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AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY A

MEMBER OF THE

MANUMISSION SOCIETY,

ON THE 17TH OF AUGUST, 1816,

AND AGAIN,

ON THE 1ST OF JANUARY, 1817;

(BY ORDER OF THE SOCIETY.)

Probably by Dr. Anderson

PRINTED FOR THE

Manumission Society.

*"We hold these truths to be self evident—That all men
"are created equal; that they are endowed by their
"Creator with certain unalienable rights; that
"among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of
"happiness. [Declaration of Independence.*

KNOXVILLE; PRINTED BY HEISKELL & BROWN
MAY, 1817.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE A

MANUMISSION SOCIETY.

ONE object of this society is, to diffuse light on a subject: about which no reason can be rendered why the public should remain in darkness. To obtain this object in part, the society ordered at the last meeting that an appropriate address should be delivered at the present meeting, and were pleased to direct that order to me. In compliance with the *will* of the society, I have prepared an address on the subject, which has given birth to the association, which it is proposed to treat in the following manner:

- I. The object or design of the society.
- II. That the principles of slavery are inconsistent with the laws of nature and revelation.
- III. Shew some of its evils both moral and political.
- IV. No solid objections lie against *gradual emancipation*.

I am first to show the object of this society.

I am happy in being able to say, the object is such, that every friend of humanity, politician of every name, and christians of every denomination may join hand and heart to obtain. To relieve suffering humanity, to help the feeble voice of the degraded and oppressed African to reach the ear of legislative authority, and to promote the sacred rights of man, are the objects of this philanthropic Association. But the constitution speaks for itself.

It shall be the business of the society and of each member to endeavor to promote and inculcate the principle "*that freedom is the natural right of all men.*" What American, what republican will raise his voice or exert his influence against this eternal and immutable law of nature? The benevolence of the object which the society proposes, forbids all unrighteous or violent methods in order to obtain the end. Accordingly, the constitution has pointed out the means to which the society shall confine itself. "It shall be the duty of the society to consult among themselves whom they will elect for governor and representatives to the several legislatures, and endeavor to be unanimous in their interest for such as are friends of our country, and are believed to be in favor of a gradual emancipation."

The society will doubtless feel it a duty to write petitions and

relations of life may be broken in upon by the ruffian hand of *cupidity* and *revenge*. Husbands may be torn from the companions of their choice, notwithstanding the law of Heaven "A man shall leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and the two shall be one flesh." And notwithstanding the settled and immutable law of nature, "One perfect right is—a right to associate with whom we please consentably."* Infants may be torn from the embrace of the heart-broken mother, or the mother from them, while the agonies of their separation are insulted by sneers or the cold embrace of iron fetters. And all this to replenish the coffers of a spendthrift wretch, or an avaricious miser whose souls are as completely swept of every tender sensibility as *Tophet* is of morality. And yet the laws utter no veto against these outrages on the laws of nature and nature's God. Is this not "to frame mischief by laws?" "Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and write grievousness, which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and take away the right from the poor."†

It may be said, instances of such cruel treatment are rare, if they happen at all. What is to hinder such scenes from taking place every day? Are there any municipal regulations to prevent them? May not every owner of slaves use them in this way, whenever his interest or passions dictate? And it is on the principles of slavery, as they exist amongst ourselves, that I am treating. And although there are thousands, and I bless God for it, who have hearts of humanity and tenderness toward their slaves; yet, no thanks to the legal regulation under which slavery exists. And let it be said to the credit of slave holders in this part of the country, a great majority of them are humane, and guilty of few or none of these barbarous rigors. Still many of these evils do take place. There are not wanting examples of persons, who are so destitute of every tender sympathy of nature, and of the social virtues, as to make a business of buying these helpless creatures to drive in irons to market: the very sight of which congeals the milk of human kindness. And yet such is the sense that the public have of this outrage on religion and humanity, that these *traffickers* in human flesh feel not the weight of general abhorrence.

Can it be doubted whether such a state of things is at war with the unchangeable laws of nature? The concurrent voice of all writers is, "natural rights are such as are essential to man, and universal. Perfect rights in a state of natural liberty are first, a right to life; second, a right to employ his faculties and industry for his own use; third, a right to personal liberty; fourth, a power over life, not to throw it away unnecessarily; but for a good reason; fifth, a right to associate with any person,

* *Witherspoon's Philosophy.* † *Pslz.* 94; 20. *Isai* 10, 1 2.

