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[FOR CHRISTIAN LITERATURE.]

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

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I.

HAVING frequent occasion, in the prosecution of certain historical studies, to refer to the voluminous biograph of Mr. Garrison, written by two of his s.. * we find the question again and again recurring: What idea of the man and his times would be got from these volumes by one who had no other source of information?

It is a question not altogether easy to answer off-hand. Doubtless the idea would be somewhat confused at first; but being allowed to settle and clarify itself, after some cancelling of contradictions and eliminating of impossibilities, it would come out somewhat in this shape:

Mr. Garrison was a man of meek, gentle and affectionate spirit, and wholly blameless character, who devoted himself at an early age, with absolute unselfishness, to universal philanthropy, and especially to the abolition of slavery. Beginning this work with a nearly unanimous public sentiment on his side, he pushed it forward with such boldness, ability, tact and discretion, that by the end of fifteen years he had brought the public opinion of the nation, both South and North, into almost equally unanimous antagonism to himself. Particularly was this true of the Christian Church and ministry in America, who had shown him hearty sympathy at first; but many of whom, including men who are even yet held in the highest veneration and love, actually engaged in active opposition to slavery with the nefarious purpose of thereby sustaining that wicked institution; and when Mr. Garrison, in the simple fulfilment of his duty, rebuked such conduct, they abused him, the gentle Garrison, with vituperative language. This conspiracy of the entire Christian Church against him, simply for his superior righteousness, was only exceeded in wickedness by the abominable conduct of many of his nearest friends and benefactors and most self-sacrificing fellow-laborers, who had the hardihood to separate from his Society, and set up another society and newspaper which they called anti-slavery, but which the acumen of Mr. Garrison at once recognized as "the worst form of pro-slavery." Thus, deserted and betrayed by men whom for years he had extolled as among the noblest of the human race, he was publicly declared at last, by one of his few remaining adherents, to be "the only righteous in a world perverse."

In nothing was this good man's abhorrence of slavery more shiningly illustrated than in his rejection of any slavish bondage to his own consistency. At some periods in his career he was a gradual abolitionist, a gradual emancipationist, a colonizationist, in favor of compensated emancipation, devoted to the Constitution of the United States, inculcating the exercise of citizenship, and maintaining a narrow and rigid Sabbatarianism. He had held these views in the simplicity and innocence of his heart; but such was the wild and swift degeneracy of the age and people, that after he laid them down, they were never afterwards held by anybody else, except with vile insincerity, by patent fallacy, with abominable motives, for atrocious ends.

His methods as a reformer were original almost to the point of paradox. He had two main objects: 1, Immediate emancipation of slaves by their holders; 2, immediate abolition of slavery by the repeal of the slave code. The first was sought by a style of address to the slaveholders that enraged every man of them against him and his views to the utmost fury. The second was to be achieved by persuading all opponents of slavery into abdicating their rights and powers as citizens, and so committing the control of legislation ex-

* "William Lloyd Garrison: 1805-1879. The Story of his Life told by his Children." New York: The Century Co. 1885, 1889.

clusively to the upholders of that iniquitous system. But in the prosecution of this bold and energetic policy, the good Garrison was sadly hindered by the criminal folly of those who thought that one good way to oppose bad laws in a republic was to vote against them, and who thus committed themselves to "the worst and most dangerous form of pro-slavery."

But nothing in all this good man's career was so wonderful as his success. At last, by the power of his "sweet reasonableness," he so far won the people of the free States to sympathy with his abhorrence of the Constitution and Union of the United States and his sense of the sinfulness of voting, that they formed a great political party in which every principle characteristic of Mr. Garrison was repudiated, and fought out at the polls the old issue, that was old when Garrison was a baby. But his greatest triumph was when his peace and non-resistance principles had gained such a hold over the popular mind that at last a million of men stood in arms and entered into the bloodiest war of recent times for the maintenance of the Union and Constitution which Mr. Garrison detested —a war in which every death was held by him to be a wicked murder, and the incidental result of which was the abolition of slavery.

It was a fitting close to this triumphant career, that when he had accomplished his great work, he for himself and his family and friends in his behalf, should step promptly forward as they have, to accept for him the homage due to successful and humane achievement.

Such is the paradoxical, but filially pious portraiture of Mr. Garrison given in these volumes. The hero of them is depicted as a noble and wholly faultless character, of whom the world was not worthy. Indeed it is hardly so much the worthiness of the hero as the world's unworthiness of him that most impresses the reader's mind. One who reads believing is shocked, from page to page, with growing proofs of the utter debasement and turpitude of the generation in which he lived, especially of those who pass for the best men of it; and with the vile perfidy towards Mr. Garrison of such large numbers of those who came into intimate relations with him, in business, in reform-agitation, and in personal friendship.

No trait of Mr. Garrison's character is more emphasized and illustrated by his biographers than his singular equanimity, self-control and gentleness of temper. His mildness of manner and expression are the theme of repeated and admiring comment; and it is demonstrated, not boastfully perhaps, but with evident pride, that his remarkable composure, in circumstances which to most men would have been exciting to the last degree, was due not to self-control, but to the actual absence of excitement. Contrariwise to the public impression of him, he was not a man of hasty or irritable temper, or given to grudges or evil thoughts of others, but one who cherished not merely a doctrine of non-resistance, but actual kindly feelings towards bitter enemies. And yet, as we read, we do come upon language of his that has a different sound. For instance, in a long article on the remonstrances of some of his best friends and fellow-reformers against what they deemed the harshness and severity of his language, he says:

> "The same cuckoo cry is raised against me now as I heard when I stood forth alone; and the same sagacious predictions and grave admonitions are uttered now as were then spoken with the infallibility of ignorance, the disinterestedness of cowardice, and the prudence of imbecility. There are many calling themselves anti-slavery men who, because they are only 'half-fledged' themselves, and have neither the strength nor the courage to soar, must needs flutter and scream because my spirit will not stoop in its flight heavenward, and come down to their filthy nest."—[Vol. I. 459, 460.]

Improving upon this pleasing metaphor, he characterizes the General Conference of the Methodist Church as "a cage of unclean birds, and synagogue of Satan." [II. 78.] The action of the Consociation of Rhode Island in declining to entertain a memorial from an epicene convention in Boston is declared to be "clerical ruffianism." [II. 220, *n.*] And the Rev. Charles T. Torrey, who not long after died a martyr to his anti-slavery convictions in the Baltimore jail, but who had been guilty of the "sedition" (so Mr. Garrison termed it) of desiring another Society and another journal than Garrison's is described as coming in "the full tide of his priestly bile." [II. 270.] We have these occasional specimens of a style of expression which in most men would be indicative of anger, or hatred, or some evil passion, although in this book no evidence appears, except in expressions of shame, disgust and heart-sickness on the part of many of Garrison's best friends, that his habitual style was that of the most brutally vituperative writer of his time. And yet the testimony, both of himself and of others who knew him, is that he was a man of exceptional mildness

and gentleness of temper. What solution can be found for so strange a paradox?

That which is suggested by one of his admiring friends and cited by his biographers, seems not improbable. Miss Harriet Martineau, in 1835, found his countenance to be

"wholly expressive of purity, animation and gentleness." "His conversation . . . is of the most practical cast. . . . Sagacity is the most striking attribute of his conversation. It has none of the severity, the harshness, the bad taste of his writing; it is as gladsome as his countenance, and as gentle as his voice. Through the whole of his deportment breathes the evidence of a heart at ease. . . . I do not pretend to like or to approve the tone of Garrison's printed censures. I could not use such language myself towards any class of offenders, nor can I sympathize in its use by others. But it is only fair to mention that Garrison *adopts it warily;* and that I am persuaded that he is elevated above passion and has no unrighteous anger to vent in harsh expressions. . . . He gives his reasons for his severity with a calmness, meekness and softness which contrast strongly with the subject of the discourse, and which convince the objector that there is *principle* at the bottom of the practice."—[II. 70-71.]

