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SLAVERY

IN THE

Methodist Episcopal Church,

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

Sometime last winter we read an essay before the Cortland District Theological Association on the subject of church-slavery; a copy of which was solicited for the columns of the Northern Christian Advocate, and accordingly sent to the office of that paper. But as the Editor declined giving it to his readers, on account, as he said, of the severity of the style, and the darkness of the picture it drew of the church; it occurred to us that we might as well expand it into a small volume, and publish it into a more permanent form. He did indeed consent to admit it upon the condition that we would modify it somewhat in those points which he deemed exceptionable; but feeling that the proposed change, though it might improve the *picture*, would destroy the *likeness*, we could not make up our mind to do it.

The subject of church-slavery has become too serious a matter with us to admit of tameness. Our tampering, temporising, truckling policy has already been pursued quite too long. Its only effect has been to increase and strengthen an evil, which, like every other evil, continues to grow and become more and more insolent and uncontrollable the longer it is tolerated or indulged. A writer in the Northern Advocate whose weekly articles were entitled, "News of the day," very properly says,—“ In France, they license licentiousness, by giving 'letters of permission to houses of bad repute;' in this country, we act upon the same *principle*, though in application to other *cases*, by licensing rum-drinking, and slave-holding, both of which, we think, should be put promptly under the *ban*. The only way, in our judgment, to destroy all these moral Upases, is not to bind up and trim off their luxuriant branches, the only effect of which regimen is to give them a more rapid growth, but to lay the axe at the root of these poisonous trees, and keep up a continual

cutting till they fall! In other words, we go in for a prohibitory law."

The Demon of Slavery which entered into the Methodist societies at an early day, and which our fathers criminally failed to exorcise or cast out of the church at the time of her organization, has at length become installed over us as the *Genius Loci* of our institutions and government; and all our administrations and movements, in general, are now subject to the domineering surveillance of this ruthless Divinity! The liberty of speech and of the press, and the rights of conscience, if not wholly taken from us by the slave-power which has usurped the control of the church, can no longer be exercised with safety. Persecution and proscription—the sure harbingers of fire and faggot in those countries where religion is enabled to avail itself of the civil arm—are forever staring us in the face; and reminding us of the difficulties and perils that await our anti-slavery enterprise!

We have felt that it required a Wesley or a Luther, to stem the tide of despotism and corruption that is rolling its desolating wave over our church and country. Perhaps a much greater man than either would fail to extirpate church-slavery, or even to check the mighty torrent which has swept on with accumulated violence from year to year, and which so many of us have labored in vain to overcome or resist. He might rally around him that portion of our Israel who are truly and heartily anti-slavery in their character, and form the nucleus of a genuine anti-slavery church, should God in his Providence ever force us into a new organization, as he did the followers of Luther, and of Wesley; but it would doubtless result in another disruption of the body. Either the Reformer and his adherents must be put under the ban of excision for their intolerable heresy; or the pro-slavery caste among us, feeling that their "craft was in danger," would follow the example of their legitimate predecessors and exemplar—the Methodist Episcopal Church, South—and secede from the connection.

But though we are not a Luther or a Wesley, yet as these great luminaries were preceded and gradually introduced by lesser lights, and as some one must first break ground or throw himself into the breach preparatory to the achievement of victory; we feel it incumbent on us to step forward and do what little we can for the cause of God and humanity in that humble sphere. We are not unaware that the undertaking, in itself considered, is exceedingly unpleasant;

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especially as we feel ourselves called upon to lay open and rebuke the wickedness of the church. We deeply regret that the occasion has arisen. But the issue has been forced upon us, and it must be met. The church having yielded herself up to the slave-power, or become pro-slavery in her administration and government, has placed the subject of slavery beyond the reach of anti-slavery legislation, leaving us of the anti-slavery school no alternative but to arraign her at the bar of public opinion. And to this tribunal she must now be brought. The time has also come when stronger and more decided ground must be taken in our conflict with the slave-power. Slavery, in all its forms and phases—and especially in its legal relation, that damnable source of the whole damnable system—must be reprobated and denounced in the severest terms; and all fellowship with slaveholders must be eschewed and repudiated as a shameful complicity with their unparalleled wickedness. The pulpit and the press must raise the battle-cry of extermination against so horrible an evil, accompanying their declaration of war with correspondent action; and pour forth their denunciations and rebukes “in thoughts that breathe and words that burn.”

We are aware that much has been said and written of late against the institution of slavery. Its moral, political, and domestic aspects and bearings have been placed in a strong and convincing light before the public; and there would seem to be nothing more wanting to enlighten the public mind, or to arouse the conscience of the community in regard to this great evil. But still our anti-slavery literature, for the most part, is radically defective. *Church-slavery*, which lies at the foundation, and constitutes the bulwark of all slavery, in general, is seldom called in question. Our anti-slavery lectures, reports, discussions and other forms of presenting the subject to the world, are chiefly directed against slavery in the *abstract*; or against the *evils* of slavery, and the *abuses* of the institution; while the *guilt of the church*, and the *duty* devolving upon her to free herself from the abomination by the proper execution of Christian Discipline, are left almost wholly untouched. The idea seems to be, that the church has nothing to do with slavery in her *ecclesiastical capacity*; but regarding it as a matter of political economy, merely, she is at liberty to seek its abolition, regulation, or *perpetuation and extension* even, just as the financial interests of the country may require, *in the alone character of citizens*.

Now what is chiefly wanted in relation to this subject is, to effect

a change in our anti-slavery literature—a change which shall place all anti-slavery movements and doings upon the right foundation; and give to them the character and impulse of right motives. We must base our movements upon *principle* rather than *expediency*, and our motives must be drawn from *moral* rather than *economical* or *civil* considerations. Slavery is to be regarded as a *moral question*; and, like all other moral questions, to be disposed of by the Church irrespective of its *civil* relations and bearings, as a matter of ecclesiastical legislation and discipline.

Nor are we to leave the *state* to take the lead in the work of moral reform, the *church* following in her wake, as our pro-slavery theologians would have us believe. The church is not to be evangelized, or cured of slave-holding, through the state; but the state through the church. "Judgment must begin at the house of God." The church must lead the way—must set the example—"must cast the beam out of her own eye"—the abomination of slavery out of her own bosom; remembering that the gospel, instead of following in the track of civilization, or operating through the medium of state-laws, is graciously adapted to *precede* all such agencies, and to achieve its legitimate and grand design of reforming and saving mankind independently of them; coming directly to the heart and conscience, of *even the miserable slave-holder*, through the medium of the church. Let this ground be adopted by the church, and she will become a moral power by which slavery will soon be swept from the land.

But to bring about this most desirable state of things, or to effect the extirpation of church-slavery by which we have been so long cursed and crippled in our operations, our anti-slavery literature must take on a new character, and proceed on other grounds than those we have heretofore occupied upon the subject. Instead of catering to the cupidity and lust of the slave-holder by apologetic excuses for his wickedness; or of urging the emancipation of the slave from motives of political economy, and looking to civil legislation as the means of accomplishing it, we must bring our literature, and especially that most effective department of it—the *periodic press*—to bear directly upon the slavery of the church. The church must be admonished of her guilt; and taught to execute discipline upon her slave-holding members, excluding them from her communion, and repudiating all christian fellowship with them, as an imperative moral duty. To place the contest we are carrying on

against "the sum of all villainies" upon any other issue than that of moral obligation, will never do. Kansas will probably fail in her efforts to be admitted into the Union as a free state, for the reason that she seeks it on economic grounds merely, and in her own strength. Had she the virtue or the conscience to put her claim upon the ground of moral principle, and look to the God of Providence, like the fathers of the revolution, to sustain her cause, "no weapon formed against her could prosper, and every tongue that should rise in judgment against her, she would condemn." Nothing could prevail against her. Even the Federal Executive, with all his troops and patronage and border-ruffians, would be utterly unable to impose the curse of slavery upon her virgin soil. Nor can we who are engaged in the anti-slavery enterprise prevail against the slave-power, or succeed in our efforts to exclude that hoary abomination from the church, except we join issue against it on purely moral grounds, and secure the Divine blessings by following the will of God as the rule and measure of our proceedings, irrespective of human legislation.

The great trouble is, we of the anti-slavery school ourselves, with the exception of a few individuals, have not come up to this standard. Professing to regard the subject of slavery as a moral question, we have actually treated it as a question of mere expediency—a question that might be accommodated to conventional arrangements; and made a subject of modification, of postponement, of compromise as the case might be, to suit times and occasions. And the slave-holding faction of the church, perceiving our inconsistency in relation to the matter, and the flexibility of our anti-slaveryism, have taken advantage of these circumstances to control our anti-slavery movements, and to perpetuate the abomination of Church-slavery by and with our own consent.

Now if we would do anything "for the extirpation of the evil of slavery" in our church, there must be a radical change in our anti-slavery literature. Either our church papers, which have given character and tone to our position on the subject of slavery as a denomination, must take different ground; or *the press independent* which has already been called into existence among us by the exigencies of the times, must go on increasing in circulation and power till it shall have gained the ascendancy over those papers, and is able to shape the anti-slavery sentiments and doings of the Church after its own model. The Church must be taught and required to

“weed her own garden”—to “build over against her own house”—and to remember that she is Divinely commissioned to go forth, independently of the civil power, and in opposition to it even where its laws and administrations are sinful, for the evangelization of the world.

But in order to bring up the church to so high a standard of christian morality, and prepare her to undertake and execute “the extirpation of the evil of slavery” which she so fondly hugs to her bosom, we must infuse into her literature a pure anti-slavery element. Her conservatism, which by the by is but the conservatism of the accursed institution of slavery, must be purged out; and the sentiment of the genuine friends of emancipation, that slavery is *malum per se*—a sin under all circumstances—and to be dealt with the same as any other immorality, must be substituted in its room. This is the great want of the church. And it is to do something in the way of supplying this desideratum that the present volume is offered to the public. We claim little for ourself, but much for our cause. It is not the church we oppose, but her sin—not her constitution or government, but her practical violation of it in the matter of slave-holding. And though we expect to have our “name cast out as evil,” and to share the common fate of all who venture to interfere with popular sins; especially if they be the sins of the church, and have been baptized with the name of expediency, humanity, loyalty to “the powers that be,” or something of that sort; still, we must answer our own conscience in the premises. And, throwing ourself upon the arm of Divine Providence, and the sympathy and co-operation of the genuine friends of the anti-slavery cause, shall content ourself to abide the result.

THE AUTHOR.

SLAVERY IN THE CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

SUBJECT OF CHURCH-SLAVERY STILL TO BE AGITATED—THE EVIL NOT EASILY REMOVED—DELICACY OF TREATING THE SUBJECT—ANTI-SLAVERY CAUSE DECLINING—SLAVERY CLAIMED TO BE CONSTITUTIONALLY IN THE CHURCH—CHURCH INCONSISTENT WITH ITSELF—PRO SLAVERY EXPEDIENTS—ANTI-SLAVERY CAUSE IN DISREPUTE—SLAVE-HOLDING TRAVELLING PREACHERS—CHURCH TAKES SANCTUARY UNDER THE WING OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

But is not the subject of church-slavery exhausted? Is there any new light to be shed upon a subject which has enlisted the ablest pens, and entered into the profoundest discussions of the age? Has not the church become tired of the slavery agitation, and made up her mind to retire from the arena of conflict, and take the repose her wasted energies require? Why then disturb her needed rest by reopening the discussion?

Well, we would be sorry to chafe the feelings, or to interfere with the settled policy of the church; but we are far from supposing that the subject of church-slavery is exhausted, or that it should cease to be agitated among us until an evil so enormous in its character, and so utterly subversive of all that is vital to christi-

anity, is forever done away, and its dark and bloody stains are washed from our guilty hands.

In approaching the subject of church-slavery, we are far from entering upon our task with a feeling of self-confidence. We are aware of the difficulty of the undertaking, and would by no means engage in it but in the name and strength of Him who has commanded us to "remember those that are in bonds, as bound with them." If slavery as a civil institution has been able to roll its desolating wave over the land for so many years in defiance of the laws of God and of humanity, to pervade all the ramifications of society by its corrupt and dangerous influence, in the face of the light of civilization and the word of God, and to become so thoroughly interwoven with the legislation, commerce, and sympathy of the whole country as to control every public interest and movement; how is it to be dislodged from the church, where its authority and power are greatly increased, and rendered vastly more impudent and formidable by the sanctions of religion? The magnitude of an evil which has rent in twain the purest church on earth, brought us to the fearful verge of another painful division, and reduced to silence the pulpit and the press in most parts of our country with respect to "the sum of all villainies," can scarcely be over-rated. And to think of encountering it with the least hope of effecting its removal, requires a firmness of nerve and a faith in God to which we hardly dare lay claim.

We feel that the undertaking is both a difficult and a delicate one. Nor is our position at all relieved in either of these respects by the conflict of opinion which divides our conference and people, the indefinite and tan-

gled condition in which the subject of slave-holding among us was left by the doings of the late General Conference, or the implied unconstitutionality of any action of the General Conference for the extirpation of slavery within our borders in the Episcopal quadrennial address. Yet, nevertheless, we owe it to God and to humanity, to the church and to the world, to ourself and to our calling, to lift up our voice, and to wield our pen against this hoary abomination, and to bear our faithful testimony against so horrible an evil in all its moods and tenses.

We cannot agree with most of our editors and brethren that the anti-slavery cause was so mightily advanced by the action of the late General Conference. On the contrary, it is our honest opinion, and has been from that day to this, that it never received so deadly a blow, or was placed in so unpromising and hopeless a condition, in all the history of the church. Instead of advancing, we believe "the shadow has gone back ten degrees upon the dial" of our anti-slavery position; and that the last human hope of the poor deserted slave, who, down to that fatal period, had turned his imploring eyes towards the Methodist Episcopal Church, is extinguished forever!

For some time previous to the last General Conference, the church had been deeply "convinced of the great evil of slavery." Her convictions had rolled upon her, as the subject continued to be agitated, till she felt something must be done to ease her burdened conscience. But since that time, like an awakened sinner who has shaken off his convictions by resisting the influences of the Spirit, she has lost all sense of the guilt

of holding her fellow creatures in bondage, and relapsed into a state of the profoundest apathy! She has now settled down upon the assumption that there is little or no *mercenary* slave-holding within her pale, and that she has no farther concern about the matter in any way.

If *this* be improvement, then there is improvement in the condition of one who has become relieved of his trouble of mind by shaking off his convictions, or in that of a sick and dying man who flatters himself that he is better because the pain which has exhausted his vital energies and destroyed the last particle of sensation is no longer felt. For ourself we can see no advancement of the anti-slavery cause, either in church or state. Far from it. There is but too much evidence that the aggressive spirit of the slave-power is now operating with a vigor and success never before witnessed in our country. As a *civil* institution, slavery has not only swallowed up one half of the states of the Union, but it has usurped the control of the General Government; availing itself of all its vast resources, and putting in requisition all its various powers—legislative, executive, and judicial—for the continued maintenance of its own criminal existence, and the carrying forward and consummating its own diabolical ends.

Nor is the church at all in advance of the state in respect to the cause of emancipation. She too has lent herself to the slave-power; and assumed the fearful responsibility of upholding the accursed institution by the sanctions of religion! She has even taken the viper into her bosom; and according to the teachings of the last General Conference, and the most of our editors

upon the subject, it would be a violation of the constitution of the church to cast it out! And yet *she refuses to alter the constitution!* True, a considerable portion of the membership of the church are anti-slavery; and more than half of the delegates of the General Conference assembled at Indianapolis were in favor of the adoption of a rule prohibitive of *slave-holding*, as well as of *slave-trading* as we now have it. But though such a rule was duly reported to the General Conference by the committee on slavery, and initiatory proceedings sought to be had thereon, preparatory to its introduction into the Discipline as an amendment of one of the General Rules, it failed of a constitutional majority—a number of Northern dough-faces, such as Peck of the Wyoming Conference, voting against it—and consequently was lost.

Had the bishops, in presenting their customary quadrennial message to the General Conference, announced slavery among the subjects which in their judgment required the consideration of that body; or if, doubting the constitutional right of the General Conference to pass a rule prohibitory of church-slavery by their own independent action, they had recommended the adoption of such a rule by the concurrent action of the General and Annual Conferences, which all, except a few pro-slavery fanatics allow would have been constitutional, the result would have been very different. Most clearly, the decision of a question on which the delegates were almost equally divided, rested entirely with the Episcopacy. This they very well knew. They felt that they held the balance of power on that subject in their own hands. And had they *desired* the abolition of

church-slavery; instead of interposing the objection of a constitutional difficulty in the way of such abolition, they would at least have remained *silent* upon the subject, in which case the foul abomination would have received its death blow. A majority of the General Conference were prepared, in *some* way, to effect this most desirable object; and would have done it, and done it *constitutionally*, but for the unauthorized and obtrusive interposition of Episcopal influence.

To the position taken by the bishops, therefore, or to the indication of their opinion and wishes upon the subject in their Address to the General Conference, must be ascribed the defeat of the passage of a bill which provided for the speedy extirpation of slavery from the church. If it were *right* thus to shut out a rule prohibitory of slave-holding, or to prevent any change in the General Rule, impressing upon it such prohibitory character, and thereby perpetuate the dreadful evil of church-slavery among our people, all will agree that the bishops are entitled to the credit of it, and may well congratulate themselves upon having saved the church from the guilt and mischief of an attempted wrong. If it were *wrong* to stand in the way of such rule or change, and a great injury both to the slave and to the church, as thousands believe it to have been, they also must bear the responsibility!

But *right* or *wrong*, history records the fact that slavery was claimed to be constitutionally in the church, as well by the dominant party in the last General Conference, as by the bishops in their quadrennial address; and yet they refused to alter the constitution! We say it is a matter of *history*, "known and read of all men;"

and we hope we may be allowed to repeat it without offence, as no deliberative body can be supposed to be ashamed of their own doings, that the church, having decided by her representatives in General Conference assembled, that slavery was constitutionally allowed to her members, *refused to open the door for its removal by taking the first initiatory step towards the altering of the constitution!*

How then, we would ask, is the anti-slavery cause advancing? How can it advance when church and state, law and administration, pride and prejudice and worldly interests, are all combined against it; throwing the full weight of their united influence into the opposing scale? Nay, indeed, if we are already free from mercenary slave-holding—free from all slave-holding except what is maintained for the benefit of the slave himself, and it would be cruel to him, as it is pretended, to dissolve the relation he sustains to his master—why should there be any advancement in the anti-slavery cause? It would seem in that case, that we are well enough off as we are—church, slaves, and all—and why not “let well enough alone?” What do our so-called conservatives mean by denying that there is any mercenary slave holding in the church, and at the same time congratulating her with her anti-slavery progress, and almost going into spasms lest the good work should be retarded by the agitation of the subject? Are they sincere in their anti-slavery professions? Or do they *affect* to unite with us in our anti-slavery movements, the better to defeat our object by putting us off our guard, and inducing us to confide the management of the subject to their hands? How is all this?

If there be no mercenary slave-holding in the church—none but what ought to be there for the benefit of the slave—why talk of anti-slavery progress at all?—Why have anything to say about the removal of the evil? If there be no mercenary slave-holding among us, instead of enquiring “What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery,” we should have the consistency to expunge that hypocritical inquiry from the Discipline; and substitute in its room,—“What shall be done for the” diffusion of the blessings of slavery throughout the church and the world? For the church to call herself anti-slavery, ask, “what shall be done for the extirpation of the evil,” and congratulate herself upon her progress in the anti-slavery cause, while she practically and by her official action determinately resists every measure and movement in that direction, and maintains that there is no mercenary slave-holding within her pale—no slave-holding except such as is virtuous and benevolent—is not barely inconsistent, it is clearly insincere, is grossly dishonest; and shows that she is ashamed of a practice which she is determined to pursue, and that she is driven to a course of base dissimulation as the only means of keeping herself in countenance, and of sustaining, with some degree of credit, her abominable position before the world.—Why does she not cease her miserable shuffling—her double dealing upon the subject—and practically unite with our anti-slavery band, instead of opposing, under some hollow pretext, every measure and movement we undertake; or else throw off the guise, in imitation of the Church South, conforming her profession to her practice, and divesting the Discipline, as they have

had the consistency to do, of the last iota of its anti-slavery character?

But inconsistency is a prominent feature of human action. Few men agree with themselves. And fewer still with their antecedents. Our christian (?) slaveholders, not quite easy in their consciences in respect to the innocence or virtuousness of slave-holding, or the holding their fellow creatures in bondage for their own benefit; and somewhat laden with a sense of their accountability to Him who is the avenger of the oppressed, betray evident signs of misgiving in regard to the character and destiny of the *oppressor*; and would fain discover some modification of slavery which would render it harmless, or find out some reason for holding their fellow creatures in bondage which might justify the practice. Various expedients have been resorted to for this purpose. At one time we are told that "slavery is going to die out of itself, if we will only let it alone." And then, strange as it may seem, that "the *gospel* is a going to do it away," though forbidden to be preached to slave-holding communities, or so preached and applied as to *justify* rather than *condemn* the institution. These, and many other subterfuges, have been resorted to by the church to cover up and defend the sin of slave-holding. But as a last resort for quieting the qualms of her conscience upon the subject, she has concluded to recognize and treat slavery as a *civil institution* and leave it entirely to the management of the state.

This is her present position. And this the policy she may be expected to pursue in the future. Henceforth the *state* is to be the keeper of her conscience,

and the arbiter of her doings in respect to "the evil of slavery;" and no independent or separate church-action is to be attempted or thought of any more. The agitation of the subject of slavery has already fallen into great disrepute. It is looked upon with angry contempt, and sneered at by many among us—preachers and people—even in the free states. Several of the leading members of the East New York Conference at their late session, spurned the idea of any church-action upon the subject of slavery with a coarse and angry violence which would have done credit to a "Border-ruffian," or a "negro trading Legree." Nor are they alone in their out-spoken and heartless contempt of bleeding Africa. There are more or less of the same class of dough-faced sympathizers with the slave power in all the Northern conferences. Shame on them.

But as much as we despise their cringing sycophancy, their wicked and fulsome adulation of the slave-holding South; and their open advocacy of the cruelest despotism that ever existed on the face of the globe; we by no means "suppose them to be sinners above all men that dwell in the land." There are many others among us, and those too of the highest standing in the ministry, whose cowardly silence upon the subject of a great moral evil—the horrid sin of slavery—renders them equally guilty, they being commanded of God to "open their mouths for the dumb," and in most cases still more dangerous to the anti-slavery cause. The time was when prayer used to be offered for the slave in most of our deliberative and worshipping assemblies. But if he were remembered in a single prayer at the late General Conference, except in our own in opening the conference

one morning, we did not hear it. The poor down-trodden creature seemed to have passed out of mind, while a filthy old Indian present must be formally introduced to the conference, wept over, caressed, and aided, in some little trip he wanted to make, by a liberal contribution. Such was the state of things at the last General Conference. And if the analogy of history may be relied on as an indication of the course and character of coming events, it will turn out in the General Conference to be held at Buffalo in 1860, that the subject of slavery will not so much as be mentioned upon the conference floor. Or if mentioned at all, it will only be called up to receive an apology of the conference for having shown it any disrespect; and to be put to sleep till a little farther improvement in the direction we are now going shall have developed the great excellencies of the institution, and its vast utility to mankind so fully, as that we shall be led to place it among the other benevolent institutions of the church—the Bible, Missionary, and Tract associations for instance—to be employed for the evangelization and salvation of the world.

That the Church South would lose her identity in the civil and political institutions of the slave-holding oligarchy the moment she separated from us, was to be expected. This was the sole object of her going off, and forming a new and independent organization of her own. But who once thought that the Methodist Episcopal Church would so soon follow her example? Her unyielding resistance of the farther encroachment of the slave-power at the time of the separation, was regarded as an earnest and a guarantee of the speedy extirpation of whatever of slavery there still remained within our

borders. The anti-slavery North were greatly encouraged; and all the different classes of emancipationists among them were being drawn together and strengthened by their improved harmony of sentiment and feeling, for carrying forward the noble enterprise in which they were engaged.

But how sadly have we been disappointed. The church in whose body the leaven of slavery was unhappily left, instead of following up the good begun work and purging herself of the evil altogether, as we had hoped she would, has since greatly enlarged the area of her slave territory by adding several new slave-holding conferences to her connection; and now tells us, in unmistakable language, old Baltimore sounding the key note, that "slavery is a *civil institution*, and she has nothing more to do with it." What a fine idea. So then, by the very easy process of transmuting *moral* into *civil* questions, we can at once absolve ourselves from all moral obligation—from the obligation to preach against any sin, having reduced all sorts of it to a civil affair, or to abstain from the practice of it even!

Well, we shall now be able to "cheat the Devil" sure enough. We have only to extend our civil jurisdiction over the whole ground of moral evil, or to interweave all sorts and descriptions of sin with the institutions of the State, in order to supersede the government of Jehovah himself and escape all the penalties of the Divine law. Should he presume to call us to any account, we can appeal to the laws of the state for the justification of our conduct; and he will surely relinquish all jurisdiction over us. How can he hold us responsible at his bar for sins committed under the sanctions of civil au-

thority which he has rendered paramount to his own? On this plan we have only to obey the state, or suffer the penalty of the civil law for our disobedience, and we shall go strait to heaven. Our Heavenly Father, having allowed his jurisdiction over all moral questions—as that of slavery, adultery, murder, and the like—to be superseded by that of the state, will surely admit us to the realms of glory without faith, repentance, virtue, or anything of that sort; requiring only a certificate from the officers of the civil government under which we live, and by whose laws we were authorized to commit all manner of wicked deeds, that we had either *kept* the law or *suffered the penalty* the law prescribed.

To be sure, the church still affects to deplore the existence of slavery—still pretends she is anxious to get rid of it, inquiring “what shall be done for its extirpation”—and still professes to be an anti-slavery church. But her professions of anti-slaveryism, while she still holds her fellow creatures in bondage, sound very much in our ears like “Buchanan and Free Kansas,” so often reiterated during the late presidential campaign, and so ostentatiously displayed upon the banners we every where witnessed in those times, by the sham democracy. They only go to prove, not that she is innocent of the charge of a base and servile complicity with the slave-power; but that she is ashamed of a position which she knows to be wrong, and feels she can the better maintain it by sailing under false colors.

The assertion of Dr. McFerrin of the Nashville Christian Advocate, that we have many members in our communion who buy and sell slaves, as well as own them, the same as any other class of slaveholders; and

that men are often elected to the sacred office, and ordained by the bishops who are guilty of the same wickedness, is undoubtedly true. Others have stated the same thing, and the account they give of the matter will surely be credited by the community, at least until it is contradicted. Dr. McFerrin appealed to bishop Morris, in a series of letters which he addressed personally to him, for the truth of his assertion; and the bishop never denied it. Of course we must believe that such is the practice of our border conferences and bishops. And we must also believe, what there seems no reason to doubt, that in all this we occupy precisely the same ground with the Church South, who plead in justification of their course the supremacy of the lower law. The doctrine is—O how deeply damnable—that we are shut up to this position and course of conduct by the injunction that is laid upon us in the Scriptures, to “be subject to the powers that be,” and that the state alone has jurisdiction of any and of all matters which have any connection with civil institutions.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF CHURCH-SLAVERY—ORIGINAL POSITION OF THE CHURCH—FIRST CONFERENCE ACTION—TRUCKLING TO THE SLAVE-POWER—AGITATION SUSPENDED—CONFERENCE ACTION TOO STRINGENT—GENERAL RULE ON SLAVERY—DISTINCT CHAPTER ON SLAVERY INTRODUCED—PETITIONS TO STATE LEGISLATURES RECOMMENDED—FARTHER ADVANCES TO THE SLAVE-POWER—TAMPERING WITH THE GENERAL RULE—NEW CHAPTER THE BULWARK OF SLAVERY—SLAVERY ASPIRES TO THE EPISCOPACY—CHURCHES NORTH AND SOUTH OCCUPY THE SAME GROUND—REFLECTIONS.

That the anti-slavery cause, instead of advancing, as many are made to believe, has steadily and rapidly declined almost from the period of our organization in 1784 down to the present time, the history of our church-legislation shows. A writer in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* two or three years ago, signing himself "C.," pronounced our anti-slavery writers "Methodist tinkers and tinkers of Methodism;" and took them severely to task for altering the Discipline, which, he contended, was originally conservative of church-slavery, to suit their own views. In replying to Mr. "C." at the time his article appeared, we retorted the charge. And as our reply contained a brief outline of the action of the church in relation to slavery, we shall copy it into this chapter; giving it its original form, partly for the sake of variety, but chiefly to save the labor of revision. Here follows the reply:—

“ *Who are the Methodist tinkers and tinkers of Methodism!* From a series of articles lately published in the Christian Advocate and Journal, it seems there is such a class of mechanics in our church. And as the advertisement of Mr. “C.” who appears to be one of them, does not particularly inform us who they are, or where they live, it might be well for him to *name* them; that those wishing any job done in that line may know where to call. Possibly they have not hung out their sign for the reason that they are ashamed of so low a business, and prefer doing their petty work on the credit of others.

“ But as we happen to have some knowledge of their establishment, and doubt not that it might be an accommodation to at least a portion of the community to be informed where they can get a little tinkering of Methodism attended to now and then, we consider it due to the public, for whose benefit they have gone into business, to give a passing clue to their whereabouts and character.

“ In glancing at the history of Methodism, we have ascertained that the General Conference, embracing several branches, particularly in New York and Cincinnati, constitutes the work-shop; and our pro-slavery brethren, scattered over the country, chiefly ‘along the borders,’ are the tinkers. Perhaps it ought to be remarked, as we would not mistake a historic fact, that the ‘tinkers of Methodism’ commenced their business in an *Annual* Conference, removing it to the *General* Conference afterwards.

“ The first conference action ever had upon the subject of slavery by the Methodist Episcopal Church was

in 1780. The original and consistent form which Methodism then took on in relation to slavery may be seen in the following extract :—

“Quest. ‘Ought not this conference to require those travelling preachers who hold slaves to give promise to set them free?’

“Ans. ‘Yes.’

“Quest. ‘Does not this conference acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do unto us and ours? Do we pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom?’

“Ans. ‘Yes.’

“By this action of the conference slavery was unqualifiedly condemned, and steps taken preparatory to its speedy extirpation. The language employed is exceedingly broad and forcible, covering the whole ground of the evil and of its removal. And this, let it be kept in mind, was the character and position which Methodism *originally* maintained in relation to slavery.

“In 1783, ‘the tinkers of Methodism,’ opening their shop in an Annual Conference, commenced their execrable business. The authorities of the church represented in this Conference now began to truckle to the slave-power by conforming their administration to the civil law. Slave-holding ‘local preachers’ were now to be dealt with and punished only ‘where they held slaves *contrary to the laws of the state.*’ Down to this time local preachers, as also members of the church generally, were dealt with *according to the laws of God*, which

were declared to be *violated* by slave-holding ; but *now* they were to be dealt with '*according to the laws of the state.*' This was the first job the 'tinkers' undertook and executed in patching up a system which needed no repairs. And what a hotchpotch affair it was to substitute the *civil law* for the *law of God* as an ecclesiastical tribunal and rule of conduct !

"In 1785, these tinkers proceeded to the suspension of the rules adopted against slavery at 'the Christmas Conference' of the preceding year ; and taking the ground of *expediency*, opened a still wider door to church-slavery, by passing over the subject in profound silence for the ensuing ten years ; during which period 'the abomination which maketh desolate' continued to prevail and gather strength till it became extremely difficult to arrest its onward career. And hence it was that the rules adopted in 1784 for the extinction of church-slavery, and suspended in 1785 at the instance of the tinkers, had the following note appended to them :

" 'N. B. These rules are to affect the members of our society no farther than they are consistent with the laws of the state in which they reside.'

"Here were rules requiring the emancipation of slaves held by our people, it is true ; though it was but their *gradual* emancipation, and that *only* where the laws of the state did not interfere to prevent it ; and yet *these* rules were '*too stringent*' and must be tinkered out of the Discipline ! This item of our history has often been referred to as evidence of the ultraism of the conference in 1784, in adopting these 'stringent rules,' as they have been called ; and of the wisdom of the conference of 1785, in suspending rules which they

found by experience to be impracticable. And was it so in 1785, that rules requiring *gradual* emancipation, where there were no laws *to prevent it*, were too stringent to be executed in the Methodist Episcopal Church? Aye, and they have been so ever since. *Any* thing is 'too stringent' which looks towards emancipation, however remotely, and so it has always been from the beginning. What then shall we say of our Methodist slaveholders who tell us they greatly desire to free themselves from slavery as soon as practicable? They are rotten-hearted hypocrites. Their *practice* flatly contradicts their word. They do not mean to emancipate their slaves, and they know it. Their professions of a desire to set their slaves free at the time we are speaking of, and ever since, are entitled to no credit whatever. Their only object in these professions, and their outspoken condemnation of the abstract system of slavery in which they often indulge, has been to cover their complicity with the abomination, and quiet their own uneasy consciences upon the subject.

"In 1789, the General Rule on slavery was inserted in the Discipline for the first time; there having been nothing on the subject in the General Rules drawn up by Mr. Wesley, or at any previous conference in this country. This Rule appears to have been incorporated among the General Rules, in opposition to the tinkers, for the purpose of bringing back the system of Methodism to its original form. Or it may be the tinkers half assented to its original adoption, hoping thereby to pacify their anti-slavery brethren, while they clearly foresaw the advantage they could take of it to retain their slaves in bondage.

“In 1796, the persevering tinkers having removed their business to the General Conference, where they have carried it on ever since, effected a farther change upon Methodism by introducing into the Discipline a new and distinct section on slavery; the object and tendency of which were, so to modify the position of the church in regard to the accursed thing as to render it acceptable to the slave-holder. Here another job of tinkering was done that greatly marred the beauty and impaired the anti-slavery efficiency of Methodism.

In “1796, also, the anties prevailing again, we have the following:—

“Quest. ‘What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of the crying evil of African slavery?’

“Ans. ‘The preachers and other members of our society are requested to consider the subject of negro slavery with deep attention till the ensuing General Conference, and that they impart to the General Conference, through the Yearly Conference, or otherwise, any important thoughts upon the subject, that the conference may have full light, in order to take farther steps towards the eradicating of this enormous evil from that part of the church of God to which they are united.’

“In 1800, the following directions on the same side of the question are also given:—

“‘The Annual Conferences are directed to draw up addresses for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, to the Legislatures of the States in which no general laws have been passed for that purpose. These addresses shall urge, in the most respectful, but pointed manner, the necessity of a law for the gradual emancipation of the slaves; proper committees shall be appointed by the An-

nual Conferences, out of the most respectable of our friends, for the conducting of the business ; and the presiding elders, elders, deacons, and travelling preachers, shall procure as many proper signatures as possible to the addresses, and give all the assistance in their power in every respect to aid the committee, and to further the blessed undertaking. Let this be continued from year to year, till the desired end be accomplished.'

"In 1804, the above paragraphs were both struck out, and the following added :—

"'Let all our preachers from time to time, as occasion serves, admonish and exhort all slaves to render due respect and obedience to the commands and interests of their respective masters.'

"Here was tinkering with a vengeance. The efforts of the General Conference of 1796, and of 1800, to remedy the mischief already done to Methodism by the tinkers, and to recover the primitive ground of the church, were not only neutralized by these despoilers of our system ; but they succeeded at the same time in securing an advanced position in favor of slavery. Instead of petitioning the Government to abolish slavery, and enlisting the highest energies of all the functionaries of the church—the Annual Conferences, the most respectable of our friends, presiding elders, elders, deacons, and travelling preachers—to engage in *this blessed undertaking* ; as it had been hitherto considered, and pursuing it from year to year till the desired end was accomplished ;' our tinkered Methodism, with all its agents and energies, must be put in requisition to 'admonish and exhort the slaves to obey their masters !' So while we are forbidden to attempt to 'break every

yoke, and let the oppressed go free ;' we are commanded to unite with the slave-power to rivet more firmly the chains of the enslaved ! *Once* Methodism could 'appoint committees, make addresses, petition Legislatures, and give all the aid in its power, to further the blessed undertaking of the emancipation of the slaves ;' but now, alas for us ! to engage 'in this blessed undertaking,' is *ultra, incendiary, fanatical* ; and we must no longer so much as 'agitate the subject.' No, we must cease to 'preach deliverance to captives, and the opening of prison doors to them that are bound,' and preach subjection to slave-masters ! *This* is the gospel of the slave-power—and this the Methodism of the tinkers.

"In 1808, the tinkers of Methodism, clandestinely, it is said, undertook and executed the *meanest* thing they ever attempted. With the view of neutralizing the effect of the General Rule above mentioned, they substituted the *conjunctive—and*, for the *disjunctive—or* ; so that no one could be called to an account for dealing in slave property unless he went into it under *every form and variety*, which few slave holders had occasion to do. Under this *altered* Rule the domestic slave-trade might be pursued to any extent, only so that *one* of the specifications of the evil were avoided. The most extensive slave-holder scarcely ever has occasion for a larger license than this.

"In 1824, the chapter on slavery which had first been introduced in 1796, after having been tinkered till the last vestige of anti-slaveryism was frittered away, and a form taken on to sustain "the peculiar institution" in all its lengths and breadths, reached its present character ; and now constitutes the bulwark of church-slave-

ry in our connection. Having consummated this infernal job—the climax of all their tinkering since they commenced their horrid business in 1783—these pro-slavery tinkers are ‘*satisfied with the Discipline as it is.*’

“And now let us look at it for a moment. ‘Satisfied with the Discipline as it is.’ Yes, ‘satisfied with the Discipline as it is,’ just to stave off the threatened action of the church for the time being. ‘Satisfied with the Discipline as it is,’ till they can lull us all asleep on the subject; and then look out for another stride of tinkerism—another act of pro-slavery aggression. We ought to have learned by this time that slavery is *inherently* aggressive. Voracious as ‘the grave, it never says, it is enough.’ If we ‘give it an inch, it will take an ell.’ Who that looks back upon its ever-exacting encroachments of the past, does not know this? Look at the scene of 1844 in the General Conference at New York, and there you will behold a characteristic exhibition of the interminable and growing exactions of the slave power. Beginning with the semblance of modesty, and proceeding from step to step in its onward march, it came not only to demand the Episcopal chair, the right to occupy which it had always disclaimed down to that period; but to assert its *superior eligibility* for that position on account of its connection with slavery. Here the guise was thrown off. The stealthy slave-power unmasked itself. Or if it still had “horns like a lamb, it spake like a dragon.’

“The slave-power, be it remembered, is forever the same. Like Popery, and all other tyrannies, it never changes its character. And what it has done for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, it will do for the

Methodist Episcopal Church if allowed a place within her pale. The idea of controlling it by admitting it into the church, or of assimilating it to our holy religion, is monstrous. You might as well assimilate or control sin in any other form—nay, the Devil himself—as the sin of slavery. Its workings in the border conferences are in perfect keeping with its workings in all the slaveholding conferences before the great Southern secession. It blasphemously presumes to plant itself upon the blessed Bible, as is seen in the late articles of Dr. Durbin on the subject; and what will it more? The *Southern* church have gone no farther. And what need of a separation between us? What is the difference between the two connections? In reality there is none. We are already cajoled into acquiescence by arch-southern diplomacy, and are become an obsequious tool of the slave-power. We have said there was no real difference between the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in regard to slavery. There is, however, this exception to the remark: they are *all* pro-slavery, we *only in our administration and ruling party*: they are pro-slavery *openly and in form*, we *only in fact*. But we shall leave the world to judge whether this difference redounds most to *our* credit, or *theirs*.

“And now, anti-slavery brethren and friends, let us look upon the church, far gone in her pro-slavery career, and almost lost to the claims of the anti-slavery cause, with prayerful sympathy; and do all we can to reclaim her from her deplorable aberrations. Let us entreat her to begin her work of reform by blotting out the existing chapter in the Discipline on slavery, and

substituting in its place a simple rule prohibiting slavery in the church altogether. And let us insist upon her doing this because it is right in itself, and because her integrity and salvation and usefulness as a church depend upon it. The chapter in question, as we have before shown, is unconstitutional. The General Rule belonging to the constitution of the church, forbids 'evil of every kind;' the Discipline pronounces 'slavery a great evil,' therefore the General Rule or constitution of the church forbids slavery.

"The chapter on slavery, if it be allowed to remain in the Discipline at all, should be conformed to the General Rule, which forbids 'evil of every kind;' and of course 'the evil of slavery.' But as this chapter was tinkered into the Discipline since the organization of the church in 1784, and is clearly unconstitutional, being in direct conflict with the General Rule; let us set ourselves to effect its removal in the name of the Lord, replacing it with a Rule excluding all slavery from our fellowship, and leave the community to judge who are 'Methodist tinkers and tinkers of Methodism.'"

CHAPTER III.

SLAVERY A SUBJECT OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE—CHURCH RESPONSIBLE FOR CHURCH-SLAVERY—COMPLICITY NO MITIGATION OF INDIVIDUAL GUILT—SLAVERY OF A MIXED CHARACTER—CHURCH AND STATE EQUALLY SUPREME IN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES—DUTY OF THE CHURCH TO EXPEL SLAVE-HOLDERS—EXERCISE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE PROVIDED FOR BY THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT—STATE PROFFESSES NON-INTERFERENCE WITH MORAL QUESTIONS—STILL SHE INTERFERES IN VIOLATION OF THE LAWS OF THE LAND—LIBERTY OF SPEECH AND OF THE PRESS INVADED—LIBERTIES OF THE COUNTRY IN DANGER.

But what right has the church to waive the jurisdiction, or decline the cognizance of slavery; leaving to the state the adjudication of questions affecting the moral character of her members? What right to determine the ecclesiastical relations or standing of her members in subordination to the civil law? Is this the standard which God has erected for the settlement of questions of a moral nature, or of church-membership? And will he sanction and approve whatever we may do in the administration of moral discipline, so that it accords with the laws of the land where we happen to live? Most clearly, the church is the Heaven-appointed guardian of the interests of morality and religion the world over; and especially within her own pale. And to attempt to shirk the responsibility of inquiring into the moral character, or of controlling the ec-

clesiastical relations of the members of her own body, in regard to slavery, by declaring it a civil institution and throwing it into the hands of the state, involves a gross dereliction of duty—a shameful and wicked betrayal of an awful trust—for which she must render an account in the last great day, when the poor slave, whose interests she has so cruelly abandoned, will be “a swift witness against her!” And what is the doom that awaits her then?

The slave, having been outlawed by the state, and adjudged to “possess no rights which a white man is bound to respect,” turns to the church for sympathy and protection; but is told that no protection can be afforded him by her. It is in vain he pleads the design of christian discipline, and the duty of the church to exercise it for the redress of the aggrieved, and the punishment of the aggressor; there is no protection to be afforded him. Here, too, he finds himself an outlaw; the church having adopted the civil law as the rule of her conduct in relation to slavery, and conspired with the state to enslave and oppress him. “O Lord, how long?” How long shall these children of Ham, “scattered and peeled,” be trodden down and oppressed by their brethren? How long dost thou not avenge the wrongs of bleeding Africa upon the heads of their oppressor? The church, which was designed to be an asylum for the oppressed, has become an asylum for the oppressor; and there’s no protection! The hunted, panting lamb is pursued by the devouring wolf even into the sheep-fold, and there’s no protection! He is hunted, and worried and devoured under the very eye of the shepherd, and there’s no protection! Nay, the shep-

herd himself becomes the devouring wolf, feeding and fattening and rioting upon the blood of his hapless victim, and there's no protection!

And can it be that this Devilish policy is upheld and practiced *by the church*—that *she* recognizes no right of the slave which she is bound to respect—and that she absolutely denies his claim to be heard in his own defence, or to testify against a white man, whatever his cruelty or crime may be, in an *ecclesiastical* court? Aye, we are sorry to say it, but it is even so! The poor slave, Cain-like, “is driven out from among men, is become a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth,” and any one who chooses “slayeth him.” Yet all this is sanctioned and practiced and baptized as an institution of humanity and benevolence, by the church! Good God! And has it come to this? Is the church so fallen, so depraved, so bent upon her own ruin as to trample upon all the principles of truth and righteousness in the enslavement of her fellow-creatures? God has commanded her to “break every yoke, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free,”—He has commanded her by *her own voice*, to “do good to *all men*, good of every possible sort, good to their bodies, and to their souls, as she has opportunity”—He has commanded her to free the oppressed, especially her own slaves; and as she can do this in spite of earth and hell, and is in duty bound to do it, putting in requisition the arm of christian discipline, if need be, and expelling those of her members who refuse to emancipate their slaves; she'll be damned if she don't.

The fact is, the church has no right whatever to trans-

fer to the state the high and sacred trust committed to her hands in relation to the subject of slavery—no right to leave the ecclesiastical and moral training of her members in relation to any question to the civil government. In doing this, she has betrayed a high and sacred trust which has been committed to her under sanctions of awful import, and perpetrated a deed of great wickedness. Nor will she be able to shift off the responsibility which has been laid upon her to instruct and discipline her own members ; or to escape the penalty of the breach of trust of which she has been guilty. God still holds her responsible for the doings of her chosen substitute—the civil power—and she must answer at the bar of Him, whose cause she has betrayed into the hands of sinners, for all the consequences of those doings, as well in respect to the slave, as to the cause of God and humanity in general ; and for all the crime and misery she might have prevented by duly instructing her slave-holding members upon the subject of their wickedness and cruelty, and meting out to them as in duty bound the admonitions and awards of her own church discipline.

And why refer the crime of slave-holding to the state, as belonging exclusively to her jurisdiction, while every other crime is regarded as a matter of church discipline ? Or why should crime *in general* be prohibited by church authority, and the crime of slavery be made an exception ? Is there any reason for such discrimination between one crime and another—between the stealing of a horse and the robbing a man of his purse, and the stealing of a man or the robbing him of himself ? If the church may not legislate upon the

subject of slavery because it is a *civil* institution and she is not permitted to interfere with civil affairs; and the state may not prohibit or punish it because of the moral element it contains, lest she should overstep her legitimate province by interfering with moral subjects; how, we would like to know, is the most atrocious villany on earth to be dealt with at all?

And why not extend to all other criminals the same impunity? Why not exempt the adulterer, the murderer and criminals of every other description, from all civil pains and penalties on the one hand upon the plea of the moral character of his conduct which places it beyond the jurisdiction of the state; and from all ecclesiastical punishment on the other for the reason that as crimes of this nature are made the subject of civil legislation, the church has nothing to do with them? Such indemnification for criminals of all kinds would doubtless be most grateful to them. And it is really difficult to see why murderers and all sorts and descriptions of evil-doers may not as well enjoy it as the slaveholder. And as all criminals would doubtless hail such indemnification from punishment for crime with peculiar delight, feeling themselves greatly accommodated by an arrangement of this sort; they must of course be expected to acknowledge their obligation to the *church* for bringing into use a code of morals so perfectly well adapted to their wishes and mode of life. And were it not for a single drawback upon the general application of the system, they could not fail to rally at some convenient haunt of the fraternity; and, summoning the legions of the pit to attend and participate with them on the occasion, hold a universal jubilee over it. The trouble is, the

abolishment of punishment for crime would deprive them of the power of punishing *each other*, and this would never answer ; for whosoever invades *their* rights, or interferes with their *villanous wrong-doing* even, must die the death. *They* would sin with impunity. But others must be punished, even for doing right, if it fall out with their positions ; and in the absence of any law of the state or church of which they might avail themselves for that purpose, lynch-law, which is always at their command, and particularly at the command of the slaveholders, must be brought to bear upon the offender.

But this shifting of grounds or of characters upon occasion, involves the basest trickery ; nay, the grossest self-imposition. And though it may answer a temporary purpose, it can never *end* well. The day is coming when the wretched slave-holder will no longer be able to cover up his iniquity, or escape the punishment he deserves, by his crafty alternations of moral and civil, christian and citizen, church and state policy ; but must yield to the scrutiny of the simple Word of God, interpreted and applied by its own Divine Author. And then we shall see whether the church, who has taught him to appeal to *her*, or to *Cæsar*, as his interests or inclinations demanded, will be able to help him out of the difficulty in which she has involved him. For any one to assume a two-fold character as the basis of accountability, to be taken on and worn in either form at pleasure ; or for the Christian to lose himself in the citizen, when called to an account for his wickedness by the authorities of the church, for the purpose of escaping the punishment he deserves by denying her jurisdiction over him and taking himself out of her hands ; involves a pol-

icy which will be very far from prevailing at the last day. In that day, *Another* will determine the character he bears, and the tribunal at which he must stand and be judged.

He may claim that he holds slaves as a *citizen* and *not* as a *Christian*, if he please—claim that he “swears as a *prince* and *not* as a *bishop*—but “when the prince goes to hell and is damned for his wickedness, what will become of the bishop?”

Nor does the *alliance* of the slave-holder with the state, or with others in any form, any more than with himself under two distinct characters, suffice to keep him in countenance, or abate anything from the guilt which lies at his own door. As well might a gang of thieves be allowed to escape the hand of justice on the ground that one of them did not *take* the stolen property, and another has not *got* it, when *all* of them in one way and another were concerned in the theft. “God will by no means clear the guilty,” however they may seek to evade the law or to shift the responsibility of crime. The church may throw it upon the state, and the state upon the church; just as Adam laid it to Eve, and Eve to the serpent; but instead of both parties escaping the penalty of the law by such vile artifice, they must each of them share the full measure of the punishment due to their common wickedness. “Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished.”

