons, manifest a spirit insensible to shame, and setting disgrace at defiance ; they are offensive to public decency ; are galling to the feelings of the honest and industrious, whose property is wasted ; and are injurious to those principles of honour and justice, which every wise state should cherish and consecrate in the minds of its subjects.

Nor will individuals suffer by such restraints. The generality of persons who enter the walls of a

prison, would be better both in body and mind, for being confined to a course of sober diet; and even those of a better description, for whose sake we might be willing to grant a relaxation, will not suffer by a temporary change. Rules, necessary for the general good, must be submitted to by individuals, for whom they might not be wanted. But it is no disadvantage to any man, to know how his fellow-creatures ordinarily live, and to partake, on some occasions, of the safe and hardy nourishment of the poor. It will promote sober thought, and favour the growth of manly habits. The period cannot be long; the temporary inconvenience, if such it should be felt, is trifling, and will be attended with no lasting evil. With those who would feel it as a great grievance, I cannot sympathise. The sooner, in such a case, their habits are broken, the better for themselves. They are sinking under a disease, for which the regimen of simple life will prove a safe and salutary remedy. Nor ought it to be regretted, either by themselves or their friends, though they should be obliged to learn a better taste, some strength and health of mind, and even how "to endure hardness," in the necessary discipline and restraints of that house, to which misfortune or misconduct has brought them.

I attempt not to ascertain what articles of diet should be adopted. These must be different, according to the circumstances and customs of the country in which the prison is erected. We may, however, venture to affirm, that such food as is the general fare of the sober and industrious peasantry of Scotland, is salutary and pleasant; while it is simple and easily furnished. I lived once in the neighbourhood of a labourer, who was distinguished for strength and cheerful activity, and whose family possessed all the marks of health and contentment. I had the curiosity to inquire into the nature of their diet. It consisted generally, of porridge and milk for breakfast; milk and potatoes, beaten with cabbage and a little butter, for dinner; potatoes and salt for supper. They used butcher-meat seldom in summer, more frequently in winter; never had, in their humble dwelling, porter or beer; nor, except on some great occasion, was the curse of Scotland tasted. The diet of this contented and happy family may seem too poor for a labouring man. On this, I presume not to give a positive opinion. But it may be observed in general, that such quantities of butcher-meat as are commonly used by the English people, are, by no means, necessary to health and comfort; that the Scotch peasantry are as

hardy and active, and fully as happy as those of England; and that their food, so far from being coarse, is nutritious and pleasant, and often chosen, when ceremony allows of a choice, in preference to the richest dishes, by families of the first rank and affluence in the kingdom.

The diet of the Bridewell in Glasgow, is as follows: for breakfast, porridge and milk, or beer: for dinner, broth, made of vegetables; generally on the Sabbath, cow-head, or other coarse pieces of meat are added; and, at times, in place of barley-broth, potatoe-soup is made: for supper, bread and milk, or beer; in severe weather, potatoes or porridge, in place of bread. When sick, the prisoners are conveyed to the sick-room, and get such food and other articles as the physician prescribes. The prisoners, in this Bridewell, are remarked for good health, and for the favourable change which takes place in their appearance, after they have been sometime confined in it. They also, it should be added, defray, by their own industry, the whole expense of their maintenance.

In the Poor-house of Glasgow, the diet is as follows:—for breakfast, porridge and milk, or beer: for dinner, broth, made of vegetables; joined with bread and butter, cheese, or salt herrings, alternate.

ly; beef once in the week: for supper, porridge and milk, or beer. Persons who are sickly, are allowed tea in the morning, and wine or a little spirits and water, when these are thought useful. The children, in this excellently conducted institution, are very healthy, when the circumstances under which they enter are considered: And the health of the aged and infirm, is, I believe, equal to that of persons of the same description in any other house. The expense of the maintenance of each person, was, in 1807, only 4*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.* per annum. And, including clothing, coal, and candles, household charges, salaries of clerk, mistress, teacher, surgeon, drugs, spirits and ale, premiums, the average expense of each individual, did not amount to more than 7*l.* 17*s.* 5*d.* per annum. In consequence of a considerable increase of price on the various articles of food, the average expense of maintenance was, in 1809, 4*l.* 18*s.* 11*d.* for each individual, but in this is included washing materials.

Some years ago, when, from the high price of provisions, and want of employment, multitudes in this country were reduced to great distress; exertions were made in Glasgow, as in other parts of the kingdom, for the relief of the necessitous. Soup-kitchens were established in various parts of the town. In

one, with which, along with several gentlemen, I was connected, four hundred persons received a quart of strong soup, made of vegetables and butcher-meat, boiled to pieces in it, at the expense of about 9*l.* 10*s.* per week. In this sum, is included the expense of servants, vegetables, barley and pease, meat, coals. Each person thus received what was esteemed a good and wholesome dinner, a quart of soup, made of meat and vegetables, barley and pease, at the small expense of about three-farthings. This calculation, it is also to be observed, has reference to a year of uncommon scarcity.

By these observations, I mean not to recommend, that any of those kinds of diet should be exclusively adopted. But I mean to show, that the plan of a general kitchen for every prison, may be easily carried into effect; and that good and wholesome food may be provided for every prisoner, greatly to the advantage of his health, morals, and fortune, *without any additional expense to the public.*

III. IN the construction and management of prisons, the closest attention should be paid to the habits, character, moral and religious interests of the prisoners.

1. When we contemplate prisons under this view, the CLASSIFICATION of prisoners, according to their

state and circumstances, naturally presents itself among the particulars of first importance.

It is evident that prisoners must be of very different characters and degrees of guilt. Some are confined upon suspicion, and may be innocent: others are convicted, and are confined till the execution of their sentence: some, again, are convicted of misdemeanours, and others, of more heinous crimes: some are young, and unhackneyed in vice; others are old, and hardened in iniquity. Justice requires that a distinction should be made, in the treatment of these persons. The same treatment is unjust in itself, and it inflicts a severer doom on the comparatively innocent, than on the more guilty, by placing them on a level, and obliging them to associate with the worthless and criminal. But these considerations, important as they are, almost disappear from my apprehension, when I think on the dreadful consequences of such an association, upon the principles and future conduct of the unfortunate prisoners.

Every good government should seek, in all its public institutions, to promote the virtue of its subjects, and to guard or reclaim them from vice. But, at least, it should take care that its institutions become not the means of corruption, the nurseries of that profligacy which they were designed to oppose

and to destroy. Now, I would ask any person, acquainted with human nature, if the indiscriminate association of persons of all descriptions, often in the same sleeping-rooms and the same beds, has not the most direct tendency, both to encourage the vicious in their abandoned courses, and to render more deeply corrupt, the young and unhackneyed transgressors? The very circumstance of degrading them to a level with the most abandoned, tends to deprave their character. It destroys the small feeling of reputation and self-respect which remains. But what must be the effect of witnessing the conduct, becoming accustomed to the habits, hearing the conversation, learning the principles and the practices, and being exposed to all the seducing arts of the regardless profligate, and often the ingenious villain? Such society, must not only ruin the young and less guilty, but must tend to harden the more criminal. They encourage, by their conversation, one another in their vices, and invite to the commission of new enormities. Better feelings and resolutions are prevented from rising and taking possession of their hearts; and passions are excited or are kept alive, which might otherwise have subsided. Thus, their dispositions become more corrupt, their minds more determined on vice, and every good principle is more

deeply buried beneath an overwhelming load of depravity.

It is distressing to think how little attention has been paid to this important object, even in prisons which are supposed to be well regulated. In the prisons of London, crowds, particularly of females, are huddled together in the same room, without order or discrimination. Amongst the unhappy persons, thus thrown indiscriminately together, are there not many of different characters, ages, and degrees of guilt; of different conditions in life; accused or convicted of different crimes; with very different habits and feelings? Are there not some, even among those who have been convicted of crimes, of whom some hopes of repentance and reformation might be formed; who have only commenced the career of vice, feel the compunctions of returning principle, and, with some encouragement, and in favourable circumstances, might be induced to fly the fatal paths of the destroyer? But, alas! they are abandoned to the society of the most profligate; where every virtuous and religious principle is laughed to scorn, where their minds are polluted with indecency, new arts of iniquity and wickedness are taught them, and new temptations continually forced upon their thoughts. In such a situation, surrounded only with vice, their reputation gone, their hopes

in life blasted, no good sentiment awakened or encouraged, they give themselves up headlong to the direction of the abandoned ; and issue from prison a thousand-fold more depraved than when they entered its fatal walls !

But is it necessary to visit the capital for examples of this kind ?

In Scotland, justly distinguished for the purity of its principles, and the excellence of its public institutions, still less attention has been paid to the condition of unhappy prisoners than in England. In a prison belonging to this country, a friend of mine informed me, he saw, with horror, ten women confined in one room, where were only two beds. Among these women was one of a respectable character, imprisoned for debt. The rest were generally of a profligate description ; and one was a criminal, condemned to transportation, but remaining in prison, on account of a loathsome disease. Here there was a woman, comparatively respectable, compelled not only to associate with profligate characters, but to sleep with four in the same bed, one of them a convicted criminal, whose body was almost in a state of putrefaction !

In a prison, not distinguished for negligence, I have myself seen three boys, the oldest not more than fourteen years of age, confined, for a long pe-

riod, in the same room with two hackneyed criminals, who had been tried, convicted, and sentenced to transportation. What rendered the case of these children more afflicting, they had not been found guilty of any offence, they were only waiting for their trial. I ask you to consider, what would be the probable effect of such society, and in such circumstances, on the principles, characters, and future fate of these young persons? Justice requires, that persons merely accused, should not be placed on the same footing with persons convicted and condemned; that distinctions should be made also, according to the degrees of guilt; and, that the young and inexperienced should not be ranked among old and hardened transgressors. But does not the public interest, religion, compassion, every good principle in the soul of man, plead farther; that they should not be exposed to the contagion of greater vice, nor be doomed to a condition, which must almost inevitably lead to ruin? Nay, does not every good principle call upon us, to employ means for preventing even persons of a similar character, from injuring one another, by their society and conversation; and by such a judicious arrangement of time, place, employment, intermixture of superintendance and authority, to endeavour to divert their ideas in-

to channels, which might be innocent and improving?

Among numberless instances of the fatal effects of this criminal association in our prisons, I shall mention only one. Some years ago, I was requested by an unhappy young man, under sentence of death, to visit him a few days before his execution. He was only 19 years of age, of an easy temper and apparently candid disposition, but was convicted of several acts of robbery and theft. In the course of conversation with him, he informed me that his criminal course commenced with that prison in which he was then confined. When a boy, he was, with some others, imprisoned for a few days on account of some petty disorder, of which he said he was innocent, and unfortunately thrown into the same room with some old and abandoned criminals. After he was set at liberty he never could shake off those wretched acquaintances which he had formed when in prison. They employed him as the instrument of their nefarious designs, and stimulated him, by the principles of praise or of shame, which in young persons are very powerful, and which they well knew how to address, to the most lawless and dangerous actions. He told me that he often went to thieve and to rob, without any desire of plunder, but

merely to obtain the praise of dexterity and courage. This he farther assured me was the case of many young persons as well as of himself. They were the victims of criminal associates older than themselves, who practised upon their weaknesses, frequently upon principles which, though not in themselves virtuous, are often auxiliaries to virtue, and, rightly directed, might have led to usefulness and honour.

In considering the best mode of effecting the proper classification of prisoners, the first idea which arises, is the necessity of erecting prisons of suitable dimensions. The want of accommodation suited to the number imprisoned, is, indeed, the great excuse for the evils which we have mentioned. But should such an excuse, in a country like this, be permitted to have a foundation? Should an excuse for injustice, cruelty, the encouragement of vice, be permitted to remain in the kingdom of Britain? The rights and the well-being, the character and morals of every class of subjects, are the care of a good government, and the concern of an enlightened, humane, and religious people. If any county or city will not do their duty, the laws and government of their country should interpose. *The evil is not to be remedied by the partial exertions of humane individuals.*

Supposing that the building is of adequate dimensions, five great divisions, at least, should be made. Separate divisions should be made for males and females; for the accused and the convicted; and, while the law continues as it is, a separate ward should be allotted for debtors. These divisions, with a little consideration, might be easily subdivided, according to the probable condition and character of individuals. Even if no other allotment and means were employed, considerable advantage would be obtained. Still, however, in each of these divisions, many worthless persons must be supposed to be associated, disposed and fitted to corrupt one another, and those of a better description, who are confined to their society. The means of preventing this are next to be considered.

The following means are submitted for consideration. Every prisoner ought to have a sleeping-room allotted for himself, to which he might, during the day, at all times retire. Persons imprisoned for a short period, on account of misdemeanours, should be confined entirely to their own rooms; while they might be allowed better accommodation, according to the nature of their guilt, and the character which they sustain. This would both preserve them from the general infection of the prison, and, by a short

seclusion from society, dispose them to sober thought. I observe farther, that every prisoner, at his first imprisonment, should be confined entirely, for some period, to the room allotted for him. This would enable the jailor and superintendant of the prison to form some estimate of his condition, and to determine with propriety the class to which he should be assigned. It would remove, also, the criminal for a period, from the corrupting influence of his companions in vice. The silence and retirement of his cell would dispose him to serious reflection, and afford leisure and opportunity for indulging it. At such a season, and in such circumstances, he might recall the events of his life, and the consequences of his crimes; compare his days of peace with his present fallen state; carry forward his views to the future consequences of sin; remember the invitation to the chief of sinners; and, with a full and overflowing heart, "arise," like the returning prodigal, "to go unto his father." Such have been the effects of seasonable correction, joined to the silence and retirement of solitude; and why may they not also be felt in silence and retirement by the lonely prisoner?

But confinement in solitude, when long, stupifies and debilitates the mind, and produces either

habitual gloom and dejection, or sullenness and malignity. The next consideration, therefore, should be, in what manner the society of prisoners with one another should be regulated.

Persons of a more sober character might be permitted to meet in their own apartments, or in some common room, at stated hours. But the generality of prisoners I would permit to associate only in two places; in the room allotted for employment, and in the court allotted for exercise. The hope of meeting, and sometimes conversing together, would render the thought of labour pleasant, and prove an incitement to industry. It would be easy to superintend them. In these places, one of the jailors, of a good and prudent mind, should always be present. His presence would check disorder, and promote the general security of the prison. "In most of the prisons at Paris," we are informed by Howard, "there are five or six turnkeys, two or three at the gates, *one walking in the yard*, to prevent conferring and plotting; a circumstance to which French jailors are very attentive." I add, that to the female ward should be assigned some respectable *woman*, to superintend the general economy of that part of the establishment, to direct and encourage the industry of the prisoners, and assist, by her pru-

dent counsel and good example, in promoting their reformation. In populous cities, jails and bridewells, appropriated to females only, should be provided. The additional expense would not be great, and it would allow a system of management adapted to the female character which might be productive of the happiest consequences.

2. PRISONS should be also constructed and managed in such a manner, as to afford opportunities for EMPLOYMENT, and encouragement to INDUSTRY.

The importance of employment to all classes of men, is too obvious for illustration. But, without this be a special object of consideration, in the construction and management of prisons, it is plainly rendered impossible to the prisoner, from the nature of his condition. Unless, therefore, some provision is made, to enable him to labour, you not only deprive him of liberty, with its attendant advantages, but you reduce him and his family to the lowest state of indigence; and you expose him to all the moral evils which arise from a life of idleness, spent among the idle. His family, in various ways, must greatly suffer. The public also are injured; they not only lose the benefit of his industry, but they must afford maintenance to his family, who are de-

prived of the means of support. These reasons should lead us to provide, as far as possible, the means of employment to prisoners of every description; but they are especially powerful, when applied to the case of debtors, or of prisoners who have not been convicted of crimes. Many other reasons combine to enforce this object. Employment would render the management of the prison more easy and safe. It would direct the thoughts of active spirits from dangerous caballing; it would prevent that disorder and tendency to riot, which is, at all times, the fruit of idleness, but which must particularly arise among persons, whose habits are disorderly, and whose thoughts will, probably, take the course of mischief and of profligacy; and it would greatly tend to promote the improvement and moral interests of the prisoners.

It is the duty, we have observed, of a well regulated society, so to order its public institutions, that they become not the means of corruption, and nurseries of profligacy. And does not idleness naturally lead to vices and to crimes? Must it not be particularly dangerous among those persons, whose habits already lead them to disorder and profligacy? By not furnishing prisoners with the means of employment, you increase the tendency to idleness,

disorder, and vice among the corrupt, and you place those of a better description, in circumstances of the greatest danger. But, as a community, professing the character of humanity, and acknowledging the infinite importance of virtue and religion, both to states and individuals, should we not have in view, not merely to preserve individuals from increasing wretchedness, but to employ such means as we possess, and are consistent with general principles, to check the progress of corruption, to recover men from vice, reclaim, and reform them? With such views, employment should not only be permitted, but should receive every encouragement. Its importance, in this view, is great, if it did nothing more than give exercise to the minds of prisoners, change the current of their thoughts and desires, lead them to fix their attention and employ their talents on useful objects. And is it not also of importance, as beginning and aiding the formation of the most important habits? Are not idle habits among the most common causes of disorder and profligacy? And is it not, therefore, of the first importance, to lessen their power, if not wholly to burst their ignominious fetters? Nay, has not industry a direct tendency not merely to preserve from vice, but to improve the human mind; to exercise its

faculties, to give an useful direction to the thoughts, and, as the fulfilment of a duty incumbent on every human being, to strengthen the principle of rectitude, exercise and cherish the domestic affections, and prepare the mind for engaging in a course of active virtue?

Such views show the importance of furnishing prisoners with the means of employment, and engaging them in a course of industry, by such methods as are suited to their condition. In every prison, therefore, working-rooms should be provided, and the implements of labour necessary to the most common professions, furnished, or permitted to be introduced. Men not accustomed to manual labour, may be furnished often with a variety of employments, especially in commercial towns, which they can easily carry on in the day-rooms allotted to their ward. To find them employment, dispose of the produce, and manage their pecuniary concerns, should be the business of the jailor, or clerk of the prison. Of all these transactions, a regular account should be kept in the name of every prisoner, to which he should have occasional access; and which a committee, to be afterwards mentioned, should regularly inspect, and compare with the vouchers.

The great incitement to industry, is the prospect of profit in proportion to exertion. Let the fruit of his labours, therefore, be given wholly to the prisoner. Inattention to this renders the system which is followed in many of the Bridewells of the kingdom extremely defective. A small portion of time is appointed for labour, and the produce, instead of being appropriated to each individual, according to his exertions, is put into a common fund, for the general maintenance of the establishment. What is the effect? The prisoners labour only at the periods fixed by the public; they labour reluctantly, and from fear, because they are to reap no personal advantage from their exertions. Thus also, the idle and industrious receive the same encouragement; the proper habit of industry is not formed; and what is particularly to be remarked, the public lose by this appropriation to itself of the whole profit of the prisoners. In such Bridewells, it will be generally found, that though the whole of the profits are taken by the public, the criminals are far from maintaining themselves. The cause is obvious; the proper stimulating principle to industry is not employed. In the summer of the year 1807, I had an opportunity of visiting the Cold-bath-fields prison. It is a house of a very superior order, and calculated

greatly to promote the health and comfort of the prisoners. I made, however, the following remarks :
 “ Prisoners are allowed to associate too indiscriminately ; no means are employed to instruct ignorant criminals, nor are useful books sufficiently furnished to those who can read. The labour of the criminals is too small ; it is not sufficiently diversified, and seems to consist almost entirely in picking oakum ; no inducement is given to voluntary exertions, nor proper attention to the formation of industrious habits ; finally, and very much in consequence of these latter circumstances, the establishment is too expensive to the country.”—Let us now consider, what would be the effect of a very simple change in the system which is generally pursued. Appropriate to the criminals the same hours of labour which a sober workman voluntarily assigns to himself. Be at pains to find those kinds of work which are both profitable and suited to the skill of individuals ; and where skill in useful arts is wanting, let it *be taught*. Open an account for every criminal, and let him know, that, after deducting the expense of his maintenance, *the whole profits of his labour are his own*. Finally, let every convicted criminal know that he must remain in confinement, till he has paid, by his labour, the expense of his maintenance. By such

means the most powerful inducements to industry are presented, inducements of a rational kind, and similar to those which are presented in ordinary life; the hope of gain, the inconvenience of debt, the certainty of advantage proportioned to present exertions. Thus labour is voluntarily and cheerfully performed, habits of industry are encouraged, and expense to the public is saved; while some wealth is acquired, and the sweets of sober industry are experienced by the criminals. This is not mere theory; it has been fully tried, and with very happy effects, in the bridewell of Glasgow. Besides paying the expense of their maintenance and clothing, prisoners, on leaving the house, very frequently receive considerable sums, as the price of their labours. The general expense of the whole establishment becomes thus very small to the public.—The following ideas, in addition to this excellent plan, may deserve attention. The prisoners feel not sufficiently, in the time of labour, the good effects of their industry; they receive the fruit of their whole labour at once, at the time of their liberation, and in the moment of greatest danger; and they are not taught by previous use, the wise and virtuous method of spending the little which they gain. Some rewards of industry might be given, and some of its comforts permitted

to be experienced during confinement. As a farther incitement, shew once in the month, to every prisoner, the state of his account, and encourage him, by a view of the progress of his gains. Allow him a partial use of what he has acquired, point out to him the advantage of a wise and virtuous expenditure, and direct him, by your counsel, to the choice of what is profitable and necessary. Thus he would experience, in the mean time, some of the advantages of diligence, learn the right method of expending his money, and, at least, acquire some articles which are comfortable, and of which, on leaving the house, he would know the value. Large sums, given to such persons, at the moment of liberation, prove often, it is to be feared, temptations to extravagance and vice; some money, however, it is of importance they should possess, to enable them to live with honesty, till they meet with regular employment.

These observations, though directed chiefly to bridewells, are, in a great degree, applicable also to ordinary prisons. The means of enforcing diligence must be different, employment must be more voluntary, and the kind and degree of it be determined, in a great measure, by the choice of the prisoners. Still, however, in prisons, similar facilities might be

given, and the *same encouragement* to individual exertions might be afforded. Some rewards, suited to the nature of a prison, might also be conferred on the industrious. They might be permitted to purchase, by their industry, a participation in the diet of the first class: and to acquire for themselves, additional articles of accommodation. Rooms of a better order might be assigned them, by the superintendants and inspector; particular care might be used, to procure for them articles of employment which were less painful and more profitable; attentions of a friendly nature might be paid them, and the prospect of certificates of character, and some interest in their future welfare, might be presented. Above all, endeavours should be made to encourage and reward their industry, through the medium of their own *families*. Connect their industry, as much as possible, with the advantage and happiness of their children. Draw forth and keep alive their domestic affections; let the parent see his offspring occasionally, benefiting in the fruits of that employment which you encourage; and convey to his family, with regular attention, that assistance which his labour has been enabled to procure. You will thus soften and humanize his heart; you will inspire or keep alive those strong affections which

form the most powerful incitements to exertion and diligence. His gratitude for the attentions which you pay to those who are dear to him, will increase your influence, and give new force to your counsels. And he will experience inward satisfaction from the consciousness that he has been enabled, in the midst of all the evils of his condition, to discharge, in some degree, the part of a parent, and to alleviate those distresses which his misconduct or misfortunes have occasioned to those objects who looked up to him for protection. Domestic affections, very hardened persons are often observed occasionally to feel. And though sensuality and profligacy tend to deaden and destroy them, yet, sometimes in the season of reflection and retirement, and particularly in situations where vicious habits cannot be indulged, the strong feelings of a parent have been seen, when scarcely any other sentiment seemed capable of moving him, to overpower the wretched criminal.

3. Another particular of great importance to the present comfort and future well-being of prisoners, is, the EXCLUSION of the means of VICE and DISORDER.

One of the chief causes of that disorder and profligacy which so frequently prevails in prisons, is, Drunkenness. This renders every good regulation nugatory ; every attempt at order, industry, reflec-

tion, reformation, vain; it produces noise, quarreling, and fighting; destroys the peace and comfort of respectable prisoners, and not unfrequently presents temptations too well suited to their unhappy situations; while, at the same time, it destroys the present health and comfort of the licentious, encourages all their wretched habits of idleness and profligacy, engages them in new crimes, and sinks them in deeper ruin.

The character and situation of prisoners render it particularly necessary to guard against this fatal vice. If the history of the generality of prisoners were examined, the cause of their present condition would be found to be frequent intoxication. Accustomed to extravagance and excess, fond of the high, though temporary, state of spirits which drinking occasions, perhaps habitually addicted to drunkenness, with little self-government, and feeble principles of virtue and religion; intoxicating liquors are sought with an avidity which sets at nought every consideration of interest and duty, and leads to the grossest excesses. The depression of spirits, and the melancholy feelings which their condition tends naturally to produce, excite a disposition even in more sober prisoners to this fatal indulgence, and render them little capable of resisting temptation.

This is increased by the injudicious kindness of friends, who press upon the prisoners this dangerous remedy, by which care is forgotten, and a temporary elation of mind is excited; but at the expense of a succeeding depression, still lower and deeper, alas! perhaps, of present vice, and an after life of habitual degradation and licentiousness. The numbers too, which are collected in prisons, their vacant time, and the disposition to idleness which so frequently prevails, lead to those meetings, of which drinking is always the fatal attendant, and riot and excess the frequent termination.

In such circumstances, it might have been expected that no unnecessary temptations would be placed before unfortunate prisoners, and that the management of prisons, if it did not counteract, would, at least, not have increased the evil. Instead of this, prisons are frequently turned into taverns, where all the fatal habits of the prisoners are gratified with ease, and temptations are presented in every form, and almost in every quarter. The men whose duty it is to restrain have an interest in encouraging excesses. In proportion to the sale of liquors is the profit of the jailor. He is an host who makes rich by the extravagance and drunkenness of his guests. In some prisons, spiritous liquors are for-

bidden ; but, notwithstanding the prohibition, they seem to be with little difficulty procured, and the disorderly mirth of men rioting over the midnight bowl, is not unfrequently heard sounding along the walls which confine them. But what if the prohibition was successful ? Can men not get drunk with ale and strong beer ? Will the sale of these not enrich the jailor, when it is frequent and great ; especially when aided by exorbitant prices for wretched materials, extorted from his dependant prisoners ?

Such practices are particularly inexcusable, because they are directly in opposition to the spirit and intention of the statutes passed on this subject. By the Act respecting jails, passed in the twenty-fourth year of his present Majesty's reign, justices of the peace are empowered to prevent jailors from selling any liquors, or deriving any profit from the sale of liquors ; and, if they shall see cause, to appoint salaries in lieu of the profit. And it is farther enacted, " that from and after the 24th day of June, 1785, no jailor shall suffer tippling or gaming in *such* prison ; or shall sell, or permit to be sold, or be capable of being licensed to sell any wine, beer, ale, or other liquors, or have any beneficial interest, or concern whatever, in the sale of any liquors of any kind, or in any tap-house, tap-room, or tap, un-

der the penalty of 10*l.* for every such offence." The spirit and intention of this statute is obvious; but unfortunately, it only empowers, and does not enjoin, the justices to carry its excellent ideas into execution. And though it, with great propriety, discourages the sale of liquors by the jailor in prison, it points to no means to prevent or regulate the purchase or introduction of them from *other* quarters. It is also, such as it is, confined in its extent to England and Wales.

That we may perceive the inefficacy of the law, the extent to which the evil has been carried, and, above all, the remedy which alone will be effectual, it may be useful to present a few facts, most of which will be found in different parts of the journal of the "State of Prisons," published by the truly benevolent Howard.

IRELAND, 1788, Fourcourt Marshalsea prison: "In most of the lower rooms the debtors sell whisky; one is a pawn-broker's shop. On the night preceding one of my visits, many had been gambling, drinking, and fighting. Mr. Dexter, the marshal, told me, that when his prison was full, a hogshead of whisky was sold in the week, in a clandestine manner, besides what was sold from his own tap."

CITY Marshalsea prison: "Here also there had

been a scene of confusion and riot the night before. The wives and children of the debtors, living with them, bring in spirits, and this makes most of the lower rooms gin-shops; to which may be added, that the prisoners themselves are quite idle. The garnish is two bottles of whisky. Dr. Scott, physician to the Marshalseas, informed me, in June 1787, that he had just lost three men out of four, by excessive drinking, in the City Marshalsea. They had, one morning, drunk twelve shillings worth of brandy, in punch, beside porter and other liquors."

Fleet prison, London, 1777, having mentioned the tap-room and coffee-room, it is added, "On Monday night, there is a wine club; on Thursday night, a beer club; each lasting till one or two in the morning. I need not say how much riot these occasions, and how the sober prisoners are annoyed by them."

In 1788, of the Fleet, it is observed, "No alteration. Liquors sold as usual, notwithstanding the late *Act**, which prohibits keepers from selling

* This excellent man seems a little to have misunderstood the *Act*. It does not prohibit, but empowers justices, to prohibit, and,

liquors, or having any interest or concern therein." It is long since this account of Mr. Howard was published, yet, in 1809, the following is still the statement which is made of it: "The first floor contains two tap-rooms; the second floor consists of a coffee-room," &c.

New Ludgate, 1778: "On conversing with the keeper, he observed to me, 'now *prisoners* keep taps.' One advantage which was expected from the abolition of taps in jails was, preventing the comrades of criminals from associating with them; but, by the unrestrained visits of their friends, and the permission of beer, wine, &c. to be brought to them from *certain* public-houses, this intended advantage is in a great measure frustrated."

In the accounts of other prisons, we meet with the following occasional remarks: "As liquors are introduced by visitors, and through the windows which are towards the street, most of these prisoners think their confinement little or no punishment."

"Through the windows of two damp cells, both

if they shall see cause, to appoint a salary. When, after the prohibition of the justices, and appointment of a suitable salary to the jailor, it becomes unlawful in *that* prison.

men and women freely converse with idle people on the street, who supply them with spiritous liquors till they are quite intoxicated." "One of the regulations is, to admit no visitors on Sunday, which is too generally a day of confusion and intoxication."

"A publican, with cans of beer, was waiting on Sunday, in the inside, to serve the prisoners."

"Many of the windows of this prison are towards the street, and opposite to the prison-gate are *three adjoining ale-houses*." "The keeper sells beer, and there is company as at a common ale-house."

"In my various tours, I have often heard of the death of one or more prisoners, by *intoxication* and *quarrels* in prisons. Here one had lately been unhappily killed." "The late jailor killed himself by drinking; and I find, in my visits, that many others have died by this vice; the taps in the jails having been a very strong temptation to them."

"The good old surgeon constantly refuses the debtors' applications for spiritous liquors, as he well knows the quarrels, riot, and confusion, such an admission has frequently caused in jails." "In what prison in London is there a proper separation of criminals, the old from the young, convicts from the untried? Where are the night-rooms for solitary confinement and reflection? Where is any proper

attention paid to sick or dying prisoners? Where are the rules and orders of magistrates for the direction of jailors, and the management of prisoners? In what jail are not the ears shocked with the profaneness both of prisoners and turnkeys? Where is any regard paid to the Lord's day? Where is not the afternoon of that day a time of greater concourse of visitants than at any other? And, though the jailor's taps are abolished, yet are not publicans *continually* waiting to serve the prisoners and their company? Is not beer now sold by the debtors? And do not turnkeys keep *shops* in the goals?"

If some of these abuses be rectified in some prisons, in others, many and great, of a similar nature, continue in their worst forms. In a great number of prisons in the three kingdoms, taps kept by jailors continue; and where they are abolished, spiritous liquors, beer, and ale, with little restraint, are introduced from the *neighbouring ale-houses*; often, it is to be feared, under the *connivance*, and *with the encouragement of the jailors, who may have privately an interest in the consumption*. The effects of these practices are perceived, not only by those whose duty leads them to superintend the conduct of prisoners, but by every casual visitant. Many prisoners are to be seen intoxicated before

mid-day; while the bloated heavy look of stupefaction, marks out others to have passed their nights in riot, or their days in habitual tippling. The immediate confusion and disorder, disease and waste, which such practices produce, are not the worst of their effects. The profligate are confirmed in their habits of drunkenness, and tempted, for their gratification, to the commission of new crimes; and men who entered prisons industrious and sober, come out from them the sottish, feeble slaves of idleness and intemperance.

Such melancholy facts, while they show us the evil, point also to the remedy.

The prohibition to sell liquors in prisons by jailors, should not depend on the pleasure of the justices, and their appointment of a salary; it should be made absolute and universal by law; a suitable salary should be appointed to every jailor, according to a general rule; and means be appointed and employed to carry the law into effect. This, if nothing more was done, would certainly produce some advantage. Still it would remedy very imperfectly the evil. It is essential that regulations should be made respecting the introduction of liquors from *other quarters*. Without such regulations, the evil may still prevail to a great extent; nay, the jailor,

by a *secret understanding* with convenient publicans, may have the same interest in encouraging abuses as when he openly vended from his own tap-room. Some regulations, limiting the quantity, and fixing stated times for the admission of liquors, joined to a constant and strict superintendance of prisoners, jailors, and turnkeys, might, in some degree, lessen the extent and number of the abuses. But, when I consider the temptations, the characters of prisoners, the opportunities and excuses for evasion, the complicated and troublesome superintendance required in such a plan, I am convinced that no method can be adopted which will prove effectual, and promote, at the same time, the interests of individuals and the public, but an ENTIRE and TOTAL prohibition of ALL liquors, excepting such as may be distributed by the appointment, and at the expense of the public, to each individual with his *food*. This prohibition ought not to be considered as severe by any sober man; but if it should be so felt, let him consider that privations must be submitted to, occasionally, for the general good; and that here they are not only necessary for the sake of others, but, in his peculiar circumstances, are of importance to his own safety and well-being. By this system the management becomes simple and easy;

every opportunity and excuse for abuse is taken away both from jailors and prisoners ; and abuses, when they take place, can be easily detected, rectified, and punished. The hopelessness of success will lead every party to cease attempting deception, and dispose them soon to proceed in a quiet and regular course of conduct. While the office of jailor, no longer connected with such a traffic, and the irksome and degrading circumstances which it produces, will rise to that respectability which every consideration of private and public interest most powerfully recommends.

Let the introduction of liquors, then, into prisons, be entirely and universally prohibited by the laws of the realm, excepting such as may be assigned by the public with the food of the prisoners. Let no individual have an interest in the quantity and distribution of them ; and let the liquors be provided by the public, and distributed from the kitchen at meals, in the same manner, and on the same terms, as are fixed for the articles of diet. Thus will the fatal evils which we have stated be prevented effectually, and with ease ; and thus also, perhaps, may the beginning of a happy change be produced on some of those, who, though far misled, have not yet entirely sunk under the almost hopeless

habit of intemperance. Those who have contemplated seriously the progress and condition of the unhappy drunkard, know how difficult is his case : But they also know, that the rare instances of recovery which have been presented, generally have been produced through severe misfortunes, accompanied with removal from the scene of temptation, and the opportunity of vicious indulgence. The disease, also, is of various degrees of inveteracy. And may we not hope that amongst the numbers who are confined in the many prisons of this extensive empire, there may be found many in those stages which, through the Divine blessing, may permit the expectation of recovery to be cherished ?

4. While innocent recreations are encouraged, all GAMBLING and improper amusements should be carefully prevented.

An excessive fondness for amusement, leading to idleness, extravagance, and indisposition to every useful pursuit, is a very frequent cause of that misconduct which terminates in a prison. But no amusement, if it can receive the name, has led such numbers, and so directly, to ruin and a jail, as that of gaming. The character of the generality of prisoners may therefore lead us to suppose, that when they meet together without restraint, they will de-

vote their hours to this fatal employment. Its stimulating effects on the spirits, the exercise of mind, and the temporary diversion of the thoughts from serious, often painful subjects, which it affords, render it a strong temptation to men of a better order. It may be, therefore, considered as certain, that unless judiciously regulated, gaming will become the common employment of a prison, and be carried to the greatest excess. Such, accordingly, every man who has attended to the state of prisons, knows to be the melancholy fact. Hence another source of that general disorder and personal wretchedness which pervade them, and of that idleness and depravity which they are found to produce and to nourish. Besides these fatal effects, it must directly counteract that encouragement to useful employment which ought to be a leading object in the institutions of every country. The idle and the dissipated, if allowed to devote their days and nights to gaming, will not think of labour; to which, in other circumstances, they might, from mere weariness, be disposed. It must also tend to destroy that reflecting frame and sober thought, through which misfortunes often lead to reformation, and which, therefore, the system of every prison should carefully encourage.

The chief difficulty is how to prevent this fatal practice, without also preventing that degree of amusement which may be salutary both to the body and mind of the prisoners. While many are giddy and unprincipled, some require to be roused and preserved from dejection. And any innocent satisfaction which can be granted to prisoners, consistently with the nature of their situation, general order, and their own good, every man must wish to allow. But what is the kind and the degree of amusement which may be permitted, consistently with the design of a prison, and the rules necessary for the general good; and how this permission is to be regulated, so as to prevent gambling, and to destroy its pernicious influence, are subjects of serious consideration. In general, I conceive it to be necessary to prohibit entirely those games which the habits of prisoners will render them most prone to abuse. Recreations which are permitted, should be limited to certain periods of the day; the remainder of the time should be supposed, by the regulations of the house, to be passed in useful employments. This will prove some check to idleness, direct their minds to the right use of time, and encourage them to engage in worthy pursuits. The recreations permitted

should be chiefly of such a kind as lead to exercise of body in the open air. Persons who pervert these to the purposes of gaming, may be punished, by depriving them of that amusement which they have abused; or by obliging them to deposit, for the future welfare of themselves and their families, that money which, in a well regulated prison, they cannot want, and which they employ in violation of the rules of the community, to the injury of themselves and of others. Coarse and noisy mirth should be discouraged. When long and frequent, it is the effect of a disorderly mind, injures real cheerfulness, and unfits for rational intercourse, leads often to the forgetfulness of mutual respect, and ends not unfrequently in disputes and ill humour. Besides, what may be convenient among a few individuals, may be extremely inconvenient among great numbers, of different dispositions, and without selection, assembled in one place. Nor does it seem very suitable to the condition of men in prison, or to that state of mind which, on many accounts, should be encouraged. There is too great a tendency in men to confound noisy mirth with cheerfulness and comfort; to seek pleasure in mere giddiness of spirits; to banish reflection, and encourage that habi-

tual thoughtlessness of disposition which hardens the heart, and prevents the softening influence of misfortune. That state of mind which bears some correspondence of character with our circumstances, is, if judiciously moderated, the most profitable. Sadness is often useful; nor is it always unpleasant. When circumstances are unfortunate, it is right we should feel; indulge in grave reflection, and a thoughtful frame. Nor, I conceive, will the benefits of misfortune ever be experienced by him who, in the midst of circumstances calculated to affect the mind, plunges into the madness of mirth, and seeks his solace in thoughtlessness and folly.

5. Prisoners should be furnished with the means of enjoying the blessing of DIVINE ORDINANCES and RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION; and, when needed, of elementary EDUCATION.

It were cruelty to deprive unhappy men of the benefits of those blessed institutions, which men of all ranks, ages, and characters, in this state of weakness and depravity, require for present duty and comfort, personal improvement, and preparation for future happiness. And as it were cruelty to individuals, so it were most injurious to the public interest, to deprive men of those means through which

are taught, impressed, and continually maintained, those great principles, obligations, and motives, by which the best interests of every community, from the least to the greatest, are upheld and promoted. But in the case of prisoners, there are additional motives for the exercise of such duties, and the employment of such means. They, above all classes of men, require the benefit of religious ordinances and instruction, whether you view them as unfortunate or criminal, as involved in calamity, or as under the power of ignorance, error, and depravity. The ignorant require to be instructed; the erring and depraved to be reclaimed; the unfortunate to be comforted; the wisest and best to be aided, directed, and supported, in the time of trial and temptation. The best instructed Christians feel that, even in the ordinary course of life, they need thus to be reminded of their duties and their dangers; to have the great objects of their faith frequently presented before their minds, and impressed upon their hearts; to have their consciences and intentions purified, the deceits of the mind unfolded, their purposes strengthened, their affections kept alive, directed and raised to heaven. If such be the case of the wise and good, what must be the necessities of the ignorant, the thoughtless, and the corrupt; especially in places

and in seasons of peculiar danger or distress! Men who confine their views merely to this world, might be expected to feel the desire of communicating to such persons the means of improvement and consolation. What then should be the views, the desires, and the conduct of Christians? of Christians, who, of all men, should feel the power of benevolence and compassion, especially where the diseases of the mind are concerned; who consider the relation of man to an eternal world, and estimate the value of the salvation or loss of the soul by the views which are given in the gospel of Christ? When we consider the temporal evils of a state of ignorance and depravity, the importance of religion and virtue to the present happiness of individuals and of nations, we may perceive strong motives for spreading and maintaining among men of every class the knowledge and the power of the gospel. But when we look forward to eternity, consider the future consequences of sin, the salvation provided by God, and by means of such infinite magnitude; the accumulated evil which may be incurred, the perfection and the bliss which may be obtained; and with these, consider the spirit and the character required in the followers of Him who came to save the lost, and call sinners to repentance—the obligation of furnish-

ing to unfortunate prisoners the blessings of religious ordinances and instruction, must appear to be of the first importance, enforced by every consideration which is most sacred in the estimation of Christians.

Impressed with such views, in the year 1773, and the thirteenth of his present Majesty's reign, the legislature of the United Kingdom passed an act "for the appointment of proper ministers to officiate in the several county jails within that part of Great Britain called England, and the Principality of Wales." By this act, the justices of the peace, assembled at the quarter-sessions, "are authorised and empowered to settle and ascertain how many clergymen shall be deemed necessary for the several jails within their respective jurisdictions, to settle and ascertain what duty shall be performed, and what salary shall be paid to each clergyman, not exceeding 50*l.* in the year." To the credit of the justices of England, this act has been carried very universally into execution. But, like the other beneficial acts which we have noticed respecting prisons, it *does not extend to Scotland*. Nor is sufficient provision made to obtain ministers possessing qualifications suited to the successful discharge of duties which are, in many respects, peculiar and difficult. To the general qualifications of his office, the minister of such

a charge ought to possess a considerable share of experience and knowledge of mankind; much patience, prudence, and tenderness of mind; an ardent zeal for promoting the moral and spiritual interests of the prisoners; talents fitted to command attention and respect, joined with a facility of accommodating himself to the state and apprehensions of the weak and the ignorant. That the benefit of such persons may be generally enjoyed, it is necessary that a considerable field of selection should be possessed; a probability of their continuance secured; leisure from other duties, and opportunities of usefulness afforded. But is this to be expected from the provision made by the act? Will not ministers of experience and talents naturally seek other spheres of usefulness? Will they frequently accept, or continue in an office, by which they cannot have even a personal subsistence? The probability, therefore, is, that little power of selection will be possessed; and that the chaplains of prisons will generally be taken from young or inferior persons, or persons already residing on the spot, burdened with other avocations. On the other hand, a full provision for the maintenance of a minister is not to be generally expected; as in many places the number of prisoners will be small, and the duties not deemed sufficient

to furnish entire occupation for a minister's talents and exertions. In such circumstances, it becomes a matter of inquiry how prisons shall be furnished with ministers suited to the situation, yet the public not be burdened with an expense which may seem to be more than equal to the labour. The following ideas are suggested for consideration.

In populous towns, where the number of inhabitants frequently exceed the accommodation of the churches, let a house of worship be connected with the prison, in which an appropriate situation is appointed for the prisoners, while the remainder is fitted for the general accommodation of the people. With this let a parish of small extent be joined; and let a regular minister be set apart to the duty of the whole, having a stipend equal to the other ministers of the city. Or, where a parish church would not be advisable, let the chapel of the prison be built of such dimensions, and with such access, that part of it may be rented in seats for such families as may require them; and let the rent be made part of a fund for the maintenance of the chaplain. In situations where no farther accommodation for the people is required, or where circumstances render such a plan not eligible, chaplains must be appointed as at present in England. But

in such circumstances it should be understood, and expressed as the public wish, that *the prison be considered as also the care of the minister or ministers within the bounds of whose parish it is placed*; and that they join their counsel and their labours in friendly union and co-operation with him to whom the spiritual interests of the prisoners are more especially committed.

In selecting men for this important trust, no qualities seem to be of more importance than prudence, gentleness, condescending and unwearying zeal. These ought much more to be the objects of attention than distinguished talents. But when talents are united with such qualities of character, what happy effects might we not anticipate? It is scarcely possible to suppose that the labours of such a man would be vain—instructing the ignorant, calling the thoughtless to consideration, alarming the regardless and secure, touching the springs of affection, and softening the hearts of the hardened, shewing the fatal consequences of a life of sin, and, at the same time, the merciful provision made through our Redeemer for the safety and happiness of returning sinners. The most profligate would consider him as a friend interested in their welfare. The contrast betwixt his compassionate attentions and the severity of the

world, would affect their hearts. They would listen with respect and affection to his instructions, and, perhaps, in some happy moment, lay open their minds to the awful, yet gracious and deeply affecting views of the gospel.

But a minister of the gospel, to be generally and lastingly useful to such persons, must not satisfy himself with the *public* exercises and instructions of religion, however affectionately and earnestly administered. He must descend to *particular* cases; he must acquaint himself with every individual, and give instruction, counsel, and admonition, suited to their circumstances, character, and capacity. With these he should frequently join familiar and friendly conversation, fitted to gain their confidence, and improved to the purpose of introducing such topics and views as are suited to their different cases. They would thus insensibly give him their confidence; lay open to him their hearts; and afford to him many additional opportunities of usefulness.

Many of these prisoners, however, are placed almost beyond the means of ministerial instruction, by the gross *ignorance* in which they are found; by an entire want of ideas, as well as impressions of religion, a want almost of capacity to comprehend the plainest instructions, arising from the total neglect

of early culture, information, and good example, joined to the stupifying effects of depravity and vice. This total ignorance, and almost brutality of state, the degree of which will scarcely be credited by those who have not had the opportunity of observation, is the cause of numberless crimes, and must prevent the means of reformation. In such circumstances, it is of the greatest importance to improve the advantage which confinement affords, and to provide for the ignorant *a teacher* who should devote a portion of each day to their instruction in the principles of *reading*; and with these, to the communication, in simple and impressive forms, of some ideas of the *first truths and obligations of religion*. By such means the ground would be broken and softened, the dormant faculties would be awakened, and the conscience exercised to discern good and evil. The seed then sown by the sower might be seen beginning to bud; and the grounds considered as stony places and waste, might bring forth their fruit, “some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty.” Nor are your labours always lost, though for a long time the effects of them may not be perceived. The truths you have instilled, the lessons you have taught, the ideas and the feelings you have awakened, may be overwhelmed and long neglected;

yet though dormant, they are not always dead; circumstances may arise which may again warm and cherish them into life, and, perhaps, excite the sigh and awaken the feeling of repentance.

These remarks, to which, nine years ago, I took the liberty of calling the public attention, have been lately verified by several striking examples, arising from the exertions of persons who have rendered their names illustrious by their benevolent labours. The effects produced on the female prisoners of Newgate by education and religious instruction, joined to other means of order and improvement, have been especially noticed, and justly appreciated by the public. But should such efforts be left entirely to the casual exertions of benevolent individuals? Can these be expected to be either general, or frequent, or permanent? Or should we not consider such instances as enforcing on us the importance and duty of furnishing stated and permanent means of instruction to prisoners in every quarter, and of incorporating them into our general system for the management and discipline of jails? Without this, the benevolent impulses of the public mind will be found limited, and partial, and unsteady in their operations, sometimes injudicious, and generally ceasing with the excellent persons who commenced them.

The labours of the benevolent must be the basis of a system.

I have only to add, that, to these means of instruction and reformation should be joined a judicious selection of such books as are suited to the general situation of prisoners. Every room of the prisoners should be furnished with a Bible. With the Scriptures might be joined such tracts as are calculated, at the same time, to interest and inform their minds. With many of these we are happily furnished, beyond most other nations, through the pious and benevolent labours of persons distinguished for literature and talents, but who have not thought it an unworthy employment of their powers to condescend, like their great Master, to the instruction of the humble. Such are many of the works of Baxter, of Watts, and of Doddridge. Such also are some of the works of many excellent persons in the present day. The works of Miss More, in this view, ought particularly to be mentioned; who, in that valuable collection called the Cheap Repository, has blended instruction with entertainment, and in such a manner as is intelligible and interesting to the poor and illiterate, yet may please and improve the most enlightened and refined.

6. A prison should be conducted with a careful attention to ORDER and equitable DISCIPLINE, directed by wise and known regulations.

Order is of great importance in the conduct of human affairs, but it is particularly necessary where a society is numerous, and the objects of attention various and complicated. It is only by attention to order that the rules necessary for the general interest, and the health, comfort, and moral welfare of individuals, can be observed. It is necessary also to be strictly enforced, for the sake of forming a habit of order among the prisoners. Disorder and confusion are among the first causes which lead to ruin; order and regularity are among the most important means of recovery and future well-doing. "If you look abroad into the world, you may be satisfied, at the first glance, that a vicious and libertine life is always a life of confusion. Thence it is natural to infer, that order is friendly to religion. As the neglect of it coincides with vice, so the preservation of it must assist virtue. By the appointment of Providence, it is indispensably requisite to worldly prosperity. Hence arises a presumption, that it is connected also with spiritual improvement*."

* Blair.

Laws also respecting the manners of the prisoners, and their conduct to one another, should, in every prison, be fixed and made known; and, as is necessary in the government of every society, enforced by equitable sanctions, and a suitable authority. The power should be mildly, but steadily and strictly exercised; and, it is almost unnecessary to add, with an impartiality unbiassed by favour, influence, or rank. The most unprincipled quickly discern equitable conduct, and easily submit to it. “Many such are shrewd and sensible. Let them be managed with calmness, yet with steadiness: show them that you have humanity, and that you aim to make them useful members of society: and let them see and hear the rules and orders of the prison. When they are sick, let them be treated with tenderness. Such conduct would prevent mutiny in prisons, and attempts to escape; which, I am fully persuaded, are often owing to prisoners being made desperate by the profaneness, inhumanity, and ill usage of their keepers*.”

In addition to those remarks which have been already made, with a reference to the internal order and government of prisons, I beg leave to transcribe

* Howard.

the following regulations from the Rules of the county jails of Lancaster and Berks.

“ That no garnish, or other exactions at entrance, be permitted to be taken by the jailor, or suffered to be paid by one prisoner to another.— That no abuse, ill treatment, affray, or profane or indecent language, be suffered between the prisoners. If any such should happen, the offenders to be punished by reduced allowance, on the order of a justice of the peace, or by close confinement, at the discretion of the jailor : such closer confinement not to be continued longer than forty-eight hours without the special order of a justice of the peace.—No wives or children of any kind to be permitted to sleep in jail, nor lodgers of any kind.—The jailor is not allowed to take any indulgence money, upon any consideration whatever, from any of his prisoners, on pain of being immediately removed from his office.—The allowances of provision to be given out every morning to the prisoners, as soon as the rooms shall be made clean ; but to be entirely withheld from all who shall not have their hands and faces clean washed, and their persons clean and neat.—The chaplain shall read prayers, and preach a sermon, every Sunday morning, and read prayers in the afternoon ;

and also read prayers every Wednesday and Friday at eleven o'clock * ; and that the chaplain be empowered to purchase, at the expense of the county, Bibles and Common Prayer Books, for the religious instruction of the poor prisoners, at his discretion.— At divine service all prisoners in the jail are to attend, to appear clean, and behave with becoming decency. As an encouragement to industry, cleanliness, and good order, and a due attendance on religious worship, an extra allowance shall be made on every Sunday to every prisoner who shall have behaved well during the preceding week ; but all allowances and indulgences to be kept back from such prisoners who shall not attend divine service, according to the rules of the prison.—The jailor shall every day visit every part of the prison, and also attend at divine service whenever the chaplain may officiate.—The jailor shall keep a book, in which he shall write down the names of every prisoner who shall behave ill, specifying his offence, &c. and he shall also insert the names of those who shall observe

* In Scotland, the simple but affecting service of family-worship, should be performed every morning, immediately after breakfast, by the chaplain ; which consists of reading a portion of Scripture, singing some verses of a psalm, and prayer.

these rules, regularly attend public worship, and behave in a peaceable orderly manner. And he shall regularly produce these books to the visiting justices, and at the assizes, and quarter sessions.—The surgeon shall personally visit the prisoners, whenever required; and once a-week, or oftener, at other times.—These rules, orders, and regulations, together with a table of donations and legacies, and the three prohibiting clauses of 24th Geo. II. chap. 40, shall be hung up in the most conspicuous part of the prison, and a sufficient number of them shall be printed for the use of the prisoners; and they shall be distinctly read over by the chaplain, on the first Sunday in every month after divine service.”

