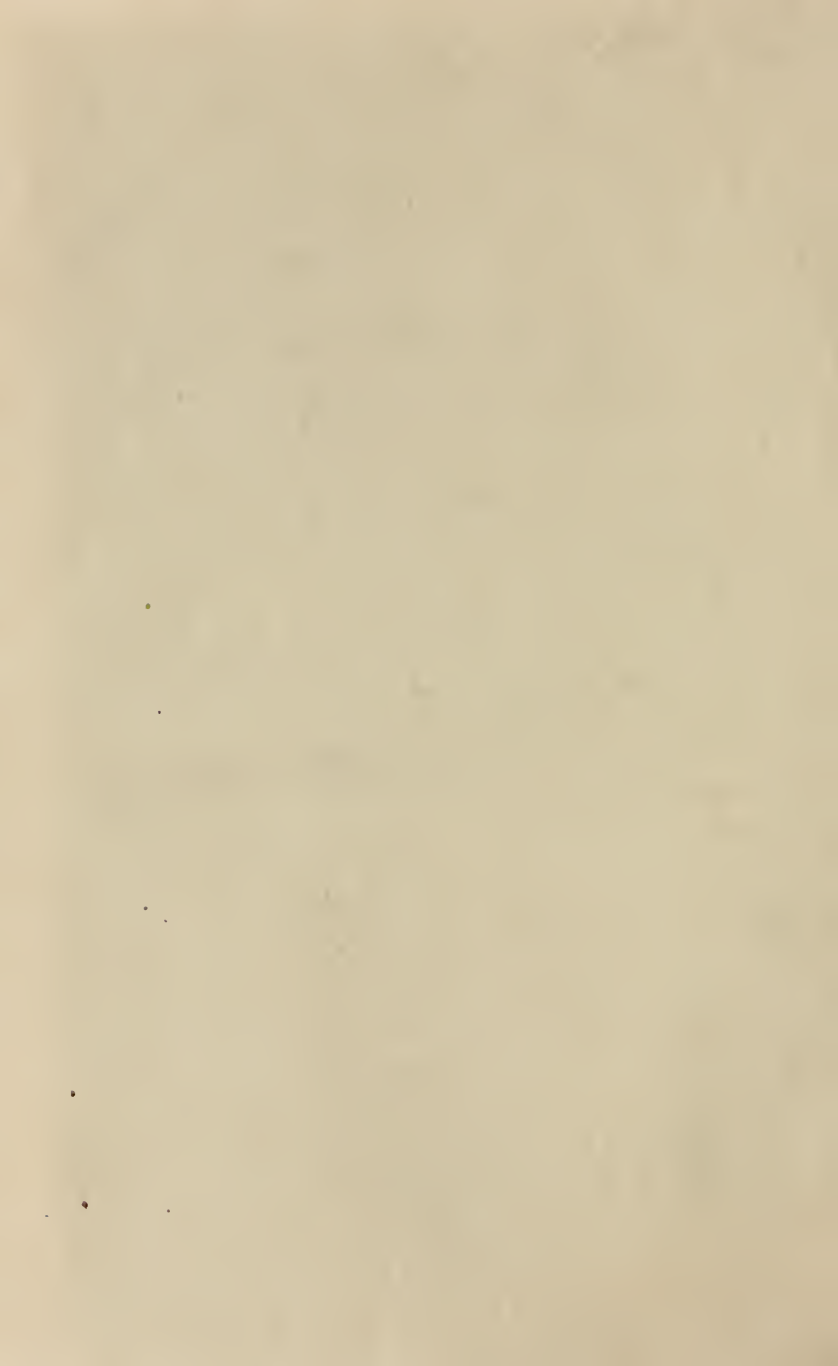


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THE COMMISSION FROM GOD, OF THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE, AGAINST THE SIN OF SLAVERY; AND THE RESPONSIBILITY ON THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY FOR ITS FULFILMENT.

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AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.

BY REV. GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D. D.



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RESPONSIBILITY

OF THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY RESPECTING THE SIN
OF SLAVERY.

BY REV. GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D. D.

THE foundation of the argument which it is my desire to present on this occasion, together with its application to our hearts and consciences, is contained in the great Missionary Psalm, the seventy-second. In that glowing, radiant, and central portion of God's word, a righteous judgment of the poor, the oppressed, and the children of the needy, and the redemption of their souls from deceit and violence, together with the breaking in pieces of the oppressor, are stated as the great results of the coming of the Redeemer's kingdom. The object and work of the Missionary Enterprise, as being God's appointed agency for the prevalence of righteousness, and against oppression, and the consequent responsibility and duty of those who manage it, are definitely and undeniably presented in this remarkable passage. Oppression, with its attendant deceit and violence, is the main thing here forbidden, and the care and deliverance of those trodden down beneath it is the main thing demanded. The destruction of the oppressor and the redemption of the oppressed, and of the children of the needy, are the grand fruits and proof of a genuine Christianity, the inevitable results of its triumph.

It is clear, then, that where this sin of oppression most prevails, there the work of the Missionary Enterprise is most needed, there this triumph of Christianity is to be most completely demonstrated, there is the great scene of its conflicts and its power, and there its genuineness is to be most thoroughly tested. The conclusion from this Psalm is inevitable, that when God's Kingdom comes, when the Missionary Enterprise

advances, there must be either repentance and the renunciation of this great sin, or the breaking in pieces of the oppressing nation. But the Missionary Enterprise advances by God's truth, and can accomplish these glorious predicted results only by the application of God's word to those very forms of sin, that in and through the prevalence of Christ's Missionary Kingdom are to be destroyed. In the light of that word, and by its condemning power, the peculiarity and greatness of the sin of oppression, in its intensest form, in our own country, as our own sin, must be demonstrated.

If you would see at a glance how the fire of God's word shoots its lightnings against this sin, you have but to take your concordance, and run through the passages under the head of oppression with its cognate terms, and you will be satisfied. The blessed old Hebrew language never had a word for slavery, nor a term for slave; it was too free and sacred to admit it, the reality itself never being permitted of the Almighty. And the unlimited reprobation and wrath of Jehovah against this sin are manifested in passages so multiplied and direct, and by inferences unavoidable from so many other passages, and by historical instances so blazing with solemn and terrible evidence, that it is impossible in this brief hour even to refer to them. The Hebrews had a fugitive slave law, but it was in behalf of the fugitive, on purpose to preserve him from being returned to his master. "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates where it liketh him best; thou shalt not oppress him." The sending of the fugitive servant back to his master is stigmatized as oppression, and forbidden of God. Put this alongside of the Fugitive Slave Law in these United States, and the indication of God's judgment in regard to it is unmistakable; the reprobation of our legislation by the Almighty cannot be denied.

Again, "He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hands, he shall surely be put to death." This is the extremest, most wicked, most diabolical form of oppression, and God sets it, as a crime, in the same catalogue with murder. By the terms of this declaration, and the conclusions from it, by a logic impregnable, and not to be evaded, the whole system and sin of American slavery is man-stealing, and ours is this guilt, adjudged of God to be worthy of the punishment of death. That which is piracy by the divine law, we have adopted as the common law and justice of our country. That which is marked of God's law for the reprobation of the gospel, (menstealers being set down with whoremongers and murderers for the condemnation of the Gospel according to the law), we have enthroned and sanctioned as our capital all-controlling policy and legislation. The Word of God reproves and condemns us from beginning to end.

