

AN  
ADDRESS,  
DELIVERED BEFORE THE  
PORTSMOUTH ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY,  
ON THE  
FOURTH OF JULY, A. D. 1839,  
BEING THE 63D ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

---

BY HON. WILLIAM CLAGGETT.

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“ 'Tis a base  
Abandonment of reason to resign  
Our right of thought.”

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PORTSMOUTH, N. H.  
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The author of this Address ought perhaps to render an apology to the Portsmouth Anti Slavery Society, (which passed a vote on the 4th July, requesting its publication,) for its imperfections. Although he did not at the time expect it would meet the public eye, yet in now consenting to its publication, his only reason is, that it may perhaps excite some inquiry into the merits of a subject in which this community has a deep interest.

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## A D D R E S S .

At the Annual Meeting of the Portsmouth Anti-Slavery Society, on the 4th day of July, 1839, the following resolutions, viz :

- “ *Resolved*, That the existence of Slavery in our Union is incompatible with the genius of our political institutions, and a virtual renunciation of the self-evident truths relating to the natural equality and the inalienable rights of man, as set forth in the Declaration of Independence—that the rapid increase and extension of Slavery, as tending to undermine the foundations of virtue and morality, the Christian Religion, and civil liberty, is a subject which ought to excite the most fearful apprehensions of the friends of freedom.
- “ *Resolved*, That the abolition of the whole system of Southern Slavery is demanded by the dictates of humanity—the immutable principles of justice—and the interests and welfare of the whole nation :”

being under consideration, Mr. CLAGGETT addressed the meeting, as follows :—

MR. PRESIDENT :— When the constitution of the United States was adopted, nearly fifty-two years ago, the number of persons held in bondage in the thirteen United States, probably exceeded six hundred thousands. By the census of 1790, the whole number was 697,897. The present number may be estimated at three millions. We have thus the startling—the appalling fact, that in the lapse of about half a century, there has been an increase of slaves in this land of freedom, this boasted “asylum of oppressed humanity,” of nearly two millions and an half. And now on this sixty-third anniversary of our national

Independence—this grand national jubilee, while the star-spangled banner of freedom is proudly waving o'er the heads of thirteen millions of freemen, there are, in our glorious Union, three millions of our fellow-beings, who, in the language of the Declaration of Independence, were “created equal”—who were “endowed by their Creator, with certain unalienable rights; among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;” but who are robbed not only of these rights, but all other human rights, by the hand of violence and oppression. The infidel may scornfully affirm, that these humble, degraded slaves do not possess the immortal soul; that they did not originate from the same ancestors as did the white man, but that they sprang from the Monkey tribe.<sup>(A)</sup> But to arrive at that preposterous conclusion, the infidel is under the necessity of rejecting the lights of Christianity, of Science, and of Philosophy. When the sacred Scriptures expressly declare, that God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth, we are bound to believe that the declaration is true, or else reject the Christian Revelation as a fiction.

The position being established, that a negro is a man, possessed of an immortal spirit, the inference is incontrovertible, that man cannot hold property in man—that the immortal soul, an emanation from Deity, cannot be converted into a chattel.

The allegation, that a human being can lawfully be converted into a slave, is a flat denial of the self-evident truths of the Declaration of Independence. And were it true, as is often affirmed, that our Constitution upholds or guaranties slavery, the constitution being repugnant to the immutable laws of God, could have no binding force upon the citizens of this republic. Indeed, did the constitution contain such provisions, our most sacred obligations would teach us to reject them. But the Constitution does not guarantee slavery, nor does the word slave, stain its pages. Its provisions, with one exception, are in favor of liberty and the rights of man. There are but three allusions in it to the subject of slavery, although its framers avoided the use of that term. The first is the clause authorizing slave representation in