It seems a hard thing for sons to have to say of a father whom they love and venerate, and yet it seems to be true, that the frenzied and unbridled scurrility of Garrison's polemic, such as might be extenuated, not excused, on the ground of irritated feeling or excited passion, was really adopted by him "warily," without a particle of animosity, in cold blood, as a matter of policy for the accomplishment of a purpose. There was no noble and irrepressible rage in it. His feelings never ran away with him, no matter how diabolical the wickedness that confronted him. A very striking illustration of this self-command is presented in these volumes. On the subject of liquor-selling, said he, in 1829:

"We who are somewhat impetuous in our disposition and singular in our notions of reform—who are so uncharitable as to make no distinction between men engaged in one common traffic, which shall excuse the destroyer of thousands and heap contumely on the murderer of a dozen—we demand that the whole truth be told on all occasions, whether it induces persecution or occasions a breach of private friendship. . . . If it be injurious, or criminal, or dangerous, or disreputable to drink ardent spirits, it is far more so to vend, or distil, or import this liquid fire. 'Woe unto him who putteth the cup to his neighbor's lips'—who increases his wealth at the expense of the bodies and souls of men—who takes away the bread of the poor and devours the earnings of industry—who scatters his poison through the veins and arteries of the community, till even the grave is burdened with his victims! Against *him* must the artillery of public indignation be brought to bear; and the decree must go forth, as from the lips of Jehovah, that he who will deal in the accursed article can lay no claim to honesty of purpose or holiness of life, but is a shameless enemy to the happiness and prosperity of his fellow-creatures."—[I. 155, 156.]

"He looked upon 'every distiller or vender of ardent spirits' as 'a poisoner of the health and morals of community'; and could even say, in his address in 1832 before the second annual Convention of the People of Color in Philadelphia: 'God is my witness that great as is my detestation of slavery and the foreign slave trade, I had rather be a slaveholder—yea, a kidnapper on the African coast—than sell this poison to my fellow-creatures for common consumption.'"—[I. 268.]

This was in 1832. In 1833, this uncompromising reformer, burning with holy indignation, had the golden opportunity of confronting in the midst of his ill-gotten and blood-stained wealth, one of the most notorious of these monsters, more detestable than the slaveholder and the kidnapper, these murderers and public poisoners, of whom he was resolved to speak the truth on all occasions however embarrassing. It was a peculiarly flagrant case, for the caitiff wretch had not only openly made and sold his liquid damnation, but had commended it to his neighbors' lips in that seductive form known as Buxton's Entire; and nevertheless, was holding a high position in the public esteem, and giving himself the airs of a philanthropist and reformer and Christian. In all Mr. Garrison's stormy career, he never had so good an opportunity for unlimbering the "artillery of indignation" for a point-blank shot. But instead of this he speaks with undisguised delight of a "polite invitation by letter" from this ogre "to take breakfast with him"; on which occasion our reformer, instead of warning his host of the hypocrisy of his "claim of honesty of purpose or holiness of life" and faithfully denouncing him as the "shameless enemy of his fellow-creatures," accepted his breakfast and his compliments without a syllable of protest; and after returning to America, described him as "the worthy successor of Wilberforce, our esteemed friend and coadjutor, Thomas Fowell Buxton," and declares that, aside from a single mistake of anti-slavery policy, "Mr. Buxton deserves universal admiration and gratitude for his long-continued, able and disinterested efforts, amidst severe ridicule and malignant opposition, to break every yoke and set the oppressed free."—[I. 351, 352.]

Miss Martineau was right. The spirit of the prophet was completely subject unto the prophet. He was able to restrain the

fury of his indignation against this monstrous criminal, and devote all his energies, in England, to hounding, pestering and abusing the agent of a benevolent enterprise, of which less than four years before, Garrison himself had been an extravagant eulogist. The Colonization agent was guilty of not keeping up with Garrison in the nimble changes of his mind from love to hate; and this was a crime as much worse than Buxton's as Buxton's was worse than that of the slaveholder and the kidnapper. But let it not be supposed that even this badgering of the Colonization agent was a matter of indignation. As Miss Martineau perceived, it was only "sagacity"—part of a course "adopted warily," and on "principle"—a course disgusting enough to her, as well as to Whittier, and Follen, and the Tappans, and many others, but which nevertheless, as he calmly explained, with "gladsome countenance" and "gentle voice," had to be pursued as a matter of policy.

It is not impossible to comprehend the situation in which Mr. Garrison felt himself drawn or driven to this disgraceful policy. We must remember how scanty were the resources not only material and social, but intellectual, with which he entered on his crusade. He was a decidedly bright young fellow, who had worked his way up from printer's boy to editor—wrote in a fairly good English style, with a knack for turning a sonnet which now and then rose to the dignity of real poetry. But he lacked intellectual strength, and was conscious of the lack. The reader of this book is impressed, in the pages from Garrison's pen, with the absence of genuine eloquence, or vigor of argument, or acuteness of observation. A superiority of intellectual and moral tone is recognized at once, when we pass from a page of Garrison's writing to a page from Elizur Wright, or even Lewis Tappan. Now, what do most men do in this case—conscious that their strength is inadequate to their undertaking? They are commonly tempted to make up in violence for the defect of strength. And this was the temptation to which Garrison yielded. He was always straining his voice till it broke into falsetto. He might not be able to argue successfully; but he could scold like a fishwife. He might not convict his adversary of wrong; but he could pelt him with hard names. He might not be able to command the attention of the people by weight of character or power of language; but he could infuriate them by insult. Here were cheap substitutes for eloquence always at hand, and he had small scruple about using them. He might not be able to win any large following to serve under him by the attraction of his genius, or the success of his leadership; but perhaps some might be intimidated into his service by a policy of systematic insult. So this policy was deliberately adopted and persistently followed. Probably it was the first instance of an attempt to carry forward a scheme of Christian philanthropy in main reliance on blackmail. The bitterest epithets and most damaging accusations in Mr. Garrison's extensive repertory were applied to these who were nearest him but failed to adhere to him. The one lower grade of turpitude was that of the men who, having once trained in his troop, detached themselves from it. The "worst and most dangerous form of pro-slavery" was to be an anti-slavery man outside of Garrison's residuary faction. There was no lack of collaborators to whom the policy of Garrison was congenial, and it was industriously prosecuted. Faithful citizens, and especially Christian ministers, were studiously annoyed with false charges of being "pro-slavery." Americans going abroad found that a system of correspondence was in operation by which evil reports were sent in advance of them. But the delight of the Garrison press and platform was to seize the occasion of the recent death of some exceptionally beloved and honored citizen, when hearts were tender, and the wounds of bereavement not yet closed, to defile his fresh grave with some abominable accusation. And down almost to this very day it has been the amiable practice of some of the survivors of that faction, notably of Mr. Oliver Johnson, to signalize the departure of some man honored for his great services in the cause of human freedom, by printing mendacious charges against him of pro-slavery sympathy, and sending them marked to the mourners.

It is only by glimpses between the lines that the reader of this biography gets an idea of the state of public sentiment in America at the time when Garrison began his work. Garrison's own reckless and swaggering account of it is this:

> "At that time [before the beginning of *The Liberator* in 1831] there was scarcely a man in all the land who dared to peep or mutter on the subject of slavery; the pulpit and the press were dumb; no anti-slavery organizations were made; no public addresses were delivered; no reproofs, no warnings, no entreaties were uttered in the ears of the people, silence, almost unbroken silence, prevailed universally."—[I. 458.]

In the same ridiculously false and brag-

gart tone is his talk about Channing's little work on slavery: "We do claim all that is sound or valuable in the book as *our own;* its sole excellences are its *moral plagiarisms;*"—[II. 89]. Habitually, he abounds with great swelling words of assumption that he is the very founder and inventor of anti-slavery feeling, argument and effort.