"Ye shall not oppress the stranger." "Cease to do evil, learn to do well." "Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed." "Because ye trust in oppression, therefore this iniquity shall be your ruin." "Put away from the midst of thee the yoke." "Is not this the fast that I have chosen, that ye let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke?*" The wrath of the Almighty is "the heritage of oppressors."† Which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, but say to their masters, Bring, and let us dwell together. The people of the land have used oppression, have oppressed the stranger wrongfully, have not proclaimed liberty, every man to his neighbor; therefore "I proclaim liberty for you, saith the Lord to the sword, the pestilence and the famine."‡

In the very last prophecy of the coming of the Lord to reign in righteousness, to revive and spread true piety, he declares, "I will come near to you to judgment, and I will be a swift

* Isaiah 58 : 6, 7.

† Job 27 : 13-23.

‡ Jeremiah 34 : 7.

witness against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, not fearing me, saith the Lord. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked." And God speaks of the flock of the oppressed, whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty, and they that sell them say, "Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich;" and their own shepherds pity them not; and God says that he will smite that land and its inhabitants without pity, and will cut off those shepherds.

But the sin is too plain, too glaring, to need a repetition of the thousand proofs of its wickedness in the sight of God. Oppression, the reign of the oppressor, the trampling of society and law upon the poor and needy, the oppression and destruction of the children of the needy, their bondage and degradation under deceit and violence, are forms of sin, especially when organized and national, that cannot consist with the advancement of true Christianity.

A slave-holding Christianity, by this demonstration, is a forgery and falsehood, a corruption of religion, a defiance of the Living God, a libel upon the gospel, and a perversion of it for the sanction and protection of some of the worst forms of human wickedness and misery. By the testimony of God's word, and the verdict of mankind, the climax of oppression, the consummation of its malignity, and the concentration of all its evils is personal slavery, the buying and selling of men, the claiming, holding, and making merchandise of human beings as property.

What makes this iniquity more dreadful with us than anywhere else, more offensive to God, more injurious to man, is its descent upon the children, its enshrinement and perpetuity as the law of the domestic state, the controlling law of society. What gives comprehensiveness and accumulation to its dominion, and bitterness to its intensity, is the law of hereditary permanence and immutability, foredooming innocent children for

its curse. The whole family relation, the whole domestic state is poisoned, is perverted and prostituted by it, and turned into an engine of merchandise and misery. What God meant should be the source and inspiration of happiness, becomes the fountain of sin and woe. God setteth the solitary in families ; but the independence, the mutual endearment, the sacred relationships and obligations of members of the family circle to one another and to God, are elements of holiness and happiness that cannot exist in a slave's household.

By the nature of slavery, by its remorseless consecration of all capacities and obligations, from birth till death, to the owner, the sacred names of husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, are themselves chattelized, and become merely the exponents of various forces and values in the owner's property. The family relations and affections of slavery, being subjected in a Christian State and community to the will, the avarice, the necessities and passions of the slaveholder, are made, just like all things of faculty, capacity, intelligence, force, emotion, and sensibility in the slave, articles of pecuniary worth alone, of barter and sale, with reference to the market value, and for future increase ; and this constitutes a violation of God's arrangements for the good of his creatures, and an anomaly of heaven-defying wickedness, ten thousand times worse than the family chaos of savage life, or the ignorance and cruelty of heathenism. Our iniquity in the sanction and support of slavery is preëminently this of the wholesale oppression and sacrifice of children. We become a people of menstealers in perpetuating this iniquity.

But the great terror of such oppression is its work upon the soul. In its perfection it separates between the soul and God. It sets a practically omnipotent human master, owner, in the place of God. If that owner of the piece of human property is an irreligious man, a servant of Satan, the chattelism of the slave becomes fatal to his soul, for he cannot obey his master and obey God. The system of chattelism, of property in man,

interpreted by the master, and applied and carried out by his passions, his avarice, his lusts, is the destruction of the soul both of the master and the slave. They go down to the pit together. The slave is destroyed by obeying the master, the master is doubly destroyed by compelling the slave into such obedience. It is impossible to answer the demands and obey the statutes of the system of slavery, and at the same time to obey God. It is impossible to be truly the slave of man, and yet to be a Christian. And therefore the gospel of Christ declares, Ye are bought with a price, be ye not the servants of men; for the moment ye are Christ's freemen, ye can no longer be slaves, can no longer obey men as their property, but as the Lord's property, and only in the Lord, as to the Lord and not to men. Oppression in all forms is fearfully injurious and disastrous to piety, and to the prevalence and practice of true religion. And therefore it is one recorded form of prayer to God by divine inspiration, Deliver me from the oppression of man; so will I keep thy precepts. And the same inspiration declares that oppression maketh even a wise man mad. Beneath such oppression of man (abandoned and condemned to the endurance of that yoke, that compulsion), the keeping of God's precepts is so difficult, the temptations to impiety and sin are so great, the assaults upon a man's faith, patience, virtue, principle, are so terrible, that even a man of inspired piety intimates that except God will hear that prayer, and remove that almost insurmountable obstacle in the way of his religion, he has no hope of holding fast his integrity, and keeping the precepts of his God. But, if that be the case with a converted man, how much more dreadful the condition of an unconverted man under such oppression, how much more desperate his case, how much more hopeless his salvation!

And therefore the gospel answers to this prayer. If thou art called to Jesus' love being a servant, if thou art converted while and as a servant, care not for it; distress not thyself on account of thy servitude, for the grace of God that called thee

can keep thee, and thou art no longer a slave, but thou art Christ's freeman. Nevertheless, if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. Even as a Christian, get out from that state of bondage as quickly as possible; for with all the grace that called thee, and that thy God and Saviour giveth thee, it is a fearful state, a state most unfavorable to piety. If you can possibly get free, be free. Stay not in that condition of bondage any longer than thou canst help.

As a general rule, every man is to abide still in the same calling wherein he is called. But slavery is so bad, so unfavorable to piety, that it is to be made an exception, and you are to escape from it as soon as possible.

But now if as a Christian, with all the mercy of a Saviour's love to render that condition endurable, and with the principles of divine grace and the guidance of God's word to make you faithful to God, even under all the terrible temptations to the contrary, you are counselled to take your freedom as soon as you may, as soon as possible, how much more necessary is such freedom for a man without grace, without piety, without the principle to withstand temptation, without the word of God in his heart to guide him, and how much more dreadful and fatal the influence of slavery upon such a soul! The argument is exceedingly powerful; nor is there any injunction in the word of God upon any man to obey his master, except in reference to conscience and to God, except on the ground of the grace of God, which makes him a freeman, and enables him to endure even an unrighteous bondage for Christ's sake.

Now when it is asked, What has a missionary society, or the missionary work, to do with such a system? we answer, As much as it has to do with idolatry; for it is clear, every precept of piety, as well as humanity, demands the renunciation of the system and the sin, and a deep abhorrence and repentance of its wickedness. The application of a true missionary piety will break up this bondage forever. The moment the slaves themselves are converted, the requisition of the

Gospel is, If thou mayst be made free, use it rather. And, consequently, the moment the masters are converted, they are bound to look to the welfare of their slaves as well as their own, and to do for them that which their spiritual well-being, as well as common justice, requires. The moment the masters are converted, then the requisition of the same Gospel to them is, that they confer upon their slaves that same right of freedom which the Gospel commands the slaves to seek for themselves.

The simple law of Christ, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, and, Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, would require this. So would the command, Give unto your servants that which is just and equal. The very first article of justice and equality is the releasing of them from bondage, and the paying of them wages as free laborers. The refusal to do this, and the violent conversion of them from free hired servants to the condition of slaves, was the last climacteric cause of God's vengeance on the whole Jewish nation.

