

The moral influence of manufactories.

A Report.

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Theological School.

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The subject to which I shall call your attention this evening, is the moral influence of manufactories, or the manufacturing system, as it exists in this country. In doing this, I do not consider this subject as standing pre-eminently above other similar subjects, but because I think that it is well for us to obtain as definite idea of the influence which this system of labor exerts, as time & means & opportunity will permit. This I consider is of the utmost importance.

But before entering upon a discussion of the particular subject before us, I shall call your attention for a few moments to the nature of man, & the influence which labor has upon his character & conduct.

Man was made for labor. By it, he develops the physical the intellectual & moral powers of his being. It is favorable - it is indispensable to his progress in knowledge & his growth in virtue. To neglect ^{is to neglect his} ~~it~~ he violates a fundamental law of his being & is compelled to suffer the bitter consequences. But labor, if it be not useful, beneficial, will not have a healthy influence over him. On the contrary, it will be productive of much & the worst evil. This result seems obvious, when we consider the nature of man & his relations to society.

And what is man? Man is a creature of impulse & is prone to imitation. His life is influenced & his character is formed, to some extent, by the lives & characters of others. He partakes of the spirit of those with whom he associates. And this must ever be, as long as man is a man. Outward circumstances will influence his conduct. It cannot be otherwise. He may not be aware of it, may he may even deny it; but their impress is indelibly stamped upon his character & it cannot be wholly obliterated. He may seek to remove it, but it clings to him with a deadly tenacity. Its mark is still upon him & it may remain there forever. Not only man's associates, & his outward circumstances have

an influence over him; but even his occupation does. He cannot wholly separate himself from the employment in which he is engaged. He may desire it; yea! he may even struggle for it; but he cannot fully accomplish his purpose. It has become a part of himself; its spirit has become infused into his very nature & has taken a strong hold upon his affections. He is influenced by it. This he cannot help if he would. It is not merely the result of choice, the determination of will; but it is often, it is generally the effect of a secret, silent, unobtrusive influence that steals upon him unobserved. Of its approach he is not aware, till he finds himself under its iron control.

This is not the result of one act, but of many. It is not what takes place in a day; but it requires years - a life. It is not what ~~has~~ been entailed upon him by another; but what man has brought upon himself by constant repetition of the same act. This is in accordance with the laws of nature. It is in conformity with the known laws of the mind. Hence the influence which trades & professions exert over men. is founded upon laws immutable in themselves & extensive as creation. Illustrations of this truth, we witness in every day life. If a

man is engaged in a business that is corrupting & demoralizing in its nature & tendency; he will, to some extent, become degraded & corrupted by it. Its influence will be seen in this life & upon his character. It would require a strength of moral principle, seldom possessed, to prevent it. Such a man would exhibit the real dignity of human nature & the moral grandeur of true integrity of character. It would show that man was superior to circumstance, & that if he sought to develop his capacities he could triumph over them.

So on the other hand; if a man is engaged in a business that is ennobling, elevating & improving in its character, it would betoken a degree of moral depravity & perverseness of heart, seldom witnessed, if he was not made better by it. It would show that the heart was overlaid with such a thick incrustation of human guilt, that rendered it impervious to the noble sentiments & kindlier influences with which it was surrounded. It would indicate that the soul was insensible to all generous impressions & virtuous actions; that it was encased in a triple coat of steel, through which the arrows of truth & the weapons of virtue could not penetrate.

What is true of individuals, is equally true of societies. They

are made up of individuals & whatever individuals are, such will societies be. If individuals be corrupt & depraved, societies will be corrupt & depraved also. Man does change his character by changing his condition. Neither does he change his acts by associating with those like himself. Were he immoral before he united with a society of immoral men, the probability is that he will remain immoral. There is nothing in this situation, calculated to produce a favorable impression upon him. Vice cannot beget virtue nor sin, holiness.

What is true of societies is also true of institutions. If institutions are depraving in their nature & demoralizing in their influence, they will corrupt & deprave those that are connected with them. Community will also suffer. That is made up of individuals & must partake of the character of those who compose it. Are institutions corrupt? it must be, because the men who established them, or now control them are corrupt. Institutions of themselves cannot make men better or worse, but it is the men who have the charge of them, the laws which they enact & the labor which they impose. These are the means by which men are influenced for good or for evil & not institutions strictly speaking.