And yet throughout the book, and especially the earlier part of it, we come continually upon facts that are only to be explained by supposing (what is the demonstrable truth) that Garrison from his childhood grew up in an atmosphere of abhorrence of slavery—an atmosphere which pervaded the North and, to a large extent the South as well. The really remarkable and distinguishing thing about his early life is the torpid insensibility of his own conscience on this subject, while all about him men were feeling deeply and speaking and acting boldly. He had had exceptional opportunities of knowing slavery in its most hideous aspect, in successive visits to one of the chief slave markets of the country; but he took no interest in the matter. In the year 1826, a speech was made in Congress by Mr. Everett, which seemed to apologize for slavery; Mr. Gurley, of the Colonization Society, Mr. Bacon, and other friends of the colored people broke out in indignant protest and denunciation; Mr. Garrison copied the speech into his newspaper without the slightest sign of disapproval.

When, at last, his sluggish conscience was roused to recognize that slavery was wrong, and he began to speak and act, he found that the whole country was beforehand with him. In the year 1828, he refers, in his Bennington newspaper, to a petition recently presented to Congress by more than a thousand residents of the District of Columbia, including all the District Judges, praying for the abolition of slavery in the District. And presently a meeting is convened at the Bennington Academy at which a petition for the same object, drawn by Garrison's hand, is read and adopted, which reads:

"Your petitioners deem it unnecessary to attempt to maintain by elaborate arguments that the existence of slavery is highly detrimental to the happiness, peace and prosperity of that nation in whose bosom and under whose auspices it is nourished; and especially that it is inconsistent with the spirit of our government and laws. All this is readily admitted *by every patriot and Christian.* . . . It is gratifying to believe that *a large majority of the inhabitants of the District, and also of our more Southern brethren, are earnest for the abolition.* . . . Your petitioners deem it preposterous that while there is one half of the States in which slavery does not exist, and while *a large majority of our white population are desirous of seeing it extirpated,* this evil is suffered to canker in the vitals of the republic."

The petition was sent to *all the postmasters* of the State of Vermont, with the request that they would obtain signatures to it; and most of them "responded nobly"; so that the document was sent to Washington with no less than 2352 signatures, and there found a *nearly unanimous* resolution of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in favor of the same object.—[I. 109, 110.]

It is this exact period of which it is impudently declared (for the greater glory of Garrison):

"Fifty years ago [*i. e.*, in 1829], it is no exaggeration to say, this nation, in church and state, from President to boot-black—I mean the white boot-black—was thoroughly pro-slavery. In the Sodom there might have been a Lot or two here and there—some profound thinker who wished justice to be done though the heavens should fall, but he was despondent. It seemed as though nearly the whole business of the press, the pulpit and the theological seminary was to reconcile the people to the permanent degradation and slavery of the negro race."—[I. 298. Quoted from a speech of Elizur Wright, in June, 1879.]

Who would suppose, from reading this statement of history, that Garrison's boyhood had passed in the midst of an anti-slavery agitation that convulsed the nation almost to the point of civil war; or that in 1818 that noble act of the Presbyterian Church declaring slavery to be "a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ," had been *unanimously* adopted by the General Assembly, representing North and South? The eulogists of Garrison will hardly have the effrontery to claim that it was from their hero that the illustrious Kentuckian, Robert J. Breckenridge, learned either the ethics or the rhetoric of that splendid invective which he uttered in 1833 in the pages of the "Biblical Repertory," in which he declared "slavery as it is daily exhibited in every slave State" to be "a system which is utterly indefensible on every correct human principle, and utterly abhorrent from every law of God"; in which rebuking the apologists of the institution he exclaims: "Out upon such folly! The man who cannot see that involuntary domestic slavery, as it exists among us, is founded

on the principle of taking by force that which is another's, has simply no moral sense"; . . . "these are reasons for a Christian land to look upon and then ask: Can any system which they are advanced to defend be compatible with virtue and truth? . . . Hereditary slavery is without pretence, except in avowed rapacity."

Such views as these, of a conspicuous leader of public opinion in the slave States in 1833, instead of being, according to the preposterous assumption of Mr. Garrison's admirers, something unknown before his advent, devised by his own heart, becoming prevalent through his propagation of them, were, as a matter of exact history, the generally prevalent sentiment of the country at the beginning of his career; and the progressive decline of them, and, at the South, the practical extinction of them, synchronizes with the progress of Mr. Garrison's anti-slavery operations. Whether these operations stood to the decline of anti-slavery sentiment in the relation of cause to effect is a fair question, on which, however, in our own minds, there is not a particle of doubt. It is clear to us that Mr. Garrison and his propaganda had no small part in the demoralization of public opinion which went on to worse and worse during the period of his greatest activity.

But while he had no originality in the advocacy of anti-slavery, of emancipation, or of abolition—on all these points merely accepting the general sentiment of good men prevalent at the beginning of his career—there were two favorite nostrums on which he claimed exclusive rights, at least for the American market; one of these he labelled "immediate emancipation," and the other "immediate abolition." Both of them were founded in fallacy—that form of fallacy which one of his surviving disciples, Mr. Oliver Johnson, with unconscious humor, characterized * as "elastic definition," but which is better known to logicians as "ambiguous middle." All slaveholding is wicked, said the reformer; therefore every slaveholder should instantly emancipate all his slaves, and until he does so, he is a murderer, a man-stealer, a pirate, to be excommunicated from the Church, and shunned by decent men. But being questioned what he would do in the case of one who was holding slaves only until he could bring them away to a State where the laws would permit the emancipation of them, he answers at once: "When I say slaveholding is wicked, I mean the wicked kind of slaveholding; the man you describe holds slaves, indeed, but he is not what I mean by a slaveholder. I have 'an elastic definition' that can be accommodated to all such cases." In short, he fell afoul of the English language; his long quarrel with the best men of his generation was a contest in defence of his indefeasible right to use words out of their proper meaning.

So with his demand for "immediate abolition," objection to which filled him with "inexpressible abhorrence and dismay." It "does not mean," he says, "that the slaves shall immediately . . . be free from the benevolent restraints of guardianship."—[I. 294.] In short, when he says "immediate abolition" he means what is ordinarily understood by "gradual abolition," which if any man dare to express approval of, he will belabor him with foul words in his *Liberator* and do what he can to injure him in public estimation.

With more patience than this patent fallacy deserved, the sober anti-slavery men of this country labored to clear excited minds of the illusion which Garrison and his followers persistently labored to maintain. Said Leonard Bacon:

"As for the thing which alone they profess to recognize as slavery, we hold it to be invariably sinful. As for the thing which, when they attempt to speak accurately, they call emancipation, we hold it to be the plainest and first duty of every master. As for the thing which they describe as the meaning of immediate abolition, we hold it to be not only practicable and safe, but the very first thing to be done for the safety of a slaveholding country. The immediate abolition against which we protest as perilous to the commonwealth and unjust to the slaves, is a different thing from that which the immediate abolitionists think they are urging on the country. . . .

"The sophism by which they unwittingly impose on their own minds and inflame the minds of others, is this: the terms 'slavery,' 'slaveholding,' 'immediate emancipation,' etc., have one meaning in their definitions, and, to a great and unavoidable extent, another meaning in their denunciations and popular harangues. Thus they define a slaveholder to be one who claims and treats his fellow-men as property—as things—as destitute of all personal rights; one, in a word, whose criminality is self-evident. But the moment they begin to speak of slaveholders in the way of declamation, the word which they have strained out of its proper import springs back to its position, and denotes any man who stands in the relation of overseer and governor to those whom the law has constituted slaves; and consequently every man who, in the meaning of the laws, or in the meaning of common parlance, is a slaveholder, is denounced with unmeasured expressions of abhorrence and hate, as an enemy of the species. What is the effect of this on their

* *Century Magazine*, vol. IV (1883) pp. 153, 636.

own minds? What, on the minds of those who happen, from one cause or another, to be ripe for factious or fanatical excitement against the South? What, on the minds of those who, without unravelling the sophistry of the case, know that many a slaveholder is conscientious, and does regard his slaves as brethren? What, on the minds of those slaveholders themselves who are conscious of no such criminality"—*Quarterly Christian Spectator*, 1834.

