

LECTURES ON SLAVERY,

DELIVERED IN THE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CINCINNATI,

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PREFACE.

It was my purpose, when the following discourses were delivered, to publish them. The importance of doing so, is the more evident from the very gross misrepresentations of them by the editors of the Abolitionist papers of this city. From those gentlemen, I regret to be obliged to say, I expect nothing like fairness or candor in their representations of my views of slavery. I deem it proper, therefore, to give them to the public, that candid men may judge for themselves both of the positions taken, and of the arguments by which they are sustained.

I have added some documents and facts which time did not permit me to introduce whilst delivering the discourses, and have condensed the whole in as small space as possible. I have the satisfaction to know, that several previously inclined to Abolitionism were fully satisfied of the correctness of the views presented. If they should be the means of correcting misrepresentations of an injurious character, and of satisfying inquiring minds, I shall not have labored in vain.

N. L. RICE.

LECTURES ON SLAVERY.

I AM perfectly aware, my friends, that many well-meaning persons are decidedly opposed to the discussion of almost any subject connected with religion, in regard to which professing christians hold different views. If we were to yield to the opinion of such persons, the extensive field of religious investigation must be contracted to extremely narrow limits; for there are few truths in divine revelation which have not been called in question by some who still claim the christian name. It may, however, be proper that I should state the reasons which have induced me, at the present time, to discuss the subject of slavery. They are the following:

1. This subject is now exciting very general interest amongst all classes of people in our country, is occasioning divisions in the church of Christ, and even threatening the destruction of our civil Union. Already it has divided the Methodist and Baptist churches; and it is now agitating to the very centre the New School Presbyterian church; whilst fanatical Abolitionists are denouncing our civil union as most iniquitous and not to be tolerated. At such a time it behoves every man to inform himself fully on the whole subject, that his influence may be thrown where it should be. At such a time it becomes the duty of those who deprecate such divisions and agitations, to contribute as they can, to the dissemination of correct principles.

2. Those who refuse to adopt the views of Abolitionists, have been constantly taunted with fearing discussion, from a consciousness that their principles cannot bear the light. Such charges, accompanied with the boasting of Abolitionists, that they are prepared to submit their doctrines to the closest scrutiny, are calculated to make an impression on the minds of many. We owe it to ourselves, therefore, and to the truth, to show the public, that we are prepared to meet them, and to demonstrate the correctness of our principles.

3. The action of the late General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church on the subject of slavery, has been most grossly misrepresented; and continued efforts have been made to heap odium upon that body. The report which, with the most delightful unanimity they adopted, has been represented as a decidedly pro-slavery document, and our church reproached as "*the slave church of America.*" However imbecile these efforts to injure our church will prove to be, many may be misled by the false representations so industriously circulated, if they should not be exposed.

To show the audience the character and spirit of the publications to which I have referred, I will read a few extracts from letters written by Professor Stowe, of Lane Seminary, to the *Boston Recorder* and *New York Evangelist*, and from the *Watchman of the Valley*, the *New School Abolitionist* paper of this city. Professor Stowe, anticipating great agitation in our Assembly on the subject of slavery, wrote as follows: "The Old School Assembly, which meets here in May, will have musket-fire and gun-powder on the subject of slavery; for the elements are already boiling like a witch's cauldron. After the excitement of 1838, Rev. Dr. Baxter went home to Virginia, and told the students of Prince Edward Seminary, what a grand thing had been done, for they had got rid of the *New School* and the *Abolitionists* at the same time. "Ah! luckless speech and bootless boast," as Cowper says. The Old School will yet be shaken to its very centre by this same question of slavery, (and perhaps the New also)" &c.

Such were the predictions of the Professor; but the result sadly disappointed him. There was no "musket-fire and gun-powder on the subject of slavery." Whereupon, he again wrote in the following strain: "The action on slavery astonished every one, and it was carried through with very little opposition, only 12 out of 170 members voting against it. It confirms what I told you in my last letter, respecting *the unconscientiousness of such bodies*. Even unscrupulous politicians expressed their astonishment at the result." The word "unconscientiousness," I presume, is intended as a mild expression for *hypocrisy*. Concerning the letter from the Free Church of Scotland, he thus writes:

"THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND."

"A letter and memorial from this church, on the subject of slavery, was presented to the Assembly and read. The

Scotch Church of course exhort their American brethren to take some action on the subject of slavery, to evince their disapprobation of the system, in their desire to get rid of it. The Assembly reply, by referring their Scotch brethren to their present action on the subject, which declines to give any disapproval of the system, or make any efforts to remove it. I was not present when the subject was up, but was informed by another, that during the reading of the papers from Scotland, *most of the Southern men left the house*. On such terms as these, will the Free Church of Scotland long hold communion with the *slave-church* of America? for such, *par eminence*, is now the Old School branch of the Presbyterian church in the United States.

The following extracts from the Watchman of the Valley will show the character of the assaults the editor has thought proper to make upon the General Assembly :

“To dispose of such a subject, in such a summary way, as if unworthy to occupy the deliberations of the house; and then solemnly to propose to return thanks to Almighty God, that they had been able, in so short a time, and with such wonderful unanimity, **TO SHUT OUT THE CRY OF THE POOR** from the Assembly, argues an infatuation on that subject which reflecting men may well look upon with amazement! “O my soul! come not thou into their secret! Unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united!” For “instruments, cruelty are in their hands.” They can settle the fate of *groaning* millions with as much *sang froid* and despatch, as a Turk would sever the head of a “christian dog” from his body, and then publicly return thanks to God that they had done it!—thanks to God, that they had been able so effectually to stop their ears and harden their hearts against the groans and importunities of the oppressed, as to fear no farther annoyance from that source!

“Such a decision outrages conscience, humanity and common sense, and must ultimately expose its authors to the scorn and contempt of mankind—a scorn and contempt proportioned in severity to the exalted religious authority from which it emanates. For the world, we would not stand in that *pillory*, in which the late Assembly, by its proslavery document, has placed itself. That act has given to this Assembly an unenviable distinction, among all the general ecclesiastical bodies in the United States. **THE OLD**

SCHOOL GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES, FOR THE YEAR 1845, STANDS SINGLE AND ALONE, in pronouncing American slavery, a justifiable, a righteous, an apostolically authorized "relation!" No other Assembly and no other church has ever *dared* to father such a monstrous *absurdity*."

By these gentlemen, you perceive, as well as by others equally our *friends*, the Report adopted by the Assembly is pronounced a pro-slavery document, a defence of American slavery, with all the cruelty which wicked men may choose to inflict on their slaves; and our church is stigmatized, as "*par eminence—the slave-church of America*." And yet, in that document, which the reader has probably seen, I defy any man to put his finger on one expression which advocates slavery as a desirable institution, or looks toward the toleration of the slightest cruelty in the treatment of slaves. There were before the Assembly two important questions, viz :

1. Is the mere fact of holding slaves, without regard to circumstances, to be made a bar to christian fellowship? In other words, ought we to exclude from the church all slaveholders, regardless of the circumstances in which they are placed, and of their kind treatment of their slaves?

2. In what way can the church most effectually ameliorate the condition of the slaves in our country?

The first question the Assembly decided in the negative, that the mere fact of holding slaves is not, according to the Bible, a sin to be visited with the discipline of the church. In regard to the second, they decided, that the condition of the slaves cannot be improved by ecclesiastical legislation, by making slave-holding a bar to christian-fellowship, nor by the bitter denunciations hurled by Abolitionists against all slaveholders indiscriminately; but by preaching to both master and slave the glorious Gospel, as did the apostles of Christ! For these decisions, that body is held up to odium as the advocate of slavery—nay, as the apologist for all the cruelty which the slave-law allows the master to inflict on his slaves, although they distinctly condemned all unkind treatment of them! I will not assert, that these gross misrepresentations were intentionally made; and yet I find it extremely difficult to see how those who made them, could have believed they were stating what is strictly true. However this may be, it is clearly our duty to repel and expose

such charges. And before I close this discussion, I will prove that they come with a peculiarly ill grace from those who have made them.

4. My position in relation to this subject makes it peculiarly proper that I should undertake this duty. Unexpectedly appointed a commissioner to the General Assembly, and still more unexpectedly made chairman of the committee on slavery, and consequently assailed as the principal author of the Report, it is particularly my duty to expose the misrepresentations and repel the assaults of Abolitionists. And as it is well known, that I am in favor of the full and fair discussion of all subjects of importance, which agitate the public mind, my silence would undoubtedly be misconstrued. For these reasons I now enter upon the discussion of this agitating subject—premising, that I now speak simply as an *individual*, and am alone responsible for the sentiments I shall express.

It is particularly important, in this discussion, that the precise points at issue should be distinctly understood. For in the discussion of no subject which I have had occasion to investigate, has error gained a greater advantage by making false issues, than of the one now under consideration. I will therefore distinctly state the questions at issue, and in so doing, shall dispose of at least *two-thirds* of the arguments of the Abolitionists.

1. The question is not, whether it is right to *reduce free men to a state of slavery*. No class of christians, so far as I know, in any part of our country, pretend that it is. All Presbyterians, all christians, all philanthropists, denounce the African slave trade as an enormity not to be tolerated. All, consequently, agree that slavery ought never to have been introduced into our country. Whether it is right to force a free man, charged with no crime, into a state of slavery, is one question—a question easily answered. But what is our duty toward those who have been made slaves by others—how far we can immediately restore to them their liberty, must depend upon many circumstances. For illustration, it would be very wicked in me to reduce a rich man to poverty and want, either by fraud or violence; but how far I may be able to aid a man thus reduced by others, is a very different question—a question to be determined by circumstances. The slaveholding states have *inherited* the evil of slavery; and for

this sad inheritance they are indebted in no slight degree, to England and to the older free states. And let it not be forgotten, that Presbyterians compose but a very small proportion of the population of those states. They (the present generation) found the Africans in slavery. Many of them, almost all, I presume, deplore the existence of slavery amongst them. But the question is—what is their duty, situated as they are, with reference to it? Doubtless the spirit of the Gospel requires us to do what we can for the present and future happiness of our fellow-men; but what is our duty, under the existing circumstances? This is the question; and it may not be so easily answered.

2. The question between us and the Abolitionists, is not, whether there are evils connected with slavery, or whether slavery is itself a great evil. This is admitted, I believe, by most, if not all, Presbyterians, and by multitudes in the slave-holding states, who make no profession of religion. I have not a word to say in favor of slavery as a desirable institution. I have ever deplored its introduction into our country, and would do as much to remove it as any Abolitionist, so far as it can be removed by the operation of correct principles. Multitudes of the most enlightened and influential men in our country, as well as in England and Scotland, who never will, because they never can, believe the doctrine of the Abolitionists, nor unite with them in their agitating measures, are as staunch friends of the slave, and as desirous of the removal of the evil of slavery, as the most zealous Abolitionist, if not more so.

WAR is a dreadful evil; but it does not follow, that there are no christian soldiers, nor that every church member who, under any circumstances, becomes a soldier, should be excommunicated. All sober-minded men admit, that there is such a thing as *justifiable war*. So there may be such a thing as *justifiable slavery*. Yet we have, in our country, the *non-resistance party*, who would excommunicate a man for resisting a highway robber, or for defending himself against the assaults of a murderer! They have made much greater advances in removing evils, than the Abolitionists; for Joshua Leavitt, of the *Emancipator*, informs us, that humane men are thinking seriously of reasoning with slave-holders, not with arguments, but with “cold steel!”

LIBERTY is truly a great blessing; and yet in the organ-

ization of human society, it must be more or less restrained according to circumstances. Children must be under parental government, until mature age; and yet they often feel that their liberty is greatly restrained. Some of our modern reformers, however, have gone so far as to renounce all family government, and leave children to be governed by their own inclinations! Females, in our country, are not eligible to civil offices; nor are they even permitted to vote in the election of civil officers; and yet they are quite as deeply interested in the affairs of government, as men are. Moreover, Paul and Peter were so *tyrannical* (so some now consider it) as to forbid women to become public speakers, and require them to obey their husbands. But we have reformers who have far greater light on this subject, than the Apostles had; and they have formed "*the women's rights party*." And now it is by no means uncommon to see females, regardless of their proper sphere, and destitute of that modesty which is one of the chief ornaments of the sex, figuring as orators on the stage, amid the confusion of Abolitionist meetings! Garrison and his party have more fully carried out their principles, than their brethren in this latitude; but I see no reason to doubt, that in due time, they will follow suit.

Some nations, it is admitted, are not qualified to sustain and enjoy a government so free as ours. Such, for example, is the condition of Mexico and South America. And all must admit, that where intelligence and virtue are, to a great extent, wanting in any country, a more despotic government becomes necessary. May it not, then, be fairly questioned, whether there is in the slave population of the South and West so much virtue and intelligence, as to prepare them at once to enjoy full liberty, even were it within their reach? May it not be absolutely necessary, for the good of both masters and slaves, and of the country generally, that emancipation should be, as it has been wherever slavery has been abolished in this country, *gradual*, not *immediate*? It is not difficult to foresee the evils which must result from the immediate emancipation of *three millions* of slaves, without intelligence, degraded to a great extent in moral character, without property, and without habits of industry and economy.

But admitting, as I most cheerfully do admit, that slavery ought everywhere to be abolished just as fast as it can be

on scriptural principles, without violence, with safety to all parties, the question arises—by what means can the condition of the slaves be most effectually ameliorated for the present, and the ultimate removal of slavery be most safely and expeditiously accomplished? I oppose modern Abolitionism, not because it tends to abolish slavery, but because its doctrines are false, and, as carried out in practice, tend to perpetuate slavery and to aggravate all its evils! This I expect to prove in due time.

But the Abolitionists, with as little wisdom as truth, *denounce*, as pro-slavery men, all who refuse to adopt their extravagant views, and to fall in with their agitating measures. We are not yet reduced to the alternative of advocating slavery as a blessing, or of uniting with them. Two physicians, for example, are called to consult on the case of a patient laboring under a disease which has assumed the chronic form. One of them insists, contrary to all established principles of medical practice, that he can cure the patient by one tremendous dose of strong medicine. The other protests, that such a dose will be his death, and refuses to allow it to be administered. The first Doctor then denounces the other as a most cruel man, utterly unwilling that the patient shall be cured—anxious indeed that he should die—an advocate of disease and death! Precisely so do the Abolitionists. They seem incapable of understanding the obvious truth, that evils which have long existed, and become interwoven with the very texture of society, cannot be removed by one spasmodic movement; and they seem wholly to forget, that if slavery is ever to be abolished in the slave-holding states, it must be abolished, as it has been in the older free states, with the consent of the people, and by the people of those states.

3. The question between us and the Abolitionists, is not whether the laws by which, in the several states, slavery is regulated, are just and righteous. Many of them are sadly defective, and some are oppressive and unjust in a high degree. The laws of Rome gave the master complete power over the life of his slave. These laws were most unrighteous. In some of the Southern states the laws prohibit slaves being taught to read. Such laws are most unjust. They are an invasion of the rights of conscience. No legislature has the right to forbid me to teach my family to read the word of God. I confess, I would not readily sub-

mit to such laws ; and I rejoice to learn, that in the South, they are to a great extent a dead letter, and are practically disregarded.

But are individual christians to be responsible for all the defective or oppressive laws of the civil government under which they live ? Or are they to be charged with all the cruelty which the civil laws *allow* to be inflicted upon the slaves, whether they in fact inflict it on them or not ? The law requiring the mail to be carried on the sabbath, we regarded as unjust ; and we sought its repeal. But that law did not require me to be a post-master or a mail-contractor. Consequently, notwithstanding its injustice, I could live in all good conscience toward God.

