

“THE HIGHER LAW,”

IN ITS APPLICATION TO

THE FUGITIVE SLAVE BILL.

REVIEW

OF

DR. JOHN C. LORD'S SERMON,

ON THE

DUTIES MEN OWE TO GOD

AND TO

GOVERNMENTS,

BY

JOHN NEWELL,

LICENTIATE OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

“He is a freeman whom the truth makes free,”
“All else are slaves beside.”

SYRACUSE:

PRINTED AT THE JOURNAL OFFICE.

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REVIEW.

The design of Dr. Lord's Sermon, on Matt. xxii. 17—21, is avowed to be an exhibition of the duties men owe to God and to Governments, and then the application of the truth elicited to the law regarding the Fugitive Slave, the vexed question of the present times. Whether the author has treated his subject in the order he has thus proposed to himself, and what is the result of his demonstration, fall under our consideration. The text chosen is applicable to a portion of the subject assigned, and the strength of the argument depends upon the proper exposition of the passage selected.

Few will deny that there is some truth in this sermon, but many will see that the truth is obviously misapplied, while, from the disordered array of statements, they may be unable to detect the fallacy, or averse to trouble themselves about it. It would have been more to the learned author's credit if he had said less and said it *better*, and thus have saved himself recrimination because of logical blunders and loose epithets.

We may, at present, omit the appropriate but highly-colored preface, and come at once to his argument, for it is the mind, and not the imagination, that must be influenced to conviction on such a subject. Up to page 8, the way is being prepared, the field cleared for the discussion of the question; and there these words occur: "appeals have been made to a higher law, as a justification not merely of a neglect to aid in enforcing a particular statute, but of an open and forcible resistance by arms;" again, "*The acknowledged principle* that the law of God is supreme, and when in direct conflict with

any mere human enactment renders it nugatory, has been used," &c. ; and again : "It is high time to determine whether one of the highest duties enforced by the gospel, *obedience to the law of God as supreme*, can be made to justify a violent resistance to the late enactment of Congress." An important acknowledgment is here made—there is a higher law—the supreme law of God ; and when in *direct* conflict with any *mere* human enactment it renders it nugatory. The words *direct* and *mere* are now marked by italics, because it is desirable to know the force of these adjectives, and difficult to apprehend what conflict could be *indirect*, or what enactment could be *merely* human, while the government that enforces it is by the author supposed to be an ordinance of God. One would likewise wish to know why he leaves out in page 9, to determine why *neglect to aid* in enforcing a particular statute is wrong, as well as violent resistance ; why, when the two distinct cases occur, he fuses them into one and deals with neglect and *not consenting* as he does with violent resistance, or omits it altogether ? Did it not occur to him as a case properly before him, and worthy of consideration, whether or not a citizen of delicate conscience, considering the authority of the law of God to be infringed upon by the late enactment, might not, without show of resistance, rightly demur in carrying out principles which, when made law, outrage his belief ? And here it may be as well to state, that our author all along deals with the extreme case, that of violent resistance, forgetting or omitting that it is possible to discharge our duty both to God and man by not consenting to what is wrong or doubtful, and that the very essence of his text is that we should discharge our duties to governments and our duty to God simultaneously ; that the two are united ; and that cases may arise wherein human authority overturns or sets aside the supreme law of God, and then we should "obey God *rather than* man," for the all-important clause in the passage, and that by the light of which the other is to be explained is—"and to God the things that are God's."

Having thus evaded a most interesting topic, under the head of "duties," our author deals with an extreme case throughout, and turns to the text for confirmation or elucidation of the statements quoted or yet to be made.

"Our duties to Government flow out of our relation to the Supreme Governor," and these are enjoined in Scripture. This is correct, and the condition of the Jews is properly stated; but the doctrine that follows is unfairly deduced from the passage. If the reader will compare with the text the correlate passage in Matt. xvii, 24—27, where Christ hints at the injustice of the Roman power, that it was obtained by might over right, by aggressive war and lawless oppression, over a nation that should have owned no foreign yoke, he will find that he tells Peter, whom he orders to pay tribute, the principle upon which he renders unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. In the text before us there is no principle stated, as Dr. Lord avers, but duty is enjoined; in the other place we have the true principle upon which tribute money was to be paid, and that is—"Lest we offend them." In the xvii of Matt. the principle is laid down with the practice; in xxii of Matt. the duty only; but Dr. Lord says, page 10, that, in the latter place, Christ states "the true principle on which the obedience of the citizen is demanded by government." It is, however, by referring to the former passage that the principle is found. Now, does our author mean to assert that the words "Lest we offend them," or "for wrath's sake," express the *true* principle on which obedience is rendered to the authority of the government, or to parental authority, the prototype of the magistratical. The true principle is a higher and a nobler one, "for conscience sake," which obtains when the authority is morally binding and our obligation to obey is perfect. True, Christ's principle does not justify resistance, but wisheth peace, and to give offence to none; but it is the very lowest in the scale of motives to

submit to authority, in fact it does not recognize the moral character of the government at all. "Lest we offend them" can be capable of no higher application than, for our own safety and interest and the weal of the church, we do so; that the "powers that be" may not treat us as rebels and crush us in our infancy.

Dr. L. has thus started upon an erroneous deduction from his text, for it is plain, by comparing the two passages, that our Saviour does not give the "*true principle*" on which the obedience of the citizen is demanded, but only gives the true reason why he and others of his nation should at least pay taxes. But this is not all that is unfairly put at the outset. "The impress of Cæsar upon the penny was proof that the Romans possessed the government of Judea *de facto*, and *therefore* to be obeyed as the supreme authority in all civil enactments; while any attempt to interfere with the religious principles or practices of the Jews might be conscientiously resisted." Because of the *actual existence* of authority it is therefore to be obeyed. What then is the difference between *de facto* and *de jure*; between actual and rightful possession of authority? And is there to be no distinction between the obedience rendered to the one and to the other? Why, at all, is the distinction made, if it be of no moment, and a difference in kinds of submission spoken of in God's word—"not only for wrath's sake, but also for conscience sake?" The Romans held the reins of government actually, but not rightfully; by might and not by right; and does not Christ here virtually make a distinction between obedience to rightful and to actual authority in the clause, "Lest we offend them?" Are those who know the origin of the Roman government, to be told that the marauder's authority, the bandit's rule, satanic power are to be obeyed and honored equally with rightful, lawful government; that, although there be a distinction in regard to the character of the powers, there is to

be none in the character of the obedience? And again, the Roman power was to be obeyed in *all* civil enactments, while any attempt to interfere with the religious principles of the Jews might be resisted. Why use *all*, the unlimited term, which is in the next clause to be limited; why mislead in the first instance and bewilder in the succeeding? Now attempted interference could only be by a civil enactment of some kind or other, therefore, according to our author, they were to be obeyed in *all*, and resisted in some of their orders. What absurdity! Are the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in the author's mind confused; jurisdictions distinct intermingled? Whatever command the State issues is certainly civil, and bears its stamp, and in the case alone where the ecclesiastical and civil rules are vested in the chief magistrate can such a state of things arise; then may the governor interfere in ecclesiastical matters, and if so, he oversteps his peculiar or appropriate jurisdiction, and he may be resisted.

