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ANTI-SLAVERY TRACTS. No. 7.

Mrs Mary Estlin
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REVOLUTION THE ONLY REMEDY FOR SLAVERY.

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In the treatment of diseases of the human system, an accurate knowledge of their nature and cause is essential to success. An eruption upon the skin indicates a derangement of the internal machinery; and he is the truly skilful physician who discovers the cause of this derangement, and applies himself wisely to its removal, thereby restoring to the vital economy its original harmonious action. Precisely so is it in administering to the moral maladies of our race. A clear and distinct knowledge of their nature and cause is absolutely essential to the discovery and skilful application of appropriate remedies. The absence of such knowledge is one of the principal reasons why, with an unequalled number of spiritual physicians, our country, at the present time, is reeking with corruption, and presents an aspect which, in some respects, might well shame the darkest portions of the heathen world. Slavery, that crime of crimes, with all its untold horrors and abominations, not only exists among us, but is extending itself with a rapidity hitherto unknown in the annals of history. It stands out before the world, to-day, a dark plague-spot upon our national escutcheon. It is an eruption upon the surface of our social system—a foul ulcer, already gangrened, and threatening the very life of the nation. Confined, it is true, in its external developments, to a distinct portion of the body politic, but in its cause and consequences coextensive with the remotest current of life blood which circulates through our common heart.

Unfortunately, however, such is not the popular belief. Slavery is regarded by the masses at the north not only as an evil of trifling magnitude, but as altogether a southern affair; and hence they decline all efforts for its abolition. As well might the head refuse to

prescribe remedies for diseases of the foot; or the hand refuse to apply the assuaging ointment to an angry wound, because it had chanced upon the knee, and not upon the thumb. The south is but a part of ourself, — bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, — and we share with her the sin, the shame, and the misfortunes of slavery. We are a united people, with one and the same destiny; and in nothing are we more thoroughly united than in support of this odious institution.

It is a sad mistake to suppose that the south alone is involved in the unparalleled crime of enslaving three and a half millions of the people of this republic. In this terrible holocaust she has officiated at the altar, it is true; but the north has furnished the knife and the wood, without which not a single victim would now be gasping in the agonies of a living death. To illustrate this important truth, and place the matter beyond the possibility of doubt, or even of cavil, — to point out some of the most important channels through which the wealth, the physical force, and the religious influence of the north are employed to sustain this great national iniquity, and to suggest the appropriate remedy, — will be the object of the following pages.

To understand the actual relations of the different sections of our country to the institution of slavery, it is necessary, in the first place, to bring to mind certain important facts of common notoriety, and consider them in their relative position and general bearing upon this subject.

The slaves, it is well known, constitute about one seventh part of our entire population. In several of the States they are the majority. Taken together they are more numerous than the entire population of the country at the time of the declaration of our national independence. If, in their knowledge of their rights, and their means of defending them, they are more circumscribed than were our revolutionary fathers, the oppression to which they are subjected is infinitely more severe and galling, and hence the motive to resistance proportionally stronger. Said Thomas Jefferson, himself a revolutionist and a slaveholder, "One hour of their bondage is fraught with more misery than whole ages of that which we rose in rebellion to oppose." Our fathers were stimulated to resistance by the loss of political rights merely. They were subjected to taxation without representation; and when accused of crime, the right to an impartial trial by a jury of their peers was denied them. But a

nation in our midst has been robbed of personal liberty, utterly denied an appeal to the laws of the land for protection in any shape whatever, and, so far as rights and personal security are concerned, placed absolutely on a level with the brutes. Our fathers, under the most rigorous administration of the British government, were never doomed, even in anticipation, to the loss of a tithe of their possessions. The slaves are robbed of all. They have earned thousands of millions of dollars—the wealth of a nation; but among them all there cannot be found a solitary individual who is the legally recognized owner of a single cent. Their plunderers have literally spared them nothing. “A slave,” says the statute, “is one who is in the power of the master to whom he belongs. He can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire any thing but what must belong to his master.” With the loss of property has gone also the sacred right of marriage, and the parental relation. These heaven-descended institutions exist for them only to mock their agony. A million and a half of slave women, some of them without even the tinge of African blood, are given up a lawful prey to the unbridled lusts of their masters. Even the most refined and virtuous are liable, at any hour, to come under the absolute control of any vile and bloated wretch who has the gold to command their price, and can appeal neither to the government nor to their friends for protection. Their backs are scarred with the lash; their foreheads exposed to the branding iron. Their families are sold upon the auction block. The spelling book is denied them. The Bible is to them a sealed book; the public worship of God a crime.