Congress. Were the slaves fully represented, and qualified to vote, it would seem to be favorable to human rights, rather than slavery. The second is the article by which Congress was allowed to prohibit the slave trade after the year 1808. Surely the abolition of that most infamous and horrid traffic in human flesh, cannot be construed in *favor* of slavery. But the third clause, requiring that persons (doubtless meaning slaves) held to service or labor in one State, escaping into another, shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor is due, may be construed as favorable to slavery. But the question arises, whether the citizens of the free States are bound to violate their State laws and constitutions, and the laws of God, by sending back into slavery the poor, degraded, and wronged fugitive, who escapes from the hand of his oppressor who had robbed him of those inalienable rights given him by Nature and Nature's God? If the master has no property in the slave;—if he holds him not in virtue of any contract for his services but by the exercise of an arbitrary, despotic authority; and if slavery is sinful, upon what principle, we ask, are the citizens of the free States bound to aid in the reclamation of the fugitive? It may be answered, that he is converted into a personal chattel by the laws of the slave-states, and that the federal constitution requires us to surrender up such property, if found within our dominion. To this we reply, that the laws cannot make that property, which is not property, in and of itself; that a man, or the immortal soul, is not a *thing*, which can be the subject of sale; that a man cannot sell himself into perpetual slavery, because such sale would imply a contract; and that slavery is a negation of all contracts, because every contract, to be valid, implies a good consideration. A man can have no consideration for surrendering up his person, and all his rights and services. And human laws, thus depriving men of *themselves*, leaving them nothing but the free air of heaven to breathe, are clearly invalid, because they violate the laws of God.

A social compact, whether in the form of civil government or

a Constitution, thus taking away all rights, although it may be entered into by millions, can have no greater claims to our support.

At this enlightened age of the world, we trust that it is unnecessary to go into an argument to prove that there are certain natural rights, among which are those enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, of which no laws or constitutions can deprive men, not guilty of crime, except by force and violence. The poor slave is guiltless—he is unjustly held in bondage—he has a right to escape from the hand of his oppressor. American citizens have been held in captivity by the Indian tribes. We all agree, that they had a perfect right to make their escape. Is there any difference, except in the name, between the two cases? The Indian obtained possession of the American citizen by force—by conquest; and had he held him and his offspring a century, would the lapse of time legalize the capture? But the Indian title was the same, as that of the Southern slave-holder. The slave-holder may startle at this. He may say, that he and his ancestors have held this species of property for more than a century—that he holds his slaves under a valid title, being no less than the last will and testament of his honored Father. But how did the Father obtain the title? From a slave-dealer, perhaps for a valuable consideration. How did the slave-dealer get his title? Either by seizing the negroes on the African shores, or else by paying some twelve dollars a head to another slave-dealer, who seized them as captives of savage war. The original title then vanishes; and how can the slave-dealer convey a title, which he never possessed? How can the slave-holder or planter create a title by his last will and testament, which never existed?

The laws and customs of the slave-states degrade the slave to the level of the grazing horse—the law undertakes to convert him into the same kind of property. Suppose that the original horse-thief should undertake to give a title to the stolen horse to an accomplice—that a fair paper title should pass from the accomplice

to a third person—and from the latter to others; a slave-holder would at once admit, that the last possessor of the stolen horse, although he may have had quiet possession for years, gained no title under a bill of sale and the lapse of time, because the original taking was unlawful. Such being the law in respect to the horse, why should it not be in respect to a man, *especially* when he is treated by *law, as a horse?*

Suppose the North American Indian should set up the same justification for holding our men and women and their offspring in perpetual captivity, that the Southern planter now sets up to hold his slaves and their offspring; and suppose the lapse of time and the transfer of possession from one hand to another, should be the same; yet who would admit the Indian title? The slave-holder's title, having no better foundation, why should we hesitate to reject it? Why should we doubt in respect to our duty to refuse our aid in sending back the fugitive slave to be further cruelly lacerated and maltreated by his merciless oppressor? So far as our moral duties are involved in the question, I freely adopt the ethics of the learned, the philanthropic and the eloquent Dr. CHANNING, the influence of whose arguments against Slavery has been felt throughout our Union. Dr. Channing says in his last able treatise upon the subject, that “to send back the slave, is to treat the innocent as guilty. It is to violate a plain natural right. It is to enforce a criminal claim. It is to take the side of the strong and oppressive against the weak and poor. It is to give up an unoffending fellow-creature to a degrading bondage, and horrible laceration. The fixed universal consequence of this act is, the severe punishment, not of the *injurious*, but of the *injured* man.” Dr. C. alludes to the claim of the slave-holder as being “a criminal claim.” The federal constitution says, that the fugitive “shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.” If no service or labor is due from the fugitive to the master from whom he has escaped, it is a legal inference, that the free States are not bound to surrender him



