

THE
BIBLICAL REPERTORY.

JULY, 1833.

No. III.

ART. I.—*Hints on Colonization and Abolition; with reference to the black race.*

THEY who are wise enough to place implicit confidence in the statements of the Bible, as to the origin of the human race, find no difficulty in tracing the three distinct races of men who inhabit this vast continent to the patriarch Noah, as the second head and progenitor of mankind. Nor is the difficulty great, to reach the assurance that the three sons of that patriarch were respectively the heads of three races which surround us: all things concurring to prove that the North American Indians are of Asiatic, that is of Shemitish origin, whilst the origin of the white and black races is not only matter of familiar knowledge and full experience, but is stamped upon the very aspects and lineaments of the beings themselves, in characters which time is not able to erase. Indeed we think we see in the very state of things which are passing before us, the evidence of the truth of God, in the exact fulfilment of a prophecy, which, from the distance of forty-two centuries, seem to point steadfastly to us. "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his ser-

vant." This is very remarkable; and as far as we know, has been true no where else but here; and true no where, if its statements were reversed. Shem has not ruled Ham in the tents of Japheth; nor Ham either of them in the tents of the other; nor Japheth, been served by Ham in the tents of Shem, any where but in this western hemisphere. God enlarged Japheth, until he hath stretched him over the tents of Shem, and the liberties of Ham; the double plunderer of both his brethren.

With only one of these races, it is our purpose now to occupy these pages; having reference to a second race only so far as their high interests or close duties may implicate them in the discussion; and dismissing the third from our thoughts as not now particularly concerned. For, although the question of colonization has not only been made, but matured and executed as to considerable portions of the Indian race; it is obvious that it stands upon wholly different grounds from the same question as applied to the African race.

The African race in the United States, at this time, does not vary much in amount from two millions and a half of persons. Of these, something more than two millions are slaves, and the remainder admitted to a very limited state of freedom. This race is again capable of another division, which, though generally overlooked, is of no inconsiderable consequence; the division we mean into unmixed Africans, and coloured persons originally of African origin, but more or less mixed with the white race. No means have been used to ascertain the precise number of mulattoes in this country; but they undoubtedly amount to many thousands of people, scattered through all the States, varying through all possible grades of complexion between black and white, and yet forming unitedly a distinct, powerful, and remarkable class of beings. By the laws of the slaveholding States, any person whose veins contain as much as one quarter of African blood is technically called a mulatto, and is considered and treated in all respects as if he were black. The question, as to the right of freedom, upon the mere fact of having less than a fourth part of African blood; that is, being neither a black nor a mulatto but *a white man* (such are so by these laws), *and as such, per se, free*, has not, we believe, been yet made in our courts as a legal question. Nor is it our province to say how it will be decided when made; but if the law be construed to favour freedom, as all law pretends to do, there are multitudes of persons now held in bondage, who will go free. This whole class of mulattoes is to be considered and treated as distinct from the blacks. They consider themselves so; the blacks consider them so; and all who have opportunity of comparing the

two cannot doubt that the former are the more active, intelligent, and enterprising of the two. They look upwards, not downwards. They are constantly seeking, and acquiring too, the privileges of the whites; and cases are within our own knowledge where persons of respectability, in nearly every walk of life, have sprung within the memory of man from this mixed race. For all the purposes of this discussion therefore, this race may be left out of the question, or rather considered as united, for its ultimate destiny, with the whites rather than the blacks; to the former of which they are far the most assimilated in constitution and in character.

The unmixed race of coloured persons, may, as has been already indicated of the whole race, be divided into two very unequal masses, the smaller embracing free persons, the larger slaves; unitedly forming about a sixth part of the entire population of the republic. What is to be the destiny of these multitudes of human beings? What influence can we exert over their present and everlasting interest? What connexion has their destiny with ours? and with that of the world? These are questions which we cannot escape; which we ought to meet, and examine, and decide, with the carefulness, and candour, and firmness becoming free, enlightened, and Christian men.

In the discussion of these deep interests, let us as far as possible keep all jarring matters separate; and while we look at the whole subject in all its imposing magnitude, let us do it in such a manner as not to confound things which are essentially distinct. It is within the compass of possible events, for example, that the public sentiment may settle down unto just such a state as we should prefer on all the questions relating to free persons of colour, while the reverse occurred on all those relating to slaves; or the precise opposite might happen. The questions are separate, and should be separately discussed.

First, then, as to the free people of colour. We hazard nothing in asserting that the subsisting relations between this class of persons and the community cannot remain permanently as they are. In the year 1790 there were sixty-three whites to every single free coloured person in this nation: in 1830, there were only thirty-five to one. A similar rate of approximation for about two centuries and a half would make the free coloured persons equal to the whites, without taking slaves at all into the account. Neither the safety of the State nor the resources of any community would endure within its bosom such a nation of idle, profligate, and ignorant persons. There is a point beyond which the peace of society cannot permit the increase of the elements of commotion; for the moment that point is passed,

they who were the vagabonds of yesterday become the lords of the ascendant to-morrow; so that States, by a sort of self-adjusting process, purge away the grosser elements which compose them. True, the process is usually demoralizing, and always stern and bloody; but, in the long run, not therefore the less inevitable. So, on the other hand, there is a point beyond which no community can allow a system of pauperism to go; and whether this system exhibit itself in a useless and corrupt aristocracy, nominally above society, as in foreign States, or in a class of abandoned idlers below it, as with us, the result is sooner or later the same, and really from the same causes. Society can bear only such a rate of idle hands, to the mouths that must be fed; and whether the excess that cannot be borne is attempted to be fed by oppression under pretence of law, or by real theft, or by general mendicity, makes no difference as to the certainty that the body politic must re-act, and the excrescence slough off.

We may be allowed also to say, that in our age of Christian enterprise, such a condition as that which is generally exhibited by the free coloured population of this country cannot be permitted long to exist, under our daily observation. Their condition is no doubt represented to be comparatively worse than it really is, in some respects, as we may have occasion to show hereafter. But that it is really most degraded, destitute, pitiable, and full of bitterness, no man who will use his senses can for one moment doubt. And whatever their condition, that it has been brought upon them, chiefly if not entirely by our own policy and social state, is just as undeniable. They are victims to our fathers and to us; how, we pause not to ask. But they are victims: and every sentiment of religion impels us to regard their case with an eye of pity.