Such is but a faint picture of the condition of more than three and a half millions of the people of this country, many of whom are the offspring of their masters, and some of them children of our most distinguished statesmen. To hold this vast people in such a condition of wretchedness; to plunder, maim, and imbrute them; and especially to do this in a country where liberty is, theoretically, the acknowledged right of all, requires the constant application of an immense force. In this age of light, of discussion, of world-wide sympathy with the oppressed, it requires the strength of numbers as well as superior intelligence to triumph over those who are, by nature, our equals, and bind them in fetters. Whence then comes the force by means of which this great wrong is perpetrated? In other words, how, and by whom, are the slaves actually *held* in this

condition? What power is that which makes them slaves? which holds possession of their plundered rights? We know their masters, the men who claim them as their property, and who are usually denominated slaveholders. Their position is clear and unmistakable. But is it by them alone that the slaves are held in bondage? or are others concerned with them, as accomplices and abettors? This is a most important inquiry, an intelligent answer to which will shed a world of light upon all the various ramifications of this most intricate subject.

That the slaves are not held by their claimants unaided by any foreign force, is apparent from the vast disparity in their numbers. The slaves, it must be remembered, are more than three and a half millions; their masters less than half a million, or as one to seven. We must, therefore, look elsewhere than to the plantation for the power which makes the plantation what it is—the charnel house of liberty, the grave of unnumbered hopes. The master, beyond all question, has his accomplices somewhere. To find them is the object of our search, that upon them also, as well as upon him, we may roll the mountain weight of this terrible iniquity.

Slavery in this country was, originally, a purely domestic institution. It existed without the sanction of law, solely on the responsibility of the families into which it was introduced, and the neighborhoods which tolerated it. But as it grew in strength, it became necessary for the government to take cognizance of it, and either adopt and regulate it, or put an end to its existence. It was seen to be a beast of prey which must either be caged or exterminated, or, in time, its depredations would become indiscriminate, and the children of all classes would be exposed to its terrible fangs. The governments, in most of the States, decided to adopt it, and assume its regulation and support. Hence the system lost its purely domestic character, and became a political institution. In those States slaves were declared to be lawful property, and the whole power of the government, civil and military, was pledged to the claimants of such property for its protection. By that act of the government the responsibility of slavery, which had hitherto been confined to a comparatively small number of private individuals, was extended to the whole community, or, at least, to that portion of it which constituted the government; and supporting the government became synonymous with slaveholding. It is now no longer the claimants of the

slaves who control their destiny. The government has assumed that prerogative. It, and not the master, decides their condition. It puts the official brand of slavery upon them, and follows them, wherever they may go, by night and by day, with a doom as certain as their own existence. It makes it a crime in any one to shelter or protect them, or to aid their escape. The masters, in some cases, would gladly set free their slaves; but the government overrules their wishes, and holds them still in bondage. The real slaveholders, therefore, are those who, through the government, actually ordain, uphold, and protect the system — who doom the negro, by law, to the condition of a brute. And hence, as slavery is preëminently a political institution, and slaveholding a political act, we should go to the caucus and to the ballot box, as well as to the plantation, to ascertain a man's standing on this question. One may possibly be the legally-recognized owner of slaves, and be innocent in the sight of God. But he cannot sustain a slaveholding government, knowing its character, without involving himself in all the guilt and crimes inherent in the system. To sustain such a government is inevitably to aid in holding slaves. Not the slaves only of humane masters, but of the most cruel and brutal also. By that act he makes himself the accomplice of all the Legrees and Haleys in the land who perpetrate their crimes under the sanctions of a government of which he constitutes a part, and to the strength of which he voluntarily consents to add the weight of his own personal influence. For, it must be remembered, these wretches derive all their power over their victims from the government. Let its protection be withdrawn but for a single hour, and they would have returned to their own lips the poisoned chalice which they had mingled for the lips of their hapless slaves. Whoever, therefore, consents to accept a slaveholding government, and proffers to it his support, should be classed with the worst of slave claimants, inasmuch as he is not only their accomplice, but is party to an association without whose authority and protection these miscreants could never perpetrate their crimes. Such is the cost at which, in this republic, a citizen purchases the privilege of membership in the government.

Originally, the responsibility of slavery rested exclusively with the States in which it existed. No State had, necessarily, any connection with it in any other State; and if any of the States chose, they might be entirely free from the contamination. But in the for-

mation of our present political union the relations of the several States to slavery became entirely changed. The support of the institution which had hitherto devolved exclusively upon the States in which it existed, was now assumed by the Federal Government, and the responsibility thereby thrown upon the whole country. In the United States Constitution are four important provisions, each of which, in its operations, makes the north a party to the continuance of the system, and is of such a nature as necessarily to involve all who acknowledge allegiance to the government in the guilt of that odious institution. There is also in the Constitution another provision of the same tenor, but it has become inoperative by its own limitation.

