

T H E M A R T Y R .

A DISCOURSE,

IN C O M M E M O R A T I O N

OF

THE MARTYRDOM

OF

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DISCOURSE.

“When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.”—*Acts vii. 54—60.*

THE primitive Christians, as witnesses to the truths of the Gospel, seem at first to have been known as *martyrs*. It was not long before some of them were called to seal their testimony with their blood. Of these, Stephen and Antipas seem to have been distinguished for the excellence of their character and the extent of their usefulness. Since their death, the awful circumstance of sealing one's testimony to the truth with his blood, has entered into the definition of a martyr. When I say *to the truth*, I do not deny, that the advocate of error may maintain his bad cause at the expense of his life. His, too, may be a death of violence, inflicted by “wicked hands.” But, though he may thus be a victim, he is not a martyr. Strong claims he may justly have on our compassion, but he is not entitled to our heart-felt esteem and profound reverence. These gems befit only the *martyr's* crown.

The facts belonging to “the Book of Martyrs,” admit of easy explanation. As endowed with the light of reason, man is capable of seeing and applying those elemental truths, which are known by the name of *principles*. These are called self-evident, as being too plain and certain to admit of proof and illustration from any foreign sources. *Necessary* they are called, as they command our assent. They are called *universal*, since they commend themselves as undeniable to every human understanding. And as they depend on none of the contingencies of time and space, they are *eternal*. In being able to discover and apply these truths consists especially the *image of God*, which is constitutionally im-

pressed upon the human soul. But man has senses also. These connect him with the world of time and space. Here he finds multiplied objects, which are adapted to interest his feelings, to supply his wants, to please his taste, to gratify his passions—in a thousand ways to contribute to his enjoyment. All these objects he ought to estimate and dispose of in the light of those principles, which the reason furnishes. Thus would reason, will, and passion, be in delightful coincidence with each other. Thus the sweetest harmony would result from the operation of the human powers. But, instead of being the possessor of passions, man has become *possessed by his passions*. They have gotten the dominion over him. Thus has he become a voluntary slave. He bows, not to the dictates of reason, but to the impulses of passion. The things of sense occupy, engross, control his powers. He thus consents to sink from a place by the side of angels, to a place among the “beasts that perish.” He lays himself a victim on the altar of animalism. In all his objects, plans, methods, and exertions, he feels and acts like a mere *animal*. It is thus in every age with large communities of human creatures. Is it not thus with a majority of the children of Adam? Amidst all this revolt and degradation, and misery, instead of leaving himself “without witness,” God opens the lips of his commissioned prophets. They give voice to the principles of reason and the dictates of conscience. The light of neglected truth they pour upon the darkened bosoms of the creatures of sense around them. These start up from their guilty slumbers. They are filled with perplexity, apprehension, and terror. Reason and conscience command them to “turn from their evil ways;” passion impels them onward. Thus they are placed between two conflicting forces. And alas, of “the many” we must say, they resist the authority of reason. But peace cannot be so procured. The conflict rages within. They feel guilty, degraded, wretched, and fearfully exposed to far greater evils than have yet befallen them. What can they do? The voice of rightful authority within them, they are fully bent on disobeying. How earnestly they wish to reduce that voice to silence! To do this they eagerly employ multiplied expedients. But they cannot succeed in their suicidal purpose while the prophet of God—the ally of truth—is continually pouring upon their ears what their reason approves, and what arms against them the terrors of an accusing conscience. Tortured with remorse and blind with rage, they at length “stop their ears,” and with loud outcries and murderous violence, “run” upon the messenger of truth, and do him whatever injury they have the power to inflict. This is a brief but just

account of all the persecutions which "the Faithful" have been called to endure, from the murder of Abel to the murder of Lovejoy.

