

ACTS

OF THE

ANTI-SLAVERY APOSTLES.

BY

PARKER PILLSBURY.

"And they went everywhere preaching the Word."

ACTS viii. 4.



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CHAPTER III.

SLAVERY—AS IT WAS.

Everybody now is anti-slavery. It is honorable now to be a child of the man who "cast the first anti-slavery vote in our town;" or called "our first anti-slavery meeting;" or first entertained Garrison as guest, or Abby Kelley, or Frederick Douglass; or rescued Stephen Foster or Lucy Stone from the hands of a ferocious mob; or raised, or commanded the first company of colored troops in the war of Rebellion, at the time when not a musical band could be found in the whole city of New York to play for a colored regiment, as it marched from the New Haven Railway station to the steamer at the foot of Canal street to embark for the seat of war! "*Paid pipers,*" the venerable Dr. Tyng with withering scorn called them all on the same evening in Cooper Institute, where he presided at a lecture by George William Curtis. "*Paid pipers,*" with wind too immaculate to blow away in escort of a gallant battalion of our country's saviors, when there was no other name under heaven given among men," whereby the nationality could be saved but the *negro name*; despised as he was and rejected of men; "a man of sorrows" and acquainted all his dreary life with grief! Everybody now is an abolitionist, or son, or grandson of an anti-slavery parentage, and so all seem to claim equal honor, so far as honor is due, for ridding the world of the sublimest scourge and curse that ever afflicted the human race.

Few now, however, have much conception of what slavery was; or what was genuine, effective anti-slavery, when slavery sat supreme "on its throne of skulls," and ruled the whole nation, state, church and school, literature, trade, commerce, manufactures and agriculture, as with rod of iron! And its first command, great command, only command was, "Thou shalt have no god but me." Not, as from Mount Sinai, "no other *gods* before me," but no other *god*. Not "no other gods *before* me," but "no other gods *with, or above or below* me!" So it was. Anti-slavery then, was more than a name; more than profession; or denomination in religion; or party in the government. So Christianity had mighty meanings when the great apostle to the Gentiles wrote: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." And "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." It had fearful meanings when the gardens of Nero were illumined with the burning bodies of martyred saints, both men and women, young and old! When to name the Christ of God was death in lingering torments—when crucifixions were so multiplied that, as in grim epigram it was said, "space was wanted for crosses, and crosses for christians." And yet so sublime was christian heroism at that hour, that it could have well been added, but christians are never wanting for crosses.

But what was our slave system, that so many now proudly claim to have aided to destroy? And whose fathers and mothers were those who really did bear active, effective part in the thirty years moral and peaceful conflict, inaugurated by Garrison with "sword of the spirit;" whose only weapons were

"The mild arms of truth and love,
Made mighty through the living God?"

Or whose sons and brothers rushed at last to the field of mortal combat, and fought the bloodiest, mightiest, everyway, most frightful war, that has shaken the earth and darkened the skies in all the christian years? Slavery! What is it? What was it on the American plantation? "Peculiar Institution," some called it. "Patriarchal Institution," others! But what was it? All language pales and is silent in its dread presence. Slave-holding! "Deed without a name!" In cant phrase we said slavery degrades man to the brute, sinks woman to the dead level of the horse. And then who knows the height and depth, the length and breadth of those stunning words; insulting blasphemies against the Holy Spirit of Humanity! Let one advertisement, distributed by large handbills, as well as published in the daily newspapers of New Orleans, aid the imagination:

RAFFLE. MR. JOSEPH JENNINGS respectfully informs his friends and the public that, at the request of many acquaintances, he has been induced to purchase from Mr. Osborne, of Missouri, the celebrated DARK BAY HORSE, "STAR," aged five years, square trotter and warranted sound; with a new, light Trotting Buggy and Harness: Also the dark, stout Mulatto Girl, "Sarah," aged about twenty years, general house servant, valued at *nine hundred dollars*, and guaranteed: and will be RAFFLED for at four o'clock P. M., February first, at the selection hotel of the subscribers. The above is as represented, and those persons who may wish to engage in the usual practice of raffling will, I assure them, be perfectly satisfied with their destiny in this affair.

The whole is valued at its just worth, fifteen hundred dollars; fifteen hundred CHANCES at One Dollar each. The Raffle will be conducted by gentlemen selected by the interested subscribers present. Five nights will be allowed to complete the Raffle. Both of the above described can be seen at my store, No. 78 Common street, second door from Camp, at from nine o'clock, A. M., to two P. M.

Highest throw to take the first choice; the lowest throw the remaining prize, and the fortunate winners will pay Twenty Dollars each for the refreshments furnished on the occasion.

N. B. No chances recognized unless paid for previous to the commencement.
JOSEPH JENNINGS.

In the light of a spectacle like this, it is possible to fancy slightly what should be understood when it is said that slavery degrades human beings to the plane of brute beasts.

Or reverse the order of illustration, if we dare, and imagine a brute beast raised to the dignity and honor,

the privilege and prerogative of a man, an immortal being. History or fable tells us of a Roman Sovereign who made a favorite horse first Consul of the Empire. Such mockery might have been. But suppose in a christian country, in a christian sanctuary, it were proposed to admit, not a horse, but some dogs into full fellowship and communion with the church. It is on a delightful Sunday of early summer, in a pleasant New England country town. The village gardens are already abloom with early flowers, the orchards are white with prophecy of abundant fruit, and every tree is an orchestra of cheerful birds, whose worship-notes almost charm the Sabbath silence into sweet accord with the songs of paradise. All the village and the districts around assemble at their, to them, "house of God." At the appointed hour, the baptized communicants of the accepted faith are invited to seats at the sacramental board. The unregenerate of the congregation retire to the outer seats, paying silent but respectful attention. The first scene in the solemn service is admission of new members, who are invited forward to the altar. There, in presence of the congregation, they listen and bow silent assent to the Articles of Faith and the Covenant Vows, and receive the seal of baptism, in the name of the triune God. Solemn and impressive as this may be, it may excite no unusual emotions, being neither new nor infrequent. But slavery, we used to say with lip only, "degrades man and woman to a level with the brutes;" puts the "bay horse, Star," and the "Mulatto girl, Sarah," into the same raffle, or on the same auction-block. Now change the order. Elevate the brutes to the place of immortal beings at the baptismal font and sacramental table. Whistle up two or three dogs and solemnly read over to them the creed and

covenant, and sprinkle them with the holy drops of baptism, calling them by their appropriate brute names, "Lion, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Tiger, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And let the third be a female: "Topsy, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Let such a spectacle be enacted on a delightful summer Sunday afternoon, in a beautiful New England village, in its pleasant white meeting-house, and at the memorial supper of that crucified Redeemer in whom the church and its pastor devoutly believed, and through whom they humbly hoped for salvation. Can the effect on the beholders of such a daring spectacle be described, or even imagined? As well, but no better, attempt a description of that slavery which truly did degrade human beings to a level with horses and with dogs. This whole scene was once supposed as illustration, in the days of slavery, in just such town and house of worship as here described, and not only that town, but the pulpit and religious press of both the hemispheres almost shrieked as with holy horror at what they called so audacious, so diabolical blasphemy. And the cry came up from near and far for immediate punishment of him who had so illumined slavery, to the fullest demand of the statute, which was long confinement, it was held, in the State prison! But one thing was made clear. The words, Slavery degrades man to a level with beasts, were seen and felt as perhaps never before. The congregation where the illustration was presented saw and solemnly felt that from beasts up to men—to men exalted to angelic heights—was no farther than those deeps down which

immortal man is plunged, to reach the level of the beasts that perish. And that frightful pit was reached by every chattel slave ever born.

