

THE
/

272
268

SINFULNESS

OF

SLAVEHOLDING

IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES;

TESTED BY REASON AND SCRIPTURE.

By JAMES G. BIRNEY.

Detroit:

PRINTED BY CHARLES WILLCOX.

1846.

TO THE PREACHERS OF THE GOSPEL IN THE UNITED STATES.

GENTLEMEN—

This is dedicated to you, inasmuch as it is written chiefly for you. It is intended, for the most part, for intelligent and well trained minds; therefore, it is but the suggestion of thoughts which lie still more expanded in the mind of the writer.

The writer does not believe that slavery can be established by any law. It is out of the power of man, as adultery, murder, profanity would be. No human law that requires me to speak irreverently of the Author of my existence, or to commit any of the crimes mentioned in the Decalogue, is of any binding obligation. Slavery has been *might*, prevailing for a season against *right*. The strong and unprincipled have enslaved the weak and defenceless, till it has emasculated the former. As slavery is now a sign of weakness in the nation that cherishes it, so is it a sign of weakness in the tribes that permit it.

I will not withhold my surprise, that any of you should still use the Book of God's *love* to countenance the practice of Man's *hate*. He has formed me, in some sort, to see HIM as a God of love, as a God of justice—as a Father, tender and kind; as a Governor, just and inflexible. He has bestowed on me the faculties of *love* and *justice*. They must be like his own. I must, therefore, throw aside his character, and the book which reveals it, or I must throw aside its opposite, American Slavery, “the sum of villanies.” To maintain them both is impossible. Which of them I shall throw aside, I leave to you.

It is attempted in the following tract, to show you the condition of the Apostle Paul—of the country and people among

whom he chiefly operated—and thence to arrive at right conclusions. It is ground, yet unattempted, so far as the writer knows. If he is not mistaken, this tract cannot fail of being useful. That it may be, is the wish of a warm friend of the faithful among you, as well as of one who has thought much on the subject.

JAMES G. BIRNEY.

January 1, 1846.

SINFULNESS OF SLAVEHOLDING.

The question to be determined is, *Is Slaveholding right in any circumstances?* I shall approach the subject without prejudice, and do what I can to lead all concerned to a right decision.

Let us first determine what slaveholding is; for why should we dispute about words, ignorant of what each other intends? Slaveholding is a *positive* act. I say this in opposition to a *negative* act. It is the absolute subjection of one human being to the will of another. It is not the voluntary going-out of the *will* of another, seeking a master, to whom he may, forever, thereafter, be irrevocably and totally surrendered; but the *subduing* of the *will* of another. This shows that something is to be *done*. The more his will be subdued to act on the instigation of another, the better slave he will make. Slaveholding, is, therefore, not a negative, but a positive act:—a bringing under another's dominion, by force.

I say, *by force*:—for it requires some application of force to subdue the *will* of another to conform in any degree to that of mine. If there was no *slaveholding*, there would be no *slaveholder*: if there was no slaveholder, there would be no subduing of the will by *force*. This force is unlawful, too, because it is exerted contrary to the will of him who is to be enslaved, and who has a right to be consulted. It, therefore, appears to be an act of unlawful force.

Jesus Christ, when he said, “whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,” spoke to his hearers no revelation. It was what their *reason* would require of them; for just so far as they respected the rights of others, their rights would be respected—no further. And, to this day, this constitutes a good man. How far this influences *savages*, to whom the gospel has never been preached, we may learn from Dymond. [Essays

on the Principles of Morality, pp. 72, 73.] It is not pretended that this feeling exists, in the same degree, in the unrefined savage, as in the well-informed christian; but that it does exist in all men sufficiently strong enough to be termed a law of our nature—one to be reasoned from.

If I am right in this—if it be true that slavery is attended with force; that this force is unlawful; that to do to others as they should do unto us, is the law that is common to human nature every where;—that to respect the rights of others, is the only security for having our own respected;—then, have I, already, to all impartial minds, fully made out my case. If these things be true, slavery cannot be right in its inception. And not being right in its inception, its subsequent continuance can never be right. A wrong, originating in a trespass,—itself constituting a trespass,—can never become a right. A plea to an assault and battery, that my intention was only to carry the party complaining into slavery, would, before a court and jury, uncontaminated with that system, avail me but little.

But as it is not impartial minds only, that are to be convinced, I will prosecute the inquiry a little further.

Admah is a savage African chief:—He has about him and under his control, one hundred warriors. He is running short of rum, tobacco and balls. How shall he replenish his store? At that moment, a christian slave-trader arrives on the coast, we will suppose, from Charleston, South Carolina. He is well supplied with the stores which Admah so much needs. He instigates him to adopt the most summary method of supplying his wants; to attack the village of his neighbor, Bolun, *in the dead of the night, when the inmates are asleep and unsuspecting*, and reduce as many of them as he can to slavery. Admah follows his advice. He attacks his neighbor, Bolun. Some fly in the dark; others resist by the light of their burning dwellings. The decrepid and immature he kills. When the struggle is over, he finds himself possessed of fifty strong men and women as slaves.

If, in the morning, his heart should relent,—if he should say, I will not *bind* you,—I will repair, as far as I can, the injury I have done, and you need not fear *actual* or *constructive* violence being hereafter applied to you,—his victims would no longer be such, but they would at once go free. But Admah does not so

act. He applies chains and fetters to their arms and limbs, and makes his captives his slaves.

Is Admah not here guilty of *force*? Is it not *unlawful*? Admah has attacked them in the dead of the night; they were his neighbors; and they depended on his friendship for Bolun, as a sufficient safeguard. Admah, in the best way he can, contrives to make them unsuspecting of his intended assault. Their not suspecting his friendship, makes his assault on them the surer. In this there was force. His secret preparations prove them to be unlawful, and his demeanor throughout the whole transaction, is a violation of the rule, written in his heart—"thou shalt do to others as you would that others should do unto you." It is plain, here, that he would not change conditions with his captives.

But Admah is not one of the pliant kind. He whips out of his captives their sulkiness—drives them, *bound*, to the sea-shore, and disposes of them for rum, tobacco and balls, to the christian slave-trader. The slave-trader purchases—what? Not the *bodies* alone of the captives, because he has no use for them, and they are only an expense and encumbrance to him. He buys, beside, the *power* of the prince. The prince retires, with his warriors, from the *position of force*, and the slave-trader assumes it, with the necessary band. The situation of the captives remains unchanged. He applies as much of *actual* force, if it be necessary, as compels them to ascend the sides of his vessel, and as much of *constructive* force as keeps them conformed to his will. In fine, he applies, just what Admah did, though in a different form—at least a competent degree of force for his *object*, which is keeping the captives in subjection to him.

That it is a system of force—unlawful, of course, and prosecuted with an entire forgetfulness of the golden rule—may be easily tested. For, if the slave-trader were to tell them, *at this time*, that they might go about their business; that they might no longer fear actual or constructive force from him, or from any other quarter, they would at once go free.

In this way they are conveyed across the Atlantic, to the city of Charleston.

In the morning, one of the most intelligent planters visits the ship, desiring to purchase the whole lot, that he may add them to his stock. He confers with the slaveholder, and comes to an immediate agreement with him as to price. Actual force—the mana-

cle—does not suit him. It does not consist with the business which he has for the captives to do. After a certain manner, he sets them at large, but he has, at the same time, impressed upon them, that if they claim the first right, to which, as men and equals, they are entitled to from him, there will be united against them, for the infliction of actual force, or death, it may be all the whites, all the intelligence, and all the arms of the neighborhood; and, if it be necessary, of other States, and the General Government itself. He steps into the shoes of the slave-trader, as the slave-trader has before stepped into the shoes of the African prince.

So it is, with the descendants of the slaveholders, or of the purchasers from them in any succession.

What, then, is the difference of guilt between these three characters—the African prince, the slave-trader, and the planter? They occupy precisely the same position with regard to the captives. There is none—except it be this: the African prince is unlettered; in his mind, the rule by which we give to men all that we demand of them, may be comparatively faint: the slave-trader may have been brought up under the influences of christianity, and this rule may be more clearly impressed upon him; whilst the planter may be a member of a christian church, and the rule perfectly familiar to him. If we measure guilt by intelligence, we must suppose the planter the most guilty of the three. They all have exactly the same object, which is accomplished in the last.

Suppose, now, the treatment of the captives to be as lenient as it could be, consistently with the *main object*. Suppose the African prince took them to the coast in the most humane manner he could; suppose that the slave-trader had to administer to such as were sick, the same physician that administered to him: and suppose the planter had the best medical attendants that the city of Charleston could supply—would this alter the case? I think not. Would it not be “doing evil that good may come?” Would it not be acting on the principle that the Protestants attribute to the Roman Catholics? Would it be right to wrest from them their liberty, that we might minister, to the extent of our humanity, to the cure of their bodily maladies?

We will suppose, further, that the planter, from the impurest motives, has committed the crime of arson—that, in the middle of the night, he has burnt out a poor family, leaving the father

and mother, with several helpless children, the simplest attire, to guard them against the inclemency of the next morning; that, at the sight of the misery his malice has occasioned, his heart relents; that he takes them to his house, and feeds and clothes them, as the commonest humanity would teach him to do; but that, at the end of the repast, his good feelings abandon him, and he dismisses them. But before the next criminal court, his crime is discovered; he is indicted and tried; his plea is—not that he did not commit the crime of arson—but that he fed and clothed the family the next day. The court and jury smile at the simplicity of his defence, and he is sent—with the approbation of all—to the penitentiary for the longest term.

Suppose, further, that a CONDUCTOR has committed the crime of kidnapping, at Albany, and has deposited his victim in a car by himself; suppose, he communicates the knowledge of the fact to the next CONDUCTOR, and he to the next, and so on to the city of Buffalo. All these CONDUCTORS are guilty of the crime of kidnapping, and common sense declares them equally so. The humane treatment of one of these conductors, though it may not screen him from the punishment due to his offence, may give him favor with the jury. So, of slavery; if we could *try* for such offences, the African prince, the slave-trader, and the planter, being tried *together*, they would be found guilty of the offence with which they were charged, while the comparative humanity of one of them might obtain for him some mitigation of his punishment.

In order that it may be even more fully seen, how prone the slaveholder is to practise principles which he professedly rejects, and how liable his supporters are to admit “evil that good may come,” I will take the case of the Rev. Thomas S. Clay, a Presbyterian minister of Georgia. I take his case the more willingly, because it is duly authenticated before the world, and because it gives the slaveholders all the advantages which they claim in the presentation of it. Mr. Clay is said to be an educated and accomplished man—his wife, his peer—and the daughters worthy of their parents. The law of Georgia prohibits the *teaching* of slaves, whilst the law of Christ, promulgated by himself, enjoins on every man to “search” the scriptures. But Mr. Clay is a law-abiding man. He obeys the law of Christ, as far as it is convenient for him, and then he strictly obeys the law of Georgia. So, also, he instructs his wife and daughters, who, it is said, assist

him, in impressing, *orally*, on his slaves, religious truth. I would do no injustice to Mr. Clay, and it might be doing him injustice, were I to say, that the Legislature of Georgia, in acting as they did, intended to aid him. Mr. Clay's system wants no such aid. Is it saying too much of him, then, that his system is not, *in itself*, what he would approve, but is made to accommodate itself to the general system of slavery throughout the State? Under these circumstances, Mr. Clay holds his slaves.

His wife and his daughters instruct their slaves according to the laws of Georgia. One of these slaves—the most intelligent of them—even with this instruction, is brought to see, that he is the subject of a righteous Governor, of a kind Father ready to forgive. He feels within him his immortal destiny, and that it cannot be *satisfied*, unless he preach salvation to his neglected fellow slaves. He, at first, begins with those who are immediately around him. They catch the contagion, for so the slaveholders themselves would call it. They are fired with the new views which he presents to their minds. Each one enlightened, as the circumstances will admit of, is ready to go forth, as a missionary, to enkindle, in the minds of his down trodden caste, the same glorious ideas. The leader is remonstrated with; he offers them the best security, that he will give *all* his time, to preaching to his fellow men. But this will not do. His conduct is unexceptionable. Mr. Clay is brought, himself, to be among the remonstrants. His wife and daughters beseech, by the most sacred ties that can subsist between them and him whom they have instructed, that he would desist. He is inflexible. He no longer feels himself a slave, but in the bonds with which his fellow men have bound him. He is the freeman of God, and feels it his obligation, his duty, his delight to do the will of his Heavenly Father. He is now qualified to make known to those whom the avarice of man has overlooked, the “glad tidings,” which, by Jesus Christ, HE has sent to them. He burns to do it. But slavery becomes more obdurate in its demands. It has extended. A greater number of persons become interested in it. Its laws, like the Eternal's laws, are not always right. They shift—they change—the whites decrease—the slaves increase. The laws become more stringent—the slaveholders more vigilant. Their *necessities*, they say, oblige them to it. Mr. Clay is, already, in the south. It would be hard to give up that estate, which distin-

guishes him and his. He becomes a defender of the increased rigor of the law. What was right to-day, becomes wrong to-morrow. He goes down the current, with cruel slaveholders. He accommodates his own system to theirs. He extinguishes light which he had enkindled in the breasts of them whom he had instructed. He is determined to have slavery. Slavery he has, but he must have it without the *law of the Lord*. Is this an adequate equivalent? I leave it to you to determine.

