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THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SLAVERY;

OR,

THE INSTITUTION CONSIDERED

IN REGARD

TO ITS INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC WEALTH AND THE GENERAL WELFARE.

BY

1857  
EDMUND RUFFIN, OF VIRGINIA.

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THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN

THE HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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THE HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN

# THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SLAVERY;

OR

THE INSTITUTION CONSIDERED IN REGARD TO ITS INFLUENCE  
ON PUBLIC WEALTH AND THE GENERAL WELFARE.

BY EDMUND RUFFIN, OF VIRGINIA.

*Slavery general in Ancient times—Causes of Slavery—Aversion to labor of degraded classes and of barbarous communities.*

Slavery has existed from as early time as historical records furnish any information of the social and political condition of mankind. There was no country, in the most ancient time of its history, of which the people had made any considerable advances in industry or refinement, in which slavery had not been previously and long established, and in general use. The reasons for this universal early existence of slavery, and of domestic or individual slavery, (except among the most ignorant and savage tribes,) can be readily deduced from the early conditions of society.

Whether in savage or civilized life, the lower that individuals are degraded by poverty and want, and the fewer are their means for comfort, and the enjoyment of either intellectual or physical pleasures, or of relief from physical sufferings, the lower do they descend in their appreciation of actual and even natural wants; and the more do they magnify and dread the efforts and labors necessary to protect themselves against the occurrence of the privations and sufferings with which they are threatened. When man sinks so low as not to feel artificial wants, or utterly to despair of gratifying any such wants, he becomes brutishly careless and indolent, even in providing for natural and physical wants, upon which provision even life is dependent. All such persons soon learn to regard present and continuous labor as an evil greater than the probable but uncertain future occurrence of extreme privation, or even famine, and consequent death from want. Hence the most savage tribes of tropical regions are content to rely for sustenance almost entirely on the natural productions of a fertile and bounteous soil. The savage inhabitants of less fruitful lands, and under more rigorous climates, depend on hunting and fishing for a precarious support, and with irregular alternations of abundance and lavish waste, with destitution and hunger and famine. And in every civili-

zied and plentiful, and even generally industrious country, there are to be found, in the lowest grade of free inhabitants, many individuals, families, and communities of many families, who live in the most abject condition of poverty and privation in which life can be preserved, (and is not always preserved,) and prefer such wretched existence to the alternative of steady labor, by which they might greatly improve their condition, if not relieve all wants for the necessaries of life. Even in countries, and among a general population, in which the highest rewards are held out for labor and industry—where some intellectual, and also moral and religious instruction, are within the reach of all who will seek and accept such benefits, there are numerous cases of men who not only forego all intellectual and moral improvement for themselves and their families, and the attempt to gratify all artificial wants, but who also neglect the relief of the most humble comforts and even necessaries of life, rather than resort to that regular course of labor which would furnish the means for comfortable subsistence. In all such cases—whether in civilized or in savage society, or whether in regard to individuals, families in successive generations, or to more extended communities—a good and proper remedy for this evil, if it could be applied, would be the enslaving of these reckless, wretched drones and cumberers of the earth, and thereby compelling them to habits of labor; and in return satisfying their wants for necessaries, and raising them and their progeny in the scale of humanity, not only physically, but morally and intellectually. Such a measure would be the most beneficial in young or rude communities, where labor is scarce and dear, and the means for subsistence easy to obtain. For even among a barbarous people, where the aversion to labor is universal, those who could not be induced to labor with their own hands, and in person, if they became slaveholders, would be ready enough to compel the labor of their slaves, and also would soon learn to economize and accumulate the products of their labor. Hence, among any savage people, the intro-



creation and establishment of domestic slavery is necessarily an improvement of the condition and wealth and well-being of the community in general, and also of the comfort of the enslaved class, if it had consisted of such persons as were lowest in the social scale—and is beneficial in every such case to the master class, and to the community in general.

*Indolence of free laborers at high wages—Difference in incentives to free and slave labor—Comparative values.*

But the disposition to indulge indolence (even at great sacrifices of benefit which might be secured by industrious labor) is not peculiar to the lowest and most degraded classes of civilized communities. It is notorious that, whenever the demand for labor is much greater than the supply, or the wages of labor are much higher than the expenses of living, very many, even of the ordinary laboring class, are remarkable for indolence, and work no more than compelled by necessity. The greater the demand, and the higher the rewards, for labor, the less will be performed, as a general rule, by each individual laborer. If the wages of work for one day will support the laborer or mechanic and his family for three, it will be very likely that he will be idle two-thirds of his time.

Slave labor, in each individual case, and for each small measure of time, is more slow and inefficient than the labor of a free man. The latter knows that the more work he performs in a short time, the greater will be his reward in earnings. Hence, he has every inducement to exert himself while at work for himself, even though he may be idle for a longer time afterwards. The slave receives the same support, in food, clothing, and other allowances, whether he works much or little; and hence he has every inducement to spare himself as much as possible, and to do as little work as he can, without drawing on himself punishment, which is the only incentive to slave labor. It is, then, an unquestionable general truth, that the labor of a free man, for any stated time, is more than the labor of a slave, and if at the same cost, would be cheaper to the employer. Hence it has been inferred, and asserted by all who argue against slavery, and is often admitted even by those who would defend its expediency, that, as a general rule, and for whole communities, free labor is cheaper than slave labor. The rule is false, and the exceptions only are true. Suppose it admitted that the labor of slaves, for each hour or day, will amount to but two-thirds of what hired free laborers would perform in the same time. But the slave labor is continuous, and every day at least it returns to the employers and to the community, this two-thirds of full labor. Free laborers, if to be hired for the like duties, would require at least double the amount of wages to perform one-third more labor in each day, and in general, would be idle and earning nothing, more length of time than that spent in labor. Then, on these premises and suppositions, it is manifest that slave labor, with its admitted defect in this respect,

will be cheapest and most profitable to the employer, and to the whole community, and will yield more towards the general increase of production and public wealth; and that the free laborer who is idle two days out of three, even if receiving double wages for his days of labor, is less laborious, and less productive for himself, and for the community, and the public wealth, than the slave.

The mistake of those who maintain, or admit, this generally asserted proposition, that "free labor is cheaper than slave labor," is caused by assuming as true, that self-interest induces free hirelings to labor continuously and regularly. This is never the case in general, except where daily and continuous labor is required to obtain a bare daily subsistence. That case, and its consequences, will be considered hereafter. For the present, I will return to the causes of slavery.

*War formerly a source and producer of slavery.*

Though slavery would, in the manner above stated, have been introduced (if not otherwise) among every savage people above the lowest and least improvable condition of the savage state, still the institution generally preceded, and so prevented, the existence of these conditions. For there were other still earlier and sufficiently operative causes. As soon as men outgrew and emerged from strictly patriarchal or pure family government, (the most ancient of all,) and were included in larger communities, under governments of usurpation and force, it must be supposed that the strong ruled and oppressed the weak, whether acting or acted upon as individuals or as communities, and in that manner that the weaker would become slaves to the stronger. If not produced otherwise, this would necessarily be the result of war between semi-barbarous communities; and war has existed between such communities, and has rarely ceased, since men were first arrayed in different political bodies. Where civilization and refinement were so low as among the most ignorant savages of Australia, or most of the North American Indians, the prisoners of war would be put to death, because no profitable use could be made of them. But where any advances had been made in regular industry, and especially where the right of private property in land had been established, the expediency of making domestic slaves and laborers of prisoners of war would soon be acknowledged and acted upon. Thus one of the earliest effects of the institution of slavery would be to lessen the horrors of war by saving lives that would otherwise be sacrificed.

*Slavery imposed as penalty for crime or debt.*

In the early conditions of society and of private property, most of the debtors to individuals, or to the sovereign, or delinquents whose punishments were pecuniary or property annexments, would rarely have any other property or means for payment than their own persons. Hence would certainly follow (as still is the usage in barbarous countries) slavery as the payment for debt, and



penalty for crimes, or offences against the sovereign or the laws. With the injustice and cruelty usual in all barbarous communities, the families of delinquents thus condemned to slavery would also be enslaved. And if this were not ordered by vengeance and cruelty, it would almost surely be required by expediency, and even humanity. For the destitute wife and young children of a slave, and any future and more helpless infants, would generally need to be supported, or would perish from want. In barbarous communities, regular maintenance in such cases can only be had from a master who can afford to support infant and then unprofitable slaves, to be compensated by the subsequent labors of their mature life and profitable service. Thus, slavery would necessarily, and from the beginning, become hereditary, and be everywhere a permanent and fixed condition.

*Where personal slavery is not needed, and if previously established would cease to exist.*

By the two modes above stated, slavery would necessarily be established in the early state of society of every young and barbarous community which was not so savage as to be destitute of all regular industry, and of the artificial wants which induce a demand for, or the desire to possess, the accumulated products of labor. Without the existence of such a demand for the services of slaves as will induce and compensate the providing for their regular and sufficient support, domestic slavery cannot be begun. And if before existing, neither can it be continued in old countries densely peopled, where the support of a slave will be more costly than the hire of a free man, driven to his greatest exertion by extreme want, and depressed by the competition of his fellows to the lowest rate of wages at which subsistence is possible.

*The evils and benefits of slavery stated generally.*

Slavery, when thus introduced, would be frequently attended with circumstances of great hardship, injustice, and sometimes atrocious cruelty. Still, the consequences and general results were highly beneficial. By this means only—the compulsion of domestic slaves—in the early conditions of society, could labor be made to produce wealth. By this aid only could leisure be afforded to the master class to cultivate mental improvement and refinement of manners; and artificial wants be created and indulged, which would stimulate the desire and produce the effect, to accumulate the products of labor, which alone constitute private and public wealth. To the operation and first results of domestic slavery were due the gradual civilization and general improvement of manners and of arts among all originally barbarous peoples, who, of themselves, or without being conquered and subjugated (or enslaved politically) by a more enlightened people, have subsequently emerged from barbarism and dark ignorance. The slavery supposed to be thus introduced would be the subjection of people of the same race with their masters—of equals to equals—and

therefore this would be slavery of the most objectionable kind. It would involve most injustice and hardship to the enslaved—would render it more difficult for the masters to command and enforce obedience—and would make the bonds of servitude more galling to the slaves, because of their being equal to their masters (and, in many individual cases, greatly superior,) in natural endowments of mind.

*The greatest works of ancient nations due to slavery, and in its worst form.*

Still, even this worst and least profitable kind of slavery (the subjection of equals, and men of the same race with their masters) served as the foundation and the essential first cause of all the civilization and refinement, and improvement of arts and learning, that distinguished the oldest nations. Except where the special Providence and care of God may have interposed to guard a particular family and its descendants, there was nothing but the existence of slavery to prevent any race or society in a state of nature from sinking into the rudest barbarism. And no people could ever have been raised from that low condition without the aid and operation of slavery, either by some individuals of the community being made slaves to others, or the whole community being enslaved, by conquest and subjugation, in some form, to a foreign and more enlightened people. The very ancient and wonderful works of construction and sculpture in Egypt and Hindostan could never have been executed, nor even the desire to possess them conceived, except where compulsory labor had long been in use, and could be applied to such great works. And to the same cause was due, not only the later and far more perfect and admirable works of art in Greece and Rome, but also the marvellous triumphs of intellect among these successive masters of the then known world. And not only were great works of utility and ornament so produced, nations enriched and strengthened, and empires established and maintained, but also there were moral results, in private and social life, of far more value. In much earlier time, it was on this institution of domestic slavery that was erected the admirable and beneficent mastership and government of the patriarch Abraham, who owned so many domestic slaves that he could suddenly call out and lead three hundred and eighteen of them, able to bear arms, to repel and punish the invasion of foreign hostile tribes. The like system of domestic slavery then, and for many ages after, subsisted in every part of the world in which any considerable moral or mental progress or economical improvement was to be seen.

*Evils of ancient slavery, and its great extension and abuse, and relief offered by another kind.*

The institution of slavery in ancient times, with its great benefits, had also its great evils, and not only in its first establishment, but in its latest incidents. The ease and cheapness with which slaves could be acquired in the latter times of the Roman Empire induced their being held in great and unnecessary

numbers, and no small proportion of them were of captive barbarian and warlike enemies. These conditions were necessary causes of weakness of the master class, and of the general community, and helped to invite and to aid the success of the hordes of barbarian invaders that swept over the then civilized world like a deluge, and, for ages afterwards, buried Europe under dark ignorance and barbarian rule. Still, slow-growing, yet complete, final relief, sprang from the same cause—slavery—that had produced the former civilization. In one or other form, whether of the general and political slavery of a people, (as of the conquered to their conquerors,) or of class to class, or of serfdom, villenage, or slavery to the soil, or of personal slavery, this institution was universal during the dark and semi-barbarous middle ages of Europe. And in the beginning it was from the slaves made of the enlightened and refined, but effeminate and cowardly former masters of the lands, that the latter civilization first began, and was communicated to their barbarous conquerors and their masters. Thus, and contrary to the general order of things in this case, the enslaved, and not the master class, was the source of improvement to the other. To this cause it was owing that the revival of civilization and learning in Europe occurred centuries earlier than would have been the case if the slaves, after the complete conquests made by barbarians, had been as ignorant as their masters.

