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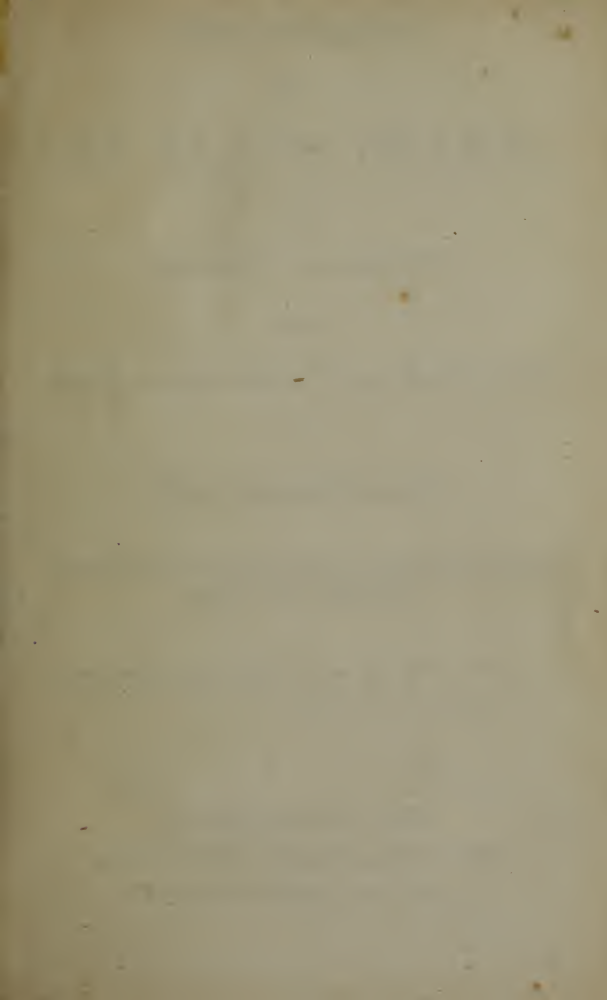
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THE ENORMITY
OF
THE SLAVE-TRADE ;
AND
THE DUTY OF SEEKING
THE
MORAL AND SPIRITUAL ELEVATION
OF
THE COLORED RACE.

SPEECHES OF WILBERFORCE, AND OTHER DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS.

"It being among my first wishes to see some plan adopted by which slavery in this country may be abolished by law."

GEORGE WASHINGTON, September 9, 1786.

PUBLISHED BY THE
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,
150 NASSAU-STREET, NEW YORK.

Received of the Treasurer of the State of New York

the sum of Five Hundred Dollars

for the purchase of land

in the County of Albany

for the use of the State of New York

in full of the purchase money

of the land of the State of New York

in the County of Albany

for the purchase of land

in the County of Albany

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in the County of Albany

for the purchase of land

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1827

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2. The second part of the document is a list of questions that were asked of the individuals who were interviewed. The questions are listed in numbered order, and the answers are listed below the questions.

3. The third part of the document is a list of answers to the questions that were asked. The answers are listed in numbered order, and the questions are listed above the answers.

4. The fourth part of the document is a list of names and titles, including the names of the members of the committee and the names of the individuals who were interviewed. The names are listed in alphabetical order, and the titles are listed below the names.

THE SLAVE-TRADE ;

AND

THE ELEVATION OF THE COLORED RACE.

MR. WILBERFORCE'S SPEECH,*

1789.

ON HIS MOTION IN PARLIAMENT FOR THE
ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE-TRADE.

[FROM HAZLITT'S ELOQUENCE OF THE BRITISH SENATE.]

MR. WILBERFORCE began with observing that he did not mean to appeal to, the passions of the House, but to their cool and impartial reason.

* The Life of the Hon. William Wilberforce by his sons shows that he was elected to Parliament in 1780, and was early interested for the abolition of the slave-trade ; but it was not till the conversion of his heart to Christ that he devoted himself to it from religious principle, and felt that " God Almighty had set before him this great object " of his life. His influence in enlisting Mr. Pitt, Lord Grenville,

He did not mean to accuse any one, but to take shame to himself, in common indeed with the whole Parliament of Great Britain, for having suffered so odious a trade to be carried on under their authority. He deprecated every kind of reflection against the various descriptions of persons who were most immediately involved in this

Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, and other eminent men in this service was great; and he labored perseveringly in connection with Granville Sharpe, Thomas Clarkson, Bishop Porteus, and others in obtaining light and awakening public interest in the subject. In May, 1788, one hundred petitions had been presented in the House of Commons for their action; and Mr. Wilberforce being prostrated in health, Mr. Pitt, Chancellor of the Exchequer, offered and secured the passage of a resolution binding the House to consider the subject at the next session. On May 12, 1789, Mr. Wilberforce made the speech here briefly reported by Hazlitt. It was over three hours in the delivery, and so effective that Mr. Burke declared that "the House, the nation, and Europe were under great and serious obligations to the honorable gentleman for having brought forward the subject in a manner the most masterly, impressive, and eloquent. The principles," he said, "were so well laid down, and supported with so much force and order, that it equalled any thing he had heard in modern times, and was not perhaps to be surpassed in the remains of Grecian eloquence." Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox were no less loud in their eulogies, and Bishop Porteus, who was in the House from five to eleven, wrote to a friend that it was "one of the ablest and most eloquent speeches ever heard," showing that "the slave-trade was the disgrace and opprobrium of the country, and that nothing but entire abolition could cure so monstrous an evil."

wretched transaction. It was necessary for him to state in the outset, that he did not conceive the witnesses who were examined, and particularly interested witnesses, to be judges of the argument. In the matters of fact that were related by them, he admitted their competency; but confident assertions, not of facts, but of supposed consequences of facts, went for nothing in his estimation.

Mr. Wilberforce divided his subject into three parts: the nature of the trade as it affected Africa itself; the appearance it assumed in the transportation of the slaves; and the considerations that were suggested by their actual state in the West Indies.

With respect to the first, it was found by experience to be just such as every man who used his reason would infallibly have concluded it to be. What must be the natural consequence of a slave-trade with Africa, with a country vast in its extent, not utterly barbarous, but civilized in a very small degree? Was it not plain that she must suffer from it; that her savage manners must be rendered still more ferocious, and that a slave-trade carried on round her coasts must extend violence and desolation to her very centre? Such were precisely the circumstances proved by the evidence before the Privy Council,

particularly by those who had been most conversant with the subject, Mr. Wadstrom, Captain Hill, and Doctor Sparman. From them it appeared that the kings of Africa were never induced to engage in war by public principles, by national glory, and least of all by the love of their people. They had conversed with these princes, and had learned from their own mouths that to procure slaves was the object of their hostilities. Indeed, there was scarcely a single person examined before the Privy Council who did not prove that the slave-trade was the source of the tragedies continually acted upon that extensive continent. Some have endeavored to palliate this circumstance; but there was not one that did not more or less admit it to be true. By one it was called the concurrent cause; by the majority it was acknowledged to be the principal motive of the African wars.

Mr. Wilberforce proceeded to describe the mode in which the slaves were transported from Africa to the West Indies. This, he confessed, was the most wretched part of the whole subject. So much misery condensed in so little room, was more than the human imagination had ever before conceived. He would not accuse the Liverpool traders; he verily believed that if the wretchedness of any one of the many hundred negroes

stowed in each ship could be brought before the view, and remain in the sight of the African merchants, there was not one among them whose heart would be strong enough to bear it. He called upon his hearers to imagine six or seven hundred of these victims, chained two and two, surrounded with every object that was nauseous and disgusting, diseased, and struggling with all the varieties of wretchedness. How could they bear to think of such a scene as this? Meanwhile he would beg leave to quote the evidence of Mr. Norris, delivered in a manner that fully demonstrated that interest could draw a film over the eyes so thick that total blindness could do no more. "Their apartments," said this evidence, "are fitted up as much for their advantage as circumstances will admit. They have several meals a day, some of their own country provisions, with the best sauces of African cookery, and by way of variety, another meal of pulse, etc., according to European taste. After breakfast they had water to wash themselves, while their apartments are perfumed with frankincense and lime-juice. Before dinner they are amused after the manner of their country; the song and the dance are promoted, and games of chance are furnished. The men play and sing, while the women and girls make fanciful ornaments with

beads, with which they are plentifully supplied." Such was the sort of strain in which the Liverpool delegates gave their evidence before the Privy Council. What would the House think, when by the concurring testimony of other witnesses the true history was laid open? The slaves, who were sometimes described as rejoicing in their captivity, were so wrung with misery at leaving their country, that it was the constant practice to set sail in the night, lest they should be sensible of their departure. Their accommodations, it seemed, were convenient. The right ankle of one indeed was connected with the left ankle of another by a small iron fetter, and if they were turbulent, by another on the wrists. The pulse which Mr. Norris mentioned were horse-beans; and the legislature of Jamaica had stated the scantiness both of water and provision as a subject that called for the interference of Parliament. Mr. Norris talked of frankincense and lime-juice, while the surgeons described the slaves as so closely stowed, that there was not room to tread among them; and while it was proved in evidence by Sir George Yonge that, even in a ship that wanted two hundred of her complement, the stench was intolerable. The song and the dance, said Mr. Norris, are promoted. It would have been more fair perhaps if he had explained

the word promoted. The truth was, that for the sake of exercise, these miserable wretches, loaded with chains and oppressed with disease, were forced to dance by the terror of the lash, and sometimes by the actual use of it. "I," said one of the evidences, "was employed to dance the men, while another person danced the women." Such was the meaning of the word promoted; and it might also be observed with respect to food, that instruments were sometimes carried out in order to force them to eat, which was the same sort of proof how much they enjoyed themselves in this instance also. With respect to their singing, it consisted of songs of lamentation on their departure, which while they sung they were always in tears; so that one of the captains, more humane probably than the rest, threatened a woman with a flogging, because the mournfulness of her song was too painful for his feelings. That he might not trust, however, too much to any sort of description, Mr. Wilberforce called the attention of the House to one species of evidence which was infallible. Death was a witness that could not deceive them, and the proportion of deaths would not only confirm, but if possible even aggravate our suspicion of the misery of the transit. It would be found, upon an average of all the ships upon which evidence had been given,

that, exclusively of such as perished before they sailed, not less than twelve and a half per cent. died on the passage. Besides these, the Jamaica report stated that four and a half per cent. expired upon shore before the day of sale, which was only a week or two from the time of their landing; one-third more died in the seasoning, and this in a climate exactly similar to their own, and where, as some of the witnesses pretended, they were healthy and happy. The diseases, however, that they contracted on shipboard, the astringents and washes that were employed to hide their wounds and make them up for sale, were a principal cause of this mortality. The negroes, it should be remembered, were not purchased at first except in perfect health, and the sum of the different casualties taken together, produced a mortality of about fifty per cent.

Mr. Wilberforce added, that as soon as he had advanced thus far in his investigation, he felt the wickedness of the slave-trade to be so enormous, so dreadful, and so irremediable, that he could stop at no alternative short of its abolition. A trade founded in iniquity, and carried on with such circumstances of horror, must be abolished, let the policy be what it might; and he had from this time determined, whatever were the consequences, that he would never rest till he had

effected that abolition. His mind had indeed been harrassed with the objections of the West Indian planters, who had asserted that the ruin of their property must be the consequence of this regulation. He could not, however, help distrusting their arguments. He could not believe that the Almighty Being, who forbade the practice of rapine and bloodshed, had made rapine and bloodshed necessary to any part of his universe. He felt a confidence in this persuasion, and took the resolution to act upon it. Light indeed soon broke in upon him; the suspicion of his mind was every day confirmed by increasing information, and the evidence he had now to offer upon this point was decisive and complete. The principle upon which he founded the necessity of the abolition was not policy, but justice; but though justice were the principle of the measure, yet he trusted he should distinctly prove it to be reconcilable with our truest political interest.

In the first place, he asserted that the number of negroes in the West Indies might be kept up without the introduction of recruits from Africa; and to prove this, he enumerated the various sources of the present mortality. The first was the disproportion of the sexes; an evil which, when the slave-trade was abolished, must in the course of nature cure itself. The second was the

disorders contracted in the transportation, and the consequences of the washes and mercurial ointments by which they were made up for sale. A third was excessive labor, joined with improper food; and a fourth, the extreme dissoluteness of their manners. These would be counteracted by the impossibility of procuring farther supplies. It was the interest, they were told, of the masters, to treat their slaves with kindness and humanity; but it was immediate and present, not future and distant interest, that was the great spring of action in the affairs of mankind. Why did we make laws to punish men? It was their interest to be upright and virtuous. But there was a present impulse continually breaking in upon their better judgment—an impulse which was known to be contrary to their permanent advantage. It was ridiculous to say that men would be bound by their interest, when present gain or ardent passion urged them. It might as well be asserted that a stone could not be thrown into the air, or a body move from place to place, because the principle of gravitation bound them to the surface of the earth. If a planter in the West Indies found himself reduced in his profits, he did not usually dispose of any part of his slaves, and his own gratifications were never given up so long as there was a possibility

of any retrenchment in the allowance of his negroes. Mr. Wilberforce entered into a calculation in order to prove that in many of the islands, and particularly in Jamaica, there was an increase of population among the slaves actually begun; and he deduced from the whole that the births in that island at this moment exceeded the deaths by one thousand or eleven hundred per annum. Allowing, however, the number of negroes to decrease, there were other obvious sources that would insure the welfare of the West Indian islands; the waste of labor which at present prevailed; the introduction of the plough and other machinery; the division of work, which in free and civilized countries was the grand source of wealth; and the reduction of the number of domestic servants, of whom not less than from twenty to forty were kept in ordinary families. But, granting that all these suppositions were unfounded, that every one of these succedanea should fail, the planters would still be secured, and out of all question indemnify themselves, as was the case in every transaction of commerce, by the increased price of their produce in the English market. The West Indians therefore who contended against the abolition, were nonsuited in every part of the argument. Did they say that fresh importation was necessary? He

had shown that the number of slaves might be kept up by procreation. Was this denied? He asserted that the plough, horses, machinery, domestic slaves, and all the other inevitable improvements, would supply the deficiency. Was it persisted in that the deficiency could be no way supplied, and that the quantity of produce would diminish? He then reverted to the unanswerable argument, that the increase of price would make up their loss, and secure them against every possible miscarriage.

Mr. Wilberforce proceeded to answer incidental objections. In the first place, he asserted that the African trade, instead of being the nursery of our sailors, had been found to be their grave. A comparison had with great industry been formed between the muster-rolls of the slave-ships and those of the other branches of our commerce; and it had been found that more sailors had died in one year in the slave-trade, than in two years in all our other trades put together. Three thousand one hundred and seventy seamen had sailed from Liverpool in 1787, and of these only fourteen hundred and twenty-eight had returned. Information upon the subject had lately been received from the governor of Barbadoes, who stated in the course of his narrative, that "the African traders at home were obliged to send out

their ships very strongly manned, as well from the unhealthiness of the climate, as the necessity of guarding the slaves; and as they soon felt the burden of the consequent expense, the masters quarrelled immediately upon their arrival in the islands with their seamen, upon the most frivolous pretences, and turned them on shore, while many of these valuable subjects, sometimes from sickness, and sometimes from the necessity of entering into foreign employment for subsistence, were totally lost to their country." A farther objection that had been urged was, that if we abandoned the slave-trade, it would only be taken up by the French; we should become the sufferers, and the evil would remain in its utmost extent. This was indeed a very weak and sophistical argument; and if it would defend the slave-trade, might equally be urged in favor of robbery, murder, and every species of wickedness, which, if we did not practice, others would probably commit. The objection, however, he believed, had no foundation in fact. Mr. Necker, the present minister of France, was a man of ability and religion, and in his work upon the administration of the finances, had actually recorded his abhorrence of the slave-trade; and the king of France having lately been requested to dissolve a society formed for the express purpose of the aboli-

tion, had answered that he could not comply with what was desired, and that he on the contrary rejoiced in the existence of such a society.

Mr. Wilberforce proceeded in his arguments to show that no measure could in the present case be effectual short of the entire abolition. The Jamaica report had recommended that no persons should be kidnapped, or permitted to be made slaves contrary to the customs of Africa. Might they not be reduced to this state unjustly, and yet by no means contrary to the customs of Africa? Besides, how could we distinguish between the slaves justly and unjustly reduced to that condition? Could we discover them by their physiognomy? If we could, was it believed that the British captains would by any regulations in this country be prevailed upon to refuse all those that had not been fairly, honestly, and uprightly enslaved? Those who were offered to us for sale were brought, some of them, three or four thousand miles, and exchanged like cattle from one hand to another, till they reached the coast. What compensation then could be made to the rejected slaves for their sufferings? The argument was equally valid as to their transportation. The profit of the merchant depended upon the number that could be crowded together and the shortness of the allowance. As to their ulti-

mate situation; it would also remain. Slavery was the source of all sorts of degradation, and the condition of slavery could not even be meliorated without putting an end to the hope of farther reinforcements.