Yet, such is the delusiveness of the system, that the Rev. Mr. Clay thinks he is embracing God's laws, which are *immutable*, when he is embracing only the laws of Georgia, which are *mutable*; that he is embracing the law of the Lord, rich with mercies towards all mankind, when he is only embracing slavery, defiled with miseries to all the human race that have any connection with it. Is not this accredited minister of Christ doing "evil that good may come?" Is he not declaring to the world, that, as long as you treat your slaves *according to the law of Georgia*, you are safe; as long as you treat your fellow men *according to the laws of God*, you are undone? Is he not declaring to the fraternizing slaveholders of the south—we will keep the laws of Georgia *strictly*, but the law of the Lord, *as well as we can*?

But, as we have been a slaveholding nation, for more than two hundred years, and as, therefore, the principal case, and its kindred ones, may create prejudice in the minds of some, I will take another.

A foot-pad in the neighborhood of Liverpool, has succeeded so well, as to establish his store in that town. All the articles that compose it, are taken in the strict exercise of his *professional art*. He has his ship trading regularly to New York. The captain, and the supercargo, if he has one, are well acquainted with the manner in which the foot-pad came into the possession of the goods. So are the purchasers at New York, and elsewhere through the country. It so happens, that as soon as the goods are opened in this country, the *names* and *persons* of the respective owners become perfectly authenticated. This is the case through whatever number of hands they have passed, and remains unchanged. *Of this, on no hand, is there any doubt*. Now suppose, the owners were to become apprised of this fact; to ship themselves for this country, and make claim to their respective parcels, into whose hands soever they may have fallen. Re-

collect, on no hand, is there any doubt of the persons making this claim. They are, to all intents and purposes, the owners of the parcels, and are so recognized. Would not the commonest justice lead each holder of a parcel, to render it to the proper owners again? Certainly it would. This is undeniable.

But suppose each holder refuses to give up the goods—does he not associate himself in point of guilt, with the original foot-pad? By the latter, the goods were obtained, to be vended in the United States: by the captain and supercargo, the manner in which the foot-pad obtained the goods was perfectly well known; the people of New York and the surrounding country, ignorant, at first, of the owners of the goods, had their names and descriptions perfectly made known to them in the opening of the parcels. So that on the score of *knowing*, they stood on the same footing with the foot-pad, and the captain and supercargo, and they must stand their equals in guilt. The municipal law of England, may punish the foot-pad in one way, and the captain, only the *receiver* of the stolen property, in a very different way. The laws of New York, and the other States in which the goods are sold, may differ very widely from the laws of England. For the wisest municipal purposes, the punishment of the three, may be very different. But this does not affect our question at all. We are deciding on *guilt* before a tribunal which we have not established—which we cannot abolish—and which is affected only by the *knowledge* of the parties. They all equally know the destination of the goods, they are agents in the same transaction, though at different parts of it. If the foot-pad is guilty, so are the other parties.

I must not omit here an answer to a case, because it is thought unanswerable. If the *principles* be true, which I endeavored, at the outset, to establish, not much time will be consumed with it. It is this: *A slaveholder dies in the city of Charleston, and leaves a patrimony of one hundred slaves to his only son: is it not the duty of the son to exercise acts of ownership, for which the laws of the State have provided?* We have before said that slave-holding was a *positive*, not a *negative* act. We fully believe it. Without a slave-holder there would be no slave. Without a *subduing* of the will, there would be no slave-holding. Without something being *done* by the stronger and more unprincipled party, nothing would be done. Things would remain as they are. Now, if

these remarks be true, and they are yet to be proved false, the question lies in a very small compass. The young man may have *nothing to do* with the transaction. He may not take notice of it at all. He would not be the *slave-holder*. Who would? The State, if it be the next successor—or whosoever becomes the *holder* of the slaves. If the *young man* and the *State* were to say to the slaves—we will have nothing to do with you; by the laws of South Carolina, they would go free. In this case, there would be *no* slaveholding in the question.

But, supposing, the young man have imposed on him, because of his *residence* in South Carolina, certain duties to the colored people, he must go to one of the *free* States, where they cannot pursue him with this responsibility. The lawmakers have driven him out of South Carolina, and there is no help for it. I here do not, at all, argue the *unconstitutionality* of such a measure. But supposing him—which seems by far the strongest case—to use the State laws, in taking them to another State. He is no slaveholder, because the act he is doing, is by their consent, and for their good; not for his own good, as a slaveholder. If any of them refuse to accompany him, after he has duly put before them the whole case, he can do no more. The first moment that he puts forth an act of *force*, that moment he becomes, *pro tanto*, a slaveholder. *Every* act of *force*, without crime to the State, is *unlawful*, and therefore criminal, before the highest tribunal.

Lest there may not have been announced, with sufficient precision, the *tests* which have been applied to the above cases, and which, it is thought, will remove all doubt as to slavery, I beg leave to furnish them to you with still greater prominence.—Whenever Rev. Thomas S. Clay, for instance, gives to the SLAVE what he could with the same propriety give to his EQUALS in society, (*exempli gratia*, good clothes, comfortable lodging, plenty of provision and the like,) it has nothing to do with SLAVERY. This goes, not any part of the way, in making up the *slaveholder*. A person who does not own a slave may do this, as well as a slaveholder. All slaveholders are not alike. Whilst they are all to be condemned for *slaveholding*, some of them are comparatively kind and humane—some are unprincipled and severe. The latter is the genuine product of the system. Whilst we would not condemn humanity, though it appear in its coarsest form, we would think it equally unwise to make its exhibition a full excuse

for the *crime* with which it is nearly connected. This is the first rule.

The second rule is like it. Whenever the Rev. Thomas S. Clay inflicts on his SLAVE what he *cannot* inflict on his EQUAL in society, (for example, trial for an imputed offence, by laws made especially for him and others like him—the forcible separation of children—of husbands—of wives—the being driven into the field, and made to work without wages, &c.) there is SLAVERY. It will not do for us to mix up the bad acts of the strong and unprincipled, with the comparatively good acts of the humane—those acts which may be done to the slave and the freeman *alike*—and baptize the whole as good. This would be weakness without excuse. If you can find me one act, which properly goes to make up the SLAVEHOLDER, I will, at the same time, show you one of *force*—one of *unlawful violence*—one which regards not the law of man's nature, “thou shalt do unto others as ye would have them do unto you.”

CHAPTER II.

The foregoing argument is complete in itself, and, as the writer thinks, unanswerable. If so, slaveholding cannot be justified or excused by the scriptures. But as there are yet many, who profess to be preachers,—and, therefore, *teachers*,—who are unable to see the difference between a MAN and a THING, and distort the bible to sustain themselves, I have thought it not unnecessary to discuss, somewhat at large, the following question:—

Is American Slavery consistent with the bible?

I shall approach this subject, too, as I did the last, and attempt to lead all, who will give me their attention, to a wise conclusion. I deem it any thing but wise for the accredited ministers of God, to wrest the book of His *love*, which he has given to mankind for their happiness, to the maintenance of a system of *hate*, which greatly adds to their unhappiness. And I esteem it beyond historical dispute, that no people, who are greatly civilized, have ever admitted the system of slavery among them; and that it is a proof of advancing civilization, in any people, that they are getting rid of it. The present, then, I cannot but regard, at least, as an attempt on the part of the slave states, to impose a

hindrance on the free states, to a further progress in true refinement and christian civilization, for which they pant. If, knowing God's character as a God whose other name is *love*, some of his ministers in a slight degree had to *force* the book in which slavery was revealed, for its condemnation, it would not have been surprising;—but, as a departure from slavery involved a national change, and a purification of their religion;—as it would tend to throw into confusion every thing that was done on that basis, and endanger the salaries and situation, for the time being, of themselves and their families, it is not unexpected that many have shown themselves unprepared for it. Be it understood, that I consider preachers of the gospel *as men*; that, as a class, they have the passions of men. I do not blame them because they do not act as angels. My heart has often bled for them, when I have seen the strait in which they were placed.

So much I have thought it proper to say concerning the ministers of religion.

We will now see the state of the world under the Roman dominion, in which christianity, at its commencement, was chiefly placed. It is useless to discuss *facts*, unless we can agree upon them. There was no printing press to diffuse its intelligence, in every city, every morning, in the time of the apostle Paul, for an interminable time before, and for many centuries afterward. To even the few and most favored, the means of information were of difficult access. There were, notwithstanding, some of bold minds, who did use the advantages which could be obtained, and rose superior to every obstacle, that could be placed before them. These acquired, for the times, a great deal of information, but such as now, in our learned men, would be deemed contemptible. It was accompanied too, with prejudices and superstitions that have departed from us only within the last two hundred years. Neither was there any railway then. The mass of the people—except those who were engaged in military expeditions—were much confined at home. They knew little else, than what their own workshops furnished. Whilst the favored class were, comparatively, learned, the *popular body* were sunk in the grossest ignorance. They were not regarded as constituting any part of the government, and no government was thought to have any relation to them. It is even, up to this day, one of the most difficult of things to make the great body of the people think that

they are connected with the government, in any other way than hating their neighbors who differ from them—or voting for a party one day of the year, and of serving on juries. Such may be stated as the condition of the first nation of the world, to whom all, at least, of the civilized portions, may be considered as subjected, including the remote province in which our Saviour appeared. We will postpone what further we have to say respecting the Roman power, in this matter, as we may again have occasion to recur to it.

It has been said, we believe, by all who have written on the other side, that slavery existed among the Jews, at the time the Saviour appeared, and that he walked in the midst of it, without rebuking it. No concession, if it has been made, was ever made more unnecessarily or injuriously. There is no proof that slavery was among the Jews at the time the Saviour appeared, nor that he ever saw it. Why did not Christ heal the centurion's servant? He did, it is true; and it is not here disputed, that slavery existed in the Roman army. But, Christ did not enter the house of the centurion—he healed the servant without entering the house—nor is there any evidence whatever, that he was, at any time, inside the house of a Roman officer, or that he was, in any way, conversant with the manners of that class of persons. It is not at all probable that he should be.

Nor is it true. Nor is there, so far as we know, any proof that it is true,—that slavery existed among the Jews, during the ministry of the Saviour. God could not, without the utter destruction of the offending parties, have signified his displeasure more plainly than he did, against the undue retention of the Hebrew servants, in the reign of Zedekiah. Zedekiah was the last king of Judah. It is said that the Lord “had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place.” We may well suppose---if we can make such a supposition at all---that the Lord did, what He did do, very reluctantly. Notwithstanding all this---notwithstanding the Lord “had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place” ---notwithstanding Zedekiah, too, was the last king. He had greater repugnance at the commission of *idolatry* and *oppression* than He had to all other considerations united. He would not permit his name and the name of *man* to be dishonored. “*Therefore, thus saith the Lord, ye have not harkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbor;*”

and with the most terrible irony----“ *behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence and to the famine, and I will make you to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth.*” He kept his word. They were removed, and, as a nation, utterly destroyed.

After the Jews were restored to their own country by the permission of Cyrus, 536 years before Christ, we hear nothing more of their being given, as a nation, to slaveholding and idolatry---the two sins for which they had been nationally degraded. In the time of the Romans, they permitted a Procurator, or Governor, with the necessary proportion of troops scattered throughout the country. In the households of the officers, slavery as well as idolatry might have existed. But among the Jews, neither of them existed. Had they existed among them, they would have been rebuked by the Saviour as other great crimes of his countrymen were rebuked. Till then, we see some reason given for the assertion complained of, we shall set down Christ, as never having seen the institution with which the surrounding states were cursed.

It will be in vain to attempt getting out of this difficulty, by saying Christ did not condemn the vicious practices of other nations; and that, therefore, he approved them, or they are allowable. His principles condemn *all* vicious practices, wherever they exist, whilst he personally, condemned only what prevailed around him.*

But did not Paul, the most select of the apostles---he who was taken out of the ranks of persecution, and converted, that he might be sent specially to the Gentiles---he, who was favored with a conversation with Jesus Christ himself, previous to his departure: did he not *regulate* slavery, which he would see among the Gentiles, admitting the ground before taken to be true? Did he not use the following language in his instructions to Timothy:

“ *Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters as worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.*”

* The foregoing is enough for the *argument*. Others, who wish to prosecute this matter further, are referred to the whole of Prideaux's Connection, particularly page 129, of vol. 2, to show the cruel treatment of Alexander the Great, and page 431, of the same volume, to show the aversion with which the Jews viewed being sold themselves into slavery.

“ And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren: but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.”