But when we speak of institutions, we always have in our minds every thing that pertains to them, or is necessary to their existence & perpetuity. Such are the ideas that we associate with the institution or establishment which we have under consideration at the present time.

If the manufacturing institution or establishment exerts a baneful influence upon men & society; if it is a moral pest-house, the very sink of all iniquity, the concentrated essence of all evil; the character of those who are connected with it, will become blackened, degraded, & defiled & a stream of moral pollution will go forth from it, that will contaminate & destroy the very life-blood of society. Such must be its tendency & influence. So on the other hand; if it does not partake of this horrid character, but is instrumental in calling forth the higher powers & nobler faculties of the human mind, developing the native, inborn energies of the soul, & strengthening the diviner principles of man's nature; then those who are connected with it, either as conductors or operatives, will be made better by their occupation, & society will reap rich harvest of good from its establishment. An influence will be exerted by it, that will

be known & felt to the very soul & center of society. If these principles be true; it becomes a matter of the first importance to every philanthropist & christian, to see to it, that they do not exert their influence in behalf of such establishments or systems of labor, that will degrade the physical, intellectual or moral natures of those connected with them & entail on community a withering, blighting curse which time alone can remove.

If this system of labor cramps mens intellects; degrades their character; destroys their manliness; takes from them their just rights; makes them mere machines & reduces them to the condition of slaves; it is the duty of every philanthropist & christian to cry aloud & spare not; till every vestige of this monster evil is numbered among the things that were but are not. If they are true to themselves, they will do this; they must do it; for on them rests a fearful responsibility, which requires the wisdom of serpents & the harmlessness of doves in order to discharge it aright. They should set before the world its true condition, expose its deep wrongs & warn men to beware of it, as they would the deadliest evil that ever afflicted society or the world.

Such I conceive are the obligations, that rest upon all who have the physical & moral well-being of their fellow man at heart. The condition of their brother man they should seek to elevate; & whatever has a tendency to crush him down, they should be first & foremost to lift up their voice & exert their influence against it. If it is the natural tendency of the manufacturing system to do this; they are recreant to their duty if they do not let society know the deep wrong it is inflicting upon man & the world.

I have made these remarks to show the position which we occupy in relation to this system, & every other system of labor; that has been established among us, for the saving of physical strength, the accumulation of wealth, & the supply of the necessities as well as luxuries of life. I think that men - Christians even, do not fully understand the connection which exists between men & the various trades, professions & systems of labor in which they are engaged. But in this they commit a fatal mistake & it is productive of the worst of consequences. Yet they are not alone. All men entertain the same views & are influenced by them.

It is generally thought that, if man's physical wants are all

supplied, there is nothing more that needs to be done. If this outward lot & condition be favorable; it matters not what may be this inward spiritual welfare. If men are kept from poverty, suffering & want. it is a matter of small consequence whether the heart, the affections & the immortal nature starves, perishes & dies. And as these charges are preferred against the manufacturing system. it is for this reason that I have brought it before your attention at the present time.

But before we attempt to decide upon the merits of this system, let us first define what it is. It is the application of art, science & labor in bringing about certain specific changes or modifications in already existing materials, that they may be adapted to supply the wants of man, gratify his desires, or increase his happiness. For this purpose was the manufacturing system established. And the question which most immediately interests us & which we have to discuss is this; are the persons, who are engaged in bringing about these various changes or modifications, made better or worse by their occupation? Or in other words, is the influence which is exerted over them healthy & ennobling; or is it pernicious & corrupting? If it is the former, we have cause for joy & gratulation that this sys-

tem has been introduced among us. If the latter, we have just reason for sorrow & regret that it occupies so prominent a place in the hearts of this people.

Before entering upon a particular discussion of this question. I would call your attention to one fact, the deep interest which is felt, by almost all men, in the prosperity & success of this institution. It engages the thoughts, not only of the men of wealth & business, but of the statesmen, the politicians & the humble, but honest-day laborer. It occupies a prominent place in the heart of this people; for they see wealth, good arising from it.