Of these provisions, the one which presents itself first in order for our notice relates to the rendition of escaped slaves. Prior to her adoption of the United States Constitution the soil of Massachusetts was free. The slave no sooner planted his feet upon it than his chains fell off. She knew no difference between the fugitive from Carolina and the fugitive from Hungary. All who sought her protection were alike the objects of her care. It was her proud boast that her soil, barren though it might be, was untainted with the footprints of a slave — that her chill breezes fanned no tyrant brow. But alas, the change! To-day every rood of her soil is hunting ground for kidnappers. Concord, and Lexington, and Bunker Hill are all deeded to the slave power. There is no temple in all her borders so sacred that it may not be profaned by the presence of the impious man-hunter; while her young men, who should have been the pride and glory of the Commonwealth, may be seen armed with murderous steel, assisting him to seize and bind his hapless prey. But recently have we seen two armies, headed respectively by National and State officials, — the strong arm of the Federal Government, backed and supported by the strong arm of the State Executive, — marshalled in deadly array through the streets of New England's proud capital, over the very spot where Attucks fell, and within sight of Bunker Hill, dragging back to the hell from whence he had escaped one poor, solitary victim who had trustingly sought protection at her hands! Alas! who could have believed this proud old Commonwealth capable of such a crime! And yet this is the legitimate fruit of our "glorious Union." What better could be expected from the political companionship of a people who live by

plunder, and make education a crime? What is here said of Massachusetts is essentially true of all the north. There is not a solitary foot of soil beneath the shadow of the stars and stripes where the slave-hunter may not pursue his prey.

Another provision of the Constitution requires the United States to "protect each of the States against domestic violence." This provision pledges the entire blood and treasure of the north to fight the battles of slavery, and makes all who acknowledge allegiance to the government virtually the body guard of slave masters. It is to them that the master looks to keep the peace on his plantation, and in more instances than one have they responded to his call, by sending a military force to suppress a slave insurrection. It is this provision of the Constitution, more especially, which guaranties the perpetuity of slavery. In a conflict with her slaves, it is not upon herself that the south relies, but upon the strong, vigorous, athletic arm of the north. Says the Maryville (Tenn.) Intelligencer, "We of the south are, emphatically, surrounded by a dangerous class of beings, — degraded, stupid savages, — who, if they could but once entertain the idea that immediate and unconditional death would not be their portion, would react the St. Domingo tragedy. But the consciousness, with all their stupidity, that a tenfold force, superior in discipline if not in barbarity, would gather from the four corners of the United States and slaughter them, keeps them in subjection. But to the non-slaveholding States particularly are we indebted for a permanent safeguard against insurrection. Without their assistance, the white population of the south would be too weak to quiet that innate desire for liberty which is ever ready to act itself out with every rational creature." Said the Hon. Thomas D. Arnold, of Tennessee, in the United States House of Representatives, "What had the south to rely on if the Union were dissolved? All the crowned heads were against her. A million of slaves were ready to rise, and strike for freedom at the first tap of the drum!" Said the Hon. Mr. Underwood, of Kentucky, (lately of the United States Senate,) on the same occasion, "The dissolution of the Union was the dissolution of slavery. It had been the common practice for southern men to get up on this floor, and say, 'Touch this subject, and we will dissolve this Union as a remedy.' Their remedy was the destruction of the thing they wished to save, and any sensible man could see it."

Similar admissions have been made by many of the prominent statesmen of the south, among whom is the late Hon. Henry Clay; but our limits will not permit us to introduce them here.

Indeed, testimony on this point is unnecessary; for, as Mr. Underwood has well said, no sensible man, at all familiar with the subject, can fail to see that slavery draws its life blood from the Union. If the protection of the north were withdrawn, the slaves could only be kept in subjection by the constant presence of an immense standing army; and this would be entirely out of the power of the south to maintain.

A third provision of the Constitution requires the United States "to protect each of the States against invasion."

It will readily be seen, that to protect the slave States against invasion is to cut off the slaves from all hope of foreign aid, — the very aid which secured our own independence, — and thereby to postpone the day of their emancipation. It is defending freebooters in the very act of plunder, and, of course, makes us a party to the crime. In resisting their masters by force, the slaves have a natural right to seek assistance from whatever quarter they may think proper; and we cannot interfere with the free exercise of that right without making ourselves responsible for the continuance of their enslavement. Were they left thus free, — that is, were the protection which the south receives from the Federal Government withdrawn, — there is reason to believe that their appeal to the awakened sympathies of Christendom would not be in vain. The north is to the slave what Russia is to Hungary — the strong right arm of the power which mocks all his hopes.

The fourth provision of the Constitution touching the question of slavery is that which gives to the slave States a representation in Congress based upon slave property.

The effect of this provision is to give the slaveholding interests a preponderance in the Federal Government, and thereby to place the whole military and naval power of the nation, together with the national treasury, entirely at the disposal of the slave power, thus rendering it morally impossible for the north to oppose any effectual resistance to its most arrogant demands. In speaking of this with other provisions of the Constitution, the late Hon. John Quincy Adams holds the following language:—

"Yes, it cannot be denied — the slaveholding lords of the south

prescribed, as a condition of their assent to the Constitution, three special provisions to secure the perpetuity of their dominion over their slaves. The first was the immunity for twenty years of preserving the African slave trade; the second was the stipulation to surrender fugitive slaves — an engagement positively prohibited by the laws of God, delivered from Sinai; and, thirdly, the exaction, fatal to the principles of popular representation, of a representation for slaves — for articles of merchandise under the name of persons. * * * in fact, the oppressor representing the oppressed. * * * To call government thus constituted a democracy, is to insult the understandings of mankind. It is doubly tainted with the infection of riches and slavery. Its reciprocal operation upon the government of the nation is to establish an artificial majority in the slave representation over that of the free people in the American Congress, and thereby to make the preservation, propagation, and perpetuation of slavery the vital and animating spirit of the national government.”