The laws regulating the conjugal and parental relations, are, in many countries, and even in our own, defective or oppressive. In Kentucky, for example, divorces have often been obtained upon the most flimsy pretexts ; and thus men who, according to God's law, were husbands, were permitted to marry again. But those laws, however they may permit men to treat their wives cruelly, do not compel any man to seek a divorce. In Ohio, I venture to assert, that men may, without exposing themselves to the penalty of the civil law, inflict great injustice and suffering upon their wives and children. Indeed no civil enactment can entirely protect those who are in the power of wicked men. But is every man obliged to do as much wrong as the civil law permits him to do in the relations of life ? And is any christian to be called before ecclesiastical courts upon the presumption, that such is his practice ?

Abolitionists, with singular absurdity, go to the law-books for a definition of slavery ; and having ascertained the power the civil law gives the master over the slave, they charge the slave-holder with all the oppression and cruelty the law permits, and denounce every man who refuses to pronounce slave-holding in itself a heinous and scandalous sin, as defending all that cruelty and oppression. For they tell us, that all the evils which the civil law permits to be inflicted on the slave, are *essential features of the relation*.

A specimen of this most unsound logic is found in the *Watchman of the Valley*, of June 12th. The editor quotes the statutes of South Carolina and Louisiana, defining the powers of the slave-holder, and then remarks :—"Such is the *essential nature* of American slavery, as defined by the

law which institutes and authorizes it. This "relation," which our august Assembly of divines and elders, the teachers and judges of religion and morals, plainly tell us, by implication is not in itself wrong, is simply a law—constituted relation." The law of South Carolina, we are told, says—"Slaves shall be deemed, sold, taken, reputed and adjudged in law to be chattels personal, in the hands of their owners and possessors, and their executors, administrators, and assigns, to all intents, constructions and purposes whatsoever." Well, did the General Assembly say, the laws of South Carolina are either wise or just? It did not. Might not those laws be greatly modified without destroying the relation of master and slave? Every man of common sense knows, they might. Then they do not constitute the essential *nature* of slavery, as the editor asserts. Again—are christians obliged to regard and treat their slaves as mere "chattles personal," as not "sentient beings, but things," because such is the language of the law, or of writers on law? May they not, whilst they claim their services, treat them as rational, accountable, immortal beings, with all kindness, providing abundant food and raiment; and affording opportunities for religious instruction? Are the christians of South Carolina to be held individually responsible for the laws of the state? Or are they to be excommunicated on the presumption that they are as cruel in the treatment of their slaves, as the law permits them to be? With the same propriety I might charge these Abolitionist gentlemen with treating their wives and children, as cruelly as the civil law permits, and insist on their being excluded from the fellowship of the church. The folly of holding individuals responsible for the laws which regulate slavery, is perfectly manifest.

It is, indeed, the duty of every christian, as a citizen, to seek, by all proper means, the repeal of oppressive laws, and the amendment of such as are defective. And this the General Assembly, in adopting the Report, exhorted the members of the churches under their care to do. Individuals are responsible for existing laws, only so far as their influence as citizens, and their votes, will go to change them.

And here I must notice one of the many slanders recently published against the General Assembly, viz: that they approved of giving to the slaves simply *oral instruction*,

and of withholding from them the right to read the Word of God. What is the language of the Report on this subject? It is as follows: "Every christian and philanthropist certainly should seek, by all peaceable and lawful means, the repeal of unjust and oppressive laws, and the amendment of such as are defective, so as to protect the slaves from cruel treatment by wicked men, and *secure to them the right to receive religious instruction.*" Slaves have never been forbidden to receive *oral* instruction. Of course, the language of the Report refers to the right to *read* the Word of God. The importance of the remarks now made will be still more manifest, from the following editorial article in the Watchman of the Valley of June 26th.

"Nothing Wrong in the Relation Itself.—Dr. Edward Beecher, at the late meeting of the Massachusetts Abolition Society, adduced the following law case.

"A man was tried in North Carolina, for shooting his own female slave. Judge Ruffin decided, that according to slave law, the act could not be pronounced criminal, *because the master must have unlimited control over the body of his slave,* OR THE SYSTEM CANNOT STAND. In regard to this decision, the judge confessed, that "he felt its harshness, and that every person, in his retirement, must *repudiate it*; but in the actual state of things *it must be so: there is no remedy.*"

"According to the decision, then, of a Southern judge, extorted from him by the inexorable necessity of his legal logic, in opposition to his humane feelings, the *relation* of slavery, as constituted *by law*, is *in itself* cruel, authorizing the unlimited control of the master over the body of his slave, *life not excepted.* Why? Because without such control, the system could not stand; i. e. the relation could not exist, as it is now legally constituted. No sin in such a relation? Then there is no sin, a Carolina jurist being judge, for doing whatever is necessary, (be it stripes, torture, or death,) to preserve this sinless, lawful relation!"

It is truly astonishing that intelligent ministers of the Gospel will attempt to excite the feelings of men by such tales. I will not assert, that no Southern judge ever rendered himself ridiculous by delivering such sentiments as these; and yet it appears incredible. But it is worse than vain for Dr. Edward Beecher and the Editor of the *Watchman*, to attempt to convince the people of this country, that

the system of slavery cannot be sustained, unless the master have unlimited control over the *lives* of his slaves. Every body knows better. They might just as well assert, that a man cannot preserve family government, unless he have the right to kill his wife and children !

But let us admit, that the system of slavery cannot be sustained, unless the master have unlimited power over the body of the slave ; then I can proclaim to the Abolitionists good news—that in Kentucky, and indeed in all the slaveholding states, the system of slavery has received its death-blow ; for in no one of them, so far as I know, has the master any such power over his slaves. The law of Kentucky, passed in 1830, is as follows :

“That if any owner of a slave shall treat such slave cruelly and inhumanly, so as in the opinion of the jury to endanger the life or limb of such slave, or shall not supply his slave with sufficient food and raiment, it shall and may be lawful for any person acquainted with the fact or facts, to state and set forth in a petition to the circuit court, the facts, or any of them aforesaid, of which the defendant hath been guilty, and pray that such slave or slaves may be taken from the possession of the owner, and sold for the benefit of such owner, agreeably to the 7th article of the constitution.”

By a subsequent section, it is made the duty of the circuit court to take up such cases and try them immediately after getting through with the criminal cases before it. A precisely similar law exists in Louisiana, as I am informed by a very respectable lawyer, who is a member of the Episcopal church, and has practiced law in New Orleans for thirteen years past. He informed me, that he had, in several instances, known slaves taken from their masters in consequence of cruel treatment, and sold into other hands. In one instance, the negro did not sell for a sufficient sum to pay the costs of the suit. The cruel master, therefore, lost his slave and paid all the costs. Similar laws exist in Alabama. Dr. Drake, in a lecture on the subject of slavery, delivered in this city last winter, stated, that whilst traveling through Alabama, he met a sheriff and his posse returning from the penitentiary, where they had safely lodged a man, who owned a farm and a number of slaves, and who had been convicted, chiefly on circumstantial evidence, of having killed one of his slaves. *Ten years*, if I rightly re-

member, was to be the period of his confinement in the penitentiary.

If, then, it be true, as Dr. Beecher and the editor of the *Watchman* would have the people believe, that the system of slavery cannot be sustained, unless the master have unlimited control over his slaves ; it must soon be abolished, and the Abolitionists need give themselves little further trouble. In Kentucky, the slave has the same protection that a child has.

But what, I ask, must be the inevitable effect of publishing such stories, and making such appeals ? If they are believed in the free states, the effect will be, to make the people of the South regarded as monsters in human shape ; and in the slave-holding states, those who publish them will be detested as a set of base slanderers. In vain will such men address the slave-holder on the duty of liberating his slaves. It is thus that Abolitionists have lost every particle of influence which they might have exerted in the slave-holding states.

The law of the Presbyterian church on the subject of the treatment of slaves, is clear and explicit. In 1818, the General Assembly gave the following injunction to all church Sessions and Presbyteries under their care.

“ We enjoin it on all church Sessions and Presbyteries, under the care of this Assembly, to discountenance, and, as far as possible, to prevent all cruelty, of whatever kind, in the treatment of slaves ; especially the cruelty of separating husband and wife, parents and children ; and that which consists in selling slaves to those who will either themselves deprive these unhappy people of the blessings of the Gospel, or who will transport them to places where the Gospel is not proclaimed, or where it is forbidden to slaves to attend upon its institutions. The manifest violation or disregard of the injunction here given, in its true spirit and intention, ought to be considered as just ground for the discipline and censures of the church. And if it shall ever happen that a christian professor, in our communion, shall sell a slave who is also in communion and good standing with our church, contrary to his or her will and inclination, it ought immediately to claim the particular attention of the proper church judicature ; and unless there be such peculiar circumstances attending the case as can but seldom happen, it ought to be followed, without delay, by a suspension of

the offender from all the privileges of the church, till he repent, and make all the reparation in his power to the injured party."

Such is the law of our church on this subject. If the Abolitionists can prove any member of the Presbyterian church guilty of cruel treatment to his slaves, let them take measures to have such member brought before the proper tribunal; and I pledge my word, he will be dealt with just as if guilty of any other immorality. The venerable Dr. Chalmers well remarks—"Our understanding of christianity is, that it deals with persons and ecclesiastical institutions, and that the object of these last is to operate directly and proximately with the most wholesome effect on the consciences and the character of persons. In conformity with this view, a purely and righteously administered church will exclude from the ordinances, *not a man as a slave-holder*, but every man, whether slave-holder or not, as licentious, as intemperate, as dishonest."

4. After what I have already said, it is scarcely necessary to say, that the question between us and the Abolitionists is not, whether a christian may regard and treat his slaves as *mere property*, not as "*sentient beings*." Men own horses; but they are not permitted by the civil law, to treat them inhumanly. Much more is a christian, who owns a slave, bound to treat him as a man, with all kindness, and to afford him the necessary opportunity to receive religious instruction. The language of the Report on this point is clear and strong: "Nor is this Assembly to be understood as countenancing the idea, that masters may regard their slaves as *mere property*, not as human beings, rational, accountable, immortal. The Scriptures prescribe not only the duties of servants, but of masters also, warning the latter to discharge those duties, "Knowing that their Master is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him."

5. The real question at issue between us and the Abolitionists is stated by Rev. T. E. Thomas, a very zealous Abolitionist, in his Review of Dr. Junkin's speech on slavery. He says—"That question now in process of investigation among the American churches, is this and no other, Are the professed christians in our respective connections, who hold their fellow-men as slaves, thereby guilty of a sin which demands the cognizance of the church; and after due

admonition, the application of discipline," p. 17. This is precisely the question. Is the mere fact of holding a slave, however kindly he may be treated, and under whatever circumstances, a heinous and scandalous sin, to be visited by the discipline of the church? The Abolitionists affirm: we deny.

And it may be well to remark, that according to them, the holding of slaves is a sin of the most heinous character, even worse than theft and robbery: it is *man-stealing*, or a crime of equal magnitude.

Now I affirm, that circumstances have existed, and circumstances do now exist, which so far justify individuals in holding slaves; *that is, in claiming their services, with the corresponding obligation to treat them as men, as rational, accountable, immortal beings*; that the church cannot, on that account, exclude them from her communion, without trampling under foot the authority of God, and lording it over his heritage. To make the subject perfectly clear, I will state two important, but obvious principles, viz.

1st. God never did, and never could, give his people permission to form a relation in itself sinful, or sinful under the circumstances attending its formation. In other words, God, being infinitely holy, never did, or could, give his people permission to commit sin. This principle is so perfectly self-evident, that it would be worse than useless to reason with one who would dispute its truth.

2nd. The church of Christ has no authority to make terms of communion which the Apostles of Christ did not make, to exclude from her fellowship characters, received by them; to require as a condition of membership what they did not require. This principle is about as clear as the one just stated. He who calls it in question, must contend, either that the Apostles were so unfaithful to their trust, that they admitted into the church as christians, sinners who ought to have been excluded; or, that that which was not inconsistent with christianity in the days of the Apostles, is inconsistent with it now. The former position, no one, I presume, will maintain; and to maintain the latter, is to say that christianity is not now what it was in their day. But Paul says, "If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal. i. 9.

These principles few persons, I presume, will call in

question. I now state, and will proceed to prove two important facts, viz.

1. God did expressly give permission to his people, under the Old Dispensation, to hold slaves.

2. The Apostles of Christ did receive into the church slave-holders, as christians in good and regular standing, and did not require them to liberate their slaves.

If these facts can be established, it follows, incontrovertibly, that Abolitionism is false. I proceed to prove the first.

1. It is a fact, that Abraham, "the father of the faithful," "the friend of God," did buy slaves with his money, and receive them as a present, and that God did not require him to manumit them, but commanded that they should receive circumcision—the seal of the covenant. Gen. xvii. 12, 13: "And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations: he that is born in the house, *or bought with money of any stranger which is not of thy seed.* He that is born in thy house, *and he that is bought with thy money,* must needs be circumcised." Now if Abraham *bought* persons, they most certainly belonged to him. If, then, slave-holding were, under all circumstances, a heinous sin, can it be believed, that God would have entered into covenant with Abraham—a covenant which constituted him the father of his church in all ages, without requiring him to abandon that sin? Still more, would God have directed him to circumcise his slaves, instead of commanding him to set them at liberty?

In Gen. xx. 14, we find Abraham receiving slaves as a present from Abimelech. "And Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and man-servants and women-servants, and gave them unto Abraham." If Abraham had been an Abolitionist, would he have received such a present? Would he not rather have denounced Abimelech as a man-stealer and a robber?

And let it not be forgotten, that when Abraham bought slaves, or received them as a present, there certainly was no law limiting the time of their servitude. Moreover, it is certain, that slaves might then be subjected to punishment, if they failed to do their duty. We have some account of one of the slaves of Abraham, whose name was Hagar. That she was a slave, is evident—1. Because, in the allegory introduced by Paul, in Gal., 4th chap., she is so repre-

sented in contrast with Sarah, who was *free*—"Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman, &c." 2ndly. She was punished by Sarah, when she treated her mistress disrespectfully. When Sarah complained to Abraham, that Hagar treated her with contempt, he said—"Behold thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarah dealt hardly with her (or punished her) she fled from her face," Gen. xvi. 6. In what follows we have an instructive lesson, in contrast with the principles inculcated by modern Abolitionists. "And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarah. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands," Gen. xx. 7—9. Is this the instruction which modern Abolitionists give to fugitive slaves? Do they not advise, and even exhort them to run away? Nay—did not the Abolition Society of New York advise slaves to *steal*, not only from their masters, but from anybody and everybody in the slave-holding states, or in the free states, whatever might be necessary to aid them in making their escape? How comes it to pass, that Abolitionists preach doctrines so opposite to those taught by an angel of God? Are they more benevolent than he? Or are they wiser than he?

Abolitionists, indeed, tell us, she was required to return, because she was Abraham's "*secondary wife*." But this is not the reason given by the angel. Moreover, she was afterwards sent away by God's direction. If she were considered Abraham's wife, and therefore bound to return, is it not passing strange, that she was afterwards sent away by divine direction.

