

was no limit to the power of human combination. Perhaps his lengthened connexion with the Religious and Charitable Institution House in Glasgow, and his management of so large a number of societies, had deeply familiarized his mind to the idea of action by joint forces. This mode of operation for the good of man is one of the most extraordinary features of modern times. It was never dreamed of among the ancients. But this mode of action for purposes of mischief, is as old as society. What is the science of war, the combination of multitudes for mutual destruction, but the science of such action? Individuals were capable of but little mischief; organized, no bounds could be set to their desolations. The principle is now being applied, in all possible ways, to work out the good of the species. There is scarcely an evil to which man is exposed, against which, by association, he may not guard himself. It extends to man in all conditions, and to the property of man in all situations—to accident, to sickness, to death itself, to the ravages of fire, and the rage of ocean. It extends to the whole empire of art, science, and humanity. It has been employed to emancipate the slave in the West, and to enlighten the idolater in the East; to construct rail-roads at the expense of millions, and compose Encyclopædias comprising the wisdom of ages. In the mind of Nasmith the principle was linked with humanity; he thought he had found in this a means of mitigating misery, in all its forms, and in its utmost magnitude.

These societies are of two classes, the natural and the artificial; the former Christian Churches, and the latter voluntary associations of Christian men. In the order of nature, conventional movements are first, and absolutely