To our fathers it was self-evident, that every one who had the constitution of a man, was entitled to act and to be treated as a man. With them, it was his inalienable right, while he respected the rights of others, to enjoy life, liberty, and to pursue happiness in such objects and by such methods as he might, for reasons of his own, see fit to prefer. This great truth they laid at the basis of the government which they were commissioned to form. To this, every thing was professedly adjusted. But arrangements were admitted totally at variance with it. According to these arrangements, one-sixth part of the people of these United States were to be stripped of every right and robbed of every privilege to which human nature, as such, was declared to have an inalienable claim—they and their posterity were to be reduced to a level with things—to be kept and disposed of as "articles of merchandise." The circumstances in which the young republic was placed, contributed somewhat to conceal the form, or at least to soften the features of this monstrous and horrible anomaly. In the shouts of recent victory, the cries of the oppressed were drowned and lost. With peace came prosperity. The nation grew rich and powerful. Pride and luxury gradually insinuated themselves. The authority of reason and conscience was less and less generally and reverently regarded. The sway of appetite and passion became continually wider and more powerful. The control of the senses became long ago well nigh resistless and universal. The animal of our nature placed its hoof upon the spiritual and rational of our nature—upon the image of God in the soul of man—to a most mortifying and frightful extent. Indeed, in almost one half of the republic, mankind was divided into two classes of animals, the noble and the ignoble—or in the language of those who made this division—into capitalists and laborers;—the one as animals to be made wholly subservient to the other as animals! And this arrangement seemed to be rapidly gaining favor with those who exerted "a leading influence" in every part of "the Union." The great truth which lay at the basis of our free institutions, attracted less and less attention—awakened less and less discussion—exerted less and less influence. At length it was to a wide extent looked upon as bed-ridden and obsolete; until men were found among us, who without apprehension, and with slight rebuke from any quarter, proclaimed it "a rhetorical flourish!" Thus were we led, "like an ox to the slaughter," to the brink of destruction!

But at length, in the mercy of God, the principle which lay at the basis of our free institutions, with its collateral truths and just applications, found a voice. Here and there conscience found an ally, and truth a prophet. Under a heavenly impulse, these urged on the attention of their fellow-citizens the gross inconsistency, which all might easily see and must strongly condemn, between the principles, which as a republic we avowed, and the practice, which as a republic we maintained. Those whom our principles protected, our practice destroyed. Those whom our practice had reduced to slavery, were, according to our principles, fully and immediately entitled to freedom. According to our principles, therefore, our practice was in the highest degree wicked and infamous. No sooner was all this proclaimed with correspondent exertions at reformation by the friends of freedom, than multitudes in all parts of the nation were aroused from the lethargy in which they had been indulging. They could not help seeing that reason, conscience, truth—that heaven above and the earth beneath—demanded of the nation the abolition of slavery. At the same time, they regarded the abolition of slavery as directly adverse to the designs they had formed and the interests they had cherished. These they were not prepared to relinquish. What could they do? A fierce conflict raged within them. The authority of conscience was opposed by the impulses of passion and the demands of self-interest; and by the latter they permitted themselves to be borne away and carried along. But how were their agitated bosoms to be calmed? How were they to be restored to their former tranquillity and self-complacency? Not in the way of reasoning. Not by “free discussion.” Reason, they saw, must ever be consistent with itself. It could never authorize them to act in opposition to its own sacred principles. From “free discussion” what could they hope for? This it was which had broken their peace—which had filled them with alarm, remorse, and apprehension. They would gladly have set themselves free from the authority of reason, the dictates of conscience, the high demands of immutable and eternal truth, even at the expense of effacing the image of God, in which as men they had been formed! But thus to destroy themselves they had not the power. The only way in which they could hope to obtain the least relief, consisted in efforts to reduce to silence those by whose voice they had been disturbed and terrified. Stopping their ears, therefore, upon this way they eagerly and recklessly rushed. The language of ridicule, scorn, and reproach, broke from their lips. They calumniated, maligned, threatened. They tried what unfounded assertions, false accusations, and “hard names”

could effect. The reputation and property of the friends of freedom they violently assailed. One they cursed, another they scourged, and a third they murdered. In open contempt of all law, human and divine—to the shame of universal humanity, of common decency, nay, of the worst forms and wildest excesses of barbarism itself—they have proceeded with open mouth to pronounce sentence of outlawry upon every man who may dare to assert and defend those “self-evident truths” upon which our government is professedly founded. For proclaiming these truths under the ban of this sentence, Lovejoy fell, in the presence of those who were sworn to afford him legal protection—fell by the hands of a mob which had been goaded on to the murderous deed by the “leading influences” of society! *If to die as a witness for the truth* be a just description of a martyr, then as a martyr must Lovejoy be honored and revered.