*The extinction of individual slavery the necessary result of an excess of free labor—The competition of free laborers, and their greatest sufferings, produce the greatest profits of capital.*

But in every country, when covered by a dense population, and when subsistence to free laborers becomes difficult to be obtained, the competition for employment will tend to depress the price of labor, gradually, to the lowest rate at which a bare subsistence can be purchased. The indolence natural to man, and especially in his lowest and most degraded state, can then no longer be indulged; because to be idle would not be to suffer privation only, and to incur risks of greater suffering, but absolutely and speedily to starve and die of want. If domestic slavery could have continued to exist so long, the slaves then would be in a very much better condition than the free laborers, because possessing assured means for support, and that for much less labor and hardship. For sharp want, hunger and cold, are more effective incentives to labor than the slaveowner's whip, even if its use is not restrained by any feeling of justice or mercy. But under such conditions of free labor, domestic or individual slavery could not exist. For whenever want and competition shall reduce the wages of free labor below the cost of slave labor, then it will be more profitable for the slaveowner and employer to hire free labor (both cheapened and driven by hunger and misery) than to maintain slaves, and compel their labor less

effectually and at greater expense. Under such conditions, slaves (if they could not be sold and removed to some other country, where needed) would be readily emancipated by masters to whom they had become burdensome. Soon, under the operating influence of self-interest alone on the master class, domestic slavery would come to an end of itself—give place to the far more stringent and oppressive rule of want, as a compeller of labor, and be substituted by class-slavery, or the absolute subjection of the whole class of laborers to the whole class of employers—or of labor to capital. Then, in the progress of society, first begins to be true, and soon becomes entirely true, the hackneyed proposition that "free labor is cheaper than slave labor;" and it is only true under these circumstances, when the supply of labor is regularly or generally greater than the demand. Then the surplus hands must be left without employment, and therefore without means for subsistence. They can obtain employment only by under-bidding the rate of wages then received by the laborers employed, and so be engaged by throwing as many other laborers out of work. These must, in like manner, submit to the same reduction of wages, to be enabled again to obtain employment by getting the places of as many others. Finally, all are compelled to work for the reduced wages. But, after this general reduction, still, as before, the supply of hands will exceed (and more and more with the increase of population) the demand for their labor; as many therefore as are surplus must be always out of employment, and struggling to obtain it—and by the same process, competition, urged by extreme want, will tend still more to lower wages. Thus want and competition will continue to compel the superfluous and unemployed hands to submit to more and more reduction of wages, until the amount generally obtained is very much less than what is needed for the comfortable subsistence and healthy support of the laborer. And during all the time of this long continued competition and struggle for subsistence, while the rate of wages is being gradually lowered, the amount of toil of each laborer is increased—or at least as long as the human frame can bear increased exertion. *When the greatest possible amount of labor is thus obtained for the lowest amount of wages that can barely sustain life and strength for labor, there has been attained the most perfect and profitable condition of industrial operations for the class of capitalists and employers, and also for the most rapid increase of general and national wealth.* But these benefits (so much lauded and deemed so desirable for every country, and by almost every writer,) are purchased only by the greatest possible amount of toil, privation, and misery of the class of laborers under which they can live and work. It is readily admitted that slave labor could never yield anything like such large net returns—and that it would not only produce less, but would cost more. Slaves could not be subjected to such extreme privation and misery, because they must be



fed and clothed, and cannot generally be greatly over-worked, (and never to the profit of the master,) as is caused continually by the pressure of extreme want, and through competition, on free laborers. If the political and economical problem to be worked out is the production of the greatest amount of profit to capitalists, and of wealth to the nation, in a country of dense population and advanced industrial operations, without regard to the sufferings of the laboring class, it is certain that the laborers must not be slaves, but free from all masters except extreme want. England, after the general abolition of slavery, was more than two centuries approaching this condition, which was finally reached, and has now been fully enjoyed for many years. Since then, England has been, of all the countries of the world, the most prosperous in manufactures, commerce, and all industrial employments of capital and labor—and the laboring and poorest classes have been among the most destitute and miserable. That they have not been sunk, by competition for food, to still greater misery, and that many more numerous and frequent deaths have not occurred from absolute starvation, is owing to the introduction and protection of another kind of slavery—pauper slavery—which is the certain consequence of, ferings produced by the competition of free and the partial remedy for, the evils and suflabor.

#### *Pauper slavery.*

Though, after the supply of labor in any country has long exceeded the demand, competition for employment will, necessarily, reduce wages to as little as will serve to maintain life under great suffering—yet wages cannot be reduced any lower, at least to the further profit of the whole class of capitalists or employers. For, when laborers can no longer subsist on their wages, the deficiency must in some way be supplied by the property owners. In lawless or badly governed countries, beggary and theft may be the irregular means of drawing that support from property which was denied in wages. In better regulated communities, the supply is furnished by the "poor law," or a compulsory provision for the laboring poor who cannot subsist on their wages, as well as for the infirm poor, incapable of labor. This system is most extensive and complete in England, and is the necessary result of the competition for employment of free laborers—of England's great and boasted success in all industrial pursuits and profitable employment of labor by capital. And thus it is, that the cruel oppression by capital, in reducing wages to the lowest rate, is avenged by the tax levied by and for the poor, equal to the deficiency of wages for the amount necessary for bare subsistence. And to this relief, which the poor law promises and affords, every day-laborer in England looks forward as the almost certain destiny and last resource of himself and his family. There are but few of that class who do not, at some time, have to resort to support by the parish; and every

English laborer has more reason to expect to die a parish-supported pauper, than otherwise.

But this aid held out to pauperism, wretched as it is, serves to encourage improvidence, and to increase, as much as to relieve extreme want. The pauper laborer, supported by the compulsory and reluctant charity of his parish, is but a little better off than those who perish elsewhere for want of such provision. But it is not my purpose to consider the system in either of these aspects, but in another. The pauper, whether laborer or otherwise, receiving support from the parish, is neither more nor less than a slave to the administrators of the law and dispensers of the public charity. The pauper ceases to be a free agent in any respect. If at work far from the place of his birth, (in England,) he is rounded and transported to his own or native parish, there to obtain support. If either this forced exile from his long previous place of residence and labor, or other reasons of expediency require it, husband and wife, and parents and children, are separated, and severally disposed of at the will of the overseers of the poor. The able-bodied laborer, who at his agricultural or other work can earn but six shillings a week, and cannot support his family for less than ten, may, indeed, obtain the deficient four shillings from the parish. But to do so, he is subject to be forced to take any service that the authorities may direct. And as the employer receives the pauper laborer against his will, and only because he thereby pays so much of his share of the poor-tax, he not only has the pauper as an involuntary slave, but he has not even the inducement of self-interest to treat the pauper slave well, or to care to preserve his health or life. The death of the pauper laborer is no loss to his temporary employer, and is a clear gain to the parish. Hence, while all of the millions of pauper population of England are truly slaves, and as much under constraint as if each one and his family belonged to an individual master, or as negro slaves are here, they have not the family comforts, or the care for the preservation of their health and lives, enjoyed by every negro slave in Virginia or Mississippi. The negro slaves in the United States have increased from 300,000, the number originally imported from Africa, to nearly 4,000,000, or more than twelve for one. This is a sufficient evidence of their general good treatment, induced by the self-interest of the owners. If it were possible to designate, separately, the whole class of poor laborers in England, and to trace them and their descendants for two hundred years, it is most probable that the original number would be found diminished in as great proportion as that in which our negro slaves have increased—or reduced to less than one-twelfth part. Yet this widespread, miserable, and life-destroying hunger slavery and pauper slavery in England is there called freedom by the fanatics and so-called philanthropists, who abhor, and call incessantly for God's vengeance upon, the negro slavery of this country!

*Evils caused to the former serfs and to the community, by their emancipation.*

Such are the present conditions of things, and the relations of labor and capital in England, especially—and also to great extent in France, and the other most populous and richest countries of the civilized world. When these latter conditions (usually understood to be evidences of the highest state of national prosperity) were first in progress, and were extended, personal slavery rapidly disappeared. It had formerly been general in some form in every part of Europe. It now only remains as serfdom in the Russian and Austrian dominions, and some other of the least improved portions of Europe.

When the slaves or serfs of Europe were left free, their masters were relieved from what was then comparatively a burden, because they were able to hire cheaper free labor. But the former slaves suffered from the change more than their former masters gained. All of them were necessarily thrown into the lowest class of free laborers. The most industrious and provident among them could but enter upon the struggle for employment with the most necessitous competitors, previously free. The indolent and the reckless would either live by preying on the community, as beggars or thieves, or would perish from disease or starvation, or other consequences of want and suffering. And such were the effects. Even as late as 1693, the amount of pauperism and beggary, vagrancy, thieving, and other petty crimes, and of extreme misery, was so great among the poorest class in Scotland, that Fletcher of Salton, (an able statesman, a true patriot, and a stern republican, and also a strong reasoner, and an elegant scholar,) wrote and published an elaborate argument, maintaining and urging the expediency of reducing this class of persons to the condition of slavery, not only to relieve the community, but for their own benefit, and to save them from the extremity of suffering.\*

*General and extreme suffering from want impossible in a slave-holding community.*

So long as domestic slavery is general in any country, and for the most part supplies

the labor of the country, there is no possibility of the occurrence of the sufferings of the laboring class, such as were described above. There, the evils which are caused by extreme want and destitution, the competition for sustenance, class-slavery of labor to capital, and lastly pauper slavery, are all the incidents and necessary results of free society, and "free labor." Before such evils can visit any laboring class of personal slaves, they must have first been emancipated, and personal slavery abolished. This abolition of slavery is indeed like to occur in every country in the progress of society, and where the increasing population has no sufficient and advantageous outlet. But so long as domestic slavery remains, and is the main supply of labor, among any civilized people, it is a certain indication, and the most unquestionable evidence, that extensive and long continued suffering from want or hunger have as yet had no existence in that country. The first great effect of such distress will be to reduce (by competition) the wages of free labor below the cost of maintaining slaves—and this effect would next cause the extinction of slavery, by the mode of sale and exportation, or otherwise the emancipation of all the slaves. After this step has been made, of course, in due time, the want and suffering, which are the necessary incidents and consequences of free society, are to be expected to follow in after times.

When temporary evils, great loss, and distress, fall upon slaveholding countries, it is not the laboring class (as in free society) that feels the first and heaviest infliction, but the masters and employers. If a slaveholding country is visited by dearth, ravaged by war, or by pestilence—or suffers under any other causes of wide-spread calamity—every domestic slave is as much as before assured of his customary food and other allowances, and of a master's care in sickness and infirmity, even though the master class, and the country at large, have but half the previously existing profits, or value of capital. A striking proof of this was afforded by the recent (and still continuing) general suspension of payments of the banks in this country, and the consequent universal pecuniary loss and distress. Payments of debts could not be obtained, commodities could not be sold, and all manufacturing and some other great industrial operations either had to be continued for greatly reduced prices and wages, or to be entirely suspended, if of such kind as could be suspended. In consequence, in the Northern States, the free hired laborers were thrown out of employment, or employed only at much reduced wages. Hence all such persons were greatly damaged or distressed, and thousands of the most destitute were ready to starve. Hence hunger mobs were menacing the city of New York with pillage, and the last evils of a vicious and unbridled and starving populace, excited to insurrection and defiance of legal authority. Universal loss from this cause also visited the slaveholding States, and every property holder, and also, to some extent, every

\* Fletcher's "Two Discourses on the Affairs of Scotland." The author therein states, that there were not less than 200,000 persons in Scotland begging their bread from door to door. That was a time of unusual distress. But, he adds, "yet, in all time, there have been about 100,000 of these vagabonds who have lived without any regard to the laws of the land, or to those of God and nature." He says, further, that all the other nations of Europe (except Holland) groaned under a similar pressure. As no such evil had been complained of by any of the writers of antiquity, and as much poverty was the consequence, in Europe, of the manumission of slaves, Fletcher inferred that the existence of slavery was the cause of the comfort and industry of the lower orders in former times. Hence, this "statesman and patriot of the highest order" proposed the reducing of all these destitute mendicants and their posterity to slavery, by a solemn act of the legislature, (in and for Scotland,) as the only means by which they could be compelled to work, and have insured to them the necessities of life. (See article "Fletcher of Salton," in Edinburgh Encyclopedia and quotation therefrom, at page 743, vol. iii, "Farmer's Register.")



other free man therein. But not a slave has lost a meal, or a comfort; and as a class, the slaves scarcely know of the occurrence of this great national calamity which has so universally damaged their masters, and the capitalists and employers of labor. Nor was the difference of effect owing to the slaves being generally engaged in agricultural labors. The very large business of manufacturing tobacco, in Virginia, is carried on almost exclusively by the labor of slaves, and those mostly hired by the year. The late bank suspension serving to suspend all payments of debts to, and income of, their great establishments, they were generally compelled to suspend work, even though still obliged to feed and support their hired slave laborers, who, for some time, thus received their full allowance and support, while remaining perfectly idle, and returning no compensation whatever to their employers who had hired them for the year.

*The "associated labor" doctrine of the socialists true—but deficient in the main agency, which slavery only can supply.*

The socialists of Europe, and of the Northern States of this Union, (there are none existing in our Southern States,) of every sect, and however differing on other points, have all advocated the *association of labor*, in some form or other, as the great means for reforming the evils of society arising from starving competition for labor. The founders and preachers of socialism had all observed and earnestly appreciated these evils. They saw that, in advanced society, labor was the slave of capital, and that the more capital was enriched by the employment of labor, the less was acquired and retained by the individual laborers, and the more their wants and sufferings were increased. They also saw, and correctly, that there was great loss of time and labor in the domestic operations of every poor family, and most in the poorest families—and also, that the productive labors of all, if associated, and thus aiding each other, might be made much more productive. And if by laborers being associated in large numbers, and directed by their combined knowledge to the most profitable purposes and ends, all unnecessary waste (as occurs in isolated families) was prevented, and all the actual efforts of labor utilized—the net profits and economy of such associated labor would be much increased, and thus, the laborers might secure and retain a sufficient subsistence, out of the larger share of the profits of their labors, which now goes to the share of employers and capitalists. Their views and doctrines are true in the main, and are altogether so plausible, and so applicable to the wretched condition of labor in the most advanced conditions of society in Europe, that the teachers have found numerous believers and zealous disciples. Sundry associations have been originated in Europe, and established in America, (as a new country only offered the needed facilities,) to carry out, in different modes, the great object of associating and combining labor, for the common and general profit and benefit. But every such attempt

has met with signal, and also speedy, failure; except a few, of religious associations, which were under the guidance and direction of a single despotic head. In all other cases, no matter how benevolent and intelligent the leaders—and though one hour of labor, in each day, in this cheap and fertile country, would yield more food than fifteen hours' labor in Europe—still these associations soon failed in their every aim and purpose, and were severally broken up as soon as their inherent defects were made manifest, and seen to be inevitable and incurable incidents of the system.

Yet, so far as their facts and reasoning go, and in their main doctrines, the socialists are right. Associated labor can be much more, productive, and be conducted more economically, than the labors of individual persons or families. The socialist theorists reasoned correctly, and in their practical experiments they devised good but defective plans. They constructed admirable and complex machinery to produce certain final results, in which every wheel and other operating agent was well adjusted as a secondary cause, or effect of another preceding cause. But in all these great and complicated works, the artificers had omitted to supply the first and great motive power, which is to be found only in one directing mind, and one controlling will. Supply the one supreme head and governing power to the association of labor, (for the suitable conditions of society,) and the scheme and its operation will become as perfect as can be expected of any human institution. But in supplying this single ruling power, the association is thereby converted to the condition of *domestic slavery*. And our system of domestic slavery offers in use, and to the greatest profit for all parties in the association, the realization of all that is sound and valuable in the socialists' theories and doctrines, and supplies the great and fatal defect of all their plans for practically associating labor. A few illustrative views will be submitted, which will apply to both the theoretical free associated labor, and to the practical domestic slave labor.

Suppose that some extensive industrial operation, as the tillage of a great farm, the working of a mine, or a cotton factory, is carried on by the labor of fifty men, with that of such other few members of their families as can be spared from home. These men, as usual, generally, are married, and have one or more young children. But whether single and without children, or husbands, or widowers with children, every man is the head of an isolated family, for which separate services are indispensable. Each home or family requires, and has, its separate purchasing of food, (and at retail and highest prices,) its separate cooking, washing, fires, lights, nursing of children, and of the sick, &c., &c. Such duties, in an ordinary or average family, fully occupy the time of the wife and mother. If there is no wife, or the mother is dead, the single man, or the father, is more or less required to perform the like household and woman's duties. Thus, of the supposed fifty households, probably including not less than from 150 to 200 persons, there

may be but the fifty men to labor for wages. All the many others capable of labor, are fully employed as menial servants and nurses for their respective families. This is necessarily the condition of free laborers, each working for himself and his family.

