

THE
RELIGION OF CHRIST
AT WAR WITH
AMERICAN SLAVERY;
OR,
REASONS FOR SEPARATING FROM
THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, (O. S.)

By **REV. EDWIN H. NEVIN**,
Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Mt. Vernon, O.

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"Man is one:  
And he hath one great heart. It is thus we feel  
With a gigantic throb athwart the sea,  
Each other's rights and wrongs; thus are we men."  
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FESTUS.

CLEVELAND, O.:
STEAM PRESS OF SANFORD & HAYWARD.

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## PREFACE.

The sermon which forms the present pamphlet, was preached before a congregation in the Presbyterian Church of this place, probably amounting to one thousand persons, on Sabbath, the 27th of August, and is now published by the request of a large number of persons. In issuing this, the second edition of it, I would say to the reader that time has only served to strengthen my convictions, as they are herein expressed. I am more fully persuaded than ever, that my position is Scriptural, and therefore, tenable; and that the churches that will not cleanse themselves from all connection with Slavery, will become a reproach and a by-word. God is evidently on the side of Freedom. To attempt to clog its chariot wheels by neutrality or indifference, or ecclesiastical compromise and sanctions, is to be crushed and blasted. That the truth the pamphlet embodies may find its way through the whole church and arouse a spirit of honest and prayerful inquiry among all its members with regard to the question of fellowshipping slaveholders and advocates of or apologists for slavery, is the sincere desire and prayer of the Author.

“He who seeks the truth and trembles  
At the dangers he must brave,  
Is not fit to be a freeman—  
He, at best, is but a slave.”

MT. VERNON, O., DEC. 20, 1849.

# THE RELIGION OF CHRIST AT WAR WITH AMERICAN SLAVERY.

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## 2 CORINTHIANS IV. 1, 2.

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy we faint not but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

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The ministry of Jesus Christ occupy a very high and responsible situation. They are ambassadors from the court of heaven, to treat with a sinful and lost world in relation to their spiritual and eternal interests. It is only through the mercy of God that they are qualified for this work, and are sustained in the faithful discharge of its onerous duties. Being men, naturally of like passions with others, they have in every age been exposed to corrupting influences, and frequently have yielded to a spirit of dishonesty in their profession, walking in craftiness, and handling the word of God deceitfully. To stand erect in the consciousness of moral integrity and renounce every thing that is dark and fleshly and sinful, and exhibit the whole truth of God, however it may conflict with prejudice, passion and personal interest and convenience, is a very difficult task; but yet it is a task, which by the grace of God, a minister may perform. The Apostle Paul did it, and every other minister must do it, if he would commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. For a while the multitude may not approve of such candor and fidelity; but in their more calm and solemn moments, when their relationship to another world begins to be properly apprehended and appreciated, the approbation of their consciences will be extorted. As we advance in the great journey of life, the shadows of error

in which we sometimes choose to walk become less attractive, while truth, justice and goodness become invested with increasing brightness and glory.

Having come to the conclusion, Dear Bretheren, that the church in which I was born, and in which I have for many years worshipped and labored, has so far departed from the principles of true christianity, as taught by the word of God and our early confession of faith, as to involve it in great guilt, I have felt it to be my painful duty to separate myself from it. In doing this I have not acted impulsively or rashly. The question has been before my mind for some years, and I can assure you, has during that time been a subject of much anxious and serious thought and frequent and earnest prayer. No other consideration but a clear conviction of duty could have forced me to take this step. Many whom I love and respect, will condemn it as unwise and premature, and perhaps, altogether uncalled for; but the light within me, and the light in the word of God, as I perceive it, instruct me differently. And I do sincerely believe, that sooner or later, if not at the present time, my position and conduct will commend themselves to the consciences of all lovers of truth and right. But if this should never be the case, I *must* still be faithful to my own sacred moral convictions. Through obedience to these only, can I die calmly and triumphantly, and meet my God in peace. My ambition, if I know my heart, is not to be identified with the honorable, and popular and affluent of the earth, but with the few faithful followers of mercy, truth and righteousness, whose influence and actions, will always tell upon the complete reign of the Son of God in the world. For some time past it has appeared to me, that much of the indifference to religion which, confessedly prevails to a lamentable degree, throughout Christendom, is to be ascribed to the loose construction of the principles of christian duty that has for many years prevailed in the church. Who can read the story of the primitive christians, without being struck with the contrast between the state of things, *then and now*. Then there was an unreserved self-surrender to a higher guidance. The disciples obeyed, without questioning, every clear command, and embodied in action every undoubted principle of their religion. They believed that the gospel was designed to make all things new; and neither the novelty of the act, nor the greatness of the sacrifice stood between them and the way of duty. *Now* how different! It has for many years been held by the majority of christians, that the gospel makes, comparatively nothing, new. The law of Christ is made as broad as their feelings incline them to go, and all beyond that they cover up with the sweet and concealing name of charity. Does one enter the church, who practices unlawful acts, sustains unrighteous relations, feeds on unholy gains, or is in some

profession, the very functions of which are in opposition to the gospel? He is bidden to "remain in the same calling, wherein he is called;" Scripture is kindly warped to suit his case. Brotherly love must have its limit of condition, country, and color; and beyond this limit indifference or hatred is the better way. This loose exposition of scriptural morality weakens its hold upon the respect of the community, and of individuals. They find so many of its precepts explained away, that they learn to regard all its strong and decisive portions as excessive and hyperbolic; and they easily reconcile the command "Seek ye first the kingdom of God" with any convenient measure of selfishness and worldliness. Now we cannot expect any thing else on the part of observant and intelligent persons, than that such a course of conduct, will produce a spirit of indifferentism, infidelity, and contempt, which cannot easily be removed. The church may denounce them with all the anathema's of high heaven, but their denunciations will fall powerless upon their ears, and pass by unheeded. God has given to every mind a sufficiency of acuteness and intuition to detect at first glance, every position of a church or individual that conflicts with the fundamental principles of right. And we might as well attempt to pray and preach men out of the affirmations of their eyes and ears, as out of their clear intuitive preceptions, and judgments. We cannot certainly expect sensible men to look with interest and reverence on a religion which sanctions or winks at any mode of individual or social wrong. But let it be plainly shown and seen that there is *no* wrong for which the gospel does not provide an adequate remedy, that its deep and holy moral teachings extend from individual to social and from social to public duties, comprehending under its sway, at once, the individual soul and the vast heart of the nation and race, and that it is beautifully and divinely adapted to bring purity and peace and joy to every human being, breaking all yokes and reforming all evils, *then* it will command universal reverence and admiration.

In taking the ground that I do at present, that my relationship to the Old School Presbyterian Church is sinful and that I cannot, innocently sustain it any longer, I do not express any opinion in regard to the piety of all the individual members of that church. No doubt there are many pious persons, how many, he only who searches the heart can absolutely determine. I wish, simply, to make it appear to that church and the world, by my conduct, that the organization to which these persons belong, has taken such ground and placed itself in such a false and dangerous attitude as to involve a violation of the law of God in a fundamental point, and for any christian to consent to and inwardly approve of that violation is to cherish an anti-christian spirit, and thereby endanger its everlasting welfare. Especially do I wish it to be remem-

bered, that my conscience does not trouble me because of my connection with the members of this beloved congregation, to whom I have been ministering for the past four years; but because of their connection and my connection with the whole Presbyterian Church, which, through the medium of the General Assembly, its highest legislative and judicial body, has given its unqualified sanction to the system of *American Slavery*.

The reasons which appear to justify me in pursuing this course are the following:

1. In the history of the church since its earliest organizations, it has always be recognized as a principle that there were some doctrines and practices so flagrantly at war with the whole spirit and genius of the gospel, that it becomes an imperative duty on the part of individuals and churches to withdraw their connexion from those who advocate and adopt them. Even in the days of the Apostles great errors and sins appeared in the church and subjected both those who were immediately guilty of them and those who tolerated them to the censure of the faithful. Paul in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, (III. 6), says "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which he received from us." Again in the same chapter, he says "We hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy bodies. Now them that are such, we command and exhort, by our Lord Jesus Christ that with quietness they work and eat their own bread. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him that he may be ashamed." In his first epistle to the Corinthians, he says "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one, no not to eat." The Corinthians were evidently not allowed to give the least seeming countenance to any of these unholy practices; but must withdraw, wholly from those who presisted in them, writing to Titus, Paul says "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth; being condemned of himself." In many other places in the word of God the same great principle is clearly recognize<sup>d</sup>. All the various forms of Protestantism are ultimately grounded in the recognition of this scriptural principle. The Romish Church having adopted many dogmas, clearly subversive of the plain doctrines of Christ, and having thrust a vast system of wicked and absurd machinery between the naked and helpless soul of perishing man and the heart of Jesus Christ our great High Priest, thereby separated herself from God, and as the neces-

sary result, those whose hearts clung to God, separated from her. In every renewed heart, the attachment to God and truth, and righteousness must always be stronger than its attachment to any ecclesiastical organization. On other grounds and for other reasons separations have taken place, in the Protestant Church. Baptists think that their mode of baptism is the only scriptural mode, and therefore they cannot fellowship those who do not practice it. Episcopalians maintain that their Bishops and Ministers, only, are of the true Apostolical succession, and have a right to preach the gospel and administer its ordinances, and therefore, they cannot fellowship other churches. The Associate and Associate Reformed Churches, think the old Scotch version of the psalms, usually called Rouse's version, the only scriptural psalmody, and therefore, they cannot fellowship other churches. The great body of the churches called Evangelical, or Orthodox, refuse to hold fellowship with Unitarians and Universalists, because the former deny the supreme divinity of Christ, and various other doctrines supposed to be fundamental, and the latter maintain, that all persons irrespective of their present conduct and character, will finally be gathered into the kingdom of God. In 1837, the General Assembly of our own church dissolved its connexion with four Synods and expressed an unwillingness to walk any longer with them, because of the supposed unconstitutionality of their plan of union and some minor points of faith.

Not only do the Scriptures recognize the doctrine that under some circumstances, Christian fellowship with particular churches, becomes sinful; and not only have Christians in different ages of the church acted upon this principle, but from the nature of the case, would the church of God keep itself a separate and distinct thing from the world, excision or separation must be practiced. Supposing that our church, through its legislative assemblies, especially through the general Assembly, whose acts become the acts of the whole by virtue of their representation there should sanction the doctrines that the scriptures were not given by inspiration—that the moral law is no longer obligatory upon Christians—that Christ is not divine—that there will be no resurrection—that the Sabbath may be desecrated—that intoxicating drinks may be used as a beverage, or any other doctrine that is manifestly contrary to the gospel, and dishonorable to the Christian name and suited to bring scandal on the Christian religion, would not the intelligence and moral sense of the great majority of her members, force them to dissolve all connexion with them? Most certainly they would. So that it is evident from the nature of the case, would the church preserve its individuality and purity, separation under some name or form, must take place.