But the question, What was American slavery? is not yet answered. To call it robbery, by only our dictionary definition, would pay it high compliment. Its fell work began where all ordinary robbery leaves off. John Wesley saw it and pronounced it, "Sum of all villainies." And if he did not pronounce the slave holder sum of all villains, he did address him in words like these :

What I have said to slave-traders, equally concerns all slave-holders, of whatever rank and degree, seeing man-buyers are exactly on a level with man-stealers. You say, I pay honestly for my goods, and am not concerned to know they are honestly come by. Nay, but you are. * * * You know they are not honestly come by; you know they are procured by means nothing near so innocent as picking pockets, house-breaking, or robbery on the highway. You know they are procured by a deliberate species of more complicated villainy, of fraud, robbery and murder, than was ever practiced by Mohammedans or Pagans; in particular, by murders of all kinds; by the blood of the innocent poured upon the ground like water. Now it is *your* money that pays the African butcher. *You*, therefore, are principally guilty of all these frauds, robberies and murders. *You* are the spring that puts all the rest in motion. They would not stir a step without *you*: therefore the blood of all these wretches who die before their time lies upon *your* head. "The blood of thy brother crieth against thee from the earth." O, whatever it costs, put a stop to its cry before it be too late; instantly, at any price, were it the half of your goods, deliver thyself from blood-guiltiness! Thy hands, thy bed, thy furniture, thy house, and thy lands, at present are stained with blood. Surely it is enough; accumulate no more guilt; spill no more the blood of the innocent. Do not hire another to shed blood; do not pay him for

doing it. Whether you are a Christian or not, show yourself a man! Be not more savage than a lion or a bear.

Slavery is not robbery therefore, because it is so much more, and worse. Indeed, to rob man of manhood, and bestialize him down with not only animals, but the dead matter on which brutes feed and tread, makes any farther spoliation simply impossible.

Or shall we pronounce American slavery adultery, wholesale, unblushing adultery? If not, it must be because, as with robbery, it was something so much worse. For, first, what is adultery but setting aside all rights, privileges and responsibilities, human and divine, of both the marriage and parental relations? Slavery knew no more of marriage and parentage among slaves than among swine. Logically, as well as legally, it could not. And the statutes and court decisions so declared.

But such abomination had not only state sanction, but church sanctification as well. Judge Birney, of Kentucky, once a slave-holder, in his memorable tract entitled: "The American Churches the Bulwarks of American Slavery," second edition, revised by the author, cites this instance:

In 1835 the following query referring to slaves was presented to the Savannah River Baptist Association of Ministers: "Whether in case of involuntary separation of such a character as to preclude all prospect of future intercourse, the parties ought to be allowed to marry again."

The following was the answer:

* * * Such separation among persons situated as are our slaves, is civilly a separation by death. And we believe that in the sight of God, it would be so viewed! * * * The slaves are not free agents, and a dissolution by death is not more entirely without their consent and beyond their control than by such separation.

James G. Birney was at one time a slave-holder as well as judge in the courts, and a ruling elder in the Presbyterian church. He was induced to emancipate his slaves, as well as to provide for their future support, taking them over into the free state of Ohio for that purpose, by the faithful and earnest argument and appeal of Theodore D. Weld, an early, eloquent and everyway most efficient apostle and laborer in the anti-slavery field. Washing his own hands from the blood and guilt of slave holding, Judge Birney set himself to the work of abolishing the foul system. Among his first endeavors was an attempt to purify the churches, beginning with his own. But neither his official standing in both state and church, nor his high consequent social status availed to shield him from every possible indignity and outrage at the hands of infuriated mobs, composed largely sometimes of members of the churches. Driven from Kentucky he removed to Ohio. His descent on Cincinnati, where he had now become known, was a signal to waken all the vengeance of both church and state against him. Meetings were at once called, "to see if the people will permit abolition papers to be published in this city." At the first meeting the postmaster, who was also a minister, presided. A committee of thirteen, all eminent citizens, and eight of them church members, was appointed to wait on Mr. Birney and assure him that his paper must stop, or the meeting would not be responsible for the consequences of its continuance. The chairman of the committee declared that "if the paper were not promptly suspended, a mob, unusual in numbers, determined in purpose, and desolating in its ravages, would be inevitable!" All of which proved true, for the paper did not stop. In the darkness of midnight the mob entered and carried

press, types and all else of contents and sunk them in the Ohio river. And twice afterwards was the same outrage perpetrated. No wonder Mr. Burney entitled his memorable tract, published at the time, "The American Churches the Bulwarks of American Slavery." For the title was more than justified on every subsequent page, as will hereafter be made to appear. And the word of divine truth uttered by Mr. Weld, and the baptism of fire and water three times administered by the fiendish mob, with full approval of state, church and pulpit, were sufficient consecration of the author of the memorable tract to his subsequent anti-slavery ministry and apostleship.

But returning to the argument. Not only was slavery adultery, as sanctified and committed by the churches, in thus sundering all marriage rights and responsibilities; it was legally and in solemn compact annihilation of human marriage and parentage. The court decisions contained sentiments such as these: "With consent of their masters, slaves may marry; but in a state of slavery it can produce no *civil* effect, because slaves are deprived of all civil rights." [*Judge Matthews, of Louisiana.*] Attorney-General Delany, of Maryland, held that slaves would not be admonished for incontinence, or punished for adultery or fornication; or prosecuted for petty treason, or for killing a husband, being a slave. The code of Louisiana declared, "a slave could not contract matrimony. The association which takes place among slaves, and is called marriage, being properly designated *contubernium*, a relation without sanctity, and to which no civil rights adhere." So the plain, unquestionable fact was, slavery was wholesale, legalized, sanctified concubinage, or adultery, from first to last. Our government was based on the prostrate bodies, souls and civil,

social, marital, parental, educational, moral and religious rights of half a million of immortal beings. In three-quarters of a century their numbers multiplied till at the downfall of the institution there were four millions, and not one legal marriage ever existed in all their generations! And yet, compelled by law thus to live and herd like brute beasts, hundreds of thousands of them were admitted to baptism and sacramental communion and fellowship in all the great evangelical denominations in the land!

One other attribute of the dreadful system remains to be exposed, and that was *murder*. Under the written law of slavery, more than seventy offences, when committed by slaves, were punishable with death. One law read, "if any slave shall presume to strike any white person, such slave may be lawfully killed." Of course killed on the spot. A woman or girl would have been killed (undoubtedly many were killed) for defending her person against the lustful attack of her overseer or other white assailant.

Special laws existed for recapturing escaped slaves at any cost of life to the victims, by first proclaiming them outlaws. The following legal instrument with its accompaniments will suffice to show the way:

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, }
Lenoir County.

Whereas, complaint hath been this day made to us, two of the Justices of the Peace for the said county, by William D. Cobb, of Jones county, that two negro slaves belonging to him, named Ben (commonly known by the name of Ben Fox) and Rigdon, have absented themselves from their said master's service, and are lurking about in the counties of Lenoir and Jones, committing acts of felony;—these are, in the name of the State, to command the said slaves forthwith to surrender themselves, and return home to their said master. And we do hereby, by virtue of an act of the Assembly of this State, concerning servants and slaves, intimate and declare, if the said slaves do not surrender themselves and return home to their master immediately after the publication of these presents, that any person may kill and destroy said slaves by such means as he or they think fit, without accusation or impeachment of any crime or offence for so doing, or without incurring any penalty or forfeiture thereby.

Given under our hands and seals, this 12th day of November, 1836.

B. COLEMAN, J. P. [Seal.]
JAMES JONES, J. P. [Seal.]

TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD.—Ran away from the subscriber, a certain negro man named Ben, (commonly known by the name of Ben Fox). Also, one other negro, by the name of Rigdon, who ran away on the 8th of this month.

I will give the reward of one hundred dollars for each of the above negroes, to be delivered to me or confined in the jail of Lenoir or Jones county, or for the killing of them, so that I can see them.

November 12, 1836.

W. D. COBB.

Another advertisement, from the Sumpter County (Alabama) *Whig*, will illustrate the methods of slave hunting in other States besides North Carolina:

NEGRO DOGS.—The undersigned having bought the entire pack of NEGRO DOGS of the Hay & Allen stock, he now proposes to catch runaway negroes. His charge will be three dollars a day for hunting, and fifteen dollars for catching a runaway. He resides three and one-half miles north of Livingston, near the lower Jones' Bluff road.

November 6, 1845.

WM. GAMBEL.

The New York *Commercial-Advertiser* of June 8th, 1827, contained the following item of news, not uncommon at that time, as the irresponsibility of slave-holders over the lives of their slaves had hardly been questioned:

HUNTING MEN WITH DOGS.—A negro who had absconded from his master, and for whom a reward of a hundred dollars was offered, has been apprehended and committed to prison in Savannah.