This, which is, by far, the strongest case in the New Testament, we admit to be Paul's language, and in the most approved versions; the *interpretation* is the greatest difficulty between us and our opponents. If we can produce a *doubt*, we are entitled to the benefit of it. For the *spirit* of christianity, to say the least of it, is *equalizing*. It is more. When we heard,—as we often did, and as yet may be heard in any of our fashionable churches—that christianity left men where it found them, that the civil relations remained as they were, we were sensible that much remained undone for society, that might have been done. Christianity, when properly understood, leaves men, neither the pride of office, nor the pride of station, nor the pride of riches, nor any other pride. It is a system of *truth*. Men must be exactly what they seem. A man is to be estimated, as a christian, just as he knows the truth; as he is blest with the gift of imparting it; and as he shows his sincerity by practising it. By this rule, is he to take his place, as a christian. If he assume any more, he must do it by some other rule. It brings to nought, at once, all the relations which grow out of human enactments, and substitutes for them a more excellent way. If an office, for instance, is held that has any part of its duties opposed to the divine law, that part of it is at once annulled. So, of slaveholding—that part of it, (which means the whole,) inconsistent with the law of God, becomes annulled, immediately on the master's becoming a christian. A christian will be content with such measure of influence, as we have already indicated; he ought to desire nothing more. In one sense, the difference between Christ and his apostles was infinite; in another, next to infinite. Yet, did he never assume more than his wisdom entitled him to, and one of his last lessons was to convince his disciples, by precept, and by example, that, in proportion to their knowledge must be their painstaking to teach those who were less instructed than they were. He says to them, *“ Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a ba-*

sin, and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.” “*Ye call me master, and Lord : and ye say well, for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and master, have washed your feet ; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you.*” (John, 13 Ch.) Again he says, “*to the multitude,*” —“*But he that is greatest among you, shall be your serrant.*” (Mat. 23 Ch.) In the same way, in various places, he inculcates upon the multitude and his apostles, the necessity of the strong condescending to the infirmities of the weak.

Will it be said, that such a profanation, by the preachers is altogether *improbable* ? I grant it. Yet it is *possible*. And we are not without admonition in this respect ; for we are told—

“*Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen ; and polluted the house of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending ; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.*” (2 Chronicles, 36 Ch.)

It ought to be borne in mind, as well as mentioned here, that all the civilized nations of Europe have been, till lately, favorably affected toward slavery. Till the Somerset case, in 1772, England, from which we have received nearly all our religion, allowed the slaveholders to bring slaves to her shores and take them, thence, at pleasure. Although slavery was banished from her *soil*, by that case, it was not, till lately, banished from her *dominions*. Her legislators still held slaves and slave plantations, without remorse, in the West Indies, because it was not prohibited by the laws of the land. In the year 1787, the *slave-trade* was attacked, and it was not till 1806, that it was condemned *by law*. It soon became unpopular. But slavery itself cannot be said, in this way, to have become *nationally unpopular*, till more than twenty years afterward ; so that, till very lately, with but few exceptions, the *national taste*,---and with it the most approved commentators seem to have coincided,---was altogether in favor of slavery. The number, now, in that country, are probably very few who consider slavery as a transgression of the moral law ;

but nearly the whole number consider it as a great *inexpediency*. In this way slavery has escaped the examination, which has been given to other sins in that country. If proof of this is required, we have need only to take up the case which has already been cited. There is not a reader of the history of Zedekiah who will not conclude, that the destruction of the Jewish nation was as much owing to the *retention* of the Hebrew servants, after their term of service had expired, and their seizure, a second time, after they ought at once to have been proclaimed free, as to the prevalence of idolatry. Yet, there is not one of the commentators that I have consulted, except it be those who were called *enthusiasts*, who do not ascribe almost exclusively to the captivity of the Jews their subsequent exemption from idolatry. Slavery forms no part of the consideration. I would not wrong any of them intentionally; but I have consulted Jahn, a Roman Catholic German, Macknight, a Scotch Presbyterian, and Horne, an Episcopalian, the latter of whom wrote as late as 1818, and not one of them ascribes the captivity to slavery, as well as idolatry. They say, indeed, that idolatry was extinguished by it, but not slavery. One, if not two of them, Horne and Macknight, go so far as to say, in plain terms, that slavery remained with the Jews after the captivity, as it did with the Romans and the rest of the world. The passages cited by the first, are altogether insufficient for that purpose. They appear to find it difficult, as it seems to be with all writers who have not had slavery *among* them, to discern the difference that there is, and always must be, between a *servant* who hires his own time and chooses his own master, *yet is obliged to work*, and the *slave* who has no control of himself, or choice of his master. If I have done the writers, or the persons above mentioned, any wrong, it is done unintentionally. They can be consulted. I am willing to abide by quotations from their own writings or sayings.

With this temper, let us consider the passages in question, and we will, in all probability, be conducted to a wise conclusion.

Paul was born in Tarsus—"no mean city"—in Cilicia, a province of the Romans. He was in good circumstances, yet he gives us no account of his having been a slaveholder. He wrote the Epistle to the Romans, before he had been in Rome. He says nothing of slavery in it. But he had been much abroad, and he wrote the Epistle to Timothy from Rome, or elsewhere.

Timothy was then over the church at Ephesus, where Paul had been for three years before; and where, from the length of time the province had been *Roman*, we are to presume Paul was well acquainted with slavery.

Such are the circumstances in which Paul was placed, before he wrote the epistle in question. We have selected this case, because it seems the strongest, as we have already said, in favor of slavery, in the New Testament. If we cast a *doubt* upon its received interpretation, we render the others doubtful; and we are, at least, entitled to the benefit of the doubt, in favor of liberty. If we add to this, the *spirit* of the Gospel—that *civil liberty* has prevailed just in proportion as there has prevailed an intelligent understanding of its provisions, our point is sufficiently gained; we rescue the bible from a construction, by which the pride of man has been fostered; by which millions have been debarred from the hopes and consolations of its sacred pages, and by which the evils to which they were exposed have been sanctified for numberless ages.

CHAPTER III.

Those who contend that Paul saw slavery, and was conversant with it in the Hebrew *slaves*, (as the slaveholders in America will have it,) and that, because he did not rebuke it in Jerusalem, are prepared to defend the slavery of Rome and all its dependencies, as a christian institution. They are prepared, also, to defend the slavery of half civilized Russia of modern times, in which country of Europe alone, we believe, it is at present tolerated. They must remember at the same time, that they are defending *white* slavery. The slavery of Europe, both ancient and modern, was almost entirely confined to the *whites*.

This is said now, to make the fact accessible at all times, and that we may know precisely what we are at.

Ephesus was a Roman city; it was an old city, a splendid city, and one of immense wealth. Slavery existed at Ephesus; in the same form *in which Paul* saw it, at Rome, when probably he wrote to Timothy *his first epistle*. They must be prepared, also, to admit—as they doubtless are—that slaveholding is the paramount institution in any country in which it may exist; that non slavehol

ders, from principle, are bound to support its laws, whatever they may be; and that a non-slaveholder, for instance at Ephesus, or a member of a christian church, in the northern states, with his one hundred thousand dollars *in cash*, may innocently transmute his means into a plantation with fifty slaves, to whom *before* he owed *as men*, nothing but the love of the people, now, nothing but the hate of the slaveholder. This instantaneous change of feeling toward the slave, whether owned or not, Paul must have *justified*, if the supporters of that system, on the authority of Paul, be *right*. For they would not choose that Paul always authorized the hatred of the slave, inasmuch as it was impossible to tell, at any given time, who would be enslaved. Plato, the friend and disciple of Socrates,—and Diogenes, the most famous of the Cynic philosophers,—were enslaved. If the European, indeed, were obliged always to hate the *white* slave, not knowing that it might soon be his lot to fall into that class, Paul required an impossible condition; or one that was too general to be practical. He required a condition that is no where to be found in the charter under which he acted, and which is as open to us as to him.

A young man at Ephesus—or, if you please, a member of a christian church at the north—finding it an inconvenient thing, *not* to speak against the slavery that exists at the south, whilst he is there, and to say of the laws, without once adverting to the ease with which the condition of the country could be changed, that they are in strict accordance with the state of things, which is every where to be seen around, finds it convenient to invest his property in slaves. *Then*, he has an *interest* in maintaining the slave laws; *before*, he did it with but a faint heart. Or, if you like it better, he was bound to the slaves, before he bought them, by the law of love, as to *men*, universally; but *now*, by buying them, he has become a slaveholder. He at once transmutes the law of *love* into the law of *hate*. This is the teaching of Paul, if the slaveholding christians be right.

Every body understands what is meant by *the law of love*; but few understand what is meant by *the law of hate*. They never will, if they listen only to slaveholders. The law of hate is their law with regard to their slaves. This can be easily demonstrated, had we time, and did the occasion call for a fuller exposition than is already enjoyed. The writer does not undertake to say,

that the slave will not choose between the humane slaveholder and the inhumane. But take the humanest slaveholder and liberty, and convince the slave that his election will be *effectual*—in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred, unless there be something in the way, he will choose the latter. In this way, Bryan Edwards, and his coadjutors, were much surprised to find, that most of the insurrections commenced among the favored *household* slaves in the West Indies. They ought not to have been surprised at this at all. They would not, had they known the nature of man in this respect—to covet all, and the nearer you place him to the object of his attainment, the more zealous does he become.

The Rev. Thomas Scott, D. D. an Episcopalian, whose commentary on the bible is much used in this country, has, on the subject of slavery, fallen into an inconsistency, which strongly confirms my former remarks, and might naturally enough be expected of one who wrote so much for popular use on the subject of the bible. When his notions of *legal* classification, which he derived from his countrymen, seemed to prevail, the slaves were but of small consideration in his eyes. When he left to *nature* the classification, which, when undisturbed, she rarely fails to make, he expresses the religious opinions which we are prepared to hear from him, and slaveholding becomes a crime of the basest desert. It never once occurred to him, nor has it to many others, as I have before stated, that christianity is, at least, an *equalizing* system; that it does not leave the *civil relations where it found them*, but requires all officers and others to bring their offices and stations to the standard of religious truth. It does not excuse *wrong* in them, because they exercise offices and particular stations in society. It holds them strictly responsible for the consistency of all that they *do*, with the truth. It requires not, that truth be measured by stations and offices, but that all offices and stations be measured by the truth.

To show how little he had informed himself of a matter about which he pretends to lecture others, take the following commentary, from the fifth to the ninth verses of the Epistle to the Ephesians; written, too, to the same people that Timothy was placed over, and from the same place, and about the same time, that the epistle to Timothy was written, in which occurs the passage now in dispute:

“*In general, the servants, at that time, were slaves, the property*

of their masters; and often treated with great severity, though seldom with modern cruelty." It will be sufficient to reply to this passage, to say, that, at Rome, and, we suppose, at Ephesus too, the slaveholder could put his slave to death *when he pleased*, and that he was an *idolator*!

But Dr. Scott proceeds: "*But the Apostles were ministers of religion, not politicians; they had not that influence among rulers and legislators, which would have been requisite for the abolition of slavery; and in that state of society, as to other things, this would not have been expedient; and they did not deem it proper to exasperate their persecutors, by contending against the lawfulness of slavery,*" &c.

The commentator thinks that he does Paul great credit, here, by making him a cunning man, in the modern sense. He had talents and religion which prevented him from being a cunning man, and there is no trait of a low and little character, that christianity more pointedly condemns than cunning. It repudiates all such trickery, and calls not on it for the slightest assistance. If Paul did not possess that influence which would have led to the abolition of slavery, the bible did not authorize him to insist on a condition that had no existence in the truth—that went far to foster a system which eventually ruined the Roman government, and which continually added rich nourishment to the already rampant pride of the transgressors. Is Paul, when addressing his own church, to deal in such things only as are "expedient;" and is he when addressing his own church, to suppress the truth through the fear that he would "exasperate" their persecutors? Is he to preach the lawfulness of slavery in a slave state—its unlawfulness, if any such can be found, in a free state, where it is condemned? Is he to be Paul, the friend of slavery, on the south side of Mason and Dixon's line, and on the north of it, Paul the condemnor of slavery? Who commissioned him to preach one gospel in one place, and, because it was not "expedient," a different one in another? Why does he, then, preach the love and honor which should be rendered to woman? Why should he preach, that she was to be led to her duty, as man was, simply by christian considerations, when they were totally unknown and unacknowledged by the Romans? If fear of "exasperating their persecutors," were the main object of Paul, why preach at Athens—at Rome—the one God, in opposition to the

THIRTY THOUSAND IDOLS, by which those places were distinguished ! Surely, he could not have taken on himself a more effectual means of drawing persecutions on his efforts than he did. If the condition of slavery was not abolished, by both slave and master becoming christians, it was his duty, fearlessly, to say so. To take the side of the master against the slave, when it was *not* authorized, would have been “currying” popular favor, united with power, which, whatever others may do, we would not suspect the apostle Paul of.

But to the commentary of the Rev. Mr. Scott. He again says, in speaking of the same passage we have in hand :

“ This shews that christian masters were not required to set their slaves at liberty ; though they were instructed to behave to them in such a manner as would greatly lessen the evils of slavery.” “ The principles both of the law and the gospel, when carried to their consequences, will infallibly abolish slavery.”