whom he can persuade, not force." * The same author adds, "it is unjust and unequal for any individual to hinder or abridge another in any one of these rights without consent. Liberty either cannot or ought not to be given up in the social state." This is the language of common sense, and the spontaneous feeling of even the untutored savage. The learned and the unlearned equally feel the force of these truths and we have one instance of a whole nation solemnly declaring viva voce by their representatives their intuitive conviction of these principles. On the celebrated 4th of July, 1776, the representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, declared in the following nervous language; "we hold these truths to be self evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by the Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted amongst men; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter and abolish it." On the certainty of the unchangeableness of these truths, we justify our separation from the government of Great Britain. For the defence and enjoyment of these principles our fathers willingly met death, and surrendered their lives *Martyrs*. They bequeathed them to us as the greatest of all human legacies. Yet slavery as it exists in these United States is in direct opposition to these self-evident maxims. Every line of our history, every battle in our struggle for independence, every anniversary of our national birth, condemns the principles of slavery, and fixes on us the charge of glaring inconsistency; and every law passed by legislatures in favor of slavery is in direct opposition to the principles of our national existence. Let us willingly do, that for which we justly blame Great Britain for refusing to do, until forced, namely, acknowledge the rights of men, and give, in a suitable way more than one million and a half of people to enjoy these sacred rights.

It remains on this part of our subject to shew; that slavery is in opposition to the whole *sacred volume*. And first, it is at war with the claim which Jehovah has declared he has to an exclusive property in the human family. "All souls are mine" Souls in the original is, *nepes*, and signifies a human creature, being self or person; and most certainly means the creature as composed of soul and body. God claims all men as his property to dispose of them, to command and use them for his own Glory. But the doctrine of slavery disregarding the right of God, claims the slave and the descendants as the exclusive property of the master to be commanded and disposed of at his sovereign pleasure. "Will a man rob God. Ye are cursed with a curse, for

* *Witherspoon's philosophy, see also Paley.*

ye have robbed me, even this whole nation" of more than titles and offerings; for it is a robbery of souls in their whole capacity of enjoyment and activity; and of bodies which should be employed as instruments in the service of God. Let man contend with his fellow potsherd man about rights and claims; but what individual or nation may safely contend with omnipotence about his sovereign unpurchased rights?

To this some may object. By the same mode of reasoning it may be proved, that we have no right to use the cattle or the productions of the earth, whether of the dry land, or of the waters, for they are the Lords. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein." "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I knew all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine."*

It is acknowledged that the earth is the Lord's, the world and all that are therein; and if we have any right to appropriate them to our own use, such right must be founded on a divine grant. And such a grant we have recorded in Gen. 9: 2, 3, the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth on the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even as the green herb have I given you all things." But here is no grant to one part of Noah's family to enslave the other.

It may still be urged, that the Africans are the descendants of Ham whose posterity were doomed to slavery by the curse of Heaven. "And he said cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren."

It is deemed a sufficient answer to this objection, that this is a prophecy, and not a command. And a prophecy that an event shall take place even by human agency, is no warrant for doing that action, nor can the prophecy be plead in justification. If it could the most enormous crimes that have ever been committed might be justified. The death of Christ was predicted very minutely, ages before it took place; and yet God expressly condemns those, who were instrumental in his death as guilty of the basest murder. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

But selfishness ever ready to apologise for its plans, pleads, there is a divine warrant for slavery, first, in the example of bible Saints; such as Abraham, who had servants born in his house and bought with his money; second, and in the grant which God gave to Israel to enslave the heathen nations round about them.

* *Psal.* 24, 1, and 50; 10, 11.

"Both thy bond-men and thy bond-maids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen, that are round about you, of them shall ye buy bond-men and bond-maids." *Lev. 25. 44.*

To the first part of this idle apology for slavery we answer :
1st. The Bible contains a faithful history of saints. It records equally their crimes, as well as the virtues, without condemnation of the first, or recommendation of the latter: contenting itself with a naked statement of facts, leaving us to form our judgement about those facts according to the doctrines and morality, which it teaches else-where. If the example of Bible Saints may be plead as a justification of any action; then, we can justify lying, adultery, idolatry, and even murder. The example of the saints as much justifies these crimes as it justifies slavery. But point to the place where Noah or David is commended for these crimes, or commanded to perpetrate them, then may you find a warrant for slavery in the Oracles of God.

To the second part of the apology we answer: there would be as much propriety in pleading, as an excuse for the massacres of Cortes in South America, or of the British in the East Indies, the ravages of a tornado, or the indiscriminate destruction of an earthquake. God has a right to do with his own as he pleases. nor have we any right to find fault, or ask him wherefore hast thou done it? If God gives an express command to one nation to destroy another they ought to obey; or if he gives a command to enslave them the nation commanded would incur guilt if they did not obey. But in giving Israel a grant to enslave the heathen, has God given us a grant to enslave the unoffending Africans? I know not by what logic this can be made out. There is no more connection between the premises and the conclusion, than if we should say the tower of Babel was an 180 feet high; therefore, the repose of Europe depends on Bonaparte being confined in the island of St. Helena. Suppose a company of Americans and an equal number of Africans should meet, both of them in quest of the same object, namely, human beings whom they might carry off to enslave; and the Americans should thus address the Africans; "We are in quest of people to enslave, and we have a divine warrant for taking you, because God gave a grant to Israel to enslave the Heathen round about them, but if you resist we have not sufficient power to accomplish our purpose by force." If this address be true the Africans ought to submit. But suppose they should reply, "We are out on the same errand and you are the very people that we expected to seize, for the purpose of making bond-men and bond-women, and we have a divine warrant for taking you and enslaving you and your descendants forever; for you were the Heathen at the time God gave the command to Israel, and they were commanded not to abhor the Egyptians the descendants of Ham." *Deut. 23. 7.* Now which of them has the best claim? The truth is,