The editor who states the fact adds, with as much coolness as though there were no barbarity in the matter, that he did not surrender till he was considerably maimed by the dogs that had been set on him—desperately fighting them, and badly cutting one of them with a sword.

The St. Francisville (La.) *Chronicle* of February 1st, 1839, reports a slave-hunt after this sort:

Two or three days ago a gentleman of this parish, in hunting runaway negroes, came upon a camp of them in the swamp on Cat Island. He succeeded in arresting two of them, but the third made fight. On being shot in the shoulder, he fled to a sluice, where the dogs succeeded in drowning him before assistance could arrive.

Had "assistance arrived," would it have been tendered to the dogs or their victim? is a question, to

this day. But calling off the dogs altogether, let the subject be illumined a little farther with lights like this, from the Charleston (S. C.) *Courier*, in 1825.

TWENTY DOLLARS REWARD.—Ran away from the subscriber, on the 14th instant, a negro girl named Molly. She is 16 or 17 years of age, slim made, lately BRANDED ON HER LEFT CHEEK, THUS, "R," AND A PIECE IS TAKEN OFF HER EAR ON THE SAME SIDE; THE SAME LETTER IS BRANDED ON THE INSIDE OF BOTH HER LEGS.

ABNER ROSS, Fairfield District, S. C.

True, the *killing* is here omitted, possibly by accident, but if such an atrocity does not involve murder, sublimated, what shall be said of this from the Wilmington (N. C.) *Advertiser* of July 13th, 1838?

RANAWAY—MY NEGRO MAN, RICHARD.—A reward of twenty-five dollars will be paid for his apprehension, DEAD OR ALIVE! Satisfactory proof will only be required of his *being killed*. He has with him, in all probability, his wife, Eliza, who ran away from Colonel Thompson, now a resident of Alabama.

But no more such evidences of the murderous spirit of slavery can be needed; though the last advertisement suggests an incident in South Carolina, so late as 1844, which is too instructive and assuring not to be given.

That "wife, Eliza, who ran away from Colonel Thompson," possibly might have a tale unfolded, whose lightest word would have harrowed up the soul. There were many such tales. A young man in South Carolina was seen walking with a young woman, a slave, to whom it was known he was tenderly attached, and whom, it was farther shown, he married and aided to escape from slavery. That was his crime. He was arrested, tried, and found guilty. Sentence of death was pronounced upon him by Judge J. B. O'Neale, in word and spirit as now reproduced:

JOHN L. BROWN—It is my duty to announce to you the consequences of the conviction which you heard at Winnsboro', and of the opinion you have just heard read, refusing your two-fold motion in arrest of judgment for a new trial.

You are to die! To die an ignominious death—the death on the gallows! This announcement is, to

you, I know, most appalling. Little did you dream of it when you stepped into the bar with an air as if you thought it was a fine frolic. But the consequences of crime are just such as you are realizing. Punishment often comes when it is least expected. Let me entreat you to take the present opportunity to commence the work of reformation. Time will be furnished you to prepare for the great change just before you. Of your past life I know nothing, except what your trial furnished. That told me that the crime for which you are to suffer was the consequence of a want of attention on your part to the duties of life. The strange woman snared you. She flattered you with her words, and you became her victim. The consequence was, that, led on by a desire to serve her, you committed the offense of aiding a slave to run away and depart from her master's service; and now, for it you are to die!

You are a young man, and I fear you have been dissolute; and if so, these kindred vices have contributed a full measure to your ruin. Reflect on your past life, and make the only useful devotion of the remnant of your days in preparing for death.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, is the language of inspired wisdom. This comes home appropriately to you in this trying moment.

You are young; quite too young to be where you are. If you had remembered your Creator in your past days, you would not now be in a felon's place, to receive a felon's judgment. Still, it is not too late to remember your Creator. He calls early, and He calls late. He stretches out the arms of a Father's love to you—to the vilest sinner—and says: "Come unto me and be saved." You can perhaps, read. If so, read the Scriptures; read them without note, and without comment; and pray to God for His assistance; and you will be able to say when you pass from prison to execution, as a poor slave said under similar circumstances: "I am glad my Friday has come." If you cannot read the Scriptures, the ministers of our holy religion will be ready to aid you. They will read and

explain to you until you will be able to understand ; and understanding, to call upon the only One who can help you and save you—Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. To Him I commend you. And through Him may you have that opening of the Day-Spring of mercy from on high, which shall bless you here, and crown you as a saint in an everlasting world, forever and ever.

The sentence of the law is that you be taken hence to the place from whence you came last ; thence to the jail of Fairfield District ; and that there you be closely and securely confined until Friday, the 26th day of April next ; on which day, between the hours of ten in the forenoon and two in the afternoon, you will be taken to the place of public execution, and there be hanged by the neck till your body be dead. And may God have mercy on your soul !

No event in anti-slavery history up to that time so stirred the two hemispheres as did this frightful sentence of Judge O'Neale. Even in the British House of Lords, two illustrious members, Brougham and Denman, gave it pathetic and powerful consideration. One London journal said: "The dreadful case of John L. Brown has created throughout Great Britain, a sensation of deepest and most painful character. Addresses to the churches in South Carolina have been extensively signed by the independent churches in England and Scotland."

The Glasgow *Argus*, among the most important journals of Scotland, twice published the *Charge* on account of its fearful character, and said of it, "we know of nothing more atrocious in the judicial annals of modern times. * * * And what are we to think of a judge, who in passing sentence for what in our country, our land of Freedom, would be looked upon as a praiseworthy act, invokes the sacred name of Deity and the Holy Book of Inspiration as lending sanction to the atrocity about to be committed!"

But perhaps the most imposing movement in Great Britain, on this terrible perversion of all justice, as well as outrage on all decency, humanity and charity, was a "Memorial addressed to the Churches of Christ in South Carolina, as representing those of other states," signed by more than thirteen hundred ministers and office-holders in the churches and other benevolent associations of London, and other portions of the kingdom, in solemn protest against it. But it need hardly be told, that all the sympathy felt, all the effort made, all the appeals and memorials sent, eloquent, tender, pathetic, devout as many, if not all of them were, seemed almost wholly thrown away on the press, pulpit, and vast majority of the people of the United States, even though South Carolina did yield to foreign pressure at last, and commuted the sentence to fifty lashes on the bare back ; and even they were said to have been remitted on condition that the young man quit the state forever.

But this account though already extended, would not be complete unless the feelings excited in the hearts of the American Abolitionists, in view of the whole scene, could have utterance. Let then their favorite and faithful poet, Whittier, be their oracle :

ON THE SENTENCE OF JOHN L. BROWN.

Ho! thou who seekest late and long
A License from the Holy Book
For brutal lust and hellish wrong,
Man of the Pulpit, look !
Lift up those cold and atheist eyes,
This ripe fruit of thy teaching see ;
And tell us how to heaven will rise
The incense of this sacrifice—
This blossom of the gallows tree !

Search out for slavery's hour of need
Some fitting text of sacred writ ;
Give heaven the credit of a deed
Which shames the nether pit.

Kneel, smooth blasphemer, unto Him
Whose truth is on thy lips a lie—
Ask that His bright winged cherubim
May bend around that scaffold grim
To guard and bless and sanctify.

Ho! champion of the people's cause—
Suspend thy loud and vain rebuke
Of foreign wrong and Old World's laws—
Man of the Senate, look!
Was *this* the promise of the free,
The great hope of our early time—
That slavery's poison vine should be
Upborne by Freedom's prayer-nurs'd tree
O'erclustering with such fruits of crime?

Send out the summons East and West,
And South and North, let all be there
Where he who pitied the oppressed
Swings out in sun and air.
Let not a Democratic hand
The grisly hangman's task refuse;
There let each loyal patriot stand,
Awaiting slavery's command,
To twist the rope and draw the noose!

But vain is irony—unmeet
Its cold rebuke for deeds which start
In fiery and indignant beat
The pulses of the heart.
Leave studied wit and guarded phrase
For those who think but do not feel—
Let MEN speak out in words which raise
Where'er they fall, an answering blaze
Like flints which strike the fire from steel.