In fine, Mr. Wilberforce called upon his hearers to make all the amends in their power for the mischief they had done to the continent of Africa. He called upon them to recollect what Europe had been three centuries ago. In the reign of king Henry the Seventh, the inhabitants of Bristol had actually sold their children as an article of merchandise. The people of Ireland had done the same. Let then the same opportunity of civilization be extended to Africa, which had done so much for our own islands. It might hitherto have been alleged in our excuse, that we were not acquainted with the enormity of the wickedness we suffered; but we could no longer plead ignorance, it was directly brought before our eyes; and that House must decide, and must justify to the world and their consciences the facts and principles upon which their decision was formed.

MR. WILBERFORCE'S SPEECH, 1791.

[FROM THOMAS CLARKSON'S HISTORY OF THE ABOLITION OF THE
SLAVE-TRADE.]

MR. WILBERFORCE began by soliciting the attention of those interested in the West Indies to what he was going to deliver to the House. However others might have censured them indiscriminately, he had always himself made a distinction between them and their system. It was the latter only which he reprobated. If aristocracy had been thought a worse form of government than monarchy, because the people had many tyrants instead of one, how objectionable must be that form of it which existed in our colonies. Arbitrary power could be bought there by any one who could buy a slave. The fierceness of it was doubtless restrained by an elevation of mind in many, as arising from a consciousness of superior rank and consequence; but alas, it was too often exercised there by the base and vulgar. The more liberal too of the planters were not resident upon their estates. Hence a promiscu-

ous censure of them would be unjust, though their system would undoubtedly be odious.

As for the cure of this monstrous evil, he had shown last year that internal regulations would not produce it. These could have no effect, while the evidence of slaves was inadmissible. What would be the situation of the bulk of the people of this country, if only gentlemen of five hundred a year were admitted as evidences in our courts of law? Neither was the cure of it in the emancipation of the slaves. He did not deny that he wished them this latter blessing. But alas, in their present degraded state they were unfit for it. Liberty was the child of reason and order. It was indeed a plant of celestial growth, but the soil must be prepared for its reception. He who would see it flourish and bring forth its proper fruit, must not think it sufficient to let it shoot in unrestrained licentiousness. But if this inestimable blessing was ever to be imparted to them, the cause must be removed which obstructed its introduction. In short, no effectual remedy could be found but in the abolition of the slave-trade.

He then took a copious view of the advantages which would arise both to the master and to the slave, if this traffic were done away; and having recapitulated and answered the different objections to such a measure, he went to that part of

the subject in which he described himself to be most interested.

He had shown, he said, last year, that Africa was exposed to all the horrors of war, and that most of these wars had their origin in the slave-trade. It was then said, in reply, that the natural barbarity of the natives was alone sufficient to render their country a scene of carnage. This was triumphantly instanced in the king of Dahomey. But his honorable friend Lord Muncaster, then in the House, had proved in his interesting publication, which had appeared since, called *Historical Sketches of the Slave-trade and of its Effects in Africa*, addressed to the people of Great Britain, that the very cruelties of this king, on which so much stress had been laid, were committed by him in a war which had been undertaken expressly to punish an adjacent people for having stolen some of his subjects and sold them for slaves.

He had shown also last year, that kings were induced to seize and sell their subjects, and individuals each other, in consequence of the existence of the slave-trade.

He had shown also that the administration of justice was perverted, so as to become a fertile source of supply to this inhuman traffic, that every crime was punished by slavery, that false

accusations were made to procure convicts, and that even the judges had a profit on the convictions.

He had shown again, that many acts of violence were perpetrated by the Europeans themselves. But he would now relate others which had happened since. The captain of an English vessel lying in the river Cameroons, sent his boat with three sailors and a slave to get water. A black trader seized the latter and took him away. He alleged in his defence that the captain owed him goods to a greater amount than the value of the slave, and that he would not pay him.

This being told on board, the captain and a part of his crew, who were compelled to blacken their naked bodies that they might appear like the natives, went on shore at midnight armed with muskets and cutlasses. They fired on the trader's dwelling, and killed three of his children on the spot. The trader, being badly wounded, died while they were dragging him to the boat; and his wife, being wounded also, died in half an hour after she was on board the ship. Resistance having been made to these violent proceedings, some of the sailors were wounded, and one was killed. Some weeks after this affray, a chieftain of the name of Quarmo went on board the same vessel to borrow some cutlasses and muskets.

He was going, he said, into the country to make war, and the captain should have half of his booty. So well understood were the practices of the trade, that his request was granted. Quarmo, however, and his associates, finding things favorable to their design, suddenly seized the captain, threw him overboard, hauled him into their canoe, and dragged him to the shore, where another party of the natives, lying in ambush, seized such of the crew as were absent from the ship. But how did these savages behave when they had these different persons in their power? Did they not instantly retaliate by murdering them all? No; they only obliged the captain to give an order on the vessel to pay his debts. This fact came out only two months ago in a trial in the court of Common Pleas; not in a trial for piracy and murder, but in the trial of a civil suit, instituted by some of the poor sailors, to whom the owners refused their wages because the natives, on account of the villainous conduct of their captain, had kept them from their vessel by detaining them as prisoners on shore. This instance, he said, proved the dreadful nature of the slave-trade, its cruelty, its perfidy, and its effect on the Africans as well as on the Europeans who carried it on. The cool manner in which the transaction was conducted on both sides, showed that these

practices were not novel. It showed also the manner of doing business in the trade. It must be remembered too that these transactions were carrying on at the very time when the inquiry concerning this trade was going forward in Parliament, and while the witnesses of his opponents were strenuously denying not only the actual, but the possible existence of any such depredations.

But another instance happened only in August last. Six British ships, the *Thomas*, Captain Phillips; the *Wasp*, Captain Hutchinson; the *Recovery*, Captain Kimber, of Bristol; and the *Martha*, Captain Houston; the *Betsey*, Captain Doyle; and the *Amachree*, he believed, Captain Lee, of Liverpool, were anchored off the town of Calabàr. This place was the scene of a dreadful massacre about twenty years before. The captains of these vessels, thinking that the natives asked too much for their slaves, held a consultation how they should proceed, and agreed to fire upon the town unless their own terms were complied with. On a certain evening they notified their determination to the traders, and told them that if they continued obstinate they would put it into execution the next morning. In this they kept their word. They brought sixty-six guns to bear upon the town, and fired on it for three hours. Not a shot was returned. A canoe then

went off to offer terms of accommodation. The parties, however, not agreeing, the firing recommenced, more damage was done, and the natives were forced into submission. There were no certain accounts of their loss. Report said that fifty were killed; but some were seen lying badly wounded, and others in the agonies of death, by those who went afterwards on shore.

He would now say a few words relative to the middle passage, principally to show that regulation could not effect a cure of the evil there. Mr. Isaac Wilson had stated in his evidence that the ship in which he sailed only three years ago, was of three hundred and seventy tons, and that she carried six hundred and two slaves. Of these she lost one hundred and fifty-five. There were three or four other vessels in company with her, and which belonged to the same owners. One of these carried four hundred and fifty, and buried two hundred; another carried four hundred and sixty-six, and buried seventy-three; another five hundred and forty-six, and buried one hundred and fifty-eight; and from the four together, after the landing of their cargoes, two hundred and twenty died. He fell in with another vessel, which had lost three hundred and sixty-two; but the number which had been bought was not specified. Now if to these actual deaths during and imme-

diately after the voyage, we were to add the subsequent loss in the seasoning, and to consider that this would be greater than ordinary in cargoes which were landed in such a sickly state, we should find a mortality which, if it were only general for a few months, would entirely depopulate the globe.

But he would advert to what Mr. Wilson said, when examined as a surgeon, as to the causes of these losses, and particularly on board his own ship, where he had the means of ascertaining them. The substance of his reply was this: that most of the slaves labored under a fixed melancholy, which now and then broke out into lamentations and plaintive songs expressive of the loss of their relations, friends, and country. So powerfully did this sorrow operate, that many of them attempted in various ways to destroy themselves, and three actually effected it. Others obstinately refused to take sustenance; and when the whip and other violent means were used to compel them to eat, they looked up in the face of the officer who unwillingly executed this painful task, and said with a smile, in their own language, "Presently we shall be no more." This their unhappy state of mind produced a general languor and debility, which were increased in many instances by an unconquerable aversion to

food, arising partly from sickness, and partly, to use the language of the slave-captains, from sulkiness. These causes naturally produced the flux. The contagion spread, several were carried off daily, and the disorder, aided by so many powerful auxiliaries, resisted the power of medicine. And it was worth while to remark that these grievous sufferings were not owing either to want of care on the part of the owners, or to any negligence or harshness of the captain, for Mr. Wilson declared that his ship was as well fitted out, and the crew and slaves as well treated, as any body could reasonably expect.

He would now go to another ship. That in which Mr. Claxton sailed as a surgeon afforded a repetition of all the horrid circumstances which had been described. Suicide was attempted and effected, and the same barbarous expedients were adopted to compel the slaves to continue an existence, which they considered as too painful to be endured. The mortality also was as great. And yet here again the captain was "in no wise to blame." But this vessel had sailed since the regulating act. Nay, even in the last year the deaths on shipboard would be found to have been between ten and eleven per cent. on the whole number exported. In truth, the House could not reach the cause of this mortality by all their

regulations. Until they could cure a broken heart—until they could legislate for the affections, and bind by their statutes the passions and feelings of the mind, their labor would be in vain.

Such were the evils of the passage. But evils were conspicuous everywhere, in this trade. Never was there indeed a system so replete with wickedness and cruelty. To whatever part of it we turned our eyes, whether to Africa, the middle passage, or the West Indies, we could find no comfort, no satisfaction, no relief. It was the gracious ordinance of Providence, both in the natural and moral world, that good should often arise out of evil. Hurricanes cleared the air, and the propagation of truth was promoted by persecution. Pride, vanity, and profusion contributed often, in their remoter consequences, to the happiness of mankind. In common, what was in itself evil and vicious was permitted to carry along with it some circumstances of palliation. The Arab was hospitable, the robber brave. We did not necessarily find cruelty associated with fraud, or meanness with injustice. But here the case was far otherwise. It was the prerogative of this detested traffic to separate from evil its concomitant good, and to reconcile discordant mischiefs. It robbed war of its generosity; it deprived peace of its security. We saw in it the vices of pol-

ished society without its knowledge or its comforts, and the evils of barbarism without its simplicity. No age, no sex, no rank, no condition was exempt from the fatal influence of this wide-wasting calamity. Thus it attained to the fullest measure of pure, unmixed, unsophisticated wickedness; and scorning all competition and comparison, it stood without a rival in the secure, undisputed possession of its detestable preëminence.

But after all this, wonderful to relate, this execrable traffic had been defended on the ground of benevolence! It had been said that the slaves were captives and convicts, who, if we were not to carry them away, would be sacrificed, and many of them at the funerals of people of rank, according to the savage custom of Africa. He had shown, however, that our supplies of slaves were obtained from other quarters than these. But he would wave this consideration for the present. Had it not been acknowledged by his opponents that the custom of ransoming slaves prevailed in Africa? With respect to human sacrifices, he did not deny that there might have been some instances of these; but they had not been proved to be more frequent than among other barbarous nations; and where they existed, being acts of religion, they would not be dispensed with for the sake of commercial gain.

In fact, they had nothing to do with the slave-trade, only perhaps, if it were abolished, they might, by means of the civilization which would follow, be done away.

But exclusively of these sacrifices, it had been asserted that it was kindness to the inhabitants to take them away from their own country. But what said the historians of Africa long before the question of the abolition was started? "Axim," says Bosman, "is cultivated, and abounds with numerous large and beautiful villages; its inhabitants are industriously employed in trade, fishing, or agriculture." "The inhabitants of Adom always expose large quantities of corn to sale besides what they want for their own use." "The people of Acron husband their grounds and time so well, that every year produces a plentiful harvest." Speaking of the Fetu country, he says, "Frequently, when walking through it, I have seen it abound with fine well-built and populous towns, agreeably enriched with vast quantities of corn and cattle, palm wine, and oil. The inhabitants all apply themselves without distinction to agriculture; some sow corn, others press oil and draw wine from the palm-tree."

Smith, who was sent out by the Royal African Company in 1726, assures us that "the discerning natives account it their greatest unhappiness

that they were ever visited by the Europeans. They say that we Christians introduced the traffic of slaves, and that before our coming they lived in peace. But, say they, it is observable, wherever Christianity comes, there come swords and guns and powder and ball with it."

"The Europeans," says Bruce, "are far from desiring to act as peacemakers among them. It would be too contrary to their interests, for the only object of their wars is to carry off slaves; and as these form the principal part of their traffic, they would be apprehensive of drying up the source of it, were they to encourage the people to live well together."

"The neighborhood of the Damel and Tin keep them perpetually at war, the benefit of which accrues to the Company, who buy all the prisoners made on either side; and the more there are to sell, the greater is their profit, for the only end of their armaments is to make captives, to sell them to the white traders."

Artus of Dantzic says that in his time "those liable to pay fines were banished till the fine was paid, when they returned to their possessions."

Bosman affirms that "formerly all crimes in Africa were compensated by fine or restitution, and where restitution was impracticable, by corporeal punishment."

Moore says, "Since this trade has been used, all punishments have been changed into slavery. There being an advantage in such condemnation, they strain the crimes very hard in order to get the benefit of selling the criminal. Not only murder, theft, and adultery are punished by selling the criminal for a slave, but every trifling crime is punished in the same manner."

Loyer affirms that "the king of Sain, on the least pretence, sells his subjects for European goods. He is so tyrannically severe, that he makes a whole village responsible for the fault of one inhabitant, and on the least offence sells them all for slaves."

Such, he said, were the testimonies, not of persons whom he had summoned, not of friends of the abolition, but of men who were themselves, many of them, engaged in the slave-trade. Other testimonies might be added; but these were sufficient to refute the assertions of his opponents, and to show the kind services we had done to Africa by the introduction of this trade!

He would just touch upon the argument, so often repeated, that other nations would carry on the slave-trade if we abandoned it. But how did we know this? Had not Denmark given a noble example to the contrary? She had consented to abolish the trade in ten years; and had she not done this, even though we, after an inves-

tigation for nearly five years, had ourselves hung back? But what might not be expected if we were to take up the cause in earnest—if we were to proclaim to all nations the injustice of the trade, and to solicit their concurrence in the abolition of it. He hoped the representatives of the nation would not be less just than the people. The latter had stepped forward, and expressed their sense more generally by petitions than in any instance in which they had ever before interfered. To see this great cause thus triumphing over distinctions and prejudices was a noble spectacle. Whatever might be said of our political divisions, such a sight had taught us that there were subjects still beyond the reach of party—that there was a point of elevation where we ascended above the jarring of the discordant elements which ruffled and agitated the vale below. In our ordinary atmosphere, clouds and vapors obscured the air, and we were the sport of a thousand conflicting winds and adverse currents; but here we moved in a higher region, where all was pure and clear, and free from perturbation and discomposure.

“As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm;
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.”

Here then, on this august eminence, he hoped we should build the temple of benevolence ; that we should lay its foundation deep in truth and justice ; and that we should inscribe upon its gates, "Peace and good-will to men." Here we should offer the first-fruits of our benevolence, and endeavor to compensate, if possible, for the injuries we had brought upon our fellow-men.

He would only now observe that his conviction of the indispensable necessity of immediately abolishing this trade remained as strong as ever. Let those who talked of allowing three or four years to the continuance of it, reflect on the disgraceful scenes which had passed last year. As for himself, he would wash his hands of the blood which would be spilled in this horrid interval. He could not, however, but believe that the hour was come when we should put a final period to the existence of this cruel traffic. Should he unhappily be mistaken, he would never desert the cause, but to the last moment of his life he would exert his utmost powers in its support. He would now move,

"That it is the opinion of this Committee, that the trade carried on by British subjects for the purpose of obtaining slaves on the coast of Africa ought to be abolished."

S P E E C H

OF

CHARLES JAMES FOX, 1791.

Mr. Fox at length rose. He observed that some expressions which he had used on the preceding day had been complained of as too harsh and severe. He had since considered them; but he could not prevail upon himself to retract them, because if any gentleman, after reading the evidence on the table, and attending to the debate, could avow himself an abettor of this shameful traffic in human flesh, it could only be either from some hardness of heart, or some difficulty of understanding, which he really knew not how to account for.