none of them have any warrant for their nefarious purpose. Who does not see that every nation may plead this apology for the practice of enslaving all that they have power to enslave? The Algerines may plead it, for capturing and enslaving the Americans, just with as much propriety as we do for retaining the Africans in bondage generation after generation.

But again; it is plead as the last refuge. If the Bible condemns slavery, it would not command servants to obey their masters, not with eye service as men pleasers; but with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ. With good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men.

This is reasoning from a direction given for the purpose of regulating the conduct of the slave, to the right or property of the master in him. If this is good logic it will hold good in other cases. Let us try it. God has commanded those who rule over men, to be just, and rule in the fear of God; and according to the statutes and ordinances of his word: And if they do not obey, they incur the displeasure of Heaven. Yet God commanded, at a time when unjust, ambitious, and idolatrous men administered the governments which in many respects were inequitable, tyrannical, and corrupt; his people to be "subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors." "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. Whosoever resisteth the powers, resisteth the ordinances of God." Would it be good logic to reason from these precepts, that tyrannical, oppressive, and corrupt governments, administered by ambitious ungodly men were right and according to the divine Oracles. Surely not.

Let us try the soundness of this logic on a plain scripture precept. "For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults ye take it patiently? But if, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God for even hereunto were ye called." *Pet. 2. 20, 21.*

It is plain that we are called to suffer patiently, even for good deeds. Then according to the foregoing logic, it is right to inflict sufferings on those who do righteously, because the sufferer must bear it patiently: What miserable reasoning. Yet it is as sound, as to reason, that slavery is right, because the Bible commands servants to obey those who are their masters. The sophistry of this argument might be further exposed by trying it on such precepts as the following. "I say unto you, that ye resist not evil." "Bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." *Math. 5. 39, 41.* If evil treatment must not be resisted then evil treatment is right. When you advise a son or daughter to submit to, and bear with an ill-natured capricious father, would you think it a fair inference from your advice, to say that you allowed and approved of ill-nature

and caprice in parents toward their children? This would be construing your advice as fairly, as we construe the Bible, when we say it allows and approves of slavery, because it commands servants to obey their masters. The truth is, the precepts to servants are not founded so much on the nature of the relation between the master and the servant, as on expediency, and what is best, all things considered. If the slave has no honest upright method of freeing himself from his unjust bondage, it will be best to submit to it, and bear patiently with its evils. In the case of hired servants the precepts to obey are founded on relation, and obligation arising therefrom. Again, *slavery* is inconsistent with that *impartial regard* and *good will* which God's word enjoins on man to exercise toward his fellow-men. God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth. And because all are equally the creatures of God and descended from one common Origin, they are required, and reasonably too, to love each other as they love themselves; and to do to others, as they would, that others would do to them. These precepts need no comment to shew their reasonableness or their hostility to slavery: unless it can be shewn, that the love which human creatures have for themselves is such, as to lead them to be willing to be at the disposal of another not only as it regards incessant and often rigorous labour; but as it respects all the dearest comforts of life. But if our love to ourselves never operates in this way, then our love to others ought to be such, that we would neither be willing to put or retain them in a condition, that we would not willingly submit to ourselves. If we obey God we must do to others as we would that they would do to us. Let the question be put to our bosoms. Am I willing to be made a slave, and I and my descendants retained in adamant chains forever? Would not the darkness and silence of the grave be a welcome asylum from such a condition? The answer spontaneously arises in every bosom. Let death close my eyes on the light forever rather than see myself and offspring placed in such a state. And shall we without remorse treat others in a way that is more abhorrent to us than the gloom of death itself? It is not a solitary passage or two of this kind in the sacred oracles that opposes slavery. This spirit is breathed directly or indirectly in every page. "Love seeketh not her own, rejoiceth not in iniquity;" of course not in oppression. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour;" of course it will not work an evil of the greatest magnitude. Unqualified slavery.