In some parts of our country, it has become a fixed & permanent institution. And in almost every section of it, whether on the rock bound coast & amidst the sterile hills of New-England, the broad savannas of the West; or the sunny plains of the South, men are becoming more & more interested in it. They are inquiring what it is, what it has done, & what it is designed to do, towards developing the physical & moral resources of the country. Neither are they satisfied in simply asking what has been done, & what is doing in this great department of labor, but they are looking about themselves, to see what they can do to give it permanency & success. They are not simply asking

what they can do; they go further; they are putting forth the utmost energies of their souls to bring this system into complete & successful operation. They are investing their capitals, sacrificing their time, & foregoing present good, that in due time, they may receive their share of future prosperity. They are indulging in high hopes, dwelling upon bright visions of fancy; devoting the best powers of their minds, & bestowing the best years of their lives; thinking that they shall promote their own pecuniary interest, & advance the general well-being of the community in which they live.

To be actuated by such motives, & governed by such principles is worthy of all praise. It is well for men to possess a generous enlarged & enterprising spirit; & manifest a deep & lively interest in the great moral & physical movements of the day. It is right for them to do so; if they do not sacrifice the integrity of their souls on the altar of Mammon; nor trench upon the rights & privileges of others. But should they do this, they must remember that they are treading on forbidden ground; & that they cannot violate one of the least of the physical or moral laws, without suffering the just consequences of their deeds.

I have said that men.— that the country felt a deep & lively

interest in this great & growing institution. I now say that they are seeking, how they can best promote its general welfare; by bringing it to the highest point of perfection. This seems to be the great problem which they now have to solve. Hence the mind is tasked & tried, in devising ways & means, by which this end can best be accomplished. And the result is that improvements are constantly taking place in this department of human industry, & the system which was pursued a few years ago, is now almost wholly abandoned. Man is made to perform, more & more labor every day, that once fell to the lot of human limbs. Machinery now does in one day or one year, what it would require millions of human hands to perform in the same time. It is estimated that the manufacturing power of Great Britain & of the United States, perform as much labor, as all of the inhabitants of the globe could do without them.

If such be the fact, who can doubt, for a moment; but what the manufacturing system exerts a deep & powerful influence over the destiny of individuals as well as the countries in which it is situated? Who can hesitate to believe but that it is a subject worthy of the attention of every philanthropist & christian? Who will question, but what it is as much the duty of men to seek

to remove the cause of evil as it is to labor for its cure?
These questions seem to answer themselves. If then this system is the cause of evil-sin we are in duty bound to point out that evil & labor for its removal.

In the remarks which I have to make on this subject I shall confine myself to the system as it has developed itself in our own country. I have nothing to do with it as it exists in other countries; nor with the evils of which it is said to be the cause. That is a subject foreign to the one which is now to engage our attention. & has no connection with it. Neither would I be understood, in what I have to say; as wishing to justify the wrong or condemn the right, which may exist in some particular establishment in our country. I wish to look at it as a whole, & not as a part, & make up my opinion accordingly. Its pecuniary advantages & intellectual influence I shall not speak upon, any further than they will serve to illustrate the subject under consideration. The moral influence of this system is the subject which we have to discuss, & to a candid consideration of this I would call your attention.

And here a wide & boundless field of thought & reflection opens before us. As we attempt to explore it, we are lost, we

are overwhelmed at the thought of its magnitude & vastness. For who is able to measure the influence of a word, or an act? Much less the influence of such an institution as this. Men may speculate about it; they may form some faint idea about it. But that is all that they can do; they cannot trace out its secret windings & see its practical bearing upon the lives & characters of those who are connected with it, & the influence which it exerts over society & the world.

If the sins of men are visited upon the third & fourth generations & their virtues upon the thousandth who will have the presumption to say, that the influence of this institution or of any other, may not be equally as extensive? The thought is too vast for conception; it is infinite. We may trace out the courses of the stars, & measure the distance of the sun, but who is able to point out or even conceive of the influence of this institution? Not one.

It may be interesting to give a short account of the rise, progress & present condition of the manufacturing system in this country. I do this that we may know the extent to which this system has been carried - the prominent place which it occupies in the hearts of men - the estimation in which it

is held; that we may be better prepared to judge of the influence which it exerts.

The first attempt, to manufacture cotton or woollen goods in this country, by machinery, was made at East Bridgewater Mass. in the year 1786. This enterprise was regarded with such a degree of interest, that the General Court of that year voted the sum of £200. or \$666, + to encourage the undertaking.

In the following year 1787. an attempt was made at Beverly Mass. to introduce the manufacture of cotton fabrics, by machinery. To advance this enterprise, the General Court granted the sum of £1,000. or \$3,333, + to be raised by a lottery.