They, therefore, who are for doing nothing in reference to this great subject, are out of place, and behind the necessities and the feelings of the age. To do nothing, is to let the very worst be done. They who are prepared to do something, are divided between the plans; the first of which proposes to retain the free coloured people in this country, to admit them to all the privileges of the whites, and to discountenance and break down forever every sentiment, or feeling, or taste, or prejudice, which stands in the way of a perfect equality and complete mixture of the two races: the other plan proposes, to divide the two races totally, by colonizing the free blacks. Widely as these schemes differ, there is one point in which the enlightened and humane who advocate either, cordially agree; namely, that the moral and intellectual condition of these unhappy men, should be im-

mediately and greatly improved, whether they stay here, or go to whatever land their destinies may call them. It is a cause of deep thankfulness to God, that they who differ so widely about so many things should agree on this vital point. And yet what fruit has this concurrence of opinion yielded? Where are the evidences of Christian effort among these people, for their present instruction? The missionary, the Sabbath School, the temperance agent, the tract distributor! where are they all? Alas! how meager are the efforts of benevolence for the present advantage of these dying multitudes, who are left to perish, while we discuss questions relating to their future condition. For this at least, there can be no excuse; for we know well, that no people hear the gospel of God with more greediness than these neglected children of sorrow.

To return, however, to the first of the two plans indicated above, let us inquire, Is it the best? Is it practicable? Is it wise? To each of these questions, we think a negative must be given; and as the point here involved is also still more deeply implicated in a question touching the slave population of this country, to which we will come by and by, it is proper to examine it candidly and fully.

It must be admitted that no moral obligation would be violated by society, if this plan were executed fully, in all the details which are so revolting to the public taste. We do not mean to say that men are at liberty to violate, individually, the deep and settled public feeling on subjects of this kind; but only, that if society could be led into the scheme, there is nothing that morally forbids it. When we admit this, we admit all that the moral sense of every rightly constituted heart and mind can on this point demand. For surely no one will assert that the public taste which has so steadfastly, and for so long a period, revolted at this project of levelling and mixing the races, is, *per se*, morally wrong. We know not on what principle it can be judged criminal in us to shrink with aversion from the thought of contracting the tenderest relations of life, or allowing our near relatives to do it, with persons, who from their physical organization create disgust. It may be said these feelings result from the previous contempt and aversion for this race generated by the previous relations of the parties. But if this be so, how happens it, that in those States where slavery has long ceased, or where it never existed, yea, even among those who most deeply feel for the condition of the blacks, this repugnance to the levelling and mixing of the two people, still exists in full force? Who in any country of white men, selects his wife, his friend, his ruler from among the blacks? If rare cases

are found, men set them down to rare merit on the part of him who has arisen above the force of natural instincts, or to rare depravity on the part of him who falls below them. Now unless this strong and abiding repugnance of all cultivated societies, to pass over natural barriers of this kind, can be shown to be criminal in itself, it seems to be most preposterous to stake a whole plan of mighty good, upon the single point, of forcing men to give it up. We say preposterous: for such conduct would be most unwise, even if the thing complained of were morally wrong, so long as any other way existed of effecting the chief end in view, which in this case is the good of the blacks. But will any attempt to show that the black can never be happy and free, and wise, and Christian, unless he be a member of the same community, and on equal terms with the white man? Or, still worse, will any assert, that his present condition among us can never be improved by removing him to some other land unless we first agree to say and to prove, that he is now, physically intellectually and morally, our equal in all respects? It is manifest then, even if our feelings on this subject deserve no better name than local prejudice, that it is useless and foolish, and may we not add, criminal, to risk a great cause upon a point, which seems immoveably settled against us, and which is at any rate not indispensable to our main design.

It may be asked, why we have placed this matter on personal relation chiefly, or at all? We answer, because the best criterion is thus afforded, both of the nature and extent of the repugnance to the plan we are combating. Buonaparte asserted that the only possible way to place various castes and races of men, in any state, upon a footing of perfect equality, was to *allow polygamy*. This was the result of his reflections on the political state of Egypt; and he saw no method to secure peace among the multifarious classes of all eastern nations better than the violation of the fundamental principle of all Christian institutions. This opinion is certainly worth something; and the universal course of events which confirms it, is worth still more. For we believe it will be hard to find a community, in which races of men, materially different from each other, have lived in the enjoyment of equal privileges, where polygamy has not been tolerated. Now while this fully justifies the manner in which we have treated the subject, it presents us with a most instructive commentary on those schemes which it is our immediate purpose to confute. For what our race has uniformly exhibited in every stage of its existence, may be reasonably supposed to have a deeper location than in the prejudices of society, at least should not needlessly be brought into contest as an absurdity or

a crime, where its overthrow is not of necessity involved in the very success of the chief good to be obtained. Or, if that be really so, it would seem not utterly inconsistent with wisdom and humility, to call in question the facts and reasonings, which had brought us in conflict with the sentiments of so many generations.

For our part, we have never been able to see what good was to be effected, by reducing all the races of men to one homogeneous mass; mixing the white, the red, the tawny, the brown, the black, all together and thus reproducing throughout the world, or in any single State, a race different in some physical appearance from all that now exist. What would be gained by it that would be valuable? Nothing, absolutely nothing. For if such a state of things could be produced, it is manifest it could not be made permanent. The same causes that have made the European white, and the Asiatic tawny, and the African black—we care not, and inquire not, what those causes are—would beyond doubt produce again the very same effects; and with the outward appearance and corresponding habits, produce also the very same propensities and tastes and feelings which now irritate the thorough abolitionist. The object is *physically* not less than *morally* impossible. We have found in certain positions and latitudes, the man of one complexion and organization; and in another position and latitude we have found a different race; and this with a uniformity so surprising, that when the arrangement has been disturbed, it has been by causes operating against the common course of things, and counteracted at last themselves by the more enduring laws which God has stamped upon the universe. Who believes that the white man will possess western or central Africa, or southern Asia, or even that he will continue to hold the West India Islands? Or, who would not smile at the thought of the black man making permanent locations around the polar seas? If any portion of our broad land is best adapted to the black man, we rest assured, that He, who does all things well, will give it to him. But any attempt on our part to mix up, and give him what is not best for him, is as absurd as all effort to keep him from his own must finally be nugatory.