To these should be added, rules respecting the hours of opening the cells and locking up; of beginning meals; of meeting for divine service; all of which might be marked out by the ringing of a bell. In the jails of Lancaster and Berks, some of these particulars are fixed a little differently; and a difference must be proper, according to the climate, and, likewise, according to the other internal regulations. Rules also ought to be made respecting visitants; who, it appears, are often, especially on the Sabbath, great causes of disorder and riot, as well as of attempts at escape.

IV. Prisons require a constant and vigilant SUPERINTENDANCE.

All plans and regulations are unavailing unless they are faithfully and judiciously executed. And in proportion to the importance of the object, to the difficulty of its accomplishment, and the temptations to neglect and unfaithfulness, should care be employed to adopt such means as may secure a wise, faithful, and active execution of the rules and duties of every department.

1. Upon the choice of a Head-jailor and his servants, the right management of every prison must essentially depend. It is foolish to expect that the rules necessary for such a house shall be observed, and the designs of it accomplished, without a strict attention to the character of those who are to superintend and carry them into effect. The superintendance and vigilance of a magistrate are of much importance; but opportunities of eluding his vigilance are continually occurring, and the letter of rules may be often fulfilled while the spirit of them is disregarded. Much also must necessarily be trusted to such persons; and opportunities of doing good must frequently arise, which a good man will improve, but which no general rule can embrace. The importance of the choice of such persons will

also appear, if we consider the nature of the duties which must be committed to them. The very example of a good man, his *manner*, silent but impressive, is calculated to affect the heart of the most hardened.

These are views which seem too little to have engaged the attention of the public, even in those institutions which are designed directly for reformation. Surrounded by persons harsh and ferocious in their deportment and manners, prisoners become hardened against the means employed for their benefit, and feel only sullen indignation and disgust. Thus also the means of promoting good are discountenanced, and difficulties thrown in the way of their execution ; vicious practices are secretly encouraged ; and examples of profanity and licentiousness are given by those very men to whom was committed the charge of restraining vice, and promoting reformation. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that only such persons should be selected for the keeping of prisons, who are of sober characters, and possess integrity, fortitude, prudence, and intelligence, joined to a humane and religious spirit. Attention to character should extend to the choice of *every servant* necessary for the duties of such a house. To secure the choice of such persons, and

encourage them to a faithful and honourable discharge of their duties, the odium attached to the keepers of prisons should be removed. For this purpose, whatever in the public imagination is connected with degrading ideas, should be separated from their office. All the servants of the house should be held up as of high importance, and their duties as connected with a very sacred trust. Even the name of jailor should be changed, and in place of it should be given, the master or governor of the prison. The salaries should be such as will encourage persons of respectability to accept of the different offices. The master of the prison should have the entire direction and disposal of the inferior officers ; but I think it necessary, in order to remove the temptation of hiring men unfit for their situation, that the salary should be fixed and paid by the public. Fees of every kind from prisoners should be abolished. Debtors are unable to pay them ; persons acquitted, must be considered as innocent, and, consequently, as having suffered a grievous hardship from imprisonment. Fees are also a troublesome and painful mode of remuneration to public servants ; and they are often a source of long confinement and cruel vexation to prisoners. By adequate salaries, you will at once secure the poor and unhappy from

cruel usage, and increase the respectability and comfort of the men, to whom you commit a most important charge.

The number of officers and servants must vary according to the probable number of the prisoners. In general, beside the master of the prison, one officer must be necessary to the superintendance of the wards for debtors and persons accused; and one for the superintendance of the ward for the condemned. A respectable *female*, I have already observed, should be allotted to the ward for women. A clerk is also requisite, and a woman for the kitchen. To assist in some of these duties, prisoners of a better character might generally be found, who would, for a small remuneration, perform many necessary labours. The duties of every man should be fixed, and also the time and manner of their performance. To the master of the prison must belong, in the first instance, the distribution of the prisoners: the superintendance of them and of the under jailors; and the charge of seeing executed all the rules appointed for securing the persons, yet promoting the health and improvement of those committed to his care. To accomplish these objects a system of rules should be appointed him, suited to the nature of the prison, and the extent of his trust.

2. But no man, however respectable, is to be trusted with independent power. It is absolutely necessary that a superintendance of a superior nature be provided, to prevent the abuses, and secure the good management of prisons. For want of this, very shocking circumstances have often occurred; even in the midst of thousands of benevolent and virtuous men who might have prevented them without difficulty. This superintendance must be vigilant and regular. Without regularity and constant attention it will attain imperfectly its object, and, at length, sink entirely into neglect and disuse.

In a great city, where magistrates have so many objects to occupy their attention, the superintendance of the prisons should be made the object of a *peculiar* establishment. The plan which I would propose for this purpose is very simple, but would be most effectual. Let the magistrates appoint an *Inspector from the most respectable of the citizens, without a salary*. Let his reward be the confidence of his fellow-subjects, and the opportunity afforded him of doing good. Let it be his duty, frequently, and without any fixed hour, to visit the prison; especially at the time when the food of the prisoners is distributed. Let him farther take a charge of directing, at stated periods, the purchase of the ge-

neral stock of provisions ; and let him inspect the books of the clerk, and the accounts of the establishment. Still farther, *let a list of Visitors be appointed every year.* Let these, in their turn, being duly warned, visit the prison *every day*, and in a book provided for the purpose, mark their report and let them be so numerous, that a visit once in the month may be only required from each. Lastly, *let the seven visitors for the week meet with the inspector on every Saturday, as a Committee ;* to read over the daily reports, examine the books and accounts of the house, give such orders as circumstances require, and bring any uncommon case before the magistrates for their opinion and interference. Adoption of this simple plan would be productive of the most important effects. It would keep every department alert, prevent abuses in their commencement, and give rise to such improvements, from time to time, as experience and the changing circumstances of human life might suggest. The trouble would be small to any person except to the inspector ; and I am persuaded that many most excellent men would be found in the counties and cities of Britain, both able and disposed, with cheerfulness, to undertake the duty. Plans of a similar nature with that which we propose, are regularly carried on

in charitable institutions, such as hospitals, infirmaries, and asylums for penitents ; nor have active and benevolent citizens ever been wanting, at least in the City of Glasgow, with which I am best acquainted, to accomplish them with ability and success.

3. A business so important, however, should not be entirely trusted to local jurisdictions. It ought, I conceive, to be a national concern. With this view, it would be of great importance to appoint *annual reports* to be made of the state of every prison in the kingdom ; of the accommodation which they afford ; of the number and treatment of the prisoners, and the system of management on which they are conducted. These annual reports should be certified, after examination, by some person appointed by Government : they should be laid *before Parliament*, and examined by a committee : and an annual statement from them should be presented to the two houses, with such observations as seem to demand public attention.

Thus the benefits of both a general and local superintendance would be secured. The advantages arising from the experience of one part of the kingdom would be made known and communicated to another. The subject would never be forgotten ;

nor would evils, shocking to humanity, be allowed by wise and good men to exist in their neighbourhood, without means being employed to remedy and remove them.

It is vain to think that any remedy will ever be adopted, which will be effectual or general, without the interference of the Legislature. The subject should be brought before Parliament, and one great Act, comprehending what is valuable in former Acts, with the addition of those improvements which farther experience has suggested, should be formed. This Act should be rendered *universal* in its operation. The provisions of it should be not only authorised, but *commanded* to be carried into execution, with a suitable penalty; and temporary commissioners should be appointed for every county, to enforce the orders of government, and to set the law in operation. The partial exertions of good men, in remedying local evils, will not only be confined in extent, but be short in duration. The power of the nation alone has energy to overturn and sweep away those inveterate abuses, which have so long and generally prevailed; to introduce a system worthy of a FREE AND CHRISTIAN COUNTRY, to set it in operation, and to render it universally effectual. Let the exertions of the wise and benevolent be directed

to this GREAT OBJECT. Much, and amidst many difficulties, in the present age, they have done ; and much, through the blessing of God, on their talents and persevering exertions, they will still accomplish.

ON

BRIDEWELLS.

THE remarks which, in the preceding essay, have been made on prisons, apply, in general, to Bridewells with still greater force. Persons who are confined in Bridewells have been tried and found guilty. The nature of their imprisonment, with all the rules and discipline to which they are subjected, are implied in the sentence of their judge, and may be therefore, unquestionably enforced. The longer duration of their confinement affords also a more ample opportunity for employing the means of improvement; while it proportionally exposes them to the evils which arise from an improper system of management. Bridewells also are designed for the RE-

FORMATION, as well as the punishment of criminals ; and therefore imply, in their very object, a special attention to the morals and improvement of the prisoners.

The solitary confinement to which prisoners in Bridewells are sentenced, may be supposed to preserve them from the danger of corrupting conversation, and vicious associates, and to render unnecessary any attention to their proper classification. But so unfortunately are some Bridewells constructed, that prisoners, though confined to separate apartments, can elude the vigilance of their keepers, and converse together without difficulty. In some, two rows of apartments are in each story of the building, which are separated from each other only by a narrow passage. The prisoners must thus either endure the extremes of an airless and narrow cell, or the cold and wind of the external atmosphere ; while the object of solitary punishment is in a great measure lost. Through the doors of their opposite apartments they carry on conversation with facility, and every person who approaches them, without their notice, may hear long and noisy conversation : alas ! too frequently more suited to their former characters and crimes, than to the unhappy situation to which they are reduced. In other Bride-

wells, and in some which deserve much general approbation, the prisoners can see one another, as well as converse together, even while they are separately confined. The effect of solitary punishment, and of a separation from wicked associates, is thus in a great measure counteracted, sources of corruption of various kinds are opened, new acquaintances are formed, and the more vicious of both sexes are both tempted and enabled to lay snares to catch the young, on the day of their liberation. It is to be observed also, that solitary confinement, though in a certain degree very beneficial, cannot be long continued without prejudice to the health both of the body and mind of the criminal. Unless duly moderated, mixed with occasional society, and combined with other means fitted to rouse the powers and give exercise to the thoughts and affections, it will rather retard than promote reformation. That hard labour, to which criminals are condemned, cannot always be carried on in a solitary cell. It is of importance to exercise them also in useful and profitable employments, by which they may be stimulated to industry, and acquire a taste and capacity for occupations which may be afterwards useful to them; but these cannot be carried on, in many cases, without the co-operation of others. And

where the work of reformation is commenced, feelings and purposes of repentance may be strengthened by the occasional conversation and example of others, whose minds are undergoing, or have undergone the same blessed revolution.

These observations shew, that, in bridewells as well as in prisons, it is of the greatest importance to guard against the danger of corrupt conversation and acquaintances, and with the most scrupulous exactness, to attend to the due classification of the prisoners. Every bridewell should, therefore, be so constructed and regulated, that solitary confinement, when judged proper, should be applied, not in appearance only, but in reality and with effect. The governor of the bridewell should daily visit each prisoner in his cell, converse with him, counsel him, and form some estimate of his general disposition and present state of mind. He should farther acquaint himself with his history, his education, talents, and habits; he should take him, as it were, for a time upon trial, ascertain for what employments he is most fit, and with what society he may with safety be trusted. If it shall be deemed suitable, after a proper period, to permit him to associate in any degree with others, he should be then introduced only to that class which is suited to his

age and character. Even this occasional association should seldom be permitted, I conceive, but in the period of employment, and under the superintendence of a person of respectability and faithfulness. Females should have a quarter of the building separate to themselves, and though under the same general management, should have a female superintendence, and employments assigned them suited to their sex. Even in the time of divine service, they should not be seen by the other prisoners. To be recognised by one another afterwards, as having been inhabitants of bridewell, might lead to consequences fatal to their future welfare. Nor would it be difficult to provide for them that decent seclusion, which, as in Magdalene Asylums, would afford them at the same time concealment, and the benefit of religious ordinances, with persons fallen and lost like themselves.

But vain is every method to produce reformation, unless the MINDS of the prisoners be addressed. All external and merely physical means without this are unavailing. With this accompanying them, they may be successful, by themselves they are useless. To produce the most imperfect change on any part of the external conduct, views and motives must be somehow presented, fitted to affect the inclinations

and the purposes of men. To produce any change on the character, still more to produce that thorough change which every Christian must desire, a slight acquaintance with human nature and the Scriptures, may convince us is impossible, while the soul is in a state of moral ignorance and insensibility.

Misapprehensions of the nature of reforming punishments seem to be entertained by two different classes of persons. Some, with a disgusting apathy, ridicule every adaptation of punishment to the reformation of the criminal, as romantic and inconsistent with the object of public justice; and others expect from the mere nature of the punishment a much greater effect than it is capable of producing. Without doubt, the direct object of public punishment is the good of the community; and no plan for the good of the criminal must be permitted to counteract the great ends of public justice. But if punishments can be inflicted sufficient to maintain a salutary dread of crime, and at the same time fitted to produce, or to aid in producing, the reformation of offenders; what man, actuated by any principle of religion or feeling of humanity, would not give them his warm approbation? The hopelessness of the attempt to reform criminals, is a favourite topic with persons who will

not be at the trouble of making the trial. But why should it be hopeless? Have men, who have fallen into vice, never been reformed? Have even great and habitual transgressors never been seen to undergo a change of character? But criminals, condemned criminals—what is to be expected of them? I might refer the objectors to the end and the power of the Christian dispensation: I might refer also to many illustrious facts, to shew that the grace of God, through the means which he has appointed, is powerful to break down the strong holds of Satan, and bring even the chief of sinners to repentance. But as even good men sometimes form false notions of the character of criminals, and are thus led to indolence and despondency, I would answer, farther, by inquiring on what grounds it is believed, that persons under the sentence of the law, are sinners above all others that dwell in Jerusalem? Every violation of the laws of our country should be viewed with horror: but so also should every violation of the laws of God, of rectitude and of good morals; though they should escape the punishment of human law, or be of a nature to which human laws cannot be applied. The crimes, though of a different order, or attended with different circumstances, may imply equal depravity and want of

moral principle. The crimes, too, for which persons suffer punishment, are of very different degrees of guilt, and are attended with very different degrees of aggravation. The characters of the criminals are also very various: some are habitual and hardened transgressors; it is only the first transgression of others: some have committed crimes through strong and sudden temptations; others from habitual inclination and determined purposes of villany. Now, to confound all these persons in one mass, and form the same judgments and hopes with respect to them, is both senseless and cruel. Many of those who have fallen under the just and necessary condemnation of the law, are far from being hardened in crime; nor is there reason to fear that a just system of means would be less successful with them than with any other persons who have fallen into vice. The number of criminals who have become reformed, I am ready to allow, is not so great as that of other persons who have committed vices equally heinous. The causes of this melancholy fact are not difficult to be traced, and must not be laid merely to the character of the individuals. The stigma affixed to their name by a public punishment, places them in the most unfortunate circumstances on their liberation, for which scarcely

any remedy has hitherto been attempted. And, O! sad reflection,—reflection which should humble the best of us in the dust! no wise, and moral, and spiritual means, have hitherto, with zeal, and patience, and persevering kindness, been extensively employed by Christians, or even christian Ministers, for bringing back these unhappy wanderers to God, and saving them from becoming the prey of wretchedness and vice. Alas! had the best of us thus been treated by our God and Saviour, what had been our fate? And how little in this instance has the Christian world exemplified of **THE SPIRIT OF THEIR MASTER!**

This leads me to notice the error of those persons who seem to expect the reformation of criminals, as a matter of course, and without farther trouble, from the mere application of what is called reforming punishments. By this false estimate of the nature and efficacy of such punishments, these men encourage the neglect of those means which are necessary to render such punishments availing; and by their want of success, which a short period of trial will evince, they bring a prejudice against plans of great value, and cause their good to be evil spoken of. Reforming punishments are, in two respects, valuable: they furnish favourable oppor-

tunities for using the proper and direct means of reformation ; and they coincide with, and encourage the feelings of repentance, when these have been awakened. But left to their own unaided operation, their effect, except in singular and predisposed cases, will be feeble and confined.

All punishments, without doubt, tend to prevent, in one view, the repetition of crimes, by operating both on our instinctive fear, and a rational sense of interest. They may, therefore, sometimes deter the criminal from returning to his vices, where there is no feeling of remorse, or love of virtue. He avoids the crime, as he avoids the fire which had scorched him. This, however, though a natural and rational motive, will be found by itself, when the inclination is powerful, to be very feeble in its operation ; and instances are presented every day, of men indulging their inclinations, in opposition to every motive of self interest, after the experience of the severest punishments, and even in the face of the greatest evils. Nay, it not unfrequently happens, that punishment, when not accompanied with other means of reformation, hardens the criminal, and prepares him for greater enormities. When no moral feelings have been awakened, and no sense of the guilt of his crimes has

been felt, punishment, inflicted by his fellow men, excites and fosters resentment, hatred, and all the blacker passions of the soul; rendered more deep and malignant, by the necessity of concealing their expression, and, by those numerous circumstances of degradation, which must keep a mind, which is unsubdued by repentance, in a state of continual discontent and exasperation. Having no just sense of his criminality, a person of this character looks on his fellow-creatures as the causes of his wretchedness and shame; he views them as his enemies, indulges his passions in plans of retaliation and vengeance against that society which he hates, or justifies his schemes of aggression by the plea of necessity, and even of justice. In the same proportion his love is increased of those wretched companions who acknowledge him as a friend, and of those wretched pursuits which afford free scope to his passions, and the unchecked indulgence of his pleasures. In the society only of criminals like himself, his unhappy mind can give vent to its feelings, and be soothed by sympathy, and the expression of similar sentiments. Among them, also, instead of contempt he meets with friendship, perhaps honour and applause; while example, conversation, partnership in guilt, and in evil,

and in fancied wrongs, raise higher every baleful passion, and give increased malignity and strength to every lawless determination.

Reforming punishments, such as those of bridewells, possess all the general benefits which punishment tends to produce. They likewise possess advantages peculiar to themselves; but unless means be added to enlighten, direct, and impress the mind of the criminal, they will be found also attended with similar evils. When the criminal possesses some religious and moral sensibility, and when the suffering arising from his crimes has led to reflection, and given weight to the convictions of conscience, solitude and separation from former companions will dispose to serious thought, favour its indulgence, and render deeper and stronger the feelings of contrition. Yet even on this most favourable supposition, is there not much reason to fear, that unless his feeble and disordered mind be aided by other means, no lasting change will be produced upon his character? How frequently does it happen, that when the first ebullition of grief is over, inclinations, which had been for a time suspended, return; and self love, and passion, and fondness for habitual indulgencies, aided by that apathy of conscience which sin produces, lead him

again to palliate the guilt of his crimes, and to seek excuses for their commission ! The power of evil habits will scarcely be believed, except by those who have witnessed their resistance to the means which have been employed for their cure.

But if this be often the state of persons who have been awakened to remorse, what will be the state of the generality of criminals ? Accustomed to hardships and dangers, punishment seldom affects them deeply. They view it with carelessness and levity ; meet its first approach with a thoughtless hardihood ; little sensible either to shame, to self-reproach, or to fear. Unhappiness and depression will, I have little doubt, succeed ; and solitude, were their minds so disposed, would favour serious and sober thought. But will such characters of themselves, merely from their solitude, be generally either willing or able to take such views of their character and condition, as will terminate in reformation ? Suppose them to have received even a religious education, the impression of it is frequently effaced, and the knowledge of its principles is lost. The bias of the thoughts and feelings has been so long and powerfully directed in other channels, that even the ideas which may remain in the understanding do not arise before the mind ; or they pass like some con-

fused and fleeting dream before it, without awakening a purpose, or leaving an impression. Should circumstances combine to keep the unwelcome vision for a time before their eyes, and to awaken some dormant feeling into action, how frequently is it met with the stern opposition of a practised combatant, or with the heavy stubborn aspect of a conscience asleep and insensible to all its warnings! The greatest number, however, of persons confined in bridewells, are uneducated and uninstructed in even the first principles of religion. Their minds have never been opened to just ideas of their duty, or of their condition, or of their true interest. They have been deserted, or cast upon the world by their worthless parents, with much less care than the brutes manifest to their offspring. Alas! they have sometimes been left, not only ignorant and destitute, but, both by example and by precept, have been trained from infancy to vice. Now, what can solitude and imprisonment produce on such young persons? Is it to be expected that their thoughts will spontaneously take the direction of virtue and religion? That they will, of themselves, reason and judge rightly respecting their own conduct and condition, their guilt, their duty, and their interest? Is it to be expected that they

should be even capable of any thing like just and continued reflection? They want the very elements of that knowledge which is necessary to enable them to choose aright for themselves, with respect to their worldly interests; still more of that which alone can awaken and bring forth to life and vigour the higher affections and purposes of the human soul. To expect that such persons will, of themselves, fall into such reflections, and views, and purposes, as will end in reformation, from mere solitude and confinement, is folly. If they reflect at all, it will be on objects which they know, to which they have been accustomed, and to which the bias of their mind is suited; but in general, they will be found to sink into lethargy, and to sit, like the savage, gazing upon vacancy, or, like the wild beasts in their dens, to pass away their hours in sleep.

But instead of listless solitude, let us suppose hard labour added to confinement, either alone, or in the society of fellow prisoners, and see whether this part of the punishment of bridewells will, independently of other means, produce reformation. The beneficial influence of occupation, on men of every condition, is great. It tends to fix an unsettled mind; it prevents the indulgence

of corrupting thoughts, and thus helps to break the chain of corrupting associations; it gives to the mind vigour and self denial; and when engaged in from good motives and with a view to virtuous ends, it exercises and strengthens the highest principles and affections in the human soul. But labour, inflicted as a punishment on ignorant, uninstructed, and unwilling criminals, will be found to produce but a small portion of such effects; unless joined with such means as may lead them to the knowledge of their duty, the desire of improvement, and a sense of their true interest. With the use of such means, even severe labour will be submitted to with humility, and will often prove a mean of purifying the mind, and forming to habits of order and of industry; but without such means, it will produce a very slight degree of moral influence. Bodily labour cannot communicate knowledge to the ignorant, give a right direction to a depraved and erring mind, bring light and conviction to a dark and hardened conscience, or destroy the taste for unlawful pleasures and pursuits. It will not even destroy the love of idleness, or form the habit of industry in him on whom it is forced, and by whom it is viewed only as an evil. Persons may, in early youth, by instruction, authority, and affection, and

views of interest and of duty properly presented, acquire habits of industry, and a love of labour, in employments to which they were originally averse. But the mere obligation to work from necessity, or as a punishment, will seldom, I apprehend, produce this effect ; especially when previous habits of idleness and disorder are to be overcome. Criminals in this situation will view labour as an evil, from which they long for escape, and to the termination of which they look forward with joy. On the first dawn of liberty, they will thus throw off the yoke of bondage, and plunge with new avidity into those pursuits and pleasures, the desire of which, instead of being broken, had been only increased by the period of restraint and toil. A very different effect would be produced, were means employed to enlighten their conscience, and shew them their true interests, to subdue their hearts to penitence, and give a new direction to their feelings and their views. Labour they would then see to be useful, and their punishment to be deserved. They would acquiesce in the wisdom and justice of their employments, and engage in them with willingness. The power and the pleasure of useful exercise would, in some degree, be experienced, the habit of idleness and disorder be broken, while the rewards of future in-

dustry, being presented in engaging colours before their mind, would be habitually anticipated, and anxiously sought.

These observations shew, that reforming punishments will do little to the amendment of the criminal, unless assisted by other means, to give to them direction and effect. But they also shew, that they afford favourable opportunities for the employment of such means, and naturally tend to promote and strengthen their influence. And what are those means which must be combined with them to render them effectual? What but the means which must be employed to affect or direct the judgment, and conscience, and heart, of every human being? the means which God himself hath appointed for the conversion and improvement of men. When ignorance prevails, and the great truths and motives fitted to affect the judgments, consciences, and hearts of human beings are unknown, instruction must be communicated. When these truths, though known, are forgotten, or banished from the mind, unthought of, and unfelt, they must, by an affectionate and respected monitor, be recalled, placed before the mind in their fulness, excellence, and importance, in a manner fitted to fix them in the soul, and im-

press them deeply, to rouse the conscience, and all the feelings of the heart. And when, to native disorder, fatal habits of vice have been added, the conscience has become indifferent to good and evil, and habit, and self love, and passion, have united to deceive the criminal into false ideas of himself, his conduct, and his condition; what but such a faithful yet compassionate friend can unravel and expose the deceits of his heart, make a faithful application of divine truth to his conscience, and teach him how to judge rightly of himself, his actions, and his state—what but such means repeated, urged, by every method, both of tenderness and severity, pressed close upon the soul, can touch and subdue his hardened mind, lead him to lay down the weapons of rebellion, with anxiety to look to the grace which is in Christ Jesus, and, in humble faith, and penitence, and deep self-abasement, to cry, “God be merciful to me a sinner!”

Should you even desire to awaken nothing more than a purpose of abstaining from those criminal courses which the laws of society must punish; what other means can you employ, with a being endowed with reason and conscience, placed in such fatal circumstances, but to instruct him in his true interest, to open his mind to the whole evils and

consequences of his conduct, to expose his deceptions and false views, to awaken better feelings and desires, and purposes, touch both his fears and his hopes, engage him in a train of thought and in exercises of mind which may lead his heart from former pursuits, and stimulate him to the desire of attempting better objects? This cannot be done, unless by a person acquainted with the varieties of human character, and zealous to do good, yet patient, prudent, and persevering, capable in meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves. And are the purposes, and feelings, and prayers of sincere and heartfelt contrition; or the defective, yet still valuable, resolutions of external reformation, to be left unaided and unwatched, as soon as they have been excited? Are education and good instruction the work of a day? Are false views and principles to be in a moment eradicated, depraved habits and propensities at once to be broken and subdued? Or do they not require persevering labour and pains, both on the part of the individual and his instructor? Do they not require watchfulness, and care, and superintendence? Do they not require the habitual use of means to direct and exercise the mind in those duties which belong to every human being: to confirm, and to cherish, and to carry forward, the

good work which is begun ; to keep alive, and to preserve before the mind, those great truths and purposes which are the foundation of the most partial change of character ; and to bring forth, to exercise, and to render powerful and permanent, those affections, and dispositions of the soul, by the prevalence of which alone we can be virtuous and good ? Such means, and such exercises, are necessary to every human being, whatever be his state, in even the highest condition of holy character ; and in proportion to the degree of his progress in christian excellence, will they be valued and observed. What then must be their necessity to the unfortunate criminal ? How necessary to impress, to confirm, and carry forward in improvement, beings who have been long accustomed to do evil, and who have not yet learned to do well ?

The assembling, only, of young persons together for the purposes of education, the inquiring into their qualifications, arranging them in classes, manifesting an interest in their welfare, and addressing them with kindness, tend all of them to soften stubborn minds, and form them to order, discipline, and submission. Instruction in reading, and in other useful branches of learning, not only furnishes the

most important means of reformation, but is itself a powerful instrument for changing and improving the character of youthful criminals. It not only gives them the means of acquiring knowledge, but, if properly conducted, it communicates, in the course of learning the art, knowledge of the most important kind. It improves the mental powers, increases the subjects of useful thought, gives an important direction to the understanding; and, both by the lessons which are read, and the direct and incidental instruction of their teacher, it stores the mind with the most important truths, exercises the thoughts and affections on the most important objects, and gives a favourable direction and bias to all the principles of their character.

“About three years ago,” says the Rev. Mr William Richardson of York, in a statement to Mr. Gurney, “some boys from Sheffield were tried and condemned at York, for robbing a watchmaker’s or silversmith’s shop, and left for transportation. One of the magistrates, who was of the grand jury, struck with compassion for the youth, and the miserable appearance of these poor culprits, spoke to them after their conviction, and, on his return to his own seat in the country, wrote to the governor of York castle, expressing a wish that some useful

instruction might be afforded them while they remained there, promising to bear the expence of it, and desiring him to consult with me on the subject. It occurred to me, that the best thing to be done was to establish a school in which the boys might be regularly taught. The governor was kind enough to furnish a proper room; a decent young man, (a prisoner for debt) who had been master of a cheap school in the north of Yorkshire, was hired to teach this little school; and I undertook that my curate or myself would inspect it. The project succeeded beyond our expectations. The master soon grew fond of his pupils, on account of their rapid improvement in reading, writing, &c. The boys were diligent and attentive to instruction, happy, and orderly; their behaviour at the chapel, and their whole conduct at other times, gave us pleasure. This continued till the time of their departure from the castle, when they were visited by their benevolent patron, who had wished to see and examine them before they left the country. He was highly satisfied with the result of his experiment, and furnished them with useful religious books and tracts to take with them. He also made each of them a present of a guinea, saying, at the same time, "I give you this to dispose of just as you please; but

I cannot help observing, that the man whom you robbed is now in the castle, a prisoner for debt; and if I were in your case, I should think it right to make him some compensation for the wrong I had done him. But you are quite at liberty to do what you like." He then left them, and returned home. When he was gone, and the boys were left to themselves, they unanimously agreed to send all that their benefactor had given them (I think to the amount of five or six guineas) to the man they had robbed, desiring only that he would return them each a shilling for pocket-money. The poor man, surprised and affected by this unexpected act of restitution, did more than they requested. Care was taken to keep them separate from the other convicts during their journey to the ship, and a charge given to the master of the transport to watch over them during their voyage. I also gave them a letter to Mr. Marsden, the senior chaplain of New South Wales, recommending them to his pastoral care. This successful experiment has excited in my mind a strong wish that schools could be formed in all our larger prisons, where juvenile offenders are so often to be found. This measure, together with occupation for all, and a proper classification, seem to me, after forty years' acquaintance

with the inmates of a prison, to be the most promising means of producing reformation.”

The conclusion from these observations is, that as we hope to produce any reformation among criminals, we must furnish them with the means of *religious instruction* and *religious ordinances*; and, such of them as require it, with instruction in *elementary education*.

In towns and parishes of small extent, it is possible, by a proper arrangement, for the established clergymen to discharge, in some degree, religious duties in prisons or bridewells which are situated in their parishes. But in the prisons and bridewells of populous cities and counties, where the official duties of clergymen are numerous and extensive, and where, also, the numbers imprisoned are great, it is absolutely necessary that *special ministers* be appointed to take charge of them. When we consider, also, the number of young and uneducated persons who are confined, we will be convinced that the benefits of education which we have illustrated, ought not to be left to the casual exertions of benevolent individuals. The stated and regular duties necessary for such a purpose, it would be unjust to expect from them; neither could these be depended upon with certainty, or to any consi-

derable extent; nor could they be expected to be always performed in the best and most effectual manner. *A well qualified teacher*, under a judicious superintendence, appointed not merely in consequence of temporary circumstances and of local feeling, but of a general system by public authority, will alone secure permanently, and to its just extent, the blessing of education to the young and ignorant in our bridewells. Such important objects as divine worship, religious instruction, and good education, should not even be left to the uncertain chances of a local magistracy, who may either neglect, or counteract, or wholly overturn the system which, a few months before, their predecessors had established.

I conclude with earnestly calling the public attention to the observations which, in the preceding Essay, have been made on the importance “of placing over our prisons and bridewells men of excellent character, and of exercising a wise and vigilant superintendence.” By such means, all the good which we desire, and which in the first warmth of hope we might think reasonable, will not be obtained; yet still much will be done. And amongst other happy consequences, the various characters of the unfortunate prisoners will thus be ascertained,

intelligent and good men will know them, and assist them to acquire, on their liberation, situations adapted to their talents and circumstances: Nor will they then be, as they are at present, cast out indiscriminately upon the world, destitute, branded, and shunned—desolate wanderers, without a home to shelter them, without a friend to protect or advise them, often, alas! without even the power of procuring the means of *nourishment and life!*

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 them to acquire, on their liberation, situations ad-
 equate to their talents and exertions. For will
 they then be, as they are at present, cast out into
 circumstances open to the world, destitute of friends, and
 without a home to retreat to, without a home to
 shelter them, without a friend in private or public
 life, often, alas! without even the power of pro-
 curing the means of subsistence and support?
 It is not possible to see a man in such a situation
 without being struck with the idea of his being
 abandoned to the world, and to the mercy of
 every man's hand. It is not possible to see a man
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ON
AIDING DESTITUTE CRIMINALS,

A Discourse on Opening the Asylum for Penitents,
at Glasgow.

*“ How think ye? If a man have an hundred
“ sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth
“ he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth
“ into the mountains, and seeketh that which is
“ gone astray? And if so be that he find it,
“ verily I say unto you, He rejoiceth more of
“ that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which
“ went not astray. Even so it is not the will
“ of your Father which is in heaven, that one
“ of these little ones should perish.”*

MATT. xviii. 12.

THE Son of God came into the world to call sinners to repentance; and never surely do his followers so fully manifest themselves to be under the Spirit of their Master, as when they are seeking to preserve or to recover their brethren from sin. This has, accordingly, ever been the earnest and

habitual desire of the followers of Christ. And the general regulations of kingdoms; the public institutions of religion; the establishments for the education of youth; the societies for the protection and instruction of the destitute; and the many affectionate and tender, though often humble and unnoticed, exertions of individuals in doing good—all manifest the desire of Christians to preserve and reclaim their fellow-creatures from the power of depravity.

But in reclaiming or preserving from further vice those unhappy persons who, by their misconduct, have excluded themselves from society, or fallen under the sentence of the laws, little comparatively has been attempted, and still less has been done. And of that little how strange is it, that, notwithstanding the humane and generous spirit of our country, we should be found to have done less than many other nations?

Let me call your attention to the duty of promoting the reformation and welfare of even the greatest outcasts from society, and then conclude with some remarks suited to the occasion of our meeting.

I. The consideration of the public interest points out its obligation.

Nothing is more certain than that the profligacy

of individuals is destructive of the public good. So intimately are we bound together by various connexions and relations, that every man by his conduct affects the character and happiness of others. But the vices of offenders against the laws, must be considered as still more directly injurious to society. They not only injure society by ruining themselves ; but by their profligacy, disorder, idleness, and frequent attacks upon the peace, property, and persons of their fellow-creature, they spread around them the most desolating evils, disturb, corrupt, and destroy the happiness of human life. Every wise man, therefore, who regards the strength and security, the virtue, peace, and well-being of a people ; who justly values his own interests, the interests of his family, his friends and his country, will desire to diminish the number of such criminals, prevent their growth, and if possible restore them to habits of usefulness, and engage them in virtuous pursuits.

But by reclaiming offenders, not only evils are diminished, but a great addition of good is made to the community. As the cultivation of those immense commons which now lie waste, would not only remove objects offensive, unwholesome, and disgraceful to the country, and present in their

room smiling and lovely fields, but would also raise food for millions, and thus contribute to the numbers, strength, and riches of the nation; so would unhappy criminals, if reclaimed, by their industry, talents, and exertions, honourably contribute to the advancement of the general welfare. No longer burdens by their idleness, and nuisances by their vices, they would not only preserve themselves in health and comfort, but add their share to the great stock of public good. No longer separated from society by their vices, but united in all the tender relations and connexions of life, they would enjoy themselves the happiness of domestic comforts, and diffuse happiness around them in their various spheres. Nay, as fathers and mothers, brothers, sisters, and friends, exercising the affections and duties of their different relations, they would be not only promoting present happiness, but training up a seed to serve God; whose example, exertions, and talents, instead of corrupting and destroying, would contribute to continue and to spread still wider, the joys and the blessings of man.

Is not this then an object of general concern, which merits the attention of the ruler, the statesman, the patriot, of all who wish well to the best interests of their country?

II. From considering the general interests, let us attend to the situation of the unhappy individuals.

I shall not attempt to describe to you the miseries of those who are sunk into the lowest depths of profligacy. They present a picture of human depravity and wretchedness, too deformed, loathsome, and shocking for the public eye; from which retreating, sickened and appalled, your dread and abhorrence might be apt to overcome the workings of compassion. But I call you to consider what they *have been*, and what they possibly still *may be*; and I leave it to every feeling heart to determine, whether means should not, even for such outcasts, be tried to rescue them from such a state, awaken in them the lost feelings and sentiments of humanity, restore them to the condition of human beings, and to a capacity for human happiness.

But from these let us turn to the situation of those who are only commencing their course of vice, who, in the midst of the horrors of their state, feel the bitterness of remorse, and long and sigh for an opportunity to return to the ways which they have forsaken. Among these wretched outcasts, various are the characters and degrees of guilt. Some there are in the beginning of life, and placed too in the

most unfortunate circumstances. They are left perhaps destitute, friendless, unprotected, without a parent, or guardian, or counsellor. They are also ignorant and uninstructed in that knowledge of God which alone could prove to them the mean of safety. They are in the midst of a tempestuous ocean; young and unpractised voyagers in a feeble and dismayed bark; without strength to resist the billows and the storms which assail them, without pilot to assist in guiding them through the rocks and the shoals, and with scarcely sufficient light to discover the safe and friendly haven to which their course should be steered.

Others again there are, the children of pious parents, in whose minds religious principles had been early instilled, a lively sense of duty cultivated, and all the virtuous affections called forth and exercised. They afforded the fairest hopes of a life at least of peace and of humble virtue; and looked forward to their simple establishment in domestic life, with all the moderate wishes of a feeling heart, as the utmost boundary of their ambition. But forced by that necessity which often separates the happiest families, and obliges children to seek for subsistence at a distance from their native home, they no longer experience the counsel and protection of a pa-

rent. They fall into the society of the wicked ; and feel the corrupting effects of profligate conversation and example. Or they are placed in circumstances of peculiar danger ; perhaps are exposed to the devilish machinations of the unprincipled and callous profligate. From one step to another, and by a progress easily conceived, they pursue their course of depravity, and arrive at a stage of very dreadful wickedness. In drunkenness, debauchery, theft, the riot and noise of shocking passions, and with a rude levity, ill concealing the misery of a diseased body and a wretched mind, they spend those days which once were passed in innocent pursuits ; banish the remembrance of those principles which once irradiated and blessed their minds, and lose all traces of those sentiments which once beamed light and joy upon a parent's heart. Yet though low they have fallen, they have not yet sunk into total insensibility. There are moments in which they stop, and with trembling look down to the gulph which lies before them. With anxious eye, and a breaking heart, they then look back. They think of the heights from which they have come, and the happy retreats of peace and safety which they have forsaken. They think of their former days, their former prospects, their fa-

ther's house, and the hopes which their parents had formed. Their hearts are rent with anguish, and the wishes of return arise; perhaps for a moment they even lift up an eye to heaven. But how shall they return? The way seems to them shut up; it is also encompassed with thorns, and of a steep ascent; and their resolution and strength are feeble. Involved in perplexity, wearied, helpless, and forlorn; without friend near to assist, to encourage, to point the road, to shew the consolation of hope, and give strength to the trembling purpose; they desperately plunge into the courses before them, and seek in forgetfulness and vice a temporary relief from the misery of thought.

Is not this the situation of thousands, who wanted only to hear some encouraging voice, to see some ray of hope, to discern some opening pointed out by a friendly hand, and to receive some assurance of shelter, some chance, though at a distant period, and as a hired servant, of being admitted into their father's house; who wanted only this to have confirmed the rising purpose, and led up to penitence the sad sigh of retrospection? How many a wretched female, by friendly interference in the moments of contrition, might have been saved from a wretchedness too deep and dreadful to be thought

upon ! How many a wretched boy, from a train of succeeding crimes and miseries, more dreadful even than that death in which they often terminate ! And is there a compassionate heart, which does not wish that means could be used for the reformation of these wretched ones ; to draw them from their fatal courses, to prevent them at least from plunging farther into the abyss of iniquity ; and though unable to restore to them the honour and happiness they have forfeited, to rescue them from the state of profligacy, and to save them from feeling the last fatal effects of their vices ?

But who is he who, in considering human characters and actions, can confine his views to this world ? Who without anxious and awful concern, can avoid looking forward to the eternal state, and contemplating that connexion which God hath established betwixt present character and future happiness ? Now is God in Christ Jesus reconciling a guilty world unto himself. Through that great Redeemer, who by his obedience and death obtained salvation for the guilty, He offers mercy and grace. He calls them by every motive to return to himself, offers to receive them again into favour, and under the gracious administration of his Son, to train them to a meetness for a higher state, and

bestow on them the highest happiness. But this great dispensation of mercy shall come to a conclusion. The tares shall at length be for ever separated from the wheat; and the Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. Excluded from heaven, and separated from the society of the good, the appointed and necessary effects of their depravity take place. They are fixed in that state, and united to that order of beings, to which their characters and actions are suited.

Can we think of these awful declarations without the liveliest compassion for the state of sinners? without the most ardent desire to reclaim them from their sins, and save them from a fate so awful and irretrievable? Can we see our fellow-creatures in danger of perishing, without exerting ourselves to save them? Are we convinced that sin, if persisted in, must be followed by ruin, and yet shall we not endeavour to preserve them from its power? Shall we not spare a little pain and cost in the attempt? Shall we not embrace with ardour every mean which promises to be successful? Is it not at least worth the trial? Behold! here the wretched children of guilt. Let the future fate of the

impenitent rise up before you ; and let the thought inspire you with the desire of uniting to try some probable mean for their recovery.

III. The text suggests to us another motive, which will be felt with peculiar force by every Christian. “ It is not the will of God that any of these little ones should perish.”

The will of God, the command of your Saviour, a regard to your own eternal interests, unite with compassion in calling your attention to this object. The will of God—compassion to the miserable, He hath manifested to be his will in every form which can affect the heart. The views of mercy under which He hath presented himself ; the divine character of our Redeemer, and all his words, his actions, his exhortations, his commands, all manifest the will of God, and declare, in language too plain to be misunderstood, that without compassion, whatever be our name, we are not followers of Christ. Nay, not only are the duties of compassion acts of obedience, they are exalted to acts of piety, and made direct expressions of love to Him who redeemed us. The Saviour of men makes, as it were, the cause of the miserable his own ; and every act of mercy which we do un-

to them he compassionately considers as done unto himself.

But to that compassion which consists in preserving or recovering men from depravity, the gospel peculiarly directs the views, desires, and labours of Christians. This is ever represented as the object of chief moment. To save sinners from the guilt, the effects, and the power of sin, was the great object for which God sent his Son into the world. For this end it was that the Son of God took upon him our nature, and finally, "bare our sins in his own body on the tree." And can we regard the will of God, and be indifferent to this object? Hear the words of our Lord. "Take heed that ye despise not one of those little ones; for the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye then? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray? Even so it is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish."

And how elevating is the thought that we are thus fellow-workers with God; promoting that great object which, under the gracious administration of

his Son, He is pursuing for the honour, perfection, and happiness of the human race ! How grand the idea of restoring a fellow-creature to God, bringing him to the kingdom of Christ, rescuing him from a state of degradation and depravity, and raising him to honour and to virtue ! Ye are the light of the world ; ye are the salt of the earth. Our Lord hath also intimated, that great is our accountableness for this honourable distinction. “ If the salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted ? it is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men.” But how great is the reward in heaven which Jesus hath obtained for his people ; and of all graces in their character, what more hath he required and promised of his mercy to bless, than that which has for its object the recovery of a soul from death ! “ The wise shall shine as the sun in the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”

Thus the most powerful motives—motives connected with time and eternity, drawn from a regard to the general interests, compassion for individuals, regard to the will of God and our Saviour, and finally from the character and hopes of Christians ; all combine to engage us to use and countenance

every probable mean for reclaiming public offenders, and encouraging in them the desire of reformation.

Nor let any man imagine that this duty is confined to any peculiar order or description of men. In the general design of preserving or recovering others from the power of iniquity, every man is concerned. Every one has for this purpose his peculiar sphere appointed him by God ; his portion in the vineyard which he is called to labour and improve. Private individuals, heads of families, masters of servants and dependants, teachers and guardians of youth, elders and ministers of the church of Christ, magistrates and rulers of the land, all who have a general superintendance of the morals and character of the people ; all in their different spheres have a peculiar charge entrusted to them, and are called to preserve and reclaim their fellow-creatures from sin, according to the talents which God hath given them, the sphere in which they move, and the influence which they enjoy.

But what is to become of those whose crimes have separated them from their brethren and friends ? who have forcibly burst every tie asunder, withdrawn from every mean of recovery, associated themselves with the abandoned, and to whom, in the

ordinary course of providence, there is no access to do good. Ah! unhappy and unfortunate beings, what heart can think of your lost situation without compassion! without earnestly wishing that means might be found to rescue you from the miseries of your condition, aid your wishes of return, and, if possible, bring you yet back to the fold which you have broken.

To promote this pious and benevolent design, the **GLASGOW SOCIETY FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PENITENTS** has been formed. With this view, it proposes to direct its attention to two great objects.

1st, To preserve Boys who have fallen into crimes from returning to their idle and pernicious courses.

2dly, To protect and encourage Penitent Females in their desire of reformation.

Among the boys confined in bridewell, some are frequently to be found without a parent, and without a home; some whose parents are worthless, or in distant regions, unable to watch over and direct their misguided and inexperienced offspring. To increase their misfortune they have learned no useful occupation; they are also without knowledge of the first principles of duty, nor has early instruction

and pious example turned their young hearts to the sentiments of religion. These young persons are now to be dismissed from confinement, and where are they to go—to what course betake themselves? They have no home, or their home is the nursery of vice. They have no means of present subsistence; their habits of industry are to be learned; their vicious and idle habits to be broken; and to all their disadvantages are joined the inexperience, thoughtlessness, and strong passions of youth.

Or behold, here is an unhappy female who has left the paths of virtue, or who, scarcely past the days of childhood, has fallen a victim to the monstrous passions of the depraved profligate. But, by the grace of God, she has been awakened to reflection. She looks back on her past life with horror; and with agony and terror she contemplates those miseries which must follow a continuance in her wretched courses. But her vices have justly separated her from the society of the good. A just displeasure against vice, regard to character, and to the safety and principles of the innocent, joined with uncertainty respecting the sincerity of her repentance—all contribute to exclude her from the hope of admission into respectable society and service.

It is to the protection and encouragement of young persons in such circumstances, and with such sentiments, that the Society before whom I now speak comes forward. They say to the destitute and friendless boy, "We will take you under our patronage; we will endeavour to place you in a situation of comfort, where you shall be instructed in useful occupation, taught the principles of Christianity, and formed to habits of usefulness, it may be of religion." To the repenting female they present a place of retreat: "There, removed from circumstances of temptation, you may practise undisturbed your purposes of penitence, contribute to your maintenance by useful employment, enjoy for a season the benefit of pious exercises and instruction, and after a suitable time of trial, with some prospect of comfort and recovered reputation, return to your friends and to society." While thus the just distinctions of life are preserved, so necessary for the maintenance of virtue and the preservation of the innocent, the penitent are encouraged in their purposes of amendment, and shielded at once from temptations and despair.

For the accomplishment of this latter object, the plan of an asylum for female penitents was formed, and by the blessing of God, is now executed. To

the liberality of the public the Society appealed ; the appeal was listened to with favour ; and Glasgow now numbers with its benevolent institutions a **MAGDALENE ASYLUM**, “worthy of the noble edifices with which it is associated.”

Besides furnishing good accommodation to the superintendents and servants, this building contains seventeen bed-rooms, each of which may accommodate two or more persons, as circumstances require ; and four working and eating rooms of considerable dimensions. It contains also a chapel for divine service, fitted up in a plain but handsome manner. And annexed to it is nearly an acre of ground, properly enclosed, in which the inhabitants may walk, and carry on those kinds of external labour in which it may be sometimes proper to employ them.

The Society is far from entertaining the idea, that the objects which they have in view are to be speedily accomplished. “On the contrary,” in the language of their report, “they lay their account with many difficulties, and many disappointments. But they expect much from the blessing of God on patient, mild, and humble perseverance. They console themselves with the thought of meeting sometimes, though it should be at distant intervals, with real penitents ; of rescuing some from the mi-

sery arising from idleness, and unprotected youth ; of preventing others from falling into further and deeper immorality ; and where they are not so happy as to see the signs of genuine penitence, of at least fostering a spirit of useful industry, and lessening in some degree the crimes and miseries of wretched and forsaken outcasts. To rescue fellow-creatures from the miseries of guilt and depravity, is peculiarly congenial with the dispensation of the gospel ; nor can they forget the declaration that ‘ joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.’ The common feelings of humanity, and regard to the interests of society, lead to the same object ; for no miseries are so great and extensive as those which arise from vice.”

The public has expressed its approval by that liberal support, through the means of which the Asylum, this day to be opened, has been so well and so speedily erected. But the wise and the good will be aware, that no extensive or permanent effect can be accomplished by casual and temporary expressions of benevolence. Their benevolence must be persevering, founded on principle, and steadily directed to the accomplishment of its object. Under your auspices, and in the hopes of your continued benevolent and pious aid, we engage in this

important design. To your *annual* contributions, or *occasional* donations, we look for that support which shall enable us fairly to try in this city, a plan for one of the most merciful objects; a plan which in other cities has been attended with the most beneficial effects.

Let the severe and the supercilious frown, or the callous and the licentious sneer, at our humble endeavours. We count it no degradation to engage in the attempt of promoting the reformation of the chief of sinners; and our highest honour, to follow Him who came to call sinners to repentance. We look with disdain on the opinions and sneers of the selfish profligate; who, after having corrupted innocence, would leave his wretched victims to perish in want and wretchedness, and would discourage the endeavours of those who seek to remedy the evils of which his own despicable passions and pursuits have been the cause. But while we disdain his ridicule, for himself we feel nothing but compassion. Him we behold as even a more wretched object than the miserable victims of his vices. The time of retribution will come, *and the retribution will be awful!*

May God in his infinite mercy touch the hearts of the hardened! May he unite the spirits of

Christians more and more, in promoting by every mean, and in every quarter, the great work of reformation! And may the Asylum, which is this day to be opened for the reception of the penitent, be blessed, while it lasts, with the spirit and the presence of him who came, TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST.

NOTES.

IN the preceding discourse, two methods for promoting the reformation and welfare of Destitute Criminals are mentioned, as being pursued by the Glasgow Society for the encouragement of Penitents. There are many persons dismissed from Bridewell, to whose situations these methods are excellently adapted, but there are others to whom they are not applicable. The unhappy situation of the generality of persons dismissed from imprisonment has never yet sufficiently engaged the public attention. We meet with persons who are continually wondering at the number of criminals

who return to Bridewell after their liberation. But if we were to attend to the combination of unfortunate circumstances which environ them, and the total want of any aid to assist them in their struggle, and to prevent their sinking in the depths of those billows upon which they are carelessly thrown, we will wonder only that any of them escape destruction. In this age, priding itself on its benevolence, scarcely any thing has been done for them; that little has been done with reluctance; the necessary means have been weakened and narrowed from a want of support, or been left deserted and unemployed from the feebleness of Christian zeal and compassion in many, whose exertions in such a cause might have been expected to have been great and persevering.

1. For penitent females, from whatever quarter they come, or by whatever causes they have been brought to repentance, Magdalene Asylums, when properly conducted, afford a most excellent mean for security, instruction, encouragement in virtuous purposes, and the formation of Christian character. The Magdalene Asylum of Glasgow, in so far as the improvement, order, peace, and comfort of its unfortunate inmates are concerned, has succeeded in its object, beyond the expectations even

of its friends. Its directors have indeed often met with disappointments ; but these, from the beginning, they expected, and they would have shewn much ignorance of human nature had they formed any other expectations. Nor should every relapse into vice be imputed to hypocrisy. There are many instances of persons who, from the power of temptation, have broken resolutions formed in seriousness and sincerity. Yet, notwithstanding those disappointments, the instances of success are so many, and so great, in the period of the institution, as should give pleasure to every man who regards the temporal welfare of his fellow-creatures ; how much more to him who estimates, with christian faith and christian feeling, the value of *saving a soul from death*.