2. A Hebrew might be sold, according to the law of Moses, for *six years*; and this servitude might become perpetual. Exo. xxi. 2: "If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve; and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master hath given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by him-

self. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children ; I will not go out free : then his master shall bring him unto the judges ; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post ; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl ; and he shall serve him forever." See also Deut. xv.

And here it may be well to remark, that in the law of Moses an important difference was made between the *Hebrew servant*, who was sold, and the servant *bought of a stranger* ; as also between the *hired* servant and the servant *bought* with money. Levit. xxv. 39, 40 : " And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee ; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant : but as a hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee until the year of jubilee." There were amongst the Jews three classes of servants, besides those sold for crime or debt, viz : the hired servant, the Hebrew sold for six years, to be treated as a hired servant, and the bond-servant, bought of the stranger.

3. This leads me to remark, that the Jews were expressly permitted to buy slaves from the heathen, and from the strangers who lived amongst them ; and these slaves were inherited by their children. Levit. xxv. 44 : " Both thy bond-men and thy bond-maids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you ; of them shall ye buy bond-men and bond-maids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land : and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession ; they shall be your bond-men forever : but over your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigor." And not only the people generally, but even the *priest* might own slaves, Levit. xxii. 11 : " But if the priest buy any soul with his money, he shall eat of it, (the passover,) and he that is born in his house."

4. That these servants were slaves, is clear, not only from the language already cited, but from the fact that they were liable to corporeal punishment from their masters, if they failed to do their duty. Exod. xxi. 20, 21 : " And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand ; he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding,

if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money." Observe, these slaves are represented as the *money*, the *possession* of the master, and the *inheritance* of his children; and the master might enforce obedience by inflicting corporeal punishment, though not permitted to destroy life or limb. Can any candid man resist the conviction, that God did expressly permit the Jews to purchase and to own slaves?

I will now notice some of the methods by which Abolitionists attempt to evade the force of this evidence.

1. They tell us, that the individuals whom the Jews bought, *sold themselves*. To this plea I answer—1st. If the relation of master and slave be *in itself* sinful, as the Abolitionists maintain, no man had the right to sell himself into the condition of slavery, and no man had the right to buy another, and thus form that sinful relation. It may be said, that the man who sold himself was paid for his labor. But let it not be forgotten that *unrequited labor* is only one of the evils of slavery enumerated by Abolitionists, and not the principal evil either. 2nd. But it is, of course, not true that *children* sold themselves, even if it be admitted that adults did. The Jews were permitted to buy the children of the heathen round about them, Levit. xxv. 44, 45: "Of their families, &c." Children, therefore, might be sold by their parents into perpetual slavery. Or if it be asserted, that at the year of jubilee—the fiftieth year—they were free, (though contrary to fact) yet they might be enslaved for forty-nine-years! 3d. But it is admitted that adults did not always sell themselves. Mr. Thomas, a zealous Abolitionist, says—"The advocates of slavery can devise but one answer, accordant with their views; namely, that the heathen round about were slave-holders: that they had captives taken in war, &c. whom they might sell to the Jewish purchaser. *We admit that some servants of this sort might be bought of the heathen who claimed to be their masters*, and shall prove presently, that even such persons could not be held by the Hebrews, without their consent." It is here admitted, that servants might be bought of heathen men who claimed them as their property. Of course, then, it is not true, that they always sold themselves. Indeed there is no evidence whatever, that this was even commonly done. The Jews were expressly permitted to buy slaves, and were not forbidden to buy of a third person. Abraham re-

ceived from Abimelech slaves as a present. If he could receive them in this way, certainly he could have purchased them of Abimilech, if he had chosen to do so.

2. But Abolitionists assert, that the Jews could not purchase slaves *without their consent*. To this I answer—1st. The statement can apply only to adults. Children, who were bought of the heathen, or of strangers, were of course not consulted. If they had been, the obtaining of their consent would have been a mere mockery. They were not capable of judging and acting for themselves in a matter of such moment. Yet children might be sold into perpetual bondage by their parents. 2nd. As to *adults*, no christian, it is believed, would purchase them without their consent. Nothing is more common in the slave-holding states, than for the slaves of christians, and even of those not professing religion, to select their own masters, when they are obliged to be sold, or even hired. And nothing is more common than for those who purchase, first to inquire of the slave, whether he is willing to live with them. I should place a very low estimate upon the piety of any professor of religion, who would buy an adult slave against his wish, or who would sell an obedient slave to a man with whom he was unwilling to live. But if, as Abolitionists assert, slave-holding is in itself a sin, the consent of the slave to live with his purchaser, would not change the moral character of the relation.

3. Abolitionists tell us, that the time of servitude amongst the Jews, was limited—that the servants bought of the heathen and of strangers, went out free at the year of jubilee—the fiftieth year. Mr. Thomas says—“They were never purchased for six years; but always till the jubilee.” *Review of Junkin*, page 90. Suppose this to be true; does it alter the *principle*? If slave-holding is in itself sinful, then it is sinful to hold a man in that condition *fifty years*, or *five years*. And if there are circumstances which justify the relation for fifty years, there may be circumstances which would justify it for fifty-four years, or longer, if there be no express law against it. We are now inquiring into the morality of the *principle*, which is not affected by the *duration* of the servitude. Besides, if men were sold into slavery till the jubilee, multitudes of them would never be free. Suppose men sold by the heathen to a Jew at the age of 25 or 30 years, and suppose this sale made immedi-

ately after the jubilee; what could be their age at the return of the jubilee, fifty years after? Or suppose children at the age of 15, sold thus; what would be their age? What proportion of them would live to see the time when they would be free? And of what great advantage would it be to set them at liberty, when near three-score years of age?

4. It has been asserted, that amongst the Hebrews slaves *received wages*. There is no evidence whatever that this is true. It is true, however, that in slave-holding states many of the slaves do receive better wages, than many of the poorer classes in our own city. What numbers amongst us do labor, day and night, far more severely than the slaves, and yet are obliged to depend on charity in part for the support of themselves and their children! The slaves, at least amongst reputable men, are well clad and fed, and taken care of in sickness and old age. Dr. Cunningham, of Scotland, says—"They [christian men in the slave-holding states] define this right of property [in slaves] to be a mere compulsory and permanent right to a man's services, laying up on a master the obligations to treat him well and kindly, maintain him comfortably, and give him all the opportunities of intellectual, moral, and religious improvement; and there are men who make conscience of this too, that the slave is entitled to his wages. They endeavor to form as correct an estimate as they can, of what, in the actual position of society, would be the fair remuneration for that man's work. There may be conditions of society, and a state of things, when a man cannot gain enough to maintain himself and his family. There are thousands in this country, who work *twenty hours* a day, and cannot get the means of maintaining themselves. That, therefore, is a question of circumstances. Many, however, make conscience of ascertaining the amount of wages due to their slaves, and give them that; and cases are not uncommon of a slave in this way raising money for purchasing his own liberty."

5. But we are told, that God permitted polygamy and concubinage, as well as slavery, under the Old Dispensation; and that, on our principles, we must now tolerate in the church those things. I answer, God never *gave permission* to any man to marry more than one wife, or to have concubines; but he did expressly permit men to purchase and hold slaves. The cases, therefore, are not parallel. There

were indeed pious men, who were guilty of the sin of polygamy; but no permission was given them by God, to form such connections, any more than permission was given Jacob to tell his father a falsehood, in order to obtain his blessing.

The question may be asked, why God gave permission to the Jews to hold slaves? Doubtless the condition of those whom they purchased, was greatly improved, because, they were brought under the protection of the divine law, which shielded them from the cruelty their heathen masters, or even their parents might inflict upon them; and because they were instructed in that divine religion which would secure to them much happiness in this life, and eternal glory hereafter. One of Abraham's servants, whom he sent to obtain a wife for Isaac, was an eminently pious man. But whatever reasons may be assigned for the permission given the Jews to hold slaves, *the fact* is as certain as language can make it. There were circumstances, therefore, which then justified the practice.

6. But it is said that the Jews, though permitted to buy slaves, were not permitted to *sell* them. To this I answer—1st. This assertion, if true, does not affect the principle. The question between us and the Abolitionists, is not whether slave-selling is a sin, but whether slave-*holding* is in itself sinful. The Jews were expressly permitted to *buy* men; and that which I buy with my money, belongs to me for all the purposes to which it may be lawfully applied. A man may not use his horse as he may use a piece of timber; nor may he use his slave as if he were a horse. But if I buy a horse, he is mine; and I may use his services lawfully. If I buy a man, he is mine, so far as his services are concerned; and I am solemnly bound to treat him as a man. It matters not whether the law permits me to sell him—he is my slave. 2nd. But the law of Moses nowhere prohibits the Jew from selling the slave bought of a heathen man or a stranger. And “where there is no law, there is no transgression.” The Jew was permitted to buy, and was not forbidden to sell.

We are then forced to one of two conclusions: either God gave express permission to the Jews to indulge in heinous and scandalous sin—to be man-stealers and robbers; or slave-holding is not in itself sinful. No believer in the inspiration of the Scriptures, will assert the first; all are,

therefore, constrained to adopt the second—that slave-holding is not in itself sinful—that there are circumstances which justify it: and, therefore, the fundamental doctrine of Abolitionism is proved false.

Second. I proceed now to establish the second fact, viz: the apostles of Christ did receive into the church slave-holders, as pious and consistent christians, and did not require them to manumit their slaves. The evidence of this fact is found in the following portions of Scripture:

Eph. vi. 5—9: “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ, &c. And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master is also in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.” Col. iii. 22: “Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God.” ch. iv. 1: “Masters, give to your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.” 1 Tim. vi. 1—2: “Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.” 1 Pet. ii. 18, 19: “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.”

That the masters here spoken of, were *slave-holders*, and the servants, *slaves*, is clear, for a number of considerations.

1. The literal and ordinary meaning of the word *doulos*, translated *servant*, is *slave*. On this point there is, amongst lexicographers, critics and commentators, but one opinion, so far as I know. That you may be satisfied of the truth of this statement, I will give the definition of this word, and some of its cognates, as given by several of the best lexicographers.

Robertson defines *doulos*—“a slave, a servant—spoken of involuntary service, e. g. a slave in opposition to *eleutheros*—free.” *Douleia*—slavery, bondage. *Douleuo*—to be

a slave, or servant, to serve. *Doulos*—to make a slave—to bring into bondage.

Bretschneider defines *doulos*—*servus*, qui sui juris non est, cui opponitur *ho cleutheros*. 1 Cor. vii. 21—A slave—one who is not under his own control, to which is opposed *cleutheros*—free. *Douloo*—to make a slave, to reduce to slavery.

Donnegan—a slave; a servant, as opposed to despotes—a master [or slave-holder]. *Douloo*—to reduce to slavery, &c.

Groves—*Doule*—a female slave—*Doulos*—a slave, a servant—*Douloo*, to enslave, reduce to slavery.

Greenfield—*Doulos*—a man in a servile state—male slave or servant. *Douloo*—to reduce to servitude, enslave, oppress by retaining in servitude.

These lexicographers all agree, that the primary and ordinary meaning of the word *doulos*, as used both by profane and sacred writers, is *slave*, not a *hired servant*. The Greeks had a word to signify a hired servant, viz: *misthotos*; and this word is used both in the Septuagint and the New Testament. It is used in Mark i. 20, and is translated “hired servants;” and also in John x. 12, 13, where it is translated “hireling.” In Levit. xxv. 39, 40, it is used by the Septuagint to distinguish a hired servant from a bondman or slave. But this word is not once used by the apostles, in their addresses to masters and servants.

Prof. Stuart says—*Doulos* means, in itself, one devoted to the service of another, one who is subject to the will and control of another. A servant of a man, i. e. of any common man, is a slave; at least, the word, in its strict sense, would import this. *Comment. on Rom.* i. 1. I presume, it will not be pretended, that Stuart is a proslavery man.

Rev. A. Barnes says: “The proper meaning of this word servant, *doulos*, is *slave*—one who is not free. It expresses the condition of one who has a master, or who is at the control of another.” *Comment. on Rom.* i. 1.

Scott the Commentator, says—“In general, the servants at that time were slaves, the property of their masters.” *Comment. on Ephe.* vi. 5—9. Again, in his comments on 1 Tim. vii. 1, he says—“This shows, that christian masters were not required to set their slaves at liberty; though they were instructed to behave toward them in such a manner, as would greatly lessen and nearly annihilate the

evils of slavery. It would have excited much confusion, awakened the jealousy of the civil powers, and greatly retarded the progress of christianity, had the liberation of slaves by their converts been expressly required by the Apostles."

Henry says—"These servants were generally slaves."

Dr. Dick says—"The apostle makes use of strong language on this subject, and it is worthy of attention, that, in his days, servants among the Greeks and Romans were slaves."

McNight says,—“The word *doulos* properly means a *slave*. Anciently the Greeks and Romans had scarcely any servants but slaves: perhaps also he (Paul) was thus particular in his precepts to slaves, because the Jews held perpetual slavery to be unlawful, and because the judaizing teachers propagated that doctrine in the church.”

Such are the opinions of some of the best lexicographers, commentators and critics, concerning the meaning of the word *doulos*, translated *servant*, and concerning the relation intended to be expressed by the word *master* and *servant* in the New Testament. Authorities might be easily multiplied. Indeed, so far as I know, there has been but one opinion amongst learned men on this subject. It is in vain for modern Abolitionists to assert, in the face of all standard authorities, that the servants addressed by the apostles, were not *slaves*, but *hired servants*.

2. But the sense in which Paul used the word *doulos*, is made perfectly clear in 1 Cor. vii. 21: “Art thou called being a servant? (*doulos*) care not for it; but if thou mayest be free, use it rather.” Here the word *doulos* is placed in contrast with *eleutheros*—*free*, and therefore necessarily means *slave*, and it is so understood by Abolitionists themselves. They also admit, that it is used in the same sense, in Tim. vi. 1. Let them prove, if they can, that in the other Epistles, Paul used it in a different sense.

3. The directions given to servants by the apostles, are such as would be given to slaves, and such as are appropriate only to such. “Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as unto Christ. Not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,” &c. So also Coloss. iii. 22. Compare these directions with those given by Pe-

ter, who, as even Abolitionists admit, was addressing slaves ! “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear ; not only to the good and gentle, but to the froward,” &c. Is it common, is it proper, thus to address persons who are *hired* to do your work ? Would you teach them to obey those who had hired them, “with fear and trembling ?” Would not your hired servants resent such language as a gross insult ?

4. But even the most zealous Abolitionists admit, that in 1 Tim. vi. 1—, Paul speaks of masters and slaves ; for here he not only uses the word *doulos*, but speaks of servants as “*under the yoke*.” Moreover, he speaks of masters as *despotai*—a word which, they admit, properly means an owner of slaves. Mr. Thomas, a most zealous Abolitionist, who abounds in criticism on the Hebrew and Greek, says : “This word (*despotes*) properly denotes the possessor, or master of slaves ; one who rules as a master over his slaves, with *uncontrolled* power, a despot.” *Review*, p. 116. Let us now read the passage : “Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters (*despotas*), let them not despise them, because they are brethren ; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit.” Here we have not only *masters of slaves*, but “*believing masters*,” “*faithful and beloved* ;” and their slaves, who are also believers, are exhorted not to despise them, because they are brethren, and, therefore, as christians, on an equality ; but to serve them the more faithfully, because they are christians. “This shows,” says Dr. Scott, “that christian masters were not required to set their slaves at liberty, though they were instructed to behave towards them in such a manner as would greatly lessen, and nearly annihilate the evils of slavery.” On this passage, Henry thus comments : “Or, suppose the master were a believer, and the servant a believer too ; would not that excuse him, because in Christ there is neither bond nor free ? No—by no means : they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren ; for that brotherhood relates only to spiritual privileges, not to any outward dignity or advantage ; nay, rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved,” &c.

