No. 438

RELIGION PROFITABLE:

WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE

TO THE CASE OF

SERVANTS.

A Sermon,

Preached on September 22, 1822,

IN THE

Circular Church,

CHARLESTON, S. C.

By BENJAMIN M. PALMER.

CHARLESTON, S. C.

J. R. SCHENCK, PRINT. 23, BROAD-ST.

1822.

ADVERTISEMENT.

An opinion having been expressed by a number of persons, and by some of them with considerable confidence, that the publication of the ensuing Sermon, delivered in the ordinary course of the Author's ministration among his own people, would be generally *useful, especially in the present condition of this community; the author has concluded to give it, with a few slight alterations and some additions, a wider circulation than he intended when he wrote it, commending it to the blessing of God, as far as the sentiments contained in it comport with his will; and to the applause or censure of men, according as, upon perusal, it shall be found to merit the one or deserve the other.*

Charleston, Sept. 26, 1822.

SERMON.

PHILEMON, i. 11.

Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me.

Profit and loss is a rule in arithmetic, with which every child who receives a tolerable education, has to be conversant, before he leaves the Institution to which he is sent for instruction. Profit and loss are ideas that follow us into mature life, and that are familiar to every individual, till he drops into his grave. All the calculations of the world proceed upon some consideration of these ideas, and men conduct their business, their pleasures, their recreations, and even their religion, with a final reference to profit or loss. Every man living, in every moment of his life, is, in a greater or less degree, in relation to every thing he thinks, says or does, in pursuit of some real or imaginary gain; is attempting to avoid some real or imaginary loss. The principle is right, and the application of it is of infinite consequence: but here men differ from each other by such wide and distant extremes, that awful mistakes, and mistakes, which, if continued in, will finally admit of no remedy, are committed by multitudes. "What shall it profit a man," says the Saviour, "if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." Yet, how many are grasping after the world with such intensity of effort, and such constancy of application, as must inevitably ensure the ultimate

loss of the soul. Some things may be profitable for a while, which yet may leave their possessor at last in the rags and wretchedness of spiritual poverty, if not of temporal too. A wise man will pursue such a course as will be ultimately propitious in the highest degree to his best and most enduring interests, tho' in such pursuit he may be subjected to a thousand present inconveniences and immediate distresses. But, where shall that course be found? where is such a path marked out? It becomes the place in which we are assembled, the day on which we have met, the occasion that has brought us together, the occupation of the preacher, and the character and expectations of his audience, to say that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the way which we are enquiring after. There, "life and immortality are brought to light," and we are told, how we may enjoy the one and inherit the other. Nay, we are farther told, that, even in relation to the present life, religion yields the best enjoyment. What said the Great Head of the church, in his sermon on the mount? "Blessed are the meek; for they shall *inherit the earth*." What said he again in conversation with his disciples? "There is no man that hath left house or parents or brethren, or wife, or children for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more *in this present time* as well as in the world to come, life everlasting." What said one of the most faithful and honored of his Apostles "Godliness is profitable for all things having the promise of the life that *now is*."* And what says our text, "which in time past was to thee *unprofitable*, but now *profitable*," in which the useful influence of religion on others in the relative connections of life is declared.

Attend to the circumstances of the case, and hear the details of the story. There is not a more beautiful epistolatory composition extant in the world, we are bold to say it, than this letter of Paul to Philemon. For correctness of sentiment, for delicacy and tenderness of feeling, for a judicious and faithful regard to the rights, interests

* See these passages explained by Ps. xxxvii. 16. Pr. iii. 33. 1 Tim. vi. 6. Job. v. 14. 26.