The last Report presents the following statement :

“ Since its commencement, in the year 1815,
 118 have been received ; of whom
 29 have been restored to their relations ;
 14 have been got into respectable service ;
 10 have left the House ;
 20 have been dismissed for impropriety of conduct ;
 8 have been allowed to go out at their own request ;
 1 has died ; and
 36 at present remain in the House.

“ Your Committee feel much pleasure in saying, since the last annual meeting, they have had repeated proofs that the Institution has been attended with the most beneficial consequences to many ; and that impressions have been made on the minds of several of the inmates, not of a transient nature, but bearing on them the features of permanent good. As a proof of this, your Committee, in place of inserting, as usual, some of the Reports of the Weekly Visitors, (and which, they are happy to say, have been uniformly favourable,) beg leave to make one or two Extracts from Letters, which have been received from some who were once inmates of the Asylum, but who have been for a considerable time, either with their relations, or employed at some respectable occupation.

“ M— S— was left an orphan in childhood ; she was seduced at an early period of life, and for some time lived in pomp and luxury. Abandoned, however, by her guilty associate, she soon sunk into the common herd. Having been recommended to apply for admission at the Magdalene Asylum, she was received, and remained about fifteen months, when she was placed out in service. Some time ago, she wrote to the Matron as follows :—

“ ‘ I can no longer forbear returning you, and the Gentlemen of the Committee, my most sincere thanks. Words come far short of expressing my gratitude, for teaching me to earn my bread by honest industry ; but more especially for teaching me the way of salvation, by explaining to me the word of God, which before was a sealed book. What a comfort do I now feel in going on in the path of honest industry, in looking to God, and doing all as under his immediate inspection ! I pray the Father of Orphans amply to reward all your kindness. May you, Madam, be long spared to point sinners to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world ; and may you appear at last robed in his righteousness.’ ”

“ H— S— was seduced under promise of marriage, and was for some time the votary of guilty pursuits. In a state of mental agony, she sought and found a refuge in the Magdalene Asylum. She had been brought up a Roman Catholic, and was wholly untaught ; indeed, at the time of her admission, she did not know a single letter. She applied assiduously to learn, and made very great progress in reading, writing, and the usual employments of the Institution. She was restored to her relations upwards of a year ago, and has conducted herself ever

since with the greatest propriety. Some time ago, she wrote to the Matron as follows:—

“ ‘ Dear Madam, whom I would fain presume to call, my much-loved mother, (and indeed you are so, in the best sense of the word,) words come short of the sense of gratitude which I owe to you for the spiritual instruction which you have given me for many days back ; much, very much pains have been taken, and I think I will never take up my Bible without thinking who were the instruments, under God, who taught me to read. What poor, blind, ignorant creatures are they who cannot read the word of truth ! I find myself very thankful also, for being taught a decent business, by which I can earn my living.’ ”

“ To these might be added many more, all indicative of the same gratitude, and the same religious impressions.”

2. For the case of boys liberated from imprisonment who are sensible of their misconduct, and desirous of well-doing, and who are at the same time without friends to counsel and protect them, no plan can be conceived better than that which proposes to place them under a religious and humane Master, who may teach them the trade which they have chosen, instruct them in religious principles, superin-

tend their conduct, and act to them as a parent. But this plan can only be successful with those who are sincerely desirous of doing well, and who are either wholly without friends, or whose friends concur and assist in the plan for their improvement. In many cases these young persons, either from insincerity, or unsteadiness, desert their apprenticeship, and a still greater number from the fatal counsels and examples of their worthless friends. But when the boys themselves are willing and sincere, and can be separated from former companions, and from such ignorant and wicked relations as would mislead them, I am persuaded, no method could be better adapted for their welfare than that of placing them in a virtuous family, under the guardianship and instruction of a respectable master. In carrying this plan into effect the Society should call to their aid persons of various occupations; they should frequently visit the young persons while under confinement; they should seek the advice and assistance of the keeper of Bridewell; and on no account tempt the boys to insincerity, by promising to get the period of their confinement shortened. It is of great consequence also to find masters for them who live in places at a distance from the scene of their former offences, and the residence of their acquaintances.

Many such masters may, by proper inquiry, be found; who, without families themselves, and actuated by that pure christian principle which raises fallen human nature to the resemblance of the divine, will with tenderness, and meekness, and patience, endeavour to train up to goodness these unfortunate children.

3. There are numbers of females of different ages for whom Magdalene Asylums are neither designed nor fitted. Their offences are not only of a different order, but they neither choose to submit to seclusion, nor do they shew the probable symptoms of penitence. Yet they may be willing to submit to various means of importance to their welfare, and, at least, to engage in such useful employments as may preserve them from the alleged necessity of returning to their crimes for subsistence. A House and School of Industry, properly conducted, seem excellently fitted for the case of this description of females. In these, work can be provided for those who are willing to labour, and the ignorant may be instructed and counselled. Such a plan has been lately commenced in Glasgow, under the patronage of Ladies who have long been distinguished for works of piety and mercy; and though the trial has been short, I am persuaded it will be followed with the happiest effects.

4. There is still another description of persons whose case deserves consideration. Many young boys are confined in Bridewell who promise amendment, and manifest sometimes even soft and amiable dispositions, but who are surrounded with the most worthless acquaintances and friends. By the interference of these connexions every scheme for their good is rendered hopeless. There are other boys of a hard and careless cast of character, who neither have learned, nor are willing to learn any occupation, and who can be expected only to plunge deeper in crimes, upon their liberation. While there are other persons farther advanced in life, sufficiently skilled in some useful profession, but who, from loss of reputation, cannot find the means of honest labour, though willing to follow it. These become often the most destitute of human beings; and not only from external temptations, but from want and suffering, irritation and hopelessness, are driven to the most criminal courses. For such various classes of persons, some plan should be adopted in every populous city; and I conceive a Workhouse might be so constructed and managed as to meet the cases of each of them without difficulty. It might consist of two great divisions; one for boys, and another for men destitute of employment. Boys without occu-

pation, by the sentence of their judge, without any violation of the principles of a free government, might, after the commission of crimes, be there obliged to learn the means of subsistence, and for a time be separated from friends who have shewn themselves unfit to take charge of them. There they might not only be taught a useful occupation, but that instruction and education might be continued which in Bridewell had been begun. Men destitute of employment might be furnished with the means of subsistence by their industry; and rules of admission and of management might be so formed, and steadily pursued, as would prevent any abuse from idleness and deception. Thus would an opportunity also be afforded to those who have forfeited reputation, in some degree, and after a fair trial to regain it; and hope and present comfort would unite their influence in confirming the purposes of virtue.

ON

ASYLUMS FOR LUNATICS,

A Discourse on laying the Foundation Stone of the
Glasgow Lunatic Asylum.

*“ Now, therefore, perform the doing of it ; that
“ as there was a readiness to will, so there may
“ be a performance also out of that which you
“ have.”*

2 COR. viii. 11.

THE exhortation which the Apostle gives in these words, relates to a general contribution among Christians, for the relief of their destitute brethren in Judea.

The great principles and views which form the mind to compassion, and enforce its obligation, lead not only to the succour of distress as it is casually presented, but to the exercise of judgment in preparing the means of relief ; to union for the accomplishment of those objects which surpass the power

of individuals ; and, finally, to the formation and establishment of such institutions, as may render good designs most effectual, extend their influence, and secure their permanency. Accordingly, the influence of the divine spirit of Christianity began to appear soon after its introduction, in the united exertions of Christians for the succour of the indigent. Not only were individuals distinguished for unexampled liberality, but a common fund was established in every church, for the aid of the distressed ; and, by the direction of the Apostles, an order of men was appointed to superintend its management, and direct its application. Under the influence of the same spirit, churches, in different countries, united for the relief of their brethren, who were oppressed by want, slavery, or persecution. Alms were joined with their devotions ; and while they remembered the love of Him who gave himself for them, they remembered also that the good which was done to the least of his brethren, He considered as done unto himself. As the Christian church extended, and the institutions of Christians received protection and security, general establishments were formed, and structures seen every where arising, for the succour of the destitute, the infirm, and the diseased. In this spirit, institutions have been form-

ed for the protection of the young and the helpless ; schools for the instruction of the ignorant ; hospitals for the support of the aged ; infirmaries for the recovery of the sick. In the same spirit, and under the influence of similar obligations from humanity, religion, and our common interest, we are called, I conceive, to provide ASYLUMS for our brethren under MENTAL DERANGEMENT.

Without dwelling on the heart-rending circumstances which attend mental derangement, it must be obvious, that the SECURITY which is consistent with the safety of the insane, their connections, or general society, can only in a very few cases, be enjoyed in the houses of private families. In these few cases, it can only be attained at such an expense of time, and attention, and with so much anxiety, and harassment of mind, as must greatly injure the happiness and peace of domestic life. Removal from home is generally necessary, and in almost every case is desirable. But if our friends, thus helpless and unhappy, must be removed from us, to what places are they to be taken ? Are you satisfied that they should be carried to mere places of confinement ? Do you desire nothing better for them than a jail ? Are they to add, as in many places, to the miseries of our prisons ? Would you treat them

the refuse of their species ; prepare for them only chains and bolts, a floor of stone, and a bed of straw ; and add diseases and pains of body, exasperated and wounded feelings, to the evils which oppress them ? Looking only to security and safety, we are led by every consideration of justice and humanity, to provide appropriate abodes, and accommodations suited in some degree to the condition of our unfortunate brethren.

But the necessity of this will appear still more arguent, when we attend to their RECOVERY.

It must be obvious, that we cannot expect the recovery of the sick, unless we provide the means which are adapted to their disease. If necessity, therefore, force us to remove our fellow-creatures to separate abodes, we must either leave the unhappy sufferers to perish, the victims of our neglect and inhumanity, or we must suit these abodes to the nature of their case ; furnish such accommodations and establish such a plan of management, as may afford them relief, and promote their cure : in other words, we must form LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

This necessity will appear still greater, when we add, that asylums erected and conducted with such views, furnish the most probable means of accomplishing the cure of the patients, even when they

could remain at home consistently with security. The circumstances of the great body of mankind, are of such a nature as to render the attempt at recovering insane persons in their own houses, extremely difficult, and generally hopeless. If infirmaries be necessary for the cure of the ordinary diseases of the poor, how peculiarly necessary must be asylums when the poor are visited with insanity! Every thing in their houses must be wanting, which is necessary to the hope of success. For them, therefore, asylums must be provided, or they must be abandoned to their fate. But persons placed in more favourable circumstances require similar houses to be provided for their recovery. The presence of relations is frequently found to be hurtful; and methods must often be resorted to, which their feelings permit them not to execute. Peculiar accommodations must also be provided, arrangements made, and a course of management and attendance pursued, which the circumstances of private families will not permit. In many situations, particularly in the country, proper medical aid cannot be obtained without much inconvenience; minute and frequent attention, which is so important, cannot be given; nor can a skilful domestic management, conducted by persons of experience, under a vigilant and en-

lightened superintendence, be enjoyed. Or, if in some cases, the benefits of these could be obtained, is it probable they could be obtained in an equal degree? Could the accommodations and arrangements be expected to equal those of houses erected and establishments formed, with a view to the nature and various appearances of the disease? Could the management be conducted and the means be employed with that knowledge, skill, and attention, which might be hoped for in an institution, where every rule is adopted and every person chosen with a view to the state and the recovery of the patients; where a constant superintendence is provided; and where longer experience, and more extensive and varied practice must increase the knowledge and skill of persons in every department.

But an asylum presents not only the idea of a place of security, and of recovery from disease. It is a RETREAT suited to the condition of our afflicted brethren; an abode prepared to afford them those COMFORTS which their unfortunate circumstances will permit them to receive. It is not merely an infirmary for the sick; it is a place of refuge to the wanderer, an asylum for the wretched.

If the means of recovery should have failed, are our brethren to be forsaken? Still confinement, in

many cases, would be necessary ; retreat from the world, in every case, desirable ; an abode suited to their state of mind, important to their comfort. The notion that with the loss of reason, our fellow-creatures have lost all sensibility to pain or pleasure, is a gross and vulgar error ; unworthy of a people of humanity, or of observation. In many cases, they manifest very acute sensibility to neglect and personal injustice ; often you see them keenly alive to the ridicule of the unfeeling ; and often shrinking from the look of contempt, or the tone of severity. Their disease does not render them insensible to the evils of want and the pangs of hunger ; and though regardless they may sometimes meet the rain and the tempest, yet the fever of their minds prevents not the wet and the cold from affecting their shivering frames. Neither are their bodies insensible to the rigour of close confinement ; to the evils of damp, cold, airless, and nauseating abodes ; nor to the numerous train of diseases and pains which attend such wretched dwellings. There are many comforts of which they are deprived, but there are many of which they are still sensible. Insanity is a disease which assumes infinitely varied forms, and exists in various degrees. In the severest paroxysms,

the unhappy patient can distinguish much. Reason also, to a certain degree, at intervals, returns; and he can participate in many of the rational enjoyments and pursuits to which he was accustomed. In few instances is understanding entirely removed. In some, it fails only on one class of objects, while on all others it is sound and entire. In those cases where reason is uniformly weak and disordered, a certain portion of its light continues to irradiate and direct the mind. All have their tastes, which may often with safety be gratified; and few are not capable of some employments, which are calculated to amuse and to please them. But these cannot be enjoyed with safety, in the ordinary haunts of men; never in the abodes of the poor, the labouring, and the busy; seldom with convenience and comfort in the houses of the affluent. Where confinement is necessary, asylums furnish a comparatively happy retreat; and where the state of the patient renders greater liberty safe, they furnish an abode best adapted to his condition. Comforts are provided suited to his state; evils warded off to which he is exposed; and means of enjoyment and occupation are conferred, which in other circumstances might be dangerous, or could not be afforded.

Many of these benefits may, without doubt, be

obtained in asylums which are erected and conducted by individuals, for their personal advantage. Individuals possessing the necessary fortune, dispositions, knowledge, and skill, may sometimes be found to erect and conduct asylums, as a speculation and professional employment, on principles of a similar nature with those which have been mentioned. But how few persons, possessing the necessary fortune, character, and talents, are likely to be found of so singular a taste, as to devote their money and their lives to such an occupation ! It is to be remembered also, that persons possessing these difficult requisites, and providing, at a great expense, the necessary accommodations, when they do arise, must require a reimbursement greatly beyond what the generality of families can afford. And though excellent characters should be esteemed more highly, when they resist great and numerous temptations, yet it is just to state, that such asylums must want the advantages of a vigilant and humane superintendence ; that, in the conduct of them, many strong temptations from self-interest must often be presented, to neglect our unfortunate brethren, and to withhold from them the requisites to their recovery and their comfort. The danger of these temptations is

increased by the consideration, that the suffering individuals are often incapable of knowing the neglect which they may experience, of finding redress for the evils which they may feel, of making known their complaints, or of obtaining relief when they are made.

Accordingly, in the western district of Scotland, no private asylum of any kind has been undertaken. Many of those in other parts of the kingdom, are kept by persons wholly unfit for the important charge, and are void of the necessary accommodations, arrangement, and system of management; places merely of confinement, unfit either for recovery or comfort; more fit to occasion madness than to cure it. To these observations is to be added, the situation of the labouring and middle classes of society. What is to become of the friends of the valuable tradesman, the industrious labourer, the poor man already bowed down with the misfortunes and afflictions of life? Are they, when visited with the heaviest of human calamities, to be thrown into wretched dungeons; or left, naked and helpless wanderers, to perish in our fields? For them no house erected by self-interest, is open to supply their wants, to clothe their shivering bodies, to protect them from the cold and the tempest; to shelter them from

the eye of an unfeeling world, minister relief to their disease, and soothe their distracted minds.

Such, then, are the objects of LUNATIC ASYLUMS ; and such is some of the advantages which they possess. Let me entreat of you now to consider whether it be not our duty and our interest, to promote the establishment of such institutions.

I will not enlarge on the relief from many painful occurrences, which is thus obtained by the public ; on the comfort of reflecting that this is not obtained by injuring, but by promoting the welfare of individuals ; nor on the general advantages which must arise from the restoration of talents and labours, which were more than lost to society : I would rather lead your attention to those obligations which arise from the duties which we owe to our afflicted fellow-creatures.

Our character and condition as human beings ; the will of God and our Redeemer ; every view presented in the dispensation of grace ; our affections, feelings, hopes, and aims, as Christians—all lead to the exercise and cultivation of compassion, to the relief of the afflicted, and the care of the helpless. But can any of our brethren be in a greater degree the objects of compassion, than those who have been visited with insanity ? Or, have they not peculiar

claims to our regard? Deprived of reason, they are rendered destitute and helpless, incapacitated for the pursuits of life, and for acquiring its necessaries and its comforts; incapacitated for all the high and varied employments, blessings, and satisfactions, which distinguish us as moral and intellectual beings. Sensible frequently to their loss, and experiencing a deep sense of wretchedness, they are, at the same time, incapable of enjoying the sweetest and best refuge of the miserable; the consolations of the gospel, and the society, sympathy, and friendship of the affectionate and good. Nor is their case marked only with the deprivation of the chief blessings of man. By the loss of reason, their path is involved in darkness; they perceive not the course which they should pursue, and see not the evils which surround them. Alas! not only darkness, thick as night, has overtaken them; they are bewildered in the imaginations of their disordered minds, and in the pursuit of fancied objects, or in the flight from fancied terrors, hurried into the midst of dangers. With these are often joined the most misjudging and furious passions, which render them dangerous to themselves, and objects of fear to those who love them. And though sometimes sentiments of a lighter order may prevail, yet often with insanity are

joined feelings of the most poignant kind ; frantic and wild despair, or settled, deep, and gloomy melancholy ; dreadful imaginations and perpetual terrors ; or the deep despondency and helpless grief of a mind refusing to be comforted, chained to its sorrows, and dwelling amidst scenes of woe.

And can there be, in the minds of Christians, no desire to procure relief for their fellow-creatures in such circumstances ; to restore them to the common blessings of human beings ; to deliver them from the thralldom which binds down their minds to misery, or from the furious tempest which threatens every moment to overwhelm them ? Shall we not embrace every favourable opportunity to save them from a state so dreadful ; to bring them in safety to their native shore ; to guide them to the friendly haven, where no tempest rages, and the surrounding calm may restore them to tranquillity and happiness ! Or, should this desire prove hopeless, and we should see the dismayed and driven vessel broken for ever in pieces by the overwhelming billows, shall we not provide for the shipwrecked some shelter for the night ; some comfort suited to their wretched case ; some place, at least, for the head to rest of him whom the storm hath bereft of all, and cast helpless upon our care ?

Take farther into account the additional miseries which must follow the neglect of these unfortunate sufferers.

The neglect of the helpless must, in all cases, add to their sufferings; but the neglect of those disordered in mind, must be followed by consequences unusually deplorable. Shall we dwell on the many evils which, in their dreadful paroxysms, they must bring upon themselves! Or, shall we follow the distracted wanderers, deserting their families and homes, exposed to hunger and nakedness, and every inclemency of season, among strangers, regardless of their condition, and unwilling to be disturbed by their infirmities? Or, shall we go to those cold, and damp, and airless cells, where no friendly accent falls on the irritated soul, and where, in the midst of disease and pain, the wretched maniac passes his solitary days? Or, shall we view those abodes which self-interest hath formed; where no superintending care provides the means of recovery and comfort, and guards against the neglects of selfishness and inhumanity; where those who have known every tender indulgence, and whose gentle minds shrink from the look of disorder and violence, are doomed to hear the shocking ravings and horrid blasphemies of the furious, and cannot look from

their small apartments without seeing some sight of horror?—To dwell on such scenes would awaken not merely pity, but unmingled anguish. Slightly to present them in review before the mind, is sufficient to awaken the liveliest compassion; to stimulate the exertions of the pious and humane, that they may ward off from the unfortunate such additions to their misery.

Another view only requires to be presented. Contemplate the character and condition of the persons who thus claim our assistance.

Were the diseases of insanity confined to one description of character; were the proud, the profligate, and unprincipled, only its victims, compassion and a sense of duty would still prompt our endeavours, but some of the most powerful principles of the human soul would be left untouched. But how powerfully should every string vibrate through the heart, when we consider that the disease of insanity assaults and subdues beneath its power persons of every character and class in human life! The mild and the amiable, the pious and the wise, the accomplished scholar as well as the illiterate peasant, the rich and the poor, the vigorous and the weak, persons of every sex and every age, the young rejoicing in their strength, and the aged and unfortun-

ate, worn out with disappointments—all are seen sinking before this dread calamity. Still nearer may the case be brought. The objects of your peculiar esteem and regard; your benefactors, your friends, your connections, and your nearest kindred, may be amongst the number of its victims. In rearing an asylum for frail and disordered beings, whom the saddest of human maladies has overtaken, we are providing for one of those awful casualties, which may, in a moment, overwhelm and humble to the lowest dust, ourselves, our families, the objects of our best affections, and of our dearest hopes.

Under the influence of such views, the **GLASGOW LUNATIC ASYLUM** has been planned. Such are the objects to which it is directed, and the motives by which it claims our support.

In the Hospital of Glasgow some wards had been long set apart for the reception of insane persons. But these wards, while they were very limited in their number and size, were quite unsuited both to the cure and comfort of the patients; and never, from a variety of causes, could be rendered capable of fulfilling, in any tolerable degree, the important objects of a lunatic asylum. Accordingly, on the motion of a gentleman who has taken a deep interest in this Institution, a Committee was appointed by

the Directors of the Town's Hospital, to take the state of the lunatic wards into consideration. This Committee gave a very full report upon the subject. They stated the insufficiency of the present wards, the importance of a separate building in a healthy situation, with suitable accommodations, and ground for exercise; and farther, that the benefits of such an establishment should be extended to the WESTERN DISTRICT of Scotland. The Directors received the proposal with the warmest approbation; and appointed a general committee, from the different orders of which they are composed, to take such steps as they should deem necessary for carrying it into effect.

In proceeding to accomplish their important object, the committee early determined to request the advice and co-operation of gentlemen from the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons in this city, and of the two medical Professors of the University. They also requested the co-operation of other gentlemen, whose zeal and knowledge, in different departments, rendered their assistance of the greatest importance. And it is due to these various gentlemen, to some of them in a very distinguished manner, to acknowledge, that, to their talents and information, assiduous and persevering attention, this institution must

ever lie under the deepest obligations.—In the formation of their plan, the committee proceeded on the principle, that the income of the asylum was to equal its expenditure. As they trusted, therefore, that no succession of contributors would be requisite, they endeavoured to provide a superintendence which should be constant and permanent; at the same time, with such a change and variety of persons as should always secure attention, knowledge, and impartiality.—An early and favourite object was the acquisition of such an extent of ground, as would afford air and exercise to the patients, and admit of divisions corresponding, in some degree, to various classes and characters. This, the liberality of their fellow-citizens enabled them very soon to accomplish. Three acres of ground have been purchased, in a healthy situation, possessing the advantage of retirement, yet at a distance from town, so convenient as to admit of a regular and easy superintendence.—In the plan of the building, the committee conceive they have been particularly successful. Its specific nature, and the views on which it has been founded, have been already explained to the public in an excellent Memorial. Yet, admirable as it seemed, it was not adopted by the committee till every part was minutely examined by gentlemen in different

departments of business ; and the whole had received the fullest sanction of medical practitioners of distinguished talents, knowledge, and experience. The expense of its execution will, indeed be great. But this will not proceed from unnecessary ornament. For, though striking and picturesque, its beauty arises from the effect of figure and proportion, and not from minute and expensive decoration. It is calculated to contain about 120 inhabitants ; but it is so constructed, that, when requisite, considerable additions may be made without injuring its general design.

To complete this great undertaking, including the expense of ground and of furniture, L.15,000, it is supposed, will be necessary. But the committee conceive that they would ill meet the feelings and the wishes of the public, were they, on this account, either to desist from their undertaking, or to accomplish it in a manner unworthy of its object. They fear not the expense. They know the humane and generous spirit of their countrymen, and they derive confidence from the support which they have received in the prosecution of their object. In the city of Glasgow alone, more than L.7000 have already been contributed, besides several liberal contributions from other quarters. Exertions are making, and we

trust will be made, by the affluent and respectable towns in our neighbourhood. And the noblemen, land-holders, and inhabitants, of the various and extensive parishes in the western districts of Scotland, will, we hope, come forward, with cheerfulness, to give their aid for the accomplishment of this benevolent design.

I congratulate you, my brethren, on the prospect which this day presents. I view, with joy, so many distinguished individuals, public bodies, and various orders, assembled to give their countenance and aid to this great object. They are harbingers of success; they are pledges, from the public, of support; they give grounds not only for hope, but for confidence. Yes! my highly respected friends, who have devoted so much of your valuable time, and have exerted yourselves in such various ways for the succour of the most helpless and destitute of your species, ye will not be deserted. Proceed in the course you have been pursuing, with increasing ardour and perseverance. It is the cause of humanity in which you are engaged. The Father of mercies approves and will bless your undertaking. The Saviour of men looks down with complacency on his followers, when they are engaged in the cause of the afflicted. And it is in the exercise of those heaven-

ly principles, which He exemplified and which He taught to be characteristic of his subjects, that we are trained in his kingdom here, for the bliss of the celestial world.

Ye who have, by such generous contributions, promoted this important design, continue to give it your support by such additional means as God, in his providence, may afford. Much may be effected by your private influence; by example, by conversation, by rousing general attention, and by leading to just views and feelings of duty, your various acquaintances and friends. Amidst those objects which have engaged the attention of the general committee, many humane and respectable citizens have not been asked for their support, to whom we look with confidence. Many too, may be supposed, not to have perceived, at first, the full importance and great expense of such an undertaking, who may be disposed to add, according to their ability, to the aid which they have given. But to the populous towns around us, to the noblemen, landholders, and affluent inhabitants, of the various parishes to which the benefit of this institution extends, we must now turn in a particular manner for assistance. The great body of the people also will, we trust, now come forward with their aid. Let every man, ac-

according to the admonition of the Apostle, "lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." The gift is accepted "according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." And though the separate contributions of individuals may sometimes be small, they will render, when united, great and effectual support.

Let no man keep back on account of trifling differences of sentiment. No great undertaking will ever be accomplished, if every man should refuse his support until all his opinions respecting it should be adopted. Extensive objects can only be accomplished by union; and good men will sacrifice even more than trifling differences of opinion, rather than great and benevolent designs should fail to be accomplished. Neither let us plead the excuse of inability. Few men, in any condition of human life, can plead this excuse with sincerity. Let there be first, "a willing mind," and then how quickly will the means be presented. The luxuries in which we daily indulge, the trifling and expensive pleasures which we daily pursue, the ornaments of vanity which serve so little the purposes either of beauty or of use, might be mentioned as sources, from which men of every rank might draw something without injury, even in appearance, to their comforts. Yet, even to

these, it may be generally unnecessary to have recourse. Let us only give a little from that which is spent carelessly, and we know not how; which is spent not only without adding to the comfort, but often to the great detriment of ourselves and our families; and I apprehend, not only men in affluence, but in every order of society, will be able to contribute, without inconvenience or loss, more than their proportion to the purposes of charity.

O! did men only come near, and contemplate with seriousness the miseries of their fellow-creatures; how would the dark and flimsy cobwebs with which they enwrap their minds, break asunder; vanish before the powerful operations of feeling and the convictions of duty; and leave them astonished and ashamed, that they could have remained so long indifferent to the woes which are around them!

But on this subject I will not enlarge farther. I am surrounded with hearts touched by pity for human suffering. “Now, therefore, perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.”

May the God of grace and consolation prosper our undertaking; may He render that Fabric, the first stone of which is about to be laid in our presence, an **ASYLUM** for the **DESTITUTE**, not in our day only,

but through many succeeding ages ; and when ages have ceased to roll, and the plans of Divine mercy for the recovery of a ruined world, have completed their great design, may all of us be found among the happy subjects and followers of Him, who “ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” *Amen!*

NOTES.

FEW benevolent plans have succeeded more fully in the attainment of their object, than that of the Glasgow Asylum for Lunatics. After struggling with many difficulties, and in troublous times, during ten years, the Committee appointed for carrying the design into execution were enabled to surrender into the hands of the subscribers their great object completed. The gentlemen composing this committee were from various classes of the community, but they were animated, in this matter, with one spirit. And amidst the many changes of human life, I am persuaded there is not one of them who does not look

back with satisfaction on the days of their mutual labours, and feel towards each of its members the tie of a peculiar brotherhood and affection. Indeed, there never was a body of men so long engaged in one business, who, while expressing their sentiments with freedom and independence, maintained toward each other more mutual respect, or proceeded with a more direct and single intention to the accomplishment of their object.

The foundation stone of the Asylum was laid, with a very splendid ceremonial, and before an immense concourse of spectators, on the 2d day of August, 1810: And it was opened in the presence of the Magistrates, after divine service, conducted by the late much respected Dr. Balfour, on the 1st of December, 1814. Including the expense of the grounds and the furniture, the cost of it rose considerably above L20,000. At its opening, about L.15,000 had been subscribed, of which, at that time, above L.10,000 had been subscribed by Glasgow alone; and the committee had also given their own personal security to the amount of L.2000 more, that the work might proceed without interruption.

The object of this Asylum, as has been stated, is to promote, at the same time, the *security, cure,* and

comfort of the insane. The Committee accordingly determined, as appears from the Outline of their plan, which they published at the commencement of their operations, "That the house should be divided into two great separate parts, one for males, another for females : that each of these should be subdivided into two parts, one for boarders, another for paupers : and that the ground appointed for the benefit of the patients should be divided into similar parts, none of which should have communication with the other." The building, executed from an admirable design of Mr. Stark, admits of a very minute classification of patients, according to their different characters, and the degrees of the disease : it secures to every room the freest ventilation : while, under one general management, it separates the different classes of patients from one another as completely as if they lived at the greatest distance : and it enables that system to be executed which the Asylum was designed to keep especially in view, that of great gentleness and comfort, and a considerable degree of liberty, combined with as much security, as, in the unhappy circumstances of the patients, can be obtained.

The exercising grounds are also laid out with judgment and good taste ; and on the same princi-

ple of security with liberty and comfort. Each class of patients have their appropriate grounds assigned them; and when in a state of mind fit for receiving such an indulgence, all enjoy the benefit of exercise and amusement in the open air, “with the appearance of liberty, but with no chance of escaping, and no risk of meeting any excepting those with whom they are intended to associate.”

The regulations of the Asylum have been formed on the same great views; and its management has, from the period of its commencement, justified in every respect the public expectations. Its regulations have been inserted in the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on the subject of Madhouses; and the Hon. Henry Grey Bennet declared, in his evidence before that Committee, “That the Glasgow Asylum was the best he had ever seen.”

In proof of the sentiments expressed in the preceding discourse, many facts might be stated from incontestable authorities, and from none more satisfactory than the account of the justly celebrated Institution of the Society of Friends in the neighbourhood of York. But it is pleasing to observe the confirmation which, in addition to these, the Glasgow

Asylum itself has afforded from the period of its opening. This will be found in various particulars, and from various statements, but especially from the Annual Reports of its Directors, written by Dr. Cleghorn, Physician to the Institution; to whose professional knowledge and skill, joined to the most disinterested zeal and indefatigable attention to its interests, this Asylum must ever owe the highest obligations.

Security.—This seems to have been the only object kept in view respecting the Insane, in former times, and still to be even at present, in a great variety of places in this humane and enlightened country. Our fellow-creatures are thrown into places of confinement fitter for brutes than men: they are there left alone, in a state of filth and wretchedness, exposed often to cold and nakedness; and when misery and pain have produced their usual irritating effects, they are only visited that some new circumstances of cruelty and exasperation may be added. The Asylum of Glasgow gives new evidence, not of entire security, but that equal security may be obtained by kind and gentle methods of treatment, as by the most rigorous and severe. Fewer instances of attempts at escape or violence occur in its large esta-

blishment than formerly took place in the few confined wards of the Town's Hospital. Nay, the disputes of any kind which occur will not be found to exceed, so much as is imagined, the proportion of those which take place among persons in the full use of their faculties, who are collected in the same place for any considerable period. Some years ago, I remember to have seen, in a house in England, eleven females, all of them under mental derangement, sitting together in one room at tea, in a very quiet and comfortable manner; and the whole business of the tea-table was conducted by one who was also deranged, but whose turn of mind led her to take a kind of maternal charge of the unhappy persons who surrounded her.

Cure.—This seems also to have been, and still in many places to be, very little an object of attention. The recovery of deranged persons seems either to have been considered as hopeless; or the means employed were harsh and indiscriminate: these were generally too of a merely physical nature, and seldom adapted to the character and laws which belong to an intellectual and moral being. The numbers which have been cured and relieved, during the last four years in the Glasgow Asylum, are as follow: Since 1st January, 1815, to 7th of January,

1819, 335 patients have been admitted ; of these 151 have been cured ; 85 have been relieved. It is to be observed also, that while several of the largest Asylums in Britain, after the trial of one year, dismiss all the patients, not cured at that time, to make room for others ; here, with a few exceptions, the incurables continue accumulating from year to year, and, consequently, diminish the proportion of cures.

“ It is certain, indeed, that all are liable to relapse, just as one who has had an ague in the spring is liable to relapse next autumn : but this is no good reason for saying that agues cannot be cured, or, that it is idle to make the attempt : it is certain also that many are ready to relapse after stated intervals, unless particular care be taken to break the morbid habit, and to avoid the exciting causes of the derangement ; but it is no less certain that many, long subject to derangement, have continued free from it for many years, and that the number of complete *permanent* cures has of late increased greatly, under mild treatment, especially in houses where it is not the interest of any one to prolong the residence of the patient.”

Comfort and Moral treatment.—That persons under mental derangement are susceptible of various degrees and kinds of comfort, of pleasures even of an

intellectual and moral order ; of innocent and rational amusements ; of useful employments ; and, finally, of being influenced, to a certain degree, by motives and treatment addressed to the understanding, the conscience, and the heart—are facts abundantly ascertained, and of which this Asylum presents, in its whole system of management, the most pleasing illustration. Cleanliness and order distinguish in a high degree the appearance of its unfortunate inmates. A proper degree of temperature is communicated to every apartment, even in the severest weather ; and from those distressing disorders which arise from cold, and neglect of their persons, the patients are wholly exempted. Many of them are seen engaged in various employments, and innocent recreations. When I last went through this house, as an official visitor, I saw one man playing on a violin, with a music book before him, another reading a magazine, a third reading his Bible with apparent seriousness and quiet attention. Many were taking exercise and amusement in the garden grounds ; and a considerable number were employed in useful occupations, both within doors and in the open air, and seemed to have pleasure in them. Every encouragement is given to these by the excellent management of Mr. and Mrs. Drury, and “ nothing,

it is observed, "contributes so much to promote a cure, and prevent a relapse." That a considerable degree of reason, and of the higher faculties and feelings, and a consequent capacity for moral treatment, to a certain extent, remain, the nature of their amusements and pleasures, and the judgment and dexterity which they display in them, sufficiently shew. This also is manifested by occasional works of fancy, judgment, and acuteness, of considerable excellence; and, what is chiefly to be noticed, by the direct influence of rational and moral motives properly addressed to them, and of moral treatment judiciously applied. The reply which a deranged man made to a physician who treated him with kindness, should never be forgotten: "Even a madman knows when he is treated like a gentleman." "It has been said, the last Report observes, *none but a madman would reason with a madman*; a most equivocal maxim, oftener founded on apathy, indifference, and carelessness, than on superior discernment. In fact, as men of sound minds are occasionally less under the influence of motives than they ought to be; so the least sound, while short of idiocy, still feel their influence in no inconsiderable degree, and it is impossible to fix with precision the point at which motives lose their influence so com-

pletely, as not to be worth urging. A long chain of reasoning is, no doubt, out of the question ; but a short argument, a sententious maxim, gravely stated, or an aphorism, delivered with solemnity, especially if in the language of Scripture, often produces a sudden calm amid the most furious commotions, and leaves durable effects.

When a religious melancholy madman was loudly avowing and vindicating his intention to commit suicide the very first opportunity, his hand was taken kindly, and, in a solemn tone, he was reminded of the awful consequences of such a deed, ‘ as no murderer hath eternal life ;’ on which his eyes, formerly glaring with phrenzy and despair, were turned towards the ground, he appeared absorbed in fixed thought, and made no more mention of suicide. Next day, warmly thanking the person who had addressed him, he declared, with much emotion, that, whenever the temptation recurred, which it often did, the text always came along with it, uniformly shielding him from its baneful effects, as it has now done for several years, that he has spent in the bosom of his family, whom he supports with steady industry.”

This capacity of moral judgment, however limited and occasional, is of great importance in managing and governing deranged persons. They see the

propriety of any privations or confinement which it may be necessary to impose on them. And when these are imposed with equity and steadiness, yet with gentleness and affection, they submit to them often without difficulty ; while improper treatment, proceeding from cruelty, rashness, or caprice, never fails to exasperate them, and to retard their cure. It is indeed a pleasing consideration, that the system of management which is most agreeable to the feelings of a humane and moral mind, while it promotes the present comforts of the unhappy patient, is that which most directly tends to the cure of his disease. Accordingly, in this Asylum, whatever wears the look of severity and confinement, is avoided ; and restraint, when it is necessary, is not only imposed in such a manner as to guard against pain, but even as much as possible to remove every offensive and irritating appearance. Endeavours also are used to convince offenders of their fault, and of the necessity of placing them under restraint. Nor is any severity ever employed, but when gentle methods have proved unavailing.

Another fact connected with this subject deserves to be mentioned. Under this system of management the kind affections are called forth, and opportunity is given for their exercise, according to the

disposition and genius of individuals. By such exercises the patients have frequently proved very useful to one another, and also promoted greatly their own recovery. "A fine young woman," it is mentioned in one of the Reports, "from her vacant stare, her habits, and listlessness, seemed fast verging to idiocy. When she left her bed, she was usually obliged to be confined, to prevent her from injuring herself or others. In addition to an expert and intelligent nurse, who paid her great attention, one of the *patients* belonging to her little society began to take a parental charge of her, and with effects truly astonishing. Being a very clever woman herself, and the mother of a family, she speedily gained the affection of her ward, whom she has so completely transformed, that, instead of loitering in bed, or requiring confinement when out of it, she rises sometimes, washes herself, dresses neatly, often elegantly, sits at table with the rest, where she acquits herself perfectly well, and spends her time in useful or ornamental needle-work." Another is mentioned, who, though greatly recovered, being liable to occasional returns of her disease, prefers the Asylum as her permanent abode: And it is stated of her, that she "is of the greatest use to the house, by counselling, assisting, and soothing, other patients,

over whom she has great influence ; every exertion of her judgment or benevolence toward them tending wonderfully to promote her own recovery, and fortify her constitution against future attacks.”

Superintendence.—The remarks in the preceding discourse, on the necessity of a humane and vigilant superintendence, were made originally with a view to the disadvantages attending the want of it in *private* Asylums. Discoveries however have lately been made in England and Ireland, which shew that *public* asylums have also been grossly defective in this most important part of the system of management. Every charitable institution requires constant and vigilant inspection ; but especially where, as has been already observed, “ the suffering individuals are often incapable of knowing the neglect which they may experience, of finding redress for the evils which they may feel, of making known their complaints, or of obtaining relief when they are made.” If any thing could impress the importance of such sentiments on the hearts and consciences of the people of this country, it must surely be the discoveries which have been made of those scenes of savage cruelty, selfishness, and profligacy, which have disgraced some of the public asylums of this empire ; and which could not have taken

place had they been placed under a humane and vigilant system of superintendence, conducted by respectable and faithful directors. There is some difficulty in securing that privacy which in asylums of this kind should be held sacred, with that degree of openness and publicity which are necessary to guard against abuses both in the *admission* and *treatment* of patients. In what manner these are secured in the Glasgow Asylum will appear from the following statement.

It is governed by Directors who are constituted as follows :

The Lord Provost of Glasgow is President ; two Directors are annually chosen from the Town-council ; two from the Merchants' house ; two from the Trades' house ; two from the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons ; two from the General Session, consisting of a Minister and Elder ; eight from the General Subscribers : the Chief Magistrate of Paisley, and the Professors of Anatomy and Medicine in the University of Glasgow, are Directors *ex officio*.

These Directors, taken from so many different bodies, elect the Physician and Surgeon, and the Superintendant and Matron of the Asylum. They meet regularly, *once every quarter*, when they receive a Report on the State of the Asylum, and de-

liberate on its affairs. From them are chosen, annually, a Sub-committee, who meet *once every week* at the Asylum, for attending to the particular interests of the House, admission of patients, and all such business as, in the ordinary course of management, may arise. This Committee consists of four Directors, the Medical Gentlemen who attend the Asylum, and the Treasurer. At each meeting, regular minutes are kept, and the *name and description of every patient is specified.*

Besides these Committees, *twelve visitors* of the House are annually appointed. Their duty is to visit the house, in rotation, each week. In a book, kept for the purpose, they mark the condition in which they find the House, the servants, and the patients, with such remarks as occur to them. The book with these remarks is regularly laid before the Weekly Committee. Each visitor pledges his word to relate nothing out of the Asylum by which the feelings of the patients or their relations might be wounded.

Finally, a statement of the affairs and management of the Asylum are laid once every year before a general meeting of the subscribers, and afterwards before the public. And a Committee of Directors are appointed every year to revise all

the regulations, and to suggest such improvements or alterations as they may think necessary: but, to guard against improper innovations, no change on the regulations can be made till it has been submitted to the consideration of the Directors for one month at least; nor can it be adopted unless approved by two-thirds of the Directors, warned to meet for the express purpose of deciding on it.

Still it is never to be forgotten, that the chief security against abuses must depend on the *character of the official persons* to whom the conduct of the Asylum is entrusted. And as the selection of them depends, in this institution, on Directors taken from so great a diversity of the most respectable classes in the community, and who are deeply interested in its success—it may be hoped that the selection will always be made of such official persons as shall be distinguished, like the present, for the talents, fidelity, and success with which they discharge their important trust.

ON

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION,

A Discourse, delivered before the Glasgow Society of
Teachers, in 1810.

*“ To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice,
“ and judgment, and equity ; to give subtilty
“ to the simple, to the young man knowledge
“ and discretion.”* PROV. i. 3, 4.

IT is evidently the design of God, that men of every condition should receive a great degree of their knowledge and improvement, through the information and direction of their fellow-creatures. A gracious adaptation is made for this purpose in the relations of society ; but especially in the different characters and relations of the aged and the young. In early life too, the mind is peculiarly fitted to re-

ceive the instruction of wisdom. Then knowledge and useful arts may be taught with the greatest advantage, and the understanding and dispositions may be cultivated with the greatest facility and success. Then also, information, counsel, and discipline, are peculiarly necessary. The young are without knowledge and experience; they have learned no useful habits; they are even ignorant of the objects to which their powers and exertions should be directed, or of the means by which those objects may be attained, the evils of their condition escaped, and their highest interests secured. Add to these considerations, that the nature of man is disordered; that much has to be restrained and subdued, as well as to be cultivated; much to be rectified, as well as to be strengthened: that the most fatal habits are acquired by neglect; the most fatal dispositions rendered inveterate by unrestrained indulgence: finally, that mental stupor and moral insensibility follow early ignorance, and powers unexercised, or exercised only to evil.

In the present age, when every subject connected with the improvement of our condition engages attention, the education of the young has justly received a considerable portion of public regard. And among many romantic theories and loose specula-

tions, little suited either to the present or the future condition of the beings who are the subjects of them, many important views have been presented, and new means of usefulness have been furnished. Elementary Education has, of late, received a particular degree of attention; and to this, the present occasion of our meeting naturally directs our thoughts.

In forming our ideas of any plan of conduct, it is obviously necessary to consider first the object which should be pursued, and then the means by which it may be most successfully attained.

We shall, therefore, endeavour to consider, at this time, in the First place, some of the OBJECTS, which, in a course of elementary education, should be kept in view: and Secondly, the MEANS by which these objects may be accomplished.

I. The business of education commences with the first moments of existence. The powers and dispositions of the young are not only unfolding and acquiring strength every moment, but are affected by circumstances, example, the objects to which they are directed, and the manner in which they are employed. Nay, the impressions of infancy are so deep, and the tendencies of thought and disposition then given, are so strong, as often to affect us through the whole of our life, even in opposi-

tion to our judgment and will. The wise and the good accordingly very early attend to the effect of circumstances and example on the character of their offspring. They watch with affectionate care their dispositions and conduct, and with a tender and prudent hand employ the means which are fitted to save them from evil, and train them to future excellence. Thus, according to the opportunities which the openings of character, and the little incidents of their lives afford, useful information on many subjects is insensibly conveyed to the young, by those affectionate guardians whom God in his mercy hath provided; important habits are gradually formed; evil tendencies corrected; good affections drawn forth, cherished, and directed to their proper objects; the heart is softened to virtuous emotions, and accustomed to delight in virtuous exercises; a taste, disposition, and general direction of mind is given, favourable to intelligence, useful knowledge, and true goodness.

But the period arrives when both the present and future welfare of the young requires a superintendance, instruction, and discipline, which neither the talents nor occupations of parents enable them to give. They must seek for the aid of others to promote the improvement of their offspring, and to pre-

serve them from those dangers to which their ignorance, inexperience, and misguided passions often expose them, in the midst of an evil world. You place them, during a considerable portion of each day, under the direction of a teacher, whom you conceive qualified for the important trust ; and in the society of children of similar years, pursuing the same objects, and governed by the same laws. The season is critical ; the time during which they are absent from a parent's eye is necessarily long ; their habits of mind and character are rapidly forming ; and soon they must enter upon that world to which they are strangers, and in which they are exposed to numerous and fatal dangers ; incapable of preserving themselves from immediate evil, unprepared for that life on which they must enter, ignorant, and liable to the most dangerous impressions : yet possessing powers and affections capable of being directed to the noblest objects, and rising to the highest attainments ; natures which may be debased to the wickedness and misery of fallen spirits, or be exalted to the glory and happiness of the angels of heaven. In such circumstances, at such a time, and with such prospects of good or evil, let me ask, if you desire no other benefits to be provided for your children but instruction in the art of knowing and pronouncing words ? Or are there not,

along with this useful art, other important objects which you desire to be kept in view? Do you not wish that means should be employed to improve and direct rightly their powers of mind, cultivate and strengthen their understandings, enlarge and quicken their conceptions, elevate their mental character, give them a taste for superior enjoyments and pursuits, and prepare them, in some degree, for discharging the duties of their condition, with ability, success, and satisfaction? Do you not desire, that means should be employed to communicate, progressively, such knowledge as is suited to their circumstances and character, and may prove profitable in the future conduct and business of life: such knowledge as may acquaint them with their various duties and relations, and dispose them to the cheerful and faithful observance of them: such knowledge as may lead them to God and to heaven, to a sense of their highest interests, and the desire of the noblest objects; as may awaken and cherish the most amiable and generous affections; as may elevate their ideas to Christian excellence, inspire them with an abhorrence of all that is unworthy, a love and desire of all that is good? Do you not desire that such means should be employed as may form your children to habits of usefulness and virtue; as, by a

wise accommodation to different characters, may correct the tendencies to evil, encourage and strengthen every tendency to virtue ; as may prepare them for the duties and employments of this world ; and finally assist them in the attainment of that character which, while it leads to the purest happiness on earth, will fit them for the employments and the happiness of heaven ?

These objects are too momentous not to occupy some portion of regard in every part of a well-regulated system of education. While his children are removed, during a considerable portion of the day, from his care, a prudent and affectionate parent will desire that objects of such importance should be kept continually in view : he will desire that every fit occasion for promoting them, should be carefully embraced ; that the favourable opportunities and means which a seminary of education affords, should be improved for this purpose ; and that the advancement of these should enter into every part of its system, and influence all the discipline, exercises, and methods of instruction, which are employed. This desire must be greatly increased by the character and critical circumstances of his children at this period. The knowledge necessary for their direction and improvement, is yet to be acquir-

ed. Curiosity is awake, and eager for the acquisition of new ideas ; and according as it is directed, may improve or corrupt the mind. The young look now with deference to the aged, and easily receive their instructions ; and the knowledge which they now acquire remains indelibly on their remembrance. The mental powers also are feeble and pliant. By neglect they will soon wither and harden, or become weak and perverted ; but by care, and exercises suited to their nature, they will rise to strength and excellence, delight in useful objects, and become prepared for higher exertions and more difficult undertakings. Above all, the heart, at this time, is tender ; the conscience and affections are more susceptible of direction and of culture ; and corrupt tendencies having not yet acquired the inveteracy of time and indulgence, are more easily overcome. While, on the other hand, without the most watchful care, wise, and assiduous pains, the most dangerous direction and impressions will assuredly be communicated to the mind, and habits of the most fatal order rapidly acquired—direction, impressions, and habits, of the most powerful and lasting nature ; which will characterize the mind, and affect the happiness of the much beloved objects through every period of their existenee. How important then is it

to improve every mean and opportunity of good, at a season which is at once so favourable, and so full of danger ! and with what anxiety should the friends of youth and of society desire, that the principles, dispositions, and habits, of the young, should be objects of leading attention in the institutions designed for their benefit !

But if these objects require attention in the elementary education of children of every condition, how greatly do they demand attention in that of the children of the *labouring man* ! His own habits and attainments, and the time which he must necessarily spend in his daily occupations, often far removed from his family, must deprive him of many opportunities for promoting their instruction and improvement, which men in more affluent conditions enjoy. With greater anxiety should these disadvantages be supplied, by the aid which well conducted institutions for youth are able to afford. The instruction which the children of our poor brethren receive, it should also be remembered, is confined to those elementary schools. The term of their education finishes with the short period of early life. And must not, therefore, every man of humanity and religion wish, that a term which comprises the whole of their education be employed to the best advantage ?

Must he not wish that the institutions formed for their instruction, be conducted in such a manner as may tend in some degree to raise and cultivate their moral and intellectual character ; as may give to them that direction of mind which will dispose them to use rightly the attainments they have acquired ; as may convey to them some knowledge which may prove useful to them in future life ; above all, as may convey to them that heavenly knowledge, and those divine impressions, which may save them from the miseries of vice, and lead them to the happiness of virtue ? The *increasing profligacy* of the labouring classes, especially in great towns and their neighbourhood, affords to these views an additional consideration of the most urgent and alarming nature. If ignorance and vice be spreading among the people, shall we not employ the means which are fitted to check their progress ? If the situation of the young be daily becoming more hazardous, shall we not more anxiously seek to guard them against the danger, and provide them with the means of defence and security ? If the superintendence and instruction, which their early years require, be not afforded to them by their parents ; if they be exposed not only to all the evils of neglect, but of vicious example, and numerous

temptations; shall we not employ the means which our schools afford in some degree to supply the want, and counteract the evil; and by directing education in such a manner, as may tend to instruct and train them in the principles of piety and virtue, endeavour to snatch the helpless victims from the certain wretchedness of ignorance and early profligacy?