The possible effect of his sophistical talk on other men's minds seems not to have been veiled from Mr. Garrison. In the retrospect, at least, he looked back with complacency to the syllogism which he had furnished to the extreme defenders of slavery: "If human beings could be justly held in bondage for one hour, they could be for days and weeks and years, and so on indefinitely from generation to generation."—[I. 140.] It was an instruction which needed no bettering, to fit it exactly to the use of pro-slavery men, North or South, in their conflict with the anti-slavery feeling that was everywhere dominant when Garrison began his glorious work. But this bearing of it seemed to be no objection to it in Mr. Garrison's mind; and the fact that it would be exasperating and alienating to good, conscientious and anti-slavery men among the slaveholders was vastly in its favor. His grievance with the old anti-slavery societies was that they did not "personally arraign the slaveholder and hold him criminal for not immediately emancipating his slaves, and seek to make him odious and put him beyond the pale of intercourse."—[I. 159, *note*. The language is the biographers'.]

Nothing in all this book is more truly characteristic of Mr. Garrison than these words of his children. A policy of reform might be wise, effective, successful; it might have extinguished slavery, as indeed it had extinguished it, in State after State, and be moving hopefully for the like result in other States yet; but unless it was personally exasperating it had no charms for him. He was not exasperated himself; and he no more believed every slaveholder to be criminal than Dr. Bacon or Dr. Breckenridge did; but with his little contrivance of "an elastic definition" he continued, with great composure and equanimity, to pour out the weekly torrent of bitter, foul, insulting language with which he succeeded in quenching the anti-slavery sentiment of the South to its last embers, and infuriating an opposition to the very name of abolitionist, even in the North, that showed itself in the shameful mobs which he delighted to provoke, and which were repressed or prevented by the efforts of men for whom he had no thanks, but only abuse and calumny. His love of a mob was not in the least like the Tipperary Irishman's delight in a shillalah-fight. It was a matter of policy, and in the roughest tumble of it his "mind was tranquil"; and when it was over he sat down and footed up the net advantages: "New subscribers to the *Liberator* continue to come in—not less than a dozen to-day. Am much obliged to the mob."—[II. 50.] He was even capable of refraining from exciting a mob when he saw no profit in it—"a mob without doing us any benefit, as the market is now getting to be somewhat glutted with deeds of violence."—[II. 105.] But in general, he actually hungered for a row, and labored, when he saw the populace nearing the boiling-point, to throw in fresh provocations, and invite general attention to his non-resistance principles. On the eve of the Boston riot, he was disgusted with the apparent lull of popular excitement which threatened that the storm would blow over. "Boston is beginning to sink into apathy. The reaction has come rapidly, but we are trying to get the steam up again."—[II. 2.] In like manner, at the dedication of Pennsylvania Hall in Philadelphia, his disgust at the address of David Paul Brown, the eminent anti-slavery lawyer, was irrepressible. That address seemed adapted "to allay, in some measure, the prejudice that prevails against us and our holy cause"; and that was not at all what he had come to Philadelphia for. There were placards out inciting to a riot, and it was an opportunity not to be missed. The mob needed punching up, and Garrison was just the man to do it. So he took the platform with some sneering and insulting remarks about Mr. Brown and his address, and about men of "caution," and "prudence," and "judiciousness," generally.

"Sir, I have learned to hate those words. . . . Sir, slavery will not be overthrown without excitement, a most tremendous excitement. And let me say there is too much quietude in this city. It shows that the upholders of this wicked system have not yet felt that their favorite sin has been much endangered. You need and must have a moral earthquake. . . . Your cause will not prosper here—the philosophy of reform forbids you to expect it—until it excites popular tumult, and brings down upon it a shower of brickbats and rotten eggs, and it is threatened with a coat of tar-and-feathers."—[II. 215, 216, *note*.]

The desire of Garrison's heart was promptly gratified by the smashing of the windows and the burning of the building; out of all which he got safely off, and

wrote to his mother-in-law in high spirits, from Boston. "We have had great doings in Philadelphia, during the present week. . . . It will do incalculable good to our cause. . . . Our friends are all in excellent spirits, shouting Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth! Let the earth rejoice!"

The attitude of Mr. Garrison and his queer little "persecuted remnant" of followers, towards the mob, was like that of Messrs. Dodson and Fogg towards the enraged Mr. Pickwick. "'Perhaps you would like to call us swindlers, sir,' said Dodson. 'Pray do, sir, if you feel disposed; now pray do, sir.' 'Go on, sir; do go on,' added Mr. Fogg. 'You had better call us thieves, sir; or perhaps you would like to assault one of us. Pray do it, if you would; we will not make the smallest resistance. Pray do it, sir'; and Fogg put himself very temptingly within the reach of Mr. Pickwick's clenched fist."

The case is not exactly in point. The mob was by no means as innocent as Mr. Pickwick, and the abusive epithets, to which *thief* and *swindler* were terms of compliment, were rather bestowed by Mr. Garrison than solicited. But Dodson and Fogg never equalled Mr. Garrison in the cool studiousness with which he invited assault with the standing promise of impunity, serenely calculating on the ulterior advantage of it. He swaggered insolently about in the panoply of his non-resistance principles, the "Moral Bully" described by Dr. Holmes:

"His velvet throat against thy corded wrist,
His loosened tongue against thy doubled fist."

"The *Moral Bully*, though he never swears,
Nor kicks intruders down his entry stairs,
Though meekness plants his backward-sloping hat,
And non-resistance ties his white cravat, . . .
Hugs the same passion to his narrow breast;
That heaves the cuirass on the trooper's chest;
Feels the same comfort, while his acrid words
Turn the sweet milk of kindness into curds,
As the scarred ruffian of the pirate's deck
When his long swivel rakes the staggering wreck."

The lesson of Mr. Garrison's life, truly told, is instructive but sad. It is the story of the failure and wreck of what could hardly, in any case, have been a great career, but might have been a wholly honorable and useful one. The whole course of his active life is a continuous history of opportunities wasted, influence forfeited, faithful friends and benefactors alienated and forced into hostility, and friends that still remained "sickened" at the folly and violence of his language, and at the irreparable mischiefs wrought by it to the cause which he claimed for his own. Meanwhile he was embittered by seeing "enlargement and deliverance arise from another place." The sober, conscientious, Christian anti-slavery sentiment of the country was clearly enlightened, and resolutely and wisely led, by such men as Albert Barnes, Leonard Bacon, William Ellery Channing and Francis Wayland—men for whose persons, whose arguments, and whose measures Mr. Garrison had no words but bitter denunciation and insult, and all the more as he saw them leading on to success where he had miserably failed. The attempt to represent that the only consistent and sincere anti-slavery of the nation was confined to Garrison and the infinitesimal faction of his adherents—an attempt pertinaciously prosecuted by him during his lifetime, and now renewed since his death—needs to be rebuked in the name of public morality; and not less, the mischievous lesson that is deduced from this false representation, to wit, that extravagant statement, sweeping denunciation and personal abuse of antagonists may be relied on to carry almost any crotchet of "reform," if only they are stuck to long enough.

The public career of Mr. Garrison, to which we have mainly confined our attention, is not difficult to understand. His personal character as exhibited in this book would be a more complicated study, very interesting, but less important to the world. Certain fine qualities he had in a high degree. His courage lacked nothing, but a little modesty, of being perfect and entire; but he advertised it too much in his newspaper. He was completely superior to mercenary considerations, and took joyfully the spoiling of his own goods, and still more joyfully the spoiling of other people's goods; no one of the proprietors of Pennsylvania Hall seems to have equalled him in the happy serenity and even hilarity with which he witnessed the destruction of that valuable property. For the great cause which he had at heart, he was willing to bear the loss of friends—so willing, in fact, that as they turned, grieved or indignant, from his door, he usually kicked them down the steps, only not with an actual boot of leather—that he held to be sinful. His sympathy with the slaves was deep and sincere; the groans of their prolonged bondage were torture to his soul; yet even this torture he was willing to bear cheerfully for an indefinite period (no matter

what their preference might be) rather than have them emancipated on incorrect principles [I. 348, 352]; so far was he from being a reckless enthusiast in his humanity. Conscious of superiority to such vulgar forms of selfishness, he sincerely thought himself (there is much evidence of this, sometimes pathetic, sometimes amusing) to be a perfect man.

