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THE FAMILY AND SLAVERY.

BY A NATIVE OF THE SOUTH-WEST.

THE Family is a divine institution for the maintenance, comfort, and improvement of the human race on earth, and its due preparation for heaven. It is constituted differently from every other association, and is endowed with ample powers for the accomplishment of its high design. Its beginning was in Paradise, and it has proved man's richest source of earthly blessing since his fall. Patriarchal religion was sustained by its instrumentality. By the law of Moses it was assigned an honorable position in the church and the state. In the moral law the Fifth Commandment defines its duties, while the Seventh guards its purity. The New Testament surrounds it with clearer light and more solemn sanctions. All history attests its wide-working power for good or evil. The predicted renovation of the world will be largely secured by it. It is the germ of the church, and the state, and is both sacred and secular in its character. Society has risen to the highest elevation, or sunk to the deepest debasement, as family obligations have been respected or violated.

Universal ante-diluvian degeneracy grew out of vitiated domestic life, and was but a dark premonition of what succeeding ages have experienced from the same potent cause. The family is an ever-flowing fountain of weal or woe. Its responsibilities, toils, joys, sorrows, smiles, tears, hopes, and solitudes, form the chief interest of life. Its pre-eminent pur-

pose, however, is to preserve, diffuse, and perpetuate the saving knowledge of God. "The Lord established a testimony in Jacob, and a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make known to their children, that the generation to come might know them; who should arise and declare them unto their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments."—Ps. 78: 6, 7, 8.

The relations of the family state are those of husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, and master and servant. The first is voluntarily formed, the second and third are derived from it, and all three are perpetual, except as God shall dissolve them. The last is not essential to the family, and unlike the others, has its origin and perpetuity not in nature, but in circumstances. The necessities of society have generally required its existence, but no class of men has been divinely and specifically designated to fill it. The divine law, however, requires that where it exists, the master shall remember that he has a master in heaven, and shall consequently treat the servant as a rational and accountable fellow man, forbearing threatening, showing kindness, and giving him as a creature of God, and not of human law or custom, what is just and equal; and that the servant shall act honestly, faithfully, and with good will. Servitude on such conditions may be greatly advantageous to the parties concerned.

Slavery is involuntary, hereditary, and unrequited servitude. It is the exaction of service without consent, and gives one man a claim to the life-long labor of another, with authority to enforce that claim, if necessary, with severe punishment. It annihilates a man's ownership in himself, and makes him, by force, the property of another. The master in the ex-

ercise of his prerogative, may, and in the great majority of cases must, decide where the slave shall live; in what comfort or discomfort; what he shall eat and wear; where and when and how hardly he shall toil; where he shall go; what connections he may form, and how long they shall last; what amusements he may have; what penalties he shall suffer; what shall be his opportunities for intellectual improvement; where and when, and how long he shall worship, if at all; and what shall be the destiny of his children after him. He can transfer him at will to another, and is liable to have him sold for debt by the law of the land. "A slave," says the Louisiana code, "is in the power of the master to whom he belongs. The master may sell him, dispose of his person, his industry, his labor. He can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire any thing but what must belong to his master." All modern slave laws are formed chiefly for the benefit of the master, and with but secondary reference to the welfare of the slave. They confer almost absolute power without any certain commensurate responsibility. No true analogy can be traced between mastership over slaves, and control over children and apprentices. The right to service in the latter cases is limited and temporary; may readily be abrogated if abused; is granted for educational purposes, and implies no ownership; while the slave code authorizes unchanging bondage, with scarce the shadow of protection and profit to the slave. Slavery was introduced, and still exists, without a divine sanction. It has been suffered to remain like many other great evils, and has been placed in this country under moral influences, which, if not resisted, will terminate it. It existed when the laws of Moses were given, but they secured such privileges to the slave, and placed such restraints on the master, that for a considerable period