It is to be observed farther, that much of elementary education is only useful as a mean of knowledge; and that the instrument may be acquired without the *disposition to employ it, or the capacity and desire to employ it to its proper purposes*. In vain, for example, have you taught to the young the art of reading, if you have not also communicated some disposition to use the art when it is acquired; convinced them of its advantages, given them a habit of rightly employing it, and some taste for the benefits and pleasures which it conveys. Without some corresponding habits and dispositions, it will be either *forgotten or perverted*. Now you form those habits and dispositions when you join to instruction in the art, the communication of suitable knowledge, and the cultivation of the mind and character of the scholars. You thus dispose them to value and to seek after the advantages which they are enabled to

acquire ; you form a habit of reading, and a taste for the pleasures which it conveys ; you direct their taste to right objects, and to a right channel ; finally, you render instruction of every kind more engaging, and, consequently, more effectual ; and by the nature and the variety of the enjoyments it affords, you give to the youthful scholars greater refinement and happiness. The communication of new ideas, when they are of a nature adapted to the progress of the scholars, and are communicated in a manner suited to their years, affords many lively and varied satisfactions. It gratifies curiosity, gives exercise to their thoughts, employs their fancy, or awakens some pleasing emotion, and rouses some generous affection. It also furnishes early to the young the means and the taste for various innocent and pleasing occupations, and by useful exercises and growing improvement, it tends both to multiply and refine their pleasures. Additional instructions, exercises, and operations of mind, must be therefore carrying on along with elementary instruction, if you would secure the blessings even of the art which is taught to the rising generation. It will otherwise be with them, as with the rude children of nature, when brought suddenly into civilized life, and made hastily acquainted with its customs. You may teach

them in a few months many important arts ; but unless you teach them also corresponding habits, and a taste for the employments and pleasures of their new condition, they quickly throw aside the arts which they have acquired, and return to the customs and pursuits of the savage state ; or they use the arts they have learned only to their own destruction—for the gratification, alas ! of their corrupt passions, perhaps of propensities and habits which they have acquired in the course of your instructions.

II. Let us now attend to the MEANS by which these objects may be accomplished.

1. The success of all means, it is obvious, must greatly depend on the QUALIFICATIONS and CHARACTER of the person by whom they are employed. Besides possessing a competent acquaintance with those arts which he directly professes to teach, the teacher and superintendant of the young, in order to accomplish the important objects of his trust, and to assist in rearing an intelligent and virtuous youth, should himself be intelligent, moral, and religious ; attached to that knowledge which he should communicate to his scholars, and should teach them to value ; acquainted with the different characters of children, and capable of accommodat-

ing himself to their various dispositions, capacities, and genius.

The example of a wise and good man brought near, and rendered interesting by frequent intercourse, is of itself a very important though indirect mean of improvement. But its influence is especially great, when it is given by those who figure strongly in the imagination of the young, and possess a portion of their reverence and regard. All the actions and words of their teacher are regarded with a keen attention, and make a deep impression. They are made the topics of their conversation, and are long remembered. Even those actions and words which they do not witness themselves, are often objects to them of interest; they hear of them with eagerness, ruminates and converse on them. Hence the example and conversation of a good man produce often important effects on the minds of his pupils; inspire a taste and disposition favourable to knowledge and goodness; and impressively, though indirectly, teach them lessons of great moment. Hence also an immoral and unprincipled teacher, though he should not directly abuse his access to the youthful mind, by the insinuation of unworthy principles and ideas, does incalculable mischief, by the natural effect of his conduct and

discourse. He is a public nuisance of the most offensive and dangerous order. Even a careless and idle man, by his neglect of important duties, his foolish speeches, and the low or empty style of his conversation and manners, does often a degree of injury to the best interests of society, which *no eminence in the mere art which he teaches can ever compensate.*

But besides these indirect effects of example and conversation, a good man will directly endeavour so to suit his conduct and intercourse with his pupils, as to promote their improvement. He will not only be careful that he make no injurious impression by his manners and conversation, he will consider in what manner he may render them beneficial to the tender minds of those who surround him. He will enter into discourse with them, for the purpose of promoting their benefit; he will seek for occasions to communicate to them good counsel and profitable lessons; and sometimes, by an insensible direction of their minds to useful thoughts, at other times more directly, by personal and affectionate addresses, he will convey to them that instruction which their age and their condition require. These, when judiciously made, will be generally listened to, and considered, with deep attention. And, I be-

lieve, there are few men who may not look back on some instances of the happy effects produced upon their minds, in early life, by some words in season, which have been addressed to them by a prudent teacher.

In teaching the simplest rudiments of his art, a discerning master will also perceive frequent opportunities for cultivating the understanding of his pupils, exercising their judgment, and quickening their conceptions; for accustoming them to weigh, to distinguish, and arrange; and for leading them to habits of attention and reflection. The good or ill behaviour of the young, their different degrees of progress and of application, the various dispositions, capacities, and genius, which they display, will likewise afford frequent opportunities for illustrating and enforcing useful truths, instilling good principles, and correcting dangerous tendencies. Even passing hints and observations, when well directed, make often deep and salutary impressions, furnish materials for reflection, and contribute to awaken purposes and give a bias to the temper, of the greatest moment to the welfare and future character of the scholar.

There is an adaptation of instruction, discipline, and general conduct, to the talents and dispositions

of individuals, which is of the utmost importance, and which, though not strongly marked, should be kept continually before the mind of the teacher. It is obvious, that great varieties of capacities and of genius exist among the young, and that the means of instruction must be varied or accommodated to suit this diversity. The same modes of cultivation must not be applied to every kind of soil. Nay, even where the soils are similar, the means must be often varied in their application. The slow or the quick apprehension, the sluggish or the lively fancy, the dull yet tenacious, or the ready but unretentive memories, the different powers of attention from nature or habit, the aptness for some kinds of truths and instruction, and the great indisposition to others; these and other varieties of intellectual character, must be attended to in a successful course of education, and corresponding methods of communication, exercise, and discipline, as much as possible, applied. Different dispositions also must often require a different plan of management and conduct. We ought not surely to confound, in one indiscriminate method, the steady and the volatile, the calm and the impetuous, the diligent and the idle, the affectionate and the selfish, the timid and the resolute, the mild and the stubborn, the feeling

and the insensible. They require different kinds of incitements and exercises, of superintendence and general treatment; and an application of the discipline of reward and punishment, praise or blame, different both in the measure and the mode. This accommodation of management to the dispositions of children, is not only necessary to their immediate progress in knowledge and useful learning, but to the improvement of their general habits, and their preparation for future life. The employments and discipline of a school become thus a course of moral education; in which what is blameable is corrected, and what is praise-worthy is encouraged, evil habits are diminished, and good habits are formed and perfected. And may not these peculiarities of disposition be kept in view by every teacher, in the selection of those lessons by which he instructs his pupils? May he not frequently bring forward such lessons and views as are fitted to correct their tempers, and dwell upon those examples and truths which it is peculiarly necessary to illustrate and enforce? Thus a deeper impression of the nature and danger of their weaknesses and sins might be made, and a love of those principles and virtues in which they are deficient be inspired. Thus, through the divine blessing, the necessary direction might be

given to their thoughts and their feelings ; desires might be excited, resolutions awakened, a vigilance and exertion called forth, of the utmost moment to their future character and happiness.

2. In accomplishing the objects of education, no mean seems to me more important, than connecting, with instruction in the art of reading, the use of
JUDICIOUSLY SELECTED BOOKS.

It is possible, without doubt, to teach children to know and pronounce words, without the use of books ; and, it is true, that in this manner some saving of expence may be made. But it is a saving which, I conceive, would be made most injudiciously ; the idea of which, in this country, should not for a moment be entertained.

Young persons may learn to read well a few lessons, while they are incapable of general reading. Nay, such is the effect of association and custom, that the same words will not be known by them, or known with great difficulty, which in the passages to which they have been accustomed are readily recognised and pronounced. It is only by exercise on a variety of pieces, and for a considerable period, that the habit of reading generally, and with facility, can be acquired.

By the use of books also, in the course of instruc-

tion, the minds of the young are opened and enlarged by new ideas ; their curiosity is both awakened and gratified ; their understanding and memory are strengthened and quickened, by exercise on the ideas which are presented ; their thoughts are directed from foolish and corrupting objects, to those which are useful and ennobling ; and a knowledge is taught and impressed upon their hearts, which, though seemingly simple, *is more important to their happiness than all the discoveries of science, or the accumulated wealth of kingdoms.* A discipline of the heart, of a very important nature, is thus also carried on. The truths, the views, and the lessons, which are presented, tend directly to awaken corresponding feelings and reflections. When the young read of the evil and guilt of falsehood, they fear afterwards to make a lie. When the history is perused of idle and disobedient children, they feel an abhorrence of idleness and disobedience, and resolve to be diligent, docile, and submissive. When the power, the wisdom, the goodness and righteousness of God, are presented in striking views of his works and of his dispensations, reverence and awe, mingled with love and gratitude, arise to their Father who is in heaven. When they read of the life, the character, and the instructions, the suffer-

ings and death, the resurrection and ascension, of the Redeemer, with all their touching and striking circumstances, their youthful hearts are affected with various and mingled sentiments of admiration and humility, a hatred of sin, and a love of goodness. The pictures of mortality, and of the changing nature of our state, which their lessons place before them in simple but affecting forms, tend to soften their minds, and lead to a train of serious thought. And while the threatening of punishment rouses a dread of transgression, the prospect of future and heavenly bliss exalts their minds, awakens hope and desire, animates them with the ambition of Christian excellence, and inspires early the purpose, under the guidance of the Captain of Salvation, to seek for glory, honour, and immortality.

The use of books in the course of education, both enables and disposes the young to seek, of their own accord, the knowledge and satisfaction which reading conveys. Their books are frequently their earliest property. They are cherished by them with a peculiar interest, and often are considered by them as conferring a distinction, which raises their possessor above the state of ignorance and barbarity. Rejoicing in their acquisitions, it is not uncommon to see them at home, and by themselves,

perusing with interest their little volumes, and filling up their vacant hours by thinking and conversing on the lessons which are taught. Instruction becomes to them a source of entertainment as well as of profit. A conviction of the value of reading is deeply impressed, and connected with their early pursuits and pleasures. And both from practice, and the experience which they have of its satisfactions, such a habit is formed and a taste is acquired, as will lead them to employ frequently, and to their proper purpose, the important acquirements which, in the course of education, they have made.

Suffer me also to mention the opportunities which are afforded by the use of books, for exercising the faculties of the young on the truths which are presented, and for impressing on their minds such lessons as their characters and conditions require. In the course of reading, a skilful teacher will frequently fix the attention of his pupils on particular passages, and will lead them to weigh and to consider what they read. Sometimes he will require them to give, in their own language, its meaning; and what they do not understand, he will illustrate and explain. At other times, he will call their attention to the importance of the truth communi-

rated, of the example presented, and of the lesson which is taught. He will, perhaps, in a few simple words, illustrate and recommend them ; or propose questions on their nature, fitted to lead his scholars to apprehend and feel the instruction which is conveyed. He will lead them to apply it to their own conduct, and accustom them to read with the understanding, and a view to their personal improvement. By such means, their mental powers will be cultivated, and very important habits taught ; while their minds will be expanded with increasing knowledge ; and truths and lessons, of the greatest moment to their welfare, will be impressed upon their hearts.

These advantages must, in a considerable degree, depend on the *nature* of the books which are employed. Books may be corrupting, or they may be frivolous. It is therefore proper to observe, that the subjects of those which are used in a course of education should be generally of a kind so important, as to merit that degree of time, and attention, and possession of the thoughts, which they must necessarily receive. Ideas may be presented which are just and innocent, and yet do not deserve to occupy a great degree of time and attention. They may also be of a character which is not fitted to form the

taste and bias of children. They may occupy a place, but ought not to predominate in their minds. They should be also suited to the years of the scholar; such as he can understand and feel, with proper care and prudent assistance. They should have a particular reference to his character and circumstances; and lead him to just sentiments of his present and future condition, his duties, dangers, and temptations. They should also be so various as to communicate those kinds of information which are requisite; and to suit the different tempers and conditions of the young. And while all are useful, they should yet be so diversified in character as to awaken various emotions, and to afford various kinds of pleasure. The grave and the cheerful, the gay and the solemn, the pathetic and the humorous, may all, in their own place, be employed to forward the objects of education.

The same observations are equally applicable to the *manner* in which the subjects are presented. The subjects may be important and suitable, and the ideas expressed on them of the justest nature, and yet the manner of the composition may render its instruction abortive. Its language and illustration may be unintelligible to the young, or not calculated to fix their attention and interest their af-

fections : or the style may be so unsuitable in its character and spirit, as to counteract the end which you have in view, and degrade the subject, instead of recommending it. Simple language and illustrations, with an affectionate, mild, and lively expression, yet varying its character according to the nature of the subject, are in general requisite to the instruction of youth. The lessons which are taught, should be also presented under such views, as are fitted to please the imagination and affect the heart. And for this purpose, no methods seem to be better adapted, and to admit of greater diversity, than that by illustrations taken from examples, incidents, and scenes, in human life ; by lively and characteristic conversations ; by pictures of character, and descriptions of natural objects and scenes ; by accounts of the habits of animals, or the customs of countries ; by interesting passages from the histories of individuals, or the general histories of nations ; and, finally, by views in simple but solemn language, of those great and striking events which relate to the various dispensations of God to his creatures.

Yet, while we thus pay attention to the capacity, dispositions, and progress, of the young, let us beware of those improper accommodations which tend to destroy the desire of exertion, and retard

the progress of improvement. There is a childishness of dialect and sentiment, with which even good instruction is sometimes conveyed, which tends to encourage a babyish taste, to enervate, rather than to strengthen the understanding, to debase, rather than to elevate the conception, to connect frivolity with important truths, and to leave all the nobler and stronger principles of the mind dormant and untouched. And though views and illustrations should be often presented, which please the imagination and affect the heart, yet every selection for youth should be always mingled with such ideas and instructions, as will exercise the understanding, and form to habits of attention and discrimination, reflection and diligence. The idea should never be encouraged, that any valuable attainment can be made without application and exertion. Objects fitted to awaken the ambition of farther knowledge, should be proposed. Advancement in the course should be still making. Pieces adapted to different stages of progress, and calculated to carry the mind forward in the road of improvement, should succeed in their due order. For this purpose, it is not necessary that every word which is employed, or every truth and sentiment which is presented, should be such as young persons can easily and instantaneous-

ly comprehend. It may be sometimes proper that such should occur, as may occasion to them some difficulty ; as may rise a degree above their powers for the moment, and while they excite curiosity, may lead to inquiry and consideration. It is sufficient if these can be understood by thought, exertion, and the assistance of those who superintend and instruct them. Children are not to be considered as insulated beings. They are to be viewed in connection with their affectionate instructors and guides. And their capacity for understanding and learning many truths, is not to be estimated by what they can understand by their own exertions, but by their exertions directed and aided by prudent and faithful friends.

These observations may be, in some degree, applied also to schools for young persons in a more advanced state of age and improvement. The advantages, for example, of a *classical education*, do not consist merely in the acquisition of one or two ancient languages. Instruction in these, is a vehicle by which the powers of the mind are improved, useful habits are formed, the taste is cultivated, and various kinds of important knowledge are easily and impressively communicated. But the attainment of such objects depends greatly on the character of

the books which, in the course of instruction, are used, and on the exercises and illustrations which, in the course of their explanation, are employed. It is possible to teach a language in such a manner as will conduce little to mental improvement. Exercises must be given, adapted to the minds of the young; fitted to improve their various powers; to form them to habits of attention, of arrangement, and of thinking; and to lead them to the perception and feeling of what is beautiful in sentiment and language. Illustrations from the examples which are presented, must be also given of the nature of grammar and the rules of composition; of ancient customs and manners; of the different characters and actions of individuals; of the general history of nations, their laws, government, and religion, their learning, arts, commerce, their vices and virtues, their evils, and advantages. The books employed should not only be of a kind which furnish opportunities for such exercises and illustrations, but which tend directly, from their character and nature, to improve the mind. They should be such as from their manner, are fitted to engage attention; from their style, to cultivate the taste; and from their subjects, to increase the knowledge, and to improve the character of the scholars. For

this purpose, the style and the subjects may be various; yet should be always not only consistent with the ends of instruction, but subservient to their advancement. Not only what is immoral in its nature or tendency should be avoided, but also what in its general spirit is mean, frivolous, and useless. Compositions even which may not unprofitably employ a passing hour, may be unsuited to a course of education. Those employed in education, it is to be considered, occupy, during a long period, the attention; they are presented often and repeatedly before the mind, must make a deep impression, and greatly contribute to form the bias and temper of the scholars. They should, therefore, be of a kind which deserve to be deeply wrought into the thoughts; which deserve to occupy so much time and so much attention, at this interesting period; which not only will give no improper direction to the powers and habits of young persons, but will store their minds with useful ideas, increase their knowledge on subjects worthy of regard, enlarge and elevate their conceptions, give them a taste for what is excellent, and a love for what is good.

3. Exercises of a special nature, should be employed on SELECT PASSAGES AND COMPOSITIONS.

The practice which has happily prevailed in the

schools of this country, of appointing pieces to be committed to memory by the different scholars, according to their progress, seems to me, when the selection is judiciously made, to be excellently adapted to the instruction and improvement of youth. By this mean, not only the memory, but other powers and principles of mind, are exercised and improved ; and, by the special attention which is required, an important direction is given to the thoughts and the feelings. By this mean also, those great truths and rules which ought chiefly to govern the principles and choice of man, and to be habitually present to his thoughts, are fixed deeply in the remembrance ; and fixed in that form which is best fitted to direct the understanding and influence the heart. Thus too, those images and views which awaken the noblest feelings, and give the most delightful and improving associations, are interwoven with our minds ; rise easily in all their affecting forms before us, on occasions when their influence is important ; direct the general tenor of our thoughts, and give a portion of their spirit to our character. Nor does it seem to me to be of small importance, that those great truths which should be the chief objects of our veneration and love, receive, in this way, associations suited to their nature ; nor

that the sensibility to what is excellent and beautiful in nature or art, is thus excited and improved, and a general refinement in the moral and intellectual taste is promoted.

To accomplish these purposes, the sacred writings furnish the best and the amplest materials. Besides their great variety, their divine simplicity, their grandeur, tenderness, and beauty, they come upon the soul with the authority of God, and the certainty of his word; they furnish the mind with those principles by which human opinions are to be tried; they are consecrated with the awe and reverence, affection and gratitude, which belong to their Author; they breathe a heavenliness and purity of spirit and of manner, which distinguish them from the compositions of man; and they convey the divine truths which they teach, with a peculiar power, to the conscience and the heart. Many admirable passages for the same purpose, are to be found in the works of some of our great writers, both in prose and in poetry. In these, the highest sentiments are communicated in all the charms of language, and with all the associations of fine and affecting imagery; while they are, at the same time, often adapted to present manners, and to the different situations and conditions of human life. Such passages

I would inculcate upon the children of the poor as well as of the rich. Nor do I fear that the portion of refinement which they would thus acquire, will unfit them for that condition to which they may be destined. Besides that we know not what is to be their condition, I conceive that the refinement which such writings produce, will render them both more useful and happy in every situation of life. The best feelings may be unduly indulged, and the purest pleasures may be sought with an improper eagerness. The possession of good habits and the just exercise of the understanding and the conscience, must always be supposed; and these being supposed, a sensibility to what is great, and beautiful, and becoming, will improve not only the happiness but usefulness of men in any situation. The pleasures to which it disposes, are of the purest kind, and may be easily obtained; and when accompanied with proper habits, which, in every condition, as well as that of the poor, are essential to well-doing, they will not interfere with any duty, nor unfit for any employment. The employments of men in the higher ranks of society, are often as coarse and inconsistent with such a character of mind, as those of the peasant; yet we would not deprive them of the pleasures which a well directed sensibility affords. Nor do I conceive that

the humble cottager, who can taste and admire the beauties of the Creator's works—who, after the labours of the day, finds delight in cultivating his little garden, and ornamenting his lowly dwelling with those shrubs and flowers which his situation enables him to procure—is less likely to rise with the lark to begin his useful labours, than the men who live in the midst of *filth and disorder*, and employ their hours of relaxation in *cloddish stupor, noisy debate, or brutal intemperance*.

It is of great importance, I conceive, also, that the leading principles of religion should be impressed on the memory in just language, according to their relative importance, and their proper order. They are thus more easily remembered, and clearly and justly apprehended; the connection and importance of different parts are perceived; and the whole comes with a more united influence upon the mind. The misapprehensions which arise from viewing truths detached from others with which they are connected, and by which they are guarded, are thus prevented; difficulties are more easily solved, and the evidence, excellence, and beauty of the divine plan more fully discerned. Hence the importance of committing to memory short summaries of divine truth, accurately expressed, and digested in

a natural and proper method. The form of catechisms, by question and answer, is particularly well adapted to the instruction of young persons. While it possesses the advantage of impressing on the mind, a just and clear summary of the doctrines and duties of religion, it excites curiosity and attention; it enlivens by its variety and interchange of persons; it supposes two parties, the teacher and the scholar, and affords a natural opportunity of illustration, by conversation betwixt the two speakers on the subjects of instruction. Nor is the capacity of the scholar to apprehend the truths which are thus taught, to be judged by what he is capable of apprehending by himself; but in connection with the familiar illustrations of an affectionate and experienced guide, which this method of instruction always supposes. And though it be true, that religious truth should not be presented in abstruse perplexing forms, yet we are not to reject appropriate and forcible expressions, which can be understood and rendered familiar by a little care. Nay, though I strenuously maintain the importance of carrying the understanding of the scholar along with instruction of every kind, yet, in every species of learning, it may be sometimes necessary, that young persons be taught to remember sentiments and expressions, which they do not,

at first, understand. It may be necessary that these be deeply and early impressed on the mind; and in that place, series, and connection with other truths, which belong to them. Nor, if the understanding be properly exercised on other subjects, will the young acquire any improper habit, though they be informed respecting some occasional passages, that "what they know not now, they shall know hereafter." It may be requisite even in communicating the simplest truths, to inform them, that the knowledge which is most important for us to learn, and seemingly most easy for us to understand, may be connected with inquiries beyond the capacity of man. The true nature of our state is never to be forgotten. Patience and modesty in the exercise of the understanding, should be early inculcated; and though, like every disposition, these may be carried to excess, yet, I apprehend, even in their excess, they are more connected with the discovery of truth, the exercise of a sound judgment, and the advancement of human happiness, than a disposition to *rashness*, *petulance*, and *presumption*.

It will likewise be useful to employ young persons, when the state of their progress has rendered them capable of it, in occasionally transcribing particular passages either in school or at home. This,

while it improves them in the arts of writing and orthography, impresses good sentiments and expressions on their mind; contributes to improve their character and taste; and forms a diversity of exercise, which may be often agreeably employed when the labour of committing to memory would be burdensome.—To require the young occasionally to give an account, in their own words, of select passages, sometimes immediately after a passage has been read, and sometimes after previous preparation, is also of great utility. By such means, not only the ideas will be more deeply impressed on their remembrance, but their attention will be kept alive, thought and consideration will be employed, and some selection of sentiment, and expression made; while, at the same time, an opportunity will be given to their teacher, to correct their errors and direct their judgment.

To these exercises should be joined the daily reading of the Scriptures. Acquaintance with the Scriptures lies at the foundation of the Christian character; and besides the unspeakable greatness and importance of the truths, which by them God addresses to man, the histories, the parables, various characters, affecting expressions of devotion, striking

scenes, wonderful events, and mixture of awful and engaging views, which, in simple but impressive language, the Sacred Writings present, are peculiarly fitted to fix the attention, and interest the feelings, of the young. But to accomplish these purposes with the best success, I doubt the propriety of employing the Scriptures, as a school-book, at the first stage of instruction in the art of reading. I conceive it were better that the Bible were given as a mark of distinction to those who could read with considerable propriety. It should be distinguished from an ordinary book, and associated with ideas of reverence. It should be read publicly each day, at a stated interval, in the hearing, and for the instruction, of all the scholars: it should be read, not merely as an exercise of reading, but with a view to religious knowledge and improvement: it should be read with solemnity and seriousness, and listened to with deep silence and reverent attention.

In all these exercises, a wise teacher will consider the character and circumstances of his scholars. He will adapt, with prudence, every lesson and employment to their capacity and progress. He will fix convenient intervals, and allot convenient seasons. He will endeavour to render every exercise pleasing;

and while he avoids encouraging that inactivity and lightness of mind, which too great facility produces, he will guard against burdening and perplexing the mind of the young by difficult and unseasonable labours. He will not teach them to consider education as only an amusement; but he will encourage them to find happiness in the due employment of their understanding and affections, and avoid connecting the exercises of instruction with ideas which are either puerile or irksome. He will lead their understandings gently on in the path of knowledge; connect progress and exertion with ideas of distinction; direct them to more extensive views as they proceed in their road; and by enlivening and invigorating their mind, instead of fatiguing it by exercise, he will render them delighted with the course, and desirous to continue their progress*.

* I have often thought, that to place in the daily sight of all the scholars, in our parish schools, maps of the four quarters of the earth, would have also an useful effect. The view of them would awaken curiosity, give a general idea of different countries, and impress their relative situations deeply on the mind. A few general observations made occasionally, and as a reward of diligence, by the master, would easily give the requisite instruction. I am happy to observe, that lessons in geography are now given in severa of the charity schools of this city.

From these observations it follows, that in judging of any plan for the instruction of youth, we must look farther *than the mere art*, which is the direct object of the teacher. Other great and important objects are also to be kept in view; and by its fitness to promote those objects, the comparative value of any system must, in a great degree, be estimated. Plans of a more limited nature may have their own use and their own place. But they must not be put on a footing with those which embrace and accomplish more momentous and extensive designs; and still less must they be supposed best fitted for general adoption. It was on a nobler and a more liberal idea that the schools of this country were established by our ancestors; and it was by keeping higher objects in view, that they have been blessed with such unexampled success. The experience of ages has stamped their value. From such seminaries have arisen a people distinguished for intelligence, information, virtue, and religion; a people, too, who value this noble distinction of their country, and who hitherto have been desirous to transmit to their children the precious inheritance which they themselves have received. But should the time ever come, when, disregarding the lessons of expe-

rience, and forgetting the character and circumstances of our country, we shall confine our wishes to narrower objects ; lower the national spirit ; and, for a substantial and religious education, substitute those inferior plans which are adapted to a people who are insensible to higher advantages, or sunk into a state of abject poverty—we shall then lay the chief distinction of our countrymen in the dust, and deeply injure, not only their temporal, but their everlasting interests.

Farther, the remarks which have been made lead me to observe, that, in order to accomplish the important objects of elementary education, the *numbers in a school*, at the same time, should not be greater than what a teacher can personally instruct and superintend. Various advantages without doubt, may be produced by the assistance of scholars superintending and teaching one another ; and, under a proper system, such aid may be carried to a considerable extent. But still it is never to be forgotten, that the advantages which arise from rightly exercising and directing the youthful powers ; conveying useful knowledge ; accommodating instruction, exercises, and discipline, to the different talents, tempers, and circumstances of individuals ; giving good counsel, illustrating and enforcing moral

and religious truth, and, by the improvement of suitable incidents, endeavouring to form the character, dispositions, and habits of the young—all require the direct interference of a wise and a pious teacher; they are not to be effected by boys.

The *importance of books* also appears to be so great, that no considerations of a pecuniary nature should ever be permitted to exclude them, even from schools of the most inferior order. We will act, I trust, from more generous principles, and take care that every child, whatever be his condition, be furnished with his book, as soon as he is able to join syllables. The spirit of the people of this country has long been directed to the education of their children; and among the expenses to which they have been accustomed to look, they have long regarded it as a duty to furnish some provision for the minds of their families. I trust that their spirit in this matter will never be brought down; and that they never will be led to conceive, that a portion of their gains can be better employed than in promoting the mental improvement of their offspring. And when families are oppressed with poverty, when the honest labourer has been overtaken by misfortune, or, after having spent his days in toil, is obliged to leave his children on our compas-

sion, I trust we shall not treat so churlishly the helpless charge which devolves on us, as to grudge the little pittance which may be necessary for their improvement; that we shall not consider only at how cheap a rate they may receive a little imperfect instruction, nor amidst the boasted benevolence of the times, permit an economy so *unlike* the character of *Scotland*, to influence our conduct. The expense of their instruction is an eventual claim which the labours of their fathers have earned: it is a debt which, in the case of misfortune or of death, it falls on the affluent to pay: and, independently of their claims on our justice and humanity, it is an expense which more than most others, will produce profitable returns. The cheapness of a plan is a very important consideration; but it may be obtained at a mighty loss. Improvement should be ever kept in view, and much in every department remains to be made. But it should be sought, not by considering chiefly what is cheapest, but what is best; not by lowering, but raising the standard; not by adding weight to a sinking spirit, and encouraging a grovelling temper, but by rousing men to a proper ambition, animating them to throw off every incumbrance, maintaining, supporting, and elevating still higher, the desire and the aim of excellence. “Happy

is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Nor will the difference of expense be so great as is imagined. The rate of education in our parochial schools, and in schools formed on similar principles, is very low. And the disadvantages of bringing children from distant quarters, especially in great cities, as must be the case where the numbers in a school are very great, will often, independently of intellectual and moral considerations, more than overbalance the few pence which might otherwise be saved.

To carry into effect the objects which we have been contemplating, *a considerable period of time* must undoubtedly be employed. But many considerations lead me to believe, that a rapid plan of education is not always desirable; and that for such important objects, the additional time which may be required should not be viewed as a loss. It is to be observed also, that an art may be acquired, and

yet so *slightly take possession of the mind, as to be easily and quickly obliterated.* To take firm hold of the memory, it must be frequently repeated; a considerable period of exercise must be allowed, and habit must be brought in aid of memory. And what is the advantage of quickly removing children from the scene of education? They are early enabled, as it is said, to do for themselves, and parents are relieved from the burden of their maintenance. But are the disadvantages on the other side not to be considered? Besides losing the benefits of a well conducted education, these little victims of the luxury of the affluent, and often of the avarice, indolence, and wretched indulgencies of parents, are deprived of all the means of strength, and the natural enjoyments suited to their years. They are placed even in situations which are injurious to their tender frames, and called to exertions which are beyond their power. Habits of industry, instead of being gradually and pleasingly formed, are counteracted by this unnatural system. The spirit of the children revolts from their employment; and they become restless and unhappy. The season of servitude at last terminates; and at what age, and with what dispositions is it concluded? Early apprenticed, they become masters of their own

conduct at the most dangerous season of youth ; when their passions are strong, and their experience of life is small. The employment to which they were bound in childhood, is an object of distaste. It is either deserted, or its gains are spent in profligacy. For an intelligent, sober, and industrious youth, we have young men idle, ignorant, and unprincipled, restless, insolent, and profligate.

Yet, while I thus recommend that system which, as it appears to me, should be generally pursued, let me not be understood as condemning in every case, the adoption of schools of a different description ; and still less as wishing to lessen the praise of any benevolent individuals who have sought, through them, to promote the interest of the young. There may be situations in which, from a hard necessity, such schools may be most expedient ; and the most imperfect education is still to be considered as important. But let us not attempt to spread generally an inferior system ; and in cases where necessity recommends its adoption, let us keep in view, when opportunities arise, the remedy of its disadvantages.

It is especially necessary that both the *nature* of the schools, and the *qualifications of the teachers*, in populous towns and districts, be objects of serious attention. Notwithstanding the excellent institu-

tions of our ancestors, notwithstanding the plans and the exertions of wise and good men in the present day to meet the necessities and the evils of the times, it is certain that ignorance, and disorder, and profligacy, have been prevailing in our cities and their suburbs. Among the means of meeting this alarming evil, few are more important than to give encouragement in every district to well qualified teachers, communicating to all the children around them the inestimable blessings of a solid and religious education. We may have schools in abundance, and at so small an expense as to meet the ability of the poorest labourer, yet the *population be neglected*. If we consider justly the value of a good education, conducted by able and well principled teachers—the susceptibility of youthful minds—the influence of a teacher over his scholars, and the opportunities which he possesses of employing it—we shall see the importance, not only of schools in sufficient numbers, but schools of a proper character, and conducted by fit men ; we shall see the importance of bringing forward and encouraging schools which are conducted on such principles, and taught by such masters, as will ensure to the children of every labourer, and in every quarter of our cities and their suburbs, the benefits of that instruction, su-

perintendence, and discipline, which have so greatly contributed to give that character to our general population for which this country has been distinguished.

The subject which we have been considering, will not, I trust, be viewed as unsuitable to the occasion of our meeting. We have seen some of the advantages of a good education; the importance of a teacher of youth; and the consequent estimation in which those should be held who discharge with ability and faithfulness the duties of their trust. May they ever meet with honour and affection! may their widows and children be ever enabled to live in respectability and comfort! and may your ASSOCIATION for this purpose, my Respected Friends, receive that public attention and support which are at once due to the profession which you exercise, and to the characters which you maintain! *Amen.*

ON THE
QUALIFICATIONS OF THE TEACHERS
OF YOUTH.

A Discourse delivered on the Anniversary of the
Charity Schools of Glasgow, in 1812.

*The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and
addeth learning to his lips.*

PROV. xvi. 23.

ON preceding anniversaries of this nature, our attention has been frequently directed to the momentous subjects of charity, education, and early piety. At this time, it is proposed, from these words of Solomon, to consider some of those Qualifications in the Teachers of youth, which appear to be especially important.

This subject, while it is intimately connected with the object of our meeting, is, in itself, of the highest moment. The duties of a teacher of youth are of the first order, and produce most important

effects upon both individuals and nations; effects not confined to the knowledge and skill directly communicated, but necessarily and powerfully affecting the understanding, and principles, dispositions, and habits, of the young. The qualifications of the persons who have such duties to fulfil, are, therefore, objects of most serious attention. The importance of them is increased by the consideration, that the office of a teacher, partakes necessarily of the nature of a trust. There are duties which no money can purchase, and no superintendence can secure. Of this kind are those which relate to the improvement of the young. A general outline may be drawn, and in some degree enforced. But those minute yet infinitely important attentions, that improvement of circumstances and incidental occasions, those undefinable means which a well-disposed mind perceives and employs, are not the subjects of bargain, nor of law, nor of authority; they are the effects of the disposition and the character.

The general qualifications of a teacher of youth, may be viewed with a reference to THE IMMEDIATE END PROPOSED BY HIS INSTRUCTIONS; to the GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE OF HIS PUPILS: and to the FORMATION and IMPROVEMENT of their HABITS and GENERAL CHARACTER.

I. A competent *knowledge* of those branches of learning in which teachers profess to give instruction, is obviously in the first place essential. Men will be found, in every profession, undertaking what they do not understand ; but in populous districts, where the demand for a cheap education is considerable, and parents are themselves careless and ill instructed, various temptations induce persons to undertake the important object of instruction, who are ignorant even of the first rudiments of knowledge. Many teachers accordingly will be found in our cities and their suburbs, not only unacquainted with the ordinary rules of grammar and of arithmetic, but unable to write and spell correctly the simplest words. Their habits and views, like their attainments, are often also of the meanest order. In every respect unqualified for giving instruction in the art which they profess, they are still more unqualified for giving a right direction to the minds and manners of the young. Such persons deceive the parents who trust them, waste the only season of instruction enjoyed by the children of the poor, and prevent their improvement under competent instructors. They injure, in various ways, a most important profession ; bring down the standard of education throughout the nation ; and nurture a low taste and character

among the people. It may not in every situation be necessary that the knowledge of a teacher, even in the branches which he professes, should be of the highest order ; but it ought always to be considerable. Inferior persons must be employed where better cannot be obtained. But surely, in every situation, the instructors of youth should be able to communicate that kind and degree of knowledge which it is desirable a labouring man should possess, and which parents expect their children to receive. Surely in every situation their knowledge should be such as may tend to raise, and not to sink the character of the society around them ; such even as may enable them to meet the occasional wish for some superior instruction, and to encourage the dawning of some better genius. The information conveyed to the pupil can rise no higher than the source from which it proceeds. If the fountain be low, and ill supplied, the water will be scanty and polluted ; fitted often to injure rather than to improve even those lower grounds among which it stagnates ; and wholly incapable of rising to refresh the higher lands which give beauty and grandeur to the landscape.

But while the communication of knowledge is the direct design of some branches of instruction, the for-

mation of particular habits, facility and skill in executing certain objects is the direct design of others. The teacher of reading, of writing, and of arithmetic, for example, does not teach merely the knowledge of those branches, and the rules connected with them; he teaches the practice of those arts, as well as to understand their meaning and their nature. Is not this also the case with many of the higher branches of education? Is it not the case with the acquisition of languages? Are not the habits also of close attention and reflection, of quick, yet clear perception, of acute discrimination, of clear arrangement and method, of just and solid reasoning, important objects of a course which professes to instruct the young in the right conduct of the understanding*? Are not the habits of accurate composition, of clear and distinct communication of our ideas, important objects in a course which teaches the principles of grammar, and of good writing? And is not the power of giving beauty and elegance to our language, impressive representations of the images of fancy, propriety, vividness, and energy, to the expression of our feelings, an important object in a course which pro-

* See the excellent work of my much respected friend and colleague, Professor Jardine of Glasgow.

fesses to form the taste, and give instruction in the art of rhetoric? Is not this attention to the formation of particular habits, skill in particular exercises, and eminence in certain duties, of peculiar importance also in those courses of education which are professional? Who does not perceive that a man may have much knowledge in the professions of a physician, a lawyer, and a divine, and yet be wholly unfit for the duties of these professions? Possessing all necessary knowledge, he may be not only without eminence, but helpless as a child, awkward and unskilful as the most ignorant and uneducated. Nay, he may have acquired, even in the course of his education, such a general character, taste, and habit of acting, as will unfit him for acquiring, in future life, the qualifications which he wants. He has received lectures on his profession, but he has not been taught it. His powers have not been exercised with a view to his future duties; even the desire of excelling in them has not been fostered, nor a taste for them inspired, much less have those dispositions and habits been formed by which he is to discharge them with ability and success.

With knowledge, therefore, a teacher must have *skill* to practise the art in which he professes to give instruction. The pupil must imitate, and the ob-

ject of his imitation must generally be the examples presented to him by his instructor. Those examples must be frequently repeated; and while the imperfections and errors of the pupil are pointed out, his teacher must also show to him what he should have done, and by reiterated efforts lead him on to facility and to excellence. A teacher therefore requires a combination both of knowledge and of skill in the art which he teaches. Without this, his pupils must remain in much ignorance of what they should have learned; what they learn, they learn imperfectly; and with imperfection will be joined those improper habits which must accompany his unskillfulness.

But a person may practise an art with success, yet be ill qualified to instruct others in its attainment. To execute a work is different from teaching others to execute it. And many men of talents, nay, distinguished in literature and science, have been found very awkward and unsuccessful teachers of youth. It is obvious, that a certain order and method must be followed in teaching even the rudiments of any art or science with success. Besides these, there are methods which must be adopted, suited to the general capacities, attainments, and character of youth: methods fitted to se-

cure their attention, to meet their conceptions, to impress the necessary principles, and to form the necessary habits ; to exercise their powers, and enable them, with judgment and facility, to apply the knowledge and rules which they have been taught. Without attention to these, the teacher and his pupils will labour in endless confusion, without pleasure and without progress. After much unpleasant labour, little is learned, and that little is learned indistinctly. Often the pupils are disgusted with what they so little understand ; and their powers of mind, instead of being improved, are weakened or perverted by pernicious habits. A good teacher must, therefore, possess the power of discerning and pursuing a just *method of instruction*. He must not only acquaint himself with the plans which men of experience and observation have formed on a subject so important to his usefulness ; he must add to them the result of his own experience and reflection. He must select what is useful, from whatever quarter the suggestion may have come ; but he must also reject all visionary fancies, and ill-digested notions, though recommended by splendid names. He must stoop to no tricks of art to gain a temporary popularity ; and remember that what is solid will remain, after the gaudy bubbles of the day have

broken, and the chaff has been dispersed by the wind of heaven.

The methods however which are generally important, are not applicable, in all respects, to every situation. A teacher must therefore possess the talent of *accommodating* himself to the circumstances and characters of his scholars ; and be able so to arrange and modify his plan as to suit the people among whom he lives, and the condition of those whom he is destined to instruct. Nay, general outlines must not only be varied according to circumstances, but new methods must be often tried, and various incidents improved to the purposes of instruction. Diversified means must be employed to awaken attention, keep curiosity alive, give interest to the lesson which is taught, and revive the flagging spirits. Frequent illustrations must be presented, to convey instruction to the understanding, and impress it on the mind ; to relieve the fatigue of study, and mingle pleasure with the labours and efforts of the youthful learner. Above all, methods accommodated to the different talents, tempers, and habits, advantages, and degrees of improvement, enjoyed by his different pupils, must be considered, and adopted. Hence a successful teacher must possess fertility of invention, and just discernment

of character; a condescending and accommodating temper; a power of entering into the minds of the youthful beings placed under his direction, and of pursuing those methods which are suited to their various and changing feelings.

It is an easy matter to instruct and train to eminence a few boys of distinguished talents and of excellent dispositions. But he only deserves the name of an eminent teacher, who rouses the sluggish to activity, fixes the attention of the volatile, quickens the capacity of the dull, leads the careless and idle to habits of attention and perseverance, and finds his way to the understandings of the slow and the confused of apprehension: Who forms not a *few* to eminence, but *many* to excellence: Who leaves not a mass of stragglers behind; but, with wisdom, exertion, and persevering attention, keeps together and brings forward, in their different orders, the whole of his little flock. The general is not celebrated for skill who conducts safely and rapidly a few healthy and obedient troops; but he who, through the difficulties of an enemy's country, in a wintry season, and under a stormy sky, conducts to the wished-for termination, the disorderly, the timid, the sluggish, the weak, and the diseased. He is not the good

husbandman who only cultivates a few favoured spots, and leaves the rest of his fields neglected and waste ; but he who considers the various kinds of soil committed to his charge, varies his management according to the nature of his lands, and the incidents of the season, and brings the whole into that state of cultivation of which they are susceptible.

To this discernment and capacity of accommodation, must be joined, *patience* and *perseverance*. A teacher of youth has many difficulties to surmount, many trials of temper to encounter. He must bring down his mind to the level of ignorant and uncultivated minds ; place himself in their situation, and enter into their feelings. He must dwell among ideas long hackneyed and familiar to himself ; forego the pleasures of novelty, and of new exercises of thought and imagination ; wait with long and fatiguing attention ; repeat and reiterate the same ideas and the same lessons. and after much pains and exertion, expect to find his labour often unsuccessful. Impatience and irritability are incompatible with the discharge of such duties. They confuse and overwhelm the minds of the young, retard their improvement, and damp the desire of exertion. The opening prospects of many a youth of the best dispositions, and of the finest genius, have

been darkened, and sometimes blasted, by the impatient and irritable temper of his teacher.

I join *zeal* and *activity* with patience and perseverance. To encounter such difficulties, and exercise such patience and perseverance, require considerable zeal. But what I have now chiefly in view, is the importance of zeal to produce active and animated exertions both in the teacher and his scholars. A slight attention may convince us that many of the immediate objects of education are naturally not interesting to the young; and that the rules which must be followed, and the attention given, require frequently, on their parts, the exercise of self-denial. Hence, unless stimulated by the active zeal of their teacher, they will break out into disorder, regardless of restraint, or sink disheartened and unconcerned into indolence and vacant stupor. The zeal of their leader, on the other hand, rouses them to exertion; infuses into them animation, and a high feeling of the importance of their duties. They catch a portion of the fire with which he is animated. They feel the importance and the distinction attached to the objects they pursue. Their attention is kept continually alive by his stimulating energy, and ever-varying exertions; and they find, in the exercise of their powers, the circumstances which sur-

round them, and the consciousness of growing improvement, such constant and varied pleasures as carry them through difficulties with triumph and success. Zeal also quickens invention; and the judgment of the teacher is often employed to aid the imaginations and feelings of his pupils. Society adds its charms; and irksome employments are connected with such ideas and circumstances, as give to them a greater interest than others which are naturally agreeable. What man who has enjoyed the blessing of a well-conducted course of education, under a skilful and zealous teacher, does not remember examples of this nature? Does not recollect the attention which he awakened, the energy and exertions which he excited, the general interest which he gave even to subjects which were forbidding to a youthful mind? What a different scene is presented when the teachers are indolent and careless, heartless, and without zeal to promote the objects of their profession—when they contemplate their duties with dislike, and submit to them only from necessity, with reluctance and aversion—when the sense of duty does not overcome this aversion, all is a forced and unnatural service, and every object around them partakes of their dislike! Then do we see the heart-rending sight of neglected youth; not only without progress and improvement, but given up

to sloth, carelessness, and disorder: Men occupying important stations, regardless of their trust, and ruining those youthful minds which it should have been their delight and glory to have improved: Some looking with drowsy indolence, or careless unconcern, on the interesting objects around them, and seizing every opportunity to escape from their duties: others punctiliously going through their accustomed round, but lifeless and inefficient, without energy or interest, neither encouraging the diligent, nor inciting the idle, nor passing their prescribed limits though it were to save a soul from death: sitting in sullen state, wrapped in gloom and self-importance, surveying with contempt his pupils and their efforts, treating their errors with the severity of a tyrant rather than the tenderness of a friend, sometimes even disdainingly to explain in what they have offended: another, vain and capricious, or dissatisfied with his situation, yielding himself, without restraint, to passionate invective; alas! perhaps giving vent to the ill-humour of his discontented mind in acts of violence on the helpless little race which surrounds him.—That affectionate zeal to do good, and that meekness, forbearance, condescension, and patient perseverance, which every Christian is bound, by his profession of the Gospel, to maintain, are most impor-

tant in a teacher of youth. And as they are often severely tried, so they are peculiarly amiable. They give genuine dignity and beauty to his character; and while they essentially promote the great ends of his office, they win the affection and reverence of his pupils, and the esteem and the gratitude of all wise and good men.

II. The Qualifications of a Teacher of Youth should be considered with a reference to the GOVERNMENT and DISCIPLINE of the young.

Contemplating the subject under this view, he should possess those *qualities which inspire respect*.

Youthful societies, like every other, are governed much by opinion and by feeling. Whatever therefore tends to diminish respect for their teacher, must be inconsistent with his success. As the young also are very prone to imitation, it is of great importance that the example which their teacher presents should not only be morally good, but free from every thing which is foolish and unseemly. This, so important to the character of his scholars, is necessary to his authority and influence. Every impropriety is of the nature of vice; and when it appears in our looks, tones of voice, dress, deportment, and general

manners, never fails to offend the moral feelings of our fellow-creatures, and to lessen us in their estimation. In like manner, those weaknesses which we associate with a defect in discernment, judgment, and mental improvement, or which manifest some absurd taste, the predominance of some foolish inclination, carelessness, confusion, or disorder of mind, tend greatly to diminish respect and confidence. But above all, the influence and authority of a teacher will be injured by any thing of the nature of vanity and pride ; or which awakens and connects with him ludicrous ideas, in the lively and susceptible minds of his scholars.

The appearance of vanity or pride is always disgusting. It offends not only our self-love, but our sense of justice. We feel a desire to resist the claims and bring down the pretensions of men, whose dispositions exceed the bounds of equity and truth, disregard the rights of others, and grasp, with an excessive selfishness, at what is not their due. This general sense of justice, and feeling of their own rights, are powerful in the young; nor are there any vices in character to which they are more alive, than those of arrogance and ostentation. But when these, as they almost always do, appear associated with ri-

diculous circumstances ; when the appearance and manners, the gestures, tones, and phraseology of a teacher, are marked by absurdity and folly, respect and deference among his scholars are destroyed. No severity of discipline will suffice ; not even the conviction of his knowledge and skill in his profession. Besides their sense of propriety, their propensity to ridicule is strong ; and when it is frequently excited, bursts through all restraint. His strange appearance and speeches, they make the subjects of their amusement and their jests ; and instead of coming to receive his instructions with minds prepared to attend, to learn, and to obey, they come prepared to watch his singularities, and treasure up new food for entertainment. It is vain to expect, in such circumstances, order and improvement. The time of the pupil is worse than wasted. No discipline nor punishment will remedy the evil. The disorder is in the teacher ; and until that be removed, the scholars must remain undisciplined and untaught. If it were possible, in such circumstances, to maintain some appearance of order by the operation of constant terror, it would be the order not of will and of duty, but of force ; unaccompanied with any of those sentiments of the heart, or efforts of the understanding, which lead to intellectual and moral improve-

ment. In this view, even the circumstances of dress are not without their importance. The teacher who displays the ostentation of finery and fashion on the one hand, or slovenliness, vulgarity, and the affectation of ease and carelessness on the other, may be assured, whatever his vanity may suggest, that he makes an impression, very different from his expectations, both on his pupils and on the public.

But something more is requisite than mere freedom from what is foolish and unseemly, to produce regard. The character and manners of a teacher should be such as will directly awaken respectful feelings. A sober and grave deportment is both suited to the nature of his office, and necessary to produce deference and submission. The graver order of manners is considered to be the expression of a mind habitually occupied with important objects, and, therefore, naturally disposes the young to attention and regard. Such an appearance in a teacher, also, is a public, though silent, declaration to those around him, that the business in which they are engaged is important, and demands their care. It is fitted, likewise, to repress that levity which is natural to youth; and, by the influence of sympathy, to dispose them to that calm and settled attention

which is necessary to their immediate duties, and of which the habit is of the utmost importance, in the course of education, to acquire.

This gravity of carriage, however, must be accompanied with *simplicity* and *affection*. There is a parading solemnity of manner which arises from affectation, and produces only disgust and ridicule. The genuine feeling, of which a proper manner is the expression, must be maintained, and not the mere appearance. The veil of affectation is quickly seen through by the keen eyes of lively youth; and it is generally conjoined with such discordant elements as to produce very different sentiments from reverence. Nor is a grave deportment to be confounded with gloom and severity. The truly grave are generally the most gentle, tender-hearted, and benevolent. The extremes of giddiness and gloom are, both of them, in general, hostile to a kind consideration of others, and are frequently found meeting in the point of selfish insensibility. The gravity of a good teacher is mingled with gentleness and affection, and, in some degree, arises from them. His behaviour is staid and sober; because he feels the importance of his situation, and is deeply interested in the welfare of his scholars.

An affectionate temper, besides its importance in directing and quickening the labours of the teacher, has a most powerful influence on the minds of the young. Nothing so much leads to attention and cheerful obedience, as the conviction that what is required, proceeds from the desire of their welfare. Affection also awakens affection. They feel a desire to please, and an unwillingness to offend him; a love of his approbation, and a dread of his censure. Obedience is given with alacrity. Order, regularity, and diligence, become the voluntary compliance of reason, affection, and a sense of duty.

Sober *judgment*, and the strictest *equity*, must be added. These qualities are necessary both in the formation of rules for the government and direction of the scholars, and in the application of them to the cases of individuals. Whatever rules are formed, should be founded on propriety so evident, that the young persons themselves may understand and acknowledge it; and, remembering that the great object of government is the good of the subjects, they should be adopted, not with a view to the teacher's own convenience, but the welfare of his pupils. In these rules, there should be no appearance of whim or caprice; no vexatious niceties, and harassing prohibitions which abridge liberty without

any adequate end, nor multiplied observances, which are difficult to be practised, sometimes to be remembered. When simple, founded on propriety, and easy of observance, the young acquiesce in them with cheerfulness, and submit to them without difficulty. Nor let any man think it beneath his situation to explain the reasons on which he acts. The discernment of the young, especially on subjects connected with their interests, is much more acute than men are generally aware of; and no mean of producing obedience and order is so important as to bring the judgment and conscience of the subjects to the side of their ruler. Rules when established, should not be frequently or suddenly changed. Frequent and sudden changes destroy the beneficial effect of habit and custom on the scholar; and convey the idea of inconsiderateness or volatility, both in their adoption and their alteration. In all rules, it is of the first importance, that the interest of every class of scholars be impartially considered. The very appearance of partiality to rank and wealth, is most destructive. It destroys esteem and reverence; it excites deep and heartfelt indignation; and it renders obedience an extorted, sullen, and reluctant service. Need I add, that it produces the most fatal effects on the young persons themselves who seem to be preferred.

I speak not only of the ill-will which it generates towards them in their fellow-students, but of its effects on their own characters ; the pride, the vanity, the insolence, which it engenders and fosters—those enemies of human happiness, those vipers, which, while they destroy the comfort and peace of others, gnaw the vitals of the unhappy individuals who have cherished them in their bosoms.

