

tears of the sorrowing, and in producing compassion for the helpless and suffering, has it not been carrying into practice the precepts of its founder, and elevating humanity itself by teaching the common brotherhood of man?

The particular laws which I ask you to consider, are those having for their objects; *The preservation and protection of infants; The support of the poor; The establishment of hospitals for the sick and the incurable; The encouragement of the emancipation of slaves; The prohibition of gladiatorial contests; And the mitigation of punishments.*

To this audience I need scarcely say that all these are duties inculcated by our religion. We are told that children are a heritage of the Lord. The want of them was deemed the greatest privation. Give me children or else I die, said the Hebrew wife. They were esteemed the most precious blessings. The grand old prophet, while he thought it possible for a mother to forget her sucking child, yet places it next to that impossible thing that God should forget his people. And we can have no higher idea of the value, the sanctity of children, and the tenderness with which they should be treated, than was given by our Lord himself, when he would not suffer them to be removed, but took them in his arms and blessed them, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

The poor shall never cease out of the land, therefore, thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to the poor, and to the needy in thy land. We are also directed to judge righteously, to plead the cause of the poor and needy. One of the transgressions for which punishment would not be turned away, was selling the poor for a pair of shoes.

The general duty of compassion to the poor and suffering is exemplified in the account of the last judgment when the Lord shall say unto the wicked, "I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger and ye took me not in; naked and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison and ye visited me not. And inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren ye did it not to me."

Let us now see with what these principles had to contend.

The Romans had long been renowned for their supremacy in the arts of peace as well as of war—and they attained such a high degree of intellectual civilization as has perhaps never been surpassed. They did not excel the Greeks in the politer arts, music, sculpture, painting, and poetry; indeed they affected to treat them with some disdain, claiming that *their* mission was to give laws to subject nations. In this respect their pre-eminence was just; no system of laws has ever been devised