before the time of the Savior, it had entirely ceased among the Jewish people; and no one acquainted with the genius of Christianity, doubts for a moment that its universal prevalence will banish the evil from the earth. Slavery has generally originated in violence, and has been maintained on the principle that might makes right. Persons of every rank, station, and color, have thus been enslaved, and however differing at first, have soon been reduced to a common barbarism. The relation of master and slave is not founded in nature, but is the arbitrary creation of human law, and varies in its character according to the circumstances, the caprices, or the cupidity of the masters. It is different in Africa, in Turkey, in Brazil, in Russia, and in the United States, and yet, every where it is identical in the fact, that it divests man of true manhood, and makes him the chattel of another. It is a violation of all natural rights. Man, as created and dependent, derives all his rights from the Creator, and He never would have conferred any one, which, in its exercise, would destroy the substantial equality He has established among men, and spread havoc among his great social arrangements. When He defined man's position to the lower creation, He said: "*Have dominion* over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth;" but when He prescribed his duty toward his fellow man, He said: "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" If slavery is not of divine origin, it can be nothing less than a daring and impious usurpation of power over man, which, sooner or later, will meet with unsparing retribution. Slavery can not be rightly estimated by the conduct of a few kind masters, who are, to a certain extent, involuntarily connected with it, and who would gladly be emancipated from it; nor by the modified character it assumes

under Christian institutions and civilization, which are opposed to it; nor by the fact that Providence has overruled it for some good, as has been the case with other admitted evils; but it must be judged according to the divine standard, by the principles on which it rests, and which give it life and strength. Based on the assumption of a right of property in man, it can not but be pregnant with suffering and wrong. Under the operation of those leading corrupt feelings which it fosters, the love of ease, the love of power, and the love of money, all the possibilities of evil it contains may at any time be developed, and it may fairly be held responsible for them all.

It is the purpose of this tract to trace, in a kind, candid, and truthful manner, the influence of slavery upon the diversified relations and interests of the Family; and to show not only what in some cases it does, but what in any ordinary case it may do. If both proceed from God, a beautiful and helpful concord will be found to exist between them; but if either is the result of depravity, there will be found only discord and every evil work.

1. The Family is founded in marriage, the most intimate, endearing, and sacred union, that can be formed on earth. The nuptial contract, as sanctioned by both divine and human laws, binds the parties to live in a peculiar manner for each other, till they are separated by death. The husband is to honor his wife—to love her as his own body—to love her as Christ loved the Church; and the wife is to devote herself in love, reverence, and ~~cheerful obedience~~, to her husband. The manifestation and reciprocation of sympathy, affection, and kind offices, should be tender, and constant, and secure from all interference. In the lowest point of view, marriage is the most important of earthly arrangements, and from a divine

stand-point appears of transcendent consequence. By it alone the race can be legitimately continued. But corporeal life would scarce be a blessing, were not a higher life connected with it; and man has been invested with capacity for reproduction, chiefly that by it he may multiply the moral image of the Creator. Through this relation both earth and heaven may be peopled with unnumbered myriads who shall forever be blessed in wearing the likeness of God. It is from this and kindred facts, that marriage has been honored by being chosen as the symbol of the holy, beatific, and indissoluble union between the Redeemer and the redeemed. A strict and high regard for its sacredness must lie at the foundation of a well ordered and virtuous state of society. Without it human beings might herd together impelled by instinct and appetite, but sensuality would usurp the domain of reason, and there would be an entire and perpetual absence of endearment, sympathy, courtesy, confidence, and respect. History affords no example of a prosperous, refined, and happy people, where the marriage bond has not been cherished and held inviolable; but its pages are crowded with dark pictures of nations degraded and ruined on account of the wide-spread licentiousness following its neglect and desecration.