A third attempt to manufacture "home spun cloth, by machinery, was made at Providence R.I. in the year 1788. A similar attempt was made this year at Philadelphia which proved more successful than any of the other experiments.

"But, notwithstanding these laudable & praiseworthy efforts made by the people of Mass. & R.I. and soon after by Penn. N. Y. & Conn." says the memoir of Slater. "their persevering enterprises entirely failed. & they saw their prospects blighted & their hopes prostrate."

It was at this critical period, that Samuel Slater the father

of the American System of manufactures arrived in this country from England. He had served a regular apprenticeship, in Cotton Spinning, under Jedediah Strutt, or partner of the celebrated Sir, Richard Arkwright, the inventor of the Spinning frame. He landed at New York at the close of the year 1789, & soon left that place for Providence R.I., where he made arrangements with some gentlemen of that place to set up machinery for cotton spinning. The place selected was Pawtucket. From this period may be dated the commencement of the manufacturing system in this country. Its progress has been rapid, almost inconceivable. Beautiful villages & flourishing towns, have sprung up as rapidly as if the earth had been touched by an enchanter's wand. The barren heather has been converted into the fruitful field & the rock bound plain has been made to blossom like the rose. Mighty rivers have been checked in their course, & made subservient to the will of man. The hostile elements of fire & water have been yoked together, & compelled to do his bidding. The winds & the waves even have been made to obey him & the heaving lightning has been caught & held by his arm. Such have been some of the triumphs of intellect, united with physical strength, over dead inert matter.

Man has become almost omnipotent. No work seems too great for him to accomplish. The solid rock has yielded to his power, the lofty mountain has been brought low, & the deep valley has been exalted, & the desert has been made a high-way for him to pass over. Stupendous buildings have been erected, filled with active machinery, subjected to the care of intelligent men & women & made to perform the labor of millions of human hands. These are some of the results which have arisen from the introduction of labor saving machinery into the world.

That we may form some idea of the extent of the manufacturing system I will state a few facts. The amount of cotton consumed in this country in 1805 was about 361,000 lbs. Now it is estimated that we consume about 266,500,000 lbs. yearly & the quantity is constantly increasing. We manufacture about 800,000,000 of yards of cloth valued at about \$70,000,000. The number of persons directly employed in this business is probably 120,000 with as many more who look to them for a support.

The extent of the woollen manufacture I have not been able to learn. Probably it is nearly as great as that of the cotton. If so we have a population of at least 200,000 souls who are directly engaged in these two branches of human industry.

To inquire into the physical, intellectual & moral condition of this class of our citizens, is a subject of the deepest interest. It is deserving the attention of every man. It is natural for man to feel an interest in his Brother man, & he seeks to do him good. Is he in suffering? he seeks to assuage it. Is he in distress? he strives to relieve him. Is he in prosperity? he has no heart to rejoice with him. So where are with the kindlier sentiments of the soul, with manifest themselves in deeds of charity & acts of kindness. From this deep interest in the great Brotherhood of the race; ^{that} arises the great moral movements of the day.

But to return to the subject before us. It is generally admitted by all writers on moral philosophy: that the growth of the moral sentiments depends, to some extent, upon the means which man has of supplying all his natural & physical wants for himself. If he is deprived of these means, he is left to the power of temptation, & may supply them by unlawful means. Does he do this, his morality suffers; his integrity is weakened; his character become suspicious: & he loses that self-respect which is necessary to the maintenance of the integrity of his soul. Misery, ruin & degradation, follow with all their attendant consequences & man becomes an outcast in society. In this we see the intimate con-

nection between man's outward condition & his inward principles. But the factory operative has the means of supplying all his natural & necessary wants, & even of enjoying the luxuries of life. His labour is well rewarded. In fact there is no class of labourers so liberally paid for their services, as those who are engaged in the manufacturing establishments. I know of no occupation, which affords a better opportunity for a man to acquire a competency, by honest industry; than as a situation as an operative in one of our well conducted manufacturing establishments. As far then as man's outward condition has an influence over his inward principles - his morality - this speaks well for the system under consideration.

To illustrate the same principle let us be more particular & see if the same results will not be educed. In 1845 a gentleman of Lowell Mass. made inquiries respecting the physical, intellectual & moral condition of the operatives engaged in the various mills in that city. The result was as follows. (I have collected at random from the numerous statements made). In a mill employing 240 female operative. 22 stated that their health was better since working in the mill than it was before, 143, that it was as good & 15 that it was not as good; but attributed their cross.

of health to other causes, than to their work in the mill. All were capable of writing an intelligible hand, except a few foreigners & 30 had been engaged as teachers in the public schools.