Some had considered this question as a question of political, whereas it was a question of personal freedom. Political freedom was undoubtedly a great blessing; but when it came to be compared with personal, it sunk to nothing. To confound the two served therefore to render all arguments on either perplexing and unintelligible. Personal freedom was the first right of

every human being. It was a right, of which he who deprived a fellow-creature was absolutely criminal in so depriving him, and which he who withheld was no less criminal in withholding. He could not therefore retract his words with respect to any who, whatever respect he might otherwise have for them, should by their vote of that night deprive their fellow-creatures of so great a blessing. Nay, he would go further. He would say that if the House, knowing what the trade was by the evidence, did not by their vote mark to all mankind their abhorrence of a practice so savage, so enormous, so repugnant to all laws, human and divine, they would consign their character to eternal infamy.

That the pretence of danger to our West Indian islands from the abolition of the slave-trade was totally unfounded, Mr. Wilberforce had abundantly proved; but if there were any who had not been satisfied with that proof, was it possible to resist the arguments of Mr. Pitt on the same subject? It had been shown, on a comparison of the births and deaths in Jamaica, that there was not now any decrease of the slaves. But if there had been, it would have made no difference to him in his vote; for, had the mortality been ever so great there, he should have ascribed it to the system of importing negroes, instead of that of

encouraging their natural increase. Was it not evident that the planters thought it more convenient to buy them fit for work, than to breed them? Why then was this horrid trade to be kept up? To give the planters truly the liberty of misusing their slaves, so as to check population; for it was from ill-usage only that, in a climate so natural to them, their numbers could diminish. The very ground therefore on which the planters rested the necessity of fresh importations, namely, the destruction of lives in the West Indies, was itself the strongest argument that could be given, and furnished the most imperious call upon Parliament for the abolition of the trade.

Against this trade innumerable were the charges. An honorable member, Mr. Smith, had done well to introduce those tragical stories, which had made such an impression upon the House. No one of these had been yet controverted. It had indeed been said that the cruelty of the African captain to the child was too bad to be true; and we had been desired to look at the cross-examination of the witness, as if we should find traces of the falsehood of his testimony there. But his cross-examination was peculiarly honorable to his character; for after he had been pressed in the closest manner by some able members

of the House, the only inconsistency they could fix upon him was, whether the fact had happened on the same day of the same month of the year 1764 or the year 1765.

But it was idle to talk of the incredibility of such instances. It was not denied that absolute power was exercised by the slave captains; and if this was granted, all the cruelties charged upon them would naturally follow. Never did he hear of charges so black and horrible as those contained in the evidence on the table. They unfolded such a scene of cruelty, that if the House, with all their present knowledge of the circumstances, should dare to vote for its continuance, they must have nerves of which he had no conception. We might find instances indeed in history of men violating the feelings of nature on extraordinary occasions. Fathers had sacrificed their sons and daughters, and husbands their wives; but to imitate their characters we ought to have not only nerves as strong as the two Brutuses, but to take care that we had a cause as good; or that we had motives for such a dereliction of our feelings as patriotic as those which historians had annexed to these when they handed them to the notice of the world.

But what was our motive in the case before us? To continue a trade which was a wholesale sacri-

fice of a whole order and race of our fellow-creatures; which carried them away by force from their native country, in order to subject them to the mere will and caprice, the tyranny and oppression of other human beings, for their whole natural lives, them and their posterity for ever. O most monstrous wickedness! O unparalleled barbarity! And what was more aggravating, this most complicated scene of robbery and murder which mankind had ever witnessed had been honored by the name of trade!

That a number of human beings should be at all times ready to be furnished as fair articles of commerce, just as our occasions might require, was absurd. The argument of Mr. Pitt on this head was unanswerable. Our demand was fluctuating; it entirely ceased at some times; at others it was great and pressing. How was it possible, on every sudden call, to furnish a sufficient return in slaves, without resorting to those execrable means of obtaining them which were stated in the evidence? These were of three sorts, and he would now examine them.

Captives in war, it was urged, were consigned either to death or slavery. This, however, he believed to be false in point of fact. But suppose it were true, did it not become us, with whom it was a custom founded in the wisest pol-

icy to pay the captives a peculiar respect and civility, to inculcate the same principles in Africa? But we were so far from doing this, that we encouraged wars for the sake of taking, not men's goods and possessions, but men themselves; and it was not the war which was the cause of the slave-trade, but the slave-trade which was the cause of the war. It was the practice of the slave-merchants to try to intoxicate the African kings in order to turn them to their purpose. A particular instance occurred in the evidence of a prince who, when sober, resisted their wishes; but in the moment of inebriety he gave the word for war, attacked the next village, and sold the inhabitants to the merchants.

The second mode was kidnapping. He referred the House to various instances of this in the evidence; but there was one in particular from which we might immediately infer the frequency of the practice. A black trader had kidnapped a girl and sold her; but he was presently afterwards kidnapped and sold himself; and when he asked the captain who bought him, "What, do you buy me, who am a great trader?" the only answer was, "Yes, I buy you, or her, or any body else, provided any one will sell you;" and accordingly both the trader and the girl were carried to the West Indies and sold for slaves.

The third mode of obtaining slaves was by crimes committed or imputed. One of these was adultery. But was Africa the place where Englishmen, above all others, were to go to find out and punish adulterers? Did it become us to cast the first stone? It was a most extraordinary pilgrimage for a most extraordinary purpose. And yet upon this plea we justified our right of carrying off its inhabitants. The offence alleged next was witchcraft. What a reproach it was to lend ourselves to this superstition. Yes, we stood by; we heard the trial; we knew the crime to be impossible, and that the accused must be innocent; but we waited in patient silence for his condemnation, and then we lent our friendly aid to the police of the country, by buying the wretched convict with all his family, whom, for the benefit of Africa, we carried away also into perpetual slavery.

With respect to the situation of the slaves in their transportation, he knew not how to give the House a more correct idea of the horrors of it, than by referring them to the printed section of the slave-ship, where the eye might see what the tongue must fall short in describing. On this dismal part of the subject he would not dwell. He would only observe that the acts of barbarity related of the slave-captains in these voyages

were so extravagant, that they had been attributed in some instances to insanity. But was not this the insanity of arbitrary power? Whoever read the facts recorded of Nero without suspecting he was mad? Who would not be apt to impute insanity to Caligula, or Domitian, or Caracalla, or Commodus, or Heliogabalus? Here were six Roman emperors, not connected in blood, nor by descent, who, each of them possessing arbitrary power, had been so distinguished for cruelty, that nothing short of insanity could be imputed to them. Was not the insanity of the masters of slave-ships to be accounted for on the same principles?

Of the slaves in the West Indies, it had been said that they were taken from a worse state to a better. An honorable member, Mr. W. Smith, had quoted some instances out of the evidence to the contrary. He also would quote one or two others. A slave under hard usage had run away. To prevent a repetition of the offence, his owner sent for his surgeon, and desired him to cut off the man's leg. The surgeon refused. The owner, to render it a matter of duty in the surgeon, broke it. "Now," says he, "you must cut it off, or the man will die." We might console ourselves perhaps that this happened in a French island; but he would select another instance,

which had happened in one of our own. Mr. Ross heard the shrieks of a female issuing from an outhouse, and so piercing, that he determined to see what was going on. On looking in, he perceived a young female tied up to a beam by her wrists, entirely naked, and in the act of involuntary writhing and swinging, while the author of her torture was standing below her with a lighted torch in his hand, which he applied to all the parts of her body as it approached him. What crime this miserable woman had perpetrated he knew not; but the human mind could not conceive a crime warranting such a punishment.

He was glad to see that these tales affected the House. Would they then sanction enormities, the bare recital of which made them shudder? Let them remember that humanity did not consist in a squeamish ear. It did not consist in shrinking and starting at such tales as these; but in a disposition of the heart to remedy the evils they unfolded. Humanity belonged rather to the mind than to the nerves. But if so, it should prompt men to charitable exertion. Such exertion was necessary in the present case. It was necessary for the credit of our jurisprudence at home and our character abroad. For what would any man think of our justice who should see another hanged for a crime which would be innocence

itself, if compared with those enormities which were allowed in Africa and the West Indies under the sanction of the British Parliament?

It had been said, however, in justification of the trade, that the Africans were less happy at home than in the islands. But what right had we to be judges of their condition? They would tell us a very different tale if they were asked. But it was ridiculous to say that we bettered their condition, when we dragged them from every thing dear in life to the most abject state of slavery.

One argument had been used which, for a subject so grave, was the most ridiculous he had ever heard. Mr. Alderman Watson had declared the slave-trade to be necessary on account of its connection with our fisheries. But what was this but an acknowledgment of the manner in which these miserable beings were treated? The trade was to be kept up, with all its enormities, in order that there might be persons to consume the refuse fish from Newfoundland, which were too bad for any body else to eat.

It had been said that England ought not to abolish the slave-trade unless other nations would also give it up. But what kind of morality was this? The trade was defensible upon no other principle than that of a highwayman. Great

Britain could not keep it upon these terms. Mere gain was not a motive for a great country to rest on as a justification of any measure. Honor was its superior, and justice was superior to honor.

With regard to the emancipation of those in slavery, he coincided with Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Pitt, and upon this principle: that it might be as dangerous to give freedom at once to a man used to slavery, as, in the case of a man who had never seen daylight, to expose him all at once to the full glare of a meridian sun.

With respect to the intellect and sensibility of the Africans, it was pride only which suggested a difference between them and ourselves. There was a remarkable instance to the point in the evidence, and which he would quote. In one of the slave-ships was a person of consequence—a man once high in a military station, and with a mind not insensible to the eminence of his rank. He had been taken captive and sold, and was then in the hold, confined promiscuously with the rest. Happening in the night to fall asleep, he dreamed that he was in his own country, high in honor and command, caressed by his family and friends, waited on by his domestics, and surrounded with all his former comforts in life. But awaking suddenly, and finding where he was, he was heard to

burst into the loudest groans and lamentations on the miserable contrast of his present state, mixed with the meanest of his subjects, and subjected to the insolence of wretches a thousand times lower than himself in every kind of endowment. He appealed to the House whether this was not as moving a picture of the miserable effects of the slave-trade as could be well imagined. There was one way by which they might judge of it. Let them make the case their own. This was the Christian rule of judging; and having mentioned Christianity, he was sorry to find that any should suppose that it had given countenance to such a system of oppression. So far was this from being the case, that he thought it one of the most splendid triumphs of this religion, that it had caused slavery to be so generally abolished on its appearance in the world. It had done this by teaching us, among other beautiful precepts, that, in the sight of their Maker, all mankind were equal. Its influence appeared to have been more powerful in this respect than that of all the ancient systems of philosophy, though even in these, in point of theory, we might trace great liberality and consideration for human rights. Where could be found finer sentiments of liberty than in Demosthenes and Cicero; where bolder assertions of the rights of mankind than in Tacitus and Thucydi-

des? But alas, these were the holders of slaves. It was not so with those who had been converted to Christianity. He knew, however, that what he had been ascribing to Christianity had been imputed by others to the advances which philosophy had made. Each of the two parties took the merit to itself. The philosopher gave it to philosophy, and the divine to religion. He should not then dispute with either of them; but as both coveted the praise, why should they not emulate each other by promoting this improvement in the condition of the human race?

He would now conclude by declaring that the whole country, indeed the whole civilized world, must rejoice that such a bill as the present had been moved for, not merely as a matter of humanity, but as an act of justice; for he would put humanity out of the case. Could it be called humanity to forbear from committing murder? Exactly upon this ground did the present motion stand, being strictly a question of national justice. He thanked Mr. Wilberforce for having pledged himself so strongly to pursue his object till it was accomplished; and as for himself, he declared that, in whatever situation he might ever be, he would use his warmest efforts for the promotion of this righteous cause.

MR. BURKE said he would use but few words. He declared that he had for a long time had his mind drawn towards this great subject. He had even prepared a bill for the regulation of the trade, conceiving at that time that the immediate abolition of it was a thing hardly to be hoped for; but when he found that Mr. Wilberforce had seriously undertaken the work, and that his motion was for the abolition, which he approved much more than his own, he had burnt his papers, and made an offering of them in honor of his nobler proposition, much in the same manner as we read that the curious books were offered up and burnt at the approach of the gospel.

MR. CLARKSON'S SUMMARY VIEW.

A GLANCE only into such a subject as this will be sufficient to affect the heart, to arouse our indignation and our pity, and to teach us the importance of the victory obtained.

The first subject for consideration, towards enabling us to make the estimate in question, will be that of the nature of the evil belonging to the slave-trade. This may be seen by examining it in three points of view: first, as it has been proved to arise on the continent of Africa in the course of reducing the inhabitants of it to slavery; secondly, in the course of conveying them from thence to the lands or colonies of other nations; and thirdly, in continuing them there as slaves.

To see it as it has been shown to arise in the first case, let us suppose ourselves on the continent just mentioned. Well then, we are landed; we are already upon our travels; we have just passed through one forest; we are now come to a more open place, which indicates an approach to habitation. And what object is that which first obtrudes itself upon our sight? Who is that

wretched woman whom we discover under that noble tree, wringing her hands and beating her breast as if in the agonies of despair? Three days has she been there at intervals to look and to watch, and this is the fourth morning, and no tidings of her children yet. Beneath its spreading boughs they were accustomed to play. But alas, the savage man-stealer interrupted their playful mirth, and has taken them for ever from her sight.

But let us leave the cries of this unfortunate woman, and hasten into another district. And what do we first see here? Who is he that just now started across the narrow pathway, as if afraid of a human face? What is that sudden rustling among the leaves? Why are those persons flying from our approach, and hiding themselves in yon darkest thicket? Behold, as we get into the plain, a deserted village. The rice-field has been just trodden down around it. An aged man, venerable by his silver beard, lies wounded and dying near the threshold of his hut. War, suddenly instigated by avarice, has just visited the dwellings which we see. The old have been butchered, because unfit for slavery, and the young have been carried off, except such as have fallen in the conflict, or have escaped among the woods behind us.

But let us hasten from this cruel scene, which gives rise to so many melancholy reflections. Let us cross yon distant river, and enter into some new domain. But are we relieved even here from afflicting spectacles? Look at that immense crowd, which appears to be gathered in a ring. See the accused innocent in the middle. The ordeal of poisonous water has been administered to him, as a test of his innocence or his guilt. He begins to be sick and pale. Alas, yon mournful shriek of his relatives confirms that the loss of his freedom is now sealed.

And whither shall we go now? The night is approaching fast. Let us find some friendly hut, where sleep may make us forget for a while the sorrows of the day. Behold a hospitable native ready to receive us at his door. Let us avail ourselves of his kindness. And now let us give ourselves to repose. But why, when our eyelids are but just closed, do we find ourselves thus suddenly awakened? What is the meaning of the noise around us; of the trampling of people's feet; of the rustling of the bow, the quiver, and the lance? Let us rise up and inquire. Behold, the inhabitants are all alarmed. A wakeful woman has shown them yon distant column of smoke and blaze. The neighboring village is on fire. The prince, unfaithful to the sacred duty of the protection of his subjects, has surrounded them. He

is now burning their habitations, and seizing, as saleable booty, the fugitives from the flames.

Such, then, are some of the scenes that have been passing in Africa in consequence of the existence of the slave-trade, or such is the nature of the evil as it has shown itself in the first of the cases we have noticed. Let us now estimate it as it has been proved to exist in the second; or let us examine the state of the unhappy Africans, reduced to slavery in this manner, while on board the vessels which are to convey them across the ocean to other lands. And here I must observe at once, that as far as this part of the evil is concerned, I am at a loss to describe it. Where shall I find words to express properly their sorrow, as arising from the reflection of being parted for ever from their friends, their relatives, and their country? Where shall I find language to paint in appropriate colors the horror of mind brought on by thoughts of their future unknown destination, of which they can augur nothing but misery from all that they have yet seen? How shall I make known their situation while laboring under painful disease, or while struggling in the suffocating holds of their prisons, like animals inclosed in an exhausted receiver? How shall I describe their feelings as exposed to all the personal indignities which lawless appetite or brutal passion may sug-

gest? How shall I exhibit their sufferings as determining to refuse sustenance and die, or as resolving to break their chains and disdaining to live as slaves, to punish their oppressors? How shall I give an idea of their agony when under various punishments and tortures for their reputed crimes? Indeed, every part of this subject defies my powers, and I must therefore satisfy myself and the reader with a general representation, or in the words of a celebrated member of Parliament, that "never was so much suffering condensed in so small a space."