But this matter must not take away our attention from the acknowledged principle that the law of God is supreme—a truth which we expect to find carried out in this sermon. The attentive reader or hearer pauses to inquire why the Doctor has abandoned this principle so soon, without further application; it seems a good one, and this matter might be cleared up by the light of it. Here is a higher law, and there is slavery; if slavery be at variance with this higher law, then, by an acknowledged principle, the Fugitive Slave Bill is rendered nugatory. But without disposing of this, he would have us believe that governments without a character, if they only exist, are to be obeyed in all civil enactments, while, &c.; forgetting that he has admitted, by the acknowledged principle, that these civil enactments may be rendered nugatory by conflicting with the supreme law, and putting forth *in very vague language* a doctrine that few will

dispute, that on the assumption of ecclesiastical rule by civil powers, they may be conscientiously resisted. The point was and still is, to show the duty of subjects under a government whose statute or statutes are opposed, or by many considered to be at variance with, the supreme law.

“We take the ground,” says Dr. L., page 10, “that the action of civil governments within their appropriate jurisdiction is final and conclusive upon the citizen.” This ground, however, is at variance with the acknowledged principle that human enactments are rendered nugatory by being at variance with the supreme law. This common ground, on which it is pleasant to meet with him, he vacates for a position of his own which is unscriptural and at variance with his own admitted belief. The action of governments, as such, cannot be final and conclusive, be above appeal and irremediable, if it be that there is a higher law with which they should quadrate. And the conclusion of this sentence shows that Dr. L.’s *aim* is to get clear of the higher law; from his former standing he must depart, with his own statement he must conflict, when he says, forgetting his acknowledged principle, “that to plead a higher law to justify disobedience to a human law, the subject matter of which is within the cognizance of the State, is to reject the authority of God himself;” but if that which is within the cognizance of the State, which lies within the range of its appropriate jurisdiction, be in contrariety with the supreme law, it is rendered nugatory, and, consequently citizens are justifiable in pleading this higher law against the contrary enactment, rendered nugatory by its hostility to the divine law; if, in itself, it is nugatory by its conflicting character, surely disobedience is justifiable, or rather obedience is unnecessary to a worthless and improper law; and to render obedience argues but little for the moral and intellectual character of subjects. The assumption, that the action of civil govern-

ments is final and conclusive in their appropriate jurisdiction, is thus shown to be false, if there exists a higher law of appeal; and the inference that to plead a higher law to justify disobedience &c., is at variance with a previous admission. In fact, to plead a higher law to justify disobedience is as fair as to plead that same supreme law to justify obedience; in both cases the supreme authority of God is owned. In disobeying what is rendered nugatory by heaven's decree, we trifle with no authority that is valuable, but worthless; while we do, even in our disobedience, obey the authority of Him who hath said, "Them that honor me I will honor." The supreme law is the law of God, *not* the civil enactment; he permits none of the "powers that be" to occupy the place of absolute authority; they are by Him ordained and permitted, and to Him are accountable, because of His law. Knowing this, we cannot believe that if they transgress the bounds He has set them, or forget His high rule, we have no privilege of dissent, that whether they act against light or not, whether they own God or disown Him, we are not at liberty to reject their authority, but must obey. Christians, who profess to serve God and obey him, would do well to consider before they give credence to such extravagant sentiments. If Dr. L. had not admitted that the law of God is supreme, so that it can nullify human laws, if he had not acknowledged thus, "that the powers that be" are moral subjects, amenable to this law wherever it has come, we had had no controversy with him; but it is impossible for him not to see that the supreme law is intended for man in his relative capacities, and extends to every relation, through all the ramifications of class to the ends of the world; that it cares for men's honor, their lives, their property, their conduct as fathers and children, as masters and servants, as rulers and subjects, and that States best discharge their duty by ruling in the fear of God, setting His law openly before them as their directory.

He must see, too, that they may disregard it or they may observe—that the heathen nations not having this law are a law unto themselves; that professedly Christian nations, who own not this law, but act as if it did not exist, place themselves on a level with the heathen nations. But states, are, by the very fact of the existence of this law among them, moral subjects, and judgments are denounced against such as do not rule in righteousness;—just as men are moral and accountable subjects, whether or not they regard God's law, so are nations moral subjects, whether they hear or forbear;—and just as the moral character of the individual is known by his observance or non-observance of this law, so is the moral character of the nation known by the acknowledgment or disowning of the Supreme law. The immoral man owns no check, no higher law in his practice—disregards it, obeys it not; the nation that pays no respect to that law is immoral in its character likewise. Seeing they are moral subjects, “the powers that be” may either be rebellious and be visited accordingly, or be observant of this supreme law, copying its dictates, owning its authority, and thus moral in their conduct. Where this law exists, nations should be ruled by it; where it does not, the light of nature and expediency are all that are left to guide them in their enactments. Now, it will occur to every reader of this sermon, that Dr. Lord has omitted altogether this important matter—*the character of the government*:—according to its character, moral or immoral, so is the obedience that is due, just as in the family circle the authority of the father is only fully obligatory, when he rules his house well, in the fear of the Lord,—his laws are only binding when they are right, and in conformity with the higher law of God. There is such a thing as abuse of the parental as of the magistral authority, and, in either case, the nature of the submission due is in accordance with the character of the authority exercised. Dr. Lord enjoins full submission to “the powers that be,” without giving us their character. In quoting, at page 11,

the xiii of Rom., he omits very disingenuously the character of those to whom submission is due: "For rulers are not a terror to good works but to evil." He tells of the existence of the authority, but omits its character; and in every passage in Scripture where conscientious submission is enjoined, the character of the ordinance is explained. See 1 Pet. ii: 13, 14. The rulers there spoken of are sent "for the punishment of evil doers and for the praise of those that do well," which shows to us that the words in these passages find not their proper exemplification in the days of Nero, the most flagitious and wanton of tyrants, whose character is the very *opposite* to the description of the Holy Spirit, by Paul and by Peter;— while Christians are enjoined to live peaceably and recognize the ordinance, yet the passages referred to ascend much higher, even to the exhibition of magistracy as it *ought to exist*, of rulers such as God would have, and of the duties of subjects under those governors, whose authority is sanctioned by the Almighty.