By this critical analysis of the subject, we find three distinct classes of slaveholders, each sustaining peculiar external relations to the system. The first class are the claimants of slaves. The second are the members of those State governments which have adopted and now regulate the system. The third are the members of the general government — that government having assumed its protection from all forcible interference from within or from without. It should also be remarked, that the latter class stand in the same relation to the system in the District of Columbia and the Territories as that occupied by the constituents of the State governments, within their respective States. We have further seen that it is to the support given to slavery by the general government that it owes its existence at the present time. Had it been left exclusively to the States in which it existed for protection, it might have passed away many years since. The responsibility and guilt of slaveholding, therefore, rest upon the Federal government to the same extent, and in the same degree, that they do upon the State governments, or the slave claimants. As the virus of slavery is inwrought into the very framework of the government, and the support of it is the legitimate fruit of the existing compact, and must inevitably follow from any political union whatever with slaveholders, this responsibility is not confined to any particular party, or class of parties, but it falls

necessarily upon all parties which are now, or may be hereafter, organized under the Constitution; and not only upon such parties, collectively, but upon every individual of society who gives his assent to that blood-stained instrument, or to the government of which it is the basis. It matters not how anti-slavery one may be in his feelings or professions—to promise allegiance and support to a Constitution which is “doubly tainted with the infection of riches and slavery,” is practically to betray the cause of freedom into the hands of its enemies, by whomsoever that promise may be made. No support of slavery is so potent as that given to it by *honest* men. If the interpretation here given to the Constitution—and it is the only one ever given to it by any legislative, judicial, or executive body in the country—be the true one, the conclusion is inevitable that to support it is, virtually, to become a slaveholder. It is to become an accomplice of the master in all the crimes which flow from the system, and, of course, to share his guilt and infamy. The only admissible plea which can be made in abatement of judgment, in the case of any individual, is the general one of ignorance of the nature of the act. We are, therefore, driven, logically, to the conclusion, that all that anti-slavery which accepts the Constitution, and acknowledges the Union, is utterly worthless, if not tainted and spurious, so far at least as its political character and influence are concerned. At best it is but a promissory note, the indorser of which, though an honest man, has not the means to redeem his promise.

It is this complicity with slavery through the government which has palsied all the efforts of our politicians to resist its encroachments, and confine it within its present limits. Having pledged themselves to support it with their treasure and blood, within the limits of the States where it now exists, they have become tainted with its guilt, and have thereby lost their moral power to oppose its progress into new territory. All their denunciations of slaveholding, and their arguments against it, are rendered powerless by their position. They are nothing more nor less than self-condemnation and self-reproach. “If slavery be a sin,” responds its advocate, “why do you engage to support it? Why allow it any where? If it be not a sin, why object to its introduction wherever the people choose to have it?” And so all their preaching against it serves only to disgust and exasperate while it has no tendency to reform. The Christian proverb, “Cast first the beam out of thine own eye,

and thou shalt then see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye," contains a great philosophic principle, which, if disregarded in our efforts to reform others, is sure to vindicate itself in our utter defeat. They who have sworn upon the altar of slavery are not the men to fight the battles of freedom. The recent unparalleled success of the slave power has in it no hidden mystery. It was repeatedly predicted by the abolitionists as the inevitable result of the composition of the elements of our government. They clearly saw, several years since, that a struggle against slavery carried on under a Constitution which pledged them to its support must inevitably end in utter defeat; and therefore wisely determined to renounce the government, and raise the flag of revolution. They also saw, with equal clearness, that there was no alternative left them but either to withdraw from the government or involve themselves in the guilt of slaveholding; and hence, for the sake of preserving their own personal purity, as well as for the slave's sake, they decided to exchange an alliance with slave claimants in the government for an alliance with their slaves outside of it, and against it.

In the Federal Union lies the grand secret of the strength of the slave power. Of itself that power is contemptibly weak. If in the countenances of their masters only the slaves discovered the visage of a foe, not another sun would go down upon an unbroken fetter. Backed by the entire body of non-slave-claimants of the south, it could have no strength to stand against the combined forces of the slaves, and their many sympathizers in the north, and in Europe. But in its alliance with the free States, through the Federal government, its strength is immense. It rules with a rod of iron, and none can say to it, "Why do ye so?" It kills, and it makes alive. It casts into the shade the giant intellect of Webster, and places on the highest pinnacle of political eminence and power a man whose boon companions may be found in the bar rooms of the Granite State, and whose fame has scarcely reached the remotest township of the county which gave him birth. It is able not only to command the services of the entire body of our militia when an insurrection is to be suppressed, an invasion to be repelled, or a slave to be recaptured, but it has seduced into its willing service, or awed into submission, nearly every prominent man throughout the entire north. It has by the same means corrupted the heart of the church.