We contend that christianity is a *leveling* system. We expect to prove it so. This is enough to say, at this time, as to the beginning of the quotation—masters who embraced christianity were under obligations *“ to set them at liberty.”*

“ They were to behave to them in such manner as would greatly lessen the evils of slavery.” How, let me ask, were these evils to be lessened ! Was it to be done by selling a man, or his wife, or his child, *once* instead of *twice* a year ? Was it to be done by whipping a slave *half* as often, as the *christian*, as before this he was accustomed to do ; or taking from him *half* his wages, or exacting from him *half* his slavish duties ? This is a great reduction—but still it is selling a human being—or robbing a human being, in some degree. Such a doctrine as this, we know, Paul never preached. Ought not Mr. Scott, too, to know that *slavery*, like its twin sister, the *slave-trade*, can never be *regulated* ? I will give him language as true as it was certainly uttered in the British parliament. Mr. Fox says—*“ As for himself, he had no scruple to declare, at the outset, that the slave-trade ought not to be regulated, but destroyed. To this opinion his mind was made up ; and he was persuaded, that the more the subject was considered, the more his opinion would gain ground.” **

* Mr. Fox was a great party-man, and did many things, which, could such things *permanently* distinguish, would have distinguished him. From all his public acts, the statuary has selected the African kneeling to him. He is so represented in Westminster abbey.

And what sort of theology is the Rev. gentleman to teach us, or what manner of speech is he to put in the mouth of Paul, when he tells us, that the principles both of the law and the gospel, *when carried to their consequences*, will infallibly abolish slavery, if we are not to act on them, *at this time*? Are we not *now* to carry “to their consequences” the principles both of the law and of the gospel? If not, *now*, in America, where slavery prevails *very much as it did at Rome, and Ephesus*, be good enough to tell us *where* we can do it? Was Paul to preach a *lie*, because he was in Rome? Lying is the most contemptible of all sins. “*Ye are of your father, the devil,*” said our Saviour to the Jews, “*for he was a liar from the beginning and the father of it.*” Was Paul to preach to slaveholders, as they then were, and in order to get their favor, tell them that they could enter the church, although they continued slaveholders;—that they need not give themselves any concern on the subject, that God, as soon as he wished, would abolish slavery, and advance them, as a people, to a higher degree of civilization? Slavery, too, possesses *some* moral character. Concerning this, among intelligent and impartial men, there can be no dispute. Is it the work of God, or the work of the devil? Plainly of the latter. And we are told that “*for this purpose the son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*” And would you teach, for sound theology, that Paul was to advance the interest of the Son of God—of his church—by supporting the work of the devil, and by advancing its *chef d’œuvre* to the church? And would you palm on Paul for his teaching, and on the young and old of this country, as *true*, that we are not, *at once*, to abolish that, which the principles of law and of the gospel approve and require? If not *now*—say *when*? And say, too, if you walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and Paul, which you are bound to pursue as far as the latter was right,—and say, if they maintained slavery, why you dare do *otherwise*?

And was Paul so little discriminative, as to moral character, as to put on the *same* footing, him who, for conscience’ sake, made free his twenty thousand slaves, (for some of the Romans had that number,) and him who began from *nothing*, and acquired his twenty thousand? Are both these men to come into the church on the same footing? Suppose, Paul had remained at Rome;—that he had founded a church there;—that he continued

to preach to the large slaveholders of his congregation, for fear of exasperating his persecutors, the christian inviolability of the relation between the slave and his master;—and supposing, that, by his individual justice and equity in all his transactions, which must necessarily have been small, with others, he had won over several of the small slaveholders to emancipate their slaves?—Does not Mr. Scott know, that, in proportion, as such emancipations advance, the criminality of the persisting slaveholders increases? And that the case of the *last* slaveholder, as of the *last* man, given to intoxicating liquor, becomes eminently sinful?

Besides this, slaveholding will not *stop*. It may inveigle, and if it have the command or countenance of an apostle, it will not fail to inveigle, the best men in any community. Only the comparatively wealthy, at least, engage in it. There is no inhibition to any man to enter this class, except *inability*. Slaves are the most desirable of all kinds of *property*. When every thing else is dull and unsaleable, slaves command a comparatively high price. Crassus, whose slaves are counted by the thousand, looks down on Apicius, who is the owner of not more than forty or fifty; and Apicius, in his turn, looks down on him who has *no* slaves, or Megrinus who has but *one*. What discordant materials have you here for a harmonious church! Yet they are all, so far as slaveholding is concerned, equally well qualified. But Crassus is a rich and careful man. Half his slaves are as bad as they can be. Apicius lets his run at large, perfectly careless of them, and he who has but one slave works with him, and treats him as the Cherokee and Choctaw Indians treat theirs,—as nearly as they can, on terms of equality. They permit them to read the Scriptures and to lead in prayer, *even in their masters' houses*. Paul is anxious about Crassus, that he appear well to those who are “without.” About Apicius too—and he has a due care for Megrinus,—but about the three thousand slaves he cares but little. To be sure, if they believe the book which oppresses them; if they believe the interpretation given to it by the wrong-doers, to sustain them in their wrong-doing; if they frequent the church in inconvenient numbers, or “in vile raiment” unsuitable to the “gay clothing,” the “goodly apparel,” and the “gold ring” of their masters, Paul puts them in a pew by themselves; or if he does not do that, he very warmly interests himself in obtaining from Crassus, Apicius, and the like—as the next most gen-

teel thing that he can do—the erection of an inferior house of worship, and the securing of the services of an inferior expounder of the law for them. Into this house it would be exceedingly ungentleel for any person, always excepting the *teacher, not a slave*, to enter, where they can be taught *by themselves*, to know their duty *as slaves*, and that they and their children, must never expect to rise higher than their present condition. “For a spring to rise higher than its fountain would be preposterous.” So they say.

The *conduct* of Paul’s successors represents him as so preaching; but it is well for us that he did not so preach. If he had, we should still have been among those, “who made no scruple” of selling at the Roman market, *our* “own children when overstocked,” or we should still have given rise to the jest of Cicero, the originator, we believe, who pronounced the English slaves, sold at Rome, as too stupid for household occupations. As it is, the pro-slaveholding priesthood are, in effect, joining themselves to the infidel, and attacking Paul, as the infidels attack christianity, with the very weapons it has afforded.

After a long time, Crassus is spoken to by Paul himself, for nobody else dares do it, about his severity to one half his slaves; and he is told, that others manage three or four or five hundred, with incomparably less severity than he does; that the *world* is beginning to talk of it, as *unchristian*, &c. None deploras it more than Crassus does, at the same time, acknowledging all the facts to be true. “But then,” says Crassus, “*Providence has cast on me* four or five times as many as any of the persons you mention. I am obliged to use a different mode of government from any they adopt, and which, you say, succeeds so well. I do not at all dispute what you affirm—though you must be a very incompetent judge, having never had charge of a similar number of slaves with my own. I am a good master, proverbially; address yourself to the managers and slaves themselves; you are at perfect liberty to do so. Half my slaves are well behaved—they give me no trouble, and I use them kindly. Half, are the veriest scamps that you ever saw; and instead of *beating* them, to which I have a great aversion—as great an aversion as you can possibly have—I use them, to all appearance, very severely, but as well as they will bear. Indeed, were I to use them any better than I do, they would be perfectly intolerable to the community.

My heart often bleeds for what they *force* me to do to them, and I am almost driven to find fault with Providence that cast so many on my hands."

What now could Paul do, but leave Crassus—discomfitted, as to the church, to be sure—but with a more elevated opinion of his christian integrity, and with a more depressing conviction of what could be done for the slaves?

It is well for us, that Paul had too much common sense than to be caught with the cant of the slaveholder, or thus to embarrass himself with a weight, which his descendants, with much weaker powers than his, have not scrupled to take upon their own shoulders.

But Crassus is a noble man. So are the Roman people, a noble people. They have depopulated and overrun many communities—they have made many slaves, and Crassus is their general. But his being a general, does not, in any way, prevent him from being a regular member in good standing of a church, ministered to by an apostle. Crassus, being a *successful* general, too, adds to the number of his slaves. The apostle of the Gentiles makes no inquiry as to the *manner* in which they are obtained—whether they are obtained *agreeably to the laws of his religion or not*.

The increase which the war of Crassus had enabled him to make to his slave *property*, soon induces him to find out ways of keeping it with less trouble to himself and greater security to the state. When Rome was small, and her inhabitants few, slaves were permitted to be taught to any extent—they ran at large and had their families about them. But times are greatly altered. Wealth has poured in. There are now many slaves, and many persons interested in that species of *property*. Slaves are becoming troublesome, if left at large, and they require a closer custody. Crassus said the book of God must be kept from them; that, although it maintained slavery, *when properly understood*, it had great influence on them; and contained sentiments that were favorable to liberty, generally. Apicius was too careless to look after it; Megrinus was too unimportant to be regarded, and Crassus easily carried his point. The book of God is seen no more in the hands of the slave. But this is insufficient. There is in slavery always a tendency to dissolution. A new measure has to be adopted. Not only the book of God must be kept out of their hands, but they must be fastened up at night. But Api

cus and Megrinus object to this as unnecessary. They are not afraid to let *their* slaves have the book of God—to roam about, after they have done their day's work, as they please. But Crassus is more diligent than they. He has a larger interest than they; and he does not see, why, as it imposes no personal hardship on Apicius or Megrinus, they should object to what *he knows* is necessary for *him*. In addition, the cry is raised that Apicius and Megrinus are, *at heart*, opposed to the institutions of the country, and they ought to be looked to.

In this way Crassus proceeds, till he denies to the slaves the book of God, although he professes to be governed by it himself;—till he fastens up the *men*, every night;—till he breaks up entirely their *families*;—till he sets the example of the American, Mr. Baker, who, if I mistake not, has on one plantation, on the east end of Cuba, *seven hundred men*, regularly confined at night, without a woman on, or near, the plantation. In the mean time, Apicius and Megrinus oppose, but to no purpose.

They, together with Crassus, represent classes, not merely individuals.

I wish I could drive out of the minds of the *bod. of the church*—to drive it out of the minds of those who receive high-sounding titles and names from one another, I suppose is impossible—the idea, that Paul, or any one of the primitive christians, were *rich* or *influential*. They were far from it. To one who has been an Abolitionist, from the beginning of the movement, this ought to be no secret. Paul and those who were with him preached against the habitual sins of the priesthood, and those who were nearest the source of authority. So did the Saviour. So far from discarding the book itself, they made it more precious by proving from it every thing for which they contended. Their incurring the hatred of the church, and of all whom the leaders in it could influence, was entirely owing to their respect for the bible—their exposure of its desecration in the lives of the scribes, pharisees, and the principals in authority, who professed to make that book their guide; and their demanding from them holier living than a great majority of them practiced. But Paul had no wealth, so far as we know; neither had the other apostles. They preached a religion which was despised by the high of their own church—by the duly authenticated expounders of its doctrines; a religion, the Author of which had spent a great part of his time in expo-

sing the hypocrisy of those who pretended to it ; a religion, whose founder was a poor young man, who was brought up in humble parentage, to a mechanical profession ; who had passed the greater part of his short life among the poor, and who had terminated it, by the persecutions of the chief of the church, in the most ignominious manner known to the hated Roman law. When this religion was preached to the poor, (especially of Judea,) *who understood it*, it was gladly heard. When it was recommended, even by the eloquence of Paul, to the philosophers of Athens, then the most abundant and the most celebrated of all the countries on earth for the production of that race, it was hooted at and scorned. Well might Paul, after Jeremiah, say of himself and his confederates, “*we are the off-scouring of all things unto this day.*” Well might he say of himself, “*even up to this present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place ; and labor with our own hands*”—inasmuch as he had failed thus far, of converting *the rich* wherever he had been. If he had converted the *moderately* rich, he need not have worked with his own hands. They would have felt it their own interest to have kept Paul, at least, from personal labor. No : it was the advocacy of the *truth*, to which there is an answering chord in the human heart, it was the uniform *holiness* of Paul and his associates, that upheld the cause which was entrusted to them.

CHAPTER IV.

I have said in the foregoing remarks that slavery never *stops*. The remark is verified, by every considerate man's observation, especially in this country. How often have we had here “good” Megrinus's and Apicius's, who, without suspecting any change in themselves, have ended as Crassus did—or as the American, Mr. Baker, did, in shutting up the men at night, who toiled for him alone, during the day ! But enough of this : it is not the subject that I wished, particularly, to present to your attention.

I have said, too, elsewhere, that slavery contained within itself, the seeds of dissolution. So it does, always, unless Providence intends to punish the people who commit it, with the destruction of their national existence. Wherever a higher state of chris-

tian civilization—the *only one where the right of the popular body was ever acknowledged*—was reserved for the community, that community has been, always enabled to shake off slavery. It has been thus with the principal nations, both Protestant and Catholic, of Europe. With the exception of Russia, which, as I have already said, is, as yet, but half civilized, and which is not Roman catholic, slavery is not permitted to put its foot on their shores. Whatever may be their form of government, never have they been known to make as rapid advances in true civilization. Great Britain has never been so powerful as since the time she banished slavery from all her dominions. Other nations of Europe find it necessary to follow her example, and they are preparing themselves accordingly. And we may be prepared, as long as our administration is a slaveholding one, to hear Great Britain, or any other powerful nation that follows her example, charged with the most improbable offences.

