

which you look for a measure of support. Hard as times are, your claims will not be disregarded.

Let me pass from these introductory observations, to the topic on which it is my purpose to address you this evening; merely premising further, that it is matter of regret that this position is not occupied by an abler individual, on an occasion so propitious as the present.

FREEDOM OF MIND !

One of Johnson's definitions of "freedom" is "Liberty, exemption from servitude, independence." This will suit our present purpose. By "freedom of mind" is meant its "liberty" to think, to range abroad, to investigate, to reason independently of all extraneous control. Except to its Maker it is exempt from servitude; and even He requires the service of powers which He has made to be free. Without freedom there could be no responsibility; yet Jehovah reigns, and his intelligent offspring are accountable. The mind is responsible *only* to its Maker and Supreme Ruler, it acknowledges no allegiance to merely fellow mind—to man it is not accountable. Responsibility of *action* extends into a wider sphere. We may be rightfully accountable to properly instituted human authority for our *doings*, but not for our *thinking*, that is independent. Our fellows cannot control it. The mind is beyond their reach,—nor have they the slightest right to interfere with its movements, except in the way of instruction and persuasion, which must necessarily recognise our personal freedom. This inherent liberty unfolds itself in our earliest mental efforts. The child thinks without restraint. He runs hither and thither in search of pleasurable sensations, the sources of which, *for him*, abound in every department of nature. He rapidly perceives, and comparing his perceptions with one another, forms and treasures up ideas, which, although imperfect, are nevertheless there, for future correction and enlargement. In possession of a little stock constantly enlarging, the young mind, careers and gambols along with the joyousness of a perfect freedom. Many an imaginary paradise does he construct, with sunny skies and wandering rills, with verdant slopes and rocky eminences, with grass and flowers, trees and fruits,