I come now to the evil as it has been proved to arise in the third case, or to consider the situation of the unhappy victims of the trade when their painful voyages are over, or after they have been landed upon their destined shores. And here we are to view them first under the degrading light of cattle. We are to see them examined, handled, selected, separated, and sold. Alas, relatives are separated from relatives, as if, like cattle, they had no rational intellect, no power of feeling the nearness of relationship, nor sense of the duties belonging to the ties of life. We are next to see them laboring, and this for the benefit of those whom they are under no obligation, by any law, either natural or divine, to obey. We are to see them, if refusing the commands of their purchasers, however weary or feeble or in-

disposed, subject to corporeal punishments, and if forcibly resisting them, to death. We are to see them in a state of general degradation and misery. The knowledge which their oppressors have of their own crime in having violated the rights of nature, and of the disposition of the injured to seek all opportunities of revenge, produces a fear which dictates to them the necessity of a system of treatment by which they shall keep up a wide distinction between the two, and by which the noble feelings of the latter shall be kept down, and their spirits broken. We are to see them again subject to individual persecution, as anger or malice or any bad passion may suggest. Hence the whip, the chain, the iron collar. Hence the various modes of private torture, of which so many accounts have been truly given. Nor can such horrible cruelties be discovered so as to be made punishable, while the testimony of any number of the oppressed is invalid against the oppressors, however they may be offences against the laws. And lastly, we are to see their innocent offspring, against whose personal liberty the shadow of an argument cannot be advanced, inheriting all the miseries of their parents' lot.

The evil, then, as far as it has been hitherto viewed, presents to us in its three several departments a measure of human suffering not to

be equalled, not to be calculated, not to be described.

But would that we could consider this part of the subject as dismissed. Would that in each of the departments now examined there was no counterpart left us to contemplate. But this cannot be. For if there be persons who suffer unjustly, there must be others who oppress. And if there be those who oppress, there must be to the suffering which has been occasioned a corresponding portion of immorality or guilt.

We are obliged then to view the counterpart of the evil in question, before we can make a proper estimate of the nature of it. And in examining this part of it, we shall find that we have a no less frightful picture to behold than in the former cases ; or that, while the miseries endured by the unfortunate Africans excite our pity on the one hand, the vices which are connected with them provoke our indignation and abhorrence on the other. The slave-trade, in this point of view, must strike us as an immense mass of evil on account of the criminality attached to it, as displayed in the various branches of it which have already been examined. For, to take the counterpart of the evil in the first of these, can we say that no moral turpitude is to be placed to the account of those who, living on the continent of

Africa, give birth to the enormities which take place in consequence of the prosecution of this trade? Is not that man made morally worse who is induced to become a tiger to his species, or who, instigated by avarice, lies in wait in the thicket to get possession of his fellow-man? Is no injustice manifest in the land where the prince, unfaithful to his duty, seizes his innocent subjects and sells them for slaves? Are no moral evils produced among those communities which make war upon other communities for the sake of plunder, and without any previous provocation or offence? Does no crime attach to those who accuse others falsely, or who multiply and divide crimes for the sake of the profit of the punishment, and who for the same reason continue the use of barbarous and absurd ordeals as a test of innocence or guilt?

In the second of these branches the counterpart of the evil is to be seen in the conduct of those who purchase the miserable natives in their own country, and convey them to distant lands. And here questions similar to the former may be asked. Do they experience no corruption of their nature, or become chargeable with no violation of right, who, when they go with their ships to this continent, know the enormities which their visits there will occasion; who buy their fellow-crea-

ture man, and this, knowing the way in which he comes into their hands, and who chain and imprison and scourge him? Do the moral feelings of those persons escape without injury whose hearts are hardened? And can the hearts of those be otherwise than hardened who are familiar with the tears and groans of innocent strangers forcibly torn away from every thing that is dear to them in life; who are accustomed to see them on board their vessels in a state of suffocation and in the agonies of despair; and who are themselves in the habit of the cruel use of arbitrary power?

The counterpart of the evil in its third branch is to be seen in the conduct of those who, when these miserable people have been landed, purchase and carry them to their respective homes. And let us see whether a mass of wickedness is not generated also in the present case. Can those have nothing to answer for who separate the faithful ties which nature and religion have created? Can their feelings be otherwise than corrupted who consider their fellow-creatures as brutes, or treat those as cattle who may become the temples of the Holy Spirit, and in whom the Divinity disdains not himself to dwell? Is there no injustice in forcing men to labor without wages? Is there no breach of duty when we are

commanded to clothe the naked, and feed the hungry, and visit the sick and imprisoned, in exposing them to want, in torturing them by cruel punishment, and in grinding them down by hard labor, so as to shorten their days? Is there no crime in adopting a system which keeps down all the noble faculties of their souls, and which positively debases and corrupts their nature? Is there no crime in perpetuating these evils among their innocent offspring? And finally, besides all these crimes, is there not naturally in the familiar sight of the exercise, but more especially in the exercise itself of uncontrolled power, that which vitiates the internal man? In seeing misery stalk daily over the land, do not all become insensibly hardened? By giving birth to that misery themselves, do they not become abandoned? In what state of society are the corrupt appetites so easily, so quickly, and so frequently indulged? and where else, by means of frequent indulgence, do these experience such a monstrous growth? Where else is the temper subject to such frequent irritation, or passion to such little control? Yes; if the unhappy slave is in an unfortunate situation, so is the tyrant who holds him. Action and reaction are equal to each other, as well in the moral as in the natural world. You cannot exercise an improper dominion over a fellow-crea-

ture, but by a wise ordering of Providence you must necessarily injure yourself.

Having now considered the nature of the evil of the slave-trade in its three separate departments of suffering, and in its corresponding counterparts of guilt, I shall make a few observations on the extent of it.

On this subject it must strike us that the misery and the crimes included in the evil, as it has been found in Africa, were not like common maladies, which make a short or periodical visit and then are gone, but that they were continued daily. Nor were they like diseases which from local causes attack a village or a town, and by the skill of the physician, under the blessing of Providence, are removed; but they affected a whole continent. The trade with all its horrors began at the river Senegal, and continued winding with the coast through its several geographical divisions to Cape Negro, a distance of more than three thousand miles. In various lines or paths formed at right angles from the shore, and passing into the heart of the country, slaves were procured and brought down. The distance which many of them travelled was immense. Those who have been in Africa have assured us that they came as far as from the sources of their largest rivers, which we know to be many hundred miles in-

land ; and the natives have told us, in their way of computation, that they came a journey of many moons.

It must strike us, again, that the misery and the crimes included in the evil, as it has been shown in the transportation, had no ordinary bounds. They were not to be seen in the crossing of a river, but of an ocean. They did not begin in the morning and end at night, but were continued for many weeks, and sometimes by casualties for a quarter of the year. They were not limited to the precincts of a solitary ship, but were spread among many vessels ; and these were so constantly passing, that the ocean never ceased to be a witness of their existence.

And it must strike us, finally, that the misery and crimes included in the evil as it has been found in foreign lands, were not confined within the shores of a little island. Most of the islands of a continent, and many of these of considerable population and extent, were filled with them. And the continent itself, to which these geographically belong, was widely polluted by their domain. Hence, if we were to take the vast extent of space occupied by these crimes and sufferings, from the heart of Africa to its shores, and that which they filled on the continent of America and the islands adjacent, and were to join the

crimes and sufferings in one to those in the other by the crimes and sufferings which took place in the track of the vessels successively crossing the Atlantic, we should behold a vast belt, as it were, of physical and moral evil, reaching through land and ocean to the length of nearly half the circle of the globe.

The next view which I shall take of this evil, will be as it relates to the difficulty of subduing it.

This difficulty may be supposed to have been more than ordinarily great. Many evils of a public nature, which existed in former times, were the offspring of ignorance and superstition, and they were subdued of course by the progress of light and knowledge. But the evil in question began in avarice. It was nursed also by worldly interest. It did not therefore so easily yield to the usual correctives of disorders in the world. We may observe also that the interest by which it was thus supported was not that of a few individuals, nor of one body, but of many bodies of men. It was interwoven, again, into the system of the commerce and of the revenue of nations. Hence the merchant, the planter, the mortgagee, the manufacturer, the politician, the legislator, the cabinet-minister, lifted up their voices against the annihilation of it. For these reasons the slave-

trade may be considered, like the fabulous hydra, to have had a hundred heads, every one of which it was necessary to cut off before it could be subdued. And as none but Hercules was fitted to conquer the one, so nothing less than extraordinary prudence, courage, labor, and patience, could overcome the other. To protection in this manner by his hundred interests, it was owing that the monster stalked in security for so long a time. He stalked too in the open day, committing his mighty depredations. And when good men, whose duty it was to mark him as the object of their destruction, began to assail him, he did not fly, but gnashed his teeth at them, growling savagely at the same time, and putting himself into a posture of defiance.

We see then, in whatever light we consider the slave-trade, whether we examine into the nature of it, or whether we look into the extent of it, or whether we estimate the difficulty of subduing it, we must conclude that no evil more monstrous has ever existed upon earth. But if so, then we have proved the truth of the position, that the abolition of it ought to be accounted by us as one of the greatest blessings, and that it ought to be one of the most copious sources of our joy. Indeed, I do not know how we can sufficiently express what we ought to feel upon this

occasion. It becomes us as individuals to rejoice. It becomes us as a nation to rejoice. It becomes us even to perpetuate our joy to our posterity. I do not mean, however, by anniversaries which are to be celebrated by the ringing of bells and convivial meetings, but by handing down this great event so impressively to our children, as to raise in them, if not continual, yet frequently renewed thanksgivings to the great Creator of the universe, for the manifestation of this his favor in having disposed our legislators to take away such a portion of suffering from our fellow-creatures, and such a load of guilt from our native land.

THE BILL PASSED ABOLISHING THE TRADE.

THOUGH the bill had now passed both the Commons and the House of Lords, Mr. Clarkson says, There was an awful fear throughout the kingdom lest it should not receive the Royal assent before the ministry was dissolved. This event took place the next day ; for on Wednesday the 25th, (March, 1807,) at half-past eleven in the morning, his Majesty's message was delivered to the different members of it, that they were then to wait upon him to deliver up the seals of their offices. It then appeared that a commission for the royal assent to this bill among others had been obtained. This commission was instantly opened by the Lord Chancellor Erskine, who was accompanied by the Lords Holland and Auckland ; and as the clock struck twelve, just when the sun was in its meridian splendor to witness this august act, this establishment of a Magna Charta for Africa in Britain, and to sanction it by its most vivid and glorious beams, it was completed. The ceremony being over, the seals of the respective offices

were delivered up ; so that the execution of this commission was the last act of the administration of Lord Gréville—an administration which, on account of its virtuous exertions in behalf of the oppressed African race, will pass to posterity, living through successive generations in the love and gratitude of the most virtuous of mankind.

Thus ended one of the most glorious contests, after a continuance for *twenty years*, of any ever carried on in any age or country—a contest, not of brutal violence, but of reason—a contest between those who felt deeply for the happiness and the honor of their fellow-creatures, and those who, through vicious custom and the impulse of avarice, had trampled under foot the sacred rights of their nature, and had even attempted to efface all title to the divine image from their minds.

Twenty-six years later, the bill for the abolition of slavery throughout the British dominions, by the efforts of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton and others, was passed, and received the Royal assent August 28, 1833.

UNANIMOUS ACTION

OF

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED
STATES, 1818.

THE General Assembly of the Presbyterian church, having taken into consideration the subject of slavery, think proper to make known their sentiments upon it to the churches and people under their care.

We consider the voluntary enslaving of one portion of the human race by another, as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature ; as utterly inconsistent with the law of God, which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves ; and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ, which enjoin that "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Slavery creates a paradox in the moral system ; it exhibits rational, accountable,

and immortal beings in such circumstances as scarcely to leave them the power of moral action. It exhibits them as dependent on the will of others, whether they shall receive religious instruction ; whether they shall know and worship the true God ; whether they shall enjoy the ordinances of the gospel ; whether they shall perform the duties and cherish the endearments of husbands and wives, parents and children, neighbors and friends ; whether they shall preserve their chastity and purity, or regard the dictates of justice and humanity. Such are some of the consequences of slavery—consequences not imaginary, but which connect themselves with its very existence. The evils to which the slave is always exposed often take place in fact, and in their very worst degree and form ; and where all of them do not take place—as we rejoice to say in many instances through the influence of the principles of humanity and religion on the minds of masters, they do not—still the slave is deprived of his natural right, degraded as a human being, and exposed to the danger of passing into the hands of a master who may inflict upon him all the hardships and injuries which inhumanity and avarice may suggest.

From this view of the consequences resulting from the practice into which Christian people have most inconsistently fallen, of enslaving a portion

of their brethren of mankind—for “ God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth ”—it is manifestly the duty of all Christians who enjoy the light of the present day, when the inconsistency of slavery both with the dictates of humanity and religion has been demonstrated, and is generally seen and acknowledged, to use their honest, earnest, and unwearied endeavors to correct the errors of former times, and as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible throughout the world.

We rejoice that the church to which we belong commenced as early as any other in this country the good work of endeavoring to put an end to slavery, and that in the same work many of its members have ever since been, and now are, among the most active, vigorous, and efficient laborers. We do indeed tenderly sympathize with those portions of our church and our country where the evil of slavery has been entailed upon them; where a great, and the most virtuous part of the community abhor slavery, and wish its extermination as sincerely as any others; but where the number of slaves, their ignorance, and their vicious habits generally, render an immediate and universal emancipation inconsistent alike with the safety

and happiness of the master and the slave. With those who are thus circumstanced, we repeat that we tenderly sympathize. At the same time, we earnestly exhort them to continue, and, if possible, to increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery. We exhort them to suffer no greater delay to take place in this most interesting concern, than a regard to the public welfare truly and indispensably demands.

As our country has inflicted a most grievous injury upon the unhappy Africans, by bringing them into slavery, we cannot indeed urge that we should add a second injury to the first, by emancipating them in such manner as that they will be likely to destroy themselves or others. But we do think that our country ought to be governed in this matter by no other consideration than an honest and impartial regard to the happiness of the injured party, uninfluenced by the expense or inconvenience which such a regard may involve. We therefore warn all who belong to our denomination of Christians, against unduly extending this plea of necessity—against making it a cover for the love and practice of slavery, or a pretence for not using efforts that are lawful and practicable to extinguish this evil. And we at the same time exhort others to forbear harsh censures and uncharitable reflections on their brethren who un-

happily live among slaves, whom they cannot immediately set free ; but who at the same time are really using all their influence and all their endeavors to bring them into a state of freedom, as soon as a door for it can be safely opened.

Having thus expressed our views of slavery, and of the duty indispensably incumbent on all Christians to labor for its complete extinction, we proceed to recommend, and we do it with all the earnestness and solemnity which this momentous subject demands, a particular attention to the following points.

We recommend to all our people to patronize and encourage the society lately formed for colonizing in Africa, the land of their ancestors, the free people of color in our country. We hope that much good may result from the plans and efforts of this society. And while we exceedingly rejoice to have witnessed its origin and organization among the holders of slaves, as giving an unequivocal pledge of their desire to deliver themselves and their country from the calamity of slavery, we hope that those portions of the American Union whose inhabitants are by a gracious Providence more favorably circumstanced, will cordially and liberally and earnestly coöperate with their brethren in bringing about the great end contemplated.

We recommend to all the members of our religious denomination, not only to permit, but to facilitate and encourage the instruction of their slaves in the principles and duties of the Christian religion, by granting them liberty to attend on the preaching of the gospel when they have opportunity ; by favoring the instruction of them in Sabbath-schools, wherever those schools can be formed ; and by giving them all other proper advantages for acquiring the knowledge of their duty both to God and man. We are perfectly satisfied that as it is incumbent on all Christians to communicate religious instruction to those who are under their authority, so that the doing of this in the case before us, so far from operating, as some have apprehended that it might, as an excitement to insubordination and insurrection, would, on the contrary, operate as the most powerful means for the prevention of those evils.

We enjoin it on all church sessions and presbyteries under the care of this Assembly, to discountenance, and as far as possible to prevent all cruelty of whatever kind in the treatment of slaves, especially the cruelty of separating husband and wife, parents and children, and that which consists in selling slaves to those who will either themselves deprive those unhappy people of the blessings of the gospel, or who will transport

them to places where the gospel is not proclaimed, or where it is forbidden to slaves to attend upon its institutions. And if it shall ever happen that a Christian professor in our communion shall sell a slave who is also in communion and good standing with our church, contrary to his or her will and inclination, it ought immediately to claim the particular attention of the proper church judicature ; and unless there be such peculiar circumstances attending the case as can but seldom happen, it ought to be followed without delay by a suspension of the offender from all the privileges of the church, till he repent and make all the reparation in his power to the injured party.