But *to what estimation, as a martyr, is he justly entitled?* To return an intelligent answer to this inquiry, we must in the first place ascertain *the weight and worth of the truths* to which he bore testimony. In the science of Astronomy, *Galileo* discovered and proclaimed truths of fundamental importance. For this he was exposed to insult and injury. He hardly escaped with his life from the hand of persecution. The sufferings which he endured, though not deadly, were, so far as they went, the sufferings of a martyr. In estimating our obligations to this great philosopher, we must take into the account the value of the truths for which he was immured in the dungeons of the Inquisition. The same thing, moreover, must we do in estimating our obligations to the magnanimity, intrepidity, and high-souled patriotism of *Algernon Sidney*. In the science of civil government, he stood up a prophet and died a martyr. His claims upon the gratitude and reverence of posterity, must correspond with the magnitude of the truths which he proclaimed. For the peculiarities of the Gospel, *Stephen* died. These he proclaimed amidst frightful tumults and lawless violence. Nor could loud threats and ragged stones close his lips, till overwhelmed by the brute force of the maddened multitude, he “fell asleep” in Jesus. The estimation in which he ought to be held, must correspond with the glorious truths which fell from his dying lips.

What then are the claims of the *martyred Lovejoy* upon all who may gather around his grave, or hear the story of his sufferings? To give a just answer to this question, we must advert to the value of the truths for maintaining which he fell a victim to popular vengeance. He stood up the intelligent, earnest, and devoted advocate of those principles

which in their natural application and influence, were adapted to subvert American slavery. What, then, is American slavery? What are its inherent tendencies, and what its necessary effects? What are its victims doomed to suffer under its influence? It finds them, as the creatures of God, reflecting his image. It finds them endowed with reason, and forbids them to walk in the light of its principles. It finds them formed with the power of conscience, and forbids them to bow to its dictates. It finds them gifted with free-will, and forbids them to act according to their choice. It finds them the children of the skies, and forbids them to make provision for their immortality. It finds them exalted and dignified by the image of God, which they bear, and does its utmost to degrade them to a level with the beasts which perish around them. In its inherent and necessary tendency it strikes at the very vitals of their humanity. It strives to obliterate every characteristic feature and property of their human nature.

Slavery finds its victim placed, as a man, under the obligations of the two "great commandments of the Law." The relations on which these commandments are based, reason recognizes and approves. Of these, the first requires us to cherish toward God every filial feeling in the highest degree—with the most intense ardor and the deepest tenderness. It requires us with the utmost diligence to study His character in the best light we can command; and through an ever-growing acquaintance with him, to cherish an ever-growing love for him. It requires us to the full extent of our resources and with all our might, to subserve the divine designs. Our will is to come into full coincidence with his; and thus, we are to find ourselves free in full security, and secure in perfect freedom. Thus are we to rise to communion with God; and to reach the perfection of our being and the height of bliss in enjoying him. From this exalted privilege—the birth-right of every child of Adam—slavery excludes its victim. It forbids him to study the divine character, subserve the divine designs, enjoy the divine perfections. Not a syllable of the Sacred Volume will it permit him to study. He cannot command a moment to cultivate "fellowship" with his Maker and Redeemer. All his powers, at all times, in all places, under all circumstances, and for every purpose, he is to devote, without the least hesitation or the slightest reserve, to the will of his master. Nor does slavery make less havoc with the obligations and privileges which grow out of the second great commandment of the Law. According to this, every child of Adam as a man, is to make himself the standard by which he is to estimate, as men, all other members of the human family. In the language