I advance now to my second reason for refusing any longer to

fellowship the Old School Assembly or the church over which it has authority, which is the fact of its *sanctioning* the system of *American Slavery*. Slavery of every name and kind is repugnant to the best feelings of our nature, and is in violation of every principle of justice and morality. The Author of the "English Synonymes" one of the most valuable works in the English language, expresses himself on this point in the following terms; "Slavery which marks a condition incompatible with the existence of personal liberty, is a term odious to the christian ear. It had its origin in the grossest state of Society. The word is derived from the German *Slave* or *Schlavonians*, a fierce and interpid people who made a long stand against the Germans, and being at last defeated, were made slaves. Slavery therefore, includes not only *servitude*, (with which some, very foolishly, try to confound it), but also the odious circumstance of the entire subjection of one individual to another; a condition which deprives him of every privilege belonging to a free agent and a rational creature; and which forcibly bends the will and affections of the one to the humor of the other; and converts a thinking being into a mere senseless tool, in the hands of its owner. Slavery, unfortunately, remains, though barbarism has ceased. There are those who take the name of christians, and yet cling to the practice of making their fellow creatures an article of commerce. Some delude themselves with the idea, that they can ameliorate the condition of those over whom they have usurped this unlicensed power. But, they forget that he who begins to be a *slave*, ceases to be a *man*."

So clearly and glaringly, is the principle of slavery at war with every principle of reason and humanity that the very heathen, having no other light, than the light of nature to guide them, condemned it in the strongest possible terms. A man could not stand fair in some of the heathen churches, and he would be very far behind many of the heathen moralists, unless he would denounce the principle of slavery. Dr. Beattie the distinguished Author of "the Elements of Moral Science" has truly remarked: "It is impossible for a considerate and unprejudiced mind to think of slavery without horror. That a man, a rational and immortal being, should be treated on the same footing with a beast, or piece of wood, and bought and sold, and entirely subjected to the will of another man, whose equal he is by nature, and whose superior he may be in virtue and understanding, *and all for no crime*, but merely because he was born in a certain country, or of certain parents, or because he differs from us in the shape of his nose, the color of his skin, or the size of his lips; *if this be equitable* or excusable or pardonable, it is vain to talk any longer of the eternal distinctions of *right and wrong, truth and falsehood, good and*

*evil.* It is difficult for those who do not reflect upon the meaning of the words they use to comprehend fully the meaning of all that is expressed by the word *slavery*. Many persons seem to think that slavery is only a little, insignificant idea, altogether too small for a large and strong mind to be concerned about for a moment; and they often inquire whether it is only that one thing, that disturbs the conscience and arouses the soul to a deep and solemn protest, against its nature and spirit? Like the earth. Slavery is only one thing, but a very large thing, including a vast number of objects, and involving heights and depths of sin and wickedness, which God only can scale and fathom. Some twenty years ago, a sharp sensation ran through the nerves of the civilized world at the story of a young man named Casper Hauser, found in the city of Nuremburg, in Bavaria. Though sixteen or seventeen years of age, he could not walk nor talk. He heard without understanding; he saw without preceiving; he moved without definite purpose. It was the soul of an infant in the body of an adult. After he had learned to speak, he related that from his earliest recollections, he had always been kept in a cell so small, that he could not stretch out his limbs, where he saw no light, heard no sound, nor even witnessed the face of the attendant who brought him his scanty food. For many years the whole community felt anxious to know something about his history.—Public opinion, at length, settled down upon the belief that he was the heir to some throne, and was the inheritor of a vast amount of wealth, and was hidden for the purpose of depriving him of his legitimate rights. If the man could have been found, who committed this unnatural act, instead of being thought fit for the church, he would have been handed over to the gallows. Christians, would, at least, have withdrawn from his fellowship, if he had happened to belong to some ecclesiastical organization; and they would not have waited very long for the purpose of remonstrating with him and bringing him over. To day in this boasted land of light and liberty there are three millions of Casper Hauser's who have the souls of infants in the bodies of adults, and yet the Presbyterian Church instead of weeping over them with tears of blood and tender sympathy, say that the conduct of those who voluntarily put them *into* and hold them *in* that situation is in accordance with the teachings of the Apostles and "is no bar to Chirtasian communion."

In order to a proper appreciation of the enormity of the evils necessarily involved in American Slavery, we must contemplate it under some of its particular phases. There are at least, Dear Brethren, thirty hundred thousand persons in this country, men, women and children in slavery. They are owned by about 300,000 persons. 77,000 of these slaves are held by members

of our own denomination. These persons, thus enslaved, have not been charged with any crime against God or man as the ground of their enslavement. Their only crime, is that of wearing a dark complexion, which, if it is a crime at all, God their Creator must be held responsible for. According to the system of law under which they have been placed, they are not recognized as persons but things; they are wholly subject to their masters and are stripped of all rights. All that the slave enjoys, therefore, is but a privilege. According to the caprice of the master or masters, who are the law-makers, these privileges are enlarged or diminished. The slave may be damaged but he cannot be wronged. However ill treated, he cannot of himself, in his own name and right bring a formal action in any court. He cannot appear as a witness, when a freeman is on trial. His master can beat, maim, mutilate or mangle him, and the slave has no complete or legal redress, *practically*, no redress at all. The master may force him to marry, or forbid his marriage; he can sell him away from wife and children. The relation of master and slave begins in violence, and, of course, it must be sustained by violence, the systematic violence of general laws, or the irregular violence of individual caprice. Regarding the slave as a thing, "an instrument of husbandry," the master gives him the least and takes the most that is possible; he takes all the result of the slave's toil, leaving him only enough to keep him in a profitable working condition. His work is the most he can be made to do; and his food, and clothing, and shelter and amusement, the least he can do with. But passing over these matters, there are other features of their condition, which make a still stronger appeal to our commiseration. They are treated with great cruelty; often being branded with a red-hot iron on the breast or the shoulder, the arm, the forehead or the cheek, though the Roman law forbid it fifteen centuries ago. They are disfigured and mutilated, now by the madness of anger, then by the jealous malice of revenge. Their backs and sides scored with the lash or bruised with the "paddle," bear marks of the violence needful to subdue manhood. This system is a mighty outrage upon every principle of nature and reason. Every individual who has common sense, and a conscience and a human heart, has pronounced judgment against it. Human nature with her million voices and echoes has rung it round the world, in every language under the heavens. "Let it be accursed!" Oh! if ever there was a wrong inflicted by man upon his fellow-man, slavery is that wrong. It is a wrong to his conscience, his intellect, his heart, his life, his family, his hopes and his all. Of all the remorseless and wanton cruelties ever committed in this world of wickedness and woe, I hold that to be the most so, which degrades into a mere thing and shuts out from

all the means of instruction, a being whom God has crowned with honor and glory and immortality, and endowed with the capacity of knowledge, and inspired with the divine desire to know. How extremely cruel must be that system that shuts out from the immortal spirit of man, the humblest man that ever God created, the light of grace and hope and salvation, that shines upon the page of Revelation. Every man has a right to read the word of God! The merciless slave-holder stands up between God and the slave, and boldly denies him that right. To shut out the blazing light of the sun from his eyes, and roll back the air from his lungs, and deaden his ear to all the rich and melodious symphonies of universal nature, would be but a slight injury compared with the giant wrong inflicted upon the ever-living mind of the slave.

If circumstances were changed, and the Africans were the aggressors, the masters, and we the unequal and the enslaved, with what rapidity could we form a correct judgment in the case. Sufficiently strong terms could not be invented to express our indignation at the fearful outrage. If the Africans should come to the American coast, to drag whites of both sexes from their families; to chain them and conduct them to Africa and mark them with a hot iron; if whites stolen, sold, purchased by crimes, and placed under the guidance of merciless inspectors, were immediately compelled by the stroke of the whip, to work in a climate injurious to their health, where, at the close of each day, they could have no other consolation, than that of advancing another step to the tomb—no other perspective than to suffer and to die in all the anguish of despair—if devoted to misery and ignominy, they were excluded from all the privileges of society, and declared legally incapable of judicial action, and their testimony not admitted against the black class; if driven from the sidewalks, they were compelled to mingle with the animals in the middle of the street; if the forfeit for killing them were but a trifling sum—if a reward were offered for apprehending those who did escape from slavery—if those who did escape were hunted by a pack of hounds, trained to carnage—if, blaspheming the Divinity, the blacks pretended, that by their origin they had permission of Heaven to preach passive obedience, and resignation to the whites—if greedy hireling writers published, that for this reason, just reprisals might be exercised against the *rebellious* whites, and that white slaves are happy, more happy, the masters themselves being judges, than the peasants in the bosom of Africa. In a word, if all the arts of cunning and calumny, all the strength and fury of avarice, all the inventions of ferocity, were directed against the whites by a coalition of dogs, merchants, priests, lawyers and soldiers, what a cry of horror would resound through these United

States? No man would run to the word of God to justify or palliate it. To do so would expose him to the vengeance of the multitude.

Americans reverse this hypothesis, and see what you are and where you stand! If it would be outrageous for the Africans to deal thus with the whites, is it not equally so for the whites to deal thus with the Africans? Oh what a burning shame is it, that professors of the religion of Jesus Christ, that religion which includes nothing but justice, light, love and humanity, should even try to force the Gospel into the support of so much wrong, violence and cruelty.

It is often said that although the law of slavery is unjust and cruel, yet such are the feelings of the masters, that, after all, they treat the slaves well and kindly, and their tender regard for them restrains them from inflicting cruelties upon them. It is not strange that slaveholders should try to persuade others of their kind treatment of their slaves; the only marvel is, that intelligent men can be gulled by such professions. Despots always insist that they are merciful. The greatest tyrants that ever dripped with blood, have assumed the title of "*most gracious*," "*most clement*," "*most merciful*," and have ordered their crouching vassals to accost them thus. When did not vice lay claim to those virtues, which are the opposites of its habitual crimes? The guilty according to their own showing are always innocent, and cowards brave, and drunkards sober, and pickpockets honest to a fault.

Human nature works out in slaveholders, just as it does in other men, and in American slaveholders just as it does in English, French, Turkish, Algerine, Roman and Grecian. The Spartans boasted of their *kindness to their* slaves, while they whipped them to death by thousands at the altars of their Gods. The Romans lauded their own mild treatment of *their* bondmen, while they threw them into fish ponds, or like Cato "*the just*," starved them. It is the boast of the Turks that they treat *their* slaves as though they were their children, yet their common name for them is "*dogs*," and for the merest trifle, their feet are bastinadoed to a jelly, or their heads clipped off with the scimitar. The Portuguese pride themselves on their gentle bearing towards *their* slaves, yet the streets of Rio-Janeiro are filled with naked men and women yoked in pairs to carts and wagons, and whipped by drivers like beasts of burden. Who discredits the atrocities perpetrated by Ovando in Hispaniola, Pizarro in Peru, and Cortez in Mexico, because they filled the ears of the Spanish Court with protestations of their benignant rule?

If ever there has been any one sin condemned more than another by the universal voice of humanity, of every age and every

country—that sin is *slavery*. Nations have expressed their abhorrence of it by sacrificing their all rather than submit to it. Every nation that has not been brutalized by vice, has voiced its sentiments, in the glowing and stirring language of the noble Hungarian Kossuth, who is now fighting for the political liberty of himself and people, against the despotic powers of Russia and Austria. “In the name of the Eternal God,” says he, “and in the name of the country, do we call upon the people to rise in their own defence, against the Russian and the Austrian Emperors. All provisions must be hid from the enemy—hid in the fastnesses of the mountains, and the morasses of the plains—for the enemy shall starve. Before your towns and inhabited places are occupied by the enemy, you shall abandon them, and your bravest men shall fire the roofs above the heads of your foes. You shall burn them with fire, because your homes are doomed, and your enemies burn wherever they come. The country is in danger! Rise then my mighty, my gigantic people, rise and arm! Let every Hungarian take up arms and the victory will be ours. And it is for this reason we decree and proclaim a general rising for our *liberty*, in the name of God and of our country.”