THE SUBSTANCE
 OF THE
 PLAN OF A COMMITTEE
 OF
 THE SYNOD OF KENTUCKY,
 FOR THE
 INSTRUCTION AND EMANCIPATION OF
 THEIR SLAVES, 1835.*

JOHN BROWN, Esq.,	Rev. WM. L. BRECKINRIDGE,
JOHN GREEN, Esq.,	Rev. JAMES K. BURCH,
THOMAS P. SMITH, Esq.,	Rev. ROBERT STEWART,
J. R. ALEXANDER, Esq.,	Rev. NATHAN J. HALL,
CHARLES CUNNINGHAM, Esq.,	Rev. JOHN C. YOUNG,"
	COMMITTEE.

DEAR BRETHREN—The will of Synod has made it our duty to lay before you “a plan for the

* “An Address to the Presbyterians of Kentucky, proposing a Plan for the Instruction and Emancipation of their Slaves, by a Committee of the Synod of Kentucky.”

“For the purpose of promoting harmony and concert of action on this important subject, the Synod do

“*Resolve*, That a committee of ten be appointed, to consist

moral and religious instruction," as well as for "the future emancipation" of the slaves under your care. We feel the responsibility and difficulty of the duty to which the church has called us, yet the character of those whom we address strongly encourages us to hope that our labor will not be in vain. You profess to be governed by the principles and precepts of a holy religion; you recognize the fact that you have yourselves "been made free" by the blood of the Son of God, and you believe that you have been imbued with a portion of the same spirit which was in "Him who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor." When we point out to such persons their duty, and call upon them to fulfil it, our appeal cannot be altogether fruitless. But we have a still stronger ground of encouragement in our firm conviction that the cause which we advocate is the cause of God, and that his assistance will make it finally prevail. May He who "hears the cry of the poor and needy," and who has commanded to let the "oppressed go free," give to

of an equal number of ministers and elders, whose business it shall be to digest and prepare a plan for the moral and religious instruction of our slaves, and for their future emancipation, and to report such plan to the several presbyteries within our bounds for their consideration and approval."

each one of us wisdom to know our duty and strength to fulfil it.

We earnestly entreat you, brethren, to receive our communication in the same spirit of kindness in which it is made, and permit neither prejudice nor interest to close your minds against the reception of truth, or steel your hearts against the convictions of conscience. Very soon it will be a matter of no moment whether we have had large or small possessions on the earth; but it will be of infinite importance whether or not we have conscientiously sought out the will of God and done it.

We all admit that the system of slavery which exists among us is not right. Why then do we assist in perpetuating it? Why do we make no serious efforts to terminate it? Is it not because our perception of its sinfulness is very feeble and indistinct, while our perception of the difficulties of instructing and emancipating our slaves is strong and clear? As long as we believe that slavery, as it exists among us, is a *light evil* in the sight of God, so long will we feel inclined to pronounce every plan that can be devised for its termination inexpedient or impracticable. Before then we unfold our plan, we wish to examine the system and try it by the principles which religion teaches. If it shall not be thus proved to

be an abomination in the sight of a just and holy God, we shall not solicit your concurrence in any plan for its abolition. But if, when fairly examined, it shall be seen to be a thing which God abhors, we may surely expect that no trifling amount of trouble or loss will deter you from lending your efforts to its extermination.

Slavery is not the same all the world over. And to ascertain its character in any particular state or country, we must examine the constituents and effects of *the kind of slavery which there exists*. The system, as it exists among us and is constituted by our laws, consists of three distinct parts: *a deprivation of the right of property, a deprivation of personal liberty, and a deprivation of personal security*. In all its parts it is manifestly a violation of the laws of God, as revealed by the light of nature as well as by the light of revelation.

1. A part of our system of slavery consists in *depriving human beings of the right to acquire and hold property*. Does it need any proof to show that God has given to all human beings a right to the proceeds of their own labor? The heathen acknowledge it; every man feels it. The Bible is full of denunciations against those who withhold from others the fruits of their exertions. "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteous-

ness, and his chambers by wrong ; that useth his neighbor's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work." Jer. 22 : 13. See also James 5 : 4 ; Lev. 19 : 13 ; Deut. 24 : 14, 15. Does an act which is wrong when done once and towards one individual, become right because it is practised daily and hourly and towards thousands ? Does the just and holy One frown the less upon injustice because it is systematically practised, and is sanctioned by the laws of the land ? If the chicanery of law should enable us to escape the payment of our debts, or if a human legislature should discharge us from our obligations to our creditors, could we, without deep guilt, withhold from our neighbors that which is their due ? No ; we all recognize the principle that the laws of the God of nature can never be repealed by any legislature under heaven. These laws will endure when the statutes of earth shall have crumbled with the parchments on which they are enrolled ; and by these laws we know that we must be judged in the day in which the destinies of our souls shall be determined.

2. *The deprivation of personal liberty* forms another part of our system of slavery. Not only has the slave no right to his wife and children, he has no right even to himself. His very body, his muscles, his bones, his flesh, are all the property of

another. The movements of his limbs are regulated by the will of a master. He may be sold like a beast of the field; he may be transported in chains like a felon. Was the blood of our Revolution shed to establish a false principle, when it was poured out in defence of the assertion that "all men are created equal;" that "they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?" If it be a violation of the rights of nature to deprive men of their *political freedom*, the injustice is surely much more flagrant when we rob them of *personal liberty*. The condition of a *subject* is envious compared with the condition of a *slave*. We are shocked at the despotism exercised over the Poles. But theirs is a political yoke, and is light compared with the heavy personal yoke that bows down the two millions of our colored countrymen. Does European injustice lose its foul character when practised with aggravations in America?

Still further, the deprivation of personal liberty is so complete, that it destroys the rights of conscience. Our system, as established by law, arms the master with power to prevent his slave even from worshipping God according to the dictates of his own conscience. The owner of human beings among us may legally restrain them from

assembling to hear the instructions of divine truth, or even from ever uniting their hearts and voices in social prayer and praise to Him who created them. God alone is Lord over the conscience. Yet our system, defrauding alike our Creator and our slaves, confers upon men this prerogative of Deity. Argument is unnecessary to show the guilt and madness of such a system. And do we not participate in its criminality if we uphold it?

3. *The deprivation of personal security* is the remaining constituent of our system of slavery. The time was, in our own as well as in other countries, when even the life of the slave was absolutely in the hands of the master. It is not so now among us. The life of a bondman cannot be taken with impunity. But the law extends its protection no further. Cruelty may be carried to any extent, provided life be spared. Mangling, imprisonment, starvation, every species of torture may be inflicted upon him, and he has no redress. But not content with thus laying the body of the slave defenceless at the foot of the master, our system proceeds still further, and strips him in a great measure of all protection against the inhumanity of any *other* white man who may choose to maltreat him. The laws prohibit the evidence of a slave against a white man from be-

ing received in a court of justice. So that wantonness and cruelty may be exercised by any man with impunity upon these unfortunate people, provided none witness it but those of their own color. In describing such a condition, we may well adopt the language of sacred writ: "Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. And the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment."

Such is the essential character of our slavery. Without any crime on the part of its unfortunate subjects, they are deprived for life, and their posterity after them, of the right to property, of the right to liberty, and of the right to personal security. These odious features are not the excrescences upon the system, they are *the system itself*; they are its essential constituent parts. And can any man believe that such a thing as this is not sinful; that it is not hated by God, and ought not to be abhorred and abolished by man?

But there are certain EFFECTS, springing naturally and necessarily out of such a system, which must also be considered in forming a proper estimate of its character.

1. Its most striking effect is *to deprave and degrade its subjects by removing from them the strongest*

natural checks to human corruption. As there are certain laws impressed upon the elements, by which God works to preserve the beauty and order of the material creation, so there are certain principles of human nature by which he works to save the moral world from ruin. These principles operate on every man in his natural condition of freedom—restraining his vicious propensities and regulating his deportment. The fires of innate depravity, which, if permitted to burst forth, would destroy the individual and desolate society, are thus measurably repressed, and the decencies and enjoyments of life are preserved. The wisdom and goodness of God are thus seen in implanting in man a sense of character, a desire for property, a love for distinction, a thirst for power, and a zeal for family advancement. All these feelings working in the mind of individuals, though not unmixed with evil, combine to promote their own happiness and the welfare of communities; and they are inferior, in the good which they produce, only to those high religious principles which constitute the image of God in the soul of man. The presence of these principles only can compensate for the absence of those natural feelings. Whenever then these natural feelings are crushed or eradicated in any human being, he is stripped of the nobler attributes

of humanity, and is degraded into a creature of mere appetite and passion. His sensuality is the only cord by which you can draw him. His hopes and fears all concentrate upon the objects of his appetites. He sinks far down towards a level with the beast of the field, and can be moved to action only by such appeals as influence the lunatic and the brute. This is the condition to which slavery reduces the great mass of those who wear its brutalizing yoke. Its effects upon their souls are far worse than its effects upon their bodies. Character, property, distinction, power, and family respectability, are all withdrawn from the reach of the slave. No object is presented to excite and cultivate those higher feelings whose exercise would repress his passions and regulate his appetites. Thus slavery deranges and ruins the moral machinery of man; it cuts the sinews of the soul; it extracts from human nature the salt that purifies and preserves it, and leaves it a corrupting mass of appetite and passion.

2. *It dooms thousands of human beings to hopeless ignorance.* The acquisition of knowledge requires exertion; and the man who is to continue through life in bondage has no strong motive of interest to induce such exertion; for knowledge is not valuable to him as to one who eats the fruits of his own labors. The acquisition of knowledge re-

quires also facilities of books, teachers, and time, which can be only adequately furnished by masters; and those who desire to perpetuate slavery will never furnish these facilities. If slaves are educated, it must involve some outlay on the part of the master. And what reliance for such a sacrifice can be placed on the generosity and virtue of one who looks on them as his property, and who has been trained to consider every dollar expended on them as lost, unless it contributes to increase their capacity for yielding him valuable service? He will have them taught to work, and will ordinarily feed and clothe them so as to enable them to perform their work to advantage. But more than this it is inconsistent with our knowledge of human nature to expect that he will do for them. The present state of instruction among this race answers exactly to what we might thus naturally anticipate. Throughout our whole land, so far as we can learn, there is but one school in which, during the week, slaves can be taught. The light of three or four Sabbath-schools is seen glimmering through the darkness that covers the black population of a whole state. Here and there a family is found where humanity and religion impel the master, mistress, or children, to the laborious task of private instruction. Great honor is due to those engaged in this phi-

lanthropic and self-denying course, and their reward shall be received in the day when even a cup of cold water, given from Christian motives, shall secure a recompense. But after all, what is the utmost amount of instruction given to slaves? Those who enjoy the most of it, are fed with but the crumbs of knowledge which fall from their master's table—they are clothed with the mere shreds and tatters of learning.

Nor is it to be expected that this state of things will become better, *unless it is determined that slavery shall cease*. The impression is almost universal that intellectual elevation unfits men for servitude, and renders it impossible to retain them in this condition. This impression is unquestionably correct. The weakness and ignorance of their victims is the only safe foundation on which injustice and oppression can rest. And the effort to keep in bondage men to whom knowledge has imparted power, would be like the insane attempt of the Persian tyrant to chain the waves of the sea, and whip its boisterous waters into submission. We may as soon expect to fetter the winds, seal up the clouds, or extinguish the fires of the volcano, as to prevent enlightened minds from recovering their natural condition of freedom. Hence, in some of our states laws have been enacted prohibiting, under severe penalties, the

instruction of the blacks; and even where such laws do not exist, there are formidable numbers who oppose with deep hostility every effort to enlighten the mind of the negro. These men are determined that slavery shall be perpetuated, and they know that their universal education must be followed by their universal emancipation. They are then acting wisely, according to the wisdom of this world, when they deny education to slaves; they are adopting a measure necessary to secure their determined purpose. It is, however, policy akin to that which once induced the ruffian violators of female chastity to cut out the tongue, and cut off the hands of their victim, to disable her from uttering or writing their names. She had to be maimed, or they would be brought to justice. It is such policy as the robber exhibits, who silences in death the voices that might accuse him, and buries in the grave the witnesses of his crimes. He is determined to pursue his occupation, and his safety in it requires that he should not indulge in the weakness of keeping a conscience. How horrible must be that system which, in the opinion of even its strongest advocates, demands, as the necessary condition of its existence, that knowledge should be shut out from the minds of those who live under it; that they should be reduced as nearly as

possible to the level of brutes or living machines ; that the powers of their souls should be crushed. Let each one of us ask, can such a system be aided or even tolerated without deep criminality ?

3. *It deprives its subjects in a great measure of the privileges of the gospel.* You may be startled at this statement, and feel disposed to exclaim, "Our slaves are always permitted and even encouraged to attend upon the ordinances of worship." But a candid and close examination will show the correctness of our charge. The privileges of the gospel, as enjoyed by the white population in this land, consist in free access to the Scriptures, a regular gospel ministry, and domestic means of grace. Neither of these is, to any extent worth naming, enjoyed by slaves, as a moment's consideration will satisfactorily show. The law, as it is here, does not prevent *free access to the Scriptures* ; but ignorance, the natural result of their condition, does. The Bible is before them, but it is to them a sealed book. "The light shineth in the darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not." Like the paralytic who lay for years by the pool of Bethesda, the waters of healing are near them, but no kind hand enables them to try their efficacy. Very few enjoy the advantages of a *regular gospel ministry*. They are, it is true, permitted generally, and often encouraged to attend upon

the ministrations specially designed for their masters. But the instructions communicated on such occasions are above the level of their capacities. They listen as to prophesyings in an unknown tongue. The preachers of their own color are still farther from ministering to their spiritual wants, as these impart to them, not of their knowledge, but their ignorance; they heat their animal feelings, but do not kindle a flame of intelligent devotion. It has been proposed by some zealous and devoted friends of the colored race, to supply the deficiency of gospel ministrations among them by the employment of suitable missionaries, who may labor exclusively among them. We need not here speculate on the probable results of such a scheme if carried into effect in a community where there is no intention to emancipate; for before there is found among us benevolence enough to adopt and execute it on a scale large enough to effect any highly valuable purpose, the community will be already ripe for measures of emancipation. Such a spirit of kindness towards this unfortunate race as this scheme presupposes, can never coexist with a determination to keep them in hopeless bondage. Further, there are no houses of worship exclusively devoted to the colored population. The galleries of our own churches, which are set apart to their use, would not

hold the tenth part of their numbers ; and even these few seats are in general thinly occupied. So that, as a body, it is evident that our slaves do not enjoy the public ordinances of religion. *Domestic means of grace* are still more rare among them. Here and there a family is found whose servants are taught to bow with their masters around the fireside altar. But their peculiarly adverse circumstances, combined with the natural alienation of their hearts from God, render abortive the slight efforts of most masters to induce their attendance on the domestic services of religion. And if we visit the cottages of those slaves who live apart from their masters, where do we find them reading their Bibles and kneeling together before a throne of mercy ? Family ordinances of religion are almost unknown among the blacks. We do not wish to exaggerate the description of this deplorable religious condition of our colored population. We know that instances of true piety are frequently found among them ; but these instances we all know to be awfully disproportionate to their numbers, and to the extent of those means of grace which exist around them. When the missionaries of the cross enter a heathen land, their hope of fully Christianizing it rests upon the fact that they can array and bring to bear upon the minds of these children of

ignorance and sin all those varied means which God has appointed for the reformation of man. But while the system of slavery continues among us, these means can never be efficiently and fully employed for the conversion of the degraded sons of Africa. Yet "God hath made them of one blood" with ourselves; hath provided for them the same redemption; hath in his providence cast souls upon our care, and hath clearly intimated to us the doom of him who "seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him." If by our example, our silence, or our sloth, we perpetuate a system which paralyzes our hands when we attempt to convey to them the bread of life, and which inevitably consigns the great mass of them to unending perdition, can we be guiltless in the sight of Him who hath made us stewards of his grace?