of the Golden Rule, he is to do to others as he would have others do to him. This command accurately expresses and authoritatively maintains the natural equality of mankind. It requires every man to regard every other man as his fellow and equal. The official distinctions, which the natural interests of human society demand, he is to uphold and respect for the "Lord's sake," whose government, so far, is thus embodied and administered for the benefit of the human family. Every man, then, is to make himself the standard by which he is to measure and modify his regard for his fellow-men. Does slavery permit its victim to do this? Nay, verily. Under the severest pains and the heaviest penalties, it forbids him, as a man, to regard other men as his equals. To his master he is to ascribe such prerogatives as God himself abstains from claiming! The prerogatives of an owner to a piece of property—"an article of merchandise!" His father, brothers, sons, he is to regard as "*things*"—whom at the bidding of his master, he is to bind, scourge or crucify, as the passion or humor of their common owner may require! The wife of his bosom and the daughter of his love, as "*things*" formed for the convenience and gratification of the pale-faced tyrants around him, he is at once, without scruple or hesitation, to sacrifice to their lordly lusts. Under such bonds, can he "love his neighbor as himself?"

Thus slavery tears away its victim from the control of that God whose commands it blasphemously forbids him to obey. It breaks up those relations which connect him with the throne of Heaven. It thrusts him down from the high position where as a child of God he naturally stands. It subverts the very foundations of his nature. It annihilates his manhood. In doing this, slavery assails, with murderous intention, *universal humanity*. This is represented by every man through those attributes by which, as a man, he is distinguished. *Hostility to these attributes, is hostility to all to whom they characteristically belong.* In all its victims, slavery does its utmost to destroy these attributes. It tramples on every thing which gives worth and dignity to human nature, by trying to reduce a man to "an article of merchandise." Its success must be the destruction of every thing which distinguishes a man from a beast. And whatever has, as slavery certainly and obviously has, this tendency, is at deadly strife with universal human nature. Every thing appropriate to man as man, and of course every thing dear to him, slavery tramples under foot.

All this Lovejoy clearly saw. And while he saw, he felt his spirit stirred within him. Under an impulse from on high, which he felt that

he could not resist without denying God, he opened his lips in the clear and impressive proclamation of those truths which, like the breath of Heaven, were adapted to destroy this system of legalized man-murder. He stood up in defence of those prerogatives which the endowments of Reason, Conscience, Free-will, evidently imply and inalienably confer. In behalf of the enslaved, he nobly plead that it was their privilege and duty to feel and act *like men*;—to walk in the light of reason, to obey the dictates of conscience, to act according to their will. Such were the truths which he proclaimed;—so self-evident, immutable, eternal; so vital to the present peace and future welfare of the family of Adam;—truths which are to our souls as the vital air; without which our hold upon the skies would be broken, and we must sink to dust and ashes. So commanding, comprehensive, and heavenly, were the truths for which our martyred brother suffered the pains of a death of violence! What, then, shall I say of the estimation in which he ought to be held? For the truths for which Galileo suffered; for the truths for which Sidney bled; for the truths for which Stephen “gave up the ghost,” Lovejoy fell a martyr.

2. In estimating our obligations, under God, to our martyred brother, we may derive assistance from a rapid and general review of *the exertions which he had made to extend and deepen the influence of those truths* for which he suffered. A man of strong character might refuse to contradict his own convictions even at the hazard of his life; though he had neglected to exert himself to fasten such convictions on the minds of others. The name and honors of a martyr he might deserve; though he must fall far short of the place in our esteem and love, to which vigorous exertions in the cause of truth would have raised him. Lovejoy died in the defence and propagation of the most important principles—of the most commanding truths which could be revealed to the human understanding or affect human destiny. But what efforts did he put forth, in the midst of life, to spread the knowledge and extend the sway of these principles? Here I shall speak of him as of one of the company of confessors—the avowed and devoted friends of universal freedom—to which he belonged. What, then, have they attempted in the cause in which they have enlisted? They have drawn out of the rubbish with which general neglect and contempt had covered them, those great principles which are the life of our free institutions. To these, with the utmost solicitude and care, they have given just and accurate definitions. They have presented them to the public mind in a clear and certain light. The natural bearings of these principles in their