and feelings of two individuals, standing related to each other in two very distinct grades of life, and for simplicity of style and manner, it is without a parallel. The case was this. Philemon, Paul's correspondent, was a Christian. He was the owner of a slave named Onesimus. The name is derived from the Greek language, and signifies *profitable*. Paul in our text makes a useful and appropriate pun upon his name. "Which in time was to thee *un*profitable but now profitable." His name appears to have been very much misapplied, until the period at which Paul wrote. So far from being profitable to his Master, he was his plague and his trial; for aught we know, the greatest domestic cross he had. Onesimus in this conduct was wholly inexcusable; for Philemon was not a heathen master, many of whom treated their domestics with unfeeling severity and extreme cruelty. But Philemon professed to be a Christian, and undoubtedly the profession was sincere; for Paul throughout his epistle proceeds altogether on that supposition: and all Paul's writings shew him to have been a man, who did not "partake of other men's sins" by conniving at them; but who rebuked his dearest friends if he found them going astray. Surely he who ventured to reprove Peter to his face, and in presence of others; who says "I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed" would not have let Philemon passed unrebuked, if he had thought, that any conduct on the part of Philemon had driven his servant Onesimus to dishonesty, desertion or desperation. Paul gives not the slightest hint, that Philemon had, in any degree, or respect, acted unkindly towards Onesimus. He was bad therefore for no other reason than because he would be bad. He acted, to use a term familiar in our courts of justice, by the instigation of the devil. It is highly probable, that he plundered his Master's property, because, in a subsequent part of the letter, Paul says, "if he wronged thee or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account. I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it." But, whatever his other and previous faults were, it is certain that he took it in his head to run away. Away therefore he rambled: where he meant to go, or what he meant to do in this wild career, we cannot tell: but it

so happened that in his guilty rambles, he came within the reach of the sound of the gospel. Happy day for Onesimus! Eternity will be too short for him to bless God in for that day; it was the day of salvation to his hardened, guilty heart. It saved him probably from disgrace and ruin in this world, and certainly from "shame and everlasting contempt" in the "world to come." It was the day of his new birth into the kingdom of God—the day of his espousals to Christ—the day that occasioned "joy in the presence of God and among his angels" because this "one sinner repented." An arrow from the quiver of the Almighty reached his heart, and prostrated him to the earth, and made him cry out. "What shall I do to be saved?" and that cry, when made in sincerity, never goes unanswered. Now Onesimus is entitled to his name, and Paul convinced of the fact, sends him directly back to his Master. Go now and tell what great things God has done for you: go "declare" to him and your fellow servants "what God has done for your soul."

But, how shall poor Onesimus meet his master's eye, after all his ungraceful and criminal conduct? He has no excuse to make for himself, no extenuation to plead to a kind and indulgent owner. He cannot go and say, "Master, I own I was wrong in leaving you, but yet your treatment of me was so hard, that I thought at the time I was right to endeavour to escape from it." Even this would not have justified the course he took; for Peter gives explicit directions in this case, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently; but if when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."* Such is his injunction on Christian Servants. Onesimus however, when he ran away, was not a Christian servant: and therefore, had he been in a really and seriously suffering state, his conduct in eloping, might have admitted some extenuation.

* Pet. ii. 18—20.

For, if what Solomon says be true, that "oppression makes even a wise man mad," notwithstanding all the force and influence of his philosophy, it was hardly to be expected, that one in Onesimus' condition could suffer without complaint. But Onesimus had so good an owner, that he had not even the shadow of an excuse for what he did. How then shall he return to his grieved, injured Master, who had been as kind to him as the day was long? Paul, to meet this difficulty, writes a letter for him, and gives it to Onesimus to carry, in which he intercedes with Philemon to give him a kind reception. The purport of the letter may be thus paraphrased, "Here, brother Philemon, is your poor wretched runaway, now a different man from what he was, when he left you: then he was unprofitable, and his name ought to have been changed; for his whole character was in contradiction to it. But now you may call him Onesimus with propriety, for he is now profitable, and will be so in future; you will have no more trouble with him, I trust. He ran away from you, but the Lord Jesus met with him, and laid hold of him through my ministerial instrumentality, and made him "willing in the day of his power:" and now he is willing to return of his own accord." Paul, though holding the office, and possessing the dignity of an Apostle, and writing to a Christian friend in private life, does not interfere with the existing relations, in which he finds society placed; but rather directs Philemon in *his superior*, and Onesimus in *his inferior* situation, to perform their mutual duties. He lays down all his Apostolical authority, in its exercise at least, and intercedes and pleads with the master in behalf of the servant. For love's sake I beseech thee, being such a one as Paul the aged, (as much as to say, let my gray hairs plead my cause,) and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ, I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds;" then follow the words of the text, "which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me. Whom I have sent again, thou therefore receive him that is mine own bowels. Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered to me, in the bonds of the gospel. But without thy mind would I do nothing; that

thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly :" and then, recognizing the double relation of brothership in Christ, and of superiority on the one part and inferiority on the other, in domestic life, he adds, " For perhaps he departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him forever. Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord. If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself." The whole transaction, that stands in connection with the text, is so interesting and instructive, that we have felt justified in dwelling on it to some extent ; but shall now proceed, taking the 11th verse of the letter as the basis of our remarks, to establish this position, that

The religion of Jesus Christ, when cordially received, renders men profitable in every station and relation in life ; and begining with the case in the text,* observe :

1. That it renders *servants* profitable. It addresses their understanding and appeals to their hearts. The particular case of servants occupies a very conspicuous and considerable space in both the Old and the New Testaments, and particularly in the latter. Paul and Peter have given special and plain directions to this class of persons. The former in the 6th chapter and 5th verse of the Epistle to the Ephesians says, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling ; in singleness of your heart as unto Christ: Not with eye-service, as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart : with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men ; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." Can there be better precepts than these for that class of persons to whom they are addressed ? Can more honorable or more powerful motives be pressed upon the conscience than are here presented ? What they do, in their character as servants, they are bid to do, " in singleness of heart, as unto Christ." They can serve Christ even

* This discourse when delivered, was designed to be the first of a series on relative duties.

while serving their masters. Again, "not with eye-service as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ." An eye-servant is one, that cannot be trusted out of sight, one of a mean spirit, which every servant of correct feeling would be thoroughly ashamed of; one who either does nothing at all, or does very unfaithfully what he is appointed to do, except when his owner's eye is upon him or her. This is the kind of servant which Paul directly disapproves, and whose conduct he directly condemns. Again, look at *the motive*: if a man does any of his duties faithfully, God remunerates him not according to his station, but according to his faithfulness: "whether he be bond or free," God will make no difference on this account; he only looks at the fidelity of each. And when "we all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," the question asked of each will not be, were you a master or a mistress in this world, or were you a servant? but were you a Christian—were you faithful—were you a believer in Christ—were you obedient to all his commands?

Paul brings up the case of servants again in the epistle to the Colossians, 3d chapter 22d verse. "Servants, obey in all things" (that is, in all things which are consistent with their duty to God, their heavenly master) "your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service as men pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it *heartily, as to the Lord*, and not unto men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons." The language here is nearly the same with that already quoted from the epistle to the Ephesians; except, that there is a new and additional motive introduced here. The servant is told, that he shall be answerable for his bad conduct as a servant, just as much as for any other bad conduct, "*he shall receive for the wrong which he hath done.*" Let dishonest, disobedient, unfaithful servants tremble when they think of this.

Paul is so much interested on this subject, that he introduces it a third time in the 6th chap. and 1st v. of the

epistle to Timothy, "Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit." In this passage there is a new set of instructions in relation to servants, addressed, not immediately to them, but to Timothy, a preacher, that he might know how to deal with servants in his ministerial labours among them. They are to "count their Masters worthy of all honor:" to respect them, to defend their character, where it can be done with truth and a good conscience. There is reason to fear, that many servants when they get together spend their time in mutually speaking to the disadvantage of each other's owners; these are not the kind of servants, that Paul's doctrines are adapted to form. And look at the motives, which he sets before them: *that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.*" Nothing is more natural than for men to blaspheme God's name and doctrine, when *any of the professors* of them contradict their profession by an unbecoming conduct. And if servants think, that, because they are in an inferior situation, no such great evil can grow out of their behaviour, the Apostle teaches them, that they are in a grand mistake in thinking so; that it is in their power to do very great injury to the cause of religion. This indeed does not justify at all such awful blasphemies; but it presents a most solemn warning to servants professing religion. Paul, in the same passage, directs Christian servants how to behave to Christian owners. Though they are both "one in Christ Jesus," since here men are considered as "brethren:" yet, says Paul "let the servants that have believing masters not despise them, *because they are brethren*, but rather *do them service*:" they ought to be, if possible, more faithful to them on that account. Should servants, think that, because they and their masters belong to Christ, are saved in the same way and by the same means, therefore they may become like their owners in every respect; may *dress* as well as they, and live like them in every particular; the Apostle clearly informs them, that this is to turn

things upside down: instead of despising, or attempting to be on an equality with those whom Providence has placed over them, they are to give them greater honor, in consequence of both belonging to Christ.