3d. Slavery is inconsistent with that Justice between man and man which the Bible enjoins. "The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night." "Wo unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages and

giveth him not for his work. The hire of the labourers which have reaped down your fields which of you is kept back by fraud, crieth : and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth." * Where is the compensation of the poor slave ? The nearest that it can be pretended, that these principles of justice are practised towards slaves, is, that many masters feed them with plenty of wholesome food, clothe them so as to protect them from the inclemency of the seasons, provide for them comfortable houses and lodgings, while they exact no rigorous or unreasonable quantity of labour, and provide for them in infancy, sickness, and old age. This is the extent of the compensation given by the best of masters. But the greater part of this treatment is common, when men are hired to labour, beside their wages ; and if the wages were withheld on the pretext of good usage, it would be condemned by all as dishonest and unjust, and the laws of the land would compel payment. The laws of most governments in christendom, have solemnly declared, that a servitude of 21 or 23 years, is sufficient for all the above care, except the care that old age requires, as it is for this period that orphans and destitute children are bound. But would to heaven all slaves had no more to complain of than that they labour for nothing. Many are compensated with hard fare, coarse diet ; perhaps the ashes the softest couch, he has to repose his wearied limbs upon. Insulting taunts, neglected in sickness, disregarded and unpitied in trouble ; or the cow-skin once a day ; a lacerated back ; a bruised head ; or broken limbs, † such are the facts in numerous instances, altho' many neighbourhoods are strangers to such cruelty and many individuals are exceptions in places where

* *Lev.* 19. 13. *Jer.* 22. 13. *Ja's.* 4. 5.

† Point to me the man

Who will not lift his voice against the trade
 In human souls and blood, and I pronounce
 That he nor loves his country nor his God.
 Is he a Christian then ? Who holds in bonds
 His brethren ; cramps the vigor of their minds,
 Usurps entire dominion o'er their wills,
 Bars from their souls the light of moral day ;
 The image of the great eternal Spirit
 Obliterating thence Before your God
 Whose holy eye pervades the secret depths
 Of every heart ; do you who hold enthralled
 Your fellow-beings liberty, believe
 That you are guiltless of a damning crime.
 Be undeceived, and cleanse from guilt and blood
 Your crimsoned conscience, and polluted hands.

Daniel Brien.

such is the treatment of slaves. The righteous Lord who loveth righteousness will not always forget thee, O thou unpitied, insulted *African*. His justice will not always slumber! May we pacify the most High by turning from the error of our ways before he render to us double for our iniquities as a nation.

4th. Slavery is irreconcilable with the relative duties which God commands us to observe on pain of his displeasure.

1st. Husbands and wives. (*Rom.* 7. 2. The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth." (*1 Cor.* 7. 10. "Let not the wife depart from her husband." And 3 verse, "Let the Husband render unto the wife due benevolence; and likewise, also, the wife unto the husband." (*Eph.* 5. 33. "Let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." See also (*1 Pet.* 3. 7. *Col.* 3. 18. 19.) Thus has the laws of the eternal God regulated the marriage relation and enjoined that they should live together as the heir of the grace of life. Which of these sacred duties are consonant to the principles of slavery. Or which of them are even practicable in slavery?

2d. Of Parents and Children. (*Eph.* 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, "Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise) that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth. And ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." *Col.* 3. 20, 21.) (*2 Cor.* 12. 14 "The Children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." Such are the immutable obligations between parents and children; and such are the commands of the creator of all things in heaven and earth. And who does not see at first glance that the laws of Jehovah and the laws of our land respecting slavery are at dreadful odds?

Revelation says "Husbands love your wives as your own bodies. *Eph.* 5. 28.

Slavery says, Husband you shall shew no more regard to your wife than the interest or caprice of the master pleases.

Rev. "Children obey your parents."

Slav. The master's authority shall be first regarded and your obedience to this law of heaven may bring on you the lash of your master's whip.

Rev. "Parents bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Slav. The children must be kept ignorant of religion, of morality, and especially of the rights of man.

Rev. "Parents provide for your children."

Slav. They shall labour for me and mine entirely, and I will dispose of their children as I please.

Rev. "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the fall of the old man". *Lev.* 19. 32.

Slav. The hoary head shall be kicked about just as every pettish child pleases.

Rev. "All souls are mine."

Slav. I dispute and disregard the claim of Jehovah, the slaves are mine.

It is only necessary to mention the subject in order to see that slavery puts the slave in a condition in which it is impossible for him to observe the commands of God respecting the Sabbath day, the ordinances of public worship, and the duties of private worship; together with innumerable other precepts, such as "Provide things honest in the sight of all men," "Visit the widow and the fatherless;" "Feed the hungry," & "Clothe the naked," &c. And all the precepts of charity, benevolence and kindness, the observance of which goes farther to improve the virtues of the heart than all other things*.

We are in the third place to shew some of the moral and political evils of slavery.

Political and moral evils are so closely connected, or rather the first, being but the creature of the last, it will not be necessary to consider them very separately. It will be granted whatever tends to form the character of the people of these United States hostile to the genius of a republican government, does directly or indirectly endanger our liberties, render our rights insecure, and threaten the very form of the government. Of all kinds of government ours depends most on the character of the mass of the people. Without a general diffusion of knowledge and virtue it is impossible it should exist long uncorrupted.