One is surprised and almost sorry to find it claimed for him that he was not passionate or vindictive—that when he was running amuck through society, striking and stabbing indiscriminately all but those that ran with him, it was a mere matter of policy, about which he chatted "gladsomely" with his friends. In like manner, we are pained to discover that he was far from being the pachyderm which his recklessness of the feelings and reputations of others indicates him to be. He is sensitive to the pains which he delights to inflict or see inflicted on other men. If he fairly chuckles with joy at preventing the Colonizationists from getting a place for their meeting [I. 450] it is not because he does not go bemoaning the wickedness of the churches in not being willing to lend him or his friends a meeting-house gratis. His devoted labors to make other people "odious, and put them beyond the pale of intercourse," were compatible with bitter complaints that he found he had made himself odious instead. The most abusive of writers is continually grumbling at being abused. He calls on John Breckenridge, who loses his temper and becomes "really abusive"; Garrison bears it with a grieved and injured spirit, but with angelic meekness, goes home and down on his knees for his enemy; and then puts the knife into him in the next *Liberator* as "ferocious and diabolical."—[I. 449.]

Mr. Garrison's religious faith, through the earlier period of his life, seems genuine, deep and practical. Not Archbishop Laud, nor Saint Peter Arbuez, gives evidence of a more honest piety, or more strikingly illustrates Isaac Taylor's definition of fanaticism, as the combination of the religious sentiment with the malignant emotions.

For the materials of this exposition of the character and career of Mr. Garrison, it has not been necessary to go outside of the voluminous biography written of him by his own sons. No one can blame them for not having told the whole story. They have told enough to make their huge book refute itself. Can it be wondered at that they should have walked backward laying a garment upon both their shoulders, so as not to see their father's shame? But sooner or later some severely just and faithful hand must take up the task of thoroughly exposing the perversions of history that have been perpetrated by a considerable number of writers, for the canonization of Garrison. It is in the interest of good morals that he should be known to the next generation, as he was known to the past generation, as the systematic, cold-blooded and unscrupulous calumniator of better men than himself, and the constant antagonist of the men and the measures that were most helpful (as the event demonstrated) to the abolition of slavery. That his example may not be of evil influence in the future, it is needful that the demonstrable fact should be publicly exhibited and proved, that good did not come from the evil which he did that good might come; that the cause which he claimed as his own was begun without him, and went forward to success not because of him but in spite of him; and that the failure of his career—a miserable failure, notwithstanding all the false glorying of his panegyrists—is a warning to any who may hereafter be tempted of the devil to follow him in those methods which won for him the indelible title of "malignant philanthropist." This work might well occupy a volume, or more than one. But something may be accomplished towards it, even within the narrow limits of a magazine article.

"THE FOUNDATIONS OF BELIEF."[1]

BY A. M. FAIRBAIRN.

From *The Contemporary Review* (London), April, 1895.

THE appearance of the statesman as a theologian is a matter of interest not only to theologians, but also to the State. It speaks of interests which have all the greater significance for this world that they embrace another and larger, and of ideals which are potent in making character and governing both private conduct and public policy. Plato has told us that only the statesman under the inspiration of the kingly Muse can implant in the souls he governs the Idea, which is a divine principle, of the noble, and the just, and the good; while not till philosophers were kings, and political power was wedded to philosophy, could his ideal city live and behold the light of the sun. Aristotle was doubtful whether kings were an advantage to States, but he was clear that they ought to be chosen for their merit, or personal life and conduct: while the statesman might

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[FOR CHRISTIAN LITERATURE.]

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

BY LEONARD WOOLSEY BACON.

II.

LIMITATIONS of space and of time and of bodily strength forbid me any adequate treatment of the thesis which I have undertaken to maintain. I can hardly do more in this article than to outline the argument which sustains it, leaving to some other time, perhaps to some other pen, the work of filling up the outline, and thus correcting a monstrous and mischievous perversion of recent history.

The common account of Mr. Garrison's career is to this effect: That he found the country, and especially the Christian Church and ministry, sunken in a deep and criminal apathy concerning the condition of the negro population of America, both slave and free; that by his earnest and powerful appeals he succeeded in arousing the public conscience to the sinfulness of slavery, and enlisting its sympathies with his cause; that the principles which he enunciated, the measures which he advocated, and the men whom he drew around him and organized for action, became effective at last of the abolition of slavery.

The demonstrable facts of history are these: At the time of the strangely tardy awakening of Mr. Garrison's conscience to the wrongfulness of slavery, there was a generally prevalent and growing anti-slavery sentiment both at the North and at the South, and this sentiment was especially active in the Christian Church and ministry; it continued active on the same principles and along similar lines of effort with those under which freedom had already been secured to one-half of the Union, and was operating hopefully in several of the border slave States; it was effecting emancipations from year to year by the hundred and the thousand; it was zealous in promoting the welfare of the free blacks. The new principles, measures and methods inaugurated by Mr. Garrison had no effect on the general anti-slavery sentiment of the country except to defeat its enterprises at the North, and to extinguish it at the South; they procured the abolition or mitigation of slavery in no single State, and, so far as known, the emancipation of no single slave; the peaceful, constitutional and legal measures for resisting the spread of slavery that were undertaken in the interest of freedom were in succession steadfastly resisted by Mr. Garrison and his men; the notable and successful leaders in the anti-slavery conflict were by him, with few exceptions, discredited and vilified; when, in spite of him, the advance of slavery had been barred by the colonizing of Kansas, no resource was left to the friends of slavery but secession and war; when secession came, Mr. Garrison took sides with the secessionists; when war was begun, he was in favor of surrender. If Mr. Garrison could have won the anti-slavery people of the North into sympathy with his notions, slavery would have been dominant to-day throughout the entire country. Unhappily, in alienating the people of the country from himself and from his odious peculiarities, he alienated them also from the cause which he misrepresented; and succeeded in nothing so much as in making the very name of abolitionist to be the object of general detestation.

The despondency of anti-slavery men that followed their defeat in the struggle over the Missouri Compromise was not of long continuance. Already in 1820 the pen of Jeremiah Evarts, always ready and potent in a good cause, was busy in *The Panoplist*, showing that there was no reason for despair —that the condition of the negro population of America was still a legitimate subject of discussion, and the improvement of their condition still a legitimate object of effort on the part of patriotic and Christian men. The anti-slavery sermon of the younger Edwards, republished by Mr. Gurley, of the Colonization Society, was circulated both at the North and at the South. In the anti-slavery revival of this period,

naturally enough, Andover Seminary largely shared. Of the six essays contained in the manuscript Transactions of its "Society of Inquiry Concerning Missions" of this time, not less than four relate to slavery and the colored people. The first of these, by R. Washburn, on the question, What is the duty of the Government, and the duty of Christians, with regard to slavery in the United States? begins thus: "Perhaps there is not a more marked feature in the history of modern benevolent operations than the efforts made in favor of the unfortunate Africans. Forty years ago, there were few to weep over the wrongs and wretchedness of slavery; now thousands call the sons of Africa brethren, thousands are willing to devote their money and their efforts to redeem them from their long captivity, and thousands offer the daily prayer to Him who 'hath made of one blood all nations to dwell on the face of the earth,' that He would shorten the days of darkness and crime, and hasten that day of light and glory when oppressions shall cease, and a universal jubilee be proclaimed for all the enslaved of the human family." The long report to that society, from the pen of Leonard Bacon, "On the Black Population of the United States," containing denunciations of American slavery as solemnly severe as could be expressed in language, was extensively circulated in New England by the Andover students, and its severest anti-slavery passages were republished in Richmond. Every Fourth of July the most effective speakers among the Andover students went out into the neighboring towns to advocate the cause of the negro whether in slavery or in nominal freedom. The annual religious celebration of the Fourth by some associated churches of Boston, from the year 1823 onward, opened the famous pulpit of Park Street to the same subject, and there Louis Dwight, Leonard Bacon, John Todd and others in successive years spoke in no uncertain tones.

