





THE  
EVILS OF SLAVERY,  
AND THE  
CURE OF SLAVERY.

THE FIRST PROVED BY THE OPINIONS OF SOUTHERNERS  
THEMSELVES,

THE LAST SHOWN BY HISTORICAL EVIDENCE.

BY MRS. CHILD,

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Let us not betake ourselves to the common arts and stratagems of nations; but fear God, and put away the evil which offends him: and trust not in man, but in the living God; and it shall go well for England.—*William Penn.*

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## SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED BY THE SOUTHERNERS THEMSELVES ON THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY.

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“ Now Naaman was a great man, and honorable ; he was also a mighty man in valor ; *but he was a leper.*”—2 Kings, chap. 5.

### *Sentiments of Patrick Henry.*

“ Is it not amazing, that at a time when the rites of humanity are defined with precision, in a country above all others fond of liberty, that in such an age, and in such a country, we find men professing a religion the most humane and gentle, adopting a principle as repugnant to humanity, as it is inconsistent with the Bible, and destructive to liberty? Believe me, I shall honor the Quakers for their noble efforts to abolish slavery. Every thinking, honest man, rejects it in speculation; yet how few in practice, from conscientious motives. Would any man believe that I am master of *slaves* of my own purchase; I am drawn along by the general inconvenience of living without them. I will not, I cannot justify it. However culpable my conduct, I will so far pay my devoir to virtue, as to own the excellence and rectitude of her precepts, and to lament my own want of conformity to them.”—*Letter of Patrick Henry of Virginia, to Robert Pleasants, of the Society of Friends.*

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### *Sentiments of Jefferson.*

“ The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on one part, and degrading

submission on the other. Our children see this and learn to imitate it. The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives loose to the worst of passions, and thus nursed, educated, and exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. With what execration should the statesman be loaded, who, permitting one half of the citizens to trample on the rights of the other, transforms those into despots, and those into enemies; destroys the morals of one part, and the *amor patriæ* of the other.

“And can the liberties of the nation be thought secure, when we have refused the only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country, when I recollect that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep for ever; that, considering numbers, nature and natural means only, a revolution in the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation is among possible events; that it may become probable by a supernatural interference. The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest.”—*Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, published 1782.*

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In a letter, dated Monticello, 1814, *Mr. Jefferson writes thus in his old age.*

“Dear Sir—Your favor of July 31 was duly received, and read with pleasure. The sentiments breathed through the whole do honor both to the head and heart of the writer. Mine on the subject of the slavery of the negroes have long since been in the possession of the public; and time has only served to give them stronger root. Yet the hour of emancipation is advancing in the march of time. *It will come*; and whether brought on by the generous energy of our own minds, or by the bloody process of St. Domingo, excited and conducted by the power of our present enemy,\* if once stationed permanently with-

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\* It will be recollected, that we were then engaged in war.

in our country, and offering an asylum and alms to the oppressed, is a leaf of our history not yet turned over.

“I am sensible of the partialities with which you have looked towards me, as the person who should undertake this salutary but arduous work. But this, my dear sir, is like bidding old Priam buckle on the armor of Hector, ‘*tremantibus ævo humeri et inutile, ferrum cingi.*’ No, I have overlived the generation with which mutual labors begat mutual confidence and influence. This enterprise is for the young; for those who can follow it up, and bear it through to its consummation. It shall have my prayers, and these are the only weapons of an old man.”

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#### *Sentiments of Governor Randolph.*

“The deplorable error of our ancestors in copying a civil institution from savage Africa, has affixed upon their posterity a depressing burden, which nothing but the extraordinary benefits conferred by our happy climate, could have enabled us to support. We have been far outstripped by States, to whom nature has been far less bountiful. It is painful to consider what might have been, under other circumstances, the amount of general wealth in Virginia, or the whole sum of comfortable subsistence and happiness possessed by all her inhabitants.”  
—*Governor Randolph’s Address to the Legislature of Virginia, in 1820.*

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#### *Sentiments of John Randolph.*