Paul enters on this subject again even a fourth time in his epistle to Titus, ii. chap. 9. v. where he directs Titus to "exhort servants to be *obedient* to their own masters, and to please them well in all things; *not answering again, not purloining* (by which he means stealing,) but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

Here the Apostle adverts to other peculiar duties of servants, which he had not particularized in the other passages which we have quoted: "not answering again," a sin which they are often inclined to fall into, but which is altogether contrary to the character God's word would have them bear—"not purloining," not pilfering, stealing or plundering, their Masters property, or that of any other person: "but shewing all good fidelity;" and what an important reason is assigned to enforce all Paul's instructions on this subject—"that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." Thus no less than four times, and in four different epistles, does the Apostles of the Gentiles dwell with considerable particularity and minuteness on the case of servants; enjoining their different duties, and pointing out the sins into which they are most in danger of falling.

The subject is considered of such importance, that it is again taken up by Peter, who in the ii. chap. and 18 v. of his 1st, epistle, says, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward" &c. and contains a plain guide to the behaviour of such of them as may be unkindly, and harshly used. And the motive, with which the Apostle enforces his exhortation is no less a one, than the example of Christ himself; "because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

What servant, whose heart is brought under the vital influence and spirit of such precepts as these, can prove otherwise than *a good and faithful servant*, an Onesimus indeed. And, as what God has joined together, man is

charged not to put assunder, the gospel must be so preached to servants, as well as to all other persons to whom it is preached at all, as to connect together *its doctrines and its duties.*

And all that has now been stated, as the reasonable and natural result of such precepts, where they are received and believed, admits of abundant confirmation from facts. Bodies of facts, strong and stubborn facts, can be adduced to prove, that such is the result and the influence of evangelical doctrines and precepts on that class, of whom we are speaking. And if there are exceptions, the same exceptions exist in every other order of persons, with whom the gospel has to do. We do not say, that *the mere profession* of religion makes servants or any other persons profitable, but that *religion itself* does. If a profession of religion is assumed *by them*, or *by others* merely "as a cloak for sin;" if men are not sincere believers, but designing hypocrites; of course their conduct will correspond with their *real*, not with their *assumed* character.

Should the statements here made be called in question; should close observers of men and things say, that they have noticed various instances, in which religion so far from proving beneficial to the character of servants, has had a contrary operation; has rendered them assuming and consequential, indolent or disobedient, it would be well to enquire, whether there have not been *powerful causes to counteract* in a great degree and frustrate the legitimate influence of Christianity; and whether those concerned with servants have been sufficiently careful to remove or to lessen this counteracting influence. Where servants in a family are so numerous,* that there is little or nothing for each one to do, "abundance of idleness" one of the sins of Sodom, Ez. 16, 49, is the necessary result: but idleness is a heavy curse of itself, and we ought to avoid, as much as possible, throwing its numerous and dangerous temptations into their way. "An idle brain is

* It is confidently stated, that in some domestic establishments in this city, there are not fewer (including all ages) than 40, 50 or 60. What a manufactory for sin must such an establishment be! If thefts, and frauds and falsehoods and quarrels abound, who can wonder at it.

the Devils' workshop," though an old and coarse proverb, is nevertheless as true, and as important too, and universal experience proves it, as though it had been found in Solomon's book of Proverbs. Servants in many instances, labour under peculiar disadvantages for exhibiting the influence of religious instruction and religous belief. We have just mentioned one. But few of them comparatively have access to the pages of the Bible, on which their numerous idle moments or rather hours might be profitably employed.