Now suppose, instead of this free population, that all the laborers and their families were slaves to the employer. Then, with proper and convenient arrangement of buildings, &c., instead of there being fifty women cooking, washing, and nursing the sick or the helpless of so many different small households, four or five might even better (with the better means and facilities afforded by the master) perform these services for all. This would dispense with some forty-five women, or other hands fit for labor, previously engaged in these household duties, and which would nearly double the number previously working for production and profit. This great increase of numbers would fully compensate for the general lessening of each individual's labor, which is certain of domestic slaves compared to free laborers driven by hunger. This abatement of toil, together with the allowances indispensable to the profitable existence of slavery, would render certain the comfortable subsistence of the slaves, which, if it could have been for free laborers, would ultimately have given way to the sufferings from competition and slavery, to want, and next to the pauper slavery now so general in England. Further, in this form of associated labor, there would be secured many of the savings in expenses, which the socialists correctly counted upon, besides those already mentioned. By the single head and master providing all the necessities for the maintenance and comfort of the laboring class, the contracts and purchases would be few and on a large scale, and at wholesale prices. There would not, at any time, be a deficiency of food, nor any necessary deficiency of medical or nursing attendance on the sick. When required by economy, fire and light could be supplied to all at half the cost that would be required separately for each family. Thus, in the institution of domestic slavery, and in that only, are most completely realized the dreams and sanguine hopes of the socialist school of philanthropists. Yet the socialists are all arrayed among the most fanatical and intolerant denouncers of domestic slavery, and the most malignant enemies of slaveholders.

*The beginning of negro slavery in America, and its effects.*

As slavery or serfdom (for the causes above stated) was ceasing to exist in England, another kind of slavery was beginning to be established in the new settlements in America. This was the slavery of African negroes to European masters—of one among the most inferior to the most superior race of mankind. The condition of young colonies, where land was at the lowest price, labor at the highest, and the demand for labor exceeding any possible supply, made slavery there especially

profitable. And as it was agricultural labor that was required, and at first for the rudest processes, slaves as ignorant and savage as the native Africans would serve the purpose. Hence arose, and was extended, the African slave-trade. It was first begun, by the Portuguese, in the latter part of the fifteenth century. But the regular African slave-trade, and the extensive use and employment of African slaves in America, occurred in the sixteenth century—the same remarkable epoch when the European mind, and European enterprise, received their greatest impulse, and made the greatest improvements—when the art of printing was discovered, the Protestant religion was established, the modern route to India and the rich East was found, and when America was discovered, and a new hemisphere, almost untilled previously, was, for the first time, ready to receive settlement and culture from the white race, directing the labor of black slaves. When the Caucasian mind thus commands and directs the bodily powers of the ignorant negro, it is the best possible form of slavery, and the condition which conduces most to the benefit of both the white and the black race—and especially is best for the happiness and improvement of the latter. Indeed, it is the only condition in which the negro race has received much enlightenment, or civilization, or real Christianity, in the thousands of years during which African barbarism has been known to exist.

Having designed to confine my remarks to the politico-economical or utilitarian view of negro slavery, other questions have not even been touched, which some readers would deem much the most important, to wit: the Bible authority for, and the religious and Christian influence and operation of slavery. These branches of the general subject have been fully discussed by earlier writers, far better qualified than myself to treat them. But there is one remarkable statistical fact, which, though it is the most important in its religious bearing, is also connected with my special purpose. The following passage, copied from the recent work of the Rev. J. C. Stiles, goes to show that negro slavery in the Southern States has made twice as many Christians as all other missionary efforts have effected among heathens, throughout the world:

"In 1855, heathen church-membership is set down at 180,000. The present estimate of colored church members in the Methodist Church South alone, [which includes slaveholding States only, and does not include Maryland and a part of Virginia,] is 175,000. Eight or ten years ago, the Baptist colored membership at the South was recorded as only 4,000 less than the Methodist. When to these two numbers, you add all the colored members of other unincorporated organizations of Methodists and Baptists, also of Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Presbyterians, Old School, New School, and Cumberland, you readily reach an aggregate of colored church membership *near twice as large as the strictly heathen orthodox church membership of the world.*"—*Modern Reform Examined—Appendix, p. 277.*



*The great extent of slavery in Africa, and the change therefrom to slavery in America.*

The social and political state of the negro race in Africa has always been the same. The darkest ignorance, with savage ferocity and cruelty, have been universal. The whole population was divided into different and usually hostile tribes, each governed by an ignorant, savage, and bloody despot, having unlimited authority. Personal slavery was everywhere so extended that much the greater number of the people were slaves to individual masters; and their slavery was the most galling and intolerable, because of the savage ignorance of the masters, and their consequent recklessness of the happiness or the lives of those in their power. The exchange of physical conditions, from being a slave in Africa, in savage society and to a savage master, and under the general form and conduct of unlimited despotic government, there universal, to the general or usual condition of slaves in these Southern States, would be even more conducive to the benefit of the slaves than of their new masters. And even with all the evils, injustice, sufferings, and cruelties which accompanied the transporting of slaves from Africa to America, (while the traffic was legal and uninterrupted,) the change still was probably beneficial to most of the transported slaves, and certainly to their descendants in all subsequent time. The slaves so obtained were generally such as had been slaves in Africa, or recent captives in war, whom enslavement saved from being killed. If any previously free were included, it was because the tenure of freedom was of little value, and every man's freedom, as well as his life, was at the disposal, either by caprice or cruelty, of the despot of the tribe. It was manifestly to the interest of the slave-traders to bring their cargoes in the best condition to the market in America. Therefore, self-interest prompted them to take the best care of the health, and lives, and consequently of the comfort, of the slaves when on their passage across the ocean. Considering the difference of the previous respective conditions, it is probable that all the evils and physical sufferings of the Africans, when thus transported to America, were not greater to their brutish feelings than are the different evils, both moral and physical, suffered by the lower class of free and voluntary European emigrants, who are now continually brought, in ship loads, to America. There are, indeed, abundant causes for wrongs and sufferings from injustice and cruelty, previous to and during the transportation, in both these cases, as in every other state of complete subjection of any human beings to others. There were, doubtless, numerous cases of great injustice and horrible cruelty in the early slave-trade, as there are now in many particular and exceptional cases of the existing negro slavery in these Southern States. Many such abuses in the slave-trade might have been, and ought to have been, prevented by proper legal regulations. But the existence of such evils, both in the former and present condition of negro

slaves, is no ground for condemning and denouncing the institution of slavery, more than any other wide spread and generally beneficial institution, because of its accompanying evils, and even if such evils are inevitable.

*Former and more recent opinions as to the morality or immorality of slavery.*

It is interesting and curious to observe the different and shifting lights in which slavery and the slave-trade have been viewed at different times. From all historical and contemporaneous testimony, it may be inferred that, until in modern times, slavery in itself was never deemed by any to be a violation of morality, or as contrary to humanity, or as ground for offence to the conscience or sensibility of the most virtuous and religious persons. In Greece, and afterwards in the Roman Empire, neither among masters nor slaves, did the institution of slavery, or the ordinary condition and the obligations of slaves, seem to be ever considered as unjust or oppressive, more than the difference of conditions of property and rank, of luxurious indulgence and abject want and misery, and the extremity of human suffering, such as now exist everywhere, and are especially to be noticed in free and rich England. Indeed, there are now hundreds who, entertaining socialist or agrarian opinions, denounce and contend against what they deem the wrong and iniquity of the unequal distribution of property, and would be ready to maintain their doctrines by force and bloodshed, where, in ancient times, there was one moral reasoner, or even one slave, who held the modern doctrine of slavery being essentially wrong and sinful, and a grievous and unjust oppression of the slave by the master. The philosopher Epictetus was a slave, and was undoubtedly and immeasurably superior to his master in learning and moral worth. Yet, he did not complain, either of his own position, or of the injustice and wrong of slavery in general. The great moral writer and moralist, Samuel Johnson, when, with all his intellectual labors, he could scarcely earn a bare and wretched subsistence, would have been as like to complain that he was not raised as much higher in fortune and rank, as he was truly superior in intellect and worth, to most of the actual possessors of either in England. From before the days of Abraham to within the nineteenth century, the mere fact of a man's being a slave was no more deemed wrongful than the other general fact that all the political power and wealth of a country should be held by a few persons, (and these not the most wise or virtuous,) without regard to the consent or opinions of others; and that a much greater number of their countrymen should be without any political power even for defence, and without daily bread, or means for subsistence. These differences in England, the most free country in the Old World, are greater, and more important than the difference between the necessary conditions of master and slave.

The propriety of placing these cases in comparison will be denied on the ground that the free man, however low, is not debarred by



law, as the slave is, from rising above his first condition. It is, indeed, theoretically and physically possible that the child of a day laborer, or a pauper, in England, may rise to the highest political distinctions that are not hereditary. But, in practice, such elevation would be more improbable than a slave, in other countries, rising to wealth and high public honors. Where difference of race did not (as it does of African slaves) forbid, there have been many more cases of slaves and the sons of slaves, becoming leaders of armies and rulers of kingdoms, than there have been of the sons of free English laborers or peasants rising to high rank and wealth. When Diocletian rose from the condition of a slave to be Emperor of the Roman world, he did not encounter and overcome such great obstacles to his ascending progress as would the free laborer of the greatest natural talent in England, to become Prime Minister of the kingdom, or Commander-in-chief of its armies.

*Origin and progress of the African slave-trade—Changes of public opinion thereupon.*

Considerations of morality and religion, or of benevolence, had no bearing whatever on the beginning or the progress of the extinction of slavery, or villenage, in England, and elsewhere in Europe. It was simply a question of gain or loss to the previous masters. And, as conscientious or religious scruples had no influence to encourage or promote this movement of emancipation in Europe, neither did such scruples exist, or have the least operation in restraining the beginning and early progress of the African slave-trade, for the supply of America. Las Casas, one of the most benevolent of men, a sincere and devout christian, and a philanthropist as earnest and zealous as Wilberforce or Clarkson, was the first to propose (to the Emperor Charles V.,) the bringing of African slaves to South America, by means of the slave-trade, that, by their substituted bondage and labor, might be saved the feebler race of native Americans, who were fast dying out and disappearing under the severe slavery and labor to which they had been subjected by the Spanish colonists. This bondage was destructive to the American slaves, and yet of little profit to their masters. Just the reverse of both these conditions were found in regard to the more docile, patient, strong, and enduring Africans.

The distinguished navigator Hawkins was the earliest English slave-trader. For this and other naval and patriotic services, Queen Elizabeth bestowed on him the then high dignity and reward of knighthood; and further, she purchased an investment, and held a share in Sir John Hawkins' continued slave-trading business. England became the great slave-trader, exceeding in the number of negroes annually transported to, and sold in America, the vessels of all the world besides. The business was deemed of great commercial and national value, was encouraged by the laws, was recommended by the public declarations of several English monarchs, (one of them William III.,) and certainly was discounte-

nanced by none. The extensive smuggling of African slaves by English ships into Spanish America, in contravention of the laws and exclusive commercial policy of Spain, (which did not oppose the colonies receiving slaves, but only the trading with any other nation than Spain,) was the cause of war between the two countries; and by the treaty of peace (of Utrecht) which closed that war, England required and obtained from Spain the formal grant of the right to bring and sell a certain large number of African slaves annually to the Spanish colonies. Now, what Queen Elizabeth did, and other English Monarchs recommended, or what any English administration sustained and promoted, would be far from indicating that such acts were virtuous, or even otherwise than iniquitous. But such open advocating, sustaining, and participating in the slave-trade, and the almost monopolizing it by the English people when it was most extended, and this course being continued far into the reign of George III., will suffice to prove that the slave-trade, so approved by Monarchs, Parliament, and people, for centuries, and opposed by not even a single voice, could not have been deemed contrary either to morality or religion. Even within the last seventy years, and after some of the founders of the opposite doctrines had begun to speak, the general opinion of the most moral and religious members of English society had not begun to condemn slavery in the abstract, or even the actual cruelties of the African slave-trade. A sufficient proof of this assertion is presented in the circumstances of the life of the Rev. John Newton. In the earlier portion, and through the prime of his life, he had been regularly engaged in the African slave-trade. He had continued in this business as captain of a slave-ship, and when he was free to choose any preferable trade; and moreover, he so continued to be a regular slave-trader long after he had become a pious, devoted, and exemplary christian. His sincerity and his piety have not been doubted by any of those who have since denounced the iniquity of slavery in general, and more especially, of the African slave-trade. It is true, that the Rev. John Newton, late in life, and when a distinguished and venerated preacher of the Gospel, allied himself to the then new and growing anti-slave-trade and slavery party of Clarkson and Wilberforce. But this later position of his, in no degree, contradicts what I have inferred from his earlier and long continued business as a slave-trader, and when he was no less moral, conscientious, and christian, than in his later and more distinguished ecclesiastical position.

*Beginning and progress of the anti-slavery doctrine and sect in the American Revolution.*

Virginia and South Carolina, and perhaps other of the then colonies of England, had earnestly opposed the further introduction of African slaves. But their wishes were disregarded, and their legislative enactments for this purpose were annulled by the mother country, that her profits from the slave-trade

might not be lessened. These facts stand forth among the grievances stated in both the Declarations of Independence, first of Virginia, and of the United States. At that time, and earlier, the prohibition of the further supply of slaves from Africa was proper, even upon grounds of economy and expediency. At an earlier time, the slaves in Virginia had exceeded the whites in number in the proportion of ten to seven. In South Carolina, the slaves had been thrice as numerous as the white population.—(Dew's Essay on Slavery.) In addition, the then settled territory of the colonies was all east of the Alleghany mountains, and there appeared not even a chance for expansion beyond the Mississippi. Under these circumstances, sound discretion and policy required the cessation of any further supply of African slaves. But the most correct opinions in regard to national policy, when contested by an opposing and hostile party or nation, are apt to run into excess and extremes. Hence, when the further introduction of slaves into this country was properly deemed an evil, and a grievance inflicted by England merely for her greater profit in the slave-trade, to aid the just opposition to and denunciation of this oppression, every supposed evil of slavery was cited, and exaggerated. This disposition, in conjunction with the then first springing and fast growing theoretical doctrines of the equal, natural, and political rights of man, which were conceived and nourished in the conflict of opinions caused by the American Revolution, (and which doctrines admitted of no exceptions to their general application,) gave existence to the anti-slavery doctrines and sect, which afterwards became so greatly extended, and have had such great influence in both hemispheres. But while Jefferson and many (if not all) others of the Republican leaders and assertors of American liberty, thus acquired and erroneously maintained the opinion of the evil and criminality of African slavery, and hoped for its future extinction in this country, none of them would have advocated, or submitted to, the end since and now sought by the modern disciples of this doctrine, in the immediate and speedy abolition of the obligations of slavery.