Naturally enough, the young men who went forth from this centre of anti-slavery agitation did not lose their love of freedom in entering on the pastoral work. We follow the course of one of them, not as exceptional but as representative of the young clergy of the time; and we choose our example for two reasons, first, for our special opportunities of knowing his course, and secondly, because his name has been, and is to this day, systematically vilified as an example of the "universal apathy on the subject of slavery" prevailing in the community and especially in the Church, in the days before Garrison.

When Leonard Bacon, at the age of twenty-three, took charge of the ancient church at New Haven, in 1825, one of the earliest incidents of his work was the organization of a club of young men, some of whose names were destined to become famous in the great conflict, under the name of "The Anti-Slavery Association." Out of the labors and studies of this club grew "The African Improvement Society of New Haven," in which he and his associates toiled with eminent success for the uplifting of the colored people of that city from their deplorable degradation.

In March, 1826, his friend Mr. Gurley, of the Colonization Society, wrote to him indignantly from Washington, of a speech of Mr. Everett's which he had just heard, apologizing for slavery. Said Mr. Gurley, "If he dares to publish these sentiments, which go to sustain a most iniquitous system, our friends at the North must not be silent." They were not silent. Mr. Bacon's Fourth of July sermon of that year, from the text, "Cry aloud; spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions," declared it to be "the duty of every citizen of the United States to promote by every means in his power the abolition of slavery"; and continued: "Public opinion throughout the free States must hold a different course on the subject of slavery from that which it now holds. Instead of exhausting itself fruitlessly and worse than fruitlessly upon the *operation* of the system, it must be directed towards the *principle* on which the system rests. It must become such that on the one hand the man who indulges his malignity or his thoughtlessness in so exaggerating the evils attendant on the *operation* of the system as to implicate the body of the slaveholders in the charge of cruelty and tyranny shall feel himself rebuked and shamed by the nobler spirit that pervades his fellow-citizens; and such that on the other hand the man who dares to stand up in Congress and, presuming on the forbearance of those who sent him, attempts to purchase popularity by defending the *principle* of slavery, shall find himself greeted on his return to his constituents with one loud burst of indignation and reproof."

There was nothing startling in these views of the young preacher; they were the common opinions of the American Church at that time. He himself testified forty years later: "From the beginning of my

official ministry, I spoke without reserve, from the pulpit and elsewhere, against slavery as a wrong and a curse, threatening disaster and ruin to the nation. Many years I did this without being blamed, except as I was blamed for not going far enough. Not a dog dared to wag his tongue at me for speaking against slavery."

It is an instructive fact already adverted to, that when the speech that so stirred the indignation of these two colonizationists reached Mr. Garrison in his editorial office, he found nothing in it to object to; he thought it a good speech, and printed it accordingly. He was at the time much concerned about the oppression of the Greeks. There does seem to have been "apathy" *somewhere*, in those days.

A favorite plan of the young men at Andover was the scheme of a college for the liberal education of colored youth. The scheme seems to have been first publicly announced by Mr. Bacon when, at the age of barely twenty-one, he urged it on the support of the Colonization Society at Washington in 1823. It was set forth more publicly yet in his "Plea for Africa" from Park Street pulpit in 1824, and at New Haven in 1825. It was much in his thoughts and in his letters. It met with a painful discouragement in the early death of Samuel Hooker Cowles, one of that circle of young Andover abolitionists, who was "willing to lend his hand to any measure which prudence and philanthropy might dictate," but whose cherished plan, as expressed in a biographical sketch in *The Christian Spectator* (1828, p. 4), was "the establishment of an African college, where youth were to be educated on a scale so liberal as to place them on a level with other men, and fit them for extensive usefulness to their brethren, either in this country or in the colonies." Not only in Andover was the plan taken up with eagerness. President Griffin, of Williams College, was its enthusiastic friend. Theodore Woolsey was earnest and wise in counsel about it; and his friend Ridgely wrote to Woolsey and Bacon:

"I am delighted with the idea of calling a general meeting at New York to deliberate about the practicability of establishing a *Negro University*. The necessities of Africa cry aloud for some such institution. Her children are starving for the bread of knowledge. They must have it. It is my opinion that twenty well educated and accomplished young negro *gentlemen* (I hope you are prepared for the unusual association of terms) would do more for that forlorn and outcast race than all that has been yet accomplished by their distinguished benefactors at Washington. It would go far to dignify the name."

Already, in the summer of 1825, the project had been talked over in the little Anti-Slavery Association at New Haven. It is needless to detail here the encouragements and the delays that it met with. At last, however, in the summer of 1829, the well-matured plan of the institution was submitted to a circle of leading citizens of New Haven, especially those connected with Yale College, and was cordially approved. A large conditional subscription towards it was made by a member of Mr. Bacon's congregation, and the scheme which for more than six years had been actively promoted by the friends of the negro race seemed in a fair way to be realized.

We have spoken at such length of the work done at New Haven as being an example of the humane and kindly work that was going on with increasing zeal and success throughout the North. There was not to be found in all the Free States a considerable city without its Clarkson Society or its African Improvement Society intent on similar labors. And the men and women who gladly gave their time, money and influence to promote this work were everywhere the earnest friends of that enterprise of African colonization, one great argument for which was its tendency to elevate the free colored people in America, and another great argument, its tendency to promote emancipation and the abolition of slavery.*

At this juncture, in that series of Fourth of July discourses in which Mr. Bacon five years before had delivered his "Plea for Africa," Mr. Garrison makes his tardy entrance as an anti-slavery orator. The most notable characteristic of his discourse is the extravagance of his zeal for colonization. It was the one door of hope for the African race. It was to accomplish instantaneous wonders. But except for this and for his wild suggestion that the colored population of the country should be deported at the expense of the federal government, it does not appear that his speech differed materially from the half-dozen anti-slavery discourses that had preceded his in the same series. His impression that he was alone and peculiar in his sympathy for the blacks, "over whose sufferings scarcely an eye weeps, or a heart melts, or a tongue pleads either to God or man," was simply one of his constitutional eccentricities.

Coming forth in the summer of 1830 from

* *Christian Spectator*, II. 470–482, 524; IV. 318–334; V. 163–168.

his brief imprisonment in Baltimore jail, he made a progress through the northern cities in his character of martyr to the rights of the negro, making addresses to such meetings of the colored people as he was able to gather. Poor, ignorant, facile creatures, they were the ready victims of any demagogue who should cajole them with flatteries, or intoxicate them with silly expectations, or irritate their vindictive passions. These things Mr. Garrison was not ashamed to do, poisoning the minds of the colored people against the benefactors who had done so much for them, and were on the point of doing so much more, by representing that these were in a dark plot to keep them in ignorance and degradation.* The mischief that he wrought in thus defeating the fairest hopes then open before that injured people is not to be computed. The story of how, in unconscious coalition with the baser passions of the populace, he brought the noble enterprise of the African College to wreck is too long to tell at this time. He succeeded in identifying it, in the public mind, with his own pernicious teachings, and it was swept away by the shameful panic resolutions of a New Haven city meeting, but not without repeated solemn and indignant protests from Mr. Bacon, who lost in that ruin the hopes and patient labors of seven years.†

We must pass, rapidly, point by point, over the chief points on which Mr. Garrison fought against the anti-slavery cause, taking sides with its enemies.

As we have already seen, the stronghold of anti-slavery sentiment was in the Churches. In the progress of that pro-slavery reaction which began with Mr. Garrison's movement and moved parallel with it, growing with its growth and strengthening with its strength, those men did the noblest service to the cause of freedom who labored to hold the Churches to their principles. But they got no help from Mr. Garrison—only sneers and discouragements. His effort was just the opposite—to get all the anti-slavery men out of the Church, and turn the whole influence of that institution over to the enemy. For this purpose, he, and his confederates with his smiling encouragement, assailed it with unprintable vilifications, delighted if thereby they could draw a disorderly crowd to their meeting. As this went on, the best men among his adherents left him in disgust, and among those who remained were some who saw how suicidal was this course, and sought to arrest it, but were answered with defiance.* Was it strange that this mad policy should have been so far successful as to inspire many good people in the Churches with a violent antipathy to the very name of anti-slavery or abolition?