Various applications, they have studied and exhibited. Thus in the light of fair inferences from naked principles, they have illustrated the certain tendencies and inevitable effects of slavery. They have shown that from the "nature of things"—from the known government of God and the acknowledged constitution of man, it must be in the highest degree criminal and injurious—that it must blight and destroy whatever comes under its polluting touch. But not only have they tasked their best powers to show what slavery *must be* in the unerring light of principle' but also what it may *be seen* to be on the page of history, and in the field of observation. They have with great pains-taking collated and classified the *facts* in which their principles are embodied—by which they are realized and verified. The most convincing proofs they have thus furnished, that in practice as well as theory—in actual experience as well as obvious tendency—slavery is a system of unutterable abominations; scattering, wherever it can wield its instruments of torture "fire-brands, arrows, and death." The blood of "the poor innocents," which in different parts of our republic has been most wantonly poured upon the ground, they have uncovered; striking terror into the bosoms of the guilty, and producing thrill upon thrill of universal horror.

In a thousand ways on various occasions, they have opened their "lips for the dumb," and plead the cause of those who were crushed by insufferable burdens. For this purpose they have employed the eloquence of the living voice and the energies of the press. Their money, time, and strength; whatever their talents, stations, opportunities, might enable them to do; they have most earnestly and untiringly devoted to the cause of holy freedom. For these labors of love, Lovejoy was greatly distinguished. In the land of slaves, he stood up in behalf of violated law and outraged humanity. Driven thence by worse than savage violence, he took a position among the monuments of freedom—under such protection and with such encouragements as equal laws might be expected to afford. Here, in vigorously pursuing the "even tenor of his way," the dark spirit of slavery—a very Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation—started up before him to resist his efforts and oppose his progress. Again and again was he assailed by frenzied mobs, maddened and set on by more miserable wretches from the upper walks of life. Nothing daunted, our brother, with even brow and vigorous step, pressed forward. His reputation was assailed; his property was destroyed; his person was threatened. In the arms of his devoted wife, beneath the roof of their common mother, his precious life was sought with blood-hound eagerness. No violence could drive him aside from the shining

track which was marked by his foot prints. Still he moved on : with collected strength, a faithful heart, and steadfast resolution, he moved onward toward the goal, where a "great cloud" of witnesses awaited him. In the midst of this career of glory it was that the crown of martyrdom was placed upon his head. He suffered in the cause for which he had been toiling. A sublime harmony there was between the death he died, and the life he had lived. Blessings forever on his memory for his exhausting labors no less than for his deadly sufferings in the cause of holy freedom !

3. To the memory of our martyred brother we shall fail to do justice, unless we take into the account, in estimating our obligations to him, *the effects which his sufferings may, under God, be expected to produce.* Will not thousands and millions of our countrymen who have hitherto been indifferent, be thereby *aroused to the claims of the enslaved?* The bleeding body of a murdered companion thrown across their path, could hardly fail to bring the most careless among the sons of pleasure to pause and reflect, however thoughtless they might have been. And will not the dying groans of Lovejoy produce that effect upon multitudes of his countrymen who had up to the hour of his death stood aloof from the friends of humanity? Almost no obstacles have the advocates of freedom had to contend with, so formidable as the general apathy which prevailed around them. Their appeals have but too generally been met with the cold reply : Let us alone. We are too much engrossed with our own concerns to take an interest in the wants and woes of distant strangers, however wronged and wretched. Our hands and hearts are full. We have such schemes for amassing wealth ; for brightening our reputation ; for increasing our enjoyments, as leave little time or strength for deeds of disinterested charity—a charity especially, which might, if exercised, involve us in disgrace and expose us to injury. We are opposed to slavery as much as any body. Its evils are, however, we presume, greatly exaggerated by those who are intent upon its abolition. We cannot admit that our southern brethren are so bad as to uphold such a system of iniquity as they are charged with maintaining. However this may be, we shall not stop to inquire, examine, discuss. The South must take care of itself. And so must our posterity, if slavery should ever make encroachments on the inheritance with which we hope to enrich them. We cannot be their "keepers." Such is in effect the language with which our ears and hearts have been pierced. But we cannot but indulge the hope, that the voice of Lovejoy's blood will rouse the feelings and fix the attention of thousands who

will be ashamed of their former apathy—who will be constrained in good earnest to inquire, what can these things mean?