It has awed the pulpit into silence, and, in some instances, bribed it into a scriptural defence of slavery. Whatever crime is perpetrated against freedom amongst us, it is done in the name and for the sake of the Union. Is a slave to be recaptured, it must be done to save the Union. Is an abolitionist fined and imprisoned for hiding the outcast, it is done to save the Union. Is the freedom of speech cloven down by the lawless violence of a ruthless mob, or by a shameful perversion of the law by a faithless court, it is done to save the Union. Does a doctor of divinity offer up his mother or his son on the altar of slavery, to serve in the harem or toil in the rice swamps, it is to save the Union. Indeed, no language can describe the depth of degradation to which this guilty connection with slavery has reduced us. It has led us into the perpetration of crimes at the very sight of which all Christendom has turned pale with horror. And where this career of infamy is to end God only knows. Thanks to his name, there is a remnant left, which has not bowed the knee to this political Baal — the seed, it may be, of a revolution which will yet bring light out of darkness, order out of chaos and confusion, and the sweet nectar of liberty from this sea of fathomless corruption.

One of the most obvious, if not disgraceful crimes committed against the cause of freedom by the north, is her fellowship of southern slave breeders and slave mongers as Christians and ministers of Christ. At the south the members of the different religious sects traffic in the bodies and souls of their fellow-members. They sell the living temple of the living God. Baptist sells his brother Baptist on the auction block. The Methodist communes with a woman on one day, and on the next sells her, it may be, for prostitution. The Presbyterian gives the elements of a Savior's body and blood to a mother on Sunday, and on Monday sells her babe to the slave trader, as we sell the calf to the butcher. And yet when these men visit our northern cities and large towns, they are taken to the bosom of our churches, and oftentimes made welcome to our pulpits, even while the blood of their victims is still dripping fresh from their fingers! Against such indecency every instinct of our nature rises in rebellion. Even the unregenerate heart of the most confirmed worldling mocks at the infamy of the church in this matter. Indeed, so gross and flagrant is her inconsistency even with her own professions, and so little *apparent* interest has she in maintain-

ing her present fellowship of southern slaveholders, that, to many, her conduct seems a perfect enigma. They can see no sufficient motive to induce her to adhere to a practice which is a source of great grief to many of the most devoted of her members. But the fault of such lies in searching for motives in the wrong direction. The secret of this attachment to an ecclesiastical connection with the south is not to be found in any special love or affection existing between the two sections, nor in any conscious honor or strength derived from it by the north, but it is one of the many latent, but fatal results of our "glorious Union." It is this political network in the toils of which our ministry, as well as our statesmen, find themselves bound hand and foot, and delivered over to the tender mercies of the slave power. Gladly would the northern church, undoubtedly, to-day cut her connection with the south, could it be done without disturbing other, and, to her, more important relations. She feels the infamy of her position, and is smarting under the withering scorn of Christendom, but sees no ready way of escape.

The difficulty lies here: By our political connection with the south, all our influential statesmen and politicians are forced into the interests of slavery. They have no hope of political preferment and eminence but in swearing upon its altars, and vying with each other in their readiness to do its bidding. The government, which is but another name for the slave power, holds in its hands the annual distribution of more than fifty millions of dollars, with all the honors of office, and is therefore a power whose will none but a martyr can afford to disregard. By means of this connection a similar influence is also exerted over our capitalists. All our commercial cities are threatened with the loss of southern trade unless they consent to remain true to the interests of slavery. By this means Boston is made to vie with New York, and New York to vie with Philadelphia, in doing whatever work the slave power may require at their hands. The tariff is also a most effective instrument in the hands of the slave power in controlling northern capitalists. The north desires protection for her manufactures; the slave power will grant that protection only on condition of the most faithful allegiance on her part to its one great interest—its own preservation and aggrandizement. Here, then, we have the two dominant classes of society—the wealth and talent—placed entirely at the disposal of the slave power, and ever listening to catch its word of command.

To them the Constitution is the higher law, and the will of the slave power is the Constitution. What slavery requires of us is, that there shall be no discussion of the subject here, and that we shall promptly fulfil all our constitutional obligations to protect it, leaving the south to direct the policy of the general government undisturbed by northern interference; and the duty and aim of these men have ever been to see that this requirement was obeyed. This is the work demanded of them by their southern masters, and in consideration of the faithful performance of which they receive political preferment and southern trade, with a tariff pitched upon a sliding scale. In the prosecution of this work the pulpit, from its powerful influence over the popular mind, naturally became a coveted instrument, and through its dependence on the voluntary system for support, became an easy prey to the assaults of so powerful an antagonist.