It is merely for *political* liberty that this strong and eloquent appeal is made. How much more dear and sacred is *personal* liberty? The voice of Kossuth is but the voice of all the nations on the face of the earth, where oppression and base servility have not eaten out their manhood, and degraded them into mere play things for kings and fools. By the sacrifice of property, comfort, wealth, tears and blood—which have been offered by nations for this great boon—they proclaim to the world, in language which cannot be misunderstood, the high estimate they put upon it. Thank God too, I am able to say that the leading, honest-hearted ministers of every age and of every denomination, have united in condemning the system of slavery as a most unreasonable and merciless system. They did not ransack the Bible to see whether they could not find something to justify it in the abstract or “*per se*” and thereby strip it of some of its deformity. But they searched the word of God in order that they might make every verse and chapter speak out against it. It may be sufficient here to give the language of two distinguished Divines, REV. JONATHAN EDWARDS, D. D., and REV. JOHN WESLEY, the one standing high in the estimation of Presbyterians, and the other in the estimation of Methodists, and both standing high in the estimation of the world: “He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.” Thus death is—says MR. EDWARDS—by the divine express declaration, the punishment due to the crime of man stealing. But death is not the punishment declared by God to be due to fornication.

tion, theft or robbery, in common cases. Therefore we have the Divine authority to assert, that man stealing is a greater crime than fornication, theft or robbery. Now to hold in slavery a man who has a right to liberty, is man stealing; for it is immaterial whether he be taken and reduced to slavery clandestinely, or by open violence. Therefore, if the negroes have a right to liberty, to hold them in slavery is man stealing, which we have seen is, by God himself, declared to be a greater crime than fornication, theft or robbery." This is strong language, but it is not stronger than the language of that devoted servant of God, JOHN WESLEY: "This equally concerns," says he, "all slaveholders, of whatsoever rank and degree; seeing men buyers are *exactly* on a level with men stealers! Indeed you say "I pay honestly for my goods; and am I not concerned to know how they are come by." Nay but you are, you are deeply concerned to know that they are honestly come by; otherwise you are a partaker with a thief, and not a jot honestier than he. But you know they are not honestly come by: you know they are procured by means nothing near so *innocent* as picking pockets, house breaking, or robbing upon the highway. You *know* they are procured by a deliberate species of more complicated villainy, fraud, robbery, and murder than was ever practised by Mohammedans or Pagans. Now it is *your* money that pays the African butcher. You therefore, are principally guilty of all these frauds, robberies and murders. You are the spring that puts all the rest in motion." Would to God that the sentiments of Edwards and Wesley were the sentiments of all Presbyterians and Methodists!

All the leading Commentators of the different sects however much they may have differed in other points, have agreed in denouncing *slavery*. DR. SCOTT says "every man is now our brother, whatever be his nation, complexion or creed. How then, can the merchandize of men and women be carried on without transgressing the commandment of God. A man may steal or purchase of those who do steal hundreds of men and women, and not only escape with impunity, but grow great like a Prince. According to the law of God, whoever stole cattle restored four or five fold, whoever stole one human being, though an infant or an idiot, must die." MACKNIGHT says "men stealers are inserted among those damning criminals against whom the law of God directed its awful curses. Persons who kidnapped men to sell them for slaves. This practice seems inseparable from the other iniquities and oppressions of slavery, nor can a slave dealer by any means keep free from that atrocious criminality. If the receiver be as bad as the thief, they who encourage that unchristian traffic by purchasing that which is thus unjustly acquired, are partakers of their crimes."

DR. ADAM CLARK says "among christians, slavery is an enormity and a crime for which perdition has scarcely an adequate state of punishment."

Among the huge crimes charged by God on Babylon is that of trading in "slaves" and souls of men.

American slavery as revealed by the slave code, stands out in striking contrast with the whole genius and tendency of the christian religion. What this is may be ascertained by a brief reference to the views which that religion imparts, the disposition which it inculcates, and the duties which it enjoins. The religion of Christ leads our minds to the contemplation of an infinitely glorious being who is as good as he is great; whose justice is such that not an individual, of whatsoever rank in the scale of existence, of all the numbered myriads that have had and shall have a being, shall have to complain of an injury done to him; whose benevolence is as boundless as the universe, and lasting as eternity. He is represented as the Creator of all black or white, bond or free; the common Parent of all mankind, to whom all may address the language, "*Our Father* who art in heaven."

He is the benefactor of all. He has created the world and formed all the arrangements of nature for the benefit of mankind. The sun shines, the winds blow, the rains descend, the earth produces for the African as well as for the European. He is the governor of all; "*His Kingdom ruleth over all.*" All are bound to obey and serve Him. He will be the Judge of all. Poor and rich, princess and the people, the planter and slave, all must stand before his tribunal, to be judged, not according to the color of their skin, but according to their works. These are the views which the Gospel presents, of the relations of *all* men to God. Can such views and the sentiments which they are adapted to produce accord with American Slavery.

And what does Christianity teach with reference to man? That we are all sprung from one common stock, and whatever change, a difference of climate and food, and manner of living may have produced, "God hath made of *one* blood all nations of men." Christianity abolishes all national distinctions and declares that we are all brethren, forming part of one great family, of which the Creator himself is the head. That as all are born in the same way grow in the same way, and alike descend into the dust; so the bodies of all shall be revived, when "the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised." What then is the essential difference among these brothers, that one man should buy and sell his brother or claim an absolute property in a human being? As Christianity recognizes no difference in the physical nature of man, so it admits not of a moral distinction. It declares that "*all* men have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and that

"except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Its address to *all*, without exception, is "Except ye repent ye shall *all* likewise perish." And do not the merciful provisions of the gospel extend to the Black as well as the Whites, to the uncivilized as well as the polished? Is there one Redeemer for the Planter, and another for his slave? Must not the sins of both be pardoned by the same atoning sacrifice? Does the *Divine* Spirit disdain to visit the bosom of the African, or to purify his heart, because of the color of his skin? All the promises and invitations of the Gospel are as much addressed to the slave as to his master. The same sources of consolation are open to all; the same enemy tempts all; the same grace is sufficient for all; and the same heaven will bless and reward every humble follower of the Saviour, whether he be black or white. "They shall come from the east and the west, and the north, and the south; and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of God." Now are these consistent with that state of degradation to which one man reduces another when he makes him a *slave*?

The dispositions which the Gospel of Christ inculcate, militate no less against slavery. It teaches us that *love* is the life and soul of all religion: "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." Love to God and love to man, are essential to the being of genuine christianity in the heart. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" Nor is the measure of this love to be small; "Thou shalt love thy neighbor *as thyself*." What a delightful portraiture is drawn of *charity* by the same Apostle that condemns "man stealing!" It "suffereth long, and is *kind*;" It cannot therefore, deliberately injure. So far from *doing* evil to another, it "*thinketh* no evil." It is not selfish, looking only to personal gains and gratifications, but it expands the heart with a disinterested generosity; "seeking not her own." And so deeply does this charity or love enter into the very nature of christianity, that a man possessed of *heavenly* gifts and miraculous powers, without *it* would be but "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." How constantly are we in the writings of the New Testament, moved to all that is merciful and kind, both by the infinite benevolence of our common Father, and by the example of the blessed Redeemer! For if God so loved us, 'we ought also to love one another.' We are to forbear and to forgive; to be "tender hearted" to "weep with them that weep, and to rejoice with them that rejoice." Now who can, for one moment, believe that all this tenderness of love, with all its holy sympathies can be compatible with the dark and cruel system of American Slavery! Oh there is nothing in nature, nothing in the moral law, nothing in the life and teach-

ings of Jesus Christ, that justifies a system begun in Piracy, and sustained by a system of legislation, misnamed *law*, which is in violation of every principle of justice, mercy and humanity.

The Rev. Albert Barnes has well said "The defence of slavery from the Bible is to be, and will soon be abandoned, and men will wonder that any defence of such a system, could have been attempted from the word of God. If the authors of these defences, could live a little longer than the ordinary term of years allotted to man, they would, themselves wonder that they could ever have set up such a defence. Future generations will look upon the defence of slavery drawn from the Bible, as among the most remarkable instances of mistaken interpretation & unfounded reasoning, furnished by the perversities of the human mind. One thing further is settled. If the Bible *could* be shown to defend and countenance slavery as a *good* institution, it would make thousands of infidels; for there are multitudes of minds that will see more clearly that slavery is against all the laws which God has written in the human soul, than they would see that a book sanctioning such a system had evidence of divine origin." Oh, Dear Brethren, instead of the Bible and the Religion of Jesus Christ originating and protecting and favoring the system of Slavery—They root it up and blast it and drive it away, wherever they are permitted to go and acquire the ascendancy—as Robert J. Breckenridge has remarked in the Presbyterian of Oct. 17, 1832, "Whatever blessings we enjoy, whether of civil or religious liberty, are derived under God, from the Bible. The history of the Bible is the history of liberty. Our republican institutions are constructed on the principles which it unfolds as to representative liberty, and the rights of man properly so called. The South American States are not free, because they have not the Bible. It alone can dispel their anarchy, rebuke their tumultuous and wild misrule, and take away the tools of demagogues and the slaves of military despots, by making every man a law unto himself! Ireland is not free—injured, unhappy Poland is not free, Spain, Italy, Portugal, all *oppressed* nations are not free because the people at large have not the Bible. Where it is wanting nothing can supply it, where it is possessed nothing can enslave it. Yes! the Bible is the great liberator of *man*. It is dreadful to tyrants only. When it rules the world, *all* nations will be free, but not before." But how can the Bible lift up and pull down—establish justice and injustice, slavery and freedom, "Does a fountain send forth at the same place, sweet water and bitter?"

The Gospel of Jesus Christ may be so far corrupted, as to seem to be in harmony with Slavery. Between the system of Popery and Slavery, there is a *real* affinity. It may be edifying to trace that affinity. Popery claims Divine origin so does Slave-

ry. The Pope assumes the place and perogatives of God—so does Slavery. It grants indulgences to commit sin—so does Slavery. It exercises absolute political power, elevating or deposing at its will—so does Slavery. It unites church and state—so does Slavery in effect. Popery reduces the mass of the people to degradation and vassalage—so does Slavery. It dictates what books shall be published, and what shall not be—so does Slavery. It prohibits the Bible to the people—so does Slavery. It crushes enterprize and improvement—so does Slavery. Popery is a relentless persecuting power—so is Slavery. It prescribes what shall be said or not said, done or not done, printed or not printed—so does Slavery. It threatens to subvert our free institutions—Slavery is rapidly doing it. Popery claims to be infallibly right—Slavery demands that right shall be wrong and wrong treated as right. It denies that man has inalienable rights—so does Slavery. It exercises a powerful control over the press in this country—so does Slavery. Both are *unscriptural, unrighteous, unreasonable, and dangerous*, and both are destined by the power of the brightness of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to be Destroyed. May God hasten that day!