But it may be said, we care not for the amalgamation of the races, we ask only for equal privileges and rights; we reply, the things are inseparably united; united by universal experience; united in the feelings, the sentiments, the prejudices of mankind. The class out of which we choose our rulers, and teachers, and associates, is the same out of which our children choose their husbands and wives; *it is the class of our equals*,—whether we be all

equally free or equally slaves—it is the class of our equals only. All civil equality which begins not in such sentiments as will tolerate perfect personal equality, is idle and fictitious; and as to political without personal equality, it is every where impossible, but in a land of repeated and popular elevations, the notion is utterly absurd.

But suppose it were not so; what peculiar advantages would accrue to the free persons of colour by residing in this country, on terms of perfect equality, among the whites; that would not exist to an equal degree, if there were no white men here? Or if they were alone in some other land as good as this? Amalgamation with the whites, we think, has been shown to be out of the question, and not desirable if it could be attained. The attainment of equal civil or political rights here, without amalgamation, we think has been shown to be impossible. And we now demand again, if neither has been proved, in what is some other land, equal to this in soil, climate, and all other advantages, inferior to this, as the black man's home? Will he say, it is inferior simply because it is not his home? And does he really mean to say, that the place of his birth, though in no respect superior to other portions of the earth, is so dear to him, as to be preferred *with oppression and contempt*, and that in his own judgment, or with poverty and ignorance and nominal freedom, in the judgment of all, to a land not less lovely, with plenty and liberty and knowledge! And is this the evidence upon which he expects to be admitted to the privileges of citizenship, among a people who love liberty with idolatrous devotion! This however is mere pretence. And it seems as if every reason alleged to support the useless and unreasonable claims which have been set up for this unhappy race, flatly contradicted all human experience. What nation has ever yet located the permanent seat of its empire in the native land of its inhabitants? What people have not migrated from their original seats? The earliest monuments of our kind, show us a race of wanderers; and, at the hour in which we write, there is hardly a country, some of whose people are not going to and fro over the earth. And shall a despised and degraded race, who have been forced not only into exile, but into bondage, now arise and contradict the whole of human experience? And for what? To prevent their restoration from exile! their deliverance from ignorance and want! If there ever was a case, where every high and pure consideration conspired with the amplest personal advantage, to foster this migratory propensity of man, this undoubtedly is it. The black man possesses no single advantage here, which he will not retain in an equal or higher degree in Liberia; he abandons no

enjoyment here, which he will not be an hundred fold more likely to acquire there, than he ever can be here. Besides this, he is not only residing here, (as to the larger portion of North America assuredly) in a climate which is better fitted to us than to him; but the climate to which we desire to transfer him is perfectly fitted to him, and to nobody else on earth. Central and western Africa is the home of the black man, and the grave of all others. It is as if God called him with a voice the most imperative, issuing out of the bosom of the land of his ancestors, to come back to her laden with the trophies of civilization and religion, which he has reaped in the midst of tears. If he refuse, who shall set up the standard of the cross in Africa? It is the brightest hope of Africa which her own sons are trying to extinguish! It is the most effectual door for the entrance of the Gospel into that dark continent, which they, who profess to love the Lord Jesus, are trying to shut upon us!

It is therefore alike the interest of the free coloured people,—of their kindred in Africa—and the cause of Christ, that they should fall in with the plans of the Colonization Society, and remove to Liberia. That such is also the interest of this nation, is not less obvious; whether we consider the existing evils resulting from the presence of these people among us, or the advantages both interior and exterior, that would result from their removal. The same advantages that resulted to Europe from the settlement of the white man in this hemisphere, would, in a proportionate degree, result to all America, and more especially to ourselves, by the settlement of civilized communities in Africa. It is not improbable, that every year's commerce with Liberia will yield a net profit to this nation of greater amount than the entire expenses of the Colony to us, up to each period of accounting. And is it nothing to us to spread our laws, and acts, and language, and manners, and institutions, over one entire quarter of the earth, now covered with a darkness that may be felt? Is it nothing to these great interests, and to our love for them, to possess another habitation, against the time when the calamities that have overtaken in succession every portion of the earth, and every human institution, shall make us desolate? When we consider too that in obtaining results so valuable, we are actually delivering ourselves from a population, that in its present relations, is and must continue to be a great public calamity, it is unaccountable how any enlightened citizen can refuse to aid us. Great as the degradation of the free black population is, no friend of Colonization has ever said that their vices or crimes were of such a nature as to be incapable of reform. They result, so far as they are peculiar to them,

from the peculiarities of their condition; and when the condition is changed, the vices disappear. There is, therefore, nothing but sophistry and want of candour in the reproach which upbraids us for expecting to make men, who are degraded here, virtuous elsewhere. We expect nothing from change of place only, but every thing from change of place and condition also: and they who deride us, expect the same results as we look for, by change of condition merely. Then, surely, we have more reason to expect them than they. There is however a proneness in the public mind to aggravate the vices of the free blacks; and the abolitionists are not without grounds when they complain of it. It is true, that the proportion of convictions of free persons of colour is greater than that of white people. But this is to be taken with great allowance as an evidence of criminality. For their temptations are, usually, manifold greater and more pressing: their offences are more narrowly looked after, and therefore a greater proportion detected: and of those detected, a greater proportion are convicted by reason of their possessing less public sympathy, smaller opportunities of escaping, and less means of blinding, seducing, or bribing justice. In addition to all this, the very code of offences in all the slave States, is more stern as to them than the whites; and the very principles of evidence are altered by statute, so as to bear most rigorously against them. Or if we contrast them with the slaves, we have no means of forming a judgment; for the very nature of offences and punishments is different in the different classes. We have known a slave hanged for what a white man would hardly have been prosecuted for; and we have known free blacks put into the penitentiary for several years, upon evidence that was illegal by statute against a white man; and for offences for which a gentle tempered master would have rebuked his slave, and a hot tempered one have caned him. We admit the general corruption of the free blacks; but we deny that it is greater than that of the slaves; and we affirm that it is judged of by false methods, and is in a high degree exaggerated. We once thought differently; but we have seen reason to change our opinion.