“Virginia is so impoverished by the system of slavery, that the tables will sooner or later be turned, and the slaves will advertise for runaway masters.”—*John Randolph, of Roanoke.*

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#### *Sentiments of Mr. Read.*

“Slavery is an unnatural state, a dark cloud, which obscures half the lustre of our free institutions. I would

hail that day as the most glorious in its dawning, which would behold, with safety to themselves and our citizens, the black population of the United States placed upon the high eminence of equal rights.”—*Mr. Read, of Georgia, in the debate on the Missouri question.*

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#### *Sentiments of Governor Giles.*

Free blacks, when convicted of certain crimes, are sold as slaves. *Governor Giles, in his Address to the Legislature of Virginia, in 1827*, alluding to this custom, says: “Slavery must be admitted to be a punishment of the highest order; and, according to every just rule for the apportionment of punishment to crimes, it would seem that *it ought to be applied only to crimes of the highest order.* It seems but an act of justice to this unfortunate, degraded class of persons, to state that the number of convicts among free colored persons, compared with the white population, is extremely small; and would serve to show, that even this description of our population is less demoralized than is generally supposed.”

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#### *Sentiments of Amos Weaver.*

“What! are thousands of our fellow-creatures within our State, destitute of every real protection afforded them by law, either in their persons or property—without any law to guard their marriage rights, or without the law’s having any knowledge of marriage among them,—for such is the fact with regard to the whole slave population among us,—many of them under the control of cruel and relentless masters, from whom they receive much inhuman abuse—and yet are we told that all this needs no legislative interference? Monstrous, indeed, is the doctrine! But on this subject, we appeal to the virtue and good sense of our countrymen.”—*Oration by Amos Weaver, of Guilford County, North Carolina, delivered in 1829.*



*Sentiments of B. Swain.*

“Is it nothing to us, that seventeen hundred thousand of the people of our country are doomed illegally to the most abject and vile slavery that was ever tolerated on the face of the earth? Are Carolinians deaf to the piercing cries of humanity? Are they insensible to the demands of justice? Let any man of spirit and feeling, for a moment cast his thoughts over the land of slavery—think of the nakedness of some, the hungry yearnings of others, the flowing tears and heaving sighs of parting relations, the wailings of lamentation and wo, the bloody cut of the keen lash, and the frightful scream that rends the very skies,—and all this to gratify ambition, lust, pride, avarice, vanity, and other depraved feelings of the human heart. Too long has our country been unfortunately lulled to sleep, feeding on the golden dreams of superficial politicians, fanciful poets, and anniversary orations. *The worst is not generally known.* Were all the miseries, the horrors of slavery, to burst at once into view, a peal of sevenfold thunder could scarce strike greater alarm. We cannot yet believe the condition of our country so desperate, as to forbid the judicious application of proper remedies.”—*Address of B. Swain, of North Carolina, in 1830.*

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*Sentiments of Henry Clay.*

“In our attempt to adopt gradual emancipation in Kentucky, we were overpowered by numbers, and submitted to the decision of the majority, with the grace which the minority in a republic should ever yield to such a decision. But I have never ceased, and never shall cease to regret a decision, the effects of which have been to place us in the rear of our neighbors, who are exempt from slavery, in the state of agriculture, the progress of manufactures, the advance of improvement, and the general prosperity of society.”—*Henry Clay, of Kentucky.*