up to his late master. If man cannot hold property in man, and if the slave-holder has no contract with the slave, then we say that no labor or service is due to the master; but instead of that, we hold, that the fugitive has a claim, well founded in justice, against his late master, for his past services, the payment of which, *in foro conscientiae*, ought to be decreed.

We contend also, that under the constitution and laws of the free States, the fugitive is entitled to the privilege of trial by jury, before he shall be despoiled of his rights.

We are aware that the refusal of the free States to deliver up the fugitive, may be a powerful means in extirpating Slavery. And shall we not rejoice in the prospect, that whenever the wronged slave escapes from oppression, and crosses the line dividing the free from the slave States, his manacles fall from him, and that he stands a man erect? We trust that the time is not far distant, when it may be truly affirmed of the degraded American slave, as well as of the "stranger and sojourner" among us, that "no matter in what language his doom may have been pronounced; no matter what complexion incompatible with freedom, an Indian or an African sun may have burned upon him; no matter in what disastrous battle his liberty may have been cloven down; no matter with what solemnities he may have been devoted on the altars of Slavery;—the first moment he touches the sacred soil" of the free States of the American Union, "the altar and the God sink together in the dust, his soul walks abroad in her own majesty, his body swells beyond the measure of his chains that burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated and disenthralled by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation."

Slavery has been abolished in thirteen States of our Union. In the other States, it cannot long endure the lights of knowledge, of philosophy, of Christianity, the power of truth and moral suasion, and the mighty influence which the civilized world is exerting for its overthrow.



The slave-holder will ultimately be convinced, that its abolition will PROMOTE HIS OWN INTEREST. The wealth of a nation consists, not in the flesh and bones of its citizens, but in its products. The point, upon which the argument relating to the slaveholder's pecuniary interest rests, seems to be generally conceded,—that free will produce more than servile labor. (B.)

To satisfy himself upon this point, he need only look to the glorious results of the emancipation of eight hundred thousand colored persons in the British West India Islands.

Mr. JEFFERSON, at the age of seventy-seven, in the midst of slavery, thoroughly acquainted with the whole subject; himself a slave-holder, warned his countrymen, that the day was not distant, when they *must* hear and adopt the general emancipation of their slaves. "Nothing is more certainly written," said he, "in the book of fate, than that these people are to be free." (Jefferson's Writings, vol. 1, p. 40.) The Hon. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, commenting upon this declaration of Mr. Jefferson, adds: "It is written in a better volume than the book of fate; it is written in the laws of Nature and of Nature's God."

There are a variety of interesting topics connected with the general subject of slavery. But, Mr. President, at the present time, I will not long detain the meeting. The resolution on your table declares, that the rapid increase and extension of Slavery tend to undermine the foundations of virtue and morality, the Christian religion, and civil liberty. Such being the undoubted tendency, I fully concur in the sentiment, that the friends of freedom ought to be under the most fearful apprehensions. I will offer a few suggestions in respect to the influence, which the Southern system of Slavery has, and, until abolished, will continue to have upon the liberties and institutions of the free States of the Union.

A code of laws, adapted to a state of slavery, cannot be adapted to a state of freedom, for the plain reason, that the two states are diametrically opposed to each other. Slavery tends to pro-

duce an aristocracy of feeling as well as of wealth, and to prostrate in the dust equal rights and privileges — thus laying the foundation of an Aristocratic form of government. (C.)