Complicity in crime operates no mitigation of the guilt of the parties. Each individual is just as guilty, and liable to be punished to the same extent, as if he had sinned all alone. There might, for instance, be a case of murder where twenty persons were concerned in

taking the life of one man ; but the law, instead of being satisfied with the execution of one of the number, requires that all of them be executed. The murder is not looked upon as a single crime which they are at liberty to divide between them, each sharing a twentieth part of the guilt and of the penalty ; but as the crime of twenty murders, and to be expiated only by the execution of the whole company. So of slavery ; the guilt of all, is the guilt of each. Every slave-holder by his practical endorsement of the institution and sin of slavery, becomes individually responsible for all the abominations of the whole slave system. And as our Divine Lord said to a single generation of the Jews—the Jews of his time—“ upon you shall come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar ; ” so all the blood and groans and tears which have ever mingled in the cup of suffering humanity, as the effect of slaveholding, will be required at his hands !

Fearful doom ! And yet it cannot be averted ! The demon-hearted slave-holder is surely destined to realize some day what meant those sighs and sobs, and groans—those imploring looks, those gushing tears, those death-like writhings—of the slaves of his plantation, as he worked them and whipped them and starved them and tore them one from another—parents and children and companions—to meet no more on earth. Some day he will remember with the bitterness of death and hell the pleadings of the helpless ones, as he trampled upon their mangled, bleeding forms, or drove them from his angry presence with a demon-heart ; and then will he feel his

individual accountability—his individual and awful guilt.

Here he may ascribe to the accursed institution of slavery a *moral* or a *civil* character, whichever suits him best—may seek to throw the guilt involved in it upon the state, or divide the responsibility of an evil which presses so heavily upon him with his accomplices in the sin of slave-holding; but in spite of the art of men and devils he will be found equally guilty in the day of judgment, and meriting the same awful punishment, as if he were the sole author of all the slave-holding in the world! If he have not *actually* wrought all this wickedness, it has been simply for the want of an *opportunity*, and not of a disposition. He has done it in *heart*; and as “God looketh on the heart,” and weigheth the actions of men according to their principles and motives, he will hold him responsible for all that he *would* have done had the opportunity been afforded—for all he has *practically endorsed* by connecting himself with the slave-holding fraternity by the ownership of even a single slave.

Doubtless the idea will appear startling to some; and yet, such is the fearful responsibility of every individual slave-holder on the foot-stool! He has conceived in his heart a sin of no less magnitude than that of the sum of all the slave-holding in the world! And as heart-slave-holding, like heart adultery, heart-murder, and the like, involves all the elements of guilt belonging to the outward act; so every individual slave-holder, having conceived in his heart the sin of the enslavement of his fellow creatures *indefinitely*, must meet the dreadful account of the sum total of all the slave-holding that shall have been perpetrated at the period of the consum-

mation of all things! "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

The idea of dodging between our church and state relations, or of throwing the guilt of church slavery upon the state because slavery is claimed to be a civil institution, is as *shallow* as it is wicked. The true and proper idea is, that slavery, like theft, robbery, murder, and the like, is of a *mixed* character—partly *moral* and partly *civil*—and of course a subject both of *ecclesiastical* and of *civil* legislation. And while the two authorities—church and state—are not to be regarded as conflicting institutions; so neither are they to be interwoven or blended together. They consist of entirely distinct and independent bodies; each operating as an independent and sovereign power within its own peculiar sphere and jurisdiction. The *one* has to do with our *religious* interests and character: the *other* with our *civil*. And as the state regulates and determines our *civil* relations according to her own constitution and laws, irrespective of the laws of the church; so should the church regulate and determine our *ecclesiastical* relations according to *her* laws, irrespective of the laws of the state. It is not merely her *right* to do this—a right guaranteed to her by the constitution and laws of the civil government under which we live, as well as by the laws of God—but a *duty* imposed upon her in the Holy Scriptures; where she is commanded, upon her peril, to govern her own members; "putting away evil doers," such as slave-holders, "cutting off those that trouble her," the same abominable class, as well as all other troublers, and "keeping herself pure from the blood of all men." As God forever imputes to the

church the sins of a wicked person whom she tolerates within her pale, so the iniquity of a solitary Achan in the camp—a single slave-holder who has purloined vastly more than a wedge of gold, or a Babylonish government—is sufficient to cause her, forsaken of God and abandoned to her own weakness, to fall before her enemies.

We are aware of the oft-repeated and much relied on argument of the church, that “her duty to the state requires her to let the subject of slavery alone; since any interference with a civil institution would bring her into collision with ‘the powers that be,’ *i. e.*, the civil government, which she is required in the scriptures to ‘be subject to.’” But this argument proceeds upon the blasphemous and infidel hypothesis that we are to obey *man* rather than *God*. And if this be so—if civil authority is to constitute the supreme rule of human conduct—we should be governed by it in *all other matters*, as well as in the matter of slave-holding; and if the state command us to admit *murderers* into our communion, or *commit murder ourselves*, we are bound to do it! But we will not insult the common sense of our readers by pursuing this argument. The idea of substituting the *lower* for “the *higher* law”—the law of the state, for the law of God—is too *impious* for the stupid heathen. Devils alone might be supposed capable of so foul and daring a treason against the government of Jehovah! Everybody knows, that like Daniel and Jeremiah and Peter and John and Luther and Wesley and a numerous host of confessors and martyrs, we are to “obey God rather than man;” and only to obey the state in matters which fall within her jurisdiction as

a civil power ; where her laws are made obligatory upon us only as they are conformable to the laws of God. Taking this position, as is our bounden duty, we should proceed to expel every slave-holder from the church, except he emancipate his slaves at once, and that too in such way and manner as we may prescribe, though at the expense of martyrdom.

But happily for us, no such state of things exists in our country. There is no law of the land requiring any one to hold slaves ; much less that the church should admit slave-holders to her communion, or embrace them within her sacred pale. On the contrary, it is provided by the constitution of the government itself that she shall be allowed to manage her own internal affairs in her own way ; and to administer her own discipline, inflicting upon her members any penalty of an *ecclesiastical* nature, even to the exclusion of the refractory from her communion. And yet her constant plea for retaining slave-holders within her pale, is, that she “cannot expel them without formally arraying herself against the civil government, or coming into collision with the laws of the state.” How strange ! And is she really sincere in her pretensions ? Does she honestly believe that she is forbidden to free herself from the sin of slavery, or from the curse of slave-holding members, by state laws ? Why, she is not in Italy, where civil pains and penalties are connected with the administration of church law ; nor yet in old England, where the reigning monarch, wicked as the Devil though he may be, is the “head of the church,” and religion a mere state engine—an ecclesiastico-machine—designed and worked for governmental purposes. She must

know—she *does* know—that in this country, where there is no national church—no legal connection of church and state—and the free toleration of religion of every form is guaranteed by the constitution of the government, she is at perfect liberty to determine any matter or thing within the range of her ecclesiastical jurisdiction, or to carry out and administer all the various rules and regulations of her Discipline, in all their various applications and bearings, without let or hindrance from the state.

What shall we say then to her constant representation that the laws of the state are in the way of any church action pertaining to the subject of slavery? Why, that it is a mere scare-crow she has hung up to frighten her anti-slavery children, and drive them from the field of conflict. And, affecting to be frightened at it himself, she points to the horrid spectre and exclaims,—“Ha! you rabid abolitionist! you hair-brained fanatics of the north! Hands off! Desolation and ruin are in your path. Away with your incendiary agitations—your revolutionary movements—your treasonable interference with civil authority. Submit yourselves, as it becomes good and loyal citizens, to ‘the powers that be;’ and no longer jeopard the anti-slavery cause in which we are all engaged, or retard the blessed work of emancipation we all have so much at heart, by your ultra abolition measures.” But we have seen so many spooks, and have so little faith in them; especially when conjured up and paraded before us by the witchery of the slave-power, that we are not much scared after all. At any rate we shall not take to our heels till a more formidable ghost than that of the pretended interference of

our anti-slavery movements with civil authority appears to us. And as this seems to have taxed their magic art to its utmost capacity, or to have constituted the crowning effort of their necromantic skill, we think we shall be able to stand our ground in spite of all they can do to put us to the rout. Perhaps we shall be told by the church, that she does not pretend there are any state laws in the way of the exclusion of her slave-holding members ; but only in the way of these members emancipating their slaves ; and this being the case, there being state-laws which stand in the way of the emancipation of slaves, their owners are not to be blamed for continuing to hold them in bondage—not to be blamed for not doing what they cannot do by reason of such state laws—and therefore ought not to be expelled. Well, she has it *both* ways, and almost *any other* way as best suits her turn in catering to the slave-power ; but we cannot attend to this particular aspect of the subject in this connection. We shall examine the alleged legal inability of the slave-holder to emancipate his slaves, however, in another place.

But though the constitution and laws of our government are such that the state cannot *legally* interfere with the prerogatives of the church, yet she *can* and *does* do it *illegally*, or by a *shameful prostitution* of law and justice in a thousand ways. It is in vain she pretends to adopt the policy of non-interference in relation to questions of a purely moral nature ; for everybody knows that she adopts no such policy. We wish she did. We should then be permitted to preach the unadulterated gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, or to “declare the whole counsel of God,” at the south. Then

we might administer the Discipline upon the ground that non-slave-holding constitutes a condition of church-membership, as in fact it does, without a mobocratic lynching, instigated by government officials; or a Border prosecution for the purpose of wresting from us our church property, *after a former example*. Then would the free citizens of Kansas be afforded indemnification from the brutal outrages of Border-ruffians, and southern blood-hounds, those potent allies and dirty instruments of the Federal Executive. And last, not least, the poor chattelized slave, "made in the image of God," and redeemed by the blood of Christ, would be allowed to read the Bible.

But the state, to whom we have committed the keeping of our conscience on the subject of slavery, will allow of no such thing. The first attempt to preach the pure gospel to the slave-population of our country, or to impress upon them an enlightened christian character—making them acquainted with their obligations and their rights in common with the rest of mankind—would subject us to every species of mob-violence. Possibly, they might not kill us outright for the first transgression; but incarceration in their horrid "nigger dungeons," or a chivalrous riding us out of town on a rail, clad in the livery of a coat of tar and feathers as their custom is, would be sure to admonish us never to repeat the offence.

And as things are now going on in our land, the time is not distant when the liberty of speech and of the press, already overthrown at the south, will be struck down at the north also, by the damnable slave-power which we as a church are guilty of upholding, and op-

pression will everywhere become the order of the day. Even now are our love and advocacy of freedom visited upon us by southern despotism, in the exclusion of our patriotic republican citizens from all government patronage and emolument—in the bold and insulting demand upon the governors of the free states for the delivering up of clergymen and others who have distinguished themselves in the anti-slavery cause, to be taken south and there tried by slave law—and the disfranchisement of the people of the north, dough-faces excepted, of the rights of citizens the moment they set their feet upon the manacled soil of a slave state. And what but the extension of slavery over the territories, and the utter subversion of the liberty of the free states themselves, may be expected to follow? *O tempora! O mores!*

But it is fit, and a thing to be looked for, that our betrayal of the cause of God and of humanity into the hands of the slave-power should be thus requited by retributive vengeance! Sin and the gospel are both *aggressive* in their nature. The issue between them is a war of extermination. And unless the gospel is wielded against sin as an *aggressive power*, pursuing it into all its lurking-places, and besieging it in every strong-hold it may occupy—even though it may be the protection extended to it by a perfidious, slavocratic administration of the government and laws of the state—the horrors of extermination will fall to our lot, and we shall richly deserve our fate!

CHAPTER IV.

CHURCH PROFFESSES TO BE ANTI-SLAVERY—HER CHARACTER DETERMINED BY HER PRACTICE—PROVED TO BE A PRO-SLAVERY CHURCH—PRO-SLAVERY IN HER DISCIPLINE—IN HER ADMINISTRATION—IN HER RULING AUTHORITIES—HER ANTI-SLAVERY PROFFESIONS MISLEADING—OCCUPIES THE SAME GROUNDS WITH THE CHURCH SOUTH—NO CAUSE OF SEPARATION BETWEEN THE TWO BODIES—DISTINCTION BETWEEN MERCENARY AND VIRTUOUS SLAVE-HOLDING—THE IDEA OF ENSLAVING MEN FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT HORRIBLE.

We are aware our church *professes* to be anti-slavery; and affects to be greatly injured in her character and feelings when represented as occupying pro-slavery ground. And if she be innocent of the charge, most clearly it ought not to be preferred against her. For ourselves, we would be among the last to accuse her falsely. And yet we rather the accusation were false than true, though we ourselves should make it. For as much as it afflicts us to make the charge, it afflicts us very much more that there is any occasion for it. What then is the fact in the case? Is the church pro-slavery, or is she not. It is clearly due to the church, and all concerned, that this question should be definitely answered; and the sooner, the better. Let us then "define our position," that we may no longer "strive about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers," and the injury of the cause of God.

In judging of the character of an *individual*, we very properly subject him to a *practical* test. It is comparatively of little consequence what his creed, theory, or profession may be, farther than relates to its practical effect and bearing; we pass over all these, and assign him that character and standing in society which are indicated by his *practical behavior* or *manner of life*. And so of the church. It is the *practice* she pursues, rather than the *profession* she makes, that fixes her character and position before the public. The simple fact, therefore, that the church is pro-slavery in *practice*, determines her to be a *pro-slavery church*. There is no escaping this conclusion. And though she may fret and scold and curse the "rabid abolitionists" for throwing the imputation upon her, and protest and swear that she is anti-slavery till dooms-day; still, she is a pro-slavery church; and such she will be accounted and declared by the voice of community as long as she retains a solitary slave in her possession. That the church should attempt to conceal her pro-slavery character under a false name or profession, is not strange. It is a common thing for all criminals to make professions of innocence, or to assume characters that don't belong to them; and even to change their names in some cases; but they are judged of and treated according to their *actual conduct of life* after all. And though a pro-slavery church may be ever so loud and persistent in her professions of anti-slaveryism, still her professions can have no other effect in the eye of community than to brand her with the most delusive blindness or the foulest hypocrisy.

That a considerable portion of the church, preachers

and people, are anti-slavery, and that an anti-slavery character is claimed for her Discipline, alters not the case. *Churches* as well as *countries*, take their name and character from the form of their government, or from their administration and ruling authorities. Hence England and most of the European governments are called *monarchies*, though many of their subjects are, *republicans*. And hence also, several branches of the christian church are denominated *Calvinists*, while considerable numbers belonging to their communion are *Arminians*. And notwithstanding there are many thousands, probably a majority of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who are anti-slavery in their character and feelings; yet, the institution of slavery being *practically* sustained by her, and the shield of her Discipline, of her administration, and of her ruling authorities being thrown around it, she is to all intents and purposes a *pro-slavery church*. Her *Discipline* is pro-slavery, since it provides by statutory enactment, for the existence of slavery, and regulates and upholds it. Her *administration* is pro-slavery, for it admits slave-holders into her communion, keeps them in her communion, and protects them in all the rights and privileges of membership, the occupancy of the sacred office itself not excepted. And her ruling authorities are pro-slavery, as the impossibility of getting a prohibitory rule through the General Conference sufficiently proves. And what more is necessary to constitute her a pro-slavery church? Surely, nothing but the *name*. And why should that be wanting?

If, then, the church be pro-slavery, as we see she is, why does she constantly disavow it, and that too with

so much sensitiveness, when it is imputed to her? Why so pertinaciously insist on being called anti-slavery in her character? Is she ashamed of her appropriate appellation? Ashamed to be called what she really is? Well, this is somewhat encouraging; for where there is *shame*, there may be *virtue*, it is said; and we will yet faintly hope for the extirpation of church-slavery. Still, we contend that the Methodist Episcopal Church is a pro-slavery church; and it is vain for her to pretend to the contrary. As well might she maintain that the drunkard, the adulterer, or the high-way robber, is opposed to the practice which he pursues, as that the church is opposed to slavery while she continues to hold slaves. No one believes that the drunkard is anti, i. e., *against* intemperance, while he continues to get drunk; or that the church is anti, i. e., *against* slavery, while she continues to hold slaves; and it is a gross imposition for her to assume to be anti-slavery, or attempt to pass herself off in that character before the world.

And as she has no right to assume the *character*, so neither has she any right to bear the *name* of an anti-slavery church. It is by this bold dissimulation—this sacrilegious forgery of the name of a class of people whose character and principles she despises in her heart—that she continues to keep up a reputation for humanity, and enables herself the more effectually to carry on her crusade against the anti-slavery cause. We have shown that she is *in fact* pro-slavery in character; and that being pro-slavery in *fact*, she ought to be so in *name*. And we feel ourselves called upon as a friend of truth and righteousness to unmask her in the light of the sun; and present her to herself and to the world, what she really is,

a pro-slavery church. It is indeed high time that a vessel, sailing under false colors, should be called to an account. And if she be engaged in the piracy of the slave-trade, whether foreign or domestic which is all the same thing, let the awards of justice be meted out to her—at least let her be placed in a condition to be unable to carry on the nefarious traffic as a matter of ordinary commerce without due search and seizure. If she is determined to continue the infernal business of slave-holding, let her throw off the guise and do it *openly* and *above board*, like her more ingenuous and consistent sister—the Church South.

But if she still continue to dissemble her true character, as we fear she will, we shall be compelled, though with great reluctance, to drag her into the light; and shall not fail to use her studied concealment of the position she occupies in relation to slavery, as an argument against her. We shall regard it, as all doubtless will who look at the matter, as evidence of her own conviction of the enormity of slave-holding, and of the conscious guilt and shame she feels on account of it. Nay, we cannot suspend our expose of the character and condition of the church upon the contingency of what she may be or do hereafter—she has been let alone quite too long already—and if she is ever to be cured, the remedy must be soon applied; and if not, the time has fully come when the friends of the anti-slavery cause should be put upon their guard against her well dissembled pro-slavery influence. If it be said we ought not to hold the church responsible for the doings of the pro-slavery party belonging to her communion, and fasten upon her appellations or names which can only apply to

them ; it is sufficient to reply, that whatever is done by the administration—the party in power—the *church* does. And as the General Conference—the Supreme Authority of the church—upholds and sanctions slave-holding by legislative provision ; and all the Annual Conferences and other executive and judicial bodies administer these ecclesiastical slave-laws for the protection of slavery, of course the church does it ; and is therefore *a pro-slavery church*.

She has not, to be sure, gone quite the length of the Church South in declaring her hostility to the anti-slavery cause, or in openly espousing “the peculiar institution,” in common with the slave states, as a great moral, political, and social benefit ; but to be consistent with herself, or to make her profession agree with her practice and teachings, she *ought* to do it. No one will think the better of her for *professing one thing and practicing another*. Either let her conform her practice to her profession and give up the abomination of slave-holding, inserting an absolute prohibitory rule in her Discipline and carrying it out in her administration ; or else go over to the Church South, conforming her profession to her practice, and expunging from her Discipline, as that church has done, the last vestige of any thing that could be objected to by the slave-power, or in any way restrict her in respect to the holding and buying and selling of slaves the same as other slave-holders.

The mere circumstance of the pretended exclusion of slavery from the travelling connection by which we are distinguished from the Church South, being founded on *expediency* instead of *principle*, is too trifling to justify the separation of the two bodies. This distinction, which

had long existed, was no particular offence to the Church South. She had always been willing that the several Annual Conferences should follow the example of the states in regard to slavery, each conference being allowed to regulate its own internal affairs in its own way. It is not our restriction of the travelling ministry to non-slave-holding of which she complains, but of the perpetual war we make upon her connection with slavery when we are "as deep in the mud as she is in the mire." Of *this* she complains. And she has a *right* to complain of it. And if we have no other reason for the separation than that we inhibit slave-holding to the travelling connection, while we allow it to all other grades or classes of the church, we cannot too soon get upon our knees to a church we have so much abused, ask pardon for having driven her from our embrace without the slightest provocation, and entreat her to allow us to take her back again as an integral and vital part of our own body. Why should there be kept up a continual irritation and collision along the border which lies between us? And why should our connectional efficiency and prestige be impaired in all the world by the unbrotherly contention which so painfully agitates us on both sides? Oh, how much better for us to unite in one connection and expend the mighty missiles we now level against each other upon the common enemy. Let us do this by all means, and let us do it *heartily* and at *once*, or become an anti-slavery church in *practice* as well as in *profession*.

CHAPTER V.

CHURCH PROFFESSES TO BE ANTI-SLAVERY—ALLOWS THE RELATION OF MASTER AND SLAVE—AND THIS SHE PRETENDS FOR THE SLAVE'S BENEFIT—THE VERY IDEA HORRIBLE—THE TRANSMISSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY CONVEYS NO TITLE—SLAVERY, MALEM PER SE—LEGAL RELATION AFFORDS THE SLAVE NO PROTECTION FROM THE ABUSES OF HIS CONDITION—IT IS MAINTAINED ONLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MASTER—ALL THE POWER, ALL THE CRUELTY, ALL THE GUILT, AND ALL THE EVIL OF SLAVERY LIE IN THE LEGAL RELATION—COMPULSORY BENEFITS NO FAVOR.

Our church, in defining her own position with respect to slavery, attempts to justify her claim to be anti-slavery in her character upon the ground that she “does not approve of *mercenary* slave-holding, or of the *system* of slavery; and only maintains the *legal relation* for the purpose of extending to the poor unfortunate slave the protection his circumstances require.” But while many are misled by this soft delusion, supposing that a large class of slave-holders, particularly those professing religion, are induced to maintain the legal relation from motives of sympathy and kindness towards the slave, men of intelligence and reflection know better. They know that *all* slave-holding is mercenary; and that this plausible, well-contrived distinction of mercenary and *merciful*—of *system* and *legal relation*—is resorted to for the sole purpose of “drawing the wool,” or rather *cotton* “over our eyes,” and of inveighling us into the leading-strings

of the slave-power. In reality, this legal relation-stratagem is but the nice white heap which conceals the *cat*—a mere cloak under which all the wickedness and cruelty of slavery are known to abound !

And is there no truth then in the representation that slaves are sometimes held in bondage for their own benefit? Aye, indeed, no truth; and we can hardly forbear to say, *no honesty* in such representation. Who that is not lost to every principle of truth and consistency can think of it without a shudder—a human being, “of like passions with ourselves,” deprived of his liberty and degraded to a state of imbruted chattelhood *for his own benefit!* The idea is so clearly false, so evidently absurd, so absolutely monstrous and shocking, that we could not consent to argue it for a moment but for the sake of those who would sooner take for granted any thing which comes to them under the guise of plausibility and the authority of distinguished names, than be at the trouble of examining it for themselves. With all persons of sense and reflection the bare presentation of an idea so preposterous and hateful were a sufficient refutation of it. And for our own part, we are compelled to say, that such an idea, for bare-faced impudence and diabolical insult, has no parallel in the annals of human depravity! “The horrible decree” of unconditional reprobation, which Wesley says “makes God worse than the Devil,” is equitable and benevolent in comparison of it. *That* consigns you to hell torments *for the general good!*—*This* to the hopeless bondage and deep damnation of the next region this side, *for your own benefit!!!*

But in what sense, permit us to enquire, or from what evil of slavery is the poor manacled slave protected by

the legal relation? We do not ask whether it protects him from a state of bondage. This is not pretended. The legal relation itself necessarily involves that state. We cannot admit the plea of the present generation of slave-holders, however, that they had no hand in bringing their slaves into that state, merely because they were not among the first man-stealers, and therefore are not responsible for their bondage; for the transmission of stolen property from one to another conveys no valid title to it, though it pass through ten thousand times ten thousand hands. All law, human and Divine, proceeds upon the principle that "a partaker is as bad as a thief;" or that he who knowingly uses or holds stolen property is equally guilty, and liable to the same penalty, with him by whom it was originally stolen. But waiving that point, we should like to know from what evil of slavery any one can protect his slaves, now that they are already in his hands, by virtue of the legal relation. We are not unwilling to make an issue with the slave-holder on this point alone, and to concede to him a triumphant vindication of his cause if he will fairly meet it. From what single evil of slavery then does or can the slave-holder protect his slaves by virtue of the legal relation? Is it from the rapacious clutches of another robber who stands ready, under cover of law, to nab him the moment he is set at liberty by his old master and provide him a new one? And what does all that amount to? Who knows but another robber into whose hands he might chance to fall would use him equally well with his former master? Or if death be preferable to bondage, as our revolutionary fathers maintained, would not the greater cruelty to which he might

be subjected by a change of masters become *in effect* the greater kindness, by hastening the period of his dissolution? And is not the language of the Old Patriot of seventy-six,—“Give me liberty, or give me death,” the language of ninety-nine hundredths of all the slaves of our country at this moment? Surely, when life becomes so embittered by the hand of oppression as to extinguish the last ray of hope, and compel you to look upon the grave as your only hiding-place or refuge, how joyfully would you submit to the stroke which by terminating your life should put an end to your misery.

And what other evil of slavery is there from which the slave is protected by the legal relation? Can any one tell? The truth is, slavery itself is evil—is *malum per se*—a sin under all circumstances; and to destroy all the *evils* of slavery, is to destroy slavery itself, for it is *all evil, legal relation and all*. Or, which is the same thing, to *protect* the slave from the *evils* of slavery, is to dissolve the legal relation he sustains to his master, i. e., to emancipate him. There is absolutely no other way. The sin of slavery, like any other sin, or like sin in general, is homogenous, and can no more be purged from its evil properties without destroying it, than the plague of leprosy or any other bodily disease. To separate slavery from its evils, is to separate a thing from itself, which cannot be done. Slavery, and its evils, are identical. They exist, or expire, together. The legal relation constitutes their common cause or fountain. And as the cause of an evil can never become its cure, or the stream be purified which flows from a corrupt fountain; so the legal relation, which constitutes the very source and life-blood of slavery, can never be made

available under any circumstances for the protection or benefit of the slave.

But as the church has now settled down upon the policy, so congenial to the slave-power, that the legal relation of master and slave may exist, not only without sin, but with great advantage to the slave also, and every thing is now drifting in this direction, to the great detriment of the anti-slavery cause and scandal of our holy religion, we feel ourselves called upon to repudiate a position so unchristian and abominable in its character, and to proclaim and show to the world that in the legal relation of master and slave lies all the power, all the cruelty, all the guilt, and of course all the evil of slavery.

Few will deny, it is presumed, that all the *power* of slavery lies in the legal relation of master and slave. Take this away, and what power has slavery over any one? Admit this, and what power has any one over slavery? This is indeed "the dragon which gives to the beast his power, and seat, and great authority"—the life-blood of a system which "is evil, and only evil continually." How then can this same legal relation be regarded as so harmless a thing by many of our people? Nay, how can it become the salvation of the slave—the all-glorious talisman, protecting him from all the evils of his condition in a state of bondage, and guiding him to the elysium of all his aspirations and hopes beyond the tomb? But we shall not dwell here. It is sufficiently plain that if the legal relation were abolished, slavery could not exist for an hour.

The question whether all the *cruelties* of slavery lie in the legal relation, will not be so generally admitted.

Many there are who make the cruelties of slavery lie in the *abuses* of the institution, and not in the institution itself. They assume that the institution of slavery in our country is a great benefit to the slave; and as the institution can not exist without the legal relation, therefore kindness to the slave requires that the legal relation should be maintained. And not a few who condemn the institution as a great moral, political and social evil, contend nevertheless, that since it has been already grafted upon us, and is sustained by the government which no one as an individual can change, the best thing the slave-holder can do for his slaves under the circumstances, is to avail himself of the legal relation for their protection and comfort.

Now all this seems very plausible. But who, after all, believes a word of it? If the good of the slave be the object of the master, and he cannot liberate him where he is and secure to him his freedom, why not take him where he can? Or if there be any case where he could not be removed to a free State, which we honestly doubt, then let him be paid for his labor the same as a hired servant. And though *nominally* a slave, the legal relation remaining barely for his protection from the auction-block of the sheriff, let him be *virtually* free, "doing what he will with his own." Let him eat, drink, buy, sell, become a farmer, merchant, mechanic, or professional character, at his own option; only so that he secure his master against any damages in case he should commit any depredations upon the property of others for which his master would be held responsible by the laws of the state. And above all, let him pursue the cultivation of his mind—furnishing himself with a libra-

ry, taking the newspaper, enjoying society, going to church and reading the word of God—the same as any other citizen.

Such treatment of the slave would leave no doubt upon any one's mind that the *good* of the slave was at least *aimed* at in the maintenance of the legal relation. But who ever treated his slaves in this way? The like, we believe, was never heard of. And in the absence of the record of a single instance of such treatment in all the dark history of American slave-holding, we must be allowed to reject the idea of the holding of slaves in bondage by means of the legal relation for their own benefit, as a hollow-hearted pretext for robbing them of their liberty and living upon their unrequited earnings. At least we must regard any one who should assume the responsibility of sustaining the legal relation of a slave-master for the benefit of his slaves, as furnishing a rare exception to the character which the slave-holders of our country are known to possess. Let there be no more gain arising from the labor of the slave, than of the hired servant, and not one of a thousand of our benevolent (?) slave-holders would be found to bear such responsibility for a moment. They would all soon discover the enormity of holding their fellow-creatures in bondage, and their tender consciences and the Holy Bible would admonish them of the solemn obligation they were under to "break every yoke and let the oppressed go free." Nay, it is *their own* good, or rather *gain*, and *not* that of the slave, which causes them to cling to a relation as with a death-grasp which cannot possibly inure to the benefit of any but themselves. And besides, no one at the South, as we shall have occasion to show here-

after, would be allowed to hold slaves for their own benefit. For if the example should not become contagious, others following in the same train, and thus ruin the institution of slavery as a source of income to the master, which we insist is the only object contemplated by its introduction or establishment; it would at least breed discontent among the slave-population who might not be treated in like manner, and stir them up to secure their liberty by some means, or an equivalent for their services, which would be equally fatal to the whole slave interest.

But even if the good of the slave *were* or *could* be promoted by means of the legal relation, which we do not admit, yet no one has a right to attempt to benefit him by such means, except with *his own consent*. The *means* in any other view of the subject, being wrong, could not be justified by the *end*. Slavery is an *evil*. God has *denounced* it under the name of man-stealing, oppression, and the like. Our church, in her excellent Discipline, has done the same thing, professing to desire and seek its entire extirpation. And we are not to "do evil that good may come." Wesley said he "would not tell a lie to save the world from hell." And it is an established maxim in christian ethics, that we are to "do *right* if the heavens fall." The idea is that *principles* and not *consequences* are to be the rule of our conduct; and we are never to enquire whether any *good* would come from it, or whether it would be a *favor* to any one were we to do this or that, where it is settled by Divine authority that the thing in itself is wrong. The stealing of a man or the robbing him of his liberty for his benefit, however great the benefit might be supposed to be, is a thing that we have no right to do, *simply for*

the reason that it is wrong. If there were no other reason for the renunciation of slavery, *this* is all-sufficient. God has forbidden it, and that should settle the question.

In following out the subject of the absence of the right of one human being to confer *even a benefit* upon another without his consent, we shall remind the reader that "the pursuit of happiness is the inalienable right of all men"—the black as well as the white—and that all have an equal right to pursue it in their own way, only so that they do not violate the rights of others. If any *choose* to become slaves as the most eligible means of attaining the object of their pursuit, it is all very well; but they have the same right to choose a state of freedom. And no one has any right to dictate to them as to the ways and means, within the above limitation, by which the object of their pursuit shall be sought. We freemen, inspired by the noble spirit of seventy-six, would sooner spill our heart's blood than be dictated to in this respect; and why not leave our brethren of the African race to occupy the same ground? The right of choice as much belongs to them, as to us. It is equally dear to them. And why not allow them to exercise it—doing unto them as we would they should do unto us—without molestation or grudging?

Of course we repudiate the scandalous doctrine of Chief Justice Taney, and his slave-holding Associates, by which the colored people are *dehumanized* and converted into mere property; and apply to *them*, as well as to their *pale-faced neighbors*, the declaration of our Fathers, that "government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed." They too have a right to say, no less than their white fellow-citizens, *who* shall

rule over them, and *how* the government shall be administered—a right to say what happiness *is*, and by *what means* they will pursue it. It is for the colored man to determine *for himself* whether the *benefits* (?) of a state of bondage shall be conferred upon him, or whether he will so far *deny* himself as to forego those benefits (?) and remain in a state of freedom. If *others* consider it a favor to live in a state of bondage, they may choose it for *themselves*, but not for *him*. It is a favor he does not ask at their hands; and though in their clemency they may confer it upon him, still he does not thank them for it. Even the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is not to be propagated by *force*, nor its benefits conferred upon any one against his will. How much less are the benefits (?) of slavery to be propagated by *force*! *Such* a method of benefitting mankind, though in perfect keeping with the religion of Mahomet, the Pope of Rome, slave-holders, and the whole miserable fraternity of despots, is a horrid outrage upon the principles of the Divine economy and the rights and responsibilities of moral agents. We repeat it, and we would do it with the emphasis of thunder, that if slavery *be* a favor to the slave, no one has a right to confer it upon him *without his own consent*.

But in truth, that which is *forced* upon any one against his will, though a *fortune* or a *crown*, is *not* a favor. The greatest good imaginable, if conferred upon an individual against his will, not only loses all its value, but actually becomes an evil to him. And hence it is that *slavery*, being a *forced* condition—a state to which the slave is subjected in utter violation of his inclinations and will—is necessarily an *injury* rather than a *favor*

for that reason alone. The violence done to the slave in robbing him of his manhood, and reducing him to a brute or a thing, can never be atoned for. Freedom is the natural state of man—it is man's element—is essential to his happiness; and to remove him from the element in which he was designed to live, is to render him miserable. There is indeed no compensation for the loss of freedom. There can be none. Freedom is infinitely preferable in Africa, with all the degradation and sufferings of that barbarous land, to all the blessings of civilization and religion allowed to the slave in this christian country while deprived of it. Take freedom from a human being, and though you give him in exchange every privilege and blessing of life that can be enjoyed in a state of bondage, you do him an infinite injury. You destroy in his bosom the only susceptibility of happiness—the love of liberty; or, extinguishing its appropriate object—the right and enjoyment of liberty—you leave it to languish and pine and die unsatisfied!

Since, then, the slave-holder cannot possibly render unto his slaves an equivalent for the liberty he has taken from them—cannot possibly indemnify them for the loss or damage they have sustained at his hands, or do them *justice* even, while he holds them in a state of bondage; how reckless must he be of truth and honesty, how unblushing and impudent, to pretend that he holds them in that state as a favor to themselves! The slave, who is the best and only rightful judge in the case, does not think slavery a favor; nor would the slave-holder in a change of circumstances, think it so. He *knows* that there can be no compensation for the loss of liberty—that a state of bondage, though in Paradise, could not

come into comparison with a state of freedom under whatever circumstances it might be enjoyed—and that to talk of giving the slave in exchange for his liberty, the chains and privations and cruelties of slavery in their *mildest* forms as a favor to him, is to talk like a madman or a fool! Surely, that which is not so much as an *equivalent* for the thing taken from us, or falls infinitely short of the claims of *common justice*, can never be regarded *as a favor*.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LEGAL RELATION AFFORDS NO PROTECTION FROM THE CRUELITIES OF SLAVERY—SOME FORMS OF SLAVERY WORSE THAN OTHERS—NONE OF THEM EQUAL TO LIBERTY—NO PROTECTION FROM THE TRAFFIC OF SLAVERY—THE MASTER MAY BECOME INSOLVENT—HE MUST DIE—NO PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE DOMESTIC INSTITUTION—THE MASTER BOUND BY THE SLAVE LAWS, EQUALLY WITH THE SLAVE—HE CAN ONLY PROTECT HIS SLAVES AS CATTLE, OR PROPERTY—EMANCIPATION, AND NOT THE LEGAL RELATION, THE ONLY SECURITY AGAINST THE CRUELITIES OF SLAVERY.

But is there no case where the slave is benefited by his condition in a state of bondage? Does not the legal relation afford him protection from the evil of being sold into worse hands often, and from many other evils of slavery as it exists in our country? We are not about to say that the evils of slavery are equally intolerable in all cases, or that all slave-masters are equally oppressive and cruel. That is not the point of comparison. The question is not whether one form of slavery is less cruel than another, but whether slavery in *any* form is better than freedom; or whether slavery, when compared with freedom, is better for the slave under any circumstances. This we utterly deny; and think we have fully sustained our position. Possibly there might be an isolated case where the legal ownership of an individual who could not take care of himself would be a

favor to him, if it could be taken apart from its moral aspect, and its bearing upon the system of slavery in general; but as this cannot be done—as a single instance of this kind might be made a precedent for slaveholding generally, and we have no right to seek an individual and partial benefit where it is to be overbalanced by the general evil consequence which must result from it—we utterly deny that slavery is better for the slave than a state of freedom under any circumstances whatever.

And here we would ask, how the legal relation enables the master to protect his slave from the evil of being sold into a worse condition, or from any other evil of slavery, in case of his *death* or *insolvency*, by one or other of which they must inevitably pass out of his hands? Can he control their destiny after they have passed into the hands of others by *such* means, any more than if they had been set at liberty by his own voluntary act and then sold by the sheriff to the highest bidder? Or were he to live forever, and still retain them in his own hands as their legal master, how is he going to protect them from the evils of a system which neither he nor they can at all control? True, the legal relation places them in his power to work them, to whip them, and in case of resistance or an attempt to escape from bondage, to kill them. But it does not enable him to restore to them the elective franchise, the right to hold office, or to testify in a court of justice. And what advantage can he take of the legal relation to protect the slave from the cruelties of a situation in which he is doomed either to live a single life, with no one to cheer him “in his house of bondage”—to be limited in

the choice of a companion to the slaves of his own master, however uncongenial or repulsive they may appear to him, (and *colored* men have their affinities and their taste)—or what is still more cruel, to connect himself with one of another plantation under the inevitable liability and constant and withering apprehension of having her sold away from him at any moment, with any dear children they may have, and taken to parts unknown? Or may all these evils, so trying and abhorrent to the white man, be heaped upon the poor slave *without cruelty*, merely because of the color of his skin?

The master, let it be remembered, is as much bound by the slave-laws as the slave himself; and *cannot* be kind to his slaves, or even “give unto them that which is equal and right,” without emancipation, *if he would*. The legal relation instead of enabling him to protect them from the cruelties of slavery, *puts it out of his power to do it*. The thing is forbidden by the laws of the slave-states, to which he himself is subjected by the legal relation; nor dare he disregard or violate them upon his peril. He may, to be sure, indulge his slaves in the gratification of their natural appetites and passions where his own interest is served by it—may allow them food and rest for the purpose of keeping them in good working order, the same as a horse or an ox; the slave-code taking good care to provide for things of this sort; but is he at liberty to raise them above the condition of brute-beasts, and restore them to the rights and dignity of manhood? This can never be. And what sort of protection is that from the cruelties of slavery, or what does all the protection amount to, where the master can only extend to his slaves such gratifications

or indulgences as they are capable of enjoying in common with the cattle ; but has no power to open to them the door of a literary institution, to put the Bible into their hands, or to allow them any other right—social, civil, or religious—peculiar to their own species? Strange protection, we must confess, from the cruelties of slavery, where one is denied the position and claims of a human being, and only allowed those sensual gratifications which belong to the mere brute! Yet this is all the protection which the legal relation—that boasted instrument of humanity and kindness—affords the poor down-trodden slave!

Well, this gives us a clue to what the chivalrous South would have us understand by the cruelties of slavery. It is not the abusing a fellow-creature *as a man*—the depriving him of all the rights and relations of a human being, or the treating him with such indignities merely as would be incompatible with his manhood—O, no, that is not the idea. There is no cruelty in all that. No cruelty in barely depriving him of his liberty, or robbing him of those capabilities and enjoyments which distinguish him from the inferior races of animals. But it is the abusing him *as a beast*, or the inflicting upon him those *corporeal* injuries, after he has been deprived of his manhood, which a *beast* would be entitled to complain of—the beating, starving, overworking, or abusing him beyond physical endurance—that constitutes the cruelties of slavery. That is the idea. Nothing is cruel to the slave, in the judgment of the South, which would not be deemed inhuman, and punishable by the laws of the land, if inflicted upon a dumb beast. In estimating the language of the slave-

holding South, and of their Northern sympathisers upon the subject, therefore, we must remember that they always contemplate the slave as a *beast* and not as a man. *This* is their only standard of judgment.

But we of the anti-slavery North, regarding the slave as a *man* and *not* as a *beast*, or taking his manhood as the basis of our calculations and judgment in the premises, maintain that the cruelties of slavery begin where slavery begins, and *chiefly consist* in depriving a human being of his liberty; and that any merely corporeal abuses inflicted upon him in his humbled condition are comparatively nothing. That great *physical* cruelties are heaped upon the slave, and far greater than are inflicted upon the mere brute, *is* and *must* be the case, as far greater cruelties are required to "break him in," as it is expressed, and keep him in a state of subjection, on account of his superior intelligence and love of liberty; but his sufferings are *mental* rather than physical—the sufferings of a *man* who *feels his degradation* and sighs for the inheritance of freedom which has been wrested from him—rather than of a *beast* to whose condition he has been reduced by the hand of violence and blood. And yet the slave-holder who *basely makes a beast* of his fellow-man by robbing him of his liberty, or *only plunders* him of his God-given rights of self-ownership as a human being, is not only to be vindicated from the imputation of *cruelty*, but to be looked upon as a benefactor of his race—not only to be regarded as an upright and honorable man, having been guilty of no injustice or wrong in what he has done, but to be held up as a pattern of christian benevolence in affording the poor benighted Pagan a glimpse of civilization,

and allowing him to breathe the atmosphere of slavery in a christian land ; and only to be accounted *cruel* when he denies him the treatment that is due to cattle ! Singular idea of the abuse of a human being, to be sure. And who of *us* could be deprived of all our rights and privileges, except what we possess in common with the cattle of the field, and not feel that we were *cruelly* dealt by ? Doubtless, if the tables were turned, the heartless slave-holder would be enabled to judge of cruelty by a very different standard.

But as slave-holders never implicate one another, much less their own character, and their abused human chattels are not allowed to testify for themselves, we must either admit that no cruelties are experienced by the slave at the hands of his master, or draw our conclusions upon the subject from other sources. We shall do the latter. And being assured, as well from the nature of the case as from a world of reliable testimony, which we need not introduce here, that the most horrible cruelties are perpetrated upon the slave all over the Southern states, we shall still contend and believe that no advantage either has been or can be taken of the legal relation to prevent, or materially *abate* these cruelties. They are inherent in the system of slavery itself. They constitute the only basis on which it can rest. Nor can it exist a moment without them.

If the cruelties of slavery consisted merely in the privation of food, raiment, rest, or such other comforts as have respect to the interests of the master *only*; they might be somewhat modified by *personal kindness* on his part. But as a common interest is felt throughout all the Southern states in denying to the slave the

right of education, of property, of domestic oversight and free social intercourse, with everything in the shape of manhood and liberty, lest, tasting of their value, he should become uneasy and dangerous; and as the slave-laws enjoin it upon the master under heavy penalties to withhold all these rights and privileges from his slaves, to break down their spirits, and to crush out the last vestige of liberty pertaining to them, *for the common safety*; no slave-holder, whatever his character or inclination may be, can possibly stand between his slaves and the cruelties of slavery. No advantage can be taken of the legal relation for such purpose. Nay, the denying to the slave every right and claim of humanity, and the inflicting upon him all the cruelties in general of the whole monstrous system of slavery, are made necessary by the slave-laws which everywhere bind the master as well as the slave; and he has no alternative but to yield to their authority, sacrificing the higher to the lower law, and staining his soul with the foulest crime the sun ever looked down upon, or to dissolve the legal relation from which all these cruelties emanate.

The experiment of Mrs. Stowe's Clayton in North Carolina, is an illustration exactly in point. His attempt to educate his slaves and treat them kindly, proved a failure. He soon found, to his great disappointment and grief, that the thing was utterly impracticable. If any one could have succeeded in the undertaking, he must have been the man. An amiable, intelligent, and highly distinguished gentleman, and belonging to one of the best and most influential families in the state, he was every way qualified for the execu-

tion of his design, had it been practicable. But his slave-holding neighbors, among whom were men of great wealth and distinction, alarmed for "the peculiar institution" which they knew could not co-exist with education and kindness, were not long in giving him to understand that he must abandon the project of improving the condition of his slaves by treating them as human beings, and train them into brute subjection like other slave-holders around him, or leave the state. He chose the latter course. And though he failed of his design to educate them, and treat them as rational, accountable creatures in a slave state, where his example might have the effect, as he ardently hoped, to improve the condition of the slaves generally; yet, by removing them to a free state, he was enabled to realize his cherished purpose of making them intelligent and happy. By this course alone can any one do *justice* to his slaves, not to say *kindness*, or shield them from the cruelties of slavery. There is absolutely no alternative but emancipation, or cruelty and abuse. You can no more show kindness to a human being in a state of bondage—no more protect him from cruelty—than you can ease him of pain in the agonies of death, or render him contented and happy in the regions of the damned. Slavery is a *furnace of fire, a burning hell*—and there is no freedom, no comfort, no alleviation of torment, but to get out of it.

CHAPTER VII.

CRUELTY ESSENTIAL TO THE EXISTENCE OF SLAVERY—THE SLAVE-MASTER, CORRUPTED BY SLAVERY, HAS NO MORAL POWER TO BE KIND—IN CLAIMING TO CONTROL THE WILL OF THE SLAVE, HE TRANSCENDS THE PREROGATIVES OF GOD HIMSELF—THE LEGAL RELATION RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EVILS OF SLAVERY.

The slave-power, aware that perfect obedience on the part of the slave can only be secured by absolute authority on the part of the master, has taken care to invest the latter with such authority by state laws; and to maintain such authority over the slave, and keep him in subjection to his will, the cruelties of the slave system must be put in requisition. These cruelties of which the slave system is made up, and apart from which it can never be contemplated, are not merely incidental to the system, arising from the peculiar temperament or passions of the master as has been pretended. They have been *contrived* and brought into use for the very purpose of keeping the slave in subjection to his will, and their exercise or infliction imposed upon him as a necessary condition of the society in which he lives.

How idle then to talk of *merciful* slave-holding, or slave-holding in any acceptation whatever, apart from the

cruelties of the slave system. How idle to suppose for a moment that a human being could be reduced to a state of bondage, involving as it does the loss of everything dear to our common humanity, or be held in that state, except by cruel means. As well might a man be robbed of his property, or his family, or be murdered, by any other than cruel means! The fact is, the *cruelties* of slavery are slavery itself. Nothing more. Nothing less. They still are, and ever have been, *one and inseparable*. Wherever slavery exists, there are its cruelties. Wherever the *cruelties* of slavery are abolished, there slavery is no more. Slavery! O, how it sounds. How I hate the very name. Slavery is the very *embodiment* of cruelty—is cruelty itself. It is cruel in the abstract, and cruel in the concrete—cruel in theory, and cruel in practice—cruel in its beginning, cruel in its continuance, and cruel in its end. And whoever under the broad canopy of heaven sustains the legal relation of a slave-master, obliging himself thereby to practice the cruelties of slavery, *is a cruel wretch!*

But the worst of all is, that the legal relation *enslaves the mind of the slave-holder*, leaving him no *moral power*—no *will* or *disposition*—to protect his slaves from the cruelties of slavery. This interposes a *greater* obstacle in the way of such protection than the slave-laws even. To commit sin, is to fall under its enslaving influence. And if it were even possible for the slave-holder to evade the law of the state in some instances for the abatement of the sufferings of the slave, he could not evade the law of his own despotic and cruel disposition by which he himself is enslaved, and under the malig-

nant and debasing influence of which he often exceeds the utmost stringency of the slave-laws in the abuse of his slaves! Nay; with the disposition naturally engendered by the sin of slavery in the bosom of the slaveholder, he would sooner *increase* the rigor of the slave-laws, cruel as they are, than elude their oppressive operation, or modify their force by a lenitable application of them to his human cattle. Hence it is that almost every year must add to the stringency of those laws in order to gratify his increasing malignity, and keep pace with the progressive cruelty of his disposition and practice. And yet we are told with a sanctimonious and positive air, that "many connect themselves with slavery by assuming the legal relation in order to lessen the cruelties of the system." What arrant hypocrisy! No slave-holder believes a word of any such thing. He knows better. He knows one might as well join a gang of robbers for the purpose of curtailing their depredations upon the country, or throw himself into a rushing torrent in order to break its force and lessen the desolation which must result from its unrestrained violence. How certainly and how soon, would he be swept away, and thereby add to the ruin he could neither prevent nor circumscribe!