But what influence has slavery on the character of the people? To answer this question, we have only to take a view of facts. Between two, and fifty slaves are common in families. These slaves are generally in a state of ignorance of God and moral obligation equal to the savages of the forest. Their minds are wholly destitute of the knowledge of every science. Their conversation and conduct are as profligate and irreligious as their state of bondage will permit; and their very state of bondage is a powerful temptation to many immoralities, such as prophanity, disregard to the sabbath, prostitution, lying, and stealing.

* Ye gospel promulgators! why so dumb
Upon the solemn theme to which each ray
Of revelation points? And has the world
Such fascination, such corrupting power
And vile intimidations force, as thus
To paralyze the energies divine
Of Satan's combatants, that they will yield
To his blood-feasting hosts without one blow. *D. Brien.*

These are the people and these their qualifications to whom the sacred trust is committed of nursing and raising the white children of the family. From them the young heir of the estate, and the future citizen of the republic, learn the pronunciation of our language: so far back as this in the elements of education do we start under the instruction of *negroes*. From them we get our first impressions about God, and moral obligation by hearing his name profaned and by seeing his law transgressed. These first impressions on our infantile minds are hardly ever erased, and are difficult even to correct: they will modify and shape the whole future life. In a state of things like this, it is easy to see the reason, that even youths can without a blush commit crimes in slave countries, that would blast the reputation of any man in other lands. These crimes have been familiar to them from the cradle. They have scarcely any sense of the turpitude of impurity, (especially males) profanity &c. Brought up in a school like this, is it strange, that men can without remorse be guilty of illicit commerce with their own female slaves, hold their own offspring as bond-men and as bond-women, and drive them to market and sell them like cattle; or see them held and sold as slaves by other men, their brother, their neighbour or landlord. This rationally accounts for the general irreligion of slave states. The efforts of the infidel Voltaire and his associates did not more prepare the character of Europe for the infernal order of *Illuminism* founded by the fiend Weishaupt, than the influence of slavery is preparing this country for the intrigues of these unclean spirits of darkness aiming at the overthrow of all religion and social order. Such effects must flow from such causes.

In slave states the men, whose characters are formed by the instruction and example of the ignorant profligate slaves, are often from their wealth and other circumstances, the persons who give tone to the morals of society. These are the men, who are climbing to posts of honour and profit in our government. They are found in legislative bodies and all the different places and offices in society.

It is from characters, whose morals are formed by the models found in negro quarters, that the fair sex must generally choose a partner for life, and that too with a full knowledge of his impurities. And altho' inviolably chaste herself, she is reconciled with debauchery in her partner. Thus the restraint of female frowns is removed, and a most licentious liberty is given to a crime that modesty forbids to be named. But so much are the morals of society lowered, that in many circles the amours of fine gentlemen in their neighbour's kitchens are honourable topics of conversation. And instances are not wanting of ladies relating such gallantries of their own husband or suitors in female circles for pastime. And these circles the highest orders of society. This may be thought to be the painting of

Illuminism

an over-heated zeal, by those who live in the land of liberty; but I believe even this description will fail to give them a full idea of the demoralizing influence of slavery; and upon acquaintance they would say half had not been told.

Another part of the character formed by slavery yet remains to be drawn. It has a direct tendency to beget pride, cruelty, love of dominion, impatience of government and restraint, and aversion from every kind of exertion of body or mind, except trifling amusement. The slave is often used both to satisfy lust and avarice. But before one human being can be brought willingly to drudge for another without even the poor reward of thanks; they must be used with the utmost rigor. Bound with chains frequently to their labour. A cow-skin or cart whip to drive them on; and then denied the comforts of life. Accustomed from infancy to see African blood shed by whips and scourges, to hear the sound of whips cracking, negroes screaming and masters or overseers cursing, we become familiarised to misery, and our native abhorrence to injustice, cruelty and oppression is erased; yea, we naturally imbibe these very qualities, and are prepared to exercise them whenever interest or passion may demand. This exhibits the two constituents of a completely detestable character, formed hostile to God, and his laws; to man, and his rights.

It is not pretended but the influences of other counteracting causes may and has saved thousands of individuals in slave countries from this dreadful pitch of depravity; but on the other hand slavery has formed and is forming thousands and tens of thousands completely up to this picture; and this is its direct tendency.

But what political evils would flow from such a corruption of morals even if it became general? If we look into the history of the world, we will find, that every instance of encroachment on the liberties of the people has been made by men of this description. All oppressive laws have been enacted by their authority. Governments have been dismembered, insurrections against the laws of the country fomented, civil wars carried on, and the power of the state usurped by such Catalines of impiety. And if slavery has a direct tendency to form such characters as have always been engaged in these works of blood and devastation, then, it is easy to see how it is sapping the very foundation of our government and the liberties of the people.