*Sentiments of Mr. Faulkner.*

“Slavery, it is admitted, is an evil. It is an institution which presses heavily against the best interests of the State. It banishes free white labor—it exterminates the mechanic—the artisan—the manufacturer. It converts the energy of a community into indolence—its power into imbecility—its efficiency into weakness. Being thus injurious, have we not a right to demand its extermination? Shall society suffer that the slaveholder may continue to gather his *virginal crop* of human flesh? What is his mere pecuniary claim, compared with the great interests of the common weal? Must the country languish and die that the slave-holder may flourish? Shall all interests be subservient to one? Have not the middle classes their rights—rights incompatible with the existence of slavery? If there be one who concurs with the gentleman from Brunswick, in considering the character of this institution harmless, let me request him to compare the condition of the slave-holding portion of this commonwealth—barren, desolate, and seared as it were by the avenging hand of Heaven—with the description which we have of this same country from those who first broke its virgin soil. To what is this change ascribable? Alone to the withering and blasting effects of slavery. To that vice, in the organization of society, by which one half its inhabitants are arrayed in interest and feeling against the other half—to that condition of things, in which half a million of your population can feel no sympathy with society, in the prosperity of which they are forbidden to participate, and no attachment to a government at whose hands they receive nothing but injustice.”—*Mr. Faulkner’s Speech in the Legislature of Virginia, 1832.*

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*Sentiments of Mr. Wirt.*

*Mr. Wirt, of Virginia*, said that “slavery was contrary to the laws of nature and of nations; and that the law of South Carolina concerning seizing colored seamen was unconstitutional.” In his life of Patrick Henry, speaking of the different classes in Virginia, he says, “last and lowest, a *seculum* of beings called overseers—the most

abject, degraded, unprincipled race—always whip in hand to the dons who employ them, and furnishing materials for their pride, insolence, and love of dominion.”

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*Sentiments of Mr. Brodnax.*

“That slavery in Virginia is an evil, and a transcendent evil, it would be more than idle for any human being to doubt or deny. It is a mildew, which has blighted every region it has touched, from the creation of the world. Illustrations from the history of other countries and other times might be instructive; but we have evidence nearer at hand, in the short histories of the different States of this great confederacy, which are impressive in their admonitions, and conclusive in their character.”—*Speech of Mr. Brodnax, in the Virginia Legislature, 1832*

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*Sentiments of Mr. Summers.*

“Sir, the evils of this system cannot be enumerated. It were unnecessary to attempt it. They glare upon us at every step. When the owner looks to his wasted estate, he knows and feels them. When the statesman examines the condition of his country, and finds her moral influence gone, her physical strength diminished, her political power waning, he sees and must confess them. Will gentlemen inform us when this subject will become *less* delicate—when it will be attended with *fewer* difficulties than at present—and at what period we shall be *better* enabled to meet them? Shall we be more adequate to the end proposed, after the resources of the State have been yet longer paralyzed by the withering, desolating influence of our present system? Sir, every year’s delay but augments the difficulties of this great business, and weakens our ability to compass it. Like silly children, we endeavor to postpone the work, which we know must be performed.”—*Speech of Mr. Summers, in the Legislature of Virginia, 1832.*

*Sentiments of Thomas Clay.*

“The present economy of the slave system is to get all you can from the slave, and give in return as little as will barely support him in a working condition. Even where there is not a direct intention to abridge his comforts, they are but little consulted; and seeing his master wholly engrossed by his own advantage, the slave naturally pursues the same selfish course, and when not restrained by higher principle, becomes deceitful and thievish. The master takes no pains to conceal that he takes it for granted the negro will steal and lie? and when the slave is tempted to either, he feels that he has no character to lose.”—*Thomas Clay's Address before the Presbytery of Georgia.*

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*Sentiments of Z. Kingsley.*

*This writer informs his readers that he settled on a plantation in Florida, with about fifty negroes, many of whom he brought from the coast of Africa himself. He is one who wants to regulate the evil—not abolish it.*

“As far as regards the free colored people of the south, the laws are dictated in a spirit of intolerant prejudice, and irresponsible autocracy, holding out to people they nickname free, no reward or premium whatever for being virtuous; nothing to stimulate to industry, or the acquisition of a good name, learning, or refinement; no kind of protection either for person or property. Even their punishments must be corporeal—not excepting the most delicate female, whom industry and virtue alone would place at the head of society in any other country. Liberty is merely nominal, without any constitutional protection. They may be sold to pay partial, exorbitant, and tyrannical taxes, or fines, all which are unconstitutional. Oppression is carried to its greatest extreme, when a mother, of most unexceptionable moral character, going out of her native State on account of ill health, is inexorably punished by perpetual banishment from husband, children, friends, country, and all that is dear to

her.\* As for our laws to regulate slaves, they are all founded upon terror.”