4. *This system licenses and produces great cruelty.* The law places the whip in the hands of the master, and its use, provided he avoid destroying life, is limited only by his own pleasure. Considering the absolute power with which our people are armed, it must be acknowledged that the treatment of their dependents is, in general, singularly humane. Many circumstances operate here to mitigate the rigors of perpetual servitude; and it is probably the fact that no body of slaves

have been ever better fed, better clothed, and less abused, than the slaves of Kentucky. Still they have no security for their comfort but the humanity and generosity of men who have been trained to regard them not as brethren, but as property. Humanity and generosity are at best poor guarantees for the protection of those who cannot assert their rights, and over whom law throws no protection. Our own condition we would feel to be wretched indeed if no law secured us from the insults and maltreatment *even of our equals*. But superiority naturally begets contempt, and contempt generates maltreatment, for checking which we can rely not on virtue, but only on law. There are in our land hundreds of thousands clothed with arbitrary powers over those whom they are educated to regard as their property, as the instruments of their will, as creatures beneath their sympathy, devoid of all the feelings which dignify humanity, and but one remove above cattle. Is it not certain that many of these hundreds of thousands will inflict outrages on their despised dependents? There are now in our whole land two millions of human beings exposed defenceless to every insult and every injury short of maiming or death which their fellow-men may choose to inflict. They suffer all that can be inflicted by wanton caprice, by

grasping avarice, by brutal lust, by malignant spite, and by insane anger. Their happiness is the sport of every whim and the prey of every passion that may occasionally or habitually infect the master's bosom. If we could calculate the amount of woe endured by ill-treated slaves, it would overwhelm every compassionate heart—it would move even the obdurate to sympathy. There is also a vast sum of suffering inflicted upon the slave by humane masters as a punishment for that idleness and misconduct which slavery naturally produces. The ordinary motives to exertion in men are withdrawn from the slave. Some unnatural stimulus must then be substituted, and the whip presents itself as the readiest and most efficient. But the application of the whip to produce industry, is like the application of the galvanic fluid to produce muscular exertion. The effect is powerful indeed, but momentary; and if often applied, it is exhaustive and destructive to the system. It can never be used as a substitute for the healthful and agreeable nervous stimulus with which nature has supplied us. Equally vain is the attempt to supply by the whip the deficiency of natural motives to exertion; it produces misery and degradation. Yet inadequate as is this substitute, it is the best that can be had; it must be used while the sys-

tem lasts: the condition of the slave is unnatural, and his treatment must correspond to his condition. We are shocked to hear of epicures who cause the animals on which they feast to be whipped to death, that their flesh may be more delicate and delicious to the taste. We feel it to be disgusting and intolerable cruelty thus to inflict pain even upon a beast, merely to satisfy the cravings of luxury; and shall we excuse ourselves if a desire for ease or wealth leads us to sanction, sustain, and assist in perpetuating a system which, as long as it lasts, must lacerate the bodies and grind down the feelings of millions of rational and immortal beings?

Brutal stripes, and all the varied kinds of personal indignities, are not the only species of cruelty which slavery licences. The law does not recognize the family relations of a slave, and extends to him no protection in the enjoyment of domestic endearments. The members of a slave family may be forcibly separated, so that they shall never more meet until the final judgment. And cupidity often induces the masters to practise what the law allows. Brothers and sisters, parents and children, husbands and wives, are torn asunder, and permitted to see each other no more. These acts are daily occurring in the midst of us. The shrieks and the agony often

witnessed on such occasions proclaim with a trumpet-tongue the iniquity and cruelty of our system. The cry of these sufferers goes up to the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. There is not a neighborhood where these heart-rending scenes are not displayed. There is not a village or road that does not behold the sad procession of manacled outcasts, whose chains and mournful countenances tell that they are exiled by force from all that their hearts held dear. Our church years ago raised its voice of solemn warning against this flagrant violation of every principle of mercy, justice, and humanity. Yet we blush to announce to you and to the world that this warning has been often disregarded even by those who hold to our communion. Cases have occurred in our own denomination where professors of the religion of mercy have torn the mother from her children, and sent her into a merciless and returnless exile. Yet acts of discipline have rarely followed such conduct. Far be it from us to ascribe to our people generally a participation in these deeds, or a sympathy with them; they abhor and loathe them. But while the system, of which these cruelties are the legitimate offspring, is tolerated among us, it is exceedingly difficult to inflict punishment upon their perpetrators. If we commence discipline for *any* acts which the laws

of slavery sanction, where shall we stop? What principle is there which will justify us in cutting off a twig or branch of this poison tree that will not, if carried fairly out, force us to proceed and hew down its trunk and dig up its roots? These cruelties are only the loathsome ulcers which show corruption in the blood and rottenness in the bones of this system. They may be bound up and mollified with ointment; they may be hidden from the sight; but they cannot be entirely removed until there is a thorough renovation within. Our churches cannot be entirely pure even from the grosser pollutions of slavery, until we are willing to pledge ourselves to the destruction of the whole system.

The voice of the civilized world has been lifted up in execration of the despot who recently dragged numbers of the unhappy Poles from their country, separating husbands and wives, parents and children. But they are his property by the same tenure by which we hold our slaves; and has he not a right, he may exclaim, to do as he pleases with his own? Nay, the security and peace of his dominions require this cruelty. He is not willing to relinquish *the property which he inherited*; and he may tell us, and tell us truly, that it cannot be retained in safety without the adoption of these horrid measures. Can we condemn his

conduct, and yet justify our system of slavery? or can we condemn both, and yet be guiltless if we use no efficient exertions to terminate these cruelties among us?

5. *It produces general licentiousness among the slaves.* Marriage, as a *civil ordinance*, they cannot enjoy. Our laws do not recognize this relation as existing among them, and of course do not enforce by any sanction the observance of its duties. Indeed, until slavery "waxeth old and tendeth to decay," there cannot be any legal recognition of the marriage rite or the enforcement of the consequent duties. For all regulations on this subject would limit the master's absolute right of property in his slaves. In his disposal of them, he would no longer be at liberty to consult merely his own interest. He could no longer separate the wife and husband to suit the convenience or interest of the purchaser, no matter how advantageous might be the terms offered. And as the wife and husband do not always belong to the same owner, and are not often wanted by the same purchaser, their duties to each other would thus, if enforced by law, frequently conflict with the interests of the master. Hence all the marriage that could ever be allowed to them would be a mere contract, voidable at the master's pleasure. Their present quasi marriages are just such

contracts, and are continually thus voided. They are in this way brought to consider the matrimonial engagement as a thing not binding, and they act accordingly. Many of them are united without even the sham and forceless ceremony which is sometimes used. They, to use their own phraseology, "take up with" each other, and live together as long as it suits their mutual convenience or inclination. This wretched system of concubinage inevitably produces revolting licentiousness. This feature in the slave character is so striking, as to induce in many minds the idea that the negro is naturally repugnant to the restraints of matrimony. From the ample and repeated testimonies, however, of such travellers as Park and Lander, who have visited this race in their native land, we learn that their character in this respect is in Africa the reverse of what it is here; that they regard the marriage rite with remarkable sacredness, and scrupulously fulfil its duties. We are then assured by the most unquestionable testimony that their licentiousness is the necessary result of our system, which, destroying the force of the marriage rite, and thus in a measure degrading all the connection between the sexes into mere concubinage, solicits wandering desire, and leads to extensive profligacy. Our familiarity with this consequence of slavery pre-

vents us from regarding it with that horror which it would under other circumstances inspire. The sacredness of the marriage rite is the bulwark of morality, the corner-stone of domestic happiness. It is the foundation on which alone the whole fabric of an organized and virtuous community can be built. On it must rest all those family relations which bind together and cement society. Without it, we might herd together like brutes, but we could no longer live together as human beings. There would be no families, no strong ties of kindred, no domestic endearments softening the manners and curbing the passions. Selfish, sensual, and unrestrained, man would exercise his reason only to minister to the more grovelling propensities of his nature. Any set of men will approximate to this condition just in proportion to their approximation to the practical abolition of matrimonial restraints. And certainly, never in any civilized country has respect for these restraints been more nearly obliterated than it has been among our blacks. Thus the working of our system of slavery diffuses a moral pestilence among its subjects, tending to wither and blight every thing that is naturally beautiful and good in the character of man. Can this system be tolerated without sin?

6. *This system demoralizes the whites as well as the*

blacks. Masters are in a great degree irresponsible for the exercise of their power ; and they generally feel that their object in possessing and exercising their dominion is their own utility, and not the good of those over whom they rule. Now, power can never be held or exercised without moral injury to its *possessor*, unless its exercise be subject to responsibility, or unless it be held *mainly* for the good of its *subjects, not of its possessor.* The lives of absolute monarchs furnish us with our most disgusting pictures of human depravity. Few, even of those who had been previously trained to self-control and virtue, have been able to withstand the corrupting influence of unrestrained power. And the effect is in some measure the same where despotic authority is possessed and exercised in a smaller sphere. No man, acquainted with the frailty of the human heart, would desire uncontrolled dominion over his fellow-men. We are sufficiently prone by nature to tyranny and a disregard of the rights and interests of others, without having these feelings developed, cultivated, and matured by a sense of irresponsibility, and by the habit of regarding ourselves as born to command, and others as born to obey. Where a consciousness of responsibility, equality, and dependence, does not check their growth, hard-heartedness, selfishness, and arrogance are

in most men fearfully exhibited. And these odious traits of character must be peculiarly marked in those who have from childhood been trained in the school of despotism. The hand of one of our greatest statesmen has strikingly portrayed the demoralizing effects of this system on the minds and manners of the ruling class. "There must doubtless," says Mr. Jefferson, "be an unhappy influence on the manners of our people produced by the existence of slavery among us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unrelenting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it; for man is an imitative animal. This quality is the germ of all education in him. From his cradle to his grave he is learning to do what he sees others do. If a parent could find no motive either in his philanthropy or his self-love for restraining the intemperance of passion towards his slave, it should always be a sufficient one that his child is present. But generally it is not sufficient. The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives a loose to the worst of passions; and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by

it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances."* Such, according to the testimony of one who had marked its operation with a philosopher's eye, is the character which slavery forms, a character perfectly the reverse of that which the gospel requires.

We forbear to picture before you the consequences of that indolence and aversion to all manual occupations which are necessarily engendered in youth surrounded by a servile class who are engaged in these pursuits. These consequences you have all seen and felt and deplored. Such are the evil effects to ourselves and our children of the system which we support. Thus we are made to eat of the bitter food which we prepare for others, and drink of the poisoned cup which our own hands mingled; the sword with which we unthinkingly destroy others is thus made to drink our own blood. These evils, if duly estimated, are alone sufficient to arm us with implacable hostility towards the system from which they spring. And in view of these effects, we can almost adopt the opinion expressed a few years since on the scaffold by one who was executed for the murder of a slave: "Slavery is a bad system; it is even *worse* for the master than it is for

* Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, p. 319.

the slaves." It is a system which reminds us of the dark magic of ancient days, an art as fatal to those who exercised it as to those who were their victims.

7. *This system draws down upon us the vengeance of Heaven.* "God is just," and "he will render to every one according to his works." Oppression can never escape unpunished while He, who hath emphatically declared that he is the "Judge of the widow" and "the Father of the fatherless," is on the throne of the universe. "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall he not render to every man according to his works?" Not a sparrow falls to the ground, we are told, without the notice of God; how much more doth he mark the abuse and oppression of a creature who bears his own peculiar image? "The very hairs of our head are all numbered;" much more are the groanings of the oppressed and the sighings of the prisoner recorded by Him who says that his name is "Gracious," and that his "ear is ever open to the cry of the poor and needy." The blood of Abel did not soak into the ground unheeded; it called down judgment upon the guilty man who

had smitten his brother, and it drove him out a wanderer from the land of his birth, a fugitive from the presence of the Lord. But the sore cry of millions of the down-trodden has gone up to heaven from the midst of us; this cry is still swelling upward; and if there be righteousness on the throne of the universe, it must bring down vials of wrath upon the heads of all who are engaged in this guilty work. And when He cometh to execute vengeance, "who may abide the day of his coming?" Who can stand before his indignation? Who can stand up in the fierceness of his anger? We see the truth of what the prophet declares, that "the Lord is slow to anger;" but we are assured that it is equally true that He is "great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked; the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet."

Brethren, we profess to be Christians; we reverence the holy revelation which God has given; we look to its precepts for guidance, and to its denunciations for warnings. We know that the *principles* of the divine dealings are the same in every age, and that what God said to those of old, when we are in similar circumstances, he saith unto us. Listen, then, to one of the many intimations he has given us of the way in which

he regards slavery, and the way in which he will punish it. "The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy; yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I sought for a man among them, that should stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath; their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God." Ezek. 22:29-31. Can we despise the instructions of the Almighty? Shall we shut our eyes and close our ears against the admonitions of the great Judge of the earth? Shall we not arise and "stand in the gap before him for the land, that he may not destroy it?" Though our "nest may be built on high," and "our defence be the munitions of rocks," we cannot escape, if God rise up against us. He can blast our prosperity; he can drown us in blood; he can blot out our existence and our name from under heaven.

Let us remember too, that not only as a people, but as individuals God will deal with us. The day is soon coming when every man's works which he hath wrought shall be tried as by fire, and we must then "eat of the fruits of our own ways."

We have now exhibited, fairly but briefly, the nature and effects of slavery. For the truth of our facts we refer to your own observations; for the correctness of our reasoning we appeal to your judgments and consciences.

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[After considering and answering various objections, the committee submit the following plan, and their closing appeal.]

The plan which we propose is, for the master to retain, during a limited period, and with a regard to the real welfare of the slave, that authority which he before held in perpetuity, and solely for his own interest. Let the full future liberty of the slave be secured against all contingencies by a recorded deed of emancipation, to take effect at a specified time. In the mean while, let the servant be treated with kindness; let all those things which degrade him be removed; let him enjoy means of instruction; let his moral and religious improvement be sought; let his prospects be presented before him, to stimulate him to acquire those habits of foresight, economy, industry, activity, skill, and integrity, which will fit him for using well the liberty he is soon to enjoy. That master is, in our opinion, doing most for the destruction of this system who thus sets in opera-

tion a machinery which, in a given and limited period, will not only unbind the body of the slave, but will, link by link, and in the only way in which it can be effected, twist off the fetters that now cramp his soul. If the master retains his authority over his servants only for a time, that he may enjoy ampler opportunities of employing means for their amendment and elevation ; if he regards them as a trust committed to him by his Master and theirs, for their mutual benefit, and no longer as property of which he has the uncontrolled disposal for his own selfish ends ; if he acts and feels thus, he is not only free from guilt, but he is “bringing forth fruits meet for repentance,” he is doing a work of righteousness and humanity.

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Brethren, there are three courses before you, one of which you must choose : either to emancipate immediately and without preparation, or to pursue some such plan of gradual emancipation as we propose, or to continue to lend your example and influence to perpetuate slavery. It is improbable that you will adopt the first course ; if then you refuse to concur in the plan of gradual emancipation and act upon it, however you may lull conscience, you are lending your aid to perpetuate a demoralizing and cruel system, which it

would be an insult to God to imagine that he does not abhor ; a system which exhibits power without responsibility, toil without recompense, life without liberty, law without justice, wrongs without redress, infamy without crime, punishment without guilt, and families without marriage—a system which will not only make victims of the present unhappy generation, inflicting upon them the degradation, the contempt, the lassitude, and the anguish of hopeless oppression, but which even aims at transmitting this heritage of injury and woe to their children and their children's children, down to their latest posterity. Can any Christian contemplate without trembling his own agency in the perpetuation of such a system? And what will be the end of these scenes of misery and vice? Shall we wait until worldly politicians and legislators may rise up and bid them cease? We shall wait in vain. Already have we heard the sentiment proclaimed from high places and by the voice of authority, that a race of slaves is necessary to the existence of freedom. Is it from those who utter such sentiments that we expect deliverance to come? No; reformation must commence where we are divinely taught that "judgment must begin—at the house of God." This work must be done; and Christians must begin it, and begin it soon, or wrath will come

upon us. The groans of millions do not rise for ever unheeded before the throne of the Almighty. The hour of doom must soon arrive, the storm must soon gather, the bolt of destruction must soon be hurled, and the guilty must soon be dashed in pieces. The voice of past history and the voice of inspiration both warn us that the catastrophe must come, unless averted by repentance. And let us remember that we are each of us individually responsible. We are individually assisting to pile up this mountain of guilt. And even if temporal judgments do not fall upon our day, we are not on that account the more safe from punishment. If we "know our Lord's will and do it not, we shall be beaten with many stripes." The sophistry and false reasoning by which we may delude our own souls, will not blind the eyes which "are as a flame of fire." A few years at most will place us where we would gladly give all the slaves of a universe to buy off the punishment that oppression brings down upon the soul. It may be difficult to do our duty, but it will be far more difficult to stand in the judgment without having done it.

Brethren, we have done. The hour is coming in which the slave and his master must stand together before the tribunal of God, a God who judges righteously. Are you prepared to place

yourselves before him who will decide upon your eternal destiny, and say that you have done justice to those whom you now hold in bondage? Are you prepared to say, "As I have done unto these, so let it be done unto me; as I have showed mercy, so let me receive mercy at the hands of my Judge." Anticipate, we beseech you, the feelings and decision of that great day which is fast hastening on; try yourselves now, as God will then try you. "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" Are you "doing justly" while you retain your fellow-men in hopeless bondage? Are you "loving mercy" while you are supporting a system that degrades and brutalizes beings whom God created in his own image? These are solemn questions. Let reason answer them, and let conscience decide your future course.

JOHN BROWN, Chairman.

JOHN C. YOUNG, Secretary.

DR. YOUNG'S DUTY OF MASTERS.*

“Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.” Col. 4:1.

