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AND THE

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GERRIT SMITH

AND THE

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NEW-YORK:

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FIRE-PROOF BUILDINGS.

1860.

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*From the Syracuse Journal.*

## IMPORTANT LIBEL SUITS.

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MESSRS. SEDGWICK, ANDREWS & KENNEDY, of this city, have commenced suits in behalf of GERRIT SMITH against WATTS SHERMAN, ROYAL PHELPS, and S. L. M. BARLOW, of New-York. Fifty thousand dollars are the damages claimed in each case. There are twenty-eight other members of this Democratic Committee. But we have not learned when or whether they also are to be sued. Nor have we learned when nor whether any of the many publishers of the "Manifesto" are also to be sued.

The following correspondence preceded the legal proceedings :

PETERBORO, February 13th, 1860.

WATTS SHERMAN, Esq. : SIR : My father-in-law, Mr. Gerrit Smith, has at length so far waked up from the eclipse of his intellect, as to be able to read and to hear reading. He has just now seen for the first time the

“Manifesto of the New-York Democratic Vigilant Association,” published last October, in which you connect his name with a certain “Central Association” of bloody and horrible purposes.

As Mr. Smith belongs to no Society, has always opposed secret societies, had never before heard of this “Central Association,” and condemns all shedding of human blood, save by Government, he necessarily feels himself to be deeply wronged by you and your associates. He holds you and them responsible for calling in effect upon the people both of the North and South to detest and abhor him.

Mr. Smith wishes to know without any delay whether you and your associates will persist in your libel, or make the unqualified and ample retraction which the case calls for.

Yours, Respectfully,            CHAS. D. MILLER.

P. S.—I do not as yet write to any of the Executive Committee except yourself, Mr. Phelps, and Mr. Barlow.

2d P. S.—It occurs to Mr. Smith that it may have been the “Provisional Government” adopted by the Convention at Chatham, C. W., with which you intended to identify him. But Mr. Smith bids me say to you that this can not relieve you, since never, until within a few weeks, has he heard of that “Government,” or that Convention. What that Government was, he has yet to learn, as he has not heard or read a line of its provisions.

NEW-YORK, February 18th, 1860.

C. D. MILLER, Esq., Peterboro: Sir: I have received your letter of the 13th inst., complaining, on behalf of your father-in-law, of the use made of his name in a publication by the New-York Vigilant Association in October last; and although the publishing of my name to that document was an unwarrantable liberty, for I never signed it, or authorized any one to sign it for me, yet, as I did not contradict it at the time, I can hardly set up this plea now.

I have been disappointed in seeing Mr. Sherman today, but you shall hear from us early next week.

I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

ROYAL PHELPS.

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NEW-YORK, February 22d, 1860.

CHAS. D. MILLER, Esq.: SIR: Yours of the 13th inst. was received by me a few days since; and but for other pressing engagements, would have been answered immediately. Since its receipt, I have looked over carefully the "Manifesto of the Democratic Vigilant Association" to which you refer, and so far as Mr. Gerrit Smith's name is mentioned in connection with the "Central Association," have no hesitation in saying that his statement, that he is not a member of that body, renders it obvious that in this particular the writer of the pamphlet has fallen into an unintentional error. With regard to the letter also inserted in this pamphlet, dated Peterboro, Aug. 29th, 1859, purporting to have been written by Mr. Smith, as you do not allude to it, I suppose *that* is correctly set forth. By



comparing the general tone and sentiment with the constitution of the "Central Association," I think you will see that the writer of that pamphlet might very naturally have fallen into the mistake, (as you assure me that it is a mistake,) of supposing that the writer of one approved of the objects of the other. This was doubtless the view of the writer of this pamphlet, in regard to which particular care was taken to insure accuracy in its statement of facts, and for these the writer of the pamphlet relied somewhat upon the current newspaper articles of the day. After the information now received from you, I am very sorry to learn that Mr. Smith's name was thus connected with the "Central Association" to which you say he did not belong, or that any injustice was done to him in this publication.