But the south has, more than once, refused to let the moral influence that would banish slavery, and refine and chasten her, grow up in her midst. She has twice rejected newspapers, published within her borders, that professed to throw light on the matter, which keeps her back; and all attempts of the kind, whatever people may think of it, that have not duly reflected on the subject, must, in future, be costly and bootless. She loves, too, the thing that depresses her. She ascribes to it her supposed excellence. She loves her country because of its slavery, just as the Bushman, whose language is so meagre, that he can scarcely express his ordinary wants in it, loves his; or the Laplander, whose severe climate prevents his attaining more than five feet in height, and who, of a scarce year, is brought to subsist on fish bones, loves his.

I have said, on another occasion, that the southern slaveholding states, if cut off from the rest of the world, and left to themselves, would soon exhibit signs of distress, that could not be mistaken: they would be, in fact, decaying communities. I still entertain this opinion, but with modifications, which recent experience has introduced. Their only plan of safety, though they will be the last to admit it, is their connexion with the north, and the implication of their government with that of the free states. It would be proof positive that, as a people, we had been consigned to *barbarism*, for denying every principle of liberty for which we had conten-

ded, if the north were as much in love with slavery as the south. There would, then, be no adequate redeeming power, but we should, all, be hastening to that bourn, whence our only relief would be, consigning our government and ourselves to some one that was stronger than we. The acquisition of Texas—made by a violation of the Constitution, in every way, and avowedly to support slavery—may, for a time, alleviate the condition of the neighboring states, though it will be of short duration. *Servitus delenda est*, is as clearly now the proclamation of the public voice, to which all must conform, as *Carthago delenda est*, was the voice of Cato—was delivered in the Roman senate—and was certainly accomplished in the destruction of that city.

The awakened energies of the north—the increased vote that she has given, almost every where, to the Liberty party, after the spasm of the autumn of 1844, has given me fresh hopes for her; that she still is, at heart, the friend of liberty, and that she desires a superior civilization. It has given me, too, a better hope for the south. It has shewn me that, however she may fortify herself, her slavery is to be soon relinquished, and that better times, though, for a long period, an inferior civilization, await her. It then rests with the north to say, *when* southern slavery shall cease. If she gives an increased vote to the Liberty party, she will expedite it,—and just in this proportion;—if the Liberty party recede, gloom and night must close the prospect. How great reason, then, have the Liberty party—seeing that both the other parties are trying which can outstrip the other, in support of slavery—to be faithful to their principles—to the object with which they set out. I have no reason for distrusting the statements and opinions just expressed. If they are true, they will, in all probability, receive ample confirmation before long in the state of Maryland. Slavery, there, has been powerfully acted on, by her proximity to Pennsylvania. As it becomes less secure, the slaveholders will try various devices to sustain it. The non-slaveholders are greatly encouraged. They have there, many co-operating causes in their favor—the inherent iniquity of the system—Torrey's questionable conviction—the decreasing number of slaves, and the Pope's late Bull, acting in some degree, on a largely extended Roman catholic population,—besides the cause to which I have now especially adverted. The slaveholders will not again, probably, carry a single point in their favor in that

state, without their usual circumvention. In Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, the slaveholders by combining, may for some time to come, carry their particular measures ; but, if the Liberty party succeed well in the adjoining states, the reign of slavery there will be short.

I must substantially repeat,—although it subject me to the charge of tautology—I wish not to be understood as saying, that with the interpretation of Paul’s language, which we shall presently contend for,—with the desire of the *effective* part of the community for a more advanced civilization than slavery could afford, and nothing but christianity could bring,—that slavery would be utterly exterminated. By no means; any more than Paul’s preaching the true doctrines of christianity would exterminate infidelity, throughout the world. The world can go on, after a manner, without the true doctrine of christianity. But it cannot with the received doctrine of slavery : if we admit that, which is very admissible—that the *immorality* of slaveholding makes difficult the transaction of ordinary business. Such would soon come to be the condition of the south, were it not chiefly for the cause above mentioned—her intercommunity with the free north, where a more advanced morality prevails. Even with this, it is difficult to save the south---as is particularly to be seen, in the case of individuals, with but rare exceptions, of every class and calling, who migrate thither, *with the intention of staying*.

Paul’s faithfulness, as we contended, had but small influence on the large slaveholders of Rome. It might have had much greater, had he diluted his doctrine, so as to have considered, every slaveholder, especially, if a large one, “a christian;” so as to have made a difference between “individual” sins and “organic” sins---so as mightily to “reprobate” slave-*holding*, as the work of the devil which Christ came to destroy, while the slave-*holding* christian was the work of God, which Christ came to build up ; in fine, had Paul, and the other apostles. set themselves earnestly to work, so to use the christian religion, as to *save* the Roman empire, with all its vices, from the dissolution that awaited it, the large slaveholders would freely have united with them, whilst the non-slaveholders, who believed in its *principles of liberty*, would have been frightened from them. But it so happened, that Paul, and his true followers, ever since, were unable to see, that there

was a difference between “individual” and “organic” sins;---that the sin of slaveholding might be *reprobated* very “*strongly*,” yet that he who was engaged in it was qualified, so far as slaveholding was concerned, for “christian brotherhood;” whilst they were able to see, that neither the large slaveholders, were conciliated; that the empire was lost*—but that *christianity* was saved. Paul never busied himself about *saving* the Roman empire, as if *it*, not christianity, was *the truth*, which was unchangeable.

Neither is slavery like any of the relations in life. Rome is a Roman catholic city. It is the chief city of a faith, which condemns, as heretical, every other faith. It is the residence of the Pope, the head of the Roman catholic religion. Yet I, as a protestant, could abide there in perfect peace. I could render to my wife all that, as a protestant, she claims. They would not ask me to bow down to their images, their pictures, their saints or their virgins, and through them, implore the blessings that I need. It is not so with slavery. The slaveholder must not express, publicly, *a doubt* of the system as a good one, and he must *do* as the largest slaveholders do; so that the largest slaveholders, who, as a general thing, have most fears, and consciences but ill at ease, have the smaller and more confiding class completely in their power. If Crassus lock up his slaves at night, and withhold the bible from them, Apicius and Megrinus must do the same. But, if I am in Rome, I am not *obliged* to bow down to images, saints and virgins, whatever others do, for I may keep myself in my room, if nothing else will do.

So you may try the condition of slavery---for it is too great condescension to call it *relation*---and compare it with the relations of parent and child---master and apprentice---master and servant, and you will see, that the *first* is a positive and not a negative act---that it requires something to be *done* by the master, which, remaining a slaveholder, he cannot avoid or omit.

* I am sorry that I cannot lay my hand on the No. of the North American Review, which contains proof irrefragable that the Roman Empire fell, in consequence of slavery. The article was published in 1835—was thought very conclusive, and was ascribed to Mr. Bancroft, now of the U. S. Navy Department

CHAPTER V.

But did not Paul use the words which we have before quoted from the sixth chapter of his first epistle to Timothy? Certainly he did: as certainly, as he used words of nearly the same import to the Ephesians----to the Collossians----to Titus. If he used them as slaveholders, and their friends, now contend that he did, do they not incontestibly prove, that slaveholders were members of the churches which he instituted in his time? They certainly do: but recollect, if we succeed in disproving them, or even in casting a *doubt* upon that construction, the cause of liberty is entitled to the benefit of the doubt; for it is generally supposed, the *spirit* of the *bible* favors the cause of human freedom. This is *the* question, and the only one; for I esteem too frivolous, and not likely, therefore, to obtain the public ear, the position taken by Professor Tucker,* late of the Virginia University, that when the slaveholding states and territories advance from their present population, which is not quite twelve to the square mile, to a population of about fifty to the square mile, when slave labor will no longer be profitable, slavery will cease;----and the question generally taken, *for granted*, by religionists, who think slavery a very bad thing, yet have not courage enough to unchurch the slaveholders; to wit, that slaveholders were *communicants* in the church, in the second century, or thereabouts. The first would make us a nation willing to sacrifice every principle that we profess, to profit: the second would compel us to live, not by what an apostle said or did, but by the *abuses* which had crept into the church, managed, if it be as is said, by such temporizers, as they who are now the most prominent in giving currency to the foregoing opinion. I trust, that we are not the first, and that we are too intelligent, to be subjected to the last.

But that we may have fully before us the passage in question, we will again quote it:

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed----And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort."

* See his book published in 1843, pages 111 and 114.

To prove what we have asserted—that the *spirit* of the bible is in favor of human freedom—we will not go to the nations, where the bible is read much or read little. Nor will we, for that purpose, compare the West Indies till lately, with England, or the southern states with the northern. It is as well known as any fact can be, that the liberty of the masses, is in direct proportion to the reading of the scriptures. But the slaveholders themselves, have furnished all the evidence that is necessary in the case, by excluding the sacred volume itself, from those they wish to brutify and enslave. If it be perfectly clear, that Paul and Peter's directions were to slaves, *as such*, and to masters, *as such*, exhorting both to continue in their present station—and if they derived their warrants for what they said and did from Hebrew slavery—if it was transferred to Roman slavery, where the power of the master was unlimited—and if it has been transferred thence to the American slaveholders, it is strange that some one, at least, of the latter, have not inculcated slavery, as a christian duty upon their victims, by a separate publication of Paul's and Peter's epistles, or such parts of them as suited their purpose. But we have not heard that this has been done, in any instance. Poverty cannot be pleaded for the slaveholders, for, *as a class*, they belong to the *rich* of every land, where they are to be found. And this accounts, too, for the facility with which they found admission to the church in such countries. The poor have been flattered by condescension of the rich, while the church has been kept prostrate for the admission of the latter. They have been *begged* into it, as a matter of favor, because they *were* rich, and willing to assist its temporalities,—not because they were holy, and would add to its spiritual power.

If it be perfectly clear, that Paul's writings inculcate slavery, why have keen-sighted and just men, as well as slaveholders, considered the spirit of the bible *antislavery*, and Paul as forming no exception to the other writers, who assisted in making up that volume? why have they considered him as consentaneous with those, whose writings conspire to give character to that book? For if these men are right, in their estimate of the spirit of the bible, Paul's departure from them must be looked on as a very remarkable one. Luther was a long time in reconciling Paul and James; between whom, he, for one period of his life, thought there was an inconsistency. After making due allowance for the

superior importance of Luther's question, no pains have been taken, that we are aware of, to reconcile Paul with the other writers of the bible. And Peter may be put in the same category with Paul.

We are bound to interpret this passage as an antislavery passage, in consistency with the book, of which it forms a part, and not differently from it, unless we be prepared to show the reason of that difference. We ought not, besides, to fail of remembering, that slavery has *insinuated* itself into the christian church; that slaveholders now exercise a large influence over its concerns; that as republicans and christians, we do not disapprove of slavery as we should do, and that all the commentaries, that we are accustomed to use, were composed under the bias of slavery. Let it not be forgotten, too, that, this essay is written to show, whether or not, Paul approved of Roman slaveholding as part of the church organization.

CHAPTER VI.

It will be necessary in this discussion, to fix on the exact thing called slavery, which,---conceding to our opponents the most important part of their ground,---Paul did so approve of: for, it will hardly be contended, that he left to the majority of slaveholders, who it may be supposed, at Rome, as elsewhere, were *unbelievers*, the settling of the terms of the condition, by which he, and all faithful men who might come after him, were to be bound. If we do not at once fix the terms, Paul will appear to have *no principles*; all with him will be at loose ends, and he will seem, at one time, to have approved, what at another he greatly condemned. The ancient Romans lived on the simplest fare. Their chief magistrates, and most illustrious generals, when out of office, cultivated the ground with their own hands, sat down at the same board, and partook of the food, with their slaves---as Cato the censor. They sometimes, even dressed the dinner themselves---as Curius did;---or had their wives to carry it to them to the field. They had no care of their slaves, after the labors of the day---what books they read, or how they amused themselves. Was this the slavery which Paul approved? For we may *imagine* that Paul might have approved of this, when he

would utterly disapprove of what he was called to witness. About the time of Paul, the influx of wealth into Rome had made slavery almost as bad as it could be. Luxury had seized all ranks, and the pleasures of the table became the chief objects of attention.