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*Sentiments of President Monroe.*

“We have found that this evil has preyed upon the very vitals of the Union; and has been prejudicial to all the States in which it has existed.”—*James Monroe before the Virginia Convention.*

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*Sentiments of Washington.*

*General Washington, in a letter to Sir John Sinclair,* speaks of the prices of land in Virginia, and particularly in the neighborhood of Mount Vernon. The land there is described as exhausted and miserable—plantations not worth more than four or five dollars an acre, including buildings. He then alludes to the prices of land in Pennsylvania and the free States, which averaged more than twice as much; I think he stated it at sixteen dollars per acre. He assigns as reasons for this mighty difference, first, that foreign emigrants are more inclined to settle in the free States. The second reason I transcribe in his own words:

“Because there are in Pennsylvania, laws for the gradual *abolition of slavery*, which neither Maryland nor Virginia have at present; but which nothing is more certain than that they must have, and at a period not remote.”

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*Sentiments of Mr. Custis, of Virginia.*

“Sir,—The prosperity and aggrandizement of a State, is to be seen in its increase of inhabitants, and consequent progress in industry and wealth. Of the vast tide of emi-

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\* Free colored people, if they go out of the State, for any reason whatsoever, are never allowed to return, lest they should bring back opinions that would make the slaves uneasy.

gration, which now rushes, like a cataract, to the West, not even a trickling rill wends its way to the ancient dominion. Of the multitude of foreigners, who daily seek an asylum and home in the empire of liberty, how many turn their steps to the region of the slave? None. No, not one. There is a malaria in the atmosphere of those regions, which the new comer shuns, as being deleterious to his views and habits. See the wide spreading ruin which the avarice of our ancestral government\* has produced in the south, as witnessed in a sparse population of freemen, deserted habitations, and fields without culture. "Strange to tell, even the wolf, which, driven back long since by the approach of man, now returns, after the lapse of a hundred years, to howl over the desolations of slavery."

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\* Those who seek to get rid of the shame of slavery, by throwing the blame on our English ancestors, ought to remember, that when this government was formed, the Southern States insisted that no restriction should be put on the importation of slaves for twenty years to come!

## HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

CONCERNING THE EFFECTS OF IMMEDIATE EMANCIPATION.

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“Elisha said unto Naaman, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

But Naaman was wroth, and he turned and went away in a rage.

And his servants said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some *great* thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather, then, when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean?

Then he went down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.”—2 *KINGS*, chap. 5.

WHEN the question of immediate abolition was first started in England, the friends of slavery vociferated nothing more loudly, than the danger of universal insurrection and bloodshed; and nothing took stronger hold of the sympathies and conscientious fears of the people, than these repeated assertions. This is precisely the state of things in our own country, at the present time. We all know that it is not according to human nature for men to turn upon their benefactors, and do violence, at the very moment they receive what they have long desired; but we are so repeatedly told, the slaves will murder their masters, if they give them freedom, that we can hardly help believing that, in this peculiar case, the laws of human nature must be reversed. Let us try to divest ourselves of the fierce excitement now abroad in the community, and calmly inquire what is the testimony of history on this important subject.

In June, 1793, a civil war occurred between the aristocrats and republicans of St. Domingo; and the planters called in the aid of Great Britain. The opposing party proclaimed freedom to all slaves, and armed them against the British. It is generally supposed that the abolition of slavery in St. Domingo was in consequence of *insur-*

*rections among the slaves; but this is not true. It was entirely a measure of political expediency.* And what were the consequences of this sudden and universal emancipation? Whoever will take the pains to search the histories of that island, will find the whole colored population remained faithful to the republican party which had given them freedom. The British were defeated, and obliged to evacuate the island. The sea being at that time full of British cruisers, the French had no time to attend to St. Domingo, and the colonists were left to govern themselves. And what was the conduct of the emancipated slaves, under these circumstances? About 600,000 slaves had instantaneously ceased to be property, and were invested with the rights of men; yet there was a decrease of crime, and every thing went on quietly and prosperously. Col. Malenfant, who resided on the island, says, in his historical memoir: "After this public act of emancipation, the negroes remained quiet both in the south and west, and they continued to work upon all the plantations: Even upon those estates which had been abandoned by owners and managers, the negroes continued their labor where there were any agents to guide; and where no white men were left to direct them, they betook themselves to planting provisions. The colony was flourishing. The whites lived happy and in peace upon their estates, and the negroes continued to work for them."