At a very early period of the anti-slavery enterprise, nearly the entire clergy of the north were either bribed into an open, though indirect support of slavery, or constrained to silence by the threat of expulsion from their pulpits, and starvation for their dependent families. Thus, through our political union with the south, have our clergy been made the slaves of slaves, and our churches kept in a position which is fast making the very name of Christianity a reproach. What is here said of the clergy is essentially true of our periodical press. By means similar to those employed to subjugate the pulpit has the press been muzzled by the slave power, and made to speak only the language of oppression.

Another difficulty which lies across the pathway of the church in cutting her ecclesiastical connection with southern slaveholders, so long as she remains in a political union with them, is the glaring inconsistency of the act. What principle of Christianity or of common sense would warrant her in excluding a man from her fellowship for a heinous crime, in the commission of which she had stood his sworn defender? In concert with others, she has made slavery and the slave trade lawful in our capital. Shall she, then, banish a man from her table whose only offence is, that he has bought and sold slaves?

Again: Should she exclude from her table those who hunt slaves at the south, with what show of consistency could she admit to that table those who, "conquering their prejudices," do the same thing at the north? Is slave hunting any more unchristian and villanous

in Virginia than in Massachusetts or Michigan? As well might the common drunkard refuse to associate with his cronies on account of the quality of the liquor on which they had become intoxicated, or the bad character of the house at which it had been purchased, as the northern church refuse to fellowship those of her own faith, at the south, merely because they held slaves. Such a course, should she attempt it so long as her political relations remain unchanged, would only make her the laughing stock, as she is now the tool, of the slave power.

The only practicable way of cutting any of the cords which bind her to slavery is to sever them all at a single stroke. But so long as she consents to sustain a government which annually consigns to all the horrors of chattel slavery more than a hundred thousand of its own children, turn and shift as she may, the mark of Cain will remain upon her forehead. The only possible salvation from the guilt of slaveholding is in the position long occupied by a single sect,—the old school Covenanters,—and more recently assumed by the abolitionists, of uncompromising hostility to a slaveholding government, and total disfellowship, religiously, of all who persist in upholding it.

We have now laid open before us the secret sources of the strength of the slave power. We see that power, feeble in itself, through the agency of the national government gathering into its hand the strength and resources of twenty millions of freemen, and employing them for its own aggrandizement. By means of this agency it lays its hand upon our pulpit, and it is dumb; upon the press, and it is silent; upon capital, and straightway, for the sake of its *per cent.*, it parts with its birthright; upon our literature, and forthwith it is self-emasculated. It commands our armies. It controls our treasury. It dictates law to our judges. It expounds the gospel to our churches. It has bound the conscience of the nation by an oath to participate in its crimes, and thereby rendered its opposition impossible, or powerless. At its command we trample the law of God under our feet, and refuse to hide the outcast. Thus has it made us at once a nation of atheists and an empire of slaves.

Such is but a faint picture of the nature and strength of the evil with which, as abolitionists, we are called to grapple. Our contest is not with a few hundred thousand slave claimants, in distant States, but with a nation powerful in all the elements of physical

strength and intellectual greatness. The enemy is at our own door. The entire government, from the president down to the humblest citizen in the retirement of private life, is, by the requirements of the Constitution, its protector, and is sworn to defend it, if need be, with the heart's blood. We lift our hand to succor the victim of the merciless man-hunter, and the bayonet, not of the Carolina planter, but of our next door neighbor, is thrust into our bosoms. We hasten the panting fugitive on his flight, and forthwith we find ourselves incarcerated within the walls of a prison built with our own money. We turn to the church for sympathy, and she brands us with the double infamy of fanaticism and infidelity. We, on the other hand, are few in number and limited in resources. And yet our only chance of success lies in being able to bring into the field and oppose to this mighty cordon of strength, behind which slavery has entrenched itself, a superior force. Where, then, lies our hope? Is it in political tactics? in the skilful manœuvring of forces already committed by an oath to the slave power?

To the enlightened vision there is for this evil but one remedy. Our strength all lies in a single force — the conscience of the nation. All else is on the side of the oppressor. But conscience, that force of forces when properly instructed, is all, and always, on our side. It is to this element of strength, then, that our attention should be mainly directed. Our only hope is in being able to bring the conscience of the nation into active conflict with its present position, in respect to slavery, and thereby induce a radical change. What that position is we have already seen. The Constitution requires of the general government the protection of slavery in such of the States as choose to retain it, with no power to regulate or abolish it. Hence the private citizen has no course left to him but either to aid in upholding the system, or renounce his allegiance to the government. His only choice is between slaveholding and revolution. By this subtle device of the slave power the whole country has been leagued in defence of the institution, and the north reduced to a mere subjugated province of the plantation. The heart of the church has been corrupted by it, the conscience of the country fettered, and our statesmen converted into sycophants fawning at the feet of the slave power. Here, then, is the seat of this terrible disease, and here especially must the remedy be applied. Our first great work is to cut this Gordian knot, — the Union,

—and set free the northern conscience from the restraints of the constitutional oath. Till this is done, all other efforts will prove of little avail. There is no hope for the slave, nor for the country, but in revolution.