And so, when a converted slaveholder, commanded by the Apostle thenceforth to give unto his servants that which was just and equal, asked himself, over and above the general law of love as promulgated by the Saviour, What in such a case was just and equal, what did God require? he had to look into God's word as his guide, and to see what was there written. He could not be himself the solitary judge in the case, averring that a peck of corn a week, and a crib and straw along with his horses, was just and equal, or that the Roman slave law was the right and just law for Christian consciences. He must inquire at the word of God, and he could not read far, whether he began with Moses or the Prophets, before finding out that slavery is manstealing, that holding his servants as slaves instead of free laborers was under the curse of God, and that the not giving liberty every man to his brother, and every man to his neighbor, had been visited of God with the sword,

the pestilence, and the famine. He could not prosecute the inquiry one single hour, in the plainest and most familiar portions of the sublimest and sweetest of the prophecies concerning the coming of Christ, and the works of religion incumbent on His followers, but he found it marked down as the very first fruit of righteousness and true piety, that he was to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer, If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke. The description and the application were so plain and so well known as to be inevitably appropriated; there could be no mistake.

If the man attempted to justify slaveholding by the laws of the Roman Empire, he would find abundant light in regard to that infamously cruel system, as well as on all the forms of unrighteous law that ever have afflicted the world with the oppression of sin and the bondage of Satan. He would find it written in God's book, as we do, that when men were truly converted, one of the first fruits of such conversion would be the disavowal and rejection of such unrighteous statutes, and obedience to the law of God and the spirit of Jesus in their stead. He would find it written, that the throne of iniquity, which frameth mischief by a law, could have no fellowship with Jehovah. He would find it set down as one of the marks of a truly good man, that he despiseth and refuseth the gain of oppressions. He would find that the promulgating, speaking, and defending of oppression, the excusing and the practising of it, the taking of his servant's work without wages, and the compelling of him to serve by taking advantage of unrighteous law, would be for himself, an insurance of the wrath of God. He would find among the central works of the Saviour of his own soul, and the proofs of the divinity of that Saviour, and of the heavenly glory and permanence of his kingdom, the proclaiming of liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. He would find

that God heareth the desire and the prayer of the persecuted poor, and will prepare their heart, and cause his ear to hear; to judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress. How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Defend the poor and fatherless, do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy, rid them out of the hand of the wicked. He would find that they that are corrupt speak wickedly and loftily concerning oppression; the justification and defence of it are proof and characteristic of inveterate inwrought wickedness.

Such an examination being entered into, and such the inevitable conclusions from it, it could not be consistent with a Christian hope that any man should claim his fellow man as property, and treat him as a slave. The repentance and abhorrence of this wickedness would be one of the fruits of true conversion. And why should not true conversion operate now, in regard to the same sin, just as it would then? Why is not the Missionary Enterprise, and the revival of religion in its train, just as strictly to be measured and known by its fruits now, as in the early stages of Christianity? The genuine fruits of Christianity are the same in all ages of the world. If slaveholders are converted now, they are to be referred to the same Word of God, the same divine code of morality, as Paul insisted upon, and they find there the same condemnation of the wickedness of manstealing, and of the holding or selling of men as property. The Missionary Enterprise, and the revival of religion, must, if it be God's work, reprobate, cast out, and destroy this abomination. The revival of religion now enjoyed must, if it be God's work, make itself known by its instrumentality in the redemption of the children of the oppressed and needy from that system of deceit and violence, under which and by which they have been sacrificed to Moloch. A revival of religion is but the quickening of sin, if it be not the conquest of sin.

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are, to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience to righteousness? If the revival makes better men, if it changes men from selfishness to love, from avarice to benevolence, from sin to holiness, if it makes them carry religion into their business and life, the Sabbath and the Word of God into the week,—then is it true, and such conversions are genuine. If a man has been a liar, now he puts away lying, and speaks the truth with his neighbor; if he has stolen, he steals no more; if he was covetous, or an extortioner, now he knows that no such person hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. In the 12th chapter of the prophecy of Hosea, you find God drawing the character of an unprincipled, ungodly merchant, thus: A merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppress. Now, if such a merchant's conversion makes him hate oppression, and leads him to do justly, that product of the revival shows it to be God's work; but if he still holds to deceit and oppression, and throws his whole influence and wealth in commerce, in politics, and in the church, to strengthen the arm of the oppressor, and to shield and sanction the sin of slaveholding, such products of the revival show it to be Satan's work, a selfish, sympathetic delusion.

And at this point we confess with shame the sin of the Church, the pulpit, and the ministry, in this country, in that while, during a whole winter's session of our national Congress, the project of forcing on a free State the iniquity of perpetual slavery as a Constitutional obligation has been under discussion, and all moral as well as political influences have been required in array against it, the churches and the ministry have still been silent, the Word of God has been restrained, its power has not been brought to bear upon this nefarious scheme at all. The Word of God has been kept almost as silent, as if God himself had sent an angel with commission to seal up its thunders under an interdict from heaven. On the

most momentous and comprehensive question, of right and wrong before God, of equity and iniquity, of justice and injustice, that ever came before a nation; on the question of defiance against God, and disregard to His authority, or of obedience to Him, and of righteousness and mercy to mankind, on a question of the claims of humanity and of the oppressed from generation to generation, and for future ages, the pulpit has been nearly dumb, and God's word, which sets the seal of God's reprobation and wrath on this iniquity, and commands us to open our mouth for those drawn to a living death beneath it, has been bound and not glorified.

There is no possible excuse for such a silence. In the Constitution so proposed to be enforced upon a Christian people, there has stood out continually, to the outrage of humanity, the shame of Christianity, and the defiance of all the sentiments and laws of freedom and of charity, the central declaration, which is the object and end of the whole scheme, that property in man is the most sacred and unassailable of all property, and that the right to such slave, AND ITS INCREASE, is to be secured forever, as such property, to the possession of the master and owner. The Word of God ought to have been made to lighten and to burn against such an enormity. The pulpit, as the Shechinah of God's holiness, the enshrinement of the divine reprobation against such infinite sin, ought to have been clothed with robes of judgment, and of supplication, and God invoked as of old for the salvation of His people, to march through the land in indignation, and to thresh such heathenism in His anger, consuming it with the spirit of His mouth and the brightness of His coming. It was a time when burning coals from His altar should have been thrown upon the nation.

And it is not yet too late. God is pouring down His spirit, so as to render the scattering of such coals doubly effective. God, in pouring down His spirit, is trying us with the last argument of mercy he ever uses, and is throwing in the mightiest

of all elements for the conquest of this tremendous evil, this terrific sin. It is a falsified, corrupted, rotten Christianity, that has taken down this iniquity of slavery from the gallows where it was hanging as the scorn of all mankind, and has galvanized its bleaching bones, and set it up as the keeper of the Bethesda of the Gospel, the benevolent missionary agency of heaven. This false Christianity is reviving even the slave trade, and striking down the barriers against it, and raising up a noxious, frightful public sentiment, in admission, tolerance, and justification of it. Now then, it is a revived and true Christianity, fresh from the word and spirit of God, that must resuscitate the early fire and power of abhorrence against this infinite abomination. It is a reviving Christianity that through the word and the spirit must cut up and abolish this horrible traffic at the roots, by abhorring, denouncing, and casting out slavery itself, as forbidden and accursed of the Almighty.

It is God's judicial curse on such infatuation, that they who will put evil for good and good for evil, shall at length be left to worse than idiotic blindness; shall not be able to discern between the two, being given up to strong delusion to believe a lie, as part of the penalty for holding the truth in unrighteousness. But when the church comes under such infatuation, then indeed a nation is ready to perish; for the church is the conscience of the nation, and if the light that is therein be darkness, how great is that darkness! If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. If the conscience of the church is corrupted and darkened, the nation has no means of knowing its own evils, and may be far advanced towards irremediable ruin. We become, as a man whose nervous system is incurably diseased or paralyzed, even to the sense of pain. We well know the benevolent instrumentality of the sense of pain for our protection from unperceived injuries. In the absence of that sense, or if it were greatly deficient, if the nerves appointed to convey the notice of injuries betrayed their trust, being paralyzed, or lulled into insensibility, or

bribed into silence, then might a fatal violence be committed, a fatal hurt inflicted, and no warning given, no alarm to save the victim, no bell rung to rouse the sleeper, till the flames have cut off his retreat, and the house is consumed, and he in it.

