

The Rev. J. W. C. PENNINGTON, on coming forward, was enthusiastically received. He said it was almost needless to attempt to add anything to the valuable facts stated by his rev. brother who had just preceded him. In admitting all that he had said with respect to the progress of the cause, and rejoicing in it too, he still set it down as the grand and glorious exception to the law of slavery and the influence of prejudice. The way to understand slavery, after all, as it existed in America, was to go to the law of slavery: there they would see it in its natural character. In coming to Birmingham that day from Leeds, he had met with an inquisitive individual, who wished to know whether the slave was treated as badly as he was represented to be. He assured the gentleman in reply, that the friends of abolition had no interest, and nothing to gain, by exaggerating their statements. He then wished to know whether all were treated alike. To this he answered that there were noble exceptions; that there were cases in which the masters were as kind to their slaves as the system would permit them to be; but that, after all, these were exceptions to the law. In order to understand what slavery was, they must go to the law, and there they would see on the pages of a Christian nation statutes giving to one man property in another, and by consequence the power of life and death over him. (Hear, hear.) Such was the law of slavery, and every more favourable view in which it could be presented to the world was only the exception to the operation of the law. (Hear.) And now all that his brother had stated, and all of which was excellent and true, merely went to prove that they had accomplished something in their country. He could look back ten years; he could recollect the time when he just began to thirst for knowledge, and when he went about the country, inquiring for a place at which he could study the arts and sciences; and, mournful to tell, he found not a door open; and, with a heavy heart, he was at length obliged to employ teachers, and pore over his books in private; and when he came to study theology, he found the same prejudice operating against his colour; and when, at length, he obtained admission to Yale College, it was as a matter of favour, for he was not allowed to enter himself as a regular student. (Hear, hear.) Such was the state of things ten years ago; since which time a great change had taken place, for the Oberlin and other noble institutions were now open to all who panted for knowledge. The meeting would, therefore, perceive that the statements of himself and his brother thus far agreed; but, wherever

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the law of slavery was enforced, it invariably operated in the same way; and the law of prejudice was only a reflection of the law of slavery, and wherever either was relaxed, it was only brought about by the influence of abolition. (Cheers.) In regard to the treatment of the coloured people, no one thought more, or suffered more, either directly or by sympathy, than himself, and therefore he was prepared to rejoice in any advance made in this respect. He rejoiced to say that there was an advance; and one of the strong features of that advance which he would note was, the operation of conscience on the religious people of America. (Hear, hear.) The abolitionists having thrown themselves on their principles, and having appealed to the God of nations for judgement, they had not appealed in vain: that heaven had worked, and multitudes, who had not yet decided to act, nevertheless felt conscious that the principles which the abolitionists advanced were right; and many, who were not prepared to go with them, would not oppose them; and where they found men not willing to lead on, they had, at least, laid aside their violent opposition. (Cheers.) He believed the age of violent opposition to right action had gone by; and he might here state, that in almost any church now in Connecticut the minister might pray for the slave in his pulpit on the sabbath; whereas a few years ago it would be considered, by his congregation, offensive for a minister to pray for the slave as for any other person. (Hear, and cries of "Shame.") In places, too, where the coloured population were not permitted to hold prayer-meetings in chapels, the doors were now open to them, although their white brethren refused to mingle their prayers with theirs. He had been reflecting only that day on the state of things in the West Indies, and contrasting them with what they were ten years ago; and he believed Christianity was so catholic in its spirit, that the triumph of freedom there might be taken as an indication of the advance of the cause over the whole world; for the same Providence who had brought about the freedom of 800,000 of their fellow-creatures there, would, in his own good time, accomplish the same mighty work in other slaveholding countries of the world. (Loud applause.) In America they looked upon this event as one of great interest. He could assure them every slave in the United States regarded the 1st of August as glorious, though groaning in his chains. In this respect they were a people of sympathy, for it might appear strange to some that a