It leads to vice and all manner of criminal indulgencies—to a general degeneracy of the public morals. It degrades its victims to the level of savage beasts by depriving them of the means of moral and intellectual instruction and improvement. It converts the holy Sabbath into a holiday, and, in its train of immoral consequences, tends to undermine the foundations of virtue and religion.

Under our form of government, our laws are but an emanation of the popular will. When the great mass of the people become corrupt, it is in vain to expect, that they will elect the most virtuous and enlightened citizens to office, as their law-makers. The public officer will generally be actuated by the same motives, which govern the main body of his constituents. When the slave states shall succeed in securing a commanding majority in the national legislature, the free states will learn, what are the *bitter fruits* of Slavery. The specimens already afforded ought to be sufficient to open their eyes in respect to what the future may mature. The “peculiar institutions” of the South have already been the means of destroying the sacred right of Petition; a right given by Nature, the abridgement of which the Constitution prohibits. Their influence has also restrained the freedom of speech or debate in Congress, and attempted to shackle the Press by passing laws forbidding, under severe pains and penalties, the circulation of its publications through the medium of the public mails. The free colored citizens of the free states, by the mere act of crossing the boundary line of some of the slave states, are liable to be forcibly seized, and sold into perpetual bondage, in violation of one of the most sacred and important provisions of the Federal Constitution.

The slave states have appealed to, and even demanded of the free states to enact penal laws to punish our citizens for exercis-

ing the liberty of speech in respect to those "peculiar institutions"! They have gone even further, and demanded the surrender of some of our free citizens of the most respectable characters, into the hands of Southern judicatories for trial; or rather for execution under the laws of "Judge Lynch"!!!

The legislature of the state of Ohio recently yielded to the dictation of a slave state so far as to pass a law for the delivery up of persons claimed as fugitive slaves by the *fiat* of a single magistrate,—taking away the privilege of trial by jury, and making it an offence punishable by fine and imprisonment to obstruct or impede the process.

No one can doubt the fact, that the slave states have already used a mighty influence in respect to elections in the free states to secure our public officers in the support of their domestic institutions of involuntary servitude. Their success has been truly alarming. That influence has once settled, and probably will again determine the Presidential election.

And that same evil influence has been the means of exciting ferocious mobs in the free States; of the conflagration of the Pennsylvania Hall, dedicated to freedom of speech; and of shedding innocent blood. It has gone to the fearful extent of attempting to deter members of Congress from the faithful discharge of their duty by threats of assassination!!! (D.)

We are even summoned to abandon our own principles, the principles of civil liberty, for the purpose of perpetuating, and even extending one of the most odious and disgraceful systems of slavery, that was ever known on the face of the earth. It is demanded of us, that slavery shall be perpetuated in new states to be added to our already too widely spread Union.

The baneful influence of slavery dismembered the Mexican Empire, and threatens to annex Texas to our Union for the detestable purpose of converting it into a great slave-mart to drain off our redundant slave population, and render slave-breeding a lucrative business! (E.)

The slave-holders of the South, rioting in luxury and ease,



affecting to believe that labor degrades the man, look down with disdain upon the laboring classes of the North. Their slaves are to them, they say, what our bones, muscles and sinews are to us. Industry is the hand-maid of virtue, and should the former be brought into disrepute in the free states, the latter would lose one of its main supports.

Such is the constant intercourse between the South and the North, that we can hardly expect to escape the contamination of their profligate morals and evil examples. We cannot feel indifferent to the struggles, which the slave states are constantly making for the adoption of laws and commercial regulations to strengthen and promote their "peculiar institutions," to the injury of the free institutions and commercial prosperity of the Northern States. Nor can we feel indifferent to their threats to form a closer union among themselves, in order, as publicly avowed, "to give law to the Union;" or, in plainer language, to fix upon this nation a code of laws, and commercial regulations adapted to their "peculiar institutions." Nor can we feel indifferent to their evasion of the laws of the Union prohibiting the slave-trade, by which, it is said, that about one hundred and fifty thousand of the sons of Africa are annually torn from the shores of that ill-fated land.