Slavery does not recognize marriage. No provision can be made for its formation, celebration, or continuance; and no suitable opportunities afforded for the fulfillment of its engagements. The voluntariness and independence necessary to take the conjugal vow can not belong to slaves. To accord them the ordinary rights and privileges of marriage would impair their value as property, diminish the master's control, and injuriously affect his ownership. A just pro-

tection granted to this relation would do much for the overthrow of slavery. While marriage can not be legalized, the instincts which prompt to it can not be eradicated, but are developed in greater vigor as they lack the guidance of intelligence and moral principle. The consequence is a state of society, if it be not a contradiction to speak of such a thing, without purity, refinement and virtue. No solemn bond unites the parties, no child is born in lawful wedlock. The primary relations of life are dishonored, and the obligations belonging to them are neither understood nor fulfilled. The Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky, in an address to its churches, on this subject, in 1835, spoke thus: "All the marriage that can be allowed among the slaves, is a mere arrangement, voidable at the master's pleasure, and very frequently made void. In this way they are brought to consider the marriage arrangement as a thing not binding, and they act accordingly. Many of them are united without the sham and forceless ceremony which is sometimes used. To use their own phrasology, they 'take up with' each other, and live together as long as suits their convenience or inclination. This wretched system of concubinage inevitably produces the most revolting licentiousness." The first effect of slavery on the family is to take away entirely its divinely established foundation.

2. The unity and integrity of the family are essential to the accomplishment of its beneficent design. Each household should be a little community separated from all others, with its own interests, duties, hopes, trials, and enjoyments. To attain this a man is required to "leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." Husbands are to "dwell with their wives," and wives are to be

“keepers at home, and to guide the house.” “Those persons,” says Baxter, “live contrary to the nature of this relation, who live a great part of their lives asunder. The offices which husband and wife are bound to perform for one another, are such as for the most part suppose their dwelling under the same roof, like the offices of the members of the body for each other, which they can not perform if they are dismembered and divided.” Nor can children be trained in the way they should go, without for a considerable time being kept together. Their affections would remain undeveloped, their wills undisciplined, their tempers ungoverned. But the Family can not be kept unbroken in the condition of slavery. The legitimate exercise of the property right is fatal to its integrity. Inconvenience and loss to the masters would be unavoidable, could it not be dissevered, and its members scattered abroad at pleasure. It is not uncommon for one person to own the husband, another the wife, and yet another the children; or if all are owned by one, his advantage may require that each shall live at a separate place. Some slave families never meet together,—others but in part, and seldom, and then but for a short time. The design of the Creator in forming the domestic ties so tender, so endearing, and so strong, is thoroughly frustrated. Unexpected and distressing separations of husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, are not unfrequently enforced. Slaves may not possess that depth and delicacy of sensibility which comes from a fine and high culture, and may not in this respect suffer as keenly as others of superior advantages; but the cool and barbarous severance of domestic bonds which takes place under the ordinary operations of the slave code, through the necessities or misfortunes of masters who would otherwise be

kind, or the willful wickedness of such as are themselves in bondage to lucre or lust, rasps and wrings such sensibilities as they have, and sometimes crushes the very life out of the heart. It is shocking to every just and generous sentiment of humanity. Those whom, for the noblest purposes, God has joined together, slavery ruthlessly puts asunder without ceremony, compunction, restraint, or fear.

3. The affections, comforts, and hopes, belonging to a well regulated family, are the purest, sweetest, and richest, of an earthly kind. The most sober become cheerful and agreeable amid the kind and gentle ministries of the family circle. The zest and wakeful interest of living center there. To share the glowing anticipations of an ingenuous courtship, the happy festivities of the marriage season, the roseate joy that lights the bridal hours, the honest independence and pleasure that crown the new home of plighted love, the tender interest of the hour when the fountains of parental feeling are first unsealed in the heart; to witness the dawning intelligence of infancy, the cheering development of childhood, the unfolding promise of youth, the realization of parental hope in useful, vigorous manhood; to make provision for those lovingly dependent, and be twice blessed, in imparting it, and beholding the happiness it creates; to dispense, and receive in return a generous hospitality; to interchange the heartfelt courtesies of refined society; to pass the winged hours of morning blessing, and delightful evening intercourse at the fireside; to cultivate those family friendships which enduringly knit souls together; to see the formation of new companionships by the young, and the realization by the old of the oriental blessing, "Thou shalt see thy children's children;" to live and to worship under the exulting hope that the storms of life being past, the family shall