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slave could rejoice and be glad in his chains, yet the coloured people in the United States had long since learned to make the best of their condition; and he could assure them if they had not learned this lesson they would have heard of a great many more troubles and insurrections in the United States than they had. (Hear.) Some might suppose that the slaves there were ignorant of what was going on in the West Indies; but wherever they got the news (and it was mysterious to think *how* they found it out), they were nevertheless well advised as to the progress of things there. (Hear.) Since the abolition of slavery in the West Indies, large numbers of slaves from the south had passed through his hands, and, having conversed with all, he was astonished at the extent of their information on this particular subject; they invariably regarded West India emancipation as a token of hope that the messengers of freedom would next visit them. (Cheers.) They were looking up, and he could assure them that this mighty change could not have occurred, under the supervision of an all-wise Providence, so near to their sea coast without seriously affecting their condition. It made the slave hope; and when he heard of 800,000 men being emancipated without the shedding of a drop of blood, he was encouraged to look up to the same God who had accomplished this great work, knowing as they did, that He was no respecter of persons. (Applause.) Emancipation in the West Indies had affected the minds of the slaveholders too, he could assure them; he was aware that he now stood alone, and that the slave-ships were liable to find their way into the British colonies, near which they were obliged to pass in carrying on the traffic with the south. The case of the *Creole* was only one case; they might soon hear of others. (Cheers.) The liberation of 800,000 slaves in the West Indies had marked the downfall of slavery in all the slaveholding nations of the world; and if the planters of the southern states were wise they would look to and prepare to follow this glorious example. (Cheers.) Although the cause was advancing, slavery was still the same, and it was only by its total extermination that any change could be produced. Wherever the slave breathed, there he breathed in pain, and blood, and sorrow; and the only way to change his condition was to break his fetters. (Cheers.) Last night he had heard a letter read on an anti-slavery platform, at Leeds, from an English Methodist, in the state of Virginia. His Methodist friends here wished to know

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how he was getting on; they held a correspondence with him, and found that he had formed a connexion with slavery. One of the brethren then wrote to say that he could not hold correspondence with any body of Christians who were implicated in the guilt of slavery. The brethren in America wrote back in true American style to say that the letter from the brethren in Leeds had been laid before the Conference, and they said, "You have acted rashly—if you can do without us, we can do without you." (Hear, hear.) And the Methodist, writing from Virginia, went on to say, that the letter had been laid before Conference, and that a large majority decided that they would not hear it read, but returned it to him, and requested that he would send it back to the writer in Leeds. They went on to say, that the slaves were satisfied and were kindly treated; and, to use a word from the slave dictionary, that "they were fat." (Shame, shame.) Such was a specimen of the temper of some of the slave-holding Christians, when remonstrated with on the sin of slavery. He confessed when he heard that letter read in the chapel of Queen-street, Leeds, he could scarcely suppress his indignation; these offences might be borne with in his own country, but when they found men (and professing Christians too) with brass enough and brow enough to commit these thoughts to paper, and send them across the Atlantic, and have them believed as the voice of all Christians in that land, he thought they at least deserved rebuke, and that promptly. (Loud cheers.) He did not mean to say, that all Christians in America were like these Virginia Methodists; but he was sorry to say, that too many of them were such. In the state of Missouri, a case of this kind had come before the Methodist Conference. One of the ministers had received the testimony of a coloured member of the church, and on that testimony convicted and suspended a white member. The case was brought before the annual conference for review. The annual Conference, after hearing, reversed this judgement. The minister then took the case to the triennial Conference sitting at Baltimore, and it sustained the action of the annual Conference, and decided the question that the testimony of coloured members of the church could not be received against white members in criminal actions.—("Shame, shame.")—that as this was the law of the state, that the testimony of a black could not be received in a court of justice, the church must conform to the same rule. And such, he presumed, was the law of that section of the American

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Methodist church. (Hear, and cries of "Shame.") So they stood with respect to slavery in America; but last evening he was delighted to hear a letter read, stating that 500 ministers had seceded from the Methodist church in order that they might be emancipated from the thralldom of slavery. (Loud cheers.) This was, indeed, glorious news; and though they were no friends to splitting and splicings, and dividing and breaking up, yet if the worst came to the worst, let God be served; they must come out, and if they could not purge the churches any other way, many had come to the decision that they must come out. (Applause.) For many years they had been remonstrating, and many, not only in the Methodist, but in the Congregational, the Presbyterian, the Baptist, and the Episcopalian churches, had conscientiously come to the decision, that if their brethren would not consent to reform on this great question, they must come out and save their souls. (Loud applause.) The rev. gentleman concluded by supporting the resolution.

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