How do the Abolitionists escape the clear fact, that we here find slave-holders recognized as faithful christians, not

commanded to free their slaves? Mr. Thomas labors, with most gross abuse of all criticism, to prove, that in this one instance Paul used the word *despotes* in "an unusual sense." But if, in this sense, it does not mean a slave-holder, but one who has hired servants, it has not merely an *unusual* meaning, but a meaning it never has elsewhere. Thus, for the special accommodation of Abolitionism, Paul is made to call men slave-holders, who, if we are to believe Abolitionists, really held no slaves, and even abhorred the practice!! There is not, I venture to assert, a respectable critic, or commentator, or scholar in the world, who will sustain Mr. Thomas in his assertions. He does not attempt to adduce one.

But, says Mr. Thomas, "the epithet '*believing*,' would prove to a *primitive* christian, that *despotes* was taken in an unusual sense." Yes; if the primitive christians were Abolitionists such as Mr. Thomas. This, however, is the point to be proved. But he says, Paul spoke of believing *despotes*, believing slave-holders, just as we speak of *reformed drunkards*. How does he know? Is this the obvious meaning of his language? Have wise and good men, even anti-slavery men, so understood it? They have not. Why, then, must it have this meaning here? Only because, if it be taken in its obvious sense, the sense in which it has always been understood, it gives a death-blow to modern Abolitionism! But look at the connection,—they that *have* (not *have had*) believing owners; let them obey and serve them. What need of such an exhortation to men working for wages, according to a bargain made by themselves? There is no cure but grace, for men who will thus boldly and recklessly wrest the Scriptures from their obvious meaning to suit their notions. It is precisely in this way that the world has been filled with religious errors of the worst character. It is impossible to use language which they cannot pervert.

Peter exhorts servants to be obedient to their masters with all fear; "not only to *the good and gentle*, but also to the froward." It would sound strangely to hear men—christian men—talk of good and gentle man-stealers, good and gentle robbers and tyrants—good and gentle men stained with blood! But modern Abolitionism is obliged to sustain itself as every other gross error, by the most palpable perversion of the language of the Scriptures.

The fact is clear, that the Apostles received slave-holders into the christian church, as brethren in the Lord, and did not require them to liberate their slaves; though they did require them to treat them kindly. I have already quoted Scott, Henry, McKnight, Stuart, Barnes, Dick; besides several of the most celebrated lexicographers, in proof of this fact. I will refer to a few others, known as eminent men, and as anti-slavery men, to the same point. Let me just give one more quotation from Rev. Albert Barnes:—“The object of this (Eph. vi. 9,) is to secure to servants proper treatment. It is evident, from this, that there were in the christian church those who were *masters*; and the most obvious interpretation is, that they were the owners of slaves. Some such persons would be converted, as such are now. Paul did not say, that they could not be christians. He did not say, that they should be excluded at once from the communion. He did not hold them up to reproach, or use harsh and severe language toward them. He taught them their duty towards those who were under them, and laid down principles which, if followed, would lead ultimately to universal freedom.” How different the conduct of Paul from that of Abolitionists! Mr. Barnes here admits all for which we contend, viz: that slaveholders were, by the apostles, received into the christian church. He says, Paul did not say, that they should be excluded *at once* from the communion. Did he say, they should be excluded *at all*? If he did, let Abolitionists point to the passage. But Mr. Barnes says, Paul taught masters their *duties* to their servants. Then *immediate emancipation* was not one of their duties, under the circumstances; for, as he admits, he did not require this. Indeed he goes on to say,—“If the master and his slave were both christians, even if the relation continued, it would rather be a relation of mutual confidence. The master would become the protector, the teacher, the guide, the friend; the servant would become the faithful helper—rendering service to one whom he loved, and to whom he felt himself bound by the obligations of gratitude and affection.”

Dr. Spring, of New York, a decidedly anti-slavery man, says,—“While they (the apostles) neither excommunicate, nor even rebuke the master, simply because he is a master, they do not withhold their rebuke of all his oppression and injustice—nay, they thunder forth their anathemas against

the degradation, the ignorance, the misery, the wickedness, and every violation of the personal and domestic rights to which he subjects his slaves, and solemnly remind him of the fearfulness of that day when God shall call him to an account." Again—"Such a slavery, for example, as Onesimus sustained to Philemon, a state of christian servitude, a state in which the master and the slave were required to conduct themselves as brethren and heirs of the common faith and salvation, Paul certainly did not *forbid*, when he restored this fugitive slave to his master. So far from justifying him in absconding, he required him to go back, at the same time furnishing him with a letter of introduction to his master, intreating him to overlook his fault, and regard him as a penitent and faithful servant, and brother beloved." Again—"Nothing is more plain to my mind, than that the word of God recognizes the relation between master and slave as one of the established institutions of the age; and that while it addresses slaves as christian men, and christian men as slave-holders, it so modifies the whole system of slavery, as to give a death-blow to all its abuses, and teaches such a spirit, that in the same proportion in which its principles and spirit are imbibed, the yoke of bondage will melt away, all its abuses cease, and every form of human oppression will be unknown." *Obliga. of World, &c.* pages 237, 239.

The venerable *Dr. Chalmers*, of Scotland, who is a most earnest anti-slavery man, says—"But again, not only is there a wrong principle involved in the demand which these Abolitionists now make on the Free Church of Scotland: it is in itself a wrong procedure for hastening forward that object, for the accomplishment of which we are alike desirous with themselves; or, in other words, it is not only wrong in principle, but hurtful in effect. Should we concede to their demands, then, speaking in the terms of our opinion, we incur the discredit (and in proportion to that discredit we damage our usefulness as a church) of having given in—and at the bidding of another party—to a *factitious and new principle, which not only wants, but which contravenes, the authority of Scripture and apostolic example, and, indeed, has only been heard of in Christendom within these few years, as if gotten up for an occasion, instead of being drawn from the repositories of that truth which is immutable and eternal*—EVEN THE PRINCIPLE, THAT NO

SLAVE-HOLDER SHOULD BE ADMITTED TO A PARTICIPATION IN THE SACRAMENTS." [See his *Letter*, recently published in the *Presbyterian*.]

Dr. Wayland, President of Brown University, decidedly Abolitionist in his principles, says, "The moral principles of the Gospel are directly subversive of the principles of slavery; but, on the other hand, the Gospel *neither commands* masters to manumit their slaves, *nor authorizes* slaves to free themselves from their masters; and, also, it goes further, and *prescribes* the duties suited to both parties in their present condition." *Moral Philos.* p. 212. If, then, the Gospel nowhere commands masters to manumit their slaves, but prescribes the respective duties of master and slave, what authority has the church, acting under its guidance, to go beyond its requirements? Observe the fact, *Wayland* admits, that the Gospel does address both masters and slaves, and, of course, that both were in the church—the masters not being required, as a condition of membership, to liberate their slaves.

Rev. Dr. Tyler, Professor in the East Winsor Theological Seminary, Connecticut—a Congregationalist of eminent abilities, said, in a speech at the late meeting of the Association, "The simple question before us, is this; Is slave-holding a sin, calling for the discipline of the church? (And mark the fact—Mr. Thomas, the Abolitionist states this as precisely the great question now agitated,) *And this is answered by the example of the apostles. They lived and labored in the midst of it, and did not pronounce it a sin; and we may not, we cannot do it.*" Again, "We are all agreed that there are great evils growing out of the system of slavery; and he was opposed to any resolution that implies an opinion that the General Assembly [of the Presbyterian Church] has approved those evils. It has not. It expressly condemns them." Again, "He then referred to the course of Abolitionists. They denounce us as *pro-slavery* because we will not shut our pulpits against Southern ministers, and our churches against Southern members. But the Bible will not justify them in the ground they take. The Great Head of the Church communed with such men as many of the Southern christians are, and I will not refuse to do it. He then shewed up Mr. Perkins' misquotation of the text of Scripture, and asked if that passage (1 Cor. vii. 21,) would justify a slave in killing his master, or justify Mr.

Perkins in aiding him to escape. He would like to preach from that text to the slaves of the South, especially if he were a Colonization agent; and he would say to them, If you can be made free by going to Liberia—"use it rather"—go. Much as he abhorred slavery, he would not go further than the Bible would allow him, in condemning it, and he did not wish to be called *pro-slavery*, for giving full expression to his views."

Dr. Tyler, it will be observed, takes precisely the ground taken by our General Assembly, and for which it has been so grossly abused by Abolitionists, viz: that slave-holding is not a sin in itself, calling for the discipline of the church—that Christ and his apostles did hold christian communion with slave-holders—that the Bible will not permit us to make slave-holding a bar to christian-fellowship. And he had the candor, of which the Abolitionists have proved themselves so destitute, to say, that our Assembly did not approve of any of the evils of slavery, but explicitly condemned them. Moreover, he clearly intimates that he is a friend of the colonization cause.

And whilst on this subject, I must quote from one or two other speeches in the Association. Rev. Dr. W. W. Andrews said—"The principle of the General Assembly's resolutions was incontrovertible. Slavery did exist in the times of the Savior and his apostles, and they did not condemn it. No hint is given us, that they regarded emancipation as a duty which was due to Christ and his service. Now Mr. Perkins has not met this argument, and he cannot. And if the apostles did not say that slavery is a sin, we have no right to say it. Nor did he like the idea of rebuking a sister church with whom we are in friendly correspondence, in such terms." Again—"Rev. Mr. Andrews expressed the thought, that the Association is unanimous in the opinion that slavery is not sinful in itself; and if a resolution were drawn, expressly stating this fact, and condemning the incidental evils, it would probably harmonize all views." "Rev. Mr. Ely contrasted Paul's treatment of Philémon with the conduct of modern Abolitionists. 'These, he said, pervert the whole cause of the Gospel, putting *liberty* before the kingdom of God; seeking, not the conversion and salvation, but the liberty of the slave. If these brethren had a little of the spirit of the Gospel, they would be far more useful in the removal of the monstrous evil of slavery.'"

In the proceedings of the Association on this subject, I observe with particular interest the following facts, viz: 1. Leading men in that body contended for the precise doctrine of the Report adopted by our General Assembly; 2. The Abolitionist resolutions offered by Mr. Perkins, were laid on the table by an almost unanimous vote; and those offered by Mr. Dutton, and which were drawn up by Dr. Bacon, shared the same fate; 3. Dr. Tyler, after having declared himself decidedly opposed to Abolitionism, opposed to excluding Southern ministers from his pulpit, and Southern christians from the Lord's table—after having declared himself favorable to colonization,—after having defended the doctrine of our Assembly—was appointed chairman of the committee to report on the subject. 4. That committee made a report, in about *five minutes*, (a much shorter time than the committee of our Assembly were employed in preparing theirs,) which was almost unanimously adopted, simply referring to their past action on the subject. What that action was precisely, I know not; but I am perfectly certain, that Dr. Tyler did not agree, after having condemned the doctrine of the Abolitionists, to refer to any past action of that character, as the present opinion of the Association. Doubtless that Association is decidedly anti-slavery in its views; and doubtless it is, as a body, opposed to modern Abolitionism. See *New York Observer of June 28th*.

I state these things with the greater pleasure, because Professor Stowe has informed his brethren in New England, that the action of our Assembly was intended “for the entire casting out of the New England spirit from the pale of Old School Presbyterianism.” I presume, there was in the Connecticut Association some of the New England spirit. Dr. Tyler perhaps might claim to have somewhat of that spirit. And possibly Rev. Mr. Humphry, of Louisville, son of Dr. Humphry, might claim to have some remains of it. He was a delegate to that Association; and he “read the recent action of the Assembly, and by explaining the constitution of that church, showed, it was not competent for the Assembly to legislate on the subject of slavery. His speech was very lucid and impressive, and was listened to with fixed attention.” *N. York Observer*.

I have quoted these opinions of eminently wise and good men for two purposes: 1st. To show how ignorant or how

dishonest our Abolitionists are, when they attempt to throw odium upon our Assembly, by representing it as having assumed new ground—taught a new doctrine—in denying that slave-holding is in itself a sin calling for the discipline of the church. So far from it, such is the doctrine taught by the wisest and best men—men strongly anti-slavery in their sentiments—from the days of the apostles to the present time. Dr. Chalmers, who may claim to have read as much, perhaps, as the editor of the *Watchman of the Valley!* asserts that the doctrine of the Abolitionists was never heard of in the church of Christ till within a few years. 2nd. I have referred to these opinions to show how such men interpret the language of the apostles on the subject of slavery. Perhaps the authority of such names will weigh as much as the bold assertions of Abolitionists, who have little reputation for learning,

The fact, I think, is now proved to the satisfaction of every candid hearer, that the apostles of Christ did receive slave-holders into the Church, and did not require them to manumit their slaves. Consequently, one of two conclusions follows, viz: 1. That the apostles did receive into the church, as christian brethren, men living in the constant and willful commission of heinous and scandalous sin—men-stealers and robbers; or, 2. That the doctrine of Abolitionists is false. I cheerfully leave each of the audience to decide which is true. And now I ask, by what authority do they exclude from the church such characters as were received by the apostles of Christ? Are they authorized to make new terms of communion?

But we are told, that although the Gospel nowhere commands masters to manumit their slaves, *the principles* of the Gospel forbid slave-holding. To this I answer:—

1. Did the apostles receive slave-holders into the church *in violation of the principles of the Gospel which they preached?* Will the Abolitionists lay against them this serious charge? If they did act in violation of their own principles, what confidence can we place in them even as good men? Abolitionists, I know, tell us, they did not directly and openly condemn slavery, through apprehension of the excitement and persecution such a course would produce. Are we then to believe that the apostles, so bold and fearless in reproving every other sin, in the face of the most furious persecution, shrunk from openly opposing this,

which, if Abolitionism be true, was about the greatest of all? Could Paul call God to witness that he had not shunned to "declare the whole council of God," when in fact he had failed to declare that council on one of the most important subjects connected with the purity of the church and the salvation of men? He who brings against the apostles such a charge, does infinitely more for infidelity, than he does against slavery.

2. But what right have Abolitionists to give to the principles inculcated by the apostles an interpretation and an application which they did not give? Are they wiser than the apostles? Or do they claim to be more faithful? The conduct of the apostles is the best exposition of the principles of the Gospel which they preached, so far at least as the government of the church is concerned. When men so interpret those principles, as that they require a course to be pursued, widely different from that pursued by them, it is certain that their interpretation is false, or the apostles were unfaithful ministers of Christ.

But the Abolitionists tell us, they will produce a direct prohibition of slave-holding, so soon as we produce an express declaration of Scripture against polygamy, horse-racing, gambling, dancing, theatre-going, the Grecian and Roman games, &c. This is a miserably shallow evasion. Did the apostles direct men how to treat their *several wives*? Did they direct them how to conduct their horse-racing, their gambling, their theatres, &c. Did they admit to membership in the church persons engaged in those vices? If they had treated them as they treated slavery, I would maintain, that we have no right, if we are guided by the Bible, to denounce them as necessarily sinful, or to exclude from the church persons participating in them. But the apostles did address masters and slaves, enjoining upon them their respective duties. They did receive into the church slaveholders without requiring them to manumit their slaves. The cases are not at all analagous, as every candid mind at once perceives.