The case is presented for illustration of a man who lay down to doze on the top of a lime-kiln, and during his slumbers, by some inexplicable but fatal paralyzing power, though one of his feet was burned almost to ashes, he was not aware of it until he arose and attempted to stand on the disabled limb, when it was crushed by the weight, as if it might have been a roasted apple. Now our sins may thus roast us alive beneath the devil's anodynes, and we not know it, until at length, the power of stupefaction being exhausted or withdrawn, our reason is restored only to discover, too late, that Satan and our own madness have reduced us to cinders. A man sometimes drinks till his system is so imbued with the fumes and spirit of the liquid fire, that his very breath will *take* fire at a lighted candle, and he first comes to the knowledge how far his intemperance has carried him, by spontaneous combustion. A whole nation may thus indulge its sins, may proudly and daringly rush onward in a career of oppression, and maintain that such wickedness is the indefeasible right of popular sovereignty, till all the veins, arteries, and vital organs of the social system and the State are filled and poisoned with the mischief; and then spontaneous combustion ensues, and the repulsive, smoking, worm-eaten carcass of an empire is cast forth into God's providential Gehenna, an offence and a warning to the nations. What is to prevent such ruin, if conscience, under timely admonition, does not give the alarm, does not make the people sensible what devil's work upon itself is going forward in the heart of the community.

Now the church and the ministry are the only living conscience of the State; and they are the spiritual nervous system of the nation. It is their business and duty to stand sentinel, to know the approach of sin, to feel the pain, to keep up a

keen sensibility against it, to detect the presence of the stealthy invader, to report the violence, to warn the people against the danger and the injury. If they do not do this, if they desert their post, if they keep silence, if they suffer themselves to be drugged and bribed, the nation may be sunk in such profound insensibility, under the chloroform of selfish sophistry and expediency, so given up to strong delusion to believe a lie, that the whole system, within and without, may be debauched, poisoned, gangrened, ready to drop into the grave, and incapable of resistance, whatever outrages of burning or maiming are inflicted on it. Suppose that while you are asleep a shovel full of coals should be thrown upon your bare arm by some reckless villain, and your nervous tissue should refuse to advertise you, by the sense of pain, letting you sleep on, instead of instantly awakening you, and causing you, with a convulsive start, to throw the fire from you, you would be fatally maimed, your limb destroyed, without remedy. And just so, if the church with the Word of God, by God's authority, do not faithfully and in season perform the office of conscience to the nation, while wicked men, with wicked laws, are piling iniquity after iniquity, as coals of burning fire, upon the people, the awakening will come too late for resistance, too late for salvation.

And thus it has been with the progress of this sin, left almost unimpeded in its career by the silence of the pulpit, the ministry, the church, and the tract bargaining, mutilation and deceitful handling of the Word of God. The conscience of the nation not being set on fire, and made a living sensibility to sin, with capacity and power of vivid and intense repulsion, has given way, being hoodwinked and anodyned, possessed and drugged by the basest expediency, the direst political sophistry; but at the same time expediency on so grand a scale, and with such benevolent pretences, that men have been made to believe that the largeness of the interests at stake absolutely converts wrong into righteousness, and the duty of speech in behalf of the oppressed into an obligation of compassionate silence.

If there had been an early teaching and catechising of the conscience, and outspeaking of the Word, in accordance with the opinions and professions of the patriots and Christians of the Revolution, and the examples of Washington, Jefferson, Dane, Pickering, Randolph and others, and of the early, undiluted and unmutilated expressions of opinion and of truth in the very Book of Discipline in the Presbyterian Church, then the iniquity of slavery would from that time have diminished, and died out, before this flame of justice and benevolence, this fire of conscience and of true patriotism.

But every unused and slumbering faculty only grows weaker, and it was conscience that almost died out, while slavery grew on in gigantic insolence and pride. Every compliance of the North with the slavery of the South has been made against conscience, every compromise with sin has been accompanied indeed with a faint protest and outcry of nature and of grace, and yet the iniquity has been received and submitted to in silence and self-contempt; and the wounded conscience has shrunk away beneath some covert of expediency, till the wound could be cicatrized and seared, and the moral sense prepared to endure, without revolution and resistance, yet another and a further outrage. So from step to step, from post to post, from citadel to citadel, the stupendous and remorseless iniquity has strided on, securing every advance by a new bribery and covenant with conscience, and allowing only time enough to intervene between the great encroachments, to ensure the pacification or stupefaction of the protesting elements. The new-made graves of principle have been hardly matted with the sods of a single season, when over them the squadrons of invaders have galloped for the perpetration of fresh crimes, which again have been sanctioned by tame complying silence and submission.

It seems an instance of judicial blindness, when Christian men, in their senses, can conspire to shield the iniquity of slavery from the reprobation of the Word of God, by refusing to

denounce it as sin, and declaring that such treatment of it is ultra and inexpedient. The whole history of the corruptions of Christianity can show nothing worse than the sanction and defence of this iniquity by the church and the ministry. The custom of praying for the dead, the invocation of saints, the worship of images, the installing of lying as a Christian virtue, on the principle of doing evil that good may come, abuses and abominations that we look upon now as hideous, were not half so strange and abominable in the Christian church under its Pagan shadows, as the protection of the iniquity of slavery under the clearest light of the Gospel, and with the conscience of the whole world against it. The refusal of the church and the ministry to turn the condemning light of God's Word upon it, the fear and trembling on the part of good men to speak out against it, and to call it sin, the compromise with it, and the very generally implied and sometimes express sanction of it, by men of age, experience, and professed piety, cannot do otherwise than call in question the religion of such men, and the genuineness of such religion. No iniquity that blots the name, the memory, the Christianity, of any Father of the Church in its corruptest patristic period is to be compared with the iniquity of shielding, sanctioning, and sustaining this sin.

In proportion as the advance and aggression of the sin have been daring, the cowardice and silence in regard to it on the part of the church and ministry have been increasing. Forty years ago, the Presbyterian church in this country inserted in their confession of faith the explicit testimony of the word of God against it, declaring that according to God the holding and selling of human beings was the guilt of manstealing, and that slavery is that sin, and can be nothing otherwise; that very crime of which the Almighty has said, "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hands, he shall surely be put to death." But now, when this iniquity has taken possession of every branch of our government, and usurpation, and State swindling, and despotism, in the name of popu-

lar sovereignty, have set up this image, and proclaimed the edict of its universal worship as the condition of a legitimate State, and the test of Christian patriotism; now, when enormous piles have been driven down for the support of this iniquity, in pretended Constitutional statutes, and on this mainland of the devil a new basis of common law has been grounded, against God and man, and the common heart and conscience of humanity; now, when this iniquity has been publicly and solemnly enshrined in the Supreme Tribunal of Justice, the place of the national conscience, and the professed Sheehinah of equity and righteousness under responsibility to God, in an edict of oppression against the stranger, caught up, reverberated, and applied, from the highest and most dignified to the lowest and basest of our tribunals and officials, from the Secretary of State, to the conductors of our street cars and the superintendents of lamp-posts, with the damning infamy of the declaration that black men have no rights that white men are bound to respect; now, when, like the Star Wormwood, this iniquity has fallen upon all rivers and fountains of waters both in Church and State, so that men drink thereof, and as to integrity of moral sense forthwith are infected and die; now, when the enemy thus cometh in like a flood, and the most sacred defences against this sin are torn away — this standard, once lifted under the guidance of the Divine Word and Spirit, is trailed in the dust — this testimony out of God's word against this gigantic and devouring iniquity is withdrawn! Why is this? Have the authors of the Confession for God examined their creed anew, and found themselves mistaken? Have they received new light? Have they a new revelation, or a more celestial exposition of the revelation, teaching them that their fear towards God must be taught by the precepts of men? Then, it was a fearful and a horrible thing that this iniquity should be committed in the land; now, it is a terrible and dreadful thing to declare that it is iniquity. Then, the prevalence of the sin, its existence at all, was mourned over; now,