Still let a mousing priesthood ply
Their garbled text and gloss of sin,
And make the lettered scroll deny
Its living soul within:
Still let the place-fed, titled knave
Plead robbery's right with purchased lips,
And tell us that our fathers gave
For Freedom's pedestal, a slave,
The frieze and moulding, chains and whips!

But ye who own that Higher Law
Whose tablets in the heart are set,
Speak out in words of power and awe
THAT GOD IS LIVING YET!
Breathe forth once more those tones sublime
Which thrilled the burdened prophet's lyre,

And in a dark and evil time
Smote down on Israel's fast of crime
And gift of blood, A RAIN OF FIRE!

Oh, not for us the graceful lay
To whose soft measures lightly move
The Dryad and the woodland fay,
O'er-locked by mirth and love!
But such a stern and startling strain
As Britain's hunted bards flung down
From Snowden to the conquered plain,
Where harshly clanked the Saxon chain,
On trampled field and smoking town.

By Liberty's dishonored name,
By man's lost hope and failing trust,
By words and deeds which bow with shame
Our foreheads to the dust;
By the exulting Tyrant's sneer,
Borne to us from the Old World's thrones,
And by his victims' griefs who hear,
In sunless mines and dungeons drear,
How Freedom's land her faith disowns!

Speak out in ACTS, the time for words
Has passed; and DEEDS alone suffice;
In the loud clang of meeting swords
The softer music dies!
Act—act in God's name, while ye may!
Smite from the CHURCH, her leprous limb!
Throw open to the light of day
The bondman's cell, and break away
The chains the STATE has bound on him!

Ho! every true and living soul,
To Freedom's perilled altar bear
The Freeman's and the Christian's whole
Tongue, pen, and vote, and prayer!
One last, great battle for the right—
One short, sharp struggle to be free!
To do is to succeed—our fight
Is waged in Heaven's approving sight;
The smile of God is Victory."

Severity of punishments inflicted on slaves short of death, were often a thousand times more cruel than death by the halter; not unfrequently terminating in death, though only by whipping. But hanging was not always severe enough, as witness a law of Maryland, enacted in 1729: "The slave shall first have the

right hand cut off, then be hanged in the usual manner; the head be severed from the body, the body divided into four quarters, and the head and quarters be set up in the most public places of the county where such act was committed." And this horrible barbarity could be inflicted by a simple justice's court.

But it may be said this legislation was before the foundations of this republic were laid. That is true. But in the year 1836, in the city of St. Louis, Missouri, an act was perpetrated, of which the following was the accepted newspaper account, on the spot and over the country :

On the 28th of April, 1836, in the city of St. Louis, a black man named McIntosh, who had stabbed an officer who had arrested him, was seized by the multitude, fastened to a tree in the midst of the city, wood piled around him, in open day, and in the presence of an immense throng of citizens, he was burned to death. The *Alton Telegraph* thus describes a part of the scene :

All was silent as death while the executioners were piling the wood around the victim. He said not a word till he felt that the flames had seized him. He then uttered an awful howl, attempting to sing and pray, then hung his head and suffered in silence. After the flames had surrounded their prey, his eyes burned out of his head, and his mouth apparently parched to a cinder, some one in the crowd more compassionate than the rest, proposed to end his misery by shooting him. But it was replied that he was already out of his pain. "No, no," cried the wretch, "I am not. I am suffering as much as ever. Shoot me! Shoot me!" "No," exclaimed one of the fiends standing by the roasting sacrifice, "no, he shall not be shot. I would sooner slack the fire if that would increase his misery!"

A St. Louis correspondent of a New York paper sent an account of the diabolical deed, of which this is an excerpt :

The shrieks and groans of the victim were loud and piercing, and to observe one limb after another drop into the fire, was awful indeed. In dying, he was about fifteen minutes. I visited the place this morning and saw the body, or the remains of it, burned to a crump. The legs and arms were gone, and only a part of the head and body was remaining.

A subsequent judicial decision by judge Luke E. Lawless, of the Circuit Court of Missouri, made at a session of court in St. Louis, was, that as the burning of McIntosh was the act, directly or indirectly, by countenance of a majority of the citizens, it is a case which transcends the jurisdiction of the grand jury!

And so the dreadful sacrament was sanctified and solemnized by high judicial decision. And as such atrocities were common while slavery lasted, why need the law of Maryland be shorn of its odium and terror in the popular apprehension, only because it was older than the Declaration of American Independence?

Assuming that nations are not better than their laws, or that laws are never made till needed, what shall be said of legislation like this? A law of North Carolina provided that :

If any person shall wilfully kill his own slave, or of any other person, every such offender shall, on conviction, forfeit and pay the sum of seven hundred pounds, and shall forever be rendered incapable of holding or exercising any office.

And this law was not repealed till the year 1821, if ever. Another section of the same act provided :

If any person shall, in sudden heat of passion, or by undue correction, kill his own slave, or the slave of any other person, he shall forfeit the sum of three hundred and fifty pounds.

A still further provision of the same act read thus :

If any person shall wilfully cut out the tongue, put out the eye, castrate, or cruelly scald or burn any

slave, or deprive any slave of any limb or member, or shall inflict any other cruel punishment, other than by whipping or beating with a switch, horse-whip or cow-skin, or by putting on irons, or imprisoning such slave, such person, for every such offence, shall forfeit and pay one hundred pounds.

Judge Stroud, in his carefully prepared "Sketch of Laws Relating to Slavery," says in his latest edition, (1856): "This, *so far as I can learn*, has been suffered to disgrace the statute book to the present hour. Amid all the mutations which Christianity has effected within the last century, she has not been able to conquer the spirit which dictated this law."

And not to speak of the shameful outrage, so denounced in Deuteronomy, xxiii; 1st, what must be thought of the decency, humanity, not to say religion, of a people that enacts, supports, sanctifies a law which beats without limit, without mercy, with horse-whip, cowskin or other missile, a human being, man, woman, child, unrebuked, unless the last stroke should produce immediate death?

With one more well authenticated fact and one other witness, and he none other than Thomas Jefferson himself, the question as to the character of slavery shall be submitted to readers, to history, to posterity. The outrage to be described was witnessed by John James Appleton, Esq., whom Hon. David Lee Child and his illustrious wife, Mrs. Lydia Maria Child, endorse as "a gentleman of high attainments and accomplishments," a secretary of legation at Rio Janeiro, Madrid and the Hague, commissioner at Naples and charge d'affaires at Stockholm. Mr. Appleton was present at the burial of a female slave in Mississippi, who had been whipped to death by her master, for being gone longer on an errand than was thought necessary. She protested under the terrible

torture that she was ill and had to rest in the fields. To complete the climax of horror, she was delivered of a dead child while undergoing the punishment!! Is it strange that she had to rest by the way? But we will hasten to our last witness.

To-day as I write, the Democratic party, party of Thomas Jefferson, is celebrating here in Massachusetts, a political success, almost unexampled under the circumstances, in state elections, since the party was first inaugurated. The tribes of Israel never claimed Abraham as their father with more devout pride and filial reverence, than have the Democrats of this nation Thomas Jefferson as theirs, since their party first learned to lisp his name.

And those tribes crying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him," in the court-room of Pilate, or mocking their victim as he climbed Mount Calvary, bearing his cross in sweating agony, did not more dishonor their patriarchal father and founder than did the Democratic party and their Whig accomplices on the plains of Texas, murdering the Mexicans in a bloody war to reinstate slavery where the Mexican government, with its Roman Catholic religion, had not many years before, abolished it, as all humanity hoped, forever. That was almost forty years ago. Undoubtedly, devotion to slavery sent the old Whig party to a scarcely too early grave. Worship of the same unclean and bloody Moloch, stove down democratic rule, from the kindled wrath of the Infinite Justice around Fort Sumter, until the victories won yesterday in so many States of this Union, and proudly celebrated to-day, give sign almost unmistakable, of its probable return at the next presidential election.

And now the next and last witness as to the whole quality and character of slavery, even as he saw it

and himself embraced it, is the patriarchal American Democrat, Thomas Jefferson himself.

His memorable "Notes on the State of Virginia," so often cited in the past, so greatly disregarded while slavery continued, were revised and published in 1787, when the problem of slavery was shaking the new republic to its foundation.