Among the causes, which threaten a dissolution of our Union, no one has so prominent a rank as slavery. The slave States discard the self-evident truths of the Declaration of Independence. They contemptuously abjure the doctrine of the equal natural rights of man. Mr. Adams has boldly declared, before the public, "that the renunciation of the principles of the Declaration of Independence, is a virtual withdrawal from the Union. There can at least be no possible attachment to the Union entertained by those, who have renounced those principles—no community of feeling with those who retain and adhere to them. The two sets of principles separate the souls of men wider than the distance of the poles from each other!"

If there is any truth in our remarks, let it no longer be pro-

claimed, that the free states, or our federal government, have nothing to do—no right to interfere with the domestic institutions of slavery, which fix an indelible stigma upon our whole nation. It is their right not only to erect barriers around their free institutions to guard against the daring encroachments of slavery, but acting in the defensive, to adopt measures for the removal of the pestilence, which is tainting the whole atmosphere. The hardy and enlightened freemen of the North are not bound to remain idle spectators of its ravages upon the body-politic, until the disease shall baffle all human skill.

We fully believe, that either our Slavery, or else our Liberty must, sooner or later, perish. The two antagonistical principles war against each other. *Liberty and Slavery cannot long dwell together in the same country.* Let us, then, buckle on our armor in the cause of freedom—the cause of our country.

But our principles teach us not to restrict our philanthropy to the degrees of latitude and longitude, which include our slave population. We would extend the blessings of liberty to all nations of the earth—that liberty which is man's birth-right—that liberty which, in perfection, can be enjoyed only in the social state, under well organized governments and wise laws impartially administered—that liberty, doubly sanctified to us by that desolating, sanguinary seven years' conflict, which tried men's souls, and which was the glorious fruit of the American Revolution.

" O Liberty! expand thy vital ray,  
O'er the dark globe diffuse celestial day!  
Thy spirit breathe, wide as creation's space  
Exalt, illumo, inspire the human race!"

What authority is that which robs our species of their liberty—of the equal and inalienable rights given them by their Creator? It can be no authority other than that of the ferocious tiger over his bleeding victim. Human government can exercise no legitimate authority except in protecting human rights and promoting the welfare and happiness of the people. This is the grand object of its institution. And when it becomes destructive of

these ends, the Declaration of Independence declares that "it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government."

Our government, in its form, is the most perfect, human wisdom ever devised. It was an untried experiment; but its successful operation has been the means of diffusing more liberal principles among the enlightened nations of Europe, as well as of furnishing models of civil polity to the South American republics. But the literature, the philanthropy, the moral sense of all Christendom now accuse the citizens of the North American republic of **INSINCERITY** and **HYPOCRICY** in not adhering to the sacred principles, contained in the charter of their rights. And the stigma will rest upon them while nearly one-fifth part of our population are held in chains.

But what is the reproach, which the community of civilized nations can cast upon them, in comparison to the displeasure of the Almighty? Can we believe, that the Ruler of nations, who divided the sea to let the Children of Israel go free, and closed it upon the proud hosts of their oppressors, will not execute His judgment upon a people guilty of oppressions more cruel and aggravated, than were those of the rulers of Egypt? Shall we not, then, use our humble efforts to promote the cause of justice and humanity—to arouse our countrymen to a sense of the dangers which hang over them, that they may set the captive free, and thus hope to avert the judgments of offended Heaven.