the *ultraism* and fanaticism that dare call it sin! Then, when Pagans over night and in the darkness, set the Ark of God in this Temple of Dagon, the idol fell, scorned and broken before it. Now, Christians themselves have taken pity on this Dagon, and set him in his place again, and Southside ministers and churches have carried him into God's sanctuary, and baptized him as God's missionary. Now, it is a terrible thing to say that sin is sin. Now, the possessors of men slay them, and hold themselves not guilty; and they that sell them say, Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich; and their own shepherds pity them not. And the merchant loveth to oppress, and they speak wickedly and loftily concerning oppression, and Ephraim saith, I am become rich, I have found me out substance, and so in all my labors they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin. The buying and selling of men may be iniquity in the abstract, but not sin *per se*, and so long as you consent not to call it sin, the law makes it right, and I snap my fingers at the iniquity in the abstract.

So the prophets that divine lies, build up the wall, and others daub it with untempered mortar, making the heart of the righteous sad with lies, defending that which is sin against God, and with lies strengthening the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him peace in his wickedness. The extreme anxiety of the supporters and defenders of slavery, and their friends in the Tract Society, not to have us say *It is a sin*, their nervousness on that point, and the satisfaction with which every fear is allayed when you yield that point, and keep silence, just show conclusively where their weakness lies, and our strength, and where and how you ought to make the attack with God's word against them. These evil spirits are afraid of nothing under heaven but the Word of God; they *are* afraid of that; they would rather encounter anything than that; anything rather than the sweeping, blasting condemnation of God against their household deity as sin. Suffer us to enter into the herd of swine;

anything, rather than be thus tormented before the time. They beg and plead that the sentence of the Word of God against this iniquity as sin, may not be issued. They bluster and roar, and call you fanatical, and declare that they will not receive the gospel, if you say slavery is sin. Accordingly you yield, and betray your God and His Word at the threats of His enemies.

If ever there was weakness, if ever there was madness, if ever there was treachery, in the church and ministry, it is this. Your enemies are in terror only when they see this great gun of God's Word turned against them; this irresistible power and fire of God against slavery as sin. That is a fort that must be silenced, or they are lost. But if they see that even with that fort, and those guns, you dare not put in the ball and powder of God's Word, but stuff your cannon with trumpery about the moral duties growing out of the existence of slavery, if they see your wise men in caucusses sagely measuring the girth and weight of God's seventy-four pounders, and concluding that the shot are too heavy for you to lift into the guns, and that if you go into the battle with artillery that compels you to lift and manage such shot, you will suffer defeat, if they see you concluding to avoid such heavy terms as *sin*, and resolving that the old rags and wadding of moral advice will go further and find less resistance than the canister and grape shot of God's truth, then they will rejoice in your folly as their security.

Even with the Word of God, if you hesitate to call their sin, sin, you have taken such low ground, that they will build a fort above you; they will plant their guns on a point that commands and dislodges you, and you will have to quit, unless you take at once the highest ground, and there make your position impregnable. Just thus the British took Ticonderoga. Just thus, when the Americans planted themselves on Dorchester Heights, your enemies had to quit Boston. The thunder of your cannon was higher and stronger than they. Just

so, in this battle against slavery, you can dislodge your enemies only by taking position in God's word, above them and against them; God's thunder against sin is your only artillery, God's word your only citadel, God's authority your only right.

The only obligation upon you to speak out at all against slavery is that slavery is sin. Your only right to reprove those that maintain it, is God's command upon you to rebuke sin. If slavery be not sin, there is no alternative but of its Christian lawfulness, and you have not an inch of ground to stand upon for opposing it. But when, by God's word you show it to be sin, and apply God's own reprobation, and let loose God's appointed wrath against it, its defenders cannot endure that lightning, that consuming fire; they are blasted by the volleys of that thunder.

And yet we are advised to evacuate this citadel, and to cast ourselves upon instructions concerning the moral duties that grow out of the existence of slavery, the moral duties that grow out of the existence of a great sin, while the sin itself remains unindicted. It is treason against God and inhumanity to man, to ignore or deny the sin, and talk about its regulation. Suppose we treated other rank iniquities in the same way. What are the moral duties growing out of the existence of idolatry? Why, according to this formula, you must on no account denounce it as a sin, or else you cannot get near it with the Gospel. You must therefore just keep an affectionate guardianship over it, to preserve it from abuses. You must see to it that the servants of the idol temples are well paid and kindly treated; that the priests do not oppress them, that in their rites of worship they permit no abominations, no profaneness nor impurity, nor drunkenness, but that everything in the whole business be done decently and in order. You must take care that the idol images be made out of solid mahogany that will not rot, and you must supply the attendants with the bound volumes of the Evangelical Tract Society Library. You must see to it that there be no dancing, nor tobacco-chew-

ing, nor spitting in the temples. You must take care that the sacred bulls are not tormented, nor starved, but well fed and properly exercised. You must swallow the camel, but strain at every gnat. This done, you will have a very nice, neat, orderly idolatry, the iniquity of which being concealed, the thing itself need be no nuisance at all.

What are the moral duties growing out of the existence of swill-milk distilleries? According to the policy of the Tract Society, by the morality it is teaching through the concealment of sin, through adulteration of truth, through the withholding of God's Word, out of the fear of man, what are we to do with any such poisonous nuisance? We can only attack some of the circumstances, the adjuncts, but not the evil itself, in its essence. But what are the moral duties growing out of the existence of swill-milk distilleries? Oh, simply that the cans be washed clean with soap-suds every day, and the carts that carry them be painted with "Pure milk from Goshen," or Canaan, or some other equally godly locality, and be driven by the most pious deacons of the community. But as to denouncing swill-milk as sin *per se*, or setting the authorities to abolish it — if you are prudent you will avoid that, for if you do that, you will be called radical abolitionists, and you have no right to *abolish* swill-milk, but only to see that it is carried to your customers in godly carts and clean tin cans. You have only to abate the abuses of it, but not to denounce it as a nuisance. If you put the carts, and the cows, and the milkmen under supervision of an executive committee of the godliest, staid, conservative ministers and elders in the community, you will have done your whole duty in the premises, which is, not by any means to provide pure milk, or put away the bad, but to maintain peace and union.

Morality and religion, according to such teachings, are dependent on the latitude and longitude. South of such a line you must not speak of such and such sins; you must not speak of anything as sin, if it be the custom of the country,

or a domestic institution, or established by law, or if its defenders assure you that if you preach against the sin you shall not preach the Gospel. A member of my church was travelling this winter for his health in Florida. One day he had business with a merchant, who begged pardon for making him wait, because, said he, I have been occupied with selling that wench there (pointing to a little girl some ten years old), and have just had to finish up the bargain and take the money. "And how much did you get?" "Four hundred and fifty dollars." "And do you think this traffic is right?" "Oh, 'tis the custom of the country." And the Tract Society answers, "Oh, 'tis the custom of the country, and you may not publish against it." And the Southside ministry answers, "Oh, 'tis the custom of the country, and you may not speak of it as sin."