The section relating to slavery contains so many general observations on human relations and obligations, individual as well as collective, social as well as civil and governmental, with a profoundly reverent recognition of higher authority than any man-made institutions, or constitutions, that it surely is not too much to declare that a return of the Democratic party to power will be a blessing or scourge and curse, exactly in proportion as it shall follow, or reject the doctrines and counsels of its justly venerated founder and progenitor, as laid down in the passage from his "Notes on the State of Virginia," here reproduced :

There must doubtless be an unhappy influence on the manners of our people, produced by the existence of *Slavery* among us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other. Our children see this and learn to imitate it ; for man is an imitative animal. This quality in him is the germ of all education. From his cradle to his grave, he is learning to do what he sees others do. If a parent could find no motive, either in his philanthropy or his self-love, for restraining the intemperance of passion toward his slave, it should always be a sufficient one that his child is present. But generally it is not sufficient. The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives a loose to the worst of passions, and thus nursed and educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by

it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances.

And with what execration should the statesman be loaded, who, permitting one-half the citizens thus to trample on the rights of the other, transforms those into despots, and these into enemies, destroys the morals of one part and the *amor patriæ* of the other ! For if a slave can have a country in this world, it must be any other in preference to that in which he is born to live and labor for another ; in which he must lock up the faculties of his nature ; contribute, as far as depends on his individual endeavors, to the evanishment of the human race, or entail his own miserable condition on the endless generations proceeding from him.

With the morals of the people, their industry also is destroyed. For in a warm climate no man will labor for himself who can make another labor for him. This is so true, that of the proprietors of slaves, a very small proportion indeed are ever seen to labor. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis—a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just : that his justice cannot sleep forever : that considering numbers, and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of Fortune, an exchange of situation is among possible events : that it may become probable by supernatural interference ! The Almighty has no attribute which can take sides with us in such a contest ! But it is impossible to be temperate and pursue this subject through the various considerations of policy, of morals, of history, natural and civil. We must be contented to hope they will force their way into every mind. I think a change already perceptible since the origin of the present revolution. The spirit of the master is abating ; that of the slave rising from the dust ; his condition molifying ; the way I hope preparing, under the auspices of heaven, for a total

emancipation. And that this is disposed, in the order of events, to be with the consent of the masters, rather than by their extirpation.

Such was American slavery. Jefferson proved its historian as well as prophet, to wondrous extent. Happy for the nation, had it heeded his wise and timely counsels. Happy for it would it even now learn to regard them.

When, before or since our slave system, did governments ever punish with death for seventy offences, and then forbid, under penalties almost as severe as death, to teach one of the victims of such tyranny to read one law of man or God, in any book, the Bible not excepted? It may have been. But when, or where? What but cold-blooded murder must such governing have been! To rid the land of such a plague, no wonder it required an army on our side only, of more than two million seven hundred thousand men, half a million of whom never returned! And then, as a crowning, sealing sacrifice, an idolized president massacred, murdered, and his tall form stretched across their premature graves, while not this nation only, but foreign peoples stood aghast! All this, not to speak of moneyed cost and loss; nor counting the sighs and tears, bereavements and mournings of mothers, sisters, widows and orphans! All this, not reckoning moral and spiritual, as well as financial impoverishment and desolation, not to be restored perhaps till our third and fourth generations! Such was part of the price paid to redeem the land from its uncommon curse. Men called the war of sword and bayonet, *Rebellion*. It might have been rebellion on the part of slavery and the South. But to the North it was *Retribution*. The South claimed as property, the slave. But the North, by the terms of the Federal

Union, held him pinned down to the earth as with the point of the bayonet. From the torture-chambers of the imprisoned slave our guilt ascended, by silent but sure evaporation, until it hung in threatening clouds over all the sky, waiting the dread hour when the Infinite Patience could endure it no longer!

At last the command was given, and the tempest and thunder shook the very heavens, saying to the North, "Give up;" to the South, "Keep not back." No lightning-rod shielded either; and Slavery, with all its reeking, shrieking altars, and ghastly paraphernalia of whips, fetters, blood-hounds and red-hot branding-irons, was swept away in cataclysms of blood and fire!

power might well have asked, whom can we trust? They first whipped him with seeming rejection, that he might not forget who were his masters, and then confessed his nomination.

The outcry raised against the south, by the northern pro-slavery press, for its apparent distrust of Mr. Everett, is well characterized in the second of the resolutions at the Dover convention. It was the rejection merely of a *party nomination*; not any insult to liberty!

All three of the nominations named in the resolutions, were confirmed; the other two were New Hampshire men. Hon. Joel Eastman was appointed to a local position in his own state, and Gen. James Wilson to be surveyor-general of Iowa.

The other resolutions in the report relate to some descriptive outrages perpetrated on persons of color by the officials of the Eastern railway, then running from Boston eastward through Lynn and Salem. The church setting the example of a "negro pew," extending often to the sacramental table, as well as to seats in the meeting-houses, the Eastern railroad made haste to follow it in arranging its passenger cars. A "negro car," always inferior in convenience and comfort, was provided, and all colored people, men, women, children, well-dressed or ill, cultivated and accomplished, or barbaric and rude, were driven into it. Charles Lenox Remond, an elegant, highly-bred colored man, a perfect gentleman in whatever exalts and ennobles manhood, an intimate friend of Lady Byron, and other of the most distinguished personages in Great Britain; and Frederick Douglass, now so well and widely known in two hemispheres, intimate while abroad with the like of O'Connell and other eminent men of the two houses of parliament, both of

these, on returning from their foreign travels, were subjected to such cruel indignities, and two or three times with added and most aggravating accompaniments.

Senator Wilson, in his "History of the rise and fall of the slave power in America," volume first, page 492, refers to "*the unchristian prejudice*" which induced the regulations adopted by railroads to exclude persons of color from the ordinary passenger cars, and compelling them to ride in cars by themselves, or sometimes, without regard to tastes, character or means, in "second-class cars," bare and comfortless, the enforced receptacle of all who from any cause, could not, or would not take seats in first-class cars. The two corporations in Massachusetts, which were prominent in making and enforcing these odious regulations, were the Eastern and the Boston and New Bedford. * * * In the year 1841, David Ruggles, a colored man of New York, who had aided six hundred of his countrymen in escaping from slavery, was ejected from the cars against the earnest protest of Rev. John M. Spear, for the simple offence of taking a seat with white passengers. He brought an action in the New Bedford police court against the employes of the company for an aggravated assault. But Justice Crapo discharged promptly the offenders. On the Eastern railroad, scenes of violence were of frequent occurrence. Colored persons of character and intelligence were, in several instances, violently dragged from the cars occupied by white passengers; and in some cases their friends, who remonstrated against such brutality, were treated in like manner. Among those forcibly ejected from the cars, was Frederick Douglass. * * * The general agent of the Massachusetts anti-slavery society was repeatedly insulted while trav-

eling on that road, for remonstrating against its unjust and inhuman usages. In one instance he received blows and kicks, from the effects of which he did not recover for a number of weeks. Once, a colored man being ejected, Dr. Daniel Mann and several other white passengers remonstrated, when they, also, were seized and dragged violently out and prohibited from pursuing their journey, "unless they behaved themselves!" Dr. Mann brought an action in the Boston police court against the conductor of the train, but could obtain no redress for such high-handed outrages. * * * Charles Lennox Remond was a native of Salem, a colored gentleman of intelligence and worth, and of highly prepossessing manners. In England, where he had spent nearly two years, he had vindicated the cause of the oppressed, and had won the confidence and applause of the British abolitionists. He was everywhere hailed as the champion of his race, and treated with most friendly and respectful consideration. He bore from England the warmest sympathies and best wishes of the friends of emancipation. He was commissioned to bear the address of sixty thousand Irishmen to their countrymen in America, headed by the names of O'Connell and Father Mathew. Arriving in Boston, he went to the Eastern railroad station to take passage for his home in Salem. He was not allowed to take his seat with other passengers, but was compelled to occupy what was called the "Jim Crow" car. Several of his white friends, wishing to welcome him on his return, met him at the station and took seats with him. They were, however, ordered by the conductor to leave the "Jim Crow" car, voluntarily, or to be removed by force! Thus was this gentleman of character and

culture, fresh from his travels and the hospitalities of the best families of England, rudely and roughly treated on his arrival in his native state.