meet unbroken in heaven ; these and kindred things are the blessed ingredients of the cup of life. And when unavoidable trials press heavily, when losses come, or sickness invades the happy circle, when treasures of infantile beauty or riper loveliness and worth are torn from the heart, and the graves of the household begin to multiply, the ministrations of affection, and the manifestation and reciprocation of warm and intelligent sympathy avail to divest trouble of its burden and sorrow of its sting. It occurred to the author, while preparing this tract, to be invited to what is termed a "golden wedding." A venerable couple called their children and grandchildren together, to celebrate with them the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage. They commenced life with few advantages, but under the divine blessing had attained a position of comfort, abundance, and usefulness. A large family, trained in the paths of christian virtue, gathered around them on the happy occasion. Among their sons and sons-in-law, each of the learned professions, as well as several leading departments of business, were represented. All had prospered in this world, and most had secured an inheritance in a better world, when this should be past. The occasion was one of congratulation, gratitude, joy, and hope ; as full of blessing as any mere scene of earth can well be.

To this whole class of purifying, cheering, ennobling, and consoling influences and sentiments, the slave is by his very condition a stranger. His life is a dull, humdrum, plodding course of incessant and unrequited toil, unalleviated by tenderness, and unbrightened by hope. His marriage, if the concubinage in which he lives can be dignified with such a name, is a mere affair of instinct and convenience, formed and existing at the will of another, sanctioned by no law, solemnized with no ceremonies, without

protection, and liable to be broken up at any instant by avarice or caprice. His children are not his own, their chief end of life is to serve others. No tender concern attends their birth, no wakeful solicitude watches over their opening years, no paths of advancement expand before them, no promise gilds their future. Their destiny is to wear out in hard toil. If they live they can not rise above their condition, and when they die no hopes are buried in their graves. The blessings of memory and anticipation which attend a "golden wedding" can never belong to the slave, even if he should so struggle through the hardships of his lot as to reach old age.

4. There is truly "no place like home." There the mind first comes into contact with the external world, and receives the most awakening and indelible impressions, and the habits are formed which in after years bind the soul as with bands of iron. There the duties, courtesies, and charities, are taught and practiced which adorn life with grace and beauty. There the fire of patriotism is kindled. Even the locality acquires a kind of sacredness, and the memories that cling round it become the most undying in the heart. Home is the mold in which society is cast. A people may be great in philosophy, science, art, wealth, and power, but can have neither comfort, freedom, nor moral elevation, without those nurseries of true men—genuine christian homes. By divine direction, each Hebrew family was provided with an independent home, which no misfortunes nor vicissitudes could alienate beyond the year of Jubilee. The Anglo-Saxon legislation has given the citizen a domicile which even the monarch uninvited may not enter. It was the deep and changeless power of home that rang in the ancient battle-cry, "Fight for your altars and your fires." The slave can have neither home

nor home feelings and interests, in any true acceptance of the words. He has a place where he eats, and sleeps, and works, but it is not his own ; nothing beyond dull habit endears it to him ; he can not guard it from invasion, and he may be removed from it at any moment without consent or previous notice. His mind and heart have never been waked up by it. No tender and loving interest clusters around it, and he bears away no deep and warm recollections when he is forced to leave it. Slavery fills a land with families destitute of homes.