Of the 240 operatives 123 were connected with some Sabbath school in the city & 103 were members of some Christian church. Nearly the same results were found to exist in every other mill in the city. At this time a publication was conducted by the young ladies employed in the mills which Mr Dickens says in his notes on America: "compares favorably with the periodical literature of England." A fact can be relied upon, with question but what there is an influence exerted over them favorable to moral growth & Christian purity. Neither is their occupation looked upon as disreputable or degrading. On the contrary it is considered highly respectable & honorable & is not an obstacle to their being received into the society of the intelligent & refined. In many instances they are the intelligent & refined & would put to shame those who would regard them with cold indifference. The male operatives are regarded as belonging to one of the most valuable classes of the citizens. They are connected with the Sabbath schools as teachers & Superintendents & in some instances they even hold offices in the church. They are

electd to fill places of honor & responsibility in the city & State
& some of them are fully competent to discharge the duties of
one who occupies a seat in the hall of the National Legislature.

This is the intellectual & moral condition of the Lowell operative.
How far these remarks apply to other manufacturing establish-
ments, villages & cities I am not able to say. I only speak
what I do know & testify to what I have seen.

But it may be said that my testimony is partial. that
Lowell is an exception to the general character of the institu-
tion & is not a fair specimen of the other manufacturing vil-
lages, towns & cities in the country. & is not therefore a just
criterion by which to judge of the moral influence of the
system. Be it so or not. it is not my purpose to enter in-
to a discussion on this point. But I do say that what
Lowell is, that may be the condition of every other manufac-
turing establishment, village, town & city in the country.

Lowell does not possess any advantages which do not belong
to every other similar village, town or city in the Union.
Let men only feel the responsibility which rests upon them. &
if they indulge in wrong or even countenance it. they will
soon adopt measures for its entire removal.

Again: the manufacturing system promotes industry. Without industry there is no security, either for private or public virtue. The man who is not engaged in some useful or honorable employment, is liable to fall into habits of dissoluteness, profanity & intemperance. These are some of the most prolific sources of misery, want, suffering, crime & general immorality. It is the testimony of all experience, that good morals never did exist & never can, among an indolent, careless thoughtless people. Industry is as indispensable to morality as food is to life. One cannot long exist without the other. "Idleness" says an old proverb "is the parent of many vices" & none more true was ever uttered. Satan ever did & ever will find some mischief for idle hands to do. It is as much his object now as it was six thousand years ago, & that object he will ever seek to accomplish.

Man's nature too is the same now that it was then, & must be susceptible to the same influences. He has the same difficulties to contend with & the same obstacles to overcome. He is tried & tempted now as he was then, & he will fall from his integrity, unless he be sufficiently on his guard to resist the tempter's power. This in a measure is found in industry.

Hence whatever tends to promote industry, presents a powerful check to vice & immorality. That manufactures does this in an eminent degree, none can doubt. Hence we say that as far as industry is concerned, the influence of this system is salutary, ennobling & reforming both upon the individual & the community in which it is established.

Again, it is important to the success of this institution that the operatives be intelligent. This is a matter of the first importance. Without intelligence in the operatives the system, in this country, can never succeed. It is the unanimous opinion of every person whose writings I have seen on this subject & it is confirmed by my own acquaintance with it, that the more intelligent & the more moral the operatives are; just so much better workmen they make, & just so much better pay they receive. They are not directly rewarded for their intelligence & virtue. But because they attend to their labor better, consequently they produce more & better work, & thereby receive greater pay. This being the case, is there much danger, that this class of our fellow citizens will become mere machines; subjected to the will of others; & occupy the position of slaves for whom they labor? Not at all. The

thing would be impossible. As well might we bend the giant oak with our tiny hands, as to subject the minds of such men to the will of others.

