

may have already viewed many transactions in a different light, and weighed his own and others conduct and motives in a different balance from what he formerly did. I would leave him there, and only remind my hearers, that we too have to go to the same tribunal; our conduct and motives will have to pass a similar review. Let this allay the harsh spirit of criticism, and solemnize our minds in prospect of our own final account. But this much I will say, that if any one supposes the Christian must surrender his own inherent rights, or allow those of his fellow creatures to be infringed, without lifting up his voice against oppression, without using all just and legal means to prevent such abuse, my views and feelings have no affinity with his. He who supposeth this, hath studied ill the character of the gospel or the conduct of its most devoted servant; when his rights were infringed, no one knew better than Paul how to defend them with becoming spirit. Let his conduct before the chief captain and the magistrates of Philippi attest: "Is it lawful for you," said he, "to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?" "They have beaten us openly uncondemned being Romans, and have cast us into prison, and now do they thrust us out privily! nay, verily, let them come themselves and fetch us." "I stand at Ceasar's judgment seat where I ought to be judged. To the Jews have I done no wrong as thou very well knowest. I appeal unto Ceasar." Yet who took more joyfully the spoiling of his goods, or more readily suffered personal wrong, than did this same apostle? But in this he only imitated his Divine Master, who, though he gave his back to the smiter and his cheek to them who plucked off the hair, yea, voluntarily submitted to death; yet asserted his rights and displayed in the same moment his power, when by a simple word he made his captors go backward and fall to the ground, and declared before Pilate that he had a sovereign kingdom and power, to which even that proud governor would have to answer. Let us then learn to maintain our rights by fair and honorable means, and when deprived of them let us know how to suffer. It is matter of deep regret that the affairs of any community, especially in a free country, and above all where the gospel is known and professed, cannot be discussed without the heat of passion and the bitterness of personal invective. But should any stoop to means so low, to methods so dishonorable and so unjust, as to injure private character and wantonly to wound individual feelings, with a view to gain their own or their party's ends, under pretence, the while, of zeal for public good, let none of us present permit our soul to come