The same gentleman visited the slave-pen in Charleston, and there, amidst the crowd of Christian gentlemen, saw a negro woman put upon the block for sale. All her qualities were catalogued and vouched for, and at length the leering devil of a broker looked round the assembly with a smile of satisfaction, and closed the enumeration by saying, "Gentlemen, should you find her fit for nothing else, you may be sure she will serve as a good breeder on any plantation!" This is the Christianity and refinement of slavery in Charleston! Christian gentlemen in Charleston are accustomed to such transactions and such language, and Christian gentlemen in the Tract Society must by no means say that it is sin. This is that institution, to shield which from reprobation and commend it to public favor, a Southside literature can be manufactured and sustained even by the church and the ministry at the North! Were it not for the sake of the poor slave, we would not wound the delicacy of sentiment and feeling that makes a Christian assembly shrink with abhorrence from the mention of such an infernal abomination, which yet is only a glimpse of its horrors. What will you say of the abomination

of standing forth in defence of it, the iniquity of denying that it is sin, or the expediency of refusing to stamp it with the condemnation of the Almighty? No wonder that men are infidels, if their vision is filled and fascinated with the examples of such piety, if they neglect the gospel itself, and take their ideas of it from such expositors.

And yet, these apologizing ministers object to being called pro-slavery. They think it a great insult, a great injury, a real persecution, that they cannot be permitted to defend slavery, to protect it from condemnation as sin, and to throw the whole weight of their example and their silence in favor of it, and yet cannot at the same time be regarded and acknowledged as anti-slavery. They think they are quite martyrs for righteousness' sake, the victims of a terrible proscription. But, gentlemen, let us look at the actual position you occupy, and the manner in which you throw your influence for the support of one of the most infamous and dreadful abominations which the Gospel has ever had to encounter.

You object to being called pro-slavery; but if you keep silence, when this mighty and solemn conflict against oppression is waging in the land, your silence gives consent. If you do not take God's part in behalf of the oppressed, and speak out as God's word bids you, if you forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto this death, you are not only pro-slavery, but God sets you down as such. "He that is not for me is against me." Refusing to rebuke the oppressor for this sin, you take part against the oppressed, you confirm his bondage, you help rivet his chains, you make his deliverance more hopeless, you are a partaker of the guilt of all the cruelties enacted and practised against the enslaved. By the word of God, by the common law of the land, by all the principles of common sense and evidence, standing in the presence of this enormity, and not rebuking it, you give countenance to it, and, so doing, you are pro-slavery. You see this vast wickedness spreading through the land, its altars in every high place, its priests in every

city, its horrid form glaring from the tribunals of justice, the seats of judgment in the gate possessed by it, its pledged and sworn commissioners and marshals sitting on your juries, your merchants striking hands with it, its bribes insulting you, and its snares entangling you at every step.

You see millions of your fellow beings trampled under it, proscribed by it, and even where not enslaved, free only to be by the whole community degraded and insulted, under the Supreme Justice of the United States, which proclaims them the proper subjects of such insult, and fore-dooms them to it; denied their citizenship, their rights of representation, of proprietorship, and of common manhood, by land and sea. You see them in the character and attitude of helpless strangers, refused that benevolence and hospitality which God has commanded, under penalty of His wrath, to be exercised towards beings in such a position, and set apart as strangers for the exercise, in its extremest cruelty, of that oppression which God has forbidden; declared to be strangers and foreigners, of another race and blood than yours, just for the purpose of excluding them from the protection and rights of native citizenship, and yet citizens so far as to make them amenable to your wicked laws, framed for the purpose of condemning and degrading them; strangers, yet beaten, chained, and hanged as citizen criminals; natives, yet accused, judged, punished, maltreated, as strangers, invaders, and enemies; of American blood, yet for the African cross, and for being guilty of a skin that Americans have bleached, declared to have no rights that white men are bound to respect; your own brethren, for whom Christ has died, yet common humanity forbidden to them, their children stolen from them and branded as chattels from the birth, their affections brutalized, their very race ostracised and morally assassinated, to be made mere property from generation to generation, and branded as eternal merchandise.

You see all this, and with most pious and conservative restraint or incapacity of every feeling becoming a man and a

Christian, you keep silence, or pour out your invectives only against those who denounce this wickedness as sin. You have nothing to say against slavery, but much against the fanaticism and imprudence of those who pronounce slavery to be nothing but sin against God and man. You have beheld all these injuries and cruelties, knowing the judgment of God against those who commit such crimes; you have watched the repetition, the rapid accumulation of outrages, heaven-defying and infernal; yet you lift no voice of warning, none of reprobation or rebuke. You are accessory to the villainy. If you intended to shield it, you could hardly, in your position, do more. By not testifying against it, you are held to intend it, as truly as Frank Knapp intended murder, when he stood in the street and watched, while Dick Crowninshield perpetrated the midnight crime.

A Christian gentleman recently sojourning South, told me that in Richmond, the scene of some of the Southside Paradi-saical views of slavery, they were driven by a coachman so white that they never dreamed of his being a slave till he spoke to them of the nobleness of one of his horses, when he said if he were a free man and the animal should die, he would bury him in a coffin, he thought so much of him. "But what? Are you a slave?" "Ah, yes; but I was made free once, many years ago, by my old master, but the legatees broke the will, and promised me that if I would earn so much a year, by extra work, and so pay for my freedom, *then* I should be free. Well, I earned \$125 a year for seventeen years, and then they took the money and sold me to my present master!"

This is one of the Southside views of slavery, essential to the full knowledge of its just, Christian, and evangelical glory and blessedness.

"But have you any wife?" inquired the gentleman. The slave's countenance lightened with the first gleam of satisfaction, as he said "no," his wife was delivered from bondage by death. "And have you any children?" "No, none, thank God, they are all dead too!"

This is that institution; this is that sum of all villainies, which our Tract Societies, and Missionary Societies, and Churches, and Ministers, and Executive Committees, and Prudential Committees combine to shield from the reprobation of God's Word, and the just anger of the people. The apologists for such a system are partakers of its evil deeds. There is no possible just way of treating it, and can be none, but as rank and deadly sin against God and man, and they who attempt to baptize it with the Christian name are themselves doubly responsible for the guilt of its abominations.

There is a combination among all classes in society, our judges, lawyers, merchants, politicians, government officials, with many of our churches and benevolent institutions, to shield this sin. The whole power of the government is active for its protection, and under the assurance of security that such protection affords, there are merchants in our own cities, in New York and Boston, who maintain the slave-trade itself for gain. It is an infamously profitable business, and our government, even now, are contriving additional securities for it, under the sacred, inviolable, unassailable, and even unquestionable sanction of the American Flag. Any pirate may run up that flag, and whereas the crime of being a slave-ship, the atrocity of carrying on this piracy, is an iniquity, a violation of our laws, and of God's law, of which the government takes almost no cognizance, the act of questioning the American flag is an insult and a crime, for the chastisement of which the whole naval force of the United States must be summoned into conflict.

Lord Napier has shown with what perfect impunity sordid merchants in our own cities can pursue this traffic under shelter of the American flag. Look at his list of vessels engaged in the slave trade, fitted out in our cities, owned by our firms, carrying on this diabolical work without fear, persuaded that even if taken in the very act, they can be shielded from any possibility of conviction and punishment by the omnipotence of the slaveholding

power at the head of our government. If a poor man, even by mistake, gives shelter for a night to a poor fugitive flying for his freedom, the whole power of the government is pledged against him unto chains, and the whole penalty for such a crime shall be sure. But if a merchant, by domestic and foreign agencies, kidnaps, chains, imprisons on board a slaver, under the flag of the United States, five hundred of his fellow creatures, and then sells them into slavery, the whole power of the government is suddenly paralyzed, or secretly exerted in complicity, to shield the crime, so that the very attempt to discover it shall be reprobated as an insult against the national sovereignty. Talk of the conviction and punishment of a slaver, and the government suddenly becomes a great circumlocution office, *not to do it*. Crime goes free, but benevolence is punished as crime.