So long as we fulfil our constitutional obligations to slavery, it will live, and extend its domain, in spite of freesoil and free democratic triumphs. To promise to fulfil them, with a different purpose in our hearts, is an act of fraud which will most certainly rob us of our moral power, and make us alike the prey and sport of our enemies. At present, we have little or nothing to do with the slave claimants. They are, of themselves, but a mere cipher. Our controversy is with the government which upholds the system, and makes it possible for the master to plunder his victim, and with a clergy and church who baptize such a government, and thank God for its existence, because, forsooth, it protects them and theirs, though at the same time it inflicts upon millions of their countrymen outrages such as find no parallel under the darkest despotisms of the old world—a government in whose capital stands the auction block for the sale of human flesh, and many of whose senators have acquired princely fortunes by robbing mothers of their babes. This sin of the government and of the church must be brought and laid at the door of every individual member of these corrupt bodies. They must be made to see and feel that they cannot remain in organizations which are employed in the commission of such atrocious crimes without being themselves partakers of the guilt. It is the presence, mainly, of the *seemingly* good in these corrupt organizations which gives them power to do the wrong. The vilest members of our government, if left alone, would stand aghast at its wickedness. But the presence of better men keeps them in countenance, the better class, meanwhile, excusing themselves with the belief that the villains who use and direct them will alone be held responsible for the results of their united action. Such delusion must be dispelled, and all the guilt, and blood, and fathomless abominations of slavery rolled upon the individual conscience of every man who consents to support a government which legalizes and protects it, or to fellowship a church which recognizes the members of such a government as ministers or followers of Christ. If we would succeed, our separation from slavery must be thorough

and complete. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing," is the voice of reason, as well as the language of Scripture.

The great anti-slavery lesson of to-day is, that support to institutions which protect or sanction slavery is slaveholding; and that uncompromising hostility to all such institutions is the only *genuine* anti-slavery. The time has gone by when lower ground than this can be safely occupied by any true friend of liberty. As well might we recognize a man who is in the daily use, in moderate quantities, of intoxicating drinks, as a genuine friend of temperance, as regard him as a true abolitionist who proffers his allegiance and support to a slaveholding government. The honesty of such a man we may not perhaps question; but in his influence, as well as by his position, he stands with the oppressor, and we should regard and treat him as an enemy of the slave. Freedom allows no compromises. The man who makes them is ill begotten, and can never inherit her estates. To consent to yield to the oppressor a single barleycorn is, in fact, to yield principle, and consequently to yield every thing. So we have always found it. So we always shall find it, till the law of God is reversed, and the corrupt tree brings forth good fruit. In every contest with evil, the highest ground is the strongest. Indeed, our only real strength is in planting our feet upon the absolute right, so that God can work with us and through us. He is no compromiser. He has no part or lot with those who abate one "jot or tittle" of his law to accommodate themselves to the institutions of wicked men. The idea of hedging slavery in within certain limits is morally absurd. It can be exterminated, but it can never be controlled. You can never say to it, "Thus far—but no farther." And that anti-slavery which seeks merely to confine it within its present limits, or within any limits, is utterly spurious and worthless. It is but a milder type of pro-slavery—a hybrid, or, more properly, a kind of varioloid, whose only grace is in comparison with the hateful disease to which it bears so close a resemblance, and for which it serves as a substitute. Talk of confining slavery? As well might you talk of regulating the cholera, or of confining the plague within certain limits, or say to intemperance, "In such and such localities seek your victims, and we will defend you there; but pass not those boundaries." The vices are not our

servants. We have power to exterminate them, if we will, but we can never tolerate them, except to become our masters. A people whose moral standard will permit them to tolerate slavery any where are too weak to resist its most arrogant demands, under the pressure of temptations such as the slave power is always able to present.

If we would see our country free from the curse of slavery, we must begin the work of its abolition by applying to it the golden rule — the eternal law of absolute moral rectitude.