But as God never made man to be invested with absolute power over his fellow man, so he has never endued him with the capacity to exercise such power. He himself exercises no such power in regard to the human will, but leaves it perfectly free. Since, therefore, the slaveholder denies his slaves the freedom of the will—making *his own* will the rule of their conduct, even in matters of morality and religion—he arrogates to himself

something more than the prerogatives of Jehovah—the Supreme Governor and Ruler of all things! And what security is there for the slave—what hope of indulgence or kind treatment—in the hands of one who aspires to be higher than the Highest? The very assumption of a power which Gabriel were inadequate to wield, and which the God of heaven presumes not to exercise over the human mind, involves the foulest blasphemy—the climax of wickedness—the sin of anti-Christ! And is he who would dethrone the Deity by excluding him from the government of his own universe, or the denying him the right to govern his intelligent creatures upon the basis of the freedom of the will, to be supposed capable of employing the legal relation for the protection of his slaves? He who “exalteth himself above all that is called God” by substituting *his own* will for the will of a free moral agent, and thereby robbing him of the only faculty by which he can serve God and get to heaven—he to give us an example of merciful slaveholding, and illustrate by a kind and gentle treatment of his slaves the practicability of holding his fellow creatures in bondage for their own benefit? Just look at it. How perfectly astounding. Was there ever anything like it? A prodigy of bold blasphemy—compound of Pope and Devil—the embodiment of depravity and selfishness— aspiring to something above his Maker by monopolizing the absolute control of the will of an accountable being—so philanthropic and Christ-like, so full of humanity and the love of his neighbor, as to be qualified and disposed to treat with *kindness* a hapless fellow-creature whom the slave-laws have placed in his power. How astonishing! And to which among the

tallest, the boldest, the damndest of "the angels that fell," belongs the honor of having contrived a defence of slavery so deeply Devilish ?

The very moment a human being takes on the character of a slave-holder, call him christian, philanthropist, or what you will, he loses all power of self-regulation and control, and falls an easy prey to the perils of his situation. He has no longer any power to "choose the good, and refuse the evil;" or to "keep himself unspotted from the world." The power to rob and steal and abuse his fellow-creatures—men, women, and children—with impunity; nay, to be able to fill his coffers and wallow in luxury and extravagance upon the unrequited labor of others, and to gratify his kindled lusts upon the slave-women of his plantation or household in perfect accordance with law, custom, and the reputation of fashionable life, involves a temptation he cannot resist. An *angel* could not remain pure under such circumstances. Let him once involve himself in the sin of slave-holding, and all the corruptions and cruelties of the system would be sure to follow in its train.

It is not intended to say that the genuine christain who has stood aloof from slave-holding, and all other sinful practices, as indeed all genuine christains do, cannot keep himself from temptation; for he surely can, however it may cluster about him. He can only do it though, by forbearing to take the first step in wickedness, particularly that of slave-holding. But the slave-holder having thrown down the guards of virtue, and broken away from the restraints of morality and religion by the commission of the horrid crime of man-stealing, or slave-holding, which is the same thing, has lost all power to

“maintain his integrity,” or remain virtuous—all power to treat his slaves with any more fidelity or respect than is found to accord with his own gratification or self-interest. It is impossible for any one to violate the laws of God and humanity by subjecting his fellow-creatures to a state of bondage, thereby hardening himself in sin and cruelty, and still so far respect those laws as to treat his slaves with kindness and good will. The very idea is preposterous. If one be so lost to virtue, and abandoned to vice, that he cannot forbear to *enslave others* for his own benefit at the outset; how can he forbear to consult *his own interest*, and *not theirs*, in his treatment of them afterwards? To consult *their* interest, and treat them with kindness after he has reduced them to bondage, would be to act in a character which he has already forfeited and lost by enslaving them, and to defeat the very object he had in doing it; than which nothing could be more absurd. “A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.” “Neither do men gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles.” Equally true is it, that the slave-holder, necessarily corrupt as the effect of enslaving his fellow-creatures, is unable to treat them kindly. He has no power to do it; and no man who has any regard for virtue, or the salvation of his soul, and is at all conversant with the weaknesses of poor fallen human nature, would risk himself on such ground for a moment. And he who teaches that one man may enslave another without forfeiting his christian character and becoming himself the slave of sin, confounds all moral distinctions, brings the gospel into contempt, and opens the door to infidelity with all that train of barbarism and licentiousness which it naturally draws after it.

Such indeed is the system of slavery in its effect upon the mind, and such the nature of fallen man, that if the slave-holder *could* protect his slaves against the cruelties of the slave-laws, and against the cruelties of the whole world besides, he could not protect them against *his own* cruelties. If he has not moral power or virtue enough to resist the temptation to rob them of their liberty at first, how is he to resist the stronger temptation to rob them of their earnings, their wives, their children, and their virtue afterwards? How can he forego the gratification and profit of "raising his own niggers," and bringing into existence, as well for the market as for his own use, an *improved* breed who shall sustain the *double* relation of *slaves* and of *children* to their *kind* and *virtuous* master? Or, having adopted the maxim of tyrants that "might is right," and already acted upon it in availing himself of the law of force—the all-pervading and paramount law of the slave states—to subject his unoffending slaves to a state of bondage, how is he to forbear inflicting upon them, now that they are entirely in his power, all those impositions and cruelties which are necessary to keep them in that state and render them in the highest possible degree subservient to his own selfish interests and ends? There is absolutely no remedy but the emancipation of the slave. There can be no other remedy—no other way to avoid the infliction of insult and cruelty upon the slave than to emancipate him. The slave-holder having lent himself to the cruel Devil, and become "shorn of his strength" by abandoning himself to the cruel business of human oppression, has no power to abstain from the cruelties of a system which is founded in cruelty and

cannot exist for a single moment but by cruel means. And to the legal relation of master and slave—that boasted “magna charta” of the rights of the slaves of our country—all these heart-sickening and heaven-provoking cruelties are to be attributed!

CHAPTER VIII.

ALL THE GUILT OF SLAVERY LIES IN THE LEGAL RELATION—SUCH RELATION NEVER TO BE CONTRACTED BUT FOR THE SINGLE PURPOSE OF EMANCIPATION—WHEN CREATED BY INHERITANCE, TO BE IMMEDIATELY DISSOLVED—SLAVE-HOLDING ALWAYS CRIMINAL—ALWAYS AN EVIL TO THE SLAVE—NO TENDENCY IN IT TO EVANGELIZE OR REFORM—SLAVES SOMETIMES CONVERTED, NOT BY MEANS OF SLAVERY, BUT IN SPITE OF IT—THE LEGAL RELATION NEVER A POSITIVE GOOD.

Having shown in the foregoing pages of this work that all the *power* and all the *cruelties* of slavery lie in the legal relation of master and slave, it necessarily follows that all the *guilt* of that abominable institution, black as hell though it be, lies in the legal relation also. Truly, a relation which clothes the slave-holder with all the power he has to enslave and oppress his fellow-creatures; and arms him with all the weapons of cruelty, compelling him to oppress and abuse his slaves by placing him under the control of the accursed slave-laws, and exciting in his bosom those unhallowed propensities which no sinner, especially one who has abandoned himself to the sin of slave-holding, can resist; *must* and *does* cover him with all the *guilt* and all the *shame* of “the sum of all villainies.”

We shall blame no one for becoming a slave-holder by

inheritance. In that case, being *passive*, he is of course innocent. Nor do we esteem it wrong for a man to *buy* a slave on purpose to free him. Here also he is not only innocent but praiseworthy even. But to allow the legal relation, in any case, to continue any longer than is strictly necessary to effect the emancipation of the slave, involves the awful sin of slave-holding, which no one can be guilty of but at the peril of his soul!

This furnishes an awful motive for the abandonment of slave-holding, drawn from the interests and eternal well being of the slave-holder himself; and it is passing strange that he does not yield to it. One would suppose that the *argumentum ad hominum*—an appeal to the highest and most enduring interests of a man's own being—might be sufficient to move him. We fear, however that even this appeal, awful as it is, will fail of its designed effect; or that it will be made in vain to the great mass of slave-holders in our land. We fear that the *church* even will continue to practice an abomination in which she has become too thoroughly steeped to have much sense of her wickedness, or to forbear to justify it by such pretexts and apologies as shall be calculated to allay any qualms of conscience that still may linger in her bosom, and ward off the blow of admonition and warning so justly aimed at her by the friends of God and humanity.

But we must examine more particularly the grounds on which it is alleged that the slave *may* be and often *is* benefited by the legal relation. For ourselves, we do not scruple to denounce the legal relation of master and slave as a *criminal* relation, and *always* injurious to the slave. We have already considered this subject at

some length, and probably have said enough to satisfy most people of the correctness of our position ; but as some of the grounds on which the slave is said to be benefited by the legal relation are more particularly insisted upon, and are somewhat plausible withal, it seems necessary to examine it in respect to these grounds still more critically, that their utter untenability may be still more apparent.

A principal argument by which it has been attempted to justify the legal relation of master and slave is, that slavery, which cannot exist without it, places the slave in a condition to be christianized, by transporting him from a heathen to a christian land. This argument, so frequently employed by our slave-holding church, seems to satisfy her, not only that it is just and right to enslave the negro race, but that she has an important mission to fulfill in this direction ; and, laying her hand upon her breast, and lifting her eyes to heaven with sanctimonious air, she thanks God that he has been pleased in the order of his providence to throw these heathen outcasts into her hands, and thus "open a great and effectual door" for their evangelization and salvation.

But passing over the solemn mockery of such a showing of the case, nay, the foul and shocking blasphemy of ascribing the atrocities of the most damnable piracy on earth to the ordering of Divine Providence, we utterly repudiate the idea of any tendency in the position of one sustaining the legal relation of a slave to christianize the heathen, or reform the vicious. The voice of universal history proves the very reverse of this to be the case.

To evangelize the heathen they must be *enlightened by the gospel*,—"Go teach all nations"—"Preach the gospel to every creature;" but slavery, sustained and guarded by the legal relation, which constitutes the sum and substance of the institution, shuts out the light of the gospel; making it a penal offence to allow it to the slave, or to place the Bible—the only source of gospel light—in his hands even. Again, to evangelize the heathen, they must see the principles and power of the gospel *exemplified in their teachers*,—"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven"—"Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity;" but how does the legal relation—the holding a fellow-creature in bondage, which constitutes the very essence of slavery—exemplify the principles and power of the gospel in the slaveholder, to whom alone the slave is taught to look for an example of christian character? How can a relation which involves one in a state of bondage, exemplify the principles of the gospel which "proclaims liberty to captives, and the opening of prison doors"—calabooses, slave-pens, and the like—"to them that are bound?" Does the poor slave see in his sainted (?) exemplar—the abominable slaveholder who holds him in cruel bondage, and lives upon his unrequited toil—a man who "renders unto his servants that which is equal and right"—"doing unto others as he would they should do unto him?"—a man who "deals justly, loves mercy, and walks humbly with God;" thereby leading his slaves by the "good works they shall see in him, to glorify their Father who is in heaven?" Is this the

example the slave has set before him "in the house of his bondage?" And is he indeed led to Christ and to heaven by means of the "good works which he beholds" in his christian (?) master? We do not ask what slaveholders may *pretend* on the subject. They are a party concerned—a *guilty* party—and must be expected to say anything to ease their miserable consciences, and cover up an abomination of which they are ashamed. But what is the *fact* in the case—what the testimony of their history and laws in regard to it? Why, that the legal relation, wherever, and under whatever modification of slavery, it may exist, converts the slave, *not* into a *christian*; but into a *liar*, a *thief*, a *fornicator* or *adulterer*—nay, into a character so degraded and sunken as to be incapable of testifying in a court of justice or of performing his appointed task—a service which is said to be due to his master—except under the eye and lash of the overseer!

That slaves sometimes experience religion, or become experimental and living christians, while in a state of bondage, alters not the case. This occurs, not *by means* of the legal relation which *denies* them the means of grace, but *in spite* of it. It is not the legal relation—not the condition in which they are placed by virtue of that relation, or any advantage arising out of it, let it be understood; but the *Bible* they sometimes get hold of, or the instructions they sometimes receive from the *hated abolitionists*, in *violation* of the legal relation and the diabolical laws by which it is maintained, that become the means of their conversion to God. But the *incidental* effects of slavery, whether they have respect to the legal relation or otherwise, are no more to be attri-

buted to the institution itself, than the elevation of Joseph to the throne of Egypt and the deliverance of the country from starvation by that means, to the unnatural and barbarous deed of his brethren in "selling him into bondage." "*They* meant it for evil," and it was a deed of *evil tendency*; rendering them guilty, of course, in the sight of heaven; "but *God* meant it for good," over-ruling it, as he often does, the wicked deeds of men, and as he sometimes over-rules the wickedness of slaveholding, or the existence of the wicked and abominable legal relation, for the accomplishment of some good end. The *tendency* and *design* of an act are *one* thing; the *incidental effects* of it are distinctly *another*. And never, till we can find authority in the word of God, or the science of christian ethics, for ascribing the benefits of the death of Christ to his betrayal by Judas Iscariot, or his crucifixion by Pilate and the Jewish mob who nailed him to the cross, in violation of all law, human and Divine, shall we place to the credit of the legal relation of master and slave any good which may *incidentally* spring from such relation.

If the legal relation were to allow its victims to derive their notions of christianity from the *Bible*, by which they would come to know that it everywhere *condemns* "the peculiar institution" as a system of man-stealing, oppression, and murder, and that all slaveholders professing to be christians, instead of exemplifying their profession, or in any way representing the true character and spirit of christianity, are nothing else than the most consummate hypocrites; it might, thus far, have a tendency to christianize them. At least it would be calculated to give them a favorable

opinion of the system and design of our holy religion ; and stimulate them to assert their manhood and their liberty as a right to which they are equally entitled with the rest of mankind. But as it confounds christianity with the religion of the slave-holder—a religion which accords to the slave “no rights which the white man is bound to respect,” but one which steals him, starves him, whips him ; robbing him of his liberty, of his earnings, and his family ; the only tendency *is* and *must be* to render it odious in his sight. And hence he comes to *hate* christianity, and all who profess it ; preferring as Fred Douglas says of himself, and of slaves generally, an open and avowed *infidel* to a *christian* master. Such are the legitimate and known tendencies of the legal relation of master and slave, or of *slavery*, which the legal relation involves, in respect to all who are held in bondage by its fatal chains. And the connection of slave-holders—of those sustaining the legal relation in *any shape* or under *any circumstances* whatever—with the church, as members of her communion ; and the alleged authority of the Holy Scriptures for the infernal despotism of holding their fellow-creatures in bondage ; has done a thousand times more to close the door against our missionaries in other lands, and open the flood-gates of infidelity in our own country, than all other causes put together !

Another argument adduced in favor of the legal relation of master and slave, and one very much relied on is, that, “leaving the benefits of christianity or its evangelizing influence in the premises out of the question, slavery, and consequently the legal relation, without which slavery cannot exist, becomes *a positive per-*

sonal good to the slave; bringing him, all things considered, more *good* than *evil*." But where is the proof? We cannot take mere assertion in a matter of so much importance to the prosperity and morals of our country, and the liberties of millions of the human race. Much less can we take the unsupported assertion of the interested slave-holder on the subject. He is a party concerned; and has no more right to judge of what would be for the good of the slave, than the slave to judge of what would be for his good. Every man must judge for himself, whether he be white or black; and what is the testimony of the slave upon the point at issue? Does he tell us that to be held in bondage by means of the legal relation of master and slave, "is a positive personal good, bringing him more good than evil?" Never, indeed when he has been in a condition to utter his real sentiments upon the subject without fear or restraint. On the contrary, he always declares for freedom, groans after it "in the the house of his bondage," and often attempts to recover it, even at the hazard of his life.

Such is the testimony of the slave who knows the privations and sufferings of a state of bondage better than we; and in full confirmation of his honesty and truthfulness in the matter, he never *chooses* to sustain the legal relation for any purpose, or under any circumstances whatever. Those now in bondage never choose it. Those who have escaped from a state of bondage to a state of freedom, and are fully competent therefore to judge of the comparative claims of both states, never choose it. Not one of them has ever voluntarily returned to a state of slavery. The rather, having encountered incredible fatigues, the horrors of starvation,

and the savage and murderous pursuit of alligators, blood-hounds, and "nigger-hunters," in making their escape from a state of bondage, they have determined to die sooner than return to it; and arming themselves with the deadliest weapons, they have defended the liberty so dearly bought at every hazard! Neither do the free blacks, those even who, living in slave territory, are capable of instituting a just comparison between their own condition and that of the slaves, choose to be bound by the legal relation of master and slave. And why, if a state of bondage "becomes a positive personal good to the slave, bringing him more good than evil," does no one ever choose it in preference to a state of freedom? It will not do to say that slaves, like children, being ignorant of the proper relations and purposes of life, and governed by motives of idleness, ambition, or self-indulgence, neither *choose* nor *know* what is best for them; for it is the more *intelligent* and *pious*—a class who both *know* and *feel* to choose what is right and best—that are loudest in their demands for the blessings of freedom; showing that the love of liberty, and the consciousness of an inalienable title to it as the birth-right of every human being, are co-existent with intelligence and virtue.

That instances have occurred where individuals, left to their own option, have chosen to remain in a state of bondage when they might have had their liberty, we do not deny. Some have become so imbruted by the influence of slavery upon their constitution and habits, as to be incapable of exercising an *intelligent* choice. Others have been made to believe that the people of the free states were all a race of cannibals, who would

eat them up alive the moment they entered their borders. And a third class, having been taken to the arms of their *kind*, perhaps *christian* master, in the character of *concubines*, or *misses*, are quite willing to enjoy the protection afforded them by the legal relation of master and slave in their illicit connections. But these are *exceptional cases*. And whether they greatly redound to the credit of the legal relation from which they flow, or at all disprove the general rule of a preference of a state of freedom to a state of bondage by all classes of the human race, can be easily judged of. For ourselves, we still insist that no one, properly speaking, ever *chooses* a state of bondage for himself. And when we consider that this state is never *chosen* by any one, or *felt* to be beneficial in any way; and especially that no one is ever *improved* by it, either in virtue, intelligence, wealth, comfort, usefulness, or piety, but is invariably the loser in all these respects; the conclusion is forced upon us that instead of being "a positive personal good," as the slave-holder wantonly asserts, it is emphatically and unqualifiedly and forever a positively personal evil.

But supposing it possible for a slave-holder to treat his slaves well and kindly, and to hold them in bondage for their own personal benefit during his lifetime; does that prove slavery to be "a positive personal good to the slave, bringing him more good than evil," upon the whole? The master, poor wretch, has no lease of his own life. He may die and go to his accounts in an hour after becoming the owner of his slaves; and they being subject to all the accidents of property as a part of his estate, how is he going to indemnify them from the evil of

passing into the hands of the cruelest and most abusive master, *at his demise*? Is the "positive personal good" they enjoy in his possession during the one brief hour of his ownership of them, to suffice for this purpose? The rather, would not the many long years of cruel bondage that should follow become a positive *evil* which would fearfully over-balance the single hour's good they enjoyed in the hands of their departed benefactor? And while they and their posterity should continue to labor and groan and bleed in bondage by his means, would not that crushing balance of wrong and suffering be charged to his account, to be met and settled by him at the last great day? Must he not answer, to his eternal cost and confusion, for having left his slaves in a condition to be transmitted to such barbarous hands, whatever kindness he may have shown them during his life-time, when he *could* and *should* have secured them their freedom the moment they fell into his possession?

CHAPTER IX.

SLAVERY NEVER A PERSONAL GOOD—NEVER TO BE CHOSEN IF IT WERE—
FORBIDDEN BY DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS—NEVER A NEGA-
TIVE GOOD—DOES NOT INVOLVE A LESS AMOUNT OF EVIL THAN IT RE-
MOVES—NATURAL RELIGION PREFERABLE TO A SLAVE-HOLDING CHRISTI-
ANITY—THE LEGAL RELATION ALWAYS INJURIOUS TO THE SLAVE—ALWAYS
SINFUL.

Having shown in the preceding chapter, that the legal relation never “becomes a positive personal good to the slave;” we shall now proceed to prove, that if it were even so, it is nevertheless a terrible evil to him upon the whole; and never to be chosen or tolerated, as it can never be justifiable or right, under any circumstances whatever.

Let it be supposed then, for the sake of the argument, that the legal relation of master and slave *may* and often *does* “become a positive personal good to the slave; bringing more good than evil to him,” as an *individual*, while he lives; does it follow therefore that it “brings him more good than evil” upon the whole? The slave, let it be remembered, does not live for *himself alone*, any more than his master, or any other man. The great interest of life, as well in his case as in that of his brother of the white race, lies not in his own *personal* gratifica-

tion or happiness ; but in the intercourse of his family and friends, and the happiness he is enabled to impart to them. The Creator, having impressed upon him a *social* character, the same as upon his white fellow-creatures who enjoy a state of freedom, has assigned him a *higher* destiny than to be doomed to a life of unsocial loneliness or selfish solitude. He is a human being, possessing like aspirations and passions with ourselves ; and feels, as every human being feels, that his *domestic* and *social* interests are clearly *paramount* to *any* or *all* the interests he possesses of a merely *personal* character. It gives him more pleasure to *do* or even to *suffer* for the benefit of those he loves, than to occupy the most *eligible situation* on earth, if he must share it alone.

St. Paul says,—For a good man, some would even dare to die;” and we might add, some *actually have* died for their friends and country. Damon, a Grecian youth, nobly *offered* to die in place of his friend Pythus whom the King had condemned to be put to death for some offence against the State. Regulus, a Roman general, voluntarily gave himself up to the Carthagenians, and suffered a most cruel death at their hands, for the good of his country. And instances have not been wanting, where, not Africans merely, but African *slaves* have had the sympathy and heroism to die upon the same principle. Aye, *African slaves*, with half their feelings of humanity crushed out of them, have been known to *immolate* themselves upon the altar of friendship, of philanthropy, of patriotism. How then can it be pretended that slavery “is a positive personal good to the slave,” all things considered ; or that the legal relation, even in the best shape you can give it, can “bring him more

good than evil," simply for the reason that his own individual condition is improved by it? Before we can adopt such a conclusion, we must deny to him all social qualities, all natural sympathies, all humanity; and convert him, physically, intellectually, and morally, into what he is *politically*—a mere brute!

There are few, if any cases, we venture to say, where immediate emancipation would not be attended with immediate and very decided advantages to the slave. But supposing it to be otherwise—supposing that instead of being a personal benefit, it should prove a personal injury to him, would that make it appear that slavery is preferable to freedom? Or that anything is lost to the slave by emancipation, upon the whole? If he were not a *social* being, or had no social *interests* or *sympathies* to consult, we might think so. He might in that case, be satisfied with any condition which should secure to him the greatest amount of *personal* good. But as it is, personal good, however great and satisfying in itself, does not suffice. He has a *social* nature to be satisfied—a nature which throbs with the pulsations of philanthropy, and the love of kindred friends—and finds its greatest happiness in providing for the happiness of others. What led our fathers of the American revolution to encounter the perils of a sanguinary and protracted war; enduring the greatest personal hardships, and making the greatest personal sacrifices, without a murmur; but the interest they felt in bequeathing the priceless legacy of freedom to their posterity? There are those of the revolution now living, few, and tottering under the weight of years though they be, who can testify that it was nothing else. And how cheerfully would the slave, no less

devoted to his offspring than they, avail himself of the opportunity of extending to them, at any expense of personal ease and comfort, the same glorious inheritance. He loves his children. He loves them as tenderly as they theirs; and would as readily "pledge his life, his fortune, and his sacred honor," to make them free and independent. And however great the evils of emancipation might be to himself as an *individual*, he still would greatly prefer to be made free for the sake of his descendants, whose interests and well-being would be vastly promoted thereby in all coming time.

The question is not, therefore, whether the individual emancipated would lose or gain by the change. That is not the point to be settled. But whether *any amount* of good which might inure to him *personally* by remaining in a state of bondage, would be an adequate compensation for the perpetual entailment of the evils of slavery upon his descendants; or whether all the evils which could possibly befall him in consequence of receiving his freedom, would equal the benefits of freedom secured to his posterity forever. Nay, indeed, whether the *advantages* or *disadvantages* of the emancipation of an individual would preponderate, taking the entire history both of himself and of his posterity into the account. This being the question, it is apparent to every one, that the benefits of emancipation, in relation to *any* and *every* individual, compared with those, if any there be, of the continuance of the legal relation of master and slave, are as a thousand to one. The rather, comparison is out of the question; for where there is no *positive* good, there can be no *comparative*; and there is in slavery absolutely *no good at all*.

If it were possible for a doubt still to remain in the mind of any one as to the advantages to be secured to the slave by emancipation, it must be at once and forever removed by comparing the three millions of slaves in the slave states, with an equal number of our free peasantry in those states and territories on which the blight of slavery has never fallen. The latter have vastly the advantage over the former, as has been shown by the comparative statistics of North and South with respect to the two classes in intelligence, in morals, in comfort, in every thing which pertains either to character or condition. The conclusion then to which we are brought is, that though slavery *were* a positive personal good to the slave, (which we have shown is not the case;) yet, as any amount of personal good which he might derive from it as an individual, is many times over-balanced by the domestic and social evil it brings upon him, it becomes, upon the whole, a monstrous evil; and to hold a human being in such a condition, under the pretext of extending over him the shield of the legal relation for his own benefit, is to add insult to injury!

The only remaining argument for the legal relation of master and slave which we shall notice in this connection is, that it "is a *negative* personal good to the slave, involving a less amount of evil than it removes, by bringing him from a *heathen* to a *christian* land; where the darkness of paganism and idolatry are chased away by the light of civilization and religion." But here again we take issue with the advocates of slavery, and utterly deny the doctrine of the argument adduced. The language of Patrick Henry,—“Give me liberty, or give me death,” is but the utterance of the sentiments and feel-

ings of our common nature. Every human being, black or white, bond or free, is here represented; all of them exclaiming in the voice of the old Patriot of seventy-six, "Give me liberty, or give me death." But if death be preferable to slavery, as all feel it to be; and slavery preferable to freedom, as the slave-oligarchy maintain; how deplorable is the condition we are all in! How intolerable our fate, making the best of it we can! Only think of it: Slavery worse than death, and freedom worse than slavery! And what are we all to do? To whichever of these awful predicaments we turn ourselves, a dreadful doom awaits us! And why not all of us—every son and daughter of Adam—choosing the least of these appalling evils—seek refuge in the horrors of death!

"O, we do not mean that slavery is better than freedom for the *white* man; but only for the *negro*, who is incapable of taking care of himself." "Incapable of taking care of himself!" What a bare-faced libel upon the character of the black man. "Incapable of taking care of himself!" Why, he did take care of himself before he was made a slave, and he finds no difficulty in taking care of himself whenever he is so fortunate as to recover his freedom. Indeed, he does much more than this; and that too while in a state of bondage, where he has none of the motives of free labor—as the accumulation of wealth, the support and education of his own dear family, and the promotion of charitable objects—to call forth his native energies or excite him to active effort: he both takes care of himself, and of his master and family, who live upon his unrequited earnings. Nay, more still: he supports them often in affluence and splen-

dor, making them *rich* even by the work of his hands. And yet, forsooth, "slavery is better for him than freedom, because he cannot take care of himself!" Ah, if these benevolent slave-holders ever chose slavery for *themselves*, we might at least give them the credit of being sincere in their pretensions; but to choose it for *others*, reserving to themselves the relation of *owners* or *masters* at the same time, involves something more than a bare suspicion that they hold their fellow-creatures in bondage, not for the benefit of the *slave* but for *their own* benefit.

"But does not slavery involve a less amount of evil than it removes" in a *civil* or *political* point of view, by "bringing the slave from a heathen to a christian land?" In considering this question, it must be kept in mind that the comparison does not lie between the two *countries*, but between *freedom* in the one, and *slavery* in the other. It is gratefully acknowledged, that as a home for the free, this country is vastly superior to Africa. But what has that to do with the question in hand? It still remains that *liberty* in that country, is greatly preferable to *slavery* in this; and no one, if left to his own free choice, could be persuaded to exchange his pagan liberty in that dark and degraded land, imperfect and limited as it is, for the boasted *christian slavery* of these United States. The truth of this sentiment rests, not on mere conjecture, or upon our simple ipse dixit: we have a practical demonstration of it in the history of our own noble ancestors; who actually fled from the hand of oppression in the highly civilized and flourishing land of their nativity, to a land of savages and of barbarism, where they might enjoy the rights and privileges of a free people.

“ Well, admitting that slavery does not involve a less amount of evil than it removes in respect to the *social* and *civil* condition of the slave, it is still a great benefit to him in a *religious* point of view, as it becomes the means of converting him from paganism to christianity ; which is the great thing to be looked at in forming a proper estimation of the subject.” So talk the advocates of slavery. But is this the means ordained of God for the propagation of the gospel ? The means he has appointed for the conversion of the heathen to christianity ? What authority is there for such a notion ? Where does it appear that God has appointed the enslavement of mankind, or any portion of them, as the means of their salvation ? The method *he* has devised for the evangelization of the world, is embraced in the apostolical commission,—“ Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” And is the reducing the poor benighted African to a state of bondage the same thing as preaching the gospel to him ? Why else do our christian (?) slave-holders prohibit the preaching of the gospel—the pure, unadulterated gospel “ as it is in Jesus ”—to their slaves ; and substitute the teachings, the maxims, the laws and the cruelties of slavery in its place ? They would certainly seem to think, judging of their belief from their practice, that the enslaving their fellow-creatures, particularly of the African race, from generation to generation, if not precisely the same thing with the preaching of the gospel for the salvation of the world, was a manifest and decided improvement upon the plan.

But the propagation of the gospel by physical force, or the proselyting of men to christianity by pains and

penalties, has nothing to do with the Divine economy. God has everywhere forbidden it. Nor has such a method any *tendency*, as we have before shown, to evangelize or reform the sinner. The custom of making proselytes by force, belongs exclusively to *tyrants*; as Mahomet, the Pope of Rome, slave holders, and all that class of monsters, whose religion, as it commends not itself either to the *conscience* or *reason* of mankind, can be propagated in no other way. *Moral suasion*, the only means adapted to the propagation of the gospel of Christ, is infinitely unsuited to the evangelizing purposes of the slave-holder. *Violence or force*, is his only rule of action in *any* undertaking—the only law he knows; and as his religion, like his character, is abhorrent to every dictate of truth and of humanity, it must be propagated by this means, or not at all.

But the worst of all is, if the slave *should* be converted to the religion of the South, he would gain nothing by the change. It would only be in the language of Dr. Young,—“A washing unto fouler stains.” He had better live and die in the religion of his fathers, than to embrace a slaveholding religion. *Natural* religion, which is the religion of the African in his native country, is far preferable to a slave-holding christianity. A subject of the *former*, would be far more likely to live a virtuous life and finally get to heaven, than of the *latter*; there being a thousand times more Divinity in the religion of Nature, than in the religion of the slave-holder. *Natural religion* teaches the knowledge of the true God: “The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.” *The religion of slave-*

holders recognizes none other than a false God—a sort of heathen Divinity—whose worship and service consist, if not in “Bacchanalian reveries and rites obscene,” yet in reading garbled portions of the Scriptures—in tortured explications of particular passages about “servants obeying their masters,” etc., in the form of sermons or lectures—in invoking the Divine blessing upon their own dear selves, in contradistinction from their “niggers,” and upon the work of their hands in stealing, breeding, working, flogging, buying and selling human beings for their own use and benefit—in singing hymns of praise for the blessings of a free country, and the success with which their business in the increase and labor and commerce of men, women and children have been crowned—and in the occasional presentation of those Pharisaical offerings for religious and charitable purposes which are “the price of blood.” *Natural religion*, or what is called the light of nature, teaches the way of life and salvation; enabling its sincere and devoted subjects to “do the work of the law, written in their hearts,” and find their way to heaven: “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts mean while accusing or else excusing one another.” *The religion of slave-holders*, by substituting the will of the tyrant master for the Divine will, as a rule of faith and practice to the slave, and enforcing obedience to it by the sanctions of misinterpreted Scripture, which those in bondage, shut out as they are from the word of Life, have no means of correcting for themselves, and

which time-serving ministers assure them is the genuine teaching of Holy writ; deprive the poor degraded victim of imposition and avarice and lust, of the knowledge of the true God, and leave him to "perish in his sins!" *Natural religion* involves a code of morals, or a system of ethical philosophy, which enjoins moral honesty: "The Gentiles are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts." *The religion of slave-holders* is the very *embodiment of dishonesty*—a system of practical fraud and violence—full of robbery, oppression, and murder—"the sum of all villainies!"

We have now shown, that the legal relation of master and slave—a relation, as we have before said, which constitutes the sum and substance of slavery—is no benefit to the slave. That it never was a benefit to him. That it never can be. We have examined it in all its bearings—personal, domestic, social, civil, and religious—negatively and positively; and have proved by facts and arguments which none can gainsay or invalidate, that human bondage in all these respects, instead of being a benefit to the slave, is a monstrous evil to him. We have also proved, that while slavery is an unmitigated evil to the slave, it is always and in every instance maintained on the part of the master *for his own benefit*; and that the benefit of the slave is never taken into the account. But though for the sake of the weak and wavering we have adduced many arguments in proof of this position, any one of which would be sufficient to establish it in the minds of the intelligent; yet we might have rested the cause upon the single fact, that slave-holders and their sympathizers, though perfectly enamored with sla-

very, and full of its praise as an institution of unparalleled humanity and benevolence; affording peculiar advantages to the enslaved, and to be desired and chosen by them on account of its reformatory and elevating influence, and of its amelioration of their condition generally; invariably choose this delightful situation for *others*, and not for *themselves*. *This* argument has all the force of a *mathematical demonstration*; and if there be any who fail to be convinced by it, we must either pronounce them *non compos mentis*, or doubt their honesty.

CHAPTER X.]

THE SUBJECT OF THE LEGAL RELATION CONTINUED—THE IDEA OF THE UTILITY OF THIS RELATION MUST BE DONE AWAY—THE NATURE OF THIS RELATION—ITS DESIGN—ITS PRACTICAL WORKINGS—NEVER WORKS ANY GOOD—BUT MUCH EVIL—ITS MAINTENANCE BY THE CHURCH SHOCKING—PROVED TO BE WRONG AND HURTFUL BY SYLLOGESTIC ARGUMENT—IT CANNOT BE TOO STRONGLY DENOUNCED—POLICY OF THE CHURCH TEMPORISING—SHE SEEMS JUDICALLY BLINDED.

In this chapter, the subject of the legal relation of master and slave will be still pursued. Our object is to present the subject under one comprehensive view; and to show, partly by recapitulating what has been said upon it in the foregoing pages, and partly by a few additional arguments and reflections, that the legal relation involves the whole monstrous system of slavery, cruelties and all; and that as it cannot exist apart from the system and its cruelties, consequently it cannot be maintained without guilt to the master, and injury to the slave. We should not deem it necessary to spend so much time on this subject, but for the grave and weighty reason that the *church*, though claiming to be anti-slavery in her character, regards the legal relation as a thing harmless in itself, and capable of being employed by lenient, or as she would rather say, *christian* masters for the slave's own benefit. It is with this view of the subject that we are at present chiefly concerned.

We wish to convince the church of her iniquity in sustaining the abomination of slavery by sustaining the legal relation from which it flows, and to persuade her, if possible, "to "put away the accursed thing." But in order to be able to cherish the faintest hope of success, so desperate and deep-rooted has the evil become, we must sift the matter to the very bottom.

We have said, in the course of this work, that the legal relation of master and slave, constitutes the sum and substance of slavery; embracing all its power, all its cruelties, and all its guilt; and consequently is responsible for the fearful aggregate of all the evil of that horrid institution. We now propose to fortify this position by some farther considerations, and to render the truth of it so clear and certain as to remove every doubt of the wickedness of that relation, and convince the most skeptical upon the subject that all who maintain the legal relation of master and slave, maintain slavery, with all its abominations and cruelties. The idea that the legal relation can become an instrument for the protection or benefit of the slave under any circumstances, must be done away, or we may look in vain for the extirpation of slavery, either in the *state* or in the *church*.

Where or *when* did slavery ever cease, or its *cruelties* ever become abated, while the legal relation continued to be sustained? As well might the physician expect to cure his suffering patient without removing the disease; or the shepherd to protect his flock from the ravages of the prowling wolf without excluding him from the sheep-fold. To cure slavery of its evils, or in any way to protect the slave from its cruelties, is to abolish the legal relation. Nothing else under heaven will ever

do it. To cure or reform slavery then, is to destroy it, by destroying the legal relation on which it depends for its existence. This every body knows. The slave-holder knows it. The church knows it. She knows that slavery and the legal relation stand, or fall together; and it is because of her interest in "the peculiar institution," and her determination to uphold it—cruelties and all—for the benefit she expects to derive from it, that she hugs the legal relation with so much tenacity. "It is by this craft she has her wealth;" and the love of gain having eaten out her spirituality and her conscience, she must be expected to cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

But to understand and appreciate this subject in all its aspects and bearings, we must bring the legal relation of master and slave to the test of a critical and full analysis; showing both what it is in its character, and in its practical operations. What then is the legal relation of master and slave? What its design? What its practical workings and results? The legal relation of master and slave, as it exists in these United States, is a relation established between two or more individuals by law: the very *terms* of which are a sufficient definition of its nature. The *design* of this relation, is to give one man the right of ownership in another; and to protect him in the use of his slave-property—the buying, selling, and working of it—the same as of his ox or his ass. In speaking of the *practical workings* of the legal relation, we shall consider it both in its *negative* and *positive* bearings; showing, first, what it *does not*, and secondly, what it *does* accomplish.

First, negatively: What does the legal relation *fail*

to accomplish in relation to the parties concerned? Does it restrain the master from acts of violence and cruelty; obliging him to feed, clothe, and sustain his slaves comfortably? It does not. Does it require him to respect the marriage relation among his slaves, to allow them to live together as families, and the parents to look after their children's welfare; educating them in science, literature and business, and "bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," which God has commanded them to do, and which they feel the same interest in doing as their master his children? No. Does it make fit his duty to extend to them any right—social, civil, or religious—belonging exclusively to human beings? Never. It absolutely leaves him no such discretion. And what advantage can the poor helpless, outlawed slave take of the legal relation, whose powers and rights and privileges are all on the side of the master, to recover any of the rights of which he has been robbed, or render himself comfortable and happy in his degradation and bondage? Can he secure to himself his stolen liberty, or raise himself to the rank and condition of *a man* by any means? Surely not. He is left by the legal relation to live and die a mere brute!

And failing to restore the slave to his freedom, or to require the master to treat him with lenity and kindness in his bondage; does the legal relation invest him with any power to redress himself, or to alleviate, in any way, his own wrongs and sufferings *as a slave*? How is this? Can he avail himself of his own earnings for the benefit of himself and family? This can never be done. A slave, having no right to himself, can own nothing—can possess nothing—can use nothing for any purpose but

by the consent of his lordly master. Can he appeal to the legal relation to protect him in the acquisition of learning, in the cultivation of his mind, the reading of the word of Life, or the "worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of his own conscience?" The legal relation allows him no such appeal. Does the legal relation afford his *wife* or *daughter* any protection for her virtue, or enable him to obtain any redress in case of their being ravished, or of a rape being committed upon them, by any one who chooses to violate and abuse them in this way? No redress or protection is afforded by it in such cases! Does it allow him to open his mouth in his own defence, or to testify in any case for the conviction of a white man, whatever injury or abuse he may have received at his hand? Not at all! In all these things the poor slave is powerless.

We will now look at the legal relation in its *positive* results, and see what it *does actually* accomplish in its practical operations and doings. The legal relation then, in its positive practical operations and results, robs the slave of his liberty, and converts him into a chattel or thing. It places him in the hands of a master, to treat and use him as property; and to dispose of him—of his wife, of his children, and of their earnings—the same as of the increase and labor of his cattle. It subjects him to all the accidents of property, making any little comfort which it leaves open to him as a mere brute, dependent upon the interest, or passion, or caprice of his owner. And if, perchance, he have a master of comparative kindness, it still places and holds him in a condition to be sold or given away at any moment, and be:

transferred to the estate of an incarnate demon, who will consign him to the hell of an Alabama rice-swamp for the remainder of his life. The legal relation degrades and brutifies his intellect—debases and corrupts his morals—and greatly diminishes his chances for heaven, compared with those of the heathen world even—those of “the untaught Indian brood”—who never saw the light of the gospel, or tasted of the blessings of civilization and refinement.

And what are the practical workings of the legal relation, in respect to the slave-master? Ah, shocking to relate! It invests him with something more than the prerogatives of his Maker; giving him absolute control of the *will* of the slave, which God Himself never pretends to exercise; and, placing such power in his hands, it requires him to use it by directing every movement and choice of the slave, as well in matters of religion and moral duty, as in the ordinary affairs of life. It makes it his interest, and leaves him at full liberty, in breeding slaves, whether for the home service, or for the market, to encourage the promiscuous and cattle-like intercourse of the sexes; and provides every facility for the observance of this economical method of promoting the increase, and improving the stocks and bloods of his human cattle. Nor does it at all forbid that he should put in requisition *his own genital* contributions and forces for the improvement of the breed. Surely, this must be a land of liberty. Who can doubt it?

Again, the legal relation obliges the master to keep his slaves in ignorance, to trample them under foot, and to torture and crush them, as the only means of keeping them in subjection to his authority, or of upholding and

keeping in existence "the peculiar institution." And that it places before him a temptation to licentiousness which he is unable to resist, let the amalgamation of the two races, and the rapid approximation of the slave-population of the South to the *complexion of their masters*, bear testimony. It converts the slave-master into a miserable despot; extinguishing in his bosom all idea of any other authority than that of his own will; and of any other law than the law of force. This is all the law he knows. It is all the law he acknowledges. True, he talks largely of "the law of honor," and of his chivalry in doing its high-minded and magnanimous bid-dings; but his chivalry is nothing else than the most contemptible and cowardly meanness, and his law of honor, than the law of force, or what is appropriately called, "the club-law."

In proof of this, look at the weapons of the South—their revolvers, their bowie-knives, and their loaded canes. See them shooting, stabbing, and clubbing their way through the world, regardless of all law, human or Divine, except the law of force. Behold Bully Brooks in the Senate chamber of the National Legislature, applying this famous Southern law in silencing Sumner, whose speech in opposition to the frauds and violence of the South left him no other argument than that of the club; and mark the Federal Government, now in the hands of the slave-power, and obsequiously executing its damnable mandates by means of the Federal troops. Consider the violence it has done to the rights, the lives, and the liberties of the people of Kansas, and of Nicaragua, through the instructions and connivance of a cat's-paw President; sending out his drunken officiates, his

border-ruffians, and his piratical fillibusters to overturn the constitution and laws of a republican government which he was appointed to administer, and build up a slave-oligarchy upon its ruins! Let any one consider all these things, remembering that they are but a feeble specimen—a mere tithé of the doings of the slave-power, and then say whether the slave-master whom the government has invested with a kind of omnipotence, either recognizes or knows any other law than that of force. And is the legal relation of master and slave, which provides for all this wickedness and cruelty, and justifies and upholds it in the slave-holder, so harmless a thing as has been represented—a thing to be maintained and fostered by the church? Gracious Heavens! And what could she do more to destroy her own usefulness—what more to blast her reputation as the church of the compassionate Redeemer, and call down the judgments of a sin-avenging God upon her guilty head?

But to make this subject as plain as possible, and leave no doubt upon the mind of any one in regard to the sinfulness, and the injurious character of the legal relation of master and slave under all circumstances, we will throw the question into the following syllogistic form:—

Slavery cannot exist without the legal relation: but slavery does exist; therefore the legal relation is responsible for the existence of slavery. Without the legal relation, the *cruelties* of slavery cannot exist; but these cruelties do exist, as every body knows; therefore the legal relation is responsible for their existence.

Wherever the legal relation exists, there slavery, with all its abominations and cruelties, *may* exist; but the

legal relation exists wherever there is a slave-holder; therefore wherever there is a slave-holder on the face of the earth, there slavery *may* exist, with all its abominations and cruelties.

Wherever the legal relation exists, there slavery, with all its abominations and cruelties, *must necessarily* exist, said relation requiring an abominable and cruel treatment of the slave as the only means of keeping him in subjection; but the legal relation exists wherever there is a slave-holder; therefore, wherever there is a slave-holder, there slavery, with all its abominations and cruelties, *must necessarily* exist.

All laws or relations which either *enjoin* or *tolerate* oppression, are sinful: but the legal relation both *tolerates* and *enjoins* oppression, the master being unable *even to retain* his slaves upon any other ground; therefore the legal relation is sinful.

All who act in accordance with a wicked law, or avail themselves of it in any way to coerce a fellow creature, are wicked: but all who avail themselves of the legal relation to buy, sell, or hold slaves, act in accordance with a wicked law; therefore all who buy, sell, or hold slaves, thereby coercing their fellow creatures, by virtue of the legal relation, are wicked.

All who sanction a wicked law, either by advocating it, or by giving their suffrage to those who go for it, are wicked: but all who advocate the legal relation, or give their suffrage to those who go for it, sanction a wicked law; therefore all who advocate the legal relation, or give their suffrage to those who go for it, are wicked.

All who fail to *oppose* a wicked law by an open avowal of their hostility to it, by their efforts to procure its re-

peal, or by doing all they can to render it inoperative and nugatory, are wicked : but all who fail to oppose the legal relation by these means, fail to oppose a wicked law ; therefore all who thus fail to oppose the legal relation, are wicked.

The various propositions of the above arguments are so evident and plain, we shall not waste time in attempting to prove them. It would seem like an insult to the understanding of the reader, whose own reflections will readily supply whatever proof may be thought necessary or desirable in the premises. But if the doctrine laid down and maintained in these arguments be true, as we are fully persuaded it is, how grossly wicked are many of the preachers and members of the church ; not slaveholders merely, but all who sympathise with them in their enslavement of human beings, or fail to oppose "the peculiar institution" by all the means in their power.

The gospel, it is well known, is *aggressive* in its character. Its very object is to subdue a rebellious world, and establish the universal dominion of Christ upon earth. Hence it is that the church—the chosen instrument which he has employed to carry into effect his grand design—is required to make war upon sin ; upon all sin ; and of course upon the sin of slavery. This is what the *true church* have boldly undertaken to do. "But there are many adversaries"—many even within our pale "who go not with us to the battle," especially the battle in which we are engaged with the sin of slavery. If they do not actually oppose our anti-slavery movements, yet they refuse to co-operate with us ; and "they that are not for us"—of us—with us—in our undertaking and efforts to "extirpate the evil of slavery"

—“are against us.” The so-called conservatives of the church, who adopt the “do-nothing policy” in regard to the evil and curse of slavery—doing nothing themselves, and laboring to enforce the cessation of effort, the non agitation of the subject of slavery, on the part of others—“being not for us, are against us.” All these, refusing to unite with us in the anti-slavery cause, or to afford us “aid and comfort” in opposing the most complicated and damnable sin the world ever saw, “are against us.” They are against the anti-slavery movement—against the cause of God and humanity—against the reformation and salvation of the world—“they are against us.” There is no neutral ground in this controversy—“they are against us.” “They have made a covenant with death, and are in league with hell”—“they are against us.” Their *silence* even, provided they had never spoken *against* the anti-slavery cause, were treason against God—“they are against us.”

Aye, “they are against us.” And already do we hear the denunciation of Heaven falling upon them—upon all who counsel silence upon the subject of the wrongs of the slave, and the wickedness of his oppressor, or remain silent themselves—all who refuse to “open their mouths for the dumb, or to plead the cause of the stranger”—already do we hear the denunciation of Heaven—of Him who “is no respecter of persons,” and “will by no means clear the guilty;” whether they be slave-holders or non slave-holders, professors or non professors of religion, private or official members of the church; whether they be preachers or editors, or secretaries, or bishops, or doctors of divinity—already do we hear the denunciations of Heaven falling upon them,—“curse

ye Meroz, saith the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty!"

And these wicked emissaries and allies of the slave-power, except they repent, of which there is little hope, will hear the same terrible voice at the bar of final judgment, saying unto them,—“I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.” “Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren”—these down-trodden slaves, among others of my brethren whom ye have neglected and despised—“ye did it not to me.” “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous”—the righteous slaves, and those who have righteously labored for their emancipation, especially—“into life eternal.”

We are aware that the miserable wretch of a slaveholder, and his rotten-hearted lick-spittle sympathisers, will pronounce these views extreme and uncharitable; and that we shall be charged with ultraism, as is the fate of all who refuse to compromise their principles and their consciences with popular sins. But we cannot forbear to call things by their appropriate names, and to treat them according to their real character and merits, whoever may be disturbed by it, or in whatever way it may affect them. We have looked into this subject with diligent research, with patient investigation, and with prayerful interest. We have satisfied ourselves be-

yond the shadow of a doubt, that while the Bible provides for a *lenient, remunerative servitude*, particularly in relation to the ancient Jews, it gives no countenance whatever to slavery; and the Bible is our only guide, as well on this, as on all other subjects—"the only and all-sufficient rule both of our faith and practice." We must believe and preach and obey the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, however it may be objected to by slave-holders and all other pirates and infidels whom it condemns. And our open and practical opposition to popular sins; and especially to those which are interwoven with civil institutions, and sanctioned and sustained by civil authority, like the sin of slavery, instead of yielding to the popular current, or suffering any abatement out of deference to human legislation, must be so much the more active and determined, as *popular and legalized* iniquity is so much the more criminal and dangerous.

If we have spoken of the enormous sin of slavery in strong and decided terms, or denounced it as a crime of the deepest dye—an exhibition of depravity which it were shocking to contemplate in the most uncivilized and barbarous state of society even—we ask no man's pardon. We shall make no apology. Our conceptions of the unparalleled wickedness of slavery, and the abhorrence with which we regard an evil so gigantic and appalling in its character, have utterly failed, through the feebleness of language, to manifest their full strength and vigor, or to give adequate expression of their intensity. When Wesley said of slavery, "It is the sum of all villainies," he fell below the reality. It is *plus* all that, *even in its mildest form*; and all the Buchanans and Taneys this

side of hell can make nothing less of it. We might look in vain for the entire aggregation, or absolute embodiment of crimes of all sorts and descriptions in any other single institution on earth. The annals of the darkest period of the dark ages, when slave-holding was prevalent in most parts of the world, and Rome and Romanism stood forth pre-eminent in the history of crime; even the annals of that period furnish no parallel in wickedness and cruelty to American slavery! And our astonishment at the assumptions and usurpations of the slave-power in this enlightened age and nation, and the barefaced affrontery with which they seize upon the Government and resources of the country for the propagation and maintenance of their infernal tyranny; is only equalled by our surprise and mortification at the tameness with which the free people of the North—churches and all—submit to it.