General Lacroix, in his memoirs, speaking of the same period, says: "The colony marched as by enchantment towards its ancient splendor; cultivation prospered; every day produced perceptible proofs of its progress."

This prosperous state of things lasted about eight years; and would probably have continued to this day, had not Buonaparte, at the instigation of the old aristocratic French planters, sent an army to deprive the blacks of the freedom which they had used so well. It was the attempts to restore slavery, that produced all the bloody horrors of St. Domingo. *Emancipation produced the most blessed effects.*

In June, 1794, Victor Hugo, a French republican general, retook the island of Guadaloupe from the British, and immediately proclaimed freedom to all the slaves.



They were 85,000 in number, and the whites only 13,000. *No disasters whatever occurred in consequence of this step.* Seven years after, the supreme council of Guadalupe, in an official document, alluding to the tranquillity that reigned throughout the island, observed: "We shall have the satisfaction of giving an example which will prove that all classes of people may live in perfect harmony with each other, under an administration which secures justice to all classes." In 1802, Buonaparte again reduced this island to slavery, at the cost of about 20,000 negro lives.

On the 10th of October, 1811, the congress of Chili decreed that every child born after that day should be free.

In 1821, the congress of Colombia emancipated all slaves who had borne arms in favor of the republic; and provided for the emancipation in eighteen years of the whole slave population, amounting to 900,000.

In September, 1829, the government of Mexico granted immediate and unqualified freedom to every slave. *In all these cases, not one instance of insurrection or bloodshed has ever been heard of, as the result of emancipation.*

In July, 1823, 30,000 Hottentots in Cape Colony, were emancipated from their long and cruel bondage, and admitted by law to all the rights and privileges of the white colonists. Outrages were predicted, as the inevitable consequence of freeing human creatures so completely brutalized as the poor Hottentots; but all went on peaceably; and as a gentleman facetiously remarked, "Hottentots as they were, they worked better for Mr. *Cash*, than they had ever done for Mr. *Lash*."

In the South African Commercial Advertiser of February, 1831, it is stated: "Three thousand prize negroes have received their freedom; four hundred in one day; but not the least difficulty or disaster occurred. *Servants found masters—masters hired servants—all gained homes, and at night scarcely an idler was to be seen.*—To state that sudden emancipation would create disorder and distress to those you mean to serve, is not reason, but the plea of all men adverse to abolition."

On the 1st of August, 1834, the government of Great Britain emancipated the slaves in all her colonies, of which she had twenty; seventeen in the West Indies, and

three in the East Indies. The measure was not carried in a manner completely satisfactory to the English abolitionists. Historical evidence, and their own knowledge of human nature, led them to the conclusion that immediate and unqualified emancipation was the *safest* for the master, as well as the most just towards the slave. But the West India planters talked so loudly of the dangers of such a step, and of the necessity of time to fit the slaves for freedom, that the government resolved to conciliate them by a sort of compromise. The slaves were to continue to work six years longer without wages, under the name of apprentices; but during this period, they could be punished only by the express orders of magistrates.

The legislatures of the several colonies had a right to dispense with the system of apprenticeship; but Antigua and Bermuda were the only ones that adopted immediate and unconditional emancipation.

Public proclamation of freedom was made on the first of August, and was every where received in joy and peace. Mr. Cobbett, a missionary stationed at Montego Bay, Jamaica, writes thus: "The first of August was a memorable day! Our preaching place was crowded at an early hour. At the close of the services, I read the address of his excellency the governor to the negro population, made several remarks in reference to the change of their condition, and exhorted them to be obedient to their masters and to the powers that be. There was in every countenance an expression of satisfaction, and of gratitude to God and their benefactors. The conduct of the negroes during this eventful period has been such as will raise them, I should think, in the eyes of all their friends."