OF the ten commandments which God has given to us as comprising his moral law, *six* are intended to regulate our intercourse with our fellow-men; and with no portion of our fellow-beings, except our wives and children, have we so much to do as with our servants. Our duties to them must, then, be deeply important, embracing as they do so large a portion of the duties contained in the divine code. Our dealings with our servants comprehend a very large part of that conduct for which we are to be responsible at the bar of God; is it not, then, of the utmost consequence to ourselves that these dealings should be all

* “The Duty of Masters: a Sermon preached in Danville, Kentucky, in 1846, and then published at the unanimous request of the Church and Congregation. By Rev. John C. Young, D. D., President of Centre College, and Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Danville. Revised by the Author.”

regulated by the principles of religion? The Bible lays down precepts for the master and for the servant, because each has the happiness and well-being of the other greatly in his power. There is, however, more need of the authority of religion to enforce the duties of the master, especially the master who holds the servant in involuntary bondage ; for while he has power to coerce the servant to yield him in some good degree what is his due, the servant has no reciprocal power to coerce the master ; and the natural motives which can be applied to stimulate the servant's labors for his master, are much more efficacious with the mass of men than those which address themselves to the master in behalf of the servant's interests.

In examining our text, and comparing it with the instructions given to servants in the previous verses, we have been struck with the discriminating and beautiful adaptation of the several precepts and motives to the respective classes to whom they are addressed. The peculiar temptation of the servant is to indolence and remissness in his work, because he lacks that greatest natural stimulus to exertion, the knowledge that he will himself enjoy the fruit of his labors ; for as our personal interest in the results of our efforts is diminished, the spirits of all men naturally flag,

and their industry decreases. The main precept to the servant meets this evil by enjoining upon him faithfulness and energy in all that he does: "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily." And mark the peculiarity of the motive by which this precept is enforced, and its adaptation to counteract the force of their temptation: "knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance." Here is what is needed by the servant—a reward held out to quicken his sluggish spirit. He is taught, that while he labors in his lowly avocations, he is working not merely for an earthly, but for a heavenly Master, and that however little compensation he may receive from his earthly master, a heavenly inheritance shall reward his faithful exertions. The master, on the other hand, is tempted continually to the exercise of injustice and oppression. On him, therefore, is enjoined, "Give unto your servants that which is just and equal." And the injunction is enforced by reminding him of the fact, that there is One who holds dominion over *him*, and who will one day call him to an account for the exercise of his power. Thus the master is checked by the fear of retribution, while the servant is stimulated by the hope of reward.

The precept in our text is strikingly wise, too, in its comprehensiveness. To see this, reflect for

a moment how long a list of directions must be given, in order to specify the particular and minute duties of any one master; reflect then upon the very varied circumstances of masters, which would more or less modify their duties; think of the very different kinds of servitude which have prevailed in different climes and ages, and the very different conditions of society in which masters and servants are found, all of which circumstances must produce variations in these duties. A detailed statement of a master's duty under all circumstances was then impossible. Nor was it necessary; for here in a condensed form is summed up the whole of their duties: "Give unto your servants that which is just and equal;" give them what conscience, if you consult its dictates, will teach you that justice and equity, in each particular set of circumstances, demand. But will not selfishness so blind us as to prevent our clearly discerning what is "just and equal?" This danger is removed, and the correct working of the rule secured, if we give due heed to the motive by which it is followed: "knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven." God calls our attention to the fact that he is *our Master*; as we treat our servants, we may expect that our Master will treat us: "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Can we con-

ceive of a more efficacious means of securing a correct judgment on the rights of our servants than is furnished by the thought thus presented before us? Suppose yourself placed in a condition of alternate authority and subjection, that each day of power was to be followed by a day of subjection; and suppose yourself to be aware of the fact, that on each alternate day which you spent as a servant you were to be treated exactly as you had treated your servants on the day preceding; would it not make you impartial and just in your conduct towards them? Would you not honestly seek to ascertain your duties to your servants, and most scrupulously fulfil those duties? But if this supposition were realized, your motive to diligent inquiry and conscientious conduct on this subject would not be as powerful as it is now. It is not your condition on alternate days of your earthly existence, but your condition throughout eternity, which is to be affected by your conduct towards your servants. After a short mastership here on earth, you are to go up to your Master in heaven, and there *receive* according to what you have *given*: the principles on which you have acted here must there be applied to yourself; and how infinitely more momentous in their consequences upon us, for welfare or for woe, will be the application of those principles there. When therefore

we fail to render to our servants the full amount of what is "just and equal," it is evidently no gain to us, but a most serious loss. If we are wise we will not, in deciding upon what is due to our servants, lean to what might be considered our own interest by men who look not beyond the grave in their calculations of profit and loss; nor will we be content with a slight and hasty consideration of the subject, knowing that mistakes arising from inattention or prejudice will not excuse our derelictions in duty, nor screen us from their punishment.

Let me entreat you, my beloved brethren, to make this motive practical; dwell upon it until its influence habitually affects your conduct. Realize to yourselves the solemn fact that each of us has a Master, and that *as we deal with our servants, so will he deal with us*. Do we wish him to do for us, his imperfect and unworthy servants, more than we feel that we deserve? And shall we not do for our servants as we beseech him to do for us? Can we expect him to forgive our debt of ten thousand talents, while we exact rigorously the hundred pence which are due from our poor fellow-being to ourselves? Let us remember that it is *our Master* who hath warned us, that "he shall have judgment without mercy who hath showed no mercy;" and let us determine so

to treat our dependents as we ask Him to treat us.

We will now endeavor to show, in some points, what this precept, "Give unto your servants that which is just and equal," would require under our peculiar circumstances. The duties enjoined by this general rule must vary, as we hinted above, with the peculiar nature of the servitude. The master who owns slaves owes them far more than is due from the master who hires free laborers to those employed to do his work; for our bondmen are in a great measure dependent upon us for their happiness in time and eternity. The obligations must correspond necessarily with the extent of their dependence and the absoluteness of our power.

1. It is the duty of every master to form the habit of feeling that his servants are *partakers of the same flesh and blood, and brethren of the same great family with himself*, and the habit of speaking and acting towards them as this view of his connection with them would require.

One of the natural and pernicious consequences of arbitrary power is, that it begets a feeling in its possessor towards his subjects such as could only properly exist if he and they belonged to different species. If we would discharge our duties to our servants, we must counteract this feel-

ing ; if we wish to act rightly, we must neither think a lie, nor even feel a lie. We must reflect upon the facts announced to us in the holy Scriptures, that " God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth," and that we are all sprung from Adam as our common ancestor. We should observe that they possess all the feelings which prove a common nature with ourselves : the same susceptibilities of hatred and love, joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain—the same capacities of memory and judgment, reason and conscience. Still more are we to impress upon ourselves the fact that they are our brethren, when we remember that the same gracious God whom we esteem it a privilege to call our Father, acknowledges them equally with ourselves as his children, and exhibits for them the same affection ; that the same Saviour who has redeemed us by his precious blood, recognizes them as a part of his purchased inheritance ; and that they are to enjoy throughout eternity, in full concert with ourselves, the thrones and the crowns and the harps and the mansions which God has promised to his redeemed people. " Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither *bond* nor *free* ; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

When, by such views, we free ourselves from

that contemptuous feeling which their servile condition tends to generate, and form the fixed habit of regarding them as our brethren, our language in addressing them, and our conduct towards them, will naturally conform to our improved sentiments.

2. It is our duty to suppress and eradicate another unwarranted and pernicious feeling that naturally springs up in us, the feeling that *our servants were made for us*.

Our cattle, our houses, and *all* our property, we regard as designed for our use: the very end and aim of the existence of these objects is for our service; for this purpose God created them. Now, when we class a fellow-man as a part of our property, we are exceeding apt to regard him as we are in the habit of correctly regarding all the other portions of our property, and consequently we are apt to feel that the great end of his existence, and the main use for which he was designed, is to serve us. But whatever rights the laws of the land may give us over our servants, and however much they may foster this erroneous impression, we are to remember that our servant was created for a purpose as elevated, and a destiny as glorious as our own—he was formed to *serve God Almighty, and to inherit the glories of his eternal kingdom*. For this end he was endowed, equally with ourselves, with an immor-

tal soul, and the revelation of God's will was directed to him as well as to us. We cannot degrade our servants into the mere instruments of our gratifications, we cannot conceive of them as creatures merely existing for our interests, without miserably failing in our most important duties towards them. Our servants have higher relations than those which they sustain towards us; they have more important duties than those which they owe to us; they have more valuable interests than those which we can affect. Their first and main duty is, to serve that God who is *their Master and ours*—that God who has not given up his rights in them when he has placed them by his providence partially under our control and protection—that God who will hold them as well as us accountable for not yielding him the honor and obedience which he claims as his due. Since it is their first and great duty to serve their Lord, we are to remember that, so far as we have power over them, it is our first duty to them to induce them to engage in this work, and to aid them in its proper and full performance.

3. It is the duty of a master to see to the religious improvement of his servants, not only by *furnishing them with the means of instruction*, but by using all diligence in *inducing them to avail themselves of those means*. We are not to think that our

work is done on this point when we merely permit our servants to enjoy the means of grace. The moralist and the Christian defend the practice of holding human beings in bondage only on the ground that they are incompetent to govern themselves and manage their own interests successfully. If this principle warrants us in keeping them under control, it at the same time binds us to exercise our power to restrain them from evil, and lead them to happiness and heaven. If they need our guardianship, and we exercise authority over them, we are under an obligation of the same kind towards them which we recognize ourselves as placed under towards our children. Our children are subject to our control because their ignorance and immaturity of powers disqualify them for self-government. If a parent should regard his authority simply as a source of advantage to himself, and should not use it for promoting the best interests of his child, he would be reprobated by man, and condemned and punished by God. Guilt of the same kind, though somewhat less in degree, is incurred by the master who fails to use his power to promote the highest interests of his servants. If you use this power to secure their services to yourself, and do not use it to secure their services to God, you fail in your duty to God, who in his providence has placed these beings under your guardianship, that

they might be trained up to glorify him. If an earthly parent had apprenticed his child to you, that he might be qualified for discharging hereafter the duties of life with ability and honor, would you not expect his displeasure, if he should discover that you had worked his son exclusively for your own benefit, while you had neglected to give him that instruction and train him to those habits which alone would fit him for the station which his father had designed him to occupy? Must we not then expect the displeasure of God, if we shall be found neglecting to impart to his children, whom he has placed under our control, those benefits which he designed them to receive from their connection with us? His design in their present condition is not our gain merely, but their good, and God's glory. If we are permitted by him to use their services, it is as a compensation for the pains and trouble which we endure in training them for glory, honor, and immortality. Thus in neglecting their religious improvement we grievously violate our obligations towards the great Jehovah, who has placed a portion of his immortal children under our guardianship. We are guilty too towards these our brethren; for if the interests of their souls are a matter of indifference to us, or of but slight and transient concern, we fail to act towards them on the golden

rule, that we should "do to others as we would that they should do unto us," and they must probably perish by our neglect.

The duty of attending to the religious improvement of our servants comprises among others two important particulars: *teaching and encouraging them to read God's word, and inducing them to attend his worship.* Some have assumed the position that we ought not to teach our servants to read the Bible. Our posterity will doubtless wonder how so strange a position could ever have been assumed in a Christian land, and how any sensible and good man could ever have deluded himself into the belief that such a notion was consistent with the first principles of that gospel which is sent to the bond as well as the free, and which requires all who receive it to impart a knowledge of it to the utmost of their ability to all who have it not.

To expose the falsity of this view and its pernicious consequences so fully and thoroughly as to insure its adequate condemnation, would perhaps require more time than the limits of our discourse will allow. But for its refutation in the eyes of all intelligent and reflecting men, nothing more, as we conceive, is needed, than that their attention should be directed to the two false assumptions on which the position rests. The first assumption is, that our system of servitude is inconsistent with even such a degree of intelligence

on the part of servants as will enable them to read the Bible. Why are slaves to be prohibited from learning to read? The answer is, because such instruction will unfit them for remaining in bondage. Now if this assumption were true, it would be the most powerful argument that has ever been urged against the system; for what pious or even philanthropic heart could countenance for a moment the existence of a system, whose existence depended on excluding its subjects for ever from obeying the divine command to "search the Scriptures," in which alone we "have eternal life?" The second false assumption on which must be rested the exclusion of servants from learning to read is, that for the sake of perpetuating a system which we imagine to be gainful, we have a right to keep a whole race of our fellow-men in such a state of degradation as to debar them from all direct access to God's holy word, and thus fearfully multiply the chances of their eternal perdition. If we have no such right, they must be allowed to read. But can any Christian imagine that we have such a right? If so, he must believe that for an increase of gain we might rightfully increase still more their chances of perdition, and that to secure a very large amount we would be justified in *insuring* the destruction of their souls.

But it is not necessary to consume time in prov-

ing that all human beings ought to be *permitted* to read God's word. A prohibition of this privilege we should feel bound to regard just as far as we would a prohibition to feed the hungry or clothe the naked. Is there aught more valuable to any one of us as an immortal being than to be able to read the divine oracles? Can you then think—I appeal to the conscience of every Christian—that you are obeying the precept of our text, that you are giving to your servants what is “just and equal,” while you are taking no measures to enable them to share in a privilege of such priceless value? If the Christian of old, in the days of heathen persecution, would rather suffer martyrdom than deliver up his copy of the Bible, can we imagine that we possess the Christian spirit, when we are unwilling to make exertions that those under our care may have the fullest means of acquainting themselves with its life-giving truths? What would you think and how would you feel if you were yourself debarred from all personal resort to that living fountain of truth which God has opened in the Bible for the healing and refreshment of the soul—if you were permitted to drink of the water of life only as others might find leisure and inclination to hand you an occasional sip? God's word is, next to God's Son, and God's Spirit, the most precious gift which divine mercy ever bestowed on man; and

shall we not aid those whom God has placed under our care, and for whose salvation we are in a great measure responsible, to secure to themselves its invaluable influences? Shall we suffer those who dwell in our houses and labor in our fields to remain incapable of reading for themselves that truth by which the Saviour prayed that the Father would sanctify his people? •

Again, a master cannot discharge his duties to his servants unless he uses faithful and diligent efforts *to secure their attendance upon the preaching of the gospel*. The preaching of the gospel is one of God's appointed means of grace, and a means of great value. Yet many Christian masters take no pains to induce their servants to attend regularly upon the house of God. Their own children are trained up to frequent the sanctuary, but the presence of their servants there they do not require. Is it not the duty of the bond as well as the free to attend the ordinances of God? And is it not the master's business to see that his domestics perform all their duties—not merely the duties which they owe to him, but those which they owe to God? We are not required to control the hearts of our servants, for this is beyond our power; but their attendance upon the means of grace, like the attendance of our children, can be procured by proper exertion, and we ought to secure it. Does it not look strangely inconsistent

that we can easily secure their attendance during six days of the week on *our* work, but find it impossible to secure their attendance upon *God's* work on the seventh? They are certainly not more averse to hearing a sermon than to digging or ploughing; if then they perform the latter and neglect the former, is it not owing to the different estimate we teach them to place on these duties? We manifest displeasure at their neglect of our interests, but their neglect of God's service we wink at.

Further, it is the duty of a master to *assemble his servants with the rest of the household for family worship*. Those servants who live apart from the master's household should be encouraged to worship God daily in their own houses; the domestic servants ought to unite in the family devotions. Every man is constituted by God a prophet or teacher, as well as king or ruler in his own household, is regarded as the superior in wisdom as well as authority: this position he holds that he may train his children and servants to fear and serve God. A man cannot expect the blessing of God upon his family, unless he endeavors to make it a family that calls daily upon God's name. It was the testimony which God gave to Abraham, when assigning the reason why he would bless him: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him; and they

shall keep the way of the Lord, and do justice and judgment." Here is an example held out by God for the imitation of all masters. Many persons justify slavery by pleading the example of Abraham; but they fail to remember that it was an inestimable privilege to belong to the family of Abraham. Do they imitate him in those points of conduct which sanctified his mastership, and which drew around him a body of faithful servants, whom he could arm to repel the assaults of an invading foe?

Our object at present is not to give minute directions to aid one who is disposed to discharge the religious duties of a master, but simply to show what those duties are. We cannot then turn aside to answer the question, "How shall we most surely and easily secure the attention of our servants to the Bible, and to the public and private exercises of divine worship?" One thing, however, is certain, that no man will succeed in any good work who does not direct his mind diligently to the discovery of the means of success, and then use them with patience and perseverance.