How shocking to every feeling of a man of sense and conscience, that the sin of slavery must be inaugurated as the policy of the land; and all classes and conditions of the people fall prostrate at its bloody shrine in obedience to the dictum of its man-stealing propagators and authors! Nay, how shameful and base and wicked in us of the North, having the staff in our own hands, not only to allow these drunken bloats, these polluted debauchees, these swearing, swaggering, tyrannizing rascals of the slave-oligarchy, to hold in bondage their millions of human beings, treating them with the utmost rigor and abuse; and to lord it over our own northern states, excluding us from government patronage, controlling our state and federal elections, and converting our soil into a hunting-ground and our citizens into blood-hounds for

the recovery of the panting fugitive "who escapes from them unto us;" to suffer them to draw upon the National Treasury, chiefly replenished from our own portion of the country, to sustain them in the perpetration of their horrid usurpations and abuse.

But here we are, a nation of pirates—the church forming no exception to this remark—a people who fled from oppression, only to oppress others; and we as far exceed the mother country in injustice and cruelty, as they the most upright and humane government on earth. And if there were sufficient cause for revolution in *our* case, the oppression we experienced in our colonial condition having become intolerable; how much more so in the case of the slaves of the southern states, the outraged citizens of Kansas, and the masses of people North and South whose rights are stricken down and trampled upon with lordly insolence by the slave-power! Our revolutionary fathers could throw off the tyranny of the mother country in respect to themselves, both because of their love of personal freedom, and for the reason that they esteemed it *right* and a matter of *duty* to resist the usurpations of tyrants; but finding it for their *interest*, as they suppose, to fasten the fouler despotism of domestic slavery upon the land to which they had fled for freedom, they had not principle enough to resist the temptation. They were *going* to put away the evil, which they both *felt* and *acknowledged* to be wrong, at a *future period*—*going* to do it at their *convenience*: but no reformation is ever effected on that ground. *Suspended* resolutions are never carried into execution. It was so in this case. And it is always so. Where there is *complicity* with sin, we never fail

to be overcome and subdued by it. So it always has been. So it always will be.

Our policy, both as a church and as a nation, has been *temporizing*, and consequently wicked and demoralizing from the beginning. As a *nation*, we set out in our career of independence with a malignant cancer upon the face of the body politic: slavery was incorporated with our civil and political institutions at the time of the formation of our Federal government; and provided for, or at least tolerated by the constitution then adopted. It was the same with the church. This dreadful cancer was upon the face ecclesiastic at our first organization. And it has continued to spread and rage and rankle till it has eaten into her very vitals, diffusing its moral virus over the whole system! But she heeds it not! She seems not to be aware of her condition! She has sinned so long and against so much light and knowledge, that she appears to be "given over to hardness of heart, and to a reprobate mind;" and to be realizing, in the madness of her pro-slavery career, the fulfillment of that awful declaration of the apostle,— "For God shall send them strong delusions, that they may believe a lie; that they all may be damned; because they obeyed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness!"

CHAPTER XI.

SLAVERY MALUM PER SE—THE LOWER LAW DOCTRINE BLASPHEMOUS—
SLAVERY ANALOGOUS TO MURDER—AN EXTRACT FROM DR. CHEEVER, EM-
BRACING THE FOLLOWING TOPICS :—JUBILEE STATUTE OF UNIVERSAL
FREEDOM—ITS APPLICATION TO HEATHEN SERVANTS—PERVERSION AND
MISREPRESENTATION OF THE MOSAIC LAWS—NO INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE
ALLOWED—VARIOUS FORMS OF CONTRACT—LIMITATION BY JUBILEE—
MEANING OF LEV. XXV. 46—NO REFUGE OR STANDING-PLACE FOR
SLAVERY—THE JUBILEE CONTRACT OF SERVITUDE FOR THE HEATHEN—
EVERY CONTRACT PERFECTLY VOLUNTARY—USAGE OF THE WORD BUY—
SERVANTS BOUGHT BY VOLUNTARY CONTRACT WITH THEMSELVES BUT NOT
OF A THIRD PARTY—THE FAMILY INHERITANCE OF SERVICE TILL THE JU-
BILEE—BOTH HEBREW AND HEATHEN SERVANTS FREE—NO PROPERTY IN
MAN EVER SANCTIONED.

Hitherto, we have been chiefly occupied with the question of the *utility* or *beneficial results* of slavery; and have shown, as we think, that instead of the institution being useful, either to master or slave, it is clearly injurious and hurtful to both. We have shown that the legal relation, in which all the abominations and cruelties of slavery inhere, is, upon the whole, “evil, and only evil, continually.”

But leaving this view of the subject, as having been sufficiently argued and proved; we shall proceed to the farther consideration of the doctrine, already examined at some length, that slavery is *malum per se*—a sin under all circumstances—and doubt not we shall

be able fully to establish it. *Our* position is, that slavery is *sinful in itself*, being peremptorily forbidden by the word of God; and that for this reason alone, in the absence of every other consideration or motive, we are bound to effect its immediate extirpation, or to "put away the accursed thing," irrespective of the claims of expediency, of convenience, or of the question of loss and gain, at once and forever. "The lower law" doctrine—the doctrine of the paramount authority of human constitutions and laws—is itself the consummation of the foulest and most damnable blasphemy! It is, in effect, to exclude the Deity from his own universe, or to be guilty of a usurpation of his throne! Absolute sovereignty rests in God alone; and he has never superseded his authority or right to govern the creatures he has made, by delegating it to others. To do this, he must cease to be the sovereign of the Universe Himself—cease to be "the only Lord and law-giver" of mankind—cease to be God—which is impossible.

To say nothing of those portions of Scripture in which God has indirectly, and yet positively forbidden slavery, in forbidding oppression, the doing to others as we would not they should do unto us, and the like; the single passage forbidding man-stealing, covers the whole ground, leaving the foul abomination not so much as a solitary inch on which to rest the sole of its foot. Man-stealing, developing itself under various modifications and forms of buying, selling, and holding human beings as property, constitutes the whole of slavery; and the prohibition of man-stealing, therefore, is the prohibition of slavery in all possible shapes, phases and relations.

It is all man-stealing, no one holding a slave having any more right to him than the original thief.

The idea that the transfer of stolen property from one to another gives a valid title to it, or that the title claimed to such property can be legalized by time, possession, human legislation, or any other circumstance, is at variance with all law, and all common sense. Such an idea is precisely of a piece with that most contemptible quibble of the pro-slavery conservatives of the Bond and Stevens school, that in order to violate the General Rule of the Discipline on slavery, there must be the buying *and* selling of at least two men, two women, and two children. But an interpretation of law upon which no one, who had not lost his *brains* as well as his heart, would be reckless enough to hazard his reputation for a moment, is entitled to no consideration or respect. The bare statement of such a ridiculous interpretation or construing of the rule, is a sufficient refutation of it, with all sensible people; and must brand its fawning, footering, time-serving authors with eternal infamy and shame.

Another subterfuge which our christian (?) casuists and doctors of divinity have contrived for the protection of the miserable slave-holder from the imputation of guilt, is, that slave-holding and man-slaughter are precisely parallel in their character; and that as killing a man is not always murder, so the holding him in bondage by the simple tie of the legal relation is not always slavery. But the pretended parallel does by no means exist. You can only take the life of a human being, *innocently* in one of the following ways: either you must do it by *accident*, or in *self-defence*, or by *public authority* as

a *punishment for crime*. But in neither of these cases does the alleged parallel hold. The slave is not held in bondage by accident, or in self-defence, or as a punishment for crime; but, being *innocent* of crime, he is held in that barbarous condition *deliberately*—of *set purpose*—and, often, to the *jeoparding* of the *life* and *limb* of the *master*, rather than in *self-defence*.

The parallel lies, not between slave-holding and man-slaughter, but between slave-holding and *murder*. Both of these, slave-holding and murder, are perpetrated in the utter absence of any motive, either of accident, (if accidents have any motive,) or of self-defence, or of punishment for crime. Hence it is that slavery, like *murder*, is *malum per se*—a sin under all circumstances. We do not deny that one may sometimes become a slave-holder *involuntarily*. But we do deny that he involuntarily *remains* such. Even the slave-laws themselves, bad as they are, attempt not to compel any one to hold his fellow-creature in bondage. And if they did, they are not to be obeyed, since they can absolve no one from the obligation to obey God who has forbidden it, in forbidding man-stealing on pain of death! “The higher law” is the supreme authority; and all are required to obey it—slave-holders, civil rulers and all—whatever man may teach or command to the contrary, at their peril!

But the authors and abettors of slavery, hard pressed and overborne by arguments drawn from other sources, and inflamed with the determination to be revenged upon the conscientious and faithful anti-slavery band who array themselves against “the peculiar institution” on *moral grounds*, have recourse to the Holy

Scriptures; and by the grossest perversion of their true meaning, make them justify and defend "the sum of all villainies." Especially do they appeal to Moses—the Divinely inspired and famous Jewish law-giver—in whose institutions and laws they pretend to find an exact parallel and precedent for American slavery. They tell us that in the Book of Leviticus, particularly at the 46th verse of the 25th chapter, a system of hereditary chattel slavery is most fully and explicitly instituted; and that it was designed to be perpetuated as a moral and highly elevating and improving condition of society in all after ages.

But far abler critics, and those too who were neither biased by interest, nor blinded by guilt, on account of their complicity with the enormous sin of slave-holding, have entertained a very different opinion on the subject. Many learned and critical disquisitions have been given to the public by men of this class; in which the Scriptures have been triumphantly vindicated from the blasphemous imputation of either instituting slavery, or affording it the least countenance whatever. Among this number of able and judicious Biblical critics may be reckoned the out-spoken and faithful Dr. Cheever, of the city of New York; who has shown, to the confusion of his adversaries, that the Mosaic economy, instead of embracing in its structure the elements of hereditary chattel slavery, or bearing the slightest resemblance to that consummate villany, strikes at the very root of it; not only by denouncing it under the name and title of man-stealing, and annexing to its perpetration the penalty of death, but by the institution and establishment of a lenient, humane, and *remunerative* system of servi-

tude which rendered its introduction an impracticability. We shall devote the remainder of this chapter to a somewhat lengthy extract from a late publication of the Dr., entitled, "God against Slavery."

The Dr. says,—“The great crowning statute, which secured all the others on this subject, was the jubilee statute of universal personal liberty for all the inhabitants of the land. The Hebrews were permitted to obtain servants from the heathen on a contract lasting till the jubilee, but at every recurrence of that time of release all were free, and every contract was voluntary. No heathen, no creature of any name, or race, or residence, could be forced into it; it was at any heathen servant's option to make a contract to the jubilee, or not. If, rather than make such a contract, he chose to return to the heathen country, he was at perfect liberty to go; and if he stayed in Judea, and could find any master to take him as a hired servant, and not as a servant of all work, till the jubilee, there was no law against that; he was at liberty he hire himself out on the best terms, and to the best master, that he could find. So much is indisputable, and so much is absolutely and entirely inconsistent with slavery.

“And had it not been for the arbitrary translation of the word servant into *bodman*, by our English translators in the 25th chapter of Leviticus, where the jubilee contracts are treated of, no semblance of an argument could have been found for the existence of any kind or degree of involuntary servitude for them. The word is used for procuring heathen servants as well as Hebrew, and in neither case can it mean bondman, but simply and only *servant*. In the 46th verse of the 25th chap-

ter of Leviticus, the word *bondman* is inserted in our English version, where there is not only no such word, but nothing answering to it, in the original Hebrew. The service of the heathen was not bondage, and made no approximation to slavery; and the law of heathen servitude until the jubilee was simply a naturalization law of fifty years probation, of those who had previously been idolaters and slaves, for freedom.

“It was a contrivance to drain heathenism of its feculence. The heathen slave was on no condition to be admitted at once to the privileges of freedom and of citizenship among the Hebrews. They needed to be under the restraint of law, and service. They were put under such a system as made them familiar with all the religious privileges and observances which God had bestowed and ordered; a system that admitted them to instruction and kindness, and prepared them to pass into integral elements of the nation.

“It was a system of emancipation and of moral transfiguration, going on through ages, the taking up of an element of foreign ignorance, depravity, and misery, and converting it into an element of native comfort, knowledge and piety. And the statute of the jubilee, the statute of liberty to all the inhabitants of the land every fifty years, was the climax of all the beneficent statutes, by which the sting was extracted from slavery, the fang drawn; and by this statute, in conjunction with all the rest, the Hebrew system constituted a set of laws and causes to prevent the introduction of slavery and render it impossible, and at length to break it up, all over the world. The system of Hebrew common law would, by itself, have put an end to slavery everywhere. The Hebrew

laws elevated and dignified free labor, and converted slave labor into free. The service of the heathen being a voluntary apprenticeship, and not involuntary servitude, it was, by reason of the privileges and instructions secured by law, a constant elevation of character, and preparation for citizenship; and then, every fifty years, the safety of complete emancipation was demonstrated. The jubilee statute cannot be understood in any other light. But when the veil of prejudice is taken away, it is especially by the tenor of the Hebrew laws, in regard to slavery, that the beauty and glory of the Hebrew legislation, its justice, wisdom, and beneficence, become more apparant than ever. We might rest the demonstration of a divine inspiration of the Pentateuch in no small degree on the supernatural benevolence and wisdom of those laws.

“It is from the misinterpretation, misrepresentation, and perversion of those laws, that the advocates of slavery have contrived to draw some shadows of pretense for its existence and divine sanction among the Hebrews; although it was never slavery, but free voluntary service, concerning which the whole system of jurisprudence was established. Some men really have the idea that the heathen were given to the Hebrews for slaves, in such wise that they might, any time when it pleased them to make a foray, go forth and snatch up any men, women, and children, whom they chose to take, and keep them in perpetual bondage! And this, notwithstanding the repeated statutes enacted, and staring them in the face, commanding the Hebrews to treat all strangers in their land as brethren, and on no account, nor in any way, to oppress them. The heathen were

strangers, and there were no strangers in the Hebrew country *but* heathen; so, if the heathen *had* been given to the Hebrews for slaves, here were two sets of laws right against each other, directly and violently conflicting. But there never was any such gift, nor any such permission, nor could heathen servants be oppressed, nor bought into bondage any more than Hebrew servants, nor made slaves, nor treated as property.

“ Even the term *forever*, applied to the longest possible contract for service, is used both with reference to the Hebrew and the heathen. It is this fact which renders null and void the pretence alleged by some, from Leviticus, xxv. 46, that the heathen were perpetual slaves; for, if the heathen were, then the Hebrew were; for precisely the same declarations being made in regard to the Hebrew, in the same case: namely, the longest contract, *that he shall serve his master forever*; whereas, it is admitted on all hands, without a single denial, that the Hebrew could not be a slave, and, if he had made the *forever-contract*, that is, till the jubilee, then in the jubilee he was free as ever. The cases are precisely parallel, the form of language used is the same in the Hebrew original, both in Exodus, xxi. 6, of the acknowledged freeman, and in Leviticus, xxv. 46, of the pretended slave, but who was, just as truly as the Hebrew, a freeman, having made his own contract voluntarily with his master, till the jubilee, and no longer. Then, in the jubilee, by the great standing appointment in the Hebrew constitution, *all the inhabitants of the land*, whether of Hebrew or heathen origin, that had been bound for any term of service whatsoever, long or short, were FREE.

“Let us read the two passages together. The first is in reference to the Hebrew servant, with his wife and children, apprenticed to serve his master for the ordinary service-term of six years. At the end of that time, he is as free as his master. But he had the privilege, by law, if his situation pleased him, if he loved his master, and liked his service, to enter then into the longest engagement with the same master, even till the jubilee, and his master was compelled to agree to it, and could not compel him to quit. The law reads as follows: ‘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 unto the door, or unto the door-post, and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; AND HE SHALL SERVE HIM FOREVER.’

“Now several things are here to be considered.

“1st. It is admitted, and cannot be denied, that this means simply *till the jubilee*, when by law, he, and every servant in the land, was free; and no master, whatever might have been the terms of contract, could keep any servant one moment longer than that period.

“2d. The terms here used are the same as in Leviticus, xxv. 46, where it is said of the heathen, in reference to a contract of the same period, *they shall be your bondmen forever*; but in this latter place, the word *bondmen* is not in the original, but is put in by the translators; and so the place should read, as in the first passage, *they shall serve you forever*, or, *ye shall serve yourselves with them forever*; meaning, just as in the first passage concerning the Hebrews, *till the jubilee*. The first passage might just as properly have been

translated, *he shall be his bondman forever*, as the last.

“3d. The details of this law were thus minute and definite, equally for the servant and the master, to prevent fraud on either side; to render alike impossible oppression on the part of the master, and cheating on the part of the servant. If it was a privilege for the servant thus to secure himself and his family a permanent place with a good master for forty or fifty years, it might also be a tax on the kindness of the master; and this admirable legislation most effectually guarded against fraud on either side. The servant might die very soon after the contract-money had been paid to him, and in that case it might all be lost to the master. For it is pretty clear that the money was always paid down, or a great portion of it, in this bargain, and the servant had the privilege of trading with it, and making the most of it he could, and thus, if he chose, he might at any time, if successful, buy back his whole contract. But if the money was thus to be paid beforehand, some idle rascally servants might possibly be so wicked, so imitative of the more respectable swindlers on a grander scale, as to take advantage of this, and having received a considerable sum for the contract, then deny that they had entered into any agreement longer than the renewal of the ordinary six years' term. To guard against that, if the servant insisted on staying with his master till the jubilee, the desire must (1st,) be solemnly affirmed, and the contract drawn in the presence of judges; and (2d,) the servant was to have his ear bored, so that if at any time he denied the contract, designing to cheat his master, there was the unobliterated proof of it.

“4th. On the other hand, these provisions were just as necessary for the protection of the servant; for if at any time the master, on his part, designed to repudiate the contract, and turn his servant out of doors, there was, manifestly, the ear bored, and there were the judges to whom he could appeal, and laws by which he could compel his master to keep him.

“5th. It is obvious that the contract, once entered into, was a contract *belonging to the family*; it was a contract by which the servant's time and labor having been purchased for forty or fifty years, was due to the family for that period. It had been purchased by the master for himself and his household, his children; and the servant so apprenticed would belong (that is, his time and service would belong) to the family, to the children, if the master died before the time of the contract expired. If, for example, the master entered into such a contract the seventh year after the jubilee, it would be a contract for forty-three years to come. Now, suppose the master to die ten years from that time; then manifestly the time and service of the Hebrew servant would belong to the family as their inheritance; it would belong to the children as their possession after their father; and again, if *they* all died within the next ten or twenty years, and the servant lived, then ten or twenty years of the unexpired service would still belong to the grandchildren, as *their* possession; and so on till the jubilee. It would be an inheritance for the master, and his children after him, *to inherit a possession*; inasmuch as his death, ten years after a contract made and paid with a servant for forty years, did not and could not release the servant from his obligation to

complete the service, for which he had been paid, in part at least, beforehand.

“ Let us now read, along with this, the passage in Leviticus, xxv. 46, relating to the heathen servant, or servants coming from the heathen nations into Judea for employment, and engaged under the same jubilee contract, *the forever contract*, as in the preceding instance of the Hebrew servant so engaged. It reads thus: ‘Ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit a possession; ye shall serve yourselves with them forever.’ As we have said, the phraseology is almost exactly the same in the last clause, defining the extent of the contract with the heathen servant, as the clause in Exodus, xxi. 6, which defined the extent of the contract with the Hebrew servant; the word forever being used in both cases, and used with the same meaning, that is, of a contract extending to the jubilee. The word bondman or bondmen is not used in either passage, though our translators have chosen to put it in the text, in the passage applying to the heathen, but without the least authority for so doing. Instead of saying, *they shall be your bondmen forever*, the passage simply says, just as concerning the Hebrew servant in Exodus, *they shall serve you forever*; that is, they shall be your servants for the longest period admitted by your laws for any service or any contract, even till the jubilee. And as engaged by such contract, and paid on such terms, ye do take them, and may take them, as an inheritance for your children after you, for any part of the term of service unexpired, when you, the head of the family, are taken away from your household. Then, these servants, by you engaged and paid for an appren-

ticeship till the jubilee, shall be for your children to inherit as a possession, the possession of their time and service, which, by your contract with them, as rightfully belongs to your children as to you, until the stipulated period comes to an end. This is the jubilee contract, *the forever contract*. The passage in Exodus, xxi. 6, is absolute demonstration in regard to this matter.

“ And thus are all the refuges of lies swept away, by which the advocates of slavery, asserting that the heathen were slaves to the Hebrews, or could be held as such, endeavor to make men believe that slavery is sanctioned by the law of God.

“ Now taking the 44th and 45th verses of the same chapter in Leviticus in the original, the meaning is perfectly plain, according to the laws of jubilee, with reference to which they were written. It is the long contract, the jubilee-contract, called, with reference to the Hebrew servant, *forever*, which is under consideration in these verses, as in Exodus, xxi. 6; under which contract, namely, the servants taken among the heathen were to be engaged, and were to be for a possession according to the engagement, up to the time of jubilee, voluntarily assumed by both parties. No Hebrew could compel any heathen to serve him; no Hebrew could buy any heathen servant from a third party, as an article of property. No such buying or selling was ever permitted, but every contract was to be made with the servant himself. The 44th verse reads thus: ‘ Both thy men servants and thy maid servants, which shall be to you of the heathen that are round about you, of them shall ye buy the man servant and the maid servant ;’

that is, the man servants and the maid servants themselves that have come unto your land, of them shall ye procure, shall ye obtain, your man servant and your maid servant, on the jubilee contract.

“ And the 45th verse reads thus : ‘ Moreover, of the children (descendants) of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begot in your land ; and they shall be to you for a possession.’ *Of the children of the stranger shall ye buy* ; that is, ye shall take the children (the descendants) themselves, as many as are willing to enter your service on this contract, not from a third party, but from themselves, by their own free choice, and from their families, begotten among you ; and those so taken, so engaged, shall, as to their time and service for the period for which they engage themselves, belong to you, be to you as a possession, a fixture of service, up to the period of jubilee.

“ The English word *buy* conveys, of necessity, to an English reader, the idea of traffic and of property ; but such was not the idea attached to the word in the original, which is the same word used of marrying a wife, as when Hosea *bought* his wife ; * and Jacob bought Rachel and Leah his wives, and paid for them seven years’ work each, to Laban. † Just so, Boaz *bought* Ruth. ‡ And just so God is said to have bought his people. ¶ And in Exodus, xxi. 2, if thou *buy* a Hebrew servant, we have the exact usage, in reference to a free contract of free service for six years. And

* Hosea, iii. 2.

† Gen. xxix. 16-23.

‡ Ruth, iv. 10.

¶ Deut. xxxii. 6.

corresponding with this, we have in Jeremiah the expression, every man his brother a Hebrew, *which hath been sold* unto thee, in the original, *which hath sold himself*; † that is, engaged as a servant in contract for six years.

“Just so in Lev., xxv. 47, after considering the cases of the heathen servant engaged till the jubilee, there follows the consideration of Hebrew servants engaged to the stranger till the same period, and the case is, if he, the Hebrew, *sell himself* to the stranger, *or to the stock of the stranger's family*. But in the 51st verse this Hebrew servant is said to have been *bought* for money, which money was paid to himself, and the contract a perfectly free and voluntary contract. So in the 39th verse, if thy brother be *sold* unto thee, that is, in the original, *sell himself*; the same free contract. And the expression, *the stock of the stranger's family*, is just precisely a paraphrase or explanation of the expression in regard to heathen servants *taken for you and your children after you*; that is, heathen servants who have *sold themselves to the stock of your family*, engaged themselves by contract, for which you have paid the money to them, to serve you and your children till the jubilee, thus constituting a fixture, a possession, as to time and service paid for, in the family stock. This was done by Hebrews themselves, who nevertheless were perfectly free, and in no sense slaves; it was done exactly in the same way to the heathen, on a contract exactly as free, and they were nevertheless in no sense slaves.

† Jer. xxxiv. 14.

translated, *he shall be his bondman forever*, as the last.

“ 3d. The details of this law were thus minute and definite, equally for the servant and the master, to prevent fraud on either side ; to render alike impossible oppression on the part of the master, and cheating on the part of the servant. If it was a privilege for the servant thus to secure himself and his family a permanent place with a good master for forty or fifty years, it might also be a tax on the kindness of the master ; and this admirable legislation most effectually guarded against fraud on either side. The servant might die very soon after the contract-money had been paid to him, and in that case it might all be lost to the master. For it is pretty clear that the money was always paid down, or a great portion of it, in this bargain, and the servant had the privilege of trading with it, and making the most of it he could, and thus, if he chose, he might at any time, if successful, buy back his whole contract. But if the money was thus to be paid beforehand, some idle rascally servants might possibly be so wicked, so imitative of the more respectable swindlers on a grander scale, as to take advantage of this, and having received a considerable sum for the contract, then deny that they had entered into any agreement longer than the renewal of the ordinary six years' term. To guard against that, if the servant insisted on staying with his master till the jubilee, the desire must (1st,) be solemnly affirmed, and the contract drawn in the presence of judges ; and (2d,) the servant was to have his ear bored, so that if at any time he denied the contract, designing to cheat his master, there was the unobliterated proof of it.

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“5th. It is obvious that the contract, once entered into, was a contract *belonging to the family*; it was a contract by which the servant's time and labor having been purchased for forty or fifty years, was due to the family for that period. It had been purchased by the master for himself and his household, his children; and the servant so apprenticed would belong (that is, his time and service would belong) to the family, to the children, if the master died before the time of the contract expired. If, for example, the master entered into such a contract the seventh year after the jubilee, it would be a contract for forty-three years to come. Now, suppose the master to die ten years from that time; then manifestly the time and service of the Hebrew servant would belong to the family as their inheritance; it would belong to the children as their possession after their father; and again, if *they* all died within the next ten or twenty years, and the servant lived, then ten or twenty years of the unexpired service would still belong to the grandchildren, as *their* possession; and so on till the jubilee. It would be an inheritance for the master, and his children after him, *to inherit a possession*; inasmuch as his death, ten years after a contract made and paid with a servant for forty years, did not and could not release the servant from his obligation to

complete the service, for which he had been paid, in part at least, beforehand.

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ticeship till the jubilee, shall be for your children to inherit as a possession, the possession of their time and service, which, by your contract with them, as rightfully belongs to your children as to you, until the stipulated period comes to an end. This is the jubilee contract, *the forever contract*. The passage in Exodus, xxi. 6, is absolute demonstration in regard to this matter.

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“ Now taking the 44th and 45th verses of the same chapter in Leviticus in the original, the meaning is perfectly plain, according to the laws of jubilee, with reference to which they were written. It is the long contract, the jubilee-contract, called, with reference to the Hebrew servant, *forever*, which is under consideration in these verses, as in Exodus, xxi. 6; under which contract, namely, the servants taken among the heathen were to be engaged, and were to be for a possession according to the engagement, up to the time of jubilee, voluntarily assumed by both parties. No Hebrew could compel any heathen to serve him; no Hebrew could buy any heathen servant from a third party, as an article of property. No such buying or selling was ever permitted, but every contract was to be made with the servant himself. The 44th verse reads thus: ‘ Both thy men servants and thy maid servants, which shall be to you of the heathen that are round about you, of them shall ye buy the man servant and the maid servant; ’

that is, the man servants and the maid servants themselves that have come unto your land, of them shall ye procure, shall ye obtain, your man servant and your maid servant, on the jubilee contract.

“ And the 45th verse reads thus : ‘ Moreover, of the children (descendants) of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begot in your land ; and they shall be to you for a possession.’ *Of the children of the stranger shall ye buy ;* that is, ye shall take the children (the descendants) themselves, as many as are willing to enter your service on this contract, not from a third party, but from themselves, by their own free choice, and from their families, begotten among you ; and those so taken, so engaged, shall, as to their time and service for the period for which they engage themselves, belong to you, be to you as a possession, a fixture of service, up to the period of jubilee.

“ The English word *buy* conveys, of necessity, to an English reader, the idea of traffic and of property ; but such was not the idea attached to the word in the original, which is the same word used of marrying a wife, as when Hosea *bought* his wife ; * and Jacob bought Rachel and Leah his wives, and paid for them seven years’ work each, to Laban. † Just so, Boaz *bought* Ruth. ‡ And just so God is said to have bought his people. ¶ And in Exodus, xxi. 2, if thou *buy* a Hebrew servant, we have the exact usage, in reference to a free contract of free service for six years. And

* Hosea, iii. 2.

† Gen. xxix. 16-23.

‡ Ruth, iv. 10.

¶ Deut. xxxii. 6.

corresponding with this, we have in Jeremiah the expression, every man his brother a Hebrew, *which hath been sold* unto thee, in the original, *which hath sold himself* ; † that is, engaged as a servant in contract for six years.

“ Just so in Lev., xxv. 47, after considering the cases of the heathen servant engaged till the jubilee, there follows the consideration of Hebrew servants engaged to the stranger till the same period, and the case is, if he, the Hebrew, *sell himself* to the stranger, *or to the stock of the stranger's family*. But in the 51st verse this Hebrew servant is said to have been *bought* for money, which money was paid to himself, and the contract a perfectly free and voluntary contract. So in the 39th verse, if thy brother be *sold* unto thee, that is, in the original, *sell himself* ; the same free contract. And the expression, *the stock of the stranger's family*, is just precisely a paraphrase or explanation of the expression in regard to heathen servants *taken for you and your children after you* ; that is, heathen servants who have *sold themselves to the stock of your family*, engaged themselves by contract, for which you have paid the money to them, to serve you and your children till the jubilee, thus constituting a fixture, a possession, as to time and service paid for, in the family stock. This was done by Hebrews themselves, who nevertheless were perfectly free, and in no sense slaves ; it was done exactly in the same way to the heathen, on a contract exactly as free, and they were nevertheless in no sense slaves.

† Jer. xxxiv. 14.

“It is from the misinterpretation of the word *buy* and *sell*, that much of the perversion of Scripture on this subject has originated and been maintained. A fair examination clears away all the sophistry, and leaves the case as plain and open as the daylight. There is no such thing as property in man permitted or sanctioned in the Scriptures.”

CHAPTER XII.

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH EMPHATICALLY A SLAVE-HOLDING CHURCH
—HER ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENTS HAVE BEEN RETROGRESSIVE—THE
BISHOPS AND OTHER LEADING OFFICIALS PRO-SLAVERY—THE ABOLITION OF
CHURCH SLAVERY QUITE IMPROBABLE—THE MORE SO AS THE CHURCH IM-
AGINES HERSELF ADVANCING IN THE ANTI-SLAVERY CAUSE, WHILE GOING
THE OTHER WAY—THE SLAVE-POWER IN THE CHURCH, THE SAME AS IN
THE STATE, DIVIDES AND THEN DEVOURS.

And now what shall we say for the Methodist Episcopal church—the church whom “God has raised up to spread scriptural holiness over the world”—the only church on earth believing in the doctrine of holiness and professing a personal experience of it in her members—what shall we say for her in relation to this awful subject? Why, that she has gone in for slavery, *ostensibly* for the *legal relation*, which she pretends to maintain for the benefit of the slave, but *practically* and to all intents and purposes for the *whole slave-system*, with all its abominations and cruelties! O, “tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.” Tell it not that the Methodist Episcopal Church—the legitimate and beautiful daughter of the philanthropic and sin-hating Wesley—the largest christian denomination in the country, and, without

controversy, the purest church on earth—tell it not that *this* church *practically* endorses a despotism, the vilest, the most cruel, and the most fiendish this side of hell, by receiving it into her bosom and extending over it the ægis of her administration and discipline !

The plea that there is but *little* slavery in the church is no excuse. The rather, it betrays a consciousness of guilt by the *implied* admission that some apology for slave-holding, or some palliation of the evil, is felt to be necessary. If slave-holding be *right in itself*, and a *kindness to the slave*, as is pretended, there *should* be a *great deal* of it in the church : if *wrong*, *none at all*. Crime is not to be estimated so much by its *amount*, as by its *nature*. And if there be *one* criminal in the church, whether he be a thief, or a robber, or a murderer, or a slave-holder, where all these abominable characters meet in the same person, she has no alternative but to exclude him from her fellowship, or be held responsible for his sin. How fearful then her responsibility—how terrible her guilt—when not *one* merely, but *many* slave-holders are recognized and cherished by her as members of her communion ; and a far greater number beyond her pale are kept in countenance, and taught to justify their unmitigated wickedness by her example ! The idea that “ she holds on to her slaves to prevent their falling into worse hands,” is supremely ridiculous. It is an argument she has stooped to borrow from the *hero of the tap*, who “ puts the cup to his neighbor’s lips ” and makes him drunk, because, if he does not, “ somebody else will.” So then, if you *murder* a man to prevent somebody else from committing the deed, or if you do it because if you do not, somebody else will do it

in a more cruel manner, it is not a *criminal* but a *benevolent* act you have performed—not a *mercenary* but a *merciful* and *virtuous* murder you have committed! What a diabolical perversion of truth and righteousness is this! We challenge the dark and damnable code of Popish ethics, or Jesuistical casuistry to equal it; and yet the doctrine, abhorrent and damnable as it is, is gulped down and digested as a sweet and wholesome morsel by the Methodist Episcopal Church!

We had fondly hoped to see the church entirely freed from this dreadful evil. We had labored long and hard for the accomplishment of this most desirable object, and felt that we were about to realize its happy consummation as the effect of the anti-slavery movement which had been going on among us. But the last General Conference developed the humiliating fact that as a church we had greatly deteriorated in our anti-slavery character, especially for the last few years; and that the slave-power had been rapidly gaining ground among us, riveting our chains, and deluding us with the idea of progress, in the very face of our anti-slavery hopes and efforts. We found, to our great mortification and chagrin, that we had “reckoned without our host;” and that we were far less able to cope with the growing evil which had so long infested our borders than at any former period of our history. The Bishops, whose equivocal silence had long and justly been regarded as evidence of their sympathy with the slave-power, here laid aside their wonted reserve, and openly espoused the cause of church slavery, by throwing the full weight of their influence in the way of prohibitory legislation upon the subject—the policy of the Federal government of selec-

ting northern men with southern principles to fill the various offices in its gift, was adopted, with two or three exceptions, in the election of the officers of the General Conference—and every movement of the conference, affecting the question of slavery, “gave signs of woe that all was lost.”

In this view of the state and course of things—our anti-slavery leaders, many of them, going over to the slave-power for the sake of promotion, or rising to office upon the anti-slavery issue and then betraying the cause by their open opposition or dastardly silence in relation to it—we sank into a state of great discouragement, and our “heart died within us.” We felt that deliverance to the poor abandoned slave must arise from some other quarter; and that the church was never to share the glory she might have had, and which a waiting, wooing, expostulating Heaven seemed anxious to confer upon her, as the instrument of his emancipation. And we trembled at the thought that she was in all probability doomed to perish, like Pharoah, by those judgments her oppression of the manacled, down-trodden slave had provoked, and which the Arm Omnipotent will be compelled to employ, in consequence of her delinquency, to bring him into a land of freedom.

Nor are we at all relieved of our burden by the consideration that the church, instead of realizing her sad apostacy, has suffered herself to be hoaxed and flattered with the dream of anti-slavery progress. *This* constitutes the bitterest element in the cup of our sorrow—the darkest cloud upon the horizon of our hopes. That the church, after having pursued a temporising policy, and trifled with her own conscience so long, in relation to

the sin of slavery, should imagine herself upon the very eve of effecting its extirpation, is not singular. Self-complacency, and false hopes, are known always to increase inversely as vital godliness declines; or to advance in strength, in obstinacy, and in bold and defiant assurance, in proportion to the advancement of apostacy and corruption.

The Jewish church, abandoned of God, and the cup of her iniquity full, *imagined herself invincible*; and when at the point of ruin, the wrath of an insulted Heaven lowering over her guilty head, and signs portentous of her approaching overthrow fast gathering around her; she still felt secure and confidently looked for deliverance from the perils of a besieging army, till her walls were battered down, her temple was wrapped in flames, and the streets of her metropolis flowed with blood! In like manner the church of Rome, having lost all the nature and spirit of true religion, and degenerated into the character and condition of anti-Christ—the mother of harlots—the whore of Babylon—had reached a point of *advancement* which seemed to her to suggest and authorize the claim of *infallibility*! And what marvel is it that the Methodist Episcopal church should claim to be *anti-slavery* in her character and movements, and proudly congratulate herself upon her constant and rapid *advancement* in the anti-slavery cause, at the very time she is yielding herself up to the control of the slave-power, and laboring in every possible way, especially by hushing to silence the friend and advocate of the slave, to crush out the last vestige of anti-slavery feeling within her borders?

We are aware she will repel the insinuation with in-

dignation and contempt; and yet it is appropriate and just. She has pursued her wicked oppressions of the black man till she has become to blind to see, and too hard to feel or acknowledge the absurdity of claiming to be anti-slavery, while holding her fellow creatures in bondage, and throwing every imaginable obstacle in the way of the anti-slavery movement. In laboring to deceive others, she has been left, by an awful retribution, to deceive herself. She has actually wrought herself up into the belief that she is an anti-slavery church; and, if not prevented by the ultra abolitionists, will soon free herself from "the great evil of slavery." But O, how mistaken. How surely does she "put light for darkness, and darkness for light; calling evil good, and good evil." And who wonders that a church that can cherish the blinding, corrupting, and damning sin of slavery in her bosom; should come to substitute her growing numbers, her multiplied and costly temples, and her acknowledged popularity and influence for the genuine Scripture evidences of evangelical piety; or that she should rely on the position she has come to occupy in respect to these things, as a sure indication of anti-slavery progress.

If these things are so, of which there seems to be no rational doubt, the anti-slavery cause, as well in the hands of the church, as of the State, her model and guide in this matter, is in a deplorable condition. The prospect of its ultimate success, except by the special interposition of the arm of Jehovah, is dark and forbidding. It is true, there are many individuals, some associations of greater or lesser extent, and a few editors, (all honor to them,) who are honestly laboring for the advancement of

the cause ; but with little to encourage them. " Power is on the side of their enemies." The ruling authorities of the Nation, both civil and ecclesiastical, are against them ; and what can they do—how can they succeed—against such fearful odds ? In the language of the Scriptures, " we are killed all the day long ; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." " We see the sword coming." " The day of vengeance," saith the Lord, " is in mine heart." And, overwhelmed with a sense of the desolations that are sweeping over the land by reason of the sin of slavery, and of our inadequacy to stem the rushing tide, we are filled with anguish and tears ; and would fain give vent to our feelings in the pathetic lamentation of the weeping Prophet,—“ Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people ! Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of way-faring men ; that I might leave my people, and go from them ! For they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. And they have bent their tongues like their bows for lies : but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth ; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord. Take ye heed, every one of his neighbor, and trust not ye in any brother : for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbor will walk with slanders.”

We except from this dark and repulsive picture, the ignorant and the credulous, in some circumstances ; but a more just and striking portrait of the enemies of the anti-slavery cause in general, could scarcely be drawn. If we look at the movements of the slave-oligarchy, whether in the church or in the state, we shall find that

they are arbitrary, unscrupulous, and deceitful. Slavery becomes a passion with them—a raging, foaming, blustering passion—which, like a mighty torrent, sweeps them quite away. It is indeed an all-absorbing *interest* which never ceases to engross them, and of which they never lose sight for a moment. Nay, it constitutes the one great object of all their aspirations and aims; and to this object all things else—their laws, their literature, their religion even, must be made subservient; the Bible itself being so construed and applied as to uphold and sanction “the peculiar institution.” In their estimation, there is no crime of equal magnitude with an offence committed against the slave-power. They feel that hanging, or any other mode of executing criminals prescribed by the laws of the land, is too good for the rebellious abolitionist. His punishment, as a *civil* offender, must consist of tortures and torments, unknown to the gentler cruelties of savage barbarity, and only practiced by the lawless, lynching, fiendish man-stealers of the south! And as an offender against the *church*, the poor heretic must be adjudged to have committed the unpardonable sin; and to be looked upon and treated as a miserable reprobate! And it seems to be understood that “all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme: yet he that shall blaspheme against the [*slave-power*] hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.”

You may commit any other deed of darkness known to the catalogue of crime, so far as the ruling oligarchy are concerned—may shoot down a man in broad daylight—may dirk him to the heart in the presence of

scores of witnesses—may engage in the horrid business of man-stealing, robbing bleeding Africa of her children, and consigning them to a state of hopeless bondage, in the face of the sun—may fall upon the defenceless tribes of Central America by means of fillibustering expeditions, in violation of the laws of nations, and of our own neutrality laws; landing your marauding forces upon their shores under cover of the guns of a United States man-of-war—may perpetrate all the outrages of arson, of robbery, of murder, which have been visited upon the unoffending citizens of Kansas for the last three or four years by order or connivance of a Government bound to protect them in their rights, and effectually indemnify them against these unprovoked and most atrocious wrongs—may rob the mails—break open houses—defraud private creditors, business corporations, and the public—*and nothing said!* Or if the injured party, or the friends of law and justice, should be so reckless of the feelings of community and of the public peace as to make any ado about things of so trifling a nature, and cannot be persuaded by bribes or threats, or flattery or force to cease their agitation of these small matters; in that case the bar and the bench, the arm of legislation and the funds of the state or nation, must be put in requisition for the defence of the scoundrels complained of! But if a man be only *suspected* of the enormous crime of abolitionism—the crime of loving the liberty vouchsafed to him by the God of heaven, and the constitution of his country, he must die the death—must be lynched by the infuriated mob, instigated and led on by the chivalrous oligarchs, be torn to pieces by nigger-hunting blood-hounds, shot down like a beast of prey by

any rag-a-muffin who chooses to indulge in the sport, or tortured to death in some way adapted to the taste of the murderous crew who thirst for his abolition blood, "without benefit of clergy!" Oh, how applicable to our degenerate and wicked country is the language once applied to the Jewish church by the prophet Isaiah,— "judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment." Surely, we are become a very wicked people. Church and State have all plunged into the dark and damnable sin of slave-holding, with an unblushing greediness; virtually resting their claim to the right of property in man upon the alone assumption of tyrants, that "might is right." And the time is not distant, when at the rate we are now going on in the career of violence and crime, we shall become a race of cannibals; and it will be as common among us to talk of dining upon a roast "nigger," as upon a pig, or turkey!

We know it is said that *christian* slave-holders are not to be ranked among these blood-thirsty persecutors and lynchers of the friends of emancipation. But, waiving the claim of any slave-holder to be regarded as a *christian*, perhaps we ought to allow that some few of the class here intended, may, from their connection with the *christian* church, and the pride of consistency, submit to some little restraint in respect to their *outward* or *apparent* behavior; but, generally speaking, they feel no great embarrassment on the subject, and are scarcely distinguishable from the mass of non-professing slave-

holders around them. Nor, indeed, if it be true, that they are less violent and abusive in respect to any personal outrage they may commit upon the abolitionists; it is *not* true that they are any less determined to thwart their anti-slavery designs, or to maintain and perpetuate the damning sin of slave-holding to the latest generation.

Who among these *christian* slave-holders have ever *sought* the abolition of slavery, either as *christians* or as *citizens*? Who have ever availed themselves of the *liberty of speech*, or of *the press*, or even of the *elective franchise*, for the purpose of effecting the extirpation of the evil? And who among them have not been known *actively* and *zealously* to employ all these mighty agencies on the *other side*? Ah, your *christian* slave-holders, whatever they may *profess* on the subject, or however they may *affect* to deplore the existence of slavery and desire its removal, are all of them pro-slavery to the core. They *mean* to uphold and perpetuate the institution. And as the hated abolitionists constitute the chief obstacle in the way of their hellish design, giving great uneasiness to their troubled consciences, and rendering insecure their human property by making it acquainted with its right of self-ownership, and affording facilities for its escape to a land of freedom; they are determined in some way or other to reduce them to silence, or to neutralize their influence. Nor is it to be expected that they will be over-scrupulous about the *means*, so that the *end* is only realized.

The poet, speaking of the prowling wolf, says,—

“The sheep he never can devour,
Unless he first divide.”

And so of the slave-power in our church and country. The division of the anti-slavery flock, is the wolfish artifice, the grand expedient, the mighty engine, on which they rely as the means of destroying it. Every thing at the north, as well in *religion* as in *politics*, is controlled by the slave-oligarchy on this ground. They have long been practiced in this kind of management; and have become exceedingly dexterous and skillful in turning the current of legislation, the rules of parliamentary debate, the interpretations and decisions of the judiciary, with all the financial appropriations and interests of the government, to their account, by dividing the ranks of the opposition. The programme in respect to the civil institutions and government of the country is, to take the federal executive into their keeping; and, through him, to dispense the honors and emoluments of government patronage upon the condition of the absolute submission of the recipients to their will. By this means, the friends of liberty are divided, and consequently shorn of their strength; a portion of them possessing too much integrity to throw themselves into the market, or to yield to bribery; and of the remainder, a sufficient number of them yielding to the corrupt overture and going over to the slave-power to keep them always in the ascendancy. In like manner, the anti-slavery portion of the church are divided and paralyzed in their anti-slavery efforts by Episcopal influence, which the slave power always make shift to keep in their interest. Here too, the genius of government patronage is omnipotent. Surely 'there is no enchantment against the" Bishops, "nor any divination against their" *known position*. "He couched as a lion, and as an old lion: who shall rouse him

up?" It may be otherwise with the people; but the preachers, generally speaking, are sufficiently obsequious in their attendance upon "the godly admonitions and judgments of their chief ministers." Some, indeed, there are among them who have the moral principle and the nerve to occupy independent ground, and to remain firm in their anti-slavery principles and course of action, even in the face of persecution and proscription; but it is extremely doubtful, we are sorry to say, whether this can be said of a majority of them. Since, then, the preachers are in bondage to the bishops, and the bishops to the slave-power; either the preachers, or the bishops, or both, must be emancipated, before we can emancipate the slave.

But the policy of the slave-power is to divide our anti-slavery ranks; and having succeeded in their wolf-like project, particularly at the last General Conference, when they created a wider and more disastrous breach than ever before, stopping the mouths of some of the more prominent among us by promoting them to office, and occasioning a personal, antagonistic, and self-exhausting division of the anti-slavery press, they feel they have well nigh accomplished their work; and can now afford to stand aloof from the scene of conflict, and look quietly on while we proceed to destroy each other! They congratulate themselves with the idea that the question of church-slavery is now settled; and that "the peculiar institution," established upon a firmer basis in consequence of the fiery ordeal through which it has passed, is henceforth and forever safe. Nor does it appear to us that much remains to be done by them in order to consummate the object of their iniquitous crusade against

the anti-slavery cause. At most they have barely to keep up the division they have already effected, and thereby worry and weaken and waste us through our own internal disputations and contentions till we shall lose all power of resistance and fall an easy prey to the rapacious oligarchy. *This* is their ultimate and steady aim. And who that has any interest in the welfare of the slave, or the purity and safety of the church, does not tremble for the result? Who does not see, that in our divided state, the common cause, being lost sight of amid the smoke of personalities, of side-issues, and a world of extraneous and distracting influences which cannot fail to arise among us, will be abandoned; and the emancipation of the slave be left to other agencies, probably to the judgments of Heaven!

CHAPTER XIII.

**LITTLE HOPE OF THE EXTIRPATION OF CHURCH-SLAVERY BY CHURCH ACTION—
2. ALL THE MOVEMENTS OF THE CHURCH HAVE A CONTRARY TENDENCY, IF
NOT A CONTRARY DESIGN—THE FRIENDS OF EXTIRPATION MUST DEN-
OUNCE AND TREAT SLAVE-HOLDING AS A GROSS IMMORALITY—MUST SEEK
ITS EXTIRPATION BY ABSOLUTE PROHIBITORY LEGISLATION—MUST PRO-
VIDE, BY PENALTY, FOR THE DUE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ENACTED PRO-
HIBITORY RULE—SUCH A COURSE WILL BE VASTLY UNPOPULAR—GOD WILL
SUSTAIN THE MOVEMENT, THOUGH AT THE EXPENSE OF THE CHURCH.**

From what we have already said of the connection of the church with slavery, it is evident she is in a deplorable condition. The shades of an awful night seem gathering around us, and our threatening doom draws near apace! But is there no hope for us? No way to escape from the ruins of our fall? Alas for us! There is little prospect that the church will ever be any better than she now is—little prospect that she will ever occupy grounds more favorable to the extirpation of slavery than at the present time. It is the testimony of all history that public corruptions are only cured by revolution. Such has been the case with nations. Such has been the case with churches. Revolution—not legislation, or administration, or agitation, but revolution—has been the only remedy. And revolution too, stained with

martyrdom and blood! The hope that our church, so long and so deeply imbued with the corruptions of slavery, is going to free herself from the evil, or that she is ever to become free, except by forcible means, seems to us like the hope of the hyorite which shall perish. In the light of the Scriptures, and of history, and of the discussions which have been going on among us ever since our first organization, particularly for a few years past, we have seen the institution of slavery in all its various operations and bearings; and are not likely to know any more about it than we already know. And if seventy odd years have not sufficed, under these circumstances, to convince us of its enormity, and to lead us to effect its extirpation within our borders, when shall such a result be looked for? What reason have we to look for it at all?