Now the question arises what relationship does the Presbyterian Church sustain to this system of American Slavery, which as John Wesly has well said "is the sum of all villanies" and which Dr. Beattie has said "is repugnant to every principle of reason, religion, humanity and conscience." I am free to admit that at one time, the Presbyterian Church, seemed disposed to take right ground—that ground which ought to be taken by every church and which *must* be taken before the Millennium will ever burst upon the world.

In 1793 the General Assembly, not very long after it organized, adopted the judgment of the New York and Philadelphia Synods, in favor of universal liberty. In 1794 it adopted the following as a note to the eighth commandment, as defining and expressing the doctrine of the church on slaveholding. "1 Tim.; i. 10. The law is made for man-stealers." 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. 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 only steal 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." This note is found yet in many of our old Confessions of Faith,

of which I happen to have a copy myself. The church, it seems, after having added this note, contented itself with simply *recording* its doctrine. No rules of discipline were enforced. The Slaveholders remained in the church, adding slave to slave unmolested; not only unmolested, indeed, but bearing the offices of the church. In 1816, the General Assembly while it called Slavery "a mournful evil," directed that the note appended to the eighth commandment, should be erased. And accordingly it was erased. But thank God, that, although, from the influence of worldly policy and a disposition to compromise and thereby give relief to the consciences of their Southern brethren, the note *was* erased, the great fundamental, burning truth embodied in that note, *still* lives and will live forever, and meet that Assembly and these Slaveholders at the bar of God, where no compromise will find the least degree of allowance.

In 1818, the General Assembly adopted the following resolution: "We consider the voluntary enslaving of one part of the human race by another, as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature; as *utterly* inconsistent with the law of God, which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves; and as totally irreconcilable with the *spirit* and *principles* of the Gospel of Christ, which enjoins that "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Slavery creates a paradox in the moral system. It exhibits rational, accountable, and immortal beings in such circumstances as scarcely to leave them the power of moral action. It exhibits them as dependant on the will of others, whether they shall receive religious instruction; whether they shall know and worship the true God; whether they shall enjoy the ordinances of the Gospel; whether they shall perform the duties and cherish the endearments of husbands and wives, parents and children, neighbors and friends, whether they shall preserve their chastity and purity, or regard the dictates of justice and humanity. Such are some of the consequences of Slavery, consequences not imaginary but which connect themselves with *its very existence*. The evils to which the Slave is *always exposed*, often take place in their very worst degree and form; and where all of them do not take place, still the slave is deprived of his natural rights, degraded as a human being, and exposed to the danger of passing into the hands of a master who may inflict upon him all the hardships and injuries which inhumanity and avarice may suggest. From this view of the consequences resulting from the practice into which christian people have most inconsistently fallen, of enslaving a portion of their *brethren* of mankind; for 'God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth,' it is manifestly the duty of all christians who enjoy the light of the

present-day, when the inconsistency of Slavery both with the dictates of humanity and religion have been demonstrated, and is generally seen and acknowledged, to use their *honest, earnest and unwearied* endeavors to correct the errors of former times, and as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion and to obtain the complete abolition of Slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible, throughout the world," See digest pp. 341, 342, 343. If those who enjoyed the light of 1818 thought and spoke thus of Slavery, what ought we to think and to speak, who live in 1849, thirty-one years later than when the Assembly spoke. Every now and then individual churches feel as if something ought to be done, and they soothe their consciences by taking a leap backwards some thirty years, and reenacting what the General Assembly enacted then. Oh, is it true or is it not, that the world is making progress, that light is increasing. If it is, then we be to the man, or the church that tries to get relief from present responsibility by occupying the position of a past age. If ever there was an evident fact, it is the fact that the church since 1818, instead of "using their *honest, earnest and unwearied* endeavors to obtain the complete abolition of Slavery throughout Christendom," have actually gone back from that position, and are not making, comparatively, any efforts at all.

The reality of Slavery in the Presbyterian Church since 1818, may be known from the following testimonies. The Rev. James Smylie, A. M., of the Amite Presbytery, Mississippi, in a pamphlet published by him a short time ago, in favor of American Slavery, says "If Slavery be a sin, and advertising and apprehending Slaves with a view to restore them to their masters, is a direct violation of the Divine law, and if the *buying, selling* or holding a Slave for the sake of *gain*, is a heinous sin and scandal, then verily three-fourths of all the Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, in eleven States of the Union, are of the Devil. They 'hold' if they do not buy and sell Slaves, and with few exceptions they hesitate not to apprehend and restore runaway Slaves, when in their power."

In 1834, the Synod of Kentucky appointed a committee of twelve, to report on the condition, &c., of the Slaves. The following passage is found in their report: "Brutal stripes and all the various kinds of personal indignities are not the only species of cruelty which Slavery licenses. The law does not recognize the family relation of the Slave, and extends to him no protection in the enjoyment of domestic endearments. The members of a Slave family may be forcibly separated, so that they shall never more meet until the final judgment. And cupidity often induces the master to practice what the law allows. Brothers and sisters, parents and children, husbands and wives are torn asunder and

permitted to see each other no more. These acts are daily occurring in the midst of us. The shrieks and the agony often witnessed on such occasions, proclaim with a trumpet tongue the iniquity and cruelty of our system. The cries of these sufferers go up to the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. There is not a neighborhood where these heart-rending scenes are not displayed. There is not a village or road that does not behold the sad procession of manacled outcasts whose chains and mournful countenances tell that they are exiled by force from all that their hearts hold dear. Our church, years ago, raised its voice of solemn warning against this flagrant violation of every principle of mercy, justice and humanity. Yet, we blush to announce to you and the world, that this warning has often been disregarded, even by those who hold to our communion. Cases have occurred in our own denomination, where professors of the religion of mercy, have torn the mother from her children and sent her into a merciless and returnless exile, yet acts of discipline, have rarely followed such conduct."

In 1835, Mr. Stewart of Illinois, a ruling elder, in a speech urging the General Assembly, of which he was a member, to act on the subject of Slavery, bears this testimony to the existing state of things in the Presbyterian Church: "I hope this Assembly are prepared to come out fully and declare their sentiments that Slaveholding is a most flagrant and heinous sin. Let us not pass it by in this indirect way. While so many thousands of our fellow creatures are writhing under the lash, often inflicted, too, by *ministers* and *elders* of the Presbyterian Church. In *this* church a man may take a free-born child, force it away from its parents, to whom God gave it in charge, saying 'Bring it up for me,' and sell it as a beast, or hold it in perpetual bondage, and not only escape corporeal punishment, but really be esteemed an excellent christian. Nay even ministers of the Gospel and Doctors of Divinity may engage in this unholy traffic, and yet sustain their high and holy calling. Elders, Ministers and Doctors of Divinity, are with both hands engaged in the practice."

The speech from which the above is extracted, was made in support of various memorials and petitions from members of the Presbyterian Church, asking that the General Assembly might proceed to carry out its principles as they were avowed in 1794 and in 1818. Nothing was done this session further than to refer all such memorials and petitions to a committee (a majority of whom were known to be opposed to the prayer of the memorialists) to report at the next session in 1836.

At the next meeting of the Assembly in 1836 the first thing that was done to conciliate the excited Slaveholders, was to elect one of them *moderator*. The majority of the committee appointed in

1835, of which the Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Princeton Theological Seminary, was chairman, did accordingly report at the session of 1836, as follows :

"That after the most mature deliberation which they have been able to bestow on the interesting and important question referred to them, they would most respectfully recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of the following preamble and resolutions : 'Whereas, the subject of Slavery is inseparably connected with the laws of many of the States of this Union, with which it is by no means proper for an ecclesiastical Judicature to interfere, and involves many considerations in regard to which great diversity of opinion and intensity of feeling are known to exist in the churches represented in this Assembly. And, Whereas, There is great reason to believe that any action on the part of this Assembly in reference to this subject would tend to distract and divide our churches, and would probably in no wise promote the benefit of those whose welfare is immediately contemplated in the memorials in question ; therefore *Resolved*, That it is not expedient for the Assembly to take any further order in relation to this subject.'"

The *minority* of this committee reported the following resolutions, which are far more manly and decided :

1. "That the buying, selling or holding a human being as property, is in the sight of God, a heinous sin and ought to subject the doer of it to the censures of the church.

2. "That it is the duty of every one, and especially of every christian, who may be involved in this sin to free himself from its entanglement without delay.

3. "That it is the duty of every one, especially of every christian, in the meekness and firmness of the Gospel to plead the cause of the poor and needy by testifying against the principle and practice of Slaveholding, and to use his best endeavors to deliver the church of God from the evil, and to bring about the emancipation of the Slaves in these United States, and throughout the world."

During this session of the Assembly, the Slaveholding delegates, to the number of forty-eight, met *apart* and resolved :

"That if the General Assembly shall undertake to exercise authority on the subject of Slavery; so as to make it an *immorality*, or shall in any way declare that Christians are *criminal* in holding Slaves, a declaration shall be presented by the Southern delegation, declining their jurisdiction in the case and our determination not to submit to such decision."

At an adjourned meeting these delegates adopted the following preamble and resolution, to be presented to the Assembly as a substitute for Dr. Miller's :

"Whereas, The subject of Slavery is inseparably connected

with the laws of many of the States of this Union, in which it exists under the sanction of said laws, and of the Constitution of the United States; and, Whereas, Slavery is recognized in both the Old and New Testaments, as an existing relation, and is not condemned by the authority of God; therefore, *Resolved*, The General Assembly have no authority to assume or exercise jurisdiction in regard to the existence of Slavery." The whole subject at that time was finally disposed of by the adoption of a resolution "That the whole subject should be indefinitely postponed."

A large number of memorials and petitions went up to the General Assembly of 1837. They were referred to a committee of which the Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, a Slaveholder, of South Carolina, the same man who was moderator the year before, was chairman. After detaining them till nearly the usual time for adjournment of the Assembly, he reported that the committee has had a number of papers submitted to them from various Synods, churches, and individuals, men and women, on the subject of Slavery; and the committee had unanimously agreed (without the exception of a single member) to direct that they be returned to the house; and that he should move to lay the whole subject on the table, which was accordingly done by a vote of 97 to 28.

In 1838 a similar committee reported a resolution to the effect that the overtures on slavery which had been committed to them be laid on the table without debate. The report was adopted.

In 1839 overtures from the Synod of Cincinnati and the Presbytery of Oxford were laid on the table.

In 1840, nothing was done.

In 1841, the usual committee reported "that certain papers had been put into their hands on the subject of slavery which they deemed it expedient not to offer to the house; and they proposed that the same be returned to the persons from whom they came." After several fruitless attempts to procure the reading of one or more of them, the whole matter was indefinitely postponed. In 1842 the committee reported that they considered it inexpedient for the General Assembly to take any action on the subject of Slavery. In 1843 the Assembly unfortunately overlooked this item of unfinished business. In 1844 the anti-slavery memorials signed by many hundred members of the church, and the report of the committee of bills and overtures thereupon, with the whole subject was laid on the table. In 1845 the Assembly *did* act upon the subject, but notice the sentiment embodied in that action.