But let us now consider *the golden rule*, which is supposed to prove slave-holding in itself sinful. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even the same to them: for this is the law and the prophets," Math. vii. 12. Does this rule forbid slave-holding under all circumstances? I answer, no:—

1. Because if it does, then God gave express permission to the Jews to violate it—to commit sin. This no one will maintain. But it is a fact, as already proved, that they were permitted to purchase and hold slaves.

2. If this rule proves slave-holding in itself sinful, then the apostles received persons into the church, who were notoriously acting in gross violation of it, and yet did not reprove them, nor require them to abandon their sin. This no believer in the Scriptures, will admit. Then it is clear, that under the Old Dispensation, and in the days of the apostles, circumstances did exist, which made the holding of slaves not inconsistent with this rule; and if such circumstances did exist, then slave-holding is not in itself sinful; and circumstances of a similar character may again exist.

3. But what is the meaning of this rule? Evidently it requires us to treat others as we would reasonably expect and desire them to treat us, if we were in their situation. And the spirit of the Gospel certainly does require us to do all we can, consistently with other paramount duties, to ameliorate the condition of all who are, to any extent, in a suffering condition. For example, it is our duty to feed the hungry and clothe the naked; but it is not our duty to starve our own children, or suffer them to go unclad, in order to feed and clothe others. If I were traveling through an uninhabited wilderness, and were to find a man who had been wounded by robbers, it would be my duty, if possible, to take him up and convey him to some friendly habitation; but it would not be my duty to leave my little children in the road in order to assist the stranger. The ancestors of the present slave population were wickedly torn from their native land, and brought to our shores. The English government forced slavery upon the colonies. The constitutions and laws of the United States and of the different states were not made exclusively nor chiefly by christians, certainly not by Presbyterians. Slavery was unwisely and not without sin, perpetuated and extended. Christians, now living in the slave-holding states, have not reduced free men to a state of servitude; they found the slaves in their present condition, and the system of slavery established and upheld by the laws of the several states. The question is—what is their duty to the slaves, whom they find in their present condition? That they are bound to ameliorate their condition as fast and as far as they can, consistently

with other paramount duties, I admit and maintain; but how far they can go, under existing circumstances, in securing to them freedom, is an important and difficult question. Whether, if it were possible, (which it is not,) for the christians in the slave-holding states to have all the slaves at once manumitted amongst them, their condition would be improved or made worse, is at least a debatable question. The General Assembly of 1818, to whose action on this subject Abolitionists so constantly refer, evidently thought some preparation necessary before a general emancipation would prove a blessing to the colored population. That body said: "As our country has inflicted a most grievous injury on the unhappy Africans, by bringing them into slavery, we cannot, indeed, urge that we should add a second injury to the first, by emancipating them in such manner as that they will be likely to destroy themselves or others." *Digest*, page 344.

Do you say, let all christians seek, by all peaceable and suitable means, such a change in the constitution and laws, as will result in the gradual emancipation of the slaves? Agreed; but such is not the doctrine of the Abolitionists. They say, slave-holding is in itself a heinous and scandalous sin, and must be immediately abandoned. The question is—what is the duty of christians toward the slaves, so long as the civil government continues the system? Does the golden rule forbid the christians of slave-holding states to be owners of slaves, however kindly they may treat them, however faithfully they may cause them to be instructed in religious truth? I will present a few cases, such as frequently occur, and leave every reasonable man to decide what would be the operation of the golden rule, as applied to them.

A slave who has an ungodly master, who has determined to sell him (or being about to remove, to carry him) far away from his wife and children, comes to a christian man, and begs him with tears to purchase him, that he may remain with them. He appeals in the strongest manner to his feelings. He tells him, he will esteem it the greatest possible favor, if he will purchase him, keep him with his family, and allow him to serve him. Now suppose this christian man desires most sincerely to act according to the golden rule; what ought he to do? Do you say, let him buy him, and set him free? But he has not five or six hun-

dred dollars to give as a present to this slave. He has many other duties to discharge, still more binding upon him. Do you say, let him buy him and hold him until he by his labor pays for himself? Very well; but how long will it require for him to do this? It depends upon a great variety of circumstances, such as, the situation of the purchaser, whether he can afford thus to advance money for labor, whether he can make the labor profitable, what kind of labor the slave can perform, his continued health, &c. &c. In the mean time the purchaser has no security for his money, should the slave sicken and die. How long, then, ought he to hold the slave? He did not desire to purchase him. He has done so in kindness to him, putting himself, it may be, to great trouble to raise the money. Will you make the church sessions committees to go and make all the necessary calculations, and decide when all such slaves have paid for themselves and ought to be free? In the nature of the case, it must be left to the conscience of the purchaser to do what is right; and the church can do no more than Paul did—say to the master, give your servant “that which is just and equal.”

But the question recurs—did that christian man violate the golden rule, when he purchased the slave at his own importunate request? He would have been glad to make him a free man. He cannot do this; but he can place him in a far better condition than he is now in. He can treat him kindly, and prevent his being torn from his family. He has not reduced him to a state of servitude; but has improved his condition. Put yourself in the condition of that slave, and say, what you would desire a christian man to do for you. I would esteem such a man my best earthly friend and benefactor. The truth is, in such cases, the golden rule makes the christian the owner of a slave. I envy not the feelings of the man who can condemn such an individual.

Let me state another case of frequent occurrence. An individual falls heir to a dozen, or twenty, or fifty slaves. Some of them are old, and require to be taken care of. Others are women with a number of small children. Suppose he desires not to be the owner of slaves; will the Abolitionists tell us, what he ought to do with them? Do they say, let him set them all free? But what is to become of the old servants? Would it be kindness or cruelty to liber-

ate them, and send them out to take care of themselves? And then what is to become of the women and children? The husbands of those women are held in bondage by other men; and no one would feed, clothe, and take care of them and their children for their labor. Would it be kindness to send them to seek a home and support for themselves?

But suppose he should determine to manumit them all; the law of Kentucky, for example, forbids him to do so, without giving bond and security for their support, that they shall not become a public expense. The law passed in 1842, is as follows: "That the several County Courts of this Commonwealth, before granting certificates of freedom to any slave or slaves, emancipated according to the existing laws of this Commonwealth, shall demand bond and sufficient security, to provide that said slave or slaves shall not become chargeable to any county in this Commonwealth." Is it the duty of a man or woman to give bond and security for the support of a dozen, or twenty, or fifty slaves, of different ages,—slaves whom he has not reduced to a state of servitude, whom he did not desire to possess? How many of our zealous Abolitionists could be induced to do it?

But, perhaps, as the case not unfrequently is, the man who inherits the slaves, has very little property besides. Even if he were disposed to give bond and security for the support of his slaves; who, knowing his condition, would become his security? Does the golden rule require him to solicit his friends to become his securities. How many of our Abolitionists would underwrite for such a man?

But in some of the states the law forbids men to manumit their slaves, unless they will remove them from the state. Do you say, let them remove them to Ohio? There are two most serious difficulties in the way: 1st. A number of them have husbands or wives who belong to other men; and they are not willing, and it would not be right, to be separated from them. 2nd. The law of Ohio requires every free person of color, coming to reside in the state, to give *two free-holders* in the county where he expects to reside, as securities for his good conduct and his support; and this he must do within *twenty days* after coming into the county. Would it be easy to find such securities for a number of slaves brought to Ohio to be set free?

The truth is, there are insuperable difficulties in the way

of many who might be disposed to manumit their slaves. They cannot do it. Certainly they cannot, without disregarding other paramount duties. Some years since, whilst the subject of slavery was under discussion in the Synod of Kentucky, and when some were urging the duty of immediate emancipation, an elder rose in the Synod, an eminently pious man—and stated that he had inherited a large number, perhaps near a hundred slaves, of the different ages and conditions already mentioned. He said, he had no desire to own them, but wished to do for them the best that under the circumstances he could do; and called upon the brethren earnestly to tell him what to do with them. As to paying them wages, he said, *they were eating him up*—they were, taken all together, a serious expense. And now I ask the Abolitionists to tell, what ought he to have done?

The truth is, neither the precepts nor the principles of the Gospel require persons, without regard to circumstances, to liberate their slaves; and it is not only the height of folly, but the most flagrant injustice, to denounce all slaveholders indiscriminately as tyrants, robbers, oppressors, and the like. Even Dr. Wayland, though he asserts that the *principles* of the Gospel forbid slavery, and though he urges the duty of immediate emancipation, is obliged to admit that there may be circumstances in which it would not be proper immediately to liberate slaves. His language is as follows: “But it may be said, immediate abolition would be the greatest possible injury to the slaves themselves. They are not competent to self-government. This is a question of fact, which it is not within the province of philosophy to decide. *It very likely may be so.* So far as I know, the facts are not sufficiently known to warrant a full opinion on the subject. We will, therefore, suppose it to be the case, and ask, what is the duty of masters *under these circumstances?* 1. The situation of the slaves, in which this obstacle to their emancipation consists, is not by their *own act*, but by the *act of their masters*; and, therefore, *the masters are bound to remove it.*” This, by the way, is not strictly true. The masters of those now in slavery are not, at least many of them, guilty of the charge here made. *They* did not bring those people into slavery. I know, there is a sense in which we may be responsible, to a certain extent, for the wrong acts of our ancestors; but I know, too, that we are not responsible for their evil or un-

wise acts, as for our own. One generation may create difficulties which it will require the efforts of several succeeding generations to remove. But let us read a little further.

The Doctor says—"But it may be said, this cannot be done, unless the slave is held in bondage until the object be accomplished. This is also a question of fact, on which I will not pretend to decide. But suppose it to be so, the question returns, what then is the duty of the master? I answer, supposing such to be the fact, it may be the duty of the master to hold the slave; not, however, *on the ground of right over him*, but of *obligation to him*, and of obligation to him for the *purpose of accomplishing a particular and specified good.*" *Moral Philosophy*, pages 216, 217. Circumstances, the Doctor admits, may exist, which will not only justify the master in holding the slave, for a time, but make it his *duty* to do so, and, of course, a *sin* to do otherwise. Whether such circumstances do exist in our country he says, "I do not feel competent to decide." Would that Abolitionists generally had a little of the modesty manifested by this wise and good man.

Wayland, though quite zealous in his Abolition views, admits everything for which we contend. He admits, that the masters and servants addressed by Paul in Eph. vi. 5—, 1 Tim. vi. 1, &c., were slave-holders and slaves, and, of course, that the former were received into the apostolic churches. And speaking of the paragraph in which he attempts to reconcile this admission with his Abolition notions, he says, in a note in the 5th edition, page 216,—“I have retained the above paragraph, though I confess that the remarks of Professor Taylor, of the Union Theological Seminary of Virginia, have led me seriously to doubt whether the distinction to which it alludes [viz: that slaves are never required to obey masters, *because it is right*, but because the cultivation of meekness and forbearance under injury, will be well-pleasing to God,] is sustained by the New Testament.” He admits, that the Gospel does not command masters to manumit their slaves, nor does it authorize slaves to free themselves from their masters, page 212. He admits, that there may be circumstances which justify, and even require masters to hold their slaves for a time at least. These admissions, which his good sense, and his knowledge of the Scriptures constrained him to make, are fatal to modern Abolitionism.

We come, then, clearly to the conclusion, that the doctrine of Abolitionists is not sustained, either by the precepts or by the principles of the Gospel. It is directly in the face of both. Consequently, Abolitionists are condemning those whom God has not condemned, and attempting to exclude from the church multitudes of his faithful children; and are causing divisions in the church of Christ by making new terms of communion. This is fearful work. Well may they tremble in view of their false doctrine and their reckless course.

I rejoice, and thank God, that in this day of agitation, wild-fire and fanaticism, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, regardless of the reproaches of her enemies, has taken her stand on the doctrine of God's Word, and refused to agitate and divide her ranks by making new terms of communion. Let Abolitionists slander her by pronouncing her doctrine *pro-slavery*. She will still move on, proclaiming to master and slave the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ; and just as did his apostles, she will aid in removing the evils of slavery, and (as far as, acting within her proper sphere, she may be able) slavery itself.

On this point I shall have something to say in my second Lecture.

SECOND LECTURE.

IN my first lecture, I was very particular to state the precise points in regard to which we differ from the Abolitionists. The question is not whether it is right to force a free man into slavery; nor whether slavery is an evil, the removal of which should be sought in a proper way; nor whether the particular laws by which, in the several states, it is regulated, are just and righteous; nor whether masters may regard their slaves, not as *sentient beings*, but as *things*; but simply whether slave-holding is, under all circumstances, a sin, calling for the discipline of the church. I was particular in stating, that I have not a word to say in favor of slavery, as a desirable institution, or an institution which ought to be perpetuated; that I am, and ever have been, decidedly opposed to it; and am prepared, at all times, to aid in its removal from our country, as rapidly as it can be re-

moved peaceably, on scriptural principles, and with safety to the parties involved in it. In other words, I am prepared to do all that the Scriptures authorize, in order to its ultimate removal. But with the venerable Dr. Tyler, I say, "Much as I abhor slavery, I will not go farther than the Bible will allow me, in condemning it."

Yet, in the *Morning Herald*, of this city, the public are informed that I delivered a lecture in defence of slavery, or in opposition to "the advocates of human liberty." There is not an individual who heard the lecture, who does not know the charge to be false. The editor, however, (who tells us he was not present,) is but carrying out the policy of his party. Every man who refuses to adopt their unscriptural and fanatical opinions, and their revolutionary measures, is, by these pretended friends of humanity, denounced as an advocate of slavery. Such men as Dr. Tyler, of Connecticut, Drs. Chalmers and Cunningham, of Scotland, and even the New England clergy generally, fall under these denunciations. If slander and misrepresentation could abolish slavery, doubtless they would soon accomplish the work. And by what right do these gentlemen claim to be, *par excellence*, "the advocates of human liberty?" Gregory XVI. claims to be the head of the Church, and with quite as much truth. It is not uncommon for men in our world to lay exclusive claim to virtues, in proportion as they are destitute of them.

I desire now to say something concerning the duty of the church, with regard to slavery. Before doing so, however, it may be well to notice some of the charges recently made against our General Assembly, not heretofore adverted to.

1. The General Assembly decided, that slave-holding is not in itself a sin, to be visited with the discipline of the church. This doctrine has been pronounced by the *very sage* editor of the *Watchman of the Valley*, and others of the same party, new, and almost unheard of. "The Old School General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States," says he, "for the year 1845, stands single and alone in pronouncing American slavery a justifiable, a righteous, an apostolically authorized 'relation!'" In order to make the charge with a good grace, the editor found it necessary most grossly to misrepresent the action of the Assembly. Every man of common sense, who reads the Report adopted by that body, does know, that they did not

pronounce American slavery a justifiable, a righteous, an apostolically authorized relation. One of the saddest evidences of the unchristian spirit pervading the Abolition ranks, is the astonishing disregard of truth, even in men professing to be ministers of the Gospel. It might be admitted, that American slavery is, in its character, most iniquitous—that every state where it exists, ought immediately to abolish it—I say, this *might be* admitted; and yet it might be true, that individual christians, involved in the evil unavoidably, are not sinning, though they sustain the relation of masters to slaves. “Distinction,” says the venerable Dr. Chalmers, “ought to be made between the character of a system, and the character of the persons whom circumstances have implicated therewith.” The Assembly decided nothing concerning *the system of American slavery*. The question answered by the Assembly is as follows: “Do the Scriptures teach that the holding of slaves, without regard to circumstances, is a sin, the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the church of Christ?” This question they answered in the negative—that the mere fact of slave-holding is not a sin which should exclude from the church. Is the doctrine new, as the editor of the *Watchman* pretends? On the contrary, Dr. Chalmers, certainly as extensively read as the editor, declares the opposite doctrine—the doctrine of the Abolitionists—to be “a factitious and new principle, which not only wants, but which contravenes, the authority of Scripture and of apostolic example; and, indeed, has only been heard of in Christendom within these few years, as if gotten up for an occasion, instead of being drawn from the repository of that truth which is immutable and eternal.” The doctrine of the Report, as I have proved, is that of almost every respectable commentator and critic, however decidedly anti-slavery in their views and feelings.