In order that our adversaries may have nothing to complain of, we will imagine, Paul saw the first and approved of it;---that he did more than this---that; after the capture of Asia and Africa, owing to the entire change of manners among the Romans, he beheld in advance, the influx and multitude of slaves; that much more stringent laws against the slaves would be required than any they had yet dreamed of;---that these laws would extend even to the cutting off from the slave all that he and the other apostles had written;---all that Christ, their master had written;---in fine, the whole bible, as it was in his time:---and that his approbative faculties kept pace with it all. He foresaw that the slaves would be counted by the million, the holders by the thousand; that the millions would have to go down to death, certainly unprepared for the world which was to come, while the thousands, for the most part, untouched by the gospel, would have to take their chance as other men. He yet approved it all. What was dim and improbable to Cato and Curius, was plain to an apostle. Paul clearly descried a Roman matron, under the hand of the *Ciniflo*, [hairstresser,] who had a lock improperly placed; he saw the whip presently applied, or the mirror, made of polished steel or brass, aimed at the head of the offender. He saw the towering mansion of a rich Roman, and at the gate the *porter*, with his faithful *dog*, both in chains. The rich slaveholder, and the poor porter, were both members of the church which he would himself, in time to come, establish at Rome. His heart was grieved, but his commiseration for the slaveholder overcame all other considerations. He saw *absolute power* over the persons and lives of the slave given to the masters; he saw a person slain at his own house, the murderer undiscovered, and four hundred slaves put to death on that account; he saw Vedius Pollio, one of the friends of Augustus, telling the emperor of a new punishment he had devised for refractory slaves; and he saw him giving the emperor ocular demonstration of the success of his device, by casting into his fish-pond, to be devoured by eels, a member of Paul's own church. Of all that was to come, when he should be on the scene of action, when slaves should be more numerous

and insolent---so different from what he saw then,---he heartily approved.

Let us suppose that Paul looked through the vista of eighteen hundred years, and saw the results, from the time that he preached at Rome;---that the part he *did* take against slavery had banished it from all the countries of Europe but one, and that but half civilized---that it had taken refuge in the southern states of this continent;---that the poor African had been made its victim, and this, chiefly, not for any sin that he had committed, but for what he could not help, if he would; for the fault the Infinite himself had committed. If that *can* be supposed, would Paul be the friend of Amos Dresser, or of his scourgers? Would he find among the mobs of the south a better understanding of his law, and a more correspondent action, than with their victims? Would he find among the *two hundred and fifty thousand* slaveholders, a greater number that knew and obeyed his law, than among the *two million and a half* of slaves, and their friends? Would he, on the unauthorized committees of the south---who, without the form of trial, hang scores of slaves on the nearest tree---I say, would he see more of his friends on them, or among those who openly opposed such violence? Would he pray with Thompson and Burr, in the prison of Missouri---with Walker, when pelted with eggs on the pillory of an United States territory, or with Torrey, bidding him "be of good cheer" in the work-house of the *city of Baltimore*,---or with those who put them there? The question is easily answered, and is already answered, by every philanthropic heart.

But, say those who imitate the scribes and pharisees in more points than one, these are the "abuses" of the "system," and we are as much opposed to them as you are. There is this difference between us, and an impassable one it is---we are opposed to the "system" itself, you are opposed to what is impossible. You might as well oppose the "abuses" of card playing---of gaming---of dancing---of drinking---of wenching, &c. as the "abuses" of a thing that we eschew altogether, and deprecate as a mighty trespass in itself. It cannot exist without a trespass. But as I have discussed this subject already, I will not now resume it.

The epistle to the Ephesians---to the Colossians---the first to Timothy---the epistle to Titus, and the one to Philemon, are the

only writings of Paul, in which the subject of slavery is directly mentioned. To this may be added the first of Peter; and, I believe, we have all that is found in the New Testament, that has any direct relation to that question.

It is remarkable that these epistles were either written *from* Rome, where slavery prevailed to a great degree, or after the authors had been at the capital, that they were addressed *to* churches, or persons, in Asia Minor, and that they never once made mention of Roman slavery. Those written by Paul were addressed to the Ephesians, with whom he had spent three years, as their minister;—to Timothy, who had succeeded him there, who was a much younger man than Paul; but *with* him, as being the convert of Paul and Barnabas, Paul was well acquainted;—to the Colossians, also a church in Asia Minor, with which Paul was on terms of intimacy, as many persons came from that part of the country to hear Paul preach, while he was at Ephesus;—Paul was well acquainted with Titus, for Titus was one of his earliest converts. Comparing all the authorities that we have, we are brought to the conclusion, that Paul was acquainted—well acquainted with Philemon.

If we prove that Paul intended to subserve a particular object in Asia Minor, where he was well known, and where the christian religion had made considerable advances, instead of defining, forever, what slavery should be, we will be discharging what we undertook. Indeed, from the *changing* character of slavery, it would be very difficult to define it. This we have already shown. The duties of husbands, of wives, and of children are still good, and as society advances, we find them more and more observed. But society, whenever it becomes refined, is sure to cast off slavery. This would seem to show that the relations mentioned were intended to be *permanent*—the condition of slavery to be evanescent.

CHAPTER VII.

This rule of interpretation, too, as it is a reasonable one, will be acquiesced in,—‘that no doctrine is admissible, or can be established from the scriptures themselves, that is either repugnant to them, or contrary to reason, or the analogy of faith.’ With the

acknowledgment of this rule, and also, with the acknowledgment, that 'the *spirit* of christianity humanizes and refines the most barbarous nations, where it is believed,' we will proceed with our investigation.

The teachers—Judaizing teachers, we will call them—had insinuated themselves among the christians, if not into the church of Asia Minor. They had given Paul much trouble there, where they had simulated the true religion. They *added* to christianity all the Mosaic ritual. Without this, according to their view, there was no getting to heaven. Persons may sneer at this now, but at the starting of a new religion—for such the christian may be called—it was not to be sneered at. Paul's superiority of talent and piety, enabled him to withstand these Judaizing teachers. Whilst he was absent at Jerusalem and Rome, they gave additional trouble, especially to the Ephesians and Colossians. The latter probably, wrote to Paul, whilst he was at Rome, or he heard of their situation, and addressed a letter to the Colossians, requesting, that the letter addressed to *them* might be, also, read in the church of the Laodiceans; and that the church at Colosse, for the better understanding of his object, might read the letter to him from Laodicea. His anxiety, too, led him, at, or nearly at the same time, to write letters to his particular and able friends, Timothy and Titus—requesting them to withstand the teachers aforesaid. *He* had been much engaged in preaching against them. The Judaizing teachers were probably fanatical and ignorant men. Their course though is not very singular, inasmuch as it is a well known fact, that the philosophers, particularly the Platonists, who, afterwards, became converts, carried much of their philosophy with them into the christian religion. The Judaizing teachers, as it was very natural they should, first gained access to the christian servants of christian masters. It is admitted, that the passage in question contains, also, directions to the slave of the *unbelieving* master—the most powerful that can be addressed to any true christian—it is, "that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed."

But why should the Judaizing teachers suppose, for a moment—as they *did*—that as soon as the master and slave embraced christianity, the bond which had heretofore held them together was loosed, if it was not *really* so? It was next to nothing *then*, for masters to give up their slaves. The man who embraced

christianity *then*, was prepared to lose every thing; he did often lose every thing; and giving up his slaves was a small matter with him. This is said on the admission that, at first, some of the converts were slaveholders, though the *names* demonstrate, that a large majority were slaves.

Ephesus has been called a “licentious” city, by one commentator. Once shewing his unlimited power—once putting to death on the cross; once following the example of Veditus Pollio, by the Ephesian or Colossian christian slaveholder would have rendered more ineffectual all the labors of the Judaizing teachers than Paul’s exhortations, if those called slaves by Paul were really such. This would have been an example there would have been no resisting; and if slaveholding be *right*, and if “meddling” with the *slave property* can be stopped in no way, short of this, I do not see, that any objections are to be made to it—especially, by such as contend for the *right* of the slaveholder to enter the church.

No person knows better than the writer, how earnestly the slaves, when emancipated, try to show, that they are *really* free. The master, who has emancipated half a dozen, may think very little of it. Not so, with the slave. Liberty has ever been with him, the ruling thought. The power of the master, easily put forth, *was omnipotent to him*, in repressing the predominant idea of the mind. This has ever had its influence with our black population, where *presumption*, arising from color, is, almost everywhere, against them. It is universally known that they, either have been slaves, themselves, or are the descendants of slaves. How much more was it to be expected that this principle would operate upon the white slaves! As long as they were seen on the premises of their christian master—although they might be free—be receiving, *with great regularity*, what Paul had commanded should be given them, “what was just and equal,”—be better instructed; in every way more comfortable—yet, as they were seen *there*, they were set down, by such as did not inquire, as *slaves*. If a slave, or one who had been such, went from Ephesus to the city of Sardis, or to Miletus, or to any other city, and chose to engage in business there, different, altogether, from what he had before followed, the remembrance of his having once been a slave would soon disappear, if it ever was entertained. Of this temper, the Judaizing teachers may successfully have availed themselves,—while it was Paul’s temper to keep

the servants *where they were*, knowing it would be best for them. Of this disposition he gives some proof in his first epistle to the Corinthians. "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." Paul may have considered it essential to the furtherance of the gospel, as well as for the comfort, in every way, of the christian servant, that he remain with his christian master. Every thing would be done by the latter, which he had directed, and every thing that could properly be expected by the latter.

From (*doulos*) the Greek word we gather nothing. Christ was a *doulos*; so was Paul—so was Epaphras, &c. *Doulos* signifies just what we mean now, without any confusion—by *servant*. In the free states, or in Europe, we say *servants*, meaning those who can leave our employment as other people can: in the south, they call their slaves *servants*. There they do not say *slave*, unless the case calls for it. Or, we mean by *doulos*, he who is warmly engaged in the work of another—so that he has no other work to which he regularly attends. From *oiketes*---*pais*---or *therapone*---or from any other *word*, we gain nothing that *satisfies* an enquiring mind. He who has not patience to gather the meaning of the condition, from more reliable sources, ought not to attempt the investigation. He who makes a *word* his trust, has not gone deeper than the "bark" of his subject.

Does the above interpretation, in any respect, violate the *spirit* of the bible---does it interfere, in the slightest manner with the *scope* of that sacred book? If it does, we are entirely ignorant of it. So far from violating the *spirit* or *scope* of the bible, we shall be thankful to any one who will point out such violation to us. We have, for a long time, been convinced, that the practice of slavery was not allowed by the bible, and have not made this exposition but after carefully investigating all our ancient grounds. We write not for triumph, but that the truth may be established. This examination---but the beginning, as the writer would hope, of more particular ones---will make the bible better understood, and its wise mandates more hearkened to. I know that, in the time of the apostles, there were many who disseminated errors and defended Judaism; hence, it became necessary, that the apostles should frequently write against those errors and oppose the defenders of Judaism. I know, too, that many passages in their epistles were written with an express design of refuting such er-

rors. But that the bible should be brought to defend the continuance of southern slavery, which already takes away life, regardless of other laws; which, in effect, precludes from the great majority, that Holy book---which keeps the slave ignorant of his immortal destiny, and of the Judge to whom he is going, has appeared to me, with many others, but the result of not knowing what that book taught.

CHAPTER VIII.

To say that the bible will destroy that which the bible approves, does not deserve an answer, come from what quarter it may. It was written in an evil hour, and was addressed to persons who were thought unworthy of any other opinion. Nor are they who gave it, sensible of the wrong they do the apostle Paul. For they make him, the friend of the slaveholder, *as such*; ready to admit him to the church as a member, and equally ready to destroy "the system" by which he is distinguished. They make him like themselves, unfavorable to the system, but favorable to him who deliberately engages in it. Let us try the apostle of the gentiles by the doctrine which he came to impress on the popular mind.

To say, that, to hold a man and his family who proceed from him, endlessly, in ignorance, for our own accommodation, when it is in our power to place him in a different situation, is not doing to others as we would that they should do to us. I am not unaware that they have a tradition, at the south, by which they make of no effect, this part of the divine law: they say, "were I in the slave's place, as ignorant as the slave is acknowledged to be, and were the slave as intelligent as I am, I would be perfectly satisfied with his choice for me;—and his choice is, as the best thing he can do for me, that I *remain* his slave." With such miserable sophistry, they beguile themselves;—without once thinking that they cannot violate one part of the divine law, (which is altogether consistent,) even if they carry out another.

"*Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.—Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" This was the whole of Paul's commission;—what he was to preach. I shall say nothing, at this time, of the first part

of it, but confine myself to his duty to his fellow men. They whose faith is elastic enough to believe, that Paul thought the whole duty of man was fulfilled by the Roman or American slaveholder, are not to be reasoned with. There is not one of them that would exchange lots with the slave, or that does not think it a miserable one compared with his own. There was not a slave on the Pontine marshes, or in the rice fields of the south, that would not laugh Paul to scorn, if he preached such doctrine as this. Paul did not believe it himself. He believed that Roman slavery was,---and if he was here, he would believe, that American slavery is,---one of the works which his master came into the world to *destroy*, and that it was his duty to assist him in it.

The bible is the emanation of one mind; of one that sees every thing from the beginning to the end. We cannot expect in it, after making allowance for the mistakes of transcribers, any important imperfection. We do not look for any *practice that is approved by the author of it*, being at variance with any precept. In giving the history of men, it relates it according to the facts. In doing so, it makes but little account of human institutions: it makes less account of those who try to *save* them. It knows, if consistent with the *truth*, they will stand: if not, that no human power can save them. It deals with the *heart* of men, knowing, if it can get *that* right, that all else will be right. God had told Paul, that if he regarded iniquity *in his heart*, he would not hear him. Paul was his minister, yet do the slaveholders, and thus far, their advocates, make the noble-minded Paul, who was always ready to die for the truth, and who did die for the truth, say that "the sum of all villanies" was not inconsistent with the glorious idea, with which he was enlightening the minds of the multitude.