## NOTES.

### NOTE A. — F o L . 4 .

Gov. PINNEY recently delivered several eloquent discourses in this town, upon the Colonization subject. Many matters stated by him deserve much consideration. His description of the Colony at Liberia seems to settle the question, that the natural faculties of the colored are not inferior to those of the white race, and that in a free state they are equally capable of vast improvement in their moral, intellectual and physical condition. In that colony, of which he was the late Governor, he represented that there were, in addition to the natives, about four thousand colored people, sent from the United States, occupying dwelling-houses as commodious and elegant as those in Portsmouth, N. H. —that they are furnished with elegant carpets, sofas and other furniture in equal style—that the climate is one of the most delightful in the world, producing a great profusion of the choicest fruits of the tropical regions—no frosts, but perpetual verdure there—that they have well organized Courts of law, and an impartial administration of justice—that all the civil officers are negroes, and that their arguments and speeches often evince a high order of talents—that Custom Houses are established, and not less than twenty vessels have been built by the colonists, and are owned by them—that the masters of foreign vessels, and other officers, upon their arrival at Liberia, pay due homage to the sable officers of this republic—that there are 18 churches, 800 professors of religion, and 30 learned colored preachers in the nine settlements or villages, and that many black missionaries go out to christianize the native Africans. But he admitted that among the colonists, especially the white missionaries, there has been, in becoming acclimated, a considerable loss of life. There is no intemperance. Here, then, is a moral and intelligent, industrious and property-holding colored population, having become so in consequence of enjoying freedom. What a comment is this, upon the Southern institutions, which sink the negro race to the lowest degradation ! Gov. Pinney treats Colonization as a measure preparatory to the total abolition of Slavery, and of the latter, he, with all colonizationists, professes to be an advocate. But his plan goes no further than to reduce the number of the slave below that of the white population, (perhaps for greater security against servile insurrection,) and to get rid of the free negroes, deemed to be dangerous companions of the slave. It was wholly beyond his power to point out any mode, by which Colonization can effect the abolition of

Slavery. The average annual increase of slaves in our Union during the last nine years, including their piratical importation, may be estimated at about one hundred thousands. Gov. P. admitted that the slave-vessels annually obtain about one hundred and fifty thousand slaves from Africa, but how many finally arrive in the United States, we have no certain accounts. Mr. Wright, of Maryland, estimates the number at fifteen thousand. It is said that this estimate is several thousands too small. Judge Story, in his learned and eloquent charge to the Grand Jury, in Portsmouth, in 1820, stated the fact, proved by the records of the British Parliament, that of the whole number of slaves taken from Africa, on their passage, and during "the seasoning," "about one half perish within two years from their first captivity" !

Colonization, with its mightiest efforts, can have no visible effect even in reducing the annual increase of the slaves. As a project, therefore, for total abolition, it is visionary, whatever may be the motives of its advocates. It furnishes no reason or argument against the exertions of the abolitionists to promote the cause of universal emancipation. And the inferences from the statements made by Gov. Pinney, are decidedly favorable to that cause.

#### NOTE B. — F O L . 9 .

When we compare the exhausted and sterile soil of the old Slave States, the indolence, poverty, and wretched condition of the mass of the population, with the well cultivated, fertile fields of the free States, and the thrift, industry, and prosperous, happy state of the inhabitants, we can have no doubt that the difference is attributable to the system of slavery. The products of free will ever be double those of slave labor. In the free States, skill and labor receive their reward, and this is an incentive to exertion—the main-spring to industry. In the Slave States, the *lash* furnishes the stimulus to labor. There being in the latter no voluntary motive to exertion, it is now, as it was in ancient time, the value of the man is sunk in his degradation.

*“ Jove fix’d it certain, that whatever day  
Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.”*

It would be an idle supposition, that the mere color of the skin produces either a mental or physical debility ; but the ignorance of the slave renders him incapable of producing the results, which the knowledge and skill combined with the physical energies of freemen can accomplish. The interest of our Northern Farmers induces them to give the highest rate of wages to the most *intelligent* active laborers, rather than the lowest rate to the most ignorant. In respect to the mechanical pursuits, no one doubts that skill and knowledge are more requisite than muscular strength ; and applied to the agricultural pursuit, under the great improvements which have been introduced, they certainly are highly important. When we consider that our most ignorant laborers will perform more work than the same number of slaves, we need not feel surprised at the state of agriculture, the mechanic arts, and the general squalid wretchedness in the southern portions of our Union.