But did the Assembly teach a doctrine different from that of previous Assemblies? This charge has been made; but it is untrue, as any one can satisfy himself, by examining the *Assembly's Digest*. No General Assembly of our church ever took the ground, that slave-holding is in itself a sin to be visited by the discipline of the church. When the Presbyterian church in the United States was organized, slavery existed in all the states in which it had churches planted; and who ever heard of a man being excluded from

the church, or even censured, simply because he was a slave-holder? Can one instance of the kind, sanctioned by any General Assembly, be produced? The Synod of New York and Philadelphia, in 1787, had the following action on the subject of slavery:

“The Synod, taking into consideration the overture concerning slavery transmitted by the committee of overtures, came to the following judgment: The Synod of New York and Philadelphia do highly approve of the general principles in favor of universal liberty that prevail in America, and the interest which many of the states have taken in promoting the abolition of slavery. Yet, inasmuch as men introduced from a servile state to a participation of all the privileges of civil society, without a proper education, and without previous habits of industry, may be, in many respects, dangerous to the community; therefore, they earnestly recommend it to all the members belonging to their communion, to give those persons who are at present held in servitude such good education as to prepare them for the better enjoyment of freedom; and they, moreover, recommend that masters, wherever they find servants disposed to make a just improvement of the privilege, would give them a peculium, or grant them sufficient time and sufficient means of procuring their own liberty at a moderate rate; that thereby they may be brought into society with those habits of industry that may render them useful citizens: and, finally, they recommend it to all their people to use the most prudent measures, consistent with the interests and the state of civil society in the countries where they live, to procure eventually the final abolition of slavery in America.”

Now mark the fact: the Synod did not *command* or *enjoin* any thing upon their members concerning slavery, as if they regarded the relation between master and slave as in itself sinful; they *recommend*.—And what did they recommend? Immediate emancipation? No—on the contrary, they express the opinion, that “men introduced from a servile state to a participation of all the privileges of civil society, without a proper education, and without previous habits of industry, may be, in many respects, dangerous to the community;” and therefore, they *recommend* to their members to give their slaves such education as would prepare them for freedom—and “to use the most prudent mea-

asures, consistent with the interests and the state of civil society in the countries where they live, to procure eventually the final abolition of slavery in America." Is this an Abolitionist document? Does it propose to exclude all slaveholders from the church? Does it even *recommend* immediate emancipation? Is it not precisely in accordance with the doctrine of the Report adopted by our Assembly?

In 1795, the following overture was presented to the General Assembly:

"A serious and conscientious person, a member of a Presbyterian congregation, who views the slavery of the negroes as a moral evil, highly offensive to God, and injurious to the interests of the Gospel, lives under the ministry of a person, and amongst a society of people, who concur with him in sentiment on the subject upon general principles; yet, for particular reasons, hold slaves, and tolerate the practice in others: ought the former of these persons, under the impressions and circumstances above described, to hold christian communion with the latter?"

To which they gave the following answer:

"Whereupon, after due deliberation, it was *Resolved*, That as the same difference of opinion with respect to slavery takes place in sundry other parts of the Presbyterian church, notwithstanding which they live in charity and peace, according to the doctrine and practice of the apostles; it is hereby recommended to all conscientious persons, and especially to those whom it immediately respects, to do the same."

Here we find the Assembly, so far from making the holding of slaves a bar to christian communion—a sin which should be visited by the discipline of the church—recommending all persons, however opposed to slavery, to live in harmony, in charity and peace, with their brethren who were slave-holders, "*according to the doctrine and practice of the apostles.*" The Assembly thus plainly declare, that the apostles taught that slave-holding is not a sin, which should exclude a person from the church, and that they practiced accordingly, admitting slave-holders to christian fellowship.

In 1815, the General Assembly "urged the Presbyteries under their care, to adopt such measures as will secure, at least to the rising generation of slaves, within the bounds of the church, a religious education; that they may be pre-

pared for the exercise and enjoyment of liberty, *when God, in his Providence, may open a door for their emancipation.*" They also re-affirmed the advice to all their members, to make no difficulty about holding christian fellowship with slave-holders. They further remarked as follows:

"This is deemed a sufficient answer to the first petition; and with regard to the second, the Assembly observe, that, although in some sections of our country, under certain circumstances, the transfer of slaves may be unavoidable, yet they consider the buying and selling of slaves by way of traffic, and all undue severity in the management of them, as inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel. And they recommend it to the Presbyteries and Sessions under their care, to make use of all prudent measures to prevent such shameful and unrighteous conduct."

Will any one pretend that this is an Abolition document? Does it denounce slave-holding, as in itself a sin, and slave-holders as worthy of exclusion from the church? Far from it. That body deplored the evils of slavery, but was far from adopting the doctrines of our modern Abolitionists.

In 1818, the General Assembly adopted a paper, in which, after strongly expressing their views of the evil of slavery, they proceed to state what they conceive to be the duty of christians in regard to it. They say—"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, has 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.

"We rejoice that the church to which we belong, commenced, as early as any other in this country, the good work of endeavoring to put an end to slavery;* and that, in the same work, many of its members have ever since been, and now are, among the most active, vigorous, and efficient laborers. We do, indeed, tenderly sympathize with those portions of our church and our country, where the evil of

* In a note, the Assembly republished the minute of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, on this subject, which the reader may find in Sect. 2, preceding.

slavery has been entailed upon them; where a *great*, and *the most virtuous part* of the *community* abhor slavery, and wish its extermination as sincerely as any others; but where the number of slaves, their ignorance, and their vicious habits generally, render an immediate and universal emancipation inconsistent, alike with the safety and happiness of the master and the slave. With those who are thus circumstanced, we repeat that we tenderly sympathize. At the same time, we earnestly exhort them to continue, and, if possible, to increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery. We exhort them to suffer no greater delay to take place, in this most interesting concern, than a regard to the public welfare *truly* and *indispensably* demands.

“As our country has inflicted a most grievous injury on the unhappy Africans, by bringing them into slavery, we cannot, indeed, urge that we should add a second injury to the first, by emancipating them in such manner as that they will be likely to destroy themselves or others. But we do think, that our country ought to be governed in this matter, by no other consideration than an honest and impartial regard to the happiness of the injured party: uninfluenced by the expense or inconvenience which such a regard may involve. We therefore warn all who belong to our denomination of christians, against unduly extending this plea of necessity; against making it a cover for the love and practice of slavery, or a pretence for not using efforts that are lawful and practicable to extinguish the evil.

“*And we, at the same time, exhort others* to forbear harsh censures, and uncharitable reflections on their brethren, who unhappily live among slaves, whom they cannot immediately set free; but who, at the same time, are really using all their influence, and all their endeavors, to bring them into a state of freedom, as soon as a door for it can be safely opened.”

Well, did this Assembly, to whose action Abolitionists have so clamorously referred, teach, that the holding of slaves was, in itself, sinful, and that slave-holders ought to be excluded from the church? Did they *enjoin*, or even *recommend*, immediate and universal emancipation, on the part of christian slave-holders? On the contrary, they say, “We do tenderly sympathize with those portions of our church and our country, where the evil of slavery *has been*

entailed upon them ; where a great, and the most virtuous part of the community abhor slavery, and wish its extermination as sincerely as any others—but where the number of slaves, their ignorance, and their vicious habits generally, render an immediate and universal emancipation inconsistent, alike with the safety and happiness of the master and the slave.” Nay, so far from countenancing the doctrine of modern Abolitionism, that all slave-holders are guilty of heinous and scandalous sin, and ought to be disciplined by the church, the Assembly exhorted all persons “to forbear harsh censures, and uncharitable reflections on their brethren, who unhappily live among slaves, *whom they cannot immediately set free ;* but who, at the same time, are really using all their influence, and all their endeavors, to bring them into a state of freedom, as soon as a door for it can be safely opened.” In the same paper, the Assembly warmly recommend the American Colonization Society, an institution most cordially hated by Abolitionists, and strongly approved by the well-informed philanthropist. How far was this Assembly from teaching Abolitionism !

It is not true, then, that the late Assembly took any new ground on this subject. On the contrary, that body took its stand just where the Presbyterian church in the United States has ever stood, since its organization.

I have already intimated, that the charge against our church, as “*the slave church of America,*” as “unconscientious,” as conniving at the sin of slavery, or as upholding it, comes with a particularly ill grace from those who have made it—I mean the New School men. What ground does the New School church occupy, with reference to slavery ? Have they marched up to the question, pronounced slave-holding a heinous and scandalous sin, and excluded slave-holding ministers and members from their communion ? They have amongst them certainly enough of “the New England spirit,” which, Prof. Stowe says, we are driving from our ranks. What, then, have they done ?

In 1839, the first year of their separate existence, the New School Assembly referred the whole subject to their Synods and Presbyteries, to take such order upon it as they thought proper. This they did, knowing well that there were Synods and Presbyteries in slave-holding states, connected with them, which would not exclude slave-holders

from their communion, nor even rebuke them. In 1840, after a stormy debate, their Assembly indefinitely postponed the whole subject, requesting those bodies that had made slave-holding a bar to christian fellowship, to rescind their acts. This they did, too, when one of the most prominent ministers of that body stated, publicly, that he had recently sold a slave, and expected to get the money for it! In 1843, the last time the Assembly met, after a boisterous discussion, in which they came near dividing, they adopted the following paper:

“Rev. Dr. Dickinson moved the postponement of Dr. Hill’s resolution, for the purpose of taking up the following substitute:

Whereas, there is in this Assembly great diversity of opinion as to the proper and best mode of action on the subject of slavery; and

Whereas, in such circumstances, any expression of sentiment could carry with it but little weight, as it would be passed by a small majority, and must operate to produce alienation and division; and

Whereas, the Assembly of 1839, with great unanimity, referred this whole subject to the lower judicatories, to take such order as in their judgment might be adapted to remove the evil;

Resolved, That the Assembly do not think it for the edification of the church, for this body to take any action on the subject.”

Thus have the New School Assemblies, thrice in succession, refused to take any definite action on this subject. Thus, to use the *eloquent* language of the editor of the *Watchman of the Valley*, have they “*shut out the cry of the poor*”—thus “*settled the fate of groaning millions*”—refusing to say one word, in order to relieve them! Whereupon, Rev. Dr. Clelland, of Kentucky, from a slave-holding church, and Rev. Joseph C. Styles, an extensive slave-holder, took their seats as members of the New School Assembly!!!

Now, either the New School Assemblies of ’39, ’40, and ’43, believed that slave-holding is a heinous and scandalous sin, which ought to exclude those living in it from the church of Christ; or they did not. If they did not, they of course held the precise doctrine advanced by our Assembly, which, according to Prof. Stowe, made our church “the slave church.”

of America;" which, according to the Watchman of the Valley, ought to "expose its authors to the scorn and contempt of mankind;" and, therefore, the New School church is, equally with ours, and before it, "the slave church," and deserves "the scorn and contempt of mankind." If they did believe it, then they solemnly decided, that it was not *expedient* for them to exclude heinous and scandalous sinners from their communion, nor even to rebuke them! Nay, they deliberately postponed the whole subject, when one of those sinners boldly declared his sin on the floor of the Assembly; and as deliberately received into their body, commissioners from two slave-holding Presbyteries, (in addition to those previously connected with them,) at least one of whom, a minister, was notoriously a large slave-holder! Yet ministers connected with such a body, are not ashamed to attempt to cast great odium upon our church, because our Assembly would not make slave-holding a bar to christian fellowship! Would it not be wise in them, first to cast the beam out of their own eye, that they might see clearly to remove the mote from the eye of their brethren?

Look at the attitude of their church in any light; and it is far worse than that of ours. If slave-holding is a sin, which should exclude those guilty of it from the church; and if the New School know it; then are they exposed to the "many stripes" threatened against the servant, who knew his master's will, and did it not. If it is not, our church is on the true ground. We have, at least, the merit of having marched up to the question, and decided it on what we believe to be scriptural principles, not on the ground of *expediency*!

Again—the decision of '39, by which the New School referred the subject to the lower courts, has created a *schism* in that body—a schism allowed by the very reference. Some of the Presbyteries in the New School body, after that reference, passed resolutions excluding slave-holders from their pulpits and communion. The New School Assembly of '40 requested those bodies to rescind those resolutions—*thus, in fact, adopting the doctrine of our Assembly, that the holding of slaves is not a bar to christian fellowship*. Those bodies have not thought proper to comply with this "*pro-slavery*" request, (for such it is, according to our New School Abolitionists); and, consequently, ministers in good standing in that body, in Kentucky or Vir-

ginia, are excluded from the pulpits of their brethren in other states; and members in good standing are excluded from the Lord's table. And recently, the Presbytery of Cincinnati (New School) refused to dismiss a licentiate to join a Presbytery of the same church in a slave-holding state. Thus there is schism in the body; and our New School brethren not only have the sin of slavery, if it is a sin, but the sin of schism also.

I should not have said so much, if any thing, concerning the course of the New School, but for the unprovoked attacks made upon us from that quarter.

The editor of the Watchman of the Valley contrasts the action of the late Detroit convention, with "the dark, unrighteous action of the recent General Assembly in this city." That convention, of course, we are to suppose, did march up, like men, to the question, and declared the holding of slaves a heinous and scandalous sin, and all slaveholders worthy of excommunication. Let us look at the Report adopted by that body. It is as follows:

"WHEREAS, The convention held at Cleveland, June 20, did, with great and most desirable unanimity, record their solemn and decided testimony against the system of American slavery, as a great *moral, personal, and political* evil, threatening the best interests and hopes of our beloved country; and declared it to be the duty of all men, in all suitable ways, to make known their hearty disapprobation of the system, especially by avoiding all such fellowship with those who uphold it, as might imply any connivance at its perpetuity and extension; therefore,

Resolved, That this convention (more numerous attended, and covering a still wider field than the one here referred to) feel called upon, at its present session, deliberately to adopt and re-affirm this decided declaration of sentiment on this great subject; and, at the same, to express their unfeigned gratitude to God, that, in every way, by the advances of his providence and the triumphs of his truth; by the more earnest counsels, the deeper-toned remonstrances, and the increasingly fervent desires and prayers of the wise and good of all lands, touching the evil in question, he is affording us cheering tokens that he is about to establish the principles here recognized in all hearts, and to work a practical conformity thereto, in all benevolent associations and operations throughout the universal christian church. In the

prospect of such a blessed consummation, this convention heartily rejoice, and for it, as in duty bound, they will unceasingly pray."