From the xiii of Rom., Dr. Lord's deduction is "obedience to governments, in the exercise of their legitimate power, is a religious duty positively enjoined by God himself." This is by far too general an inference from the premises. Obedience may be of two kinds "for wraths sake," or "lest we offend," and for "conscience sake" when we support and obey. Rom. xiii: 5. In the one case, the ordinance is immoral and, lest we suffer, we yield only that passive submission which amounts to being quiet and peaceable citizens, taking no part with corrupt institutions; and, this is all that could be required of the then Christians, or any Christian under an immoral government. In the other case, the obedience for conscience sake is rendered to a moral constitution, framing its laws according to the Supreme law, and *owning* this as Supreme. The inference is thus too general, because the character of the government and of the rulers to whom sub-

mission is due, is omitted. Does the clause in the *legitimate* exercise of their powers, limit the character of the government—or does it only limit them to their own territory? It seems to me that it is synonymous with appropriate jurisdiction in the author's mind; at all events, it is ambiguous, for that there power be *legitimate*, it must conform to some law. What law? The law of their own Constitution, which is not superior to them, being subject to their emendations? This cannot be. It must be by conformity to the Higher Law that they are legitimate. Who gives them their power? God. To Him are they accountable as moral subjects for the exercise of it, and when thus appointed and ordering their enactments, obedience is due. But when not so appointed, and when not exercising authority legitimately, what difference is made, what distinction is observable in obedience? Can God be said to ordain those Governments—powers that are immoral—or does he at all sanction them in their disregard of his authority? Does he sanction evil—or ordain it, or does he only *permit* it? He only permits the existence of immoral powers.

Who does not see that it depends altogether on the *charter* of the institution, whether it be of God or not, and that obedience is to be rendered according as the answer is found. The character of the government and the character of submission due are in perfect keeping, and the perfection of both arises from *avowed* obedience to the Supreme Law. If the government own and obey this, then we should delight to support and obey the government. Dr. Lord's inference here will not do, it is too large in its embrace, for the annexed assertion that "obedience is a religious duty *positively* enjoined by God himself." Dr. L. is too positive in his assertions, he gives no reason for his averments, but God does, he tells the reason why obedience is due, in those passages of Scripture where submission is commanded.

In the body of the discourse we have four propositions which should bear upon our duty to God and to man. It is strange that this order is inverted by the author, and first, *duty to man* is referred to, then *duty to God*. These four propositions throw no additional light upon what has been already advanced, they rather "darken counsel by words without knowledge." Instead of showing the duty owed to government by those who suppose it to decree iniquity in regard to slavery, and how obedience to it is compatible with our duty to God, we are treated with general truths proposed in a vague form.

"*First;—Government is a divine Constitution, established at the beginning by the Creator, which exists of necessity and is of perpetual obligation.*" Here we have unqualified statements, Government—we are not told of what kind or character. It may apply to the magistratical or the parental, to the government of Satan or the power of the human tyrant. Government, we conclude, of all forms, is a divine Constitution:—the author means *institution*, surely, the appointment preceding the combination, the rule of rectitude for the society to be organized, preceding its organization, *the higher law* being imprinted on man's heart, in his state of innocence before the primitive confederation existed. "Which (constitution or government) exists of necessity," saith our author, whether the necessity be absolute, moral, or natural, he does not state; but, be that as it may, the government is of "perpetual obligation." "Perpetual" means everlasting. Is there any government perpetual but the divine, any form of power of perfect and perpetual obligation but this? The author means of course *magistracy is a moral ordinance of God*, but why could he not say so; seeing that this is the plain deduction from the Scripture passages. "Men are born under law, saith he, both as respects the law of God and the enactments of States." Fallen men are under *bondage* to

the law of God, so are some under *bondage* by enactments of State, and from either bondage should man be free. Again; "*By the ordination of the Supreme Law, they owe allegiance to the country of their birth, and are naturally and unavoidably the subjects of its government; their consent to this is neither asked nor given!!*" How then do they consent at all, if consent is not given? Though *swearing to support the Constitution*, is the consent not asked and given; are they *forced* to submit against their will; are the men machines, passive agents in the power of government. The Dr. certainly must explain himself, for really this is either insulting to the community or unintelligible to common readers. "THEIR CHOICE, says he, *can only respect the mode or form, never the fact or actual existence of the government:*" but by the preceding statements, they have *no choice at all*, for their consent is neither asked *nor given*, and when consent is not given, certainly there can be no choice, their pleasure is never consulted, it is put upon them by God, and there is no chance of evading the imposition! The Israelites, born in Egypt under the tyranny of Pharaoh, were naturally and unavoidably subjects of the government, and according to our author, in duty bound to submit; they had no choice but *slavery*. That was the actual state of things to them; and if they were *naturally and unavoidably* subjects and so born to obey, would it not be treason in them, as Dr. L. preaches, against the ordinance of God to attempt to subvert the government actually existing, by endeavouring after a *different form*? Were they not rejecting the authority of God, in seeking for deliverance from the "mode" of that government wherein they were naturally and unavoidably ruled by hard taskmasters? If there is *no choice* as to the fact of government, but *submission*, which we are in duty bound to render, then surely to seek for amelioration or *change*, is derogatory to the appointment of Him by whose will we were born under it. If actual existence secures the

obligation of a power, to attempt different forms or modes is virtually to reject the existing authority, and in so doing to set at naught the authority of God Himself. If so, then, Americans, it was treason in you to strike for this Constitution, which Dr. Lord is so anxious so uphold in its iniquity. The arguments he uses in abetting slavery when carried out, convert the name of patriot into traitor, and stigmatize as rebels against God, the Pilgrim Fathers and their successors. Such absurdity is scarcely worth exposing, the wonder is how *sane* men can swallow such extravagances. "*Mutual compact*," the author proceeds to say, "*is a figment of the imagination, without warrant from the Word of God, and contradicted by all the facts in the case.*" Nay! but mutual compact is necessary, is in accordance with the divine institution, and is corroborated by facts. What is the American Constitution but a *mutual* compact, and will Dr. L. call this a figment of imagination? "We might as well affirm that men agree to be born and be subject to their parents," &c.; but this is not a parallel case, for the authority existed here previously, though not exercised till children were born. In the case of the American Commonwealth, as of every civil organization, at its commencement, its authority did *not* exist until the confederation was formed. All these statements to elucidate the first proposition are absurd in the extreme; if intended to establish his proposition, they do not do so; if supposed to spring from it, Dr. L. must first prove his proposition, then state his corollaries, but both the proposition and the following statements are equally inexplicable, taken as they appear, and it is questionable if the author saw clearly whither they lead him.