Another evil, to which they are subjected, either by the allowance or by the connivance of those to whose province it falls, and who have the competency to remedy it, is their *carrying finery in dress* to a most disgusting extreme. This very thing has been long a deplorable, and is even at this moment a growing evil* in our community. Has not Solomon very wisely said, "He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, will have him become a Son at the length." The same Solomon observes that every thing is "beautiful in its season." But when things are *out of season and out of place*, disorder ensues, and ruin treads upon its heels. But how entirely out of place is it, when servants in their apparel and other particulars not only equal the great body of those whom God and Providence have placed in the superior station; but, as is the case in too, far too many instances, far outstrip these, and even rival those in the highest rank and order of human society. It is as preposterous, as for a common soldier to equip himself with the epaulets of a General. A lamentable degree of the same evil is observable in those instances, in which persons in very moderate circumstances, instead of "learning" with the Apostle "in whatsoever state they are, therewith to be content," are never satisfied, unless in their dress and equipage, and other exterior things, they can appear perfectly on a level, with those who in the arrangements of Providence, have been placed in far superior circumstances. But the evil in this instance does not appear to exist in any thing near so great a degree

* The law, regulating the manner in which servants should dress, is as explicit as any one in the South Carolina code; and though at the present time it may require to be somewhat modified; yet the reasons on which it is founded are of primary and *perpetual* importance.

as in the other. Paul, in saying "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal," never could have meant, that his injunction should be so construed and extended, as in its influence and effects to tend to subvert the very relations themselves, the mutual duties of which he was carefully pointing out. Owners may be very kind, indulgent and even affectionate to their domestics, without so conducting towards them, as to make them forget their station and their duty, and create in their hearts an aspiring disposition, which tends only to their own unhappiness and the unhappiness of all connected with them. And observation, we believe, will justify the statement, that this good natured weakness, is very generally, if not almost uniformly, repaid with ingratitude by those to whom it is manifested. It is as easy to spoil a servant as to spoil a child. A child ought to know, by all the treatment of a parent toward him, that he is *a child:* and a servant ought to know, in the same way, that he is *a servant.* A fastidious delicacy and an ill-judged kindness in each case, instead of contributing to the happiness of the parties whom we wish to benefit, operates in a way directly the reverse; it makes them uneasy and discontented.

We find, we have, in our discussions on this subject, insensibly glided, from the consideration of the duties of servants in general, into a view of the state of things amongst ourselves, and, almost before we were aware, have slipped along from the Apostles' times down into our own. It was however not an unnatural course. But, having now got into our own times, we have one further remark to make on the obstructions which the Gospel has to meet with in our own community: it is *the licentious intercourse of the whites*, respectable whites too. A significant remark of a person who is in the habit of periodically visiting our city is in point here. Arriving at the period, when the late iniquitous and murderous plot was discovered, he spoke to a friend who gave him the account of it, to the following effect "Do you know the reason of it. It is owing, more than to any other cause, to the criminal and illicit commerce with the whites." This is no doubt the root and source, the deep root and the fertile source of maners, if not of most of the natural

and moral mischiefs, that we have so just reason to complain of and is particularly the source of *the dressing system*. It is a fact susceptible of proof in more instances than one, that some of the best and most valuable, as well as most kindly treated servants in the city, have been corrupted and ruined by temptations from this quarter. And, if those who have uttered their vociferations most loudly and issued their rage and blasphemy against religion, its professors and its ministers, most copiously during the late disturbances, would employ but half their noise and half their strength and zeal in tracing out the source and drying up the streams of moral corruption in the midst of us; if a committee of vigilance were compelled to aid the regular authority of the city, in the execution of the laws particularly those which go to enforce God's fourth command, and his 3d 7th and 8th commandments too, if such laws there be; or if there is morality enough in the community, and concord enough among the different denominations of Christians that belong to it, to form an Association to remedy the defects of the law under the name, or at least possessing the character of *a moral society;* institutions that have been found highly useful in other cities and places, there would be much less occasion for religion to be blamed and abused for things, with which it has nothing to do, other than to condemn them utterly. If such citizens as are attached to religious truth, moral decorum and social order, would always make it a solemn point of conscientious duty, to avail themselves of their right of suffrage neither through indolence nor indifference dispensing with it, and some weeks before the period of suffrage arrives, make a choice of at least a due proportion of persons who have some age *on* their side in connection with solidity of character, and necessary interest in the welfare of the community; men who have no personal ambition to get into places of power and trust, but who would be willing to go there in order to serve the community, and if such citizens *would unite* in the support of such men, we might perceive in a short time a great change for the better in the moral complexion of this large community. Many abuses might be rectified, and much licentiousness suppressed—the designs of the evil and ambitious coun-

