

may or may not produce. He cannot be presumed to go into the consideration of such a subject, in making up his voyage; to estimate all the pleasant little family and social parties which are to be enjoyed over each separate parcel of it; to figure up all the small-talk, the tea-table tattle which may follow the enjoyment of each portion. He rather calculates the chances of profit, or as the hardy seaman would say, the "main chance;" he looks at the prices per pound in Canton, the expenses of the voyage, freight, insurance, exchange, &c., and the state of the market at home. These being satisfactory to his mind, he plans and carries through the enterprise. Whether he prospers or not, the community enjoy the advantages of his labour and capital.

It may be said we are aware, that if the merchant does not calculate upon the good he may do, in projecting a voyage, he is influenced by a love of gain, by selfish or avaricious motives. But we think this does not follow: in the first place, the merchant, when he enters upon his business in life, knows that he *cannot* labour for himself alone; no man can labour for himself alone, in any profession; and that, therefore, the man who devotes himself to an honest calling, does in some degree, from that circumstance alone, promote the public good. The merchant knows, too, that his various enterprises, whether they result profitably for himself or not, and, even if only partially accomplished, are productive of public benefit, inasmuch as he employs many trades, professions, and a large number of men, in each step of his various operations. So that, after all, the happiness which may flow from his labours, does not altogether, or mainly perhaps, depend on the cargo of his ship, the commodity he exports or imports. But suppose, for the sake of illustrating the point, that a love of gain or avarice does impel the merchant in his undertakings. This very passion, bad as it may be thought, may impel him to do that which will make people happy; and if he makes people happy by a lawful, honest, and praiseworthy enterprise, is he not a benefactor of mankind? 'The world, however, cares but little about the *motives* of the merchant, and assuredly has no right to impugn them. He is influenced by similar motives as other men, when they design the accomplishment of a similar object; and they may or may not effect his own happiness, but are not felt in the community.

We were speaking of the results of commerce, and whatever others may say, we are free to acknowledge, and to claim for it, that it has done much for the benefit and happiness of mankind. Nay more; we should almost say that it has done every thing for him. To commerce he is indebted for civilization, and, under Providence, for the spread of the Christian religion; and without these great blessings, what is man? True, it may have produced some evil in the world; what real good has

not? Name to us any blessing man has ever enjoyed, which has not been, in some form or other, productive of evil, and we will yield our opinion without further argument. The truth is, there is no such thing as unmixed good in the catalogue of man's enjoyments or endurances. There is nothing, and can be nothing, linked with man's imperfectness, of unalloyed goodness. Let us not be misunderstood on this point, not even by the designing; some things, nay many things—indeed we came near to say, all things—are *good in themselves*. Truth is good, in itself and of itself; but what is *truth* separated from *every thing besides*?

A word more for the merchant: it is no fault of his, as we shall contend, after all that has been said, that a consideration of human happiness, does not always enter into his calculations of a voyage. The evidence he consults supersedes this or implies it, and it is manifested to his perception in the state of the market or the demand. The *demand* is his criterion, and is the only evidence of want which he can know. It is his business to supply the want, and the supply of all the wants of the community embrace the results of commerce. The character of the want, or its moral effect when supplied, are matters which belong to the intelligence and virtue of the community to regulate. It is for society, by a high moral influence, to guide and govern its necessities, and the business of the merchant to supply them. We have seen that he fulfils his duty; that he supplies our necessities, and administers to our comfort and happiness every hour in the day. Let us see, for example, how our account stands with him at the present moment, even in our own little corner. This quill he furnished to us; the penknife, which lies by our hand, happens to have been brought from England in one of his ships; the desk we write upon came from beyond seas, in the timber of a warmer climate; that wedgewood inlaid is also an imported article; the oil in our lamp was once in his ships; and so we might go on; but, thanks to the skill of our own countrymen, we may use of our own paper, and Walkden's British ink powder, we apprehend, will prove to be an exception to one of our first remarks. We are surrounded with articles provided for our use by the enterprise of the merchant, and brought to us from all quarters of the world. If we should go back a few hours, and see how our account stands with him through the day, we should perceive our greater indebtedness. At our meals, whence that beautiful china, that cutlery, the sugar, tea, coffee, molasses, spices, sweetmeats, fruits, and wines? The merchant has supplied them all. He feeds, clothes, and warms us. We live, enjoy, luxuriate, in the comforts he provides, whether he calculates upon our happiness or not; and are hourly enabled to do the business of our hands by the implements and instruments furnished by his agency. Are we not, then, indebted to him?