Never was there a more complete evasion of the question, the great question, between us and the Abolitionists. The convention bear "their solemn and decided testimony," against what? Against the holding of slaves by individuals? No—but against "*the system of American slavery.*" AND WHO HAS DEFENDED THE SYSTEM OF AMERICAN SLAVERY? The question pressed on our Assembly by Abolitionists, was not whether the system of American slavery is right or wrong; but whether those professing christians holding slaves, should be excluded from the church—whether the mere fact of slave-holding is a heinous sin? This important question the convention took care to evade altogether.

But what, according to this enlightened convention of New School Presbyterians and Congregationalists, is the duty of individual christians on this subject? Why, in all suitable ways to make known their hearty disapprobation of the system. What are "suitable ways" of doing this duty? Each, of course, is left to judge for himself. So we have always done, and have manifested our opposition to it as truly as the convention. But it is our duty to "avoid all such fellowship with those who uphold it (the system), as might imply any connivance at its perpetuity or extension." Here some important questions arise, which the convention did not think proper to settle, viz: 1. Who are they that *uphold the system of American slavery*? Are all chargeable with upholding it, who do not believe every slave-holder guilty of heinous and scandalous sin? who are not modern Abolitionists? Are those who are in favor of gradual emancipation, guilty of upholding the system? Are the friends of colonization chargeable with this sin? The convention has left this matter perfectly indefinite. 2. Again—we are told, that we ought not to hold "*such* fellowship with those who uphold it, as might imply any connivance at its perpetuity," &c. Now the question arises—what kind of fellowship would imply connivance at its perpetuity? Suppose Dr. Beecher, who was a member of this convention, should allow Rev. Mr. Leach, or Rev. Mr. Styles, of Virginia, (both slave-holders,) to preach in his church: would this imply connivance at the perpetuity of slavery? Or, if he were to commune in one of the New:

School slave-holding churches of Virginia or Kentucky, would he thus connive at it? All indefinite again.

3. We are not to hold such fellowship with the upholders of this system, as might imply any connivance at its "*perpetuity and extension.*" Observe, they do not say, we must show no connivance at its *existence*, but at its *perpetuity and extension*.

Now, the simple truth is—this document was drawn with great care, so as to mean *any thing* or nothing, as each individual pleases. Interpreted by an Abolitionist, it is a completely Abolition document; and yet *three-fourths* of the slave-holding christians in Kentucky and Virginia could readily adopt it. It has some appearance of being quite a bold testimony against slavery; and yet it is just no testimony at all, so far as individual slave-holders are concerned. For example, a man, or a convention of men, might bear solemn testimony against *the system of land-holding* in England, as unjust, without saying one word against the moral character of individual land-holders. The convention, therefore, with a great show of moral courage, avoided touching the only questions now agitating the churches and the people of this country, touching slavery!

I must not omit to notice another attempt made by the enemies of our church to cast odium upon our General Assembly. That body has been charged with hurrying, with indecent haste, to dispose of the subject, and with preventing discussion. The subject of slavery has been agitating the church and the country for years past. Is it to be supposed, that the members of the Assembly had not formed their opinion, as to the question, whether slave-holding is in itself sinful, or whether slavery is to be abolished by the wild and revolutionary measures of the Abolitionists? If they had made up their minds on this subject, why should they spend time in discussing it? Suppose the question, whether Christ is truly and properly divine, had been pressed upon that body; and suppose they had decided it without debate; would not the Unitarians have had the same right to reproach them, that the Abolitionists have?

But they ought to blush to make such a charge. For years past, they have been pressing the subject of slavery upon the attention of each succeeding Assembly; and loud and long have been their complaints, that they would not discuss it. Special efforts were made to have it brought

before the last Assembly; their memorials were received, and referred to a committee. From that committee they, of course, expected a report; and the report, they knew, would open the way for discussion—the very thing they had so long and so ardently desired. Well—the report was *twice* distinctly read in their hearing. The Abolitionists say, it is a pro-slavery document, of the very worst character. And yet there was not a man on the floor of the Assembly, who would venture to make a speech against it. They called for time—for two or three days,—to consider how they should oppose a *pro-slavery* report! The report was read about an hour before the Assembly adjourned for the evening. If any one would have made a speech of an hour, the Abolitionists would have had time enough before the Assembly met on the next day, to examine carefully the report. But let it be told, to the *honor* of Abolitionists, that after being clamorous for discussion for years, and after having made special preparations to meet the subject in the late Assembly, not an individual was prepared to speak against a report, declared to be outrageously pro-slavery! And now, to conceal their own want of courage, they attempt to cast great odium on the Assembly, because they took the vote when no one wished to speak! If I were an Abolitionist, I would blush for my cause; and would be ashamed to attempt to cover the want of moral courage in the party by casting reproach upon the Assembly.

The important question recurs—What is the duty of the church in relation to the subject of slavery? How can we, as christians, most effectually improve the condition of the slaves, and remove the evil of slavery from our country?

Slavery will never be abolished, nor the condition of the slaves be improved by the Abolitionists. The tendency and the effect of their principles and their practice is not only to perpetuate slavery, but to aggravate all its evils. It must be obvious to the common sense of every man, that if slavery is ever to be abolished, *it must be done with the consent of the people, and by the people of each of the slave-holding states.* They who could contribute to this result, must convince them, that it is their duty, or their interest, or both, to abolish it. This Abolitionists will never do.

1. In the first place, the doctrine of Abolitionists is directly in the face of the obvious teaching of the Bible, as it has ever been understood by the wisest and best men. It

is vain for them to assert, that the persons bought with the money of the Hebrews, who are declared to be their "possession," and the inheritance of their children, were not slaves. It is worse than vain for them to assert, that God gave express permission to them to form a relation in itself sinful. It is useless for them to tell slave-holders, that the masters and servants, addressed by the apostles, were employers and hired servants, not slave-holders and slaves; when every respectable commentator and critic asserts the opposite. And it is equally useless for them to say, that the apostles received into the church men guilty of heinous and scandalous sin, without requiring them immediately to abandon it. They have failed to convince the great body of wise and good men in the free states of the truth of their principles; and they are now bitterly denouncing ministers of the Gospel, anti-slavery men, because they do not see with their eyes. Then how, in the name of reason, do they expect to convince the people in the slave-holding states?

2. The spirit of crimination, denunciation, and slander, which characterize the Abolitionists as a body, together with their incendiary and revolutionary conduct, necessarily irritating to the highest degree the people of slave-holding states, destroys every particle of influence which they might have had, and makes the very name of Abolitionists to be detested, as combining everything hateful in moral character. If slave-holders are living in error and sin, they are to be reformed by kind, clear and conclusive evidence drawn from God's Word. What is the course of Abolitionists? They grossly slander slave-holders. Take the following from the *Edinburg Witness*, as an example.

"What shall we think of the state of society, where a *minister of the Gospel*, with credit to himself, avails himself of the Sabbath for inflicting special punishment, as is usual, that field-labor may not be interrupted, and being engaged in flogging a poor negro, when the hour of worship comes, leaves his victim fastened to the post, goes to the house of prayer, conducts the worship, dispenses the communion, comes back, and with unabated zeal goes on with his barbarous work."

Never did the father of lies fabricate a grosser falsehood. What, let me ask any man of common sense, must be the effect of such outrageous falsehoods constantly published in Abolitionist papers?

Whilst this subject was under discussion in the Synod of Cincinnati, last fall, a member made some statements concerning the laws of Louisiana, in consequence of which a lawyer from New Orleans—a member of the Episcopal church—handed me the following written statement:

1. "The member stated that Louisiana had passed a law against keeping a *Sunday School* [for slaves]—"five-hundred dollars fine for the first offence"—and death for the second." This is *absolutely untrue* in all its points.

2. The member said that the man who was arrested about the time of Mr. Schon's stay in the city of New Orleans, was apprehended for "circulating Bibles among slaves." This is *absolutely untrue*—he was arrested upon a charge of an attempted insurrection. It is no offence in Louisiana to distribute *Bibles* to slaves—and all who know anything of her laws know this fact.

3. The resolution now under action speaks of the separation of families, &c., &c. There is in Louisiana, an express legal prohibition to this injustice—and probably in most of the slave states.

4. As to illegal, cruel, or inhuman, treatment by the master to his slave, you but inform the proper authorities, and upon proof, the slave is sold into better hands—the master paying all costs of sale and the costs of the prosecution. This I have known done repeatedly, during the fourteen years of my practice in that state. JOHN P. McMILLIN."

Doubtless the member of the Synod believed what he stated to be true; but this only shows how readily Abolitionists give credence to false reports concerning slave-holders, and on how slight grounds they give them to the public as undoubtedly true. The tendency of such things to exasperate slave-holders and to injure the slaves, is manifest.

Do the Abolitionists go amongst slave-holders, and reason kindly with them? Far from it. They remain in the free states, and denounce them in public meetings and in newspaper publications, as man-stealers, robbers, tyrants, &c., &c. Was ever a human being reformed in this way? Suppose one of your neighbors living in the commission of some great sin; would you expect to reform him by getting up a meeting and denouncing him in the bitterest terms? Did our Savior or his apostles attempt to reform men in this way? Did Paul get up a public meeting in Jerusalem, and make speeches and pass resolutions denouncing either

the slavery or the superstition of the Pagans? No—like a man and a christian, he went to Athens, and said to the people as he stood in the midst of Mar's Hill—"Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." Thus uniformly did the apostles of Christ. Do the Abolitionists expect to reform Kentuckians by holding their meetings in Cincinnati, and abusing them? The Kentuckians are a magnanimous people; and they despise the character of men, who will stand on this side of the Ohio river, and denounce and abuse them.

But Abolitionists do not stop with slander and denunciation. They lay and execute plans for decoying slaves from their masters. Nay—they are not ashamed, at least some of the most prominent of them, to advise the slaves not only to leave their masters, but to steal whatever may be necessary, either in the slave-holding, or in the free states, for their escape. The following is the advice of the New York state Anti-slavery nominating convention to fugitive slaves. It is from the pen of Gerrit Smith, Esq.—"And when too, you are escaping from the matchlessly horrible Bastile, take, all along your route, in the free as well as in slave states, so far as it is absolutely essential to your escape, the horse, the boat, the food, the clothing which you require; and feel no more compunction for the justifiable appropriation, than does the drowning man for possessing himself of the plank that floats in his way."

When editors and ministers of the Gospel condemned this abominable advice, Smith came out in the following style: "The address to slaves was scarcely from the press, before numbers of our religious teachers, some of them affrighted simpletons, but doubtless far more of them wretched knaves, took to preaching the claims of the eighth commandment." This address, he says, "has developed the devilism in the clerical toads, and other toads among us."

Is it by such men, that slave-holders are to be induced to liberate their slaves? But why do I reason on the subject? Our civil union is now denounced by many Abolitionists. They evidently do not expect slavery to be abolished, as it has been in the older free states. They look, at least many of them, to the time when the slaves will rise, murder their masters, and thus secure liberty! The notorious Leavit talks of reasoning with slave-holders with "cold steel."

Can any man wonder, in view of the course pursued by

Abolitionists, that they are detested in the slave-holding states, or that mobs have been excited against them? *I have ever condemned all violence against them; and I condemn it still.* But who that knows anything of human nature, can wonder at the results?

3. The necessary tendency of Abolitionism is to take from both masters and slaves the only influence by which the condition of the latter can ever be improved,—I mean the Gospel of Christ. The Abolitionists will not go to the slave-holding states and preach the Gospel. Much as they have said about the darkness in which their population are enveloped, it is truly remarkable that none of them have felt called providentially to go and enlighten them. Their zeal has all been expended in the free states. Yet they have not failed to exhort ministers of the Gospel in those states to preach Abolitionism. They are not ashamed to exhort others to do what they have not the courage to do, and to denounce them for neglecting to do it. Thus they prove themselves destitute of the courage to oppose slavery as the apostles of Christ opposed whatever they regarded as sin, and of the magnanimity which would prevent them from condemning others for not doing what they themselves refuse to do.

Suppose, then, all the ministers of the Gospel in the slave-holding states, could at once be converted to Abolitionism; what would be the consequence? With one accord they would hasten to the free states; and every church would be closed. If any man becomes an Abolitionist in Kentucky, for example, he soon crosses the Ohio river. The good people of Kentucky very seldom hear an Abolitionist preach, and never heard one preach Abolitionism.

And if the preaching of the Gospel should cease in the slave-holding states, when would the evils of slavery be removed, or slavery abolished? No other influence most assuredly will ever improve the condition of the slave. Who does not see, that by withdrawing the Gospel from those states, and by irritating them to the highest degree by abuse, by decoying their slaves, and the like, the condition of the slaves would be made unspeakably worse, and the evils of slavery perpetuated? Rev. Dr. Spring, of New York, says—“The late Dr. Griffin, one of the most devoted friends of the colored race in this land, said to me, a few months before his death—*I do not see that the efforts in*

favor of immediate emancipation have effected anything but to rivet the chains of the poor slave.'" In this opinion Dr. Spring, a decidedly anti-slavery man, fully concurs.

Nor are these gentlemen singular in their opinion; many other eminently wise and good men, no less opposed to slavery than Abolitionists themselves, are of the same opinion. The venerable Dr. Chalmers says—"There are various methods, various lines of procedure and policy, in which philanthropists and patriots might enter, and join their forces for the abolition of slavery. The most unjustifiable, and, let me add, the most unwise and least effectual of these, were to pronounce a wholesale anathema, by which to unchristianize, or pass a general sentence of excommunication on slave-holders." Again, "But I must repeat my conviction, that slavery will not be at all shaken—it will be strengthened, and stand its ground—if assailed through the medium of that most questionable and ambiguous principle which the Abolitionists are now laboring to force upon our acceptance, even that slave-holding is, *in itself*, a ground of exclusion from the christian sacraments—instead of being assailed through the medium of such other and obvious principles as come home to the hearts and the consciences of all men." Similar views have been expressed by Rev. Dr. Cunningham of Scotland. Yet all these eminent men were and are opposed to slavery.

The Abolitionists will never abolish slavery, nor improve the condition of the slaves; but if their principles could prevail to any very great extent, they would not only abolish the peace, harmony, and union of the churches of Christ, but the christian ministry, the sabbath (which, by Gerrit Smith and others, has been devoted to political harangues,) and our civil union. It would involve our happy country in a most dreadful civil war.

This, though enough, is not all. The tendency of Abolitionism is to take the Gospel from the slave population. As already remarked, the Abolitionists will not go and preach to the slaves. They, therefore, must have the Gospel, if they have it at all, from the very men who are denounced by these fanatics as their greatest enemies! So deeply are the Abolitionists concerned about the temporal freedom of the slaves, that they leave their immortal souls in bondage to sin and Satan, and exposed to eternal ruin! They would take from them that Gospel which alone can liberate

them and make them happy even in bondage, and which will make them now and forever the freemen of Christ.

I rejoice to know, that the Gospel is preached both to masters and slaves, and with increasing zeal to the latter, and that thousands of them are disciples of Jesus Christ, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. It is preached by those ministers whom Abolitionists love to denounce as the bitterest enemies of the slaves. They say to them with Paul—"Art thou called being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather," Cor. vii. 21. For whom, I ask, will those slaves thank God in the day of judgment;—for the Abolitionist, who stood at a distance and abused their masters, or for those ministers who, far more concerned for their souls' salvation than for their present freedom, preached to them the "unsearchable riches of Christ?" In life, in death, and in eternity, they will thank God for the ministry of those faithful men who have taught them the way of life eternal. Abolitionism, whilst it will never secure to them liberty of body, will leave their souls in bondage to the devil.

