

# AMERICAN SLAVERY.

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## REPORT

OF A PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT FINSBURY CHAPEL, MOORFIELDS,  
TO RECEIVE

**FREDERICK DOUGLASS,**

THE AMERICAN SLAVE,

ON FRIDAY MAY 22, 1846.

WITH A FULL REPORT OF HIS SPEECH.

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JOSEPH STURGE ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

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A public meeting was held at Finsbury Chapel, on Friday evening, May 22nd, to receive from Frederick Douglass an account of the dreadful condition, both in law and practice, of 3,000,000 of slaves in the United States. The meeting was convened after three days' notice only, but so intense was the interest excited, that every part of this large edifice was crowded to suffocation. On the platform were the Rev. Drs. Campbell, Carlile, Godwin, and Fletcher, and the Rev. J. H. Hinton, G. W. Alexander, Esq., J. Price, Esq., G. Thompson, Esq., S. Allen Esq., Dr. Oxley, &c.

JOSEPH STURGE, Esq., on taking the chair, rose and said—As the object of the present meeting is to hear an address from Frederick Douglass, I will not detain you more than a very short time by any observations of my own; but I wish to remind our friends that the design of this meeting is not to gratify curiosity, or exhibit an extraordinary instance of the development of the power of the human mind under the most disadvantageous circumstances, but to impress upon every one present, that, as a member of the great family of man, he has a duty to perform in endeavouring to accelerate the day when the chains of slavery shall be broken from nearly 3,000,000 of his fellow-creatures, now in degrading bondage in the United States. (Hear, hear.) I am one of those who thought that the battle of emancipation would next be fought in the French colonies after it had been accomplished by Great Britain. I drew this inference partly from the attendance of M. Guizot at an anti-slavery meeting at Exeter-hall, and from a communication he made to Thomas Clarkson. But, however sincere he may have been in

his wish to emancipate the slaves, there is reason to believe that one who in France is still more powerful is not favourable to it. (Hear, hear.) Events have since arisen that lead us to the conclusion that the next great struggle for breaking the chains of the slave will take place in the United States. There are circumstances that may appear discouraging in that quarter, especially the annexation of Texas, but I believe even that event is giving an impetus to the anti-slavery feeling, which perhaps none else would have done. (Hear, hear.) One ground of encouragement since Frederick Douglass left America has shown itself in the influence of antislavery principles at the recent elections in New Hampshire. In proof of this the chairman read a letter received from John G. Whittier, in which he says:—

“The papers of the next packet will probably inform thee of the result of the late election in the State of New Hampshire. This state, one of the New England states, north of Massachusetts, has been called ‘the South Carolina of the North.’ It has been managed by a class of politicians calling themselves democrats, and boasting of their love of equal rights, yet who, at the same time, have been bitter enemies of the anti-slavery cause. The members of Congress from that state have, with scarce an exception, voted with the slave holders: and their political conventions and legislative sessions have been marked by abuse and misrepresentation of abolitionists. In a previous letter, I believe I spoke of the highly honourable course of one of the New Hampshire delegation in Congress, John P. Hale, who refused to vote against the right of petition, and who would not join with his party in voting for slavery and Texas. For this he was at once proscribed by his party, and assailed by all their presses as ‘a traitor to democracy!’ He has manfully met them, traversing the whole state; and holding up to the people the disgraceful spectacle of a sham democracy allied to slavery. Himself a consistent and true democrat, he has secured the confidence of the people in his integrity, and has brought thousands of voters to take the position of the liberty party—that the abolition of slavery is the paramount question. Great interest has been felt throughout the country in reference to the election of this year in New Hampshire; the slave holders at Washington, it is stated, contributing large sums to sustain their allies in the north. The election took place on the 10th inst. The result is, that the pro-slavery candidate for governor has failed of his election by about one thousand five hundred votes; that only three pro-slavery members of the state senate have been elected. The House of Representatives have a majority of twenty six against them. The New Hampshire Whigs, although they voted for Henry Clay, have not gone so far as the sham democrats in submission to slavery, and as a matter of necessity will be oblig-

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ed to take an anti-slavery position. The liberty men in the state hold the balance of power between them; and the election of a thorough abolitionist, John P. Hale, to the U. S. Senate, will be the first fruit of this victory. The liberty votes have more than doubled in the State during the last year.

"I have dwelt at length upon this election, for it is the most important event in the history of the anti-slavery struggle; and I knew thou would rejoice with me in the prospect which it opens before us. The successful experiment of John P. Hale will show faithless politicians that it is safe to be honest. The support which he received from the people is full of encouragement. It shows that republicanism has a re-co-operative principle—that the heart of the people is sound."

Our friend Douglass (he continued) will also speak of events which have occurred in Scotland. It is well known that the Free Church of Scotland sent a deputation to America, and that the deputation brought back a considerable sum of money from the slave-holding churches. Such is the feeling as to the impropriety of receiving money from such a source, that we hope and believe the Free Church may be induced to send back this money to those from whence it came. (Cheers.) I attach very great importance to this question; and I believe it to be closely connected with the individual duty of all to abstain as much as possible from the products of slave labour; and here I wish it to be understood that I separate this from legislative action, on which there is a difference of opinion. Efforts are now making to supply articles made from free grown cotton to those friends who are anxious to wipe their hands altogether from things stained by the blood of the slave. (Cheers.) It is right to state that Frederick Douglass, up to the period of his manhood, was exposed to all the horrors of slavery, and, what is still worse, to its moral contamination (Hear, hear.) When I state that he has never had a day's education, except what he could obtain for himself, you will feel that if he should employ any terms that are too strong to please a fastidious ear, due allowance should be made for him. (Cheers.) On the other hand, some of our friends may inquire why we should take up distant slavery when there is so much distress at home? To those I would reply, while it is one of the dearest wishes of my heart to live to see the day when just laws should be established in this country, and the poorest of my countrymen should possess every civil, political, and religious privilege of the richest in the land (cheers)—yet, allow me also to state, that the Christian recognises the feeling of universal brotherhood, and "It surely is no crime against the law of love to measure lots with the less distinguished than ourselves; that thus we may with patience bear our moderate ills, and sympathize with others suffering more. I have heard Daniel O'Connell say publicly that the most desti



tute of his countrymen would not exchange places with the most pampered human chattel in America; and Frederick Douglass will tell you, from dear-bought experience, that "'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower of fleeting life its lustre and perfume, and we are weeds without it." (Cheers.) And if I might again quote from England's sweetest Christian poet, I would say, Frederick Douglass exemplifies in his own person the truth of the sentiment with which many of us have been familiar from our youth—

"Fleecy locks, and black complexion,  
Cannot forestall nature's claim;  
Skins may differ, but affection  
Dwells in white and black the same.

F. DOUGLASS rose amid loud cheers, and said—I feel exceedingly glad of the opportunity now afforded me of presenting the claims of my brethren in bonds in the United States to so many in London and from various parts of Britain, who have assembled here on the present occasion. I have nothing to commend me to your consideration in the way of learning, nothing in the way of education, to entitle me to your attention; and you are aware that slavery is a very bad school for rearing teachers of morality and religion. Twenty-one years of my life have been spent in slavery, personal slavery, surrounded by degrading influences such as can exist nowhere beyond the pale of slavery; and it will not be strange, if under such circumstances, I should betray in what I have to say to you a deficiency of that refinement which is seldom or never found, except among persons that have experienced superior advantages to those which I have enjoyed. (Hear, hear.) But I will take it for granted that you know something about the degrading influences of slavery, and that you will not expect great things from me this evening, but simply such facts as I may be able to advance immediately in connection with my own experience of slavery.

The subject of American slavery is beginning to attract the attention of philanthropists of all countries,—it is a matter to which philosophers, statesmen, and theologians, in all parts of the world, are turning their attention. It is a matter in which the people of this country especially, and of Scotland and Ireland, are taking the deepest interest—it is a matter in which all persons, who speak the English language, must eventually become interested. It is no longer an unintelligible or obscure question, although there is much yet to be learned. In order to the proper understanding of the subject before us, allow me briefly to state the nature of the American Government, and the geographical location of slavery in the United States. There are at this time twenty-eight States, called the United States, each of which has a constitution of its own, under which con-

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stitution is convened, from year to year, what is called a local legislature--a legislature that has the power of making the local laws for that state. Each state is considered (within the limits of the constitution) sovereign in itself, but over all the states there is a general government, under a federal constitution, which constitutes these twenty-eight states, the United States. The general government in the Congress, under the constitution, has no right to interfere with the domestic arrangements of the individual states. The general government has the power of levying taxes, providing for the general welfare, regulating commerce, declaring war, and concluding peace. There are what are called free states and slave states; the latter are fifteen in number, the former thirteen. The free states are divided from the slave states by what is called Mason and Dixon's line, running east and west. All the states south of the line are slave states. Notwithstanding the general government has nothing to do with the domestic and the local civil institutions of the individual state, it becomes my duty to show that the general government does after all give support to the institution of slavery as it exists in the slave states. An attempt has been made in this country to establish the conviction that the free states of the Union have nothing whatever to do with the maintenance and perpetuity of slavery in the southern states, and many persons coming from the United States have represented themselves as coming from the free states, and have shirked all responsibility in regard to slavery on this ground. Now, I am here to maintain that slavery is not only a matter belonging to the states south of the line, but is an American institution--a United States institution--a system that derives its support as well from the non-slave-holding states, as they are called, as from the slave-holding states. The slave-holding states, to be sure, enjoy all the profits of slavery--the institution exists upon their soil; but if I were going to give the exact position of the northern and southern states it would be simply this--the slave states are the slave-holding states, while the non-slave states are the slavery-upholding states. The physical power necessary to keep the slaves in bondage lies north of the line. The southern states admit their inability to hold their slaves, except through protection afforded by the northern states. The constitution makes it the duty of the southern states to return the slave if he attempts to escape, to call out the army and navy to crush the slave into subjection, if he dare make an attempt to gain his freedom. The east and the west, the north and the south, the people of Massachusetts and the people of South Carolina have, through their representatives, each in their own official capacity, sworn before high heaven, that the slave shall be a slave or die. So that while the free states of the American Union consent to



what they call the compromise of the constitution of the United States, they are responsible for the existence of slavery in the southern states. (Loud cheers.) There are three millions of slaves, and I believe the largest estimate that has ever been made of the slave-holders does not exceed three hundred thousand. How do you suppose three hundred thousand men are capable of holding three millions of men in slavery? It cannot be. The slaves could by their own power crush their masters if they would, and take their freedom, or they could run away and defy their masters to bring them back. Why do they not do it? It is because the people of the United States are all pledged, bound by their oaths, bound by their citizenship in that country, to bring their whole physical power to bear against the slave if such an event should arise. (Cries of "Shame!") The slave has no hopes from the northern states, for they are in connexion with the slave states of America. Every defender of the American Union, of the compromise of the United States, no matter how much he may boast of his anti-slavery feeling, is, so far as his citizenship goes, a pledged enemy to the emancipation of the bondsman. I have thought it necessary to say thus much that you might see where slavery exists, and how it exists in the United States. The slave-holders admit that they are incapable of retaining their slaves. "Why," said one man. "we are surrounded by savages; if they could entertain the idea that immediate death would not be their portion, they would re-enact the St. Domingo tragedy." (Hear, hear.) The same gentleman goes on to advocate the existence of the slaveholding union between the states, and the utility of the union on the ground that, should it be dissolved, the slave would cross Mason and Dixon's line, and turn round and curse his master from the other side.

Now what is this system of slavery? This is the subject of my lecture this evening—what is the character of this institution? I am about to answer the inquiry, what is American slavery? I do this the more readily, since I have found persons in this country who have identified the term slavery with that which I think it is not, and in some instances, I have feared, in so doing have rather (unwittingly, I know) detracted much from the horror with which the term slavery is contemplated. It is common in this country to distinguish every bad thing by the name slavery. Intemperance is slavery (cheers); to be deprived of the right to vote is slavery, says one; to have to work hard is slavery, says another (laughter, and loud cheers); and I do not know but that if we should let them go on, they would say to eat when we are hungry, to walk when we desire to have exercise, or to minister to our necessities, or have necessities at all, is slavery. (Laughter.) I do not wish for a moment to detract from the horror with which the evil of intemperance is

contemplated; not at all; nor do I wish to throw the slightest obstruction in the way of any political freedom that any class of persons in this coun'ry may desire to obtain. But I am here to say that I think the term slavery is sometimes abused by identifying it with that which it is not. Slavery in the United States is the granting of that power by which one man exercises and enforces a right of property in the body and soul of another. The condition of a slave is simply that of the brute beast. He is a piece of property—a marketable commodity in the language of the law, to be bought or sold at the will and caprice of the master who claims him to be his property; he is spoken of, thought of, and treated as property. His own good, his conscience, his intellect, his affections are all set aside by the master. The will and the wishes of the master are the law of the slave. He is as much a piece of property as a horse. If he is fed, he is fed because he is property. If he is clothed, it is with a view to the increase of his value as property. Whatever of comfort is necessary to him for his body or soul, that is inconsistent with his being property, is carefully wrested from him, not only by public opinion, but by the law of the country. He is carefully deprived of every thing that tends in the slightest degree to detract from his value as property. He is deprived of education. God has given him an intellect—the slave-holder declares it shall not be cultivated. If his moral perception leads him in a course contrary to his value as property, the slave-holder declares he shall not pursue it. The marriage institution cannot exist among slaves, and one sixth of the population of democratic America is denied its privileges by the law of the land. What is to be thought of a nation boasting of its liberty, boasting of its humanity, boasting of its Christianity, boasting of its love of justice and purity, and yet having within its own borders three millions of persons denied by law the right of marriage?—what must be the condition of that people? I need not lift up the veil by giving you any experience of my own. Every one that can put two ideas together, must see the most fearful results from such a state of things as I have just mentioned. If any of these three millions find for themselves companions, and prove themselves honest, upright, virtuous persons to each other, yet in these cases—few as I am bound to confess they are—the virtuous live in constant apprehension of being torn asunder by the merciless men-stealers that claim them as their property. (Hear.) This is American slavery—no marriage—no education—the light of the Gospel shut out from the dark mind of the bondman—and he forbidden by law to learn to read. If a mother shall teach her children to read, the law in Louisiana proclaims that she may be hanged by the neck. (Sensation.) If the father attempt to give his son a knowledge of letters, he may be



punished by the whip in one instance, and in another be killed, at the discretion of the court. Three millions of people shut out from the light of knowledge! It is easy for you to conceive the evil that must result from such a state of things. Hear, hear.)

I now come to the physical evils of slavery. I do not wish to dwell at length upon these, but it seems right to speak of them, not so much to influence your minds on this question, as to let the slave-holders of America know that the curtain which conceals their crimes is being lifted abroad (loud cheers); that we are opening the dark cell, and leading the people into the horrible recesses of what they are pleased to call their domestic institution. (Cheers.) We want them to know that a knowledge of their whippings, their scourgings, their brandings, their chainings, is not confined to their plantations; but that some negro of theirs has broken loose from his chains (loud applause)—has burst through the dark incrustation of slavery, and is now exposing their deeds of deep damnation to the gaze of the Christian people of England. (Immense cheers.)

The slave-holders resort to all kinds of cruelty. If I were disposed, I have matter enough to interest you on this question for five or six evenings, but I will not dwell at length upon these cruelties. Suffice it to say, that all the peculiar modes of torture that were resorted to in the West India Islands, are resorted to, I believe, even more frequently, in the United States of America. Starvation, the bloody whip, the chain, the gag, the thumb-screw, cat-hauling, the cat-o'-nine-tails, the dungeon, the blood-hound, are all in requisition to keep the slave in his condition as a slave in the United States. (Hear.) If any one has a doubt upon this point, I would ask him to read the chapter on slavery in Dickens' *Notes on America*. If any man has a doubt upon it, I have here the "testimony of a thousand witnesses," which I can give at any length, all going to prove the truth of my statement. The bloodhound is regularly trained in the United States, and advertisements are to be found in the southern papers of the Union, from persons advertising themselves as bloodhound trainers, and offering to hunt down slaves at fifteen dollars a piece, recommending their hounds as the fleetest in the neighbourhood, never known to fail. (Much sensation.) Advertisements are from time to time inserted, stating that slaves have escaped with iron collars about their necks, with bands of iron about their feet, marked with the lash, branded with red hot irons, the initials of their master's name burned into their flesh; and the masters advertise the fact of their being thus branded with their own signature, thereby proving to the world, that, however daring it may appear to non-slave-holders, such practices are not regarded discreditable or daring among the slave-holders themselves. Why, I believe if a man should brand



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his horse in this country,—burn the initials of his name into any of his cattle, and publish the ferocious deed here,—that the united execrations of Christians in Britain would descend upon him. (Cheers.) Yet, in the United States, human beings are thus branded. As Whittier says—

“Our countrymen in chains,  
“The whip on woman's shrinking flesh,  
“Our soil yet reddening with the stains,  
“Caught from her scourgings warm and fresh.”

(Loud cheers.) The slave-dealer boldly publishes his infamous acts to the world. Of all things that have been said of slavery to which exception has been taken by slave-holders, this, the charge of cruelty, stands foremost, and yet there is no charge capable of clearer demonstration, than that of the most barbarous inhumanity on the part of the slave-holders towards their slaves. And all this is necessary—it is necessary to resort to these cruelties, in order to *make the slave a slave*, and to *keep him a slave*. Why, my experience all goes to prove the truth of what you will call a marvellous proposition, that the *better* you treat a slave, the more you destroy his value *as a slave*, and enhance the probability of his eluding the grasp of the slaveholder; the more kindly you treat him, the more wretched you make him, while you keep him in the condition of a slave. My experience, I say, confirms the truth of this proposition. When I was treated exceedingly ill, when my back was being scourged daily, when I was kept within an inch of my life, *life* was all I cared for. “Spare my life,” was my continual prayer. When I was looking for the blow about to be inflicted upon my head, I was not thinking of my liberty; it was my life. But, as soon as the blow was not to be feared, then came the longing for liberty. (Cheers.) If a slave has a bad master, his ambition is to get a better; when he gets a better, he aspires to have the best; and when he gets the best, he aspires to be his own master. (Loud cheers.) But the slave must be brutalized to keep him as a slave. The slaveholder feels this necessity. I admit this necessity. If it be right to hold slaves at all, it is right to hold them in the only way in which they can be held; and this can be done only by shutting out the light of education from their minds, and brutalizing their persons. The whip, the chain, the gag, the thumb-screw, the bloodhound, the stocks, and all the other bloody paraphernalia of the slave-system, are indispensably necessary to the relation of master and slave. (Cheers.) The slave must be subjected to these, or he ceases to be a slave. Let him know that the whip is burned, that the fetters have been turned to some useful and profitable employment, that the chain is no longer for his limbs, that the bloodhound is no longer to be put upon his track, that his master's authority over him is no longer to be enforced by taking his

life, and immediately he walks out from the house of bondage and asserts his freedom as a man. (Loud cheers.) The slaveholder finds it necessary to have these implements to keep the slave in bondage; finds it necessary to be able to say,—“Unless you do so and so; unless you do as I bid you, I will take away your life!” (Hear, hear.) Some of the most awful scenes of cruelty are constantly taking place in the middle states of the Union. We have in those states what are called the slave-breeding states. Allow me to speak plainly. (Hear, hear.) Although it is harrowing to your feelings, it is necessary that the facts of the case should be stated. We have in the United States slave-breeding states. The very state from which the Minister from our Court to yours comes is one of these states (cries of “Hear”)—Maryland, where men, women, and children are reared for the market just as horses, sheep, and swine are raised for the market. Slave-rearing is there looked upon as a legitimate trade, the law sanctions it, public opinion upholds it, the church does not condemn it. (Cries of “Shame!”) It goes on in all its bloody horrors, sustained by the auctioneer’s block. If you would see the cruelties of this system, hear the following narrative:—Not long since the following scene occurred. A slave woman and a slave man had united themselves as man and wife in the absence of any law to protect them as man and wife. They had lived together by the permission, not by right, of their master, and they had reared a family. The master found it expedient, and for his interest to sell them. He did not ask them their wishes in regard to the matter at all; they were not consulted. The man and woman were brought to the auctioneer’s block, under the sound of the hammer. The cry was raised, “Here goes; who bids cash?” Think of it, a man and wife to be sold. (Hear, hear.) The woman was placed on the auctioneer’s block; her limbs, as is customary, were brutally exposed to the purchasers, who examined her with all the freedom with which they would examine a horse. There stood the husband powerless; no right to his wife; the master’s right pre-eminent. She was sold. He was next brought to the auctioneer’s block. His eyes followed his wife in the distance; and he looked beseechingly, imploringly to the man that had bought his wife, to buy him also. But he was at length bid off to another person. He was about to be separated from her he loved for ever. No word of his, no work of his, could save him from this separation. He asked permission of his new master to go and take the hand of his wife at parting. It was denied him. In the agony of his soul he rushed from the man who had just bought him, that he might take a farewell of his wife; but his way was obstructed, he was struck over the head with a loaded whip, and was held for a moment; but his agony was too great. When he was let go, he fell a corpse at the feet of



his master. (Much sensation.) His heart was broken. Such scenes are the every-day fruits of American slavery. Some two years since, the Hon. Seth M. Yates, an anti-slavery gentleman of the state of New York, a representative in the Congress of the United States, told me he saw with his own eyes the following circumstance. In the national district of Columbia, over which the star-spangled emblem is constantly waving, where orators are ever holding forth on the subject of American liberty, American democracy, American republicanism, there are two slave prisons. When going across a bridge leading to one of these prisons, he saw a young woman run out, bare-footed and bare-headed, and with very little clothing on. She was running with all speed to the bridge he was approaching. His eye was fixed upon her, and he stopped to see what was the matter. He had not paused long before he saw three men run out after her. He now knew what the nature of the case was, a slave escaping from her chains, a young woman, a sister, escaping from the bondage in which she had been held. She made her way to the bridge, but had not reached it, ere from the Virginia side there came two slave-holders. As soon as they saw them, her pursuers called out, "Stop her." True to their Virginian instincts, they came to the rescue of their brother kidnappers—across the bridge. The poor girl now saw that there was no chance for her. It was a trying time. She knew if she went back, she must be a slave for ever, she must be dragged down to the scenes of pollution which the slave-holders continually provide for most of the poor, sinking, wretched young women, whom they call their property. She formed her resolution; and just as those who were about to take her, were going to put hands upon her, to drag her back, she leaped over the balustrades of the bridge, and down she went to rise no more. (Great sensation.) She chose death, rather than to go back into the hands of those Christian slave-holders from whom she had escaped. (Hear, hear.) Can it be possible that such things as these exist in the United States? Are not these the exceptions? Are any such scenes as this general? Are not such deeds condemned by the law and denounced by public opinion? (Cheers.) Let me read to you a few of the laws of the slave-holding states of America. I think no better exposure of slavery can be made than is made by the laws of the states in which slavery exists. I prefer reading the laws to making any statement in confirmation of what I have said myself; for the slave-holders cannot object to this testimony, since it is the calm, the cool, the deliberate enactment of their wisest heads, of their most clear-sighted, their own constituted representatives. (Hear, hear.) "If more than seven slaves together are found in any road without a white person, twenty lashes a piece; for visiting a plantation without a written pass, ten



lashes; for letting loose a boat from where it is made fast, thirty-nine lashes for the first offence; and for the second, shall have cut off from his head one ear. For keeping or carrying a club, thirty-nine lashes. For having any article for sale, without a ticket from his master, ten lashes.

A Voice.—What is the name of the book?

Mr. DOUGLASS.—I read from *American Slavery as it is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses*. These are extracted from the slave laws. This publication has been before the public of the United States for the last seven years, and not a single fact or statement recorded therein has ever been called in question by a single slave-holder. (Loud cheers.) I read, therefore, with confidence. We have the testimony of the slave-holders themselves. "For travelling in any other than the most usual and accustomed road, when going alone to any place, forty lashes. For travelling in the night without a pass, forty lashes." I am afraid you do not understand the awful character of these lashes. You must bring it before your mind. A human being in a perfect state of nudity, tied hand and foot to a stake, and a strong man standing behind with a heavy whip, knotted at the end, each blow cutting into the flesh, and leaving the warm blood dripping to the feet (sensation); and for these trifles. "For being found in another person's negro-quarters, forty lashes; for hunting with dogs in the woods, thirty lashes; for being on horseback without the written permission of his master, twenty-five lashes; for riding or going abroad in the night, or riding horses in the day time, without leave, a slave may be whipped, cropped, or branded in the cheek with the letter R, or otherwise punished, such punishment not extending to life, or so as to render him unfit for labor." The laws referred to may be found by consulting *Brevard's Digest; Haywood's Manual; Virginia Revised Code; Prince's Digest; Missouri Laws; Mississippi Revised Code;*—

A person in the gallery.—Will you allow me to ask a question?

The CHAIRMAN.—I must beg that there may be no interruptions.

Mr. DOUGLASS.—It is my custom to answer questions when they are put to me.

The Person in the Gallery.—What is the value of a good slave? (Hissing.)

Mr. DOUGLASS.—Slaves vary in price in different parts of the United States. In the middle states, where they grow them for the market, they are much cheaper than in the far south. The slave trader who purchases a slave in Maryland for seven hundred dollars, about one hundred and sixty pounds of your money, will sell him in Louisiana for one thousand dollars, or two hundred pounds. There is a great speculation in this

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matter, and here let me state, that when the price of cotton is high, so is that of the slave. I will give you an invariable rule by which to ascertain the price of human flesh in the United States. When cotton rises in the market in England, the price of human flesh rises in the United States. (Hear, hear.) How much responsibility attaches to you in the use of that commodity. (Loud cheers.) To return to my point. A man for going to visit his brethren, without the permission of his master, and in many instances he may not have that permission, his master from caprice or other reasons, may not be willing to allow it, may be caught on his way, dragged to a post, the branding iron heated, and the name of his master, or the letter R, branded into his cheek or on his forehead. (Sensation.) They treat slaves thus on the principle that they must punish for light offences in order to prevent the commission of larger ones. I wish you to mark that in the single state of Virginia there are seventy-one crimes for which a coloured man may be executed; while there are only three of these crimes, which when committed by a white man will subject him to that punishment. (Hear, hear.) There are many of these crimes which if the white man did not commit, he would be regarded as a scoundrel and a coward. In South Maryland, there is a law to to this effect:—that if a slave shall strike his master, he may be hanged, his head severed from his body, his body quartered, and his head and quarters set up in the most prominent place in the neighbourhood. (Sensation.) If a coloured woman, in the defence of her own virtue, in defence of her own person, should shield herself from the brutal attacks of her tyrannical master, or make the slightest resistance, she may be killed on the spot. (Loud cries of "Shame!") No law whatever will bring the guilty man to justice for the crime. But you will ask me, can these things be possible in a land professing Christianity? Yes, they are so; and this is not the worst. No, a darker feature is yet to be presented than the mere existence of these facts. I have to inform you that the religion of the southern states, at this time, is the great supporter, the great sanctioner of the bloody atrocities to which I have referred. (Deep sensation.) While America is printing tracts and bibles; sending missionaries abroad to convert the heathen; expending her money in various ways for the promotion of the Gospel in foreign lands, the slave not only lies forgotten—uncared for, but is trampled under foot by the very churches of the land. What have we in America? Why we have slavery made part of the religion of the land. Yes, the pulpit there stands up as the great defender of this cursed *institution*, as it is called. Ministers of religion come forward, and torture the hallowed pages of inspired wisdom to sanction the bloody deed. (Loud cries of "Shame!") They stand forth as the foremost, the



strongest defenders of this "institution." As a proof of this, I need not do more than state the general fact, that slavery has existed under the droppings of the sanctuary of the south, for the last two hundred years, and there has not been any war between the *religion* and the *slavery* of the south. Whips, chains, gags, and thumb-screws have all lain under the droppings of the sanctuary, and instead of rusting from off the limbs of the bondman, those droppings have served to preserve them in all their strength. Instead of preaching the Gospel against this tyranny and rebuking this wrong, ministers of religion have sought, by all and every means, to throw in the background whatever in the Bible could be construed into opposition to slavery, and to bring forward that which they could torture into its support. (Cries of "Shame!") This I conceive to be the darkest feature of slavery, and the most difficult to attack, because it is identified with religion, and exposes those who denounce it to the charge of infidelity. Yes, those with whom I have been labouring, namely, the old organization Anti-Slavery Society of America, have been again and again stigmatized as infidels, and for what reason? Why, solely in consequence of the faithfulness of their attacks upon the slave-holding religion of the southern states, and the northern religion that sympathizes with it. (Hear, hear.) I have found it difficult to speak on this matter without persons coming forward and saying, "Douglass, are you not afraid of injuring the cause of Christ? You do not desire to do so, we know; but are you not undermining religion?" This has been said to me again and again, even since I came to this country, but I cannot be induced to leave off these exposures. (Loud cheers.) I love the religion of our blessed Saviour, I love that religion that comes from above, in the "wisdom of God, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." I love that religion that sends its votaries to bind up the wounds of him that has fallen among thieves. I love that religion that makes it the duty of its disciples to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction. I love that religion that is based upon the glorious principle, of love to God and love to man (cheers); which makes its followers do unto others as they themselves would be done by. If you demand liberty to yourself, it says, grant it to your neighbours. If you claim a right to think for yourselves, it says, allow your neighbours the same right. It is because I love this religion that I hate the slave-holding, the woman-whipping, the mind-darkening, the soul-destroying religion that exists in the southern states of America. (Immense cheering.) It is because I regard the one as good, and pure, and holy, that I cannot but regard the other as bad, corrupt, and wicked. Loving the one I must hate the other, holding to the one I must reject



the other, and I, therefore, proclaim myself an infidel to the slaveholding religion of America. (Reiterated cheers.) Why, as I said in another place, to a smaller audience the other day, in answer to the question, "Mr. Douglass, are there not Methodist churches, Baptist churches, Congregational churches, Episcopal churches, Roman Catholic churches, Presbyterian churches in the United States; and in the southern states of America, and do they not have revivals of religion, accessions to their ranks from day to day, and will you tell me that these men are not followers of the meek and lowly Saviour?" Most unhesitatingly I do. Revivals in religion, and revivals in the slave trade, go hand in hand together. (Cheers.) The church and the slave prison stand next to each other; the groans and cries of the heart-broken slave are often drowned in the pious devotions of his religious master. (Hear, hear.) The church-going bell and the auctioneer's bell chime in with each other; the pulpit and the auctioneer's block stand in the same neighbourhood; while the blood-stained gold goes to support the pulpit, the pulpit covers the infernal business with the garb of Christianity. We have men sold to build churches, women sold to support missionaries, and babies sold to buy bibles and communion services for the churches. (Loud cheers.)

A Voice.—It is not true.

Mr. DOUGLASS.—Not true! is it not! (Immense cheers.) Hear the following advertisement:—"Field Negroes, by Thomas Gadsden." I read now from *The American Churches, the Bulwarks of American Slavery*; by an American, or by J. G. Birney. This has been before the public in this country and the United States for the last six years; not a fact nor a statement in it has been called in question. (Cheers.) The following is taken from the *Charleston Courier* of Feb. 12, 1835:—"Field Negroes, by Thomas Gadsden. On Tuesday, the 17th inst., will be sold, at the North of the Exchange, at 10 o'clock, a prime gang of ten negroes, accustomed to the culture of cotton and provisions, belonging to the Independent Church, in Christchurch parish." (Loud cheers.) I could read other testimony on this point, but is it necessary? (Cries of "No," and "One more.") Is it required that one more be given? You shall have another. (Loud cheers.) A notice taken from a Savannah paper will show that slaves are often bequeathed to the missionary societies. "Bryan Superior Court. Between John J. Maxwell and others, executors of Ann Pray, complainants, and Mary Sleigh and others, devisees and legatees under the will of Ann Pray, defendants, in equity. A bill having been filed for the distribution of the estate of the testatrix, Ann Pray, and it appearing that among other legacies in her will is the following:—viz., a legacy of one fourth of certain negro slaves to the American Board of Commissioners for domestic

(foreign it probably should have been) missions, for the purpose of sending the Gospel to the heathen, and particularly to the Indians of this continent; it is on motion of the solicitors of the complainants ordered, that all persons claiming the said legacy do appear and answer the bill of the complainants within four months from this day. And it is ordered, that this order be published in a public Gazette of the city of Savannah, and in one of the Gazettes of Philadelphia, once a month, for four months. Extract from the minutes, December 2, 1832." (Cheers.) The bequest I am in duty bound to say, was not accepted by the board. (Cheers.) But let me tell you what would have been accepted by that board. Had those slaves been sold by Ann Pray, and the money bequeathed to that board, the price of their blood would have gone into the treasury, and they would have quoted Chalmers, Cunningham, and Candlish in support of the deed. (Cheers.) