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REMARKS

ON

[“SLAVERY.”]

BY

WILLIAM E. CHANNING.”

(First published in the Boston Atlas, in a series of Numbers.)

—————“Constant experience shews us that every man invested with power is apt to abuse it ; he pushes on till he comes to something that limits him. Is it not strange, though true, to say, *that virtue itself has need of limits ?*”

MONTESQUIEU'S SPIRIT OF LAWS.



BOSTON:
JOHN H. EASTBURN, PRINTER,
No. 18 State Street.

1836.

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REMARKS.

SLAVERY in the United States has long been a subject of speculation. Eminent men who have ceased from the earth, expressed their regrets that such an evil existed, but no one among them suggested a remedy. Colonization was instituted by slave-owners, and received some support in non-slaveholding states. Within the last ten years, abolition societies have been formed, *where slavery does not exist*. Agitators have been retained, and paid, by these societies to go from town to town, and gather assemblies of some men, and many women and children, to listen to their inflammatory harangues on the miseries of the blacks, and "the horrible sin" of slavery. In some assemblies *aliens* have made a conspicuous figure. Some who speak the language of the country in such a manner as to show, in every accent, their foreign origin, have come here to teach us our duties; and one, who appears to have been followed by a fame near akin to infamy. The Americans have to learn a lesson of no light importance to their future welfare; and that is, the folly of receiving and putting into office, civil and political, *aliens* who may have found a residence in their native land full of peril, or who may have consulted personal safety in flying from it.—At this moment a displaced alien-president of one of our colleges, is petitioning Congress to restore to him a fine, paid on conviction for a seditious libel.—The framers of our constitution are not to be blamed for not foreseeing the immeasurable evils which arise from naturalization of foreigners. Their descendants will suffer to the full extent of finding themselves a *conquered people*, if means are not devised to save the country from the dominion of these invaders. By the labors of these aliens, and some American citizens, thereto excited by the desire of notoriety, by the stimulus of poverty, or by delusion, which easily engrosses limited minds, and by the

encouragement of those excellent judges in great public questions, of law and morals, *the fair sex*, a very great excitement has been gotten up in this community.

An immense majority of all the people, of every class, united in the opinion, that these abolitionists were doing incalculable mischiefs. Public opinion soon arrived at this point, that these alien agitators should not disturb this community. The satisfaction was universal that one of them had discerned it to be prudent to recross the ocean, and exercise his benevolent functions at a distance.

Meanwhile one of the most numerous and respectable meetings ever held in Boston, on any occasion, was held at Faneuil Hall. It was well understood, that the opinions there expressed, by men who have been compelled to consider the subject of slavery, under the serious responsibility of high public stations, were the opinions of a very large majority of all our citizens. The essence of these opinions is, *that the citizens of non-slaveholding States cannot interfere with slavery; and that the discussion of it in these States, is pregnant with national evils, with peril to slave-holders and misery to slaves.* Such is the opinion at this moment, of all men who are not under the influence of an unfortunate enthusiasm, or under influences which it is needless to characterize.

In this state of things a volume was announced from the pen of the Rev. Dr. William E. Channing on slavery. Curiosity was wide awake. The perusal occasioned very different emotions among different men. How many opinions it has changed, I know not. An answer has been made to it by an anonymous writer, in a pamphlet, and remarks for and against it have appeared in the newspapers. Is it expedient that any further notice should be taken of Dr. Channing's work? I think it is. I hoped that some person far more competent than I can pretend to be, would have engaged in this duty of thorough criticism. I am not insensible of the serious responsibility of this effort. The well-earned reputation of Dr. Channing as a teacher of piety, religion and morality; his fame on both sides of the Atlantic, as a writer; his relation to a numerous and respectable religious assembly; his exemplary observance of the rules of life which he prescribes to

others ; the lustre which he has shed on the intellectual character of his country ; all unite to admonish one, that the work of Dr. Channing should be treated with all suitable deference, and with conscientious sobriety. Yet, when any man, no matter who, volunteers to teach to all others, of whatever age, experience or sagacity, the alphabet of political science, and practical morality in national affairs, he must expect that those who are not apt in unlearning what they have spent years and years to acquire, and who dissent from the theories offered, will express their dissent. This unwelcome labor will be performed in as good a spirit as that which prompted the work now to be examined. I can give no assurances as to motives, because it is not to be credited that one can have any motives in this case, but such as are commendable. My sole object is, to aid in the best way I can, my fellow citizens to form just and sound opinions on very serious subjects. I know how easy it is for a man to deceive himself, and to overrate his ability to be useful. "I ask" nothing of any one, not even to read unless he chooses to read.

The almost singular reverence which has so long been associated with the exemplary character of Dr. Channing, not only in this part of the country, but in every part ; and his well-earned fame in the polemical discussions in which he has been engaged, have secured to him a sacredness, which the Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Church seems to be losing among not a few of his obedient subjects. In short, Dr. Channing has long been thought incapable of conceiving any opinion, much less of expressing any, in which error could be found, whether pertaining to religion, to morals, or to politics. Erroneous opinions coming from such authority, are dangerous in proportion to the preparedness of the world to think them right. Though I have read some of Dr. Channing's opinions, which struck me as tending strongly to *ultraism*, I have never opened my lips to express that I so thought of them. His discussion of Napoleon seemed to me liable to this objection. It was treating of things as he would have

them to be, not as they inevitably must be, while man's nature is what it is. He, however, expressed no contempt for Napoleon, as a man, in which I do not fully concur with him.

I, no doubt, with an audacity which will surprise Dr. Channing's admirers, undertake to show, that he is wrong, very wrong, morally and politically, perhaps religiously, in his book. If he has acquired a dominion over public sentiment which tends to error, little as he may be conscious of the possibility of such consequence, some one ought to be independent and audacious enough to warn the world of their danger. I presume that Dr. Channing holds himself accountable to GOD, to his country, and to his conscience, in the publication of his volume. I hope I am duly sensible of the like obligations in discussing the merits of this volume.

In his introductory remarks the learned and reverend author says: "There is one unfailing good; and that is, fidelity to the everlasting law written on the heart, and re-written and re-published in GOD's word." He announces that he is about to discuss "Great truths, inalienable rights, everlasting duties." Why is he now called to this very solemn effort? Because, as he says, "The present is a moment of bewildering excitement; men's minds are stormed and darkened by strong passions and fierce conflicts: it is a moment of absorbing worldliness; the moral law is made to bow to expediency: its high and strict requirements are decried or dismissed, as metaphysical abstractions or impracticable theories." Suppose one should, for the purpose of seeing what is to follow, admit all this to be; what then? "It is the season to utter great principles without passion, and in the spirit of unfeigned and universal good-will, and to engrave them deeply and durably on men's minds." If such be the unhappy state of the world, the service which the author proposes to render is one of inestimable value. He is of that opinion himself; for he says, that to do this, "Is to do more for the world, than to open mines of wealth, or to frame the most successful schemes of policy."

This annunciation is, probably, *news* to no small part of the world in these northern latitudes. There is a certain class of persons amongst us called abolitionists. If the au-

thor means that this class are under a "bewildering excitement," of all the truths he has ever uttered, none of them are entitled to more respect. If he means that those who oppose this class have fallen into this infirmity, I hope to show that he is clearly wrong. These opponents have said little, and done less, until abolitionists had created such a ferment in the South, and drawn such well-deserved but indiscriminate censure on the North, as to make it the duty of those who think abolitionists wrong, to declare in a manner sufficiently public to reach the South, their disapprobation. They did this in as calm and sober a manner, as though they had assembled to hear an eulogy on a departed patriot. If the reverend author means, that those who will not engage in the crusade of emancipation have "made the moral law to bow to expediency;" and that they shield themselves in thus refusing to wear the distinctive cross, by getting behind "metaphysical abstractions and impracticable theories," I take on myself to demonstrate, that in so refusing, they have conducted themselves as moral and religious men should do; and as patriotic, virtuous, and conscientious citizens are solemnly bound to do.

"It is a moment of absorbing worldliness." This I take to be, a chastisement intended both for South and North. Its justice, as to the South, depends on the solution of the problem, whether the slave owners there have done wrong or right in refusing obedience to the command of abolitionists, forthwith to manumit their slaves. In all other respects, the South are going on, probably, much as they have done, in all the moments of the last two centuries. This problem it is my purpose to solve.

As to the North, if this chastisement is bestowed for the reason that the disapprovers of the schemes of abolitionists have been thereunto moved by the dread of losing the profits of traffic in rice, tobacco, cotton and sugar, and their own products of industry; I shall endeavor to show that they have far higher motives: motives not less commendable than those which prompted the author to send forth this volume. In any regard, I see not the justice of his chastisement. The North are doing as they have always done. They are making all the money they can by enterprise and honest industry. If

they sought riches, to spend them unworthily, the author would be right to chastise them, if this be one of his dutiful vocations. They build meeting-houses and churches, maintain clergymen ; endow munificently, literary, scientific and charitable institutions. They support schools and teachers for the poor ; and give liberally to the destitute. They make rail-roads, build steam-boats, set up factories, and employ multitudes. All classes labor in some way, with their heads or hands, or both, much more diligently and more hours, than any slaves of the Southern States. This has been thought to be not only for their good, but greatly to their honor. This castigation notwithstanding, I will continue to adventure to “ Ormus and to Ind” and get as rich as I can ; and in imitation of glorious examples, ever the subject of my grateful respect, shall endeavor to use my gains in a manner which would secure to me even Dr. Channing’s approbation. Whether any are too much abstracted from other duties by this sort of worldliness, I cannot say. If they attended more and better to some of their political duties, perhaps they might meliorate their condition. How well they attend to their religious duties, the reverend author has opportunities to judge which I have not. Before I read Dr. Channing’s book (which I did not do till within a week) I was under the “ bewildering excitement” of believing, that we were going on flourishingly, and in a very honest way ; anti-masonry, anti-slavery, &c., notwithstanding.

The first chapter is an ingenious disquisition on the nature of property. It is an illustration of this abstract truth,—*that one man cannot have a property in another man*. I find nothing *new* in this, but the very handsome manner in which that self-evident, abstract notion is maintained. The manner may be new, but the truth itself has been uttered in every assembly which the missionaries of abolition have been able to gather. In Massachusetts this has been a universally acknowledged truth ever since May, 1780. Since that time, the same abstract truth has been established in several other

States. The position assumed is sustained by several arguments ;—1. Because a man in Massachusetts *feels* that neither himself nor his offspring could rightfully be made a slave, therefore no man can be a slave. 2. A man has *rights*, and therefore cannot be made a slave. 3. All men are equal ; and as slavery implies inequality, slavery must be wrong. 4. A man has a property in his own person, mind and strength, and one who has this property in himself, cannot be the property of another man. 5. If a man has been made a slave by original wrong, no length of time will remove the wrong, and create a right. 6. If a man have a right of property in another, the principles of moral science enjoin on the person owned, to remain in subjection ; whereas a slave may “ slip his chain” when he can. 7. A man cannot be a slave, “ because he is created in God’s image ;”—“ because created to unfold god-like faculties, and to govern himself by a divine law written in his heart, and republished in God’s word.”

The last of these reasons is enforced with the writer’s characteristic eloquence. It may require a mind as clear, comprehensive and penetrating as his own, to understand the argument in its full effect. Some things are here asserted which I can neither admit nor deny. I have not been so constituted as to be able to conceive of certain matters which appear to be well known to the author. To this point I shall hereafter return.

For the reasons assigned, or for others, as the case may be, it is highly probable that there is not a human being in the non-slaveholding States, who is disposed to deny, *so far as may concern himself, within his own territorial limits*, the abstract proposition, that one man cannot be the property of another. It was, therefore, unnecessary to publish this first chapter, to engrave any great truth, on any heart in these territorial limits. In this respect, it is probable that the public mind is just where it was, on the *abstract* notion, before the book was published. It may not be a difficult matter to show that slavery as it exists in the United States, and this abstract notion, have nothing to do with each other so far as the people of the non-slaveholding States are concerned.

The second chapter is entitled RIGHTS. From the 30th

to the end of the 48th page, it is a beautiful discussion of the relation of individuals to the political State. Such thoughts as here expressed, were some times heard among Greeks and Romans. They were no more uttered or known from the time of Cæsar's usurpation, till the year 1648, when they were again uttered in our parent country. Selden, Sydney, and Locke were among those to whom our patriots of the revolution were indebted for confirmation of their own sentiments of individual liberty, and political obedience. Probably a better expression of similar thoughts has not been made by any writer with the single objection, that it tends to ultra refinement. It would be well if every American youth were required to commit these thoughts to memory. Not that these thoughts show what the members of society are, nor what any government is, but what men, society, and government ought to be. I make no exception to these thoughts, on the ground that they are in the present and probable state of the world too refined for any practical purpose, because it cannot be foreseen to what perfection human nature may attain. The residue of this chapter is an enlarged view of the thoughts contained in the first chapter, on the nature of abstract slavery, with nothing added but an induction, that a slave virtually suffers the wrong of *robbery*.