And Senator Wilson could have named others besides Dr. Mann, who suffered similar indignities and for the same reasons. James N. Buffum had traveled extensively in Britain with Douglass, addressing immense anti-slavery meetings; but in his own town of Lynn, with him was dragged out of railway cars, making no resistance except to cling to the backs of the seats, which, as they were athletic men, they generally brought out with them, "one in each hand." The railroad authorities at length became so indignant that they refused to allow the trains to stop in Lynn at all. And for several days the rule was enforced. At one time they sent a police-officer with the trains to see that their atrocious mandates on the subject of negro hate were obeyed. One day Mr. Buffum saw a white man riding in the cars with a pet monkey in his lap. He good-naturedly asked the conductor: "How is this, that you drag out '*the connecting link*,' as you call the colored man, and permit the two extremes, the white man and the monkey, the opposite link on the brute side, to ride unmolested as any white gentlemen?" The conductor did not reply. He had his orders and must obey them. And the shameful "*Jim Crow*" car continued, with occasional outrages, till public opinion rose indignantly on legislation, and compelled enactments sweeping them out of existence. "The *negro pew*" in churches can still be found, north, east and west, as well as south.

THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW.

In the early part of this work allusions were made to that "bill of abomination," known as the fugitive slave law of 1850. That law was often executed, and sometimes in Boston, with peculiar atrocities and aggravations, the navy yard near by, furnishing ample facilities for the necessary military force. Once, however, troops were ordered from the interior of Massachusetts, and quartered in Faneuil hall, till the poor victim was sent back to his whipping post and branding-iron. Honest men and women were beggared by imprisonments and heavy fines, for harboring and concealing, or refusing to aid in the blood-hound work of pursuing and capturing fugitive slave men and women in their nightly flight to Canada. Massachusetts pulpits, even Andover theological seminary, ably defended the diabolical business. On the 7th of March, 1850, Daniel Webster nearly stunned, not only his constituency, but the whole north, by his speech in the United States senate, in advocacy of that direful enactment. The old federal and whig party succession of Massachusetts, had bowed low and long to the despotic slave power before. All the compromises in the constitution had been exacted and enforced, unrighteous and unjust as all of them were, from the first. Then, even against constitutional restriction, Florida and Louisiana had been purchased for slave states. The Seminole and Mexican wars ensued, as a first consequence, continuing on through a dozen years and more, all "red with uncommon wrath," in many of the atrocities perpetrated on the poor Indians; but now new vials of slave-holding indignation, as well as power, were to be uncorked upon the north. The people of the northern states had long violated the solemn command to "remember

them that were in bonds as bound with them," and now a stern decree came up from the slave power, to *go and be bound with them* in chains more ignoble than the shackles of the slaves themselves! Robert Toombs, of Georgia, had prophesied that he would yet "call the roll of his slaves on Bunker hill." And now he did so, and in Faneuil hall as well! Slaves armed to protect the lordly slave-holder in recapturing, in Boston streets, their fellow slaves, who had been at least brave enough to attempt escape to Canada, land of kings and queens, where they could be free!

So was it when Professor Stuart sat down in the sacred shades of Andover, and wrote a work all ablaze with blasphemy against liberty, entitled, "Conscience and the Constitution, with remarks on the recent speech of Daniel Webster, in the senate of the United States, on the subject of slavery;" a work in large octavo, of about a hundred and twenty pages. It was not the first time the venerable professor had drawn his pen in defense of his friend, Mr. Webster, in some of his official acts, as the history of the Tyler administration revealed.

From Professor Stuart's hundred and eighteen pages, less than one will here be given, the first part bearing directly on the return of fugitive slaves. On page sixty, he asks:

What, now, have we here? Paul sending back a *christian* servant, who had run away from his *christian* master. * * * He enjoins it upon Onesimus to return to his master *forever*. This last phrase has respect to the fact that Paul supposed that the sense of christian obligation which was now entertained by Onesimus, would prevent him from ever repeating the offense. And all this, too, when Philemon, being an active and zealous christian, would in a moment have submitted to any command of Paul, respecting Onesimus. Why, then, did Paul send him back? There

is only one answer to be given, viz., that Paul's christian *conscience* would not permit him to injure the vested rights of Philemon. * * * Paul's conscience *sent back* the fugitive slave; Paul's conscience, then, like his doctrines, was very different from that of the abolitionists. Theirs, *encourages him to run away*, and then protects him in the misdeed. The conscience of Paul sends him back the fugitive without any obligation at all on the ground of compact; theirs, encourages and protects his escape, in the face of the most solemn national compact. And all this for *conscience's* sake.

Some of the states, Massachusetts among them, had enacted state laws or measures, contravening in some respects, the demands of the slave law. On that subject, Professor Stuart wrote: "To the position our honored legislature in their recent resolves, viz.: That the case of the fugitive shall be tried 'by jury, in the state where the claim is made,' *I am unable*, highly as I respect their motives, *to yield my assent*."

And, in summing up, the professor says, and this closes the citations from him:

I have done with this subject. The brief result, as it strikes my mind, is, that *the Constitution* in respect to fugitives held to service or labor, *must be obeyed*. It is useless to talk about *conscience* as setting it aside. It is an imputation on the men who formed our government. It is holding them up to the world as having neither justice nor humanity.

In these extracts the italicizing and capitalizing are the professor's own. Let them speak for themselves. I will only say, they are but samples of his whole work.

President, Nathan Lord, D. D., of Dartmouth College, soon after the appearance of "*Conscience and the Constitution*," wrote to the author, Professor Stuart, a reply in a pamphlet letter of two and forty pages

octavo, correcting, not the doctrine, or morality of his work, but some statements of fact relating to Puritan history and slavery. Professor Stuart wrote on page 109: "In looking back on the history of slavery in our country, whence do we find it to have originated! From Great Britain, and from her alone; all the colonies fought pitched battles against it; but the king and parliament defeated them. North and south were united on this question—united before the Declaration of Independence, and united for a long time after it."

These statements of the learned Professor, the more learned President Lord refutes in masterly manner; he shows that slavery existed in all the British colonies with exception of Georgia for a short time and with a power of erudition and argument proves it, and apparently, *approves* it too. He even implicates the Rhode Island, New Jersey and Pennsylvania Quakers with the rest. The President says:

A foggy sort of notion is beginning to prevail, that from their origin, at any rate from their settlement in this country under William Penn, the Quakers as a denomination, have been opposed to slavery. This position if true, would only prove that among many wild and visionary theories which distinguish them as a sect, they adopted that of abolition. But the notion is not true; opposition to slavery sprang up among them at a comparatively recent date. William Penn lived and died a slave owner. There is a letter on record from T. Matlack, an aged Friend, to William Findlay, which gives account of the rise and progress of this idea among them. The letter says:

The practice of slave-keeping in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, commenced with the first settlement of the province, and certainly was countenanced by William Penn. * * * Penn left a family of slaves behind him. * * * Slave-keeping of course, became general among Friends.

President Lord says Penn attempted to legislate, not for the abolition of slavery, but for the sanctity of marriage among slaves, and for their personal safety; but he also declares, "there is no more reason to suppose George Fox was an abolitionist, than that Governor Winthrop was an abolitionist. And by Rees's Cyclopaedia, by Sir Edward Coke, Sir William Temple and Lord Campbell, he establishes the fact of practical slave-holding and slave-trading, and shows that slaves could neither acquire nor hold any property in land nor goods, and children always followed the condition of the parents; and further, that the renowned Sir John Hawkins first opened and established the African slave trade with Queen Elizabeth, a ready accomplice. So President Lord argues that it was natural and reasonable that Puritans in the colonies should hold and trade in slaves as they did, even "*branding them on the shoulder,*" and exporting cargoes of their Indian prisoners to the West Indies. At the close of King Philip's war, he says, "a great many of the chiefs were executed in Boston and Plymouth, and most of the rest of the prisoners were shipped for slaves to the Bermudas and other parts." This, he says, and truly, "*was an affair of state.*" And then whole pages more, which must not only have enlightened the mind of Professor Stuart, but greatly gladdened his heart; as showing that even the Puritans, always regarded as only very little, if any, lower than the angels, were not only slave-breeders, and traders, but exalted the red hot branding-iron as part of the paraphernalia of the diabolical business.