There, is however, a danger here of an opposite kind, which is threatening the absolute ruin of the cause and the colony itself. We have spoken above in general terms, and of the general state of the free people of colour. That in many parts of our country there are portions of them who sink below that general state, wretched as it must be admitted to be, is certain. And the danger is, that the most ignorant and wicked and wretched of their class may become the chief emigrants to Liberia. The steps taken by the abolitionists have poisoned the minds of the free blacks, in an

extraordinary degree, against the plans of the Colonization Society. Just in this condition the regulations of several of the States, as Virginia and Maryland, in relation to these people, commenced their pinching operations upon them, tending, perhaps designed, to drive them from their borders, the strong, and the thrifty depart; and they depart exasperated, disposed and not unqualified to find means of annoyance. The weak, the ignorant, the idle, the irresolute, are unable to depart, ignorant how to act, overborne by a concentrated public odium, and accept, against their wills and with heavy hearts, the provisions for Africa. And when they arrive there, they weaken the settlement in fact, and weaken it by putting weapons into the hands of its enemies by their ill conduct there, and weaken it again by shaking the fervour of that zeal with which the purest hearts in this land have upheld this cause before men, and borne it up to the throne of God. We need not doubt as to the condition of those to whom we have reference, when the Governor of the Colony felt himself called on to state to the Board of Managers, that a few more cargoes like one that was composed of emigrants from the lower part of Virginia, would put it out of his power to carry on the offices of the Colony. No man could know better than Mr. Meehlin, that free vagabonds, forced to Africa, as really as if they had been fettered and carried there, are not the people by whose agency the philanthropists and Christians of America, expect to enlighten and redeem Africa. What can such people do for Africa? "The natives," says Mr. Pinney the Missionary, writing from Monrovia in February last, "are, as to wealth and intellectual cultivation, related to the Colonists, as the negro of America is to the white man; and this fact, added to their mode of dress, which consists of nothing, usually, but a handkerchief around the loins, leads to the same distinction, as exists in America between colours. A colonist of any dye (and many there are of a darker hue than the Vey, or Dey, or Kroo, or Basso) would, if at all respectable, think himself degraded by marrying a native. The natives are in fact menials, (I mean those in town,) and sorry am I to be obliged to say, that from my limited observation, it is evident, that as little effort is made by the colonists to elevate them, as is usually made by the higher classes in the United States to better the condition of the lower." Here is unexceptionable, disinterested, and friendly testimony. We confess it went like a bolt of ice through our hearts. May God deliver this cause, both at home and abroad, from any influence that is not thoroughly Christian. Instant and inevitable must be its ruin, if the Christians of this country awaken not to the mournful conviction, that it is in danger of being unchristian, or less than

Christian, in its management, effects, details and results, here and in Africa, as well as in its great conception, and mighty reach. Politicians have done and can do, almost nothing for this cause, but make speeches out of facts generally furnished to hand. It is Christ's cause, and his people must uphold it, and watch it, and pray for it, and direct it. And when they cease to do so, it is ruined, it ought to be ruined.

Now, if the free people of colour were solely or chiefly interested in this discussion, with the resulting effects upon America and Africa, which have been merely hinted at; its importance would be sufficient to engage the attention of the community. But, we have said, as is manifestly true, that the question here made between the two schemes for the melioration of the condition of the free blacks, is still more deeply involved in all the questions relating to our slave population. And it is perhaps true, that they who advocate the equality, legal and personal, among ourselves, of the black and white races, have taken their positions with reference especially to the condition of the slaves, and with the hope of aiding them. It is also true, that the most determined opposition to the plan of Colonization, has been manifested on the part of those who are favourable, not only to the amalgamation and levelling, one or both, but who are in favour of that, *instantly*; and who oppose Colonization, because they suppose it operates injuriously to *instant*, and, as they affirm, to *all emancipation*. Here is a point as much more interesting than the former, as the fate of millions of men is more important than that of thousands; as much more affecting, as the delivery from absolute and unqualified bondage is better than the melioration of a condition of qualified freedom: as much more imperative, as the claims of naked right and justice are above those of affection and benevolence. Let us therefore meet the question not only with fairness, but with alacrity.

What, it may be asked, have we to do with slavery? And to whom is such a question addressed? And of what slavery is it predicated? With the *legal* rights of the master, or the legal wrongs of the slave, in Georgia or the Carolinas, a citizen of Ohio has surely no leading right to interfere. So it is equally clear that no citizen of the United States has, as such, the right to interfere with the civil regulations of England, or the religious institutions of China. But will any man dispute our right to discuss the wrongs of English oppression, or pray and labour for the dispersion of Chinese darkness? There was not less true philosophy than touching pathos in that noble sentiment which drew down the plaudits even of heathen men, *Homo sum; nil humani alienum a me puto*. There is no state of

of the multitude at hand, we will state but two; the first is, that man, which might not have been ours, or may not be our children's. All that relates to men, relates to us; and the same rules by which our rights are established, are applicable to all who are enabled to enforce them; and the same pretexts upon which the rights of others are subverted are applicable to us, as soon as we are weak enough to be subdued. As men, then, we have a right to speak, and argue freely, on all that relates to man. As Christian men, this sacred right becomes high duty to our Master; and as free Christian men, it is among the noblest privileges and distinctions of our estate. But limit the privilege as you will, to me at least there is no restriction, if there be liberty to any.

What, then, is slavery? for the question relates to the action of certain principles on it, and to its probable and proper results; what is slavery as it exists among us? We reply, it is that condition enforced by the laws of one-half the States of this confederacy, in which one portion of the community, called masters, is allowed such power over another portion called slaves; as,

1. To deprive them of the entire earnings of their own labour, except only so much as is necessary to continue labour itself, by continuing healthful existence, thus committing clear robbery;

2. To reduce them to the necessity of universal concubinage, by denying to them the civil rights of marriage; thus breaking up the dearest relations of life, and encouraging universal prostitution;

3. To deprive them of the means and opportunities of moral and intellectual culture, in many States making it a high penal offence to teach them to read; thus perpetuating whatever of evil there is that proceeds from ignorance;

4. To set up between parents and their children an authority higher than the impulse of nature and the laws of God; which breaks up the authority of the father over his own offspring, and, at pleasure separates the mother at a returnless distance from her child; thus abrogating the clearest laws of nature; thus outraging all decency and justice, and degrading and oppressing thousands upon thousands of beings created like themselves in the image of the most high God!

