

**"THE USE AND ABUSE OF THE
WORLD". SECOND SERIES: SIX
SERMONS PREACHED ON THE
SUNDAYS AFTER EASTER, 1874, IN THE
CHURCH OF ST. JAMES'S, PICCADILLY**

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Figure 1: Scatter plot showing a positive correlation between two variables.



THE LONDON SEASON.

"Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."—1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.

THE subject which I am to introduce to you to-day is the "London season," a phrase seldom heard in connexion with religion. The sound awakens many other associations; it raises before the mind images of levees and drawing-rooms, balls and parties, sight-seeing and matrimonial engagements, the lion and the fashions of the season. The tradesman thinks of its profits, older persons groan under its expenses, and the young look forward to its pleasures.

Why should the topic be selected for treatment in church? It is because there is a right and a wrong connected with every matter, and everything which interests men should be brought to be weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, and have the mind of God inquired with regard to it.

Now, though the first notion of the "London

season" may suggest worldly associations, I am ready to admit the necessity and propriety of the arrangement.

There is an obvious advantage in persons agreeing to resort to London at the same time of the year. In fact, the matter is not the result of any compact, but is an arrangement that is made for us by nature, or, as it is more right to say, by Providence.

It is natural and proper that the Sovereign of the country should hold courts in the metropolis, and that dutiful subjects, of a certain position, should resort to them. Not to do so would be an act of disrespect. This lies, I suppose, at the bottom of the institution which we call the "London season;" this is its originating cause, as much as the virtue of certain baths occasions the seasons of various watering-places. The Head of the State must appear in public and be waited on. The noble, and rich, and distinguished of our own land, and the representatives of foreign powers, gather round the Sovereign at the capital. Because they are there, Art takes occasion to open before them her treasures, in hopes of gratifying them and winning their patronage. Painters combine to exhibit their new productions; musicians arrange their best concerts. Flower-shows in-

vite men, exhibitions of various sorts cater for every taste. Foreigners, who can afford it, naturally choose it as the time for seeing London. One cannot prevent this, if one would, and there is no need to try to do so. In itself the arrangement is sensible and convenient.

Great national gatherings were encouraged by God among the Jews; they prevailed among the Greeks; they have been usual, I suppose, in most nations. By combination men accomplish great results; by inspecting each other's works, artists are stimulated. Country folks may be improved by visiting the metropolis. In earlier times it was still more desirable than it is now in our country, that the dwellers in solitary distant districts should rub off their angularities and be polished by mixing with the society of the capital. Conceit is diminished by men finding that, though reckoned great in their own narrow sphere, they are eclipsed by many on a larger stage. Their ideas are enlarged; they may gather food for thought, to be digested at home. What more natural than that they should see the new treasures of art acquired by the nation for its museums and picture-galleries; that they should attend debates in Parliament; that they should get some acquaintance with the great men of the day by