*Progress of anti-slavery doctrine and fanaticism in England, France, and the United States.*

The new anti-slavery doctrines soon spread in England, and far more extensively. For there, the enthusiasts and fanatics had no practical knowledge of African slavery, and addressed their arguments to a people still more ignorant of the whole subject, and who had nothing to lose, or to suffer, from the most complete carrying into practical operation of these new theoretical views. Still more rapidly, completely, and disastrously, did these views of natural equality of races, and of negro emancipation, spread in France—they being exactly suited to the then revolutionary madness of that country. The general opinions and political dogmas prevailing

in France, at that time, which were called republican, and falsely deemed promotive of the liberty and well-being of mankind, carried with them, as a corollary, the doctrine that negro slavery was not only a great national evil, but a crime; and the most moderate and conservative reasoners, and even in these Southern States, generally admitted that negro slavery was a great evil and injustice, which it was desirable should be extinguished as soon as it could be done beneficially for the slaves, and safely for the masters. As late as 1830, this speculative anti-slavery opinion was almost universal in Virginia. Not a voice was then heard to vindicate or approve the institution, or even to defend its existence and continuance, except on the grounds of necessity—a necessity caused by the political inability of the colonies formerly to prevent slaves being introduced by the mother country, and subsequently the manifest danger and general destruction that would follow immediate emancipation. While the slaveholders held strongly to their legal rights of property, and would have resisted to death any foreign interference therewith, there was scarcely one of them, of cultivated mind and feelings, who did not deem negro slavery an evil, public and private, political, moral, and economical, and who would not have rejoiced to have in prospect its future and safe extinction. But this moderate condemnation was not enough for the fanatical abolition faction of the Northern States, which was then beginning to exhibit its malignity and strength, and which has ever since been increasing in numbers and violence. These Northern opposers of slavery, having nothing to lose personally, or at home, have been preaching the natural equality of rights of the negro race, and urging the speediest and most effectual consummation of their doctrines of universal emancipation and liberty, without the least regard to the evils that would follow. These sentiments have been fast growing and extending in the Northern States and in Europe, and are still extending among the more ignorant and greater number in all countries in which personal slavery has no existence. But the violence of the attacks and denunciations of this fanatical school has driven slaveholders to examine their own position, and especially to investigate, in proper manner, the question of slavery in all its aspects and bearings. Such examination and investigation, by strict reasoning, had never been before applied to this question. And the result has been that nearly all thinking and reasoning men now as fully believe negro slavery to be a great benefit for this country, as they formerly believed it to be a great evil. And not only has this change been produced in these slaveholding states, where self-interest would serve to quicken and fortify perception of this truth, but also in the Northern States and in England there is a great and decided reaction in this respect, and change of opinion with many enlightened and the least prejudiced minds. And not only have many men been thus brought to acknowledge the highly beneficial

effects of negro slavery, but also to advocate the African slave-trade, under legal permission and proper regulations and restrictions.

*Legislation of the United States and England to suppress the African slave-trade, and the consequences.*

As soon as the former colonies had become free from the rule of England, Virginia and most of the others prohibited, and entirely prevented thenceforward, the importation of slaves from Africa or any other foreign country. At a later time, and after a long struggle, the English Parliament enacted the suppression of the slave-trade from and after 1807. Since, the Governments of both the United States and England have treated the slave-trade as piracy, and have used every effort to prevent its being prosecuted by the people or ships of the respective countries. In this legal policy of suppression, France and other important powers have concurred, and all others agreed in sentiment, and in denunciation of the slave-trade, except Spain and Portugal, which powers continued to receive African slaves into their then colonies Cuba and Brazil. Finally, Brazil has also forbidden the further importation; and to Cuba alone, and against the laws and treaties of Spain, is the African slave-trade still carried on. Yet, with all the stringent and general measures used for the suppression of the trade, and with British and American vessels of war continually cruising about and watching the places for embarking slaves in Africa, the attempted suppression of the slave-trade has scarcely had any effect in diminishing the number of negroes taken from Africa, while the cruelty and sufferings of the ocean transportation (or of the "middle passage") have been made ten-fold more atrocious and life-destroying, than they were in the previous legal and open trade. Formerly, the owners and masters of slave-ships were, at least, unimpeded in the use of every means of care for their captive slaves that pecuniary or selfish interest would dictate. It was not only the most humane, but the most profitable procedure, to protect the health and the lives of the captives, by allowing them good food, enough space, and fresh air. But, since the prohibition, and the heavy penalties, and great risks of capture, the slave-vessels are constructed entirely for swift sailing, to avoid being captured—and, because of the small sizes and low decks of the vessels, the slaves are kept in the most horrible condition of confinement and suffering that would not be certainly destructive of life, so as best to insure the escape and safe voyage of the vessel, though it should be with but one-half of the slaves left alive. For so much had increased the demand and prices of slaves, that if no more than half of a cargo of slaves perished on the middle passage, the other half would return enormous profits on the whole shipment and expense of the voyage. In reference to these well-established facts, the so-called "suppression of the African slave-trade," by England, has been denounced by many of the ablest and most

zealous of the anti-slavery sect, as an entire failure of the object, even in lessening the number of slaves exported from Africa, and as serving to increase the amount of the cruelties and sufferings which accompanied the former legal trade.

*Height of fanatical opposition to slavery, and recent reaction and approval of the institution.*

But the attempted suppression of the slave-trade was denounced only for its inefficiency. Every opinion that was uttered in regard to the suppression was strongly approbatory of the object, and in favor of its being rendered truly and fully operative. Looking to the cruelties and destruction of life, caused by the then existing and illegal slave-trade, it was regarded with detestation and horror, even by the few persons who had so early learned to approve of the practical operation and results of negro slavery of long previous origin, and to deem the institution highly beneficial to all parties. The change of opinion on this subject was recent. As late as 1830, in the slaveholding States, there were to be found no defenders or approvers of slavery, but only apologists for the compulsory participation therein of themselves and their countrymen. The existence of slavery was still deemed a great and unavoidable evil, at first inflicted by the unscrupulous avarice of the mother and ruling country—and it was hoped by all that the condition was but temporary, and that, finally, slavery would be removed from our country and people.

Professor Dew, of Virginia, was the first, in his "Essay on Slavery," to defend and justify the institution, and, as boldly as ably, to maintain its utility, and the folly and madness of carrying out, in any way, the emancipation doctrines and schemes of abolitionists, whether they were the northern and practical, or the southern and theoretical or speculative views. Never has any work, of mere reasoning on previously known facts, had such great effect. It seemed as if men in modern times had not before dared to think on this subject. Soon the beneficent operation of slavery in general, (wherever applicable and needed,) and, especially, of negro slavery in these Southern States, was acknowledged by many—and since, it has been, and now is, universally recognized and maintained, wherever negro slavery exists—and also by many of the thinking men in countries where anti-slavery fanaticism is most prevalent and intolerant. At this day there are more men in the Southern States, and even in Virginia, who would now approve of reopening the legal African slave-trade, (to supply the present great need and demand for labor,) than could have been found twenty-five years ago, who did not then believe that negro slavery was an enormous evil and injury, in every aspect, and to every interest concerned. And the belief of the beneficial operation of African slavery, for countries to which it is best suited, is now everywhere extending among the comparatively few men of intelligence, as much



as the fanatical opposition to slavery is also growing and extending among the more numerous body of the ignorant and deluded, or unthinking and prejudiced of the people of the Northern States.\*

*The dogma of the natural mental equality of the black and white races considered.*

When the anti-slavery doctrines were first taught, and for many years after, one of the main positions of the advocates was, the assumption of the natural equality and capacity for mental improvement of the black and white races, or the negro and Caucasian. This bold assumption of the one party was either tacitly admitted, or but rarely and faintly denied, by the other. It was then generally supposed that, with full opportunity and facilities, and sufficient time for improvement, the negro could be raised to be equal to the white man in mental acquirements—or, at least, to the capacity for self-government, and self-support and preservation. There had then been no sufficiently long and full practical trial or experiment of this doctrine. Since, there have been ample trials in practice which have served so fully to prove the contrary, that no unprejudiced mind can now admit the equality of intellect of the two races, or even the capacity of the black race either to become or remain industrious, civilized, when in a state of freedom and under self-government—or, indeed, in any other condition than when held enslaved and directed by white men. A few general statements and comments thereon will be here presented, on each of the several great and long continued experiments of freedom conferred on negroes, either as individuals, or in societies and communities, independent of the white race.

\* Professor Dew's Essay, the earliest modern vindication and defence of slavery, has obtained for its author the highest award of merit, not only for its priority, and thus exhibiting original thought and reasoning, but also because this earliest argument, taken as a whole, is among the best of all the able recent writings on the same side. For, since that beginning, many and able publications have appeared, in which slavery has been examined and defended on every different ground—as in regard to morality and religion, and to Christianity—and as to its political, social, and economical influences and bearings. In some particular branch of the general subject, each of several different late writers has excelled all his predecessors. But no one, yet, has so well covered the whole ground of investigation, exposition, and argument, as Professor Dew. The next in order of time, and of merit, and for its extensive scope, is a small volume which was published in Philadelphia, in 1836. It appeared without the author's name, though it offers internal evidence that he was a Northern man. This work, which is entitled "The South Vindicated from the Treason and Fanaticism of the Northern Abolitionists," well deserves republication, and the attentive perusal of all who desire to be well informed on the general subject. Of other, and able, and conclusive arguments, but directed to particular branches only of the general question, the letters of Gov. J. H. Hammond, of South Carolina, to Clarkson, and the "Scriptural and Statistical views of Slavery," by the Rev. T. Stringfellow, for their particular and limited objects and popular manner, deserve especial commendation. The "Sociology," and other recent publications of George Fitzhugh, Esq., are worthy of high commendation for novel and profound views on the comparison of slavery, with what is miscalled, "free" society.

*The intellectual inferiority of the black race, tested by facts, in the United States.*

Hundreds of thousands of individual cases of emancipated negro slaves, and their descendants, have existed in this country in the last two centuries. This class has now increased, in Virginia alone, to more than 50,000 in number. In the non-slaveholding States, also, there are numerous free negroes. It is true, that when thus interspersed among the much more numerous and dominant class of white inhabitants, the free negroes are subjected to some depressing and injurious influences, from which they would be relieved if forming a separate community. But, on the other hand, they have derived more than compensating benefits from their position, in the protection of government to person and property, and the security of both, and exemption from the evils of war, and from great oppression by any stronger power. Yet, in all this long time, and among such great numbers of free negroes, everywhere protected in person and property, and in the facilities to acquire property—and in some of the Northern States, endowed with political, as well as civil rights and power, equal with the white citizens—still to this day, and with but few individual exceptions, the free negroes in every State of this Confederacy, are noted for ignorance, indolence, improvidence, and poverty—and very generally, also, for vicious habits, and numerous violations of the criminal laws. In this plentiful country, where the only great want is for labor, and where every free laborer may easily earn a comfortable support, this free negro class is so little self-sustaining, that it now scarcely increases, in general, by procreation, and would annually decrease throughout the United States, if not continually recruited by new emancipations, and by fugitives from slavery. The free negroes fare best in the slaveholding States, and in them only is the whole increase by procreation. In the Northern or "free" States, if the free negroes were not continually added to by emancipated and fugitive slaves from the South, there would be seen a continued diminution of number, from the effects of suffering from want, and vicious habits. In all this long time of freedom, and with great facilities for improvement, there has not appeared among all these free negroes a single individual showing remarkable, or even more than ordinary, power of intellect—or any power of mind that would be deemed worth notice in any individual of the white race. Yet, in the Northern States, free schools are open to the children of the blacks as freely as to the whites—many have received collegiate education—and nothing but the immutable decree of God, fixing on them mental inferiority, has prevented high grades of intellect and of learning, being displayed in numerous cases. Further, the absence of industry is as general as the inferiority of mental powers. Some few free negroes are laborious, frugal, provident, and thrifty. A very few have acquired considerable amounts of property. But these rare qualities were

not hereditary—and the children of these superior individuals would be as like as others to fall back to the ordinary condition of their class. In short, taken throughout, and with but few exceptions, the free negro class, in every part of this country, is a nuisance, and noted for ignorance, laziness, improvidence, and vicious habits.

*Experiment of colonizing freed negroes in Liberia.*

But philanthropists, while admitting these facts, had associated the continued debasement of the free negroes in this country to their previous low condition, and to their still inferior position to the far more numerous and dominant white class. Relief from this alleged evil to the blacks, and, with it, every benefit of industry, thrift, and improvement, was expected to be obtained by the free negro when colonizing Liberia, in Africa. That colony has now been established forty years. It has been sustained, by funds raised by or for the Colonization Society, better than any colony ever before planted and settled by white people. It has wanted for nothing that the most benevolent and parental care of guardianship could provide. The settlers were generally of the best of the class of free negroes of this country, or of emancipated slaves, selected and provided for by their former owners, to enjoy the supposed benefits of freedom. The people and the government have had the protecting, beneficial, and always-desired guidance of white intellect; and there has been no injurious influence from white residents, or foreign interference. Besides all the money and commodities so liberally bestowed by benevolent individuals in this country to plant and support this colony, some of the State governments have afforded to it pecuniary or other aid, and the Federal Government has given much more important, though indirect aid and support, and also military and naval aid and protection. Further: since the so-called independence and ostensible self-government of Liberia, the higher officers of government have been mostly mulattoes, who are as much of the white as of the black blood and intellect. With all these advantages, and such long support by the money, and direction by the intellect, of the whites, the colony of Liberia is a complete (though a partly concealed and denied) failure. With a soil of exuberant fertility, and a climate no less bountiful for production, the inhabitants of Liberia do not yet produce sufficient food and other necessary means for subsistence. All the necessaries of life, including rice, sugar, and others of the most ready and plentiful products of the country, sell at such exorbitant prices as to show plainly their usual scarcity.\* Lately the peo-

ple were even menaced by actual famine, because of the great scarcity of articles of food, and the want of means to purchase food from abroad. Indolence and aversion to regular labor are universal. Agricultural operations and production are in the lowest condition. If the long-continued aid of the Colonization Society was even now withheld, and also the benevolent guidance and influence of the intellect of the white guardians and protectors, this much boasted and falsely eulogised colony, and now "Republic of Liberia," would rapidly decline below its present low condition; and all the residents, who could not escape from it, to find shelter under the shadow of the white man's presence and government, would sink to the state of savage barbarism and heathen ignorance and vice, such as had formerly overspread the land. The only means by which negroes in Africa, as well as in America or elsewhere, can generally be made industrious and useful as laborers, and civilized, moral, and christian, will be when they are placed in the condition of domestic slaves to white masters.