The impolicy of slavery presents itself to us in another view. The African slaves are multiplying amongst us to an astonishing degree with the feeling of irreconcilable hatred against their oppressors. And who can tell how far distant the period may be when they will rise indignant to extirpate their effeminate masters? Whenever their numbers are sufficient. And can

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it be sound policy to create, and propagatè millions of enemies in the bosom of our country, to the government?

IV. No solid objections lie against *gradual emancipation*.

This is the object that the society proposes to accomplish, and the object advocated in this address. "I do not think" says the celebrated Witherspoon "there lies any necessity on those who found men in a state of slavery to make them free to their own ruin" * Such is the condition of the slaves at present, that most of them are unfit for civil liberty. The long habit of being governed, from the principle of slavish fear alone has eradicated every other principle of subordination; or rather, this is the only one that has been produced by their discipline. They have been raised in the expectation of continual bondage. There has been no joyful looking forward to a time when they should enjoy freedom; of course, they have not been in the habit of exercising any provident forethought in schemes for future life; or of expecting that the burden of providing for their wants would fall on themselves; but such habits of mind are necessary for a state of freedom. They have acquired neither the knowledge nor the social virtues necessary for citizens; nor any habit of industry, except a reluctant drudgery forced through fear. And thousands of them have acquired vicious habits that neither a sense of interest nor the authority of civil law would restrain. Of course, sudden emancipation would ruin thousands of them.

But these objections do not lie against *gradual emancipation*. The only others that can be urged are: first slaves are private property, and no legislature has a right to lay their hands on private property. No man can be said to have a property in an unborn slave. And when born, the law-making power in a state has a right to say, under what limitations, and conditions they shall be held. Besides, who invested us with a property in human beings? Not the laws of *Revelation* nor of *nature*, for they are diametrically opposed to slavery. Who then? The laws of man. But where did any man or set of men get their authority for making laws that enslave one man to another? Neither from *God* nor *Nature*. And it is a principle acknowledged in all the law-books, that when a human law is in direct opposition to a divine law, it is of course null and void.

The second objection is, that they and the white people would intermarry, and the people of this state would in time become people of colour.

It is admitted that this objection would in some measure be true, and that it would be an evil. But before the objection can have any weight, it must be proved that the mingling of blood would be more rapid, if the blacks were free than if they are held in slavery. This never can be proved; for it is contrary to facts. And indeed the temptations and opportunities for this

* Witherspoon's *Moral Philosophy*, Sec. 10.

mixture would be greatly removed by the emancipation of the slaves. Can Mulattoes be multiplied faster than they are now? If, then, the objection I am considering be an evil, the best method to remove it is, to emancipate the slaves.

The only remaining objection worthy of notice, is, that they would multiply and increase amongst us until they would be the most numerous people.

Facts are the proper answer to this objection. In the states of Georgia and South Carolina the slaves have increased within the last ten years in a ratio above the increase of the whites that is truly alarming. The fact is, in every slave state, they are multiplying like the children of Israel under their bondage in Egypt.* But in the states where they have been gradually emancipated, their numbers decrease, so the objection is light in the face of facts: while in a state of slavery, the males and females come together as soon as nature dictates; there are no delays to forming families amongst them from consideration as how they will be provided for, where they will settle, or what occupation they will pursue. Hence it happens, that the slave male and female are the parents of children five, ten or twelve years sooner in life than the whites. But were they emancipated, they would be governed by circumstances which would retard their increase, while numbers would emigrate; and at no very distant period our state would be nearly clear of them.

CONCLUSION.

In an address of this kind, the injustice, cruelty and bloodshed that takes place, when these unhappy creatures were and are taken in their own country, may be introduced with great propriety. They are always obtained by violence, artifice and treachery. The monsters in iniquity who live by the trade of human souls and blood, some-times employ the natives to steal slaves for them, when found abroad, on the road, or in the woods, or in the cornfields, at the time of year when their parents keep them there all the day to scare away the devouring small birds. And these stealers are rewarded by trinkets of various kinds, brandy, &c. But the more common way of obtaining slaves is,

* In South Carolina, the increase of the whites in the last ten years (1800—1810) was 17,946 or 9 1-7 per cent; that of the blacks was 51,583 or 34 1-2 per cent. In Georgia, the whites for the same length of time, was 45 3-5 per cent; blacks 73 3-5 per cent. The whites were greatly increased by emigration. The importation of slaves was forbidden during this period. In our state there is but 41,526 slaves; in East Tennessee but 9,376. In Pennsylvania there are 22,492 free blacks. In New-York 5,233 free blacks.

to set two or three neighbouring tribes or princes at war with each other, that the victor may take captives and sell them. The following extract taken verbatim from the surgeon's journal of a ship engaged in the slave trade, will shew the horrid impiety of this business ; " Sestro, Dec. 29. No trade to day, though
" many traders come on board ; they informed us, that the people
" are gone to war within land, and will bring prisoners enough
" in two or three days. Dec. 30. No trade yet, but our traders
" came on board to day and informed us, the people had burnt
" four towns of their enemies, so that to morrow we expect slaves
" 31st. Fair weather ; no trade yet ; we see each night towns
" burning, but we hear the Sestro men are many of them killed
" by the inland negroes, so that we fear this war will prove
" unsuccessful. The 2d of January. Last night we saw a pro-
" digious fire break out about eleven o'clock ; and this morning
" see the town of Sestro burnt down to the ground (it contained
" some hundreds of houses) so that we find their enemies are
" too hard for them at present, and consequently our trade
" spoiled here ; therefore about eleven o'clock we weighed
" anchor."

