

once entertained or dreamed of. To learn what the Gospel has done for society, the moral standard of a Heathen must be compared with that of a Christian nation, and the moral standard of a nation, in which true Christianity prevails, with what that was a century, or centuries ago. It will be found, that while the difference between individual character continues as marked and manifest as ever, there has been a general rise in the moral sentiment of all, and much is now condemned, which would once have been praised, and practised with but little remorse. And there is much in this, for which it behoves us collectively and individually to be thankful. We gain by the better order which prevails in society. We gain by the sway of better feelings in ourselves. Yet let us beware of pluming ourselves, or giving way to self-gratulation, on account of these, as if we were morally and spiritually, more meritorious than those who went before us. There is no merit in our knowing powers of nature, or methods of applying them to the uses of life, which in former ages were unknown. Neither is there any special merit in the participation of a moral sentiment which has become general. The tide may float a vessel from the rocks, without skill or effort, in the mariners whom it contains. And the tide of moral sentiment may carry a man out of temptations, and away from practices, which prevailed

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