"Resolved, First, That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, was originally organized and has since continued the bond of Union in the church upon the conceded principle that the *existence of domestic Slavery*, under the circumstances in which it is found in the Southern portion of this Country, *is no bar to christian communion*.

"Second, That the petitions that ask the Assembly to make the holding of slaves, in itself, a matter of discipline, do virtually require this judicatory to dissolve itself and abandon the organization, under which, by the divine blessing, it has so long prospered. The tendency is evidently to separate the northern from the southern portion of the church, a result which every good citizen must deplore, as tending to the dissolution of the Union of our beloved Country, and which every enlightened christian will oppose, as bringing about a rainous and unnecessary schism between brethren who maintain a common faith."

The action of 1845 was confirmed in 1846. And in 1847 nothing was done. In 1848 A "memorial from the Presbytery of Chillicothe was presented to the Assembly complaining that their testimony in regard to slavery was not sufficiently definite, and praying that whatever testimony we have borne against it, may be published by the board of publication, under the order of the Assembly, with such additions and explanations, as may render it more effective. The usual committee recommended the following resolution, which was adopted, viz: "Resolved, That no additional publicity in regard to the action of this Assembly on the subject of slavery is necessary"

In 1849, in answer to three memorials from Chillicothe, Coshocton, and Erie Presbyteries, the Assembly adopted the following resolutions:

"First, That the principles of the Presbyterian Church on the subject of Slavery are already set forth in repeated declarations, so full and so explicit, as to need no further exposition.

"Second, That in view of the civil and domestic nature of this institution and the competency of secular legislatures alone to remove it, and in view of the earnest inquiry and deep agitation on the subject which we now observe in one or more commonwealths of our country, where slavery exists, it be considered peculiarly improper and inexpedient for this General Assembly to propose measures in the work of emancipation."

These resolutions were passed without debate, and that too, immediately after the opening of the afternoon session, when a member, who, it was well known conscientiously objected to them was absent.

Into what a depth of absurdity and sin has the General Assembly descended since 1818. Then slavery was boldly declared to be "utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcilable with the principles and spirit of the Gospel." In 1845 and '49, it is declared by the *same body* "that the Apostles did not denounce the relation as sinful—as inconsistent with christianity, and that the Assembly cannot, therefore, denounce the holding of slaves as necessarily a heinous and scandalous sin."

Which ground was right—that taken by the Assembly of 1818, or that taken by the Assembly of 1845? One is directly antagonistic to the other. *Both* positions so glaringly opposed to each other, cannot possibly harmonize with the word of God and the teachings of the Apostles. There is a fact that occurred in connexion with the Assembly of 1849, which sat in the city of Pittsburgh, that is worthy of notice. In the providence of God, a poor *African female slave* presented herself at the door of the Assembly, with a paper certified by a number of respectable ministers, begging some pecuniary aid, to help her to purchase herself, her husband and her children, who were all owned by a master in Virginia. I being a member of the Assembly, endeavored to do what I was able for her, by my own contributions and by circulating her paper. Among other means, the thought occurred to me that it might do good to have her papers read before the Assembly—and accordingly I suggested it to a number of the members and the moderator, but they all disapproved of the suggestion, and her papers were *not* read. How unlike Christ, thought I, was that Assembly. He will hear the cries of the most humble and worthless, but the bleeding and suffering condition of this poor African mother could not be brought before the Assembly. The Assembly was not so much crowded with business that it could not attend to her request. It gave much time and attention, and marked respect to an *Indian Chief* of the Iowa Tribe, that happened to be present—and contributed sixty-eight dollars to him, which he resolved to spend in making a feast for his tribe when he returned. That money would have been more valuable to the *poor slave*. By this act of cruel neglect and contempt, it appeared to me, that the amount of *real, genuine* humanity that belonged to that body, was fairly tested. The Assembly declared by its conduct, in a way, too, that the world will understand, that it lacked this vital element of Christ-like piety. Christ condescended to live and move, and sympathise, and heal and save, in the lowest sphere of the world's population. It was the peculiarity of *his* greatness that it—stooped, I will not say, but—penetrated without stooping to the humblest wants; not simply stepped casually aside to look at the most ignominious sorrows, but *went* directly to them, and lived wholly in them; scattered glorious miracles and sacred truths along the hidden bye-paths and in the mean recesses of existence, serving the mendicant and the widow, blessing the child, healing the leprosy of body and soul and kneeling to wash even the *traitors* feet. Into the spirit of lowliness and meekness, evinced by its divine head, the church needs to be baptized afresh. It was not beneath the dignity of a King, once, to condescend to sympathize with the outcast and the lowly. George the second, King of England, going out upon a

hunting expedition, wandered off, undesignedly, from his company, and got lost. As he passed round the bottom of a hill, he was startled at what appeared to be the person of a poor helpless female lying upon the ground. Advancing to where she lay, he recognized a poor Gypsy woman, almost in the last agonies of death; he tried to revive her by applying a little wine to her parched lips; but just as he was doing this, a little bright eyed girl came running round the hill, crying "Mother! Mother! they say they wont come!" Who say they wont come, inquired the King—Why the ministers, replied the girl—*because she is a Gypsy*. Tell your mother, says George, that I am a minister of the most High, and will kneel down by her side and pray for her. He did so, and before he arose from his knees, his courtiers came, and were astonished to see the King praying over a Gypsy woman. When he had concluded, he rose up and all the apology he made to his courtiers, consisted in putting his hand upon the shoulders of one of them and exclaiming, "*Who is my neighbor?*" Understanding the Gospel according to the clear import of the teachings of Jesus, he was able to recognize in that Gypsy woman a "*neighbor*" upon whom his sympathies and charities ought to be expended. How long have the slaves of our land been crying for sympathy and love and moral influence from American ministers—and yet how true is it that "*they will not come*" to their deliverance, because they are *poor and helpless*.

The position assumed and attempted to be maintained by the General Assembly, has been stoutly advocated and defended by the religious periodical press of the church. Some of our periodicals have not hardly condescended to notice the subject, while others have spoken out, and their sentiments have corresponded with those of the Assembly. The Princeton Repertory, edited by the Princeton Professors, expresses itself in the October number of 1844, as follows: "The admitted facts of the case are these—First, that at the time of the introduction of christianity, slavery in its worst form, prevailed extensively over the world, and the severity with which they were treated, was extreme. Second, that neither Christ nor his Apostles ever denounced slaveholding as a crime. Third, that they never urged emancipation as an immediate duty. These are the facts, the inference is irresistible, that *slaveholding cannot be a crime*. It is placed by the inspired writers upon the same ground with DESPOTISM. The possession of absolute sovereignty in the State, the exercise by one man, of the supreme legislative, judicial and executive functions of government is not in its own nature sinful. Accordingly the Apostles though living under the reign of Nero, while they denounce all injustice and cruelty, whether in *despot, master or parent*, never say a word about the sin of *despotism*. On the contrary they en-

joined the duty of submission to the exercise of that authority; teaching that human government, *however constituted*, was an *ordinance of God*." So it appears that the distinguished writer, who is supposed to be Prof. Hodge, places *slavery* and *despotism* on the same footing, and affirms that God sanctions them both, God then, ordains and sanctions the doctrine of *personal liberty* and *personal slavery*, of *Republicanism* and *Despotism*. The Italian Government with the Pope at the head of it, and the Austrian and Russian which are essentially *despotic*, and are trying to murder the Hungarians for maintaining some common sense political rights, are *all* the ordinances of *God*, for "Human governments, however constituted," says this Professor, "*is an ordinance of God*." Such doctrine is not only *absurd*, but it is *perfect blasphemy*. According to it our Revolutionary Fathers were unprincipled murderers, for in throwing off the yoke of Great Britain, they were fighting against the legitimately constituted ordinance of *God*, and those divinely appointed functionaries who were conscientiously endeavoring to maintain it. Yet *this* is the present *theology* of the Presbyterian Church. And the General Assembly it seems has deliberately determined to adhere to it. *This position* it says in 1847 in its letter to the Irish and Scotch Presbyterians, has been "deliberately and conscientiously taken, and shall, in time to come be faithfully maintained."

But, not only does the Assembly by its authoritative acts and its periodical press, sustain slavery, but it has also engaged in a process of expurgation, so that it may form a dish of moral literature more palatable to slaveholding tastes. In 1816, you have seen that the Assembly erased that important note, which was necessary in order to define the word "*manstealing*," and which made *slavery* to be that very crime, and thus expurgated the confession of Faith. And since that, as you have seen by the successive resolutions it has passed, it has *virtually* erased the resolutions of 1818. It has extended this work of expurgation, also, to other things. The Hymn Book used to be somewhat anti-slavery, and the Assembly has altered it in its late editions to suit the pious slaveholders. In their last edition of Psalms and Hymns, they have omitted the following verse, together with a number of others elsewhere, which will be found in the edition of 1834—Hymn 363, v. 4.

"Oh! when shall Afric's sable sons  
Enjoy the Heavenly word,  
And vassals long enslaved become  
The freemen of the Lord."

The Board of Publication has attempted the same thing. The learned Dr. Keith of Scotland, has written a work of standard

merit, called "The Evidences of the truth of the Christian Religion derived from the literal fulfillment of Prophecy." The Board of Publication, in publishing an edition of this work, had the presumption to omit about a page of matter, which is to be found in the correct and complete editions. The passage omitted occurs at the end of the seventh chapter, under the title of "Africans, &c." The Doctor was speaking on the noted text, which contains that curse, with which so many ministers love to curse the benighted Africans—"Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren," makes the following very appropriate and satisfactory remarks:

"Whatever events the prophecies reveal they never sanction any iniquity or evil. The wrath of men worketh not the righteousness of God, though it be made to praise him; and any attempted justification of slavery, or of man having any moral right of property in man, must be sought in vain from the fulfillment of this prediction. Nebuchadnezzar was the guilty instrument of righteous judgments; and although in the execution of these he was the servant of the Lord, it was his own gain and glory which he sought, and after having subdued nations not a few, he was driven from men and had his dwelling with the beasts. Never were judgments more clearly marked than those which have rested on the Jews in every country under heaven. Yet he that toucheth them toucheth the apple of his eye; and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion shall be the day of the Lord's vengeance, when he will plead with all flesh for his people and for his heritage. And if these examples suffice not to show that it is a wresting of Scripture to their destruction for any to seek from them the vindication of slavery, because Canaan was to be the servant of servants unto his brethren, yet they who profess to look here to the *holy* Scriptures for a warrant, because that fact was foretold, should remember, that though Christ was delivered into the hands of his enemies "by the *determinate counsel and foreknowledge* of God, it was by *wicked hands* that he was crucified and slain." God hath made of one flesh all the nations of the earth, and, were the gospel universally and rightly appealed to, no other bond would be known among men but that of Christian brotherhood."—*Keith's Evidence of Prophecy*, page 354, *Edinburgh edition*, 1838.

The effect of this rotten theology and this attempt to pander to the wicked feelings of slaveholders by striking out that very truth, from valuable works, which their honest Authors designed for them, is made to appear in the conduct of the slaveholders themselves. They are encouraged, as good Presbyterians, to go on from one depth of wickedness to another, until their conduct becomes shocking even to infidels themselves. A fugitive slave

told his friends at the North that he had ceased receiving the Lord's Supper in the church to which he had been attached, because the *church* had sold his brother to pay for their communion plate; and "I could not bear," said he, "to go forward and receive the communion from vessels which were the purchase of my brother's blood."