This is slavery as it is daily exhibited in every slave State. This is that "dreadful but unavoidable necessity," for which you may hear so many mouths uttering excuses, in all parts of the land. And is it really so! If indeed it be; if that "*necessity*" which tolerates this condition be really "*unavoidable*"

in any such sense, that we are constrained for one moment, to put off the course of conduct which shall most certainly and most effectually subvert a system which is utterly indefensible on every correct human principle, and utterly abhorrent from every law of God,—then, indeed, let ICHABOD be graven in letters of terrific light upon our country! For God can no more sanction such perpetual wrong, than he can cease to be faithful to the glories of his own throne!

But it is not so. Slavery cannot be made perpetual. The progress of free and just opinions is sapping its foundations every where. In regard to this country, no political proposition is capable of clearer proof than that slavery must terminate. And the importance of the thing itself, and its direct relevancy to the matter in hand, demand a few words in illustration of this point.

We utter but the common sentiment of all mankind when we say, none ever continue slaves a moment after they are conscious of their ability to retrieve their freedom. The fact of the existence of that ability is matter of conjecture or calculation, and can never be solved but by experiment. It is possible, therefore, for men to err, and suppose they are not strong enough, long after they are so, and thus continue in bondage, when they are capable of being free. And on this idea proceed all the systems which require slaves to be kept in ignorance. But men seem to forget that all the natural impulses prompt us to err on the other extreme, and thus produce premature commotions, and partial and desperate insurrections. Under a higher state of knowledge on the part of the blacks, the Southampton affair would never have occurred. It is no part of our purpose to inquire as to the time when these principles would be mature, in this nation. But it is worthy of a moment's thought, that the constant tendency for fifty years has been to accumulate the black population upon the southern States; that already in some of them the blacks exceed the whites, and in most of them increase above the increase of the whites in the same States, with a ratio that is absolutely startling; that the slave population could bring into action a larger proportion of efficient men, perfectly inured to hardships, to the climate, and privations, than any other population in the world; and that they have in distant sections, and on various occasions, manifested already a desperate purpose to shake the yoke. It is our deliberate conviction, that if this Union were dissolved, in half a century, the sugar and rice and cotton growing country would be the black man's empire. In such an event—which

may God avert—and such a contest may it never come,—we ask not any heart to decide where would human sympathy and earthly glory stand; we ask not in the fearful words of Jefferson, what attribute of Jehovah would allow him to take part with us; we ask only—and the answer settles the argument—which is like to be the stronger side?

Slavery cannot endure. The just, and generous, and enlightened hearts and minds of those who own the slaves will not allow the system to endure. State after State, the example has caught and spread—New England—New York—the middle States on the sea board; one after another have taken the question up, and decided it, all alike. The state of slavery is ruinous to the community that tolerates it, under all possible circumstances; and is most cruel and unjust to its victims. No community, that can be induced to examine the question, will, if it be wise, allow such a canker in its vitals; nor, if it be just, will permit such wrong. We argue from the nature of the case, and the constitution of man; we speak from the experience of the States already named; we judge from what is passing before us in the range of States along the slave line, in Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky; from the state of feeling on this subject in foreign countries, and from the existing state of opinion throughout the world. The very owners of slaves will themselves, and that, we hope at no distant day, put an end to the system.

But more than all, He who is higher than the highest, will, in his own good time and way, break the rod of the oppressor, and let all the oppressed go free. He has indeed commanded servants to be obedient to their masters; and it is their bounden duty to be so. We ask not now, what the servants were, nor who the masters were. It is enough that all masters are commanded to “give unto their servants that which is just and equal!” and to what feature of slavery may that description apply! Just and equal! what care I whether my pockets are picked, or the proceeds of my labour are taken from me? What matters it whether my horse is stolen or the value of him in my labour be taken from me? Do we talk of violating the rights of masters, and depriving them of their property in their slaves. And will some one tell us, if there be any thing in which a man has, or can have, so perfect a right of property, as in his own limbs, bones, and sinews? Out upon such folly! The man who cannot see that involuntary domestic slavery, as it exists among us, is founded upon the principle of taking by force that which is another’s, has simply no moral sense. And he who presumes that God will approve, and reward habitual injustice and wrong, is ignorant alike of God, and of his own heart. It is equally

easy to apply to the institution of slavery every law of Christianity, and show its repugnance to each and every one of them. Undeniably it is contrary to the revealed will of God; and so the General Assembly of our Church have solemnly, and righteously, and repeatedly ordained. "We consider," says that body in 1818, "the voluntary enslaving of one part of the human race by another, as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature; *as utterly inconsistent with the law of God*, which requires us to love our neighbour as ourselves: and *as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the Gospel of Christ* which enjoins that all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." (1 Digest, pp. 341, 342.) And who will dare to say, that the Holy One of Israel will approve of and perpetuate that which is "inconsistent" with his own law, and "irreconcilable" in its repugnance to the Gospel of his Son? It cannot be; it will not be. Nature, and reason, and religion unite in their hostility to this system of folly and crime. How it will end time only can reveal; but the light of heaven is not clearer than that it must end.

Now just in this contingency the scheme of African Colonization comes forward; and, taking for granted, that slavery is an evil of enormous magnitude, both personal and social, it offers in the first place to relieve the country of one of the direst results of slavery, namely, the free black population, in a manner cheap, certain, and advantageous to all the parties; and in the second, it offers to the master of slaves, the highest possible inducements to free his slaves, by showing him how he may do it, in a manner at once humane, wise, and full of promise to the slave, the master, the country, and the whole world! Was ever a plan more timely? Was one ever more replete with wisdom, and forecast, and benevolence?

But it entered into the heads of the abolitionists, that the whole affair was meant only to perpetuate slavery, by acting as an outlet for its superfluous evils. Nor can it be denied that the conduct and declarations of many professed friends of the cause gave them some countenance. Here arose the conflict between the abolitionists and the colonists, upon a point which now admits of no doubt in any honest and enlightened mind: the question we mean as to the effects of colonization on the emancipation of slaves. Can any man doubt? Who emancipated the hundreds of slaves now in Liberia? Who gave the funds to carry out and sustain all the colonists who have gone out? It is needless however to reason, where the thing is proved by facts; and out

throughout all America ninety-nine in every hundred friends of colonization, who do any thing for the cause, are ardent friends of emancipation also; the second is, that the friends of colonization have done more in twelve years for the emancipation of the black race than the abolitionists have done for twelve centuries. For the truth of these two facts, on the first of which the author is willing to stake his reputation for veracity, and on the second for the least knowledge of the subject, he frankly appeals to the public.