And what is the language of our brother's blood? It speaks of *the frightful impartiality of slavery in multiplying the victims of its murderous malignity*. What does it care for the barriers which were designed to separate the slave states from the free? What does it care for any variety of complexion; what for powerful talents and exalted station; what for the elevated character, extensive usefulness, or general confidence, for which any American citizen may be distinguished? It contemns the most important relations and the most sacred offices. From its snake-like grasp, no sanctuary can afford any protection. To all without the least respect for the cord of caste or the distinctions of society, it offers one and the same alternative—to *subserve its interests, or stand exposed to the heaviest injuries it can inflict*. This alternative, in a proclamation "breathing out threatenings and slaughter," it has put into the open mouths of myriads of criers from Georgia to Maine. And alas, to what numbers of our fellow-citizens has not this been a terrible alternative! Thousands upon thousands have given up their birth-rights—have consented to bow down to the Moloch, "besmeared with blood of human sacrifice and parents' tears," which demanded at their hands the sacrifice of every thing dear and precious in our civil, social, and religious institutions! Among these are to be recorded *a large majority of those to whom the powers of the press were confided*. On the one hand they have refused to record and to publish the frightful ravages which slavery was multiplying, especially its fearful encroachments on the inheritance of freemen; and on the other, they have taxed their utmost ingenuity to frame and circulate the most deceitful apologies for any of its excesses which might break upon the public attention. They have done what they could to protect and encourage the monster, while gnawing with unwearied tooth upon the vitals of the republic. To such conductors of the press must, in multiplied instances, be added those to whom was intrusted the sword of the magistrate. From the heads of law-abiding, public-spirited, and useful citizens, who, while exposed to the greatest injuries, had the strongest claims upon their countenance and aid, they have withdrawn the shield of their protection. Often have they been known to be the instigators and abettors of the intoxicated rabble, whom they have virtually led on to the wildest excesses and the most intolerable outrages. In their official stations, they have played the tyrant;—avowing maxims, and advancing doctrines, and setting up pretensions, obviously and radically subversive of the whole frame-work

Our government. The sword which they had sworn to use in defence of freedom, they have, without blushing for their perjury and perfidy, offered to employ in the service of slavery. The complaints of their fellow-citizens, whom they had seen stoned and plundered—driven like outlaws from place to place—they have treated with the most insulting and cruel mockery. They have laid themselves in the dust at the feet of the monster whose progress they were sacredly bound to oppose. And what shall I say of those who, as the ministers of the Gospel, were officially pledged to remember those in bonds as bound with them; whose appropriate work it was to preach deliverance to the captives; to “cry aloud” in demanding that “every yoke should be broken, and the oppressed be set free?” Yielding to the “spirit of slavery,” they have by thousands turned away—cowardly and cruelly turned away from the poorest of the poor. In the grand charter of universal freedom, they have sought for texts from which they might weave apologies, or set up a defence of a legalized system of man-stealing and man-murder. Thus have they lent their influence to perpetuate and extend the worst system of iniquity under which the earth groans!

Upon those who have dared to expose the enormities and resist the encroachments of slavery, it has visited its threatenings with frightful effect. Who they were, whence they came, and what were their relations and positions, it never paused to inquire. It was enough that they dared to act in hostility to slavery. Our martyred brother was a native of New England; the son of a clergyman; endowed with a vigorous mind; enriched with a liberal education; elevated to the sacred office; under the protection of the Constitution of a free State, wielding his powers with skill and fidelity for the glory of God and the benefit of his country. He was known to be an earnest and active abolitionist. For refusing to surrender his rights as such—for refusing to deny God and violate his conscience, and stifle the voice of nature within him, by closing his eyes and lips upon the wrongs of bleeding humanity—by refusing, in a word, to be the most miserable and degraded of slaves, he was most wantonly murdered! From the high places of the republic, the voice of blood now proclaims every man, woman, and child, within the reach of its hand, to be in danger of being throttled in the grasp of slavery. There is nothing which it has not shown itself ready to do to perpetuate its dark dominion. Rather than relinquish its sceptre, it would turn the world into a Golgotha, where if it could not scourge living wretches, it might reign over heaps of skulls! Let no man expect either mercy or justice from the creatures who murdered Lovejoy.