5. Home education is a law of nature. The provision for it is ample and efficient in the domestic constitution, and the obligations to it are as untransferable as parentage itself. The training of the child for both present and future existence, begins with its birth, and is carried on by what it sees, hears, and experiences, as well as by what it is directly taught. Children have a divinely-bestowed right to the best and earliest culture at home, and at school as far as circumstances will admit their attendance. Uneducated mind is miseducated. But what education can be given by slave parents, who are themselves thoroughly untaught and ignorant, and who have neither time, means, nor opportunity afforded them to ascertain and discharge their duties? Their circumstances render the home education of their children an impossibility. As for schools, they do not exist, nor could they, in any case, be provided without incurring severe legal penalties. They would be undesirable, unprofitable, and injurious, in the opinion of masters, for those whose main business in life is simple manual labor. By the condition to which slavery reduces the Family, it becomes the most gigantic institution for the promotion of human ignorance. The waste and misapplication of mind which

it produces are most appalling. "Where there is no vision the people perish."

6. The Family is the appointed school for the discipline of the race. Human nature has been so sadly perverted by the fall, that it universally starts wrong. The appetites and passions are excitable and inordinate, and the will is rebellious against just authority. Natural selfishness is averse to the feelings of good neighborhood, and ungoverned self-will to the duties of good citizenship. Men are born despots, and need to be taught the great truths of equality and disinterested love. The young should be disciplined to self-government, to a practical respect for the right of others, and to an obedient regard for the divine law. The Family is intended to be a little model Church and State, where this all-important work is to be done, and the parents are divinely appointed to perform it. They are invested with authority for this purpose; and its wise, consistent, affectionate exercise, accompanied with prayer for the divine blessing, rarely fails of the desired end. The slave code here arrogantly interferes between the parents and their children, depriving the former of their inalienable authority, and substituting that of the master in its place; and taking the latter from the charge of their natural instructors and guardians, and scattering them without care or protection widely abroad. All Family government and discipline are denied the rising generation of slaves, and they grow up lawless and disobedient, requiring to be watched with sleepless vigilance, and fitted for the destiny they attain as subjects for the lash, the prison, and the gallows.

7. The Creator gave the Family its peculiar organization, "that He might seek a godly seed;" Mal. ii: 15; and it stands unrivalled in its advantages for imparting early religious instruction. It furnishes

ready access to the tender youthful mind: the parents to whom the children look with unquestioning confidence and love are constituted the instructors, and every day is the season for instruction. The public services of the sanctuary come in as a quickening auxiliary in this holy work. While divine grace does not confine itself to any description of means, it very largely blesses the faithful labors of the Family circle to the conversion of souls. Slavery counteracts this divine arrangement. It keeps the parents destitute of religious knowledge, and of all reasonable opportunities for obtaining it. They have no such control of themselves or their children that they can assume or fulfil any religious obligation to train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The Synod of Kentucky, in the document already quoted, gives the following unquestionable testimony on this point: "The privileges of the gospel, as enjoyed by the white population of this land, consist in *free access to the Scriptures, a regular gospel ministry, and domestic means of grace*. None of these is to any extent worth naming enjoyed by slaves. 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. 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 order are still farther from ministering to their spiritual wants, as these impart to them not of their knowledge, but of their ignorance; they heat their animal feelings, but do not kindle the flame of intel-

ligent devotion. There are no houses of worship exclusively devoted to the colored population. The galleries of our 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. *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 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 the Bible, and kneeling together before the throne of mercy? Family ordinances of religion are almost unknown amongst the blacks. We do not wish to exaggerate the description of this deplorable condition of our colored population. We know that instances of true piety are frequently found among them, but these instances we know to be awfully disproportionate to their numbers, and to the extent of the means of grace which exist around them." Though written twenty years ago, and for a particular locality, this statement needs but a very slight modification to adapt it to the whole slaveholding portion of our country at the present day. The state of things it describes is the inevitable result of the operation of slavery on the religious welfare of the Family.