teracted and defeated—good laws made, and the arm of the law strengthened—perhaps that hitherto uncontrolled monster, which laughs at the laws of God, and tramples in proud defiance on the laws of man, *The Duelling system*, might in due time, if not immediately, be put down—might at all events be brought within the enclosure of some salutary and sure restraint; and thus many a father's, mother's, sister's and *even wife's* hearts be saved from years of intense and unnecessary agony. Perhaps too, those pestilential vapours that exhale from the door of almost every dram shop in the city, "a pestilence that walks in darkness and wasteth at noon day;" that makes little noise often when it does tremendous execution: whose contagion is so easily caught by the tenants of our yards and kitchens; perhaps these could be counteracted or neutralized by the influence of some legal and moral electricity, and the spiritual atmosphere of our city be brought to a tone of greater temperance and purity. The pitiful revenue which trickles into the treasury from pecuniary exactions on these licensed manufactories of sin and misery, is but "as a drop of the bucket," compared with the streams that must flow out again to support poor houses, hospitals and orphan houses, peopled in three instances out of four by paupers, themselves the victims, or the offspring of those who became the victims of intemperance.* Is it not a hardship and a grievance to be heavily taxed for the support of Institutions, that owe their existence almost exclusively to our vices and our crimes? If all the money that issues from our treasury every year for the support of these establishments; which, instead of diminishing the evils that gave rise to them, are continually crying "Give, Give," was appropriated to furnish every pauper and evr i lier of both sexes with occupation, and saving them from the te n ptations that lead, and the habits that inure the n to intemperance; and especially if at the same time, the factories of inte n perance were themselves suppressed, or at least greatly re luce l in their number; in what a convalescent state, physically and morally, would our

* See Note, page 21.

community appear. A stranger on arriving among us, would feel constrained to exclaim "Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like unto thee, O people, saved of the Lord." Yes, the salvation of this people from the means, and from the fruits of intemperance by ardent spirits, would be worthy to be called *a great salvation.* Blood of an improved character would run through all the veins and arteries of Society.

Millions of money now wasted in fruitless efforts to remedy evils, which simple hundreds would have sufficed to prevent; millions of money, which, after being appropriated to their destined use, pass through the seive without compassing the object and must be succeeded by millions more; might be efficiently employed to send the Gospel through the world. And behold, "I shew unto you a more excellent way." Cause these streams of salvation to issue through the land—plant Sabbath-Schools in every city, town, village, neigbourhood and settlement in the states, as nurseries for society, for the church, for God; (and you may do it at a much less expense than is required to maintain the institutions we have spoken of,) send competent and well selected men of christian character into every spot and and region of spiritual darkness, (and that too you may do at inconceivable less expense, than is now demanded to support institutions, the creation chiefly of sin;) and you will commence a work of renovation and reform that shall speak its own praise—that shall not "need that any should testify of it"—for it will itself appeal to the eye, the ear, the heart. Invigorate all the institutions whose object it is, to plant "the tree of life designed for the healing of the nations" in every place, in which it has not been sufficiently contigious to be reached by the hand of those that are "perishing for lack of knowledge"—bring fresh recruits into the Lord's camp, and let those already there brighten and burnish their arms afresh; and we will shew you, what has already been shewn, as far as the experiment has had opportunity to be *fairly tried*—"the wilderness and the solitary place glad, the desert rejoicing and blossoming as the rose." O for some Chalmers to plead this cause—to carry it home to the bosom, heart and conscience of every civil