4. Masters should *watch over the moral character of their servants, and restrain them from all conduct offensive to God.* Gross sins against God are tolerated in their servants by many masters, who will permit no practices hurtful to their own self.

interest. Yet it is clearly our duty to show disapprobation of conduct which we reprehend or punish, in proportion, not to its injurious effects upon our personal interests, but to its criminality or moral turpitude. And we are certainly not discharging the obligations to our servants which our position and superior intelligence impose on us, when we teach them to regard trivial offences against ourselves as of greater magnitude, and deserving of severer reprobation, than gross violations of God's most important commandments. By acting thus we pervert their views of duty and responsibility, and give them, as far as lies in our power, a false standard of morality. We cannot expect them to be conscientious and upright, unless we train them to regard the divine law, and unless we show by our treatment of them that we expect and require them to respect its precepts.

To form and preserve correct moral feelings and conduct in them, it is not merely requisite that we should restrain them from vices, and encourage them to virtue by proper rewards and punishments, but we should as far as practicable keep them from corrupting associates, and set before them a godly example. In vain may we exhort them to do right, if they *see us* do wrong. If they see us honest, conscientious, kind, and forbearing, a strong influence will be exerted upon

them to produce virtues resembling those which they see in us ; if, on the other hand, the master is seen to be grasping and unscrupulous, the servant will imitate his selfish example, disregarding, as far as he can do so with impunity, his master's interest, and seeking only his own ease.

5. Masters are bound to *exercise patience towards the faults and infirmities* of their servants. Proper efforts will do much towards remedying the manifold imperfections of servants ; but much will remain irremediable. Patience then becomes an important duty in our intercourse with them—a duty in which we often lamentably fail. Permit me to suggest a few considerations, which, duly weighed, would satisfy us all that we should exercise, in our dealings with them, a degree of patience far beyond what we usually exhibit. 1. We are ourselves very far from perfection ; and is it reasonable to expect our servants to be better than ourselves ? We need the forbearance and indulgence of our fellow-men towards our own weaknesses and frailties ; and should we not grant to others what we claim largely for ourselves ? And how poorly and despicably do we serve God, who has far stronger claims on our services than we have on those of our fellow-men. Ought we not to exercise towards our servants something like that patience which our heavenly Master is daily exercising towards us, who fail in our duty

with so much stronger motives inducing us to fulfil it? 2. The indulgence of impatience and ill-humor effects no useful purpose. All experience teaches that those who are fretful, dissatisfied, and fault-finding, are not as well served as those who are even-tempered, kind, and forbearing. 3. The indulgence of these feelings effectually destroys our own peace. Just so far as we permit ourselves to be irritated and vexed, we permit ourselves to be made wretched; and surely it is most unwise to indulge in any disposition which will place our happiness completely at the mercy of our dependents. Many persons thus become the victims of the faults of their servants. 4. The comfort of all around us is impaired by our yielding to these feelings. Solomon strongly expresses the annoyance produced by an impatient and fault-finding temper, when he says, "It is better to dwell in the corner of a house-top than with a brawling woman in a wide house." Females are more liable to this evil than men, not from any peculiar weakness of character or infirmity of mind, but from their more constant intercourse with their servants, and chiefly from the nature of the domestic employments which they superintend, involving as they do a great variety of minute and disconnected operations, some of which are almost certain to be overlooked or slightly performed by careless servants, while none of

them can be neglected without detriment to the household, and consequent dissatisfaction to her who is responsible for its welfare. 5. Impatience and fretfulness defeat their own object. Frequent chidings not only wear away the sensibilities of a servant, and render him callous to all rebuke, but they excite a spirit of defiance and a disposition to annoy. 6. The Scriptures expressly forbid the indulgence of impatient, harsh, and fretful feelings towards our servants: "And ye masters, do the same things unto them, *forbearing threatening*; knowing that your Master also is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him." Eph. 6:9. Here while masters are taught to do for their servants the "same things" which the servants had been in the preceding verses enjoined to do unto the masters—that is, to do them all the good they can, remembering the Lord regards it as done to Him—they are expressly prohibited from harsh, tyrannical, and irritating language. Solomon also advises us not to pry curiously into all the misdemeanors of which servants may be guilty, but sometimes wisely to pass as if unheeded what, if noticed, would require animadversion: "Take no heed unto all words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse thee," that is, speak ill of thee; "for oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others." Eccles. 7:21.

6. But it is not sufficient for us to bear patiently with the faults of servants, and refrain from habitual harshness ; it is, further, a master's duty to treat his servants with *positive kindness*. Every servant is one of those "neighbors" whose proper treatment is exemplified by our Saviour's narrative of the conduct of the good Samaritan towards the wounded Jew—he is one of those "neighbors" our treatment of whom must be regulated by that comprehensive law of God which enjoins us to "love thy neighbor as thyself." He is, then, a being whose interests we are bound to regard, whose woes we must seek to alleviate, whose joys we must strive to increase. They constitute, too, that class of our neighbors who have the most strong claim upon our kindness, for *their lot is peculiarly hard*. How many are the privileges and enjoyments bestowed by God in his providence upon us, yet withheld from them. How many strong motives do we possess to incite us to good and withhold us from evil, which they do not enjoy ; and how many and precious means of improvement and usefulness have been granted to us, and denied to them. Ought not the consideration of the difference of our allotments to move our sympathies and draw forth our kindness ? They are God's unfortunate children, whom he has placed under our special care, that by our kindness we might mitigate the severities of their

lot and sweeten their existence. The chief motive which should influence us to deal kindly with them is, "for Christ's sake." Regard for duty, respect for God's command, gratitude to our Saviour who interests himself for them as a part of his redeemed people, all these should combine to form the great principle which should govern our conduct towards them. But there is an inferior motive worth considering, which may also operate to induce us to treat them kindly—*it is to our own interest to do so*. Kindness draws forth such services as harshness can never exact. Servants are human beings just like ourselves, and we know that we serve those most faithfully and heartily who treat us best. Persons often complain of ingratitude; their kindnesses are not appreciated nor repaid, especially by servants. While there is some foundation for this complaint, still it is a general law of human nature, that kindness produces a return of affection and service, and a continued course of good treatment will work a beneficial effect upon almost every disposition. When servants feel that their master's conduct towards them is simply governed by self-interest, and that no real desire for their welfare animates him, they naturally see that their interests are opposed to his, and seek their own at the expense of his. Even his favors they suspect of selfishness, and feel that no gratitude is due for them. But let

them be satisfied, from his course, that he really desires their happiness, and the happy effect will soon be visible in their labors. On this important point we might enlarge would time permit, and illustrate it by a mass of facts. But we can only notice a mistake which often prevents, in a great degree, the effect of a master's benevolent measures. There are some who propose all the favors which they intend to confer, as compensations for services to be rendered. If the servant perform this or that piece of work well, he is to receive such a reward. To some extent, this plan is good; it affords to the servant a stimulus, and secures the quick and faithful discharge of his duty. But favors thus received are often regarded as compensations bargained for, and fairly and fully earned. Servants do not feel that these are *gratuitous kindnesses*; they feel that their master has been repaid. It is well, therefore, to bestow favors that are unpromised and unexpected; they are thus felt to be gratuitous, and are consequently regarded as proofs of good will. Another happy effect of sometimes rewarding their services when there has been no promise given, is, that they are thus made to feel that their conduct is not unnoticed or unappreciated, even when no peculiar motives are presented to stimulate their exertions.

If we would treat our servants aright, we must

not only *act* kindly, but *speak* kindly. Some persons, most unfortunately, contract a tone and manner which prevent their real kindness from being seen and felt. We all recognize the power of an affectionate and pleasant voice. Our looks and tones are the great channels by which our feelings are conveyed to the minds of our fellow-men, servants as well as equals. Kind words are often a cheap means of winning services which no money could buy. The silver tones of a kind voice seldom fail to reach the heart, and if united with patience and perseverance, to secure cheerful and prompt obedience.

7. It is a master's duty to give to his servants *a reasonable and fair compensation for their labor*. "Give unto your servants that which is just and equal." It was a beautiful provision in the law of Moses, which forbade the Jew from muzzling his ox while it was trampling out the grain. Even the dumb beast was not to be tantalized with seeing the fruits of his labor appropriated and carried away by others, while he was hungering for his share. He was not to go unrewarded, while others were fattening on his toils. The man, then, who lives by the sweat of his fellow-creature's brow, ought not to grudge him a full share of the products of his own labor. And we are to remember, that what is "just and equal" to a brute, is not

“just and equal” to a human being. If a master furnishes provender, shelter, and litter sufficient for a beast, and does not overwork him, he performs all that duty and humanity require. But surely more than these are due to the human being who toils for us. He should share with us, not merely in the bare necessaries, but the comforts of life.

8. *The correction of servants when they do amiss*, is part of the duty of a master. While the infliction of punishment is always more or less painful to every feeling mind, we are taught by divine authority, that it is a salutary and often necessary means of preventing evil deeds, as well as of counteracting the effects of such deeds after they have been perpetrated. The good effects of punishment are, however, often destroyed by an impropriety in the mode of its administration. It loses a great portion of its beneficial influence, unless it is accompanied with the impression on the mind of the sufferer, that it is inflicted from a sense of duty. Many persons will punish only when their anger has risen so high as to overcome their natural repugnance to inflicting pain upon a fellow-being; and then their conduct wears to the culprit the appearance, not of discharging a duty, but of merely gratifying a vindictive feeling. While correction of every kind ought to be at-

tended with a clear exhibition of displeasure and moral abhorrence proportioned to the nature of the offence, it ought never to be administered in passion. Admonitions, rebukes, and personal chastisement produce a much better effect, both on children and servants, when inflicted with calmness. Persons often urge that they cannot punish coolly and calmly. This is a mistake; they *can* do it, and it is their *duty* to do it. It is as much the duty of the head of a family to administer justice in his household according to the laws he has established, as it is the duty of a magistrate to execute the laws in a commonwealth. And would it not be considered as an unpardonable weakness in a magistrate, to plead an incapacity for punishing a criminal until he had become excited by passion? We should remember that no one can be successful in making others do *their* duty, who does not first do *his own* duty; no one can hope to govern others, who cannot govern himself. How can we expect that God will sanction and bless correction, unless it is administered in a spirit that he approves? Our correction of every sort ought to be just, but not vindictive—effectual, but not cruel.

9. Masters should enforce upon their servants the duty of *respecting the rite of marriage*. Its neglect is followed by the most pernicious moral

consequences. We should absolutely prohibit them from forming those irregular and temporary unions, which are alike opposed to the commandments of God and to the decency of civilized life. Even the lowest barbarian has some form or ceremony by which he gives a moral sanction to the union of the sexes; how then can we tolerate these unsanctioned, unconsecrated connections between persons living in Christian families, and under the control of Christian guardians? How can we inculcate integrity, faithfulness, and the various Christian virtues upon those whom we permit to live in the open and shameless violation of one of the fundamental laws of Jehovah? And how can we expect to cultivate in them a regard for character, when we permit them to live in a condition which all decent society views with contempt and abhorrence? To convince you of the master's duty on this subject, it is surely not necessary that we should portray the brutalizing effects of a system of licentiousness, and prove the necessity of the marriage rite; it is enough for us to direct your attention to the fact that, if servants are not prohibited from trampling upon the rite which God has instituted as one of the great preservatives of human virtue, he will hold as responsible, not the ignorant servants merely, but the more intelligent masters, who might have

controlled them. By what plea can men defend or justify their power over their fellow-men, unless they use it to restrain them from vice?

10. The application of the principle, "Give unto your servants that which is just and equal," will teach every master his duty *in relation to the sale of servants held in involuntary bondage*. The law of Mohammed, more just and humane, in this respect, than the codes of many of our states, punishes a crime committed by a slave with half the penalty inflicted on a freeman for the same offence, because the slave's inferiority in knowledge and motives to restrain him from crime lessens his responsibility. But our laws often punish the crimes of slaves with a severity altogether *disproportionate to their enormity*, and our moral sense revolts at the idea of permitting their enforcement. In such a case, the sale of a slave with a view to his transportation from the state, that he may thus escape sentence of death, may be a duty of humanity, as he is thus saved from unjust suffering. There are other cases in which the perversity and misconduct of a servant defy our faithful efforts for his reformation, and make it evident that his continuance under our care will be deleterious in its influence upon his fellow-servants, detrimental to our own comfort, and productive of no good to himself. But it is clearly a violation of the prin-

ciple which God lays down for the government of our conduct towards our servants, when we sell them for the purpose of gain, without regard to their welfare. Can we imagine that then we are “giving them that which is just and equal ;” that we are doing to them as we would that they should do unto us? The criminality of this conduct rises to its highest pitch in those cases in which domestic ties are rent asunder by the ruthless hand of the master bent upon gain. A man may stop his ears to the agonizing cry of the wife rudely forced away from her husband and separated for ever ; he may refuse to hear the wailing of the mother for her children torn from her ; but there is a voice to which he must one day listen, the voice of the Eternal pronouncing judgment upon him, for his trampling upon the rights of humanity, and treating his fellow-men as if they were beasts of the field.

Such is a delineation of a master’s duty. The outline might be profitably filled up, did time permit, by many additional proofs, illustrations, and minute specifications ; but every man, for a full knowledge of his duty, must depend in a great degree on the application, by his own understanding, aided by an honest conscience, of the great principles of rectitude to his own peculiar circumstances. You can scarcely fail to arrive at truth, if, in points of inquiry as to duty not specifically

covered by these directions, you shall honestly examine what the great rule of "just and equal" would require.

Many may now perhaps be disposed to say, "If the case of the master be so with his servants, it is not good to have servants." This is precisely similar to what the Jews said to our Saviour, when he explained to them the nature and duties of the marriage-relation: "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry." It would not then be surprising, if, when we represent fairly and correctly a master's duties, many should regard it as assigning to him a hard lot. The Jews had a mistaken view of the nature of marriage, just as many among us have a mistaken view of the nature of servitude. Marriage, according to their conception of it, was mainly designed for the convenience and comfort of the man alone; and the laws and duties of married life they deduced from this erroneous principle. So now, many among us think that God has sanctioned the relation of master and servant simply and mainly for the benefit of the master; and from this erroneous principle they deduce their ideas of a master's duties. But "God is no respecter of persons;" in his sight the servant is as precious as the master; and this relation can have God's sanction only so far as it is designed for the mu-

tual good of master and servant. The master is as much bound to promote the happiness of the servant, as the servant is bound to promote that of the master. This is the true principle, and on this we should act, discharging to our servants all the duties which flow from it. It is a great mistake too, to imagine that we would be gainers, even for this world, by disregarding this principle and neglecting our duties. We see how erroneous was the judgment of the Jews when they objected to the doctrine of the Saviour on marriage, that it rendered the condition of the man so intolerable that he had better not marry. We recognize the Saviour's doctrine as true, and act upon it—no longer granting to man the right to divorce his wife at pleasure, no longer regarding woman as the mere instrument of man's gratification and the slave of his caprices; and what has been the consequence? Is the husband's condition less happy than it was among the Jews? So far is this from being true, that our domestic comfort is greatly increased. By regarding and treating woman as God intended that she should be regarded and treated, she has become a more refined, intelligent, and virtuous companion and help-meet to man. And even so regarding and treating our servants as fellow-beings whose interests we are bound to promote as our own, will

make them more intelligent, more active, more capable, more cheerful, more faithful, more conscientious, and more devoted assistants to us in all the labors in which we employ them. Besides the reward of well-doing, which we shall receive in the pleasing consciousness that we are improving the condition and character of our rational and immortal fellow-beings, who are to stand with us before the same judgment-seat, we shall receive an additional reward in the increased satisfaction of our intercourse with them, and the increased value of their services.

It may again be objected, that if this representation of our duties is correct, then all of us have been, to some degree, deficient in their discharge. This objection, so far from disproving the correctness of our representation, serves rather to confirm it. If I so explained your duties either to God or your neighbor, that any one of you could say with truth, "All this I have done," I would be sure that I had taught you what was false. But our imperfections should neither hinder us from acknowledging our duty, nor operate as an excuse for neglecting it. While we honestly and conscientiously recognize all our duties to our servants, this recognition should humble us under a sense of our past deficiencies, and stimulate us to greater future diligence.

If you thus act, great will be your reward in heaven. Your servants will be something more to you than a source of profit in this world, they will become a source of *blessedness* to you in the *world to come*. You are God's trustees, to whom, in his providence, he commits these souls for their temporal and eternal good. Will you exercise this *trusteeship* faithfully, and receive the promised gracious reward? Or, claiming them as *absolutely yours*, will you *usurp an authority never granted you by God*, and meet his dread displeasure? Remember, that *very soon* you must depart from earth, and stand before that awful tribunal where the slave is equal with his master, and where both alike must receive their doom from a righteous Judge. "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven."

An officer of the Society has contributed \$50 for issuing this treatise.

