

Excepting the southern portion of our own continent, where are no bright lines to relieve the gloomy picture, we have now accompanied the missionary over the entire globe; and though, to his mind, the spiritual condition of our race may seem the most degraded and hopeless, yet their intellectual state is hardly less distressing. Few, and narrow, and far between are the oases that smile on the wide mental waste. Out of Europe and the northern part of our own continent, the eye searches almost in vain for a green spot to rest upon. And when we come to take a nearer view even of the brightest spots, we shall find that the light falls on these only in fitful and scattered rays, illuminating but a small portion of the surface. To take this nearer view will constitute the third part of the subject, where I propose to examine it *individually*. Under this head, I wish to point out some of the employments and habits of individuals and classes of men which either tend to check the progress of intellect, or exert no influence, or a bad influence, upon society — for in all these ways waste of mental power is the result. And it ought never to be forgotten that Providence intended that all the energies of the human soul, in their most cultivated state, should be devoted to useful and worthy objects, and that they cannot, without guilt, be expended upon those injurious to society or to individuals, or which are of doubtful utility.

In entering upon the catalogue of pursuits injurious to society, one of the first on the list, which will immediately occur to every person, is the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks. A few years since, I should have been compelled to enter into a formal argument to convince even a respectable audience that such employments are injurious. But thanks to divine mercy, which has wrought so wondrous a revolution of public opinion, this is no longer necessary.