The voice of our brother's blood, moreover, speaks of *the principles by which he was governed, and the methods he employed* to subscribe the sublime objects to which he was so entirely devoted. His principles, as is manifest from the Declaration of Sentiments which he published, are comprehensively involved in the great elemental truth, that man is inalienably entitled, as man, to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Who can refuse to subscribe to a truth so universally admitted to be self-evident and of commanding importance? But a thousand voices on every side exclaim: While we admit the soundness of Lovejoy's principles, *we condemn his measures.*—What then were his measures? If inconsistent with his principles, you ought to condemn them. Let his principles, then, be the standard by which his measures may be tested.

Lovejoy made *human rights* the subject of diligent and thorough study. In this study he tasked his powers. The object of his researches he surveyed in the clearest light he could command. He spared no pains by just processes to reach sound conclusions. Did not the principles which he avowed, fully justify him in thus occupying this field of observation? And what did he here discover? He clearly saw that the notions which generally prevailed respecting slavery, were widely at variance with the dreadful reality;—that the *word slavery* altogether failed to awaken in the public mind the conception of which it was the standing symbol. By just description and accurate analysis, he undertook to correct the false impressions which so extensively prevailed. Slavery he found to be a system of fraud, adultery, and murder—to involve powerful temptations and an unrestrained license to every species of iniquity under the most revolting forms and with the worst consequences. He found it to be, in all circumstances and under all its bearings, wholly sinful—a gross violation of the laws of Heaven. And what he saw clearly, he described plainly. Which of the principles which he maintained did he thus violate? Lovejoy saw myriads of his own mother's children insulted, wronged, outraged;—with no eye to pity and no hand to rescue. The evils under which they groaned, he saw constantly and rapidly extending their influence to every part of the republic. Ten thousand hands, he saw, day and night engaged in forging chains for the limbs of freemen. His fellow-citizens he perceived, were blind to the evils to which they were exposed, and he cried out in the language of impassioned warning. He did his utmost from his post of observation to arouse his countrymen to the perils which were thickening around them. In what respect did he thus depart from the principles by which he professed to be governed? In no respect,

clearly. The measures which he employed, were *demand*ed by the principles which he had avowed. The latter were embodied and acted out in the former. No man can heartily and consistently maintain such principles, without employing just such measures.

But was not Lovejoy *imprudent*? Why imprudent? *For asserting his rights just there where they were invaded?*—That clearly was the very position which prudence required him to take. It was the only point where his rights *could* be defended. Abandoned there, they must give place to the yoke of slavery.

Such, if I understand it, is the language of our brother's blood. It cries aloud; and a loud response, I am sure, it must awaken. From the East and from the West; from the North, aye, and from the South, I already hear the thousand voices exclaiming: 'To the principles, martyred brother, which thou didst maintain, we will adhere;—the exertions which brought thee to thy bloody grave, we will promptly and earnestly second. Nor will we—hear and help us, Heaven, while we thus solemnly promise!—relinquish the one or renounce the other till slavery be universally and forever abolished.

4. Full justice we cannot do to the memory of our martyr, if we should forget *that his death was of a vicarious character*.—The friends of the slave could not but foresee that if they plead his cause, they must expect to be partakers of his sufferings. They felt themselves called upon to "count the cost" before entering on the sublime enterprise which had laid fast hold of their hearts and demanded their powers. They saw clearly that slavery was digging a grave for the republic; and that nothing could save it from the doom to which it was hastening but public spirit and magnanimity of so exalted a character, as for its sake to brave the most appalling dangers. From these dangers they durst not shrink. To their property, reputation, and lives, they could not feel indifferent. Few had stronger ties to bind them to the earth than themselves. They entered on their course; and who needs to be told of the multiplied and various trials which at every step have beset their path? But these trials they have felt themselves called upon to bear with whatever fortitude and cheerfulness the Saviour might afford them, for the sake of the millions, of all complexions and in all conditions, by whom they were surrounded.