Still earlier was made, and has been much longer continued, the settlement of free negroes in the colony of Sierra Leone, under the direction and care, and at the expense of the British Government. It is enough to say for this experiment that its failure has been much more signal than that of Liberia. The settlers of Sierra Leone were mostly recaptured and uncivilized Africans. In Liberia nearly all the colonists had been civilized by the best preparatory training of slavery in America. This difference alone would serve to account for the greater failure of the scheme of Sierra Leone.

While so many whites in Europe, and even in America, blinded by prejudice, fanaticism, or ignorance of the negro characteristics, have argued to maintain the natural equality of the negro mind, the negroes themselves, including the most enlightened among them, have universally acknowledged the inferiority of their race. One of the results of this acknowledged inferiority is the well known general unwillingness of negroes to be governed by men of their own race, compared to their usual submissive obedience and docility to the government of white rulers. It is well known to every slaveholder, who has made an overseer of one of his slaves, that the greatest difficulty was because of the discontent of the negroes to be so governed. They will, in most cases, exhibit unwillingness to be commanded by the most worthy and respectable of their fellows, even if allied to them by ties of blood and friendship, and sometimes will proceed to disobedience, and even mutinous conduct, when they would have submissively obeyed and respected any white man as their overseer, even if, in truth, less respectable as a man, and less lenient and less intelligent in exercis-

\* The following paragraph, not long since, appeared in the Richmond Dispatch, and various other papers, without comment, and has not been contradicted, and, therefore, is presumed to be correct, though the authority was not stated:

"A correspondent, at Liberia, writes that provisions are mostly imported from the United States. Flour ranges from \$12 to \$16 per barrel; hams and bacon

from 20 to 25 cents per pound; hard bread \$18 to \$12 per 100 pounds; rice \$5 per bushel; butter 62½ cents per pound; salt fish from \$12 to \$14 per barrel; sugar 25 cents per pound; potatoes \$1 25 per bushel; and everything for family use proportionately high."



ing the deputed authority of the master. This respect for white, and impatience of negro rule, extends no less through the class of free negroes. It is because of this general feeling that so few of this class have been or can be prevailed upon to emigrate voluntarily to Liberia. In these slaveholding States, the free negroes, in their usual degraded moral position, and inferior political rights, subject indirectly, if not legally, to the dominant white race, necessarily must suffer injustice and hardship from bad treatment in many cases. Yet it is rare that one of them, whether the most ignorant and degraded, or of the most worthy and intelligent, can be induced to accept the offered bounty of the Colonization Society, and of the State, to be sent to Liberia, and there be made a landholder, and an equal sharer of political rights. So strong is their repugnance to be governed by negroes, or to live where there are no white inhabitants, and, (as they say,) "no gentlemen," that if the free negroes of Virginia should be compelled to choose between being sent to Liberia, to be there free citizens, or to be made slaves, with their families, to white men in Virginia, it is probable that more than half of them would choose to become slaves, to secure white rulers and protectors.

*Experiment of the independence of negroes in Hayti.*

An earlier experiment than Liberia, and on a much larger scale, has been tried in the insurrection and independence of the slaves of St. Domingo. Even this bloody, and finally successful insurrection, which is so generally understood as presenting full evidence of like dangers attending the condition of slavery, and of the disposition of slaves to rebel, and their ability to succeed, if justly viewed, will fully prove the reverse of all these positions. It was not the slaves of St. Domingo, but the wealthy and educated class of free mulattoes, that commenced the insurrection. And even their efforts would have been speedily and completely quelled, if the contest had been left to be decided by the people of St. Domingo only. But the then insane government of the powerful mother country interposed, declaring first in favor of equal political rights to the free mulattoes, afterwards repealing that grant, and finally decreeing emancipation and equal rights to all the slaves. Armies were sent from France to enforce these different and opposite decrees. And it was by these extraneous circumstances, and especially by the armed coercion by France, that the final overthrow of the whites, and their consequent general massacre, were effected, and this formerly beautiful and fruitful territory was made a desolate wilderness and ruin—as it still remains, after seventy years of undisturbed negro domination. Even for two years after the mad declaration of equal rights to the slaves, by the National Convention, and after bloody hostilities had been long carried on between the two free classes, (of whites and mulattoes,) and after a French army was in the field to

sustain universal emancipation, the slaves were still peacefully laboring, as before, on their masters' plantations. But when so long and so urgently invited, and by the then stronger party of their superiors, to accept their freedom, and (what was to their savage dispositions more inviting) to rob, ravage, and slay at will, it would have been strange, indeed, if these long continued invitations, urged by different parties, had not been at last obeyed. Then it was, and only by these means, that the work of slave insurrection was begun, and the subsequent unprecedented rapine and slaughter, and unspeakable outrages and horrors, were consummated. If there had been only white masters and negro slaves, and no foreign and stronger power, although the whites were only one-tenth the number of their slaves, their mastership would never have been seriously disturbed. This, however, is not the present question—but the success or failure of the subsequent experiment of negro independence and self-government. And this question does not need discussion, so well established is the failure and the long continued, and still continuing desolation of the country, and debased condition of its inhabitants. Because the facts are notorious and indisputable, and can be shown by statistical documents, it will be enough here to say, generally, that in regard to cultivation and production, population, social condition, and political importance—refinement, morals, and religion—in short, in everything that can render a country or its people valuable—the general decline of St. Domingo (or Hayti) has been far greater than any person or party could possibly have anticipated. Neither in the descendants of the former slaves is there any such improvement of comfort, happiness, or of capacity, that can compensate for the inferiority of the present highest and ruling class, compared to their former white masters. Of course, the individuals composing the present higher classes, by the aid of wealth, and means for education, are much better informed than they could have been if remaining slaves. But the general or average amount of intelligence, as of their industry and productions, is far below what it was formerly—and the class of laborers is far below what they would have been, if they had continued slaves, and for the last seventy years had been operated on by the civilizing influence of slavery. Further: as much as the case of St. Domingo proves from my argument, after all, it was not a trial of a really freed negro people. The black general Touissant, (the only truly great man yet known of the negro race,) who, after suppressing the civil war, assumed and exercised despotic and severe authority, compelled the former slaves to return to the plantations, and to labor, under military coercion, and severe punishments for disobedience. They were to receive a stated share of the products of the land (one-third,) and were coerced to labor by government officials, instead of by individual masters. But under this much less efficient, beneficial, and profitable form of bondage, the

former slaves were not less than formerly compulsory laborers, and driven by corporeal punishment, as they continue to be to this time. This system of discipline and constraint is, of necessity, extremely defective. But imperfect as it is, compared to individual slavery, it has served to retard the rapidity of the descent which this community has been, and still is, making to unproductive and savage barbarism. If any civilized people were now (as ought to be done, and will be done in some future time,) to conquer and re-colonize Hayti, and reduce the whole laboring, or destitute, or idle classes to their former condition of domestic slavery, the change would be beneficial for the re-enslaved classes, for the whole community and country, and for the commercial and civilized world.

In the seventy years of independence of St. Domingo, and of freedom from invasion and foreign aggression, except Touissant, (who had been a slave, and continued to be perfectly illiterate,) there has not arisen a single man who would be deemed of more than ordinary ability, if he had been of the white race. The higher classes there possess all the still remaining wealth of the country, and can command every facility for education, and mental instruction and improvement. There have ruled and flourished hundreds of high dignitaries, military, political, and clerical—emperors and kings, dukes, generals, and bishops. But there has not yet appeared even one man whom all the advantages of wealth, education, and rank have enabled to exhibit the possession of strong or remarkable mental power. Is not this alone, sufficient to prove the natural and great inferiority of the negro mind!

#### *Experiment of general emancipation in the British colonies.*

A fourth great experiment of negro freedom has been devised and conducted under the direction, patronage, and philanthropic care of the enlightened and powerful British Government. This was the general emancipation of the slaves in all the British colonies of the West India Islands, British Guiana, and wherever African and domestic slavery had before existed under British authority. Proofs and details of facts are not called for in this case. The failure is universal, signal, and undeniable, (with a few notable exceptions,) even by the most zealous of the previous British advocates of the act of emancipation, or the abolitionists who continue to urge the like measure, with the like results manifestly impending, for our slaveholding States.

Previous to this extensive, simultaneous, and peaceful emancipation, the abolitionists of England, and elsewhere, had maintained that, after emancipation, the negroes would immediately become hired laborers—and (judging erroneously from the condition of things in England) that the free labor thus supplied would be even more valuable and cheap to the employers than the former slave labor. On the contrary, universal idleness of the blacks has taken the place of the former universal in-

dustry in the British islands. As the philanthropic British sentiment which induced the emancipation, (and forced it on the former slaveholders,) cannot resort to the wholesome discipline of Touissant, to force the newly freed blacks to labor, the general neglect of labor, and decrease of production, are even worse and more hopeless in Jamaica, than in St. Domingo. And although the continued supremacy of British Government and authority, and the presence of British military and naval forces, have so far secured the lands to the white owners, and prevented general confiscation of property, and massacre of the few whites, still Jamaica and the other British West Indian colonies are totally ruined in regard to industry, production, and all social blessings.

If required, or suitable to the occasion, I could quote at greater length than all this article besides, testimony of facts, and statistical and official reports, going to show the utter ruin of industry and production in Hayti and the British colonies—the unquestionable results of the suppression of slavery. Many of such facts may be seen in the "Present State of Hayti," written by James Franklin, an intelligent Englishman, and former resident—in Bigelow's "Notes on Jamaica"—and extracts from official reports to the British Parliament, and from British (and anti-slavery) writers, inserted in Bledsoe's "Liberty and Slavery." I will give here, merely as examples, the following few short passages:

The sugar exported from St. Domingo, now Hayti, in 1789, was 672,000,000 lbs.; in 1806, it was 47,516,531 lbs.; in 1825, it was 2,020 lbs.; and in 1832, none. Franklin (whose book appeared as far back as 1810, even then) said: "There is every reason to apprehend that it (Hayti) will recede into irrecoverable insignificance, poverty, and disorder."

Bigelow, a Northern Abolitionist and negro-philist, says of Jamaica in 1850: "Capable, as it is, of producing almost everything, and actually producing nothing which might not become a staple with a proper application of capital and skill, its inhabitants are miserably poor, and daily sinking deeper and deeper into the utter helplessness of abject want. Shipping has deserted her ports, her magnificent sugar and coffee plantations are running to weeds, her private dwellings are falling to decay, the comforts and luxuries which belong to industrial prosperity have been cut off, one by one, from her inhabitants, and the day, I think, is at hand when there will be none left to represent the wealth, intelligence, and hospitality for which the Jamaica planter was once distinguished." Henry Carey, another Northern and anti-slavery writer, says: "It is impossible to read Mr. Bigelow's volume without arriving at the conclusion that the freedom granted to the negro has had little effect, except that of enabling him to live at the expense of the planter so long as anything remained. Sixteen years of freedom did not appear, to its author, to have 'advanced the dignity of labor, or of the laboring classes, one particle, while it had ruined the proprietors of



the land." Yet, while all Bigelow's facts go to prove these evils to be the result of the incurable indolence and improvidence of the freed negroes, so inveterate is his negrophilism that he ascribes their indolence and degradation to the continued residence of the few remaining whites, and looks to the removal of the latter as the proper remedy. And, in anticipating this future event, and the benefit of an unmixed negro population in the British West Indies, he also, with all complacency, and without any intimation of objection on his part, supposes that these islands will then form a portion of the United States—and, as must be inferred, as a part of their improved condition, must necessarily then be represented in Congress by negro delegates.

"The finest land in the world," says Bigelow, "may be had at any price, and almost for the asking." Labor "receives no compensation, and the product of labor does not seem to know how to find its way to market."

Mr. Robert Baird, A. M., (quoted by Professor Bledsoe,) is an Englishman, and, like Bigelow, a strong approver of the previous emancipation of the slaves in the English colonies; and, like Bigelow, while he arrays numerous strong facts to show the ruinous results of that act, he ascribes the evil, not to the act itself, but to the want of some further supposed measures of reform. He says:

"Let any one who thinks that the extent and clamor of the complaint [of the former planters and proprietors] exceeds the magnitude of the distress which has called it forth, go to the West Indies and judge for himself. Let him see, with his own eyes, the neglected and abandoned estates, the uncultivated fields, fast hurrying back into a state of nature—the dismantled and silent machinery, the crumbling walls, and deserted mansions, which are familiar sights in most of the West Indian colonies. Let him, then, transport himself to the Spanish Islands of Porto Rico and Cuba, and witness the life and activity which in these slave colonies prevail. Let him observe for himself the activity of the slavers, the improvements daily making in the cultivation of the fields, and the processes carried on at the sugar mills, and the general indescribable air of thriving and prosperity which surrounds the whole," &c.

The degradation of British Guiana since, and because of, emancipation, as shown in the Parliamentary and other official reports, is still worse. But I will quote no more, except a passage of general comment from the British historian, Alison: "The negroes," says he, "who, in a state of slavery, were comfortable and prosperous beyond any peasantry in the world, and rapidly approaching the condition of the most opulent serfs of Europe, have been, by an act of emancipation, irretrievably consigned to a state of barbarism." Yet, even with this admission, I presume that Alison, like every other Englishman of distinction, and of high reputation as an author or statesman, (excepting Carlyle only,) is an enemy of negro slavery, and a denouncer of the iniquity of slaveholding. With all this present un-

animity of opposition to, and violent denunciation of, African slavery, the prediction may be ventured, that a change of opinion is about to take place. Reason and truth will not much longer be kept out of sight by prejudiced and ignorant fanaticism, even in England and the Northern American States.

But with such proofs of entire failure of the emancipation scheme in the British colonies, and with thousands of like facts that can be adduced from statistical and official reports, or testified by unimpeachable and intelligent witnesses, so besotted and blind is fanaticism, and so strongly does it cling to its first errors, and reject all light and truth, that a few men have dared to testify and to publish, that the experiment has been eminently successful—that the lands had increased in price and in production—the negroes were industrious—even their former proprietors were benefitted and content, and that everything had been improved. J. J. Gurney, of England, first published an elaborate report of such false statements, alleged to be on his personal examination; and his pamphlet was largely circulated, by anti-slavery advocates in the United States. Even within the last few months, the same general assertions were made by a speaker, without contradiction, in a public meeting in one of the Northern cities. This statement was matched by, if not copied from, the following, which was republished in the "African Repository," the organ of the Colonization Society in this country, without comment, or expression of even a doubt:

"THE BRITISH WEST INDIES.—At a meeting in London to take measures to present an appropriate testimonial to Dr. Livingstone, the African traveler; Mr. Montgomery Martin made the following statement: 'He had recently visited the West Indies to ascertain if the emancipation of the slaves had produced ruin there. He found there a free, happy, and prosperous population, (hear, hear;) and, speaking commercially, the West Indies now yield more rum, sugar, and other produce, than they had ever done during the existence of slavery, (hear, hear.) Since the abolition of slavery in the West Indies, not a drop of blood was shed, not a single crime was committed—nor was there destruction of property throughout the whole of the West Indies.' (Cheers.)—*N. Y. Col. Jour.*

Robespierre, in the French Convention, when urging the emancipation of the slaves in St. Domingo, and in answer to predictions of opponents of the ruin that would follow, uttered the memorable sentiment, "Perish the colonies, rather than sacrifice one iota of our principles!" The Northern Abolitionists, our fellow-citizens and political "brethren," continue to reassert, in effect, Robespierre's atrocious declaration, after they now well know, what their great exemplar, the bloody Robespierre, did not know, the wide-spread ruin and destruction that would follow the practical establishment of their dogma and purpose of negro emancipation. Their procedure says, louder than words could do, "Perish the wealth and all production of the Southern

States, with all that refines, improves, and dignifies mankind within their bounds; perish there, the white race, men, women, and babes, by massacre, so that the negro slaves shall be freed! Perish even Northern manufactures, commerce, and wealth, if dependent on the products of Southern slavery—and perish the industry, the comforts, the civilization, the morals, religion of the slaves, and even the slaves themselves, if to be necessarily caused by their receiving the gift of freedom!”