To all these abstract opinions on the nature of slavery, we have only to repeat the remark, there is nothing new in them, but in the manner and terms in which they are stated; nothing which any man may be disposed to deny, in the non-slaveholding States. But still, so far, the existence of slavery in the United States, under the peculiar and singular circumstances in which it does exist, remains untouched, though the writer intends that all he says shall apply to that subject.

I can conceive of but three motives which, up to this point, could have produced this volume. First, to raise up in the Northern States such a universal and powerful opinion on religious and moral duty, as, being known to the South, will make them "quail" and emancipate. Secondly, to act directly on the men of the South, and either terrify or persuade them, to abandon slavery. I hope and believe that no such thing as the first will be done in the North. As to the second

it is as probable that Dr. Channing will become a slaveholder himself, as effect this purpose. Thirdly, to excite the blacks to take "vengeance," and free themselves. Dr. Channing need not have said that he did not intend this. It is impossible. But no work has appeared (so far as I know) so well adapted to produce precisely that attempt, if negroes could read and understand it.

The third chapter is entitled "Explanations." The learned writer admits, that a slave-owner might be such without intentional crime. The long-continued existence of slavery may have obscured his vision, and have made him unconscious of the great wrong done to the slave. This constitutes one class of slave-owners. Another class may think slavery wrong, but persevere in it from what they think proper motives. The third class are those who hold slaves for gain, and who ask no questions, as to right or wrong, and are insensible to all consequences but gain. Dr. Channing deals in terrible denunciations against this class. He seems to have placed himself on the judgment seat, at least, of this world, and to have called every one of this class before him, to learn, for the first time, their duties, and the consequences of their disobedience. If this language had been addressed to the members of one's own parish, it would be for them to judge of its propriety or expediency. It seems to me to have not the least tendency to produce the effect which the author intended.

Whence does Dr. Channing derive his authority to address a Virginian, or Carolinian in these terms; "He extorts, by the lash, that labor to which he has no claim, [but ?] through a base selfishness. Every morsel of food thus forced from the injured, ought to be bitterer than gall. His gold is cankered. The sweat of the slave taints the luxury for which it streams. Better were it for the selfish wrong-doer of whom I speak, to live as the slave, to clothe himself in the slave's raiment, to eat the slave's coarse food, to till his fields with his own hands, than to pamper himself by day, and pillow his head

at night, at the cost, of a wantonly injured fellow-creature. No fellow creature can be so injured without taking terrible vengeance."

"I know it will be said, you would make us poor." "Be poor, then, and thank God for your honest poverty. Better be poor than unjust. Better beg than steal. Better live in an almshouse, better die than trample on a fellow-creature, and reduce him to a brute, for selfish gratification. What! Have we yet to learn that it profits us nothing to gain the the whole world, and lose our souls!"

In this and similar passages, has not the eloquent writer's zeal out run his good sense? He has no physical power over the slave-owners of the South. They are no more under his jurisdiction in this matter, as I shall show, than the Emperor Nicholas, in his management of the Poles. Does he mean to *terrify* the southern people by his awful denunciations? Dr. Channing most expressly disavows and reprobates intention to excite the blacks, to those acts, which would in truth be terrible, however certainly utter destruction to themselves would follow. It is then *moral* terror in which he deals. How far his purposes are likely to be accomplished, he must have reflected and decided, as a prudent man, before he published such language to the world with, or without his justly honored name. The people of the South may have heard that there is such a book as the Bible. They may have formed some opinion of the degree of faith to which it is entitled. It is even possible that they know and believe what it reveals; and have compared the duties of slaveholders, with the commands of revelation. Nay, it is even possible that they may conscientiously believe, that by this sacred volume they are justified, on many principles, therein expressed or implied, that it is their duty not only to themselves, but to the slaves, to continue slavery. If all this should happen so to be, what becomes of the denunciations of any clergyman, even Dr. Channing, dwelling at the distance of one thousand miles, and in a society, for all such purposes, totally alien to them.

Does he mean to *persuade* them to emancipate their slaves? His means do not seem to be adapted to the end. Persua-

tion, is not of kindred with contumely, vituperation and reproach.

It must strike the people of the South, with some surprise, to find themselves charged by a clergyman, at a remote distance, with crimes of a most aggravated nature ; and to find their souls disposed of with as little ceremony as the Pontiffs of Rome disposed of souls, before Martin Luther's time.

There may be more propriety in the concluding part of this chapter, in which Dr. Channing denounces the love of money in the North. We of the North are, possibly, under the Doctor's dominion. It is true, that only a small part of us here in the North, have settled Dr. Channing to minister to us, as a spiritual guide, and to warn us of our perils in loving the world too much. It is a matter between him and his parishioners, what degree of rebuke they ought to receive from him. The right or the expediency of denouncing those who are not of his parish, is not so apparent. He says, "I have no desire to shield the North. We have, without doubt, a great *multitude*, who, were they slave-holders, would sooner die than relax their iron grasp ; than yield their property in men, to justice and the commands of God." This indiscriminate charge of a *multitude* is neither reasonable nor just. It would be more satisfactory if some of the multitude had been pointed out. The author seems to be less effective here in his discipline, than is desirable. If he had named the individuals, they might have learned some serious truths, of which they may be at present ignorant, and consequently in unspeakable peril, according to the author's theory.

I know not of any inventions, discoveries, or compilations in moral science, which prescribe unqualified condemnation to those who are honestly ignorant that they have departed from the moral law, or have failed to conform to it. I am mistaken ; there is one exception. When a child is so young as not to know what is right or wrong, and does that which a parent thinks wrong, the parent has the right and duty of associating pain with the act done, so that when the law "written on the heart" prompts to another commission of the erroneous act, the apprehension of suffering may be sufficiently powerful to control the propensity.

Dr. Channing is not only indignantly eloquent, but ingeniously satirical on the immoralities which are incident to a state of slavery. If I felt myself at liberty to judge of, and condemn the manners and customs of a people, who have never submitted themselves to my decision, on the point, whether some, and how many of their number were guilty of immoralities, what these immoralities are, what excuse or apology can be made for them, or whether any, I could go with Dr. Channing into all proper inquiries. But the southern people have not, as a whole community, nor has any of their number ever entrusted me with the keeping of their consciences. My own conscience forbids me to enter into judgment with my fellow men, in any matters which do not affect me personally. I may be greatly in error, but I understand the doctrines of revelation to be, that as to those wrongs of which human laws cannot take cognizance, and which public opinion cannot correct, every mortal is to stand or fall, before the Great Judge of all the earth, independently of all other mortals. I see every day of my life, acts which seem to me immoral in those around me. I dare hardly hope that they do not see the like in me. If such acts were done by persons who stood in such relation to me, as to make it dutiful to attempt punishment, correction or advice, the case would be a plain one. Happily my empire is a very limited one in this respect. I am not a minister of the Gospel, and should make a very poor one, if measured by Dr. Channing's standard.

As a general subject, the immoralities incident to slavery are open to discussion. I should begin far back, even with the Jews. There were cases of great immorality among this people, according to modern views. Polygamy and concubinage we all well know to have been practised there, among the wisest and the best; men who were not so debased by these practises, that their words, (from which Dr. C. may sometimes have enlightened his hearers) have been disregarded by modern nations, even on very serious occasions. Polygamy seems to me to be the exuberant nurse of despotism; and concubinage the unclean devils who enter into, and who usurp a dwelling in that mansion, which is known by the Christian word *home*. The existence of such

evils, teaches me, that it is custom, habit, and "the law written in the heart," that settles opinion on the right, and the wrong. There is one act, which if committed in Massachusetts, makes one liable to a residence in the penitentiary, and which was formerly punished by public execution. The same act in England is merely an ecclesiastical offence. In France it is not regarded as any offence. In Italy, a woman who is not familiarly acquainted with it, almost loses caste in society. These are all *Christian* countries. Thus the nearer one gets to the footstool of the throne whereon is seated his Holiness, holding the very keys of Heaven, transmitted from St. Peter, the lighter lies the rein on human frailty. I would not be understood to justify any immorality incident to slavery of which Dr. Channing knows, and which he thinks it his duty to reprobate. There are vices and immoralities wherever there are human beings, some of one sort, and some of another, and all to be regretted and mourned over, both for this world and the next. Dr. Channing's indignant sarcasm, in the present case, proves to me his own clear and just perception of what moral duty is. When the world is as pure as this pure man would have it to be, the cost of ministers and churches will be saved. It is highly honorable to him, and I reverence him for it. I hope he lives in a community in which any man and every man whose image falls upon his retina, "may cast the first stone." I will not enter into judgment with Dr. Channing for entering into judgment with the South for their sins. He is not, herein, accountable to me. If I gave any opinion it would go no further than to suggest, that inasmuch as he has no power over the South, the chastisement which he has given them, is not likely to *persuade* them to adopt his views.

The Fifth Chapter is entitled "Scripture;" and contains but few pages. It will be more convenient to notice this in another place; certainly not in any to justify *abstract* slavery.

The sixth chapter is on "The means of removing slavery." After so vivid a picture of the crime, and of the evils of slavery, and of the duty of Abolition, one would have expected from a writer, who clearly assumes to be wiser than all the rest of the world, a remedy;—a remedy which the wisest men of this nation have earnestly desired during the last fifty years.

There is a concession in the first page of this chapter, which is surprising, and which seems to make something worse than useless, all the contents of preceding pages. I say worse than useless, unless the writer has terrified or persuaded the slave-owner into the duty of emancipation. If he has done neither of these he has only irritated slave-owners, if they have read his book, and has certainly in common with all other abolitionists, made the condition of the slave far worse, and his emancipation still more distant, if not hopeless. The concession is in these words ; “ To the slave-holder belongs the duty of settling and employing the best methods of liberation, and to no other. We have no right of interference, nor do we desire it.” It was very unexpected after this very proper concession, that the writer should devote a whole chapter to instruct the slave-owner as to what he ought to do, in a matter wherein “ we have no right, nor desire to interfere.” The writer seriously deprecates the evils which would arise, if the slave should find out, “ that liberty had been wrung from an unwilling master, who would willingly replace the chain,” and he is apprehensive that “ jealousy, vindictiveness, and hatred would spring up to blight the innocence and happiness of his new freedom, and make it a peril to himself and all around him.” This is very considerate in a writer who thinks he has no right “ to interfere”! What is the whole tenor of Dr. Channing’s work but an interference? How is his work to be separated from the work of any other abolitionist, except that he uses “ the whip” and the “ lash” upon them, as he does upon every body else but the slaves, who seem to be protected from being made in God’s image. I shall spend but a moment on the excursion to Jamaica to apply the “ lash” there. I have no call to inquire into the wisdom or folly of what has been done in this, and other British colonies. Every independent kingdom, or state, has a right to manage its own affairs as it thinks proper. This is a law of which no well-informed man is supposed to be ignorant. Yet Dr. Channing thinks it his duty to publish to the world that “ he cannot account for the slave-holder’s conduct (in Jamaica) but by supposing that his unhappy position, as a slave-holder, had robbed him *of his reason*, as well as blunted

his moral sense." One would like to know how Dr. Channing understands the 1st and 2d verses of chapter 7th of the Gospel according to Matthew.

I have speculative opinions about the result of the West India experiments. If I thought this an occasion on which it would be proper to express them, still I think it much more to the present purpose, to examine Dr. Channing's scheme of emancipation ; which I shall now do.

In chapter 6, page 118, (besides the concession before made,) are found these words : "*In this country no power but that of the slave-holding States can remove the evil, and none of us are anxious to take the office off their hands.*" Notwithstanding this, and the other concession, Dr. Channing proceeds to instruct the slave-holding States how to remove the evil.

1. "The slave-holders should solemnly disclaim the right of property in human beings."

2. The slave thus freed, "*like every other citizen*, belongs to the community, he is subject to the community, and the community has a right and is bound to continue all such restraints as its own safety, and the well-being of the State, demand." I cannot stop to comment on the theory of a man's "belonging" to a community. There are things much more serious to look after.

3. In page 120 : "The slave should not, in the first instance, be allowed to wander from the plantation in which he toils ; and if he cannot be induced to work by rational and natural motives, he should be obliged to labor ; on the same principle in which the vagrant, in other communities, is confined and compelled to earn his bread."

4. Page 123 : "A system of bounties and rewards should be introduced."

5. Page 126 : "Were the whole colored people to be assembled in Sunday schools, and were the whites to become their teachers, a new and interesting relation would be formed

between the races ; and an influence be exerted which would do much to insure safety to the gift of freedom.”

6. Page 127 : “ Legislatures should meet to free the slave. The church should rest neither day nor night, till the stain be wiped away.”

Such is Dr. Channing’s system of emancipation ! It does honor to his heart. Whether it does equal honor to his head, is doubtful. One sees, in this scheme, how great is the error of pushing any abstract notion of duty and right, into practical execution, without regard to the moral duty of weighing all consequences. The first thing to be done is to declare the slave *free*, and to make him a citizen. When a slave becomes a *citizen*, what right has the “community,” if the slave has committed no crime, to debar him from the rights of a citizen ? How does this agree with the author’s opinions on political power, set forth in his second chapter ? The author soon encounters the difficulty of controlling our new fellow-citizens, and surmounts this by conceding that the community has a right to impose all restraints, and to enforce them, which its “*safety* and well-being” demand. The author has not defined what he means by “*safety*,” and “*well-being*.” He must mean safety from physical violence at least. He must also mean, safety and well-being from that inevitable arrogance, which would follow freedom. If the slave becomes a free citizen, is there to be one law and one right for the white man, and another for the black man ? Why should the black citizen be deprived of the right of serving his country in its army, navy, militia, in the halls of legislation, on the bench of justice ? Why should the black man be deprived of cultivating his faculties, of increasing his god-like powers to the full extent of knowing all that is known to teachers of religion, piety and morality ? With these attainments, (which the author thinks the negro will be able to make) why should not an eloquent black enter Dr. Channing’s pulpit, and teach that “*multitude*,” if any be found there, how great the peril of losing their own souls, in the love of the world ? Will the black man be contented with any thing short of that which the white man enjoys ? If he think the blond beauty of the white man’s daughter, the lustre of her

eye, the graceful curling of her hair, her Grecian lip, preferable to the correspondent qualities which he sees in the sable beauties of his own race, why should these be a privileged property in personal charms, for the white citizen, and consequent exclusion of the black one? If all men are equal, in what respects are they unequal?

The humane author, unlike most abolitionists, looks, sometimes, a little to consequences. He encounters another difficulty, which could not have escaped a man of sagacity. The freed man, who now "belongs to the community," may *choose* not to work. What then? May not any free man, who has committed no crime, be idle if he pleases, and starve, if he pleases? What law is there in Massachusetts, which compels a man to take food, and continue to live, if it be more agreeable to him not to take it, and to die a very agonizing death? Dr. Channing insists that his freed fellow-citizen, who belongs to the community, shall be put to work; and if he will not work by "rational" means, he shall be "confined and compelled" to work. What! imprison a free man, "made in God's image, with Godlike faculties, and an immortal soul," merely because he chooses to dispose of "property in his own strength" according to his own will: Imprison him, then. See now this free man, in a condition in which he never was, or could be, while a slave. But still he will not work. What is now to be done? He is to be "compelled" to work. How? Not by the *lash*. The author has a horror of the lash. Starve him. There is no other alternative. Among all the horrors of slavery which the fertile imagination of the author has displayed on his canvass, that of compelling a man to use his own property in his own strength, is absent; because, no slave owner starves his slave. The longer he perseveres in this mode of compulsion, the less able will the slave be to do what is required. Thus Dr. Channing's moral reform brings the free man to imprisonment, and death, because, he will not do by the lash, (the worse case supposed) what the author admits he must do. But this is an extreme case. Not so according to the author's logic. He says, "if one man may be held as property, every other man may be so held." If one man will not work, then all

men may not work. When all men are held as property, the author, who knows much that no other man knows, can tell us, who will be masters. Thus it is, that theorists push abstract notions, to extremities. Thus it is, that men who deal in spiritualities, and who look at the world, through the key-hole of a study, would order its practical affairs.

Let us now put Dr. Channing's theory to another test. I have made a hurried analysis of the last census as to Eastern Virginia, which I suppose to be the most favorable district, for the Doctor's new theory, on the lowlands between Maryland and Florida. There are, (if I have cyphered right,) 908,484 colored persons. A part, perhaps one in fifty, are free; but when it comes to the question of "property in strength," they will all be of one class. There are 407,974 white persons. Let the latter undertake to "compel" the former, after the "gift of freedom," to work by "confinement," and what man, woman, or child, who is not under a "bewildering excitement," need be told the inevitable consequences?

All States, I agree with the author, have the right and duty of providing for their own "safety and well-being." I think, also, that the same Almighty Power who made this an essential quality of human society, has permitted, if not enjoined, as essential to human welfare, the exclusion from the territories of a State, of all persons of whatever complexion, whose presence would destroy or subvert the purposes for which human society was ordained. Now the author says, that "the slave, (meaning the freed black man) should not, *in the first instance*, be allowed to wander from the plantation in which he toils." Then there is to be a time in which he is to be allowed to wander. Wander he will; and will wander (by thousands) into Massachusetts. The freed blacks will stock our Alms-houses and Penitentiaries, and the theories of emancipation will result in transferring the black race from their present condition, to the class of sinners and convicts. Who, in such a case, will be answerable for their immortal souls?

I take these consequences to be inevitable. Whatever excitement inflammatory harangues have been able to effect in New England audiences, does any man deny, that there is an ineradicable repugnance among all white men, but refined and delicate abolitionists, to regard negroes as equals? A very small proportion of the people now dwelling in New England, know any thing from having *seen* slavery in this territory. This small number will soon be gone. But the sentiment of inequality is universal. It is strongest among that class who would find the freed negro his competitor for daily earnings. I approve of this sentiment, and will give reasons for so approving hereafter. I should think I was recreant in my moral duty, if I did not do all I can do to prevent the freed negro of the South, from being placed side by side with my fellow citizens of whatever class. I am prepared to maintain this according to what I understand to be "the law written in the heart, and republished in God's word."

On the suggestion that the white people of the South should become Sunday school masters, to the black people, I doubt not, that to some extent, this would have taken place if it had not been that the mischievous and impertinent zeal of abolitionists, has impelled the slave-owners to attend to much more serious matters. How flimsy is the veil which abolitionists hold up between their measures, and the eager interested curiosity of the slave! Dr. Channing says, page 60, "No fellow creature can be so injured without taking terrible vengeance." Does this writer believe that there is not a mode in which this sentiment will reach many a black man's ear in the South and West? What incalculable evil may not this one sentiment, proceeding from so eminent a man as Dr. Channing, occasion in regions where it will be recognized as a command! It is Dr. Channing who says this, and in the name of God! Abolitionists will treasure up this sentiment, work it into all their speeches and inflammatory publications, and, for whose ear? *Only for masters and freed men!* If there could be any thing astonishing in the conduct of mankind to any one who knows any thing of what has been done on the globe, in the last two thousand years, it would be, that men who utter such sentiments, declare themselves God's

own agents for the interpretation and publication of his will :—special missionaries of the Most High, to rebuke sinners, and redeem the oppressed !

Certainly the men of the South are the last men in the world to keep Sunday schools, if Dr. Channing's opinion of them is a just one. Suppose a white man should offer to his colored fellow-citizen to school him on the Lord's day, might not the latter indignantly reply, "You, teach me virtue, morals, religion ! Does not Dr. Channing, again and again declare, that you are an habitual hardened sinner, so steeped in iniquity, that eternal punishment in a world to come, is your inevitable doom ? Is there any law in the christian code of morality, which you have not violated, in his opinion ?" It would subject me to the suspicion of having motives far different from those which have led me to this unwelcome labor, if I were to collate from this little volume, the terms of reproach in which the author speaks of his fellow-citizens of the South. It is not my purpose, I repeat, to vindicate them. They have not commissioned me to take charge of their fame ; nor have they made Dr. Channing the guardian of their morals. Much less have they raised him to a tribunal from which he is authorized to condemn them in this world, and the next, *unheard*. This, however, is not the place to state some principles of social and political action, which are not to be stated, because no one but myself knows of their existence ; but because every body is to be presumed to know them ; and because they exist, and are known, like weights and measures, to be applied to the particular case.

The seventh chapter is entitled "Abolitionism." The reverend author has herein applied the *whip* and the *lash* on the enthusiasts of the day, with a strong arm. This is decidedly the truest and most practical of all his opinions. The difference, and only difference, between the author and abolitionists seems to be, that it is right, moral and dutiful for him to do through the medium of the press, precisely the same thing which he thinks the Garrisons, Thompsons and Follens

(all alien born) may not do, with the help of such men, women and children, as they can assemble together. Dr. Channing may say in a book, to be read by one person at a time, in fine language and most exciting eloquence, those things which abolitionists may not say in a very inferior manner, to assembled numbers. No reason is given for this distinction, but that an assembly of persons may be liable to mistake feeling for reasoning, a liability to which the quiet reader of a book would not be subject. In this distinction the author is certainly unjust to himself. If he has made no other mistake, he has made one in thus underrating his own powers. Perhaps the author chooses to be regarded as *sole author* of this great moral reform.

In this chapter there are sound and just remarks on mobs, in which all good citizens must concur. Several fundamental principles on free elective governments are here stated, in the best and most striking manner.

There are these words in the 148th page: "The persecuted abolitionists have the sympathies of the civilized world." In this part of the world they have found precisely such sympathy as they deserve. In some other places, a similar sympathy. "The world" *here* has little inclination to have the peace of society disturbed by self-created missionaries, and especially such as come from other countries to teach us the true meaning of our own institutions, rights and duties. As to all such assailants of our tranquillity, I hope they will find a residence here too uncomfortable to continue it a moment longer than they can get a passage home. As to those of native growth, if they do not occasion insurrections in the South, or such disgust for the Union in slave-holding States, as to cause a separation, I would not interfere in their meetings, nor harangues, however often held or made. But whenever the tendency of their measures is to endanger the safety and peace of the South, or to dissolve the Union, and to involve the North in the most profitless and mischievous of all possible contentions, I hope they will meet with such sympathy, as will make them harmless, in whatsoever way that must be done.

Dr. Channing's eighth and last chapter is entitled "Duties."

Among "duties of Northern men," he ranks that of encouraging manly, moral, religious discussion of slavery. This work is to be done in "individual," not in "public capacities." In my humble judgment it is to be done in no capacity; unless the South invite the North to such co-operation as the South may indicate. Public opinion is as sound and righteous, on the abstract point of slavery in the North, as it is on the duty of maintaining schools, worshipping the Deity, performing promises and covenants; or aiding to extinguish a conflagration in a neighbor's house. But I will not anticipate, what I have elsewhere to say on this subject.

I agree with Dr. Channing, that the bearing of the South has often been indiscreet and offensive. How this can be prevented I know not, but in two ways: one is to send such men to Congress, if they can be found among us, as know how to shoot others down, and establish one of the worst kinds of despotism, that of the pistol. The second is, to send to Congress, men of war, *in words*. The first mode will find no countenance in this part of the country. As to the other, I imagine that we do as well as other States do. In some individual instances, we (of Mass.) stand second to no State. It is, however, remarkable, that Dr. Channing should have engaged in this tender solicitude for the North, when in the very same book that expresses this solicitude, he exhorts all men of the North, to spare no exertion to effect the subversion of the long established institutions of the South; and to push mere abstract principles to results which no mind can think of without dismay.

Excepting in the matter of the Tariff, (on which I am a little sensitive, being one of those zealously engaged in money-making) the South have not assumed to bear harder upon the North, than is incident to the different perceptions of people of very different occupations, and views of interest. But now, if I were a Southern man, I should think no bearing too hard against the spirit of abolition; nor any measure too harsh, which would exclude from slave-holding territories, missionaries and publications, which have any tendency to change the existing order of society. From what I have seen and heard of men of the South, I believe they have very little of

that universal benevolence as to the North, which constitutes the most attractive brilliancy in the character of Dr. Channing. Their pursuits and habits are, in the nature of things, essentially different from ours. They hate most sincerely, merchants, ship-owners, buying and selling, and drawing riches from the sea. They hate the thrift and prosperity which come of incessant action of body and mind. They re-pine that we should grow rich and populous, while they are stationary, or declining, though it is the West, not the North, which has advanced so much of them. This comes of the law written in the heart, and which, (as I shall show) God's word was sent to repeal. But happily, we are *married* to them, and they to us. Though we may not like each others' tastes in all respects, and though time and circumstance may have developed traits of character, (none more touching than the new discoveries of the North on the science of moral philosophy) which makes the Union less delightful than the dream of young love may have anticipated;—yet, we have a numerous progeny in the effects of our union, in which both parties are deeply interested. The most intolerable of all things is, to upbraid each other, *before company*, for personal defects, delinquencies in conduct, and erroneous opinions, which the upbraided party does not think to be such; and when there is no tribunal on earth to which the parties can appeal and have their differences settled. I have heard lawyers say, that when there are gross faults on both sides, courts do not interfere, but leave the parties to go on railing, criminating, and squabbling, as they respectively may think most to the purpose.

I have gone over Dr. Channing's book in one view of it. I hope I have done him no injustice, so far. I shall with unfeigned diffidence, add some remarks on "the will of God," and on the duties of Northern to Southern men, in relation to slavery. I have conscientiously tried to find out my duty, and I shall perform it to the best of my ability. But I do not assume to dictate to any one; I leave to every one the same freedom in morals and religion, which I shall maintain for myself; provided always that they do not disturb my lawful and "inalienable rights."

In performing this task, it will be seen that I account with creatures made of clay like myself, as little as Dr. Channing does. Yet, I am not a winged insect striving to tease a lion—no magpie who chatters, from a secure eminence, at the noble Newfoundler, who could tear it in pieces. Nor am I envious and malicious like him, who said,—

O thou, who with surpassing glory crowned,
 Look'st, &c. * * * * *
 * * * How I hate thy beams.

I shall not, therefore, submit this book to severe criticism, as coming from a scholar, and a logician. I am looking at the “great truths” which it announces to the world. These I will fearlessly and thoroughly, but respectfully, examine.

As I have undertaken to show the unsoundness of Dr. Channing's opinions on *moral* duty, it is not enough to have passed thus hastily, over the general object of his book; it remains, therefore, to inquire into the foundation on which that object rests.

What is the “law written on the heart”? It is “the law republished in God's word.” The world has labored under a great mistake, some 1800 years. It has been supposed that our Saviour came to make a *new revelation* of God's will, because there was no law written on man's heart; or, if there ever had been, that idolatry, superstition, vice, crime, and depravity had utterly erased it. Such, at least, historians, sacred and profane, have declared the state of the world to have been, when revelation was made. But I am bound to consider myself mistaken in this, because Dr. Channing is a deeply learned Theologian. Admit, then, there is a law written on the heart; *what is it, and how to be known?* Not, I think, by answering, that it is the same law that one finds in the Bible, but by showing that the acts, or, at least, the professions of mankind, accord with the law of the Bible, even if they never happened to know of the existence of that book. If the law was written on every heart, the painful scenes of our Saviour's mission might have been spared.

If the law is written on the heart, it must be found wherever there is a human heart. It would not have been written *there* as a moral guide, nor written there at all, unless the being whose heart it is, *could* know that it was so written. No one is guilty of a breach of law, the existence of which he *could not* know. How can it be ascertained, (laying aside the “republication”) that there is such law? By some sort of recognition of it, in acts done, admissions of its existence and force, judgments for breach of it. There can be no other, since the human eye cannot read the living heart. So far as one can judge from observing what is done, professed, or judged of, since the earth was re-peopled, there cannot be a more vague, contradictory, and utterly irreconcilable code, than that which would come from human hearts.

Let us illustrate this, by the opinions, acts, professions, and judgments which have occurred in this very matter of slavery.

Every body knows that from about the year 1550, to about fifty years ago, the Christian nations of Europe did not imagine it would be any violation of the law written on the heart, nor of any law in God’s word, to get slaves from Africa. The traffic was first engrossed by the Portuguese, and afterwards engaged in by all maritime christian nations. It has been so often repeated, it hardly seems necessary to say, that the introduction of African slavery in America, was dictated by *humanity in a prelate*. Commiseration for the enslaved Indians, induced the amiable, moral and religious Las Casas, to substitute Africans. If any man ever knew what was written on the heart, and republished in God’s word, it must be presumed that Las Casas knew it. No one can deny, that numerous acts, especially in morals and religion, have been held in one age of the world, unquestionably right, and in another unquestionably wrong; nor deny, that in the same day, the same acts are thus differently viewed, and by professed Christians too, in the same city.

It is certainly possible, notwithstanding Dr. Channing’s fundamental rules, that the slave-owner may feel himself justified, in continuing slavery, although every man in non-slaveholding States may be of a different opinion. I am compelled to say, that I discern nothing to sustain Dr. Channing’s theory

of the law written on the heart, and of the republication of it. I may be wrong, but I suppose that hearts may be by nature good, bad, or both in degree ; that a good heart may become depraved, a bad one reformed ; and that conscience arises from custom, habit, education and discipline.

So far from agreeing with Dr. Channing that there is a law written on the heart, which commands humanity, justice, universal love, and benevolence ; I believe, if there be any law written there, that it commands man to enslave, not only the body, but the *mind* of his fellow men. This is so, unless our daily experience is to be discredited, and all history treated as a fable. Take the existing state of things in this country. Suppose that Andrew Jackson, Martin Van Buren, James K. Polk, Amos Kendall, and Blair (the editor of the *Globe*), and men whom I could name in Boston, and even in my own comparatively small town, could make all others obedient, according to the law written on their hearts, how long would Dr. Channing be allowed to express his opinions through the press ; how soon should I be taken to guillotine for daring thus to associate these names ?

If we go back through history, everywhere the same mournful account is found, of the law written on man's heart. Multitudes of cases throng upon my memory. One will be enough. From 1227, to 1229, hundreds of thousands of human beings died in the South of France, by the sword, by conflagrations, by the sack of cities, and by torture. Pope Innocent the 3d, who undertook to construe " God's word" for himself, ordered a desolating, murderous, fiendlike warfare, against whom ? *Christians*. What had they done ? That which our puritan forefathers did—insist on simple primitive faith, and worship. But if one object, that this case was too much merged in the darkness of the middle ages, too long before the reformation, was it any better, except in degree, for one whole century, at least, after the reformation ? The " law written on the heart" had not changed ; certainly not in " Bloody Mary's" time. What was this law of the heart, even with our puritan forefathers, in relation to the Quakers ?

There has been no despotism on earth so searching, merciless, desolating and cruel, as that which has been exercised

by man over the *mind* of man, in the name of God. The political despotism which fills so many pages of history, is the mere sport of children with things of a toy shop when compared with that horrible company of crimes, which follow the impious assumptions of mortals to announce and to execute the will of the Almighty? What is it that the world has been struggling for through oceans of blood, ever since the English revolution of 1688? Is it not, that by establishing constitutions, by making equal and just laws, by securing the faithful administration of them, the law written in the heart, might cease to make the human family wretched? Is it not, to free the human mind from the shackles which kings and priests had forged and fastened; and to leave it to every rational creature to reverence and to worship the Awful Majesty of the Divine Being as he may think right? With what astonishment, then does one read, and in this age of the world, in this country, and from the celebrated Dr. Channing: and in addressing men, who are no more accountable to him, than he to them: “*Be poor then, and thank God for your honest poverty. Better be poor than unjust. Better beg than steal.*”

Dr. Channing must permit me to say, that he reminds one of Hildebrand (Gregory the VIIth.) His language is not that, in my humble judgment, of practical philosophy, nor of Christian humility, but of *professional ultraism*. Our Saviour armed his disciples with no sharp-wounding instruments, whether made of muscles and nerves, flesh and blood—or steel—or goosequills.

I rejoice that I live in a land, in which neither Dr. Channing, nor any other man, has a right to construe “God’s word” for me; nor right, to force on me, abstract truths, regardless of all moral, social, and political consequences. He may teach all who choose to listen to him, by gentle and persuasive appeals, the morality by which it is most profitable to live in this world; the punishment which will, inevitably follow a life of wickedness and vice, and the rewards which will follow a life well spent. Neither God nor man has given him any higher *authority*. Give to any man on earth but Dr. Channing, honest zeal, the power to interpret God’s word as he thinks right, arm him with the terrors of excommunication,

make him sole judge of spiritual offences, give him physical power to execute his judgments, and we shall soon see what that law is which is written on the heart, and republished in God's word.

If the law written on the heart is the same which is republished in the Bible, the law republished in the Bible, is the same law which is written on the heart. It is obvious that Dr. Channing has ascertained this convertible axiom by reading the law as he finds it in his own heart. Like the tenant of the solitude of Patmos, Dr. Channing has attained to a sublimity which is not of this world. Happy, happy would it be if every human heart were like his own. Then might we worms of the dust take the harp of David, and assume to join in the anthems of seraphs and cherubim. If I believed with Dr. Channing, that the law which I find in the Bible is the same law which is written on the heart, never again should I open that instructive, chastening, comforting, sublime and sacred volume.

Without this volume, life after life might be spent in vain attempts to solve the problem, by what partnership of good and evil genii was the tragi-comedy of human existence invented ?

The universality of Dr. Channing's benevolence is very imposing. Is he not much in advance of his own age ? May he have that high eulogy on his fame, which immortalizes the name of *Bacon*. The field of the two laborers is, however, essentially different. Bacon thought and wrote as a philosopher, on the operations of the mind—the natural world in many branches, and on morals. He dealt in the principles of science, and developed truths, which always must be truths, in every age of the world, though not comprehended in his own. He left a rich legacy for far distant generations. Dr. Channing deals in "great truths ; inalienable rights, everlasting duties." The difference between Lord Bacon and Dr. Channing is, that he insists on an immediate, "uncompromising" application of his theories, whether the world be ready

for them or not. He condemns to everlasting punishment all who will not instantaneously adopt and apply his theories. Most unfortunately, Dr. Channing is forbidden, by as high moral duty as any which he inculcates, not to do that which he has done. At least such is my perception of this matter, and I shall with all proper deference, give the reasons on which this opinion is founded.

But as introductory, let us see whether this spirit of *universal benevolence* tends. Has that unsearchable power, whose name the reverential Brahmins of India only write, and believe it impious to utter, forsaken his own work? Is not his providence over all that he has created? Is all that has been done, and is now doing; and all that has been, and is now suffered, by man's agency on man, in the four quarters of the earth, ordered, or permitted, or forbidden, by this Omniscient Judge of right and wrong? What acts have been ordered, what permitted, what forbidden? What purposes had the Almighty, in creating this globe, and making it the habitation of successive generations, and dividing these into nations, separated by rivers, mountains, untraversable sands, and oceans; speaking hundreds of different languages, professing every variety of religion from the most degrading fetichism to the sublime doctrines of the gospel; and practising in some parts, as religious homage, acts which are deemed in others, the grossest immoralists, and the most odious crimes? What mortal can assume to know what is God's will in this?

Is it the purpose of the Almighty in his own time, and in his own manner, to develope his designs, bringing good out of seeming evil, in the long train of ages? Is it his purpose, by raising up illustrious minds from time to time, gradually to enlighten human reason, and to discipline human propensities, which in one degree are odious vices, in another admirable virtues? If so, what a mistake does he make, who in his zeal to do good, assaults the deep rooted prejudices, and the cherished interests of his fellow men, taking on himself the responsibility of defeating God's designs!

There are men whose benevolence is not surpassed by that of Dr. Channing, but who understand "duty" in a very different light. There are men who sincerely wish that none of

their fellow creatures, in their own community, were poor and miserable, through ignorance and vice ; that the earnings of labor were not expended for intoxicating drinks ; that every man's child could be so educated as to comprehend the utility of virtue ; the worth of civil and religious liberty, and the best means of preserving them. There are men who wish that there were no envyings, jealousies, backbitings, slanders ; no tenants of almshouses or penitentiaries ;—who wish that the clergy knew their own business and did not interfere with that of others ; and who wish also, that all who are trusted with political power were wise, consistent, honest and conscientious ; and that all electors were discerning enough to choose such men, and intelligent enough to obey them when chosen.

And if this benevolence is to be expanded, and embrace the whole world, there are men who sincerely wish, that the laboring classes of Ireland, England, France, Italy and all the divisions of Europe, *were not worse off than the laboring blacks of the Southern States.* [Southern blacks are in enviable felicity compared with full half of all the population of Ireland.] They may wish if they dare to, that God had made all things, in human shape, of the same color, of the same physical and intellectual construction ; and that it had been his pleasure to order that the tenants of African sands, should have had the same powers to invent, discover and meliorate that he has bestowed on another race of different complexion, in northern climes. Is not the African in his own land, precisely in the same condition in which he was, when first heard of elsewhere in the world ?

If this universal benevolence is to work beyond our own territories, what is our duty towards the Emperor of Russia ? What is our duty to benighted Asia ? Can any thing be more shocking to the spirit of Christianity than the despotism in which the Brahmins of India hold millions and millions, in body and in mind ? What does “ duty ” demand as to thrice as many millions *there*, as there are in the United States, who are not only in the most abject degradation of morals and religion, but in the most servile submission from craving daily wants ? It is mournful to “ universal benevolence ” to know,

that the three hundred and thirty-three millions of China, without exception, from the Emperor downward, may be beaten, by law and custom, at the will of any superior, at any time with the *bamboo*, which is rather worse than “the whip and the lash;” and that this should be so, for thousand of years. It is still more distressing to know, that the abominable religion of Mohammed holds about one sixth part of all immortal souls on the earth in its rigid and blighting despotism. Now, not one of the nations, or persons, who have been mentioned, is more or less within the range of this expansive benevolence, than *the blacks of the South*, and might with equal propriety awaken the author’s eloquence, as can be, and will be proved, to every unprejudiced mind. Would these things be so, if it were not God’s will that they should be? It cannot be doubted that it is consistent with that will, for pious missionaries to engage in the perilous enterprise of teaching to these unfortunate millions, the truth of the gospel; and every good man must wish that it may be consistent with that will, that their wonderful efforts should meet with correspondent success. This is a very different affair from that of intermeddling with slavery in the Southern States. The one may have been commanded by the gospel, the other, in my opinion, is clearly forbidden by the same authority, and by laws of man’s making, which every good citizen is bound to obey.

I have further to offer such reasons as occur to me to show, that Dr. Channing’s theories are wrong in relation to the established and unchangeable order of human society:—wrong as to slave owners:—wrong as to slaves:—wrong as to the whole of the American people:—and therefore, morally and religiously wrong.

Man’s wants, infirmities, and sympathies, make society indispensable to him. The idea that society was entered into by contract, and that men give up part of their natural rights when they enter into it, for the purpose of securing to themselves other rights, originated with that licentious man Jean Jacques Rousseau. He was the author of the “Social Com-

pact," a work as irrational as some of his other works are immoral. Men were never *out* of society. The smallest and most barbarous tribe ever found, had some sort of government by usurpation, consent, or usage. The natural enmity of tribes against each other and the common interest to have some authority to preserve interior tranquility and security, must have been the original principles on which governments were founded. Each society was ever as independent, as to all its own affairs, as its force of arms, or the acquiescence, or the imbecility of its neighbors, would permit. In all the space of time which history covers, all distinct states and nations have asserted this independence, and it has never been yielded but by conquest. It is now, and long has been an established principle of the law of nations, that each state, kingdom, empire, great or small, is supremely sovereign and independent, as to every person and thing, within its own territorial limits. Whatever its members are permitted to do as to each other; and whatever acts of tyranny, however immoral, odious and shocking, the sovereign power may see fit to do, as to its own subjects, no cause of offence is thereby given to any other sovereign or his subjects. Suppose a state should make a law, that all persons should be drowned who could not earn their own living, nobody beyond the limits of that state could lawfully, and therefore, not morally, demand the repeal of that law.

If Dr. Channing should hear of such a case, and think it to be as bad as he thinks slavery to be, and that he had a call from God to interpose, what ought he to do according to the established rules of society? He may induce his own sovereign, if he can, to speak to the sovereign of this wicked state, (for no sovereign has ears for any body beyond his own limits unless a sovereign speaks) to abandon this abominable usage. If he be successful, and the interference be deemed to be impertinent, and the usage be continued, the parties have come to the last resort and war ensues, if Dr. Channing's sovereign think that measure indispensable. There is one other course. This call from on High may be obeyed by going personally into the sovereignty where this deplorable evil exists, and by exciting the subjects there to petition, resist, rebel, and take

arms. But if this divine missionary should be considered as an insolent and seditious intruder, and dealt with accordingly, he might have the satisfaction of dying in the cause of humanity. Probably such would be his fate.

I offer no books of authority to sustain these truths. There are lawyers who would lend me their books and find the very pages for me. But I need no authority but *common sense*; and have not stated such truths because I am the only man who knows of their existence, or because I am the only one who thinks them incontrovertible. Every well informed American citizen knows them to be so. They are known and respected as truths, because the Almighty power who created society by creating man, has ordained that these truths should be known, admitted and respected, that the very purpose for which society was ordained, should not be defeated. If the members of one sovereignty were at liberty, at their own motion, to interfere and attempt to regulate the affairs of sovereignties to which they are alien, confusion, wars and tumult would be unceasing.

I do not apprehend that any man versed in authorities, can produce a single one which will contradict any thing which is here advanced, although my own knowledge of these things is derived from sources common to all educated men, the history, customs and usages of civilized nations.

There can be no moral duty more imperative with a well informed conscientious man, than to abstain from the violation of general rules which the good sense of nations has established for their mutual safety, security and independence. It is not a justification to any man in the violation of these rules, that he thinks himself more religious, more moral, more wise than all other men; and that he has views of the law written on the heart and republished in God's word, which he is specially called on to announce. However honest, conscientious and fervent he may be, he may be mistaken. There is a very strong presumption that he is so, when a great majority of the best informed men in his own community, and of his own reverend profession, and a much greater majority of religious, conscientious and moral statesmen and lawyers differ entirely from him in judgment, and adhere to the rules above stated as

their bounden moral duty. There are a very small number indeed of the latter description of persons, (I could not name half a dozen who have any pretension to eminence) who do not differ entirely from Dr. Channing.

If there are such general rules, and I think there are ; if they ought to be strictly adhered to, and I think they should be, then I am justified, as far as my opinion goes, in publishing, on a matter of general public interest, and in commenting on a voluntary public act of Dr. Channing, that his theories are *morally wrong as to society*.

Dr. Channing's theories are *wrong* to the *Southern States*. True it is, that Massachusetts and the slave-holding states, are one and the same country, for certain defined and national purposes. As to all other purposes, they are as distinct, sovereign and independent of each other as the several states, kingdoms and empires of Europe, and neither more nor less so. It may be a waste of labor to undertake the demonstration of a truth which no person of the age of twenty, dwelling in this country, ought to be supposed ignorant. The colonies were settled at various times and under various grants. Though under the dominion of the same King at all times, they were ever treated by him as independent of each other, and they ever treated each other as independent. In 1764, an attempt was made at Albany to unite some of the states. It was unsuccessful. The Declaration of Independence recognizes these sovereignties. The articles of confederation in July, 1778, is a treaty made by sovereignties. The National constitution in September, 1787, is a union of these sovereignties, and by the people of the states for certain purposes. The tenth article of amendment is, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people." Slavery is expressly recognized as existing, and no power is delegated to the United States but that of preventing importation after a certain day. The unquestionable right of slave-holding states, is, to manage all animate and inanimate objects within their respective limits, as they respectively think proper, excepting only the power delegated to the United States. As no delegated power re-

lates to slaves excepting in the matter of importation, power over slaves is “reserved to the states” or “to the people” — as clearly as the right of incorporating a bank, or of settling a clergyman.

As one sovereignty cannot interfere in the internal concerns of another ; as Massachusetts and all slave-holding states are respectively sovereign as to all matters of property within their respective limits ; as slaves are property ; as Dr. Channing has admitted all this to be so, by being a citizen of the state of Massachusetts, and has solemnly recognized the existence of slavery, by being a citizen of the United States, and the power of those who are slave-owners, and of those only, to continue it forever or remove it forthwith, his theories are *wrong as to the Southern States* ; surely *morally* so, if his theories, carried out, would be a breach of a solemn contract.

Dr. Channing’s theories are *wrong as to non-slave-holding States*. If wrong as to Southern States, it follows, as necessarily as one day must follow another, while the sun is luminous and the earth revolves, that they are wrong as to the Northern States. A state is a society of human beings, who have agreed, (where usurpation has not occurred) that they will express their will by the acts and words of a selected portion of their number. Not for the reason, according to Dr. Channing, that there are “Rights—Rights older than society” but because human beings are, whether they so will or not, but by God’s will, inevitably in society. *Theoretically*, rights are any thing which human fancy may make them ; practically, they are whatever any community may have made them ; and different in all communities. Being in society men make rules, more commonly by custom, than by positive legislation, to make each other do right, and to prevent their doing wrong to each other ; (which by the law written in the heart, they are most exceedingly prone to do,) and to punish those who do wrong as a just consequence of crimes, and to deter others from imitating their example. The will of a State can be expressed (the single matter of war excepted) no

otherwise, than by the acts and words of the official functionaries commissioned for that purpose. The will of Massachusetts was very properly expressed this morning, by the execution of a couple of men for obeying the law which happened to be written on their hearts. This was done by the invariable rule of words and acts, of persons thereunto authorized. If all the people of Massachusetts could have assembled this morning, and had unanimously voted that these two men should not have been put to death, the little piece of writing which one man had signed, and which another held, would have been a very sufficient reason why that vote should be disregarded, and the culprits hanged.

If our State have occasion next June, to communicate with the State of New-Hampshire, it can be done no otherwise than by words and acts of our Governor addressed to his Excellency Isaac Hill. His Excellency could not bear the united voice of 600,000 people of Massachusetts, if they were gathered around his triumphal car. If all the people of Massachusetts sincerely believed, that the law written in the heart, and republished in God's word demanded of them to call on the legislature of that State, to abrogate its *fundamental laws*, and to prevent the fastening of a *despotism* on the *mind*, destructive of civil liberty, and necessarily inductive of military despotism over the property which every man has in his "own strength," it could be done no otherwise than by a communication from our Governor, to his Excellency Governor Hill.

It is a very different thing to advise the citizens of New-Hampshire, as to the best manner of *executing fundamental laws*, as in the choosing of one man instead of another, in party politics; making roads, employing strength in profitable industry. Advice may be taken or rejected, and no harm ensues, as to the independence of one State on another.

Dr. Channing has assented, in common with all citizens of his own State, that he will do no act in relation to the *fundamental laws and rights arising therefrom, in other States*, which will bring upon his own State and his own fellow-citizens, the charge of a deliberate attempt to violate the laws and disturb the tranquility of other States, and of its citizens

Whatever horror he may feel for acts elsewhere done than where he owes allegiance, he can do no act which will subject his own State to reproach, peril, and perhaps, war, without an obvious violation of the duties of a good citizen.

Dr. Channing may insist throughout the longest life of man, with all the powers of his able mind, and with his admired eloquence, that these opinions are "metaphysical absurdities, and impracticable theories," but he will find no well-informed men who will consider them such. If I am asked for "authorities," I again say that I do not deal in them, nor need them. I have one, (unknown to none but enthusiasts) the *common sense of mankind* exemplified in the history of all civilized time; an authority which requires no professional learning, and which all intelligent merchants, farmers, mechanics, and yeomen, know as well as I do. The promotion and the cherishing of an excitement among people of one sovereignty, concerning opinions, customs, laws and principles, deemed right in another; or whether right or wrong, maintained there *by law*, cannot be in conformity to God's word, nor any law written by him in human hearts. I conclude, therefore, that Dr. Channing's theories are *wrong* as to non-slave-holding States, and inconsistent with the duties which every one owes to his own State, and to his fellow-citizens therein.

Wrong as to slave-owners. This is an unavoidable corollary from the foregoing propositions; but this, to borrow an expression of the author, "needs a fuller exposition." Whatever Dr. Channing has said, or can ever say, slave-owners do, and will continue to believe, that they have as perfect a right of property in slaves, as Dr. Channing has to believe, that he could not own a slave. They are as sincere, fixed and immoveable in their opinions, as the Doctor may be in his own. They have some pretensions to adhere, which the Doctor has not. They were born, "raised," (as they say) and have lived in these opinions; as was the fact with their fathers for two whole centuries. But Dr. Channing was born, raised, educated, enlightened by God's word, visited the slave regions, continued some twenty years in ministering from that word, and then, so far as the public knows, "suddenly there

shined around about him a light from Heaven.” His conversion is seen in his epistle to the world. The men of the South found slavery interwoven with all their political and social relations, with their daily bread,—in a word, with all that men live to have, to hope, or to enjoy. The learned author is secure from the sins which he charges on others, far remote from slavery, in ease and affluence, sure to live as well as he ever has done, in the respect and reverence of an admiring community. Ought he not to have had some tenderness for the prejudices of long-continued habit; for that sensibility to one’s own interest, the duty of self-preservation, which are laws written on the heart, whether any other be written there or not. Admit that the vision of the slave-owner is obscured; and that his position as slave-owner, (as the author remarks of Jamaica planters) has “robbed him of his reason, as well as blunted his moral sense;”—and suppose that Dr. Channing, blessed with an admirable clearness of vision, a reason freshly enlightened, and a moral sense keen as the sword of justice, was called of God to reform the tremendous evil of slavery;—Then, might not one have expected from *him*, a little more of that spirit of kindness, gentleness, and meekness, which is the eminent beauty of the Gospel?

Dr. Channing knows that there are such practical rules as have been stated. He disregards them. He annihilates all the boundaries of political societies, and makes of the whole world one expansive field for the labors of humanity. This is much like that field of which Roman Pontiffs were overseers, with undisputed authority, for a thousand years. Let us see how that field was cultivated. In 1003, Pope Sylvester II. ordered Robert, king of France, to repudiate Bertha his wife, because she was his *cousin*. The astonished monarch refused; the pope excommunicated, and made him so miserable from the horror of all his subjects to obey him, that at the end of three singularly wretched years, he submitted. This was a case in which all elements of government concentrated in one man, with superadded power from Heaven. In 1538, Pope Paul III. excommunicated Henry VIII. of England, because he chose to go contrary to the Pope’s will; declared him deposed, and invited other powers to make war on him;

but Henry had discovered that a Pope's *bull* was as harmless as the noise of an animal of the same name, when closely confined in a pound. This was a case in which the element of *executive power* was wanting. Dr. Channing's case is much the same. Lest it be thought that I mean to allude indecorously to historical facts, which I certainly do not on this, or any other occasion, let us change the scene.

One is a Christian missionary to Mahomedans. He begins :—Your prophet was a profligate impostor. That book which he pretended to have received, page by page, as written by the hand of God, and sent down by the hand of Gabriel, was a fabrication by a purchased and a corrupt Jew. He promised you an earthly heaven to induce you to sharpen your swords, lay the bleeding world at his feet, and give him an immortal fame. You worse than fools ! You abominable sinners ! Abandon the trash in that book which you call sacred, take my book which *is* sacred. Believe in it, instantly, every word from “In the beginning,” to “Amen,” or you will “lose your own souls.” This would not make converts. As little likely is it to make converts to Dr. Channing's theories, to begin by denouncing slave-owners as being oppressors of humanity, unjust, cruel, tyrannical, thieves, robbers, who ought to encounter “terrible vengeance.”

I cannot spare time to draw the conclusion from these premises. Happily, there is not an unprejudiced man in any non-slave-holding State, who cannot draw, for himself, the conclusion, that Dr. Channing is wrong as to slave-owners.

I have long, and habitually entertained for Dr. Channing an almost reverential esteem. I have considered him an admirable, enviable Christian. Now that he has associated himself in the publication of his book, with an Irishman, an Englishman and a German, to do, what I take to be, a great social and political wrong to Americans, I shall think myself perfectly justifiable, nay dutiful, in using for a few sentences, his own didactic manner.

No part of his book has shocked me more, than the repeated declaration, that the *negro is made in God's image*. Is it

any where said in the New Testament, that man is made in God's image. It is repeatedly said there, that our *Saviour* was made in God's image? Will it be permitted to say, that man is made in God's image, because he has some similitude to our Saviour, in some meanings of the world image? It is true that the writer of the book of Genesis (it may have been Moses) assumes to recite what God said, "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness." To whom did God say this? This is not an authority for the fact so often stated by Dr. Channing. The first three chapters of Genesis is an account of the origin of creation, and an account also of good and evil. These two subjects have naturally exercised the inventive powers of the mind, all over the world. Almost every nation had its own theory. Though I believe that Moses was divinely commissioned, in the sense in which George Washington was, to do a great good, to a particular people, and to lay the foundation of great events deeply interesting to all people, yet I am ignorant that Moses was inspired; or that he is entitled to credit or discredit, otherwise than in common with all historians. His work must be submitted to the criticism of reason. I think it a great misfortune to the *Christian* community and one great obstacle to the propagation of christianity, that the account given by Moses, has been *literally understood and associated with divine revelation*. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, unequalled as it may be as a work of imagination, and in grandeur of expression, has done more injury than good, to the world. The three first chapters of Genesis are not essentially connected with Christianity. If the Old Testament had contained nothing more than the prophecies and the genealogy of our Saviour, the Christian system, so far as it needed any, would have had all the foundation that it does need. I consider these two elements (perfectly within the comprehension of reason) to be irresistible proofs of God's interposition to restore (in one sense) the "depraved" race of man to his divine favor. There have been many operations of the human mind in science and discoveries, which are truly astonishing; but all of them may be accounted for by natural causes. No such causes will account for the prophetic annunciation of our

Saviour's appearance on earth. For these reasons especially, and for many others, the Old Testament is justly held to be a *sacred* book. But no man is held to believe literally, and against his reason, all and every thing therein contained. I find it not only unnecessary, but exceedingly difficult to take literally *as true*, the account of the origin of good and evil, as contained in the three first chapters, and of the creation of man in the *likeness of God*. If this is to be understood as allegorical, (as I think it must be) I can point out two allegories, made further East, which appear to me to be in nowise inferior and on precisely the same subject.

If I am at liberty to deal with the first three chapters of Genesis according to reason, then, there is nothing therein which reason so peremptorily rejects, as that man is made in God's image. May the strongest and the wisest of mortals, made up, as he must be, in his physical being, of a combination of earths, ever changing and perishable; mourning over the past, terrified at his own apprehensions of the coming, fitful, wayward, and inconsistent; the short-lived tenant of one of the most inferior of millions of planets, assume to be made in the likeness of HIM, by whose order the vast creation arose? "Angels smiled and wondered," when the mighties of all his race told how his own little ball keeps its pathway in the realms, which no stretch of his imagination could encircle. May the vain shadow of a shade take on itself to say, that it is like the ALMIGHTY and ETERNAL! when it cannot comprehend the action of its own system, nor how the seed is quickened in the ground, nor how the blossoms foretell the coming fruit, nor how that fruit prolongs the little tenure of its life? "What?" *A negro made in the image of God!* What is God's image? "Canst thou by searching find out God?" "Lo! he goeth by me and I see him not; he passeth on also, but I perceive him not. Knowest thou the ordinances of Heaven? Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the Earth?"*

*Mrs. Sarah Austin. (eminently distinguished for her German Scholarship) has given this version of Goethe's thought of the DEITY:

Who can name HIM?
 Who can feel and dare affirm,
 I believe in HIM not?
 The All-encompassing,

Within the little circle of man's knowledge is the fact, that God has made, according to one naturalist *five* species of the animal, man, and, according to another, fifteen. He has assigned to them their respective portions of the earth, in which condition is best. He assigned to the negro a vertical sun, a color, form, hair, and physical qualities which adapt him to that location. I shall not follow Dr. Channing in the disquisition of the intellectual, moral and religious qualities of this species of man. All this would be the vainest of speculations, since, neither God, nor experience, nor induction have hitherto instructed us, what to affirm, nor what to deny.

This also, is a known fact, that a portion of this colored race, have been, it must be presumed by God's will, transferred from their burning sands, to our country, where they are considered, by all but abolitionists, what God made them to be, *an inferior race to all other men*. So placed, they are never the subjects of public charity; rarely the subjects of public prosecution within slave-holding states. They are provided for in every stage of life. When old age and infirmities come on, they cannot be shaken off and abandoned. Humanity and interest, with most persons, combine to keep them in health and vigor, for the same reason (if I do not shock abolitionists in saying so) that a New-England farmer takes care of his horse, or his ox. If abolitionists would permit it, they might be schooled, and might be instructed in religious and moral duties. How far they are capable of this, is a speculation into which I shall not enter. It is probable, that their condition might be greatly meliorated, if it were the pleasure of abolitionists to allow this so to be, by letting them and their masters alone. It is even probable that manumission might take place, to a greater or less extent, if abolitionists had not forced, both on master and slave, the necessity

The All-sustaining,
Encompasses, sustains he not,
Thee, me HIMSELF?

Compare this thought with Dr. Channing's notion that the negro is made in God's image! No mind attempts to personify God, without being driven back to infancy; when only the mind is weak enough to conceive of God, in some figure borrowed from earthly objects.

of regarding each other not as friends, but enemies ; the one, thief, robber, tyrant ; the other, a disgraced, chained, cruelly treated captive, in despite of humanity, and God's will, and entitled to "terrible vengeance."

In this state of things immediate emancipation is demanded *in God's name*. As experience is the best teacher, I have glanced over my poor stock of historical facts to find what are likely to be the consequences to *slaves*. I discern no case where a people were held in bondage, who were utterly *immiscible* in the social and political condition of their masters. A *peasantry* is talked of. There long was, in Europe, and still is, in the Eastern parts of it, a class called adscripti glebæ, persons tied to the soil, and sold with it. Where freedom was acquired, all were capable of mingling in society. But these things occurred where the castes of society were nearly as well fixed, and adhered to, as they are among the Hindoos. Here we have but two castes, freemen, and slaves. The admission of the latter class to all the rights which belong to the former, without limitation, or distinction, would be alike fatal to the security, welfare and happiness of both classes. Disputes, civil war, and extermination, would be inevitable. A qualified liberation, according to Dr. Channing's plan, (most exceedingly "crude" if I may use one of his own words) would certainly lead to the same consequences. It becomes, in the first instance, a naked question of interest or money, for which Dr. Channing seems to have great contempt. What now becomes of the white man's concern in the welfare of the blacks ? What is it now to the whites, who is poor, sorry, lame, indolent, sulky, sick, aged, dying or dead, among the blacks ? Or what wrongs, tyrannies or crimes they perpetrate as to each other ?

It is highly probable that the freed slave would have the satisfactory "vengeance" of making a slave of his former master. If I were as able, eloquent and learned as Dr. Channing, I could prove, to all unprejudiced minds, from *the nature of man*, (which I take to be a decisive expression of God's will) that a black race and a white race, cannot exist on one and the same soil, in nearly equal numbers, unless one of the two is completely and absolutely subjected to the other.

Does Dr. Channing or any other man, know what qualities, vicious or virtuous, thrifty or impoverishing, the colored race would exhibit, if left to themselves ? What is the condition of Hayti at the present moment ? I take it to be a very severe military despotism, by mulattoes over blacks, and all its inhabitants continually growing poorer and more ignorant, and hastening rapidly to the natural state of their parent regions. What so swells the bills of mortality in New-York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore ? Is it not from the habits of freed blacks ? — But — how inconsistent it is with the spirit of “ universal benevolence ” to consider such things ! Adhere to and push through, abstract principles, and leave the consequence to God !

Blessed of the Almighty ! be that spirit which strives to abolish the *African slave trade*, that most complicated, deliberate and horrible wickedness, fit only for “ profoundest Hell.” The *motives* of abolitionists are strongly contrasted with this spirit. But if slaves could know what these enthusiasts say and print, they could lack nothing but the power to execute a will, which would throw the horrors of that traffic into shade. Deplorable delusion ! England will mourn in sackcloth and ashes, and within half a century, that this spirit was yielded to, in her councils. Taking this measure in connexion with the inevitable state of India, it will be an accelerating step in declension, which can never be retraced. “ *Take care of irrevocable deeds,*” is a precious maxim, no less to nations than to men.

The theories set forth in Dr. Channing’s book are *wrong as to the Nation*. If wrong as to States in which slaves are, and those in which they are not ; and if wrong as to masters and slaves, it may not necessarily follow, that they are wrong as to the Nation. It is easy to prove that they are so.

Distinct and independent as the States and the citizens thereof, certainly are, as to every thing animate and inanimate within their respective territorial limits, every citizen, in every State, is solemnly bound to all other citizens, in every State,

to support and maintain a deliberately formed contract to unite them all into one nation. Any citizen who does any act tending to impair, and to dissolve this national contract, does something worse than to commit a great immorality ; he hazards the charge of doing that wrong, which is a breach of contract, and which, if done in certain modes, would be a severely punishable offence.

Dr. Channing is not unmindful (pages 156, 157) that the spirit of abolitionism, followed out as he recommends, may dissolve the union ; yet he is pleased to speak emphatically of its value. "No one prizes the union more than myself." "Most men value the union as a means, to me it is an end." It does not follow, because I cannot comprehend this distinction, that none exists. I should think the union, of little value, if it were either "means" or "end," only. "To me" the union is means to many and most important ends, as domestic tranquility, commerce, peace, war, revenue, national independence. To enable States to have means to these ends, the national constitution guarantees to them, a republican form of Government. To enable States and citizens to have the means of ordering every thing as they please, precisely as they could, and did, before the union was formed, (those things only excepted which were, by the constitution, delegated to the National Government,) the constitution provides, that every thing not delegated, *is reserved to the States or to the people*. To secure to each State, protection against invasion, and "domestic violence," the national government, on a prescribed form of application therefor, is bound to embody militia, and send them to the relief of the distressed State.

This provision has always been understood as intended to protect States against that *servile* violence, which the measures of abolitionists are exactly adapted to produce. Dr. Channing may repel as indignantly as he pleases (and he may do so, no doubt, with conscientious truth) the imputation of intending to stir up revolt, violation, conflagration, and massacre ; but it is not for him, nor any other abolitionist, to choose the consequences of his acts. May he put the flambeau of his "universal benevolence" to one end of a com-

bustible pile, on which a violent wind is blowing, and command the flame to stop where he pleases ?

In my view, Dr. Channing's theories are a clear, obvious violation of his duty as a *national* citizen. Surely he is not of this opinion, because he is incapable of any intentional wrong. If his book has made it necessary for any slave-owner to take precautions against violence ; if it has made any citizen think his property less valuable ; if it has made any mother hug her infant closer to her breast, in terror ; if it has brought into any wife's or virgin's mind, thoughts of horror ; if it has brought fear and trembling to any heart ; was not Dr. Channing forbidden by the solemn duties of a national citizen, forbidden as a Christian, to do this ? What right, Heaven-born or earthly, has he, or any other abolitionist, to publish, that beings whether made in " God's image " or not, are entitled to " terrible vengeance " against his national fellow-citizens ?

Highly as Dr. Channing prizes the union, it can, in his opinion, be purchased, at too dear a rate. It will be purchased and held at too dear a rate, if he cannot have " an immediate disclaimer of the right of property in human beings." He says, page 157, " Still, if the union can be preserved only by the imposition of chains, on speech and on the press, by prohibition of discussion, on a subject involving the most sacred rights, and dearest interests of humanity, then union will be bought at too dear a rate ; then it would be changed from a virtuous bond, into a league of crime and shame."