President Lord's own estimate of slavery is directly given in two other pamphlets, now on my table, beside the long letter to Professor Stuart. In one, entitled "A True Picture of Abolition," he says (page 8, 9):

The south is slave-holding. It is so constitutionally and legally. Slavery enters into the structure of its society, not a thing of accident, possibly not everywhere of preference, but an inheritance according to the common law of earth; a providential order, without which, in view of necessarily, that is naturally and statedly existing diversities of race, culture and condition, the social state could not have been constituted at all, and "life, liberty and happiness" would have been insecure to a christian people, who had just bought them at so great a price. Slavery was not, indeed, the cornerstone, but the practical condition of the Union, the constitution and the laws. * * * It had existed in the usages of nations. It was common law; it was incorporated into the civil institutions of Moses; it was recognized accordingly by Christ and His apostles. They regulated it by the just and benevolent principles of the New Testament. They condemned all intermeddlers with it. * * * Wherever it was subsequently abolished its want of physical adaptation and consequent inconveniences, not its essential wrongfulness, were mainly the reasons for its abolition.

On page ten the president continues :

So it stood till a generation arose that comprehended none of these living realities; that honored not God and the Father, and for His everlasting word of natural and revealed religion, substituted a *higher law*. Among them were born the abolitionists, who are now, officially, supreme over the land. They were at first a small class of speculative enthusiasts, intoxicated by the airy pantheism of France and Germany, which had covertly breathed its spirit into the "glittering generalities" of the Declaration of Independence, and by that instrument insensibly affected the public mind. They were men of no mark nor figure; inflated visionaries, mistaking their own fancies for another gospel, which is not another.

With almost two pages octavo of similar if not even worse.

Of the doings in congress he wrote : "Calhoun and Webster at the head, or such men as *Brooks* (Bully Brooks) and *Sumner at the tail*, could never have contended greatly to the public detriment, till congress let in subjects of discussion which concerned more immediately the government of gods. That was our original mistake. * * * Common mistake of all countries, as virtue declines. * * * Till we made that blunder the country was united, prosperous and happy. There had been no such instance in the history of the world."

One quotation more. Would that space and patience of readers, would permit insertion of the whole pamphlet. On pages twelve and onward the president proceeds :

Abolitionism became an institution, organic and vital, body and soul; a working power. It was envious at God's appointed orders. It labelled the constitution, "A covenant with death, an agreement with hell." * * * Gaining confidence as it acquired ascendancy over the simple, the curious, the fearful, imaginative, the undisciplined, the dispassionate, it aspired to popular control and revolutionary distinction. But to that end it must become religious. It was ready for the occasion. * * * It appealed to scripture, now twisted by improved versions, arbitrary criticisms and fantastic commentaries from its literal, direct and scientific meanings, till it was made as subservient and as obscure as a Delphic oracle. * * * To the same end it must also be political. It affected the well-being of the state. It studied intrigue and finesse. It became an expert. It disciplined its ranks. It found the balance of party power and then sold itself to the progressive party. The price was the government of the country. The object was the dissolution of the Union, and then the introduction of the New Jerusalem. * * * Such is the moral record of abolitionism, brought down to the date of presidential proclamations. * * *

So we speak, for so we make good our cause. Abolitionism is at fault. It is false and wrong. It destroys the ancient landmarks. It obliterates the old paths. It puts its heel on constitutional relations. It sunders what God has united, and unites what God had sundered.

So much, and surely very much, for Nathan Lord, D. D., president of Dartmouth college. Readers may remember, about the college mob we had there twenty years before this pamphlet was written. For this did not appear till 1863. This was penned amid the battle thunders and dying shrieks and groans of the war of the rebellion—over the graves of thousands and hundreds of thousands already dead! With such presidents of colleges as Dr. Lord, and such theological professors as Moses Stuart, what wonder that we had our pro-slavery riot and tumult at Dartmouth! What wonder that we had such general assemblies of the Presbyterian church! And such missionary, Bible and tract societies! And what wonder that slavery, with its inevitable attendant horrors, so supported, so sanctified, continued so long!

But to return to the fugitive slave law and its ecclesiastical sanctification. The two volumes of Dr. Adams, of Essex-street church, Boston, published in 1854, and 1861, are before me. The whole soul and spirit of them both is summed up in these few words, in the volume of 1851, and with these few, readers will be glad to have done with them:

“Unless we choose to live in a perpetual state of war, we must prevent and punish all attempts to decoy slaves from their masters. Whatever our repugnance to slavery may be, there is a law of the land, a constitution to which we must submit, or employ

suitable means to change it. *While it remains, all our appeals to a higher law are fanaticism.*”

And Dr. Adams was, for many years, a prominent member of the publication committee of the American tract society.

The last fugitive slave bill was signed by acting President Millard Fillmore, and became a law, September 18th, 1850. Its execution soon began, but, everywhere, was attended with difficulties; was sometimes resisted even unto blood. The pulpit soon came to the rescue; Boston sure to be in the van.

On the first Thanksgiving day, Dr. Sharp, of the Baptist church, and Rev. Mr. Rogers, of the Congregational, gave each a sermon, which was subsequently printed, from which a few extracts will now be given. Of the Essex-street pastor, Dr. Adams, nothing need be adduced after the passage from his South-side view of Slavery,” just presented.

Dr. Sharp said:

It is our duty to submit to the government extending over the region in which we dwell, and to obey the magistrates under whose jurisdiction we are. The condition of our obedience is, that they who claim to govern us, have legal authority for doing so. With these facts well established, our obedience is not to be measured and graduated by our estimation of the wisdom or folly of the laws under which we live; their partiality or impartiality, their justice or injustice. With one exception, while any given law exists, although it may operate upon our interests unjustly and oppressively, we must, nevertheless, submit to it.

* * * *

To bring this subject nearer home, let us consider the duty of subjection to the powers that be, as applicable to the fugitive slave law. And in what I would say, I would have it understood that I discriminate between slavery and multitudes of excellent persons who hold slaves. Before

the colonies became independent, or the union of the states was formed, slavery, that system of injustice, oppression and wrong (as it appears to me), was so interwoven with all the habits, interests and worldly hopes of the people at the south, that they had not the courage, the faith, the disinterestedness, to set the slaves free. And yet they feared that their slaves, hearing of the freedom of their own race in other states, would attempt to escape. The southern members, therefore, of the convention that framed the national compact called the constitution of the United States, insisted on a clause securing the return of fugitives from labor, on legal evidence of the fact being presented. This engagement became part of the constitution. I regret its existence, but there it is.

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 * * * * * The question then arises, are you willing to enjoy the benefits of the great national compact, but to violate its conditions? How much there would be of high-mindedness in such a course, I leave it to you to determine.

* * * * * Much less can the free citizens of the United States, living under the protection, and enjoying the benefits of our blessed laws, with all the advantages of the national compact, be justified in encouraging poor fugitive slaves to acts of resistance, in putting forth the fist, or unsheathing the sword of rebellion. In this state, world-wide renowned for its steady habits, no one should allow himself to have the hardihood and unseemliness to say that a law of congress cannot be here enforced.

* * * * * Our country, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, having a coast and an interior unparalleled in the world's history, is the new Canaan, the land of promise, to which the poor and the tax-ridden, and they who have yet something left, are coming from the decaying institutions and over-stocked millions of older lands. But it will be a Canaan no longer than we prize the union, revere the constitution, and obey the laws, *wise* or *unwise*, right or *wrong*, until we can modify or change them from unwisdom to wisdom, from wrong to right, by the only process that is justifiable, the process of legislation.

So held and taught Dr. Sharp. It is easy to remember, if hard to accept the words of those brave men, who, eighteen hundred years before, had said: "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye?"