The *second proposition*, though in itself true, is treated more loosely than the first. "Governments have jurisdiction over men in all affairs which belong peculiarly to the present life; in all the temporal relations which bind societies,

communities, and families together, in respect to all rights of person and property, and their enforcement by penalties." Now, let any candid reader follow the author in his elucidation of this proposition, and say if the succeeding statements contain an exposition of the duties which governments have to perform: and mark, that the author, at the outset, proposed to himself to state the duties of subjects, whilst he mentions here and on the first topic, the position and duties of governments. "*General rules,*" he goes on to say, "*are indeed laid down in the Scriptures, for the regulation of human conduct. But, God has ordained the powers that be to appoint their own municipal laws, to regulate and enforce existing relations, and to execute judgment under such forms of administration as shall be suitable to the circumstances of the people, and chosen by themselves.*" "Municipal" is surely an improper epithet in this connection, and may be left out; and we may sum up thus: God has ordained the powers that be to appoint their own laws, to regulate and enforce existing relations, and execute judgment under such forms of administration as are suitable and selected. Now, the "*powers that be,*" are *forms of executive administration*; let us read it so.—God has ordained the "powers that be" to appoint, regulate, and execute, &c., under such "powers that be," as shall be suitable and selected! What are we to suppose the author to mean? Is it that the powers that be have no form, while yet they are by the supposition actually existing; that until the form be selected by men, the "powers that be" are floating about somewhere in the nebular state. Or, taking the whole bearing of the sentence; Is it that, in the Scriptures, there are rules laid down to regulate human conduct, BUT, (oh! how this "but" spoils all,) *but*, these rules do not equally apply to the regulation of human conduct under the "powers that be:" that the "powers that be" are self-regulating and bow to no higher authority, when once they come into existence by divine appointment, and therefore to their enactments and regulations subjects must look, in ordering

their conduct, and to these *alone*. Such is the force of this important disjunctive “but”; and here again Dr. L. contradicts the acknowledged principle with which he set out.—“Governments, as to their *mode*,” the Dr. proceeds, “do not *form* but *follow* the character and moral condition of the people, and are an indication of their condition intellectually and morally.” What has this statement to do with the proposition at the head of this paragraph? Again; “the mode of government is the *index* and not the *cause* of the condition of the nations of the earth.” Suppose this granted—though one is almost afraid to grant the preacher any thing, he blunders so often—and then as the people improve, the government should improve also: as enlightenment and civilization advance,—and Dr. L. will admit that these are best promoted by the spread of the gospel, and that the state of perfection to which human society may be brought has not yet been attained;—as these advance, there should be a progressive improvement in governments; in the degree in which gospel light increases and spreads, to an equal extent should governments be benefitted, and elevate their standard of rule accordingly. It is when they do not do so, that they are overthrown and wrecked in the onward march of men. If, shutting their eyes upon the light, they walk in darkness, they are *no index* of an enlightened people, and the outbreaks at home and abroad indicate too plainly, that governments must change, so as to conform to the requirements of the Bible and the wishes of christian people, to that “Supreme Law” which is contained in the Word of God and delighted in by his gracious subjects. The change must come to pass, because God has pledged his word to that effect. “The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish.”—Is. ix : 12. “And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High—and *all dominions shall serve and obey him*.” Dan. vii : 27.

Now, it must have occurred to the attentive reader of Dr. Lord's sermon, that he has failed to explain how civil government can be at the same time the ordinance of God—the burden of the first proposition—and the creation of the people—the burden of the second; how these two conditions are compatible: how, just as we believe in the divine right of ecclesiastical rule, so we believe in the divine right of civil government, when the one and the other, the one an ecclesiastical power, the other a civil, are in conformity with the pattern that is handed down to us. In agreement with "*the higher law*," the requirements of the Bible,—does either become a *divine* institution; it is then, and *then only* when conformed to this standard, that civil government can be called in an unqualified sense the ordinance of God; in any form at variance with this, or when constituted *independently* of the "*higher law*," is it an abuse of the divine ordinance, it has the *human* stamp upon it, but not the divine; it is an organization without *the divine warrant*, and, having this truth in his view, Dr. L. should have explained the words of his text, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's *and* unto God the things that are God's."

When Dr. L. omits to state the *character* of governments, and speaks in general and unqualified terms, he departs from Scripture and slights its evident requirements. Let the Dr. tell, if his *vague* statements be true, why nations are visited for national sins, why kingdoms perish from off the face of earth; why, if in any form, and in every, they are a "divine constitution" and "of perpetual obligation," it is predicted that they shall be overturned, and the kingdoms of *this world* become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. Rev. xi: 15. Surely, Dr. L. must know, when he grants "the powers that be" unlimited power and right "in all affairs which belong to the present life," from the mere fact of their existence, that such sentiments have long since been exploded by the advocates of Reformation, and are at variance with

the stubborn facts of the history of other kingdoms and of this Constitution. It seems that he is altogether at fault in the matter, that as soon as he has abandoned the "Supreme Law" principle, he increases in error at every step; that, as soon as he has got the governments constituted by this law in his theory, he abandons them to their fate, and yields up to them their subjects as mere passive agents. But, having first granted to civil government the breath of life, derived in its institution, from the Supreme, he should remember that it is dependent upon its author for every breath that it inhales; that the *same law* by which its right is secured at first—if, indeed, it be so secured—must be owned, obeyed, and honored constantly, else the right and *moral* power of civil rule are lost, its *physical* power alone may remain. It is a pity that Dr. L. had not kept by his *acknowledged* principle, that principle, if correct, should be followed out; that law which is Supreme should have been exhibited to teach to rulers and to subjects their duty, and the Dr. proposed to speak of the duties of subjects at the outset. Why use that holy law in the commencement, which is of no further avail or obligation in the continuance of the human ordinance.

In the *third proposition*, and two succeeding and explanatory sentences, we should have the *pith* of the whole argument, but again we are treated with incorrect and partial statements, proposed in a form so vague as to create suspicions regarding Dr. L.'s orthodoxy.

"In regard to his own worship, and the manner in which we are to approach HIM, the Supreme Governor has given full and minute directions." What has God done? He has "given full and minute directions regarding himself, his attributes, and the great principles of his government, *which constitute the doctrines of Christianity.*" Is this all? Is it so that Christianity is no more than Adam in innocence knew?

Adam certainly got directions regarding God, his attributes, and the great principles of his government. Can this statement hold true concerning the God of all grace? Is it so that he, in this relation—which certainly comes within the doctrines of Christianity—has revealed to us the great principles of his government? If so, then should we be able to state the reasons for the exercise of his sovereignty in the salvation of men;—if so, that God has revealed the “great principles of his government.” why is it that it is written, “Great is the mystery of godliness.” What ideas of Christianity Dr. L. possesses, I know not, but this I know, that he does not state fairly in this place the doctrines of the gospel, that the particulars which, he says constitute the doctrines of Christianity, would apply equally well to Theism as to Christianity, and that he does not even tell *where* God has revealed himself thus, whether in nature or in Scripture.