8. Slavery removes every safeguard usually thrown around the virtue of chastity. The penalties of the civil law, the intelligent fear of God, a correct estimate of the sanctity of marriage, a sense of self-respect, a regard for the good opinion of society, delicate feelings of honor, a sensitiveness to moral

purity that shrinks at the thought or touch of defilement, are all alike unknown in slave Families; and the consequence is, that the contamination of the most corrupting and ineradicable of all vices very largely pervades them. Nor can it be different while this class of human beings are deprived of their rightful natural position and privileges, and treated as if made only to subserve the wishes of their superiors. A detail of the almost numberless facts which would illustrate this topic, would be painful, alarming, and disgusting.

9. The pursuit of property for right ends, in right measure, and by right means; and its use in arrangements of comfort, convenience, refinement, and benevolence, has a great and constant bearing on the industry, energy, economy, thrift, cultivation, respectability, and general good estate of the Family. Of every favorable influence from this quarter slave Families are deprived. Property themselves, often bought and sold like beasts in the market, they are bound to pass through life content to own in a secondary and uncertain way only what is sufficient to make them profitable in increasing the wealth of others.

10. Other things, such as a position of respectability, a sense of social obligation, familiar intercourse with society, freedom of pursuit, a taste for the fine arts, the attainment of station, office, and power, directly or indirectly exert a modifying and exciting influence on the happiness, improvement, and accomplishment of Families. But all these things are unknown to slave Families. Their highest incitement to duty, and strongest dissuasive from evil, is the fear of the lash. Duty is crowned with no noble rewards, and punishment of the most degrading kind is inflicted under the influence of excited passions, with but small regard to demerit. Slavery is a natural

school for indolence, lying, dishonesty, intemperance, licentiousness, and every low vice. The word slave itself has in every age been a synonym for degradation. Under a free government, and with fair opportunities, it would be difficult to limit domestic advancement, but as a system, slavery has no law of progress, and is defended by impregnable barriers against all attempts at social elevation. The slave code tacitly but decidedly confesses that the condition to which it reduces its victims is so abject, that but one other worse can be found, and that is death. If a free man commit a crime of a lower grade than a capital offence, yet above a misdemeanor or petty larceny, he may, as the consequence, lose his self-respect, impair his reputation, forfeit his property, or have his liberty restrained by imprisonment. If a slave commit an offence exactly similar, his social and civil standing are already so low that but one punishment can be found for him. He has never been taught or permitted to respect himself, and he cannot feel dishonored; he never was in good society, and has no reputation to lose; he has no property with which to pay a fine; imprisonment would but slightly abridge his liberty, for he never was free; corporal punishment would be only what he was constantly threatened with, and what he often received. All that slavery has left by the loss of which he may be punished is life, and contrary to the divine law, for a whole round of inferior offences he suffers death. What possible inducement can families have to rise under such a system? To borrow the energetic language of John Foster, "If a race can by absolute force be reduced to, and long hopelessly kept in a condition in which they are esteemed and treated as having no souls, except just enough for actuating their bodies as machines for the service of their

masters, their whole moral being will subside to that level. Every thing refined, dignified, aspiring, and moral, will evaporate from the degraded mass. And such is very much the fact. Their perceptions are blunted—self-respect is unknown—their thoughts are groveling—their spirits servile—their passions gross—and habits corresponding. In the intermissions of their hard service their resource is childish revelry and coarse licentiousness. Their domestic relations are devoid of sanction and dignity, and can not have the due share of the permanent charities of life. As to their licentiousness, their being property subjects them to aggravation from one special cause, and that is that the corruption is promoted by being shared by their superiors." It is thus that slavery from its very nature crowds human nature down so low, that it becomes scarce a privilege for the slave to be accounted a man.