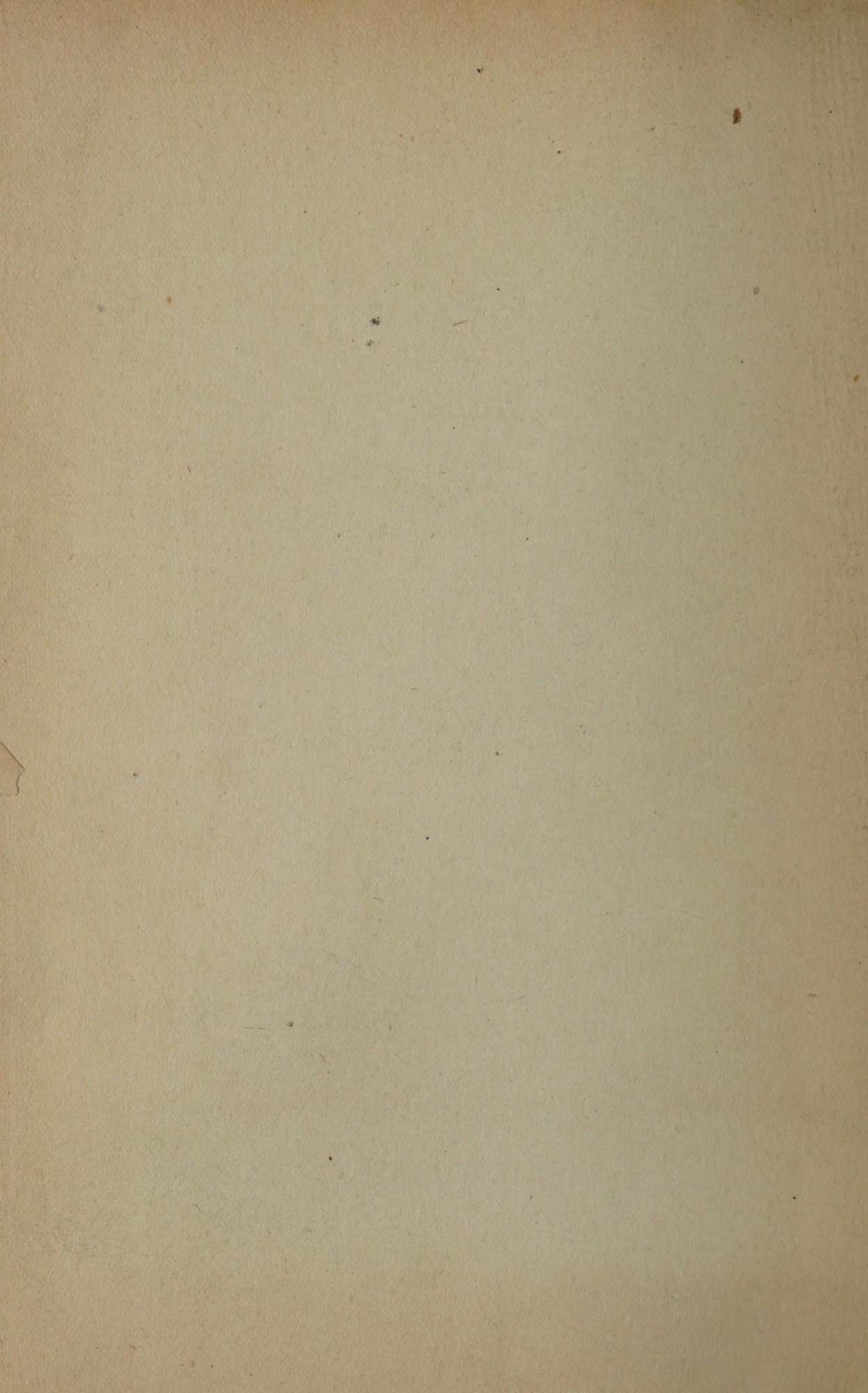
Our first work is with ourselves, to bring our own conduct within the requirements of this law, by assuming such a position towards the slaveholding institutions of the country as we should desire others to occupy were we the slaves; thus practically “remembering those in bonds as bound with them.” Our next duty is to press its claims upon the conscience of our neighbor, and give him no rest till he also yields to its requirements. Anti-slavery, it must be remembered, is a reform as well as a revolution. It can progress only as the people are made better; and we can aid it only as we exert a healthful moral influence on those around us. The slaves can be delivered from their chains only by delivering their enslavers from their guilt. In the same proportion that the one is made morally better is the other made politically and socially free.

By means such as are here proposed must the moral sentiments of the country be renovated. When that shall have been done to any considerable extent, the time will have come to commence the work of reconstructing the government and remodelling the church. But it must be remembered, we cannot build without material; nor is it wise to commence the work till a moderate portion, at least, shall have been previously prepared. Let it be the aim, then, of every true friend of liberty to get ready the public mind; and in due time will appear a master-builder under the superintendence of whose tasteful and discerning eye will be reared an edifice worthy the highest love and admiration of a free and generous people. May God hasten the day when it shall be our happiness to hail for our beloved country a new State and a new Church, “wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

Reader, do you agree, in the main, with the views here presented? Suffer us, then, to exhort you to engage, with all your heart, in the work of their dissemination. Be yourself a preacher of this divine

gospel, leaning, in the mean time, upon the arm of Him who is above all, and keeping your heart warm and overflowing with that love which animated the bosom of our great Leader while on earth. Remember the wretchedness and utter desolation of those for whom you toil, and with what eagerness and intense anxiety they watch your every motion. Their destiny is in your hands! Disappoint not their hopes. Remember, too, that you are laboring for a world's redemption—for such is really the scope of this great enterprise. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." Like the divinely illuminated Saul of Tarsus, "Confer not with flesh and blood." Like our revolutionary fathers, though with better weapons, defend the struggling cause of Freedom manfully, heroically, against all its enemies. Now is emphatically the time to work.

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