Is it true that the doctrines of Christianity regard himself alone, and this is the natural conclusion from these words; that “*things that belong to Himself*” are all that he has revealed. Has he done nothing more? Besides telling us of the duties owed to himself, do not the Scriptures teach *our duty to man*? Does not the Supreme Law consist of *two* tables, in the first, our duty to God is shown, and in the second our duty to man. Now, would not these statements of Dr. L. lead us to believe that the doctrines of Christianity consists only of things that belong to himself; whereas is there not, in these same doctrines, a secondary prominence given to our duties to man? Would Dr. L.’s words lead us to believe that these doctrines of Christianity consist of *both*? The least sabbath scholar in his congregation, that has learned the answer to third question in the Shorter Catechism, can tell the sum of the doctrines of the Bible and of Christianity. The Dr. is in duty bound to declare “the whole counsel of God,” and surely, he has not satisfied his own

conscience by such an inadequate representation of truth. Is it to serve a purpose, or in ignorance that he is led to speak so of the doctrines of Christianity?

“In things that belong to himself God exercises sole and absolute jurisdiction,” continues Dr. L., leaving us without information as to whether God does or does not exercise sole and absolute jurisdiction *in matters that relate to us*. Such half truths evidently lead to misconception regarding the divine law and its requirements. In those things that belong to himself, and which Dr. L. considers as constituting the doctrines of Christianity, “GOD HAS CONFERRED UPON NO HUMAN AUTHORITY THE RIGHT TO INTERFERE BY ADDING TO OR TAKING FROM THEM;” and again, “HE HAS, IN REGARD TO THEM, APPOINTED NO INFERIOR OR DELEGATED AUTHORITY.” Now, interference, properly speaking, does not consist in adding to or taking from; to do so would be *more* than interference, it would be, on the one hand, the assumption of the Divine prerogative; and, on the other, robbery. Interference is the insertion of somebody or something between Him who possesses authority and his subjects: and such interference—the bringing in between—is sanctioned by God himself; not by adding to his law or by detracting from it, but by seeing it fulfilled, and embodying its requirements in the Constitution. Such a lawful and proper interference have moral governments, civil and ecclesiastical. As in things that belong immediately to man, so in things that belong directly to himself, God *has* appointed inferior and delegated authority. Dr. L. denies the latter and omits the former. Does Dr. L., a Presbyterian, affirm that in God’s house he has no delegated rule;—that there is no inferior and delegated authority in Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods; and this in things that belong to God and his worship? If so, he destroys “all rule, all precedent, all right.” If in things that belong to himself, there is no delegated rule, then certainly

may we suppose, that in things belonging to men there is no such inferior authority. To this Dr. L.'s statements lead him, and where then is his divine constitution of government? Perhaps he supposes "the powers that be" to be invested with authority by the Supreme Governor, while he denies to ecclesiastical communities, what the civil can boast to possess, namely, divine permission, appointment, and sanction!

The *fourth proposition* is of all the others the most unwarranted, and crowns the absurdity of this discourse. Even the unlettered artizan, in reading this sentence, stops in astonishment;—"What does he mean"? "Surely this is wrong?" Then, let every upright, honest man take warning and be assured it is wrong. Here is the sentence. "THE DECISIONS OF GOVERNMENTS UPON MATTERS WITHIN THEIR JURISDICTION, THOUGH THEY MAY BE ERRONEOUS, ARE YET, FROM THE NECESSITY OF THE CASE, ABSOLUTE." When an announcement militates against rude common sense, it must either be improperly stated, or intrinsically false. In reply to this statement and the observations that follow, a few remarks are necessary.

First; Compare this proposition with the acknowledged principle, and see in what position Dr. L. places himself. At first he admits that the law of God is Supreme over human enactments, but now he says that the decisions of governments in their appropriate jurisdiction—(which circumscribed rule is by a former admission, under the control of the Supreme Lawgiver)—though they be erroneous, are *absolute*. But, they are in no sense absolute, if there is over them a higher law. No human enactment can be absolute, if it be true that God reigneth over nations; to be properly absolute, human enactments must be above appeal to any higher authority human or divine. They are not, then

truly absolute. Neither are they, when erroneous, morally binding; for, if they be erroneous, it must be either by militating against the Constitution, or by conflicting with the Supreme Law, and in either case, are they rendered nugatory. Error of the first kind must be speedily corrected, else the permanence of the civil authority is endangered by its folly; but error of the second kind may be persisted in, while the Constitution neglects the Supreme law; yet, dare any man affirm that disobedience to an improper statute is sinful? Now Dr. L. is called upon to reconcile his two conflicting statements; to show how human enactments are to be conformed to the higher law to insure their validity; and yet, that, though they be erroneous, they are from the necessity of the case, absolute. While the high, and holy, and just law of God is binding on States, and God reigneth among the nations, how can a decree be absolute? How can a human enactment be binding on men, which is rendered *null and void* by being in contrariety with that Law which abideth ever and which all men are bound to obey? Will Dr. L. have the goodness to reconcile these two points to those who have heard or read this learned sermon? In answer—(if we may venture to anticipate his reply)—the Dr. might state, that “the declaration of war and the making of peace, the regulating of commerce and levying of taxes” are irrespective of this Supreme law;—and these, as he alledges, are the *most essential acts of government*. One cannot see in what other way he can get clear. To be independent of this Supreme law and so vested with absolute power, states must be engaged always in legislating in matters indifferent, in cases *unconnected with morals*.