*The alleged greatest atrocities of negro slavery considered in comparison with those of free society, or class slavery.*

The main objections of the opposers and denouncers of slavery may be stated under two general heads, viz: first, the great injustice and wrong of subjecting human beings, our natural equals, to slavery, and of the so holding them and their posterity; and second, the hardships and sufferings of the persons subjected to and held in slavery. The numerous other objections urged are incidental, and of minor importance to these.

The alleged injustice and wrong-doing of producing or maintaining the relations and opposite conditions of master and slave, have already been here considered in another connection. If it is unjust and wrongful, it is in the same manner as property, wealth, and political rank and power, in almost every civilized and even free country, are possessed by a small number of the people, while the far greater number are without land or other property, without political power, or, perhaps, even political rights, and with scarcely a hope of acquiring either, in a whole life of unceasing toil and privation. Except some of the most rabid socialists and disorganizers, as Proudhon, who declares all “property to be robbery,” no English philanthropist, or Northern anti-slavery writer, has denounced all hereditary magistrates and rulers as usurpers, and all property-holders as unjust and fraudulent possessors—and declared that both these classes of usurpers and robbers ought to be deprived of their acquisitions for the benefit of the multitude of destitute persons, whose equal rights had been thereby violated. The abstract right of all mankind to personal liberty, and the right to equal participation in the government, and of property in land, (if no more,) stand upon precisely equal and like grounds. The end obtained by each of these several violations of natural and equal rights, or claims, is the same—the general and great benefit of the whole community, and of all mankind—even including (and especially as to personal slavery) the class least favored in the distribution of rights and property. The possessor of hereditary authority, in free England, or of authority delegated by hereditary rulers, either civil or military, lay or clerical, is to the poor and starving laborer, as much a fraudulent and forcible usurper of the power and property of which the laborer is entirely destitute, as the slaveholder is unjustly depriving his slave of any right to freedom. Yet, just as is this comparison, no English monarch-

ist or Northern capitalist seems to have thought of the parity of the different cases.

The second great objection to negro slavery is the severe and cruel treatment of the slaves, and the great sufferings incidental to the condition of every slave. It is a certain and deplorable truth, that wherever men have power over others, there will occur cases of unjust and sometimes cruel exercise of power. Such cases occur even where the superior individual, or class, has no interest to serve in oppressing the inferior; and they are much more frequent, if not general, when the unjust oppression of the inferior, and subject, is advantageous to the superior person or class. Thus there are many (though still exceptional) cases of slaveholders in these Southern States maltreating their slaves, although such procedure is generally opposed to, and never promotive of, the master's interest. And so in the Northern States and in England, there are many (yet also exceptional) cases of husbands using their superior power to maltreat, and even to torture or kill wives—parents their young children—and adult children their parents. But with all these cases, and many of them of horrible cruelty and atrocity, the relations of masters to their personal slaves, as well as of parents to children, and husbands to wives, are much more generally kind, just in intention, and beneficent. The owner of negro slaves is interested in obtaining from them the greatest amount of continued useful labor and service; and also, (and especially, at their present high prices,) to have the property continued by the preservation of health and long life, and increased in successive generations. These objects, it is manifest, must be opposed, if not defeated entirely, by the slaves being too severely worked, or being subjected to other suffering from want of sufficient food, and other necessaries of life and health. Further: capricious and tyrannical treatment of slaves, even though not damaging their bodily ability and health, would be as detrimental to the master's interest, by producing discontent and disobedience. Besides these motives for just and kind treatment, addressed to the self-interest of the master of slaves, there are others which appeal even more strongly to the best feelings and attributes of man. The intimate association of the master and his slaves, through years of direction and service—in many cases continued from early childhood to death—must produce, and does produce, strong and mutual feelings of personal regard and attachment. In very many cases this attachment of love has such sway, that the master's kindness of feeling overpowers his judgment, and he fails to maintain the proper degree of discipline and obedience that is necessary for the well-being and happiness of the slaves, as well as for the profit of the master. The sternest master, however deficient in the softer feelings, has at least more of personal attachment to his own slaves than to other persons unknown to, and unconnected with him. And the smallest share of this universally existing feeling of personal affection, is just so much more than is felt, or can possibly be felt, by either



party in any form of class slavery, or of subjection of labor to capital. Thus, whether reasoning *a priori* from the nature of man, or deducing conclusions from existing known and general facts, there are many and strong reasons to induce the owner of domestic slaves to be kind in his treatment, and to strive to avoid injustice and cruelty. Such are generally, and of necessity must be, the general accompaniments and condition of slavery in these Southern States, at the present, and in recent times. But I admit that the case might be (and has been elsewhere) very different. While England supplied America with African slaves, negroes were so cheap in the British West Indies, and wherever else slaves were then admitted, that the master's self-interest was small to preserve his slave's life to old age, and no increase by procreation was desired, or would have been profitable. It was cheaper to buy an adult male negro, than either to rear one from infancy, or to maintain his infirm and useless old age. Hence, according to human nature, (and just as capitalists in both Old and New England now act towards their free laborers, or class slaves,) self-interest generally overcame any promptings of humanity. It was to the gain of the owners to treat their slaves hardly and cruelly, and, accordingly, it was so done generally. Neither were the promptings of self-interest often counteracted by any feeling of attachment to the newly imported, brutal, debased, and savage African negroes. Moreover, most of the owners, in the British West India Islands were non-residents, and, therefore, were incapable of forming personal attachment to any of their unknown slaves.

This worst and very deplorable condition of negro slaves was owing to accidental and extraneous circumstances, (and mainly to the greedy and unscrupulous avarice of England, ministered to by the great profits of the slave-trade,) and would have been but temporary and transient there, as was the somewhat similar early condition of slavery in Virginia. But the necessary hardships of free laborers, and the cruel sufferings of class slavery instead of being transient, are fixed, and will be increasing as long as the competition for labor, and the pressure of want, shall continue to operate. The class of employers of free labor cannot possibly feel any love or personal attachment for their numerous and often changed hirelings. The only rule on which they act (or indeed can act) towards them, as laborers, is to obtain from them as much work as possibly can be performed, for as low wages as will be taken for such work. This is not even a matter of choice with the employers. They have their places in a complicated system of social machinery, and each one is compelled to act his required part of the general operation. It is often the case that an individual owner and director of a plantation, worked by his negro slaves, either through his own indolence and carelessness, or his too kind indulgence to his slaves, or both these causes combined, fails to obtain half of his proper products and income. Such neglect and waste of means have often

led, finally, to the ruin of the proprietor, and, consequently, the subsequent sale of the slaves. But, more generally, the less extent of such errors only causes to the proprietor such loss of profit as he can bear without destruction of his business, or diminution of his original capital. But any such diminution of profit, to a great manufacturer or mine owner, would be ruinous. The competition for purchasers, among great proprietors of manufactories, and for the trade of the world, is as keen as is the competition for employment among their laborers. Many of such capitalists are as conscientious and humane men as any other employers of labor, and they probably perform as many acts of charity, *as charity*, as other rich people. But *as wages*, no employer of numerous laborers is able to add to the pittance that will engage the needed labor, though knowing it to be inadequate. A very large part of the expense of these great industrial operations is the wages of labor. A master manufacturer is bound, by the current market values, to take certain rates of prices for his products; which prices return to him, on the general average, but a fair and proper profit on his capital and expenses. If, to make these sales, and secure this profit, he can and does hire his laborers at twenty pence for each day's work, he could not add two pence to that rate of wages without taking that amount out of his own previous and but moderate profits. He might be sensible that his laborers required higher wages to sustain health and life, and his feelings of compassion and benevolence might strongly urge him to make the increase; but for the great expense of labor to be increased to him even by one-tenth more than was paid by all his competitors, could not possibly be done without destruction to his profits, and ruin and speedy stoppage to the business. Such a man would pay his share of tax, under the poor law, for aiding to support his and other pauper laborers, and, besides, might give alms voluntarily to the extent of his ability; but as an employer of laborers, and payer of their wages, he would have no choice but to fulfil his hard and severe part in the great system of "free labor," urged to the utmost by competition, and by want.

And precisely in like manner acts every employer of labor, or purchaser of the products of labor. It is the universal law of trade, of which no particular departures from, or exceptions to, can prevent or affect the general operation, that every one will seek to hire the lowest priced labor, and to buy the lowest priced products of labor. All the knowledge of the facts of want and hunger, and consequent vice and misery, and all that benevolence and charity can feel and wish, cannot materially alter or alleviate the working to its end of the great law of competition, and its deplorable consequences.

There are but few, even among the most fanatical denouncers of negro slavery, who, if acquainted with both conditions, would not admit that the far greater amount of suffering is to be found in the class which they

falsely term "free laborers." Yet, to remedy, or greatly alleviate these certain, permanent, and growing distresses of free society, no statesman has even attempted; and, except wild and disorganizing socialists, no reformer has proposed even visionary means for relief. Yet all these statesmen, theoretical reformers, and socialists of every sect, who have all the horrors of class slavery standing and growing under their eyes, neglect its miseries and victims to unite in one universal howl of denunciation of negro slavery in this country—which is a far happier condition than that of any class of free laborers in England, and the happiest and best condition in which the negro race can possibly be placed.

*Expediency of the permanence of negro slavery, and of the extension of the area.*

Assuming as an indisputable fact that God has created and designed the negro race to be inferior in intellect to the white—that the negro possesses in a superior degree the qualities of docility and obedience, and of ability to endure the heat and miasmatic air of tropical climates, and that he only can safely labor in these most fruitful regions of the earth—while his feebleness of mind and indolence of body prevent his voluntary and sustained labor, even to preserve life—that the white man can and does direct, control, and compel the labors of the negro beneficially for both, an best for profitable production, for civilization, and for the general well-being of the world—I thence deduce the expediency and propriety of not only maintaining, and preserving inviolate, the existing condition of African slavery, but of its being extended to wherever the condition of the earth and its inhabitants would be manifestly improved thereby. Nearly all Spanish America has been degraded, and is now sunk below the hope for resuscitation, partly in consequence of the previous general mixture of blood of the inferior with the superior race—and still more because of the subsequent extinction of slavery, and the end of the former subordination of the African and native races to the European. With the throwing off the oppressive Spanish yoke, and declaring the political independence of all these extensive and fruitful colonies of Spain, it was universally expected that they would rapidly improve, and rise, in every attribute of worth and greatness. But all these sanguine and philanthropic hopes and expectations have been miserably and completely disappointed. By each of these revolutionary governments, mis-called free and republican, negro slavery was abolished by law, and equal political rights decreed to all classes of the population. The consequence was an immediate and progressive decline of industry and production; and now, after forty years of political independence, general security from foreign invaders, and with the possession of (their so-called) freedom and republican government, each and all of these republics are but anarchies, more degraded and wretched in every respect than when under the oppression and

tyranny of their former colonial government. Of all tropical and South America, Brazil, which escaped civil war, and Cuba, which has continued a Spanish province, only, have retained the institution of African slavery. And these two countries only, and certainly for that cause, have greatly extended and exceeded their former production, notwithstanding all the evils of bad government in both these countries, and for Cuba, the most horrible political oppression by the mother country. From the mongrel races that occupy Mexico, Central America, the immense basins of the Orinoco, the upper Amazon, and the La Plata and its tributaries, and which are everywhere spreading and maintaining desolation over these fair and fertile regions of the earth, there is no hope for improvement under their present policy, and their mis-called free institutions. If any or all of these great countries had been subdued, and occupied, and governed by men of Anglo-Saxon race, and for even the last forty years of their free existence had been tilled by negro slaves, there would have been as much and as rapid improvement made in population, wealth, and greatness, as there has been of actual decline and degradation under the different existing conditions. And these countries, and their inhabitants, will still continue to decline, until the only present and sure remedy shall be in operation. No tropical country, or people, in any age, has ever greatly prospered, or been raised to a high grade of industry, production, refinement, and moral worth, except by the aid, and general diffusion of domestic slavery. And in modern times, the important and valuable products of sugar and cotton, have nowhere been great articles of exportation, except when obtained from the labor of domestic slaves.

*Causes of the prosperity of the Northern States without the aid of slavery.*

It may be objected to the claims here made for the superior economy of slave labor in new countries, and wherever labor is scarce and dear, that the Northern States of this Confederacy, without slavery, have prospered as much and (as most have said) much more than the slaveholding States. There are sufficient causes of all that is well founded in this claim of equality or superiority, and for the outward appearance of much more than is true.

The settlers of all the present United States brought with them from Europe habits of industry and artificial wants, which had been produced and cultivated in their ancestors by their former, and then extinct, old system of slavery. The first colonists of America, though settlers in a new country, were an old people, with established habits of industry. A cold and severe climate, and generally land but moderately productive, required and compelled labor and frugality. To be indolent and wasteful would be equivalent to starving before the end of the next winter of six months duration. Further, the settlers of New England were still more impelled to exertion by their religious fanaticism, which had first

made them seek a new home on a barren soil, and under a rigorous climate, and prepared them to endure any degree of labor and privation. Not only the virtues, but the follies and the vices nourished by the religion and theocratic government of this peculiar people, served to stimulate effort and labor much more than ordinary physical necessities and inducements alone would have done. But, in addition, the puritan New Englanders availed themselves, as much as was serviceable to them, not only of African slaves, but of their Indian captives, whom they systematically reduced to domestic slavery. And they continued to hold their slaves until after the war of the Revolution. But in so cold a country, and where the products of agricultural labor were of so little amount, slave labor was of much less value than in countries under opposite conditions. As soon as there was even a moderate supply of free labor, it became cheaper to hire such, even at higher rates, for the few months only when it was available, than to maintain a slave throughout the year, and for months together of winter, when no agricultural work could be performed. Hence the time for the natural and economical extinction of slavery in New England soon arrived. And if the masters had not had (and used) the resource of selling their slaves to the South, they would have emancipated them, not for any conscientious scruples, (which now so heavily oppress them in regard to Southern slavery,) but for profit. The like reasons and causes operated more slowly to extinguish domestic slavery in the middle Atlantic States; and the growing anti-slavery doctrines served still more to forward and extend the removal of slavery where it had existed, and to forbid and prevent its being established in the new Northwestern States. The longer and more rigorous winters there also prevented regular or continuous agricultural labor, and would have served to detract much from the profits of negro slavery, if it had existed there. But if both law and fanaticism had not forbidden, it would be both profitable and highly beneficial to use negro slaves to a limited extent in all the Northwestern States, and especially for house servants. And they would have been indispensable, even for agricultural labors, despite the disadvantages of climate, if a supply for such service had but been continually furnished in the hordes of destitute European immigrants, who, of course, all go to these States, or newer territories, where labor is most in demand, and, therefore, is most highly paid for.