One of the first conflicts in the struggle against the insolent aggressions of the slave power was to secure the recognition in Congress of the rights to which freedom was entitled under the Constitution and existing laws. The battle for the right of petition was fought out in the House of Representatives with splendid ability and heroic courage and endurance by John Quincy Adams. That good fight of his, single-handed against the crowd, is the finest chapter in our parliamentary history. The noble and venera-

* Address to the Free People of Color, by W. L. Garrison. Review of the same, *Christian Spectator*, IV., 311. The results of careful inquiry into the needs of these people, set before the charitable public to incite to sympathy and effort for their relief, were quoted to the blacks to show them that "those who have entered into this CONSPIRACY AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS [the colonization enterprise] are unanimous in abusing their victims."—*Liberator*, I. 65. Also, II. 99.

Mr. Garrison's ferocious crusade against colonization was only an episode in his career, and need not be here detailed. The swarming fallacies and falsehoods in his "Thoughts on Colonization" (perhaps the most dishonest piece of polemic ever written) were exposed in the *Christian Spectator*, V. 145; but this did not hinder their being repeated over and over for the good of the cause, as they are still repeated for the falsification of history. See O. Johnson's "Garrison and His Times," 104, 109.

†See *The Religious Intelligencer* (New Haven), September and October, 1831. The editorial comments on this subject were well known to be from Mr. Bacon's pen. The story of this affair as told by Mr. Garrison's disciples makes the plan of an African College to have been an enterprise of "the Abolitionists" first broached two years before by good Mr. Jocelyn, and defeated with the guilty connivance and cowardice of Mr. Bacon. See "Garrison and His Times," 119-124. "Life of Garrison," I. 259.

* At the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in 1842, Mr. Pierce, of Lexington, moved the following resolutions:

Resolved, As the sense of this meeting, that it is not by the use of opprobrious epithets and harsh and sweeping denunciations, but by speaking the truth in love, that abolitionists will best promote the cause of justice and truth.

Resolved, As the sense of this meeting, that in their writings, public discussions and private conversations, abolitionists should refrain from the indiscriminate censure and denunciation of whole classes and associations of persons, as the clergy and churches of various denominations, and all those who refuse to unite with them regarding such censure and denunciation, as unjust and highly impolitic.

Resolved, As the sense of this meeting, that the proposing, advocating or sustaining such resolutions as the following (which were discussed at a recent anti-slavery meeting), "that the religion of the United States of America is one vast system of atheism and idolatry, which in atrocity and vileness equals that of any system in the heathen countries of Asia or Africa or the islands of the Pacific Ocean"; "that the sectarian churches and ministry of this country are combinations of thieves, adulterers and pirates, and not the churches and ministers of Jesus Christ, and should be treated as brothels and banditti by all who would exculpate themselves from the guilt of slaveholding;" "that any man who goes to the polls and votes for a slave-owner or any other than an outspoken abolitionist, acts on the same principle with the Algerian buccaneer, and ought not to be recognized as an abolitionist"—manifests a spirit which, if at all consistent with the spirit of the Gospel, is not likely to gain friends to the anti-slavery enterprise, but bring upon it needless odium.

The quotations are a characteristic specimen of what used to pass for "eloquence" on Mr. Garrison's platforms.

Naturally, Mr. Pierce's resolutions were promptly laid upon the table; but when, two years after, Mr. Garrison moved that "the American Church was a synagogue of Satan," there was, of course, no hesitation about "resolving" it.

ble "old man eloquent," at the outset of the fight, was brutally stigmatized in the *Liberator* as "a dough-face."

The conflict was renewed again in the perilous days of 1851. That was a great day for liberty when Charles Sumner, elected to the Senate without the support of the Abolitionists and in spite of their efforts to defeat him, pronounced his masterly argument, "Freedom National: Slavery Sectional." This noble speech, which did so much towards bringing the nation back to its old bearings, and which struck the keynote of the march of the Republican party to its final success under the lead of Lincoln, was denounced by Mr. Garrison in a resolution as "false and absurd, and an outrage on common sense."* The little band of faithful men at the Capitol, the forlorn-hope of Freedom in her darkest hour—Seward, Sumner, Hale, Giddings, and the rest—were insulted, derided, discredited in the name of anti-slavery.

It was not in vain that these losing fights were fought out in the Houses of Congress. But the debate had to be held in a wider forum, and decided by the people. At the first Mr. Garrison had been impatient to persuade or drive men to the polls in an anti-slavery party. When, at last, the first beginnings of such action were taken (perhaps prematurely—there was a divided judgment among earnest men about that), they encountered Garrison's bitter mockery and denunciation. It was resolved that a third political party is "fraught with unmitigated evil and mischief to the abolition enterprise." Those who sympathized with the effort—such men as Birney, Hale, Leavitt, Whittier, Lewis Tappan—were made the targets of his contumely. Not only their persons, but in every important issue their cause found in him an ill-wisher and an enemy. When freedom and slavery were in the grapple over the annexation of Texas, for all his stormy speeches about the wickedness of that measure, he lent no hand to prevent it, but hoped that "the slave power might become more and more severe," so as to bring to pass the horrors of that disunion which he was always coveting. He would dissuade anti-slavery voters from their duty as citizens, and deliver the question over to be decided by the enemies of freedom.

The war with Mexico was finished, and the question rose before the nation, what should be the destiny of the territories acquired from the neighbor republic. Freedom was never, in all the history of this conflict, so near a great, peaceful, and decisive victory as when the Wilmot Proviso, consecrating all that domain to free labor, was at issue. While good citizens were bending their energies to the struggle, the bird of ill omen kept croaking his discouragements. There was no hope; the nation must go on to disgrace and ruin; slavery must of necessity be triumphant; it is too late for reform; there is no remedy but revolution.*

The party of Free Soil kept growing in importance; but Mr. Phillips moved, and the Anti-Slavery Society voted (1843), that it was "a misdirection and waste of effort, and attempt at impossibilities." Like both the old parties, it was "essentially pro-slavery." The party adopted the bold and wise measure of planting an anti-slavery journal, *The National Era*, at the City of Washington, under Dr. Bailey, Amos A. Phelps, and John G. Whittier as editors. But slaveholders were assured that "if they knew the party and the editors, they would be relieved of all alarm." The sneers at Whittier might be justified on the ground of his having left the noisy camp of Mr. Garrison, and of the necessity of maintaining discipline by shooting deserters; but it could have been only the love of vituperation for its own sake that led to the denouncing of Longfellow for having in his noble lyric "The Building of the Ship," "prostituted his fine genius to eulogize the blood-stained American Union."†

The turning-point in the long fight with the slave power was reached when, after the perfidy of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill had been consummated, and at the moment of the almost despair of the friends of freedom, Eli Thayer, with heroic hopefulness and magnificent energy and ability, colonized Kansas with free settlers, and blocked the further extension of slavery. It is an almost incredible fact, and yet a fact, that Mr. Garrison and his little residuum of noisy followers did discourage and do what they could to defeat that noble, lawful and peaceful enterprise which gave checkmate to slavery and saved the continent for freedom. The story is authentically told by Mr. Thayer's own lively pen in "The Kansas Crusade."

It was in the flush of this triumph that

* As usual in his extravagances, Mr. Garrison had begun by being preposterously extravagant on the other side of the question. In his Address to the Free People of Color, 1831, he had gravely advised his unfortunate clients that *all* the disabilities which they were suffering from unfriendly State laws could be swept away at one stroke by simply carrying a case up to the Supreme Court, from which august tribunal they might "walk abroad in majesty and strength, free as the air of heaven, sacred as the persons of kings."

* Mass. A. S. Report, 1847, p. 10.