Now under these circumstances we assert, in the name of God and his righteousness, the sinfulness of silence in regard to this great wickedness, and the duty of every Missionary Association, under the great charter and commission of the seventy-second Psalm, to speak out. It was a great and powerful remonstrance against this wickedness, when the American Missionary Association was formed on the basis of that antagonism against oppression, which, in the seventy-second Psalm, is declared to be a fundamental element in the missionary work. Every year this voice of remonstrance has been growing louder, and its power stronger. Every year a greater number of ministers of the gospel have been among the leading men in the formation of Anti-Slavery societies, and some of them have, in every crisis, and in their general preaching, denounced slavery, and have taken sides with this Society in opposition to all complicity with slavery on the part of missionary and other benevolent institutions. It is just to the history of this great conflict, and to those ministers of Christ who have been faithful to his gospel, to give prominence to these facts. We remember, also, and acknowledge with gratitude and joy, the increasing number of churches that sustain the principles of

gospel Anti-Slavery Christianity, promulgated in the seventy-second Psalm, and in the preaching and teaching of the Saviour, in whom, and in whose righteous kingdom, the whole of this glorious Psalm hath its fulfilment.

And now we put it to the conscience of the people of New England, and of such a community as this of the city of Boston, and of this present vast audience, how can you look on in silence, while this tremendous struggle is going forward, and refuse to take that open, positive, and aggressive part against this sin which God's word demands, and to which your own profession of Christianity pledges you? Will you let the glory of this cause, the defence even of your own freedom, and the application of God's truth against the oppressor be taken from you, and assumed and carried by men whom you call infidels, but before whom you, in your silence, are setting an example of practical infidelity in the fear of man, and the betrayal of God's cause into the hands of his enemies? When will you ever throw off this reproach, and stand up and speak out in this cause, if not now?

Within two years the progress of the slave despotism has been appalling. For a while it was somewhat slow and doubtful; now it rushes, plunges, and sweeps all before it, like a ground wave driven by an earthquake. All the dykes of justice, all the tribunals connecting earth with heaven, every enshrinement and entrenchment of righteousness and truth, all the barriers of constitutional law, all the sentiments and axioms of freedom and humanity, are flung down and rolled into the cataract. Every defence of liberty and right has been torn away, and with a clean sweep the tide of this wickedness pours down like an avalanche from the top of the Jungfrau Alps. The Constitution itself, in spite of the Declaration of Independence, impressed into this terrible service, goes crashing over our consciences, liberties, and rights, instead of protecting and defending them. The Constitution is like a strong locomotive that has been used to drag a heavily-loaded train

up an inclined plane ; but the summit being reached, the obstacles conquered, the train itself takes the supremacy on the other side, and, instead of being drawn, drives the locomotive before it. Just so, the Constitution being fettered to the slave-despotism, has dragged the whole train slowly and with difficulty up the inclined plane of compromises, conscience, and the people's unwillingness ; but the moment it has reached the summit, which it has done, when the Supreme Tribunal of Justice, with the flag of the Dred Scott decision, steps on board, then there is no more difficulty or delay ; then the train governs, crowds, drives the Constitution before it, and it rushes down headlong. The judges themselves remove the brakes, and sit enthroned *upon* the Constitution, governing it, not governed by it, at the whistle of the President, whose sole magnificent business, as Chief Magistrate of the United States, has dwindled down to that of engineering for the slave-ocracy.

Now there is but one power under heaven that can stop this iniquity, or do the least thing towards its stay or hindrance, or hold out the least hope that we can be saved from utter destruction by it, and that power is the Word with the Spirit of God upon the individual and public conscience. The claim that the Constitution and laws, under interpretation of the Supreme Court, are to be obeyed, whether God's Word sanctions them or not, is so monstrous, so blasphemous against God, so destructive of his authority in human affairs, that it seems incredible that such an idea could have been broached in any Christian community. Yet professedly Christian men do not hesitate to set the Constitution thus perverted, and the Dred Scott decision with it, and the doctrines of devils growing out of that decision, in the place of the throne of God, and the individual conscience is ordered, at all hazards, to bow down to it. So, as of old, "equity is perverted, and judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field, and oppression becometh the law, and the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels."

It does not need that a man should be an acknowledged villain to do this, or a pirate, or an apostate from Christianity, or a United States Marshal, or hangman, or Slave Commissioner and Judge of Probate, whose living depends on the support of an unrighteous government; but professed men of God circulate these doctrines, and prophets deal treacherously with them, and cause the people to err by them, and as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way *by consent*, by silent sanction; and grey-haired and eloquent ministers, and Executive Committees, and Publishing Committees, and Prudential Committees, out of whom God cannot find a single gap-man for his truth, throw themselves into the breach for the defence of slavery, and denounce as fanatics those who in God's name call it sin. They bend their tongue like a bow for lies, but are not valiant for the truth. They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and the reprobation of sin is in their view a greater sin than sin, if the sinners say that unless the sin be admitted, they will not receive the gospel. They bind the Word of God, and seal up its thunders, and muzzle the Tract Society and the pulpit, and the American Board, and suffer no man to speak above his breath, when this iniquity is to be dealt with.

The fact that good men are involved in this conspiracy of silence, is what makes it so fearful, so powerful. If they were openly bad men, or had not gained the respect and confidence of the community, their connivance at this sin and their defence of it would not be endured at all. It is thus that they are guilty of double treason against God, in using the reputation which he has given them, to give currency to wickedness and lying. Under such examples the sophistry of the apologists for slavery prevails with most pernicious power. Their doctrines glare and glitter upon the people, till their charm is like that of the serpent, whose eye fascinates its victim, so that, after a little trembling and fluttering, all resistance is at an end. Under such examples, the conscience of the country is debauched and paralyzed, and the people are prepared to endure the most

atrocious outrages with tame acquiescence and submission. The ministry themselves, thus afraid and silenced, or persuaded into the policy of silence, as being the way of safety, peace, and prudence, lose all their power as the conductors of heaven's fire, and become like so many sticks of commercial sealing-wax. The electricity of thought, of truth, of freedom from the Word of God, stops where it first touches; it is insulated, it cannot pass to others; there is no spontaneous conducting power. Transitorily, perhaps, it melts the sticks at one end, but their very capacity for being melted serves only for sealing up and keeping close; and thus the whole ministry become, in regard to this tremendous, remorseless, all-devouring iniquity, no better than the devil's sealing-wax. Such is their uprightness, such is their conservatism. Its very law and principle are the wisdom of the god of this world to keep God's light from the conscience. Instead of a manifestation of the truth to every man's conscience in the sight of God, their method is concealment, and under it iniquity and falsehood run riot.

The crisis to which we have come makes it imperative upon every church, minister, and missionary institution to speak out. Even at the South returned missionaries sometimes bear their testimony against slavery. How happens it that almost every man at the North is silent? No voice is raised at the anniversaries of our Missionary Boards, though we hear, by letters from our missionary brethren abroad, how their hearts are filled with anguish at the dreadful prevalence of this sin, and how this stumbling-block of our iniquity lies in the path of the Gospel; and yet, the moment they step on these shores, and pass through the ordeal of our conservatism, it is a perfect dephlogistication of their souls; the spirit, the anguish, the fire of indignation dies out; the power almost of sight and feeling, in regard to the iniquity of this sin, is taken from them, and the only condition on which they can escape the charge of imprudence, insubordination, and fanatical zeal without knowledge, the only condition on which they can keep on

good terms with the leading men and enjoy their confidence, is that of profound silence in the presence of that hideous crime which is the Dagon of our nation's worship.