But there are other and stronger reasons for the prosperity and success of the Northern States. Even after negro slavery was removed from them, its continued existence and extension in the Southern States served to foster and stimulate, and reward the industry of the Northern States. Southern products,

ever since the existence of the Federal constitution, have been made tributary to Northern navigation, commerce, and manufactures—and the tribute has been made more and more oppressive to the South, and profitable to the North, by means of federal legislation giving bounties, direct or indirect, to Northern industry, capital, and general interests. It will never be known by the South, nor appreciated by the North, how much tribute has thus been paid by Southern industry and capital, (and all derived from the products of negro slavery,) to swell Northern profits and wealth, until the existing union of the Northern and Southern States shall be dissolved. Should that contingency occur, then, for the first time, will the Northern States have to support themselves from their own resources, and without the great and unacknowledged aid to their wealth derived from the slave labor and the products of the South—and they will then learn to know the value of all that they have lost.

*The intellect of the world coming to the approval and support of negro slavery.*

The defenders and vindicators of negro slavery would have nothing to fear for the final and complete success of their cause, if the question were to be decided by reason and argument, founded upon facts and experience. But the case is very different. In these United States, the rights and property of slaveholders and of the slaveholding States, are assailed in every possible manner by the opinions and votes, and also the lawless action, of the more numerous people of the Northern States, directed by ambitious and unscrupulous leaders, who excite and array ignorant fanaticism in the Northern States in opposition to slavery in the South, merely to gain political power and rank for themselves. Under this great outside pressure of the now powerful Northern States, aided by the fanatical or pretended philanthropy of England and France, it may be, that blind fanaticism, stimulating and directing illegal and incendiary action, may be able to extinguish slavery, (even though in a general extermination of the black race in the States where slavery now exists,) before good sense, truth, and sound reasoning, all of which are now extending in influence, shall come to the rescue. The existing contest between the defenders and the assailants of negro slavery is one in which intellect is, or is about to be, arrayed on one side, and the brute force of ignorant and deluded numbers, on the other. The result of the contest will be of vital importance to the Southern States, either for weal or wo, and, in a very considerable measure, to every class and condition of all America and Europe, and to the future civilization and welfare of the world.





## A P P E N D I X .

### THE INFLUENCE OF SLAVERY, OR OF ITS ABSENCE, ON MANNERS, MORALS, AND INTELLECT.

[Extract from an Address to the Virginia State Agricultural Society, read at the First Annual Meeting, December 16, 1852, by EDMUND RUFFIN, President; and then printed by order of the Society.]

\* \* \* \* The subject upon which I propose now to offer my opinions and remarks, though not strictly agricultural, is of the highest degree of interest and importance to the whole agricultural community of this and the other Southern States of the confederacy. This is, the influence of the institution of domestic or individual slavery on manners, intellect, and morals, and on the welfare of both masters and slaves; and in these respects compared to the influence of the slavery of class to class, which, in one or other form, either now prevails, or soon will occur, in every civilized country where domestic slavery is not found.

The institution of domestic slavery, its effects, influences and probable consequences, constitute the great and all-absorbing subject of discussion at the present time—of defensive and too often apologetic argument in the Southern States, and of aggressive and fierce denunciation throughout the Northern States of this confederacy. The subject is as broad and varied as it is important. To be fully discussed it would require consideration in sundry aspects, but of which each one may be treated separately and distinctly. The expediency and rightfulness of slavery may be considered either as a question of religion and morals—of public policy and political influence—or of domestic economy and influence upon private interests and on the habits and manners of society. The former and chief branches of the general question have been already discussed by able writers, to whose arguments I could add no light, even if this occasion permitted so wide a range of discussion. But the latter-named branch has had less attention, or defence, on our part; and as its consideration is intimately connected with agriculture and agricultural interests, in this connection mainly, and as suitable to this occasion, I will now offer some remarks upon the influence of the existing institution of African slavery, on the social qualities, manners, and welfare of the agricultural class in these Southern States.

This one and limited relation of slavery to agricultural interests, requires a still further division, into 1st: The question of the comparative pecuniary profit of slave labor, or of its absence and its substitutes; and 2d: The question of social and moral advantages and disadvantages. The first of these subdivisions, important as it is to our interests, and certain and easy as would be the demonstration of the result, cannot be here discussed. The superior pecuniary profit of slave-labor is a subject of statistics, of calculation and detail, which would be inadmissible at this time and place. But it is not required to reach the proof through such a course of argument. I may assume as granted and unquestionable, the fact almost universally admitted in the Southern States, that slave-labor is in our circumstances, more profitable to the employers, and to agricultural interests, than could be any possible substituted labor. Dismissing, then, this important subdivision of this subject as settled, I will direct my observations to private interests other than pecuniary, as affected by the influence of the institution of slavery.

It has been a fertile subject of declamation and denunciation among the opposers of slavery, that the existence of domestic slavery operated to corrupt manners and morals. Every wide-spread and pervading institution, however beneficial in general effect, must also have some adverse effect or influence in minor points, or exceptional cases. This is true in regard to every great institution of public economy, government, morals, or even religion. He is a poor reasoner who judges not by general rules, but by the exceptions. And that is the mode of argument generally adopted to oppose and denounce the institution of slavery. The so-called facts or premises, if not either entirely false and impossible, as is generally the case, are but rare exceptions to general rules.

The great economical objections to slave labor are these: The compulsion of authority;



and the fear of punishment, to the slave, are less potent than the pressure of want, and desire of gain, stimulating free laborers. Hence slaves labor less assiduously than necessitous free laborers. Next, with all this loss of effort still the labor of slaves is so profitable that their owners are tempted by their prosperity and the ease of obtaining a living, to be themselves indolent and wasteful. These are effects which every where follow similar causes. Their existence is certainly a great detraction from what might otherwise be the profits of Southern agricultural industry and capital. But when this detraction is urged (as is continually done) by the opposers of slavery to prove the evils of the system, they are in fact but asserting the truths that the labors of the Southern slaves, in general, are lighter, and yet the profits of their owners greater, than in regard to the corresponding classes of laborers and capitalists in Europe or the Northern States. Northern farmers who are now thriving by greater economy of labor and products, would become bankrupt if subjected to the waste of both, which is general throughout the Southern States. These evils are the effects certainly of slavery—but effects which are the strongest evidence of the greater benefits of the system, and of the falsehood of the charges against it, as a question of profit for the proprietors, or of oppression and suffering of the slaves.

Much is certainly wanting among the agricultural class of the Southern States, in education and mental culture; and great have been and still remain the obstacles to the higher attainment of these benefits. This also is one of the attendant minor evils of the institution of slavery, caused by the necessary dispersed residences of the superior class of the population. Still, in no other class of cultivators of the soil, whether in this young and great confederacy, or in old Europe, can there be found, in proportion to numbers, so much of mental improvement, enlargement of views, and general information, as in the Southern and slaveholding States. In no other agricultural class, throughout the world, are better nurtured, or so well preserved, the purity of all the domestic and family virtues of daughters, wives, and mothers. To the most intelligent and fair-judging of foreign travellers and visitors to our Southern country, who have had opportunities to observe domestic manners and country society—whether such visitors were natives of Europe or of our Northern and slavery-hating States, nothing has seemed more marked and peculiar than facts observed, which were but illustrations of the propositions I have asserted, and necessary results of our peculiar social position. Yet it has not occurred to these intelligent strangers, who have admired and eulogised the domestic manners and refinement of the Southern country population, that the main cause, the essential foundation of the permanence of the peculiar merits which they witnessed with surprise and admiration, are due to the institution of African slavery. It is this institution, which, by confining the drudgery and brutalizing effects

of continued toil, or menial service, to the inferior race, (and of which the subjection, notwithstanding, has served greatly for its benefit and improvement,) gives to the superior race leisure and other means to improve mind, taste, and manners. In countries where domestic slavery does not exist, (or some equivalent condition of society, such as I will advert to,) and where the owners of the soil and all members of their families are necessarily laborers in the lowest departments or most degrading menial services, there may be much industry, greater economy and frugality, and possibly, (under the peculiarly favorable, though transient circumstances of a newly settled territory and cheap and fertile lands,) there may be even much general accumulation of profit and of wealth. But, nevertheless, such a population, of necessity, must be, or in a few generations will become, rude in manners, and greatly deficient in refinement of feeling and cultivation of mental and social qualities. No one appreciates more highly than myself the advantages to a nation of producing and accumulating wealth by the individual members of the great community, and especially, as the greatest public gain, the increase of agricultural production and riches. To advocate and urge the forwarding of the latter results is the especial object of my present service and employment, as it has been one of the most important objects of all my public efforts and labors. Still, may God forbid that we should deem the accumulation of wealth—even if from its most beneficial and best possible source, the fertilization and culture of the soil—as compensation for the loss or deterioration of the mental and moral qualities of Southern men, and more especially of Southern women! And if brought to the hard necessity of choosing between the two conditions, with their opposite disadvantages, I would not hesitate a moment to prefer the entire existing social, domestic, and industrial conditions of these slaveholding States, with all the now existing evils of indolence and waste, and generally exhausting tillage and declining fertility, to the entire conditions of any other country on the face of the globe. Our country population would lose largely in grade by exchanging conditions with the industrious, economical, and thrifty Flemish farmers—long and deservedly celebrated for the excellence of their agriculture, and who yet, beyond the routine of their regular work, are almost as uninformed as their most ignorant hired laborers. Far worse would be a change to the condition of the proprietary class of France, among whom land generally is so minutely subdivided, that its possession is usually accompanied by all the toils and privations of day-laborers to the farmer and his family, and of course by the ignorance, coarseness of manners, and moral degradation, which are the necessary consequences of such unceasing toil, exposure, and privations. In Britain, it is true, that with much of gross ignorance and rudeness of manners among the lower class of farmers, and with all the agricultural laborers there are, in the higher classes, both of pro-

proprietors and tenants of lands, many persons of high intellectual attainments. But this exception to the general rule is owing to the almost universal mode of tenure of the landed property in that country, and the usual separation of its possession, as capital, by men of wealth, and leisure, and the conducting of the cultivation by tenants upon rent. Even many tenants are men of wealth, who find it more profitable, as tenants, to conduct very large agricultural operations and capital, than the being proprietors of small farms, and upon a necessarily very limited scale of operations. These causes are there further aided in operation by the high price of land, which keeps it in the possession of the wealthy and educated, and also the great plenty and cheapness, and degradation, of agricultural labor—much cheaper in that thickly populated country than our slave labor. Of these several conditions of British agriculture, serving to improve and refine the higher rural or agricultural classes, and only the higher classes, not one exists in this country, or possibly can occur for centuries to come.

In the Northern and Northwestern States of the confederacy, there are also to be found, (as yet, though they must certainly and soon disappear,) many proprietors and cultivators of land who are men of education and intelligence, and whose wives and daughters have a high degree of refinement of manners. But in nearly every such case, it will be found that this intelligence and refinement were derived from some previous and different training and position; and that these qualities have been so far retained in agricultural life by the large agricultural profits and accumulations of wealth available in a newly settled country. But even now, the general condition of the agricultural class in these non-slaveholding States is much lowered, and tending to what must be hereafter a state of general and deep degradation, in intellectual and social qualities. And with them, the degradation will not stop when as low as that of the tenantry of England, or of the boors who reap rich harvests from the fat soil of Belgium. The comparative poverty of soil in the older Northern States, and the general and repeated divisions of property therein, by inheritance, indicate a future condition of the proprietors more like to that of the wretched and ignorant proprietary class of France.

Even now, it is comparatively a rare case in the Northern States to find, what is so common in the Southern, a highly intelligent man, with a well educated and refined family, all natives of and still residing in the country, and belonging strictly to the agricultural class. Such persons have little inducement to remain in (and still less to commence) country life and agricultural employments in the Northern States. And should any such, perchance, be so situated, they must either abandon their pursuits and their locality, or be content that their children shall sink to the general level of the surrounding residents, in coarse manners and uncultivated intellect. A sufficient proof of the working of this law of circum-

stances is presented continually to the world in the contrast of the representation in Congress from the rural districts of the Northern and Southern States respectively. The most distinguished men, and especially statesmen, of the South, have as often (at least) been natives and continued residents of the country as of towns—and in talent and in numbers they have far exceeded all from the North in our public councils. In the Northern States there are, indeed, many men of the highest talents, education, and learning—and, it may be, in the latter respects exceeding any in the South, because of the greater advantages offered by great cities for literary and scientific pursuits. But these great or learned men are either produced in or gathered to the great cities only. They are men who have acquired their just renown either as lawyers, physicians, divines, or professors in scientific and literary institutions. All of great intellectual power that now exists in the great States of Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania, is to be found in their populous cities only—and almost exclusively in their respective great capitals. Some truly great men may be (and sometimes are) furnished from these cities to aid the public councils. But never does one such come from all the twenty-fold greater country and village constituencies—which even when disposed thus to honor the highest talent, (which is not often the case, either in town or country—North or South)—could not possibly find among themselves any high talent to honor. The difference between the intellectual conditions of the Northern and Southern agricultural population, is the cause of the usual long existing and well known commanding influence in the Federal Government of the Southern States, through their representatives, in whatever measures of national policy are directed by wisdom, or intellect, or for the benefit of general interests. But we are now much the weakest in votes; and in whatever of public policy is connected with sectional interests, or still baser private self-interest, superior intellect has no influence, and we are governed by the brute force and stupidity of superior numbers.

The peculiar defects of Northern agricultural labor in its influence on social and domestic relations, do not (as yet) forbid great pecuniary success in agricultural pursuits. Indeed, when no far-reaching intellectual power is required to devise or direct a system of culture or improvement, or while enough of such direction, derived from former influences, yet remains in operation, the returns of agricultural capital are even increased by the existing condition of things in the Northern States.