Supposing Paul had proposed to Crassus at Rome,—or that he were now alive, and proposed to the largest christian slaveholder at the south,—in order to show his humility, the example of Christ, in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew. Supposing he were to tell him, that he ought to wash the feet of his christian slaves—that he ought to be their "*servant*"—that they were all "*brethren*:" he would be amazed—the latter would call him *fanatic*, if he would do nothing worse. He would say, the religion of the bible *leaves* the civil relations untouched;—the law of the land gives me a wide preference, and if I was to do what you require of me, it would be an evil example to my other slaves, and could

terminate in no other way than dissolving the tie by which these creatures are bound to me.* Such would probably be his answer.

CHAPTER IX.

But how shall we reconcile Paul's condemnation of *manstealing*, in a former part of this epistle, with the approbation of slavery in the latter part of it? As he was late from Jerusalem, where the law proclaimed *death* to the manstealer, it is not supposed, that he was less averse to that occupation than he had been. Paul said that the *Law* was "good," and it condemned to death the man who stole another. Do slaveholders say, after this, that Paul was in favor of their "*system*"? Nothing can be plainer than the language employed. *Andrapodistes* is the Greek nominative singular of the word used in the dative plural, by the apostle, signifying "for man-stealers." *Plagiarius* is the Latin word, by which *Andrapodistes* is translated. The original meaning of this word, in English, is as well understood by us, as it was by Paul, who used the Greek word; or, its Hebrew synonyme, by the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem. It is "*a manstealer---a kidnapper---a man that steals other men's children or servants.*" There is no ambiguity about this. Paul must have been a weak man, who did not know what he was saying, or he must have been a wicked man, that knew he was saying opposite things to the slaveholders and to the multitudes. With neither has he been charged. But lest there should be any doubt,----Jarchi, a Jewish commentator, says----"using a man against his will, as a servant lawfully purchased; yea, even though he should use his services ever so little, only to the value of a farthing, or use but his arm to lean on to support him, if he be forced so to act as a servant, the person compelling him but once so to do, shall die as a thief, whether he has sold him or not." He who would make Paul condemn the "manstealer," and yet approve of the slavery of those who had been so stolen, make him a sorry casuist, indeed. If he could fall into an error so great, he was utterly unfit to manage the cause entrusted to him. Especially so, when Macknight has no difficulty in coming to a sound conclusion on the premises, as

*In all the countries of Europe, where *classes* are recognized, the bible is almost uniformly interpreted as supporting these classes.

he himself informs us in the following words : “ They who make war, for the inhuman purpose of selling the vanquished for slaves, as is the practice among the African princes, are really *menstealers*. And they, who, like African traders, encourage their unchristian traffic, by purchasing what *they know* to be unjustly acquired, are partakers of their crime.”

Nor have the General assembly of the Presbyterian church found less difficulty than that profound critic, Macknight, did, ---for so long ago, as 1794, they adopted the following note, to the passage we are endeavoring to explain.

“ 1. Tim. 1. 10. The law is made for manstealers. This crime among the Jews exposed the perpetrators of it to capital punishment: Exodus, 21, 15 ;’ and the apostle here classes them with sinners of the first rank. The word he uses, in its original import, comprehends all who are concerned in bringing any of the human race into slavery, or in retaining them in it. *Hominum fures, qui servos vel liberos abducunt, retinent, vendunt vel emunt*. Stealers of men are all those who bring off slaves or freemen, and keep, sell or buy them. To steal a freeman, says Grotius, is the highest kind of theft. In other instances we steal only human property, but when we steal or retain men in slavery, we seize those who, in common with ourselves, are constituted by the original grant lords of the earth.”

That the General assembly expunged this note from its minutes, and that it has, after passing through the several mutations which we have before noticed, become the avowed advocate of slavery, is what we expected, for many years, whenever she was pressed for an opinion. Her conduct shows this---that slavery, which is not now what it was twenty years ago, must be totally inhibited the church, or the church will be destroyed in her attempt to save it. Such is the influence of slaveholders, that they will push the church into every device, for defence of their “ system,” no matter how intolerable it may have become. There is but one way of dealing with them, to have peace *within* ; that is, to keep them *without*. If they are once permitted to defile the nest with their progeny, that progeny, like that of the cuckoo, will oust all others that are not subservient to it.*

* Those who wish to prosecute this subject still further are referred to the bible against slavery, a very profound treatise—to Cicero’s oration on the Manilian Law, and to Plutarch’s life of Pompey the great.

CHAPTER X.

But did not Paul send Onesimus, a runaway slave, back to his master, and is not that proof that slaveholders were members of the church? We will examine this epistle with great care, for there is none that has been so little examined till of late.

According to Grotius, Philemon was an *elder* of Ephesus. Dr. Doddridge *supposes* him to have been one of the ministers of the Colossian church; and from St. Paul's requesting him to provide a lodging for him at Colosse, Michaelis *thinks* that he was a *deacon* of that church. But this appellation, Drs. Whitby, Larnier and Macknight have remarked, is rather of an *ambiguous* character—the word upon which it was built—“*fellow-laborer*”—being indiscriminately applied, not only to males, but females. Philemon, says Mr. Horne, *seems* to have been a person of great worth as a man, and of some note as a citizen, of his own country, for his family was so numerous that it made a church, by itself, or, at least, a considerable part of the church at Colosse; that he was, *most probably*, a converted gentile—that, some *have supposed*, that he was converted under the ministry of Paul; and Dr. Benson, a Methodist, I believe, is *of opinion* that during St. Paul's long stay at Ephesus, some of the Colossians had gone thither, and heard him preach the christian doctrine; and the same Mr. Horne concludes, that it is *highly probable*, Philemon would never have become a christian, unless St. Paul had come into these parts; and Dr. Scott agrees, in the main, with Dr. Horne.

With the bare conjectures of Doddridge, Grotius and other commentators—which may be very pleasing as well as edifying to them—we have, in this discussion, nothing to do. We have to deal with *facts*—nothing else will be of any service to us. All conjectures, all suppositions, no matter from what source they come, serve but to bewilder us. The higher the source, the worse. All that, we *know* of Philemon is, that he was an inhabitant of Colosse, and that he was a member of the church. Whether he was of great worth, as a man; or of small notoriety; whether he was a minister at Ephesus; or a deacon; or a private member; whether he was a Jew or a Gentile; whether he had more persons in his employment than Onesimus, or him alone, remains a perfect secret to us as yet; and is to be discarded from this

controversy. We must deal only with such facts as we know concerning him, and what I mentioned above I presume are all.

Philemon's being invested with office is, so far as we know, without *any* foundation, unless in the *imagination* of the commentators. His having a whole church, or part of a church, in his house, is but narrow proof of his wealth, unless we make the Jews, Aquila and Priscilla, *rich* on that account. They were banished from Rome, and set up their regular business (tent making) in Corinth, and Paul wrought with them, for *his subsistence*, because they wrought, as their daily employment, at that business with which Paul was acquainted. And unless we make *rich, on that account*, Nymphas,* who is once mentioned in the epistle to the Colossians, and never again, if we mistake not, in the Gospel. If we are left to *conjecture* we may well say, that it was *convenient* for Paul to attend the house of Aquila and Priscilla—that it was likewise *convenient*, for those who attended the houses of Philemon and Nymphas; or that these last were eminent and distinguished *christians*, who, despite the inconvenience, had the churches to assemble in their houses, in lieu of a better, or more suitable place. Nor ought it to be forgotten, here, that the servant is not greater than his Lord, nor that the time was not yet come, when Paul, with the other apostles, were not the “filth of the world—the offscouring of all things.”†

We have endeavored to strip the epistle of all that does not properly belong to it, that we may consider it fairly. It is not told us, how Onesimus got to Rome. Colosse must have been at least one thousand miles from that city—a very long journey, especially, in those times. It may have been—if we are let loose upon *conjecture*—that he was guilty of some very heinous offence, for which he was afraid to return to Colosse, and which he could be exempted from, by pacifying Philemon.

If Philemon had held Onesimus, as a slave, there are some strange things connected with it. For how could Onesimus have

* Dr. Scott has not hesitated to say in his commentaries on this passage (4th ch. 15 verse of the epistle to the Colossians,) “that Nymphas *seems* to have been an eminent christian at Laodicea.”

† It is a fault, and we cannot but so regard it, that European biography, generally, persists through grand-fathers and grand-mothers—great grand-fathers and great grand-mothers, till it finds, or professes to find, a “*respectable*” parentage for the persons written about; as if no good things could come out of the *mass*. It is more to be regretted that fashionable American biographers are beginning to imitate them.

wronged him—how could he owe him aught—when, Philemon could, at any time, have put him to death? For Colosse had been for a long time a Roman town, and masters had there—as they had in all the Greek towns, by conquest made Roman—*absolute power* over the lives of their slaves. Indeed, one commentator does not stop to say, that “it is *most probable*, as Dr. Macknight has *conjectured*, that Philemon had a number of slaves, on whom the pardoning of Onesimus, *too easily*, might have had a bad effect: and therefore, he might judge some punishment necessary, as an example to the rest.” Wherefore Horne *concludes*, “whether Philemon pardoned or punished Onesimus, is a circumstance concerning which we have *no* information.” And Dr. Benson comes to this benevolent conclusion among others—“that, in *religious* view, or upon a *spiritual* account, all christians are upon a level, whilst christianity makes no alterations in men’s civil affairs,” &c. No wonder, such teaching makes slaveholders, and all who claim the precedence that the *law* allows.

Any other interpretation, than the one I have already hinted at, would be in direct variance with the scope and spirit of the bible. That of our adversaries continues slavery—mine abolishes it. Onesimus was guilty of some great crime, known *probably* only to him, Philemon and Paul---for we suppose to the latter he unbosomed himself fully. In all likelihood, it was *purloining* from Philemon. Why do I come to this conclusion? Because the epistle to the Colossians, sent at the same time that the letter to Philemon was sent, by Tychicus and Onesimus, mentions the latter, in conjunction with Tychicus, as “one of you”---(so does he mention Epaphras)---who was to make known to them “all things that were done in Rome.” So, it appears, that Paul imposes on Onesimus, “as one of them,” conjointly with Tychicus, a report of his own doings. Would the people of Colosse,---would Philemon and his family---have listened to this patiently, from a returned slave? I suppose not. The epistle, too, was read not only in the church in Colosse,---assembled, in all *probability*, at the house of Philemon, inasmuch as the christians were, *in those days*, too poor and too few, to build a church---but in the church at Laodicea, which, for the reason just given, was, *most probably*, assembled at the house of Nymphas. There were many cities, too, between Colosse, and the capital of Lyconia, where the “slave, the fugitive and thief,” as Dr. Benson re-

marks, was to make his *debut*, which would, probably, have gotten wind, had an apostle associated such an one with Tychicus, to tell of him a thousand miles off. These cities would, probably, have made some question of receiving a message so delivered. Yet, there appears, at neither of the cities mentioned, the least impediment to Onesimus, by Philemon, or any one else. All which,—saying nothing of the *scope and spirit* of the gospel—is inconsistent with the system of slavery, as it then existed among the Romans.

But as we are thrown upon *conjecture*,—supposing, Philemon, instead of being very rich, was in but moderate circumstances; and, that he had but one man, Onesimus, with him. Supposing, Onesimus was performing *menial* duties,---and we have many such, especially in the law offices, now-a-days, who are not slaves—and that he was surprised into the commission of some criminal act, by which Philemon was the chief sufferer;—supposing that, in order more effectually to aid Philemon, who could not undergo the expense of searching for him at Rome; that, in those circumstances, Onesimus fell in with Paul, and was converted by him. Supposing, Paul, having entire confidence in the capacity of Onesimus, found that he might be very useful to him in Asia Minor, but that he was liable, any day, to be interrupted by Philemon's moving on him, with his criminal prosecution. Supposing, that Paul wrote the letter in question, to get from Philemon, whose word could well be taken in the case, a promise, that he would, not only, not molest Onesimus, but that he would receive him as “a brother beloved especially to” Paul. But, perhaps I am replied to here, by some one, who says, that, if Philemon did not respond to the letter of Paul, as Paul expected, he would prosecute Onesimus, at once. To this I answer, that there exists precisely the same difficulty, in case Onesimus was a slave: with this exception, however, that in the latter case, there was an appeal to the avarice of Philemon, which does not exist in the former. Is not this interpretation more consistent with the *spirit* of Christ as manifested throughout his life, as well as more harmonious with the *scope* of the bible, than that which is fortified by so many commentators, who cared but little, and who knew less, of the real condition of the enslaved, and which makes Paul and the early christians the friends of slavery and slaveholders?

Let us see now, what Paul did say, that is at all remarkable in this case:

In several verses, he tells Philemon, that although he had power as apostle, to take Onesimus altogether out of his hands, he would make it a matter which Philemon should do “willingly,” “that the communication of his faith may become effectual.” How was it to become *effectual*? *By his liberating Onesimus, if he were a slave.* Slavery, then, is a bad thing. The manumitting of a slave was considered a good thing. Paul, then, had the power to banish slavery *forever*, from the church which he is establishing, and he *will* not, but takes into his christian embraces, those who are guilty of it.