In the midst of his disinterested and useful labors, our beloved and revered Lovejoy was cut off by the hand of violence;—but not for himself. He might have retired from the "deadly imminent breach," and escaped the fatal shaft. But he felt himself impelled by authority to

which he had been accustomed meekly and gratefully to bow, to hazard every thing in maintaining at his proper post the inalienable rights of man. *For the inalienable rights of man—for every man, therefore, for whom they are inalienable—Lovejoy bowed his head in death.* He died for his country; for the bond and the free; for his friends and his foes; for the advocates as truly as for the enemies of slavery. The miserable men who murdered him must, as well as others, if remorse should let them live, share in the benefits of his suffering. Yes, brother, as we bend over thy bleeding body, we know, and feel, and acknowledge, that the insufferable insults, “the cruel mockings” and dying agonies which thou hast endured, were meant for us. Thou didst not die as Elijah P. Lovejoy, but as the representative of all who prize principle, conscience, truth, freedom—the smiles of God and the welfare of man, more than life;—for all didst thou die who have rights to maintain, or powers to wield, or privileges to enjoy. Blessings on thy memory now and forever—blessings from Heaven above and the earth beneath—for thy magnanimity in thus nobly acting upon the sublimest Christian maxim: “*He laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren!*” And blessings infinite on the crowned head of Him who graciously enabled thee, in imitation of his own example, thus to welcome vicarious sufferings.

It must not be forgotten *where* the murderers of Lovejoy accomplished their fell designs. Amidst the monuments of freedom—in Illinois—it was that they raised their suicidal hands in defence of slavery. A soil professedly consecrated to freedom, drank our brother’s blood. And let me say, that it stains the hands of every American citizen who has contributed any thing to that *public sentiment* which was the inspiring genius—the evil angel of the men who slew him. Let the conductors of the public press look to it, who have been so base and wicked as to defend slavery and malign the abolitionists;—who again and again have urged on the multitude to deeds of violence which would disgrace the rudest savages. Let the appointed guardians of the public welfare look to it, who have more than once or twice so treacherously refused to protect their fellow-citizens in the enjoyment of their admitted rights. With what astounding force may not the magistracy of Alton plead in self-defence the example of the magistracy of New York, Utica, and Boston! Let the ministers of the Gospel who have refused to pray and preach in behalf of their “countrymen in chains,” look to it. Have they not consented to the death of Lovejoy? What are *they all* but bloody men, who without a word of remonstrance or an effort at resistance, have seen

freedom cloven down in the broad highway? God will find out the guilty. He will put his mark upon their foreheads. Wo, wo, wo to them if they refuse or delay to repent! What is *Alton*, at this moment, but the rendezvous of outlaws—the hiding place of confessed murderers? The North has, indeed, much to do with slavery. Unless it rises in the name of God to hasten its destruction, it cannot long escape its murderous fangs. The life or death of the republic awaits the event of the conflict in which we are now called to mingle.

For thee, brother, why should we mourn? Thou hast found thy place by the side of Stephen, in the glorious army of martyrs who now exult in the smiles of the Captain of their salvation. Welcome to thy reward. There the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. Rest, then, in the bosom of His love who inspired thee with courage and gave thee the victory! But the widowed wife! Thy helpless orphans! Who shall bind up their broken hearts? Who shall cherish and sustain these lambs, amidst the wolves which have drunk the blood of the father and the husband? They shall not be forsaken. They are ours, under God, to support and soothe—to love and bless with the tenderness and warmth of undying attachment. Whose sympathies will not gush forth and whose hand will not be open to the widow and the orphans of our blessed martyr?