And here it may be remarked, *Secondly*; MATTERS CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS ARE SO INTIMATELY CONNECTED, that, even in our natural relations we cannot discharge the incumbent moral duties as individuals and communities aright inde-

pendently of religion. Those things which are *most essential* in acts of government are certainly those which concern morals; and, it would be difficult indeed for Dr. L., with all his ingenuity, to show, that in these things, which he has mentioned as the most essential, the Supreme law has no concern. Wherever good and evil, right and wrong are implied, then we are in the region of morality, and that relation or institution which is moral, is under the control of the Supreme, and amenable to his law. The Scripture,—the standard of morality—our guide in religion, is the only unerring rule. If it be Dr. L.'s object to mystify, by the view presented of human enactments, he should not have admitted in the same sermon “the acknowledged principle”; but if it be his object, as a faithful Christian Minister, to state the nature and extent of civil jurisdiction, he has signally failed;—he has come short in the most essential features, that the “powers that be” are moral subjects, otherwise there is no apparent reason for the many references to them in God’s Word; and that, however anxious governments may be to avoid concern about morals and religion, they cannot, if they discharge their duty fully, disregard them. Moral and religious matters are so inseparably interwoven with civil, that in attempting to disannex—when there is no fixed line of demarkation—governments come short of discharging their legitimate duties in the extent of them;—and so sin by omission. Now, it actually does occur, that authorities err in this respect very frequently, by neglecting the divine law, in regard, for instance, to the sabbath and the marriage relation and in various other ways: and thus in not attending to matters within their appropriate jurisdiction, or in framing their laws contrary to the light of divine revelation, they err as manifestly as in transgressing their boundaries and assuming ecclesiastical rule. When their enactments are erroneous in either respect, they are *not final* and *absolute*;—and when governments dishonor God by manifest omission or transgression, and thus act irrespective of the

Higher Law and in defiance of it, Christians owe them not the full and proper allegiance, in fact they sin in giving them *active* support. Now is there a hint about all this in Dr. L.'s sermon? On the contrary, he deals with governments as if they had no higher directory than the light of nature;—he treats of the Pagan Government of Rome, long since annihilated by the just judgment of God, and tacitly compares the American Constitution to it. The Roman Government stood in the way of the advancement of Christ's Kingdom, and Christians, as subjects, are warned not to disturb its peace; but, are they enjoined *to support it*? Dr. L. says so. They obeyed with all the freshness of first love, and all the strength of primitive faith, the injunctions of Christ; why then, when that old throne was threatened, did they not interpose and save its occupants from traitorous hands? That would have been to support the government. Christians, that were soldiers in the army, and civilians, should have obeyed Christ's injunction in the fullest sense, and as they died in testifying to the faith, so should they have shed their blood in defence of that institution to which he paid tribute. Not so did it occur; they merely owned "for wrath's sake" a power which they might not resist, and they doubtless, rejoiced in its overthrow. Thus the passages quoted from Scripture enjoined that patient and peaceable deportment which became the profession of Christ, under the existing government, while the general language used applies to all times and all governments, and shows the true character of the ordinance and the proper obedience that is due when the time shall come that God shall be glorified in his own institution.

Have we risen no higher in the scale of moral character than these old forms? There has been a great change, and, in some respects, a happy change, from the imperial and monarchical to the democratic; but is there that deference and honor paid to the Supreme Law which ought to charac-

terize a government in these last days. Would that the American government, which boasts of its freedom and that it is in the van of enlightenment, could boast likewise that it acknowledges and embodies in its administrations that supreme rule of rectitude which alone can give stability to its power, then should the striped and starred banner be the true emblem of liberty, without that deep stain to which men of other nations point in scorn, as the flag flutters in the breeze!

Dr. L. does not preach as if he wished to be instrumental in effecting this consummation so devoutly to be wished for, or sought to elevate the character of the Constitution, which he would uphold in its iniquity. "The promised and predicted day when tumults and *oppressions* shall cease" has no meaning for him; indeed he does not believe that God will fulfil his promise, for he states that "the Gospel does not propose an equalization of human conditions in time," that is, *at least*, that oppressions will *not* cease. Oh! but God says they will, and every Christian delights to contemplate that future day; there is a music in the sublime description that finds a response in every feeling heart—"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."—Is. xi. 9.

Thirdly, We may remark that the right of private judgment is viewed in an improper light under this fourth proposition. While the right is in some measure conceded, it is then asked—"Is this a just ground of forcible resistance?" Now violent resistance is not dreamed of by sane men, that do not suffer from the enactment. Those who are placed "under circumstances of aggravated oppression" are the slaves. The warnings delivered to guard against an outbreak are almost useless to the men of the North. Instead of deterring his hearers from revolt, Dr. L. might have better

discharged his trust in the sight of God, by pointing out such measures as may be necessary in order to disencumber the State of the monstrous evil ; and thus would he have won the plaudits of right-hearted Christians of every creed and every name, and enforced upon the community the precepts of the Prince of Peace. Putting away, then, as uncalled for, this blustering about lawless resistance, let us understand about the right of private judgment, which belongs to citizens, in relation to the Fugitive Slave Law. If we understand Dr. L. aright, he says, a man has a right to *test* the constitutionality of any law by an appeal to the judiciary ; that is, by appealing to the executive court and its officers, who are by oath bound to administer that law, or to the framers of that law ; these again, in the court of justice, bring the questionable law to the test of the constitutional law and first principles. And here again Dr. L. abandons his acknowledged principle *the test*, we think, is a law above every human law. All human laws are to be tested by the divine law, which is superior to them, as well as by themselves or by the Constitution. If there be no higher law than the first principles of the Constitution, we may never get quit of slavery

Having introduced the higher law to serve his purpose, he now dismisses it unceremoniously. "Let us not talk," says he, "of a higher law, which absolves men from obedience to a Constitution which they have sworn to maintain ; if there be a higher law, it is the law of resistance and revolution." Who gave this higher law of resistance, if there be such ? Where shall we find it ? Is it, think you, Dr. L., in the higher law of the Bible, which you warn your hearers not to mention ? Have not all lawful revolutions originated from the right of private judgment, founded upon the declarations of Scripture, or the natural dictates of conscience, where the light of nature was the only guide ?

According to Dr. L., a man has a right to freedom of opinion, but no right to act upon it against the authority of the State ; for if every man were allowed to do that which is right in his own eyes, no statute could be executed. Even courts of justice may form erroneous conclusions, but their decision is final, from the same necessity. A man may err, courts may err in their decisions ; the judgment of the individual and of courts may be perverted. This is all very true ; but the abuse, misuse, or imperfection of the judgment is not to be made the ground of forbidding its proper *use*. Thus the examples quoted are unfair ; the case of the innocent man suffering the penalty of the law wrongfully is uncommon, and proves that “ extreme law is sometimes extreme injustice ;” the case of the Quaker, who considers *all* wars unlawful, is likewise extreme, and is opposed to the word of God and right reason, while it interferes but little with the legislation of States. If the case of the Friend should deter men from setting up and acting upon their private opinions against the declarations of State in regard to slavery, then, by a parity of reasoning, the case of the court putting the innocent man to death should deter courts from putting into execution the extreme penalty of the law, even when their judgment may be right.

But while private judgment is of great use, freedom of opinion and freedom of action are incompatible ; freedom of opinion may be abused, and the consequent action unjustifiable on that ground. This is at once admitted. With the right of private judgment no man may interfere, but there is a limit to freedom of action. *A man and a nation have no right to act in contrariety to the law of God ;* the limit in the case of the nation to command obedience, and in the case of the individual to act upon his private opinion, is the same unerring rule. Now the case before us seems to be this : a large proportion of the people of the United States considers

slavery to conflict with "the Higher Law," and wish it removed from the institutions of the country; and they have the Bible, and conscience, and reason on their side. They are free to hold their private opinion; yea, to agitate; and more, they are free in the sight of the God of mercy to refuse obedience to the Slave Law; violent resistance is uncalled for. "Be still, Americans," Dr. Lord would say: "entertain what opinions you please, resist not the government that is in error: it is wrong for you to indulge your delicate, sensitive consciences; very distressing things they are, and I pity you, poor mistaken persons; but, believe me, it is wrong for you not to support the State in its iniquity—you must obey *man* rather than God!"

But Dr. L. seems to anticipate whither he is carried by his remarks. "*It may be replied to this*, he supposes the cavil himself—"YOU RE-AFFIRM THE OLD DOCTRINE OF TYRANTS, OF PASSIVE OBEDIENCE AND NON-RESISTANCE; YOUR POSITION WOULD RENDER ALL REVOLUTIONS UNLAWFUL, ALL CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IMPOSSIBLE." TO THIS IT MAY BE SAID THAT IT DOES NOT BELONG TO THE CHURCH IN HER ORGANIZED CAPACITY, NOR TO CHRISTIANS, CONSIDERED SOLELY AS SUCH, AND WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR RELIGIOUS DUTIES, TO REVOLUTIONIZE GOVERNMENTS." This is no direct answer, it is mere shuffling. If it does not become men as Christians to disobey, and, if necessary, to revolutionize, does it become them at all? If among their religious duties their duties as subjects are proposed, this looks like as if they should be Christian subjects; and if they continue such till the moment of revolt, are they stripped of their noblest character in the act? "Presbyterians stood to a man with the patriots, who, under God, achieved the independence of our beloved country." Presbyterians, then, were engaged in a revolution, but it did not become them as Christians to be thus engaged! If it did not become them as *Christians* it did not become them as *men*. The Presbyterians of Scot-

land and Puritans of England, were the founders of English Liberty. They held *the right of private judgment*, and that led them to action, and their actions have told gloriously upon succeeding generations. They considered themselves to be performing "*a religious duty*," in pursuing the course which they adopted; it is to their religion—to their Christianity—that posterity is indebted for unspeakable privileges and enlarged opinions. Is Christianity to be robbed of the honor of such mighty deeds; and the influence of Bible principles upon men of former years to be thus sacrilegiously disowned? "The Gospel is silent on this subject!" Nay; it has spoken loudly, and it speaketh yet ominously, not by directing to plans of revolt, or times to crush oppressors, but by furnishing us with examples, and warnings, and lessons of wisdom to subjects and to rulers. "The *people* have a right to revolutionize," Dr. L. concedes. Have they, indeed? Where are the Christians now? Are Christians merged into the people? Have they lost their distinctiveness when occupied in matters of government and changes of form? Or have the people a right to do that which does not become Christians?

Does a man, when he goes to the jury-box, or the voting-house, or to the Senate, or when he takes up arms in defence of his rights, lay aside his Christian character? Does it not become him in every such situation to act as a Christian, and consider himself performing a religious duty? What does Dr. L. mean? The answer which he makes to the self-imposed charge of re-affirming "the old doctrine of tyrants," tends still more to convince us of his criminality. Alas! that even an approach should be made to the exploded doctrine of "passive obedience and non-resistance," by an American minister; that Presbyterians should know no better than to append their names to such a pamphlet. It should make them blush to hear such sentiments avowed in this age and in this country. Christianity is ashamed of such a

defender, and robbed of some of the laurels that it has so nobly won. Truths are set at naught which have cost men their blood,—those principles, in defence of which they sacrificed their lives, buried beneath a heap of absurdities.

It remains to be observed, *lastly*, regarding this whole argument—if argument it may be called—that Dr. L. weakens the force of his reasoning by what follows. Would not the reader, at this stage of the discourse, suppose the application of the preceding principles to be this: Enactments of Congress, though erroneous, must be obeyed; therefore the Fugitive Slave Law must be obeyed, though erroneous. To have quitted the field thus, would have been, in our opinion, more creditable to Dr. L.'s reputation as a logician, than to have continued there. Now what does he do? In the conclusion of his Sermon, he labors, most ridiculously, to prove that Slavery is not *per se* sinful or wrong; thus making it appear that he has been bringing us thus far in the body of his discourse for no end. What is the force of the fourth proposition, if now it is to be seen that Slavery is, *per se*, right? for if it be not wrong, it must be right. Either he bethinks himself that he has gone too far and must retrieve himself somehow, or he means to impress upon his hearers, that, whether Slavery be right or wrong, the Fugitive Slave Law must be obeyed;—in either case, the conclusion of his Sermon proves better than the most labored review, that the force of his four propositions is very questionable; and that if the latter part were put first, nobody would care for the remainder; or rather, the one part completely neutralizes the effect of the other.

The view of Dr. L. regarding Slavery must not be passed over; it is as improper as his remarks upon magistracy. "War and Slavery are evils incident to the fallen condition of our race, the existence of which is to be regretted," (*and*,

therefore, if possible, to be avoided and done away,) “but which are necessarily, in the actual condition of mankind, the appropriate subjects of State regulation.” That is, of two evils we are to choose the least; and *if we cannot avoid* War and Slavery, we are to legislate accordingly. Now, if we can avoid what is to be regretted, we must, in the end, regret that we did not avoid it. If we can, by any lawful means, do away with Slavery, we should not for a moment uphold it; we do what is to be lamented; we are committing sin. Slavery, “as a punishment for crime, or as a method for disposing of prisoners taken in war,” is lawful, and (*sometimes*) benefits the captive. This is true; but this is not the kind of slavery in America. “In certain conditions of society slavery is universal;” true also; but in the present state of this country, the oppression of a foreign people,—stolen from their home,—not taken in war, and the making of this a permanent institution, finds no counterpart in the annals of Slavery.

Again; “Domestic Slavery was expressly allowed, *sanctioned*, and regulated by the Supreme Lawgiver, in that divine economy which he gave the Hebrew State.” If the word “sanctioned” were left out, we could subscribe the sentence; but if “sanctioned” have any meaning peculiar to itself, above “regulated,”—it implies that wherever circumstances permit, we should conform: that God has authorized and commanded us to have slaves,—and that we are wrong if we do not have them, when we need them. Thus the men of the North are wrong, and those States that have liberated their slaves are wrong, and the sooner they return to slavery the better, for God has sanctioned it!!