Mr. Phelps and Mr. Sherman have each perused this letter, and I am requested by those gentlemen to say they concur in the same, and beg you will receive it also as their reply to the communication you addressed to each of them on the same subject. They also request me to say that it gives them great pleasure to correct the error into which the writer of this pamphlet has fallen in regard to Mr. Smith, as, however much they differ from the sentiments held by him as expressed in the "Jerry Rescue" letter, they respect the boldness and personal integrity of Mr. SMITH, and desire to do him full justice. (1)

Yours very truly,

SAMUEL L. M. BARLOW.

PETERBORO, February 26th, 1860.

S. L. M. BARLOW, ESQ.: SIR: I have your letter of 22d inst. Mr. Smith desires me to say that his attention was called at the same time to all the references to himself in your "Manifesto." That he complained of but one, was by no means because he acquiesced in the others. Compared with that one, the others are of no importance. That one is a sheer fabrication. Of all in it that you attribute to him he had done nothing. But in the other references, your responsibility is only for your opinions of what he confesses he had done.

It is true that Mr. Smith did at the close of his long letter to Mr. Thomas on other subjects, (dated 27th August,) assert the probability of servile insurrections, and the possibility of their success, as reasons why the people should, at the ballot-box, put an end to slavery. (2) But, pray, what responsible connection is there between this and the "Central Association," or the sad occurrence at Harper's Ferry? The like thing he did in scores of meetings, in his tour through this State in 1858; and never was he more full and faithful at this point than in his speech on the Nebraska Bill. (3) (See pages 200, etc., of the volume of his Congressional Speeches.) In fact, it is for more than a quarter of a century that he has been continually testifying that unless the American people hasten to put away slavery peacefully, it will go out in blood. His only regret in respect to such testimony is, that it has not availed to persuade, or, if you prefer, to *frighten* the people, both of the North and the South, into his own ~~desire~~

and abiding belief that slavery will die a violent death unless speedily put to a peaceful one. As to Harper's Ferry, Mr. Smith is not aware that he had seen or heard the name of that village, or thought of itself or its name, for years immediately preceding the scene of violence there last October.

Mr. Smith readily admits that his letter to John Brown in your "Manifesto" does not exaggerate his love and admiration of the man, whom, during the many years of his intimate relations with him, both in business and friendship, he was accustomed to regard as unsurpassed, for truthfulness, disinterestedness, and a noble and sublime spirit. No wonder that, regarding him in this light, Mr. Smith did, from the time Capt. Brown started for Kansas, in the spring of 1855, put money into his hand whenever he opened it for money. No wonder, that during the last four years of Capt. Brown's life, Mr. Smith sent very many bank-drafts to him, and to names which the Captain furnished. Whether his call was for fifty dollars or for two hundred and fifty, was all the same. It was never refused. I scarcely need add that no one feels deeper sorrow than does Mr. Smith, that his precious, nay idolized friend, was led into the mistake of shedding blood in his last attempt to help slaves get free. Indeed, it was that mistake which completed the prostration of the miserable health of Mr. Smith's body and brain. What little strength the most obstinate dyspepsia, following up typhoid fever and dropsy, had left him, was swept away by the horrible news from Virginia. You put your own assumed and entirely unauthorized interpre-

tation upon Mr. Smith's use of the words "Kansas work." What he meant by these words is what Capt. Brown, in his public meeting, held in this village a few weeks before the date of Mr. Smith's letter, described as his latest "Kansas work,"—namely, the removing of slaves without violence to a land where they can be free.

To return to your letter : I hardly need say that it is unsatisfactory to Mr. Smith. It evidently was not intended to be satisfactory to him. It adds studied insults to the cruel and immeasurable wrongs you had previously done him. You had done what you could to blacken his reputation ; and now, when arraigned for it, the whole extent of your concession is, that he shall have the privilege of wiping off the blacking if he can. It is as if you had called your innocent fellow-man a cut-throat, and then, wiping your mouth, had told him that you would retract the bad name, if only he would consent to degrade himself so far as to deny that the bad name fits him. In the depths of your malice—a malice unmitigated, as your own letter shows, by the least semblance, and scarcely by the least pretense, of a particle of evidence to justify your accusation—you did him all the injury you could ; and now, when called on to repair it, you send him a letter which but deepens it. I need not characterize that letter. It characterizes itself. There is not a right-minded man, North or South, but would pronounce your treatment of Mr. Smith to be base, infamous, and wicked to the last degree—and this, too, according to your own presentation of the case in your own letter. Let your

Committee think of their deliberate and enormous crime against Mr. Smith, and then sleep over it if they can. When he was within forty-eight hours of death, in the judgment of the physicians into whose hands he then passed; and when he knew not one person from another; and when his family were too much afflicted to read the newspapers—that Committee was busy, with Satanic industry and Satanic venom, in circulating over the whole land a falsehood of their own coinage, that could not have failed to fill with the hatred and loathing of him ten thousand hearts, both North and South, that had before loved and honored him.