Other men speak out. Dr. Livingstone is a witness in print, and there being other presses besides that of the Tract House, we get his testimony without mutilation, concerning the atrocities which we at home are fostering. But the moment a missionary sets his foot upon the soil of that republic where slavery is the law of the land, although, like Dr. Duff, he may have come from a country where they freely denounce this abomination, and where he himself has spoken against it, the spell of silence is upon him; he is bitten with that pastoral hydrophobia described in Isaiah, under which men become dumb dogs that cannot bark. Even such men of powerful eloquence visit our shores at the most solemn crisis in our long and dreadful conflict against the despotism of slavery, and depart without opening their lips in God's name to rebuke that iniquity, which yet they tell us from abroad is the greatest human obstacle to the spread and triumph of the Gospel! Whence is this? How is this? What means this? Must their very letters pass through a quarantine at the Missionary Rooms, and are they themselves carefully instructed, and their utterances strained through the alembic of a Prudential Committee, the presiding genius of whose wisdom is represented in the loving kindness of the Southside view? Must their words on this one subject be uttered in under tones and anxious whispers, as though a great imprudence were committed in even advertising to it? Is there any such complicity in the American Board with slavery itself, that even their own foreign missionaries cannot speak?

I think, until we can show some faces of flint in the church, the ministry, and our Tract and Missionary Societies, it becomes us to be modest in speaking of the dough-faces in political life. Everywhere the power of bribery and debauchery in behalf of this sin is present, and everywhere almost omnipo-

tent. No political party can be relied upon, nor any Christian society — afraid of the Word of God, afraid to say that sin is sin.

But the Church, the Ministry, and our Missionary Boards, ought to cut themselves free from such double-dealing, to come forth entirely from all entanglement with such iniquity, and all shadow of the sanction of it, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprovng them. The American Missionary Association, by this testimony as to the sinfulness of slavery, by refusing, in the name of God and his righteousness, to enter into covenant with any of the churches where it is sustained, by rejecting their offerings, as God himself in his own Word rejects them, and by proclaiming his truth against the sin, are dealing a mighty and continued blow for the reprobation and overthrow of the system. The time has come when such decision and openness are requisite on the part of all Christian associations, in whatever shape; and certainly, when the system of slavery, which, in its beginning, continuance, and propagation, is purely and solely man-stealing, is set up in the name of heaven's mercy as God's Missionary Institute, as well as enshrined in the national judgment-seat as the perfection of national justice and law, every association for the spread of God's truth and the advancement of Christ's kingdom is bound to make known and act upon God's abhorrence of such boundless impiety and crime.

If we do not obey God's Word, and suffer it to be applied without partiality and without hypocrisy to this national iniquity, and to root it out, God's Word will root us out; the fulfilment of its predictions will destroy us; its righteousness will be our ruin. It is not to be supposed that God will suffer his attributes to be belied, his Word slandered and falsified, his promised Missionary Millennium turned into a more than Papal indulgence for sin, in order that the supreme dominion of the slave-power may be successfully established. By the com-

ing of the millennium the oppressor shall be broken in pieces ; and it is for the oppressor himself to say whether he will take that sentence out in a broken heart and a contrite spirit, renouncing his iniquity, his oppression, at the conquest of love, beneath the subduing, melting, renovating power of divine grace, or whether he will *work* it out in God's wrath against him ; whether he will fall on this stone and be broken in submission, in faith, in repentance, or whether it shall fall on him, and grind him to powder.

The children of the needy are to be delivered from deceit and violence, and the oppressor is to be broken in pieces. We have reason to believe that God's long-suffering and forbearance have nearly come to an end in this matter ; and perhaps he will not suffer another generation of immortal beings to be trodden from their birth under the hoof of such cruelty, in the very name of God and the Gospel. If the millennium is coming, then either our repentance, or our destruction is at hand. God will deal with us, in this work, as a nation. The train of his divine benevolence to the poor and the oppressed is rolling on, and we must conform to it, or get out of its way, or else God's avenging providence will toss us from the track, and leave us a spectacle of retribution, a by-word of contempt, a warning to the universe.





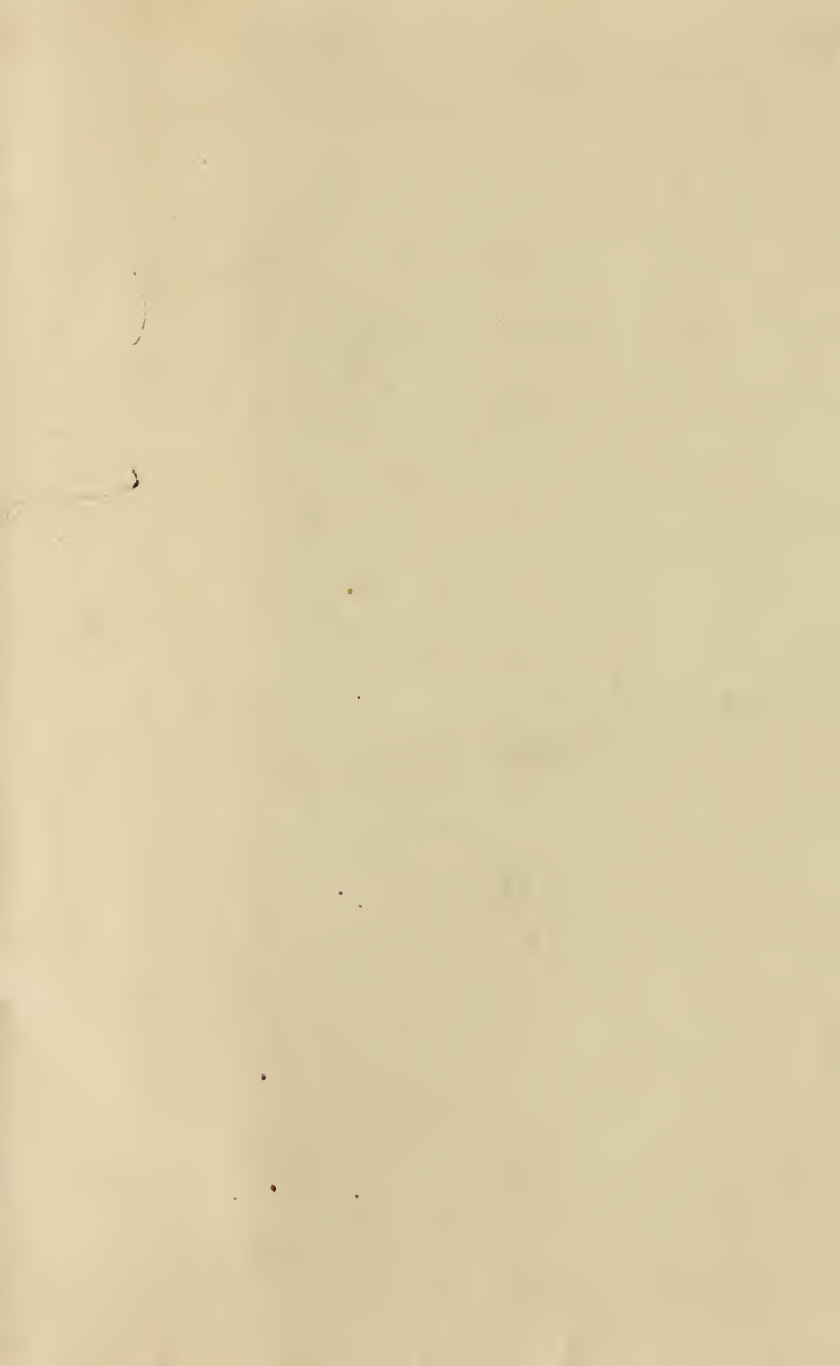
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