But, (say the abolitionists,) your plan does not demand instant emancipation. Suppose it does not; can not they demand this, and leave us to do good in other ways to those whom their prudence and Christian love may induce masters or communities to set free? The missionary societies do not demand the civil abrogation of paganism, as a condition precedent to preaching Christ among the heathen. But the abolitionists have a different logic and benevolence, and object to all improvement of the condition of the slaves by colonizing; because all who favour this plan may not compassionate the slave as deeply as they ought; or because all of them will not demand the immediate abolition of slavery. We have proved their accusation, that our plan favours slavery, to be false; and as to the unfounded allegations about the unsuitableness and unhealthiness of the region to which we propose to send the coloured people, we pass them by as unworthy at this day of any reply.

They have demanded instant abolition; and pray consider to what issues their theories have brought them. The owners of the slaves replied, We have tried abolition, and really the results have been such as to shake our confidence. How very common is it to hear men of sense and humanity say that slavery itself is to be preferred as a permanent condition, to the evils of a free coloured population. Now we consider this sentiment false; and boldly say, that if the only alternative left to us, were the perpetuity of slavery, or the general and immediate abolition of it, it would be the duty of all men to choose the latter, and risk its present evils, rather than make the horrors of slavery eternal. But why need such a question as this ever arise, or even be discussed, when we have a method better than either side of that alternative, fully within our reach? Let the abolitionist, if he can, answer that question. But when the slave-owner has pressed this difficulty, the reply has been, not indeed without truth, that these very vices and crimes of the free blacks which operate to prevent us from liberating the slaves, are in truth the result of our own laws and institutions: and that therefore we ought at once to remedy the condition of the free

blacks, instead of making our own wrong an excuse for further injustice. True, most true. But how shall we proceed to remedy this condition? The abolitionist says, by levelling and mixing one or both; the colonizer says, by separation. In regard to the free blacks, we think we have proved the plan of the former to be absurd and impossible: that of the latter, to be wise and practicable. In relation to the slave, surely the argument cumulates with vast power. What! admit the slave to all the privileges, rights, and immunities, at which, in the case of the free blacks, the heart so steadfastly revolts, and revolts upon principles neither immoral, unfounded, nor of a temporary duration, but deeply seated in the very constitution of man! And demand this with acrimony and intolerance, as the foundation of all right action on the subject! It is really wonderful that any man should ever have expected to produce any emotion but disgust and rage by such conduct. The inference of the abolitionist is all false, and does not follow from his premises. It is undeniably our duty to do something, to do every thing, for the slave as well as the free blacks, that justice, humanity, and religion demand. But does it therefore follow that we are to make them our familiar friends, to intermarry with them, and to select our rulers from among them? We are bound to love our neighbour as ourself; but does it follow from thence, that every village and city shall constitute a single family, or, according to Mr. Owen, the whole fabric of society be fused down, and brought out, not only new, but homogeneous? Or is it not rather clear, that just in proportion to the conviction you are able to impress upon the mind of the slave holder, that the duty of liberating his slave is founded on some such principles, or lead to some such results as these, you disgust him, and set him more firmly against every scheme that tends towards emancipation? And this is the mode by which we are required to advance the cause of the blacks! We speak from the deepest conviction, when we say, that in our judgment, the abolitionists in America, have done more to rivet the chains of slavery, than all its open advocates have done!

What then, it may be demanded, is not immediate abolition of slavery a moral duty? We answer, this is far from being clear in the mode stated. That slavery is criminal, we fully believe; it ought, therefore, for this and a thousand other reasons, to be abolished. But how and when, are questions not perfectly clear on the side of the abolitionists.

It is an undeniable truth, that society has the right of restraining the liberty, and taking away the life of any citizen for the public good. And this right is exercised, without question, in a thousand forms, in all societies, every day. The powers vested

in the parent, the guardian, the master of the apprentice, the keeper of the poor, the idle, the dissolute, and the criminal, in the sheriff and jailer and hang-man, all rest for their sole foundation precisely here. We cannot perceive what there is that hinders society from exercising these powers in one way, more than in another; or that requires them to put them in one set of hands, rather than another, except such considerations as are merely prudential. If therefore, the good of society requires the personal liberty of a certain portion of its people to be restrained, why may they not be restrained? And what moral principle forbids the white man from being the agent of the body politic in restraining the black; or vice versa? Or again, what requires, that they who are restrained, should be put in prison like a thief, or within ideal prison-limits like a bankrupt; in gangs like prisoners, or by single individuals like apprentices? The right is most obvious, and the modifications are merely prudential. It is admitted, however, that before society can rightfully exercise this power, it must show that they who are restrained, cannot safely be allowed full liberty. And here, the whole question, as to the real condition of the blacks in this country, comes fully up; upon which we have only to say here, that we consider the case already clearly made out as to the free blacks, and still more so as to the slaves, that they are not, and can perhaps never be in a condition to dispense with some degree of unusual restraint, while they continue to reside among the whites.

But there is still a question of personal duty on the part of the slaveholder, distinct from the general duty of society. Suppose society push the restraint too far, or refuse to mitigate it, when we think it should be done: what are in that case my duties to my slave? If it is clear, or probable, that by refusing any longer to exercise ownership over him, we place him in a worse condition than he would be, if we continued to act as his master, would we be at liberty to turn him off? Our moral sense tells us, it would not; but on the other hand, that clear duty would compel us to continue the relation of master and slave, until we could place him in a better, or at least, not in a worse condition, than we found him. We omit for the present all consideration of duty to society itself; whether that of striving to enlighten it, or of abstaining from injuring it. Here again the whole question of the relative conditions of the slave and free coloured population in this country comes fully up. In relation to which, we shall only say, that cases are most numerous, in which masters have been prevented, for the time being, from liberating their slaves, by no other considerations than such as these. They were not yet fit for

Liberia, and the laws prohibited their enlargement here. It seems to us, then, that society not only has the right to permit the relation of master and servant, so far as the restraint of liberty is required by the public good; but even that (in an individual case) Providence may put me into such a relation to my slave, as to make it my duty to continue it for the time being.