Again, the question recurs—How is the condition of the slaves to be improved? and how is slavery to be abolished? I answer, in the language of the Assembly's Report—"The apostles of Christ sought to ameliorate the condition of slaves, not by denouncing and excommunicating their masters, but by teaching both masters and slaves the glorious doctrines of the Gospel, and enjoining upon each the discharge of their relative duties. Thus only can the church of Christ, as such, now improve the condition of the slaves in our country."

When masters become true christians, they are, of course, inclined to do for their slaves the best that, under existing circumstances, they can. The feeling of responsibility, and the benevolence which are characteristic of the real christian, will induce the master to regard and treat his slaves as his fellow-beings, rational, accountable, immortal. Thus the evils of slavery will be removed; and as Rev. Albert Barnes says—"The master would become the protector, the teacher, the guide, the friend; the servant would become the faithful helper—rendering service to one whom he loved, and to whom he felt himself bound by the obligations of gratitude and affection." *Comment. on Eph. vi.* Such a state of mind would incline the master to liberate his slaves

so soon as he could do so consistently. "There can be no doubt," says Barnes, "that not a few who were converted to the christian faith were held in involuntary servitude; and it is as clear that the apostles did not design to make a violent disruption of these bonds, or to lead the slaves to rise and murder their masters. * * * *. These principles (of the Gospel) actually effected the freedom of slaves in the Roman empire in a few centuries after christianity was introduced, and they are destined to effect it yet all over the world." *Comment. on Col. ch. iv.*

Scott, the Commentator, says—"This (1 Tim. vi. 1—) shows, that christian masters were not required to set their slaves at liberty, though they were instructed to behave toward them in such a manner, as would greatly lessen and nearly annihilate the evils of slavery—the principles of both, the law and the Gospel, when carried to their consequences, will infallibly abolish slavery." The apostles, according to Scott, left the abolition of slavery to the silent operation of the principles of the Gospel.

Dr. Spring says—"The Bible is no agitator. It gradually meliorates what it cannot suddenly remove. Instead of carrying fire and sword throughout the world, without the least prospect of advantage, it aims at making men holy, and fitting them for heaven. It changes human governments only as it changes human character; and thus produces all those alterations which commend themselves to a mind enlightened by the truth and Spirit of God. It aims at transforming the world; but it is by transforming the dispositions and hearts of men, and diffusing throughout all the social institutions, the supreme love of God, and the impartial love of man." *Obligations of World to Bib., pages 239, 240.*

Dr. Wayland, though very much of an Abolitionist, is constrained to admit, that the great Author of the Bible did not directly prohibit slavery, but inculcated those great principles which would ultimately remove it. In giving reasons why it was not directly prohibited, he remarks as follows:

"The reason *may be*, that slavery is a social evil; and that, in order to eradicate it, a change must be effected in the society in which it exists, and that this change would be better effected by the inculcation of the principles themselves which are opposed to slavery, than by the inculcation of a direct precept. Probably all social evils are thus most successfully remedied.

The Gospel was designed, not for one race, or for one time, but for all races, and for all times. It looked not at the abolition of this form of evil for that age alone, but for its universal abolition. Hence, the important object of its Author was, to gain for it a lodgment in every part of the known world; so that, by its universal diffusion among all classes of society, it might quietly and peacefully modify and subdue the evil passions of men; and thus, without violence, work a revolutionary reform in the whole mass of mankind. In this manner alone could its object, a universal moral revolution, have been accomplished. For, if it had forbidden the *evil*, instead of subverting the *principle*; if it had proclaimed the unlawfulness of slavery, and taught slaves to *resist* the oppression of their masters; it would instantly have arrayed the two parties in deadly hostility, throughout the civilized world: its announcement would have been the signal of servile war; and the very name of the christian religion would have been forgotten amidst the agitations of universal bloodshed. The fact, under these circumstances, that the Gospel does not forbid slavery, affords no reason to suppose that it does not mean to prohibit it; much less does it afford ground for belief, that Jesus Christ intended to *authorize it*."

In view of these sentiments, I should like to inquire, why the Abolitionists have thought proper to pursue a course of conduct so widely different from that adopted by the inspired apostles, in reference to slavery? Do they claim superior wisdom? The apostles did not denounce slave-holders; the Abolitionists do. The apostles did not require the immediate emancipation of slaves; the Abolitionists do. The apostles did not refuse fellowship with slave-holders; the Abolitionists do. In a word, the course of the Abolitionists is diametrically opposed to that of the apostles? *Whom shall we follow?*

How, then, has slavery been abolished, wherever this has been done? Not by conventions of men and women, of all sorts and of all creeds, from the infidel to the orthodox christian, assembled to denounce and excommunicate slave-holders. Indeed, it would be truly strange, if the church of Christ should be reduced to the humiliating necessity of seeking moral light from such a motley group.

In the Roman empire, slavery, we are told, was abolished ultimately by the general prevalence of the Gospel. In

the West India Islands, it was abolished by the influence of such men as Wilberforce, Clarkson, and others, who were far from being Abolitionists in the modern sense. The parliament had authority to do this thing; and they paid the slave-holders £20,000,000, as a compensation for the loss of their slaves. But our Abolitionists offer no money, unless it is to run fugitive slaves to Canada! Wilberforce reasoned with the men who had authority to abolish it. The Abolitionists pursue a very different course. They make their appeals to those who have neither the power nor the right to liberate the slaves.

How was slavery abolished in the older free states? Once it existed in New England, in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Was it abolished in these states by Abolitionist societies, by denouncing slave-holders from the pulpit and the press, as man-stealers, robbers, tyrants, heinous and scandalous sinners, and by excluding them from the church of Christ? *It was not.* Modern Abolitionism had not then been born. Churches were not then rent asunder. The passions of men were not excited by bitter denunciation, and by decoying their servants and running them to Canada. No mobs disturbed the peace by their violence. The Gospel was preached as it is now preached in the slaveholding states. Slave-holders stood, as in the apostolic churches, in good and regular standing. Public sentiment was gradually changed by the pure and benevolent principles of the Gospel of Christ; until, by a change in the laws of each state, the system of slavery was gradually abolished.

The slave laws of New York were more severe, and the treatment of slaves far more cruel, than now in the Southern states. "In New York," says Dr. Spring, "for a long series of years, the Bible appears to have exerted little influence in mitigating the condition of the slave. The master and mistress were authorized to punish their slaves at discretion, not extending to life or limb; and each town was authorized to appoint a common whipper for their slaves, to whom a salary was to be allowed. In the year 1740, it was observed by the legislature, that all due encouragement ought to be given to the direct importation of slaves, and all smuggling of slaves condemned, as an eminent discouragement of the fair trader! The criminal code against them was fearfully severe. When capitally impeached, they were often tried out of the ordinary course of jus-

tice, and denied the rights and privileges of free subjects under like accusations. They were convicted on suspicion, and on testimony that would have been rejected by any court where a white man was the accused person. In 1741, on the discovery of what was called "the negro plot," thirteen were adjudged to the stake in our own city (New York). The last execution of this kind was witnessed at Poughkeepsie, shortly before the commencement of the revolutionary war."

How was the condition of the slaves ameliorated, and slavery finally abolished in New York? Let Dr. Spring tell. "But this severity could not long be sustained in a christian land. In process of time, the penal code against slaves was meliorated; facilities were multiplied for the manumission of slaves; the importation of slaves was at length prohibited. Laws were enacted also, to teach the slaves to read, and a system commenced for the gradual abolition of slavery. Till at length, by the act of 31st of March, 1817, it was declared that every subject of the state, from and after the 4th day of July, 1827, shall be free."

By the operation of the same principles, slavery was abolished in Massachusetts, by their constitution; it was abolished in Connecticut, by statutes passed in 1783, and 1797, "which have, in their gentle and gradual operation, totally extinguished slavery in that state." In the same way, it was abolished in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.—See *Obliga. of World, to Bib. by Dr. Spring.*

It is, then, a fact, that slavery has been abolished in the older free states, not by the doctrines or the practices of the Abolitionists, but by the simple preaching of the Gospel, and the gradual moulding of public sentiment under its benign influence. It was abolished through the influence of those who pursued the course now pursued by the great body of ministers of the Gospel in the slave-holding states—by the influence of just such men as now fall under the bitterest denunciations of Abolitionists, who claim to be the exclusive friends of the slave, and of humanity.

The Abolitionists have, for years, agitated the public mind in our country; and what have they accomplished? Where did their principles ever abolish slavery? *Nowhere on the face of the earth.* They have, indeed, had their influence. They have excited mobs and violence by their grossly unchristian conduct. They have divided churches,

and caused bitter animosities amongst brethren. They have caused more severe laws to be enacted against the slaves, in some of the states. They have broken up Sabbath schools, where hundreds and thousands of them were taught to read God's Word. In Kentucky, there were a number of such schools, every one of which, I believe, was abandoned, because of the excitement produced by the fanatical course of Abolitionists. In Kentucky, moreover, public sentiment was rapidly ripening for the adoption of a plan for gradual emancipation. In 1833, the following law was passed :

That each and every person or persons, who shall hereafter import into the state any slave or slaves, or who shall sell or buy, or contract for the sale or purchase, for a longer term than 1 year, of the service of any such slave or slaves, knowing the same to have been imported as aforesaid, he, she, or they, so offending, shall forfeit and pay \$600, for each slave so imported, sold, or bought, or whose service has been so contracted for, recoverable by indictment of a grand jury, or an action of debt, in the name of the commonwealth of Kentucky, in any circuit court of the county where the offender or offenders may be found.—Exception was made in favor of emigrants to the state. The following oath to be taken before a justice of the peace within 60 days after arrival in the state: “I, —, do solemnly swear (or affirm), that my removal to the state of Kentucky was with intention of becoming a citizen thereof, and that I have brought with me no slave or slaves, with intention of selling them, so help me God.” And persons must also, within 30 days after making such oath, have had the same recorded in the office of the clerk of the county court, of the county in which the oath or affirmation was taken.—Exception in favor of sojourners and heirs.

The design of this law was to prevent an increase of the number of slaves, and thus prepare the way for the removal of the evil. And I rejoice that, notwithstanding the irritation produced by Abolitionists, the legislature has steadily refused to repeal it.

Yet the Abolitionists have succeeded in arresting the progress of public sentiment, not only in Kentucky, but in other states, in favor of gradual emancipation, in occasioning greater obstacles to be thrown in the way of those who would have liberated their slaves, in crippling the efforts of

the friends of the colored man, to instruct him in the doctrines of christianity. Still, hundreds, and perhaps thousands, have been liberated, under the influence of the Gospel, whose ministers are bitterly reproached by the Abolitionists; and many are now not only free, but prosperous, in the land of their fathers. The colonization society has indeed encountered mighty obstacles. It has had to meet the bitter opposition of Abolitionists, the unparalleled embarrassment in commercial affairs, and the difficulties necessarily incident to the establishment of new colonies in a distant land. And yet how delightfully its course and its success appear, in contrast with the achievements of Abolitionism. Its colonies, though not large, are now flourishing. Schools and churches are established amongst them, and a happy moral and religious influence moulds the character of the population. Thousands and tens of thousands of the natives are brought under their influence. The slave-trade is suppressed, so far as their influence and power extend. Those colonies are missionary stations, from which civilization and christianity are destined to extend through that benighted region.

This society has excited no mobs—divided no churches; it has not denounced the church of Christ, nor his ministers; it has not denounced, nor threatened, our civil union. The good it has done, has been accomplished in accordance with the great principles of philanthropy which characterize the Gospel.

And what have Abolitionists done toward liberating slaves? They have run off a few to Canada. What has become of them, or what good they are doing, we are not informed. Only we know that, occasionally, one returns to his master, preferring slavery to the freedom his Abolitionist friends secured him.

The course pursued by the apostles of Christ, the history of the efforts and the past success in removing the evils of slavery, prove, conclusively, that the only effectual method of accomplishing this object, is to preach, both to master and slave, the Gospel of Christ, exhorting each to the faithful discharge of their mutual duties. This method has been repeatedly tried, with cheering success. In the slave-holding states, it has gradually moulded public sentiment, improved the condition of slaves, liberated large numbers of them in a lawful way. Abolitionists have tried a different

method. They have denounced slave-holders, published false or exaggerated stories concerning the sufferings of slaves, sought to exclude slave-holders from the church of Christ, denounced ministers of the Gospel who would not adopt their newly discovered doctrines, and fall in with their fanatical measures. The withering effects of their course are now seen and felt. No sober-minded man, who will look at the past and the present, it seems to me, can hesitate in condemning it as evil, and only evil, continually.

Some have thought, the General Assembly ought to have devised some plan of hastening the abolition of slavery. This subject has been long before the public; and it has occupied the anxious thoughts of the wisest men. But, to this day, I have seen no practicable plan suggested by which the church of Christ can improve the condition of slaves, except that adopted by the apostles, and recommended by the Assembly. If any one can devise a better plan, I shall be happy to sit at his feet and learn wisdom. So long as the system of slavery exists, christians will, to a considerable extent, be slave-holders. It can scarcely be otherwise. Christianity will, however, remove the evils of slavery, just in proportion to its general prevalence in the slave-holding states; and ultimately, I trust, it will remove slavery itself, as it has done in the older free states.

Others have thought, the Assembly ought to have expressed their earnest desire for the abolition of slavery, and to have exhorted christians, as far as possible, to labor for that object. I do not learn, that the apostles of Christ ever devised any plan for the abolition of slavery, which prevailed in their day; or that they expressed any such desire, or gave any such exhortations. Doubtless they would have done so, if they had thought it proper and wise. Christians should be slow in censuring church courts for not doing what inspired men, under similar circumstances, did not do. Besides, it is vain to express such desires, and give such exhortations, unless we are prepared to devise something definite to be done. It is to be presumed, the brethren in the slave-holding states are doing all they consider practicable, under existing circumstances, to improve the condition of the slaves; and, until the General Assembly is prepared to recommend some definite course, which is better, these exhortations would be unavailing. Indeed, those of us who have lived in those states, have had reason to know, since

the Abolition fever has prevailed, that any decided action of the Assembly on the subject, tends only to cripple the efforts of those who are laboring to ameliorate the condition of the slaves.

To those brethren who are anxious to sustain the good work of removing the evil of slavery, I would venture to suggest the propriety of increased efforts, to send into those states a larger number of wise, prudent, godly ministers, who will preach the Gospel both to master and slave, who will be far more concerned to save the souls of both, than to liberate the one. Such men will do much, under God, to remove the evils complained of, and still more to make the slaves Christ's free men—the children of God, and the heirs of eternal life.

The sum of the whole matter is this: There are many and great evils connected with slavery; but slave-holding is not, *in itself*, sinful. The proof that it is not, is found in the facts—that God gave express permission to the Jews, to buy and hold slaves; and that the apostles of Christ received slave-holders into the church, as faithful brethren, and did not require them to manumit their slaves. And further, the principles of the Gospel, under certain circumstances, make men owners of slaves; because thereby they improve their condition, as far as other paramount duties permit. Finally, if slavery is ever to cease in America, it must be abolished by the people of the slave-holding states, or with their approbation; and the necessary change in public sentiment must be wrought, as it has been elsewhere, by the influence of the Gospel of Christ; not by Abolitionist societies; not by denouncing and excommunicating slave-holders, simply because they are such; not by the mad and wicked attempt to destroy our civil union. May God, in his mercy, guide his church into all truth, and overrule for good the evil works of misguided and dishonest men.

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