Mr. Smith is not unmindful that you were moved to defame him by party rather than personal objects; and he confesses that he has no sympathy with the Republican party. He will not greatly deplore the advantages you may gain over it. But he must protest against your gaining them at his expense—especially at so great expense as having the most atrocious and injurious falsehoods told of himself. Mr. Smith is an Abolitionist, and not, as you would have it believed, a Republican. The odium of his principles belongs all to himself; and it is not right that the Republican party should suffer at all from it. But although Mr. Smith is an Abolitionist, he has friends and relatives both at the North and South. Moreover, he thinks quite as highly of Southern as of Northern character. (4) I add, that although he has purchased the freedom of many slaves, and not a few of them within two or three hours' drive of Harper's Ferry, and that although

he is a very willing contributor to "Underground Railroads," (5) he would nevertheless not have any slave seek his freedom at the expense of killing his master. He has always said that he would rather remain a slave for life than get his liberty by bloodshed.

Respectfully yours,            CHAS. D. MILLER.

## A P P E N D I X .

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(1) "CORRECT the error!" Rather a mild phrase, considering that the "error" is no less than committing wholesale murder upon Mr. Smith's reputation; outlawing him, and inviting his assassination.

There is an apparent concession at one point in this letter. It is only apparent, however. *The traducers will retract if the traduced will purge himself and declare his innocence.* In other words, they will consent to condition their retraction on his infinite degradation of himself. But what would such a retraction be worth? It would not so much as prove that the traducers themselves believed in the truth of the denial made by the traduced. It would prove no more than that they were willing, laughing in their sleeves, to encourage him to sink himself into the making of it. Another reason for saying that the concession is only an



apparent one, is that the traducers are insolent enough to tell Mr. Smith, that if he is not guilty of the charge of which he complains, he has, nevertheless, shown himself to be so wicked in another matter as to justify the presumption of his being involved in this also. The leading object of Mr. Barlow's Letter is to show that Mr. Smith is, notwithstanding all, the guilty and base, and the Vigilant Association the innocent and honorable party!

(2) This letter is much garbled and misrepresented. Although written when neither his brain nor his body was in a condition to justify the use of his pen, there is, nevertheless, nothing in either its intellectual or moral character that the friends of Mr. Smith have the least reason to be ashamed of.

(3) The following is what Mr. Smith says in this Speech on Insurrections :

"Let me not be misunderstood. Let me not be supposed to fear that American slavery will not come to an end. My fear is, that it will not be brought to an end by Governments. I have no fear that it will not be abolished. It will be abolished, and at no distant day. If the Government fail to abolish it, it will abolish itself. The colored people of this nation, bond and free,



number four millions, and are multiplying rapidly. They are all victims of slavery; for if the free are not in the *umbra*, they are, nevertheless, in the *penumbra* of slavery. Hence, then, as well as by identity of race, they are bound together by the strongest sympathy. Moreover, if not carried along as rapidly as others, nevertheless they are carried along in the general progressive knowledge of human rights. Such being the case, it is not to be supposed that they can be held in their present condition for ages longer. They will deliver themselves, if they are not delivered. He must be blind to history, to philosophy, to the nature of man, who can suppose that such a system as American slavery can have a long life, even in circumstances most favorable to its continuance. In the most benighted portions of the earth, the victims of such a system would, in process of time, come to such a sense of their wrongs and their power also, as to rise up and throw off the system. But that here such a system must be hurried to its end is certain. For here it is entirely out of harmony with all the institutions around it, and with all the professions of those who uphold it. Here it is continually pressed upon by ten thousand influences adverse to its existence. Nothing so much as American slavery stands in the way of the progress of the age. A little time longer, and it must yield to this progress, and be numbered with the things that were. The only question is, whether it shall die a peaceful or a violent death—whether it shall quietly recede before advancing truth or resist unto blood.