Is this bond any thing else but what it was in 1787, when prepared by as wise, patriotic, and virtuous an assembly as was ever known among men ? Is it any thing else than what it was, in that, and the two following years, when it was joyfully, triumphantly, solemnly adopted by a whole people, as the sure and only means of escape from confusion, civil war, anarchy, despotism ? Yes ! It is no longer that bond. The Reverend Dr. Channing, of Massachusetts, has just discovered that there are, in the Southern States, some two or three millions of black people, made in " God's image with immortal souls, and God-like powers," who ought, according to " the law written on the heart, and republished in God's word," " forth-

with to be made his fellow-citizens !” If he cannot have the immediate gratification of hailing them as such, this bond forthwith becomes “ a league of crime and shame !”

As there is not the remotest probability that the gratification which Dr. Channing seeks is attainable, and as there is as little probability that the good sense of the North will tolerate abolitionists to the extent of irritating and forcing the South to break from the union to protect themselves from the horrors which abolitionism tends to produce, we must continue to live under this league of crime and shame. If the American people have wisdom and virtue enough to choose men who will faithfully administer the laws which they have made themselves, in the true spirit of that religion which Dr. Channing professes, we shall go on well, by whatever name he may call that bond. Yet this may not be so. It may be ordered that the people of the non-slave-holding States shall permit their “ sacred rights and dearest interests ” to be sacrificed to the spirit of abolitionism. It may be that some men, wives, daughters, and children, will continue to attend abolition meetings, and to spend their time on eloquent and exciting publications. It may be in this, as in a recent case, that *abolition or not*, is to become the test for political employment, church-membership, and the right to the benefits of neighborhood ; and even the right to sunbeams and air. It may be that the peace, union and hopes of this rising empire, are to fall before a wild solicitude for Southern blacks. What limits does enthusiasm in the cause of “ humanity,” prescribe to itself, but despotism !

If, after all, Dr. Channing is entirely right in his principles of duty, and I, consequently, wrong, there is one thing in which not he nor any other abolitionist, can be right. If every slave-holder in the South had united to engage abolitionists to give to slave owners the fullest justification for ceasing to attempt emancipation, and for holding slaves in the strictest bondage, abolitionists could, in no way, have performed the desired service so thoroughly and triumphantly, as they have done. When enthusiasm stops to take counsel, it loses its distinctive character, and incurs the risk of falling into common sense.

Have I been attempting to justify abstract slavery, as a religious, moral, social, or political right? No more than Dr. Channing intended to do the same thing by his book. I would not enslave a breathing creature of any shape, nor made in any image, nor even cause a "starling" to say "I can't get out." I am only examining the Rev. Dr. Channing's profound and original notions on "Great truths, inalienable rights, and everlasting duties," as applied to a state of society, civilized, christian, and long established, and wholly unprecedented in the history of mankind. This examination has conducted me to the conclusion that this author's notions are *wrong* as to the inevitable order of society; as to Southern States, as to Northern States, as to Masters, as to Slaves, as to the American Nation. *Wrong*, politically, socially, morally, religiously; and right in nothing but "metaphysical abstractions, and impracticable theories."

Have I a right to give my reasons for my perception of "duty?" As much as Dr. Channing has to arrogate to himself a piety and wisdom transcendently superior to like attributes in all other men. His notions of duty and those of all other unprejudiced sensible men, are as opposite to each other as are the extensor and flexor muscles of the human body.

I am gratefully mindful of what it cost, to secure to the citizens of Massachusetts the right to address the public from good motives and for justifiable ends, on all subjects of common and general interest. This right I will surrender to no man, however respected and esteemed, venerated or reverend. I will exercise this right whenever I believe that any effort of mine, however poor itself, may help to avert evil from the community in which I live, or the national Union to which I owe allegiance.

Dr. Channing craves the Divine blessing on his work. Far be it from me to assume to do this, on mine. I have another depressing inequality as to "my work." I have not a well-earned and illustrious fame to emblazon my name in a title page. If my name, subscribed at the close, would add the weight of a feather, I would suppress it for that very reason. Facts, opinions, and conclusions are to be estimated, at what they are worth, on their own account, not on account

of an author's fame. All who feel interested, (and who can feel that he is not?) must judge for themselves, on these facts and inferences, in the sobriety of reason, and not according to the delusions of amiable, misapplied philanthropy.

What ought a Massachusetts man to do about slavery? What ought slave-owners to do? What will finally come of slavery? To the first question I should answer, *Nothing*. To the second, *Whatever they think best*. To the third, *That OMNISCIENT MIND by which slavery was originally permitted, and hitherto continued, knows, and none other*.

“ Shall mortal *man* be more just than GOD ? ”

“ Shall a *man* be more pure than his MAKER ? ”

ESSEX COUNTY, MASS. *March*, 1836.

Pursuing the Author's course I have a few remarks to add on his “ Notes,” with which he concludes his volume. He says ; I wish to add a few statements to show how little reliance can be place on what seem, to a superficial observer, mitigations or advantages of slavery, and how much safer it is to argue from the experience of all times, and from the principles of human nature, than *from insulated facts*.”

What would one naturally expect from this preface? The very last thing to be expected must be “insulated facts.” Yet, the author goes on to state such facts. From these, he makes out, that he has reasoned from “the experience of all times, and from the principles of human nature,” because he puts on these facts, just such construction as suits his purpose. The inferences seem to have been made first, and then facts sought for to maintain them.

I will try, in like manner, to show what “the experience of all times, and the principles of human nature,” are, by “insulated facts.” Dr. Channing is not the only man in the North who has seen a slave country. Among the insulated facts of which I have heard are the following.

1. A northern man asked a slave, whether he did not desire his liberty. He answered, “No. I am as well as I can be. I have good Massa. He take care of me. He

must take care of me when I am old. I tell the colored people, the talk 'bout liberty is nonsense. If they get liberty and go away, they die miserable."

2. A South Carolinian who was here last summer said :—
 "I own a sea-island plantation three miles from the main land. There are 200 slaves on it ; and one white family. I sometimes go there and pass a month. If I were suddenly taken sick, and needed a physician, there are dozens of slaves on my plantation, who would swim the strait in the night time to procure me a physician, if there were no other way of getting one."

3. A New England clergyman said,—“I preached on a plantation. The slaves assembled, and gave me a call. I answered that I was absent from home on account of health, and was already settled.” If no similar thing should ever occur again, why not ? Let abolitionists answer.

4. I heard a North Carolinian say : “My body servant, who was born about the same time I was, in the same house, and never separated from me, was engaged one day in shaving me. He had been treated with the utmost kindness, and had ever shown the most devoted attachment. While performing this service he said,—“Massa, what you take for me ?” “Take for you ?” said I, with astonishment. “Yes,” said he, “I want my liberty.” “Take it,” said I, “and leave me.” He did so, went to Baltimore, and in three years was dead, from vice and misery.”

5. I have heard a northern man say, that he had spent three months in the South ; that he never heard the sound of a lash ; that the black population appeared to be far happier than the white race. That there are mistresses who attend with maternal tenderness to the wants of their slaves, sick or well ; mistresses who have made it a duty to inform themselves of the diseases to which blacks are subject, and who are skilful in the use of remedies ; and who daily visited the abodes of blacks throughout their plantations.

6. Ten years ago an eminent citizen of North Carolina was in Boston. He said : “I live in a town 12 miles from my plantation. My overseer came to me and said that the negroes were refractory, and that I must go up and whip

them. I told him I had never whipped any body in my life, but I would go up and make them a *speech*. The overseer said no speech would restore them to order. I answered I should take no whip in my hand, and told him to go back and have them all assembled the next morning. I went up, and said to them, that I was surprised at what I heard of them ; that every new year's day I had visited them and distributed presents among them all ; gone almost weekly into all their dwelling-places, and spared neither money nor care to make them comfortable. I see you want another master. Next Saturday at nine, I shall come with an auctioneer, and you shall have no trouble from me, nor I from you, in future. One of them said, stop a little Massa. He stepped aside with four or five, and, after a few moments consultation, they returned and said, try us a little longer Massa, and see how we do. I never heard a word more of complaint, and there they are to this day."

7. I heard a gentleman say, that he was sitting with the mistress of a tavern on the piazza. An aged colored woman, totally blind, was feeling her way along an entry ; and an aged decrepid man of color was creeping from an out-building to the tavern house, at the same time. The gentleman said to the mistress, " Do these aged persons do any work ? She answered—Not the least thing. Said he—Why don't you get rid of them ? She replied—They have been good servants in their time. Our laws oblige us to take care of them. If they did not, the home of these persons is *here*, while they live."

8. Robert H. Goldsborough, Senator of the United States from Maryland, in his speech delivered 8th of this month, says : " In no instance, (and I have known many,) where an intelligent man from the North has come to the South, without any other impressions of negro slavery than those formed in his own fancy at a distance, have I ever known him to be otherwise than completely astonished and gratified at the real condition of things. Instead of meeting with his supposed squalid, trembling, ill-treated set of beings, he finds a cheerful well-conditioned laboring people, with a body of lively and kindly treated domestic servants ; in fact, instead of abject

and tyrannically abused slaves, he finds a happy well trained peasantry, who divide with their masters a good portion of their labor, and who unlike other peasantry, are not left to chances and accident for their support, but through all accident and chance, are sustained and protected by the means, the care, and the favor of their masters."

In the same speech Mr. G. says : " How mistaken is this zeal ! How ill-adapted to its end ! If they who are leading on to such things, could only witness the return of these Southern gentlemen with their families to their homes, and see their meeting with their slaves as they call them, and as they really are, they would not only be astonished, after all they had heard or thought, but I believe, sincerely, they would desist. Instead of the ' crouching creatures in the form of man ' coming with doubting fear into the presence of a tyrant, as the scene is ever falsely represented, they would see the gladdened countenances of *a well-taken care of people* hastening with joy to greet their friends return ; and the rustic laborers from the fields, when they come in from their employments, are no less anxious to bid the hearty welcome. Then ensue the inquiries for health and cares, and all is satisfaction and joy around. Sir, I present no fancied picture. I give the scenes that are prevalent and usual."

I have no commentary to make on the " insulated facts " stated by this Senator, but this : which of the two parties, (Dr. Channing and Mr. Goldsborough) is most to be credited on the " arguing from the experience of all times, and from the principles of human nature ? " Dr. Channing is removed some hundreds of miles from slavery, and does not appear from his book, to have seen slavery but once, where, when or how long, is not stated. Was he looking after insulated facts to sustain existing prejudices ? He is a singularly secluded clergyman, devoured (as his book shows) by the abstract notions of abolitionism ; and has forgotten the realities of this world, in his paternal solicitude to provide for all colors in the next. Mr. Goldsborough speaks on the responsibility of a Senator ; from the knowledge of long continued experience ; in the presence of hundreds who know whether he is well founded in what he says ; and surrounded by those

who could and would display his errors, if any there were. Which of these gentlemen is to be credited? There are cases of cruelty among slaves I doubt not, from "principles of human nature," because I see cases of arrogance, insolence and provocation; and cases of passion, oppression and tyranny, wherever there are communities. Man is exceedingly prone to tyrannise over his fellow-man wherever he can indulge his will. If I do not entirely misunderstand Dr. Channing's book, we should all be kept in prime order, in the North as well as the South, if his will were law, and if he had executive power to enforce it. In comparing the credibility of these two persons, in speaking of general usages, and of the condition, character, and conduct, pleasures and pains and purposes for which human life was given to blacks as well as whites, I cannot refuse my assent to what this Senator asserts. I leave to others, to judge of the bearing and worth of Dr. Channing's statements. But whether the one or the other is to be credited or both, they speak on subjects with which New England men are (as I trust I have proved) forbidden to interfere.

I am most heartily tired of this labor, and long to be otherwise employed; but there are some things in notes 2 and 3 which ought not to pass unnoticed. In note 2 the author says, "The strong and next to universal impression in regard to the tendency of this party (abolitionist) to inflame *common* minds, confirmed as it is, by what I have seen of their newspapers, *must be essentially true*. The orator who was chiefly employed in addressing their meetings and forming societies, was distinguished by his vehemence and passionate invectives. On one occasion, there is strong proof of his having given an opinion in favor of (~~the~~) *cruel vengeance* on the part of the slaves. This seems to contradict what I have said of the steady inculcation of forbearance and non-resistance of abolitionists. But this case, if correctly reported, was an exception; an ebullition of uncontrollable passion in an individual for which the rest were not responsible."