Universal emancipation, and the diffusion of knowledge among the slaves, would, therefore, instead of reducing, increase the wealth and prosperity of the whole slave-holding community. It is often said that general massacre would follow immediate emancipation. This is idle pretence. Converting the race into savage brutes, and inflicting cruel punishments, more endanger the throats of the masters, than would that treatment, which the laws of nature and humanity demand. The spirit of revenge is the natural consequence of the first mode of treatment, and humble gratitude of the other. It is stated, upon good authority, that in the British W. I. Islands, where the white population is only 129,107, and the emancipated 793,680, and the free colored 159,393, the boon of freedom has been the means of diminishing the proportion of crimes, compared with an equal period under the apprenticeship system, as about three to one; and we do not learn that a single massacre has been the consequence of emancipation.

NOTE C.—Fol. 10.

Mr. Jefferson, in his notes on Virginia, (fol. 236 to 238,) says—“There must doubtless be an unhappy influence on the manners of our people produced by the existence of slavery among us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. Our children see this and learn to imitate it.” “The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives a loose to his worst of passions, and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances.” “With the morals of a people, their industry is also destroyed. For in a warm climate, no man will labor for himself, who can make another labor for him. This is so true, that of the proprietors of slaves a very small proportion indeed are ever seen to labour. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure, when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people, that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep forever: that considering numbers, nature, and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, and exchange of situation is among possible events: that it may become probable by supernatural interference! The Almighty has no attribute, which can take side with us in such a contest.” “The spirit of the master is abating, that of the slave rising from the dust, his condition mollifying, the way I hope preparing, under the auspices of Heaven, for a total emancipation, and that this is disposed, in the order of events, to be with the consent of the masters, rather than by their extirpation.”

When Mr. Jefferson published the above remarks in 1787, the slave population probably did not much exceed six hundred thousands.



## NOTE D.—FOL. 11.

The members of Congress from the New-England States have generally been sufficiently subservient to Southern dictation ; and often have the Southern interests predominated over some of the most essential interests of the free states. But when threats of assassination are resorted to, to destroy that independence of mind, freedom of debate and of action, which ought to characterize members of Congress ; when the Constitution expressly declares, that they shall “ be privileged from arrest,” “ and for any speech or debate in either house, they shall not be questioned in any other place,” (privileges granted for the security of perfect freedom of thought and and its independent expression in public debate) the friends of liberty in the free states ought to feel great cause of alarm. Such threats are a daring encroachment upon *their* rights. These privileges were designed not so much for the personal security of the Representatives, as for the benefit of their constituents.

In the House of Representatives, no man ever took a more fearless and decided stand against the Southern system of slavery, and in defence of the Constitutional rights of the citizens of the free states, than has the Hon. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS. It is painful to state, that because his sentiments did not fully coincide, in certain points not essential to the success of the great cause, with those of the abolitionists, he has not escaped censorious remarks. But his open, bold and fearless denunciation of slavery in Congress, and before public assemblies of the people, and in the public journals, will, on the page of history, shed a brighter lustre upon his illustrious name. Mr. Adams professes not to be “ an abolitionist”—i. e., he does not belong to *the party*, or any Society ; but his public addresses prove him to be a thorough going advocate of the total extermination of Slavery and the Slave-trade, although, on account of the state of public opinion he seems to despair of its abolition during “ the short remnant of his days.” We hope that he may be agreeably disappointed in this expectation. When he declares in his last address on the subject, that “ here, in our country, Slavery, like a wounded RATTLESNAKE, has turned upon her pursuers, and not only thrusts out her deadly fang in self-defence, but threatens with mortal venom to CONTAMINATE US ALL,” we need not doubt his disposition, had he the power, to inflict the *immediate* death-blow upon the exemplar of that venomous reptile. As a statesman, Mr. Adams has not, probably, a superior in the world—his country has conferred upon him her highest honors ; yet such is the man, who, for attempting to defend the rights of citizens of the free states in opposition to slavery, during the last session of Congress almost daily received from slave-holders or their tools, through the medium of public mails, threats of assassination !