Let any one open his eyes upon the subject. Let him consider that instead of extirpating slavery in the church, or at all approximating that point, we have been constantly going the other way—that slavery has been taking deeper root among us every successive year—that it has been all the time familiarizing itself with our thoughts, wearing away our aversion to its hideous character, and interweaving itself more intimately with all our habits of action and of feeling—that many among us have come to contend for it as a Divine institution, created and sustained by Scripture authority—that we have thrown around it the guards of Disciplinary rules and regulations from time to time for its greater indemnification and security—that our conservatives, {‘falsely so called,’} embracing nearly one half of the Annual Conferences, and a large number of individuals

belonging to the other conferences of the connection though they profess to be anti-slavery, are particularly opposed to all anti-slavery movements, doing nothing to aid, but everything in their power to hinder the cause—that the General Conference habitually and forever puts its crushing hand upon every measure and movement of the friends of the anti-slavery cause which are brought before it—and, above all, that the whole weight of the Episcopal influence is committed to its justification and support—we say let, any one consider all these facts as they rise up before him in the light of our ecclesiastical history, and if he can still believe that the Methodist Episcopal Church is advancing in the anti-slavery cause, or that she will ever voluntarily dissolve her connection with the institution of slavery, we must wonder at his credulity!

That God will in some way effect the emancipation of the slaves, both of our church and our country, we have no doubt. His mercy cannot always bear. His vengeance cannot always sleep. It is altogether likely that the genuine anti-slavery band who have espoused the cause of the oppressed and urged forward their philanthropic enterprise in the face of obloquy and contempt, will be the chosen instruments of the accomplishment of this great work. We of the real, practical, heart and hand anti-slavery school, expect this honor. But the battle is all to be fought over again. The struggle hitherto, in consequence of our too great charity and forbearance towards the slave-power, has only resulted in throwing additional advantages into their hands and establishing them upon a firmer foundation. Possibly we shall be able to enlist the co-operation of the authorities

of the church in our cause. We certainly ought to try; for this is the only thing that can save the church from a dreadful catastrophe. But whether this point, so desirable in itself, and of so much importance to the church, is to be gained or not, the battle is all to be fought over again. This must be done if it were only to enlist the co-operation of the authorities of the church, so wedded are they to the slave-power; and surely it must be done to effect the extirpation of church-slavery in *opposition* to these authorities. We intend, however, to enter the campaign; and we confidently expect, in the name of Him who has commanded us to "break every yoke and let the oppressed go free," to bring about the extirpation of church-slavery, whether these authorities are to operate *with* or *against* us.

But in order to ensure success, our *modus operandi* and ground of action must be widely different from anything which has characterized our former course. Instead of regulation and compromise, there must be *prohibition—absolute, unconditional, immediate* prohibition. Slavery must be declared sinful under all circumstances—a gross immorality—an abominable crime—and not to be tolerated for a moment. This must be our position. And we must actually deal with the abomination, and demand of the church that she shall deal with it, in all her administrations and doings, the same as with other immoralities. No distinction of *mercenary* and *virtuous* slave-holding must be allowed. It is a distinction without a difference—an *imaginary* distinction, conjured up by slave-holders to cover up their wickedness, and keep themselves in credit, if not as christians, yet as men of integrity and benevolence.

But for ourselves, we place the distinction of mercenary and virtuous slave-holding in the same category with *mercenary* and *virtuous murder*, and scout it as a fabrication of hell.

The argument for the legal relation, that is sometimes temporarily assumed or sustained as a means of emancipation, is equally unmeaning and detestable. It deserves not the rank or title of a decent sophism. As well might the right of slave-holding be argued from the temporary confinement of a crazy man for the purpose of guarding him against danger, or of restoring to him his reason. The difference between buying a man to *enslave him*, and the buying him to *set him free*, is infinite. And to argue the one from the other, simply from the existence of the legal relation in both cases—the one being for a few days or weeks only, and the other, for life—is dishonest and wicked. And he who can so far bedevil himself as to confound them with each other, as if they were parallel cases, or contend that buying a slave on purpose to free him, differs nothing *in principle* from the buying him on purpose to *enslave* him, is fit only for the mad-house or the penitentiary. The argument is misleading; and when used by any one in his senses, is *intended* to mislead. He who sustains the legal relation for the purpose of keeping his fellow-creatures in bondage, is a slave-holder. He who sustains this relation for the purpose of the emancipation of the slave, is *not* a slave-holder, but a *slave-liberator*. And as the legal relation in the *latter* case is an element of *emancipation* and *not* of *slavery*, it concludes nothing against the position that the legal relation in the *former* case, being an element of slavery, and the very ba-

sis on which the whole superstructure of that abominable institution rests, is *melum per se*—a sin under all circumstances.

The time has fully come when the ground of *tetotalism* must be taken, as well in relation to slavery, as to intemperance, or any other sinful practice. The dallying with slavery for many long years has fully demonstrated the absolute inadequacy of such a course to remove, or even so much as to *check* this horrid evil. Contact is contagion. And to continue to breathe the atmosphere of the pest-house of slavery so long, could not fail to *aggravate* rather than *cure* an evil with which our people became infected at an early day. Such results might have been foreseen; and such results have actually followed from our connection with “the sum of all villainies.” Slavery was never so deeply rooted in the Methodist Episcopal Church—never so bold and defiant—as at the present juncture. God has said, —“Touch not, taste not, handle not;” and if we would ever free ourselves from slavery, this is our only course. *Prohibition—absolute, unconditional, immediate prohibition*—must now, henceforth, and forever be our *motto*, our *watch-word*, and our *sole and only test of anti-slavery character*.

We are not unaware that such a course will be infinitely unpopular. Few can be expected, at first, to engage in it. Few, even of the ministry, we have reason to believe, possess the moral daring to throw themselves into the breach, or to meet an emergency involving so much responsibility and sacrifice. The church, now fully committed to the support of slavery, under what she strongly persuades herself is a mitigated form of the

evil—the bare legal relation—will give them no countenance. Her teachings, her official tone and bearing will be cast into the scale against them; and that too under the auspices of a *pretended conservatism*, or the *professed obligation* and *desire* of guarding against those wild, extravagant, and ill-timed abolition movements which threaten her overthrow. She will not fail to warn them against the wickedness of their course, and of its tendency to *retard* the work of emancipation; evidently feeling the same deep concern for the anti-slavery cause that drunken Douglas and other kindred politicians felt for the sacredness of the pulpit and the dignity of the sacred office when many of the clergy took it upon themselves to denounce and rebuke the rascality of Congress in passing the Fugitive Slave-Law, repealing the Missouri Compromise, and imposing the curse of slavery upon Kansas by the most shameful prostitution of law and justice. They must expect to meet with taunts, sneers and ridicule; to be stigmatized and scouted as ultra-abolitionists, one idea-fanatics, enemies to the peace of the church, and all that; and they need not be surprised, or think themselves harder used than their founder, nay, than their Lord and Master even, if this terrible odium, which many “will think themselves doing God service” to cast upon them, should be followed by *official* persecution and oppression!

Slavery has taken hold of the vitals of the church, as well as of the nation; and we have already reached a fearful crisis in the history of our church and country. It would really seem that the “perilous times” which the Apostle said “should come,” are upon us; and we may depend upon it that the anti-slavery cause, as well as the

gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ with which it is so closely identified in principle and aim, is destined to have its martyrs! It is scarcely to be hoped that simple legislation, whether civil or ecclesiastical, or any other peaceable means, will suffice to deliver the slaves of our country from a bondage worse than that of Egypt, and maintained and enforced by a despotism more despotic than that of the Egyptian Monarch. A dark, portentous cloud hangs over our guilty land! The signs of the times are fraught with fearful forebodings! And though we expect deliverance to come to the slave, yet all history teaches that Heaven will never award to his people so great a triumph of humanity and religion as that of the emancipation of the slaves of our church and country but by means of a struggle in which the blood of martyrs shall be made to flow!

CHAPTER XIV.

WE HAVE NO THOUGHT OF LEAVING THE CHURCH—WE FEEL IT A DUTY AND A PRIVILEGE TO REMAIN WITHIN HER PALE—HERE WE CAN OPPOSE HER EVILS WITH THE GREATEST ADVANTAGE—SLAVE-HOLDERS CONSCIOUS OF THEIR GUILT—THEY ARE NOT NOW TO BE ARGUED WITH, BUT EXPELLED—OUR PRESENT POSITION—OUR FUTURE COURSE.

But wicked as the church is by reason of her connection with slavery, we have no thought of withdrawing from her communion. We feel she is our Mother; and how can we forsake her? In imitation of Luther and Wesley, we intend to nestle in her bosom, and labor and pray for her prosperity and happiness, "as a son in the gospel," if peradventure "our labor may not be in vain in the Lord." We feel too that the church is our home, and for this reason likewise we cannot think of leaving it. True, there are some *intruders* within her pale—some who have no right to be there—and such we consider all slave-holders who "have crept in among us." Yet, nevertheless, the church has long been our home—our chosen, cherished home; and we cannot think of leaving our home. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

We love the church—her doctrines, her ordinances, her institutions, all except slavery—we love our chosen home, and cannot afford to leave it to accommodate *intruders*. Nor do we hold ourselves responsible for their unwelcome and violent connection with the family while we are constantly remonstrating against it, and doing all we can to effect their removal. The rather should we blush for our unnatural alienation and dastardly cowardice were we to *desert* our home upon the entrance of a ruffian stranger, and leave our mother to be ravished and abused, and our home to be taken from us or destroyed by the ruthless invader. We trust we never shall be left to perpetrate an act, so undutiful, so unmanly, and so wicked and suicidal in its character.

If, however, our anti-slavery zeal should become unbearable to “the powers that be,” and we should be doomed to be thrust out of the church, or have our membership taken from us *volens volens* as the forfeiture of our devotion to the anti-slavery cause, why, of course, we must submit to it; only we must be expected to sell a privilege we prize so highly at the dearest rate. And then, losing our membership on such grounds, we should console ourselves with the reflection that the *church*, and not *we*, must bear the responsibility. But we have taken our position—we have taken it with our eyes open, and our thoughts about us—have taken it as the result of long, patient, and prayful deliberation; and while we neither *court* nor *decline* the scrutiny of an ecclesiastical tribunal, we shall calmly bide our destiny. Doubtless it will cost us the friendship, and bring down upon our head the frowns and flouts of our slave-holding oligarchy; but we have taken our position, and now de-

clare it to the church and to the world, in view of "the higher law" which we dare not subordinate to human authority, and of the tribunal of the last great day, where we and those who now claim jurisdiction over us will stand on equal ground, "each giving account of himself to God."

We again say and declare that we love the church, and would do nothing to forfeit her kindly associations, or friendly regards; and yet, though we love the church, and love her much, we love our Divine Savior and his ever blessed cause much more; and we love the *approbation* of God, and of our own conscience, far more than of the whole universe besides. We have no fear, however, of losing the approbation of the *living members* of the church by doing our duty—no fear that they will think the less of us on account of our devotion to the anti-slavery cause. It is our *love of the church* which leads us to rebuke her for her sins, and to seek to deliver her from an evil which threatens her overthrow; and all who are interested in the cause of God and humanity will esteem us the more for it. Those only who are the enemies of God, will "count us *their* enemy for telling them the truth." But however it may be judged of by the church, or affect our reputation and standing with her, we must still seek the extirpation of slavery; and still labor to extricate the church from the guilt and danger in which she is involved, though she hate us for it, and hurl us from her arms as a requital of our determined efforts in her behalf. We feel that we must "work while the day lasts"—that we must work with renewed energy and faithfulness—that what little remains to us of life is too short, and our interest in the

eternal future too vast and overwhelming, to allow of the least abatement of zeal or effort in our anti-slavery career.

We would not, for the universe, have it said to us by our Master and Judge in the day of final retribution, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto the least of these little ones"—these enslaved, down trodden children—"of mine, ye did it not unto me." And though we must stand alone in our glory or shame, which ever it may be called, as we did upon the floor of the late General Conference—no one else presuming to object unqualifiedly to the legal relation of master and slave—or be immolated upon the altar of our fidelity to the cause of freedom, by the hand of the all-exacting and still insatiable slave-power; we shall never bow down at the shrine of the Moloch of slavery, or compromise our *dignity* or our *conscience* with that obscene and bloody idol! Before "we can do this great wickedness and sin against God," we shall not only suffer ourselves to be denied the friendship of many we have honored and loved, but shall submit to "have our name cast out as evil," to be "made a by-word and a hissing, as we already have been by that notorious organ of the slave power—"the great official"—and undergo all the anguish of excommunication from a church in which we had hoped to live and die.

Strong, however, as our opposition has been to slavery, we must take still stronger ground. We must go entirely beyond our former selves—beyond our fathers of 1784, who are known to have taken strong ground, and passed stringent resolutions against slavery. Our little finger must be thicker than their loins; and whereas they chastised the slave-power with whips, we must chas-

tise it with scorpions. We must not only proceed from *argument to denunciation*, but we must denounce *slaveholders* as well as *slave-holding*. We cannot, under the circumstances, discriminate between them—cannot, after so much light has been shed upon the subject, offer the least apology for a class of men who of all others are the most guilty. We are become quite intolerant of slaveholders—quite impatient of delay in respect to their removal from the church. And convinced as we are of their determination to maintain and practice the abomination of slavery at all hazards, we consider it labor lost to argue the matter with them any farther. And for any one to talk of forbearance, delay, or sympathy, for a fell monster, who has his wife, child, friend—or any other man's wife, child, friend—by the throat, which is the same thing in principle, is a most offensive and flagrant outrage upon the feelings of our common humanity. We no sooner fix our eyes upon this monster in human shape than we instinctively exclaim, "*Hands off*," "let my people go;" and we despise the cringing, miserable doughface, who can stand aloof from the innocent, bleeding victim of the rapacious slave-holder and talk of sympathy, forbearance, delay, in relation to the unconscionable oppressor.

To what purpose, pray, do we spend our time in arguing with men who are capable of maintaining that slavery, though wrong in *theory*, is right in *practice*; making a distinction between theory and practice in respect to the crime of slavery, which might as well be predicated of *murder* or any other crime! They know slavery is wrong, and that it is wrong in *practice* as well as in *theory*—that it is wrong *in toto*, legal relation and

all. They know it well; they know it in their inmost consciences; and need no argument to convince them of it. Perhaps, however, there is this modified view to be taken of the subject: "A man convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still." The *understanding* and *conscience* of the slave-holder are convinced of the wickedness of slave-holding, and have been from the beginning; but it still remains to convince his *will*; and there is *one* argument, and *but* one, that can do it. It is the argument, not of *reason*, or *revelation*, but the argument of *superior physical force*, presented in the form of powder and ball, of the overwhelming of the waters of the red sea by which Pharoah was at last convinced of the wickedness of slave-holding, or something of that sort. *This* argument, and this *alone*, is sufficient to convince the *will* or unloose the *grasp* of the slave-holder. This is the argument to be employed with all tyrants, and the only one by which they can possibly be effected.

There was light enough sixty or seventy years ago to convince the newly converted Garrettsen of the wickedness of slave-holding, and the impracticability of retaining both religion and his slaves at the same time. A few others, like him have freed their slaves, and retained their religion; while thousands have lost their religion, by retaining their slaves. At the time of their conversion they were ready to give up all for Christ, or they could not have been converted; but when, after their conversion, the specific duty of giving up their slaves was made known to them, they shrunk from it and lost their religion as the consequence. And then, Judas like, they were well prepared, in their miserable apostacy, to head the mobocratic, slave-holding rabble in their assaults

upon Christ and his anti-slavery disciples. This whole band, of whom those professing religion and belonging to the church are the worst, acting upon the principle that "might is right"—the only rule of action either human or divine they are disposed to recognize—will be sure to hold on to their slaves as long as they have the power, and only give them up when compelled to do so by superior physical force. Of what use is it then to argue the matter with them any farther? There is already light enough to those who choose to open their eyes upon it; and if there were a thousand times more, it would have no other effect upon the determined slaveholder than to augment his obstinacy, his depravity, and his guilt. "He that doeth righteousness cometh to the light," and freeth his slaves; "and he that doeth not righteousness hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved," and the lashes of a conscience made uneasy by the clear discovery of his wickedness, should render slave-holding too bitter and oppressive for endurance.

Formerly, the slave-holders of our country, and particularly of our church, acknowledging slavery to be wrong, though contriving to throw the blame on others, only asked a limited and brief existence for it; pretending to be very sincere in inquiring "what should be done for its extirpation;" and they still virtually admit its wickedness, and show they are ashamed of it, by claiming to be anti-slavery. Why else, do'nt they conform their *profession* to their *practice*? Why, if they are not ashamed of slavery, do'nt they "face the music," and tell the world, what every body knows, and none better than themselves, that they are pro-slavery in their

character—a miserable set of man-stealers—and that they calculate to remain so? Why call themselves anti-slavery, and talk of extirpation, as they are in the habit of doing upon occasion? Ah, the poor hypocrites; they know slavery is wrong, and they are ashamed of it. And the reason our Border Conferences adhere to the Methodist Episcopal Church, rather than to the Methodist Episcopal Church South, is, that they may have the *anti-slavery reputation* of the *one*, and share the *guilty spoils* of the *other*. This is the reason, and the *sole* reason of their adhesion *North* rather than *South*, and they know it.

These miserable apologists and perpetrators of the crime of slave-holding sometimes assay to justify their wicked oppressions; putting on a long face, and telling us that “*under the circumstances*, it is the best thing they can do for their slaves to hold them in bondage, and treat them well;” and they would fain have us believe them very gracious, by the by, while they talk of “the patriarchal institution of slavery,” of “apostolic slave-holding,” and all that, as a Bible warrant for their detestable villany; and yet, they never attempt this bold and guilty measure but in conscious violation of their innate and half smothered convictions of truth and duty. They know that they ought to repudiate the abomination, to separate themselves from so great an evil, and “fly from it as from the face of a serpent.” They know that to plead the existence of Jewish slavery as a precedent in the case, is to plead a precedent that never existed. They know that the Bible argument for slavery, as it is called, is a wicked perversion of the Scriptures which everywhere condemn the evil. And they

know that to obey *man*, rather than *God*, is treason against their Maker—a crime of the deepest die; and to hold slaves, though *enjoined* by human laws, (which, indeed, is not the case in *our* country,) is what no one can do and be a christian; and what no christian will do, seeing *God* has forbidden it, though his refusal should cause him to be thrown into a den of lions, where Daniel of old was cast for the same terrible offence, or cost him a thousand lives.

If we may hold slaves in violation of the law of God, because *man* allows of it, or *enjoins* it upon us even by the constitution and laws of the state; we may go into the practice of polygamy, of robbery, of murder, upon the same principle. Indeed, the adoption of such a sentiment would abolish the government of the Deity; annihilating as it does all distinctions of moral right and wrong, and resolving every principle of morality and religion into a *civil* question to be determined by the authority of the state! Or, *admitting* of the existence of moral government, moral subjects, and moral distinctions, neither God nor the church has anything to do with them upon the supposition that the lower law is of supreme authority, or that we are to obey man rather than God. The church, upon this hypothesis, has no longer any jurisdiction over her members, God is superseded in the government of the human family whom he has created and redeemed, and the state is all in all!

And what can the slave-holder ask more? What more can downright infidelity ask? Nay, what more could the great Devil ask—what farther concession to the usurpations of his rebel throne—in order to gratify his infernal ambition, and subjugate the universe of God

to himself? If the civil law is to prescribe the distinction of right and wrong; or rather, if all moral actions and principles are to be resolved into questions of a civil character and left to the determinations of the state; then, of course, our amenability to God and the church is all a sham. The church should be forthwith abolished, there being no assignable object for its continuance—God should be declared a mythological being, or placed in humble subordination to his creatures—and we should be taught to look up to the *almighty State* to prescribe to us our only rule of truth and duty, to adjudicate all questions of law and obligation pertaining to this life, and to dispense the retributions of eternity, assigning us our place and destination beyond the tomb!

• All this slave-holders know. And especially does the church know all this. She knows that God is her “only Lord and Law-giver,” and that no law of man can supersede his authority. She knows that the state has no right to command her in relation to matters of worship or of conscience, having no more power to absolve her from her allegiance to God as her governor and judge, than the Pope of Rome. And for her to concede to the state the right to interfere with her internal policy, or ecclesiastical jurisdiction—prescribing the terms of membership in her communion, and controlling the decisions of her conferences and courts; or practically to adopt the institutions and laws of the state as a standard of hermeneutics and church discipline, conforming her administrations and teachings to the laws and morals of the land in which she dwells, is to abdicate her work and office as the church of Christ, and abandon herself, and the world she is appointed to evangelize and save, to *sin and the Devil!*

We say, the friends and advocates of slavery, particularly those of the church, know this. To suppose otherwise, would be to deny them all claim to common intelligence; or to assume that men belonging to the most enlightened age and country under heaven, could be insensible to the plainest dictates of common reason and of common sense, which would be absolutely incredible. What is now wanted is, not to convince slave-holders of the wickedness of their slave-holding, but to induce them to forsake it. Our appeal henceforth, therefore, must be to the *heart* of that guilty class of our citizens and members, rather than to the *head*—their *fears* rather than their *understanding*—their *social* and *civil position*, particularly their *church-membership*, rather than their *legal* and *scriptural defences* of “the sum of all villanies.” The thunder of denunciation and reproof, rather than a course of argumentation, and reasoning, must be employed in the treatment of a monster evil which has long defied the gentler means we should be happy still to employ if it would be of any use. It is high time we should give them to understand that we look upon them as a *race of pirates*; and that all of them belonging to our church must immediately free themselves from the sin of slavery, or be excluded from the connection—that we will not be disgraced and imperiled by them any longer.

For ourselves, this is the ground we intend to maintain. And if it should cost us our standing in the church, be it so. Our conscience will be clear, and that must suffice. But whether *in* the church, or *out* of the church, it shall be our undeviating and constant aim to reprove her for her sin—to warn her of her danger—

and to labor and pray for her prosperity and happiness. And while we shall strive by the grace of God to do all the good we can to the church and to the world during our brief sojourn on earth, "giving all diligence to make our own calling and election sure;" we shall not fail, we humbly trust, to carry on a warfare—an active, aggressive, and uncompromising warfare—against "the sum of all villanies."

CHAPTER XV.

QUESTION OF THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF CHURCH-SLAVE-HOLDING—POSITION OF THE BISHOPS AND OTHERS UPON THE SUBJECT—CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE TO PASS A PROHIBITORY RULE—SLAVERY UNCONSTITUTIONALLY IN THE CHURCH—DUTY OF THE ADMINISTRATION TO EXECUTE THE DISCIPLINE AGAINST SLAVE-HOLDERS—THE CHAPTER ON SLAVERY UNCONSTITUTIONAL—NON-SLAVE-HOLDING ALWAYS A CONDITION OF CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP—THE QUESTION OF THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF SLAVE-HOLDING THE GREAT ISSUE TO BE MET, ESPECIALLY AT THE NEXT GENERAL CONFERENCE.

In this chapter we shall examine the question of the constitutionality of church slave-holding. This is the question now to be decided—the border conferences, the bishops, some of our church-editors, and a few others, denying the authority of the General Conference to pass a rule prohibitory of slave-holding among us by their own independent action; and we of the anti-slavery school maintaining that they have such authority. What, then, are the constitutional powers of the General Conference in relation to the subject of slavery? May that body pass a rule excluding slavery from the church, or may it not? Let us see.

There has been a mighty effort put forth by our pro-slavery editors, and others of their kin, to puzzle the question at issue by confounding direct General Confer-

ence action for the prohibition of slavery with a change of the General Rule; or by bringing such action into conflict with the General Rule, to make it out unconstitutional, and so prevent it. They profess to "hate slavery, and to desire its extirpation, as much as anybody; but they would have it brought about in a constitutional way," i. e., by changing the General Rule, and not by the independent action of the General Conference. But who does not see through the guise of this hypocritical pretension. Most gladly would they divert us from the idea of direct prohibitory action by the General Conference, by which they are aware we should be able to effect the abolition of church-slavery, to the process of changing the General Rule, which they know is utterly impracticable; and which, with all their professions of favor, they would do all in their power to defeat. Doubtless these conscientious and devoted lovers of constitutional legislation would be quite willing to inveigle us into their General Rule operation; but we happen to remember that with all their interest in changing the General Rule on the subject of slavery, they have almost unanimously voted against it, as at Indianapolis, and the Annual Conferences where the question has been presented for action; and it is more than probable they would be true to their pro-slavery antecedents and instincts upon any future occasion that might arise. They did indeed allow Dr. Stevens of the Advocate and Journal to vote on the other side, partly as a compensation for his parasitic pro-slavery speech upon the General Conference floor, and partly to save the credit of his truckling paper with northern subscribers; but that was evidently a part of the programme. They felt

they could spare a half-a-dozen of their lackeys, just to avoid the appearance of collusion, or to make a *feint* of conducting the matter fairly, and still carry their point; just as Walker threw out a *portion* of the fraudulent votes in the election of the Kansas territorial legislature, making no doubt he would have enough left to place a majority of pro-slavery members in that body.

In their efforts to defeat the anti-slavery movement by confusing the subject, and diverting attention from the one sole object of our pursuit, they have endeavored to force a false issue upon us by representing that we are aiming to change the General Rule by the alone action of the General Conference, than which nothing has been more foreign from our thoughts. In following out this jumbling, misleading, characteristic policy of the slave power, Dr. Bangs says, "I hope I have succeeded in showing,—first, that the rule in the discipline on slavery can neither be 'changed nor revoked' without a constitutional majority. And here let me remark on the saying of Dr. Havens, who pleads that it can be done by a simple majority of the General Conference."

Now who ever pretended that a General Rule of the Discipline could be changed or revoked by "a simple majority of the General Conference?" Dr. Havens certainly never did; and we know of no one of the anti-slavery school who has. Why, then, are we accused of entertaining such views, or of aiming at such ends? Evidently because the *truth* in the case would not serve to bring us into disrepute, and paralyze our influence by setting us in array against the constitution of the church, and brand us with revolutionary designs.

But what if "a simple majority of the General Con-

ference cannot 'change or revoke' a General Rule of the Discipline," does it follow therefore that such majority has no power to abolish church-slavery, or that such abolition would be unconstitutional? Is "the sum of all villainies" so shielded by the constitution of the church that the General Conference cannot legislate against the one, without violating the other? And is this true of that system of church government, or of those General Rules drawn up by the hand of the sainted Wesley for the regulation of the societies under his care? Before we can so far revise our opinion of the economy of Methodism as to swallow so monstrous a representation of its fundamental character, we must take time to look over our Discipline once more.

If the constitution *required* slave-holding among us, or anywhere *enjoined* upon the church to *allow* or *tolerate* it among her members, why, of course, "a simple majority of the General Conference" could not touch the accursed thing. It would then be shielded by the constitution, and its removal could only be effected by changing the constitution, as the Discipline provides. But as the constitution nowhere requires the practice, or even the toleration of slave-holding in the church—nowhere says or intimates that it shall be allowed among us—what change of the constitution is necessary, we beg to know, in order to the passage of a prohibitory rule by "a simple majority of the General Conference?" Or in what way would it be unconstitutional for "a simple majority of the General Conference" to legislate the abomination out of the church? Can our pro-slavery editors, or some other advocate of "the sum of all villainies," inform us? It

is *one* thing to *assert* that a measure is unconstitutional, and distinctly *another* to prove it—one thing to make the gaping, goosy, dough-faced rabble *believe* an assertion, and gulp it down with a stupid credulity, and another to lay your finger upon the slightest evidence of its truth. Every man of sense and reflection has become so accustomed to the bold, dogmatical, *ad captandum* cry of “unconstitutional” in these times, that it has lost its effect on him; or is only heard with suspicion and disgust. Let any one *show* us the clause where the constitution requires slave-holding to be practiced or *tolerated* in the church, and we will yield the point.

“Why, the constitution *requires*, or at least *tolerates* slave-holding in the church, because it does not *specifically* forbid it.” Ah, is this the authority afforded by the constitution of the church for church-slave-holding? Well then, are all other crimes to be tolerated in the church which are not *specifically* forbidden? And is that “according to Blackstone, or the rules of legal interpretation”—that the interpretation that we are taught by these authorities to put upon the rule forbidding slavery, in forbidding “evil of every kind”—as Dr. Stevens of the Advocate and Journal has it? Is that the idea we are to gather from “the spirit and design of the Discipline on slavery, or the history of church-legislation upon the subject,” in the language of the redoubtable Dr. Bangs? Where does the constitution *specifically* forbid theft, adultery, murder, and a thousand other crimes which might be named? And are all these to be *tolerated* in the church because they are not *specifically* forbidden by the constitution? And is that “the spirit and design of the Discipline?” *that*

the interpretation we are taught to put upon the rule forbidding slavery, by "law reports and judicial opinions?" It is not for us to judge others. "To their own Master they stand or fall." But we would sooner put our hand in the fire, than hazard our reputation as a reasoner, or stake our moral character even, upon so shocking a perversion of Methodist Discipline. If the General Rule, which forbids "the buying and selling of men, women, and children," authorizes the *holding them in bondage* because it does not *specifically* forbid it; then the General Rule which forbids "the putting on of gold and of costly apparel," authorizes the *wearing* of these things after they *are* put on, for the *same reason*. The truth is, as must be evident to any one who will open his eyes upon the subject, that the constitution in forbidding *all evil in general*, forbids *every species of evil in particular*. The *genus* comprehends every *species* of the *same nature*; and in forbidding the *former*, it of course forbids the latter. If the slave-holder may *except* from "evil of every kind," "the evil of slave-holding," because the constitution does not forbid that evil *specifically*; by parity of reason the adulterer may *except* from "evil of every kind," forbidden though it is by the constitution, the evil of adultery, because that evil is not *specifically* forbidden by it. And so of every other evil on earth, except those which are specifically named in the constitution, they all following the same law; and for the General Conference to legislate against any of them, whether theft, adultery, or murder—any which are not specifically forbidden in the constitution—would be unconstitutional! On this hypothesis the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church authorizes and

protects crimes of every grade and hue, except the very limited number, and those of the milder type, which are specifically forbidden by it; and there is no way to get at them, or to deal with their perpetrators, but to alter the constitution! And is this so? Are all possible crimes to be "tolerated in the church," except the few of a comparatively trifling nature which are specifically forbidden, till the constitution which extends over them the shield of its protection can be changed by the slow and difficult process prescribed in the Discipline? And is this the Methodism we have loved and cherished and propagated for so many years in the simplicity of our heart? Heaven forbid! This is not the Methodism of Wesley, nor of the Discipline. It is a *spurious* Methodism—the Methodism of the Church South, and of that church alone, except our Border Conférences and their dough-faced sympathizers of the old church. Shame on them. We protest against those scandalous interpretations and constructions of the constitution of the church, by which they neutralize its authority as a standard of ecclesiastical jurisprudence and christian conduct, and make it the charter and bulwark of sin!

It is admitted that the constitution does not *specifically* forbid slave-holding in the church. Nevertheless, as it nowhere *enjoins* it upon any one, or requires it to be practised among us, of course there is no constitutional barrier in the way of its removal—no change of the constitution necessary in order to its exclusion from the church. The General Conference, though forbidden by the restrictive rules to "revoke or change" the constitution, are left at perfect liberty to do any matter or thing which the constitution does not forbid: but the

constitution does not forbid the passage of a rule by the General Conference for the extirpation of church-slavery; therefore the General Conference are left at perfect liberty to pass a rule for the extirpation of that horrid sin. Should any one take exceptions to this argument, we hope he will have the candor, as his exceptions must be found in the Discipline, if anywhere, either to point them out, that we may have the benefit of them; or give up his objection to the passage of a rule for the extirpation of church-slavery by the General Conference. Let him show us the clause in the constitution, if such clause there be, which forbids the General Conference to abolish church-slavery at once and forever, by their own separate, independent action. Till this is done, we shall take it for granted that there is no such clause; and shall continue to urge it upon the approaching General Conference to provide for the immediate extirpation of an evil which has so long disgraced the church, and crippled her operations, particularly in the missionary field, for the evangelization of the world.

Constructive law will not do. Nor shall we trouble ourselves about "the principles of legal interpretation," or the "history and reason of the case." We demand of the inventors and maintainers of the fiction of constitutional slave-holding, to give us chapter and verse on the subject; and will be satisfied with nothing short of it. The question is of too much importance to be settled on any other ground. A resort to quirks, and quibbles, and fine-spun theories, and far-fetched arguments and constructions, to justify one's course of life, or vindicate his conduct from the imputation of wrong,

but throws a suspicion upon him from which the loudest professions of piety can never exculpate him. The *innocent* have no occasion for such trickish defences. *Their* study is, to put the widest space possible between themselves and sin; and to "abstain from all *appearance* of evil." So in regard to the constitution of the church.

But having established the point that slavery is not in the church constitutionally, as the Advocate and Journal contends; we shall now "carry the war into Africa," and show that it is there *unconstitutionally*, and that the constitution, having been violated by its admission, requires its removal. The constitution, in one of its articles, requires us to "avoid [shun, go from, shift off, make void, annul] evil of every kind;" but slavery, in the very language and declaration of the Discipline, is "a *great* evil;" therefore the constitution requires us to "avoid [shun, go from, shift off, make void, annul,] slavery. All this the constitution requires of the church. Nothing could be plainer. Nothing could more effectually root up "the evil of slavery." And this the constitution requires, not by construction or inferential deduction, merely; but by the plain letter of the law, which "he that runs may read." The requirement is mandatory—is imperative—leaving us no discretion in the premises; no alternative, but either to exclude all evil—slavery and all—from the church, or render ourselves obnoxious to the penalty of a violated law. To sum up the whole matter, and present the strength of the cause in a single argument—clear, convincing, irrefutable, and convenient for common use—we would offer to our readers to following syllogism:—

The constitution of the church forbids "evil of every kind:" slave-holding is an "evil"—"a great evil"—the church herself being judge; therefore the constitution of the church forbids slave-holding.

But whose duty is it to administer the constitution in this respect, or to carry out its provisions in removing slavery from the church?

1. It is the duty of the *General Conference*. The constitution, in conferring "full powers upon the General Conference to make rules and regulations for the church," restricting it only in a few particulars, in which slave-holding is not included, makes it the duty of that body to provide for the carrying out of all its provisions; and that requiring the exclusion of "evil of every kind" from the church, of course "the evil of slavery" among the rest. Powers conferred for any object, whether for purposes of legislation or otherwise, involve the obligation to execute or fulfill that object in good faith. So it is always understood in all matters of government, or business; and especially, in all matters of public service, or official trust. And as the constitution which the General Conference is appointed to maintain and obey, contains a clause forbidding "evil of every kind," and of course "the evil of slavery," it becomes the duty of the General Conference therefore to see that this law is carried into effect in all the annual conferences throughout the connection. There is no duty of the General Conference more clearly enjoined by the constitution—none at this period of our history of more importance to the interests of the church. Hitherto, we are sorry to be compelled to say, the General Conference have proved recreant to their duty in this re-

spect. Instead of providing by statutory legislation for the carrying out of that clause of the constitution, which in forbidding "evil of every kind," forbids "the evil of slavery" as was their duty; they have done—What? We leave it to the common judgment and sentiment of the church whether they have done a whit less than to shirk responsibilities, truckle to the slave-power, and trifle with the petitions and feelings of the people who have prayed and looked and waited for them to do something to relieve them of the guilt and stigma of "the sum of all villainies," till their patience is well nigh exhausted! If the General Conference suppose they can pursue the policy of trampling upon the constitution of our groaning, bleeding, insulted Methodism, and place at defiance the prayers and feelings and claims of our people beyond the period of 1860, we shall not be responsible for their presumption! There is a point beyond which the church will not endure to be thus disregarded and abused in relation to her oft-repeated and well-known wishes upon the subject—a point beyond which "forbearance would cease to be a virtue."

2. It is the duty of the *General Superintendents*. They too, having virtually taken an oath to support the constitution under which they have been elevated to their high and responsible office, are in duty bound to carry out its provisions, by which it forbids "the evil of slavery," in forbidding "evil of every kind." "It is the duty of a bishop," says the Discipline, "to oversee the spiritual and temporal interests of the church;" i. e., to take care that all "the business of the church" is faithfully attended to, or that it is done according to

the constitution which they are authorized and required to administer. And as the constitution requires the putting away of "evil of every kind," "the evil of slavery" not excepted, we had supposed it would fall within the sphere of their duty and oversight to carry out the provisions of the constitution, according to the authority vested in them as our superintendents and leaders, for the "extirpation of the evil of slavery" in the church. Whether this duty was fulfilled in the profound silence they observed upon the subject of church-slavery for many a long year previous to the General Conference in 1856, or whether the oversight with which they are charged was duly exercised at Indianapolis in instructing the General Conference, in their official quadrennial address, that any measure they might adopt for the extirpation of church-slavery by their own independent action would be unconstitutional, the church and community will judge for themselves. We must think, however, to say the *least* of it, that they greatly erred. And when we reflect, that on their example and teaching, more than anything else under heaven, depends the fate of the evil under consideration—the enormous evil of church-slavery—we are filled with discouragement and grief.

3. It is the duty of the *presiding elders*; they being required to "take care that every part of the Discipline"—that part which forbids "evil of every kind," and of course "the evil of slavery"—"be enforced in their districts." Let the presiding elders of slaveholding districts look at this article of the constitution, or of the standing laws of the church under which they have accepted the office they hold, and see what be-

comes of those ordination vows by which they have solemnly pledged themselves to "labor as sons in the gospel," and "not to mend our rules, but to keep them ; not for wrath, but conscience sake."

4. It is the duty of the *preacher in charge*, who has also vowed at his ordination to "enforce vigorously, but calmly, all the rules of the society"—the rule forbidding "evil of every kind," and of course "the evil of slavery," among the rest.

5. It is the duty of the *whole church*—preachers, exhorters, stewards, leaders, private members and all, who have all engaged and pledged themselves—all promised and covenanted in the most solemn manner—on coming into the church, to avoid, [shun, go from, shift off, make void, annul,] "evil of every kind," and of course "the evil of slavery." Annual conferences, quarterly conferences, individual societies, and all judicial committees, having jurisdiction of slave-holding members, are in duty bound to call them to trial under the General Rule which forbids "the evil of slavery," in forbidding "evil of every kind ;" and upon conviction of the crime of holding one or more human beings in bondage, to expel them from the church. And it is the duty of every executive or judicial officer having charge of a circuit or station to bring them before the appropriate tribunal, even without a formal accusation, if none be preferred, and try them as in other cases of immorality. In short, it is the duty of every department of the church—legislative, executive, and judicial—and of every individual among us, from the bishop down to the private member on trial, to take an active part, in their respective spheres, for the extirpation of church-slavery.

The Discipline of the church, as we have shown above, requires it at our hands ; and we have all promised before God and many witnesses to obey the Discipline. We have promised to obey it where it requires us to avoid or put away "the evil of slavery," in requiring us to avoid or put away "evil of every kind," as much as where it requires us to avoid profanity, drunkenness, or any other evil. And for us to repudiate the Discipline in our administration and practice ; not in its financial economy, or prudential regulations merely, but in its *moral code*, which professes to be drawn from "the written word of God," and to be "written upon all truly awakened hearts by the Holy Spirit," is to repudiate all moral obligation, and to involve ourselves in the guilt of the awful crime of perjury !

We would not be understood by our reference to Methodist Discipline, that we regard this book as an infallible guide in matters of religion, or that we look upon the constitution of the church set forth in that compendium of christian doctrine and duty as the ultimate authority for the settlement of moral questions. We believe, in the language of our creed, that "The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation : so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite and necessary to salvation." But as the pro-slavery party among us insist upon "the Discipline as it is," and appeal to the constitution of the church, of which they seem exceedingly tenacious, upon occasion, for the settlement of the question in dispute, we have deemed it advisable to join issue with them on this ground ; and doubt not we shall

be able to convince the most skeptical, by a few remarks in addition to those we have already made upon the subject, that the constitution is wholly on our side—that it is a purely anti-slavery instrument—giving no toleration or countenance to slave-holding whatever.

We are aware that our self-styled conservatives of the constitution, are greatly alarmed at the anti-slavery movement. They affect to suspect us of designs the most ultra, revolutionary, and subversive of the constitution of the church. But we would say for their consolation and comfort, that we have no intention or wish to exceed the constitutional provisions of the Discipline; nor do we think it at all necessary in order to effect our object. The General Conference may go all lengths in legislating against slavery, and the executive authorities of the church may carry into full effect any “rules and regulations” the General Conference may adopt for doing it away, without in the least transcending their constitutional prerogatives. The General Rule, which is a part of the constitution, forbidding “evil of every kind,” opens a large field in this direction; covering, as it does, infinitely more ground than the single specification which barely forbids the buying and selling of men, women, and children; and yet this vast field, in respect to the General Conference, is “free territory”—the restrictive rules having left it all open to them. They may add to this specification of *slave-buying*, and *slave-selling*, not only any other specification pertaining to *slavery*, as *slave-breeding*, *slave-catching*, and *slave-holding* if you please; but such as relate to *sin in general*, as theft, robbery, murder, and so on, till they have exhausted the entire catalogue of crime, were that pos-

sible, without the remotest infraction of the constitution of the church. They would still be found within their constitutional limits—still they would have gone no farther than to enact and execute laws for “the extirpation of evil of every kind.”

A pretty idea to be sure, that the abomination of slave-holding is to be exalted into an article of the constitution, and shielded by the restrictive rules; being placed thereby on a level with our “itinerant general superintendency, the trial of members by a committee and the right of appeal, the ratio of representation in the General Conference, and the like. We shall be slow to believe that the framers of the constitution could have been so reckless of truth and duty, and of the purity of the church, as to require two-thirds of the General Conference, and three-fourths of all the annual conferences to legislate sin out of the church. We should hardly have looked for a body of Methodist preachers, whose only object was “to spread scriptural holiness over the land,” to make constitutional provision for the perpetuation and protection of “the sum of all villainies!” The rather should we have expected that they would do just what they have done, viz: prohibit “evil of every kind” by the very terms of the constitution which they adopted for the government of the church, provide “rules and regulations” for her advancement in holiness, and enjoin it upon the subordinate authorities of the church—annual conferences, bishops, and administrators of every grade—to carry out the provisions of the constitution which they had framed.

Indeed, we are so far from being required to maintain,

or even tolerate slavery as an institution of the church provided for by constitutional law, that the very reverse is the case. We may not even remain *neutral* on the subject—are not at liberty to cease our agitation of it, or to let it alone. The constitution arrays us against it in *active hostility*; commanding us to buckle on the armor of an *aggressive warfare*, and pursue it unto the death. As well might we plead the warrant of the constitution for letting any other sin alone, or sin in general, as the sin of slavery. If the Scriptures forbid us to sin ourselves, or to “suffer sin upon our neighbor,” and declare that the blood of those who are taken away in their sins, through our neglect, shall be required at our hands; so the constitution of the church, having commanded us to “instruct, reprove and exhort all we have any intercourse with,” wicked slaveholders of course among the rest, requires the expulsion of all those who habitually neglect any of these duties. And nothing is plainer, than that they who oppose the agitation of the subject of slavery, doing nothing for its extirpation themselves, and hindering those who otherwise would be active in the anti-slavery cause; are guilty of inveighing against our doctrine and Discipline, as well as of violating the constitution of the church, and ought to be expelled. Our doctrine and our constitution both enjoin holiness—both require that we “avoid the evil of slavery,” in requiring us to “avoid evil of every kind”—and both declare that evil-doers, of course slaveholders, “shall have no more place among us.” Where, then, is the constitutional difficulty in the way of such General Conference action as shall purge the church from every slave-holder in the connection?

The constitutional difficulty lies on the *other* side, and it is only by a direct and most palpable violation of the constitution that slave-holders are permitted a place within her pale for a moment.

We are aware that any rule the General Conference might pass for the exclusion of slave-holders from the church, would be trampled under foot by the Border Conferences; for with all their professions of regard for the constitution which authorizes and requires the General Conference to pass such a rule, they are as full of nullification "as an egg is of meat." Having claimed the right, in the character of a supreme ecclesiastical judicatory, to pronounce upon the constitutionality of the doings of the General Conference, they boldly announce their determination to disregard any action of that body which shall interfere with the subject of slavery. Their old champion, Dr. Bond, insisted upon their right to do this, and strongly advised them to it, should such action ever be taken; and that "pocket edition of humanity," as Bishop Morris denominated his successor, who must needs out-Herod Herod, like all other northern dough-faces, in his cringing servility to the slave-power, has lent himself, and the general paper which he is base enough to devote to southern sectional purposes, to the encouragement of the same revolutionary opposition to the authorities of the church.

But though a rule of the General Conference abolishing slavery would surely be resisted by the professedly loyal, yet most unscrupulous and refractory Border, still such rule ought to be passed notwithstanding. If they choose to act upon the characteristic principle of nullification, and set at defiance the authority of the

church in accordance with their southern instincts, the responsibility will rest with *them*, and not with *us*. We shall have borne our faithful testimony against the "the great evil of slavery" before the world, and taken an important step towards its removal. But to meet our full responsibility in the premises, and perform our whole duty in relation to the nullifying conferences, we must pass an *excising* rule, by which the whole body of nullifiers may be *cut off at a stroke*. Other denominations, the Presbyterians particularly, have found it necessary to resort to this wholesale measure in extreme cases; and the fine effect it has had as a remedy for the distracting evil of schism, and the reason of the case, require that we imitate their example whenever there is a demand for it. In this way we should effectually wash our hands from the pollution of slavery, vindicate our character as a christian church in the eyes of the nation and of the world, and teach the fulminating Border the very needful lesson that we have *another* way to dissolve a connection which she has rendered insupportable by her atrocious and determined wickedness, and one which accords far better with our duty, our interest, and our self-respect, than to *secede* or *vacate our home*, as they would fain have us do, and leave them in possession of our time honored name, and our hundreds of thousands of church property. We should neither secede ourselves nor allow them to secede, unless they are quick about it; but cut them off, as we would cut off an individual member who had forfeited his standing among us, for their contumacious insubordination and damnable slave-holding.

"But does not the chapter on slavery in the Disci-

pline allow of slave-holding in the church?" And what if it does? The chapter is not the constitution. Nor is the constitution to be interpreted by the chapter, but the chapter by the constitution. And the very fact that the chapter *allows* of church-slave-holding, the constitution *forbidding* it at the same time, proves the chapter to be *unconstitutional* and of *no authority*. It is admitted, we believe, on all hands, that any action of the General Conference not in harmony with the General Rules, would be unconstitutional: but the action of the General Conference in 1796, adopting the chapter on slavery was not in harmony with the General Rules, the chapter *allowing* "the evil of slavery," and the General Rules *forbidding* it, in forbidding "evil of every kind;" therefore the action of the General Conference in 1796, adopting the chapter on slavery, was *unconstitutional*.

Assuming, as our opponents do, that slavery is constitutional, they of course would pronounce the action of the General Conference in adopting the chapter on slavery constitutional also; and the proposed action to rescind or neutralize it at Indianapolis, unconstitutional. But planting ourselves upon the ground which we have so abundantly established, that slavery is unconstitutional, we shall take the liberty to reverse the decision; and maintain the doctrine of the unconstitutionality of the action adopting the chapter on slavery in 1796. At any rate, the chapter is either constitutional or unconstitutional. If *constitutional*, then as it was adopted by "a simple majority of the General Conference," a simple majority of the General Conference can rescind or change it, as we proposed to do at Indianapolis. If *un-*

constitutional, then of course it is of *no authority*, and we fall back upon the General Rule which forbids "the evil of slavery," in forbidding "evil of every kind." And then what becomes of the constitutionality of slave-holding ?

We leave our pro-slavery sticklers for the constitution to take which horn of the dilemma they like best. If they choose to give up the chapter as *unconstitutional* and *void*, leaving us to the operation of the naked General Rule which forbids "the evil of slavery," in forbidding "evil of every kind," we are content. If on the contrary, they refuse to surrender the chapter on this ground, in that case we shall not be long in putting it out of the way ; for a chapter which could be *constitutionally* adopted by the General Conference in 1796, can be *constitutionally rescinded* by the *same body* in 1860. Or if it should be objected that the General Conference of 1860, being a *delegated* General Conference, would not be the same body, nor possess the same powers with the General Conference of 1796, which consisted of all the preachers in full connection, and therefore the conclusion founded upon the identity of their character does not follow ; we have only to say, that as the *delegated* General Conference of 1812, and thenceforward down to 1824, *claimed the right* to legislate upon the chapter in question, and *actually did* legislate upon it, subjecting it to various modifications and changes, till, at the last mentioned period, it took on its present form, the validity of our argument remains unimpaired. For a chapter or section as it was formerly called, which could be *constitutionally* acted upon by this *delegated* General Conference, and adopted from

time to time *ad libitum*, particularly in 1824, with any modifications or changes they chose to make upon it, can be *constitutionally* acted upon, modified, changed, or expunged from the Discipline even by *the same delegated body* in 1860, as above stated and shown.