Among the rules for the government of the young, none require more the exercise of sound judgment and discretion than those which relate to rewards and punishments. Upon this subject much has been written, and by very different descriptions of persons. With many good observations a great deal of folly, and perhaps mischievous absurdity, has been mingled ; nor would it be easy to ascertain whether the romantic and finely-wrought theories of some, or the low and coarse ideas of others, are most productive of evil. It is probable that plain practical good sense, guided by a simple and upright mind, accommodating its determinations to circumstances and to characters, will form much wiser rules, and lead to much wiser conduct, than either very refined or opiose theories. In general, I would observe, that the animating stimulants of praise and reward, should be most frequently employed as the means of

incitement to diligence and good conduct. The rewards, I conceive too, should be so contrived as to gratify the heart, and convey in themselves instruction. They should also, as much as possible, be removed from ostentation and the incitements to vanity. But both the young and the old require to be restrained, as well as stimulated. There are some persons in whom the desire of praise is too strong; and there are some in whom it is so weak, that the motives addressed to it have little power. Fear is also a natural principle; and to avoid pain or disgrace, is a rational motive for human conduct. Such principles are addressed, and such motives employed in all governments; and it seems to me extremely absurd, to suppose that they are not proper in the government of the young. But while punishments are allowed to be necessary, it is still to be considered what are the kind of punishments which ought to be inflicted. The determination of this must depend greatly on the temper and habits of the offenders; and a teacher has it in his power, more than any other judge, to vary and to accommodate his conduct to circumstances, and yet to preserve, not only the reality, but the appearance of impartiality. But I will venture to affirm, that it is wrong to ad-

dress one principle in human nature, to the exclusion of others. In the punishments of children, as well as in those of maturer years, all the various principles of the human mind may be employed with success. Those persons who argue for the punishment exclusively of shame, should recollect that shame is a feeling which requires much delicacy of treatment; that it is easily lost, and when lost, not easily revived: they should recollect that frequent punishments of this kind, tend directly to lessen its power, harden the young to disgrace, and destroy the sense of character. Whether a little temporary pain, when it will serve the purpose, or occasional deprivation of some accustomed pleasure, would not often be more safe, deserves their consideration. If they conceive that such punishments break the spirit of the young, they should consider that indignity and contempt will do it still more. Both are useful, and should be occasionally employed. It is from an injudicious application of them, or an excess of severity, that danger is to be apprehended, and not from the principle of either. I have only to observe farther, that punishments ought to produce their effect speedily, nor continue long to divert the attention of the society, or of the offender, from

their proper business : and, finally, that they should be of a nature which will not injure the health and dispositions of the youthful culprit ; still less blunt the sensibility and deprave the character of those who are spectators.

But the strictest impartiality is not only necessary in the formation of rules, and modes of management, it is especially necessary in their application to individuals. Many temptations to partiality must frequently arise ; and it often requires a strong sense of justice to resist them. It is natural to seek the favour of the wealthy. There is a flattery in the attention of persons distinguished by their influence in society. The interest of a teacher is often directly affected either by their friendship or their hostility. Even pecuniary considerations, without a strict and stern guard upon his feelings, may lead to a dangerous bias. Attachment to acquaintances, friends, and benefactors, produces also a temptation to unjust preferences. And the various characters and talents, manners and behaviour, of young persons, must excite a corresponding difference of esteem and attachment in the mind of their teacher. These sentiments, sometimes just and natural in themselves, and leading often with propriety to a difference of conduct, must often present temptations to favour,

on occasions, where justice only should appear. Temptations arise in every condition of human life ; but when they are resisted, they display, in a brighter light, genuine excellence of character ; they likewise strengthen principle, by the constant care and vigorous exertions which they call forth, and, in the gracious providence of God, are thus changed into ministers of good.

In no societies does *favouritism* produce more ruinous effects than in those of the young. It leads the favoured pupils to look for distinction from other causes than their own exertions ; it inspires them with undue opinions of themselves, and contempt of others ; and it renders them the objects of jealousy and ill-will to their youthful associates. The desire of excellence, in those who experience neglect, is discouraged ; their spirits are broken by a sense of injury ; even the fair opportunity of improvement is not given them. The idle, on the other hand, instead of being stimulated to exertion, are left a prey to their fatal dispositions ; and, abandoned to themselves, sink lower in the scale of degradation, till they at length become hardened and regardless. The effect of these circumstances is not confined to the immediate loss of learning and of general improvement ; it extends its influence often to the

whole of life. The want of education is a great, and sometimes irremediable evil, which is felt in every period; yet great as is this evil, the habits acquired, and the dispositions fostered, through the negligence of an unjust and faithless teacher, are evils of greater magnitude and more extensive influence. Talents of the finest order are destroyed, and lost both to their possessor and to society; and those habits of idleness and disorder are formed and fostered, which it is one object of education to prevent or to remedy—habits which produce ruin to individuals, misery to families, and a great proportion of the evils and crimes which destroy the happiness of man on earth. Conduct which leads, in any degree, to such evils, is deeply criminal. Its guilt is increased by the good which is neglected, and might otherwise have been done; by the dishonesty of taking the stipulated remuneration, without performing the service; and finally, by the violation of a trust, the most important and dear which can be reposed by one human being in another.

Similar effects follow partiality and injustice in the application of rewards or punishments. Equity in these, while of importance to individuals, is essential to general order and submission. Nothing so much revolts the human mind as injustice. The

man who inflicts it, is viewed, not only without affection, but with indignation and abhorrence. Submission to him is resisted by every feeling; all connection with him is disagreeable, employment under him is hateful. Young persons, on this point, are especially jealous, and continually alive and watchful. It does not satisfy them that punishments are deserved, unless they be inflicted impartially. Only those who have had the opportunity of observation, can know with what nicety they weigh every circumstance, and with what acuteness they often judge and determine. Hence, punishments which, when equitably administered, would produce order and discipline without any diminution of regard, when unjustly and partially administered, awaken the highest indignation, and lead to discontent and disorder, sometimes to resistance.

Finally, a teacher, in order to preserve attention and good discipline among his pupils, must possess the habits of *self-command, steadiness, and order*. These are important in every condition of human life; but they are especially necessary in the education and government of the young. Their importance to a teacher may be illustrated in the conduct of parents. How many instances are presented of persons possessing good sense, good principles, and

just notions, who, from a deficiency in the habits of self-command, steadiness, and order, destroy their own family comfort, and the future happiness of their offspring ! The most promising young persons will commit faults which require correction; and sometimes from heedlessness, obstinacy, or a strong propensity, repeat them with circumstances which merit high marks of displeasure. Sometimes also these will be committed at times, and on occasions, which aggravate the offence; and so unexpectedly, as to afford no opportunity for previous preparation of mind. Hence the parent, who has not accustomed himself to restrain sudden feeling, will often act under the influence of passion. He employs improper language to his child, and he punishes with undue severity. No man was ever seen under the influence of passion, who did not lose by it a portion of respect and confidence. The child, while he contemplates his parent with diminished reverence, feels also resentment for the undue severity of his treatment. And, not unfrequently, the unhappy parent, when passion has subsided, under the returning power of affection, humbles himself to court reconciliation with his child, and to acknowledge himself to be the offender. Others there are, who, from a mixture of inconsiderateness and impatience

of temper, are continually reprov-
 ing, threatening,
 and scolding their children ; but either their threat-
 enings are so extravagant that they cannot be exe-
 cuted, or their minds so unsteady and disorderly,
 that, having given vent to their passion in words,
 they are at no pains to enforce obedience. Children
 soon estimate such conduct, and disregard authority
 so foolishly exercised. They follow their pursuits,
 smiling at their parent's weakness ; or sharpened by
 frequent irritation, they return insolence for reproof.
 But there is equal danger from the extreme indul-
 gence of more amiable feelings ; nay, great softness
 of temper, or strong and unrestrained compassion,
 leads often to more severe and frequent punishment,
 than a regular discipline and judicious restraint.
 " A parent," says Dr. Witherspoon, who was a very
 acute observer of human life, " that has once ob-
 tained and knows how to preserve authority, will do
 more by a look of displeasure, than another by the
 most passionate words, and even blows. It holds
 universally in families and schools, and even the
 greater bodies of men, the army and navy, that those
 who keep the strictest discipline give the fewest
 strokes. The reason is plain. Children, by foolish
 indulgence, become often so forward and petulant in
 their tempers, that they provoke their easy parents

past all endurance, so that they are obliged, if not to strike, at least to scold them in a manner as little to their own credit as their children's profit." It is to be observed also, that children, even at a very early age, discover the weakness of those who have the charge of them. "I think," says the same author, "I have observed a child, in treaty or expostulation, discover more consummate policy at seven years of age, than the parent himself, even when attempting to cajole him with artful evasions and specious promises." Children also soon become perfected in the art of overcoming such parents, and literally bring them under continual subjection to their caprices and passions.

These observations show the importance of self-command, steadiness, and order, in the management of the young; especially in those circumstances which call forth anger or compassion. But such qualities are also, on other accounts, of great importance to a teacher. In all branches of education, from the lowest to the highest, temptations will occur to distract the teacher as well as the scholar, from the objects which should engage his attention. Some men have a natural volatility which with difficulty can be long confined to one course, and within prescribed rules. Favourite objects in literature

and science, when they occur, engage too strongly the attention of others, and their private taste is indulged without considering the benefit of their pupils. Even the vanity of displaying attainments in which they excel, may influence both the nature and the plan of their instructions. From these and other causes, the proper objects which a teacher should pursue, may be sometimes neglected; nay, the plan which he has formed for himself, and the rules he has appointed for his pupils, may be often disregarded, or inconsistently pursued. The scholars are taught irregularity from the example of their teacher. Numbers are left in idleness for the sake of a few; or instruction is communicated in a manner unsuited to their capacities. Sometimes tasks are prescribed, and the execution of them not demanded, or not demanded at the appointed period. One day is passed in doing little, and another is burdened with a double proportion of labour. Hence the scholar loses confidence in his teacher, and ceases to rely on his declarations. Irregularity of employment injures the desire and habit of application. The idle shelter themselves under the hope that they will pass this day unnoticed. The diligent are dispirited sometimes by disappointment,

and sometimes by tasks beyond their strength. The pleasure of regular and easy employment is destroyed, and even a distaste for their studies is created. If among such young persons an external decency be maintained, it is but the decency of silent fear. The discipline of regular application, orderly preparation, active and persevering exertions, extends only to a few. The great mass are without spirit and the ambition of excellence, waste their hours in comparative idleness, and rouse themselves only to such trifling efforts, as, with the assistance of occasional duplicity and art, may secure them from some heavy punishments.

To prevent such evils, a Teacher must present, in the exercise of his professional duties, an example of order. He must deny the gratification of his inclination and taste, when they interfere with the benefit of his pupils; he must adhere steadily to the rules and appointments which he has himself made; he must fulfil every promise which he gives, every declaration which he makes, and every expectation which he awakens.

III. The Qualifications of a Teacher should be considered with a view to the general improve-

ment of the CHARACTER AND HABITS of his pupils.

From whatever tends to pervert the understanding and principles, to corrupt the mind, encourage evil propensities, lead to idle, mean, or criminal habits—every man who has in him any fear of God, any love of his fellow-creatures, any feeling of humanity and compassion, will seek to preserve the inexperienced, erring, and susceptible minds of the young : while the formation and the culture of good principles, good dispositions, and general excellence in mind and in character, will be with him an object of earnest and habitual desire. Under the influence of such views, judicious parents endeavour to procure for their children the benefit of the society, example, conversation, and good offices of wise and good men; and with affectionate care to preserve them from the influence of the unprincipled and profligate. Anxious for the future welfare of their children, they endeavour to guard them even from the impressions of the weak and foolish ; from the false notions of the ignorant, as well as the perversions of the corrupt ; from every influence of imagination, or cast of temper and of manners, which in any degree would injure their respectability, usefulness, and future comfort.

With what seriousness, then, should parents consider the character of him who is destined to be the instructor of their children; with whom a great portion of their time must be passed; to whom they must be encouraged to look with reverence; and to whom so many opportunities, from the nature of his office, must be afforded of either injuring or improving them! The character of a teacher even of arts the most mechanical, is, in this view, of importance. His example and conversation must often produce a good or evil influence on the minds of his pupils. The mode of his instruction in the art which he professes, will often affect their character. The judgment and discretion which he manifests, will influence their understanding; and when his mind is stored with useful truth, and animated by the feelings of piety and benevolence, he will find frequent opportunities to communicate much important admonition and valuable knowledge. What, then, must be the influence, and how important the qualifications of that teacher, who is connected with those branches of education which directly present intellectual, moral, and religious ideas to the mind; which not only furnish natural and easy opportunities for illustrating and enforcing them, but lead him to consider and to dwell amongst them almost from

necessity ! To such a teacher it peculiarly belongs, not merely to teach the branch which he immediately professes, but to promote the great objects of a good education—the improvement of the understanding, dispositions, and habits of his pupils. To such a teacher it peculiarly belongs, to know and to dread the general dangers and temptations of youth : and as far as his influence and opportunities extend, if he has the proper spirit of a teacher or a man, he will endeavour, with the anxiety of a parent, to preserve them from becoming their victims.

Besides more direct opportunities, incidental occasions are continually afforded to such a teacher, from the books which are read, from the exercises which are employed, and from the various occurrences which among young persons must frequently take place, for communicating useful knowledge, and teaching and impressing important lessons of human life. Even the passing hints which he gives will often make deep and salutary impressions, furnish materials for reflection, and contribute to awaken purposes, and give a bias to the temper, of the greatest moment to the welfare and future character of the scholar. The employments and discipline in a seminary of learning, become thus a course of moral

education, in which what is improper is corrected, what is good is encouraged, evil habits are broken, good habits formed and perfected. To effect these objects in the most limited degree, a teacher must not only possess that affectionate zeal to promote the welfare of his pupils which we have mentioned, but *a degree of general knowledge and talent* reaching greatly beyond the mere art which he professes; some acquaintance with human life, and its various conditions; some discernment of the different springs of human action, and of the manner by which they are to be roused and directed; some power, as well as opportunity, of accommodating himself to that variety of endowment, disposition, and condition, which must be frequently presented to him in the course of his labours.

With these important qualifications must be joined a *just judgment and sober mind*. “This I pray,” says the Apostle, “that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.” The ignorant are often forward and presumptuous; they engage in undertakings for which they are unqualified, mislead persons

ignorant like themselves into dangerous errors, and sometimes by their folly bring suspicion and discredit, often ridicule, on the best designs. When to ignorance are joined vanity and ostentation, the young are exposed to evils whose effects may never be remedied; and folly joins with infidelity, to bring religious and moral instructions into disrepute. But even knowledge may be joined with a weak understanding; and frequent instances have appeared of men possessing extensive and various information, who have seemed incapable of forming just judgments on the subjects with which they were familiar: who did not separate the wheat from the chaff, the true from the false, the silly from the useful, the trivial from the momentous: who held all in their mind unclassed and unarranged, and apparently in the same place and importance. There are also instances of men, not void of knowledge, who have little sense of the suitableness and propriety of times and places. Their instructions are not only unsuitable, but often foolish and ridiculous, not unfrequently deserving of a still severer reproach. Knowledge too, it is to be remembered, sometimes puffeth up, while charity edifieth. The judgment may in many cases be good, but it may not be consulted;

or it may be biassed by the predominance of vanity. In the desire of display, the teacher considers not the character of his pupils, nor the proper object of his instructions. The instruction may be in itself good; but it applies not to his auditors; or it is above their comprehension, and confounds them. Or it is not given in the proper place and season; and whether they hear it with impatience or with interest, it interferes with their proper duties. And, alas! how many instances are there of men whose judgments are enslaved by some dangerous bias and disease of the soul; of men, who, on ordinary occasions, manifest acute discernment and high genius, who are the victims of caprice and of whims; who entertain opinions which would disgrace children; who with the justest notions and the most excellent dispositions, mingle weaknesses and follies which render their influence and good endeavours abortive, and sometimes pernicious. The fatal effects of such weaknesses are peculiarly felt when mingled with the instructions of a teacher, or connected with the example which he presents before his pupils.

The most useful lessons, when connected with folly, receive little regard, or lose their beneficial qua-

lities in the mixtures with which they are accompanied. The most important truths become associated in the mind with childish and extravagant ideas, and are thus contemplated through life, not only with indifference, but with prejudice. Or, sometimes, the weaknesses and fancies of the teacher take possession of the minds of the scholars, mislead their understandings, pervert their taste and imagination, and in various ways injure their future usefulness and comfort. A sound and discriminating judgment, a temper free from the predominances of vanity, or the eccentricities of an undisciplined and disordered fancy, are of the first importance in communicating instruction to the young. The good which a judicious teacher, of simplicity and sincerity of mind, may do, is incalculable: on the other hand, language cannot paint too strongly the evils to which those young persons are exposed, who are placed under the direction of a teacher who is ignorant or weak, or who is urged on by vanity, or who is misled by a diseased imagination.

I add farther, that a well-qualified teacher must possess *just views respecting the great principles of faith and duty*. There are many points connected with religion, concerning which Christians,

of the same general sentiments, have unhappily fallen into parties and divisions. With such points it would not only be unnecessary, but, in general, improper to distract and embarrass the minds of the young. A teacher, therefore, though he may differ from us on such subjects, if he maintains with us the same great principles, may often with justice receive our confidence. But if he either denies those truths which we deem of high importance to the best interests of youth, and of the world; or if he holds them in connection with opinions which are false and dangerous, or weak and foolish, and fitted to bring religion into ridicule; then in proportion to our ideas of the importance of those truths, on the one hand, which he denies, or of the mischief of those opinions, on the other, which he maintains, it becomes our duty to refuse committing to his charge the precious interests of the young. Let not this be called illiberal and bigotted. Every man who maintains, *in any degree*, the importance of moral and religious principles in a teacher, must maintain the same opinion in some form, and with respect to some truths. You may differ as to the nature of the principles, but still you must hold this opinion in regard to those which you yourself conceive to be ei-

ther important on the one hand, or dangerous on the other. If you do not believe in the importance of those truths which we believe important, you may act consistently in not requiring a belief of them in the teacher of your children: but if we believe the dearest interests, not only of children, but of society and mankind, to be interested in them, then you ought to acknowledge, that it is to us one of the first duties, to which we are called by a regard to the will of God, the helpless charge intrusted to our care, and the general interests of humanity, to see that a just estimation and regard be paid to them, by those to whom the charge of youth are entrusted. Sound and just principles, unless maintained, will not be taught nor enforced. All the natural opportunities for inculcating them will be neglected. Nay, those opportunities, and that access which is given to the youthful mind, will be employed often in perverting, undermining, and poisoning its principles. It is in vain to say that men who hold dangerous principles will engage not to introduce them. In the first place, it is obvious that the good which a teacher ought to do, will, in this case, not be done: but this is not the worst effect of his principles—whenever the truths which he denies oc-

cur, he will manifest his dislike of them; while he will be in danger of inculcating, on every opportunity which is given, the false ideas which he entertains in religion and morals. Even when no direct instructions are given on religion and virtue, opportunities are continually arising for allusion to such subjects; and few branches of education are so remote as not in some way to bring them forward. What then must be the case in those branches of education, where a page cannot be opened, an idea cannot be presented, which does not, either directly or more remotely, lead to something connected with religious and moral sentiment? These subjects are so interwoven with every thing in human life, that even if we were so absurd as to wish to avoid them, they must come forward to the attention. And in what manner they are to be treated, when thus brought forward, is a matter of most serious consideration. It is for parents to consider whether they desire their children to be favourably disposed to what is good, or to be prejudiced against it. When a teacher possesses bad principles, he must show them on such occasions. He cannot be neutral. His manner, his coldness, his silence, conveys a prejudice. But will he be always silent? will his

manner be merely cold? Even when such is his wish, will not looks and tones express a meaning, convey ridicule, insinuate prejudice, bring into disrepute? And will the matter rest there? What security, in a concern of this importance, can you receive that no direct advantage will be taken to instil prejudices, to mislead and to pervert? No direct inculcation of doctrines which are mischievous and dangerous! No direct inculcation of doctrines which unhinge the very foundations of human society, destroy all moral obligation, and train up a race of youth to infidelity, to disorder, and to profligacy!

The same reasons render it of high importance that a teacher be of *pure morals and of a religious spirit*. In vain are a man's principles good unless he feel their power, act and speak under their influence. Little good will that man do, little of the spirit of religion and virtue will that man communicate, whose heart is not touched with their power, who feels not their importance. He neither will embrace the opportunities of usefulness, nor will he be able to improve the opportunity, if it were attempted. His character must appear; his indifference, his views, his ruling propensities and habits,

to which principle is sacrificed. And how dreadful the thought that the young should be associated with a vicious man ; not only associated, but placed under his superintendence and authority ! Will his duty be performed ; or performed with fidelity ? Will his depraved habits not influence his instructions, his conversation, his manners ? And is there no effect produced by example, not only in the direct exercise of official duties, but by his general character and conduct ? Is it nothing that the man whom the young are taught to respect, to associate with ideas of wisdom and regard, whom they have frequently in their thoughts, whose character and actions are often the subjects of their conversation—that such a man gives an example of folly, of irreligion, or of profligacy ; that he should be observed to be a despiser of every thing sacred ; that he should set decency at defiance ; that he should deal in oaths and profanity, in filthiness and foolish talking, and jesting which is not convenient ; or, finally, that he should be the companion of the idle and licentious, a haunter of taverns, perhaps besotted with intemperance ? Can we maintain that such persons, whatever be the branch of education which they teach, are fit associates for youth ; fit to be entrusted with access to

their youthful minds, or to be honoured with holding in their thoughts and affections the high place of their instructors? A religious spirit and exemplary conduct are of the highest moment in the teachers of youth. And in the proportion that we estimate highly the blessings of those teachers who have been the benefactors of their country, should we mark with our displeasure and indignation, every departure from even the decencies of a profession so important.

An immoral teacher, like an immoral clergyman, is among the worst and most dangerous of vicious characters; and fallen must be the tone of public morals when any of them can be contemplated with indifference. It is a false policy, and a false respect for such professions, which seeks to screen such men from the public odium which they merit. The interests of their order, its purity and honour, above all, the best interests of society, require that they be excluded from that situation which they disgrace; nor be permitted to retain the power of abusing that mighty influence which, from their office, they enjoy. “Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men!”

These considerations apply with a force, proportioned to the closeness of the relation which subsists betwixt the teacher and his pupils. Teachers who have the special care as well as instruction of youth, who live with young persons, or who receive them into their families, and profess to supply to them the place of parents and guardians, must possess an influence beyond others, over the characters and conduct of their pupils. How important is the selection of such teachers—how necessary is it not only to inquire after their talents, but their character, principles, and modes of life! And how deeply criminal is the unfaithfulness of such men! Even the careless discharge of such a trust is most flagrant. It is a cruel abuse of confidence, and neglect of most sacred duties; it is dishonesty of the worst order; it is to take the price, and to neglect the engagement, to deceive by false professions, and in a business of the first importance: it is insensibility not only to religious and moral principle, but to the feelings of humanity; a selfish indifference, which seeks its own ease and advantage, or the gratification of its own passions, at the expense of duty, and the dearest interests of others. What then shall we say of tutors and guardians of youth, who not only ne-

glect, but positively violate their engagements : who not only give to the young an example of irreligion, but encourage them to contemn the most sacred institutions, directly instil infidelity into their youthful minds, treat religion with ridicule, and shake the foundations of ordinary morals : who give up the young, as a matter of course, to disorder and vice, and accustom them to consider profligate pursuits with indifference : who expose them to temptations, from which they should have sought to preserve them ; lead them into the society of the profane and the licentious ; corrupt and inflame their minds by loose conversation, and at a time of life of all others the most dangerous, prepare them for throwing off restraint, and plunging into all the misery and disgrace of dissipation and profligacy ! Yet have not such tutors and such teachers of youth been seen—seen, on account of some superficial talents, basking in prosperity ; enjoying a temporary popularity amongst deluded parents, who, connecting superiority with distance of place or difference of country, disregarding what is valuable because easily attained, and dazzled by the false brilliancy and mock glare of artificial ornaments, have, with incredible infatuation, sacrificed to vanity the Lord,

dearest objects of their affection? Too late in the ruin of their offspring they perceive and lament their folly. "In that room," said an unfortunate father, "lies my only son. He left me lively and spirited, ambitious of excellence, and promising to realize the fondest hopes of a parent. I sent him from me to a teacher noted for talents, but whose principles I knew not, alas! did not seek to know. He returned to me idle and dissolute, his health gone, his principles perverted and debased. The feelings and affections of better days are indeed beginning to return, and this is my only comfort: but his days on earth are fast passing away. I have lost my all. While he who deceived *me* and corrupted *him*, is proceeding unchecked in his career, and daily adding to the number of ruined youths and wretched parents."

These are serious considerations both to parents and to teachers. A great account has to be rendered. And if they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever; what shall become of him who "soweth iniquity," and causeth the young "to err from the words of knowledge!" "Woe unto the world," said our

Lord, "because of offences ! for it must needs be that offences come ; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh !"

The qualifications which I have illustrated as necessary in the teachers of youth are various, and many of them not easy of attainment. The same degree of excellence is not to be expected in every man, but if the views which have been presented be just, some portion of them every man should possess, who enters on this important profession ; and a higher and increasing degree of them every man should daily aspire after, who desires sincerely to discharge his duty. In every situation it becomes us, with respect to any branch of character and conduct, to acknowledge with humility that "we count not ourselves to have apprehended ;" but it also becomes us, with watchfulness and prayer, self-examination, diligence and perseverance, to be continually "pressing forward."

Respecting the teachers of those young persons now under our inspection, it gives me unfeigned pleasure to be able to state, that their conduct is marked with propriety, and distinguished for attention, not only to those branches of learning which they teach, but to all the best interests of their pu-

pils. Proceed in your virtuous and honourable course. Hold ever high the duties of your important trust, and the character which you are called to maintain. Continue to give an example of diligence, activity, faithfulness, and Christian conduct. Thus will you be the means of promoting the honour of God, and the happiness and improvement of men; thus will you be objects of regard, not only to those who are immediately benefited by your labours, but to all whose good opinion should be an object of desire.

The subject which we have considered affords important lessons not only to the teachers of youth, but to parents and guardians, and superintendents of the seminaries of education. If you desire to promote the interests of the young, you will select for them teachers possessed of the qualifications necessary to instruct them. The young are entrusted to your care; an important trust! and for which you are accountable—a trust, on the faithful execution of which depends your own happiness as well as theirs; the happiness of your fellow-creatures to an incalculable extent, and reaching through many generations. Act under a deep sense of its importance and of your great responsibility. Exert yourselves to discover teachers qualified for their office;

and when you have reason to distrust your own judgment, seek the advice of those who are able to assist you. Let a good education for the young entrusted to your affections be only an object of serious concern, of virtuous ambition, and of conscientious thought, and the means will not be wanting to distinguish betwixt the skilful and the ignorant, the judicious and the weak, the unprincipled and the good. Let your own superintendence and instruction be added to those of their teachers. You also are teachers of youth; and zealously and anxiously should you seek to possess the qualifications necessary to the successful discharge of your duties. O! beware that you do not, by carelessness and folly, irreligion and evil example, counteract the means which are employed for the benefit of your youthful charge.

A superintendence, both of a public and a local nature, is, in many instances, appointed over the schools of this kingdom. To the persons entrusted with this charge, the election of a teacher, if the views which have been given be just, is a most important duty. It is a duty in the exercise of which men are called especially to act from public motives, unbiassed by interest, friendship, ill-will, or party-spirit. The same reasons should lead them to exercise a constant yet affectionate vigilance. Im-

portant interests are at stake, which it is the duty of every man, who possesses the opportunity, to watch over and to promote. The attention of wise and good men, judiciously directed, guards against neglect, and invigorates exertion; and while it stimulates the indolent and encourages the diligent scholar, it maintains and extends the reputation of a faithful teacher, strengthens his hands, and increases his influence. And who is insensible to approbation or blame? Who has not observed the kindling eye and animated countenance of youth, on the praise or friendly notice of those whom they regarded? or the retiring and downcast countenance, the reddening cheek and even dropping tear, under the disapproving look of a respected visitor? The good which we might do by even occasional words of friendship, the joy which we might often give, the exhilarating feelings, and the lively spirit which we might excite and diffuse, at little expense to ourselves either of labour or of time, should encourage us in our attention to the young, and render the superintendence of them a pleasing duty. There may be teachers who fear inspection, or from pride and vanity consider the idea of it as degrading. But a good teacher, who knows the value of incitement both to himself and his scholars, so far from

looking on your superintendence with a proud and jealous eye, will court your attention ; and while he counts not himself to be already perfect, will value and seek your approbation.

It must be obvious, however, that such a superintendence, even by persons the best qualified for the duty, must be conducted with much delicacy and discretion. A jealous, meddling, inquisitorial interference, would be destructive both of the peace and usefulness of a teacher. It is also inconsistent with that confidence and that respect which is due to his character and situation. Advice, when it seems necessary, should be conveyed with the manner, not of a master, but of a friend. The animating incitements of kindness, and the persuasive influence of affection, should be chiefly employed when evils are to be prevented or remedied. The reproof of a friend is sometimes necessary to all of us ; but the duty is difficult ; should be performed with caution, with Christian gentleness and humility, in a manner calculated not to hurt the feelings more than the occasion requires, still less to injure that usefulness which it is our object to promote.

The rash and frequent interference of parents with the teachers of their children, is also much to be deprecated. Can the generality of parents, in

reality, suppose that they are fit to direct teachers to the best methods of instruction? Or can they suppose that the general rules of a seminary of education are to be suspended or modified to meet their ideas, to gratify their humours, perhaps the humours of their children? Or is a teacher to be harassed on account of every complaint of an ignorant and forward pupil? Is no confidence to be placed in his judgment and his prudence, his knowledge, his talents, his experience? And should parents forget the prejudices and passions, the partialities of both young and old to themselves, the imperfect stories, and even falsehoods, which on such occasions are to be feared; finally, the danger of encouraging in the young a disposition to complain of their superiors, and the fatal consequences which must result to the public interest, if the authority of teachers in this manner be diminished? What then must be thought of the conduct of those parents who not only are guilty of frequent and vexatious interferences, but permit themselves to be led away, sometimes without inquiry, by passion; and behave with insolence and violence to teachers, even in the presence of their scholars? Do such men consider what teachers are; the nature of their office, the situation which they hold, the various and difficult qualifications

which they must possess, the importance of their profession, and the respect which is due to it? Qualities such as those we have been considering, entitle the individual who possesses them, on his own account, to respect. The public interest requires that his office should be held high in estimation; that able men be encouraged by such estimation to dedicate to it their time and their talents; and that the young be taught habitually to reverence the man who discharges to them duties so important. Let parents beware of *false teachers*; let them seriously consider the talents, the principles, and the character, of those to whom they commit the education of their children; but let them also learn to value highly those estimable men, whose qualifications have fitted them for the important task.

Respecting one order of teachers, the tutors in private families, this admonition seems to be peculiarly requisite. I am not insensible to the errors which young persons in this situation are in danger of committing. There may be some young men petulant and presumptuous, who estimate too highly the respect due to scholastic attainments, and who conceive themselves to be more highly gifted in these attainments than they are. There may be some too of a haughty and jealous temper; who ob-

serve every action, and word, and look, of those around them with suspicion, disquiet themselves and others with imaginary slights, exact an unreasonable attention, never become naturalised, as it were, in the society among which they live, continue to expect the inconvenient formalities of a stranger, and do not submit with cheerfulness to those rules which the superintendence and instruction of the young necessarily require. These are disagreeable inmates. And if, after a due exercise of forbearance, such mild and affectionate means as ought to subdue their stubborn natures, have been employed in vain; every master of a family owes it to himself and to his domestic comfort, to dissolve his connection with persons so unfit for their situation. But permit me also to observe, that many of those errors are occasioned by the conduct of parents themselves to the tutors of their children. Irritable feelings have been first awakened, and jealousies excited by improper and unmannerly treatment; and suspicions once awakened, are not soon or easily laid. Some allowance also should be made for circumstances; some tenderness should be felt for a stranger, for youthful feelings and inexperience, for those fears of neglect, which the conduct of many families gives tutors too much reason to entertain. Young

men are, in general, sensible to kind attention, grateful for advice when affectionately communicated, and disposed to follow regulations justly formed and properly explained. And who is better entitled to respect and kind attention, than the person whom you have chosen to be the instructor, counselor, and guide of your children? What office is more important than his; what qualifications more deserving of esteem; what duties more deeply interesting to the welfare of yourselves and your offspring? Words cannot express the injustice and the cruelty, the folly and absurdity, of appearing to undervalue men who have received voluntarily from yourselves a trust so important. I speak not of direct acts of injury and insult, for these would probably not be submitted to, but of that cold superciliousness and pointed neglect which cannot be noticed, yet which every man feels. There is no man admitted to the society and table of another, whatever be his condition in life, who is not entitled, by the rights of our common nature, to meet with kind and hospitable attention. But an instructor of youth, if indeed qualified for his duty, is, from the nature of his office, I maintain, on a footing of equality, in the strictest sense of the expression, with any member of your family of *similar age and experience*. Differences of rank

may justly arise from various causes, which, when they presume not too far, every man of sense will allow ; yet let it not be forgotten that the interests of society, and the rules of every well-ordered state, have also connected distinction, on grounds the least of all questionable, with those situations which require the possession of knowledge, talents, and virtue, in the men who hold them. Examine the claims on which superiority is founded, and you will find, whether you consider the importance of the office and its duties, or the talents, the learning, and the character necessary to its discharge, that few young persons can enter your roof, and become inmates of your family, who can on solid grounds be considered as the superiors of an instructor possessing the accomplishments of his office. And is it wise, is it prudent, instead of engaging affection by kindness, to repel by pride, to wound by neglect, to exasperate by superciliousness, the persons who have in their power the means of so much evil or good ? Or is it wise and prudent to destroy their authority, to counteract all their efforts and instructions, by teaching your children to undervalue them ? If they are imprudent, admonish them with friendship ; if they are unqualified, commit not to them a charge so important. But when their qualifications, and

character, and conduct, are suited to their trust ; justice, honour, prudence, regard to the best interests of your family, require, that they receive from you habitual respect and unaffected friendship.

May teachers and scholars, parents and children, unite in promoting each other's welfare, and with faithfulness fulfil their several duties ! May the love of God, and the love of one another, possess all your hearts, and animate all your actions ! “ And this, I pray, in the language of the Apostle, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment ; that ye may approve things that are excellent ; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”
AMEN.

NOTE.

THE first edition of the preceding discourse was accompanied with the following preface ; which, chiefly for the sake of one idea, is here reprinted.

“ There is a tendency in many, not duly to estimate the importance of the character and qualifications of a teacher of youth. This is, in various ways, most injurious, not only to teachers themselves, but to the public interest. It is from the high importance which the author attaches to the office of a teacher of youth, and to the fit and faithful discharge of it, that he has ventured to treat of this subject ; and he is persuaded that those of that respectable body who are most deserving of public confidence, will be the most ready to excuse the freedom with which it is considered.

“ The profits of the publication, if any shall arise, are dedicated to the support of a *Library for Wilson's Charity School*. This library was proposed last year, and some steps have been taken towards the formation of it. The object of it is to afford the perusal of useful and entertaining books to the young persons, in the first place, who attend the school, and next, to those who, after leaving the school, continue, by their good conduct, to deserve the countenance and approbation of the teacher. A few books have been procured by the aid of some private individuals. The funds of the charity being exhausted each year by its ordinary expenditure, can afford nothing for this good object.

“The author takes this opportunity respectfully to suggest, that, independently of pecuniary aid, many persons might greatly aid this infant establishment, by the donation of useful books for the young, *which their own families have already used, and no longer require. To how many useful purposes might this idea be extended! Numberless books which might be employed for the benefit of children, of servants, and of industrious families, are laid aside as useless. By a little attention in the selection and application of these, we might, at no expense to ourselves, greatly promote the intellectual, moral, and religious improvement of our fellow-creatures.*”

THE

CHARACTER AND CONDUCT BECOM-
ING MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL:

A Discourse delivered before the Synod of Glasgow
and Ayr, in 1796.

*“ Should such a man as I flee ? and who is there
“ that being as I am, would go into the temple
“ to save his life ? I will not go in.”*

NEH. vi. 11.

NEHEMIAH had been appointed governor of Judah, with authority to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, and to restore the laws and religion of his country. It was a work of much difficulty and danger. The city, the place of his fathers' sepulchres, lay waste, and the gates thereof were burned with fire. The remnant which were left of the captivity, were in great affliction and reproach. Many of the rulers and the people had become attached to the enemies of Judah and their customs. And powerful adversaries among the surrounding heathens, by artifice, and threatenings, and violence, opposed his

pious undertaking. But Nehemiah manifested an intrepidity and wisdom, mingled with a generosity and tenderness of sentiment, which became the sad scenes with which he was surrounded, and the importance and difficulty of the situation which he held. When the adversaries of his nation conspired all of them together to come to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder the rebuilding of its walls, then did he make his prayer unto God, and rose up and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, "Be not ye afraid of them; remember the Lord who is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses." And from the time that he was appointed to be governor in the land of Judah, neither he nor his brethren ate the bread of the governor: and, though there were at his table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, besides those that came unto him from among the heathen, yet for all this required he not the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon the people.

His enemies, baffled in their designs, endeavoured by treachery to ruin his reputation. Some of the chief men of the city pretending fear, and affecting a great

concern for his life, endeavoured to persuade him to fly and take refuge in the temple. But the courage of Nehemiah, and the high sense which he entertained of the conduct which became his character and situation, defeated their designs. He answered them in the spirited words of our text; and nobly felt and expressed the sentiments which became *such a man as he*. He felt that there was a spirit which was suited to his situation, a dignity and a conduct which became him, above others, to display. He felt that actions unworthy in other men, would be peculiarly unworthy in him. He felt that even actions which might be venial in some, would be in him without excuse; might lead to consequences of peculiar danger, manifest a want of those virtues which his situation required and tended to inspire, degrade his character, and destroy his authority. He rises above the insidious suggestion, and acts with *the spirit that became the important situation which he held*.

Applying the sentiment and feeling which are thus strikingly expressed to the occasion on which we are assembled; let us endeavour to illustrate, in the

First place, the CONNEXION betwixt the SITUATION and the CHARACTER and CONDUCT of men: and,

Secondly, some particulars which, under this view,

SHOULD DISTINGUISH THE MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL.

I. Vices and follies, it is of importance, in considering this subject, to observe, though in all persons the objects of disapprobation, admit of different degrees of guilt. A sinful action committed in circumstances which required deliberation, is more wicked than that which is done in a moment of forgetfulness: or, an action committed under circumstances calculated to raise feelings and views opposed to its commission, is much more blameworthy than when done under circumstances of strong temptation. The same conduct may be also aggravated by the addition of new motives and obligations. An act of fraud is sinful at all times and in every person; but the guilt of it may be increased not only by deliberation and the absence of strong inducement, but also by any peculiar evil foreseen to attend it; by the character of the person on whom it was committed; by combining with it cruelty to the unfortunate, breach of promise, violation of friendship and trust, ingratitude to a benefactor.

Similar considerations influence our judgments with respect to omissions of duty and deficiencies of character. Some situations dispose more strongly than others to the exercise of particular virtues,

awaken favouring feelings, and present in a more powerful manner the motives which should animate us. In such situations, the sense of duty is justly expected to operate more powerfully: if it does not thus operate, a stronger disapprobation is excited, and a greater deficiency of principle is presumed. In like manner, the performance of some duties may be bound upon men by a variety of different and distinct obligations. Compassion to a distressed object is the duty of every man who possesses the means of relief. But the duty may be increased both by favourable circumstances and by additional motives. It may be increased by an augmentation of fortune, which should open the heart and remove the opposition from self-love; by the experience of similar distress; or, by any circumstance which tends to soften the heart and dispose to sympathy. It may be increased by a promise to relieve, former acquaintance, relationship, gratitude, esteem.

The same observations apply to those actions which may be denominated the decencies of life. Though every kind of impropriety should be avoided, and every thing that is lovely in conduct pursued, yet the commission of the one and the neglect of the other, admit of different degrees of faultiness, and, in some circumstances, are peculiarly blame-

worthy. Nay, the good and evil, the fitness and unfitness, beauty and deformity, of some actions and kinds of behaviour, entirely depend on situation. Out of place, out of time, out of character, are ideas which every man understands and feels, and by which every man forms his judgment.

Apply these observations to particular offices and professions.

1. The duties of many situations require peculiar powers and habits both of body and of mind. When a man, therefore, enters on such situations, it is justly expected that he possesses and cultivates those necessary qualities. It is expected that they appear in the discharge of the immediate duties of his office; it is expected that they produce their natural effect on his general character and manners. If his conduct and deportment correspond with those qualities, he then appears to possess the character which he has assumed, and to be fitted for the discharge of the duties which he has undertaken; he fulfils the expectations which are formed of him, and presents a view of character and manners consistent with the situation which he occupies. If, on the other hand, these qualities do not appear in the exercise of his profession, he not only discharges his du-

ties unsuccessfully and unfaithfully, but manifests a general dishonesty and unworthiness of character. Nay, should even the general tone of our manners be inconsistent with the natural influence of those qualities which ought to predominate in our mind, we shall raise the suspicion that we possess not the requisites of character suited to our condition; that we fill unworthily our place, and hold a rank which does not belong to us; we shall act contrary to those principles which every motive of duty and honour call upon us to cultivate; and render our faults more glaring by the contrast; we shall fall from the honourable place in the public mind which our office had procured for us; and excite disappointment, pain, and general disapprobation.

2. The exercise of professional duties produces also an effect upon the dispositions and general temper.

That circumstances affect the character, is a common and just observation. The various objects and occurrences of human life excite feelings suited to them, and influence the imagination. A tendency to peculiar feelings and thoughts is thus given; and these, according as they predominate, give their colouring to all our views, manners, and pursuits. Now, peculiar circumstances of this kind attach themselves to every profession, and thus contribute to give a distinctive character to the various orders

of men. The faithful exercise of professional duties produces a similar effect. It has been observed, that the duties of some professions require peculiar talents and virtues. These, by being brought into frequent exercise, are cultivated and improved. An eminence in such endowments is thus obtained, and is justly expected. A peculiar character of mind is also acquired. The powers and feelings which are frequently called into exercise, acquire a superiority over other principles; easily and powerfully act; and diffuse a portion of their influence and expression over all our sentiments and actions; while they fit us for a more easy and successful discharge of the duties of our station. When men, therefore, want the character of their profession, they want that bias of mind and prevailing disposition which constitute an essential part of fitness for their duties; they manifest a singular untowardness of nature, a defect of proper feeling, and an insensibility to improvement, by which the natural effect of their circumstances and of their duties have been resisted or neglected; they show that those powers and feelings which enter essentially into the right discharge of their profession, have never been, in their proper power and frequency, exercised and cultivated; in other words, that their duties have not been faithfully and successfully performed.

3 Some professions and orders bring forward, with a peculiar degree of strength and frequency, the motives to particular virtues, and ought, therefore, to affect proportionably the character and conduct.

There are unfortunate situations where the motives to virtuous conduct are seldom presented, or are presented imperfectly, and for a moment; while other views and objects rapidly succeeding, banish them from the remembrance. But there are, also, situations which present fully, frequently, and with powerful energy, the motives to virtue; where every circumstance reminds us of our duty, points out to us our course, and, with a voice fitted to rouse every feeling to action, exhorts us to proceed. Such situations raise a just expectation of excellence, and must greatly aggravate the guilt and shamefulness of vice. Yet, with regard to particular virtues, is not this the case of many professions and orders in human life? Every surrounding circumstance brings forward, and impresses on the mind, the motives to that virtue which constitutes the peculiar requisite of our situation. Thus the separation of the soldier from the rest of his countrymen to duties in which courage is essentially requisite; the external badges of his order; the handling continually of arms, and

all the exercises of war; the conversation of his associates, and the marked disrespect to cowardice which he perpetually witnesses; above all, the situations of danger to which he is exposed, in which not only the principle is strenuously called forth, but the motives to it strongly and constantly presented—all these must tend to impress his mind habitually with a lively sense of the shamefulness of cowardice, and the glory of true courage; they must render him ever ready in the hour of danger to appear in the cause of his country, and give him, upon this point, a trembling sense of honour; they must justify men for connecting valour and intrepidity with his character, or for beholding any symptoms of pusillanimity with peculiar disdain.

These observations show that a particular description of character and conduct belongs to different orders of men. Some situations require men necessarily to possess, to exercise, and, on every occasion, to cultivate, particular virtues; they naturally dispose to them; they also present peculiar motives to their exercise, and every motive more constantly, and with greater fulness and power; they combine every circumstance which should give energy to such virtues, and turn the mind with abhorrence from the contrary vices. A deficiency in

these virtues, manifests thus a great indisposition and baseness of spirit; the commission of vice in such circumstances, a singular weakness of principle or strength of depravity.

The same observations apply to the manners and lesser actions of life. These have their particular character as well as the more important, and may be suitable or unsuitable to the dispositions which should predominate. Certain manners may be tolerated in one man which would be unsufferable in another; the character and circumstances of some men will palliate improprieties, which the character and circumstances of others will aggravate.

Nay, that behaviour which may be allowable in one man, may be thus, in another, unbecoming and improper. It may manifest in his circumstances an undue predominance of inferior principles, and a deficiency in those higher feelings which his situation tended to inspire. It may disagree with the sentiments of men respecting him, and destroy those agreeable and decent ideas which he should wish to have connected with his character. Many circumstances, also, it is to be remembered, may be associated with a man, which, though innocent, are offensive and degrading; nay, many actions performed by one man may excite ridicule and disgust,

which, performed by another, will excite only pleasing sensations.

II. Let us now apply these observations to the CHARACTER AND CONDUCT of the MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL.

The office of a minister requires certain qualifications and talents; it places men in circumstances favourable to the formation of particular dispositions and habits; it presents frequently and strongly the motives of religion; and it presents also motives peculiar to itself. Yes, my Reverend Fathers and Brethren, the qualifications of godliness and virtue, talents and learning, necessary to be possessed and cultivated by men of our order; our habitual employment in solemn exercises; the study of the scriptures; communicating religious knowledge; habitual direction of the mind to divine and moral objects; attention to the characters of men, and to the manner in which circumstances operate on the heart; the constant endeavour to improve and promote the spiritual interests of the people; the clear knowledge and the perpetual presence of the great motives to holiness; the separation from the business of life, and the peculiarity of our destination; finally, the great object which we are called

habitually to pursue, the advancement of the kingdom of heaven and the salvation of the human race; and this object bound still farther upon the conscience, and impressed upon the heart, by solemn vows and affecting solemnities—all conspire to add weight to the general obligations of religion, to affect the temper and the habits, to excite just expectation of eminence in particular virtues, and of a peculiar freedom from vices and follies; in fine, to distinguish in a certain degree our characters, our conduct, and our manners.

1. A minister of the gospel, when considered in this view, as in every other, ought eminently to be distinguished for SPOTLESSNESS OF LIFE.

Every follower of Jesus Christ is called to aspire after perfection; and, looking to the great Author and finisher of his faith, to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth most easily beset him. But a minister of the gospel has motives additional to those which he has in common with his fellow-christians. He makes a more open and particular declaration of his attachment to religion; he adopts a profession whose object requires a determined opposition to sin, and an ardent love of holiness; he engages daily in exercises which tend to awaken

holy affections, to elevate the soul, and give power to all the motives of virtue; he lives in circumstances which remove him from many temptations, strongly remind him of his duty, and call upon him by every principle of religion, of honour, and of interest, to keep himself unspotted from the world; like a city set on a hill, and considered as an object of imitation, he influences, to a great degree, the conduct of his fellow-creatures; and, finally, he has received a work from his Master to do, the success of which is of infinite magnitude; the faithful discharge of which is bound upon him by every tie of duty, of interest, and of affection, and which the purity of his conduct must either injure or advance.

Placed in such circumstances, every species of sin, and even of impropriety, is attended with uncommon aggravations. It is opposite to his declarations and vows, to the principles which he professes to possess and to cultivate, to the temper which his ordinary duties tend to form and maintain, to all the views which his circumstances bring forward to his mind: It is destitute of those palliations which men of the world might plead, and is committed in a situation the most favourable to hu-

man virtue; where temptations may be avoided with more than ordinary ease; where the motives to godliness are least counteracted and most fully understood; where every encouragement to holiness and discouragement to sin is afforded: It is committed, too, in opposition to that trust which he has received, and that object which he has solemnly undertaken to promote; that sacred trust which gives to him a more than ordinary influence, and that object which, of all others, is the most important and sublime; by advancing which, he advances the honour of God, and the highest interests of men; by injuring which, he extends the kingdom of darkness, and renders himself a cast-away.

And, with these circumstances of aggravation, how many other fatal evils does it involve; how many other painful sensations does it excite! It shakes the faith of men in our sincerity; it shakes their faith in the sincerity of our whole order: It destroys that pleasure and that confidence which, in all matters of importance, men naturally feel from having their opinions confirmed by those whose judgments they esteem: It associates painful ideas and feelings with all the exercises in which we preside; and excites, involuntarily, the most degrad-

ing comparisons betwixt us and our instructions: It destroys all those pleasing ideas which had been connected with us, not only from the general character of our order, but from beholding us frequently engaged in sacred exercises, from associating us with the Master whom we serve, and the duties which we perform, and from giving to us a portion of those great sentiments which we have been the means of inspiring. These natural expectations, these pleasing associations are broken. Every feeling is disappointed, and shocked. The spots in our life, contemplated with those sublime duties which we perform, appear more black by the contrast; and those circumstances, which would otherwise have shed a lustre around our characters, become the means of augmenting and perpetuating our disgrace. Respect for the ministerial character suffers. Religion itself is dishonoured. Occasion for triumph is afforded to the profligate: And the friends of piety are humbled.

And can such a man discharge with success the duties of his sacred office? Is it for a man guilty of immorality to teach, enforce, and promote the pure religion of Christ? Think for a moment of such men: let your thoughts dwell on any one of them,

while they pass in review before you, and say if they are fit to be ministers of Christ. Would men, for example, who indulge in surfeiting and drunkenness, sensuality and debauchery; in profane, vile, and licentious conversation; in disorderly and riotous living; noisy brawlers, idle gamblers, dishonest profligates: Would fraudulent and scheming worldlings; or men who deal in knavery and deceit, time-serving, lies and hypocrisy; or men who violate their trust, break their engagements, make false professions: Would men who indulge in bitter envying, spite, and ill-will, calumniating partizans, or unprincipled busy-bodies: Would the vain and the insolent who despise others, or the creeping and mean who flatter their vices: Would crafty and ambitious politicians, or turbulent and licentious demagogues; men who despise government, presumptuous and self-willed, who speak evil of the things that they understand not; or men who worship at the foot of greatness, sell their conscience for interest, and justify the wicked for reward: Would men, in fine, who prostitute their holy functions to the humours either of the high or the low, men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith, evil men and seducers, deceiving and being deceived—Would men of such characters, would men in any degree addicted

to such vices and crimes, or would men, who, though keeping within the bounds of law and public decency, shew no abhorrence of such crimes and vices, check not their progress, speak of them with indifference, treat them with levity—would such men be fit to be ministers of Jesus Christ, to bring sinners to repentance, to lead their fellow creatures to heaven, give examples to their flock, train them to Christian excellence, and promote the power of that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord? Is it for such men to fulfil even the temporal objects of their office—to promote the most ordinary degree of sobriety, honesty, and morals among the people—to check the progress of disorder, low vice, crimes, and licentious opinions—in any degree to advance the welfare of that community for whose sake they were appointed to the station which they hold? No: they are altogether unworthy, altogether unfit and disqualified for sacred functions. Instead of doing good they do evil: They ruin instead of maintaining the great objects to which they were set apart; and by every consideration, both of general and individual interest, both of time and eternity, they ought to be removed from that important office which they have forfeited and dishonoured.

Let no man deceive you with vain words, for be-

cause of these things cometh the wrath of God on the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. Such men are not only unworthy to be ministers of Christ, but as sure as the word of God is true, *they are not entitled to be considered as Christians.* In the language of an apostle, wherever, or in whatever station they are found, “they are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear; clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.” If we say that we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not: whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.