He also tells Philemon, that Onesimus is to be received, “not now as a servant, but above a servant;” well, what is “*above a servant*;”—how does Paul explain himself? He says, in connection with the last passage—“A brother beloved.” This is *above a servant*,—because, *that* always implies *inferiority*. How well Paul was borne out in what he said, we may gather from the 23. ch. of Matthew. In that, the character of the scribes and pharisees is fully portrayed; and the equalizing tendency of Christ’s own doctrine is set forth, in contrast, immediately following. They were represented, as imposing heavy burdens upon others, which they would not touch with their fingers; as doing all their works that they may be seen of men; as loving the uppermost rooms, and the chief seats, and greetings in the market; and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. The contrast is thus finely exhibited: But be ye not called Rabbi; for one is your master, (teacher,) even Christ: *and all ye are brethren.* And call no man your father upon earth: for one is your father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters, (teachers,) for one is your master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you, shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted. And all ye are brethren—all equals. This is the only proper tie that binds christians, and as such, Paul now requested Philemon to forgive what was past, and take Onesimus to his bosom as an equal, *as a brother*. What ground there is for any higher office than a preacher of the *truth*, the writer is unable to discern.

We have only one part more, and that ought to have been

sufficient, to offer our comments upon. It is but once, and then softly alluded to, by single commentator, Mr. Benson, "A wise man," says he, "chooses to address in a soft and obliging manner even in cases *where there is authority to command.*" It should have been made more prominent,—because, *if Onesimus be a slave*, and Philemon a christian,—it put the whole of Roman slavery, so far as christians were concerned, into the hands of an apostle. How Paul would have used this power, in other cases, may be gathered from this epistle, as well as from other parts of his writings. The passage to which we refer is the following, (verse 8,) "Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ, to enjoin thee that which is convenient." Which, translated fully, means—my connection with Christ, as one of his apostles, gives me the *power* to *enjoin* upon you, that which you *ought to do* to Onesimus, in the present case. You cannot refuse to do it--- *whatever it be*, as understood between you and me,---without disputing my authority,---which, if you fail to acknowledge, puts an end to your connection with the church. This passage, we think, is decisive of the question. If Onesimus *was a slave*, it puts slavery, so far as christians were concerned, entirely into the hands of Paul. If he was not, Paul had complete control over *whatever offence* he had committed. We rejoice in the belief, that Paul's letter was answered by Philemon as it deserved,---that Onesimus was received by him, "as a brother,"---as Paul himself, had he been present, would have been, and that Philemon had the magnanimity of a true christian, and did, as an act of *justice*, what he would have been compelled to do, as an act of "*necessity.*"

In the praises which have been bestowed on the *manner* of this epistle, we fully concur; believing that there never will, as there never can be one, which for delicacy of sentiment, for masterly address and overpowering appeals to the principles of right human action, to exceed it.

So much for Paul's proceedings in reference to christian masters and christian slaves, or in reference to christian *masters*. Christianity dissolved the condition, and made them "*brethren.*"

CHAPTER XI.

But Paul could do but little for the emancipation of christian slaves,---for with only such could he have any influence,---that were under the control of idolatrous masters. His sensible and reasonable course, with regard to them, is an additional proof of the truth of his mission, and of qualifications for the part that was entrusted to him. From the beginning of the world, to the time of Paul, and for many centuries afterward, there was not a *nation* in which Human Rights were considered as they now are. There was no place where the slave was safe. We do not suppose, that the kingdom of the Jews furnished an exception to this remark, in the time of Paul; for such was the strength of the Romans, and weakness of the Jews, after the people were subjugated by Pompey, that we think it altogether probable, that the former took their *fugitives* by force from the territory of the Jews; who, if they had the disposition, had not the power to withstand them.* Such was the comprehensiveness of the Roman power, at the time of Paul, that the master could lay his hand upon his slave wherever he had sought refuge. The most distant lands afforded him no protection, unless in the inability of the master to pursue, and in the crowd with which the slave consorted. For Rome, at that time, had acquired the mastery of the world as far as it was then civilized, and, to a great extent uncivilized. The comprehensiveness of the Roman power may be judged of, too, by their permitting criminals for capital offences, to go at large, on bail till the day of trial. They could put their hands upon them, in whatever country they had escaped to. So they could, in regard to *slaves*, if the masters chose to do so. Escape was impossible, or so nearly impossible, that it was hardly worth trying. In this condition of things, what did it behove Paul, as a discreet and compassionate man to do? Precisely what he did do. There was no way of securing emancipation, but to act upon the master. How was this best to be done? By the mode pointed out by Paul,---by counting their own masters worthy of all honor---by

* Menstealing, or kidnapping, was also, an extensive business. The shores of the Mediterranean, and all the seas that make from it, were vexed with piratical vessels. The weak and the unsuspecting were overpowered---taken and sold at Rome, where the market for slaves was always open. A full account of the pirates has already been referred to, as far the Romans were concerned---in the appointment of Pompey to the Manilian war, and the life of that general, by Plutarch.

being obedient, &c. If this was not sufficient to insure emancipation, they were, to show the christian character throughout, and that was, *to the christian slaves*, the main concern of life. Emancipation was but secondary. In this way, too, he made of every slave a preacher;---for we do not say, that a preacher may not be slave; and what can be more commanding to an idolatrous master, than to affect---and affect favorably---the minutest concern of the most despised situation.

We know nothing of Paul, that can, in an argument, be *relied* on, except what he has written about himself. From this, we judge, that he was a man of a nobler spirit, and of a devotion to the truth, that could not be exceeded. Let us suppose, judging from his principles, how he would have acted, had there been a free state, a Canada, to Rome, as there is to the United States, where the slave could have been free. Suppose a slave-owner residing at Placentia, Parma or Ravenna, which, I believe, is south of forty-five degrees, to take with him his trusty body servant, to Mantua, Verona or Padua, which are north of forty-five degrees. After having amused himself at Verona, for a week, and been promptly attended to, by his body-servant, whom, for convenience, we shall call Philip, he concludes to return. For that purpose, he summons Philip to make ready. Philip approaches him, with a respectful air, and tells him, that he has been informed, since he came to Verona, that slavery does not exist there, but that he is on terms of equality with him, so far as slavery is concerned,—that he shall not go back with him. “Hoity-toity! who has been putting these notions into your head! Here is Paul—(he was standing by)—we will leave it to him, whether you shall return or not.” I shall let all persons decide for themselves, how Paul would have acted and advised in such a case.

But here one question is to be settled, which is of frequent occurrence, and seems to me to be nothing more nor less than a fresh act of kidnapping or man-stealing. Supposing Philip had been kept in entire ignorance of his rights, under the laws of Verona, and in such ignorance, on his part, though not on the part of the slaveholder, had been taken back to Parma, where he was continued in slavery:—Is not such an act, no matter how it be accomplished, whether by *force* applied to the slave, or his

ignorance—a fresh act of man-stealing or kidnapping? All must answer in the affirmative, to the statement.*

Or, supposing, Paul was standing with Philip and the slaveholder, opposite to Mantua, but on the south side of forty-five degrees, and that some matter of business called the slaveholder away, for two or three hours. A canoe, with a paddle, accidentally, floats to the bank where Paul and Philip are standing. Philip tells Paul 'that he is used to the canoe and paddles—that he has been accustomed to them by airing his master on warm evenings on the Po; that, if he gets to the other side, which he can now do, without violating the person, or the property of the man who has restrained him of his liberty, or in any way encroaching on the "law of love," but simply by using in their appropriate functions, the limbs which God has given him, he is free; that, to all appearance, he can be free in a few minutes; and that, if he does not use the present opportunity, a similar one, so favorable is not likely soon again to occur, but that once more he must be precipitated into all the horrors of southern slavery.' Decide, if you please, as Paul would have decided in such a case.

That this attempt to put in popular form a much disputed question, in nearly all the churches, may be blessed to you, is the earnest wish of

Your friend and fellow servant,

JAMES G. BIRNEY.

POSTSCRIPT.

1. I have purposely omitted encumbering the above, by citing my *authorities*, as I proceeded; but they are ready to be produced, whenever my statements are called in question, by the intelligent and impartial.

2. The equalizing nature of christianity, dwelt on. By this, it is not intended, that I must lie down in the mire, because my neighbor may choose that situation. It declares to him, that he must *not* lie down in the mire; that he must be industrious; that,

* If such is the fair interpretation of the laws of the United States and of the *free states* of the confederacy, how many acts of man-stealing are daily committed, by re-enslaving persons, that have been taken to Cincinnati, and other places, on the Ohio river!

all, whether rich or poor—must be protected; that, wherever he finds *excelsior* written, he must strive to make his example still higher; that, *the truth*, to all inferior things, must be what the sun is to the planets, which revolve around it; in fine, that no office or station is *above* the *truth*, but that it must be placed in the firmament, that all may look to it, and be regulated by it.

3. We must not make laws, be they constitutional or otherwise, which, in letter or spirit, are opposed to the divine law. That we are prosperous, fifty or a hundred years hence, in spite of a violation of His law, by keeping our fellow creatures in bondage, proves two things,—the long-suffering mercy of God,—and the infidelity of the sentiment. We do not often hear this preached on, and recommended. We have it yet to learn.

4. The people are considered as connected with the government. Whilst the government is made for the *protection of property*, it must not forget its still higher duty, and the last necessarily flows from it—the *protection of persons*.

5. It may be thought, that I deal rigidly with the British commentators and biographers, and those who imitate them in this country. From my rule regarding them, I rejoice to except such as are worthy of it—such as John Wesley and Adam Clarke, so far as slavery is concerned. The *practice* under it, cannot be too speedily stopped, in this country, where there is not even a deceptious symptom of excuse—all our written constitutions, as well as the theory of our government being against it. Nor can it be supposed, that I am unnecessarily rigid toward a people, with part of whom I was so agreeably associated, a few years ago—from whom I have received so many hospitalities—so many kindnesses. If I have not greatly mistaken them, they will welcome the present examination—*perhaps, above others*. But whilst it is pleasing to me, here to say, that I believe them at least, as civilized, as refined, and, therefore, as christian a people as any with whom it has been my lot to have intercourse, I yet find great fault with many of their institutions and with their *government*,----with its army, its navy, its establishment, its caste-legislation, its different *orders*, extending from the operative to the throne. We have not, as yet, the army, the navy, the establishment, &c. as parts of the government here, as they seem to be in England, and as places of refuge for our otherwise unprovided-for, or incompetent sons. How soon the army and navy may serve this laudable purpose,

in this country, depends on, how long the north may choose to drag after them, in their upward pursuits, the almost dead carcase of the south;---how long they choose to support southern slavery, and how long they will give, for the sake of a few crumbs of office, the entire management of their government to slaveholders. The north, I know, have but little use for an army or navy---*perhaps, for no part of them.*

6. I have not introduced above, the argument which may be based on the *impossibility* of christians carrying into effect the Roman law against their slaves---allowing them to want slaves. They who are aware, that, the supreme power among the Romans was, of late, despotic; that idolatry was the state-religion; that, christianity was opposed to it, and all its alliances, well know, that the christian, for the most part, was a christian, *in private*; that, he was subject, at any time, his christianity was revealed on him, particularly if he were influential, to an ignominious death; that it was but necessary for the slave to make this known of his master---and it was difficult to conceal it from the domestic slave---to consign him to death. They who have read the most trustworthy of the "*Persecutions*" of the christians, by the Roman emperors, are not surprised at this. A slaveholding—and, of course, a slave-freeing—abolitionist of the south;—one who is openly known, too, to be opposed to the false religion which prevails there—will not be surprised at this. He could not,—if permitted to *live*---successfully call *to his aid* the law, in any case. Is he among a more civilized people than were the Roman emperors? This has not been introduced, because it required an examination that would make the tract too long. Much may be made of it, by the diligent.

7. I have confined my remarks about the Judaizing teachers to *slavery*,—the single question which I wished to make clear. Independently of this, there were many of the important doctrines, taught by Paul—if not all of them—which they greatly perverted or abused. The field is now open. The able and the diligent, who first enter it, will reap an abundant and useful harvest.

8. I despise no person because of his occupation, if it be for the good of society, and plainly deducible from good principles. I, therefore, reject him who deals to my fellow man what will, in whole or in part, deprive him of his Reason, the gift of God,—to

distinguish him from the brute ; also him who, in the sight of the world, degrades my fellow man, by imposing on him the chains of slavery.

9. Thus much I have said, in this **postscript**, chiefly, that I may not be misunderstood, and misrepresented. To sum up all : I am an advocate of christianity, without which, I am surprised, that reflecting persons can live ; of a firm and steady execution of the laws, *on all*, be they rich or poor, black or white ; of an economical and just government to all, over whom we assume jurisdiction ; of a government whose operations may be easily comprehended, by those who give their minds to understand them ; and of a free and equal one, (with exceptions, of course,) such as ours was intended to be, when it came from the hands of those who made it.

J. G. B.