Perhaps we ought not to say what we *shall* do at the next General Conference in regard to this matter. We have shown what we *can* do, if we are disposed. But whether we *shall* do it or not, will depend upon our *integrity*, rather than upon our *power* or our *convictions of duty*. The *power* and the *convictions* will not be wanting; but we cannot vouch for the *integrity*. Possibly we shall have reached a refinement in morals and in logic by that time which will determine everything to be unconstitutional but slavery and rum! If the question of slavery should be taken up at all at the next General Conference, which seems very doubtful, the representatives of the Border Conferences, accustomed to victory and confident of another triumph from the success of the past, will make a terrible onslaught upon the anti-slavery forces; and the bishops, gathering boldness from the impunities of an office which, under its present form, places them beyond the reach of correction in such cases, and from the servile tameness with which the northern delegates submitted to their pro-slavery intrusions at Indianapolis, may be expected, not merely to intimate as aforesaid, a constitutional objection to the passage of a rule by the General Conference prohibitory of church-slavery, but to claim and exercise the right of *veto* in respect to any measure of the conference that shall look in that direction.

“ But the General Conference may not pass a rule

forbidding church-slavery *in any* event, as that would be introducing a new term of membership, which of course would be unconstitutional, and of no authority." Pshaw! What a silly scare-crow is this. "*A new term of membership!*" Why, non-slave-holding has been a term of membership among us from the beginning; the constitution requiring the exclusion of every individual from the church who habitually breaks any of its rules—the rule forbidding "the evil of slavery," in forbidding "evil of every kind," not excepted. If any still doubt the truth of this position, we think their doubts will be effectually removed by duly considering the following language of the General Rules:—"There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies, a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins. But it is expected [required] of all who continue therein, that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation by avoiding evil of every kind," and of course "the evil of slavery." How effectually does this provision of the Discipline exclude slave-holders, in connection with all other evil-doers, from the church. But to put the question beyond all dispute, and leave no possible room for doubt on the subject, it is said in the final summing up of the matter,—“These are the General Rules of our societies, [church.] If there be any among us who habitually break any of them”—that which requires us to avoid "the evil of slavery," in requiring us to "avoid evil of every kind," among the rest—"he hath no more place among us," the rule itself, which the appropriate officer is duly to apply and administer, excluding him from the connection.

And now, what shall we say of the advocates of church-slavery, those especially who belong to the ministry, and profess to understand and teach and administer the laws of the church? Do they not know that non-slave-holding has always been a condition of church-membership among us? Was there ever anything plainer? Perhaps it may be thought uncharitable in us, but we can no otherwise believe them sincere in contending that the passage of a rule by the General Conference for the extirpation of church-slavery would involve a new term of membership, than by imputing to them the want of common sense, which we are not prepared to do.

But whether the aberration they exhibit belongs to the *head* or the *heart*, it is all the doings of slavery, and must all be charged to that blackest, foulest, cursedest abomination by which so many have been led astray and ruined! O, slavery! What hast thou done? How long shall the church and ministry, as well as the government and nation, bow down to thee, and worship at thy shrine? "How long dost thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord," and to blind and corrupt and mislead and destroy the church and the country by thy damning influence? But for *thy* doings, our bishops and editors and doctors of divinity and other preachers of various grades and circumstances had not overlooked the plain letter and meaning of the constitution of the church, which they are *officially* concerned to understand and administer, nor labored with so much pertinacity and zeal to turn it against the anti-slavery cause which it was intended to carry forward and sustain. The rather they would have seen that the

constitution is entirely anti-slavery; and that to admit slave-holders into the church, or to allow them to remain within her pale after they have been admitted, is to be guilty of the most palpable and bare-faced violation of its provisions, and to trample under foot and repudiate "*the Discipline as it is.*"

Having now removed the rubbish which slave-holders and their dough-faced coadjutors had thrown in the way of anti-slavery action, particularly the illegitimate and ill-favored chapter on slavery, and the contemptible humbuggery of a new term of membership; and shown that the constitution of the church not only does not provide for the existence of slavery in the church, but positively forbids it, making non-slave-holding a condition of church-membership; we feel that the way is open for the passage of *any* rule, whether *prohibitory* or *excising* or *whatever else* may be necessary for the extirpation of church-slavery, and that it is the *imperative duty* of the General Conference, in conjunction with our executive authorities, to free the church from "the sum of all villanies"—from all who practice, or abet, or defend, or justify, or in any way countenance slave-holding, with the least possible delay. If the *excising* process be necessary, let us go into it, and make a clean sweep of a class of men who are a curse to the church and the world. Why dally with them any longer? They should have been thrust out long ago. Nay, they never should have been permitted to come in. And if the excising process be the only thing that will free us from them, as under the circumstances we apprehend to be the case, let it come. The sooner we go into it the better. The idea that there would be something unconstitutional about it, and that

therefore the church is not at liberty to resort to such a measure, is supremely ridiculous. We can do *anything* to free ourselves from sin, and from incorrigible sinners. *Any* thing and *every* thing is *constitutional* that is adapted to secure this end. And he who is forever interposing constitutional difficulties in the way of reform, or of dealing with sinners, *is himself a sinner—a miserable wretch*—who feels the need of some such quibble to screen *his own* membership, and is the first to be thrown overboard.

Let it not be inferred that slavery is no sin, and that God is not displeased with the church on account of her connection with it, because he is yet with us in some degree, and we continue to be favored with revivals of religion in some parts of the country. Other denominations to whom we can accord very little vital godliness, have their revivals. But either they are altogether spurious, consisting in a mere accession of numbers; or extremely superficial, amounting to little more than a growing attention to the external forms and decencies of religion induced by the force of public sentiment, or the prevalence of some calamity of a character to create alarm. And if our revivals have *exceeded these* in their tone and character, as we are happy to believe they have in many instances, they are not what they used to be in spirituality and power, generally speaking; and besides, the hand of judgment has been stayed for the time being, and a partial out-pouring of the spirit of revival in some parts of the country vouchsafed to the church for the sake of the righteous few—the faithful, anti-slavery, righteous few—who like Abraham have pleaded with their gracious Heavenly Father *to spare the threatened city*.

But these merciful revivals, which should lead our slave-holding church to repentance, and to the abandonment of the foulest despotism the sun ever saw ; being sent for that purpose, and to indicate the unwillingness of a wooing, waiting, long-suffering Savior to withdraw his spirit from her and leave her to her fate, and *not* as an *approval of slavery* ; are hailed by her as a divine endorsement of her connection with that atrocious evil, and made an occasion of plunging into it with a still bolder and more defiant air ! Thus the mercy of God, however manifested, whether in revivals of religion, “ bearing with her ill-manners, or raising up an anti-slavery band in her midst to save her from ruin by curing her of her wickedness,” is constantly perverted by her, and must of course “ become unto her a savor of death unto death ! ” O, that she would awake from her deep and deadly slumber before it is too late ; and timely avert the impending storm, so fearfully dark and threatening, by “ putting away the evil of her doings ” —her wicked and cruel oppression of the poor slave especially, her greatest and most damning sin—and returning to the paths of humanity and godliness, from which, in the matter of slave-holding, she has long and grievously wandered. Then will she be enabled to say —“ O Lord, though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me.” Then “ will her light rise in obscurity, and her darkness become as the noon-day.” And then will “ she look forth as the morning, clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.” And spreading herself abroad as the arms of the sea, “ become a praise in the earth.”

CHAPTER XVI.

CONNECTION OF THE BISHOPS WITH THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY—THEIR DUTY IN RELATION TO IT—THEIR INFLUENCE AND COURSE OF ACTION PRO-SLAVERY—THE MODIFICATIONS AND CHECKS NECESSARY TO GUARD THEIR OFFICIAL INTEGRITY, AND INSURE THE DUE AND FAITHFUL ADMINISTRATION OF THEIR OFFICE.

We are now come to treat upon a point of great delicacy—the connection of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church with the subject of slavery; and we trust we shall be able to do it with all due respect, both for the *character* and the *office* of those venerable functionaries. We certainly have no private pique to gratify—no personal wrong to avenge. Their respect and kindness for us have always been fully equal to our merit; and we have always entertained the profoundest personal respect for them, from the day we joined the travelling connection, and were placed in a condition to observe their spirit and manner of life, down to the present hour. It could not be expected we should be a favorite with all the bishops. Perhaps we never have been such with any of them. But instead of showing us any disfavor at any time, or oppressing us in our appointments; we most cheerfully bear them witness, that they have always placed us in situations, or assigned us fields of labor

—having kept us twenty-four years in districts—which we esteem to have been above our claims. At any rate, the appearance has been such as to excite the jealousy of many of the preachers, and bring upon them the charge of favoritism. But what has this to do with the question in hand? Surely, it does not change the fact of their pro-slavery influence, or lessen our obligation to point out any modification of the office they hold which might be deemed beneficial, either to themselves, or the church over which they preside.

By the connection of the bishops with the subject of slavery, we would not be understood to mean that they are actual slave-holders; for although it has been intimated, and we think it by no means an impossible case, that some of them at least have their investments in slave property; yet we have no positive evidence of the fact, and therefore shall not assume it. But whether they have any direct pecuniary interest in slaves, or not, they are nevertheless connected with the subject in various other aspects and relations which render them scarcely less responsible for the evil. And as their connection with slavery, such as it is, and the course they pursue in relation to it, affects the character and mission of the church in which we are deeply concerned; it becomes not only our *right* but our *duty* also to inquire into the matter, and to hold it up to the view of the church and of the world in the light of a thorough investigation. If the position of the bishops in relation to the subject of slavery were not generally known, or we could reach the evil in some other way, we should be far from assailing it in this public manner. But feeling that so great an evil must be cured, if possible, and

that this is our only remedy, we are of necessity committed to the course we have here adopted.

The relation which the bishops sustain to the subject of slavery is four-fold—personal, social, ministerial, and official—the last of which, as will appear in the sequel, comprehending and embracing all the rest.

Their *personal* relation to slavery is of a purely *moral* nature, belonging equally to all intelligent beings on earth. It is none other than the relation they sustain to moral questions generally—a relation which involves the obligation to maintain and practice what is right and proper in their own lives, and to oppose *actively* and by *all the means in their power*, what is wrong in the lives of others.

Their *social* relation to this subject is involved in the relation they sustain to society as *christians* and as *citizens*; and the obligations growing out of it consist in “doing to others as they would that others should do unto them;” or in allowing to others “the inalienable right of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

Their *ministerial* relation, being embraced in the relation they sustain to the church and to the world as *christian ministers*, devolves upon them the obligation to “declare the whole counsel of God,” as well to slaveholders as to all other classes of the human family; and to correct or excommunicate offenders, slaveholders and all, according to the terms of their commission and the Discipline of the church.

The *official* relation of the bishops to the subject of slavery, in addition to the personal, social, and ministerial relations they bear to it, and which relations it clearly comprehends and embraces in its range, grows

out of the relation they sustain to the ministry as their ordainers, appointers, and overseers ; and is, therefore, a relation of great importance. With these considerations staring them in the face, how can they pretend they have no connection with the subject of slavery, and that they have nothing to do with it in any way ? How can they teach their brethren that *they* have nothing to do with it, and advise the thousands of travelling preachers and the hundreds of thousands of private and official members, belonging to the church under their care, to cease their agitation of the subject, and let it entirely alone ? Nay, how can they place upon their *index expurgatorius* a great *moral evil* which God has forbidden and denounced under the name of man-stealing, oppression, and the like ; and which the church, whose Discipline they have promised to administer and obey, has also forbidden in forbidding "evil of every kind ?" It is an awful responsibility they assume ; and we tremble for the account they will be called to render when slaves, and slave-holders, and all others who shall have been affected by their pro-slavery influence, shall stand up together in the judgment, and confront them with accusations they cannot deny, and testimony they cannot invalidate, at the bar of eternal retribution !

But having shown the *connection* of the bishops with the subject of slavery, in accordance with our design, we shall proceed to speak of their *duty* in relation to it as the general superintendents of the church. It is sufficiently apparent that all the relations of life have their corresponding obligations and duties growing out of them. So of our relation to God, to man, to the church, to the state, to our families, to society general-

ly. But we are not about to speak of all these several duties *particularly*; nor is it necessary to our present purpose. Suffice it to say, they all have more or less respect to the subject of slavery, and all have to do with a *bishop*, the same as with every other individual among us. It is the *official* duty of the bishops we now propose to consider. And as we shall only do this preparatory to an examination of their well-known history upon the subject, or the course they have actually taken in relation to it, and of the necessity of some modification or change of the episcopal office, we need not pursue it at much length; especially after what we have already said upon it in this and the preceding chapter.

In considering the official duties of the bishops, or the duties which devolve upon them by virtue of the Episcopal office, we shall refer to no other authority than that of the Discipline. This constitutes the standard by which they have promised to be guided and governed in the administration of their office, and by which alone their administration as bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church is to be judged of or tried. It does not enter into our present plan, however, to speak of *all* the official duties of the bishops, nor yet of any part of them only as they relate to the subject of church-slavery.

On page 45 of the Discipline, we read,—“It is the duty of a bishop to ordain bishops, elders, and deacons;” and on page 133,—“If any crime or impediment be objected, the bishop shall surcease [refrain] from ordaining that person until such time as the party accused shall be found clear of the crime.” These extracts are taken from the chapter prescribing the duties

of a bishop of our church, and from the service of the ordination of elders and of deacons ; and they go to show, that while it is made the duty of the bishops to confer ordination upon candidates for holy orders, according to the form of Discipline ; it is made their duty at the same time to *surcease* or *refrain* from ordaining any one who is guilty of a *known crime*. This *last* duty is equally binding with the foregoing. They are not at liberty to “lay hands” upon any one who is guilty of crime ; and of course, if the candidate be guilty of the *crime of slave-holding*, it is the duty of the bishop officiating on the occasion to “surcease [refrain] from ordaining him until he shall be found clear of it.”

Again, same page of Discipline,—“It is the duty of a bishop, in the intervals of the conference, to change, receive, and suspend preachers, as necessity may require, and as the Discipline directs ;” and on page 90th, speaking of “a travelling minister or preacher under report of being guilty of crime,” it is said,—“In the interval of the annual conference, let the presiding elder in the absence of a bishop, call him before a committee, and, upon conviction, suspend him from all ministerial services and church privileges until the ensuing annual conference ;” the phrase, “in the absence of a bishop,” implying, that it is the duty of “*a bishop*” to suspend a travelling preacher, “guilty of crime”—the crime of slave-holding equally with any other crime—if the presiding elder fail to do it, or he can better attend to it than the presiding elder, in the manner the Discipline prescribes. If a committee of preachers before whom the offender might be arraigned on a charge of the crime of slave-holding should fail to render a verdict against

him, the charge being sustained by evidence, it is the duty of the bishop having jurisdiction of the case to exercise his prerogative of "*changing* preachers," and replace them by another committee who will do it. The General Rule, making non-slave-holding a condition of membership among us, requires his exclusion from the church; and the bishop having been invested with the power of suspension of a preacher preparatory to his trial before the conference in such cases, is in duty bound to exercise it. The power of suspension was lodged in his hands, not accidentally, or by mistake; but from design, and for necessary purposes. It was placed there with the understanding that the power to suspend, involved the duty of suspending; and that whenever a preacher was known to be guilty of crime—whether the crime of slave-holding, or any other crime—it would become the duty of the bishop to suspend him, calling him before a committee and presiding at the examination himself; or to *see* it done, in the due and faithful exercise of his episcopal oversight, by the presiding elder. To fail to discharge this most necessary and important duty, is to make himself responsible for the guilt of the offender, and for all the mischief which must result to the church from his unlawful and demoralizing connection with it.

One extract more, with an accompanying reflection or two in regard to it, and we shall have done with this branch of the subject. "It is the duty of a bishop," page 45th of the Discipline, "to oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the church;" and in remarkable correspondence with this, page 128, we have the following question and answer in the form of episcopal or-

dination: "Question. Will you maintain and set forth as much as shall lie in you, quietness, love, and peace, among all men: and such as shall be unquiet, disobedient, and criminal within your district, correct and punish according to such authority as you have by God's word, and as shall be committed unto you? Answer. I will do so by the help of God." We see by this extract that the bishops are bound, both by the canons of the church, and their own solemn vows, to employ all their influence and authority for the *cure* or *punishment* of crime—for the cure or punishment of the *crime of slave-holding* among other crimes—as the case may be; and that they are bound to do this by attending *specifically* and in *detail* to *any* and *every* case which shall fall under their notice, according to the foregoing extracts. Especially are they bound to cure or punish the crime of slave-holding, as well as all other crimes, in the travelling preachers; and the obligation, as we have seen above, is peculiarly solemn and impressive, having been devolved upon them by all the laws and promises and sanctions pertaining to their holy office! We have now placed before our readers the *connection* of the bishops with the subject of slavery, and pointed out their *duty* in relation to it *by virtue of their office*. Our next business will be to inquire into their administration or course of action in respect to it; that it may be seen whether they have met the requirements of the Discipline in relation to the subject; and if not, then whether some change in the tenure and induction of their office may not be necessary to ensure the due and faithful administration of the episcopal functions in the future.

It will be seen from the foregoing, that it is the duty of the bishops to "*surcease*" or refrain from ordaining slave-holders. And have they done this? It has been declared by those claiming to know whereof they affirm, particularly by Dr. McFerrin, of the Nashville Christian Advocate, who appeals to Bishop Morris for the truth of the assertion, that they are in the constant habit of ordaining preachers who are guilty of the crime of slave-holding in all the border conferences. And to put the matter beyond dispute, this testimony is confirmed by that of the Rev. J. D. Long, who has for many years been a member of the Philadelphia Conference, travelling for the most part in that portion of the conference lying in slave states, and having personal knowledge of the condition and doings of the conference in relation to the question of slavery. And now what shall we say of the bishops in regard to the fact here charged upon them? The laws of Delaware and Maryland, within whose bounds a portion of the Philadelphia Conference is located, interpose no barrier to the emancipation of slaves—the Discipline forbids the promotion of slave-holders to official stations in the church under such circumstances—and yet the bishops habitually, and unscrupulously, it is said, confer the sacred office of deacons and of elders upon slave-holders in the states of Delaware and Maryland! And is this the fidelity they show in "ordaining, sending, or laying hands upon others, *by the help of God?*"

But their history and course of action in respect to slave-holding *travelling* preachers, is after all the most astounding. The Discipline says,—“When any travelling preacher becomes the owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character

in our church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives." And now let us see what the *facts* are with regard to travelling preachers' holding slaves in the border conferences, and *what course* the bishops are accustomed to pursue in relation to them. We are told, on good authority, that a member of the Philadelphia Conference at the late annual session of that body, openly announced upon the floor of the conference that he was a slave-holder; and that his character passed without objection. It was understood also by the conference that his was not a solitary case, but that a number of his brethren were guilty of the same thing; and yet the conference, though urged by some of its members to inquire into the matter, refused, the bishop of course consenting, to do anything about it! Of course slave-holding is now freely tolerated in the Philadelphia Conference; and no preacher, notwithstanding the prohibition of the Discipline in such cases, is to be called to an account for the abominable practice.

"O, but the Discipline only requires of travelling preachers who may become owners of slaves, that they shall emancipate them where it is *practicable*, or where the laws of the state in which they live allow it to be done." All very true. But are there any laws which render the emancipation of slaves impracticable within the bounds of the Philadelphia Conference? The conference itself has never set up any such pretension, if we except a few circuits in the state of Virginia; and accordingly, like the old Baltimore Conference who expelled Harding, a member of their body, for holding slaves, there being no law in the way of emancipation,

they have from the beginning professed themselves bound to exclude all slave-holding from the travelling ministry. It would seem, however, that for some years past they have not lived up to their profession; though they have studiously kept all this from the anti-slavery North, and now appear greatly disturbed with the disclosure of the facts in the case which the Rev. J. D. Long and some others have felt themselves called upon to make.

“But what have the bishops to do with all this? They are not the conference, and why lug them into the question of conference slave-holding?” Why, we had supposed that their connection with the conference as presiding officers, whose business it is to inquire into the character of the preachers, ordain them to the sacred office, and appoint them to their respective fields of labor, must have a good deal to do with it; and we think a few reflections upon the subject will make it manifest to all that they are very far from being without any responsibility in the premises. We have already shown from the Discipline, that they are required to *surcease* or refrain from ordaining those who are guilty of the crime of slave-holding, except they have been ordained before the commission of such crime; and in any event, whether ordained or unordained, to call them before a committee and “suspend them from all ministerial services and church privileges until the ensuing annual conference,” or to see it done by the presiding elder. And have they done this? We have never heard of their doing any such thing. And from the course pursued by the president of the late Philadelphia Conference in relation to the question of slave-

ry, we should infer that nothing was farther from their thoughts: for when it was moved to inquire of members of the conference, and of candidates for admission among them, who were suspected of the crime of slave-holding, whether they were connected with the evil in any way, and he was appealed to by certain pro-slavery members whether the motion were in order; he even ridiculed the idea, remarking in a manner sufficiently undignified we should think,—“Suppose as the name of each brother is called, some brother should arise and ask, do you wash your face every morning?” attaching to the enormous crime of slave-holding by travelling preachers, forbidden though it is by the Discipline of the church which he has promised to administer, as well as by the word of God, no more importance than to the washing of your face! Perhaps a few more such exhibitions and disclosures will suffice to satisfy the church of the necessity of teaching her general superintendents by the limitation of their term of office, of which we shall speak more at length hereafter, how to respect her authority, and carry out the provisions of the Discipline, as well in regard to the *subject of slavery* as to any other subject.

The rumors and suspicions of the holding of slaves in the border conferences by travelling preachers which have existed with accumulating credibility for a few years past, are at length confirmed in relation to the Philadelphia Conference by indubitable testimony; and who is prepared to say that Baltimore, and other border conferences are not equally involved in this seven-fold abomination? There may be many among the preachers belonging to all these conferences who

claim the ownership of human chattels, and make their investments in slave property, falsely so called, unknown to us. Things are kept so much in the dark on this subject by the slave-holding Border and their sympathisers, that we cannot pretend to say what the facts in the case may be. The truth is, they have forfeited our confidence by their prevarication, their duplicity, their shuffling, intriguing, clandestine management in staving off anti-slavery legislation upon the floor of the General Conference, and perpetuating "the sum of all villainies" in the bosom of the church. They have pretended that they would gladly emancipate their slaves if it were not for the laws, when there were no laws in their way—that they do not allow themselves to engage in the slave traffic, when it is demonstrated that they do it the same as other slave-holders—and that there is little or no mercenary slave-holding among them, when they have failed to instance a solitary case in all their history where slaves were held for any other than mercenary purposes; and we cannot depend on anything they say upon the subject. Whether they are so blinded by interest, or misled and deceived by other considerations as to be incapable of telling the truth on the subject of their abominable connection with slavery, or whether they feel that a criminal is no more bound by the *moral* than by the *civil* law to convict himself, and are disposed to avail themselves of such indemnity for the covering up of their wickedness, it may not belong to our province to judge; but from *some* cause *the truth is not told*, and we cannot depend upon anything they say on the subject.

Nor do we think that the bishops would be *any*

less likely to refrain from the suspension of slave-holding travelling preachers, should there be scores of them in the connection, than from the ordination of slave-holding local preachers; the *one* being no more a violation of the Discipline, and of their oath of office, if we may so express it, than the *other*. Men who could seek to cover "the sum of all villanies" at Indianapolis by the constitution of the church which forbids "the evil of slavery" in forbidding "evil of every kind," could easily cover their own delinquency in either or both of these cases by the same authority! If the bishops really believed there was little or no mercenary slave-holding in the border conferences, as they represented in their late quadrennial address, and that all the slavery now existing is so fine a thing for the slave; why do they not set themselves to relieve our minds upon the subject, and heal the agitations by which the church is so dreadfully convulsed, and the humane and benevolent efforts of the border conferences for the amelioration of the condition of the slave by holding him in bondage are so greatly hindered? It would certainly be a noble work, and they are surely equal to the undertaking, if they have truth on their side. Why, then, do they visit us from year to year—a large and respectable portion of their charge as we are—enjoy our hospitalities, preside in our conferences, mingle in our family, our social, and our religious circles on terms of mutual intercourse and friendship; and yet leave us in our delusion upon a subject of such vital importance to the interests of the whole church? Does not their usual taciturnity upon the subject of church-slave-holding along the border, betray *something more* than a *suspicion* in their minds

of its atrocious wickedness? And do they not pursue precisely that policy in regard to this matter which might be expected of men who were acting under restraint from some cause that prevented the open and undisguised avowal of their real sentiments? Nay, is it not apparent from the equivocal, indirect, and hesitating course which they have in general pursued with respect to slavery, that they cannot in conscience say anything in favor of it; except it be a poor, lame, half-way apology, just to pacify the Border; and that they *dare* not say anything against it, lest they should offend Cæsar?

We look upon the whole proceedings of slave-holding Methodists, and their apologists, whether they be bishops or any other characters, in relation to church-slavery, with unmitigated suspicion; and shall continue to do so, whatever they may think about it, till they shall lift the curtain of secrecy, and show us, by a full and complete table of statistics, impartially made up, that their representation of the matter is sustained by facts. They have always had it in their power to disabuse the public mind, if their positions have been misunderstood, and to free themselves from all suspicion in the premises; and their own character, as well as the character and peace of the church, requires it at their hands. *This* we demand of them; as the least they can be expected to do; and will never cease our agitation of the subject—never cease to look upon them with suspicion, and the more so, the more unwillingness they manifest to comply with our demand—or to charge upon them the wickedness of maintaining the foulest despotism that ever cursed mankind, till they do it.

In regard to the *oversight* the bishops are to take of

the church by virtue of their office, we should be glad to think it had been duly and faithfully exercised in relation to the subject of slavery within our bounds; but we fear there has been a lamentable delinquency in this respect. The Discipline declares that "no slave-holder shall be eligible to any official station in the church, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom;" and yet Mr. Long says, that "one half of all the official members of the M. E. Church on many of the circuits within the bounds of the Philadelphia Conference, the law interposing no barrier to emancipation, are slave-holders." And what is the oversight the bishops take in relation to this matter? How do they treat the subject as the "overseers of the spiritual and temporal business of the church?" Do they remonstrate against so palpable a breach of the rules of the Discipline in their pastoral supervision of that portion of the field of their oversight infected with this evil? Do they interrogate or reprove the preachers who are guilty of this breach of our rules—the promoting slave-holders to official stations in the church—in the annual examination of character before the conference, which it is their business to conduct? Have they ever been known in their examination of candidates for full connection, or in the solemn charge they have delivered to these candidates at the altar upon the subject of the duties of their sacred calling, to instruct them "not to mend our rules, but keep them" *in this respect*, "for conscience sake?" We should be glad for the credit of the bishops, and of the church over which they preside, to think they had attended to this important duty. But, we are sorry to say, there is too much

evidence to the contrary. One would think it a fine opportunity to impress upon the minds of young preachers about to be invested with the full powers of the ministry the importance of carrying out our rules in respect to *slavery*, especially as these are of a *moral character*. And it would seem that the bishops, who are in the habit of expatiating largely in their address to candidates upon *other* rules of this description, must feel the awful responsibility of endeavoring to instill it into their minds, and to impress it upon their hearts, on such an occasion, that the rules against slavery, particularly at a time when the evil is prevailing at such an alarming degree, are of all others to be "*kept* and not *mended*, for conscience sake."

But we have often been told that no such thing ever takes place in the border conferences; and it is the testimony of the Rev. Mr. Long, who has both witnessed these examinations and charges in respect to candidates, and himself been a subject of them in the Philadelphia Conference, where the evil complained of exists, that "a dead silence is observed by the bishops in reference to slavery" on these occasions; and under this kind of episcopal oversight, and as a necessary fruit of it, "the members have grown up with the impression that men and women made of the same blood with themselves, are their property in the same sense that a horse or a mule or a cow is." And what kind of oversight for a Methodist bishop must that be which produces such an impression upon our people of the border? How does it comport with the Discipline which requires the bishops to "correct and punish the disobedient and criminal according to such authority as they have by

God's word," and as is committed unto them under the most solemn engagement on their part that they "will so do by the help of God?"

If the bishops were disposed to root out "the evil of slavery" in the border conferences, they could soon do it. They could have done it long ago, had they tried, for the decision of the question has long hung upon their shoulders. The preachers having promised at their ordination to "follow with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions, submitting themselves to their godly judgments," and regarding them with the profoundest veneration and respect, would have executed the rules against slavery, had they advised it, in obedience to their counsel. But alas! These "godly admonitions and judgments" of the episcopacy, instead of leading the preachers of the border conferences to execute the General Rule which forbids "the evil of slavery" in forbidding "evil of every kind," or even the rule in the chapter on slavery which excludes all slave-holders from "any official station in the church where the emancipated slave may enjoy his freedom," as in Delaware and Maryland, have some how been understood—aye, these "godly admonitions and judgments" of the episcopacy, instead of leading the border preachers to "keep our rules" on slavery, as they have all promised to do, in promising to "keep all our rules"—have some how been understood to enjoin upon them the obligation to "cease all agitation of the subject, and let it entirely alone." And who are in fault with respect to this understanding of the case—the bishops, or the preachers? To this interrogation there can be but one answer. Everybody knows the bishops are responsible for the un-

derstanding and practice of the preachers in regard to the subject of slavery; and if any one can persuade himself that they care one straw about the Discipline where it interferes at all with that horrid evil, he can do what there seems nothing to justify or warrant in the circumstances of the case.

“But the bishops,” it is said, “have no power to interfere with slavery. That any interference with it on their part would be unconstitutional; and would result in great mischief, both to the church, and to the slaves also, whom she holds in bondage for their own benefit.” But they have power to interpose “their godly admonitions and judgments,” it would seem, for the suppression of all agitation of the subject—power to conjure up the bug-bear of a constitutional difficulty, or extra-judicial decision of the case, as at Indianapolis—for the protection of “the sum of all villainies” from any anti-slavery action of the General Conference. All this they have power to do. And we are told they have power to ask the candidate for admission into a border conference, “whether he is an abolitionist?” Not whether he holds slaves, or promotes slave holders to official stations in the church, in palpable violation of the plain letter of the Discipline; but “whether he is an abolitionist,” making that a bar to admission of any one into the conference as an itinerant christian minister, which God and the Discipline require at his hands.

And are we to understand then that the constitution and laws of the church are all on the side of slavery; and that our lips are to be sealed up in eternal silence, except only to applaud or defend the accursed institu-

tion? Has it come to this, that while the bishops have no power to inquire of one about to be admitted into the conference, whether he is a slave-holder, or to "surcease from ordaining him if found guilty of that crime until he is clear of it," they are still authorized by the constitution of the church to debar all those from admission into the conference, or the right of ordination, who are devoted to the cause of abolitionism—the cause of "the extirpation of slavery"—which both the Discipline and the Bible inculcate as a great moral duty?

We are aware that the administration of the general government of our country has proceeded upon the principle, especially of late, that the *will of the slave-holding South* constitutes the supreme law of the land; and that all our movements, whether legislative, executive, or judicial, are to be controlled by that law. But we had hoped that the *church* would recognize, not only in the Holy Scriptures, but in her own excellent Discipline also, "a *higher law*" than that of the will of a miserable set of slave-holders; yet we find, to our very great mortification and sorrow, that there is a most striking parallel, in many respects, between the administration of the church and that of the state. The *one* would seem to have been copied from the *other*, or both to have sprung from a *common source* of tyranny and corruption. We could not tell, if we were to attempt to trace the administration of the one to that of the other, which was the *original*, and which the copy. The truth seems to be, that the state, having commenced this line of policy and taken the lead in the matter, has been greatly encouraged and strengthened in their course by the fawning, cringing, lick-spittle co-operation of the

church. But however all this may be, there is a striking similarity between the church and the state in respect to their detestable subserviency to the slave-power.

In our degenerate and corrupt country, the supreme executive, it would seem, has no power to interfere with the slave oligarchy, do what they may. No power to resist their usurpations of all rule and authority, or their encroachments upon the rights and liberties of the people whom they are accustomed to trample under foot with lordly insolence—no power to repel their unlawful and border ruffian invasion of the territory of Kansas for the avowed purpose of crushing out the liberty existing there, and of establishing a slave-holding despotism in that beautiful region of the great west—no power to head off or break up their fillibustering expeditions against Nicaragua in violation of international law so binding upon us, and our own neutrality laws which have long existed ; but at the same time has power all sufficient, and power too, if we may believe His Excellency, guaranteed by the constitution and laws of the land to dispense the funds of the national treasury and the numerous offices in his gift to a gang of black-legs and cut-throats who are ready to co-operate with him in his treasonable efforts to overthrow our free institutions, annihilate the sovereignty of the states, and establish a consolidated federal Government upon its ruins—power to encourage and foster the abominable schemes of slavery propagandism by treaty stipulations, the purchase of slave-territory at the expense of the free states of the Union, or the sending forth and sustaining fillibustering movements wherever there is an opening, as best suits the oligarchy whose tool he is—and power to put in re-

quisition all the Federal troops at his disposal to inaugurate and sustain a bogus government, a foul usurpation, a miserable slave-holding despotism upon soil which had been consecrated to freedom by the most solemn compromise between the two great sections of the government; and to hunt down and shoot or stab or torture every free state citizen who dare to lift his finger against a border ruffian, *even in his own defence!*

And what great difference is there between the church and the state in relation to this matter? Who does not see the parallel between them in the animus and drift of their movements in almost every particular? Does the President take sides with the slave-oligarchy in all questions of dispute between the north and the south, affording them all the aid and comfort to be derived from his influence, counsel and government patronage? And what less can we say of the episcopacy? What hope of place or position is there from *either*, except with pro-slavery candidates, or such as are expected to be won over by promotion? In the absence of extreme outside pressure, or the necessity of an occasional show of impartiality, what promotion can any one look for at their hands, unless it is to be placed at the tail end of some unimportant committee, where they are sure to be overruled by a pro-slavery majority? Does the President labor to nationalize and maintain slavery by the sophistry and special pleading of his messages, his pro-slavery construction of the constitution and laws, and his patronage and supervision of the administration press? And who that looks at the quadrennial address of the bishops in 1856, the construction they put upon the constitution of the church with respect to slavery,

and the detestable catering of their official organ—the Advocate and Journal—to the slave-power, can fail to perceive a parallel, more or less striking, in relation to all these points? Are the representatives of the free states in the general government, though constituting a large majority in Congress, always overcome by the southern members who never fail to carry their measures upon the floor of the Capitol of the nation by artifice and cabal, and the facilities thrown into their hands by the executive? And wherein does the parallel fail between the church and the state—between the ecclesiastical and civil proceedings of the two governments—upon the subject of slavery, in any of these features of their administration?

If the bishops imagine they can shirk the responsibility of their office, or disregard the solemn duties it devolves upon them in relation to slavery, out of deference to the slave-power, as they evidently have done hitherto, they will probably find ere long that there is a *north* as well as a south to be consulted upon the subject of their administration. We have reached a crisis in our history, and feel we are in imminent danger, chiefly by their means. The “Haman” of slavery—the prime minister or genius of a fouler despotism than that of Ahasuerus—has conspired against our liberties, and our christian character and usefulness, if not against our very existence as a christian church; “and who knoweth whether they are come to the kingdom [the episcopacy] for such a time as this?” Should they shrink from the presence of the haughty despot—the tyrannical slave-power—or refuse to avail themselves of their high and influential position for the rescue of the

church from the threatened calamity, as in duty bound, "then shall enlargement and deliverance arise to her from another place;" and our people shall be freed from the curse of slavery, not through their influence, but *in spite* of it, and at their expense! They have been elected to the episcopacy, as they very well know, especially the last four of them, upon the anti-slavery issue; and yet, like most state officials elected upon the same ground, they have gone over to the slave-power. That they do not avowedly espouse the pro-slavery cause does not mend the matter: they that are "not *for* us, are *against* us:" and their *silence* upon the subject, even in the absence of the other and more unequivocal evidences of their southern proclivities which have but too often transpired, would sufficiently identify them with the slave-holding border. And how can we of the anti-slavery north put up with it? How can we endure that our general superintendents, sustaining as they do the same relation to the whole church, north and south, and belonging equally to all the conferences and other local institutions of the connection, should take on a *sectional character*, and side, on questions affecting the entire body of our people, with the border conferences? We feel that in betraying our cause—the cause of anti-slaveryism—to which they were committed by the understanding on which they were elected to the episcopacy, they have betrayed our confidence; and we can but be grieved, nay, offended with them. Still, ascribing their dereliction of duty to the circumstances in which they have been placed, more than to their want of integrity, we sympathise with them nevertheless; and feel it obligatory upon us to endeavor to relieve them of a

difficulty which has been the occasion of the errors into which they have fallen on this subject.

The remedy we propose in the premises, is the adoption of such change or modification of the episcopal office as shall reduce its responsibilities to the level of the capacity of the incumbent, and create a preponderance of motive in favor of an upright and consistent administration of its functions. Under this head we shall consider two points: the cancelling of the form of episcopal ordination, and a quadrennial rotation of office. We do not account the form of ordination with respect to the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church of any great importance, in itself considered; and yet there are some reasons arising from the laws of association, and the long established customs of society, why it should be abolished.

In the first place we look upon the question in the ordination service,—“Are you persuaded that you are called to this ministration, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ,” and the answer,—“I am so persuaded,” as a solemn farce. The idea of a special divine call, as the language here evidently implies, to a mere office in the church, goes to identify it, or at least to make it of equal obligation and importance with a call to the ministry itself, which seems to us preposterous. According to this doctrine, if any one deem that he is called to the episcopacy by the spirit, or “will of our Lord Jesus Christ,” he can but say, “woe is me if I” become not a bishop; and what if half the preachers in the connection should profess to have such a call, by what criterion should we discriminate between them? for they could not all be admitted to the office. Doubt-

less we are all called to the episcopacy, just as we are called to any other office in the church, whenever we are appointed to fill it by the suffrages of our brethren.

Secondly, it appears to us that the question and answer above referred to, are equally applicable to any other officer of the General Conference; and that the book agents, editors, secretaries, and the like, may just as well be inducted into their respective offices by corresponding forms of ordination, as a bishop. The *ordaining* of a bishop can add nothing to his spiritual character—nothing to his influence or authority as a christian minister—for he is admitted to the full powers of the ministry, and invested with the highest authority known to the Scriptures for the administration of the word and ordinances, by his ordination as an *elder* or *presbyter*; and to set him apart by the form of ordination for the mere *official* duties of the episcopacy, would seem a desecration of this sacred rite.

But the chief reason why the form of episcopal ordination should be abolished, is, that it inculcates a distinction of *order* in the ministry which does not exist; our bishops being *officers merely*, and *not* a distinct *order*, as the form of ordination would seem to imply. And being false and delusive in *appearance*, it is misleading and pernicious in its *effects*. The historical and familiar associations of this rite, forever pointing us to an order of ministers which neither the Scriptures nor the Discipline of our church recognizes, the effect is to invest the bishops with a sanctity of character, and give them an elevation and popularity in respect to other ministers of the same order with themselves, which their office does not confer upon them. Perhaps we

might come in time to associate the rite of ordination with a mere office in the church ; but if there is any reliance to be placed upon the evidence of history, or the results of our own personal acquaintance with human nature, the tendencies will be found to operate in another direction ; and the distinction which is accorded to them from motives of *courtesy* or *respect* by the use of the form of ordination, will both be *claimed* and *conceded* in process of time, *as a matter of right* ; and then the consequences so natural to an undue accumulation of power in the hands of a ruler must be expected to follow !

We well remember the no very unequivocal pretensions to prelatical authority, *jure divino*, which were set up by Bishop Soule and others in the examination of the case of Bishop Andrew in 1844, and the insuperable obstacle they interposed to an equitable and proper disposition of the case by the General Conference. Not only did the delegates from the south, whose training and habits amid the tyrannies of slavery had prepared them for the establishment of an ecclesiastical despotism, squint most significantly in this direction ; but, humiliating as it was, there were not wanting those on this side of the slave line, particularly along the border, who clearly sympathised with a doctrine so congenial with their southern aspirations and proclivities.

Nor have we forgotten the pertinacity with which this same class opposed the resignation of Bishop Hamline in 1852, lest their high notions of episcopal pre-eminence should be damaged by so noble and timely an illustration of the true and proper idea of Methodist episcopacy. They deprecated an example which implied that Metho-

dist episcopacy was but an *office* in the church—an example which they feared would be made use of and pleaded as a precedent against the usurpation of prelati- cal authority to which they aspired. Ashamed of their real object, as is the case with all tyrants, or afraid that a premature disclosure of it might operate to defeat them in their tyrannical designs, they *pretended* to op- pose the resignation of the bishop, or to urge it upon the General Conference to decline the acceptance of it, out of respect and friendship for his person ; though he had most earnestly appealed to these very considerations and feelings in the bosoms of the members of the confer- ence to allow him to resign his office.

The truth is, they are in league with the accursed slave-power ; and are laboring, in connection with the Church South, to establish and build up a national church—an irresponsible, overgrown, Methodist hier- archy—to be governed by a bishop, or primate, hold- ing his title and authority by divine right, and control- ling all church affairs, church-slavery and all, according to his own will ! Such, at least, are the tendencies of the policy now inaugurated among us by the slave-pow- er ; and such, if there be no limitation or check inter- posed, will be the result ! And there needs no prophetic inspiration or skill to foresee that the bishops, already sufficiently imbued with the spirit and sentiments of a slave-holding despotism, will probably not be long in persuading themselves of their claim, as well by the con- stitution and laws of the church, as by the authority of Scripture, to be regarded as a third and superior order of the ministry ; and, taking advantage of their usur- pation, contrive to deprive us of the liberty of speech

and of the press, thereby putting it out of our power to say or do anything "for the extirpation of the great evil of slavery."

We would not be understood that our bishops are now prepared for all this. And doubtless they would indignantly reply, if it should be intimated that they would *ever* come to it,—“Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?” But how much farther are they from it than Haziël from taking the life of the king of Syria, and usurping his throne, when, the prophet Elisha having declared to him that he would be guilty of all this wickedness, he vindicated himself from the imputation in the language above quoted? They who can justify and defend the oppressor, can themselves oppress; and they who can oppress *one* class of their fellow-creatures, can oppress *another*. And we insist upon it that a bishop of our church who can approve and fellowship slave-holders, by recognizing and treating them as members of the church in good standing, laying hands upon them in ordination, or uniting with them in the ministrations of the pulpit, the altar, the platform, as our bishops are in the habit of doing with the bishops and preachers of the Church South, are not a whit too good to usurp and exercise despotic power, if it could be done in accordance with popular sentiment, or there were no more resistance to be overcome than in robbing the poor defenceless African of his liberty and of his earnings.

Our bishops, it should be kept in mind, are but men. They have some time since entered upon the career of prelatical ambition and monopoly, by constituting themselves an independent tribunal for the decision of

law questions, and the correction of errors of administration, in the intervals of the annual conference; by assuming the prerogative, as the fountain of all executive power, to supersede the authority of all the inferior classes of the ministry by their presence; and by the practical nullification and disregard of the common law of the church, which requires them to consult their cabinet in the formation and manning of the districts. And what are we to look for next? What is to be the end of these things? "The prudent man foreseeth evil, and hideth himself." And if we would do this, as a church—if we would prevent the consummation of a scheme of episcopal ambition and tyranny which all history admonishes us will be sure to result from causes now in active operation among us—a scheme which is fast developing itself in the assumption of powers and prerogatives unwarranted by the constitution of the church—it is important that we abolish the form of episcopal ordination, in which all the elements of high-church episcopacy, nay, of *poper*y even, are perceived to lurk!

The other leading point to be considered in respect to the modification of the episcopacy, consists in a quadrennial rotation. This point, as it is far more practical in its nature and application, so is it of far greater importance to the integrity and liberties of the church than the foregoing. The form of ordination of bishops, and their perpetuity in office, both tending to the same pernicious end, the *latter* is altogether more to be deprecated and *feared* than the *former*. The *one*, investing the bishops with prelatical authority, the true import of the rite being understood, and placing them in a condition to be arbitrary or despotic in their administration;

the *other*, involving both a license and a temptation to exercise all the power implied in the form of ordination without limitation or restraint.

We have no desire to "do away episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency." We have always esteemed the episcopal form of church government the most Scriptural and appropriate; and have felt that the mighty machinery of the itinerant system belonging to our church could only be kept in operation and properly directed by a motive power of equal extent and efficiency with that now lodged in the hands of the bishops. But we cannot identify the *perpetuity* or the *efficiency* of the *office* with the *perpetual incumbency* of the *officer*. Much less can we make the *existence* of the office depend upon such incumbency. We believe that the office might not only *exist* upon the principle of rotation, but that it would possess *still greater efficiency* for all the legitimate purposes of its institution on that principle.

In a late number of the Advocate and Journal, a Philadelphia correspondent of that pro-slavery sheet takes huge exceptions to the idea of episcopal rotation; raising the usual cry of the party in such cases, of "unconstitutional, violation of the restrictive rules," and the like; but utterly fails to justify the bug-bear note of alarm by even the shadow of an argument. And another correspondent from the same slave-breeding conference, whom the Advocate seems most heartily to endorse, would have the bishops usurp the authority at once to arrest any action of the General Conference which they might deem unconstitutional, that is, any action which might look towards "the extirpation of the great evil of

slavery," until the annual conferences should have an opportunity to pronounce upon it. By this measure, the boldest perhaps which the pro-slavery border dare venture upon at present, they hope at least to stave off any anti-slavery action the General Conference may propose to take till they can have time to prepare for some other dodge. We are not at all surprised, in view of their past history, at their tyrannical contrivance in relation to this matter, nor are we disappointed that "the great official"—that miserable mouth-piece of the slave-power—should deprecate a change in the episcopacy which should go to correct its despotic leanings, and render it so available for the promotion of "pure and undefiled religion," and especially the cause of the extirpation of church-slavery. The bishops now in office, being already committed to the interests of the slave-power, and all who might be appointed to succeed them under the present regimen affecting their case, must be expected to be preferred by the slave oligarchy to a class of incumbents who should be taught to respect the voice of the anti-slavery majority of the church and ministry, and the article of the constitution which forbids "the evil of slavery," in forbidding "evil of every kind," by owing their place and authority to *the suffrages of a quadrennial election*.

It has now come to pass that the great body of the people, both in church and state, are a "factious majority"—a vulgar herd—to be domineered over, and ruled, by a handful of slave-holders; and to establish this order of things upon a permanent foundation, the work of centralization must be carried forward until it has culminated in an absolute and complete despotism. The

federal government must swallow up the states of the union ; and the bishops, in the assumed character of a supreme ecclesiastical judiciary, must pass upon the constitutionality of the acts and doings of the General Conference ! By this means, the slave-power would be able to decide, using the obsequious bishops, as they have used the Supreme Court of the United States, that the proposed modification of the episcopacy would be *unconstitutional—a violation of the restrictive rules of the Discipline*—and so defeat the measure. That such a modification of the episcopal office would “do away” that *feature* of it on which the slave-power so much rely for co-operation and support, we have no doubt ; but we have yet to be convinced that it would at all affect the *existence*, or the *integrity* even, of the office. The idea that to *limit* the term of office of the bishops, or to place it on the ground of a quadrennial election, would be to “do it away,” in violation of the restrictive rule, or to “destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency,” as the pro-slavery border pretend, is all moon-shine. The *office* does not depend upon the *officer* ; much less upon the mere *accident* of his holding his office for life. Both the *one* and the *other* are derived from the great body of the ministry, who have power to dispose of them as they please—office, officer and all. They can *modify* the office to *any extent*, short of “doing it away,” by their representatives in General Conference assembled ; and by the concurrent vote of two-thirds of the General Conference, and three-fourths of the members of all the annual conferences, they can even “do it away, or destroy it” altogether. The constitution of the church, having invested

the general and annual conferences with this power in respect to the episcopacy, what authority have the bishops to veto, arrest, or in any way nullify their acts and doings? The very conception is treason against the government of the church—a dark and devilish usurpation—which the factious, treasonable, slave-holding border and their New York agent are putting them up to, as their last hope for the preservation and defence of “the sum of all villainies.” The Advocate and Journal, however, is fully committed to this horrible usurpation on the part of the bishops; having lately admitted to its columns, without a word of dissent, an article from a leading member of the Philadelphia Conference in which it is set forth and urged as a *constitutional* and *necessary* measure!

But the *modification* of the episcopal office, and the “doing it away,” are *distinctly two things*, and never to be identified with each other. The *former* lies wholly within the jurisdiction or province of the General Conference. And though the bishops may transcend their prerogatives, as at Indianapolis, and pronounce any interference with it on the part of the General Conference “*unconstitutional* ;” we hope that venerable body, awake to their supremacy and their duty, will pass a law by which the incumbents of the episcopacy shall be regularly changed every four years, leaving them eligible to a re-election for a second term *only* at the discretion of the General Conference. All this would be but a *modification* of the episcopacy which the General Conference have full power to ordain or provide for by their own independent action. Nor have the bishops any right to interfere with their doings. They may not

even *debate* a question upon the General Conference floor; much less *vote* upon it. They are the mere *chairmen* of the body; whose only business is, to preside in the conference and decide questions of order. And though custom requires that they present an address to the conference at the opening of the session, involving a general review or history of the state of the church during the preceding quadrennial term, and recommending to their consideration such matters as in their judgment demands General Conference action: yet to take advantage of the occasion to attempt to sway the judgment, and control the action of the conference by their special pleadings, as at the last General Conference, is a gross violation of the courtesy extended to them, and infinitely beneath the dignity of their station. It reminds one of the low and contemptible pettifoggery of the President of the United States in his message accompanying the transmission of the Lecompton constitution to Congress; and we are not sure it may not have been regarded as a precedent, worthy of being followed in the vindication of the same dirty cause which called it forth.