## NOTE E. — FOL. II.

Virginia has ever held a proud and elevated rank among her sister States. She now feels extremely sensitive to the charge, that she has sunk into a breeder of slaves, for market! The charge, being too true, is a foul stain upon the escutcheons of her fame. It is stated in Wm. Jay's Inquiry, fol. 203, that "The domestic slave trade annually relieves the State of Virginia of more than six thousand slaves, and yet, notwithstanding this drain, they continue to increase." But it appears that the trade has been on the annual increase.— "Jay's View," published in 1829, fol. 79, refers to an article in "the Virginia Times," in 1836, which "estimates the number of slaves exported for sale the last twelve months," at *forty thousand*; each slave averaging six hundred dollars, and thus yielding a capital of *twenty-four millions*!!!

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## POSTSCRIPT.

Since the preceding remarks were made, a book of 210 pages, recently published at New-York, by the Executive Committee of the American Anti Slavery Society, entitled "American Slavery as it is: testimony of a thousand witnesses," has come to our notice. If this book is but a tissue of falsehoods, their immediate exposure is in the slave-holders' power: but every main point is so strongly fortified by an abundance of evidence, that we suspect no attack will be made. Its contents greatly increase our horror and detestation of Southern Slavery, and tend to degrade, in the public estimation, the character of the unfeeling slave-holder. If true, its free circulation cannot fail to unite the free States against the whole system. It appears that the great body of slaves, those who compose the field-gangs, are compelled to work, under the lash of the whip, from daylight till dark;—that they are allowed but two meals a day, their first between 10 and 12 o'clock, the other after their day's work;—that their only allowance of food for a **WHOLE WEEK**, is but *one peck of corn*, with a little salt, or in lieu of corn, the like measure of rice;—that in some places, during the potato season, they are allowed three pecks of potatoes per week, in

lieu of corn, and one peck of corn per week during the remainder of the season ;—in some places a salt-herring is added ; but they are allowed in general, *no meat* except at Christmas time. In cities they may often fare some better, being allowed the leavings of their master's table. "*Vegetables* form generally no part of the slaves' allowance. The sole food of the majority is *corn*, at every meal, from day to day—from week to week. In South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, the sweet potato is, to a considerable extent, substituted for corn during a part of the year." Under the most humane masters, there are doubtless exceptions to the general rule. The slave may be contented, well clothed and well fed on coarse fare, and enjoy that *negative* happiness which may attend the lowest state of ignorance. Their clothing is generally but two miserable garments, and "men and women are often seen at work in the field more than half naked, and children of both sexes, from infancy to ten years of age in companies on the plantations, in a state of perfect nudity." Their miserable ten feet huts or cabins, without floors, apartments, windows, chimnies, chairs, tables or bedsteads, are insufficient to guard against the storms, and the inclemency of the weather. Their whole bedding is a blanket, the cold ground their bed ! Cruel as is this mode of treatment, it bears no comparison to the cruelties-inflicted upon the bodies of the poor slaves, both male and female. For their frequent attempts to escape, they are often *shot down*. This sudden termination of their misery is but tender mercy in comparison to the bloody stripes, the tortures, the wounding, maiming, and long agonizing, heart-rending sufferings (often terminating in death) which they are compelled, bound in cords, to endure. The recital of their cruel lacerations makes our blood freeze in the veins. Language is inadequate to describe their sufferings. These almost baffle credulity itself. "Happy, contented, and well fed" as our Northern pro-slavery advocates represent them to be, yet to prevent their escape, slave-drivers, *well armed*, guard them by day, and patrols and blood-hounds by night. Horrid is their punishment, when recaptured, after flight ! Their blood is upon us of the free states, as well as the slave-holder. It cries from the ground, and ascends up to the throne of the Almighty, invoking his decree of condemnation upon the whole nation. The *physical*, if not the *moral* energies of the free states are sufficient to put an end to this crying sin. The power of the Federal government, now abused by *upholding*, may constitutionally, lawfully and justly, in various ways, be exerted in *demolishing* this whole system of Slavery.