

which subjected the greater part of mankind to the capricious tyranny of a few free-born masters, who treated and valued them like beasts, while they were sometimes made the sacrifice of a youthful frolic; and murdered in the streets and roads, by thousands, for amusement, is fully extinguished; and our own times have witnessed another triumph of Christian benevolence, in the efforts made to extirpate (at least in this country) the infamous traffic in human beings: the success of which efforts is to be ascribed *solely* to the influence of Christianity in directing public opinion.

Thus, while the Gospel prescribes the best rules for promoting family peace and domestic happiness, it has also removed the great obstacles which have often impeded it. The condition of the inferior and dependent ranks of society has been ameliorated; and every varied form of human misery finds some alleviation from the active diligence of private benevolence, and the magnificent provisions of public charity. The heathens had no public places of accommodation for the sick, the poor, the widow, or the orphan; nor was there a single hospital in the whole heathen world: whereas every Christian country abounds with charitable institutions for those humane purposes. The flow of beneficence, proceeding from this divine source, (especially in this highly favoured country,*) has scarcely left any means untried for meliorating the sufferings of the poor: it has erected asylums for almost every form of human misery for all the children of the needy, for the destitute and for the houseless. It has extended itself to the abodes of guilt and crime, and has attempted to put within the reach of the prisoner all the comforts that are compatible with the strict claims of justice, and it has even reached the inferior animals, by procuring for them gentle treatment, and constituting them objects of legal protection. In vain may we search in the writings of pagan moralists for exhortations to benevolence like this: not a word is to be found in Cicero's offices, of active and liberal love to the poor, to slaves, to criminals, to the brute creation, in short, to any, except friends and relations, as for mere worldly and selfish purposes; and if *modern* moralists do better, Christianity may claim the praise. What terminated the horrid gladiatorial massacres and murders, which destroyed so many thousands of unhappy persons among the Romans?—Christianity. What was instituted so many establishments for the reclaiming of the vicious, and for instructing even criminals?—Christianity. What has meliorated the condition and procured security to the lives of insolvent debtors, whose misfortunes—not their faults—