We do not pretend to justify slavery. God forbid that we should make such an attempt. We only design to show that the abolitionists err in principle, as well as prudence, in all their violent and overwhelming denunciations. There is a view of the matter, however, which presents subjects, in relation to slavery, which require immediate action and union on the part of all who love God, or have a heart to feel for human wrongs! If society undertakes to say that one class of its members are not fit to be free, and proceeding a step further, to appoint another class to restrain them, it does this for the public good, not for the good of the keepers; and is therefore solemnly bound, to enact a system of laws, by which the owners shall be restrained from substituting their passions in the place of the authority of society, and the slaves shall be protected from being restrained beyond what the public good imperiously demands. It is as much the public duty and interest to prevent unfit masters from owning slaves, or to prevent fit persons who are masters, from exercising too much power, as to prevent improper persons from enjoying too great license. But when we apply these principles to the accessories of slavery, as they may be called, to what are set forth as its contingent results, the case becomes still closer and more imperative. Suppose it be right to deprive a man of liberty, in certain cases, for the public good, does that authorize society to stand by and see him robbed of his money; or does my being made his keeper, justify me in depriving him of the wages of his hard labour? Upon what possible ground can society, or any human creature, justify the act that compels me to labour without compensation for another individual? Every community is bound to administer justice between its citizens; and justice never can permit one man to take without return the labour of another, and that by force. Will the slaveholder say, he returns to his slaves in the long run, as much as he takes from them. If this were true, it is no answer; for society is bound to see the slave paid and righted, on fixed principles, and may not lawfully leave the subject to the owner's discretion. Again, justice has nothing to do with such lumping accounts, as those which place hundreds in a mass, and rob one healthy, strong labourer, to make up for

the deficiency in the cases of many weak and worthless. What excuse is it for him who would plunder us, that he has attempted before to rob others and failed? Society is bound, and that *now* and *always*, to see that every man in it is fairly dealt by, and justly paid by every other man in it; and every human being is bound to "do justice" always, to every body. Even the master who believes, and this he may in many cases believe wisely and righteously, that he ought not to set his slaves free in their existing condition, becomes thereby, only the trustee, for them, of the entire proceeds of their labour; and has no more right to put it in his pocket, than to apply to his own use the estates of his ward. This, the reader may say, would soon bring slavery to an end. Doubtless: and the remark shows that it is only for its supposed profits, and not from public or conscientious considerations, that slavery is so widely tolerated.*

* We throw into a note, the British project for the emancipation of the slaves in their West India Islands, which was submitted to Parliament by Ministers in May last. Several most interesting questions arise out of this movement. What will be its effects on the whites in the British Islands? And on the slaves, in all the other Islands? and upon our southern States? And upon our national sentiment, and public character, and estimation with posterity? Are we after all, to loose the race for human liberty and advancement? Let the plan speak for itself. It is as follows:

I. That every slave, upon the passing of this act, should be at liberty to claim, before the protector of slaves, custos of the parish, or such other officer as shall be named by his Majesty for that purpose, to be registered as an apprenticed labourer.

II. That the terms of such apprenticeship should be—

1st. That the power of corporal punishment should be altogether taken from the master and transferred to the magistrate.

2d. That in consideration of food and clothing, and such allowances as are now made by law to the slave, the labourer should work for his master three fourths of his time, leaving it to be settled by contract whether for three fourths of the week or of each day.

3d. That the labourer should have a right to claim employment of his master for the remaining one fourth of his time, according to a fixed scale of wages.

4th. That during such one fourth of his time, the labourer should be at liberty to employ himself elsewhere.

5th. That the master should fix a price upon the labourer at the time of his apprenticeship.

6th. That the wages to be paid by the master should bear such a proportion to the price fixed by him, that for the whole of the spare time, if given to the master the negro should receive 1-12th of his price annually; and in proportion for each lesser term.

7th. That every negro, on becoming an apprentice, shall be entitled to a money payment weekly, in lieu of food and clothing, should he prefer it, the amount to be fixed by a magistrate with reference to the actual cost of the legal provision.

8th. That every apprenticed labourer be bound to pay a portion, to be fixed, of his wages, half yearly, to an officer to be appointed by his Majesty.

9th. That in default of such payment, the master to be liable, and, in return, may exact an equivalent amount of labour without payment in the succeeding half year.

10th. That every apprenticed negro, on payment of the price fixed by his master, or such portion of it as may from time to time remain due, be absolutely free.

Again; upon what ground can slave-holding communities justify the denial of those civil rights to their slaves, the possession of which would make them better men, and the denial of which does not make them better slaves? We will specify but one; and that one ordained of God, and of universal use and necessity in all ages of the world. We allude to the rite of marriage. There was never born in this nation a legitimate slave. Every one, without exception, is, in the contemplation of law, "*filius neminis*," and by statute a bastard. Shall the master say, the religious rights of the parties still subsist? And to what end? Suppose the great State of New York were to repeal every law that forbids polygamy and divorce, every law that gives redress for the breach of marital rights, every one that makes marriage and its fruits subject of civil regulation, what corruption, bloodshed, and havoc would reign throughout that empire State! Yet this is the condition of the slaves in this land; forced on them by our institutions! And yet we marvel at their corruption. It is said however, that if the civil rights of marriage were allowed to be contracted between the parties, the rights of the master over them, and their issue, in that case legitimated, would be interfered with and curtailed. The wife could not be brutally chastised at pleasure, nor atrocities perpetrated, which while we think of our cheeks burn, nor the children of slaves be liable to such absolute dominion of the master. These are reasons for a Christian land to look upon; and then ask, can any system

11th. That every such apprentice may borrow the sum so required, and bind himself, by contract before a magistrate, for a limited period, as an apprenticed labourer to the leader.

III. That a loan to the amount of 15,000,000*l.* sterling be granted to the proprietors of West Indian estates and slaves, on such security as may be approved by commissioners appointed by the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury.

IV. That such a loan be distributed among the different colonies, in a ratio compounded of the number of slaves, and the amount of exports.

V. That the half yearly payments hereinbefore authorized to be made by the apprenticed negroes be taken in liquidation of so much of the debt contracted by the planter to the public.

VI. That all children who at the time of the passing of this act shall be under the age of six years be free, and be maintained by their respective parents.