Says the Rev. J. Cable, in a printed letter of 20th March, 1846: "I have lived eight years in a slave State, (Virginia,) and received theological education at the Union Theological Seminary, near Hampden Sydney College. Those who know anything about slavery, know the worst kind is *jobbing slavery*; that is, hiring out slaves from year to year, while the master is not present to protect them. It is the interest of the one who hires them to get the worth of his money out of them, and the loss is the master's, if they die. What shocked me more than anything else, was the CHURCH engaging in this jobbing of slaves. The college church which I attended, held slaves enough to pay the pastor, Mr. Stanton, one thousand dollars a year; of which the church members, as I understood, did not pay a cent. The slaves who had been *left to the church* by some pious mother in Israel, had increased so as to be a large and increasing fund. These were hired out on Christmas day of each year—the day on which they celebrate the birth of our Savior—to the highest bidder. These worked hard the whole year to pay the pastor \$1000, and it was left to the caprice of the employers whether they ever heard one sermon. Since the Abolitionists have made so much noise about the connexion of the church with slavery, the Rev. Elisha Balenter informed me the church has sold this property, and put the money into other stock. There were *four* churches near the college that supported the pastor, in whole or in part, in the same way, viz., Cumberland church, John Kirk, pastor; Birney church, Wm. Plummer, pastor, (since Dr. P. of Richmond); Buffalo church, Mr. Cochran, pastor; Pisgah church, near the Peaks of Otter, J. Mitchell pastor."

The Rev. Mr. Paxton, a Virginian and once a slaveholder, states in his "*Letters on Slavery*" that the church in Virginia, of which he was pastor, owned *seventy slaves*, and that his salary was chiefly derived from the hire of their labor." In the Savannah Republican, 23d March, 1845, C. O'Neal sheriff, advertised eight slaves for cash, to satisfy a mortgage in favor of "The Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia."

By means of this whole system of operations which is diabolical in the extreme, a spurious kind of preaching and religion has become prevalent at the South, which is necessarily repugnant to the natural moral sense of the slaves themselves.

No clergyman at the South has probably labored more zealously in behalf of the spiritual interest of the slaves than the Rev. C. C. Jones; but unhappily, he has labored as the agent of the masters and the supporter of human bondage; and what has been his success? Listen to his story as, related in the tenth Report of the Association for the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in Liberty county, Georgia.

"I was preaching," says he, "to a large congregation, on the Epistle to Philemon: and when I insisted on *fidelity and obedience* as Christian virtues in servants, and upon the authority of Paul, **CONDEMNED THE PRACTICE OF RUNNING AWAY, one half of my audience deliberately rose up and walked off with themselves**; and those who remained looked anything but satisfied with the preacher or his doctrine. After dismissal, there was no small stir among them; some solemnly declared that there was no such Epistle in the Bible; others, that it was not the Gospel; others, that *I preached to please the masters*; others, that they did not care if they never heard me preach again."—P. 24.

These slaves could see very clearly the false position of the preacher, and therefore his sermon instead of benefitting them, drove them away and destroyed their confidence in what he said.

In 1792-93 a number of American Citizens were held as slaves in Algiers, and by as valid and sacred a title as that by which any slave is held in North Carolina. These slaves, 105 in number, in a petition to Congress, declared: "We are employed daily upon the most laborious work, without respect of persons, and shut up at night in two *slave prisons*." Now what would have been the feelings of these slaves towards an English Clergyman, in the pay of the "*Dey*," who, with his permission, should have preached to them from the Epistle of Philemon, urging upon them fidelity and obedience to their Algerine Masters, as Christian duties, and assuring them, on the authority of St. Paul, of the great sin they would commit in attempting to escape from their "*slave prisons*." How would these Americans have received such preaching!

Occupying the position that it does and advocating such iniquitous doctrine, the Presbyterian Church cannot do its part in converting the world. I used to wonder why it was that for eighteen hundred years past so little had been done by the church toward the accomplishment of this glorious object. But if the church has always been as time serving and truckling and preached such a pack of nonsense for the Gospel of Jesus Christ—the fact is easily accounted for—it is no longer a matter of wonder.

See the effect of this whole system of operation upon the mind of a poor Mahomedan—we never remember to have seen a keener rebuke than is contained in the Mahomedan's reply to his master.

"G. Dougherty, Esq., member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Representative in the Mississippi Legislature, related to me the following: In the year 1806, on the arrival of a slaver from the coast of Africa, J. Dougherty went to the city of Savannah to buy slaves. After several hundred had been sold in lots and single, as suited the purchasers, a middle aged man was put upon the stand, who wished to make a communication before he was sold. The purport of which was, that he was a Mahomedan, and that whenever the hour of prayer and other devotional duties came, he must have time to attend to them. Mr. D. who had lately embraced religion, and seemed to be zealous to promote the cause, gave the highest price for him, feeling confident within himself that he would soon convert him to the true faith. Taking him to his plantation, he built him a hut, and assured him that he should be allowed the time he required, and in addition, should have every opportunity to attend all the meetings of the Christians. The Mahomedan slave for a while attended these meetings, and learned something of Christianity, without, however, discontinuing his former devotions. At the expiration of about a year, his master, who was intent on his conversion, asked him formally, if he did not prefer Christianity to Mahomedanism, and if he would not openly renounce the prophet and acknowledge Jesus Christ? The slave asked, if the Christian religion allowed one Christian to hold another in slavery, and their children after them? The answer of course, was in the affirmative. The Mahomedan replied, that the religion of the prophet *did not allow that*. The result of all was, this slave, in the land of Bibles and gospel ministers, daily said his prayers, performed ablutions, made his prostrations, and at an advanced age died, declaring that God was one God, and Mahomet was his prophet."

Human nature is the same in every age and country. Why have not the Christians of Europe converted the red man of America? Let three centuries of outrage and oppression tell. Why has not Protestant England converted Catholic Ireland? The fourteen million acres of confiscated land, upon whose surface the real owners were made outlaws, can assign the reason. Why have we, in the language of the S. C. Synod, "more than two millions of heathen among us?" The wailings of dissevered husbands and wives, babes and mothers, the sound of the whip, and the rattle of manacle and coffer chain, can audibly tell why they have not become Christians. And why has not colonization, apart from missions, with its whole paraphernalia, civilized some of the nations of Africa, or, at least, mitigated the slave trade? Let the cannon balls tell, which have spent their entire force in dense masses of human flesh, within the bounds of that Christian colony."

If we then can determine the character of a church by its authoritative action and its periodical press, which certainly is the only safe and reasonable way; the character of the Presbyterian Church, at present, is certainly *pro-slavery*. Now the question arises, do individual churches and members partake of the guilt of slavery by continuing in connexion with it? I think they do. This may *not* be the case, if they intelligently and honestly believe that the church is involved in such gross ignorance, as not to be sensible of the existence of the sin and the wrong, and are without the proper means of information. Then and under these circumstances, I think, an individual, minister or private member may continue in connexion with it merely for the purpose of removing that ignorance and bringing the church on to right ground. But when there is evidence that the church has the means of information within its reach, and will not avail itself of them, or has the information itself and deliberately refuses to do its duty, *then* a connection with it becomes sinful. The Presbyterian Church, I honestly believe, has all the means it wishes. It knows what is right; but it has deliberately resolved to do the wrong. "That ground," it says, "it will maintain." It *will shelter American Slavery*. The South know it and rejoice in it. Pro-slavery men like the Rev. William Graham, of the Synod of Cincinnati, (N. S.) are taking refuge in it, and feel themselves perfectly at home. Many of those changes of Ministers from the New School to the Old School, over which the Old School friends rejoice so exceedingly, are occasioned, principally, by the fidelity of the Old School Assembly to the interests of slavery and their servility to Southern dictation.

For the first time in the history of the world, Presbyterianism has been found on the side of the oppressor, aiding, abetting and justifying him, in trampling down the liberties of man in the dust.

In order to settle the question, whether members and churches are guilty by continuing their connection with the General Assembly, and, thereby with the Old School Presbyterian Church, it is only necessary to consider the fact, that the whole Presbyterian Church is a *unit*, one large congregation, extending over the whole country, yet for the sake of convenience and edification, under the care of different Pastors. "The radical principles of Presbyterian Church government and discipline, as we read in the form of government, are: That the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute *one* church of Christ, called emphatically *the church*; that a larger part of *the church*, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein; that in like manner a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united; that is,

that a *majority* shall *govern*, and consequently that appeals may be carried from lower to higher judicatories, till they be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the *whole church*." Now here is the principle that the whole *church* is a *unit*, and every *particular* church is a *part* of that *unit*, and is just as responsible for the acts of the *whole* as any other part. If it is not a part, then there are no parts—then if there are no parts there is no *whole*. And if one part is not responsible for the official acts of the whole, then another part is not—and then it follows that there is no responsibility for want of a person or subject, with which it may be associated. How is it in regard to a particular congregation? Should this congregation through its properly constituted authorities, advocate and encourage Sabbath breaking, and dancing and intoxication, could a private member clear himself of guilt in his relation to it by resolving in his own mind, that he will oppose these crimes and testify against them? After he had done this for a number of years, and still the ministers and officers boldly advocated and published the same position, would that member not be held responsible, by the public and conscience and God, unless he would dissolve his connexion with them? It is a clear principle that if we knowingly fellowship evil-doers we must be held responsible for their acts. Our character is forfeited both in the estimation of man and God. It does not do for particular churches to try to nullify the acts of the whole church by forming new terms of communion. If one congregation has this right, then another has, and if every congregation has such a right what becomes of the *unity* of the church, or the subordination of the lower courts to the higher, or the doctrine that a *majority* shall govern, and that church government is *really* government and not *advice*. It is a sad misapprehension and misconstruction of Presbyterian government to suppose that each individual congregation is a *separate* and *independent* body. That clause in the first chapter of the Form of Government of our church, upon which some rely in order to justify the making of new terms of communion, does not relate to the power vested in particular churches at all. The language is as follows. "That in perfect consistency with the above principle of common right, every christian church or union or association of particular churches, is entitled to declare the term of admission into its communion, and the qualifications of its ministers and members, as well as the whole system of its internal government which Christ hath appointed." By looking at what precedes this clause as well as the clause itself it will be obvious to the unbiassed and intelligent reader—that the language relates to the *Presbyterian Church*—and not to one of its branches. No one branch of the church can assume the right to declare the qualifications of the ministry—as well as the whole

system of its internal government. If this power was vested in each particular church—the system of internal government would be various. The churches in their collective capacity acting through their representatives, have the control of these points. Otherwise, their separate and distinctive and conflicting action would be confusion confounded. The public sentiment of the Christian world, unites all the parts into one whole, and calls these parts, thus united, The Presbyterian Church.