But here a serious objection meets us full in the face. It is alleged, that as it is necessary to gather large numbers of persons together to carry on this system, by coming in mutual contact, they contaminate each others minds, deprave their hearts, corrupt their morals, ruin their good names, destroy their character, & that the wages of this system, like the wages of sin, is death, - physical, mental, & moral death. This allegation, in part is true & in part it is not true. It is true, that it gathers large numbers of workmen together, for it would be impossible to carry on the establishment without them. But it is not true, that these men & women, corrupt & deprave each other, by being obliged to labor side by side, & by mingling in each others Society after the duties of the day are done. It is true that a restraining, reforming, elevating influence is exerted over them, by the kindly interchange of the noble sentiments of the heart, & the expression of love & sympathy for each other. In this way, many a friendship has been formed which has lasted through life.

But it is not true, that these workmen are crowded into hot

task horses by day. compelled to breathe, without cessation, an infected atmosphere. overtasked with labor. & made to feel the smart of the tongue or the lash, if they do not perform it. Neither is it true that they are huddled together in damp cellars. Poor wretched & wretched gamuts, by night, the abodes of misery & despair, that there they must live without comfort, or decency, & die without hope or care; that they must offer up both body & soul as a perpetual oblation to the demon of gain; compelled to live but one remove from the brutes; & crushed to the earth by the most oppressive laws, to advance the private interests of the few.

The man who brings such railing accusations as these knows not what he says, neither whereof he affirms. Of one thing he is entirely ignorant. He does not understand the character of our factory population. He does not know that we hardly have such a thing as a fixed factory population. Who must work or starve. This is an important matter to take into consideration, & should not be overlooked by him who would form an unbiased opinion on this subject.

A great majority of our factory operatives are the sons & daughters of our industrious & intelligent farmers & mechanics, who have been educated in ^{the} school of frugality & virtue, & possessors of a noble

ambition: they leave their country homes with a character irreproachable & find employment for a few years in one of these establishments: After spending three or four years (upon an average) & acquiring a respectable competence, they return back to their native home to fill the important & responsible station of life.

The young man, who wishes to elevate himself, by honest industry in the scale of moral being, connects himself with one of these establishments, on account of the inducements held out to him; & by his industry & integrity, he rises from one station of trust to another till in some instances he is placed at the head of the institution. Could this be; if the influences with which he was surrounded, & under which he was compelled to live, were evil, & only evil continually? I speak as unto wise men.

The young woman too, who intends to return, in a few years to her native town or village, must carry back with her the unsullied reputation, with which she left her youthful home. And were it true, that she was placed in a peculiarly trying situation, this thought would constantly present itself to her mind to prevent her from going astray from the path of virtue. It would be her strong safeguard, in times of exposure, & not only secure her perfect integrity of character, but induce her to maintain that propriety

rectitude of conduct, that will secure to her the esteem of the virtuous & the good of every age & name. And were there one whose moral character was suspected, did she not leave the establishment all of the virtuous would; for their sense of propriety is such, that they will not associate with, neither will they labor in the room where known moral contagion exists. Where such a system of moral police as this exists, is there much danger that open corruption & self-abandonment will abound?

Again: to suppose that parents would allow their sons & daughters to labor in places where they knew that their morals would be corrupted & where an eternal reproach would be sure to fix upon their names & character, is an accusation against them, which the very men who bring it, do not themselves believe. Besides it is the interest of the mill owners to make the villages, created by their establishments, desirable places of residence. The accommodations for the operatives must be comfortable & healthy, & the moral atmosphere which they breathe must be pure. Were it not so, the manufacturer would be sure to lose his help, & his buildings would be left to decay & his machinery be permitted to remain idle. And those, who return to their homes, carry with them a ruined reputation, & a blasted character, the object of the manufacturer would soon be frustrated.

Hence he must secure the public confidence by maintaining the principles of virtue & morality. Let it once be understood that this system fosters the evil passions of the heart, & the moral sense of the community would be stung to the quick, & a general voice of indignation would be raised against it. The community would not suffer the black waters of death to flow out upon them, without doing what they could to prevent them. It would seek redress & if it did not come from the proper source it would take it into its own hands.

It is not my intention to say that this system is free from all evil. But only there is no more of it, than is found connected with all other systems of honorable & useful employment. The same charges of corruption & depravity can be brought against all other systems, that is & can be brought against this & if this is wrong than all are wrong. But it is not necessary for me to pursue this train of remark further. Our own observations, if not experience teaches us, that where large numbers of persons associate together even for the best of purposes there is a tendency to evil & corruption. It is our duty to point out the evil & strive to remove it.

With these remarks I leave the subject to your consideration, trusting that you will give it that candid & impartial examination which its merits demand.