

hold a heathen population of one hundred millions subjected to the dominion of a christian power—a power operating, we trust, silently and gradually in undermining that degrading superstition by which they are enthralled. The burning of widows on the funeral pile of their dead husbands and the crime of infanticide are now abolished. Under the superintendence of christian missionaries a regular system of education for the young is in operation in numerous villages of British India, the knowledge of scripture truth is being diffused among them, converts are made to the christian faith, and success dawns through the darkness and opposition arising from long established superstition. By the labors of christian missionaries among the Islands of the Pacific Ocean, whole tribes have embraced the christian faith, and exhibit one of the most pleasing triumphs of christianity which the human mind can contemplate. These and innumerable other facts that might be mentioned, show what the gospel in the present day is accomplishing; they demonstrate that it has lost none of its moral power, and confirm our belief that its predictions of universal dominion will yet be verified. We may form some conception of the general blessedness of this triumph, from tracing its results from individuals to societies and nations. The effect of christian principle upon the individual is matter of daily observation. It regulates his appetite, it leads to integrity, it exalts his reason; implanting the love of God, it fosters piety; implanting the love of man, it confirms justice and benevolence. No man doubts that the true christian will prove the best child, the best parent, the best subject, the best magistrate. It is obvious that a community of such individuals would be free from envious pride and dishonorable rivalships, would dwell together as brethren, would bear each other's burden, and would escape many of those disorders that embroil society in its present corrupted state. Without claiming therefore for christianity the power of making men perfect, in an imperfect world, it is not too much to affirm that a system which confers moral purity upon the individual, would also, if universally adopted, diffuse moral purity over the community, and that when each individual composing it, is raised to a participation of the divine nature, the aggregate will be a kingdom consisting of righteousness, of peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

From this brief statement of what christianity has already accomplished in the world, and what from its very nature it must yet achieve, we are warranted, I think, to draw the following conclusion in corroboration of its divine origin, that its

design to reclaim the whole human family from that condition of moral disorder and misery in which they are evidently plunged, is worthy of a beneficent and Holy God;—that the comprehensiveness of the design bespeaks the same high origin—it reaches from the beginning to the end of time, and is destined to embrace every family of Adam;—that the means are most fitly adapted to the end—it employs no compulsion, for mind cannot be forced; it enlightens, persuades, sanctifies, by the application of truth to the soul of man; it brings into play the energies of those who embrace it, and renders them the instruments of transmitting it to their fellow-men. Where utility and happiness are thus identified with activity, the moving power of activity can never fail. Farther, that neither in the composition nor execution of this plan is there any admixture of evil. Christianity aspires after universal dominion, but its name is not preceded by fear, nor its path tracked by desolation—terror and the sword are none of its weapons of conversion. No portentous signs of disastrous revolution or sudden change heralds its approach. It overthrows error; but it does not upbraid the erring. It does not meet opposition with violence; but in meekness instructs those who oppose themselves, and brings them to an acknowledgment of the truth. The kingdom of God like the airs of summer stealing softly over the world, or rather like the mighty silent processes of material nature, cometh not with observation. It may find intolerance and strife, disorder and misery, in its path, but it does not create them—these are among the number of evils it comes to rectify by diffusing charity, and peace, order and joy throughout the whole family of man.

These are conclusions which cannot well be gainsayed concerning the influence actual and attainable, of the christian religion on political communities and individuals. The only point concerning which any question can be made is the *origin* of that blessed economy, which has produced a part, and shall accomplish the whole. Shall we say with the unbeliever, that it is a cunningly devised fable? A strange fable it must be, which has produced such magnificent, such beneficent results!—strange that the humble fishermen of Galilee should invent a moral engine more potent in its power of reformation and production of happiness, than any that the wit of the most renowned philosophers ever dreamed of!—stranger still that a Book which, if the sceptic's suspicion be true, is nothing else than a forgery, should yet in a world over which God rules, achieve more advantage to mankind than all the truths that have ever been told! But surely with the evidence which has now been presented to