Now if it is true that the Presbyterian Church advocates and practices American Slavery, and private members as parts of that body, become responsible for *its* action, or rather for their own action, through it; the question arises is not *slavery* a proper and justifiable ground for dissolving fellowship with it. There are some immoralities recognized by every church, as being of such a character, as to justify their suspension or excision. When a church or church court suspends or expels a member for any immorality, they say by that act that they regard that person as unfit for church fellowship. Evil speaking, lying, swearing, intoxication, sabbath breaking and stealing, constitute *some* of the immoralities that are supposed in all church courts to justify excision, if persisted in. If the great majority practice these sins instead of a small minority, the immorality is just as great, though the constitutional power to excise them may be wanting. The act of excision expresses the moral judgment of the churches in regard to those who practice those crimes. Now is not man-stealing or American Slavery, which is the same thing, equal in enormity to any one of these? Is it not equal to all of them put together? Such in fact is the moral judgment of the Christian world, and of the whole civilized world. For these other offences, they may pass over; but try to enslave them, and they cry from the depth of their heart, "give me *liberty* or give me death!"

The worth of human liberty, and the wrong of slavery are loudly proclaimed by the suffering that has been endured and the blood that has been shed to obtain the one and resist the other. Slavery is not only *heresy* worse than Arianism or Pelagianism, but it is the essence of all injustice, and violence and fraud and rapine and murder.

The position that the Presbyterian Church occupies and so presumptuously affirms and maintains, stands out in striking contrast with the great advances the world has been making in the principles of liberty. During the last fifty years and especially during the last half of these fifty years, the world has advanced greatly in relation to this question. Human rights have been recognized, and their practical enjoyment to some extent secured. There is not a government in Europe, even the most iron and despotical of them all, that has not participated in the ameliora-

tion which characterises the present age. A noble catalogue of rights has been wrested by the British Commons from the British nobility. France and Italy have been revolutionized. Even the Pope of Rome, whose power seemed as eternal as the hills on which he was seated, has sunk under the shock. Prussia and all the Germanic powers, with the exception of Austria have been half revolutionized. The great fire of liberty has burst out in the hearts of the noble Hungarians. Great Britain has abolished slavery throughout all her realms. France has declared that any one who should voluntarily continue to be the owner of a slave cast upon him by bequest or inheritance, shall cease to be a citizen of France. Denmark has abolished slavery, wherever it existed in her possessions. The Bey of Tunis, acting under the light of the Mahommedan Religion, has abolished it. The Priests of Persia declare the sentiment to have come by tradition from Mahommed himself, "*that the worst of men is the seller of men.*" Not only all the civilized nations, but the half civilized, the semi-barbarian, are acting under the guidance of the clearer light and higher motives of our day.

While the Angel of Liberty is flying over the world and dropping her celestial blessings into the throbbing hearts of millions, and while the iron wheels of despotism are growing old and becoming rusted and broken; how unspeakably important is it that the church of God be found standing upon the high table lands of eternal truth, and contributing by its moral power to roll on the mighty wave of light and liberty, until its sparkling crest shall glitter over the last vestige of human slavery.

But, Brethren, there is another important fact that stands out in striking contrast with the position of the Presbyterian Church. The very slaves upon whom we have trodden have risen above us, and their moral superiority makes our conduct ignominious. Not Europeans only, not only Arabians and Turks, are emerging from the inhumanity and enormities of slavery, but even our own slaves, transplanted to the land of their fathers, are raising up an Anti-slavery banner. On the shores of Africa, a republic is springing up, whose inhabitants were transplanted from this Egypt of bondage. And now look at the government, which these slaves and descendants of slaves, have established, and contrast it with our own. They discard the institution of slavery, while we cherish it. Instead of permitting any man who holds slaves there to commune with the church, they will inflict the severest penalty upon him. The *Patriarchal* and *Apostolical* institution does not receive much favor at their hands. Upon their banner is written in letters of gold, "*No communion with slaveholders!*"

Thus in high toned morality, we as a people are going back—

endeavoring to enlarge the area of slavery, while the other nations of the earth, are going forward with rapid strides. And what is the cause of this lamentable fact? Is it not, that ministers and churches, are persuading the people by their teaching and example, that American slavery is a God-given institution, and that the American slaveholder is the best style of man.

How stinging is the remark of the distinguished editor of the "*True American*," published a short time since in Kentucky. "We are about to make an announcement, says he, which must sound very strange to those whose field of observation is unlike our own. The *greatest* impediment to the success of the Anti-slavery movement in the slave States, is the opposition to it of those men who profess to have been commissioned by high heaven to go abroad and use their efforts for the mitigation of human misery, and the extirpation of human wrong. This assertion, which appears so monstrous, will not surprise any one who lives among slaveholders. Our conviction of its truth has been confirmed by extensive observation." Oh, then, think of the collective influence of the Presbyterian Church, upon the great question of civil liberty throughout the world. I would not stand with its guilt upon my soul, before the bar of God, for ten thousand worlds.

If we remain, Dear Brethren, in connexion with the Presbyterian Church, we perhaps contemplate either the purification of the church, or our own personal good. As regards the first point, how many years are necessary to make the experiment. Every means that could possibly be invented have been tried, and that too by all classes of persons; and yet in the year 1849 the work is not done, and the Assembly with all the light it has, has no expectation of doing it. *This then is a hopeless task.* In regard to the second point, our own personal good: What good can be obtained from a connexion with a Presbyterian Church with slavery *in* it, that cannot be obtained with a Presbyterian Church with slavery *out* of it? It is a scriptural maxim confirmed by the experience of all, that "Evil communications corrupt good manners." And, accordingly we find that the influence of Old School Presbyterianism, has been disastrous to the anti-slavery feeling of its members. They have all, either been rocked to sleep, and their voices hushed, or they have been driven out of the church. What a painful reflection was forced upon my mind, when I witnessed the fact that there was not a member that spoke out distinctly upon the subject of slavery, in the last assembly (1849) but myself. Every other question found enough of advocates, but the question of anti-slavery found but one. Three other noble spirits, one of these a beloved missionary, and another a conscien-

tious and worthy elder of my own congregation, added their names to the protest, which I felt myself compelled to make.

I have come to the conclusion, Dear Brethren, to leave the Old School Presbyterian Church, and connect myself with the "*Free Presbyterian Church of America*" organized a year or two since. This church is composed of three Presbyteries—the Presbytery of "Mahoning," "Ripley" and "Hillsborough." The Free Church has adopted as its basis and bond of union, the "Confession of Faith," the larger and shorter catechisms—the directory for the worship of God, together with the plan of government and discipline, of the Presbyterian Church. The main point in which the "Free Church" differs from the Old School Presbyterian Church, is that of *slavery*. The Old School fellowships those who *advocate and practise slavery*—while the "Free Church" does not. The brethren who compose it, are men, so far as my knowledge extends, of tried integrity and unyielding principle. They loved *truth and right* more than *sect*, and were willing to follow the right with two or three, rather than the wrong with the multitude. I wish to let the world see and my children know when I am dead and gone, that *principle* could triumph in *my* heart over the love of popularity and the love of ease and gain. Nothing, under heaven, could force me to tear myself from many whom I love, but a desire to throw what little influence I may have, on the side of a cause which richly merits my sympathy, and which so few of the ministers of God are willing to own. I feel that we are not liable to go too far, in taking sides with the poor and down-trodden. Our natural pride of heart tempts us strongly to go in another direction. The more we sink into the will of Christ, and become like him, the more we are brought into deep sympathy with the different forms of suffering humanity throughout this bleeding world. Christianity, as developed in too many, is a selfish, calculating, wire-working, speculating, money-making thing. Christianity as taught by Christ, involves the denial of all selfishness, and calls for an earnest spirit of self-sacrifice. In moving forward in that direction in which the light and love of Christ impel, the souls difficulties are, of course to be encountered; but whatever difficulties may baffle us, it is our business to live with resistance in our will, and die with protest on our lips, and make our whole existence, not only in desire and prayer, but in resolve, in speech, in act, a remonstrance against whatever hurts, and destroys in all the earth. Did we give head to the counsels of passiveness and despondency, our Christendom, faithless to the trust consigned to it by Heaven, must perish by the forces to which it has succumbed. For between the Christian faith, teaching the Fatherhood of God and the immortality of men, between this and the degradation of large portions of the human family, there is an

irreconcilable variance, an internecine war, to be interrupted by its parley, and mitigated by no quarter. And if faith gives up its aggression upon the evil, the evil must destroy the faith. If the world were all a slave market, or a gin-palace, what possible place could such a thing as the Christian religion find therein? Who amid a carnival of sin, could believe in any deathless sanctity? or through the streams of a besotted earth discern the pure light of an overarching heaven! or through the moans and dumb anguish of a race, send up a hymn of praise to the All-merciful.—Are there not thousands, some within and many without the church, who have no apprehension of the gospel as a system of truth, directly antagonistical to these darkening, sensualizing, degrading and ruinous influences? Let their methods of interpreting the revelations of God's love and mercy to man, be once established, and immediately Atheism starts up in demoniac triumph, and proclaims man to be a brute, and earth a grave.

I knew that you will believe me, Dear Brethren, when I say that I do not separate myself from any in this congregation, because of any unkind feeling upon my part. Should some go one way, from the force of the convictions of their own minds, and some another, I will pray for them earnestly that we may all see the truth, and meet again in one great temple where parting never takes place. I feel that God has called me to raise up a standard in this place. How many hearts beat with mine, God only knows. I have not tried to bias any one in my favor. The truth as it falls from the throne of God, upon my mind I am determined to follow. It may lead me over many rugged places, and subject me to much self-denial, and expose me to much severe crimination and censure on the part of those I love, but all these acts of self-denial and all this sacrifice for the sake of the poor, will enable me to rejoice with joy unspeakable upon a dying bed, and cause my cup to overflow in Heaven.

A life of benevolence and self-denial, and devotion to the interests of the wronged and helpless, grows brighter and brighter as we advance nearer and nearer to Eternity, while a life of ease and self-gratification, and sin, grows darker and darker. This, in fact, is the only true life,

"We live in deeds, not years, in thoughts not breaths,  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial,  
We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives,  
Who thinks most, feels the noblest and the best;  
And he whose heart beats the quickest, lives the longest—  
Lives in one hour, more than in years do some  
Whose blood sleeps as it slips along their veins.  
Life is but a means unto an end; that end  
Beginning, mean, and end to all things—God.  
The dead have all the glory of this world."