11. The Sabbath was given to man in the garden of Eden as a twin-sister of blessing with the family, and they have ever since gone hand in hand in their ministry of good. The Sabbath was made for universal man in every aspect of his earthly condition. It is emphatically the poor man's day, and to rob him of it is to take away one of heaven's richest benefactions. Its enlightened and faithful observance is indispensable to the instruction and government of the Family, and without it domestic and social ignorance, disorder and debasement must reign. Slavery is in the highest degree unfavorable to its due observance. If labor is not required on that day, as it may be, by the master, the slaves having given the week to toil, devote the sacred hours to sleep, to low social intercourse, animal indulgence, working for themselves, visiting, trading, and often to gambling, intemperance, and depredating on the property of

others. They know nothing of the importance and obligations of the day, nor as to the proper method of its observance; and all its manifold and inestimable beneficial effects are lost to their Families.

12. It is the glory of God that his government over mind is moral and not physical in its character. He recognizes each man's individuality and responsibility and governs him by motives addressed to his free will. The voluntariness of actions, when tested by a moral standard, is a prime element in their rectitude or their guilt. Involuntary or compulsory service is not acceptable to God. He would have each note of praise and each act of duty a grateful exercise of appreciative freedom. Slavery lays a vandal hand on the very idea of moral government. It makes the will of the master supreme, destroys freedom of choice, removes every inspiring motive to obedience, and proposes as the ultimate constraining reason for it the fear of brute force. God intended the Family to be a mighty instrument for the establishment and extension of his moral government on earth. He rules by authority blended with love. The parent for a time stands before the child in the place of God, and proper Family government prepares the child for intelligent subjection to the Divine government. The latter should be the pattern of the former. The lesson of the child towards the parent is just that of maturer years towards God, "not my will but thine be done." The absence of suitable parental instruction and authority in early years, produces irreligion in subsequent life. In the Family, as a primary school, the foundation of pious obedience must be laid. The utter perversion which slavery works in its constitution, design, and arrangements, makes it a complete nullity in filling its high and glorious mission in this respect.

Want of space forbids further enlargement on these and kindred topics. The germ of all the evils mentioned is in the system, and the development will be rapid or protracted as circumstances favor or retard it. The domestic affections and interests seem to have suffered less than all others by the effects of the fall, and it is on them that slavery lays its most blighting grasp. Its capacity to destroy human happiness and improvement exceeds that of any other despotism ever existing, and proves it intrinsically evil, only evil, and that continually.

But one side however has yet come under review. The Families of slaveholding communities suffer as certainly from this institution as those of the slaves. A retributive Providence often makes a guilty practice itself prolific of evils. In a public address delivered several years since, the Hon. Henry Clay of Kentucky, pronounced slavery to be "A CURSE TO THE MASTER AND A WRONG TO THE SLAVE;" and a long array of facts would show that the curse is as sure and deplorable to the former as the wrong is to the latter. Did space permit, the succeeding propositions, briefly stated, might be elucidated and proved as clearly as any that have claimed attention.

1. By reducing a part of the race to a servile and abject condition, principally for the sake of gain, slavery begets towards them, especially in the minds of the young, feelings of contempt and disgust inconsistent with the divine command to "honor all men," subversive of true philanthropy, and productive of arrogance and pride.

2. By removing the necessity for personal labor, and associating it with degradation, slavery encourages idleness and its consequent vices in families, cuts the sinews of manly enterprize, and prevents a large amount of profitable activity.

3. Holding females as property renders them helpless as to the preservation of purity and honor; and exposes young men particularly to irresistible temptations to licentiousness, poisonous to high moral principle, injurious to character, and ultimately destructive to the soul.

4. The unavoidable necessity for committing young children to the care of slaves as nurses, constitutes them, ignorant and degraded as they are, most efficient educators, particularly at a time when the unwritten part of education—that of the looks, tones, gestures, manners, likes and dislikes—produces the most indelible impressions. Such training gives many a promising twig a hurtful bent from which it never recovers. Vicious principles, corrupt imaginations, and evil feelings become as fixed in the memory as if graven with a pen of iron on the rock for ever.