Mr. Wedlock, of the same place, writes thus on the 13th of August: "The first day of August, a day to which the attention of the wise, the good, and the philanthropic, of other countries besides our own, was directed, has arrived and passed by in the most peaceful and harmonious manner. Such congregations, such attention, such joys and grateful feelings as are depicted in every countenance, I never beheld!—Up to this time, peace and harmony prevail."

The marquis of Sligo, governor of Jamaica, in his

speech to the assembly, after five months' trial of emancipation, declares; "Not the slightest idea of any interruption of tranquillity exists in any quarter; and those preparations which I have felt it my duty to make, might, without the slightest danger, have been dispensed with." In a recent address to the assembly, he states that the crops this year (1835), will fall short only about one sixteenth; and that this slight difference may be accounted for by the unfavorableness of the season.

The enemies of abolition predicted that the crops in Jamaica would perish for want of being gathered; because the negroes could not possibly be induced to work an hour longer than the law or the whip compelled them. But as soon as the planters offered them *wages* for working extra hours, more work was offered than the planters were willing to pay for. Even the low price of a penny an hour, operated like magic upon them, and inspired them to diligence!

The numerical superiority of the negroes in the West Indies is great. In Jamaica there were 331,000 slaves, and only 37,000 whites. By the clumsy apprenticeship system, the old stimulus of the whip was taken away, while the new and better stimulus of wages was not applied. The negroes were aware that if they worked well they should not be paid for it, and that if they worked ill they could not be flogged, as they had formerly been. Yet even under these disadvantageous circumstances, no difficulties occurred except in three of the islands; and even there the difficulties were slight and temporary. Let us inquire candidly how these troubles originated. The act of parliament provided, that the apprentice should work for his master *forty and a half* hours per week, and have the remainder of the time for his own benefit; but it did not provide that while they were apprentices (and of course worked without wages) they should enjoy all the privileges to which they had been accustomed while slaves. The planters availed themselves of this circumstance to put obstructions in the way of abolition; with the hope likewise of coercing the apprentices to form individual contracts to work *fifty* hours in the week, instead of *forty and a half*. While the people had been slaves, they had always been allowed *cooks* to prepare their meals; *nurses* to take care of the little children;

and a person to bring *water* to the gang, during the hot hours; but when they became apprentices, these privileges were taken away. Each slave was obliged to quit his or her work to go to his own cabin (sometimes a great distance) to cook their meals, instead of having them served in the field; water was not allowed them; the aged and infirm, instead of being employed as formerly, to superintend the children in the shade, were driven to labor in the hot sun, and mothers were obliged to toil at the hoe with their infants strapped at their backs. In addition to this, the planters obtained from the governor a new proclamation, requiring the apprentices to labor extra hours for their masters, when they should deem it necessary *in the cultivation, gathering, or manufacture of the crop*, provided they repaid them an equal time "at a convenient season of the year." This was like taking from a New-England farmer the month of July to be repaid in January. Under these petty vexations, and unjust exactions, some of the apprentices stopt work in three of the colonies, out of seventeen. But even in these three, their resistance was merely passive. THE WORST ENEMIES OF ABOLITION HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO SHOW THAT A SINGLE DROP OF BLOOD HAS BEEN SHED, OR A SINGLE PLANTATION FIRED, IN CONSEQUENCE OF EMANCIPATION, IN ALL THE BRITISH WEST INDIES!

In Jamaica they refused to work upon the terms which their masters endeavored to impose. A very small military force was sent into one parish, and but on one occasion. Not a drop of blood was shed on either side.

In Demarara they refused to work on the prescribed terms, and marched about with a flagstaff, as "the ten hour men" have done in many of our cities. But the worst thing they did was to strike a constable with their fists.