Nor let any man take offence at the supposition that such characters should rise up amongst the ministers of the gospel. Amongst all numerous bodies of men, unworthy persons must be expected to appear. And every man who is acquainted with human life,

and the history of men, must be convinced of the melancholy truth, that among ministers of all denominations, whether episcopalian, presbyterian, or independent, established or dissenting, men have been sometimes found who have disgraced, by gross immoralities, their sacred character. It is not by concealing the truth, or screening the offenders, or diminishing the odium of their guilt, that we are to maintain the honour of our order, and, which is of infinitely more importance, maintain the interests of religion. No : it is by manifesting a just abhorrence of immorality, in whatever person it appears, but especially in a minister of Christ ; it is by keeping ourselves at a distance from such sins, and the temptations which might lead to them ; it is by fulfilling with conscientious fidelity our public trust, and even while lamenting their fate, removing the immoral from the situation which they abuse. He that screens the guilty, not only sacrifices his honour and faith as a public judge, but becomes answerable for all the fatal and wide-spreading consequences on the temporal and eternal interests of men, which a worthless and dishonoured ministry must necessarily produce. To such cases may be justly applied the exhortation of the Apostle Paul—

“ Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. I wrote unto you in an epistle, not to keep company with fornicators; yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without, God judgeth. Therefore *put away from among yourselves that wicked person.*”

“ This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. But,” adds the Apostle, “ a bishop then must be *blameless.*” “ For our rejoicing is this,” he on another occasion observes, “ the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.”

2. A minister of Christ should be distinguished for habitual PIETY, and fearless ZEAL in maintaining the interests of the gospel.

A general esteem for Christianity will not qualify a man for accomplishing the great objects of a Christian minister, nor indeed entitle him to be denominated a follower of Christ. The great principles which relate to God and the kingdom of heaven, must predominate in the mind and life of a Christian. "To love the Lord our God with all our heart, is the first and great commandment; and if any man love father or mother more than me, said our Saviour, he is not worthy of me." These principles, however, even when supreme, must be expected to appear, in this state of imperfection, with different degrees of power and excellence. But where should we expect to observe them so pure and so ardent, as in him whose life is devoted to the immediate service of the gospel? Every circumstance in his situation combines to inspire this hope, to render natural and just this expectation.

Proficiency in every valuable attainment should bear some proportion to our opportunities of improvement. Every principle too is strengthened by exer-

cise. Love to God and the cause of Christ must thus be strengthened by the duties of a minister ; a pious temper must be cultivated ; a sense of religion impressed deeply upon the soul : or the dreadful supposition must be made, that he engages in sacred exercises with a mind insensible to devout feelings, and to those great truths which it is his duty to teach and to inculcate.

The objects, too, which are most frequently presented to the mind, have a natural effect on the character, and influence our sentiments. A man who is surrounded, as it were, with the great objects of religion ; who is called to present to his own mind and to the minds of others, its truths, in all their vast importance, sublimity, and extent—may surely be expected to see more of their excellence, to feel more of their power, than he who is surrounded with circumstances which distract the mind, and render the apprehension of them obscure and unsteady. In whom, then, should a sense of religion appear so constant, attachment to its truths so warm, zeal for its interests so lively, courage in its defence so unshaken, as in the man who is set apart to study its truths, to maintain its interests, to guard its honour ; the whole attention of whose mind, the whole

labours of whose life, are directed to promote its power?

A high degree of these principles is essential to the discharge of even the ordinary duties of our office. When the sense of religion is powerful, affectionate, and habitual; when the desire to advance the spiritual interests of men is ardent and predominant, how touching our devotions, how affecting our admonitions, how interesting to the hearts of our people all our labours! But, O! how great is the difference when these divine principles are feeble, and we feel only that general regard for religion of which none but the most profligate are insensible! Feeling ourselves, feebly and irregularly, the sentiments of devotion, how can we hope to give animation to the desires, and elevation to the views of our people? Feeling ourselves faintly the power of divine truth, how can we hope to give it power over the minds of other men? how can we hope to present it with that elevation of thought, those vivid images, that feeling expression, that strength, and energy, and weight of sentiment and language, which suit its momentous import, and which alone can awaken, and impress, and bring under its power, the minds of our people? No serious concern, no deep inte-

rest, no heart-touching affection will speak, to awaken, to engage, to impress, to persuade. Our desire to do good being feeble, will produce also a feeble influence on our general conduct : languid and inconstant in its operations, it will be interrupted by every trifle, overpowered by every difficulty. No habitual watchfulness over the spiritual interests of our people will be manifested ; no consideration of their character ; no adaptation of conduct to their cases and circumstances ; no study of means by which their sins may be counteracted, their graces enlivened, their knowledge increased. The daily and often unexpected duties of our profession, will be performed with dispositions and with a manner calculated little to assist devotion and comfort the heart ; alas ! perhaps so as to wound more deeply the wounded in spirit, and add new grief to the soul which had turned to us for consolation. Our example, instead of inviting our people to aspire after the perfection of Christ, will encourage negligence and a dangerous security ; check the ambition of excellence ; teach men to conceive lightly of spiritual attainments, and to satisfy themselves with a state far distant from Christian holiness ; alas ! perhaps will lull asleep the conscience, and every principle within

them, even while their hearts are dead in sin, and wholly *alienated* from the life of God. At length, indifference, sloth, and carelessness, pervade our temper and habits, and render every day the duties of our profession more irksome and severe. We learn to undervalue what we do not love; to speak with carelessness of what we neglect; to seek excuses for not performing what we can neglect with impunity, till our own conveniency and ease become the sole rule and measure of our labours.

If a deficiency in piety and zeal for the gospel be so fatal, what must be any tendency to irreverence? Disrespect to religion in any man is lamentable, but what must it be in a minister of Christ? No words can express the fatal consequences which it produces. Should he treat any divine truth or duty, but with levity; should he, in the gaiety of humour, apply but the language or the garb of religion to the purposes of folly—he acts contrary to those feelings which pervade every Christian's mind, and which in him should be especially powerful; displays an unseemly giddiness, a want of self-command and feeling of propriety; treats religion with disrespect, and by associating it with objects of levity, diminishes its sacred influence both on himself and all around him; awakens, finally, suspicion

of his own principles, and deeply injures his own respectability, while he wounds the feelings of the serious, and countenances the outrages of the profligate. But, O ! if ever a minister of the pure gospel of Jesus Christ should proceed farther, and give direct countenance to irreligion and sin : If, instead of maintaining by every wise and honourable mean the interests of his Master, manifesting, with the openness and generous spirit of a true servant of the King of Heaven, his decided opposition to impiety and vice, in every situation and in whatever circumstances, he should shrink from the glorious cause which he had vowed to support, and meanly sacrifice at the low shrine of impure adulation : If he should prostrate himself before vice, join her impious orgies with his voice, countenance her unhallowed rites with his presence, strip himself of the honours of his sacred character, and become an auxiliary in the work of darkness—then does he sink into the state of the very meanest of mankind, and become an object to be spurned at by the most worthless of the race of mortals.

Tenderly alive to the honour of religion, and to every circumstance connected with it, reverence and affection manifest themselves in all the actions, the words and the manners of a true minister of Christ.

A desire to promote its interests appears in the minutest circumstance of his life; and to advance its cause, is his delight and his glory. To this he devotes his time and his talents. This is the object of his thoughts, his labours, and his prayers. For this he submits to many privations, leaves many pleasing pursuits, enters on many painful and distressing scenes. He is instant in season, out of season; and though with meekness and with prudence he pursues his great design, it is ever before him, the object of his watchful care and his diligent pursuit. The toils, the crosses, the disappointments and dangers, which the men of the world encounter for the sake of its gains and its honours, he encounters for the love of Christ and the salvation of his people. "Neither counts he his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he has received of the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."

3. MODERATION IN THE DESIRE OF EARTHLY THINGS, is another particular which should distinguish the character of a minister.

The great object to which he directs the views of his people is an eternal world. In directing their views to this object, he promotes their happiness on

earth ; by enforcing a life of holiness, and presenting delightful hopes in the midst of difficulty, distress, and misfortune. But the present happiness of men is only a subordinate and accessory circumstance. To the future world we are travelling. In it we are to live for ever. To heaven, the promised land, the better country, the Son of God directs the views and affections of his followers ; and to promote their preparation for this exalted and happy state, is the great object of his ministers.

From a person employed to direct the attention of men to the eternal world ; whose daily duties necessarily and in a great variety of ways raise his mind beyond the present ; who is the professed servant of Him whose kingdom is not of this world, engaged to support his cause, employed in his service ; from a person, finally, who is called continually to contemplate the heavenly state, to lift the thoughts and affections of men to things above, to guard them against the love of the world, and teach them to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness—from such a person we naturally expect, in a peculiar manner, a conversation in heaven ; a moderation and disinterestedness as to this world, suited to the nature of the design which

he pursues, and to the great objects with which he is habitually conversant.

Let me not be supposed to insinuate, that a minister of Christ should be indifferent to the world, and uninterested in the state of the objects around him. The things of this life were given by a gracious God to be enjoyed; and, when desired in a manner which is not inconsistent with superior principles, are lawfully attended to by his children. If, too, in the exercise of those talents and advantages with which he is blessed, a minister of the gospel can increase the blessings, or alleviate any of the evils of life, he is employed in a manner worthy a follower of Him, who did good to the bodies as well as to the souls of men. And God forbid that we should ever see those of this country sequestered from the world, ignorant of general and useful knowledge, or indifferent to any of the concerns of their fellow-mortals. It is the degree of the desire and of the attention which we deprecate. It is when the desire becomes greater than the object is worth, and inconsistent with the supreme love of heavenly objects; it is when the attention interferes with our spiritual duties, and gives to the mind a worldly temper; it is then that

we see a character peculiarly unsuitable to a minister of Christ.

Not only are the grand objects of the spiritual world brought more frequently, and in all their importance, to his view, and the duties of his office, and the objects of his life, connected all of them with the spiritual world; but he is separated from many of those circumstances and temptations, which are most apt to engender a worldly temper. The generality of men must live in the midst of the objects, and cares, and pursuits of the world. The acquisition of its goods is the direct object of their occupations, to which they were educated, to which their minds, during the principal period of their days, are necessarily directed. Such circumstances, unless strenuously resisted, give to earthly things the empire of the soul, while, in the same degree, they lessen the power of spiritual objects, and banish them from the remembrance. The situation of a minister of the gospel, in a great measure, exempts him from the effect of such circumstances; nay, frequently tends to awaken an opposite train of sentiment and feeling.

Should it not, also, to the same purpose, be observed, that he has occasion more frequently to contemplate the nature of this world; its incapacity

to afford lasting satisfaction ; the uncertainty of its objects ; the short duration of its pleasures ; the frailty of our frame and the passing nature of our days ? Called, frequently, to witness scenes of suffering ; to minister to the afflicted the instructions and consolations of the gospel ; to present those views to his people which should wean their heart from the world, raise their affections to heaven, and lead them from the afflictions of life, to prepare for the heavenly inheritance—can we avoid expecting that his heart should be softened ; that the great lessons of our state should be deeply felt ; that the world should lose its influence ; that he should learn to consider himself as a pilgrim, and the objects around him, as the passing objects of a journey ; that he should look with more frequency and affection to that better country towards which he is travelling, and in which alone, the lesson of every day informs him, he can receive the completion of his happiness ?

But, if thus a peculiar degree of heavenly-mindedness should appear in a minister of the gospel, how greatly aggravated must be the sin of him who sacrifices to the pursuits and vanities of the world the stated and essential duties of his office !

To such persons, if ever such among us should arise, in vain we might speak of the dignity and importance of those duties which they neglect, and the infinite consequence of that object which, for some paltry trifle, they sacrifice. But we would ask them, in the name of justice, to consider their conduct. For what purpose are you placed here? For what purpose do you receive the emolument and advantages which you possess? Was it to follow secular pursuits; to engage in the employments of farmers or merchants, or factors, or clerks; to dedicate your thoughts and talents, your time and your labours, to the speculations of business and the accumulation of its profits? Or was it, that, deserting the scene of your duties, you might be enabled to spend your winters in the gaieties of the city, and your summers in rural amusements, literary retirement, or idle rambling? Was it, in fine, that you might live at your ease, indulge every fancy without restraint, act the part of gentlemen at large, and shine as men of pleasure, of fashion, and of the world? Was it, indeed, for such purposes you received this distinguished office from your country? Or, did you not receive it on certain important conditions? Did you not solemnly engage to perform those conditions to the utmost

extent of your ability? And, are you not now reaping advantages granted upon the faith of your promises? If you will not fulfil your engagements, maintain the character, discharge the duties and promote the ends of your profession; justice and honour point out only one course for you to pursue—retire from your situation, that another may occupy that place which you encumber but do not fill. To undertake an office without discharging faithfully its duties, to disregard the most sacred promises, to receive emolument without paying the stipulated return, and, what is greatly worse, prevent your fellow-creatures, that people whose spiritual interests you had vowed to regard, from reaping those inestimable benefits, which arise from the faithful discharge of the duties of the ministry—can never be reconciled, I do not say, with the sense of religion, but with the principles of common integrity and the feelings of an honest man.

But few of such characters are yet, we trust, to be found among the ministers of Scotland; and every tendency to such, is contemplated with sentiments of public indignation. Long may such sentiments continue to prevail among all ranks and classes of our nation! And long may ministers see in the countenances, and language, and conduct of

their people, what is the elevation of character, the purity and faithfulness in duty, which are expected to distinguish those who have undertaken the sacred office of a minister of Christ !

Let us take, my Brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord for our examples ; and be followers of those who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises. “ Brethren, said the apostle Paul, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ ; whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. For our conversation is in heaven ; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.”—“ And every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.”

4. The character of a minister should be distinguished for LOVE TO HIS FELLOW-CREATURES, and, particularly, for MEEKNESS, CONDESCENSION, AND COMPASSION.

There are circumstances in his situation which, operating on weak and ill-regulated minds, may

lead to self-sufficiency and pride. His learning and talents are superior to the generality of his people. His office, and the natural feelings of the well-disposed, procure to him many external marks of respect. The discharge of important duties, and a considerable degree of authority and influence, are committed to him. The very office of a teacher is apt to inspire ideas of superiority, and even the frequency of his appearance in public situations, to increase the desire of praise. Sometimes, too, he will meet with weaknesses and prejudices, which tend to excite passion, or engender contempt; and sometimes with an opposition to right measures, which may check the ardour of zeal and diminish affection. But these circumstances are abundantly counterbalanced by others of a contrary nature; they are circumstances which peculiar considerations of duty and interest, urge him to resist; they are circumstances which can only operate strongly on minds ill qualified for the sacred office, and the effect of which a due discharge of his duty will annihilate. The qualifications necessary to a minister of the gospel, his duties, nay, his general circumstances, all lead us to attach to his character, the virtues of benevolence, meekness, condescension, and compassion.

The great object of the sacred profession is to do good. Every sincere desire and endeavour, therefore, to accomplish its design, must both suppose, and bring into exercise the principle of benevolence. But not only is the pursuit of the great object of our profession an exercise of love, every particular duty, every intermediate step towards our end, is an exercise and expression of it. Prayer, admonition, instruction, every act of sympathy and discourse of comfort, imply in them the immediate feeling and expression of kind affections.

The views which are most frequently presented to us in the exercise of our office, powerfully enforce and call forth the principles of benevolence. Every part of that blessed religion, which it is our duty to teach and illustrate, presents us with pictures of kindness, and tends, at the same time, to awaken our affections, and to show us the duty of exercising them. Nor can any contrast be more strong, any inconsistency be more glaring, than that of a selfish and hard-hearted man, pretending to teach the gospel of the Son of God.

The situation and circumstances of a minister among his people, are calculated to inspire benevolence. Their reverence, confidence, and dependence on his instructions; their expectation of counsel, assist-

ance, comfort; their marks of respect; the nature of his relation as their pastor; all those very circumstances which, in weak and ill-regulated minds, inspire pride, in minds properly disposed, lead to affection and tenderness.

And, as a general love to his fellow-creatures should distinguish a minister of Christ, so his circumstances call peculiarly for meekness, condescension, and compassion. These are virtues which his situation, and duties, both require and tend to increase. His people consist necessarily of men of various characters, of different opportunities, habits, weaknesses, and prejudices. His business is often, also, with the weak, the ignorant, and the sinful. In his intercourse with these, he must exercise much forbearance and gentleness; otherwise, he will lose many opportunities of doing good, of communicating instruction, removing prejudices, arresting the thoughtless, subduing the hardened, assisting the weak, confirming the doubtful, comforting the mourner, and encouraging the humble. Nay, without the exercise of these dispositions, he will lose the influence which his character and office would have given him; and, by his attempts to do good, will only force men farther into error.—

“Though I be free from all men,” said the apostle

Paul, "yet have I made myself the servant of all, that I might gain the more. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak."

A just maintenance of authority, and of that respect which is due to our character, is necessary both for our own happiness and the good of our people. But the exercise of the gentler virtues of the Christian, increases our honour and our influence; while a proud demeanour and contemptuous or passionate conduct, not only lessen respect and authority, but shew infinitely more infirmity and defect in the character, than any of those prejudices which we can reprobate and despise.

And as this gentle, condescending, and compassionate temper, increases our power to do good, so many particular duties call it forth, and essentially require its exercise. To condescend to men of low estate; to instruct the weak and feeble, as their circumstances and capacities permit; to seek the wandering and the lost, and bear with their prejudices and sins; to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction; to bring order to a distracted mind, and light to those who sit in darkness; to lead the sinner to contrition, and introduce heavenly thoughts into a hardened heart; to sympathize with a Christian brother on a bed of sorrow, direct his thoughts,

assist his uncollected mind—his mind, weakened and agitated, desirous but unable to lift up his thoughts to God; to approach with him in prayer to the throne of grace, through that great High Priest who is ever touched with the feeling of our infirmities; to commend a departing spirit to its Creator, and to speak words of comfort to a family desolate and forlorn—these are duties to which a minister of religion is peculiarly called; they are duties which require the exercise of the truest compassion; and hard, indeed, would be our hearts, if, in such scenes, they did not soften and sympathise; ill requited the confidence, justly wounded the feelings of our people, if, when they looked to us in such seasons for comfort, they only met with indifference and neglect.

Called to such duties, and placed in such circumstances, the character of a minister is justly expected to be distinguished for meekness, condescension, and compassion. Such, accordingly, are the requisites which the Scriptures have declared to be necessary to the servant of the Lord; and such was the temper which distinguished our divine Redeemer, the Chief Shepherd of the flock. His meekness, condescension and compassion, extended even to the most worthless of his persecutors. While, with the dignity of the Son of God, and with that supe-

rior regard to their eternal welfare which became the Saviour of men, he pointed out their sins, he mingled, at the same time, inexpressible pity with his reproofs, and even wept over their ingratitude and obstinacy.

A proud, vindictive, unfeeling, minister of the meek, the lowly, the compassionate Son of God, is a monster which men can never behold but with abhorrence. Every approach to such a character is odious and disgraceful. To observe him even subject to passion, incapable of contradiction, and indulging himself in haughtiness, scorn, or invective; to see him walking among his people, insensible to their marks of respect, like a lord over God's heritage; to hear him speak of them with contempt, of their errors and prejudices with bitterness, without forbearance reprobating their weaknesses, yet wholly forgetful of his own; to observe him separating himself from their concerns, taking little interest in their welfare, careless of them in sorrow and sickness, and keeping at a distance from the house of mourning; to observe such circumstances, or any of them, even in their lowest degree, must necessarily excite, in the breast of every man, displeasure and indignation.

“ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of

angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And, though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I had all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.—And the servant of the Lord, says the Apostle Paul, in his admonitions to Timothy, must be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God, peradventure, will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. “Give none offence,” he adds on another occasion, “neither to the Jews nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God, even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.” Though naturally of a high and an ardent spirit, in the service of the gospel, he was humble, patient, and forbearing; mingling affection with authority, the most engaging condescension, with unbending integrity and faithfulness. “But, as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel,” he writes to the Thessalonians, “even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God which trieth the hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness: Nor of men sought we glory,

neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us—As ye know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory—For what is our hope, our joy, or crown of rejoicing! Are not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming!”

5. The character of a Minister should be distinguished for a freedom from LEVITY, and all those IMPROPRIETIES AND FOLLIES to which persons of a light and frivolous disposition are liable.

There is a medium betwixt austerity and giddiness. And far be it from me, in the most distant manner, to insinuate that aught in religion, or in the character of its ministers, is connected with moroseness, or inconsistent with the cheerfulness of innocence. But cheerfulness is not folly; and a material distinction subsists, betwixt the cheerfulness of men and of children, of minds cultivated and

religious, and of minds rude and regardless. Neither is it necessary that, in order to cheerfulness, men should forget the proper seasons, places, objects, degrees and modes of its expression.

Many a feeling may be also indulged occasionally, and in a subordinate degree, which ought not to form the ruling disposition in the character, and the predominant feature in the conduct. The principles of the human mind, are various in dignity and importance; and they characterize the mind and behaviour, according to the manner in which they are estimated and exercised. The man who is characterized by the predominance of the lighter order of feelings, cannot hold the first place in our estimation: Not because these are without much value in their own place, but because the disposition towards them is too great, and a deficiency in the cultivation of superior principles is presumed.

The manner, too, in which the same principle expresses itself, may be vastly different; and may be suitable or unsuitable to the situation and the character. Every feeling indeed has its distinct and peculiar mode of expression. But this expression may be infinitely varied, by the mixture of other feelings suited to our circumstances. It is,

likewise, always affected by the general character of our minds. Thus, anger has its own manner of expression ; yet, the difference is great betwixt the expression of it by a narrow and a liberal mind, a generous and a cruel, by a wise man and a fool, a wicked man and a christian. The general dispositions of the individual, mingle with the particular feeling, and give a portion of themselves, as it were, to it, and to its expression. While the indulgence of a feeling, therefore, may be proper, the manner of expressing it may be unsuitable. It may manifest an absence of other principles, both of the understanding and the heart. The wit and the humour which may delight in a child, may justly give disgust in a minister of religion.

In the manners of such a person, we expect to see the effect of those advantages which learning and talents bestow, and of that superior order of principles which ought to predominate in his character. We expect to observe, also, some colouring from those sublime and serious duties, amidst which we have been accustomed to contemplate him. In such a man we might expect to observe, indeed, a habitual cheerfulness, a happiness of temper which results from an improved mind, and that peace of conscience which passeth all understanding ; and

if blessed with the charms of wit and of fancy, that his conversation and manners should spread delight and social joy, among all with whom he maintained the intercourse of friendship. But we should also expect to observe, that he had too much dignity of mind to descend to the childishness of folly; too much delicacy to connect his character with absurdity; that he possessed such a sensibility and power of discrimination, as to distinguish the proprieties of seasons and circumstances; that he placed not his chief distinction in an eminence among buffoons; and that even the follies, if we may so express ourselves, of such a person, should bear the marks of his general character. We should expect to observe, that he delighted to promote, on every fit occasion, solid, useful, and edifying conversation; and that, even in his most unguarded moments and romantic flights, he still manifested the sanctity of a heart devoted to God. Should these expectations be disappointed, and an inferior species of character pervade his manners, even though his general morals should be irreproachable, he will fall in the apprehensions of the world to the rank of a lower order of men, and never meet with that respect which is due to the ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

There is a species of folly, too, which manifests itself by an affectation of manners different from those of our situation, which is peculiarly unsuitable to our character. Whatever is of real value in the manners of any class of men may be adopted, in general, with propriety into our own. But manners having no intrinsic worth, attach themselves to all classes, which result entirely from peculiarity of situation; and which appear absurd and ridiculous in other circumstances, than those in which we have been accustomed to observe them. Real absurdities and deformities, also, will be found often in the manners of every class of men, which custom and circumstances render tolerable; but which, when made objects of imitation, taken out of their customary place, and stripped of their softening circumstances, appear exceedingly contemptible. They then not only appear in their natural deformity, but with the additional disadvantage which arises from a conjunction with manners to which they are totally unsuited. Absurd as is the effect, however, no manners are more commonly assumed. This arises chiefly from the vanity of appearing connected with the rank to which such manners are supposed to belong; or, from such a blind admiration of certain characters and classes, as converts, in the

imagination, even deformities into beauties. Hence, the origin of a great variety of those melancholy and foolish appearances, which you may observe among the manners of mankind. Hence it is, that you see many affecting, not only the follies, but the vices of persons of distinction; while others imitate their general deportment, assume their dress and air, speak the same kind of language, and adopt all the phrases, however ridiculous, which are in fashion. Some affect to display a childish nicety of taste and delicacy of feeling, in the most common concerns and occurrences of life. And others, from a similar principle, affect to be altogether regardless of themselves or of others, and assume an insensibility equally unnatural and still more displeasing. Their appearance is disordered and violent, their manners rude, their conversation boisterous, their language uncouth, their topics barbarous, and their mirth disorderly. While these adopt the absurdities of individuals in some superior class, others, from circumstances peculiar to their character or history, adopt an opposite extreme, affect to despise whatever is connected with fashion, and assume the manners of the vulgar. They are taken with nature, and are affectedly simple. They commence war against all pretensions to taste and elegance,

and affect a vulgarity unsuited both to their character and their circumstances. All these men are equally under the influence of vanity; and all equally fix their attention upon the accidental circumstances attending the characters and qualities which they admire, without discriminating the deformities from the excellencies of the original.

Such wretched affectation is contemptible in any man, but especially in a minister of Christ. It is unsuitable to his character as a man of understanding, literature, and seriousness: It is unsuitable to the habits and modes of life, to the dispositions and temper of mind which his circumstances tended to form: It is unsuitable to those grave, those proper, and, I will add, those dignified, though simple manners, which belong to his office, and which it was his duty, his interest, and his honour, to cultivate. In him, we expect to observe such a temper of mind as shall render him superior to all undue admiration of worldly greatness; and such a sense of the importance of his office, as shall make him chiefly desire to appear in the character of a minister of the Gospel: we expect to observe a sense of what is proper, so delicate as shall make him shun the least appearance of evil: we expect to observe a mind capable of looking down upon absurdities in any

rank or sphere ; and especially turning with abhorrence from whatever was the sign, or, by any association, could excite the suspicion, of a connexion with ignorance, profligacy, or barbarism.

The affectation of manners like these, would not only be inconsistent and disreputable ; it would absolutely unfit him for the duties of his office. Not only would they imply a tendency to the follies they express, an uncommon share of vanity, or great weakness of understanding ; but they would excite ideas and associations in the minds of his people, little calculated to give weight to his authority and instructions. Is it for a man connected in our minds with vanities and trifles, to inspire solemn ideas, or give effect to the great truths of religion ? Or, is it from a man affecting the airs of the coarse and regardless, that the wounded in spirit are to receive the consolations of the Gospel ? alas ! their feelings are little in unison with his ; and, instead of looking to him for comfort and direction, they would turn from him with loathing.

Reasons of a similar nature, should lead us to consider an excessive fondness for frivolous pleasures, as also most unsuitable to our character. Such amusements in certain situations and degrees, may be necessary and becoming ; nor is it always easy to

mark the bounds beyond which they become guilty. But excessive attachment to them, betrays a littleness of soul, weakens and debases the mind, and unfits us for superior exercises, pleasures and pursuits. The disposition is mean, and the conduct to which it leads is sinful. It cannot be indulged without an interference with duty, and a neglect of those pursuits and employments which become us as Christians and as men. While every preference of pleasure to duty, prepares the way for another, weakens the power of principle, and gives additional strength to the propensity, which had before been unbecoming and sinful. Even the most suitable amusements become guilty, when indulged to such a degree as is inconsistent with due attention to our duties, with the prevalence of those dispositions which our duties demand, and with the power of those principles which should distinguish us as the candidates for heaven. That degree which may be consistent with the duties of one man, let it be also remembered, may be inconsistent with the time, habits, and dispositions, which the duties of another may require. And the circumstances of situation which might be pleaded for many as extenuations of censure, will, by raising the just hope of different

habits, and another character of mind, increase our condemnation.

Will my reverend Fathers and brethren pardon me, if I should even venture to observe farther, that some amusements, which may be innocent, and sufficiently becoming, in other descriptions of men, may yet not, in any degree, accord with our character and duties? With respect to amusements whose tendency is doubtful, a minister of Christ, set apart for the great purpose of maintaining the interests of godliness and virtue, will surely consider himself as obliged to be particularly cautious how he gives them his sanction. But a vast number of actions, highly important in human life, are proper and improper, which do not, perhaps, directly rank under the strong denominations of virtue and vice. Now, as there are employments and manners, so there are amusements, suited to different descriptions of persons; to children and to men, to the youthful and the aged, to the learned and the ignorant, to the light and the grave. A degree of judgment and culture of mind, and a peculiarity of habits, dispositions, feelings, and taste, are connected with some persons, which are inconsistent with taking pleasure in some amusements, which are allowed to

persons of another description. The feelings of men with respect to any object, we must also consider, depend much on the circumstances which they are accustomed to associate with it. Hence it happens, that every person of sensibility avoids connecting himself in the public apprehension, with any circumstances which would associate him with ideas, which are either unpleasant in themselves, or which, by their discordance with the general ideas attached to him, might hurt the minds of his fellow-creatures, and degrade him in their estimation. Associations of this kind would be of less importance, did they not continue to operate on the imagination, and force themselves upon the attention, in situations where ideas and feelings of a very different nature should prevail; where every circumstance, but the most sacred, should be excluded from the mind, and every object should conspire to fix, solemnize, and elevate the soul. If a minister of the Gospel, therefore, by his frequent and public indulgence in particular amusements, shall connect with his appearance any thing ridiculous, giddy, childish, mean, barbarous, or coarse; if he shall come forward, associated in the public apprehension with circumstances, which tend to excite ideas wholly opposite to those feelings which his duty requires

him to awaken and to cherish—must not much of his influence be lost, and much of the effect of his sacred duties be counteracted?

The more closely this subject is considered, and the more extensive is our observation of mankind, the more I am persuaded shall we be convinced, that the rules and customs of our church on such matters, and which have been strictly observed by the great and pious men who have gone before us, were founded on true feeling and true wisdom: While those notions which are so frequently held up to us as more liberal, proceed, notwithstanding their high pretensions, from narrow views and ignorance of human nature; too frequently, it is to be feared, from a low feeling and idea of the nature of the ministerial, and even of the christian, character.

The very circumstances of external appearance, when considered in this view, assume an importance. They also excite ideas, mark dispositions and characters; and they may express a folly and a vanity, or coarseness and disorder of mind, with a contempt of public feeling, and want of respect for ourselves, extremely unbecoming, and followed with unfortunate effects. Even the smaller distinctions attached to our order, seem to me attended with useful effects; and a wanton departure from them to betray unparadonable levity. Independently of respect to custom

and the effect of opinion, which no public man has a right wantonly to outrage, or can outrage with impunity; they bring to the recollection of men what we are, and make our very appearance prove a restraint upon vice, and a remembrancer of duty. They are also perpetual remembrancers to ourselves of that character, and that conduct, which we ought, in every situation, and at all seasons, to maintain. And I venture to assert, that by removing even those seemingly small distinctions, which natural feeling originally suggested, men will remove very useful incentives to public and private virtue.

If, in the discussion of this part of our subject, any observation should appear inconsistent with that innocent cheerfulness, harmless pleasantry, delightful ease, and simplicity of manners, which are among the sweetest joys of human life, I have belied my own feelings, and expressed unfortunately my design. Of those men who have been deemed the honours of their profession, most have been distinguished for habitual cheerfulness; and many for a vivacity of thought and brilliancy of fancy, which rendered their manners and conversation agreeable, even to the most youthful and gay. But they were, at the same time, marked for a superiority to childish giddiness, and the absurd

affectation of manners unsuited to their profession and their habits. *They had too much spirit* for such affectation. They gloried in their profession ; and they conceived that there was connected with it all that was valuable in any rank of life—education, talents, virtue, and religion. In this manner they supported the dignity of their order, and met with that respect which is its due ; and in this manner shall those who follow in their path, continue to be distinguished, while a regard for superior endowments and usefulness remains among men.

But now, my reverend fathers and brethren, we must bring to a close our observations on this important subject. One of the advantages attending our meetings of this kind, is the occasion, which it affords and naturally suggests, of directing our minds to subjects connected with our ministerial character and duties. May the objects which have now been brought before our consideration, deeply impress our hearts, and lead each of us to a serious inquiry into the state of our characters, and the tenor of our lives ! And knowing the danger, to which every human being is exposed, of self-deception, let it be our prayer, in the solemn hour of self-examination, that God would himself try us, and assist and direct us in the momentous duty. Let our supplication be that of

the Psalmist, " Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts ; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Alas ! which of us in such seasons shall not have reason to humble himself in the dust, under a sense of his manifold sins and imperfections ? May the views which then rise before our minds, render deeper that lowliness of heart, which is the characteristic of every christian, and is essential to every degree of christian excellence ! May they render us more watchful, diligent, and persevering in every duty : lead us to a more habitual sense of our need of a Saviour, and of divine grace through him : and incline our souls to more frequent, deep, and fervent prayer ! A high standard of character is placed before us, after which we are required to aspire ; let us bear it continually on our thoughts, and let us seek to act up to it in the whole conduct of our lives. To us are given all the animating motives which should influence every christian, with all the additional motives which arise from our office and its duties. According to the effects, which our characters and lives produce on the state of our brethren, especially on that of their dearest and most sacred interests, is our responsibility, and the account which we must render at the great day. Who can

conceive the horror which, on that day, awaits the unfaithful servant? But while we ponder with serious thought on the nature of his fate, let us also animate our minds with happier prospects. Let us think on the noble examples of those who have gone before us, and through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises. “And seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” Think, also, of the provision which is made for our assistance and success. Think of the gracious hands, to which the direction and administration of it is committed. Think of the glorious effects of our humble and faithful labours, on the honour of God, the cause of Christ, the present and future happiness of ourselves and our people: And let the love of God, and the love of Christ, and the love of our brethren, and a con-

cern for our own highest interests, possess, animate, and exalt our minds. Let us anticipate the day when we shall stand before our Master, with those of our flock whom our services have blessed. Let us hear his sentence of recognition and acknowledgment, and dwell with delight on the glory that shall follow. Let us enter the heavenly mansions which our Saviour hath prepared : And contemplate the blessedness of that state, which he hath won and received for his people. “ The glory which thou gavest me,” says he, “ I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one. Father ! I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.” The glory, and the pleasures of the world, fade into insignificance, before such blessed prospects. Animated by such exceeding great and precious promises, we shall seek to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and to become partakers of a divine nature : we shall feel ourselves elevated above the temptations which would withdraw us from God ; and reckon both the joys and the sufferings of the present time, as not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. No struggle, no sacrifice, will appear too great : the service of our Master will be our delight and our glory : while that peace of mind which passeth all understanding, shall

bless us in the midst of every difficulty; and be at the same time a source of present joy, and an earnest of those higher joys which are reserved for us in the kingdom of our Lord.

“ Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen !”

ON

PROVISION FOR THE POOR.

PUBLIC provision for the poor seems to be peculiar to Christian nations, and to have arisen out of the genius, if not the direct precepts, of Christianity. Under the influence of its spirit, and of its views, by which not only general compassion is taught and inspired, but the poor are raised in the estimation of the rich, and all Christians are taught to consider one another as brethren, the first Christians made the greatest exertions to provide a general fund to supply the wants of the distressed. The poor were not left by them to the occasional and detached charities of private individuals; contributions were made, lands were sold, and a general fund was formed. This was placed in the hands of persons in authority; individuals of high character were chosen for its management and distribution,

and solemnly "appointed over this business." These were men of "honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom." Among these were teachers and ministers of the gospel. The apostles divested themselves of this charge; but the persons appointed were of the first eminence in the Christian church; nay, some of them, such as Stephen, were full of faith and power, and did great wonders and miracles among the people. The fund thus at first provided, and the mode of its management, might be in some respects local and temporary. But it was, at least so far as the Christian society was concerned, a public fund; and the management of it was appointed by public authority. The poor were not left, so far as this institution reached, to private charity. The original contribution was, to a certain extent, and in certain instances voluntary: but the fund collected was public, and the result of the union of individuals. Its management, also, was by official delegates; and, in addition to private compassion, was joined the benefit of a special care and superintendence. The public provision for the poor which was thus begun, was made, in the time of the apostles, a stated and permanent institution; and the superintendence and management of its interests, the ob-

ject of a stated and permanent office in the Christian church. Besides this, we find general contributions made for the poor, in times of peculiar distress. These were made by command of the apostles, and of the rulers of the church. Every Christian who acknowledged the power which these possessed to dictate on such an occasion, submitted to it. The command could not be enforced by civil penalties, nor was the precise quantum which individuals were to contribute determined; but it was still authoritative, and had force on those to whom it was addressed. It was different from the exercise of private charity; and provided, in addition to it, by a distinct injunction, a fund for the relief of the distressed. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."—From this injunction originated the admirable custom of collections for the poor, on every Sabbath, at the churches in Scotland. It does not appear, however, that this was the only, or the original, mode of providing a fund for the destitute, among Christian societies. It was a mode ordered on a particular occasion, which

connects the remembrance of the poor with the exercises of devotion: but other methods of providing for them had been in use; and the reason given for its appointment was, that "there be no gatherings," when the Apostle came. The Apostle not only commanded the collection of a general fund, but took his share of trouble in the charge and the transmission of it. With that regard to character which every good man feels, he insists that others, appointed by the contributors, should be joined in the commission to be administered by him; "providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." But still he himself also considered the case of the poor; formed plans for their benefit; sent persons to forward and receive collections for their relief; and finally took charge of the liberality of the different churches, and carried it to his brethren at Jerusalem.

Under the influence of such examples and precepts, an ecclesiastical order of men is appointed, in every parish of Scotland, to take charge of the poor and their interests. With this body every minister meets, as their president and head, at stated periods; and with them, he considers it to be a part of his duty to take a special interest in the concerns of

the indigent and helpless among his people. Nor, I conceive, can the superintendence of a body of men so suited to the office ever be relinquished, without deeply injuring the interests of all classes of the community.

The provision thus made for the poor by the constitution of the Christian church, was obviously confined to those who were its own members. It extended not to all the indigent citizens of the same state. The precepts and spirit of Christianity, enforced on all its disciples the duty of bestowing alms on men of every description. But the public fund, administered by the office-bearers of the church, was primarily destined to the relief of *the saints*; that is, those who were joined in Christian society and fellowship. It seems certain, however, that a portion of these public funds, was occasionally extended beyond the bounds of their primary destination, and that both Jews and Heathens, in seasons of distress, were aided, not only by the private, but public liberality of Christians. When Christianity came to be generally professed and established in various kingdoms, it carried, into their public laws, and customs, and manners, a portion of its benign and merciful spirit. Institutions for the succour of the distressed, were formed in various

quarters, both by public and private munificence, and received public encouragement and protection. The care of the poor became an object of concern to Christian statesmen and rulers. And even those modes which had been formed by Christian churches for the members of their own body, were extended to every citizen of the same country and kingdom. The office-bearers of the Christian church became the general guardians of the helpless; and the collections made at the time of divine service, were made for the benefit of the indigent, the impotent, and diseased, of every description. At the time of the Reformation, many institutions for the relief of the poor, were so interwoven with those of the Roman Catholic religion, that they underwent the same fate, and perished in its ruins. While the funds and lands of others, which might easily have been preserved, and still directed to their original object, were violently seized by powerful individuals, or destined, by successive administrations, to the reward of some distinguished persons, or the support of some favourite measures. Collections at churches, and extraordinary contributions, were then resorted to, but without sufficient success. And the circumstances of the times, it is probable, increased the number of the destitute and helpless. Various

means, in addition to these, are stated by Dr. Burn, in his history of the poor laws, to have been adopted in England, yet still without competent effect. Till at length, by the celebrated acts of Queen Elizabeth, compulsory assessments were appointed to be made. A short time before this, assessments also were appointed in Scotland in the year 1579, by the 6th parliament of James VI. Various acts of parliament, and various acts of the privy council of William and Mary, were afterwards passed, respecting the maintenance of the poor in Scotland. These differed in some particulars from one another; and, on several points, considerable dubiety, for some time, prevailed. But general practice, and the decisions of the Court of Session, have now sufficiently ascertained and fixed every principle of importance.—It may be useful to state shortly the general law and practice of both countries.

In Scotland, collections at the churches on every Lord's day are universally made. At marriages and baptisms, also, small fees are exacted for the benefit of the poor: donations are frequently made for the same purpose. The funds thus raised are managed and distributed by the ecclesiastical court called the Session; which is formed in every parish, and consists of elders and deacons, chosen for life from the

parishioners, with the minister as their head: With them, may sit the heritors of the parish, at the distribution of those funds; and the minute-book of distribution is always open to their inspection. A half of the collections may however be retained by the Session, independently of the heritors, for certain public purposes, and for such occasional charities as do not belong to the ordinary poor.—When these sources of public provision are not sufficient for the maintenance of the poor of any parish, an assessment is by law authorised and enjoined. The manner in which this assessment is fixed, deserves particular notice. The heritors, minister, and elders of the parish, are required to meet in a conjoint body, to make a list, twice in each year, of the poor, to estimate the sum necessary for their maintenance, and to assess the inhabitants for its amount. The one-half of the assessment is paid by the heritors, whether occupants or not, according to their rent, either real or valued; the other half is paid by tenants and possessors of houses, according to their ability. In the case of burghs, the magistrates are empowered to tax the inhabitants according to their substance, for the necessary sum. When the duty of assessment is neglected, the Session of

the parish can enforce it.—The poor in Scotland are persons who join to poverty, inability to labour for their subsistence. These may be of two kinds ; those who, from age or irremediable disease, require regular and continued assistance ; or those who, from temporary distress, require only temporary relief. Persons who are able to work, but are unemployed, are not understood to be the objects for which the poor's funds were designed. Still less is it understood, that the overseers of the poor are to find them work, or to supply the deficiencies which may take place in the value of their labour. They must seek out employment for themselves, and bear with those vicissitudes in the price of labour, which must occasionally take place. At the same time, when virtuous families are reduced to distress, by any unexpected emergency, it is not unusual to give them privately occasional donations ; but this is done sparingly and secretly. When any general distress arises, from dearth or stagnation of business, a temporary provision is made for the occasion, generally by voluntary contribution ; the account of which is kept separate from that of the ordinary fund.—The sum allotted from the poor's funds to individuals, is considered only as an aid ; seldom as a maintenance. Poor persons are gener-

ally supposed to do a little for themselves; and their ability, their circumstances, or the state of their relations, are scrupulously considered. The quantum allowed is in all cases fixed, in the first instance, by the kirk-session and heritors.—The law of settlement, by which persons are entitled to apply for aid from the funds of a parish, was for some time dubious; but, by repeated decisions, is now clearly ascertained. The parish in which the poor person has resided for three years, without interruption, and without making application for charitable aid, is liable in the first place; and where such a residence cannot be established, in the next place, the parish in which he was born.—The kind of aid which is generally afforded, is that of small pensions, given every week, or month, according to circumstances, to each poor individual. In several large cities, however, poor's houses are erected, and the practice respecting them is various. In some places, every person placed on the parish roll, is removed to the poor's house, and there furnished with maintenance, and such work as is suited to him. In other places, such as Glasgow, the poor are in general assisted by small monthly sums, or weekly allowances of meal; and only those who are utterly helpless, unable to labour, and without

friends to take charge of them, are placed in the poor's house.

The law of England respecting the poor, seems, at a first view, to be very similar to that of Scotland; but, on a closer inspection, it will be found different, in several very important particulars. The practice of the two countries is also very different. The public and permanent funds for support of the poor, are in every parish of England raised wholly by assessment.—The persons assessed are not proprietors in general, but only the actual occupants.—This assessment is not laid on by the principal men of the parish, who are to pay the chief part of the sums to be levied, in conjunction with the minister and spiritual superintendents of the people: But it is laid on by the church-wardens, in conjunction with two, three, or four persons called overseers. The assessment is laid on each individual, not according to a fixed ratio, but according to the will of the assessors. The overseers are, according to the act of Parliament, appointed by two Justices, and in certain cases by one; and they are nominated only for a year.—Their duty is not only to provide funds for the support of the feeble and destitute, but work for able labourers, when not sufficiently employed, and that work within the bounds of their

own parish. When the necessary work cannot be found by the overseers, they maintain the idle labourer from the public funds ; or when the work obtained by them produces what is deemed an inadequate profit, they make up the deficiency from the same source.—One Justice may order any person to be put on the poors' roll of a parish ; and this order must immediately be obeyed, without waiting, in case of an appeal, for the decision of a superior court.—The laws respecting settlement are minute and multifarious, and are hence the causes of continual and expensive litigation. During the last ten years the law-suits on this account cost the public in England about two millions—in Scotland, only two thousand.—The kind of aid afforded to the poor in England is of the same general nature as in Scotland, and consists of small pensions or maintenance in workhouses. But then the practical application is very different. In Scotland a very scrupulous inquiry is made into the circumstances of every applicant : and the division of every parish into districts, each of which is superintended by one or more elders, joined to the constant residence of the minister, enables the distributors of the poor's funds, to know, with unusual accuracy, the situation and character of every individual. When the heritors of a parish

take a share in the distribution of the funds, it is also evident, that they have a strong interest to promote both economy, and a scrupulous investigation. The consequence of which is, that the tendency in Scotland is perhaps toward the side of rigour. The poor houses are also conducted very differently. The number of them is much greater in England. Able and healthy persons are there frequently admitted, and left to work at their discretion. And the provision for their maintenance is profuse and expensive. In Scotland poor houses are confined to a few great cities, or their neighbourhood. The infirm and destitute only are admitted to them ; and a severe economy pervades every department*.

I. The subject of a public provision for the poor has, for these last fifty years, been very frequently and amply discussed : but particular circumstances have given to it, at present, an unusual degree of interest. Various opinions have been maintained on the causes of pauperism, and on the propriety of affording any public provision for the poor. Some oppose legal assessments, but support charitable societies ; others would allow only of weekly collections at church ;

* For a fuller account of the poor laws of the two countries, I beg leave to refer to a late work of the Rev. Mr. Burns of Paisley ; a work, though in some particulars I differ from him, full of excellent views, and much curious and important information.

while a great number reprobate all public and stated modes of relief, and would leave the poor entirely to the charity of private individuals. The tendency at present is considerably to this last opinion; and legal assessments especially, are treated by many with much severity. It seems to me, that no small degree of confusion of ideas, appears in many writers on this subject; that many topics have been confounded, which have no necessary connexion; that many evils have been supposed, which do not exist, and some which exist have been greatly exaggerated; that facts have been stated, without sufficient evidence; and inferences drawn, from those which are allowed, with rashness and precipitation. Assuming also a little too much of the superior tone of philosophy, they have treated those who differ from them, with some degree of superciliousness, and asperity. The friends of legal assessments and of charitable societies, are considered as vain and affected sentimentalists, or as the victims of a sickly and puling sensibility, or as creatures of a low kind of understanding; ignorant of the principles of human nature, unable to discern the consequences of their own conduct, incapable of enlarged views, and of seeing things at a distance, above all, as unacquainted with political economy.

No person will dispute, that many charitable plans are injudicious, and that the best may be injudiciously managed; or that legal assessments may be of an improper kind, and may be most improperly applied. But the general subject of legal assessments, and charitable societies, must not be confounded with accidental errors and abuses. In estimating their importance, those evils only are to be considered, which necessarily result from them; and not those which result from a particular system, or the practice of a particular place. Even those evils which are deemed inherent in the general principle, must be considered with reference to other schemes; and we must examine whether *such evils do not adhere to every plan*; or if they do not, whether the difference may not be counterbalanced *by evils much greater and more numerous*. Nor should those who support public provision for the poor, be met with such an air of superiority, still less be treated with severity. Good men who are endeavouring, according to their judgment, to provide for the relief of their distressed fellow-creatures, one might hope would meet with some respect and kindness, if it were only for the sake of their object. Nor should it even be insinuated that their views arise from ignorance and limited capacities. The ques-

tion is not new ; and the supposed consequences of their opinions and plans have been often, and long ago, pointed out. They maintain their opinions, therefore, it is to be supposed, not from ignorance of those reasonings, and facts, which are so triumphantly repeated ; but because they conceive the conclusions to be not fairly drawn, or to be founded on principles which are untrue or unestablished ; and because they claim, especially in such matters, the right of judging and acting for themselves. Nor should it be forgotten, that where laws and customs have for a long time been established, and the interests of many individuals are concerned, much prudence is necessary in making alterations ; and that, therefore, some moderation might be expected in discussing them. We do not perceive, at first, all the difficulties which attend different plans of management ; nor all the unexpected consequences and occurrences which may often derange, counteract, or destroy, the most plausible theories. Mankind do not see so far into consequences and events as they are apt to imagine. Hence it is generally best to proceed slowly, and to form our plans as circumstances suggest them. In considering systems long established, it is especially necessary to remember, that some good rea-

sons have probably led to the adoption of the rules which are generally followed, and that the alteration of them should therefore not hastily be made; that when this is deemed necessary, the customs and habits of the people who have lived under them should be taken into account; and the expediency of what we propose, judged of, not by abstract ideas of what is best, but by its suitableness to all the circumstances of the case, and of the people. We should remember that plans involving various and extensive interests, often meet with obstacles, and produce effects which were little expected; and that, in the ardour of attaining our object, and in the fixed contemplation of the idea which our imaginations have framed, we are in danger of overlooking the intermediate ground which is to be passed, and the numerous important and interesting objects, which we cast to the earth, and trample upon, in our passage. Many excellent views are often proposed by speculative men. But these, even were they verified by facts, and fully approved as desirable, cannot always with safety be adopted. That which is best for human beings, is that which is suited to their characters, and condition. Even when adopted, new plans must often be introduced gradually, and with a respect to present circumstances. We shall otherwise produce

evils greater than those which we would remove ; lose perhaps the very object which we desire ; or attain it, after wading through many scenes, and years, of difficulty, harassment, and distress. Many, in attempting to remove trifling or casual imperfections, destroy the strength and soundness of the whole body. Remedies, which may remove local complaints, will often introduce disease into the general constitution. Physicians know, that even good general remedies cannot always be applied, without the risk of destroying the patient, under their operation ; that sudden alterations are attended with danger, even to sound and vigorous frames ; and that it is necessary by restoratives and gradual preparation, to bring the body to that state which will allow useful medicine to be applied, or useful changes in the habits and modes of life to be attempted. The minute investigation, and cautious procedure of parliament, in regard to the poor laws, present an example worthy of men, who have such extensive and complicated interests committed to their trust.

Few persons, I am persuaded, are not convinced that great evils have arisen from the poor laws of England, and that they require considerable alteration. Yet, I will venture to affirm, that these have been greatly exaggerated ; and that the greatest

number of those which undoubtedly exist, have arisen from an erroneous or careless application of them. Men of education and property do not sufficiently attend to the business in their own parishes; and the laws respecting overseers provide not sufficiently for the choice of persons of knowledge, character, responsibility, and personal interest in the business. The most effectual and least offensive reform, therefore, would be to begin with reforming the general management, and introducing a more wise and faithful administration of the general laws. For this purpose, the overseers, if the system respecting them is retained, should be persons of considerable property, chosen as the representatives of the parish, with power of re-election. These, forming one body or court with the church-wardens, should keep regular minutes of their procedure; and for all their measures be accountable, in the first instance, to those whose funds they distribute. No Justice should have power to order the overseers to place any person on the poor's roll. This should always be done through the medium of those, who are in a situation to investigate fully the circumstances of every applicant. If the primary court refuse, let the applicant who thinks himself dealt with hardly, be directed to bring his case by appeal, to some su-

perior court, connected with the whole county ; which may have all the circumstances before it, and may, by its decisions, produce uniformity of procedure over the district. Lastly, let every duty which requires business of an inferior order be separated from the office of the church warden and overseer, and be committed to some inferior officers who shall act under their orders.