VII. That in a failure of such maintenance, they be deemed apprentices to the master of the parents, without receiving wages, the males till the age of 24, the females to the age of 20, at which period respectively they and their children, if any shall be absolutely free.

VIII. That this act shall not prevent his Majesty from assenting to such acts as may be passed by the colonial legislatures for the promotion of industry or the prevention of vagrancy, applicable to all classes of the community.

IX. That upon the recommendation of the local legislatures, his Majesty will be prepared to recommend to Parliament, out of the revenues of this country, to grant such aid as may be deemed necessary for the due support of the administration of justice, and of an efficient police establishment, and of a general system of religious and moral education.

which they are advanced to defend, be compatible with virtue and truth?

We have spoken of the children of slaves; and here lies one of the most abhorrent features of slavery. Men may become slaves, perhaps for life, for crimes lawfully proven. But no absurdity can be more inconceivably gross than to think of making slaves of the unborn; and no injustice more audacious, than that which makes misfortune and crime descend from father to son, and dooms the child of Africans to perpetual slavery for no better reason than that his parents had been thus doomed before him. He who is not born cannot be a slave. He cannot be made so by conquest, nor by prescription, before his existence. He cannot be made so for crime, or incapacity for freedom, before existence, and therefore before crime or incapacity. He cannot in that case, if ever, make himself a slave. His parents cannot make him a slave before he exists; nor during his minority; for his parents can part with no more right to govern him than they possess themselves, which goes no further than his arriving at the period when he can control himself. Hereditary slavery is, therefore, without pretence, except in avowed rapacity.

The conclusion of the matter then seems to be this: that society, and the owners of slaves by the consent of society, may righteously restrain the personal liberty of the slave, so far as is needful for the public good, or for the advantage of the slave; and hence that instant abolition is not more sound in morals, than it is hurtful if not impossible in practice. But it is equally clear that this construction justly extends no further, and can be continued no longer than the public good requires; and that it is the instant and pressing duty of the communities where slavery exists to put it on such a footing, that the slaves shall as soon as possible be prepared for freedom, and, while they are preparing, that they shall enjoy every right, natural, civil, social, and personal, not inconsistent with the public good, and their own permanent advantage, and that therefore the existing results and consequences of slavery are utterly indefensible, and such as no righteous man or community, should for a moment partake of or tolerate.

What then shall we say? Let the abolitionist give up his cause as impossible of execution, hateful to the community, ruinous to the cause of the blacks, and founded upon principles wrong in themselves. Let the colonizationists no longer make excuses for slavery, which too many have done; but acknowledging the evils of that wretched system, and taking for granted, as from the beginning, that it was so bad, men only needed to

see their way clear to break it up, let us lay open before the public in the practical operations of our cause, the great and effectual door which God has set for the deliverance of this country, for the regeneration of Africa, and for the redemption of the black race. The second of those great objects is, with ordinary faithfulness and prudence in conducting the affairs of the Society and the colony, already rendered nearly certain. Freedom and religion and civilized life have been transplanted in the persons of her own sons, into that desolate continent, and we commit to God the issue on which His own glory is so deeply staked. What the Colonization Society is *now doing*, would, at the end of a single century, if continued at the same rate, exhibit more than a million of persons in Liberia, as the fruits of its operations. I speak of course of the natural increase of the people sent there as well as the emigrants themselves, basing the calculation upon the rate of increase among ourselves. Let us take heart then, and go forward in the work, and the ends of the earth will call us blessed.

As for America, we are doing nothing; and for the black race here, alas! how little. The operations of the Society have not removed from the country perhaps one in many hundreds of the annual increase of the black population since its operations commenced. That the annual increase from 1830 to 1840, will not vary much from eighty thousand a year. At its rate of removal since the first of those periods, the Society has not removed yearly one out of every hundred of the increase. If its operations were much increased, that it would take off yearly one in forty of the annual increase, which would be a great augmentation, as compared with the past, the yearly increase would then be diminished only two per cent. Now if that advanced rate were attained, and preserved for a whole century, the result would be, that we should at the end of it have nearly sixteen millions of slaves left here, besides free coloured people, and exclusive of all that were carried abroad, supposing every one carried to have been a slave. This presents an aspect of the case which is most deplorable as it relates to America. Nor does it stop here. For before that century is one-half elapsed, if the spirit which now actuates the abolitionists towards the slave owners, or even that which is beginning to manifest itself in a portion of our people towards the lower classes of foreign emigrants into our country, should take possession of the colonists in Africa, all future transportation of coloured people thither would be at an end. Let them once be persuaded that to receive our manumitted slaves, is to retard the cause of freedom here; or that to receive our free vagabonds coerced away from

the slave States, is jeopardizing their own condition, and how long after that will they receive either? That colony will be a nation, powerful and respected, before this generation passes entirely away. Those are now alive, who will yet see her banner float proudly over the mighty outline of an empire. And where will then be an outlet for our slaves? Let us not deceive ourselves on this most vital point. Can any tell, by statistical tables, where the million of people who inhabit Ohio came from within fifty years? Or even where the thirty or forty millions of white people in the new world came from in the last few centuries? And so we may people Africa with nations of blacks, if we will only do it gradually, without seeming to diminish even their rate of increase among ourselves. We are actually doing this very thing; we are just doing enough to prevent our doing any thing hereafter to mitigate our condition.

Let us then arise, and do this work as becomes men sensible of the greatness of the obligation which rests upon us, and the imminency of the peril that impends over us. There is in reality but one question presented to us; do we prefer giving up the blacks alone, which we can do now, or waiting and then giving them up with some of the fairest portions of our republic as a recompense? Or, if we choose to vary the question, do we prefer giving fifty or an hundred millions of dollars to restore them to their native land: or a thousand millions to pay mercenaries to make them work, and finally to cut their throats? Our condition is like that of him who held a tiger by the ears until he was afraid to let him go, and was conscious he could not hold him much longer. Now a giant is passing by and offers to relieve us. Shall we wisely accept his aid and live; or shall we madly struggle on and take what chance may bring us? May God give us wisdom!

NOTE.—The conductors of the *Biblical Repertory* do not mean, by the insertion of the foregoing article, to express their unanimous assent to its positions; nor yet the reverse. It is published in order to procure, if possible, the agitation of the question.