In St. Christopher's the resistance was likewise entirely passive. In two weeks the whole trouble was at an end; and it was ascertained that, out of twenty thousand apprentices, only *thirty* were absent from work; and some of these were supposed to be dead in the woods.

One apprentice, executed in Demarara for insubordination, is the only life that has yet been lost in this great experiment! and a few *fisty cuffs* with a constable, on one single occasion, has been the only violence offered

to persons or property, by eight hundred thousand emancipated slaves.

Antigua and Bermuda did not try the apprenticeship system; but *at once* gave the slaves the stimulus of wages. *In those islands not the slightest difficulties have occurred.* The journals of Antigua say :“ The great doubt is solved; and the highest hopes of the negroes’ friends are fulfilled. Thirty thousand men have passed from slavery into freedom, not only without the slightest irregularity, but with the solemn and decorous tranquillity of a Sabbath! ”

In Antigua, there were 2,000 whites, 30,000 slaves, and 4,500 free blacks in 1836.

Antigua and St. Christopher are within gunshot of each other; both are sugar growing colonies; and the proportion of blacks is less in St. Christopher than it is in Antigua: yet the former island has had some difficulty with the *gradual system*, while the quiet of the latter has not been disturbed for one hour by *immediate emancipation*. Do not these facts speak volumes?

There are, in the West Indies, many men (planters, overseers, drivers, and book-keepers), who, from pride, licentiousness, and other motives, do not like a change which takes away from them uncontrolled power over men and women. These individuals try to create difficulties, and exaggerate the report of them. It is much to be regretted that the American press has hitherto preferred their distorted stories, unsubstantiated by a particle of proof, to the well-authenticated evidence of magistrates and missionaries resident on the islands.

Why are the friends of slavery so desirous to make it appear that the British experiment does *not* work well? It is because they are conscious that if it *does* work well, America has no excuse left to screen her from the strong disapprobation of the civilized world.

*Write something to the Rev. S. J. May*  
*with the same title, but with*  
*our countrymen in chains!*

## Our Countrymen in Chains!

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

“The despotism which our fathers could not bear in their native country is expiring, and the sword of justice in her reformed hands has applied its exterminating edge to slavery. Shall the United States,—the free United States,—which could not bear the bonds of a king, cradle the bondage which a king is abolishing? Shall a republic be less free than a monarchy? Shall we, in the vigor and buoyancy of our manhood, be less energetic in righteousness than a kingdom in its age?”—*Dr. Follen's Address.*

“Genius of America! Spirit of our free institutions! where art thou? How art thou fallen, O Lucifer, son of the morning—how art thou fallen from heaven! Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming! The kings of the earth cry out to thee, Aha! Aha! art thou become like unto us?”  
 —*Speech of Rev. S. J. May.*

OUR fellow-countrymen in chains!  
 Slaves—in a land of light and law!  
 Slaves—crouching on the very plains  
 Where rolled the storm of freedom's war!  
 A groan from Eutaw's haunted wood—  
 A wail where Camden's martyrs fell—  
 By every shrine of patriot blood,  
 From Moultrie's wall and Jasper's well!

By storied hill and hallowed grot,  
 By mossy wood and marshy glen,  
 Whence rang of old the rifle shot,  
 And hurrying shout of Marion's men!—  
 The groan of breaking hearts is there—  
 The falling lash—the fetter's clank!  
 Slaves—SLAVES, are breathing in that air  
 Which old De Kalb and Sumpter drank!

What ho!—our countrymen in chains!  
 The whip on woman's shrinking flesh!  
 Our soil yet reddening with the stains,  
 Caught from her scourging, warm and fresh!  
 What! mothers from their children riven!  
 What! God's own image bought and sold!  
 Americans to market driven,  
 And bartered as the brute for gold!

Speak!—Shall their agony of prayer  
 Come thrilling to our hearts in vain? \*  
 To us—whose fathers scorned to bear  
 The paltry menace of a chain;  
 To us—whose boast is loud and long  
 Of holy liberty and light,—  
 Say, shall these writhing slaves of wrong  
 Plead vainly for their plundered right?

