

having nothing, and yet possessing all things." Herself the victim of universal selfishness, she yet left on every shore which she visited everlasting monuments that she had been there in the hospitals and edifices of charity, which lifted up their heads, and in the ennobling influence which stole over the heart of society.

We are warranted in affirming, then, that, as far as the temporal welfare of man is concerned, the history of the past demonstrates that even the worst form of Christianity is preferable to the very best form which heathenism ever knew. Who has not heard, for instance, of the atrocities which men called Christians, committed in her abused name in South America? Yet even there, though her pretended priesthood was an army, and though they hewed their path with the sword, her humanizing influence was quickly felt. No longer are wives buried with their deceased husbands in Gongo; nor do the Aborigines of Florida quench the supposed thirst of their idol with human blood. At Metamba they no longer put the sick to death, nor sacrifice human victims at funerals in Angola. No longer do the inhabitants of New Spain offer the hearts of men in sacrifice, nor drown their children in a lake to keep company with the idol supposed to reside within it.

But why do we speak of other lands? Britain itself owes everything, under God, to the influence of the Gospel. The cruelties of Rome did not humanize, nor the northern superstitions enlighten us. The Missionary who first trode our shores found himself standing in the very temple of Druidism. And wherever he turned he heard the din of its noisy festivals, saw the obscenity of its lascivious rites, and beheld its animal and human victims. But Christianity had marked the island for its own. And although its lofty purposes are yet far from being worked out on us, from that eventful moment to the present, the various parts of the social system have been rising together. Even when most at rest, its influence has been silently penetrating the depths of society. When most enfeebled and corrupted itself, its authority has been checking the progress of social corruption, rendering law more protective, and power more righteous. When most disguised and repressed, its wisdom has been modifying our philosophy, and teaching a loftier system of its own. A Howard, sounding and circumnavigating the ocean of human misery, is only an obedient agent of its philanthropy. A Clarkson and a Wilberforce have only given utterance to its tender and righteous appeals for the slave. A Raikes, a Bell, and a Lancaster, have simply remembered its long neglected injunction, "Suffer little children to come to me." While all its Sabbaths, Bibles, and direct evangelical ministrations, are only the appropriate instrumentality by which it has ever been seeking to become the power of God to our salvation, and preparing us for the office to which Providence is now distinctly calling us, to be the Christian ministers and missionaries of mankind.