And again; “Honest, but mistaken persons,” (how thankful should such be to the Doctor for his affectionate warning!) “should remember that if the institution of slavery is neces-

sarily, and from its nature sinful now, it must always have been so." It was not sinful in the Israelites to be instrumental in God's hand in executing judgment upon other people; and this *punitive* "institution" of slavery is no more "an impeachment of the divine benevolence," than is the eternal punishment of man for transgression; because both are deserved; but it is sinful for any one portion of the human family to lord it over another, and by taking up God's quarrel with a nation, to execute judgment upon it WITHOUT HIS EXPRESS COMMAND. This the Hebrews had; but the argument will not do, that it is not sinful for *another* nation to hold slaves because God allowed the Jews to hold men in bondage for their punishment and benefit. To give the example of the Hebrew State on this matter is very injudicious. For, *first*, it is to be remembered that the state of things in regard to civil relations is widely different now, from what it was then. The position of the Hebrews among the nations of the earth is widely different from that of any Gentile nation then and now. *Secondly*, Their civil position and relation was typical; like their religious observances in character and emblem, was their civil constitution; and *Thirdly*, every action competent to them, when they became a nation among other nations, EXCEPTING WHEREIN IT WAS MORAL, was competent to them, and to them only, by the express command of God. The reader may consult Matt. Henry's Commentary on Lev. xxv. 26. The proposing of rules regarding slavery among the Hebrews, does not prove that slavery was sanctioned *as well as* regulated by the Lawgiver; it certainly seems to be making too free with the Divine character, to say that he sanctioned, under the Old Testament, what Christ's words in the New disapprove of. We should seek rather to reconcile the two, and thus leave the infidel no room to allege that the God of the Old Testament is not the God of the New. Scott, the commentator, remarks, on Exod. xxi. 2, "Slavery was almost universal in the world, and though, like wars, it always proceeded of evil, and was evil in itself,

yet the wisdom of God deemed it better to regulate than to prohibit it. We would not, however, judge of the practice itself by these *judicial regulations*, but by *the law of love*. Slavery, like war, may, *in some cases*, in the present state of things be lawful, for *the crime which forfeits life, no doubt forfeits liberty*, and it is not inconsistent with the *moral law*, for a criminal to be sold and treated as a slave, *during a term of time proportioned to his offence*. In any other cases, if not in all, it must be *inconsistent with the law of love*." And on Lev. xxv. 46—"The Israelites were permitted to keep slaves of other nations, perhaps in order *to typify* that none but the true Israel of God participate of that liberty wherewith Christ has made his people free. But it was *allowed*, in order that in this manner the Gentiles might become acquainted with the true religion; and when the Israelites copied the example of their progenitors, there can be no reasonable doubt that it was over-ruled to the eternal salvation of many souls. It does not, however, appear, from the subsequent history, that the people availed themselves of this allowance to any great extent, for we read but little of slaves from among the Gentiles preserved by them."

Thus it seems, that the divine purpose to punish by slavery the descendants of Canaan, does not cleanse our hands from the stain of their blood, when we know that is written, "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hands, he shall surely be put to death," and that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth;" any more than the divine purpose that, till the millenium, the Jews shall be "wanderers among the nations," exculpates those that oppress them, by casting them out. If, then, it be wrong to enslave, or possess slaves, it is likewise wrong to deliver up the fugitive; on this point we have "the higher law" warning us: "Thou *shalt not* deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee."

The antiquity of slavery, and its recognition by the Constitution, is pleaded as a reason why we should respect it. How futile this appeal! What is sinful, because it is time-worn and in the Constitution, must be respected! It is evident that such preaching is worse than vain. Between love for the Constitution, and the desire not to support it, if *manifestly* in error, Dr. L. and many worthy men, are divided. The truth must be felt sometime, and be acted upon, (for conscience will not always slumber at its post) that *the evil lies in the Constitution*, and though men idolize it, and try to screen its defects, the paint and varnish, so plenteously used, will only serve at length to make them more apparent. Better far to admit *at once* that *this compromise in the Constitution is wrong*, and that citizens must not sin by letting it remain so, but by all open, honorable means, seek to rectify it,—to disencumber it of slavery,—and watch and pray till the day of redemption cometh and it be said to the prisoner, “Go forth;” to the captive, “You are free.”

“The observance of the compact falls within the moral rule of good faith.” No—not of *the* compact; but this is the question to be answered: Whether it is better to break a bad bargain, or to adhere to it? If it be to our hurt, and to ours only, it is generally better to keep to it; but if it be hurtful to others, dishonoring to God, a burden on our conscience, and contrary to the higher law, reason teaches that it is better to break it. In so doing we do more credit to our integrity, and morality, and Christianity, than by disguising the secret sin, and preserving our misnamed honor. Let this be applied to the Constitution. *Our* honor in regard to it is to be best preserved by honoring *God*. “FEAR God, *honor* the King.” “Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, *and* unto God the things that are God’s;” this last command of the text comes first in point of importance. HONOR GOD; this above all, and in the face of all opposition; and it can

only be when the text is properly acted upon, that we shall have "the calm sea," and "the law-abiding crew," and "the flag of the union" *securely* "nailed to the mast."

"O navis! referunt in mare te novi
Fluctus, O quid agunt?"

For all the oil thrown upon the troubled waters by Dr. L., and others, the ship of state is still in the storm, and the waters will rage, and the winds threaten the ship, until the God of storms be appeased by casting out of the vessel, as soon as possible, the luckless freight.

"The plea of sympathy," Dr. L. writes, "with the colored race, however suitable such sympathy may be, *and demanded by Him*, who hath made of one blood all nations and races to dwell together on the face of the earth, will never avail to justify an agitation which is useless to them and ruinous to us." That is; though God *demands* this, his requirement cannot justify agitation. His *requirement* is rendered of no effect by a human enactment—which is in itself nugatory!! Is it come to this, that a Christian Minister dare avow such a sentiment! The agitation is neither *useless* to them nor *ruinous* to the government, but will prove *beneficial to both*, if men, as bold as Dr. L., would have the manliness to step forward and propose the emendatory measures. Is there no pity in Dr. L.'s breast for the degraded slave, when he publishes such sentiments, no spark of humanity, no commiseration for those that pine in captivity and languish for freedom, that have as good a right as their masters to a free place on God's earth and in God's house? Oh! how it sullies the name of Christian, and disgraces gospel principles, and elevates the satanic pride of the infidel, to hear such sentiments avowed by an ambassador of Christ.

Compare the last quoted sentence with one other, and we have done: "The colored race are just as capable of eleva-

tion as the white, if they can be made to possess the same advantages." Then at whatever cost does it become states, pretending to be Christian, to let them have those advantages and that speedily. Who dare forbid what God demands? Sympathy; active and benevolent as the sympathy of Jesus. In the name of all that is divine, and all that is God-like in humanity, let the evil be remedied. Arise, oh Lord! and plead thine own cause!