ruler in the land. Be not alarmed. We are not going to connect the Church and State: to make the one dependent on or ask patronage from the other. All we ask is, let the tax which comes out of the pocket of *every denomination* of Christians to maintain institutions, that, as said before are the children and offspring of sin, be put into the hands of each for the purpose of making a fair and full experiment. Let it be said to each "here, take your quota, and expend it all for one year in trying the efficiency of your preventive remedies: if you succeed, the donation will be repeated the next year; but if you fail, we hope you will be satisfied then to return to the old order of things, and give up your nostrums and nonsense." O for one such chance as this; for, tho' it has been wisely said, "let not him that putteth on his harness boast as he that putteth it off," we will in this case encounter the temerity of boasting a priori. But, if such *is* the present Constitution of the world, as far as its administration is lodged, in human hands, that *Christians* must be taxed to support evils their Bible condemns and their very soul abhors; we must submit. "Let every soul," says Paul, "be subject to the higher powers," and all we can do is to creep *on* with those Missionary and other movements, which, upon the plan just suggested, would have "wings added to their feet." But as all Christians have one grand and common interest, what hinders them from forming some *common bond* of union, in a day, which though it be a day of degeneracy, yet beams and dawns with bright and elevated hope? Why can they not rear some *joint and common standard*, around which they all may rally, without disturbing or interfering with their minor disagreements? Are the suggestions we have hazarded visionary dreams and enthusiastic flights? O remember, that we live in a day of wonders—in an age of grace—and that many parts of our country are in the very atmosphere of revivals. Take one step, my brethren, and God may teach, and providence direct you, where to take another.

NOTE.

The following extracts from the report of a City Missionary in 1821, though his remarks are confined to the City, are believed to be of such general application and utility, and so much to the point, as to one topic introduced in the preceding discourse that no apology can be deemed necessary for presenting them to the reader.

"In your *Orphan Asylum* are the descendants of those, who were once wealthy, and who spent their substance in riotous living. I have not had the means of ascertaining precisely, but it is thought by those best acquainted with that interesting establishment, that as many as two-thirds, if not three-fourths of the children are brought there by the intemperance, or the idleness of their parents.

"The sum annually expended for the support of this institution is not far from $22,000. Say two-thirds are of the above description, which is probably less than the reality. The city of Charleston then, pays annually to this one institution, a tax of more than $14,000, in consequence of intemperance, idleness, and other vices. Had the parents, and grand parents of these children been sober, moral men, $7,000 would have been sufficient, where this city now pays $22,000.

"At the *Poor House*, I have made diligent search, and find that not far from 3-4ths of its occupants were brought there by intemperance. The expense of this establishment is annually about $24,000. From 1st Sept. 1818, to 31st Aug. 1819, it was $23,925 71. Consequently 3-4ths of this, which is near $18,000, is annually paid for those, who have brought themselves to pauperism by vice.

"From my acquaintance with those at the *Marine Hospital*, the winter past, I do not hesitate to say, that I think more than 2-3ds of them were brought there by the same cause, that is in consequence of vice. The expense of this establishment, is about $6,000 annually. The last year, it was $5,928 89. Two-thirds of this is about $4,000, which this city pays in the same way, in which it pays $14,000 at the Orphan House, and $18,000 at the Poor House, amounting in the whole, to $36,000.

"I have also made inquiry with regard to those, who are aided in this city by the *Ladies' Benevolent Society*, which would do honor to any city, or nation under heaven. This Society expends, annually, upwards of $2,000, in relieving the distressed, "more than one half of whom," according to a statement given me by one of the officers of that Society, "have brought their poverty and wretchedness on themselves by intemperance and idleness." During the past year, they have aided about 400 sick poor, (396) and expended more than twenty five hundred dollars. ($2,379 94.)

"Besides what has been mentioned, I might advert to other minor charitable institutions, as also to the thousands of dollars given, every year, by private individuals, to those who have been plunged into pauperism in the same manner as those already mentioned. A tax, then, of at least $40,000, and probably, 50 or $60,000 is annually levied upon this city by vice.

"These are facts, which ought to speak loudly, so as to be heard by every one, who aids in paying the public taxes, and every one, who feels an interest in his country as a politician, or a Christian. These evils exist not only in this city, but in almost every city and village in the Union."