Great advantages would arise, both to the poor and the rich, by the attention of men of property to the concerns of the poor. They would take a deeper interest in the concerns of labouring men, counsel and direct them, encourage industry and sobriety, and by timely interposition, prevent many evils injurious to all classes. They would prevent all embezzlement and mismanagement of the general funds, and from a regard to their own interest, would investigate every case with attention and care. That the chief evils attending the poor's rates in England arise from a vicious practice, appears from indisputable facts. In those places where persons of property have interested themselves in the management, *the expence of the poor has been comparatively small.* Nor is it only the careless manner in which applicants are placed on the poor's roll, which would thus be remedied ; but the improper and indiscriminate allowances which frequently

are made. Two-thirds of the poor are persons who only require assistance: they are able to do much for the support of themselves; and nothing can be more foolish than to give to the majority of applicants for relief, as much as is necessary for a full subsistence. The absurdity is increased, when, without distinction of persons, not only the deserving and aged poor, but the idle and profligate, receive for their subsistence more than they had been accustomed to in their better days. There is pleasure in providing liberally for the industrious who have been unfortunate, and supplying them, with even better aliment than what they ever earned, as the reward of virtue, in the time of misfortune; but to nourish, in a manner approaching to luxurious living, persons of every description, is not only increasing the burdens of the people without necessity, but taking away the distinction which justice and policy require to be maintained, betwixt the virtuous and the profligate. From the report of the House of Commons in 1776, when the expence of maintenance was small compared with the present, the expence of each individual to the public, besides the produce of his labour, in the poor house of St. George, Hanover Square, is mentioned to have been about L.12 per

annum. And the expense of each poor person in London who received pensions, was about 4s. per week, at a time when an able-bodied soldier received only 3s. 6d. of wages. And is there not reason to fear, that large sums entrusted to overseers of inferior station should be liable to abuse and embezzlement, especially where there is scarcely any responsibility or superintendence? The probability of private jobbing, and other abuses, I apprehend, must be considerably increased by the practice, on other accounts obviously improper, of raising, under the head of poor rates, sums for various other objects, connected with the supposed improvement of the parish. Now, these and such like evils, in the application and administration of the poor laws, might be remedied, without interfering in any degree with the privileges of any class or individual, or affording any plausible reason for complaint. But some alterations in the general laws themselves respecting the claim of support, are obviously necessary; especially the laws respecting settlements, and the finding maintenance or employment within the parish for men in health, who say they cannot find it for themselves. I apprehend also, it is expedient and just that all *proprie-*

tors, as well as occupants, should pay in proportion to the property which they hold in every parish.

The evils arising from such laws, and such modes of administration, are obviously very great. They have often been pointed out, both by the writings of individuals, and the reports of parliament. And I have no doubt, that they will soon receive such checks and remedies as the circumstances of the country will admit. Yet these, great as they are, have been exceedingly exaggerated. Evils, arising from a thousand other causes, have been attributed to the poor laws. No allowance has been made for the unprecedented nature of the times in which we live. The practice of particular places has been attributed to the whole nation. The tendencies of customs, and the conclusions which follow from abstract principles, have been substituted for facts, without taking into account the many causes which counteract and neutralize them.

Hence, in consequence of these unfortunate laws, the people of England have been represented as necessarily a selfish, ungrateful, grovelling, low-minded people, without even the natural affections of other men, regardless of all the ties of families and friendship, hateful and hating one another; while the men

of higher rank, and all the industrious and well-doing, are oppressed, wasted, borne down, unhappy men! to the very earth, and fainting under a burden which they are no longer able to bear. Such being understood to be unavoidably the wretched condition of the people of England, how must a stranger be surprised, on visiting that celebrated country, to find—their cities swarming with busy inhabitants, rich in goods, and resounding with the noise of active and ingenious industry: their country presenting pictures of comfort, beyond what imagination had conceived; lovely villages; fields smiling with beauty and abundance; a happy peasantry, open hearted, kind, and respectful, yet manly and independent; a yeomanry bold, vigorous, and wealthy; and a gentry living in the magnificence and splendour of princes. Such exaggerations produce often dangerous effects. Presented continually, and in every form, they take hold of the imaginations of many, and rouse their minds to a state of feverish excitement. In this state, men forget, or undervalue, the good which is mingled with evil; they are disposed to embrace, with eagerness and precipitation, every new fancy; and they believe that they cannot too soon pull down, to the very foundation, every part of the system of their fathers. While

others, revolting at the exaggeration and falsehood which are mixed up with the truth, are disposed to defend the most obvious errors, to deny every evil, and to resist every attempt at amelioration.

II. But do the evils which attend the laws and the practice of England, be they as great or numerous as can be supposed, belong to a public provision for the relief of the poor? What connexion has the mode of appointing overseers, or placing persons on the poor's list, indiscriminate and profuse allowance, minute and complex laws of settlement, ill-managed poor houses, or finding employment for men in health—what connexion have these practices, with the principle of providing by assessment, in a wise and sober manner, for the truly indigent, and impotent, and helpless? These are all points connected with a particular system, and have no connexion with the general subject. Every one of these particulars, if they are found to be inexpedient, may be swept completely away; yet the assessment for the poor remain untouched, and be carried into the fullest effect, with every provision necessary for accomplishing its benevolent object. From confounding matters so distinct, much false reasoning, and many strange assertions, have been maintained, and many very causeless prejudices

have been excited. The incidental evils of a particular system, and what are supposed to be the necessary consequences of the general principle of maintaining the poor by assessment, are all mixed up together in one mass, and thus the case is supposed to be made out, and one sweeping conclusion is drawn. One would not be surprised to find this, in hasty declamatory effusions, written under the influence of feelings, which the immediate view and experience of the evils complained of, had excited; but we sometimes find it in writings professedly philosophical, and even in treatises of considerable length.

Many years ago, Lord Kaimes, in his *Sketches on Man*, considered, in a separate chapter, the subject of poor laws; and from him succeeding writers have very liberally borrowed. Like several of his writings, this contains many useful facts and observations, hastily and indiscriminately brought together, mixed with many dangerous errors, not only on this subject, but on others of great importance. One advantage attends him—he is candid and open; draws all his conclusions without shrinking, and is quite above the dishonest and insidious warfare of some of the philosophers of his time. The case of those aged and helpless human beings, who, to

their ruin, have wasted their better days, he considers on his scheme, not as wholly desperate ; for he leaves them, not to persons whose character deserves praise, and whose conduct he encourages men to imitate, but “ to such tender-hearted persons as are more eminent for pity than for principle.” And though a few should thus occasionally, from neglect or oversight, *die of want*, he seems to think it would be of no great importance, nay, probably that it would be an advantage ; for the example of such unhappy persons left to perish, “ will tend,” he adds, “ more to reformation, than the most pathetic discourse from the pulpit.” His Lordship should have extended his plan, and given to the higher ranks the benefit of his ideas, as well as the class of the labourer. Among them also are to be found, the idle and intemperate ; frail and aged persons, who have been indolent saunterers, or thoughtless squanderers, or profligate liveries, whose wasted forms, crying for food, or perishing in the agonies of hunger, might give more general effect to his Lordship’s scheme of reformation.

It is curious also to observe, what opposite vices and calamities these writers draw from the same source. They are not only numerous, but of the

most extraordinary diversity. Among the dangerous consequences of making provision for the indigent and helpless, Lord Kaimes enumerates—the obstruction of marriage, the depopulation of the country, and the downfall of manufactures, from a scarcity of hands. He proves this by two different arguments:—“ Proprietors of land, in order to be relieved of a burden so grievous, drive the poor out of the parish, and prevent all persons from settling in it who are likely to become a burden; cottages are demolished, and marriage obstructed. Influenced by the present evil, they look not forward to depopulation, nor to the downfall of manufactures and husbandry by scarcity of hands. Young men, intimidated by frequent examples of such cruel treatment, are unwilling to marry. Then they get into an unsettled and debauched way of life, acquire a habit of idleness, and become a burden on the public.” The other argument is somewhat different:—“ The country is not so populous as it ought to be; and for this,” he adds, “ I can discover no cause but the poor rates, which makes people thoughtless and idle; and consequently avoid loading themselves with wives and children.” The poor’s rates, he alleges, are also the cause of the high price of wages. “ Labour,” he says, “ is much

cheaper in France than in England ; several plausible reasons have been assigned, but, in my judgment, the difference arises from the poor laws—In England, every man is entitled to be idle, because every idler is entitled to a maintenance.”—“ The immoral effects of public charity,” he affirms, “ spread still wider : it fails not to extinguish the virtue of charity among the rich. Exercise of benevolence to the distressed is our firmest guard against the encroachments of selfishness : if that guard be withdrawn, selfishness will prevail, and become the ruling passion. In fact, the tax for the poor has contributed greatly *to the growth of that grovelling passion so conspicuous at present in England.*”

These are indeed dismal consequences. But our fears are somewhat allayed when we look around us, and observe, that population is still notwithstanding going on ; that the labouring classes marry just as readily as in other countries ; and that there is no scarcity of hands, either for husbandry or manufactures ; finally, that the price of labour is not higher than is necessary for the price of food ; and, more wonderful still, that benevolence and charity seem rather to be on the increase.

Another class of writers, however, have discover-

ed evils to result from the poor laws of an entirely opposite nature, though not less dreadful. They have found, that poor rates do not obstruct, but give far too much encouragement to marriage; that they lead to a superabundant population; and that, so far from producing a scarcity of hands, they produce such numbers of the labouring class, that neither food nor work can be found for them; that instead of increasing, they diminish the wages of the labourer; and finally, that in place of our being in danger from the grovelling passion of selfishness, we are in danger from an excess of kindness and humanity. The danger from an *excess in the numbers of human beings*, is especially a topic of fashionable declamation. The numbers of a country used to be considered as the foundation of its strength: and so far from dreading an excess, the hazard arising from diminution was principally feared. But now the country is viewed, by many persons of talents and ingenuity, as unable to find maintenance for its inhabitants; and a superabundance of mankind is considered as the cause of a great portion of our evils, and of the evils which have afflicted and dishonoured men in every country and age. I am persuaded, however, that alarm from such causes, is, for the present at least, as un-

necessary as those of an opposite nature ; and that the operation of the poor laws will not be so hasty as to endanger the subsistence of men, either here or throughout the world, for some generations.

Our danger, in my judgment, arises from a very different quarter. It is not from the excess of our population, but from its *character*, that we have to fear. Wherever there exist a healthy, virtuous, active, and intelligent people, there is no danger but they will find food for themselves and their children ; and the business of rulers is, not to fear their increasing numbers, but to give a right direction to their principles, talents, and activity. Render them only wise and good, and there will be no danger of disorder and wretchedness from their numbers. Ignorance and vice are the causes which prevent men from employing justly the means by which food may be acquired, and using it aright when it is provided. It is these, also, which prevent them from using the proper remedies for the evils which they suffer, and dispose them to courses which bring disease and suffering on themselves and their fellow-creatures. If we will consider, how much of the food of man is wasted in luxury, and vice, and foolish indulgences—how much more than is necessary, either to health or comfort, is spent even by

the temperate—how great a proportion of every country lies waste; and how much of what is cultivated is ill-directed or misemployed—what numerous articles of food are, either from taste or ignorance, neglected or thrown away; and how much is consumed unnecessarily by inferior animals—what unmeasurable wilds on the face of the globe lie waste and desolate, without inhabitants, or utterly neglected—we will see that there is provided in this world enough of food, and to spare, for ages and generations of men far beyond any about which we need to be anxious, whatever be the ratio of their increase on which we fix. And when we farther look around, and consider the state of the nations of this earth; their numbers and their condition; their various changes, and the history of the people who composed them; or compare the many ages which have passed away since the æra this world commenced, with the small number of human beings which yet people its various countries—we will also see reason to believe, that they are the checks to the increase of men which have ever been too powerful; and that the evil to be dreaded among kingdoms is, not the number, but the wickedness, of their inhabitants. In proportion to the number of intelligent and virtuous beings, must be the sum of general happiness;

and when every quarter of the earth is filled with inhabitants of this character, and the provision made by the bountiful Creator becomes inadequate to their sustenance and comfort, then indeed may we look for that end in which all Christians believe—that great period of change, when a new æra shall commence in the history of our race; when this earth shall have served its purpose, and completed its course; when men shall be destined to different states, according to their characters; and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Temporary evils, I am willing to allow, may have, at particular periods, from incidental circumstances, been felt by some countries from the numbers of their inhabitants; especially where the government or the inhabitants of a country, have been unwise and corrupt. But in few nations with enlightened and virtuous rulers, an intelligent, active, and sober-minded population, especially possessing such resources, both at home and abroad, as are enjoyed by us, have evils from such a cause been long, or in any great degree, experienced.

But supposing the population of this country to be really in danger of exceeding the means of subsistence, in what manner is provision for the poor

accessory to the evil? It holds up, it is alleged, to every labouring man, the certainty of a maintenance for his family, though he himself may be unwilling and unable to provide for their subsistence. It thus gives an undue encouragement to marriage; and renders the numbers of a country greater than it is able to maintain. Now, in the first place, this objection is not against a legal provision for the poor, but against an incidental part of the system of England, by which, not only the infirm and helpless are assisted, but men in health and vigour. In the second place, the objection itself supposes that the evil of excess has not arrived; for if the people exceeded the supply of food, no assistance from the poor rates could find them maintenance. A sufficiency of food for the population must exist in the country before the poor rates can procure it. If we may judge from facts, the danger also is imaginary, and will share the fate of many other political predictions. The poor rates have existed since the time of Queen Elizabeth; and there is still enough. There is sometimes want of work, there is seldom want of food. Nay, *when the inhabitants were few, and no poor laws were in being*, scarcity of food was much more frequent, and much more severe,

than under our increasing population, and those numerous marriages which it is alleged take place in the present day, among the poor. The increase of numbers is not the evil of this part of the law of England; it is the encouragement to inactivity, and improvidence, and the unjust employment of the property of others, which are to be lamented.

The same objection might be made, with equal justice, to every other mean by which you would better the situation of the labouring classes. If there is danger of too great numbers, and this arises from the certainty of a maintenance, then whatever gives the people this certainty, must lead to the same effect. To guard against this dreaded evil, we must therefore, for a time at least, abstain from increasing the comforts of the labourer. Surely we have not yet come to a necessity like this! At least it must be allowed, that evils of so opposite a nature cannot be true of the same causes, in the same circumstances. A fountain doth not send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter. The same laws cannot obstruct marriage; lead to depopulation; high wages; and excessive selfishness—and at the same time, encourage marriage; produce a superabundant population; diminish the wages of labour;

and excite an excess of kindness and compassion. Or if it should be alleged, that some of those opposite evils may be produced by poor's rates at different times; then we must allow, that they are not connected with the principle of the law, but only with some incidental circumstances of time and place which have been attached to it. When we find men of equal talents making such contradictory averments, and with equal confidence, it is fair for us to doubt whether any of them be right; to distrust the strength of their assertions; and to view with less agitation their portentous pictures of present wretchedness and approaching ruin.

III. There are also very unjust and false views of the poor, and of the labouring classes in general, frequently presented and dwelt upon in the consideration of this subject, which are much to be deprecated. Nay, it is to be feared that even men whose speculative judgments are right, by directing their minds too frequently and strongly to the unfavourable side of the picture, contract a severity of feeling, and of practical decision, inconsistent with the general humanity and candour of their dispositions. It is frequently repeated, and seems to be considered as a principle, that, while high and generous motives operate on the upper classes of society, the

only motive which stimulates the labouring orders to activity, is the fear of want. Hence we are in danger of learning, not merely to view our fellow-creatures of this order without esteem and affection, but to encourage only the severer methods for the excitement of their industry, and to oppose every method for alleviating their distresses, which, by any possibility of consequence, might diminish the fear of starvation. Now, suppose whatever superiority you please in the higher classes, it is still certain, that the same principles and affections exist in men of every condition, and may be brought into action and power by the employment of proper means. Nay, whatever may be the unfortunate circumstances of many, for which due allowance should be made, the various motives which this class of writers would confine to one class of their fellow creatures, will be found daily operating on men of every sphere. Yes; the love of distinction, the hope of reward, the fear of shame, the sense of duty, the welfare of neighbours, and friends, and relations, are seen daily stimulating men of the lowest condition to active exertions. And, when the expectation of labour from them is not excessive, and beyond their strength, they will be seen enjoying the pleasure of peaceful industry, and of useful pursuits, as strongly, as

frequently, and as generally, as those for whom our favourable ideas are chiefly reserved. And are we to exclude from them the views, and the motives, and the feelings of Christians? And are they Christians who thus express themselves of their poorer brethren? He must have seldom indeed visited the cottage of the labouring man, who does not know, that there is under that lowly roof as often exemplified the elevating influence of Christian principle, as ever irradiated the splendid palaces of the great; and that there its power has been seen in as many affecting examples of self-denial, kindness, sympathy, and active benevolence, expressed according to their circumstances, as ever did honour to the annals of those who are justly held up to the admiration of their fellow-men. Let the good seed only be sown and cultivated with care; let the better principles only be fostered and called forth into activity, by proper motives and means; and, though the fear of want is not to be despised as a useful principle, either in them or in any other class of society, we shall find that this is not our only resort, for engaging men of any class in the exercise of their duty.

Views are often also presented of the poor which, though partially true, yet as a general description,

are cruelly unjust. It is obvious that evils may exist among a body of men, which ought to be guarded against and removed, and yet which by no means form their general character. Nay foibles and vices may prevail and characterise them, and be justly stated and exposed, yet, by being frequently and exclusively brought forward, may give a false impression of their condition, and produce all the effect, on our judgments and feelings, of falsehood and defamation. Objecting to all provision for the poor, from the idea which we entertain, that it gives encouragement to idleness and profligacy, we are sometimes led to search for proofs of our theory, and to dwell upon every example which confirms it, so long, and so frequently—that we can scarcely perceive any thing but idleness and profligacy among our brethren who are in poverty—any other cause for want and inability—or any other evil to be guarded against and removed. Hence the frequent cry is, like Pharoah's task-masters, "ye are idle, ye are idle" Under the influence of such sentiments, many look with suspicion and gloom on every harmless indulgence and comfort which a poor man enjoys with his family; expect from him severe and incessant labour; and attribute his distresses to the most unfavourable causes. Accustom-

ing themselves to associate poverty with vice, they view the poor rather as objects of disgust than of pity ; and perceive not, in the indiscriminating darkness of the shade, the marks of their virtues, and the depth of their misfortunes. Hence they repress, both in themselves and others, the sentiments of compassion. Instead of fostering the spirit of charity, and leading on to its exercise, their habits of thinking lead them only to see dangers and difficulties in every plan of benevolence ; to damp the spirit of generous exertion ; to deal only in cautions and restraints ; to be more fearful of doing too much than too little—of the virtue of charity, than of the vice of selfishness. These observations do not apply to the truth or falsehood of the general opinion which such authors maintain respecting provision for the poor, and still less to the character of individuals in private life, who agree with their general principles ; but they point out the evil and the injustice of those indiscriminating statements which are often made for the sake of effect ; the evil of directing their own minds, or the minds of others, too strongly and frequently, to one class of views respecting the labouring orders, and especially respecting the indigent. They shew the necessity laid on even good and equitable men,

to guard against such tendencies and habits of thinking, as would lead them to dwell on partial and unfavourable statements of our unfortunate fellow-creatures, and to heap opprobrium on the head of the fallen; as would add the evils of contempt and neglect to those of want and disease, and confound, in the same sentence, and the same treatment, the virtuous and the undeserving; as would prevent the rise and exercise of that compassion, which at no time has been too high, and which at all times it has been found difficult to rouse and to render powerful; and as would give power to that selfishness, and that indifference to the poor and afflicted, which in every age and place have been seen predominating over “pure and undefiled religion.”

Our experience of the ingratitude, discontent, and worthlessness of individuals, leads often to similar effects. The feelings excited on such occasions, unless carefully watched, will lead to habits of thought and of temper which will often dispose us to harsh judgments, acts of unkindness, and systems of severity. Nay, such is the weakness of human nature, even the rules of wisdom, and of precaution against deceit, by being allowed too strongly to occupy the thoughts, may give a jealous

and suspicious bias to the mind, and shut up the feelings of sympathy and kindness. Too fearful of deceit, every view of distress awakens the idea of imposture and crime. The consideration of the poor, is like the examination of a criminal. Compassion is not only suspended, but often lost, in the intellectual process of investigating; and instead of the gently-breathing sounds of commiseration at the sight of woe, are heard the loud and sharp tones of suspicion and of threatening; alas! alas! often of invective and abuse. It is necessary, in matters of charity, as well as business, particularly where the transaction is with strangers, to investigate; and an indiscriminating confidence must lead to very dangerous consequences. But the exercise of a sound judgment is very different, in both cases, from unjust suspicions, hostile and injurious prejudices, tones and looks of violence and insult, a disposition to discover evil rather than good. It is proper for us also to remember, that though it be our duty resolutely to withhold our charity from the idle, who only affect disease and inability—and that, though it be our duty also to distinguish in our charities according to previous character and life—yet that misery has itself a claim for relief, and the cry of distress, on its own account, should be heard,

independently of the worth of the sufferer; and that in various ways we can mark our respect for the good, though we allow not the prodigal to perish for hunger.

It is not under such views that the Scriptures present the poor to our minds; nor is it according to such sentiments that they direct us to exercise our charity. They delight to represent the poor as equally virtuous with other men; nay, as the peculiar objects of the compassion and care of God. They dwell on their sorrows and afflictions; and they seek to preserve an interest in their favour, not only by direct pictures of their sufferings, but by those epithets and expressions of kindness and regard, which connect them habitually in our minds with all those views which keep alive and cherish respect and compassion. They throw around the sufferer a sacredness, which even the remembrance of past misconduct is not allowed to violate. While the prodigal of every class are warned of their danger, and threatened, after a merciful forbearance, with the awful effects of divine displeasure; and while the idle and disorderly, are justly reprobated as unworthy the name of Christians, and, in their state of idleness, are excluded from Christian aid; yet even the most unworthy are, in the time of

suffering, presented to us as objects for our compassion; and we are commanded “to be merciful, as our heavenly Father is merciful, who makes his sun to shine, and his rain to fall, on even the evil and unthankful.” And with what earnestness, what frequency, what powerful motives, suited to every principle of the soul, is the relief of the indigent and helpless recommended and enjoined! No difficulties, no dangers, are brought forward to damp the spirit, and to check the exertions, of charity. They express no fear that men be too compassionate; no danger that the spirit of benevolence rise too high, or extend too widely. The spirit which they chiefly fear, is that of insensibility and selfishness; and to raise men above its influence, to guard against its power, its suggestions, its neglects, and its cruelties, is the object to which they direct their precepts, their exhortations, and their warnings.

This charity, as it is the duty and true interest of man, is the best worldly policy, especially of the rich. There are other dangers to be guarded against in society, besides the idleness or improvidence of the labourer; and there are other and more pleasing means of inspiring a spirit of well-doing, besides that of treating men with severity, and speaking of them as outcasts. When a spirit of dis-

cord and hatred is cherished, all the blessings are lost, which mildness, and benevolence, and pity, diffuse through every department of human life; the miseries of selfishness prevail; the attachments of country are destroyed; acts of vengeance and ill-will, unrestrained by any respect and love, are perpetrated; and the bands by which society is maintained are violently broken and thrown away. Mutual kindness and respect, on the other hand, produce union. Habits of esteem and affection, render obedience to authority pleasing and uniform, and preserve from that unsettledness, and desertion of duty, which irritation, regardlessness, and painful feelings, inevitably produce. Desirous of approbation, happy in a state of favour and friendship with those around them, and assured that they shall not be deserted in the day of misfortune, men are industrious from choice, from the experience of present happiness, and the hope of its continuance, and its increase. A salutary influence over their minds also is maintained; and a variety of springs of action are easily touched, which stimulate them to perseverance in the duties of their station. Those men err exceedingly in their policy, who take not into their calculations the power of the higher and more generous principles of human na-

ture ; and employ only the ruder and baser passions, for the management and direction of intellectual and moral beings.

IV. The poor are, strictly speaking, persons who want the necessaries of life. These may be persons who are able to supply their necessities by labour, but are unwilling ; or they may be persons who are able and willing to labour, but, from the vicissitudes of trade, dearth of provision, and other temporary circumstances, cannot find employment which is adequate to their support ; or they may be persons who join to poverty such feebleness of body, or of mind, as render them unable to provide a maintenance for themselves.

The first, it is obvious, are not entitled to receive the assistance of charity. They are able to supply their own wants, if they choose ; and to assist them, is to give a direct encouragement to idleness and dissipation.—The second class of persons are in a different condition. Unfortunate circumstances have deprived them of the power to supply their necessities by their own exertions. While these circumstances continue, they must necessarily depend on the assistance of others. But this dependence continues no longer than the circumstances which occasioned it. They require only aid upon

an occasional emergency; the occurrence of which points out the need and the time for friendly interposition. When the emergency has passed away, the assistance of others is no longer requisite, and no longer should be sought or afforded. In such cases, the kind of aid, the quarter from which it should come, the extent to which it should be given, or the persons by whom it should be administered, must greatly depend on the nature and extent of the evil, and the circumstances of the place where it exists. And, probably, it were best to consider these as extreme cases, not previously to be provided for by law, but to be decided upon by themselves, and at the time in which they take place, by those who have it in their power to ascertain the evil, and to apply the most suitable remedy.—The third class alone I consider as properly the poor; persons who are at once indigent, helpless, and weak. These are the persons whom the law chiefly contemplated, in its provision for aid; and concerning these is properly the question, whether a *legal provision* should be made.

The causes of pauperism are not difficult to discover. They have been frequently pointed out; and, in particular, by the late Dr. Macfarlane, in his En-

quiries, in a very full and dispassionate manner. Recurrence to them is not in general so necessary for information, as for impression. Sometimes, too, particular causes receive an undue importance; while others, which should chiefly occupy our thoughts, are little considered and appreciated.

Imprudence, ignorance, idleness, extravagance, and profligacy, are, without doubt, frequent causes of pauperism. Weak and imprudent persons bring on themselves difficulties and misfortunes; the ignorant are frequently insensible to their duty and interest, and unfit for profitable labour; the slothful and unsettled neglect the opportunities of providing for their present and future wants; and the extravagant squander, on expensive pleasures, the gains which they have acquired. But the evils which attend such characters are few and trivial, drops in the ocean, compared with those of profligacy. This combines in itself imprudence, and idleness, and extravagance, in their worst forms and highest degree; and to these, it joins feebleness of body and of mind, disinclination and inability to labour, often irremediable disease, and untimely death. The numbers of those who are merely thoughtless, and slothful, and unsettled, are few, I fear, compared with the extravagant and dissolute. The

defect of their characters is also more easily cured ; and the immediate experience of evil, joined to the wisdom of maturer years, changes often the thoughtless and unsettled youth, into a prudent and industrious man. But what change do ills and years produce on the debauched, the dissolute, and unprincipled ? They gratify their raging passions, and follow their wretched courses, in the face of dangers, and in defiance of every consequence. So far as personal conduct is concerned, I apprehend, that profligacy of manners is the great cause of pauperism which is to be dreaded. Where there is a sense of religion, and of duty, some purity of manners, and family affection, other personal causes will operate feebly, and for a short period. But here is a disease, deep rooted and vital, difficult to be eradicated, growing with age, rapid in its progress, subduing not only its immediate victims, but infecting with deadly poison the whole atmosphere, and every object around it. To prevent, to counteract, to root out this evil, is the great object to which every exertion should be directed. All plans, all attempts, which look not to this chiefly, are mere nibbling at trifles, cutting down a few weeds on the surface, while the great evil is operating with undiminished malignancy, and all the land lies

sour and waste, unproductive, and unwholesome. In proportion as the character and habits of a people are under the direction of Christian principles, will they be sober, industrious, and faithful in all the relative duties of life. Yet after all our exertions, we must still expect to meet with the imprudencies, follies, and sins, of human beings; we must calculate on a portion of evil from this quarter, for which we must provide. And in making this provision, it is fair for us to remember, that those who have brought poverty on themselves are of very different degrees of guilt, and have often been placed in circumstances fitted strongly to awaken Christian compassion. It is fair, in particular, for the wealthy to remember, how much they themselves have contributed to the evils which have overwhelmed the unhappy sufferers; and how many of the same follies, and vices, they and their friends have in an equal degree committed; though, by a happier lot, they have been saved from experiencing the same degree of wretchedness.

But while personal misconduct leads often to that poverty, and disease, which render their unhappy victim a dependent on the charity of his fellow-creatures; it ought never to be from our

thoughts, that want, and weakness, and suffering, are, in many cases also, the necessary result of the present state of human beings, and are the lot of multitudes who cannot be charged with any peculiar degree of negligence or depravity; nay, of many who have been distinguished through life for the faithful discharge of their duties.

Unexpected diseases and calamities overtake often the most industrious and virtuous persons, and disable them for labour, before they could with the most careful economy provide against the evil day. These are necessarily reduced to poverty, and thrown on the aid of their fellow-creatures for support. Persons of this description also have often numerous and helpless children, who depended on their parent for maintenance, and who must therefore suffer with him. How many families lose their parents, by unexpected and untimely deaths, before it was possible that any provision could be made for their support! And do not unavoidable losses, which by labouring men can seldom be repaired, overtake the most prudent, through the fault of other men? Age and desolateness, feebleness and grievous sufferings, joined to an utter destitution of every mean, not merely of comfort, but of life, are likewise not unfrequently the lot of very deserving citizens. They have rear-

ed a family of virtuous children, to whom they looked in old age for aid and consolation; but these have died before their parents, and left them destitute. Misfortunes may have also overtaken the aged sufferers, and deprived them of the little which they had saved of their hard-won gains. Perhaps they never were in circumstances, which allowed them to provide a fund, adequate to their support under the infirmities of life. If we consider, that the ordinary price of labour affords little more than a subsistence to a labouring man and his family; if we join to this consideration, the interruptions and expences of sickness overtaking himself, his wife, and his children; and add the expences of lodging, and clothing, and educating young persons, with the care becoming a virtuous parent,—we shall perceive, that perhaps the average number of labouring men can seldom provide enough for their maintenance in old age, even although, in the severity of our calculations, we exclude from them all the little comforts and indulgences of which it is hard that they should not have a portion; and though we require from them a degree of wisdom and of caution, which are seldom to be expected in the great mass of human beings. One class of persons I have often contemplated with pity, for their privations and

ill-requited labour, mingled with respect for their quiet and patient virtue—the virtuous daughters of respectable tradesmen, seeking in vain, by the most continued and persevering labours, to procure the supply of their few and humble wants. This is a case which frequently occurs in our populous cities. Unfitted by nature for coarse and laborious services, they labour in retirement from the earliest to the latest hours, without being able to gain more than a scanty subsistence. Their sedentary life, the nature of their occupations, their confined dwellings, spare diet, with constitutions originally delicate, bring on them frequently decay of sight, nervous diseases, and incapacity for labour, even in the middle season of life, and leave them the helpless prey of want and suffering. And yet, perhaps, pitiable as is the case of this most deserving class of persons, still more pitiable is that of an old and helpless man, who has survived his children, and all who could have attended him in his desolate and dreary solitude. He is not only in want, but without those attentions which his helplessness requires, and which a female can in some degree herself supply. Sitting, with his shrivelled hands over a few dying embers, which alone mark his dwelling for the residence of a human being; or lying on a bed,

scarcely raised above the damp floor of his wretched hovel—he passes by himself his dreary hours. Perhaps the agony of bodily pain is added to his sufferings ; and, with the groans which these extort, you may hear the complaints of a mind wounded by ingratitude and neglect, or the still more affecting voice of quiet and patient resignation, waiting with submission, but with earnest desire, for the hour of his change.

When we consider that this may be the case of many an industrious citizen, affectionate parent, and pious Christian, after a long life of useful labour ; who does not perceive that for such persons, some provision should be made, some comfort should be afforded, some attention and care with tenderness administered ? Who does not perceive that such persons should be saved every possible humiliation ? that, from their virtues, as well as sufferings, they have acquired a title to respect ; nay, that a sacred duty and debt of honour and of justice, are devolved on that society and country of which they were members, and who have enjoyed the benefit of their labours, to extend to them assistance ? An aged man, who has long exercised his talents and powers in a country or a neighbourhood, has contributed his part, in his own place, for the advancement of

the general good. He has acquired a claim, more than the general claim of humanity, to a portion of the blessings of that society of which he has long formed a part—to the welfare of which, by his virtuous labours, he had long contributed—to the general amount even of whose present comforts he has added his share. But on his neighbourhood—on those for whom, and with whom, he had laboured—on the friends of his better days, and on their descendants—this duty, it is obvious, is especially laid. Nor let such men be treated as a degraded order of our fellow-creatures; or exposed to the contemptuous insolence of the giddy or the severe. There is a disgraceful, but there is also an honourable poverty. To be indigent and infirm—to require, and to receive the aid of the public—are only degrading when they have been produced by misconduct. To be idle, imprudent, extravagant, or dissolute, is disgraceful; to destroy health by folly or vice is disgraceful; to seek support from others, when we are able by honest labour to support ourselves, is disgraceful: but it is not disgraceful to meet with misfortune, and still less to suffer, or become old and infirm, in a course of well-doing. To receive public aid in such a case degrades no man, nor his family: nor should even the appearance of disrespect, and

humiliation, be added to the evils which already have overtaken them. Great men who have been visited with misfortunes, have often received from public munificence, besides the ordinary provision made for their services, such a provision as their circumstances demanded; or when cut off in the middle of their days, their families have become the children of the nation, and received, on account of their fathers, a generous support. The aid is justly considered both honourable to those who conferred, and to those who received it. Nor can the consideration that the unworthy are receiving assistance from the same beneficent source, attach dishonour to the character of those who have merited well of their country. Never should it be forgotten, that in every state and class of society, a virtuous man should always be respected. The industrious citizen who, by his own exertions and good conduct, has reared a virtuous family, and provided also a competency for his maintenance in old age, deserves the highest honours: but he who, in a course of virtuous conduct, has met with a harder fate, and in the season of helplessness is left without support, is entitled to receive, with the relief of misery, the respect also due to virtue and misfortune, and at least to have extended over him the shield of public

protection, to screen him from the insults of thoughtless levity, or of unfeeling arrogance.

While such general causes must produce poor persons in every country, and in every age, it must be mentioned, that circumstances of an accidental or adventitious nature frequently arise, and greatly add to the general evil. Some of these extend to a whole country; such as war, famine, national disasters, stagnation of trade. Others are peculiar to some district of country, and are of a temporary order; such as the fall of some branch of manufacture, epidemic disease, the failure or death of some distinguished individuals. Some again are of a local, but not of a temporary kind; such as the evils of great cities, manufactories, and public works—unhealthy occupations, damp and airless dwellings, crowded population, neglect of superintendence, of education, and of religious instruction, and that general corruption of manners for which great cities, particular countries, places, and professions, and in general all indiscriminate collections of persons, are notorious. These evils may be increased or diminished, according to the wisdom and virtue exercised by rulers, masters, or individuals: yet it is to be feared, that a certain portion of them must be expected, and must be calculated upon to take place, in

every country and period. Still, however, it is one of the highest duties incumbent on every man, according as God has given him opportunity, to use every proper mean to lessen or remove them; not merely with a view to the reduction of the maintenance of the poor, but for the sake of the general happiness and welfare of our fellow-creatures.

Among these adventitious causes, I beg leave to fix the attention on some, which, especially by the wealthy, are too apt to be overlooked. There are causes of pauperism which arise from the rich; the consideration of which should soften our severity in considering the case of the poor, and dispose us more readily to afford them relief. The rich are not exempted themselves from that idleness and extravagance, irreligion and profligacy, which produce such havock among all classes; and, through these, they have contributed both to corrupt the general manners, and to ruin individuals. I call upon our rulers and statesmen, our landed proprietors, merchants, manufacturers, and masters of trades, our literary men, nay, our instructors of youth, to consider—what example of attention to religious principles, and ordinances, and duties, they had for many years given. I ask them to consider if great numbers, in some quarters of the country at least,

had not treated all religious duties with open neglect—if the most sacred institutions had not often been openly violated and profaned—if irreligious and impious principles, nay, principles subversive of the foundation of the most ordinary morals, had not been by many of them, for a long period, professed, promulgated, wherever they lived and spake, continually disseminated! Let them not be surprised, if they should now see some portion of the fruit of their own conduct appearing among the people. They have long been scattering the seed, and breaking down the soil, and at last they have succeeded. O! wretched politicians! short-sighted philosophers! swollen with vanity and contempt of their fellow-creatures, but ignorant of true wisdom, and of the true good of men! They undermine the foundation of the building, and are surprised that it should fall in pieces. They take down the fences of the land, and wonder that the wild beasts of the field should overrun it. They introduce the wolf into the fold, and then ask how the flock should be wasted and destroyed. And who that has lived in great cities does not know, that besides these effects on general manners, a great portion of the poverty and dissoluteness of the people, arises directly from the vices of rich individuals?

Confine your attention only to the prevalence of seduction and debauchery, and their consequent vices of drunkenness, theft, every species of disorder, and neglect of every duty. By whom were these vices introduced; by whom are they still continued? Nor does the evil rest with the ruined individuals. They again corrupt others. Young persons of both sexes are involved in the lowest vice, when they can scarcely distinguish betwixt good and evil. By their wretched associates, and by their own wretched passions, they are engaged in a course of disorders and crimes, from which no admonition, no threatening, no punishment, can prevent them. And should they live to maturity, what is to be the example, the training, the education, given to their children? But I cannot pursue the odious subject. Well may those who have been accessory to such a state of things, join in the sentiment of the vain and unprincipled Frederick, who, in the last years of his life, expressed, but without avail, his earnest wish, that he could restore his people to those principles, and those habits, in which he had found them; and which he and his associates had laboured through life to destroy.

And is it not right for the wealthier orders to consider, that it is in providing for their luxuries,

executing their plans, the labouring classes engage in those unhealthy employments and hazardous undertakings, which expose them to sickness and calamities, reduce them to poverty, and unfit them for labour; not unfrequently, deprive them of life, and their families of parents to educate and support them? That very excess of labour and exertion, to which prosperous times frequently stimulate the labourer or artizan, becomes often a cause, I am persuaded, of poverty and disease, nay, of unsettled and profligate courses. When young persons are engaged in occupations unsuited to their years and strength, besides being uneducated, they feel their employments so fatiguing and painful, that they form no habits of industry; their minds revolt at their employments, nay, acquire a dislike, which every day increases, to that confinement, order, and regular labour, to which they have been injudiciously subjected. When persons of riper years are induced to make uncommon efforts, effects also naturally take place which are unfavourable to their morals and industry. The strength necessary for great exertions they maintain by dangerous cordials. When the work is over, they seek in like manner to relieve their exhausted spirits by society and strong drink; or, fatigued, they sink, during a long sea-

son, into a state of indolence and relaxation. The high wages obtained, produce also a natural elation of mind; and when the means of enjoyment are possessed, by men reposing from toil, it is not difficult to perceive how strong is the temptation to indulgence. And how frequently, by such exertions, is the strength of the body enfeebled, and the most fatal diseases contracted? how many are unfitted for all employment—brought down to the grave in the very vigour of their days! It is moderate and regular employment which forms the habit of industry, and secures to mankind its advantages. And whatever, in the condition of any people, tends to introduce irregularity of exertion, breaks that invaluable habit, and robs them of the health, and plenty, and sobriety, which it tends to ensure.—The uncomfortable dwellings provided in great towns for labouring men, destroy also not only their health, but, as we have noticed in our Remarks on Prisons, are most injurious to their morals. While, by the increase of their numbers, beyond the provision made for the education and religious instruction of them and their families, they are left in the most deplorable want of the great means of their temporal and eternal good, and are indeed as “sheep wandering without a shepherd.” Such views, while they shew the

causes of the evil, and the mode of their operation, shew also the nature of the remedies, and of their application. They point out, not the cure of pauperism, for that cannot be effected, but in what manner the evil may be diminished, and kept from increasing; in what manner, in many instances, it may be prevented, and, in many, may be mitigated. The poor, however, must be still in the land. Physicians may do much good, but diseases and death must still exist among the race of man.

V. Now for the relief of the poor, thus necessarily existing in every country, consisting, as we have seen, of various characters and ages, in a state of distress, arising from the combination of want, and inability to labour for their support, should any public provision be made? or should they be left entirely to the casual charity of individuals? If, in addition to the operation of individual compassion, some public measure should be framed for their assistance, of what nature should it be? should it be entirely voluntary, or aided and directed by public authority?

In considering these questions, I suppose it to be allowed, that helpless children, diseased, and aged, fellow-citizens, are not to be left to perish with cold and hunger, but that some relief ought to be granted

to them—some charge to be taken of them—some means employed, not only to preserve them in life, but to alleviate their misery. Let us suppose that their subsistence, relief, and comforts, are left entirely to the private charity of individuals. In what manner are their cases, particularly in populous and extensive cities, to be known to such a number as is necessary to supply the want of every needy family and individual? There are no public persons whose office it is to superintend particular districts, to inquire into the state of individuals, or to whom individuals might apply. The discovery of every poor person's case must therefore be left to accident; or they must apply by themselves, or their friends, to all persons who can give them relief—in other words, *they must beg*. In such a state of matters, the modest and humble must often be overlooked; and the sick and diseased, the aged and infirm, the helpless orphan and child, unable to travel far from their homes in search of assistance, and often not knowing to whom they should apply, must be left destitute and neglected. Nay, make the impossible supposition, that every case of helplessness was made known in our great cities to a sufficient number of wealthy individuals—private charity would still be found a most inadequate and irregular source of supply, and

often stopping and dried up at the season when it was most needed. The aid afforded to the poor and afflicted requires to be regular and continued. But how few of those who are best able to afford them aid, will inquire into their cases with the necessary frequency ! How many will grudge even the first assistance—how many will wholly decline the application—how many, engaged in the pursuits of pleasure, and of business, selfish, giddy, and bustling, will either wholly forget to make any succeeding enquiry, or will persuade themselves that they have neither leisure nor opportunity for the duty ? What then will be the case of the poor when their numbers are great, their necessities various, requiring frequent supply, and continued, and expensive attentions ? Those who know how difficult it is to preserve alive a spirit of extensive charity, even among the well-disposed ; how difficult, after the first impulse of feeling is over, and ordinary thoughts and objects recover their ascendancy, to secure a regular and adequate supply for the same objects during any lengthened period ; how narrow daily becomes the circle ; how many the refusals and excuses, even when direct applications, by the most respectable persons, are made—they will be able to estimate, how precarious would be the voluntary supply, from

the charity of individuals, to a numerous poor, requiring regular and extensive assistance; especially to those who, being confined by infirmity or disease, were unable to apply for themselves, or to vary the scene, and enlarge the field, of their miserable supplications. The impudent, the healthy and undeserving, might live in luxury by this system of beggary—the humble, the decent, the sick, the diseased, the aged sufferers, would be often left to perish neglected on their bed of straw, wanting every comfort, and every necessary, in dwellings infinitely worse than the kennels, which their rich and gay fellow-creatures around them have provided for their dogs.

Were all the individuals of a nation Christians, in the genuine sense of the expression; were the sense of duty, and the principles of benevolence and compassion, very powerful in every man, or not opposed by other still more powerful principles and habits; were the greatest numbers not indolent, or languid, or selfish, or thoughtless and giddy, or immersed in the pursuits of amusement, of literature, or the necessary and habitual occupations of business; and was there among these, comparatively innocent persons, no considerable mixture of proud and arrogant, passionate and cruel, extravagant, dissolute, or ava-

ricious, characters—were the generality of men, such as they ought to be in disposition, and such as we might wish them to be in their pursuits and condition—the poor might be left to take their chance amidst the general bustle, and would probably be provided for, and generally cared for, amongst the great numbers who would then feel the inclination, and enjoy the opportunity, to give attention to their wants, to search out and examine into their real situation. Were mankind in such a state, and of such a character—government, legislature, laws, and authority, would be, in a great degree unnecessary, not only for this, but for any purpose; for it is from the weakness, and corruption, and passions, of mankind, that almost all the regulations of kingdoms, societies, and cities, take their rise. But we are arrived at no such perfect state: and though the influence of Christianity has done much, its power over the great mass of men is still comparatively feeble. Nay, were we to make the supposition that all men were Christians in the best sense of the expression, it might be doubted whether general regulations, and allotments, and superintendents, would not, in many cases, still be necessary; to guard, on the one hand, against the dangers of neglect, and on the other hand, of improper interruptions in the necessary con-

cerns and pursuits of human life. Even in the first and most benevolent period of Christianity, when, from the general feeling of kindness which prevailed, the disciples were emphatically said "to have all things common," complaints were made by the Grecians "that their widows were neglected in the daily ministration;" and the Apostles found it necessary to require, that some special persons should be selected, whom they might "appoint over this business."

Some of the adversaries of public and regular provision for the poor, give very pompous statements of the natural benevolence and compassion of mankind; and to the unassisted operation of these they affirm the relief of the helpless may safely be trusted. Compassion, we have no inclination to deny, is an original and gracious principle of our nature, and in its lowest degree, and in the most degraded condition of humanity, produces very important benefits to man. But if from this we are to argue, that it will produce of itself, in every individual, all the effect necessary to human virtue and happiness; that it is not often weak, irregular, and overwhelmed by other predominating passions, or perverting and counteracting circumstances; that it requires no auxiliary power, to strengthen the principle, and to rescue it from the weight and entanglements of

other passions, or to stimulate and direct its operations, or to guard against its weakness, its irregularities, its decays, and perversions—we then assert opinions, not only directly opposite to every principle of Christianity, but to the history of men in every age and state of society, and to the experience and observation of every day of our existence upon earth. Compassion, in the generality of men, is a languid and inoperative principle, requiring continually to be roused and stimulated ; it is also transient and irregular ; and is daily overcome by a thousand circumstances, even when it is strengthened by the most powerful motives, nay, assisted by the strongest feelings and affections of our nature. We require not to seek for examples of this in past ages, and in heathen nations. They exist among ourselves, and among persons of every class in society. What then is the power of this principle, so much relied upon, when it is unaided by other principles, and unimpelled by any extraordinary motives ; when it is counteracted by the circumstances, the general habits, and the passions of men ; when it is drowned in the forgetfulness of pleasure and of business ; when its objects are seldom recalled to their recollection, do not cross their ordinary

path, nor mingle with their ordinary ideas and pursuits?

And may not distresses of the severest order often overtake the poor, in districts even of this kingdom, where no men of opulence reside, and where public provision alone could secure relief to the destitute? Are there not many parishes, both in the country and in towns, whose inhabitants are chiefly of the labouring classes, where the numbers of the poor must be great, and those who are able to relieve them must be few? In what manner are the poor in such places to be maintained? Are they to be left in want? Or is it right that the burden should be permitted to fall on those who can spare but little without great inconvenience; while those who are wealthy, and have the chief property in the suffering district, contribute nothing? Nay, may not cases occur in such districts of general distress—stagnation of trade—dearth of provisions—epidemic diseases? The number of the poor and afflicted increase, and in the same proportion the ability to relieve them has diminished. Look to the state of Ireland, and observe how many places are in such circumstances; and how great is the degree of wretchedness which often prevails among the poor

inhabitants. Imagination can scarcely exceed in painting the misery which at times overtake particular districts of that kingdom—where no kind and pious superintendents are provided to take charge of the interests of the destitute, inquire into their condition, and provide the means of relief—where they are left to the chances of private charity, the compassion of a giddy and thoughtless world—or where those on whom, from their rank and circumstances, the duty of assisting them chiefly devolves, live at too great a distance to hear the cry of want, or the feeble groans of age, disease, and helpless wretchedness.

Observe also what inequality of allotment, and of charitable aid, must on this plan necessarily take place; and how certainly the most unworthy will be supplied beyond their necessities, while the poor of a better order are in danger of want. The least deserving, and the least necessitous, will, in general, be most forward to make known their wants; to which will frequently be added all those artful means, which are most likely to excite compassion. Even though they deceived you not by false representations, they would gain more than was their due, by the number and extent of their applications. Various persons, ignorant of one another, would contribute liberally to the same case; and the portion

which should have been allotted to some humble sufferer, is swallowed up by the more forward and artful.

And how dreadful are the effects of such a system, on the moral habits and character of the poor and their families ! When the poor are thus not only tempted, but necessitated, to beg, the idle and fraudulent are encouraged to practise their plans of deceit, and the more virtuous are exposed to the strongest temptations. It is natural for persons under the pressure of want, to describe strongly their case, and to rise from the exaggerations of feeling, to the addition of such circumstances as may give effect to their entreaties. Think too of the idle, wandering, and disorderly habits, which a business of this kind must naturally produce. A widow sends out her children to beg for themselves, and their younger brothers. The modest feeling of youth is destroyed—the habit of lying and of meanness is taught—an aversion to regular industry is formed—education is neglected—every good principle is lost, and they become a prey to utter depravity. Or the mother herself engages in the same wretched and humiliating pursuit. Her children are left neglected, without the superintendence and direction of a parent ; and she becomes familiarized with the wandering and unsettled life on

which she has entered, and loses every better feeling in a life of idleness and vice. Compare this picture, with the mother of a family bringing up her children in humble and sober industry, keeping them around her, enabled to live in the midst of them by a timely and regular assistance, afforded through one to whom her interests are entrusted, and to whose sympathy and care she can look with some assurance in the day of misfortune. It is still but the dinner of herbs, and the bread of sorrow that she with her little ones must eat; but affection, resignation, and faith, and hope, diffuse peace through her humble dwelling, and support her in a patient continuance in well-doing.—And is it nothing to force the virtuous to a public and general exposure of their wants; to endure the humiliations of beggary, the neglects of the thoughtless, the scorn of the insolent, the suspicions of the jealous, and the invectives of the cruel and the selfish! How many would feel it less painful to die, than to pass the last and wearied years of life in the continued misery of such scenes—would rather be left, like the aged slaves of the cruel Romans, or like the wretched parents of the callous Indians, to perish by themselves in some secret solitude, undisturbed by the sight or the voice of their fellow-creatures!

To guard against such evils, an order of men was appointed, as we have seen, by divine authority, in the church of Christ, who should take charge of the interests of the poor, inquire into their condition, and distribute to every one according as he had need. Funds for this purpose were, by various means, provided by the public authority of the church. That the poor should not be left to the casual charity of individuals, but that some public provision should be made for them, and some public persons appointed to take special charge of their interests, is both sanctioned and appointed by apostolic authority. And I conceive, that this parental superintendence and care of those, who could not take care of themselves, is one among the many evidences of the divine spirit of Christianity. The authority and care of the church could, however, it is evident, extend at that period only over its own members. But it presented a principle and general sentiment, which might be easily extended and followed among wider communities. And when nations became Christian, their governors considered themselves as acting according to the Christian spirit, and the soundest principles of national policy, when they recommended and encouraged a similar charge of the poor among their subjects; and when

their plans were inadequate, enforced it by the authority of law.

Every good man will allow, that evils so fatal to the well-being and morals of our fellow-subjects, as those we have been considering, it should be the object both of individuals and of the state, to prevent; unless it appears that greater evils shall result from every plan for this purpose. It is surely the duty and interest, not only of individuals, but of states, to promote the happiness and morals of all classes of the people; and to preserve, as much as possible, their subjects from suffering under the most dreadful incidents of humanity. And, without entering into abstract questions, it seems to be particularly necessary, that the labouring classes, who are more exposed to injury, and with less power of redress, should receive the special protection and care of government and law; that the incidental evils which follow the best general laws, should be softened and counteracted, and their worst consequences, as far as is compatible with other interests, prevented from falling with undue pressure on any particular class of the community; that every man should contribute for this purpose, according to his stake in the community, the benefits which he enjoys from these laws, and the condi-

tion in society which he holds ; that in all cases this should be viewed as a debt due to our common nature, and to our relation as fellow-subjects, and in many cases as a debt of public gratitude and justice. On such principles, different states have considered it as their duty to promote various public measures for the care and relief of the destitute ; and the legislatures, particularly of England and Scotland, after other means had failed, have considered it proper to enforce the care of this helpless part of the community, by the authority of law. In England, as we have seen, the object is pursued by the appointment of a direct and immediate assessment in every parish—in Scotland, by an assessment after certain other means have proved to be ineffectual.