“God forbid that American slavery should come to a violent end. I hold with O’Connell, that no revolution is worth the shedding of blood. A violent end to American slavery would constitute one of the bloodiest chapters in all the book of time. It would be such a reckoning for deep and damning wrongs, such an outbursting of smothered and pent-up revenge, as living man has never seen. Can this catastrophe be averted? Perhaps it can not. Perhaps God will not let off this superlatively wicked nation on any easier terms than a servile war—a war, we must remember, that will be very like to bring within its wide sweep the whole black population of this continent and the neighboring islands—a population already numbering some ten or twelve millions. Perhaps, since we would be a nation of oppressors, He will let the oppressed smite the oppressors. Perhaps, since we would be a bloody nation, He will give us ‘blood even unto the horse bridles.’ There will be no such catastrophe, however, if the North and South, equal sinners in the matter of slavery, shall hasten to mingle the tears of their penitence; to say from the heart, ‘We are verily guilty concerning our brother;’ and to join their hands in putting away their joint and unsurpassed sin.”

(4) Mr. Smith is often censured by his fellow-abolitionists for being on as social and friendly terms with slaveholders as with non-slaveholders. Mr. Smith makes great allowance for a false education. Hence, he is charitable in his constructions of the slaveholder’s character.

and hence, too, he feels that there may be points where, in turn, his own character needs to be charitably interpreted by the slaveholder. Mr. Smith believes slavery to be the superlative piracy. Nevertheless he can love and honor a slaveholder, since there is many a one who sincerely believes his slaveholding relation to be not only not piratical, but innocent; not only innocent, but emphatically called for and meritorious.

Moreover, if any thing more is needed to account for Mr. Smith's terms with slaveholders, is it not supplied by the facts that his parents were slaveholders until after he reached manhood? that he himself married a slaveholder, and that he has many friends and relatives among slaveholders?

At the Wisconsin State Anti-Slavery Convention, held at Milwaukee, in June, 1857, Mr. Smith addressed a very large audience, and, speaking of the slaveholders of the South, said:

“That the slaveholder is, to a large extent, unconscious of the wickedness of his relation, is beyond controversy. Deplorable, however, as is this unconscionness, it happily leaves room in him for goodness. Virtues the slaveholder can certainly have. Washington was a slaveholder, and strikingly were the nobler virtues grouped in him. We must dismiss our pre-

judices against the slaveholder, and do him full justice. In innumerable instances is he graced with beautiful traits of character. Of course, this could not be, did he know the wickedness of his relation. Were he to know that, and yet to continue in the relation—to see his sin and yet to cling to it—his whole soul would be so debased that nothing virtuous, nothing generous could spring up or live in it. Unconsciousness of his wrong explains the possibility of his goodness.

“That the slaveholder should persist in remaining a slaveholder ought not to surprise us; nor ought we to regard him as preëminently wicked for such persistence. Think how rarely, even among ourselves, a man becomes, in the full and emphatic sense of the word, an Abolitionist. All over the world a new education is needed—an education into a simple, honest love of manhood, and into a deep and abiding revêrence for it. Hitherto, at the North as well as at the South, our schools and churches have not been such as to impress men with the dignity and grandeur of their common nature. In every part of our country the work is still undone of bringing men to believe ‘That the one sole sacred thing beneath the cope of heaven is MAN!’

“Open the eyes of the slaveholder to the greatness and glory of man—even of the most bruised and battered specimen of man—and he is at once an Abolitionist. The like discovery can alone transform the non slaveholder into an Abolitionist. All those before whose heaven-anointed vision stand revealed the divine image and the moral sublimity of man—all those and

none others are Abolitionists. As impossible would it be for him who is blessed with this revelation to oppress or despise his brother as to pour contempt upon the pyramids among the works of men, or upon Mount Blanc among the works of God."

(5) Mr. Smith is not at all anxious to have the fact concealed that in this matter of communicating with slaves and helping them out of slavery, he is in *principle*, and had he been in other circumstances and callings, would probably have been in *practice* also, a very old and a very great offender. The first Address from the Abolitionists to the Slaves was written by him, and at his own sole instance. It was presented to a New-York State Abolition Convention in January, 1842, and adopted without alteration.