† The quotations are from the Mass. A. S. Reports. Page after page these Reports are a continuous illustration of Mr. Garrison's constancy in getting upon the wrong side of every question affecting the cause of liberty, and abusing every one that was doing any useful work on the right side.

the election of Lincoln was achieved in 1860. Both the platform and the candidate of the Republican party were in direct antagonism with every item of Mr. Garrison's distinctive principles.* And he was merely consistent with his principles in refusing approval to the party, and consistent with his usages of speech in characterizing Abraham Lincoln as a "slave-hound." The helpers and counsellors of the great Emancipator, Chase, Seward, Sumner, Wilson, Wade, and the rest were subjected to like contumely.

Secession, long threatened, came at last, and found its friends and supporters, at the North, in Mr. Garrison and his little company. For many years the sagacious plan of Mr. Garrison had been identical with that of the Southern conspirators—though he expressed it differently—the founding of an independent, warlike, aggressive nation wholly devoted to slavery and occupying as its own the larger half of the domain of the Union, with as much more to the south and to the north as they might be able to seize and hold. It was part of his plan that the new nation should be started "peacefully," with every opportunity for strengthening itself in arms and alliances until it should be ready for offensive operations; and (if he could have his way about it) that the residuary northern nation should be organized on non-resistant principles, defending itself from its fierce neighbor only by the arms of love. A program more charming to the friends of slavery it is impossible to conceive. That they did not accept the treasonable invitation of abolitionist conventions to a "free correspondence with the disunionists of the South, in order to devise the most suitable way and means to secure the consummation so devoutly to be wished," † could only have been because they knew how contemptibly insignificant was the faction from which the invitation proceeded. But if they had counted on what support the faction could give, they did not count in vain. "To think of whipping the South," said Mr. Garrison, "is utterly chimerical;" and he proposed to say to the slave States: "Depart in peace. Though you have laid piratical hands upon property not your own, we surrender it all in the spirit of magnanimity; and if nothing but the possession of the capital will appease you, take even that without a struggle." * On practical questions he was in cordial agreement with Davis and Toombs and Yancey and their confederates.

It is a most pleasant thing to record that the awful shock of war, when it came, did at last sober the chronic madness of the man. By his antecedents he was committed "against all wars and all preparations for war; against every naval ship, every arsenal, every fortification; . . . against all appropriations for the defence of a nation by force and arms." † But now, to the astonishment of good citizens and the dismay of his old associates, he boldly turned his back upon himself, and rendered to the imperilled government and nation the best service in his power. There is nothing in all his career so honorable as his unfaithfulness, at this juncture, to his foolish so-called principles. According to these principles, the business of soldier was simple, unmitigated murder; but when his son starts for the war as officer in a colored regiment, he sends him off with his blessing for being true to his convictions, though regretting that these convictions are morally unsound. ‡ War and slavery, in Mr. Garrison's view, were under like and equal condemnation. If affairs at that time had been on the old footing, and young Mr. Garrison had conscientiously believed, as many conscientious persons in the old times certainly did believe, that duty called him to be a faithful and humane master of slaves, it would have been a most pleasing and edifying spectacle to see the Reformer waving a parting salute to the young man as he started for his plantation, saying, "I could have wished that you could see the matter as I do, but since you are faithful to your own convictions, God bless you, my boy." Unfortunately this degree of considerateness for the conscientious convictions of others, which Mr. Garrison so amiably manifested towards his own son, was not developed in his moral constitution early enough to save him from many painful and mischievous mistakes in his behavior towards other people's sons.

After all, Mr. Garrison did really, at the eleventh hour, come into the vineyard and take his place among those who had spent the heat of the day in practically useful and effective labors for the cause of human freedom; and who shall grudge him the remark-

* Mr. Lincoln repeatedly acknowledged his indebtedness for his definite convictions on the subject of slavery to the volume of Essays on Slavery by Leonard Bacon, which had fallen into his hands when he was a young man. The little book, now rare, is directed on the one hand against slavery, and on the other hand against that type of abolitionism represented by Mr. Garrison. It is from the preface to this book that Lincoln borrowed his much-quoted phrase, "If slavery is not wrong, then nothing is wrong."

† Resolution adopted at New York, December, 1859.

* *Liberator*, xxxi. 27. † "Life of Garrison," ii. 231.

‡ "Life of Garrison," iv. 84.

ably large pennyworth of credit that he gets for it? It does, nevertheless, seem to be a public duty of considerable importance to correct some of the perversions of history that are attempted for his canonization. We have no ignoble discontent at hearing Aristides called The Just, no matter how frequently; but when it comes to a settled plan to keep calling Themistocles The Just, the case is different.

THE OLD TESTAMENT QUESTION IN THE EARLY CHURCH.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR JAMES ORR, D.D.

From *The Expositor* (London), May, 1895.

WE are accustomed to speak of the Old Testament question as peculiarly a question of our own day; but it is not always realized that the earliest age of the Church had likewise *its* Old Testament question—one as serious and difficult for it as ours can possibly be to us. So far from being novel, the Old Testament question is, indeed, one of the very oldest in the history of the Christian Church—was, in an important sense, *the* burning qnestion of the second century. We have scarcely left the bounds of the apostolic age before we find the Church plunged into its prolonged conflicts with Ebionitism and Gnosticism, and both of these forms of error — Gnosticism especially—raised the Old Testament problems in their most acute shape. The question, as was natural, was then a theological rather than a literary or critical one; bore upon the substance of the Old Testament revelation rather than on the books which contained it; and the solutions proposed of difficulties were palpably of a kind which the modern mind could not accept. But even here the distinction is not absolute but relative. The newer criticism also has its historical and theological side, and is dependent to a larger extent than is sometimes acknowledged on theories and speculations as to the nature and laws of the religious development in Israel; while the older theorists did not wholly forego criticism, but struck out hypotheses often crude enough, yet occasionally singularly anticipative of modern ideas. It is in any case an exceedingly interesting phase of religious thought which is exhibited to us in this conflict of the post-apostolic Church with the early impugners of Old Testament revelation, and one which well deserves attention on its own account. I shall endeavor to present it in certain of its aspects, as it appears, first, in that remarkable literary product of Essenian Ebionitism in the second century—the pseudo-Clementine writings; and, secondly, in the multiform and influential developments of Gnosticism.

The Clementine writings, usually dated, in one or other of their forms, about the middle or latter half of the second century, are, as just stated, the principal literary monument of that form of Essenian Ebionitism, regarding which our chief informant is Epiphanius.* Epiphanius does not name the Clementines, but mentions Ebionite works (the Ascents of James, and Circuits of Peter) on the basis of which the Clementine books are evidently wrought up, and the general indications agree. It is a probable hypothesis that, after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Essenes, who from this time disappear from history, and who, even at an earlier period, as the forms of heresy at Colosse show, had made considerable attempts at amalgamation with Jewish Christianity, went over in a body to the Pharisaic section of the Jewish Christian Church, carrying with them many of their peculiar ideas and customs.† Thereafter the leaven of their influence seems to have spread somewhat widely, and given rise to a number of vigorous developments. Whether or not, as Ritschl supposes, the Clementine literature emanated from Rome,‡ there is force in his suggestion that it represents a serious attempt to gain for Ebionitism a footing within the Gentile-Catholic Church, whose developed Episcopacy it takes over, and for whose sake it softens down some of its Ebionite peculiarities (*e. g.*, substitutes baptism for circumcision).§ In the same spirit the legitimacy of the Gentile mission is no longer contested, but the credit of it is claimed for its own Apostle Peter. On the other hand, the unchanged Pharisaic standpoint of the writings is testified by their attitude of hostility to St. Paul, who, even if we refuse to regard Simon Magus as throughout a mask for the Gentile Apostle, is the object of scarcely veiled attack.‖ In character the work is a religious romance — the earliest example of the theological novel. It exists in two recensions — the *Recognitions* and the *Homilies*, the latter much the more pronounced in its Ebionitism — and opinion is about

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* *Adv. Hær.*, xxx.

† Cf. Ritschl, *Die Entstehung der altkath. Kirche* (1857), pp. 222-3, 234.

‡ This is the usual view, but Uhlhorn, Lightfoot, Salmon and others dissent.

§ Cf. Ritschl, *ut supra*, p. 264.

‖ *Recog.*, i. 70; *Hom.*, xvii. 19.