

**TRUE CHARITY A CHECK TO
PAUPERISM, A DISCOURSE DELIVERED
BEFORE THE HOWARD BENEVOLENT
SOCIETY AT THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH,
JANUARY 24, 1841, PP. 1-72**

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WILLIAM HAGUE

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A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE HOWARD BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

AT THE

OLD SOUTH CHURCH,

JANUARY 24, 1841.

BY REV. WILLIAM HAGUE,

Pastor of the Church in Federal street.

SECOND EDITION.

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1841 ADVERTISEMENT.

The following Discourse is published in accordance with a vote of the Executive Committee of the HOWARD BENEVOLENT SOCIETY, — believing the principles set forth to be those of "True Charity," exhibiting, in a clear and lucid manner, the proper method of relieving the sufferings of poverty, without nourishing vice or awarding a premium to sloth, and thus increasing the virulence of the evil we profess to remedy. With the hope that its circulation may aid the Society in its good designs, it is commended to the Christian public, and especially to Him who hath said, "BLESSSED IS HE WHO CONSIDERETH THE POOR."

BOSTON, MARCH, 1841.

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## DISCOURSE.

PSALMS XLII. 1.

BLESSED IS HE WHO CONSIDERETH THE POOR.

THE text describes a character. It would let us know, who it is that may be called a happy man, and asserts that it is the charitable man—*he who considereth the poor*. The selfish man of the world, taking counsel of his own heart, may ask, “How can that be? Is there any thing attractive in the sight of squalid want, of tattered garments, of bitter tears, and helpless misery? I can conceive of enjoyment in con-


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sidering the wonders and glories of creation; the sky, and earth, and sea, in their mild beauty or their stormy grandeur; in beholding the bloom of Nature, or the charms of art; in surrounding one's self with the innocent delights which wealth may command; the comforts of home and the pleasures of select society; in breathing the fresh and fragrant air of one's own parlor, where the sweet influences of music, and song, and literature, and friendship, all combine to dispel care, to soften the asperities of life, to smooth the brow, and light up the features with the expression of a chastened hilarity. These are things worth living for, and the anticipa-



tion of them nerves me to dare and to endure. And having gained all these, can it be *happiness* to leave all, even for an hour, to breathe the damp, pent-up air of the garrets and cellars of the poor; to hear their complaints, to share their sorrows, and to diminish one's amount of property for their sake? No. You may call it a duty, a task—a tax to be paid—a burden to be borne; but it is contrary to reason and experience to call it a *means of happiness*." So speaks the mere worldling, both in theory and practice. The "luxury of doing good" he knows not. Of the charity that is "twice blessed—blessing him that gives and him that takes"—he has

no conception. The very phrase seems to be drawn from the romance, not the reality of life. His oracle does not teach it, his maxims do not recognize it. No : the doctrine that it is *happiness* to consider the poor, that it is "more blessed to give than to receive," is not the language of the world's philosophy, nor a sentiment inspired by the genius of ambition, nor promulgated from the throne of fashion ; but the teaching of that Christianity, whose spirit is the spirit of pure benevolence, and which seeks to touch and move our hearts by the example of Him who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich.



The world's philosophy has no *heart*. The Epicurean said to his disciple, "Take care of your health, avoid excess in order to avoid satiety—be temperate in order to enjoy—surround yourself with all that is agreeable, shun all unpleasant sights and sounds—and thus will you attain the chief end of man." As the oracle spoke, sensuality took the hint, placed herself among the virtues, and in the name of reason extinguished sympathy for the poor. The Stoic said, "Take things as they come—fate governs all—what is, cannot be altered, and the wise man cares for nothing. Do you complain of pain? Believe me, it is no evil. Do you groan under misfor-