

or public hospital have never yet been laid bare, for the simple idea of mercy and compassion never entered a heathen mind. When, therefore, christianity introduced this new and improved mode of feeling and acting into the world, deep surprise was excited among the heathen, and the early defenders of the truth pointed to such remarks as an undoubted proof that the religion of Jesus is divine. "They who formerly," says James Martineau, "regarded in fermentation, have now embraced the only remedy: they who were given to magical arts, devoted themselves to the good and nobler God; they who clung to their goods and possessions above every thing else, now have their things in common, and communicate to every one that needeth. They who hated and murdered one another, and refused to discharge the duties of hospitality to any who were not of the same tribe with themselves, now since the appearance of Christ, live familiarly together, and pray for their enemies and endeavour to persuade them that unjustly hate them." But such results will be better understood when presented in detail.

1. Christianity has ameliorated, and in many instances, extinguished slavery. When the gospel was first proclaimed, the vast majority of mankind were slaves, and slavery was interwoven with the entire fabric of society in all nations. According to Milford, in his history of Greece, the proportion between freemen and slaves in that country was nearly in the ratio of ninety to four hundred. It is computed by Gibbon that, during the decline of the Roman empire, there could not be fewer than sixty million of slaves; and if it be recollected that every father of a family had the supreme control over his household, even to the extent of life and death, we shall perceive that those who were really freemen constituted only a small portion of the entire population. But we can scarcely form any adequate conception of the cruelties that were inflicted on those who are properly called slaves, without exciting the slightest indignation in the public mind. Their master's name was branded with a hot iron on their foreheads, the youth very frequently hunted them, like wild beasts, in order to learn the use of arms; and some called the Omarii, were chained, like watch dogs, before the house. Tholuck in his tract on the nature and moral influence of heathenism, gives us the following graphic picture of their condition. "A scanty and disgusting dress, and dog-skin cap, distinguished them from all the rest of the inhabitants. Those who were too robust had to be unfeebled by various kinds of ill treatment, and if the masters did not do this, they became liable to a penalty. Every slave annually received a certain number of stripes to remind him that he was a slave! Hymns of a nobler kind they were not allowed to sing, but only gay and sensual songs. To complete their degradation, they were sometimes compelled to sing songs in disgrace and ridicule of themselves; and to the same purpose they were also compelled to perform indecent dances. In order to make the sons of the Spartans loath the vice of drunkenness, the slaves were compelled to intoxicate themselves in public assemblies. When they became too numerous, they were murdered clandestinely; every year, at a certain period, the young Spartans, clad in armor, used to hunt them, and to prevent their increase, they were killed with daggers." As affording a plausible pretext for such treatment, Aristotle maintained that the various races of mankind were superior and inferior to each other, and that certain nations were so degraded as only to be fitted to be slaves to the rest of mankind.

But in the case of slavery, we see the practical triumphs of christianity. The Bible without denouncing slavery, has taught doctrines and implanted affections which in many countries, has extinguished property in man. At first, the condition of the slave was ameliorated. The emperors Constantine and Justinian prohibited their masters from putting them to death, and enacted that their rights and privileges should be respected not only as men, but as christians. The Bible had taught that "God had made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on the face of all the earth," and in proportion as society was leavened with these sentiments, the chains of slavery were broken. Even in the middle ages, it was regarded as a meritorious action to liberate one's own slaves, or—to redeem those of others. And at the present day, the indignation inflamed excited attention and arouse a spirit of indignation which, before the introduction of Christianity, could not have been understood. It is because christianity has created a public conscience and has awakened

sentiments which we can not securely ignore, that Tertullian's *Apology* stands as the "perpetual monument" of history, to the very present. Such a state of feeling is an evidence of the great influence of christianity, and is indicative of the period, when "Ere you shall stretch out her hands unto God."

2. Tertullian's *Apology* is a gem of morality in the past. Among the heathen, the poor were neglected, the wid-or was oppressed, and the same strength was given an equivalent with money. The whole Roman empire had but one hundred institutions, while the single city of London, in England, has upwards of three hundred. And the reason why so little is said or thought of these institutions arises from the fact that the public mind has become so accustomed to the evil effects of benevolence, that they are now regarded almost as matters of course—the natural consequence of prevailing principles of brotherly kindness and charity. But the case was very different, when the light of divine truth burst on the moral darkness of the world. We learn from Tertullian that surprise was excited on account of the liberality which Christians manifested for each other. He informs us that each contributed for the support of the poor according to their ability, and that each name was appropriated for the support of the indigent, for orphans, aged domestics, those out of employment, for shipwrecked persons and also for such as were condemned to the mines, or banished to the islands, or confined in prison for their adherence to Christ's cause. "But such things," says he, "and especially the operation of such a love almost burns its own impress on the minds of some. See, they say, how they love one another, but they hate one another. See how they are ready to die for each other, for they are much more prepared to kill each other." And when contrasting the conduct of Christians in one another with that of the heathen, he continues, "But we are your brethren, in virtue of one mother, nature, although ye are too little men, because ye are evil brethren. But how much more worthily are they called and regarded brethren, who acknowledge one father, God; who drink into one spirit of holiness, who have, trembling, issued from one womb of ignorance to the one light of truth." And the Christians extended this love even to their enemies. They frequently sustained them, when abandoned in sickness and old age by their relatives. In the third century, a plague broke out in the city of Carthage, the heathens fled and suffered their friends to die, but the Christians, animated by the religion which they professed, attended the very individuals who had previously persecuted them, and many of them caught the infection and died. Such was the conduct of men, whose lives were a living commentary on the religion which they professed to believe.

3. Christianity has inculcated the only elevated morality. The apostle Paul gives a correct moral portrait of the state of the civilized world before their reception of the gospel, in the *epistle to the Romans*. He describes men as haters of God, as given up to the most degrading idolatry and the most abominable vices; and as not only doing things worthy of death, but as having so completely deadened conscience as to take pleasure in those that do them. And in confirmation of this testimony, the historians who lived in the decline of the Roman empire, enumerate crimes and describe practices which then commonly prevailed, which cannot now be even mentioned in any society. In Greek and Latin authors there are numerous words to denote anger, wrath, revenge; yet there are none to denote the christian grace of humility. *Humilitas*, in Latin, from which our word humility is derived, denotes mean spiritiveness, virtue means mere bodily strength, and piety is simply descriptive of filial affection, which was required more from political than religious considerations. From the absence of words to denote such simple conceptions as Christian humility, virtue, and piety, we may conclusively argue that such ideas never entered their mind. And even after christianity had virtually created a new language, it is remarkable how many words were employed to denote the malignant passions of our nature, and how few to describe the graces of the Christian character. "It is a melancholy thing to observe," says French, "how much richer is any vocabulary in words that set forth sin, than in those that set forth grace. When St. Paul (Gal. 5, 19-23) would put these against those, the words of the flesh against the fruit of the spirit, these are seventeen, those only nine; and where do we find in Scripture such a list of graces, as we do