Extracted from the journal of a surgeon who went on board a ves-
sel from New-York. " Being on the coast, the commander of the
" vessel sent a person according to custom, on shore with a pre-
" sent to the king, to let him know they wanted a cargo of slaves.
" The king promised to furnish them ; and in order to do it,
" set out to go to war with his enemies, designing to surprise
" some town and take all the people prisoners : some time after,
" the king sent them word, he had not yet met with the
" desired success ; having been twice repulsed in attempting to
" break up two towns ; but that he still hoped to procure a
" number of slaves for them ; and in this design he persisted
" till he met his enemies in the field ; when a battle was fought
" which lasted three days during which time the engagement
" was so bloody that *four thousand five hundred* men were slain
" on the spot. Think what a sight it was to see the widows
" weeping over their lost husbands, orphans deploring the loss
" of their fathers &c." Sometimes the blood hounds arm them-
selves, and lie concealed through the day, that they may surprise
the towns in the night. Some are appointed to guard the door
of the house, others to watch the window, and others to despoil
the hut of its unoffending inhabitants. When every hut of a
village is marked out and assigned to its pillagers and murderers
the attack is made. The father fights for his innocent babes,
the husband for his wife, and the sons for the parents and sisters
until one third, one half, and even two thirds are massacred in
order to secure the remainder. My God what account shall
legislatures have to render at the flaming bar of God, who
have authorised such a traffic by law ? Will it be said if there

was laws for it. it was right? This is often said as a justifiable reason for continuing them in slavery.

But the barbarity does not cease here. When they are got, they are huddled up in prisons, from thence brought out in companies "and that naked, both men and women without "the least distinction or modesty, to be examined, those which "are approved as good are set on one side, in the mean time "a burning iron with the name of the company, lies in the fire "with which ours are marked; they are sent on board stark "naked, as well women as men; the men being all put in irons "two by two shackled together to prevent their mutinying or "swimming a shore. Six or seven hundred are sometimes put "on board a vessel where they lie as close together as it is possible "for them to be crowded, and sometimes laid two and two chained together, on shelves on their backs like bales of goods. They are so depressed and overwhelmed with grief, they sometimes leap out of the canoe, boat or ship into the sea and drown themselves. Others starve themselves to death. To prevent which they are brought on the deck, and beat with whips, and even cut with knives, swords &c. that they may leap about, and create an appetite. They sometimes attempt to mutiny. To prevent which the legs and arms of some are cut off to terrify the rest. "The ringleader was tied by the two thumbs over the barricade "door, at sunrise received a number of lashes; in this situation "he remained till sun set, exposed to the insults and barbarity "of the brutal crew of sailors. The next morning the miserable sufferer was found dead, flead from the shoulders to the "waist, and in one vessel no less than three hundred and twenty "died". And is this the way we have obtained slaves? There is not a reader of sentiment, but feels indignation rise at the incarnate fiends who carry on this traffic. But in the sight of God how much better is the receiver of stolen goods than the thief? "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." Exo. 21: 16. This curse, however long it may slumber, will sooner or later be executed by the judgment of God on those nations who are guilty of the crime.

Let the chaste matron, and the modest virgin look on the maid who serves at the table and reflect, that before they could possess her every principle of modesty, truth, justice, humanity and religion was violated. Let the christian, let the republican look on the slave who drudges in the field and have the same reflection, and let all orders of society, be roused to exert their influence to get our land freed from this God-offending

* *These accounts with many more you may see in Anthony Benezet, and Newton's posthumous works, Vol. 2d, and various other writers.*

evil. And you who are the ambassadors of the Prince of Peace, and the defenders and advocates of his holy religion cleanse your hands of this damning sin. Lift up your voice like a trumpet against it, lest the blood of souls be found in your skirts. What are you doing to avert the storm of divine wrath that impends over our land for this crime? Does your example hold up a testimony against it? Does your warning voice depict the turpitude of the crime?

I would not have a slave to till my ground,
 To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
 And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
 That sinews bought and sold have ever earn'd.

* * * * *

I had much rather be myself the slave. [Cowper.]