5. The general working of slavery is fruitful of a large class of unhappy and unchristian tempers, against which every family should be guarded. Rev. Joseph C. Stiles, for many years a resident of different Slave States, and now Secretary of the Southern Aid Society, in a speech before one of the large ecclesiastical bodies of the country, which was published by himself, testified, “In the master, slaveholding insensibly tends to breed indolence, pride, impatience, irritability, hard-heartedness, and arbitrary temper. It tends to make the servant discontented, dishonest, deceitful; to break down every high motive to general industry, as well as to all intellectual and moral culture.” A very different authority, who will certainly not be accused of puritanism, Thomas Jefferson, in his Notes on Virginia, page 139, says, “There must doubtless 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 the 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. 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, can not but be stamped by it with its odious peculiarities. That man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances."

6. The tendency of slavery, in an economic point of view, is to enrich and aggrandize a few families while it impoverishes and degrades many. The poor, who are free, suffer from it as well as the slaves. It produces a condition of society in which free schools, the only means of popular education, are almost impossible. Wealth, and even the facilities of comfortable subsistence, are placed by it beyond the reach of multitudes; and it creates an aristocratic class, without sympathy for the toiling masses. In certain respects it affords very great advantages to a few privileged ones, while, on the other extreme, it makes the prospect of improvement to the many hopeless.

7. Slavery deteriorates true religion and impedes its progress. It ignores the Bible idea of universal brotherhood, and even the peculiar provisions of the gospel by which all believers are made "one in Christ Jesus;" and tends to the establishment of a class religion, a kind of caste in the kingdom of God. The part of the community who are responsible slaveholders furnish but a very small proportion of the members of the churches where slavery exists. Pro-

bably ninety-nine out of every hundred slaveholders are men, and the fact can not be disputed, that they generally neglect religion, and leave it in a great degree to the women, the children, and the slaves.

The analytical course pursued in this investigation as to the effects of slavery on the Family, makes an extended discussion of its consequent bearings on society unnecessary. Whatever impairs the vitality of the heart enfeebles the whole system, whatever paralyzes the head prostrates all the members of the body; whatever poisons the fountain makes every rill from it a channel of death. The Family is the head, the heart, the fountain of society, and it has not a privilege that slavery does not nullify, a right that it does not violate, a single facility for improvement it does not counteract, nor a hope that it does not put out in darkness. Those who impose and those who endure the bondage, alike suffer. No approximation can be made to a safe, happy, and prosperous state of society where this evil-working institution is legalized and defended.

It will not be denied that slaves are in a more favorable condition in this country than in the midst of the deep barbarism of Africa, nor that God has overruled the wickedness that brought them here, so far as to bring them partially under the influence of the gospel, by which some are saved. Full credit should also be awarded to such masters as strive to mitigate the severities, and prevent the atrocities which naturally grow out of the system. But it is strenuously contended that the system is founded on a false moral principle, that its legitimate results are always evil, that it cannot be modified so as ever permanently to work well, and that the welfare of all concerned in it imperatively demands that it should come to an end. It is not "in the main a good system

with incidental abuses." Its fundamental principle is itself an abuse, all the workings of it are abuses, and when all abuses are removed, slavery will cease.

These words are not written in ignorance of the practical difficulties which surround this subject; but with the conviction that there can be no difficulty from which deliverance may not be found by ceaseless prayer for divine direction, combined with vigilance and activity in performing duty, as far as Providence shall make it known.

Slavery is so great a social and political evil because it is radically a moral one. Like consumption, it is a disease of the whole system, incapable of removal by partial and local remedies. It must be expurgated or it will bring on death. It is simply one of the developments of human selfishness, and one of the methods in which one class of men treat another and a weaker class wrong. It must be removed chiefly by moral means. Whatever will destroy selfishness and implant the love of rectitude will remove it, and nothing else can do it. And while no remedy that will in any measure affect the evil should be left untried, the main reliance should always be placed on those never-failing means of reform, when wisely and perseveringly tried, "THE WORD OF GOD AND PRAYER."

N O T I C E.

April, 1857.

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