But Dr. Sharp held with Dr. Adams, that "appeal to any higher law than the constitution, while that was in force, was *fanaticism!*"

But we must hasten to Mr. Rogers, of the Winter-street Congregational church:

Within the limits of this broad land, the citizen of the United States is everywhere at home; the soil of his country beneath his feet, the flag of his country above him, and the protection of its laws around him, he is nowhere an alien and a stranger in this commonwealth of our Israel. * * * * * And yet with peace in our borders, with plenty in our store, with every privilege and opportunity open to all men for development of mind, for appreciation of all the benefits pertaining to air, to earth, to sea; and yet with all of good we have, and can have, there are differences among us: there are dissensions; and bitter words are uttered, and bitter words are retorted, and men speak of resistance to law; some men speak of the nullification of the constitution. Men speak of disunion, horrible as it is, and it has thrilled every nerve in my soul! Horrible as it is, these words have become as familiar as household words. It has been proclaimed: "Law or no law, constitution or no constitution, the hands of the law and of the people should not execute the behests of the court, within the precincts of this commonwealth.

It is one of the articles of the constitution, that a person held to service or labor in one state under the laws thereof, shall be delivered up on the claim of the party to whom such labor is due; I say that it is one of the articles of the constitution; for you might readily gather from the popular cry, and from the tendency of the popular feeling, that the whole of the constitution of the United States was nothing but an

instrument for the oppression of the slave, in utter forgetfulness of every other right and every other duty. It is one of the articles of that constitution ; being one of the articles of that constitution, then I gather that whatsoever party is in power, it makes no difference what the name, what the principles they affirm before or after election, whatever party is in power, in their place in congress, if there were no law already made, pursuant to this article of the constitution, they would be bound to make a law, and a law which should carry out this provision and restore the fugitive to the claimant upon due proof of that claim and that service to be rendered in another state.

Do you say, no ? do you say that it would be wrong ? that it is sinful, thus to do ? but I ask you to consider as an honest man, with a consciousness that your representative had called the God of heaven to witness that he will maintain the constitution of these United States, would you have him perjure himself and refuse to carry out the constitution ? Leave it to an infidel christianity to teach such morals, but when you ask counsel of God, expect no such answer. * * *

* * * The fugitive asks us to interpose ; when he does so he asks us to do what the people of the United States, or a majority of them, have said we shall not do ; he asks us to do precisely what we have agreed not to do. We are under bonds to the millions of this country to keep the peace, and to make this a government of law, and not a government of force. Oh, it is a miserable alternative in which we are placed *by the mistakes, by the guilt of our fathers beyond the waters*, in bringing this curse upon us, and leaving us to decide between what seems the voice of charity and mercy, and a law vigorously severe, to which nevertheless we must bow. If the slave ask us to stand between him and the marshal armed with the power of the people, for his arrest, what can we say to him, but make the miserable confession that we have dispossessed ourselves of the power to stand between the oppressor and the oppressed ?

Then it follows, and should be distinctly understood, that if a fugitive from bondage come to our common-

wealth, and abideth here, he does it on his own responsibility, and does it with a knowledge that those among whom he lives, have dispossessed themselves of all power under the constitution and the law to stand between him and his master. This we can do for him, but, when the question is presented to us, shall we obey the law ? and the answer is, nay, but resist it ; what do we, but nullify the constitution of which the law is but the practical working ? What do we but make void the organic law of the country ? What do we but that which South Carolina has attempted in the days of her nullification, and seems likely to repeat in this second case of her madness ? Ah ! we said bitter things against South Carolina in those days. We told her there were bayonets enough and men enough in the old Bay state to put her in her place and keep her there. If we were right then, we are wrong now. But it is said we are wiser now and we may have been right. Then the law is a sin against God, and the constitution a law organic in the life of the nation. Well if it be so, then it seems to me the inference is very plain. This confederacy ought not to exist an hour ; if it be so, then those men who voted for the admission of California as a free state into this confederacy, were very wicked men. It was voting the admission of that commonwealth into a confederacy against the God of heaven.

But when the slave asks me to stand between him and his master, he asks me to do something more than free him ; and here is the difficulty. Could you separate the question of the slave's freedom or bondage, from those difficulties with which, under the law, it is involved ; would you make it a clear question here upon this soil, whether he should be a free man or a slave, there is not a hand or heart within the limits of the commonwealth, but would go at once for freedom. We must be false to our fathers, false to ourselves and to the spirit breathed into the soul of the word of God, if we could even have any other sympathy than sympathy with the oppressed, against the oppressor, the bondman rather than the bond master. But when the slave asks me to stand between the marshal and

himself, what does he ask me to do? simply to free him? no, that is not all; he asks me to substitute force for law; anarchy for government. He asks me to overturn the tribunals of justice, to break into fragments the power of a nation overshadowing all, and protecting all. He asks me to do him right by wronging twenty millions of men! The question comes home to my soul; I am not at once ready to answer; I pause; I reflect; I meditate; if I resist that law, I nullify the constitution; in doing it, I am righteously held to answer for all the natural and proper consequences of my conduct. When the slave asks me to stand between him and his master, what does he ask? He asks me to murder a nation's life; and I will not do it, because I have a conscience, and because there is a God.

Then I say unto you, as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, the conviction of my conscience is that upon the ground of reason, there is no safety for us, no better hope for the slave, than for the time, the carrying out of the constitution and laws of the country; and that as a question of conscience, God requires this at our hand.

But if the spirit of sedition and rebellion become rampant in the land; if the ordinary strength of the magistracy cannot countervail it, if there be treason, if there be rebellion; if needful, to defend the constitution of the fathers, the magistracy call you to arms, arm! If they call you to the field of battle, stand in your ranks as your fathers stood, shoulder to shoulder; *if to take human life, take it; and if you fall, your memory shall be hallowed with those whose bones moulder on the slopes of Bunker Hill!*

Verily, verily! Had Mr. Rogers lived in Babylon, or Cyprus, with what alacrity would he have despatched his daughters in all their maiden modesty, and virgin purity, to the foul embraces of Mylitta's horrible rites! "As a minister of the gospel" he demanded "obeying the constitution and the laws."

This is what he says. "When my daughter asks me to save her from such foul pollution, what does

she ask? simply that I save her? no, that is not all; she asks me to substitute force for law; anarchy for government. I pause; I reflect; I meditate. If I resist the law, I nullify the constitution! * * *

* When my daughter asks me to stand between her and the law, what does she ask? she asks me to murder a nation's life; and I will not do it, because I have a conscience, and because I believe there is a God!"

And that was Rev. William Rogers, of Winter street Congregational church in Boston, in the one thousand eight hundred and fiftieth year of christian grace! And of the Independence of the United States, the seventy-fourth! Change only the civil fugitive slave law for the sacred prostitution act of Babylon and Cyprus, and the parallel is complete; is perfect. With only this tremendous difference in favor of Babylon and Cyprus; that there, one visit to the temple sufficed forever. But return to American slavery, under its fugitive law was crossing that awful "bridge of sighs," over which was inscribed,

"All hope abandon ye who enter here!"

And now this protracted argument is done; not for lack of material, but only out of respect to space and time. For be it ever remembered, all that has been adduced, and surely it is much, is but specimen of whole volumes which yet remain. For instance, the masterly argument of Mr. Whipple, on the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, is a book of nearly two hundred and fifty pages, closely printed in fine type, and made up entirely from the annual reports and other official literature of the board itself. And his work might have been extended to two or three times its present size; and the same substantially, could be said of the sources from which the

information and evidence have been derived on the American Bible and Tract societies, and on the great leading, controlling, religious sects and organizations that represented the religious sentiment of the country at the beginning, and in the progress of the great anti-slavery conflict. And what must be the conclusion from it all? Judge Birney answered early: "The American churches the bulwarks of American slavery." Stephen S. Foster replied later, in tones of thunder, "The Brotherhood of thieves; or a true picture of the American church and clergy." Then came a ringing voice from the west: "Slavery, and the slaveholder's Religion;" by Samuel Brooke, of Ohio, and still later: "The Church as it is: the Forlorn Hope of slavery," a larger pamphlet than the others. Nor were these all. And all pursuing the same course, which was to permit the accused to furnish all the testimony; not half, nor a part, but the whole. Nor was there any cross questioning, nor inferential evidence, from beginning to end.

What more could church or clergy have asked, unless in the language and spirit of those who demanded of the great teacher of Nazareth: "*What have we to do with thee? let us alone!*" Or what can this generation ask of us to-day? the very few of us who yet remain on earth? and in justice to ourselves and our cause, what less, or otherwise, could, or should we abolitionists, have done?