What a striking illustration is this of the proverb “ *The eye cannot see itself.*” Dr. Channing severely condemns the act of an orator, under the influence of uncontrollable passion, for having expressed an opinion in favor of “cruel vengeance on the part of the slaves.” When, where, or by whom, or on what “common minds,” this outrage was committed in a perishable and perhaps *forgotten* speech, from an unworthy man, the author has not stated. It could not have been spoken to any New-England audience, (unless they had lost their senses,) without being followed by a condemnation of the orator, and of the speech, as fervently as Dr. Channing condemns them. But outrageous as this was, still it is moral, religious, dutiful, for a man no less celebrated than Dr. William E. Channing, in the calmness of the closet, to prepare a book, destined for stereotype printing ; to be read universally, and to be familiar not to “common minds” only, but to all minds ; and to make, not one impression, but thousands of impressions ; not on this generation only, but all future generations craving to know what so great a mind as Dr. Channing’s could produce,—and that book contains——What ? It does contain, at the foot of page 59 and on page 60, after a most inflammatory description of the wrongs of the slave, and far exceedingly any thing that ever came from any abolition “orator,” these words ;—“ *No fellow creature can be so injured without taking terrible vengeance.*”

As Dr. Channing must desire to have every thing done which he thinks just ; as he thinks it would be just for slaves to take “terrible vengeance,” he must desire that slaves would take such vengeance. When, therefore, Dr. Channing hears of nocturnal insurrection, of conflagration, violation, and indiscriminate massacre, these tidings will give him no pain ; for a righteous man must acquiesce in deeds of justice. The *wrong* done by some unknown “orator,” was to utter such a sentiment, in a passionate, transitory speech. The *right* done by Dr. Channing is, to utter the same sentiment, in the most durable, and universal form, and with the sanction of his own great name.

I earnestly hope for the honor of Dr. Channing’s fame, from reverence of his profession, for the honor of Massachu-

setts, for the cause of humanity, that I have, for once, lost the knowledge of my mother tongue ; and I should gladly learn that I had.

In Note III. are these words ; “ I beg, however, to say, that nothing which I have written can have proceeded from unkind feelings towards the South ; for in no other part of the country, have *my writings* found a more gratifying reception ; from no other part have I received stronger expressions of sympathy. My own feelings, had I consulted them, would have led me to stifle every expression which could give *pain* to those from whom I have received *nothing but good will.*”

One of two things is likely to come of this volume.—First ; “ the South ” will continue to believe, that the existence, the continuance, or the abandonment of slavery is exclusively a concern of their own, both in this world and the next ; and agree with Dr. Channing, that it is a matter in which he has “ no right to interfere.” In this case, the South may think that the author has made a most ungracious return for the voluntary honors conferred on “ my writings ;” and for his “ receipts of nothing but good will.” Or, secondly ; the South, “ quailing ” under Dr. Channing’s awful denunciations, may forthwith manumit all their slaves ; and rising, in oriental custom, from the earth on to their knees, may gratefully kiss the paternal hand by which they have been made to know the nature and extent of their sins, in a manner not to be misunderstood. [In China, when a Mandarin orders a whipping with the bamboo, the sinner is stretched on the earth, back upwards, and when the infliction is made, the sinner gets on to his knees, and gratefully kissing the Mandarin’s hand thanks him for his kindness. The gratitude is proportioned to the severity of the chastisement.]

In the last page 196, there is a caution to the South, which, come from what source it may, is well worthy of their notice. Any attempt of Southern men, to interfere with personal liberty, *beyond their own territorial limits*, would undoubtedly be attended with all the evil consequences which the author very properly describes. It would kindle a flame which no earthly elements could extinguish.

I have amused myself with a sort of philosophical problem,

contained in the question, why did Dr. Channing prepare and publish this book? The only way in which I can solve this, is by applying the good old rule of three. When one knows certain facts concerning any man, he may, "on the principles of human nature," deduce unknown facts; or as logicians say, he must go, by reasoning, from the known to the required unknown. Assume then, that a man is an able, eloquent divine; that his writings have every where found "a gratifying reception," and have called forth "strong expressions of sympathy;" that his knowledge is derived from what he reads, and from his own contemplations; that those who come within the sound of his voice, never come to impart any knowledge (because no one can instruct him,) but to listen to words as near to inspiration, as any words can be, in this age of the world. Would not such a man, from "the principles of human nature" necessarily believe, that common consent had revived *in him*, the long departed *Pythia* of the Delphic cave, and ordained him to dictate, *ex tripode*, to an admiring and grateful world? Suppose that such a man perceives his countrymen to be laboring under a "bewildering excitement;" that their minds are "stormed and darkened by strong passions and fierce conflicts." Then, would it not be such a man's "duty" to go forth, with a "whip" in one hand, and "God's word" in the other, and take a dictatorial command in this frightful moral commotion, and set all the warring world to rights? How unfortunate it would be, if this benign interposition should have no other effect than to aggravate the supposed evils, and to make them irremediable!

I have discussed Dr. Channing's book freely; but not a thousandth part so freely as he has discussed every body, and every thing, which he considers to need the chastisement of his transcendent piety and wisdom. Free discussion is the only preservative of civil and religious liberty. This country is to stand or fall by *public opinion*. This opinion can be kept right, and made to come right when wrong, only by free discussion. When this truth is given up, it will be matter of indifference, whether Martin Van Buren wears a temporal crown, or whether Dr. Channing wears one both spiritual and temporal. Man-worship is a dangerous devotion whether

manifested in spiritual or political concerns. Andrew Jackson would have been more or less than human, if he had not sported his wild vagaries on heads laid down in oriental servitude.

All judicious and considerate men (so far as I know and believe) deeply regret the publication of Dr. Channing's volume. How much to be lamented is it, that this great and good man, had not turned his attention to the many and crying evils in his own community, instead of attempting to remedy those which he supposes to exist in communities wherein he is forbidden (by his own confession) to interpose. What brilliant jewels he might have added to those which he honorably wears, if he had given his illustrious talents to persuade the Legislature of his own State, that they could, in no way, promote the public welfare so effectually, as by establishing a permanent board of able commissioners to superintend *popular education*; and a like board to remedy the growing mischiefs of *pauperism*. *Popular education*; because, order, property, republicanism, religion, come therefrom:—*pauperism*; because intemperance, disorder, crime, misery, come therefrom.

I have passed over the consideration of "scripture" because it does not appear to me to approve or condemn slavery, any more than it approves or condemns Monarchy or Democracy. Neither the founder of Christianity, nor his disciples, interfered, in any way with the political order of society. "Render to Cæsar, the things that are Cæsar's" is a full exposition of the Saviour's will, in this respect. Revelation is addressed to each individual's reason and conscience; requiring of him to do his duty to God, to himself, and his fellow-men, in whatsoever station Providence may have assigned. Each one is to be responsible for his own soul, not for the souls of others. Least of all does the Gospel require of any mortal so to take care of other men's souls for eternity, as to bring about temporal evils incalculable and interminable; and necessarily involving crimes which may send unnumbered souls to perdition.

Without any pretension to knowledge which is not common to all considerate, educated citizens, I may assume, that from

the first settlement of this country down to the publication of Dr. Channing's book, the great and good men, devoted to the ministry, have taken a becoming and useful part in the absorbing public interests of their times. Often and often have they, in the fervent eloquence of the sacred desk, kindled or encouraged the noble spirit of patriotism ; and animated the holiest zeal in the attainment of things practical and righteous. No case is remembered (excluding the troubled scenes of the revolution) in which any of these eminent men publicly appeared on *the wrong side*. It is a painful apprehension, that the world may believe this eminent author to be *the exception*. It is of vital importance in communities, which have *politically*, no religion, that the indispensable, venerated and honorable office of the clergy, should be sustained with the utmost respect, confidence and affection, within *its own proper sphere*. But if the clergy transcend that sphere ;—if they take on themselves to *rule* the temporalities of the world ;—if they assume to annul social institutions by the mere force of spiritualities ;—if they mount and recklessly ride over all constitutional and international law, any man may be prophet enough to foretell that their holy office will soon come to an end.

ESSEX COUNTY, MASS. *March, 1836.*

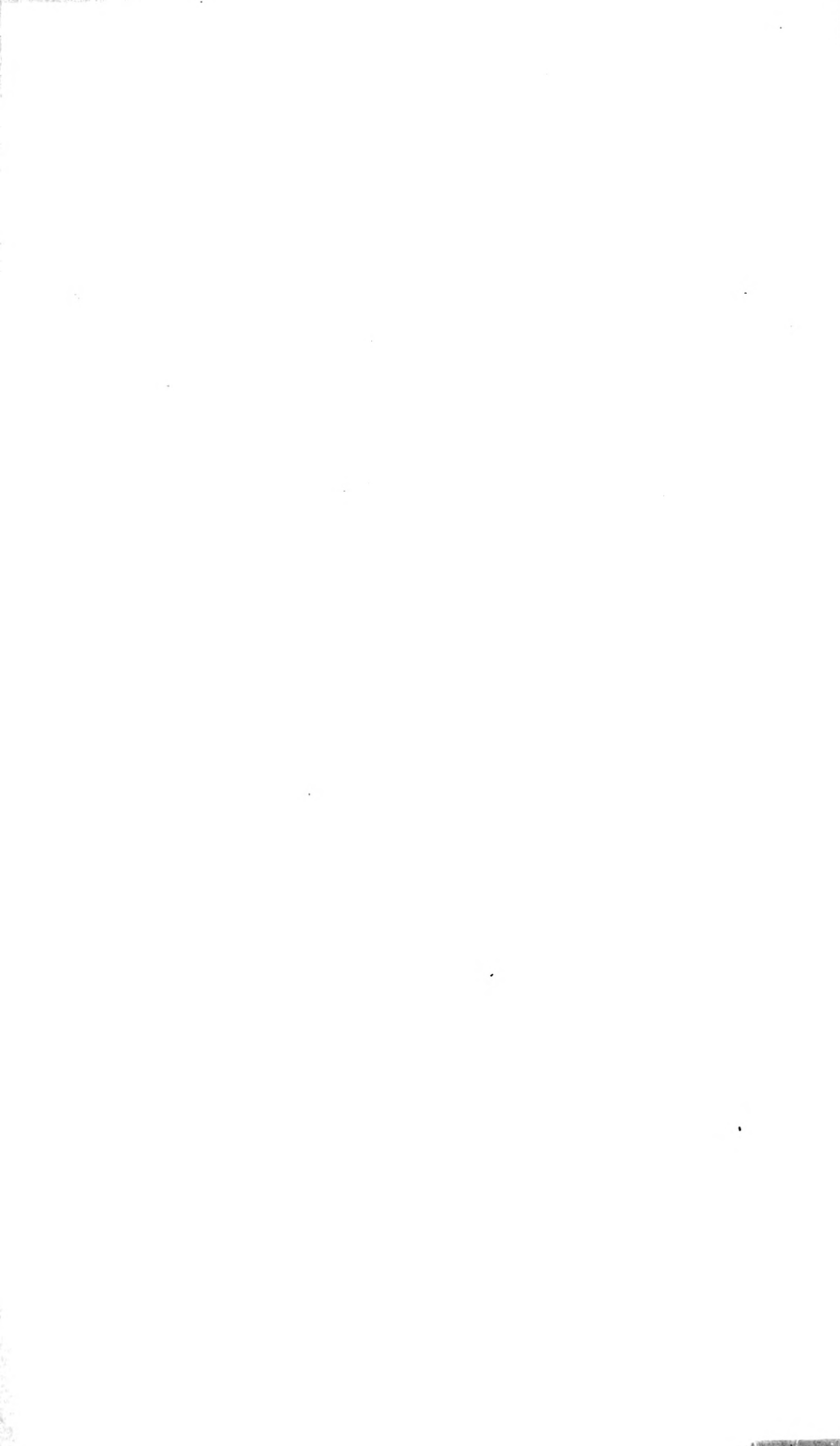
CONCLUSION.

Society is man's necessary condition. Its members *must* be governed. Governing may be the exercise of power by a few, that all may have and enjoy the benefits of existence. It may be, the exercise of power by a few, to control and oppress the many, so that these few may wanton in luxury, and delight in their supremacy. This latter has been the common lot, in most nations, and in all ages. Causes : Force, hereditary claims, priestly power, bribery, corruption, fraud, perversion of law. So it must ever be, unless a people have power, will, and wisdom, to establish, *prospectively*, RULES to restrain folly and passion, and alike binding, supreme, and sacred, as to rulers and the ruled.

Americans, and they only, have had power, will, and wisdom to establish political rules, admirably adapted to their condition ; leaving a wide space untouched for intellectual and moral action. Better lights and experience disclose errors and wrongs requiring remedies. To that community only, in which these appear, belongs the remedial power. Those who so exercise that power as to produce far greater evils than those they would abolish, tread backwards in the great purpose of melioration, and defeat their own ends.

The progress of a state, or nation requires a continual and, sometimes, a new application of political rules. Whether this shall be justly and wisely, or dishonestly and perversely done, depends on the character of rulers. Whoever tramples down the established rules, intended for the public security, and the common good, and substitutes his own will therefor, is a **PUBLIC MALEFACTOR**. This will be the judgment which a discriminating and indignant posterity will pronounce, on the present dominant faction in the United States. It will make the acts of this faction the more odious, that they were done in the name of "*the people*" for whose benefit these rules were made, by a wise and patriotic ancestry.





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