Various measures may be formed by private individuals, and particular communities, respecting the poor, which may produce very important effects ; and may deserve the encouragement and sanction of the legislature. These will, however, be found, in general, most useful in promoting some special charitable object ; after we have guarded against the first and great evil of absolute want, the relief of which admits not of delay, and ought not to depend upon accidental and temporary circumstances. The funds for the supply of want,

arising from local associations, may be often inadequate; and no certain means may be afforded of raising them to meet the exigency. Demands on the contributions of individuals which are considerable and constant, are yielded to with reluctance, and, at length, very frequently, and by great numbers, are declined. The range of contributors becomes daily more confined; and among these will be found many, who, from circumstances, humour, the state of their spirits, and often very trifling occurrences, will seek excuses to evade their expected contribution. The benevolent individuals who apply for their assistance, are treated as officious, and find the task which they have undertaken both irksome and laborious; and, after the first impulse of zeal, they leave the ungracious task of application to some inferior persons, whose calls produce small effect on unwilling minds. The poor are neglected, or their wants are inadequately supplied. The funds inadequate as they are, proceed from a few benevolent individuals. These are burdened, not only beyond their proportion, for an object in which all are interested, and in which all should take their share, but frequently, from a charitable necessity, beyond their strength, or what their judgments tell them to be suited to their condition—obliged to advance, not

only their own portion, but that of the selfish, the inconsiderate, the worldly, the vain, and extravagant, and of all the numerous tribe of wealthy individuals who care for none of these things. And how many are the districts and places in which no such beneficent associations would at all be formed, and the poor be left wholly to the precarious and niggardly boon of private charity? How many are the places and districts in which not only disposition, but ability, would be wanting; from the general poverty of the inhabitants, and the absence and the carelessness of those wealthy proprietors, to whom the duty of aiding the destitute particularly belonged?

Collections made at churches will also, from similar causes and local circumstances, be found frequently inadequate; even with all the advantages of a resident and faithful minister, of pious and careful superintendents, set apart to the charge of the poor by public and sacred authority. They are also attended necessarily with this disadvantage, that those persons who attend not church, among whom are frequently the most wealthy, bear not their share in the expence of an object of public importance, and to which they, above others, should contribute. By reiterated and impressive exhortations, good men may, for a season, be excited to bear the weight; while the profane, the avaricious, and unfeeling,

touch not the burden with one of their fingers. But even these means are found at last inadequate, in many instances, to their object; and nothing remains but a fair and equitable ASSESSMENT laid on all classes and individuals, according to their ability. In such cases it is unnecessary to discuss whether assessments or collections (in some respects voluntary, though in many instances, where there is no assessment, urged on the humane by a necessity which scarcely allows a choice,) be abstractly the best mode of raising funds to supply the wants of the destitute. Assessments have become necessary, because the other mode is ineffectual. Yet as the views presented of assessments are so unjust, and the prejudices endeavoured to be raised against them so strong, as to threaten their abolition in some countries and places, and to prevent their adoption in others, it becomes necessary to give them a more particular consideration.

I observe, therefore, that in small country parishes, where the people are regular in their attendance at church, and where the poor are few in number, collections, aided by other very simple means, and especially by the kindness of neighbours, who have known long and intimately every poor inhabitant, may serve every necessary purpose. But as a general

measure of protection to the destitute, they have been by experiment and fact proved to be insufficient, as well as unequal. In England, before legal assessments were appointed, "the church wardens, or other substantial inhabitants, were ordained to make collections for them with boxes on Sundays, and otherwise, by their discretions. And the minister was to take all opportunities to exhort and stir up the people to be bountiful. Then the minister, after the gospel (reading) every Sunday was especially to exhort the parishioners to a liberal contribution. Next, the collectors for the poor, on a certain Sunday on every year, immediately after divine service, were to take down in writing what every person was willing to give weekly for the ensuing year; if any should be obstinate and refuse, various means were appointed to be used to persuade him." All these methods having proved ineffectual, and not till then, legal assessments were ordained by Parliament to be made, in the manner which we have stated. In Scotland the proof is still more complete. Assessments are not adopted, in any instance, till other means have failed, and other funds are exhausted. Every case of assessment in this country, therefore, is a proof of their necessity. The minister and elders have, when requisite, the power

of requiring the heritors of their parish to join with them in fixing an assessment; but a strong interest disposes the heritors to weigh well the exigency, and to try as long as possible the more ordinary means. Nor is it an objection to this statement, that the people would have given larger collections, had they not known that an assessment might be resorted to. For the practice of collections was so general and habitual, that till lately the law of assessment was scarcely known or thought of by the people; and the clergy, who had, in a great degree, both the knowledge and the power of it, from various causes, avoided its adoption, till forced by the failure of other means.

I state, farther, in proof of this necessity, the condition of the poor in those countries where legal assessments have not been adopted. In Ireland, the necessity has been proved by a variety of facts. "The corporation for the relief of poor in the city of Dublin," it is stated in the history of that city, "was instituted by virtue of an act of Parliament. Their efforts were at first attended with success, and voluntary contributions flowed in so largely, that the nuisance of beggary, grievous beyond the experience of other great cities, was suppressed. But *this success was of*

temporary duration; the first fervour soon subsided; and the Parliament of Ireland was obliged to grant the annual sum of L.4000 for the support of the House of Industry." This is in addition to other charitable institutions, which receive Parliamentary aid, and to the Alm-houses of different parishes supported by collections, contributions, or donations.

In other places of Ireland, where no assessments exist, the state of the poor is so dreadful, that I am almost afraid to relate the accounts which have been given of the wretchedness and neglect which they experience!

The law of assessment is then necessary in order to secure an adequate and steady relief to the poor, under all the different and varying circumstances of places and countries. It is a mode of relief also, where it is required, which is the most easy and equal; and which leaves to the benevolent a *larger disposable fund of charity for other compassionate and important objects.* Without this, when any thing at all is done, various means of the most irksome and painful nature, which consume often to little purpose much valuable time, are obliged to be employed by compassionate individuals, whose hearts are harrowed with the sight of distress which they are unable

to relieve; and after all their exertions, the sums procured are both too scanty, and very uncertain and irregular. In the meantime, vast numbers of those to whom this public duty chiefly belongs, contribute nothing. The funds of the humane are exhausted in doing that which others ought to do; and little is left to contribute to the comfort of the deserving, or to such objects of private benevolence and public usefulness, which their dispositions would lead them to encourage and support. By an assessment, every man contributes, according to a general rule, his fair proportion. The necessary sum is raised, without embarrassment, or the undue consumption of the time and labour of worthy individuals. Every man bearing his fair proportion, the demand from each individual is also comparatively small; and the sum allotted by good men to the purposes of benevolence, is not spent in paying the debt due to society by other men—and men often more able than themselves. Nor do the poor feel the advantage of such a law, by the direct relief only which it affords. There is a heavy weight of anxious care often removed from a widowed mother's mind, by the assurance that she and her children shall not be left wholly destitute; that the children of their worthy father shall not be forced to beg for a bit of bread. There is a

rest, and quietness of mind, produced by such a thought, which not only gives her comfort, but enables her to labour for their subsistence and well-being with more constancy and strength. May I be permitted to add, that it is a mean of leading the rich to take a greater interest in the welfare of labouring men ; and that it interposes a shield of protection betwixt those in a humble condition, and the insolent abuse of power. While it does not interfere with the motives to respectful and proper conduct, which the interests both of society and of individuals strongly enforce; it takes away the temptation, which the direst necessity presents, of submitting to contumely, or of stooping to meanness and guilt, from an entire dependence on the rich in the day of sickness, of age, or misfortune. It guards against a mean and subjected spirit—secures a certain degree of independence of mind, which, when it is not accompanied with pride and self-sufficiency, is friendly to an affectionate and generous disposition. Whatever tends to mutual respect, tends also to unite the different ranks of society more closely and firmly to one another. Nor is it of small moment, that thus the love of their native land, and greater contentment with their condition, are more strongly cherished, and that a deeper interest is inspired in the prosperity of that

country, and of those orders and institutions, on which depend their own resources and support in the season of calamity. I know nothing more calculated to awaken respect and gratitude in a labouring man than to know, that his wealthy fellow-subjects have voluntarily bound themselves by law to look after the poor in the time of misfortune. It is the pledge and declaration of the nation in his favour, which at once manifests their regard, and presents to him an object of confidence in the hour of need. There is no man who has not mingled much with the labouring classes, can sufficiently estimate the comfort which a poor person feels in knowing, that he has his minister and elder for his friends; and that these affectionate guardians will not forsake him and his children, should they ever become destitute.

Let us now consider some of the EVILS which have been affirmed to attend the law of ASSESSMENT. We have already noticed the exaggerated and contradictory statements which have been made on this subject; and particularly the practice of confounding with the principle of assessment, those evils which arise from a particular system, and an injudicious management. Let us confine our attention, therefore, to those objections which are supposed to belong to the very nature of a legal assessment and super-

intendence, provided for the relief and protection of the poor.

1. It is alleged that an assessment is destructive of private charity. When we are compelled to give, the principle of compassion, it is said, is not exercised, and we think ourselves relieved from all farther concern in the poor and their condition. Now, in the first place, this supposes, that when men give by command of law, they give reluctantly, and from compulsion. But this is not the case. While I obey the law of my country, I may admire the wisdom and humanity of its principle; I may acquiesce in it as right and good, give with cheerfulness and pleasure, and feel satisfaction that I am able in this manner to contribute to the relief of my brethren. Entering thus into the principle and spirit from which the demand on me proceeds, I exercise the same regard for the poor and their interests, which the merciful laws of my country display, contemplate with benevolent joy the comfort thus provided for my fellow-citizens, and resolve to follow in the same compassionate path which it directs me to pursue. In the next place, the objection supposes, that the relief afforded by an assessment fulfils every purpose, and leaves no occasion for the exercise of private charity. But is it indeed the case, that an as-

assessment, conducted like that in Scotland, supplies every want, or affords that degree of comfort, which a benevolent mind would wish to bestow on the aged, the diseased, and the helpless? Is there still no room for beneficence to orphan children, to aged neighbours and fellow-worshippers, to decayed servants, to unfortunate relations, to industrious labourers and tradesmen, overtaken suddenly by misfortune and by disease, or burdened with numerous families to support and to educate, struggling with difficulties and exhausted with labour? The field is still ample for the exercise of charity; and listless must be his feelings, cold his heart, and weak his sense of duty, who does not still, in this mingled scene of human life, find in every quarter, and during every day, some object worthy of his compassion. Nay, I will venture to affirm, that laws for superintending and relieving the wants of the poor, so far from weakening, increase the spirit of private charity. Such laws proceeded from a principle of humanity, and they continue to maintain it. They are a continued declaration from the legislature of the regard due to our unfortunate fellow-citizens, which holds them up to the notice and sympathy of the nation. Presenting them as fellow-citizens, objects of public care and protection, both they and the class with

which they are chiefly connected, are preserved from sinking in our estimation and regard. Viewing all our fellow-subjects as objects of public protection and regard, we view them with a higher respect, and take a deeper interest in their condition. But especially, I conceive the law for the relief and superintendence of the poor to be favourable to principles of charity, by bringing them and their condition frequently before the thoughts and consideration of those citizens, who are most fitted to give the tone to public manners and public spirit. Nothing produces greater insensibility and indifference towards our fellow-creatures, than want of knowledge and consideration of them and their condition. On the other hand nothing awakens a more lively and abiding interest than seeing them, conversing with them, witnessing their condition, considering and examining their case. We feel the deepest interest in those objects which we know, and which are most frequently present to our thoughts; and compassion is chiefly excited and kept alive, by the idea of our fellow-creatures in distress, taking strong possession of our minds. It is thus that the laws for superintending and relieving the poor, maintain and diffuse the spirit of charity. Men of the first consequence of the country are led to acquaint themselves with the condition of the poor,

and take an interest in their welfare. They are led, both by law and their own interest, to attend to their circumstances, to see them, to speak of them; to discuss questions respecting their hardships, and the best means of preventing, diminishing, or removing them. The interest and compassion awakened by such means, are awakened in their families, and the circle of their acquaintances; and a general bias of thinking and of feeling is given to the public, which is most favourable to the formation of a general character of benevolence. I appeal to facts for the decision of this question. Is it true that the spirit of public or private charity has been diminished, either in England, or Scotland, by the operation of the poor laws? Notwithstanding all the disadvantages of an improper system, what nation is so distinguished for benevolence and compassion as England? Or has private charity and deeds of benevolence been less frequent, or less distinguished for liberality, since assessments have become common? Compare England and Scotland under the law of assessment, with any nation in which the poor are left to private charity; and I ask if their inhabitants be inferior to the people of such countries in acts of kindness?

2. It is objected farther, that an assessment does not allow of any distinction betwixt the deserving

and undeserving. Now, allowing this were the case, the reward due to virtue would still be equally rendered, nay, rendered with more effect, by the addition of private benevolence. Supposing assessments were limited to granting such assistance, as was necessary to preserve its objects from absolute want, and that thus, poor persons, though of different characters, received the same allowance according to their necessities: such an allotment from the assessment would not hinder, but promote, that farther assistance, which every man feels should be offered to suffering worth. The distinction, though not made from the funds of the assessment, is not done away, but may be equally made by individuals, as if no assessment existed. Nay, the investigation which is made before distributing the funds of an assessment, leads to the knowledge of virtuous poverty, and directs to its reward. It exposes the idle and undeserving, while it brings to light the circumstances and the virtue of the good. It often gives to private charity a just discrimination, and leads benevolent persons to the habit of enquiring and distinguishing with accuracy and judgment. But what is there in a fund raised by assessment, more than in any other fund raised for the poor, to prevent discrimination according to character? Be-

cause the fund, in the first instance, was designed for the relief of misery, not for the reward of the virtuous. But is not this the case also with collections, with even the funds of private charity? Still, after the first object is served, the other also may, in all cases, receive, and actually does receive, a degree of attention. The law of assessment, if it be thought proper, may even directly enjoin the exercise of this discretionary power. The propriety of the distinction is universally felt; and though the first object of both public and private charity, is not so much the reward of virtue, as the relief of our common nature from a burden which is overwhelming it, yet within certain limits, in every public charity, the deserved tribute to suffering worth is universally paid. In so far as discrimination consists, in separating the false and idle applicant from the truly necessitous, in ascertaining the real circumstances of every case, and in applying the funds for relief according to the true condition of each individual—I apprehend, that discrimination betwixt the deserving and the undeserving, the idle and the industrious, the artful and the upright, is much more perfectly made in the distribution of funds entrusted to respectable men by public confidence, than in the distribution of private alms.

Men of honour and principle feel their responsibility, and consider it to be their business to investigate and discriminate. They acquire also a habit of sifting, and distinguishing with accuracy and judgment: while individuals think themselves entitled to give their charities without much consideration, and seldom possess either the leisure, the habit, or the disposition, to make laborious inquiries or scrupulous distinctions. Indeed, I apprehend, that the habit of discriminating acquired in the distribution of public funds, has a very powerful tendency, to diffuse among individuals a similar spirit of attention, and to keep their minds alive to its necessity.

3. Assessments have been also accused of encouraging idleness and improvidence. By affording the security, it is alleged, of a maintenance to persons of every description, when in a state of poverty and distress, they take away the strongest motive to industry and frugality, the fear of want. On this, I observe, that scarcely any good can be done, or any privilege conferred, which foolish and wicked persons will not occasionally abuse; but that by proper checks, and a wise and vigorous management, the evil thus incidentally arising may be so greatly counteracted, as to appear trifling in the general amount of that

good with which it mingles. I observe, farther, that unless you come to the determination, that every person whom you suppose to have been idle and improvident, should perish in want and sickness, without succour, you cannot entirely prevent such a sentiment from occasionally operating on the mind of the worthless; for every exercise of charity must diminish the fear of starvation. If you intend that persons in want should receive any relief suited to their condition, funds equal to that purpose must, in some way or other, be provided and administered. You are not obliged by an assessment to be more liberal in your relief, than the actual circumstances demand, or than you would think proper should be afforded by any other means. Whether, therefore, you grant it through the means of collections, of voluntary associations, or private charity, you afford it to the same extent as through an assessment; or you leave that duty inadequately done which you undertake to perform. But still, it may be said, that the same degree of certainty of relief is not afforded. If you maintain this, then you must allow, that those other means are often inefficient and inadequate to the purpose for which you bring them forward. For why are they uncertain, but because they sometimes fail, and because the relief which

we are agreed should be given, is not afforded to the objects who call for it? If that relief be regularly and sufficiently granted, then you give the same security, and the same quantum, which are afforded by the funds of a well conducted assessment. This ought particularly to be allowed by those writers who maintain, that to leave all to private charity, is more favourable to the poor. For if this be more favourable, the motive from the fear of want, must be proportionably taken away. But I allow that there is, on that plan, a greater uncertainty of relief; a possibility that the poor may be often neglected, and left to suffer in helpless misery, and to die from the carelessness of their fellow-creatures. And it is because of this, joined with other reasons, that a humane people should provide against evils so shocking to humanity. Yet I also maintain, that even this uncertainty, with all its other evils, does not enable the plan of private charity to guard against the danger of idleness and improvidence, so well as that of assessment. The uncertainty of relief is little felt by the idle and improvident, and is chiefly experienced by the worthy and the helpless. Idleness and improvidence seldom continue long to mark any character without other attendant vices. When persons of this description are over-

taken by want, they are deterred by no motive from making known their case, and adding such circumstances as may operate upon the feelings of the charitable. They make a trade of poverty, and calculate upon the sums which they are to receive from compassion. They thus receive often a supply far beyond their wants; while virtuous characters are left unknown and unrelieved. If the extravagant and the dissolute ever look forward to provision in the day of want, they look forward to such resources—resources much more suited to their unsettled habits of idleness and dissipation, than the inquisitive and often inconvenient examinations, which precede the relief afforded by men of honour and piety, who manage the funds of the public, and who are aware of the artifices of the unprincipled. Before such persons, the profligate appear stripped of their false garments, in their true state, and in their proper colours. Even though we knew their unworthiness, if we believed that there was no other mean of relief but private charity, every compassionate man, revolting at the idea that a fellow-creature should perish, would give to them a portion of his alms. And though each separate portion should be small, yet when a number of individuals, ignorant of what others have given, grant even a small supply, the

amount to the worthless would be great. But when it is known that such a supply as is necessary is afforded by the public superintendents of the poor, benevolent persons can, with more ease, refuse the applications of the artful, and give what they can afford to the deserving. The objection, therefore, to an assessment, that the idle and extravagant lose the motive arising from a fear of want, is much more applicable to the system which would throw the relief of the poor on private charity. Characters of this description are much more likely to calculate on the funds of private charity, than on those of an assessment.—But the evil which is thus brought forward, and which is frequently displayed in opposition to *every plan of benevolence*, has been extremely exaggerated. It will be found to operate much more feebly than has been represented, and to be counteracted by a great variety of concurring motives and circumstances. It is a great error to suppose, that the generality of men are led to industry merely by the fear of want. A great variety of other motives, as we have already shewn, operate on their minds, of a more amiable and superior order. Men are, in general, also disposed to activity; and when early habits are rightly formed, they feel regular and peaceful industry to be congenial and

pleasing. There is a respectability, and a pleasure, in the possession of property; a regard also to reputation, a prospect of advancement, a power of extending their comforts, bettering the circumstances of families and relatives, and a desire to secure comfort in times of hardship and distress, which combine to give strength to the principles of duty, and to prevent unnecessary waste. Nay, the very life and spirits awakened and maintained by the sense of present comfort, by the relief from future anxiety, and by general contentment with our condition, produce activity and exertion. While persons who are loaded with anxiety, depressed with care, involved in poverty, often sink into listlessness and inaction. The fear of want has no influence on the feelings of such men. They have no spirit for exertion. Sunk in mind, habituated, perhaps, to a wretched condition, they have little desire of superior comfort, or fear of greater misery. They are inactive because they are poor, and are without the hope of relief. But the fear of want, so greatly estimated by political economists, is not removed *by any judicious plan of charity, or well administered law of assessment.* The funds of public, and also of private charity, may be injudiciously applied. But when properly conducted, they are not bestowed on idle and improvident persons,

who are fit for labour. "He that will not work, neither should he eat." He must labour, or he must want. The funds of public charity, in this country, are not bestowed, except on persons who are unable to labour for their subsistence. In the season of youth and vigour, therefore, the fear of want operates with full power, and lends its aid to the habits of industry and prudence. And if the immediate sight, and feeling of poverty, with all its attendant evils, do not lead men to consideration and self-denial, how little is to be expected from the fear of distant evils! and how little will distant consequences at all enter into their thoughts! The idle and profligate seldom look far into futurity; nor is it the fear of want in old age, which will prevent them from indulging their predominant inclinations. But even when two men of different characters are reduced to the same condition, and receive the same public relief, there is a great distinction in the kind and degree of comforts which they enjoy. Men forget in their reasonings, that the distinction of good and evil remains in every condition; and that though the relief of immediate necessity be afforded to each individual, their comfort and happiness must still be greatly affected, both by their previous and their present characters.

I speak not of the higher blessings of religion and of the mind, but simply of those connected with their external condition. When the condition of a sober and industrious man is inquired into, with a view to his assistance, every feeling is in his favour, and the relief granted is liberal; not only from respect to his character, but from full confidence in his statements. Sympathy is not confined in its operation to this general relief. A more particular interest is excited; and in addition to public assistance, individual kindness is seen operating in various ways, to soften his afflictions, and add to his comforts. Some part also of the fruits of former industry, will probably still remain with him. His domestic accommodation is better than that of the idle and dissolute. And the attentions of relatives and neighbours, will be more assiduous and affectionate. Besides, the poor, while they require aid, are generally able to labour in some degree for their maintenance. And in the distribution of a well conducted public charity, the relief which is granted is proportioned to the ability for labour which the poor man possesses. The incitements to industry and sobriety still therefore remain, and the evils of idleness and of waste continue to be experienced. And is not a system of begging, which the abolition of our public

institutions of charity must necessarily produce, the very nursery of idleness and profligacy? Are not children trained in such a practice, trained to idleness and vice? Is not a population among which such a practice prevails, generally worthless and debased? Occasional abuses may be made by worthless individuals of every good institution; but neither assessments for the poor, nor other public charities, when properly conducted, will be found to diminish, but rather to encourage, the industry and good conduct of the people. Where ignorance, profligacy, and irreligion prevail, there will be idleness, as well as confusion, and every evil work. But train up men in the right way, and the thought that they shall experience kindness if they are overtaken with misfortune, will not only add to their present happiness, but enliven and invigorate their exertions. I again appeal to facts. I ask if the English, with all the mismanagement of their poor laws, can be called an idle people? I ask if the people of Scotland, under the operation of their poor laws, are not distinguished for their industry and frugality? I am far from meaning to speak with disrespect of the Irish nation; but I would ask, if the want of poor laws can be observed to have rendered them better in these respects than their neighbours? or if the

fear of want, which has been considered as the only principle of industry and economy, has rendered them more industrious, or considerate, or saving and provident, than other people?

4. The last objection which I shall notice, is, that by assessments the number and expence of the poor are increased.

In reply to this statement, I observe, that *the causes of this increase of pauperism, where it takes place, existed before assessments were employed.* It is known, that the poor in Scotland are supported at first by collections, and that it is only when these are insufficient that an assessment is resorted to. The probability is, therefore, that in most cases, the poor had been increasing, before a measure so unpopular as an assessment was adopted. It is hard to attribute that tendency to an assessment, which had arisen, and been operating previously, and at a time when collections only were employed. I observe, farther, that the causes of the increase complained of may be shown, in the greatest number of examples, to arise from causes altogether independent of the mode of providing for the relief of the poor. Besides a great variety of local circumstances, a combination of general causes will be

found to affect many parishes, and extensive districts. Among these, I shall only mention the increase of population, the advancing price of provision, the effects of war on the state of families and individuals, the fluctuations and misfortunes of manufactures and trade. Let these causes be considered, and we shall perceive, that the number and expence of the poor must have increased under every system, if the poor are *to receive relief suited to their necessities*. Let us take, for an example, the state of the assessment in the city of Glasgow, which is supposed to be peculiarly high. According to the statement in the valuable and curious work of Mr. Cleland, called, “Annals of Glasgow,” the amount of assessment in

1796	was £3861	1802	was £7955
1797	3978	1803	3940
1798	4205	1804	4350
1799	3920	1805	5265
1800	4534	1806	4856
1801	7205	1807	4815

During these twelve years, there is a very small increase in the assessment. In some of them, the assessment is almost double the amount of the preceding years; it then falls lower in the year 1803,

than it had been in the year 1797, and continues with very little rise above that of 1798, till 1807. Variations of this nature shew, that the rise and fall of assessments depend chiefly on extrinsic causes; and particularly the very slight increase which, had taken place, during twelve years of so singular a kind, proves farther, that an assessment, carefully and economically managed, has no greater tendency to increase than any other mode of public relief. I beg leave to add, that, in this period, the state of the assessment, compared with other circumstances, likewise shows, that, though nominally a little higher, the proportion allowed to poor persons had in fact greatly diminished. During this period the price of provisions had increased. Let the number of poor persons be only the same, and let them receive the same degree of support, the expence must be necessarily greater from the rise on the price of food. Add to this, the very rapid increase in the population of the city, and the additional proportion of poor which must be the consequence; and to this, join the casualties of war, which, from the number of citizens both in the army and navy, were unusually severe on this city; and you will see, that the allowance made to the poor must have been proportionally much less at the end than at the commencement

of the series. After the year 1812 the assessment increased very rapidly, and in 1817 it was L.10,535. The prosperous state of business, though with some fluctuations, prevented in some degree the natural rise, which the increase of population, of the price of provisions, and of the evils of war, would have otherwise occasioned. But when to these circumstances were added, the stagnation and failure of manufactures and trade, a rise in the assessment was the necessary consequence. Yet, if we consider all the misfortunes of these years, and all the numerous casualties of war, the assessment has not increased even equal to the ratio which was to be expected, from the increase of population, and of the price of provisions. In the year 1791, the population of the city and suburbs is stated to have been 66,578. In 1816, it is stated to have been 120,000, so that the numbers during that period had very nearly doubled. The price of the most ordinary articles of provision had also increased to an unprecedented degree; rendering, without any increase either of numbers or of allowance, the expence of maintaining the poor necessarily very great.

Let it be farther kept in view, that as this rapid rise in the assessment has taken place in years of misfortune, so we have reason to believe, that when

prosperity returns it will fall. We have already seen how frequently succeeding years have been *lower* than those which preceded them: Thus, in 1802 it was 7955; in 1803 it fell to 3940, and did not rise much above this for about ten years: a fall on the present assessment may, on the ground of experience, be therefore justly expected.—Nor let it be supposed that the poor will be more forward in applying for aid from an assessment, than from collections or contributions. Why should they be more forward? Do they not know that the sum raised in one way, was raised for their benefit, as well as that raised in the other? So far as my experience extends, the applications for aid from collections and assessments have been similar, and those from contributions much more frequent. And why should not poor persons, when under distress, be allowed freely to state their case? Is it not our wish to relieve those who are truly necessitous? And as to applicants who are not necessitous, it is our business and our duty to refuse them. In Scotland, their cases are investigated with as much strictness by those who distribute the funds of an assessment as it is possible can be done under any other mode of relief.—Still you have a suspicion, perhaps, that they are too liberally assisted. I refer again to.

facts ; and I maintain, that less could not be given, under any form, to the poor, in similar circumstances, without inhumanity. In the year 1815, the net average paid to the first class of poor, in Glasgow, who require the least regular aid, was 1*l.* 17*s.* per annum : the net average of the highest class, who receive pensions, was 2*l.* 16*s.* Those who are totally destitute, such as orphans, or aged persons confined to bed, are received into the poor's house. The average of the highest class of pensioners *in that year*, was little more than 1*s.* per week ; that of the lowest class, was about 8*d.*, little more than one penny per day ; and in this average is included not only single persons, but widows with children. “ A single person on the highest class, is usually allowed 6 lb. of meal weekly ; a man and his wife get 8 lb. of meal weekly, and 5*s.* additional per quarter, *if very frail*. A widow with two children, 8 lb. of meal weekly ; if three children, 10 lb. and an additional sum per quarter, from 5*s.* to 20*s.* according to circumstances. When a single person does not receive meal, he receives 16*s.* 8*d.*, 20*s.*, or 25*s.* per quarter.” I ask, if economy in the management of the poor, could be carried much farther ?

I shall only add, in confirmation of the views illustrated in this article, an extract from the very distinct statement given of the assessment in the Abbey parish of Paisley, in the work of Mr. Burns. "In 1785, when, from the progress of manufactures and other causes, the number of the poor began rapidly to increase, it was resolved to adopt the plan of assessment, principally, it would appear, that a stop might be put to vagrant begging, which at that time had become very prevalent. At a public meeting of the Heritors, Justices of the Peace, and Commissioners of Supply in the County, held in the course of that year, a petition from the farmers and others was presented, stating the prevalence and the pernicious effects of vagrant begging, and calling on the meeting to adopt some plan for remedying the evil. It was resolved, by all interested, that a stop should be put to the prevalence of mendicity; but this, it was found, could not be done, unless the poor were provided for in their respective parishes. In the Abbey, and one or two other parishes, this could not be effected without an assessment; a measure which appeared most reasonable in the Abbey parish, as at that time scarcely one heritor, whose name appeared in the cess-book, resided within its bounds; and, with

a single exception, not one, it is believed, paid one farthing to the parish poor. On this, and on other accounts, the proposal of an assessment was willingly acceded to by the farmers and by all concerned. The assessment for the first year was only L.152; from this, partly in consequence of the high price of meal in 1791, 1792, it rose to L.415; and this sum with about L.125 per annum, arising from collections at church, &c. making a total of about L.540 was sufficient for the annual demand for some years. But after the years 1793 and 1794, when the effects of the war began to be felt, it became necessary to impose higher assessments. The scanty crops, and consequent high price of provisions, in the years 1799, 1800, and 1801, at once adding to the number of paupers, and rendering their maintenance more expensive, required an assessment of L.1000. The unfavourable state of trade in some subsequent years increased the number of claimants for charity, and raised the assessment to L.1500."—In this statement of facts, both the *necessity* of an assessment, and the *external causes* which led to its adoption, and its rise to its present state, are distinctly ascertained. But *has it continued to rise during the last ten years?* Notwithstanding the unfavourable circumstances of many of these years, it has de-

creased. “The following is a view of the progress of the assessment for the last ten years.”

<i>Years.</i>	£	s.	d.	<i>Years.</i>	£	s.	d.
1808	1570	11	10	1814	1654	7	9
1809	1654	7	8	1815	1252	12	5
1810	1699	10	2	1816	1286	15	6
1812	2179	15	6	1816	1531	7	0
1813	2082	8	2				

INSTITUTIONS for special charitable purposes, founded by benevolent persons AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE, have been also the objects of animadversion, from similar principles. Writers have not only accused them as encouraging idleness and improvidence, but have entered into calculations of their expense; and have shewn at how much less cost, children or aged men might be maintained. If such institutions were to become very numerous and extensive, they might operate unfavourably to personal exertions. But in that limited degree in which they have hitherto existed, I conceive them to produce much good, and no evil. A merchant or manufacturer, who has a large family to educate, and to establish in business, is not rendered idle because he receives a legacy from a friend; or because a wealthy relation takes charge of the education of one of his sons. The effect produced by this friendly assistance, is only to enable him to provide for his remain-

ing children with more ease and comfort, and to enjoy with less anxiety the blessings of Providence. Does any man find fault with such assistance? Does any man think meanly of him or his family for receiving it? And why should the labouring man or his family be treated more severely? Why should the assistance given to the child of a numerous family, by a deceased friend, who pitied the case of a poor man overburdened with labour and care, and wished to secure to some of them a good education, be looked at with so much jealousy? But, in some of those institutions, the maintenance of the decayed citizen is expensive; and, dreadful thought! is even equal to that of prosperous citizens. And what if it should be so? Supposing that a man chuses to make happy, in a comfortable asylum, a few unfortunate men, in the latter days of a life of toil, does he less good, than if he leaves his fortune to a wealthy proprietor, who already is loaded with the good things of the world? It is not for you to calculate the expence. The expence was intended, and was not grudged. Do you judge in this way when you or your family are enabled to live in affluence, by an act of friendship, independently of your personal labours? And why may not a poor man and his family receive some increase of comfort, and some relief from care and extreme la-

bour, by the generosity of a benevolent donor? Or a few aged sufferers, in the wearied evening of life, and after the hardships of their long and laborious journey, be provided with a place of rest and repose, by some kind benefactor? And why, if he chuses, should the accommodation not be liberal? Endowments of this kind may, without doubt, become too numerous; but, in a limited degree, they add to the comfort, and diminish the evils of life, without injuring any general interest. We go a great deal too narrowly to work in these calculations. And I am of opinion, that this cold and calculating spirit, which looks more to cheapness than to comfort, which sinks the happiness of the mass of mankind, in the mere production of labour, will be found at last to injure, not only the content, and comfort, and best affections, of life, but that increase of work, in which it seems to centre all the good of a people.

The METHODS most usually adopted for RELIEVING the poor, are *pensions and allowances of food, or maintenance in poor houses*. But those follow, in my apprehension, the best plan, who adopt each of these into their system; and apply either of them, according to the circumstances of individuals. When poor persons are able to labour in some degree for their subsistence, or when they have friends who are

willing to assist them, the relief afforded by pensions is least expensive, and most conducive to their happiness. This kind of relief can be varied according to the necessities of individuals; and the comfort of their own homes, in the society of their friends, can be enjoyed. But I apprehend, that in every populous district or town, cases must frequently occur to which this mode of relief is not suited. How frequently are children left destitute, without a friend to take charge of them! How many aged persons have survived their children, and their friends, and have no relation to pay to them those attentions which infirmity and sickness require! You must, without a poor house, board these destitute children at a great expense, and with persons over whom you can maintain no proper superintendance; or you must leave them destitute. You must provide a home and a nurse for these infirm, diseased, and helpless, old persons; or you must leave them to perish in solitary wretchedness. A poor house provides paternal care and good education for destitute children; and a refuge for the infirm, sick, and helpless, where at least attention is paid to their wants, and the consolations of religion are provided. Poor houses set apart in this manner, and confined to the *destitute and helpless*, are, I

conceive, of the first importance ; are susceptible of such arrangements as will secure every essential comfort, and of such a plan of wise and frugal management, as will easily guard against those evils which have been supposed to attend them, but which in truth are only the evils of an ill-conducted system.

Occasional supplies *of clothing and of fuel*, as well as of food, are also of great importance, and to many persons would be a relief better adapted than money. And to those who know in what wretched hovels the poor and unfortunate are generally lodged in our populous cities, nothing will appear to be more necessary to their comfort, than providing, at least for the more deserving, some *comfortable dwellings*. Small villages of well-aired cottages, in the neighbourhood of our cities, for poor and unfortunate persons, might sometimes be built for this purpose, and placed under the general superintendence of pious and humane individuals. “ Building cottages,” says Dr. Charteris, “ was a favourite charity of Mr. Howard and his wife. House-rent is a returning burden on the poor. Few charities of the same amount are calculated to yield such permanent comfort, and to extinguish so much anxiety. Rural ornaments to please the eye are sometimes executed at great expense, houses for the

poor on an estate are moral ornaments which please the heart."

But these remarks have extended to a greater length than I originally contemplated. I shall only, therefore, add the sentiments of the same excellent man, on the law of assessment; who, to distinguished talents and candour, joins long experience and many opportunities of observation. "In those parts of Scotland," he observes, in his discourse on almsgiving, "where this law is obeyed, *the good effects are manifest*. Provision is made for the sick, the widow, the orphan, the aged, the decrepid, the imbecile, the insane. The poor are delivered from the frequent feeling, and the constant fear, of want; they are delivered from wandering under the infirmities of age, and their children from hopeless ignorance, idleness, and shamelessness; they enjoy domestic comfort, and the fruits of their remaining strength, without being forced to overstrain it. Under the pressure of poverty, a mother may forget her sucking child; and the child that is constrained to beg, or to work prematurely, retains no affection for a destitute parent; whereas, among a widow and her children, who are kept together by an aliment, affection grows. The labourer foresees a resource in affliction, and, on his

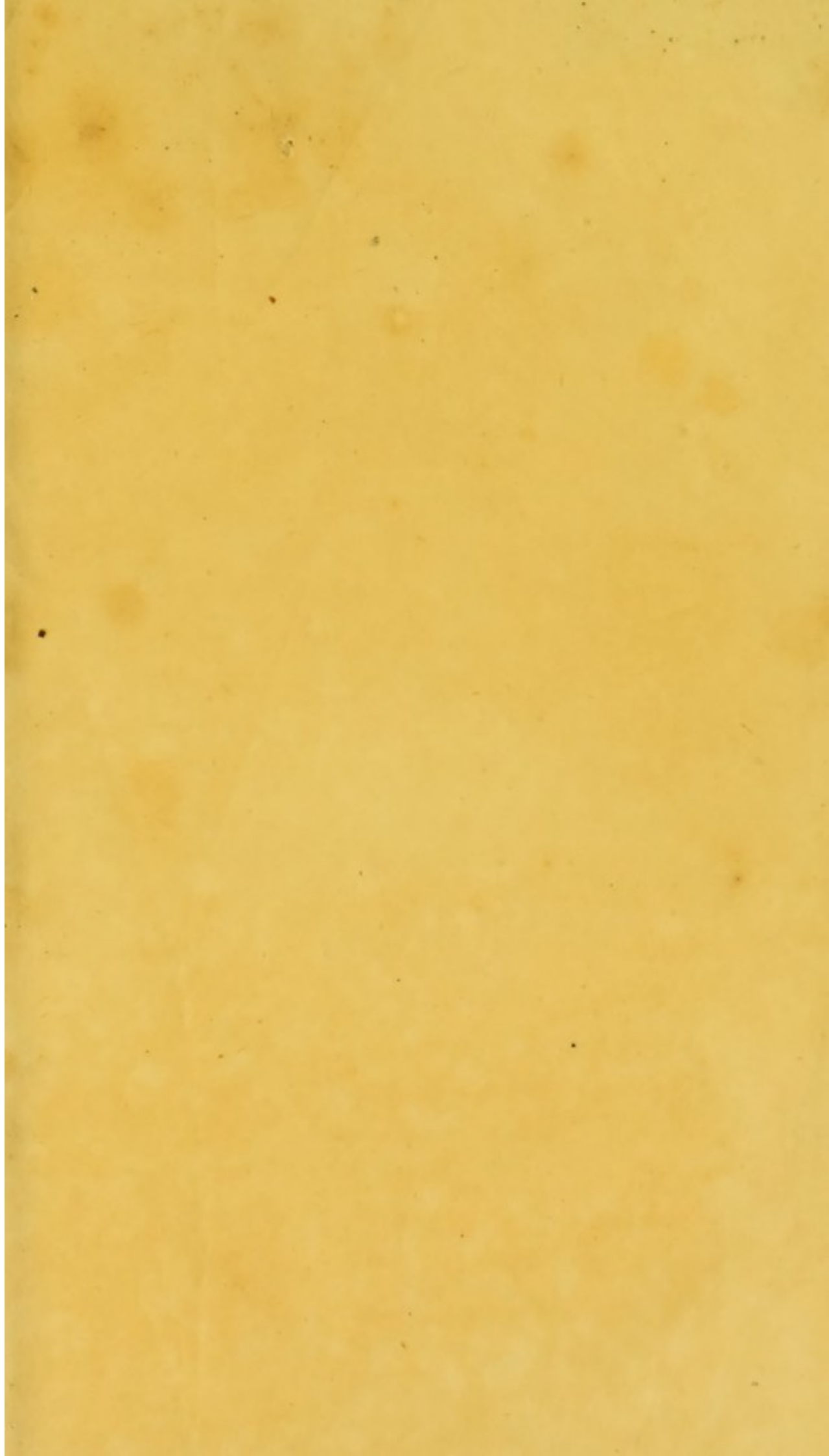
death-bed, listens to the voice of God, *leave your fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let your widows trust in me* *.”

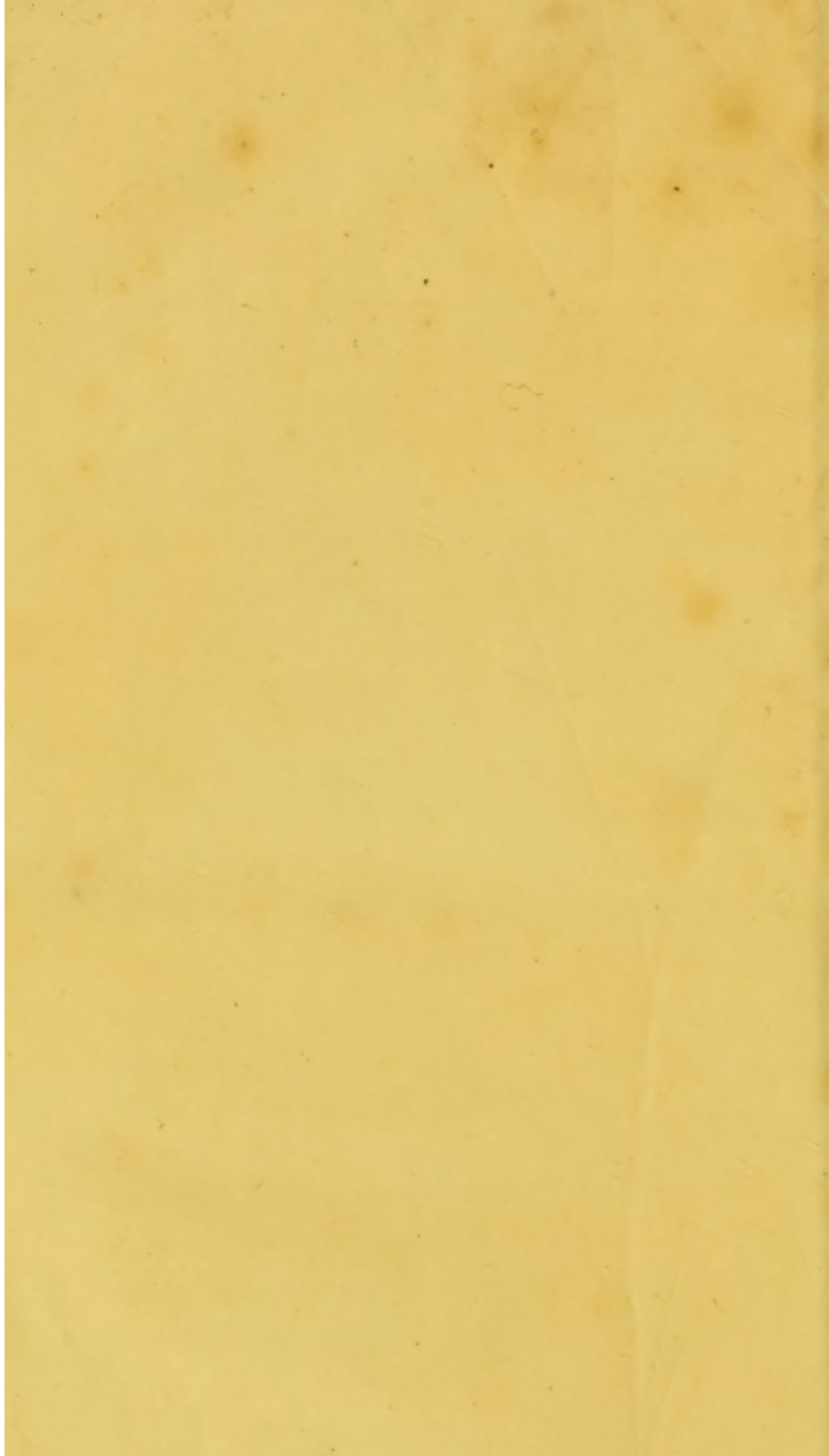
The conclusions which, according to my apprehension, should be formed on this subject, are, that ASSESSMENTS, COLLECTIONS, CHARITABLE SOCIETIES FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES, and liberal and regular PRIVATE CHARITIES, in their own place, and when wisely conducted, are all of the highest moment, and will be found, united, to do nothing more than is proper for the relief of our fellow-creatures ; that so far from being opposed to one another, they easily combine ; that, under a wise system and management, they are free from those evils of which they have been accused ; and, finally, *that they are important, not only to the relief of the poor, but to the general prosperity, comfort, and happiness of all classes of the community.*

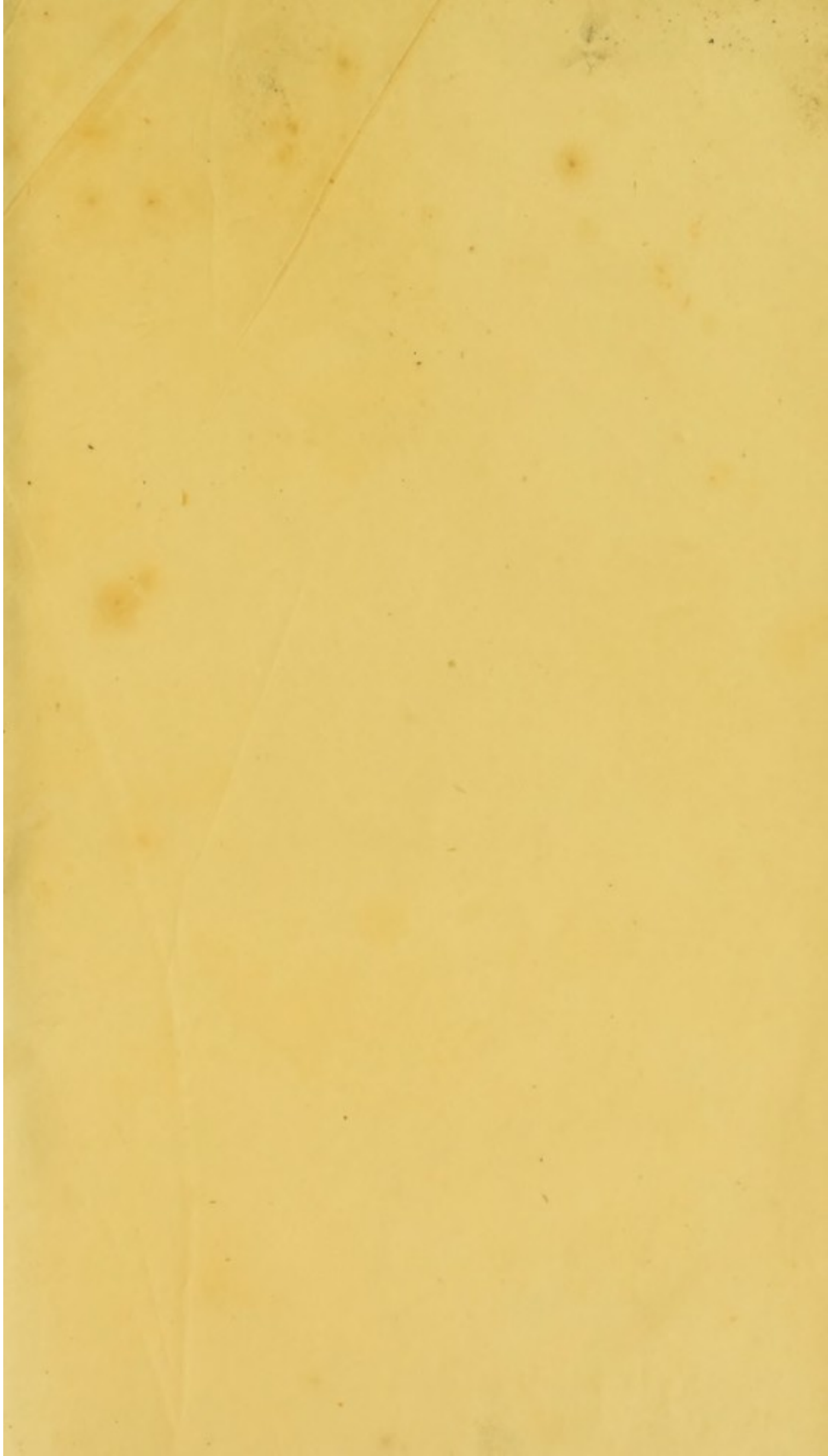
* The same sentiments are expressed in the excellent account given of the Scottish Poor Laws, by Mr. Hutcheson, in his very valuable work, “ On the Offices of Justice of Peace, &c. in Scotland.”

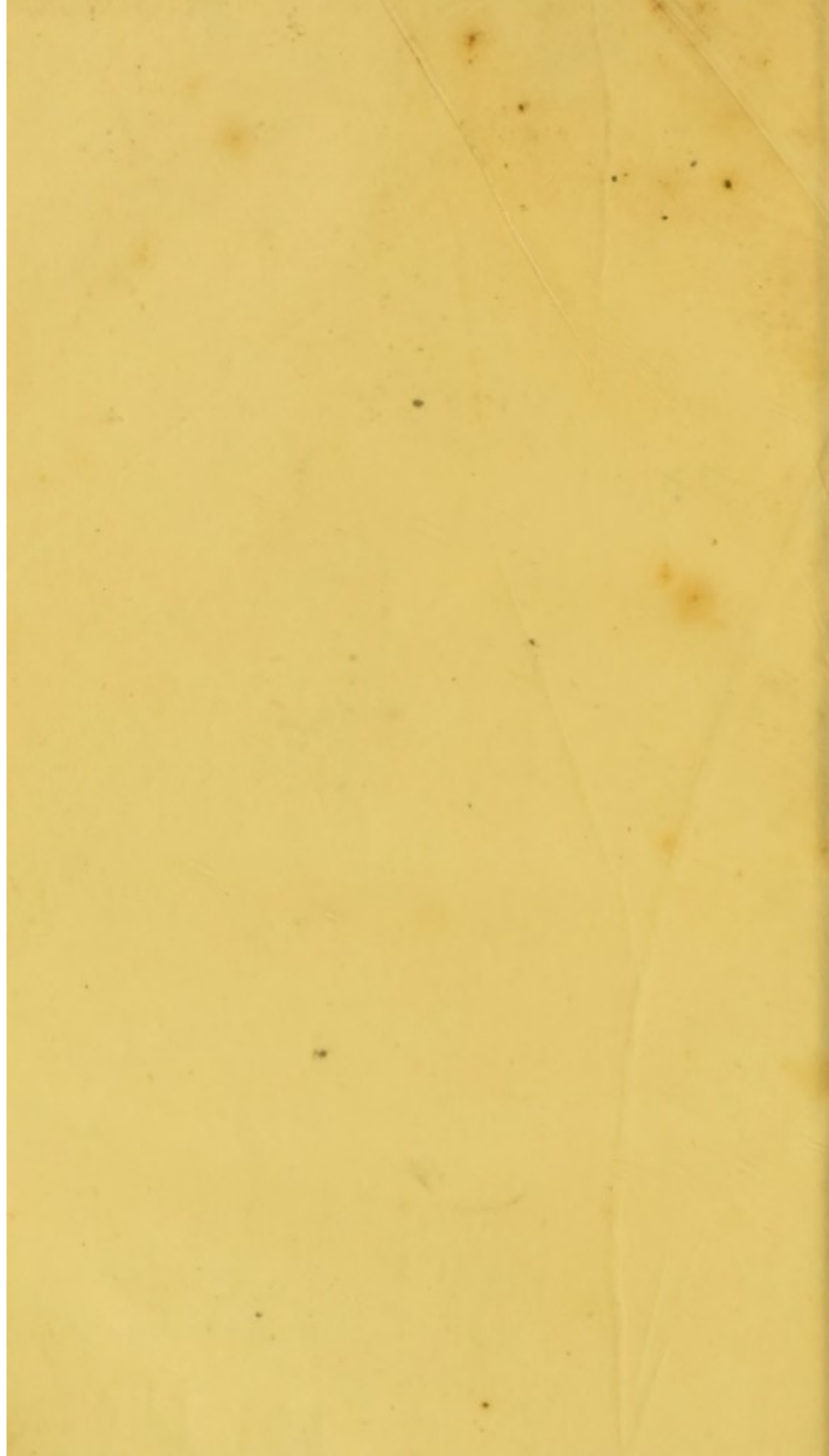
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