What!—Shall we send, with lavish breath,  
 Our sympathies across the wave,  
 Where manhood, on the field of death,  
 Strikes for his freedom, or a grave?—  
 Shall prayers go up—and hymns be sung  
 For Greece, the Moslem fetter spurning—  
 And millions hail, with pen and tongue,  
 Our light on all her altars burning?

Shall Belgium feel, and gallant France,  
 By Vendome's pile and Schoenbrunn's wall,  
 And Poland, gasping on her lance,  
 The impulse of our cheering call!  
 And shall the slave, beneath our eye,  
 Clank o'er *our* fields his hateful chain?  
 And toss his fettered arm on high,  
 And groan for freedom's gift, in vain!

O say, shall Prussia's banner be  
 A refuge for the stricken slave?  
 And shall the Russian serf go free,  
 By Baikal's lake and Neva's wave?  
 And shall the wintry-bosomed Dane  
 Relax the iron hand of pride,  
 And bid his bondmen cast the chain  
 From fettered soul and limb, aside?

Shall every flap of England's flag  
 Proclaim that all around are free,  
 From "farthest Ind" to each blue crag  
 That beetles o'er the Western Sea?

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\* "An inquiry having been made by an honorable gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. ADAMS), whether a paper which he held in his hand, purporting to be a petition from certain slaves, and declaring themselves slaves, came within the order of the House of the 18th of January, and the said paper not having been received by the Speaker, he stated, that in a case so extraordinary and novel, he would take the advice and counsel of the House.

*Resolved*, That this House cannot receive the said petition, without disregarding its own dignity, the rights of a large class of citizens of the South and the West, and the Constitution of the United States.—Adopted. Yeas, 160; nays, 35.

*Resolved*, That slaves do not possess the right of petition secured to the people of the United States by the Constitution.—Adopted. Yeas, 162; nays, 18."  
 —CONGRESS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Feb. 11, 1837.

And shall we scoff at Europe's kings,  
 When Freedom's fire is dim with us,  
 And round our country's altar clings  
 The damning shade of Slavery's curse?

Go—let us ask of Constantine  
 To loose his grasp on Poland's throat,—  
 And beg the lord of Mahmoud's line  
 To spare the struggling Suliote.  
 Will not the scorching answer come,  
 From turbaned Turk, and fiery Russ,—  
 "Go,—loose your fettered slaves at home,  
 Then turn and ask the like of us!"

Just God! and shall we calmly rest,—  
 The Christian's scorn—the heathen's mirth,—  
 Content to live the lingering jest  
 And by-word of a mocking earth?  
 Shall our own glorious land retain  
 That curse, which Europe scorns to bear?  
 Shall our own brethren drag the chain,  
 Which not even Russia's menials wear?

Up, then, in Freedom's manly part,  
 From gray-beard eld to fiery youth,  
 And on the nation's naked heart  
 Scatter the living coals of Truth.  
 Up—while ye slumber, deeper yet  
 The shadow of our fame is growing;  
 Up—while ye pause, our sun may set  
 In blood, around our altars flowing!

O, rouse ye—ere the storm comes forth,—  
 The gathered wrath of God and man,—  
 Like that which wasted Egypt's earth,  
 When hail and fire above it ran.  
 Hear ye no warnings in the air?  
 Feel ye no earthquake underneath?  
 Up—up—why will ye slumber where  
 The sleeper only wakes in death?

Up now for Freedom!—not in strife,  
 Like that your sterner fathers saw;  
 The awful waste of human life,—  
 The glory and the guilt of war;  
 But break the chain—the yoke remove,  
 And smite to earth Oppression's rod,  
 With those mild arms of Truth and Love,  
 Made mighty through the living God!



Prone let the shrine of Moloch sink,  
And leave no traces where it stood;  
Nor longer let its idol drink  
His daily cup of human blood ;  
But rear another altar there,  
To Truth and Love and Mercy given,  
And Freedom's gift and Freedom's prayer  
Shall call an answer down from Heaven !

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