A farmer or planter of the South, not rich, but in independent and comfortable circumstances, gives a portion of his time to social and mental occupation. Perhaps his whole object in seeking such relaxation is present enjoyment. But the final result is not the less improvement of mind and manners. His sons and daughters grow up under these advantages and influences of social communication. And, if, in the end, because of such indul-



gences of a family, even though moderately and properly enjoyed, there may be less money accumulated, there will be acquired other values much more than compensating the difference of pecuniary gains. Elwood Fisher, (in his excellent lecture on "The North and the South,") has observed most truly that the ordinary social intercourse of the people of the South serves admirably as a school of instruction. Quoting by memory only from this profound thinker and able advocate of Southern institutions and rights, I am not sure whether I am indebted directly to his expressions, or indirectly, (by deduction from them) for the opinion which will be here added—that his social school, in its operation for improving manners and morals, for enlarging observation and thought, and for affording general and useful information is far better than the much lauded common school education of the New England States. Spelling, reading, and common arithmetic are indeed necessary and excellent first steps in the pursuit of useful instruction and knowledge. But he who goes not farther in the pursuit, might as well have not moved at all.

A farmer of New York or Pennsylvania, in like moderate, but independent circumstances as to amount of property to those just supposed for the Southerner, would be compelled to be one of his own continual laborers. His wife would be the most unceasing drudge on the farm. His sons, and not less his daughters, would be brought up to continued labor in the lowest and most repulsive employments, and without any improving social intercourse, because its cost could not be afforded. Under such circumstances, aided by the usual accompaniments of industry, frugality, and parsimonious expenditure, wealth may and probably will be increased. But the possessors will seek and find nearly all their objects and pleasures in such accumulation, and they, or the next generation, will descend as much in refinement and intellect, as the stock of wealth may be increased. Such a proprietor, in mere money valuation, is just so much the richer as the value of the wages of himself, his wife, and his children, as day-laborers on the farm, or servants in the house. A life of continued, moderate, and regular labor, is not a life of pain. When encouraged by the prospect, and rewarded by the fruition of gain, it becomes a life of pleasure. Thus the accumulation of wealth, by an industrious Northern farmer, does not usually induce any intermission of his early labors, or change the habits, labors, or training of his children. When he may have acquired \$30,000 worth of property, he continues to labor as steadily, and to live nearly as rudely, as when under the pressure of his early poverty. His son still drives his father's wagon or his logs to market—in no way distinguished in appearance or habits from the other hired laborers. His wife is still the most laborious domestic drudge. His daughters have no improving society, and their daily and continuous employments are those of menial servants—whose services it would be too costly to hire.

This is the general condition to which agricultural society and manners must tend, are tending, and have already reached to great extent, in the older non-slaveholding States. This is the condition from which we are saved, and immeasurably exalted, by the subjection and slavery of an inferior race. The superior race here is truly free. In the so-called free countries, the far greater number of the superior race is, in effect, enslaved, and thereby degraded to a condition suitable only for a race made inferior by nature. There exists slavery, or the subjection of man to man, in every country under the sun, except, perhaps, the most barbarous and ignorant. In these Southern States we have the slavery of individual to individual, and of a naturally inferior to a naturally superior race; which, of all, is the condition best for both masters and slaves. In the so-called free countries, in addition to the sometimes most oppressive rule of a despotic and grinding government—or it may be under free constitutional government—there is the slavery of class to class—of the starving laborers to the paying employers. Hunger and cold are the most exacting of all task-masters. The victims of hunger and cold are always, and of necessity, slaves to their wants, and through them, to those who only can supply their wants. The great argument urged by English and Northern advocates for the abolition of our system of slavery, (while totally regardless of their own,) is that hired labor is cheaper than slave labor. And this is unquestionably true, as to both Old England and New England, and all other countries where the formerly existing domestic slavery has been abolished, because (and only because) it had ceased to be the most profitable to the slaveholders. Whenever continued severe suffering from hunger and cold, and the number of the sufferers, compel the destitute class to compete eagerly with each other in lowering the wages of their labor to obtain bread, then the payment for such labor of so-called free men necessarily becomes cheaper than would be the support of a domestic slave. Of course, if domestic slavery then remained in that country, the owners of slaves would hasten to get rid of them, and to employ, instead, the cheaper laborers furnished and tasked and driven by hunger and cold. Thus, and for these reasons, acted our English ancestors, when manumitting their white slaves. Thus, and still better for their own interest, did our Northern brethren. For when convinced that domestic slavery was too costly in their wintry region, they first sold their negro slaves to the South, and while thereafter avoiding their costly use, they continued, as long as permitted by law, to "steal" new supplies from Africa to sell to the Southern States. If the former Southern demand for Africans still existed, and the African slave-trade was open by law—or if it were safe and profitable to violate the now prohibitory law—enough of our Northern brethren would be now as ready as ever to supply the demand. And if their access to the coast of Africa was prevented, they would be as willing, (if safe

and profitable,) to supply all the South with slaves, by kidnapping the subjects of their now much desired ally, the negro Emperor of Hayti.

Nearly all of the many vessels which have been engaged in the African slave-trade, in violation of the prohibitory laws of the United States, were fitted out for that purpose from Northern ports and by Northern capital, and were manned by Northern crews. This trade, since being prohibited and made piracy by our laws, has been carried on to supply slaves to Cuba and Brazil, with incomparably more inhumanity and cruelty, than attended the formerly legalized and regulated traffic. From time to time we have seen announced the detection of sundry vessels or persons engaged in this now illegal and atrocious business of torture and murder in the sea voyage; and legal proceedings have often been commenced against the supposed offenders in the Northern cities to which they respectively belonged. But in not one such case have I ever heard of the conviction, followed by due punishment, of any of these worst of criminals. And when such detection of these acts of legal piracy are announced in Northern newspapers, it is usually done in as few words as would serve for any other commercial occurrence of innocent or legal character. Yet, besides the illegality of the trade, any one such voyage, made by the order and funds of merchants of a Northern city, would furnish more true facts of suffering, crime, and horror, than could possibly occur among all the slaves in the Southern States in the same length of time. No furious, popular, and philanthropic indignation has been aroused against these detected pirates; neither the crews and their commanders, nor the rich capitalists, who were the owners and real traders, torturers, and murderers. The great gain of the trade seems to serve as a veil and excuse for its deep iniquity. D'Wolf, who was one of the great slave-trading capitalists of Rhode Island, (while the trade was yet legal,) was not, therefore, the less a leading man of that State—as is evident from his having been subsequently elected by its Legislature to the Senate of the United States. If any such African slave-trader had lived in the Southern States, all his wealth would not have lifted him to a respectable position; and he could not have obtained the lowest office, from either people or Government, as readily as did his compeer of Rhode Island attain the highest official station, and, I suppose, the highest estimation, in slavery-hating and puritanical New England.

There are still other kinds of slavery besides those produced by force, and by want and suffering. General ignorance leads to the corruption of a people, and of subjection of mind to mind. And this kind of slavery, as it is in effect, tending to the most awful political and national evils, is already growing rapidly in the so-called free Northern States. It is in their circumstances—of the land cultivated and owned by an unenlightened and still deteriorating rural population—of large cities, in which, with a few men of highest

intellectual powers, or popular influence, there is collected an enormously predominating number of ignorant, needy, and unprincipled men—when a very large proportion of the population of these cities is composed of newly arrived foreigners, often vicious and turbulent, and necessarily unacquainted with the principles of free government, and unused to freedom in any form—I say, it is certain, in such circumstances as these, that the body of the people will be directed, governed, and in effect enslaved by a few master-minds—and these minds generally acting solely for the promotion of base self-interest and personal aggrandizement. No safe-guards in written constitutions can preserve such a people from being made the tools and slaves of able political knaves and unscrupulous demagogues. With such population of both towns and country—with such influences at work, and their tendencies—with such unprincipled leaders and managers, and such followers—in the great State of New York, political liberty, in effect, is already at an end; and individual property, and even life, are unsafe. If the doors of every dwelling-house in the Southern country were left nightly without locks, or bolts, and if every slave on each farm had full command of deadly weapons, (and both such circumstances, in effect, are real innumerable and continuing cases,) our property and our lives would be much safer from any attempts thereon by our slaves, than soon will be the property and lives of the rich people of New York from their destitute fellow-citizens, notwithstanding all the protection afforded by the constitution and laws of their nominal free government. Indeed, the beginning of this terrible consummation is already clearly indicated in the successful progress of the anti-rent-paying combination and movement of the State of New York. For many years, numerous occupiers of rented lands have openly and avowedly leagued to withhold the payment of the rents due to the proprietors, and yet hold to the land. The laws have been trampled upon by this felonious league, and the decrees of courts frustrated or silenced. The agents of the proprietors and creditors have been outrageously maltreated, (as would have been the principals, had they dared to appear,) and the officers of justice, when attempting to enforce legal processes, have been resisted by arms, and in some cases have been murdered by these defiers of the laws. Growing more powerful and bold with time and success, these anti-renters have assumed a political position and organization, and thus exercise great influence in state elections. And as a crowning act of triumph, they were enabled to secure the election of a candidate for the Chief Magistracy, upon the understood engagement of that candidate that he would prostitute his pardoning power as governor, to discharge from the State's prison some of the most desperate felons of the anti-rent party, who by rare chance had been convicted and sentenced to punishment in that confinement. Whether this corrupt and most vile



pledge had been expressly given or not, it was charged as being understood, and was acted upon by the anti-renters—and was faithfully redeemed by the governor so elected, by his speedy pardon of the villainous criminals, for whom his aid had been thus sought to be purchased.

Far is it from my intention to stigmatize any of our population upon the ground of foreign birth. We should value men for their known merits, and not for their places of nativity. We ought to feel even the more indebted to a good citizen, or a public benefactor, if a foreigner, who had sought our land and Government from preference, than if the mere accident of native birth had placed him in our country. Hence we are the more indebted for the services and talent and the patriotism of Montgomery, Charles Lee, Hamilton, Lafayette, Kosciusko, Pulaski, and Gallatin, as foreigners, than if they had been among us by birth, instead of by preference. To hundreds of thousands of immigrants from Europe our country has been greatly indebted for their useful private or public lives. But I speak of classes, and not of individuals—the of the general rule, and not of its exceptions. Taken altogether, the recent and present immigration from Europe is lower in intelligence than the lowest class of native citizens, and immeasurably inferior in knowledge and appreciation of the principles of free government. An infusion of such new population, amounting to a small minority only, could do no political harm. But the danger of prospective evil is enormous, when this new population can control entire States; and, if not able to elect a President, is so powerful as to be offered bribes for that purpose by every ambitious and unprincipled seeker of the office, who can so influence the legislation of the Congress of the United States.

The pretended philanthropists of the Northern States are well aware of the effects which the success of their efforts for the abolition of Southern slavery would produce. The Wilberforces and Clarksons and Benzets of former times doubtless were deceived, and believed all they professed as to the expected beneficial results of negro emancipation. But since the experiment of Hayti, now of more than sixty years' standing, and of others of later date, in the British West Indies, and all the latter made with the utmost care, and under the most favorable auspices, no abolitionists of good sense and information can believe in the benefits of emancipation even to the slaves themselves, or in the fitness of the negro race for freedom and self-government. The present leaders in this Northern warfare against Southern slavery are actuated much less by love for the slaves than by hatred for their masters. Their lust for political power is a still stronger operating motive than either. They know that the complete fruition of their machinations would be to reduce the Southern States to the condition of Jamaica, if not to the still worse state of Hayti. If they, or other as malignant and more powerful enemies, should ever succeed in abolishing this institution in

these Southern States, it will not only be the utter ruin of these States, but one of the heaviest blows to the well-being of the world, the most powerful obstacle to the settlement, culture, civilization, and highest improvement of all this western continent, and the extension of free government and the true principles of freedom among all the superior races capable of appreciating and preserving those blessings. And even the Northern States, all of which are now desirous, if not striving for the abolition of slavery in the South, would be, next to the Southern States, the greatest losers by that result, both in their pecuniary interests and political safety.

If there is any existing institution of divine origin, and manifestly designed and used by the all-wise and all-good Creator to forward his beneficent purposes, slavery, and especially African domestic slavery, is such an institution. Personal slavery has existed from the earliest known existence of society. Slaves were held by the most virtuous and the most favored of God's ancient worshippers and servants. Slavery has ever been the means, if it is not the only possible means, of civilizing barbarous tribes and regions, spreading the culture of the earth, and instructing the most ignorant and degraded races of men. Still better and peculiar features belong to African slavery, under civilized and white masters. By this, a race made inferior by nature, and always enslaved to barbarous and cruel masters, was raised greatly in the scale of comfort and happiness, as well as of improvement. Civilization and Christianity have thus been communicated to millions, who otherwise would never have heard of either. By aid of negro slavery only, could these Southern States, and still more the tropical regions of America, have been settled and cultivated by the white race. All that has been done in the South, and much of all done even in the Northern States, for industrial and moral improvement, refinement, and even religion, has been more or less due to the existence of African slavery. For even all the older Northern States had the benefit of this institution at first, when it was most needed, and retained it as long as it continued to be beneficial, and until the now fast growing slavery to want began to operate as a substitute.

It is true that the institution of slavery is attended by many and great particular evils. And where is the great social institution which is not? Even in the blessed relations of husband and wife, and of parent and child, there are cases of great unhappiness and evil, and crime, growing out of these very relations. Yet, because there are husbands and wives, and parents and children, who are monsters in human shape, and who can avail themselves of these respective characters to perpetrate the most horrible crimes, and inflict the direst calamities on helpless and innocent sufferers, who would, therefore, condemn, and strive to abolish, the institution of marriage, or the subjection of children to parents? The legal institution of apprenticeship, prevailing among every civilized and refined people, is precisely

slavery, only limited in the time of duration. In this generally beneficial relation of master and apprentice—and not less among the Northern philanthropists than elsewhere—there occur numerous cases of great injustice and cruelty, and of extreme and unmerited suffering. Yet, who, among these even sincere worshippers of a sickly philanthropy, has proposed as the proper safeguard against such particular cases of oppression and crime, the abolition of the entire system of apprenticeship.

Judging from the early existence and continued duration of the institution of domestic slavery—its almost universal extension—its beneficial influence in subduing barbarism and savage indolence and ignorance—in inducing the culture and improvement of the earth, and promoting the industry, civilization, refinement and general well-being of mankind—it seems to me an inevitable deduction, that the institution of slavery is as surely and manifestly established by the wise and benevolent design

of God, as the institution of marriage and of parental rule—and it is next to these, and inferior to these only, in producing important benefits to mankind. To the direct aid of domestic slavery, every cultivated portion of the earth, owes its first improvement, and every civilized people their first emerging from barbarism. The only exceptions to the existence (past or present) and operation of this great element of improvement, are to be found among the most rude and ignorant of savage tribes, such as the aboriginal inhabitants of North America and Australia. And if it had ever been, since the creation of man, that all mankind had been sunk in that lowest depth of barbarism, they would have so continued to this day, if without the aid of the institution of domestic slavery, for their improvement, or otherwise, the still more direct exercise of the miraculous, as well as benevolent power of Almighty God.

R. 11

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