The following is a precise copy of this Address :

AFFLICTED BRETHREN :

The doctrine obtains almost universally, that the friends of the slave have no right to communicate with him—no right to counsel and comfort him. We have ourselves, partially at least, acquiesced in this time-hallowed delusion: and now, that God has opened our eyes to our great and guilty error, we feel impelled to make public confession of it; to vindicate publicly our duty to be your advisers, comforters, and helpers, and to enter upon the discharge of that duty without delay.



Why do abolitionists concede that their labors for the slave must be expended directly upon his master ; and that they are to seek to improve the condition of the one, only through favorable changes wrought in the mind of the other ? Is it not because they are not yet entirely disabused of the fallacy, that slavery is a legitimate institution ? that it has rights ? that it creates rights in the slaveholder, and destroys rights in the slave ? Were they, as they should do, to regard slavery in the light of a sheer usurpation, and none the less such for the hoariness of the abomination, they would have as little respect for the protest of the man-stealer against the direct agency of others upon his stolen property, as they would for the protest of the horse-stealer against a similar liberty with his stolen property. With a vision so clear, they would no more acknowledge a possible acquisition or loss of rights by theft in the one case, than in the other. The same rights which the slave had before he "fell among thieves," he has now ; and amongst them is his right to all the words of consolation, encouragement, and advice, which his fellow-men can convey to him.

To make the abolitionist most odious, he is charged with the supposedly heinous and almost matchless offense of communicating with the slave ; and the abolitionist, instead of insisting on the right to do so, and instead of publicly lamenting the great difficulties in the way of practising the right, impliedly disclaims it, by informing his accusers, that the abolition doctrine is to address the master, and not the slave. No slaveholding sophistry and blustering could obtain

such a disclaimer from Paul. That heaven-directed Apostle not only himself communicated with the slave on the subject of his slavery, but directed others to do so. He declared it to be as well the duty of Timothy and Titus, as of himself; and far was he from conditioning the duty on the consent of the master. Paul carried out, more fully and fearlessly than the modern abolitionist, the doctrine, that the slave is a man, and not a chattel. He wrote to slaves, and in doing so, implied not only that they are beings to be reasoned with, but that it is their duty and therefore right to read the Scriptures, of which his writings to them constitute a part. Indeed, he expressly commands them to read his epistles. That he did not acknowledge the rightfulness of subjecting one man absolutely to the will of another man, is manifest from his sayings to slaves: "Be not ye servants to men." This injunction forbids their rendering any service incompatible with the claims of God; and forbids that they should suffer even their masters to invade the sacred precincts of conscience.

Although much has been gained by the bold positions that abolitionists have taken, much also has been lost by their timidly hesitating to take other positions, which, if bolder, are not less truthful or advantageous. When the abolitionists first demanded that the Amistad captives should be set free, few were found to respond to the justice of a demand in which our whole nation now acquiesces. The Northern press, with few exceptions, pronounces the recent insurrection on board of the Creole to be justifiable and

heroic. But had this insurrection occurred before that on board of the *Amistad*, scarcely any other than an abolition newspaper would have failed to denounce and stigmatize it. No less extensive conquests of public opinion will be achieved by the future instances of our intrepidity. Let abolitionists fully and solemnly utter the doctrine, that they are bound to enter into and maintain all practicable communications with the slave, and the candid and intelligent will not only respond to it, but ere they are aware, they will have been carried along by its trains of consequences and influences to the conviction, that the abolitionist has a perfect moral right to go into the South, and use his intelligence to promote the escape of ignorant and imbruted slaves from their prison-house. The motto of abolitionists, as well as of our Commonwealth, should be, "HIGHER;" and they should feel, that, unless they are continually rising higher and higher in their bold and righteous claims, all the past attainments of their cause are left unsure.

Having vindicated the right of abolitionists to address you, we will very briefly enumerate some of the things which they are doing for you, and also some of the things which you should do, and some of the things which you should not do for yourselves.

First. We ask the God of the oppressed to have mercy on you and deliver you.

Second. We ask our National and State Legisla-



tures to exert all their respective Constitutional power for the overthrow of slavery.

Third. We deny, that any but an anti-slavery man has a view of the Christian scheme so large and just as to fit him to be a preacher of the Gospel.