But whatever the proposed quadrennial rotation may be, whether modification, or something else, it is difficult to perceive why a *quadrennial* rotation should come into conflict with the restrictive rule which forbids the doing away of the episcopacy by the General Conference, any more than the rotation which follows upon the death of the incumbent—a rotation which has always been practiced among us. There is *rotation* in *both* cases; and of course it is not in rotation, in itself considered, to “do away episcopacy,” else it would have

been done away long ago; for we have had *rotation* among us from the beginning. And if there be a *difference* between the quadrennial rotation we propose to establish, and that which now exists, it is all in *favor* of episcopacy—in favor of its *continued* and *efficient* existence—as the following comparative view will sufficiently show:—In the *one* case, the change can only be effected upon the death of the incumbent, who may long have been useless, perhaps a burden and a trial to the church; while in the *other*, it can be brought about at the discretion of the General Conference, at least within the period of four years, as the interests of the church may require. And who does not see that the quadrennial rotation for which we contend, having all this difference in its favor, and constituting an effectual and much needed check upon episcopal aspirations and encroachments, is far more consistent both with the *integrity* and the *efficient administration* of the episcopal office, than a life-time incumbency?

It may be regarded as one of the least of the many arguments in favor of the proposed episcopal rotation, and yet of sufficient weight to evince its superiority over the present plan, that the continued incumbency of the office by the same individuals during their natural life, is *unnecessary*. We happily have always a score or two of able, judicious ministers among us—men of equal piety, zeal, and wisdom with those who have at any time filled the episcopal office—to take the oversight of the church as her general superintendents; and the increased chance of their being elected to that station upon the rotation scheme, would doubtless have the effect to stimulate them to greater effort for the improve-

ment of their hearts and minds, that they might be the better prepared and qualified for the discharge of its high and responsible duties, should they ever be called to it.

Again, should a bishop prove to be unacceptable upon his promotion to office, or become so at any subsequent period, a very possible case, he might be replaced upon the rotation principle by one more eligible to the situation, and the church relieved of the incumbrance of an officer she must otherwise endure at a great expense of funds and feeling, with very little difficulty or delay. Happy would it have been for the Protestant Episcopal Church in by-gone years, and especially in the case of the incumbents of the see of New York and of New Jersey, a short time since, could she have exchanged her *jure divino* episcopacy—her “*once a bishop, always a bishop*” dogma—for an episcopal *office* merely, which might have been vacated and filled upon the principle of a *quadrennial* or *temporary* rotation, at the discretion of the church. It is true, the tenure by which our bishops hold their place is not exactly the same with that by which the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church hold theirs; but the difference is so little with respect to any *practical* purpose, that the necessity of the adoption of the quadrennial scheme in place of the one now in vogue arising from this consideration, is most apparent. *We*, as well as *they*, may *have* bishops we *don't want*, and *want* bishops we *can't get*, upon the ground of the perpetuity in office by which we are both trammelled.

Another and still greater reason for the adoption of the proposed rotation scheme is, that it is required by

the analogies of *Methodism*. The perpetual incumbency of office by the bishops, constitutes a strange anomaly in the history and government of the church; there being nothing analogous to it in any part of our system. In the British connection, of which we are the offspring or descendants, the chief office among them—an episcopacy in *fact*, though not in *form*—is not only filled by rotation, but by *annual* rotation even; and had not Mr. Wesley been accustomed to associate perpetuity in office with the episcopacy at home, it is highly probable that in establishing the episcopal form of government here—a form he greatly preferred to any other, and felt himself at full liberty to prescribe for the Methodist societies in this country, they having no connection with any national church—he would have provided for a succession of bishops in the order, and upon the principle of a *temporary* and settled rotation. But be that as it may, we still maintain that the incumbency of an office, and especially the office of a bishop, limited only by the natural life of the incumbent, not only falls out with all the analogies of the Methodist system; but creates an invidious and repulsive distinction, placing it in the hands of a half-a-dozen officials, intended to be the servants of the church, to “lord it over God’s heritage,” and to oppress the great body of the ministry from whom they derive both their office and their authority, with entire impunity!

But of all the reasons for placing the episcopacy upon the basis of a quadrennial rotation, the greatest, and that which crowns the climax, is, that it furnishes the only adequate check upon episcopal ambition and misrule. Irresponsible power in the hands of fallen man,

except where it is restrained and modified by parental affection, always degenerates into despotism; and the creation of an officer for life, at all events if he be of the rank and authority of a bishop of our church, is virtually to render him independent of the people he is appointed to serve, and to invest him with the attributes and prerogatives of a tyrant. If Paul, and Wesley, and Asbury, were upright and lenient in their administration and government of the church, consulting the rights and interests of the people in all their transactions and doings, that furnishes no exception to the doctrine here advanced: their *people* were their *children*; and consequently the government they exercised over them, was the government of *fathers* rather than of ecclesiastical rulers. The case with respect to our bishops is very different. They sustain no such relation to the people over whom they preside, and cannot be expected to possess those affections and sympathies which necessarily grow out of it. If St. Paul could say to the church in his time,—“though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers,” how much more we of this day. Indeed there are *none*, “since the fathers” to whom we have referred “are fallen asleep,” who can add in the further language of the apostle,—“For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.” Even our bishops are but “*instructors* in Christ,” and not fathers in the same sense with Asbury and Wesley and Paul, who had “travelled in birth” for the people they so tenderly watched over and provided for as their spiritual children.

Absolute authority is only safe when associated with the relation of parent and child. And hence in the ar-

rangements of Divine Providence, it has only been confided to those who *naturally* or *spiritually* sustained that relation. In the early ages of the world, when the entire human race consisted of a few simple families only, the patriarchal or paternal form of government alone existed; the head of the family being invested with supreme authority, and only amenable to the common Father of all for the manner in which he fulfilled his trust. But when these independent family groups—these little monarchies of primitive times—became expanded into nations by the multiplication and progress of society; a more popular form of government, guarded by various limitations and restrictions adapting it to the altered state of society, was introduced. In no state of society except where the family relation, and the affection growing out of it exist, can there be irresponsible authority without despotism. And as all authority, whether civil or ecclesiastical, when conferred upon a chief ruler or functionary without limitation of time, is irresponsible; therefore the authority of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, being conferred and held upon this tenure, is irresponsible and despotic. It is true, we do not formally recognize the doctrine of an unbroken apostolical succession in respect to the external authority and constitution of the ministry, or the existence and power of a *jure divino* episcopacy, in the manner of the Church of Rome and other kindred churches; yet, our present economy, involving, as it does, the distinct ordination of the bishops for a special service—a work above that of any other grade of the ministry—and their election to the episcopal office for life, in contradistinction from all other church officers, virtually comes to the

same thing. A little more episcopal usurpation, prompted by the slave-holding border, who feel the need of an arbitrary head to protect them against the anti-slavery movement, and justified and defended by "the legal interpretations and judicial decisions" of the Advocate and Journal which has already proclaimed its ghostly ukase in favor of the constitutionality of "the sum of all villainies;" and the despotism of Rome will have seized upon us, extinguishing the last vestige of the liberty of speech and of the press, and subjecting us as completely to the domination of the slave-power as the thousands of degraded Africans within our pale who now cringe and quake and supplicate in their lordly presence!

We shall now assume the position, no less startling than novel, it may be, and think we shall be able to establish it, that in the present state of society, taking human nature as it is, and judging of things in the light of past history and the current of recent events, the *deposition* of a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church is *morally impossible*. We know the opinion has been entertained that our bishops could not only be deposed from their office, but expelled from the connection even, with little or no difficulty; but none, it is presumed, who entertain this opinion, have estimated the vast difference there is, in *some states of society*, between the *nature* and *design* of a law, and the *manner* of its administration. A *bad law* may co-exist with a *good administration*, and a *bad administration*, with a *good law*. In our case, they are *both* bad. The law itself is bad, and the administration still worse; and the great object of this work is, to *correct the one, by improving the other*. There are

but two ways in which it is pretended a bishop of our church can be deposed: the *one*, by conviction of mal-administration; the *other*, by impeachment of his moral character. Our inquiry into the subject, therefore, will be confined to these two points.

In regard to the deposition of a bishop for mal-administration, it is a thing which never can be done while the office to which he has been consecrated for life retains its present form. There is no rule of Discipline providing for it in the interim of the General Conference. And, amid the conflicting, and with respect to the borderites, extraordinary views of episcopal administration and oversight among us, and the intense interest felt by the border conferences in securing the co-operation of the bishops in their crusade against the anti-slavery cause, it is not possible he should take any step in the administration of affairs, however subversive of the laws and usages of the church, in which a majority of the General Conference would not sustain him.

Exceptions have often been taken to the management of the bishops by the committee on the episcopacy, who make a feint of subjecting their official conduct to a quadrennial examination; but, a majority of that committee governing the case, we never knew any of these exceptions embodied in their report to the General Conference. And though the senior bishop, whose example and teaching were next to oracular among us, and consequently of a most dangerous tendency if erroneous—though *even he* committed an act of the most palpable mal-administration in the case of the Rev. J. N. Maffitt, as we showed at the time; and as the Advocate and Journal and Quarterly Review have both indi-

rectly admitted since the demise of the bishop, and there was no more to hope or to fear from him ; yet the committee on the episcopacy reported in favor of the legality and correctness of the administration, and the General Conference adopted the report ! Perhaps it will be remembered too, as evidence of the impracticability of deposing a bishop by conviction of mal-administration that this same Advocate and Journal which could thus declare against the legality of the administration of the bishop in the Maffitt case since his death ; was full of the loudest and most fawning laudations of it, and of the bitterest denunciations of those who had the courage and the conscience to object to or criticise it, while he was yet alive.

The only remaining ground on which it is maintained we can depose a bishop of our church, is that of impeachment of his moral character. We are aware that there is a rule of Discipline providing for the *expulsion*, and of *course* for the *deposition* of a bishop "for improper conduct ;" but all this amounts to nothing, under existing circumstances. *Practically* the rule is a dead letter ; being completely neutralized by the guards thrown around the episcopacy in the ordination of its incumbents, and the perpetuity of their office. But as the position here taken may seem untenable, and, perhaps, unreasonable and extravagant to many of our people, we shall briefly, and yet frankly, assign our more prominent reasons for holding the opinion of the impracticability of the deposition of a bishop by the impeachment of his moral character.

First. The sacredness impressed upon his character and name by the formalities of an episcopal ordination,

virtually constituting him one of a third and superior order of the ministry, and his consecration to the episcopacy for life, invest him with an air of infallibility; which so inspires our veneration for him as to put it out of our power to suspect him of evil. We are naturally prone to superstition; making it an easy thing for our ecclesiastical rulers, or spiritual guides, to impose upon our understanding by external ceremony and display—an easy thing for them to persuade us of the transmission of some indefinable qualification, called “episcopal grace,” as also of the divine right of office, by means of episcopal ordination; and the awe we feel for one *so high* and *so holy* forbids the idea of any liability in him to become wicked, and we dare not call in question either his integrity or his wisdom. *Who* has ever insinuated anything against a bishop, however liable to censure, but at the expense of his reputation? If we have not been led by our idolatrous propensities to look up to a bishop invested with the episcopal office for life by the forms of a holy consecration, as “The Vicar of Christ on earth,” or to clothe him with the attributes of a super-human being, and pay him a sort of religious homage in that character; we have seemed to say, and doubtless have felt, that the deposition of a bishop thus set apart in regular church order, and become too sacred ever again to return to the rank and duty of an ordinary minister of the sanctuary, would involve the most shocking sacrilege! And we have shuddered at the very thought!

It is an established maxim of royalty, we believe, that “the *king* cannot do wrong.” And the language of unqualified praise everywhere employed in relation to

our bishops, particularly by our church-press, which now governs all our movements, is equivalent to saying,—A bishop cannot do wrong! But while this most criminal flattery causes the bishops “to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think,” it tempts them at the same time to pursue a course of usurpation and tyranny by assuring them of our readiness “to submit ourselves to their godly (?) judgments”—their infallible dictation—their imperious commands—whatever they may choose to enjoin upon us, without the least question or scruple of their authority.

In the second place: There is in every church of any considerable standing in the world, a corrupt and hateful aristocracy, who are alike inimical to all vital godliness, and the rights and liberties of the masses of the membership. And as they can best secure their ends of ambition and monopoly—best mould the opinions and control the destinies of the common people—through the medium of leading officials, they spare no pains to enlist these officials on their side. It is also true that all aristocracies, whether ecclesiastical or political, relying on the co-operation, or rather the instrumentality of officers of rank and influence for the maintenance of their power and the execution of their designs, are anxious to invest these functionaries with as much authority as possible; and the more the better. Their interest requires that they place them beyond the reach of the popular will. This aristocracy in our church, is the slave-oligarchy. And as they esteem the bishops to be the most appropriate and efficient tools which could be employed in their service, they are deeply interested to clothe them with that high and commanding authority,

or to impress upon the office they hold that sacredness and permanency of character, which will enable them to quell the anti-slavery movement, and screen "the sum of all villanies" from the hand of extirpation. We here discover the ground and reason of the high-church notions of the slave-holding border and their sympathizers—the ground and reason of their tenacious adherence to the form of episcopal ordination, and the perpetuity of the office of the bishops—and here we discover also, that the success and final triumph of the anti-slavery cause can only be secured by such modification or change of the episcopacy as shall place it upon the ground of a quadrennial rotation.

Finally: The impossibility of deposing a Methodist bishop on *any* ground, whether by conviction of mal-administration, impeachment of moral character, or otherwise, was fully demonstrated in the memorable case of Bishop Andrew; whose attempted deposition in 1844, proved a mortifying failure. He was esteemed by the great body of the northern portion of the church, a most guilty man. The crime of which he was accused before the General Conference was of a most complicated and atrocious character. He had not only become guilty, it was alleged, of "the sum of all villanies" by contracting and maintaining the relation of a slave-holder, but had perpetrated this horrid crime under circumstances of peculiar aggravation—circumstances which involve a breach of faith, a breach of Discipline, and a breach of the momentous obligation he was under to promote the peace and harmony of the church over which he presided.

And how far was all this from the truth? Who will say, that as he was elected to the episcopacy upon the

express understanding that he was free from the sin of slave-holding, and would remain so, it was not a breach of faith to become the owner of slaves in violation of this understanding? Again, as the Discipline—to say nothing of the General Rule which forbids “the evil of slavery,” in forbidding “evil of every kind”—forbids all ministers to hold slaves “where the laws of the state in which they live admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom;” and as the jurisdiction or charge of the bishop, extending over the whole country, left him as much at liberty to reside in a *free* as in a *slave* state; where, if slaves had fallen to him by inheritance or otherwise he could have set them at liberty, or they would have become free, by simply removing them into the free state in which he resided; what was it but a breach of the Discipline thus to connect himself with slavery, without the shadow of a plea of any legal necessity for it? And what a terrible breach of the obligation he was under to promote the peace and harmony of the church it was, to *divide* that body by his wicked connection with slavery, and involve the whole connection, preachers and people, in those disgraceful litigations, contentions and quarrels, which have resulted, as he must have foreseen they would, in so much injury to the cause of religion! But if a bishop with all this guilt and shame upon his head—the crime of “the sum of all villainies,” aggravated by perfidy, a breach of Discipline, and, prospectively, the division of the church, with all its accompanying disasters and blasphemies—could not be deposed by the General Conference; for what deeds of wickedness, known to the catalogue of crime, could he be deposed? Surely,

the deposition of a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church is a moral impossibility!

Perhaps it will be alleged that he *was* deposed from his episcopal office. But where is the proof? He is still a bishop, and has been from that day to this; and so he has been regarded and recognized and treated by our church, who have continued to fraternize with him in her border conferences, her pro-slavery editors, and her bishops, in that character and relation. True, he is not now a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church *North*, as some of our editors would express it by way of recognizing the validity of the claim of the Church South to be a legitimate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church; but what is the difference whether he belong to our church, or to some other? May we fellowship that in another church which we could not fellowship in our own? And does the transfer of a criminal to another church then, expiate his guilt, and remove the bar to christian fellowship and communion which it had interposed between us? The law of the Discipline in such cases is, that a person once excluded from our fellowship, "shall have no privileges of society or of sacraments in our church without contrition, confession, and satisfactory reformation." And such is the teaching of the Bible and of common sense—such the uniform and settled usage of the church. And it must be evident to all, that a crime which was sufficient to dissolve the fellowship at first, should be deemed sufficient to keep up and perpetuate the separation until it is removed or cancelled by the "contrition, confession, and satisfactory reformation," which the Discipline requires.

The very fact, therefore, that we continue to fratern-

ize with the bishop whom it is alleged we have deposed, and with the church who have made themselves responsible for his wickedness by separating themselves from us and going into a new and distinct organization on purpose to sustain him in his office and conduct, is proof demonstrative that we have not deposed him. We did, to be sure, hand him over to the south, by a most scandalous compromise, called "the plan of separation;" but it cost us half the church and of the book concern. And there is no doubt we might depose other bishops in the same way, if that be deposition; for the border conferences stand ready, if we understand them, to *repeat* the compromise manoeuver whenever we shall arraign a bishop for crime, especially if be it the crime of slaveholding, and open to him the same asylum that was provided for his notorious predecessor on a former occasion. Only it is understood that the *whole* of the book concern, instead of half of it, if not indeed the whole of our church property, is to be taken from us next time; and that the new organization, instead of stopping at specified lines, as in the division of 1844, are to spread themselves all over the country; paying no more attention to geographical boundaries in the location of their societies and the jurisdiction they claim and exercise over them, than in the transportation and use of their human property under the abominable Dred Scott decision of the Supreme Court of the National Government.

These are the best terms we can expect—the best results we can look for—should we ever undertake the deposition of another bishop while the episcopacy retains its present form. The office as it now stands, ren-

ders the incumbent absolutely impregnable; virtually placing him above the authority of the General Conference or of an ecumenical council of the church, and leaving not so much as a "vulnerable heel" to the arrows of an ecclesiastical judiciary! If any should be shocked at the declaration of a sentiment so bold, and so new, in respect to the condition of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the impracticability of the deposition of a bishop among us; it must be because they are not posted up on the subject of the character and doings of the slave-oligarchy of our country. Let them but open their eyes upon the light of passing events, and learn that the slave-power has become the supreme authority of the land, controlling and directing every movement of society both in church and state—let them but feel the chains that bind them, which they surely will the moment they lift a finger in opposition to the slave interest, or attempt the least movement in favor of the anti-slavery cause—above all, let them but understand that Washington, the seat of the general government, has become the head-quarters of the whole gang of official black-legs that infest our country; the grand asylum to which all our fillibusters, border-ruffians, and cut-throats flee for refuge and find protection at the hand of federal partiality and connivance; and then judge of the startling positions we have been led to take in regard to our church and bishops, who are clearly led and sheltered by the slave-power. Let any one make up his mind in the clear light of the facts in the case; untrammelled by prejudice, by interest, by ecclesiastical hopes or fears; and we are ready to abide his decision. We have no apprehension, however, for the result; for there is not a man in the nation but will say, judging of

the matter on these grounds, and taking episcopacy as it is—ordination, life-tenure and all into the account—that the deposition of a pro-slavery bishop, by a pro-slavery church, is a moral impossibility.

And now, having shown in the foregoing work, the great wickedness of church slavery—legal relation and all—its unconstitutionality, and the imperative duty of the church to effect its immediate extirpation; and demonstrated, in this chapter especially, the impracticability of deposing a bishop, or of reforming any popular abuses existing in the church, particularly with respect to slavery, while the authority of the episcopacy, derived from the form of ordination and the incumbency for life remains; we entreat and warn the church, as she loves truth and righteousness, the liberty of conscience, of speech, of the press, the cause of emancipation, the work of “spreading Scripture holiness over the world,” and all that is vital and dear to Methodism; and as she would adopt a practicable, easy, and safe method of replacing unworthy or wicked bishops with suitable incumbents, effect “the extirpation of the great evil of slavery,” and guard herself against all usurpations, all abuses of authority, and all abominations and corruptions arising from the exercise of irresponsible power; we entreat and warn the church by all these most solemn and weighty considerations, to awake from the dream of security which has so long paralyzed her energies, take the matter in hand at once and in earnest, and provide for her own purification, security and happiness by placing the episcopacy, where it must be placed to render it an instrument of *usefulness* rather than of *ruin* to the church, *upon the ground of a quadrennial rotation.*

CHAPTER XVII.

FALSE CAUSES ASSIGNED FOR DEFICIENCY IN OUR MISSIONARY COLLECTIONS—CONNECTION OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY WITH SLAVERY THE TRUE CAUSE—SLAVE-POWER FOND OF COMPROMISES—NEVER MAKES THEM IN GOOD FAITH—ALWAYS BREAKS THEM—MISSIONARY SOCIETY MUST ABANDON SLAVERY, OR THE PEOPLE WILL ABANDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY—STILL, THEY WILL NOT ABANDON THE MISSIONARY CAUSE—CAUSE OF MISSIONS AND MISSIONARY SOCIETY, NOT IDENTICAL—NO OPTION LEFT US BUT TO SUPPORT SLAVERY, OR TO CARRY ON OUR MISSIONARY OPERATIONS INDEPENDENTLY OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY—RELIGIOUS AND BENEVOLENT CORPORATIONS NEVER TO BE ENDOWED—MUTUAL DEPENDENCE OF BENEVOLENT INSTITUTIONS AND OF THE PEOPLE, THE SAME AS OF PREACHERS AND PEOPLE, MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL—IF WE ARE DRIVEN TO WITHHOLD OUR CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY AS A LAST RESORT IN OUR EFFORTS TO SEVER IT FROM “THE SUM OF ALL VILLANIES,” THE RESPONSIBILITY WILL REST ON THEM, AND NOT ON US.

Non causa pro causa. This is one of those miserable sophisms in use among mankind, by which error is attempted to be palmed off for truth, and the common people practiced upon to the great detriment of the cause of God and humanity. Some who assign a false cause for the phenomena of many of the scenes and occurrences of life, having become the silly dupes of ignorance or of superstition, are themselves deceived. But not a few of the better informed, taking advantage of the

gullibility of the masses, whose co-operation they would enlist in the execution of their selfish designs, resort to the use of this sophism for the purpose of deceiving others. Ashamed of the real cause of the evil they bring upon their fellow-creatures, either individually or socially; and aware of the charge of guilt which must fall upon them, and of the defeat they will be likely to experience with respect to the unworthy, perhaps criminal undertaking in which they are engaged, should the true relations and bearings of the matter be discovered, it is natural they should ascribe the effects of their own wickedness to some other cause.

Hence it was that the Jews attributed the destruction of their city and temple, and the overthrow and dispersion of their nation, to the murder of James, rather than the more heinous crime of the crucifixion of the Son of God. And hence also the paucity of the missionary collections are attributed to anything else, rather than to the horrid sin of church-slavery which everybody knows to be the real cause of the evil. Says the Northern Christian Advocate,—“every day’s observation convinces us that the real cause of the deficiency in the missionary collections of our church, is the want of a proper attention on the part of our pastors, including the presiding elders.” Bishop Janes ascribes the deficiency in these collections to “the indifference with which the subject of missions is treated by our church editors.” But this showing of the deficiency in our missionary collections, and much more of a similar character with which our church papers are continually teeming, is resolvable into nothing more or less than the sophistical *non causa pro causa* so rife among the friends and advocates of

the sin of slavery. Whether these pro-slavery expositors are in reality deceived upon the subject themselves, or whether they are driven by stress of circumstances to attempt to deceive others, is not for us to say. God knoweth! And here we shall leave the matter.

The real cause of the deficiency in our missionary collections, however, is none other than the connection of the church with "the great evil of slavery;" and the appropriation of the funds collected among us for the spread of the gospel of Christ, to the propagation and support of a slave-holding religion. This is the cause and the only cause of any amount; and it is a cause which will go on increasing, except the appropriate remedy be applied, until the missionary society, however they may fret and scold and philosophize upon the subject, will be left in the hands of their pro-slavery coadjutors and advisers to take care of themselves. Let slavery be banished from the church, and the funds of the missionary society be employed, according their legitimate design, for the amelioration of the condition of all classes of the degraded; rather than for the enlightenment and elevation of a portion of them merely, and the plunging the rest into a still deeper thralldom at the same time by the alleged sanction of the Holy Scriptures; and there will be no want to complain of. The hearts and the hands of the hundreds of thousands of our people will be open, and the missionary treasury will be made to overflow and abound continually. But there are a great many among us who cannot become accessory to the terrible crime of oppression, or be made to assist in building up and sustaining a slave-holding church, by the contribution of their money, even to the missionary

cause ; and they look upon it as a gross imposition—a tempting them to evil—to ask them to contribute for the support of an institution in which right and wrong, holiness and sin, the evangelization and oppression of mankind are so blended together in its operations and designs that they cannot support the one without supporting the other.

We are aware that Satan and the slave-power are fond of compromises. And we are aware also that they never enter into them into good faith. They want the reputation and the advantage of being connected, *in name*, with whatever is good. It was this which led “the old serpent” to propose to our Divine Lord to “give to him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, if he would fall down and worship him.” It was this which has ever prompted him to tempt and urge mankind to profess religion, join the church, and preach the gospel even, if their taste run that way ; provided they would consent to paralyze their own influence, and turn their christian or ministerial character to his account by connecting themselves with some godless fraternity, and associating with them, to the great grief of their brethren and disparagement of the cause of Christ ; or the pursuing an unjust and dishonorable line of conduct of some other description, at the same time. So with the slave-power. They would have the slave become pious, just to increase his fidelity and his price ; not that they care anything for his soul ; and they are more than willing we should organize conferences, and plant churches among them, with the understanding always that we shall lend the sanctions of religion to “the peculiar institution”—the one grand basis of their hope of

wealth, and happiness and heaven—and contribute largely of our missionary funds from generation to generation for its perpetuation and support. But remember, both the Devil and the slave-power, having availed themselves of their part of the benefits of the compromise, will certainly rob you of yours.

“But would you abandon the great and glorious cause of missions,” it is inquired, “and leave the many millions of our race who are ‘perishing for lack of vision,’ without the benefits of the gospel ministry, lest in extending the means of salvation to them, your beneficence should be shared by a few slave-holders belonging to the church within the sphere of our missionary operations?” By no means. We thank God there is another way of carrying the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to the perishing sinner. And we indignantly repel the blasphemous insinuations of our slaveocrats that the only way of evangelizing our fellow-creatures, in some conditions, is to tolerate them in the practice of the greatest villany this side of hell, or that the religion of the gospel of Christ is so identified in its character and objects with a slave-holding religion, that the one cannot be propagated without the other.

That nothing can be done through the medium of the missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the cause of missions, without contributing towards the support of slavery, is not pretended. The constitution of this society has been so ordered and contrived by its pro-slavery framers, that the slave-holding conferences, equally with the non-slave-holding, are authorized to draw upon its funds for the carrying forward their missionary operations; and the plea of extreme destitution and want, which must always exist in slave-holding

regions, meeting with special favor on the part of "the powers that be," they are allowed to receive from the treasury of the society very much more than their pro-rata share.

Still, we are neither to abandon the missionary cause, nor yet to contribute in any way or shape for the support of a slave-holding religion. There is another way, we have said, of promoting the cause of missions—a way which does not shut us up to the horrid necessity of sustaining the authority of the barbarous slave-master over his human cattle, or of keeping these helpless, trembling victims of his avarice and lust in subjection to his lawless will. And the period draws near apace—is at the very door—when our anti-slavery hosts, unless there be a change in the form and administration of the constitution of the missionary society, by which the necessity of such a step shall be obviated, will be compelled to adopt that way. The idea of the monopoly of "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," or of the field of missions even, by the missionary society, is a little too anti-protestant, we apprehend, for the meridian of the great body of the Methodist Episcopal Church; nor do we recognize their right, or their power—whatever pretensions they may set up, or however they may denounce us as the enemies of the missionary cause for the reason that we refuse to bow down to their supremacy and carry on our work through the medium of their organization and agency—to exclude us either from the one or the other.

"But what can *we* do," say the board of officers and managers of the missionary society, "to remedy the evil complained of? We cannot alter the constitution of

our society, if we would. And there is no option left us but to appropriate the funds coming into our hands, as the constitution of the society and the general missionary committee direct." Well, this seems very plausible, to be sure. But it is, after all, a mere shifting of responsibilities ; and does not meet the case, or relieve the difficulty in question. We would ask the board whether they had ever done anything, directly or indirectly, to remove the embarrassment under which our missionary operations labor with respect to the subject of slavery ? Whether they ever suggested to the General Conference the propriety of some change in this direction ? Or whether, on the contrary, they have not given tone and character to the entire missionary system ; presenting such plans and alterations and amendments to that body from time to time as their pro-slavery instincts dictated ; and, taking advantage of the confidence which the chief council of the church reposed in their superior practical wisdom and skill for conducting the business, to procure the adoption of their measures by legislative authority ? If they have ever done the first thing to disconnect their society, or its financial operations with slavery, will they be good enough to tell us where and when and how !

But whether the board of officers and managers of the missionary society, or the General Conference, or both together, are responsible for those provisions of the Discipline by which we are bound to aid in the support of church-slavery, or altogether withhold our contributions from the missionary society, is not material. We find ourselves precisely in this predicament from some cause. And as the power that has laid this neces-

sity upon us, whatever it may be, or wherever lodged, is able to remove it; we demand of such power that it shall be done. Or if a claim so just and reasonable is not to be regarded by those whose place it is to attend to the matter, we shall not be responsible for the consequences that must inevitably follow.

We should be sorry to be deprived of the facilities afforded by our present missionary system, in general, for the purpose of extending the benefits of our holy religion to the benighted portions of the earth. . We should regard it as a great calamity. And we feel a great unwillingness, after all we have done to bring this system to its present efficiency and perfection, to be compelled to abandon it for some other plan. But "out of two evils, we are to choose the least." And as the choice here lies between a *moral* evil—that of supporting slavery; and a *natural* evil—that of exchanging an old and well-tried system of missionary operations for a new one; and as the greatest natural evil is infinitely less than the least sin; we need not say what course the great body of our anti-slavery brethren will feel themselves called upon to take, except there be such change made in the laws and administration of the missionary society as will enable them to co-operate with it in "spreading Scriptural holiness over the world" without contributing to the support of "the sum of all villainies." We like not to disobey the king; but still we must do it, whatever "the princes, the governors, the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the the sheriffs, [the secretaries, the editors, the bishops,] and all the rulers of the provinces," may do; rather than "fall down at the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulci-

mer, [the episcopal sing-song of no mercenary slave-holding among us,] and all kinds of music, and worship the golden image which he has set up in the plain of Dura " It is not our intention, however, to abandon the missionary cause. This we feel ourselves bound to maintain in *some* way. But one of two things must take place: either the funds of the missionary society must be appropriated *exclusively* to the propagation of a non-slave-holding religion, or we of the genuine anti-slavery school, embracing at least seven-tenths of the entire membership of the church, must turn our missionary contributions into another channel.

But let it not be said that we are the enemies of the cause of missions, and that we are blocking the wheels of the missionary movement because we cannot patronize a particular organization, which has lent itself to the support of slavery. That the Church of Rome, and her faithful ally—the Protestant Episcopal Church—should denounce us as heretics for presuming to labor in the cause of Christ outside of their respective organizations, is not surprising. It is just what the intolerance and bigotry of anti-Christ would lead us to expect at their hands. Nor is it much to be wondered at that the infidel temperance societies which rose in their own strength a few years since, should have drunk in the same persecuting spirit, and proclaimed the Methodist Episcopal Church inimical to the temperance cause, though she had done more to promote its interests than all other associations put together, because she did not choose to act through their organizations instead of her own. But that we should be traduced as the enemies of the missionary cause for the simple reason that we feel

called upon to forward its objects and interests by some other method than that by which the ruling authorities of the church would bind us to the support of slavery, is a thing we were hardly prepared to look for. In this, however we are disappointed. The thing we had least anticipated has come upon us. It has now come to pass, that to speak against the *abuse* of a thing, is to speak against the thing itself. But it is no more true, that to oppose the application of the funds of the missionary society to the support of slavery, is to oppose the missionary cause; than that to oppose the doctrines of Calvinism, is to oppose the doctrines of grace. Yet such assumptions and sophistries are become strangely rife among us; and we are held up to the odium of the church and of the world for demurring at an evil in connection with our missionary operations by which hundreds of thousands of our people feel themselves oppressed; and for suggesting, what seems to us the only possible remedy.

“ But does not the Discipline provide that each annual conference shall be at liberty to appropriate its own missionary collections to any mission established among us at its own discretion? It does not. The Discipline does indeed provide that an annual conference may support a mission within its own bounds upon the condition of the vote of two-thirds of its members to that effect, and of its non-interference with the support of the parent society. But what sort of liberty is that? Why, to be sure, when Cuffee has finished up and completed his daily task for massa, and exhausted all his energies upon the unrequited labors of the day, he may then, *at his own discretion*, take more or less of the time allot-

ted him for sleep, to pound up his own hominy, and prepare and eat his own supper, without any further tax upon him! Ah, glorious liberty! How precious the unmerited boon! But, really, it looks so much like the liberty afforded the enslaved Israelites to "make brick without straw," or the Dissenters and Methodists of England to provide themselves with religious instruction, and the public means of grace generally, after having been taxed to the utmost of their capacity to support the clergy of the established church, that it is exceedingly doubtful whether we appreciate it as we otherwise might.

"But may not an annual conference designate the mission—whether slave-holding or non-slave-holding—to which their missionary funds shall be applied?" They may. But what does all that amount to? The great distributing office at New York will be sure so to manage and control every movement connected with missionary operations, as effectually to defeat our anti-slavery object after all. Suppose the Oneida Conference, for instance, should direct the missionary Board to apply their contributions to the support of a non-slave-holding mission, and they should scrupulously observe the direction; they would be sure to balance the amount by the application of other monies coming into their hands to some mission connected with slavery; so that the relative amount appropriated to each class of missions—slave-holding, and non-slave-holding—would not be at all varied, upon the whole, by such discrimination on our part. In exact proportion as we contribute for the support of a non-slave-holding mission, we take it off the hands of the missionary society; and

thereby enable them to do so much the more for the support of those missions which are inaccessible to any other than a slave-holding religion. Hence it is seen, that under existing circumstances, we are compelled, either directly or indirectly, to build up and sustain "the sum of all villanies" by our missionary contributions! Except, then, the church shall strike every slave-holding mission from the list of claimants upon the missionary funds, there is left us but the single alternative, either to sustain church-slavery, and hug the accursed thing to our bosom, as a cherished institution of our common Israel; or to carry on our missionary operations by means of the adoption and use of some other plan than that now in vogue among us.

"Avaunt! ye miserable heretics. Profane not the holy missionary cause by your sacrilegious touch! Know ye not that the cause of missions is the cause of God, and not to be called in question by any one, or suspected of anything in the shape of error or corruption?" Aye, we both know and acknowledge all this. But we do not know that every plan devised for the management of its affairs, or that every board of officers concerned in looking after its interests and guiding its operations, is free from error. The character of the *cause* of missions, and that of *the plan* upon which it is conducted, are distinctly two things. We cannot regard them as necessarily involving each other. Nor can we look upon the *managers* of the cause, and the *cause itself*, as being entirely identical. We most cordially admit, however, that the cause itself is a sacred cause—that it "is holy, just and good"—and for this very reason we feel ourselves bound by every consideration of

truth and conscience to watch over its interests with a jealous eye, and scrupulously to guard an institution so sacred and divine from whatever would tarnish its character, or impair its efficiency and success. Above all, would we labor to purge and keep it from the blighting, crippling, damning sin of slavery; in relation to which, the slightest contact is contagion; and the remotest countenance extended to it either by the contribution of our money, or otherwise, an egregious offence against God and humanity!

If the officers and managers of the missionary society, who are fattening upon the spoils of the institution, could shield the odiousness of their pro-slavery doings from the indignation of the friends of human liberty by the *sacredness* of the *cause* of missions, they would indeed gain the time. They would gladly have it understood that in condemning the *abuse* of the missionary cause by connecting it with the abomination of slavery, we condemn the *cause itself*; and that our reasonings and remonstrances and efforts employed for the correction of such abuse, is a terrible profanation of the cause—an awful violation of things sacred—which renders us obnoxious to their extreme displeasure, and places us in the condition of a sort of heretics or outlaws who “are not to be reasoned with.” And such are the accusations they are continually heaping upon us. But we hesitate not to pronounce all those who presume to accuse us of profaning, or in any way opposing the sacred cause of missions by our anti-slavery movements, as base as the imputation is unjust. It is not we of the anti-slavery school who are chargeable with profaning the sacred cause of missions by endeavoring

to sever it from its connection with the enormous sin of slavery; but our accusers—the editor of the pro-slavery Advocate and Journal, and his co-laborers in the same dirty business—who fain would prostitute the whole power of the General Conference and of the missionary society to the maintenance and perpetuation of that foul alliance in the face of a remonstrating universe!—*these* are the guilty party. And the charge they so unwarrantably bring against us of profaning and damaging the cause of missions, we feel ourselves bound, in the name of humanity and of justice, to retort upon them; leaving them to digest the matter before the church and the world in the best way they can.

“But why disregard the authority of the Discipline of the church in regard to this subject? Do you not know that the chapter ‘on the support of missions’ requires you to co-operate with the missionary society in the great work in which they are engaged, and to transmit your collections for missionary purposes to the field upon which they are to be expended through their hands?” Yes, we know this is all so. And we know it, seeing our missionary operations are connected with the support of slavery, to our unfeigned regret. We know that the board of managers of the missionary society, having an eye, it would seem, to the claims of the slave-holding missions among us, especially since the commencement of the incumbency of the present secretary, have gone on revising the constitution of the society and the chapter on missions from time to time; bringing forward new and revised editions of these portions of the Discipline, and pressing them upon the adoption of the General Conference, till we are sufficiently tied

up and committed to the maintenance and support of church-slavery. Already a considerable portion of the time of a travelling preacher is required to be devoted to the collection of funds to be passed into the hands of the treasurer of the missionary society; and his attention to the business is to enter into the examination of his character at the annual conference. Of course, if there be any delinquency found in him with respect to this part of his labor, he must suffer the penalty, whatever it may be, the same as for any other delinquency; and though the raising of so much missionary money in the manner specified, or in all the means appointed for this purpose, may not just yet be insisted upon as a condition of church-membership, it doubtless soon will be; for the collection of funds, particularly for those institutions of the church which have come to be thoroughly officered with high-salaried functionaries, appears to be regarded as the one great duty of our calling—preachers and people—while there is no possible objection to the adoption of a new term of membership, or any other *ex post facto* law, so far as the ruling authorities of the church are concerned, except as it relates to the extirpation of slavery.

Perhaps we may be thought a little too fast here; but if any are disposed to doubt the correctness of our position on the subject, let them look at the history of the progressive legislation of the General Conference in this direction with respect to the constitution of the missionary society, and the chapter on missions, and we think they will see sufficient cause to adopt our views. We shall make no comment on said constitution and chapter, at present. All who feel an interest in this

very grave question, can read these documents for themselves. But though we intend not to "inveigh against the Discipline," or to countenance a disregard of its authority in any way; we shall take the liberty to suggest that its legislative provisions with respect to the missionary society will require to be very considerably modified, in order to enlist the hearty co-operation of the anti-slavery portion of our church and people in the movements and doings of that association.

It is high time the church and the world should understand, if they never understood it before, that we feel it a great and sore grievance to be compelled to cooperate with a society who oblige us to sustain a slaveholding religion, by appropriating the monies we place in their hands for the propagation of the pure gospel of Christ, to that forbidden object. We want to support the missionary cause, and we intend to do it; but our hands hang down, and our hearts die within us when compelled to do it in connection with slavery. Our services, under these circumstances, if we serve at all, must be like all other slave labor—very poorly done, and precious little at that. But stringent as the laws of the church are in the enforcement of missionary collections, either their requisitions must be so increased as to specify every individual among us, and the amount of his contribution—demanding in every solitary instance, and under all circumstances, and that too on pain of judicial conviction and punishment, the last red cent of the tax levied—or thousands upon thousands of our people who would most cheerfully contribute, and contribute liberally, for the support of missions, if they could do it without supporting slavery at the same time; will,

under existing circumstances, do just nothing at all for the cause. Such, we venture to predict, will be the result of the present state of things. And who does not see where the responsibility will rest?

It may be thought by "those who have the rule over us" that we can be worried out after awhile by persecution and proscription, and be made to recede from the ground we have taken with respect to this matter. But though there are too many among us, particularly among the ministry, who, like too many among themselves, will sacrifice the teachings of conscience and the word of God to the machinations of place and of popularity; yet, if they calculate upon the conquest of the great mass of the anti-slavery band on this, or any other ground, it will be found, we apprehend, that "they have not reckoned with their host." An attempt in these times to dragoon us into the support of "the sum of all villainies," will prove undoubtedly, a little too late in the day. We are not yet quite reduced to the condition of the serfs of Russia, or of the slaves of our own whip-cracking South. And before we shall yield our necks to the yoke of ecclesiastical despotism, and sacrifice ourselves and our children and our money to the Moloch of slavery; we shall try what virtue there is in *revolution*—not *secession*, but *revolution*—that is, we shall supersede the existing pro-slavery administration of the church by the installation and maintenance of an anti-slavery government. Freedom from church-slavery constitutes an essential element in our platform. And we intend hereafter that the most reliable devotion to this principle, as well in the long-known antecedents of the candidate for office, as in his present unequivocal, out-spoken, and

active movements on the subject; shall be made a *sine qua non* of our suffrage and support—an absolute and indispensable test of office in the church. There must be some modification or change in our financial arrangements, or we shall materially fail in carrying forward our benevolent enterprises, and especially as it relates to the cause of missions, with efficiency and success.

But of all the reasons, in our estimation, which requires some modification of the constitution and laws of the missionary society, the liability and danger of its becoming an overgrown and despotic monied monopoly, seems the most startling. We saw it noticed in one of the secular papers last winter, that there was a bill before our state legislature to secure such alteration in the charter of the missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal Church as would enable the corporation to hold property, or to establish a fund for their own corporate uses, the annual income of which should amount to any sum not exceeding fifty thousand dollars. Whether this bill passed the legislature, or not, we are unable to say. Our church papers, so far as we are advised in relation to it, have been as silent upon the subject as the house of death. And why the secular papers have said nothing more about it, we know not. All seems shrouded in mystery. The inference naturally would be, that the officers and managers of the society, having devised the plan of the enlargement of their powers and resources, and aware of the opposition they would meet with, should it come to the knowledge of the church that they were engaged in such a project, deemed it advisable under the circumstances to lobby it through the legislature by means of the agency of some influential person—their

shrewd and trusty Secretary, it is most likely—with the least possible notoriety. But be that as it may; the project has evidently been formed, if not already carried into effect, of creating a vast fund for some purpose or other, and consequently of investing the missionary society with vast corporate powers, by placing so great an amount of money and of patronage at their disposal.

But who has the authority in the interval of the General Conference to provide for the creation and holding of such fund for missionary purposes, we should like to know? Have the missionary society the authority to enlarge their own powers and appliances during such interval *ad libitum*? How is this? We should like to be informed. Possibly the last General Conference may have authorized the society to apply to the state legislature for an enlargement of their charter. But if so, it must have been done after we left the seat of the conference, which, as we have failed to notice anything of the kind in their reported doings, we presume was not the case. But even if the missionary society were authorized to establish a fund of the character specified, it deserves to be well considered whether such fund would not be productive of more evil than good, before we contribute anything towards its creation. Let us look at it then in the light of *utility*—waving the question of authority for the time being—and see what conclusion we shall be led to form in that view of the subject.

We are aware that funded institutions, whether literary, benevolent, or religious, are generally supposed to be capable of far greater and more extensive usefulness than those which remain unendowed. And we are

aware also that this same consideration becomes, of all others, the most availing plea for the endowment of such institutions, as well by public, as by private beneficence. But all history shows that monied corporations, in most instances, have proved a curse, rather than a blessing, to the community among whom they have been located. It is not pretended that money in the hands of corporate bodies, however large and growing the amount, might not possibly be made use of in a way to do good. Such is not the question. - We have no doubt, either of the practicability, or the obligation to employ money for beneficial purposes in *any lawful situation*, if you have it in possession. But when and where has any endowed corporation, particularly of a religious character, been known to be productive of more good than evil, all things taken into the account, since the foundation of the world?

The Papal historian will tell you that the early part of the fourth century, when Constantine, the Roman Emperor, embraced christianity, and showered his royal favors upon the church and clergy with so great profusion, was an age of exceeding prosperity to the church. And there is no doubt she did flourish under the munificent patronage of so powerful a prince, as also under the fostering care of his imperial successors, so far as numbers, wealth, and worldly influence were concerned; but how was it in respect to her spiritual interests? How in respect to her true christian character and usefulness? Were these improved and placed in a better light before the world by the affluence she had acquired from the munificence of the state? In the judgment of evangelical historians, and of genuine christian phil-

osophers and divines, the age of the commencement of her worldly wealth and power, was the age of the commencement of her decline in experimental piety and practical godliness! And who that is at all conversant with the history of the church in general, does not know that like causes have been followed by like consequences from that day to this? The admonitory exclamation of our adorable Savior,—“How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven,” applies equally to companies and to corporations, as to individuals; and ought to teach us that the “laying up treasure on earth,” in the way of hoarding or funding it as a permanent endowment of some corporate institution, is to be avoided at our peril! That we require a sufficient amount of capital to carry on the business in which we are engaged, whether as individuals, or as corporate bodies, is not denied. But anything beyond this, especially as it relates to corporations of a religious or benevolent character, is usually, if not always, productive of evil.

It is well known that children who are brought up in idleness, and have large estates left them by their parents or other friends, are seldom as virtuous and useful among men as those who have been taught and left to work for a living. And what is true of the children of the wealthy who have grown up to maturity and become settled in the world, without ever having the cares and responsibilities of life thrown upon them in any way, is also true of a whole race or generation whose predecessors have made such abundant provisions for the carrying forward of all the benevolent or charitable enterprises of the country, as to leave them nothing to do in

the way of sustaining these enterprises by their own efforts. Suppose, for instance, we should go on and endow the missionary society, and other benevolent institutions of the church, as some would have us, and place them beyond the contingency of dependence upon the liberality of the next generation to sustain their operations; who can doubt, if he looks at the subject in the light of the past, and of the known propensities of fallen human nature, that a greater amount of evil than good would accrue to every one of them from such endowment? It is of vast importance that our children and successors in the church become self-reliant. And if we would bequeath a legacy to those who are to come after us that shall be of value to the world, we must not only train them to the duty, but leave them both the *opportunity* and the *necessity* of taking care of the institutions committed to their hands, as we shall have done before them. A self-made institution, the same as a self-made man, can better appreciate the value, and understand the uses of its acquirements, than one that is the mere creature of fortune; possessing, as it necessarily will, precisely that disciplinary culture, or practical training, so necessary to the carrying forward and consummating the great purposes of life.

It is a law of our nature—of our physical, our mental, and our moral constitution—that improvement is awarded to exercise. The affections of the heart, as well as the faculties of the mind and of the body, are only developed and brought to their maturity by this means. To be inactive, either as physical, intellectual, or moral beings is to be dwarfed in these several apartments of our character respectively; and become insignificant

and useless in society. The many as well as the few—the race as well as the individual—follow the same law. In all cases, we ruin the character of the rising generation, and consequently the interests of benevolence, of humanity, and of religion, by leaving them nothing to do. A child brought up in habits of idleness, and rendered independent on his own activities by the inheritance of a large patrimony; soon expends the latter, upon the gratification or indulgence of the former, which have acquired the mastery over him. A christian ministry, supported by the state, and made independent of the people for whose benefit they are appointed to labor, are a hundred times worse than no ministry at all. Instead of feeding the sheep, they fleece the flock; and lead them in the way to hell, rather than in the way to heaven. And so of the missionary society. We need only endow it with a permanent fund, and thereby render it independent of the collections of the current year for the carrying forward its benevolent operations, in order to its becoming a fountain of despotism and corruption!

“But would you not have the missionary society endowed at all then, or its capabilities for usefulness increased by the creation of a permanent missionary fund?” We certainly would not; except it be that all-sufficient and most available endowment of the confidence and affection of the people—an endowment which nothing is necessary to secure but the purity and proper management of the institution itself. Whether such a fund would yield the annual income of fifty thousand dollars a year, we could not positively say. Our belief is that it would yield a much larger sum.

But however that might be, one thing is certain: its income would so adapt itself to the *wants* and *character* of the society, as to satisfy the one without corrupting the other. And then, a revenue coming warm from the hearts of the people every year, and accompanied with their fervent and devout prayers for the blessing of God upon the missionary enterprise, as it always would be in such a case, would be ten-fold more efficacious in the achievement of the great object of missions—the the evangelization and salvation of the perishing sons and daughters of Adam—than all the income of all the funded institutions in the universe. By the adoption of such a scheme, the people would keep the power in their own hands, where it ought to be kept; and the missionary society would remain their servants, as they ought to remain. But the moment we endow the society with a permanent fund, that moment they become our masters; the power we now possess of controlling the institution changing hands, as in the case of father and son, the former of whom bears rule only till he puts his property into the hands of the latter! The true policy is, for the church to keep the staff in our own hands; giving her children—the missionary society, and her sister institutions—a little to start with; and then leaving them with such aid, either regular or occasional, as she deems best, to help themselves.