What can we think of the lamentations of those people who are friends to slavery and those legislatures who pass laws in the spirit of unqualified slavery, about the degraded state of Ireland, the vassallage of continental Europe, or the slaves detained by the Algerines? While the number of slaves in this land of boasted liberty, is nearly equal to the whole population of Ireland, and whose bondage is a thousand times worse than the vassallage of Europe. Is there any real republicanism, any real love to civil liberty in such lamentations? Surely not; for the spirit of genuine republicanism desires the liberty of all men, and will effect it if it can by any righteous means. But do we who pretended to rejoice at the prospect of French liberty, and to weep at their down-fall, and the slavery of Ireland, exert ourselves to give liberty to more than a million of people over whom we sway the most despotic sceptre? Are they not our fellow creatures, endowed with all our faculties, possessing all our qualities; our brethren both by nature and grace? But we keep them in a situation that shocks all the feelings of humanity, and the dictates of common sense. Say not fellow-citizen, say not legislator, that you found it so; that not your will but your necessity consents. Say not it would be unpopular with my constituents to enact laws in favour of emancipation. Ah! think how little such an excuse will avail you in that awful day, when your saviour shall pronounce judgment on you for breaking a law too plain to be misunderstood, too sacred to be violated. Our government has signed a treaty in which they pledge themselves to put an end to the abominable traffic. Let the state legislatures shew, that the American government feels the obligations of a treaty by doing all they can to remove this evil. Prohibit the traffic between the states. Let no more be brought into your states under any pretext. Pass laws in favour of gradual emancipation. Say not it is unpopular. A society exists that is branching out into

every part of this state and some others which grows rapidly, and every conquest of grace will add to its strength, the increase of knowledge will add to its members. This society will make it popular in time. And you may live to see yourself despised for your cowardice and want of real republicanism. Do duty; this is the high road to happiness and popularity.

2d. This is an auspicious time for the friends of liberty to make the attempt. Christian benevolence stands ready to impart that religious and moral instruction which may be necessary to fit these people for freedom. Yea, she only asks the slaveholding spirit to permit her, and she will proceed to instruct those who are to be held in bondage for life, as well as those who may be freed by equitable laws hereafter in the sublime doctrines and holy precepts of the religion of the Son of God, which teaches man to do no evil, to love his fellow-man as himself, and serve his God in hopes of a blessed immortality. The Christian world is on the alert to bring the Kingdom of God to every heart, and spread it among all the kindreds of the earth. And if we slumber over our duty, and exert not ourselves to extricate these people from a state in which they neither enjoy the rights of man nor the blessings of religion, God's justice will not slumber. But if we will humbly attempt our duty, we have reason to believe God will succeed us, as he is remarkably succeeding every attempt that is made in this age to advance his kingdom. And this society may and will effect wonders if it will only persevere. The glory of God demands it. At least 1,185,300 are in slavery, and in so wretched a kind of it that it shuts out the kingdom of God and the word of eternal life from them. But God has said all the kindreds of the earth are to make part of the gospel kingdom finally. And he will demand this portion of the human family from us either by the word of his mercy or the strokes of his judgements. Let us prepare to surrender them willingly.

3d. There is another consideration that should make all who tremble at God's word exert themselves on this subject. The time has arrived when God has begun to execute his judgements on his enemies. The 1260 years of the seven headed and ten horned beast is out. Rome is withering under the avenging hand of Heaven. The iniquities of the scarlet whore have come up in remembrance before God; and he is pouring his scalding wrath into her bosom. But among the crimes of this spiritual Babylon, is the traffic of slaves and souls of men. God calls "come out of her my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." The sword, pestilence, and famine are God's instruments for punishing guilty nations. How deeply have we partook of one of her most crimson crimes! Have we not reason to fear her plagues? But we may yet come out of her. How can we better do it, than by gradually emancipating the slaves, teaching them morality and

religion, learning them some useful employment or art, and thus fitting them for the enjoyment of civil liberty, and the advantages of the gospel. So shall these plagues pass by us. Blessed is that individual, that *church*, and that state which will first wash their hands from this crime, and faithfully do their duty.

4th. To accomplish this most desirable object, let the good people of this state not only exercise their right at elections but also keep a good conscience. Let not infidels or time-serving politicians be chosen for legislators and officers ; but choose ye "out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness." (*Exo.* 18. 21.) Such men will deliver us from one of the greatest political and moral evils that ever cursed a people, *slavery*. Under such rulers our country will flourish not only because we will have salutary laws, but because we shall have the blessing of God. "When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice : But when the wicked bear rule the people mourn." (*Prov.* 29 : 2.) "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." (*Prov.* 14 : 34.) Is slavery a sin? Yea, it is our reproach, our curse. Let us free our land from the reproach and the Lord will exalt us as a people.

Virtue, industry, commerce, religion, plenty, and all that is valuable for time and eternity, wait the success of the society's object to take up their lasting abode in our land. Let us hasten their arrival and give them a lasting habitation among us.

The foregoing has been examined by the inspecting committee and approved.

ATTEST ;

JAMES JONES, PRES.

November 20th, 1816.