Many means, I am persuaded, will be resorted to by different minds, differing just as the minds themselves differ, for the purpose of satisfying themselves, that slavery may exist all around them, both in Church and State, and yet they be innocent in their relation to it, while at the same time, they are not earnestly seeking after any means for its removal. It is a very easy matter to convince ourselves of the truth of any proposition, and persuade ourselves that we are right, when our wishes and supposed interests lead us in that direction. Many in the political world, who idolize their parties, and have no desire to be troubled with the question, say it is purely a church question, and ought to be settled exclusively by the church. Many, on the other hand, within the church, who wish to be at ease, and keep the church quiet, say that it is purely a political question—one with which they have nothing to do, and to touch it at all is to go beyond their proper sphere, and “dabble in the dirty stream of politics.” Others, look with surprise, when you press the question upon them, and inquire like Cain of old “Am I my brother’s keeper?” they are not in my “State,” and it would be meddling for me to say or do any thing about them. Others say that slavery is one of the “Institutions” of the South, and therefore we should let it alone. Just as if an evil lost its deformity, by becoming an *institution*—that is, an established thing, held up by laws and public force. Rev. Mr. Rice, of Kentucky, in the convention that formed the constitution of that State, reasoned correctly in regard to this point, “It is in vain for me—says he—to plead that I have the sanction of the law, for holding slaves. *This makes the injury the greater: it arms the community against the slave, and makes his case desperate. The owner of such slaves are licensed robbers, and not the just proprietors of what they claim.*” Others will say, that their relations to the *government* involve them in the guilt of slavery, if their relation to the church does. Verily we are guilty as citizens if we are not using all political influence to put down whatever evil can be reached by that means, Well, say they, but if the government will not put it away ought we to separate ourselves from it? We certainly ought if we can find a purer form of government where the law of God is more fully established. For it is certainly sinful to help, directly or indirectly, by any means, to wrong our fellow-beings—and if we can’t take our feet off their necks, in any other way than by dissolving our connection with our government—and forming a connection with some other better government—we certainly are bound to do so. But there is no better government, than ours on the whole face of the earth. In this respect then we could not better our situation, or diminish our guilt. When a government acts like that of Great Britain towards the Irish Patriots, or like the Austrians toward the Hun-

garies—it ought to be abandoned by every lever of the whole human family. Besides there is this difference between our relations to government and churches, our relations to some form of government is necessary—and involuntary—while our relation to a slaveholding church is voluntary and unnecessary. Others say again, I can't exert any influence. It is the collective influence of pro-slavery churches that is holding the slaves in chains. Were all who are opposed to the system of slavery to separate themselves from these churches, they would soon begin to be alarmed at their situation—and their consciences would be stirred up, and they would soon begin to discharge their whole duty fearlessly. Wicked men always like to have christians in connexion with them. When a man goes to a drinking establishment and sets down with a christian at his cups, he persuades himself that it cannot be a very disreputable business. When christians go to the communion table with slaveholders, they come to the conclusion that their sin is very small, if it is a sin at all. Others argue, that if slavery is sinful, and the church is corrupt, we ought to remain in it for the purpose of reforming it. This although plausible is not well founded. Why should we not for the same reason stay in the world to reform it? Why form any church associations? By associating with people in their churches, while living in their sins, we thereby recognize them as christians in good and regular standing, and we have no power over their consciences. They conclude that the whole matter is only a difference of opinion with regard to a minor point in morals. But are there not many good people—say others still—in the Presbyterian Church, and ought we to separate from the church while this is the case?—It is the good people in the church that bolster up slavery. It is their presence and company that tend to make slavery respectable. The unprincipled professors could not do this.

As regard to the fact of Christ and the Apostles not seceding from the Jewish Church—no argument can be based upon it, were it fully admitted in the sense in which it is claimed—which is far from being the case—in favor of fellowshiping corrupt churches—every christian will say that now no follower of Christ ought to remain in connexion with a Jewish Synagogue at all, but ought if in it, to separate immediately from it. And instead of the Jewish Church being worse now than formerly—it is better. So also, in regard to the Romish Church. Some say because Martin Luther remained in it until excommunicated, so ought we to remain in a church, we believe to be corrupt, until dealt with in the same way. How is it at the present time. Do we tell members of the Romish Church, that they ought not to leave it and come into the fold of Protestantism until they are excommunicated? Certainly not. But if we make Luther our example, we ought to do so. Others—

again—cry out we don't like schism. We reply no person does like it, but sometimes it becomes necessary and those persons only are responsible for it, who engraft enormous heresies upon the church and introduce gross immoralities. In fact where there is no unity of opinion and feeling and doctrine, in a church, in regard to the fundamental questions of morality, there is already a fearful schism. Separation is but the outward expression of that state of mind and feeling. Between those who advocate and practice slavery, and the anti-slavery part of the church "*there is a great gulph fixed*" creating a schism which can never be repaired but by the total abandonment of the advocacy and practice of the abominable system of slavery itself. We were very much amused to see, in the organ of the Presbyterian Church in the West, a short time since a paragraph, expressing a good deal of joy at the prospect of seeing a schism in the church of England, because of the late decision, making the doctrine of *baptismal regeneration* the doctrine of the standards of the church of England. But in another paragraph in the succeeding number of his paper, the Editor mourns over any schism in the Presbyterian Church—on account of the sin of *American Slavery*. If the former heresy is more glaringly at war with the teachings of Jesus Christ than the dark system of *American Slavery*—we have sadly misinterpreted those teachings. The Editor feels, no doubt that "*there is quite a difference between skinning and being skinned*" and therefore the difference of his judgment in the two cases.

I tremble in view of the *schism* that God will create at the day of judgment if the church does not bear a louder and stronger testimony against the outrageous system of slavery, instead of attempting to throw around it the sanction of the word of God. Well, indeed has a foreign author remarked "Whatever may have been the unutterable wickedness of slavery in the West India Islands, *there* it was never baptized in the Redeemer's hallowed name, and its corruptions were not concealed in the garb of religion. *That* acme of piratical turpitude was reserved for the professed disciples of Jesus in America."

In a short time, Dear Brethren. the thirty hundred thousand slaves will face us at the judgment bar of Jesus Christ. The blood of Christ has been shed for them. *They will live somewhere, either in Heaven or Hell.* Do you think that the Christian Church will then appear to have done its duty toward them. Will not their bleeding backs and their gigantic wrongs cry out in thunder tones against those christians who fellowship their oppressors and thus sanctify the outrages they committed. Wherein we withhold our sympathies and prayers and moral efforts from the slave and let him lie beneath the feet of the Church or State, we withhold them from *Christ* and offend *him*. He has identified

himself with the smallest and weakest of his followers, "Inasmuch as ye did not to one of *the least* of these, ye did it not to me." In the person of the humblest, christian slave, Christ himself is enslaved, and the wrong of the act will not appear in all of its terrific features, until Christ comes at last to take sides with his own, and vindicate *their* wrongs. I regard it as a privilege to feel for the many that are forgotten, rather than for the few who glitter before the world in momentary trappings. No question is invested with greater importance to me than the question, how may the mass of men be raised from ignorance, and sensuality and bondage, to a higher, social, intellectual, moral and religious life? A voice, Dear Brethren, has come to my heart, from the depths of human suffering, from the abuses of the social state, from the teachings of Jesus Christ, urging the need of a new struggle with giant evils, and of new efforts for the diffusion of quickening truths, enlightened and consistent piety and disinterested virtue. A few years at farthest will bring me to my journey's end. To the last I will endeavor to act under the high and authoritative convictions of my moral nature, and arouse a sympathy in behalf of the poor and helpless. Through the redeeming mercy of my heavenly Father, I hope for another life; but while here I wish to be faithful, and by the truth I present, commend myself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Oh that I could speak with a trumpet tongue to the whole church, and call upon it to awake to its great duty. Church of the living God! Is it not enough that thou hast slumbered long already while thy Saviour has been waiting for thee, and millions have perished without thine aid? Is it not enough that by negligence, strife and carnal indulgence, thou hast been long the *scorn* and not the terror of thine adversaries? Providence calls thee; occasion waits on thee; the perishing poor invoke thy sympathy; the world solicits thee! O spirit of the living God! wait not for a dilatory church; awaken her to a conception of thy mind and sympathy with thy designs. Show her her vocation, and gird her for its accomplishment. Give the mighty heart and perfect faith to which conflict is easy and victory certain. In the language of a distinguished Philanthropist, I conclude my remarks, "I place a cheerful trust in Providence. The triumphs of evil which men call great, are but clouds passing over the serene and everlasting heavens.—Public men may in craft or passion decree violence and oppression; but silently and irresistibly they and their works are swept away. A voice of encouragement comes to us from the ruins of the past; from the humiliations of the proud; from the prostrate thrones of conquerors; from the baffled schemes of statesmen; from the reprobation with which the present age looks back on the unrighteous policy of former times. Such sentence the *future* will

pass on *present* wrongs. Men, measures, and all earthly interest pass away; but principles are eternal. Truth, justice and goodness partake of the omnipotence and immutableness of God, whose essence they are. In these it becomes us to place a calm, joyful trust in the darkest hour. Though there is nothing visible around us now but the angry war of elements, yet in the light of faith

“I see a brighter sky—I hear—I hear  
Far, Far away—yet drawing near  
A low, sweet sound of ringing melody.  
I see the swift-winged arrows fly—  
I see the battle and the combatants—  
I know the cause for which their weapons flash :  
I hear the martial music and the chants—  
The shock of hosts—the armor clash  
As thought meets thought; but far beyond I see  
Adown the abysses of time to be,  
The well won victory of the *right*,  
The reconciliation ardently desired,  
Of universal truth and might.”

## APPENDIX.

We might safely presume, that after the church had so misinterpreted the life and spirit and teachings of Jesus Christ, as to make it sanction the fearful outrage of American Slavery, and justify the fellowshipping of those who were guilty of practicing this piratical outrage, it would not find it difficult, to advocate and embrace the most debased and formidable immoralities. Accordingly, we were not much surprised to find that the Synod of Northern India, as reported in the November number of the Foreign Missionary Chronicle, 1849, has taken the ground that a man having, previous to his embracing Christianity, married a plurality of wives, ought not to be constrained to separate from them.—The whole action is as follows:

“When a man embraces Christianity, having married a plurality of wives, what is his duty in relation to them?

1st.—Should he retain them all as his wives?

2d.—Should he separate from all except one of them?

3d.—In this case, should he be required to support those from whom he is separated?

4th.—If any of those separated embrace Christianity, are they at liberty to be married to another man?

The difficulties which gather themselves around this subject in a heathen or Mohammedan country, are so many and so great, as to make it a subject peculiarly difficult to decide in an incipient stage of the progress of Christianity.

The Missionaries in Calcutta, as early as 1835, had found it a practical difficulty with which they had to deal. They also found it exceedingly hard to decide. They therefore appointed a committee, composed of *Missionaries of different societies and denominations*. After much search and examination of the subject in all its bearings, that committee reported on the whole, in *favor of not constraining* the party so trammelled to separate, or turn off any of those to whom he sustained such a relationship. *The committee are of opinion, that we are not ready yet for a final and satisfactory decision of the question.*”

It is very certain that the New Testament teaches, that a man must be the husband of but one wife. In order to be qualified for

admission into a New Testament Church, a man must conform to its divine and unalterable teachings. How then dare any branch of the church of Christ, with the New Testament in their hands, depart so far from its fundamental laws and principles, as to embrace a part, and that too, the most debased part of heathen or Mohammedan morality? Although *Polygamy* and *slavery* are both glaringly at war with New Testament morality, yet I honestly believe that slavery is a far more aggravated offence against high Heaven than Polygamy, for it not only subverts the marriage institution, but is the parent of every other vice.

Let the church, through the instrumentality of its missionaries, adopt this mode of teaching and acting, and when, oh when, shall the social system be regenerated, and the kingdom of righteousness be established?

Is it not evident that Christianity needs a republication through some new Ecclesiastical organization? To stand in connexion with the church that fellowships these "damnable heresies," is to contribute so far as our influence goes, to sanctify and propagate them.

"Just God! and shall we calmly rest,  
The christian's scorn and heathen's mirth,  
Content to live the lingering jest  
And by-word of a mocking earth?"