We would not be understood here that the missionary society should be left to furnish their own pecuniary means for carrying on the work in which they are engaged; but that the church, instead of placing the society beyond her control, and converting it into an arbitrary, irresponsible corporation by a permanent endowment

of funds ; shall retain the sum of what she possesses for missionary purposes in her own hands ; replenishing the treasury of the society from year to year as the current necessities of the missionary field, and the fidelity and management of the board entrusted with the business, shall require. The great object of the specific benevolent associations of the church, is, to keep her in communication and sympathy with the great field of missionary operations ; and so far as they are kept dependent upon her will and bounty, they are admirably adapted to subserve this purpose. It is then, as a medium of intercommunication between her and the objects of her charity, that they bring her the necessary information of the condition of the missionary field, and arrange for its supply of men and means—conveying them to their various points of destination—as she has them to spare. But in the same proportion as they are rendered independent of the church by the endowment of a permanent fund, they become a sort of non-conductor : arresting the electric currents of sympathy and benevolence they were intended to transmit along the line of her missionary stations ; and turning them into other channels for their own use and benefit, or causing them to explode with terrible detonations and ruin to all connected with the operation !

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to enumerate all the considerations which conclude against the endowment of benevolent societies. A summary of the more prominent among them must here suffice. Let it be observed then, that such endowment is clearly liable to the following very grave objections :—It always excites the cupidity, and brings into the board of officers and man-

agers of an institution of the character in question, a class of men who are of all others the most unsuitable for the situation they occupy—men who are forever intruding themselves into situations of this kind merely “for the loaves and fishes:”—It assumes that coming generations will be less able, or less disposed, to sustain the institutions of the church, than the present race; which amounts to a serious reflection both upon them, and upon ourselves—upon them by invidiously degrading them below their predecessors; and upon ourselves, by the implied admission that instead of doing anything for the improvement of society, or for the placing it in advance of the position we now occupy as the formers of the character and habits of posterity; we are about to leave it even worse than we found it, so that “the world is to be no better for our having lived in it:”—It contributes to render posterity idle, and consequently profligate and vicious, by leaving them no adequate occasion or motive for the practical cultivation of the benevolent affections of their nature:—It has the effect to alienate our own minds from the institutions of the church, by placing them in a condition to do without our continued assistance or support; for whatever interest we may feel in them while they remain dependent upon our annual contributions and patronage, it must necessarily decline and become extinct as they cease to be the creatures of our care:—It removes the institutions to which it belongs beyond the control of the church; leaving them exposed to the influence of the demon of monopoly and corruption, which forever pervades and actuates such institutions in a greater or lesser degree, with no sufficient guarantee or barrier

against it:—It leads those institutions unfortunately possessed of it, to affiliate and conspire with institutions of kindred character—as the Roman Hierarchy with the Monarchies of Europe, and a certain missionary society, that might be named, with the tyrannical slave-oligarchy—for purposes of usurpation and oppression: and, in case of a division of the church, which will certainly be effected by the secession of the slave-holding border the moment we require them to free their slaves as a condition of membership among us, or in any way resist their lordly will; the whole of the property of any endowed societies we might have, would be awarded to the seceders, the same as the better part of the book concern in 1844, by a pro-slavery tribunal of the country; and thus we should be made to contribute a few hundred thousand dollars more of the funds raised for the “spreading Scriptural holiness over the world,” to the propagation of a slave-holding religion!

We are not fully advised, as before intimated, whether the missionary society succeeded in obtaining an enlargement of their charter last winter, or not. We hope they did not succeed. But if they did, or should ever do so hereafter; thereby investing themselves with corporate powers for the wielding of the mighty engine of a permanent fund of nearly a million of dollars, we trust our people will know what to do in the premises. It is generally understood, we presume, that the power to hold and manage a permanent missionary fund, is one thing: the power to raise such fund out of the community, another. And though an act conferring the former may be passed by the State Legislature; yet it will be found necessary in securing the latter, to consult the

people, who feel entitled to hold the purse-strings with their own fingers. And to carry a bill providing a permanent missionary fund through this body, the society will find it necessary also, unless we mistake a figure, to become divorced from "the sum of all villanies" which renders their position and doings so odious to the civilized world. And even then, they will only be able, we fain would hope, to avail themselves of the *annual income* of said fund, just to meet their current appropriations and expenses as they go along; the fund itself remaining in the hands of the people.

For one to put his property out of his hands, or place his capital stock in the hands of others, whether for purposes of business or of benevolence, is accounted bad policy. It is doubtless far better, for both himself and all concerned, that he should remain his own treasurer—allowing the benevolent societies of the church, the missionary society among the rest, to draw on him for their respective dividends of what he has to spare for benevolent purposes from year to year, "according as God hath prospered him" in his business operations, and the occasion they have for pecuniary aid. The management of the *interest* of any funds we may have for purposes of benevolence, will involve responsibility enough for those coporate societies of the church to whose disposition we may intrust them; and, withal, be a sufficient test both of their *integrity* and of their *skill*. As to the funds themselves, we shall be able to husband them far more economically, it is believed, than any of the societies in question; and to turn them to a far better account, as well in regard to the great interests of the church, as to those of ourselves and families.

The continual dependence of our benevolent associations, as also of the christian ministry—of which they are but the mere auxiliaries—upon the voluntary contributions of the people; and the continual giving of the people for benevolent purposes as time and occasion require; is most clearly the order of God. In the establishment both of the Jewish and of the Christian Churches, it pleased God, not only to place the support of the institutions of religion upon the ground of the voluntary principle; but to provide that the free-will offerings which the people were to make for this purpose, should be made *annually*, or *oftener*, according to the current demand. No corporate institutions, or missionary societies, were endowed—no permanent funds established—for the carrying on or sustaining the interests of the church; but all must depend, with the blessing of heaven, upon the voluntary and continual offerings of the people. By this divine arrangement, equally in force now as formerly, the happiest results will be produced wherever it is practically adopted. The people being kept in continual communication and sympathy with the objects of their liberality, and continually stimulated thereby to greater activity and zeal in their benevolent operations, will continually increase in their capabilities of usefulness, and of personal enjoyment, at the same time, by the continual exercise of their benevolent affections; and the benevolent associations of the church—missionary society and all—will become so many efficient and safe instrumentalities in the accomplishment of the great objects of their institution, without any tempting endowment to excite their cupidity, or betray them into a course of monopoly and corruption.

“But,” say the missionary society, “we cannot carry on our great and glorious work without means; and if we are not to be endowed with a permanent fund for this purpose—a plan which we have deemed the most eligible under the circumstances—we hope at least that you will be good enough to furnish us with the necessary means on *your own* plan, and let us have your successive contributions from year to year with a little more liberality and promptness than you have been in the habit of doing hitherto.” Very well. All this we will most cheerfully do; provided they will restrict the appropriation of their funds to *non-slave-holding* missions, and make the *requisite retrenchment in their expenses*. In respect to the last matter named, however, we shall say nothing farther here, except to refer our readers to the annual report of the missionary society, and ask them to examine the subject for themselves; carefully looking over the report of the treasurer, and the by-laws of the board of managers. They will here see the openings and practice of the society with respect to the employment of agents and secretaries and clerks and committees, etc., etc., with the sums expended upon them; and be able to judge for themselves of the economy of the society, and to determine whether they can afford to spare so large a proportion of their hard earned missionary collections for the support of the multiplied and expensive agencies of the institution. If it shall be found upon examination that the operations of the society are carried on upon economical principles; why, very well. In that case we shall find no difficulty on this point in laboring to promote the great and good cause of *missions*, and in contributing liberally of our pecuniary

means for this purpose, through the medium of the missionary society.

But in respect to the connection of the society with slavery, there is an obstacle in our way which cannot be surmounted. It is insuperable in the very nature of the case. And for the missionary society to expect the co-operation and support of the anti-slavery portion of the church under existing circumstances, either in the way of the creation of a permanent missionary fund, or of continued annual contributions to the missionary treasury in their hands, is out of the question. Our minds and feelings upon this subject have long been known. It has long been known and understood that our backwardness in sustaining the operations of the society was a question, not so much of dollars and cents, as of conscience and of duty; and that there has been no period in our history when we would not have been glad to aid these operations to the full extent of our ability, if it could have been done without contributing to the support of a great moral evil. This we have often told them, but they would not hear us. Either we could not be allowed to think for ourselves, and to understand our own views and feelings in relation to the matter; or we must be denied all claim to one particle of sincerity, and treated as a pack of errant hypocrites. But it evidently suits far better with their pro-slavery principles and purposes to impute our want of co-operation with them to a feeling of covetousness, or any other cause whatever, than to admit that any possible objection arising from their connection with the *divine (?) institution of slavery* could have stood in our way. And to keep themselves in countenance before the world, and justify

their reckless persistence in the support of an evil against which the masses of the church and community so earnestly remonstrate, they impudently represent that our objections to their course in respect to slave-holding missions are all feigned—that they have nothing to do with conscience, with sincerity, with common honesty, or with common decency even—but that they are hypocritically conjured up to excuse our niggardly behavior in relation to a great and noble charity, or to justify our neglect of the claims of the missionary cause to our support.

We cannot plead guilty, however, to these most unfounded and most abusive charges. No church or denomination of christians is less liable to the charge of covetousness than our own. How else has it come to pass that we have invested a larger amount of our private means in church property than any other denomination in the land, seeing we are the *youngest*, and, it is generally conceded, the *poorest*, among them? And that the friends of the anti-slavery cause, against whom the charge of withholding their means from the benevolent objects of the church is specially directed, have contributed their full share towards the creation of these munificent investments, the single fact exhibited in the financial statistics of the Bible, Missionary, Tract, and Sabbath School Societies of the extraordinary indebtedness of these institutions to the liberality of our non-slave-holding conferences for the means of carrying on their operations, sufficiently demonstrates. Nay, our public institutions generally, as well in the church as in the state, are chiefly kept up and supported by northern aid. The south, though allowed to rule over us, and live up-

on our unrequited earnings—so far as their public institutions are concerned—treating us with the same lordly domination, and supercilious contempt as their own down-trodden slaves, are emphatically a race of paupers ; doing nothing for us, and receiving everything at our hands. In regard to institutions of a *civil* character, the post-office department within their bounds, deriving its main support from the national treasury, which is replenished almost exclusively from year to year by northern manufactures and commerce, may be taken as a fair specimen. And, to say nothing of the missionary society, and other similar institutions, in the slave-states, thousands and tens of thousands of the funds of the book-concern—the proceeds of northern sales, and of northern periodicals, for the most part—were expended, previous to the great secession of 1844, upon the single item of southern periodical literature.

If it be alleged that the border conferences, since the above mentioned secession, have furnished an exception to the general fact here set forth ; it must be remembered that a very large portion of their contributions for benevolent purposes, comes from the non-slave-holding section of their territory ; and that any amount, which may in some instances be considerable, that is contributed by the slave-holding community on the other side of Mason and Dixon's line for the support of the missionary cause and other institutions of the church, is given upon the alone ground of the southernized character of these institutions, and in consideration of the peculiar adaptation of the slave-holding religion of the church and ministry of that region to keep their human cattle in subjection to their arbitrary will, and render them more

safe and serviceable to their masters as articles of property. Our laws and our religion must all be put in requisition, and that too at an enormous expense, for the support of "the peculiar institution." Laws and officers and armies and courts and administrations must be employed for the rendition of fugitive slaves, and for the maintenance and protection of slavery, not merely in the slave-states, but in the federal territories as well, the treasury of the nation bearing the expense: and the treasury of the church must be taxed and squeezed and drained; and her entire northern membership be brought down upon their marrow-bones and lampooned into the traces, by editors and secretaries and other tools, of the slave-power, to support the institutions of religion, such as they are, within the bounds of her slaveholding conferences.

"But why not draw a veil over these dark-scenes, and still continue to co-operate with the missionary society? Does it afford you any gratification to expose the proslavery doings of the society, thereby bringing it into disrepute with its anti-slavery friends, and cutting off a large portion of the supplies on which it depends for carrying on its extensive and all-important operations?" By no means. It gives us great pain to be compelled to interfere in this way with the plans and movements of a society with which we have been so long identified in name, in sympathy, and in effort. And unwilling the cause of missions should suffer in the hands of the church, and hoping for some change in her plans of operation by which we should be relieved of the embarrassment under which we have labored in regard to the subject; we have continued to give, though with a scru-

pulous hand, for the support of the missionary society. But all hope of prevailing with the society, or the rulers of the church who have "given to them their power, and their seat, and great authority," to restrict their missionary appropriations to non-slave-holding missions having faded away, or become lost amid the gathering clouds of an insetting pro-slavery night; we feel called upon to look to some other institution, or system of operations, as a medium for the carrying forward our missionary work.

We have long forborne to take so radical a step in relation to this matter; but our forbearance has had no other effect than to provoke insult and injury. Advantage has been taken of our attachment to the cause of missions, and our great reluctance to fall out with the missionary society, or turn our collections for missionary purposes into some other channel, to follow up the unblushing crusade of persecution and proscription with respect to our anti-slavery people—particularly with respect to the preachers of this school—with increasing effrontery and violence. It has even come to be a common thing with the slave-oligarchy among us, and they seem to "think they are doing God service," to hunt us down in respect to our character and standing in the church, as a gang of fugitive outlaws; subjecting us to every species of ecclesiastical and social disability to the extent of their power. Our arguments, our remonstrances, our expostulations, and our prayers, are alike turned into ridicule. Our honest and conscientious opposition to any complicity with "the sum of all villainies" is ascribed to disaffection or covetousness. And we are denounced and slapped in the face—

particularly by the Advocate and Journal, whose columns have been monopolized by the slave-power, and rendered inaccessible to thousands of its own legitimate proprietors and patrons—as a set of reckless agitators fanatics, and revolutionists, who “are not to be reasoned with.” Nay, they seem to say in the very language of a tyrant of other days,—“Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them to rest from their burdens. Let more work be laid upon the men; and let them not regard vain words. Ye are idle, ye are idle: therefore ye say, let us go and sacrifice to the Lord—[to the author of a non-slave-holding religion.] Go therefore now and work—[for the missionary society, or the slave-power:] for there shall no straw—[no relief arising from the restriction of our missionary appropriations to non-slave-holding missions] be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of the bricks”—[the sum total of all your missionary collections, and these increased ten-fold.]

And now what is to be done? Shall we still go on making brick without straw? Still continue to patronize the missionary society, while they still continue to oppress us in our rights and consciences by compelling us to support a slave-holding religion? Doubtless they think they have got us in their power, and we cannot help ourselves. And, indeed, it has well nigh come to this. They have been gradually putting on the screws by increasing the extent and force of their Disciplinary exactions—presenting their altered forms and binding clauses of the constitution and chapter on missions to the General Conference, and driving them through that body of course, until our attention to the collection of

missionary funds, and the transmission of them to the treasury of the missionary society, is already made to enter into the examination of the character of the preachers in their respective annual conferences; and will soon, as things are now going on, at least with a slight further change which the next General Conference may be expected to consummate, be constituted a term of membership. But the chains, though forged and ready for use, are not yet absolutely put upon the necks of our consciences; or, if thrown around them with the intention of binding us to the car of missionary despotism, they are not yet riveted. There is one mode of escape, or of self-indemnification, still remaining to us. Shall we adopt it?

When, in the British Parliament, the House of Lords undertake the adoption of any measure of extravagance, or of oppression of the people, the House of Commons are wont to defeat the measure by refusing to vote supplies. And, fortunately for us, we can do the same thing in respect to any movement of the missionary society which we deem to be wrong and oppressive in its character; for there has no law been passed as yet by the authorities of the church which gives the missionary society the absolute control of our purses. We can yet withhold supplies, we believe, without forfeiting our church-membership; and we submit it to the consciences of our anti-slavery brethren, and to the judgment of the world, whether we are not now driven to this dernier resort. All other remedies have failed, though tried "with much long-suffering" and perseverance; and there is now left us no alternative but to withdraw our support from the missionary society, or continue to sus-

tain a religion by the contribution of our money and countenance, which, from its connection with the horrid sin of slavery, is less to be tolerated than Paganism itself! Can we longer hesitate what course to pursue in the premises? Do we not owe it alike to ourselves, and to the cause of God and of humanity and of *missions* even, to withdraw our support from the missionary society, till such time at least as they shall strike from the list of claimants upon their treasury all slave-holding missions; and thus leave the responsibility of the decision of the question, whether we shall longer have anything to do with their organization as a medium of missionary effort, or not, to themselves. Meanwhile, let us not abandon the missionary cause; but proceed immediately, in case of such withdrawal of our support, to organize an independent society of our own; that we may be able to carry on and sustain a cause so dear to us—the cause of missions and of God—without polluting our hands, our consciences, or our funds, with “the sum of all villanies.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DUTY OF CHRISTIAN MINISTERS WITH RESPECT TO THE SUBJECT OF POLITICS—CHURCH-SLAVERY NOT A POLITICAL INSTITUTION—IT IS A QUESTION BELONGING EXCLUSIVELY TO THE CHURCH—GOVERNMENT OF THE JEWISH NATION A PURE THEOCRACY—THE PRIESTHOOD A CO-ORDINATE BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT—POLITICS A BRANCH OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS—DUTY OF THE PRIESTS TO TEACH POLITICS—THE PRIESTS BECOMING DELINQUENT IN RESPECT TO THEIR DUTY, GOD RAISED UP A SUCCESSION OF PROPHETS TO SUPPLY THEIR LACK OF SERVICE—THESE PROPHETS PREACHED POLITICS—CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES THE SAME—ALL TRUE MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL PREACH THE POLITICS OF THE BIBLE—THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL TAKES IN THE PREACHING OF THE LAW WHICH CONDEMNNS ALL SIN, AND OF COURSE THE SIN OF SLAVERY—THOSE MINISTERS WHO PREACH NOT THE LAW, AND CONSEQUENTLY AGAINST SLAVERY, ARE NOT IN THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

In this chapter, we shall treat of the duty of the christian minister with respect to the subject of politics, particularly as it relates to slavery; taking the Holy Scriptures, as well in regard to the examples they furnish on the subject, as to the institutions and teachings by which they are characterized, for our guide. We cannot here pursue this subject at any great length; nor should we introduce it at all in this connection, but for the efforts of the advocates and perpetrators of the crime of church-slavery to exclude the min-

istry from all participation in whatever pertains to politics, and shield "the sum of all villainies" from the exterminating effect of their administration and teachings by resolving it into a political institution. This, and this alone seems to render it appropriate, and, indeed, necessary, to incorporate the subject which we propose to discuss in this chapter, into the work here submitted to the public. Our great object is, to head off the abominable slave-power on every hand; and to convince the church, in order to relieve and cure her of "the great evil of slavery."

It were no difficult task to show, that *church-slavery* is not, in any proper acceptation of the term, a *political* institution; and that the civil government has rightfully no more to do with it, pro or con, than with any other matter of a purely ecclesiastical nature. It is a question which belongs exclusively to the church; and one of course which she is required to dispose of, irrespective of political considerations, according to the Word of God. But as the slave-oligarchy, both within and without the church, are disposed to claim for "the peculiar institution" a political character, and to infer the unlawfulness of the interference of the church with it in any way or shape for that reason; we shall here admit the claim set up by them, for the sake of the argument, and proceed to show that the conclusion they draw by no means follows from the premises laid down. Our position on the subject is, that the Church of Christ, and particularly the christian ministry, have much to do with politics; and we shall now proceed to the proof.

The government of the Jewish nation, in its primary

and legitimate form, was a pure Theocracy ; embracing both the institutions of religion, and those of a political character, under one and the same organization ; the priesthood constituting a co-ordinate branch of the government. It is true, the priests, from their consecration to the sacerdotal office, and the necessity of their constant attendance upon the services of religion, had less to do with the direct administration of political affairs than their brethren of the other tribes ; but this was merely for the want of time, and not upon the ground of any disqualification, either personal or civil, for offices of this kind. The circumstance of their being set apart for the services of religion, and employed more especially in that department of the government, effected no change in their political relations, nor operated any forfeiture of their rights. Their citizen character still remained, and all their political rights and privileges still inhered in them by virtue of that character. And though they were excused from any direct oversight or management of the civil institutions of the land ; yet the connections and bearings of the office they occupied with respect to these institutions, being still more controlling in their results than the offices and administrations of the civil authorities with whom they were appointed to co-operate in the carrying on of the great objects of the government, devolved upon them a higher responsibility in relation to the proper ordering of governmental affairs and the well-being of the nation generally, than upon all the civil rulers put together.

But, to perceive the relation of the ministers of religion to the subject of politics, and the duty devolving upon them to interest themselves with political affairs,

little else is necessary than to look at the definition of the term, or to acquire a clear understanding of what it comprehends and implies. Webster says of politics,—“It is the science of government; that part of ethics which consists in the regulation and government of a nation or state, for the preservation of its safety, peace, and prosperity; comprehending the defence of its existence and rights against foreign control or conquest, the augmentation of its strength and resources, and the protection of its citizens in their rights, with the preservation and improvement of their morals.” Such, it must be allowed, is a most just and consistent view of politics. And have the ministers of religion nothing to do with the subject, considered in this light? Have they no interest to consult, no rights to maintain, no duties to perform, of a political character? May they not concern themselves with “the preservation of the safety, the peace, the prosperity of the nation?” Or with “the augmentation of its strength and resources?” Has the great and good Being—the author and benefactor of our race—who has instituted civil government, or “ordained the powers that be” for the benefit of mankind, and appointed the ministers of religion to look after their welfare, failed to establish any connection, or taken it upon himself to dissolve the connection which naturally exists between our civil and religious character, between the interests of religion, and those of politics? Who on earth have a deeper interest in the well-being of the human family, or are placed under higher obligations to endeavor to give such shape and direction to every institution—whether of a religious or political character—as has respect to their prosperity and happiness, than

the minister of religion? The bearing which political institutions have upon their own rights—social, civil, and religious—and upon the rights and character and destiny of the community at large, for whose reformation and salvation they are appointed to labor, renders it their imperative duty to concern themselves with these institutions; and they can no otherwise stand aloof from them, and leave them to the exclusive management of the irreligious and profane, or of the people of the State even, than by trampling upon their high commission as the messengers of God's love and mercy to a fallen world, and proving recreant to a most important and necessary department of the duties of the sacred office.

But to say nothing of the interest which the ministry have in politics with respect to the "preservation of the safety, peace, and prosperity of the government" under which they live *as citizens*, and the duty devolving upon them by virtue of that relation to seek to promote the welfare and happiness of the people by means of their attention to the character and administration of the political institutions of the land; it must be recollected that politics, both as an *art* and a *science*, is a branch of *ethics*, embracing, as Mr. Webster says, the preservation and improvement of the *morals* of the community—not the preservation and improvement of their *civil* institutions and rights merely, but of their *morals* likewise. And have the ministry no interests to look after—no duty to discharge—of a political character, in this view of the subject? Nothing to do with the *morals* of the State, or with the moral character of State institutions? May they not take on the character of ethical teachers, or have anything to do with moral sci-

ence which "teaches men their duty, and the reasons of it?" We hope it will not be pretended that States and State institutions have no moral character, and that therefore they lie beyond the jurisdiction of the teachers of religion; for though it is painfully true that their moral character is far from what it ought to be, as a general thing; yet, they have a moral character, and are consequently accountable to God for the position they occupy, and the influence they exert in the world; and to be regarded as the subjects of instruction, of admonition, and of discipline where they come within the pale of the church, on the part of the ministers of religion.

This certainly constituted a part of the duty of the Jewish priesthood. They were required, not only to offer the sacrifices which were appointed to be offered under the Mosaic economy, but to instruct the people also, particularly in the law—the *moral*, as well as the ceremonial law—in which all their duties, moral, civil, and *political*, were clearly pointed out and enjoined. Thus Ezra, and other priests who had returned with him from Babylon, were found instructing the people in their duty—"reading in the book of the law of God distinctly, and giving the sense and making them understand the reading." And what less was done here by the ministers of religion than to teach the people—rulers and ruled; and to teach them all their duty, their political duty not excepted; the law which they read and explained taking in this among other duties, and enforcing it in their appropriate character as a sacerdotal order at the same time, by all the sanctions of the Word of God? Surely, the pro-slavery doctrine of the non-

interference of the ministry with the subject of politics finds little countenance from the institution and practice of the Jewish priesthood during the period of the existence of their Theocratic form of Government, and the purer days of the history of the nation to whom they "ministered in holy things;" nor will a doctrine so shockingly infidel and abominable in its character, fare much better, if we trace the dealings of God with his ancient people at any subsequent period of their history. The very idea of restricting the commission of God's ministers to the instruction of the common people, and to the denunciation of the non-legalized and non-popular sins, is alike abhorrent to the Divine economy, which places all classes and conditions of mankind upon the same common level in respect to their moral character, and to the common sense and consciousness of all rational beings.

It is true, the Jewish priesthood, with now and then an exception as in the case of Ezra and a few others, departed from the Lord, after the nation had rejected him as their king, and usurped the government which belonged to him; and, like the ministry in general of our own times, became a mere State engine. But God raised up a succession of prophets—as Jeremiah, and Elijah, and Macaiah, and some others—to supply their lack of service in respect to the preaching of politics, &c.; just as he has called forth Beecher and Cheever and Akers and Hosmer and such-like men of the present day, to take the place of the great body of the ministry who having shrunk from the responsibilities of their station and lost the power of godliness, do little else than pander to the cupidity and lusts of the slave-oli-

garchy! To be sure, the interference of these faithful men of old with political affairs, and their bold and God-like denunciation of legalized and popular sins, were accounted quite unministerial and incendiary on the part of the wicked rulers of the land; and they were required, even by the church herself, so fallen and unscrupulous had she become in her devotion to the service of a corrupt government, to cease their agitation of national sins, and abstain from all interference with political institutions. But God had bidden them go forward in this way—"making known to Jacob their sins, and to Israel their transgressions"—and they could not forbear. They felt they were commissioned from above to proceed in the way they did, denouncing all sin; even though it might be sanctioned by the example, and shielded by the laws of the State; and that as no human authority—whether of kings or nobles or oligarchies—could absolve them from their allegiance to God, so neither should any human authority, whatever its character might be, deter them from the duty which he had enjoined upon them, of uttering such denunciation wherever anything in the shape of sin was found to exist.

These men of God not only preached politics; which, as a branch of ethical philosophy, inculcated the duty of men—of all men—of men under all circumstances—and the reasons of it; but they often addressed their teachings to wicked kings themselves, denouncing in their very face the awful penalty annexed to the violation of such duty on their part, without fear or favor. The following instances of cases of this sort recorded in the Scriptures, will serve as an illustration and proof of the

political preaching of the true and faithful prophets of the Lord under a former dispensation:—Moses preached politics in Egypt, interfering with the political affairs of that barbarous country, when he demanded at the hand of Pharoah the immediate and unconditional emancipation of his enslaved brethren—as we now demand the emancipation of the slaves of our country, particularly of the church—“not fearing the wrath of the king:”—Samuel preached politics to king Saul; charging him with “rebellion, which was as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness, which was as iniquity and idolatry:”—Nathan preached politics to king David, saying unto him, after having procured his condemnation of a most atrocious character which he had artfully represented and described to him,—“Thou art the man;” declaring unto him the most unwelcome announcement of a higher authority than his own, that trouble and sorrow should follow him to the day of his death; and all this as the fruit and consequence of his great and abominable wickedness:—“The man of God who came out of Judah” on a certain occasion, preached politics to king Jeroboam, when “he cried against the altar” which that wicked ruler had consecrated to idolatry, and said,—“O altar, altar! thus saith the Lord; Behold a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men’s bones shall be burned upon thee;” giving him a miraculous proof of the authority by which he announced to him the terrible judgments that should overtake him for his sins:—Elijah preached politics, when he announced to king Ahab, that “the Lord would bring evil upon him,” for his un-

paralleled wickedness ; particularly for his murder of Naboth, and the robbing him of his vineyard of which he had just taken possession ; and that the dogs should lick his blood, where they had licked the blood of Naboth whom he had slain, his royal consort—the diabolical Jezebel—sharing the same fate, and other members of his family, even all his posterity, being cut off and destroyed for the multiplied abominations he had wrought in Israel:—Jeremiah preached politics, when he admonished “Johanah, and all the captains of the forces who were with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest,” of the wickedness and danger of fleeing from the king of Babylon into Egypt, in violation of God’s command ; assuring them that the very evils they sought to escape, should overtake them in their chosen refuge, and that “they should be an execration and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach ; and should see that place no more:”—and John the Baptist preached politics, when he said to king Herod, “It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife ;” reproving the royal adulterer for his violation of the law of God and of social order, to the great detriment of the morals of the nation.

“But why go back to old testament times for authority for the duty of the ministers of religion to interfere with political affairs ? What is their authority good for in the present age of the world ? Have they not been fulfilled and superseded by the gospel dispensation ?” Surely not, except as it relates to the ceremonial law. The duty of the ministry to concern themselves with politics is based upon the *moral* law, which is the same unchangeable rule of human conduct in all ages ; and of

course a rule of conduct for *us*, and for *our times*. If the law enjoining this duty in the Old Testament, had been repealed or abrogated by the New ; why, of course, it must have passed away, or lost its binding force. But as the duty in question, instead of being done away in the New Testament, is clearly confirmed and established therein, as well by the reiteration of the precepts enjoining it, and the example of Christ and the apostles, as by the establishing the law out of which it originally grew, there is no escaping its authority ; and he who fails to preach politics, being called to the work of the ministry in these, our gospel times, forfeits all confidence as a man of God, and falls under the malediction of Heaven ! We have only to keep in mind that politics constitutes *a branch of christian ethics* ; embracing the preservation and improvement of the *morals* of the community ; in order to be satisfied of the existence of the science in the New Testament, and of the duty of the ministry to preach it wherever they go. Let us then turn our attention for a few moments to the teachings of the New Testament upon the subject, and see whether any warrant for the interference of the christian ministry with political affairs is to be derived from that source.

But here we are met with a difficulty ; not from the want of evidence or authority to sustain our position in respect to the duty of the interference of the ministry with the subject of politics, but from their superabundance. The passages which treat of this matter, either directly, or by implication, are so many, and so full to the point, that we are at a loss to make the selection from among them, seeing we can take but a mere

tithe of the multitudinous aggregate, which shall best suit our purpose. And we wonder that any man, especially a minister of the gospel whose business it is to understand and teach the Word of God, should be so blinded in his perceptions of truth, or warped in his judgment upon the subject, as to be capable of entertaining an adverse opinion. The New Testament, of all other books in the world, abounds the most, and is the most replete, with the principles and teachings of ethical philosophy—the grand and only true basis of genuine politics—insomuch that the scoffing infidel, though reluctantly it would seem, is constrained to acknowledge it; admitting, as he always does when pressed upon the subject, that this part of the sacred volume especially, contains the purest system of morality which has ever been presented to the world. Nowhere do we find politics—that important branch of christian ethics, “which teaches the duty of men, and the reasons of it”—so clearly brought out, and inculcated upon them, as in the New Testament. Here politics, being set forth both as a science and an art, is enforced upon the observance of mankind, both in theory and practice. And here, the duty of man, in all the relations and circumstances of life—his political duty, as well as his duty in general—is enforced, not so much by civil pains and penalties, as by the infinitely more weighty and effective sanctions of religion! True, civil pains and penalties—even to the extent of capital punishment, in cases of capital offences, are to be inflicted by the State; she being as much required by the Word of God to punish civil offenders, and protect her citizens—black and white—in their civil rights, as the church to keep herself pure from sin

and sinners, by the exercise of ecclesiastical Discipline. And this is one of the political duties which the church, the ministry especially, are to urge upon the State, as the guardians of her ethical or moral character. But passing over the many scores of passages in which politics, or the science of government, and its due and faithful administration, are portrayed and taught, we shall confine ourselves to what is eminently denominated, "The sermon on the mount," and a few other passages which evidently grow out of it. Nor can we do more, so full is this sermon of the principles and teachings of the science of politics, and its application to political purposes, than barely to glance at its contents; remarking a little more particularly upon the so-called golden rule, in which the whole subject is summarily embraced.

If we look into Christ's sermon on the mount, as it is called, contained in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Mathew's gospel, we shall find that the purest and most lofty principles that were ever laid down, as well for the political, as for the moral government of mankind, are here introduced. The relation of the church and ministry to the world around them, and their duty and influence with respect to the subject of politics, are placed in the strongest light; leaving no ambiguity, or obscurity even, in relation to the matter. Look at those *negative* precepts which involve the inhibition of murder, adultery, the violation of the laws of marriage, and the sin of retaliation: and then at those of a *positive* character, by which all are commanded and enjoined, particularly the church, to "let their light shine;" or to pursue a course of uprightness and virtue which shall constitute them "the light of the world, the salt of the

earth," and an example of the love of their neighbor, nay, of their enemies also; and you will see how full they are of the sublimest political ethics—how full of the inculcation of the duty of man in all the various relations and circumstances of life. Let those who maintain that all these injunctions and teachings were intended to apply to us as *christians* merely, and *not as citizens*, or members of the *body politic* as well; blush, if they are capable of blushing, for their shameful perversion of the Scriptures of Divine truth. Surely, the teachings of our Lord upon the mount are not to be taken apart from their political considerations and bearings, as if we had no political relations or duties to consult in our movements, or anything to do with the affairs of the State in any way. They are clearly universal in their application, affecting all the possible relations of society, whether moral, social, civil, or political; and no one who has the least pretensions to the science of Biblical interpretation, or to the rules and principles of the commonest literary composition even, can understand them in any other way.

We shall now pass to notice, that not only the Jewish priests and prophets, but even Christ and the apostle were preachers of politics. We have already anticipated the political preaching of the Savior, to some extent, in what we have said above; but we wish to be a little more particular. Let it be observed then, that he preached politics, and he preached it as no mere man ever did or could do it, when he uttered the following brief discourse,—“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” This single pas-

sage, brief and simple as it is, takes in the whole system of civil government—laws, administrations, and all—and should a thousand of the ablest preachers take this passage for a text, and each of them preach a thousand political sermons from it; understanding and explaining it according to the analogy of faith of course; they could not exhaust its amazing contents, or go beyond its legitimate application and meaning. That it is a *moral* precept, having respect to the moral character and conduct of mankind, alters not the case. Politics are a branch of christian ethics, and consequently is all embraced in its range; there being no other difference between the one and the other, than that between *genus* and *species*. Our Lord says of the preceptive part of the passage in question,—“This is the law”—the *moral* law contained in the Decalogue and other portions of the Pentateuch—which took in the whole scheme and science of civil government, with all the relations and duties of the people growing out of it; “and the prophets”—i. e., the *teachings* of the prophets—by which all the obligations and duties of the law were enforced upon the people of the land, rulers and ruled; and of course, their obligations and duties of a *political* character. And how far does all this fall short of preaching politics? But to conclude our remarks upon the political preaching of Christ, it seems appropriate to observe, *sylogistically*—that all who either preach christian ethics, or the moral law, preach politics—the *latter* being embraced in the *former*, as we have shown above: but Christ preached both the *one* and the *other*, the whole christian world being judge; therefore Christ preached politics.

We shall next take notice, that St. Paul was an *ethico-political* preacher; and that, in this respect he followed closely in the foot-steps of his Divine Lord and Master. An instance or two of his political preaching, however, is all we have room to give in the present work. In the first place he evidently preached politics in the thirteenth chapter of his epistle to the Romans; particularly when he said,—“Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law. For this cause, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” We only need remark upon this passage, that the apostle here reiterates and enforces precisely those precepts of the Decalogue—that awfully grand compendium of the moral law—which lie at the very foundation, and enter largely into the constitution and laws and administrations of civil government; presenting at the same time all those precepts of the moral law, not embraced in the foregoing catalogue, and that sublime and impressive summary of christian ethics which takes in the whole system of politics—“teaching man his duty,” as well in his *political*, as in his social, civil, domestic, and moral relations, “and the reasons of ‘it.’” Again, this same apostle preached politics, when he taught and enjoined upon Philemon the duty of emancipating his down-trodden slave—Onesimus, and of exalting him—not of at-

tempting to recover the poor fugitive by means of blood-hounds, fire-arms, and a miserable gang of State officials, but of exalting him to an equality with himself; accounting and treating him as "a brother beloved." Other apostles might be quoted to the same effect, but the above must here suffice. We have given examples enough to establish the doctrine of the duty of the christian ministry to preach politics; and if the reader wishes to examine the subject further, he can take up the Word of Divine inspiration which everywhere abounds with *political*, as well as moral and religious teaching, and pursue it at his leisure.

But while the genuine ministers of religion, with Christ at their head, have all preached politics as an important part of their work and mission, they have always confined themselves to the politics of the Bible.—The preaching *party*-politics, or the so-called politics of the day—which, indeed, are not politics, but a shameful abuse of the system—they most cordially repudiate and despise: and, generally speaking, they look upon the so-called politicians of the times, particularly of our own country, as a set of demagogues, speculators, black-legs—a swarm of political hypocrites—professing devotion to patriotism and to the cause of liberty, just for the sake of office; while they are trampling the free institutions of our beloved country in the dust at the same time; and building up a slave-holding aristocracy—a ruthless despotism—a reign of oppression and terror—upon their ruins!

Such are the politics preached by Christ and the apostles; and such are the politics which all the genuine ministers of religion preach—particularly those of

the anti-slavery school—who can no more eschew or give up this kind of preaching than they can give up the sacred calling which God has required them to pursue, or abandon the cause of religion altogether! These are the politics which have constrained the servants of God in all ages of the world “to obey God, rather than man.” And, taking “the higher law” for their standard and guide, their position with respect to wicked administrations and laws—of which they must judge in the light of their own consciences and the word of God—is that of *passive resistance*; their Biblical politics leading them to prefer to suffer the penalty of disobedience, rather than be guilty of a wicked act, even though commanded to perpetrate it by the authority of the State. This was the position occupied by Daniel and Shadrach and Meshach and Abednego and James and John, and of all the faithful of primitive times; and it has been the position of all their true successors in the service of the Lord—preachers and people—down to the present time. They have felt that “obedience to tyrants (all wicked rulers) was treason against God;” and they dare not be guilty of such criminal obedience. Their politics have ever stood in the way of a course of conduct so extremely wicked in the sight of God, and so repugnant and dangerous to their own souls!

Real politics—the politics of the Bible—which constitute so important a branch of Christian ethics, must be preached, nay, *will* be preached, by all the genuine ministers of the Gospel, “though the heavens fall.” All who are in the true succession of the prophets and apostles and fathers of the Church, must and will preach politics. And all those belonging to the ministry who

repudiate this course—refusing to preach politics themselves, and opposing all such as do preach them—are clearly not in the succession of the genuine Christian ministry of the Church of Christ. Doubtless there are many among us who will exclaim here,—“This is a hard saying: who can hear it?” Yet we have nothing to retract—nothing to modify—and having told the truth, and pleased God, as we humbly trust; we shall neither shrink from any responsibilities or consequences involved in the publication of our sentiments upon the very grave subject herein discussed, nor sympathize much with those of the church and ministry who needlessly—perhaps we ought to say criminally—place themselves in a condition to be wounded by the truth of God.

“But Christ says, — ‘My kingdom is not of this world;’ and we want his ministers to preach the gospel, and let politics alone.” Aye, indeed, and are not “the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ?” and “the stone that was hewn out of the mountain without hands, to become a great mountain and fill the whole earth?” And how is all this to be accomplished, except the ministry interfere to bring it about, by transforming the political institutions and governments of the world into one great Christian empire, which shall acknowledge the reign of Christ, and submit to his rule and authority? Is the abstract gospel going to effect this great reformation and change, without such interference on their part? Will the mere circumstance of its having been revealed to the evangelists, and put into the form of a book or manuscript by them, suffice to “give unto Christ the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for

his possession ;” except it be applied to the nations of the earth, as well in its political, as in its religious requisitions and teachings, by a politico-evangelical ministry? To what purpose, then, has our divine Lord commissioned the ministry of his word, and sent them “into all the world”—“the world that lieth in wickedness”—the *political* world, of course; “to preach the gospel to every creature”—rulers, politicians and slaveholders among the rest—as the grand means of the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness, and the building up and establishing the universal reign of the Messiah?

“But we would like to know what all these arguings amount to. We really cannot see why Christian ministers should interfere with the things which belong to Cæsar, or desecrate the sacred office to which they have been consecrated and set apart, by dabbling in matters of a political character. We insist upon it that it is their business to preach the gospel; and that they have no right to engage in anything else.” Well, we shall not dispute the ground that Christian ministers are to preach the gospel; and that this is to constitute their one great and only work. And this is just what we anti-slavery preachers are doing—just what is done in the present work. Our custom is to preach the *whole* gospel, however; and not a garbled, mutilated, semi-infidel gospel—“having men’s persons in admiration, because of advantage.” We believe in “preaching the gospel to every creature”—“to them that are afar off, and to them that are nigh”—slaveholders, slave-holding churches, politicians and all; and of proclaiming in their ears, whatever may be their rank or station in life, “except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” We are

sworn, like all other ministers of the gospel, to preach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." And whatever others may do, it shall be our endeavor to fulfil the awfully solemn vows we have taken upon us ; proclaiming the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as it is set forth and revealed in the Holy Scriptures ; irrespective of creeds, disciplines, slave-laws, or any other human institution on this broad earth. But as some will doubtless question the truth of the position here assumed, that we are truly and properly preaching the gospel, as we pretend, in bringing politics into the pulpit, and causing the anti-slavery press to teem with denunciations against " the sum of all villanies ; " or that preaching politics in any shape, is, in reality, preaching the gospel ; we shall take the liberty to subjoin a brief gospel sermon, precisely here, as an illustration and proof of our doctrine on the subject.

The sermon we propose to preach for the object and reason specified, will be founded upon the gospel by St. Matthew, seventh chapter, twelfth verse :— *Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them : for this is the law and the prophets.*" This, it will be allowed by all, is a *gospel text*. And we would say, by way of application, that it refers not so much to the relation we sustain to God, and the duty of faith and worship growing out of it ; as to the relation we sustain to our fellow-creatures, and the duties devolving upon us by virtue of that relation, to respect each other's rights under all the conditions of society. Its general scope and bearing is purely *ethical*—" teaching us our duty to each other, and the reasons of it ; " rather than *devotional*—involving the

duty of piety towards God, or that of religious adoration and worship. This, we esteem to be a *gospel explanation*.

Our first proposition is, that this passage is a *compendium of Christian ethics* ; taking in the whole system of politics—legislative, executive, and judicial.—For the proof of the first part of this proposition, we refer to Webster, who says in his lexicography—“ Politics are a branch of ethics, which teaches the duty of men, and the reasons of it :” and the fact of the comprehension of the legislative, executive and judicial departments of the system of politics, in the system itself, is self-evident ; or at least is established by the argument *a priori*, which needs no corroborative proof.

Our second and last proposition is, that the text under consideration involves the sum and substance of the whole moral law, and of all the precepts and teachings of the Jewish prophets. We shall rest the truth of this proposition on the testimony of the infallible Author of the text ; who explicitly says :—“ This is the law and the prophets.” And having established both these propositions, as will be seen, on *gospel grounds* ; we shall proceed to draw a few *gospel inferences* which legitimately rise out of the subject. It is true, our analysis of the text is quite brief, and simple in its character ; but it is sufficiently expanded to meet the exigencies of the case, or to render the inferences we propose to deduce from it, clear and intelligent. Let us then proceed to the inferences which are authorized and required by the subject under consideration.

1. If politics be a branch of Christian ethics, which “ teaches men their duty, and the reasons of it,” as we

have seen, then is it the duty of the ministers of the gospel to preach politics, the gospel everywhere enjoining it upon them to inculcate universal duty.

2. The duty of the ministry to preach politics is no less clearly established by the fact of the comprehension of "the law and the prophets," which cover the whole ground of political institutions and duties, in the language and meaning of the text we have taken from the gospel.

3. As our Lord here teaches and commands all men to do as they would be done by—in respect to the enjoyment of liberty, of course, and all other rights and privileges—and Christian ministers are sent forth "into all the world, and to every creature," to propagate his commands and teachings in respect to such liberties, rights and privileges—neither "adding thereto nor diminishing therefrom," at their peril; of course they are required to propagate the golden rule; the ethico-political obligations and duties enjoined in our text—"in all the world, and to every creature."

4. As the text under consideration takes in "the law and the prophets"—forbidding all the sins, as that of slavery, which they forbid; and enjoining all the obligations and duties, as that of "breaking every yoke, and letting the oppressed go free," which they enjoin—thereby endorsing and confirming all their precepts and teachings by its own gospel authority; it inevitably follows, that they who preach not the law—in which the whole system and practical workings of politics are embraced—preach not the gospel. A likely story, to be sure, that the gospel allows of the existence of sin, where it is connected with political institutions; when the law

even gave it no quarters : or that Christian ministers are permitted to pass by in silence, nay, to nurse the sins of the State, and of the church also, if they have any connection with political affairs ; the priests and prophets of a darker dispensation having been commanded of God to pursue them to the death !

5. As the gospel, speaking in the language of the law, which it most unequivocally endorses in our text, forbids slavery under the designation of "man-stealing," "oppression," "coveting any thing that is our neighbor's"—of course, himself, wife, child, or earnings—and the like, on pain of death ; and enjoins it upon slaveholders, as the great sum of all ethical duty—moral, social and political, to do as they would be done by, in emancipating their slaves especially ; consequently he who preaches not emancipation, in obedience to these ethico-political injunctions of the text ; not only does not preach the gospel, but renders himself guilty of a sin of death and damnation-penalty !!

We shall now submit the question—by way of concluding our *gospel sermon*—whether preaching the gospel, which we most cordially acknowledge constitutes the one great and only work of the Christian ministry, is not preaching politics, which takes in "the preservation and improvement of the morals of the State and community ? And whether any can be said to preach the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who ignore this kind of preaching ; much less, if they denounce and oppose it ? It is true, the genuine minister of the gospel preaches "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ ;" but he remembers *that upon* the great summary of the gospel—the love

of God and man—"hang all the law and the prophets;" and that the law of *faith* even is only fulfilled by the love of our neighbor, which leads us to "do to others, as we would they should do unto us." "He that loveth another," saith Paul, doing as he would be done by, "hath fulfilled the law."

If our non-political preachers are disposed to take the responsibility of "fleeing when the wolf cometh," and leaving the ferocious animal to devour the sheep"—the responsibility of forbearing to "blow the trumpet when they see the sword coming," or to warn the wicked slave-holder, the slave-holder within the pale of the church even, of his terrible danger, lest they should suffer in their reputation or lose their bread and butter, and leave him to "perish in his sins," knowing that "the blood of all such will be required at their hands;" we can't help it. We shall not fail, however, to warn *them* of their danger; or to point them to the awful fate which awaits those "dumb dogs that cannot bark"—clearing our skirts of *their* blood, and leave them to answer for themselves!!!

We feel we have now performed a duty we had long owed to God, to the church, and to our own conscience. A duty which should have been discharged at an earlier period, could we have been spared the time from other engagements, chiefly of a public character, which hung upon our hands. If we have used great plainness of speech, sometimes bordering on severity, it has not been owing to any bitterness of spirit in our bosom; or to any disaffection or ill-will towards the church, to which we are happy to acknowledge ourself under very great obligations, and which we still love and

cherish with the best affections of our heart, as a body ; but from the stern conviction of the necessity of such a course, and the hope, faint and flickering though it has been, that a sort of life or death, kill or cure treatment, might have the desired effect—producing some change for the better, which all milder means had failed to accomplish.

But our sun has well nigh gone round ; and we may never live to witness the consummation of our object—the extirpation of church-slavery—we have so much at heart, and for the accomplishment of which we have so ardently labored, and prayed and struggled. Yet we will still feebly hope. Who can tell what good thing God may have in reversion for our beloved Zion ? There may now be another Luther, or Wesley, in some one of our American Wirtembergs, or Oxfords—nay, among our earliest prospective accessions to the episcopacy even—who will shake the Methodist Episcopal Church, as those great and powerful reformers shook the polluted churches to which they respectively belonged ; purging her of “ the great evil of slavery,” as those churches were purged of some of their more glaring corruptions. There never was a wider field, or a fairer opportunity for the acquisition of an undying fame, and the accomplishment of a great and noble work for the benefit of the church and the world, than now opens to our episcopacy. Let there be the decided anti-slavery example and countenance of a solitary member of the episcopal college, to whom the church and ministry could confidently look for co-operation and support, in their efforts for the extirpation of “ the *sum of all villanies*,” and the thing is done—church-

slavery is numbered among the things that were.— What a pity that no one of all our bishops should see this gracious opening. Or seeing it, as perhaps some of them do, should have the courage, and the conscience to enter into it, and improve it, to the glory of God, their own everlasting credit, and the advancement of the cause of humanity and religion, from the rising to the setting sun. How enviable would be the position of such a bishop in the eyes of all the world! Who among our episcopacy covets this high distinction? Who of them all will aspire to a position of such pre-eminent usefulness and glory? Should they all decline this honor, some other instrumentality will doubtless be employed in their stead, and the great and glorious object of the abolition of church-slavery be shortly achieved. But whatever the instrumentality may be, God will be glorified in the event, and all who shall have been “co-workers with him” in the anti-slavery warfare, will share in the honors of the triumph.

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