Fourth. We deny, that any but an anti-slavery man is a republican, or fit to make laws for republicans.

Fifth. The arguments to justify our course are to be read in the innumerable pamphlets and scores of newspapers which we publish; and are to be heard from the lips of lecturers, amongst whom are men eminent for learning, logic, and eloquence.

And now with respect to your own duties. Woful as is slavery, and desirable as is liberty, we entreat you to endure the former, rather than take a violent and bloody hold of the latter. Such manifestly, was the teaching of Paul to the slaves of his time. Whatever was his, the reason for our similar teaching is, that recourse to violence and bloodshed for the termination of slavery, is very likely, in the judgment of a large proportion of us, to result in the confirmation and protraction of the evil. There are, it is true, some persons in our ranks who are opposed to the taking of human life in any circumstances; and whose doctrine it is, that, however certain might be your success, it would be sinful for you to undertake to fight your way to liberty. But the great majority of abolitionists justify their forefathers' bloody resist-

ance to oppression, and can, therefore, dissuade you from such resistance to a ten thousand-fold greater oppression, not on the high ground of absolute morality, but on the comparatively low one of expediency. And now, after repeating to you, that some abolitionists believe the taking of human life, under whatever provocations, to be sin, and that others are convinced that your insurrection would result in naught but evil to yourselves, to your oppressors and the innocent ones bound up with them, we add, that it is on the condition that you shall not stain it with blood, that you will be entitled to expect that we shall continue to advocate your cause unitedly and hopefully. It is about ten years since the anti-slavery movement in this country began. During all this time, there has been no servile insurrection at the South. Whilst we rejoice in the strong probability, that this remarkable forbearance of the swelling numbers of the slaves is owing to their reliance on the philanthropic efforts in their behalf, we tremble, lest, discouraged by the tardy results of these efforts, they should extinguish their waning hopes in bloody despair.

Do not infer, from what we have said against violent attempts to recover your freedom, that we object to your availing yourselves of any feasible, peaceable mode to accomplish it. We but concur with the great Apostle, when we say : "If thou mayest be free, use it rather." Although to run away from slavery is, slaveholders being judges, the most black-hearted ingratitude, and although the adviser to such a requital

of the unequal loving-kindness of a slaveholding master, is pronounced by the same tribunal to be indelibly disgraced and ineffably mean, we nevertheless, call on every slave who has the reasonable prospect of being able to run away from slavery, to make the experiment.

We rejoice, with all our hearts, in the rapid multiplication of escapes from the house of bondage. There are now a thousand a year, a rate more than five times as great as that before the anti-slavery effort. The fugitive need feel little apprehension after he has entered a free State. Seven years ago, a great majority of the people in the border free States were in favor of replunging into slavery their poor, scarred, emaciated, trembling brother who had fled from its horrors. But now, under the influence of anti-slavery lessons, nineteen twentieths of them have come to be ashamed of and to revolt at such monstrous inhumanity. We add, that the fugitive slave may safely continue in some of the free States — especially in those where a jury passes on the question, whether “service or labor may be due” from a man, merely because he has had the misfortune to fall into the hands of kidnapers and be reduced to slavery. We leave him, however, to his own free choice between taking up his abode with us and in the British dominions. If he prefer the latter, we will gladly furnish him with facilities for realizing his preference. The abolitionist knows no more grateful employment than that of carrying the dog and rifle-hunted slave to Canada.

It may be well to say here, that it has often occurred to us, that those inhabitants of the South who pity the slave would render him an inestimable service by supplying him with a pocket-compass. Could every slave who encounters the appalling perils of flight from bondage have access to this little and cheap but unerring guide, he might dispense with the shining of the North star. An occasional match-light to show him the needle of his compass would suffice for his direction in the darkest night.

This is also the place for saying a few words to you on the subject of theft. We are aware that an almost irresistible tendency of slavery is to make thieves of its victims. But we entreat you not to steal. "Not purloining" is an apostolic injunction on slaves, as well as other servants. Let all your toil go unrequited, rather than to seek an equivalent, at the expense of trampling on conscience, and polluting the soul by violating a Divine command. "Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee." In your poorest estate, you will still be infinitely better off than they who "rob the poor, because he is poor;" "for the Lord will spoil the soul of those that spoiled them." Do not, however, suppose that we forbid your innocent yieldings to necessity. We are aware of the dreadful straits to which some of you are at times reduced; and God forbid that we should tell you to starve or freeze when relief is possible. In those straits, you have the permission of Him who says that "the life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment," to count as your own



that of which you stand in perishing need. And when, too, you are escaping from the matchlessly horrible Bastile, take all along your route, in the free as well as the slave State, so far as is absolutely essential to your escape, the horse, the boat, the food, the clothing, which you require, and feel no more compunction for the justifiable appropriation than does the drowning man for possessing himself of the plank that floats in his way.

But we proceed to offer you our advice on another point. We do not wonder that slave-ships witness thousands of cases of suicide. We do not wonder that so many of the slaves of the South lay violent hands on themselves and on their little ones who inherit the frightful doom of slavery. But the heaviest load of life which the malignity and ingenuity of oppressors can devise, is to be borne patiently. Least of all, is it to be thrown off by the black crimes of self-destruction and murder. Only trust in God, beloved brethren, and you will soon be where you will "hear not the voice of the oppressor," and where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

Cherish no vindictive or unkind feelings toward your oppressors. Early and late, and with all possible cheerfulness, yield them your unrecompensed toil. Submit to stripes and to every exaction which you can submit to without sin. Your consent to violate God's law, let no bribes, nor menaces, nor sufferings, be able to obtain.

*If you would have Him who hears "the sighing of*

the prisoner" grant you a speedy deliverance, then pray earnestly and perseveringly to Him for yourselves and your oppressors.

Have no confidence in pro-slavery preachers. Those sham ministers of the Gospel, whether at the North or South, who dare not rebuke oppression, would barter away your souls for one smile of the proud tyrants on whom they fawn. Reject their teachings with holy indignation; and God's Spirit will supply their place with His own perfect lessons of truth.

Perilous as it is, you should, nevertheless, snatch all your little opportunities to learn to read. The art of reading is an abundant recompense for the many stripes it may have cost you to acquire it. The slave who has learned to read a map, has already conquered half the difficulty in getting to Canada; and the slave, who has learned to read the Bible, can learn the way to heaven. Have no conscience against violating the inexpressibly wicked law which forbids you to read it; nor indeed against violating any other slaveholding law. Slaveholders are but pirates, and the laws which piracy enacts, whether upon land or sea, are not entitled to trammel the consciences of its victims.

We shall get as many copies of this Address as we can into the hands of your white friends in the slave States. To these, as also to the few (alas, how few!) of the colored people of the South, who, some by permission, and some by stealth, have obtained the art of reading, we look to acquaint you with its contents. Communications of a similar design — that of enlight-

ening and comforting you — will probably be made from time to time hereafter. We close the present one with a brief reference to a few of the facts which argue the speedy overthrow of slavery in the United States.

There are now but two nations in all Continental America that uphold slavery. These are our own and Brazil. In the West-Indies, slavery has received its death-blow, and will expire ere the close of another five years. The literature of Europe — and especially the America-swaying literature of England — is well imbued with hostility to slavery. Texas will be speedily reënnexed to anti-slavery Mexico, unless the favor of European nations prevent it; and that favor she will enjoy on no less condition than that of following the fashion of the times, and running up the abolition flag.

The South would quickly give up slavery were she deprived of her English market for cotton, and her Northern market for sugar. But India will soon enable England to dispense with blood-stained cotton; and Northern conscience is fast coming to revolt at the consumption of blood-stained sugar.

The principles of abolition have already struck their roots deep in the genial soil of the free States of our Union; and even at the South, abolitionists are multiplying rapidly. The idea that a pro-slavery man is fit to preach to Christians, and that a pro-slavery man is fit to legislate for republicans, is becoming exceedingly abhorrent and ludicrous all over the North;

and this idea is too absurd to enjoy a greatly prolonged favor, even at the South.

Wounded, writhing, slavery still cries: "Let me alone—let me alone." But the people will not let it alone; and such providences as the insurrections on board of the *Amistad* and *Creole*, show that God will not let it alone. His decree has gone forth, that slavery shall continue to be tortured, even unto death. "Lift up your heads," then, brethren, "for your redemption draweth nigh."





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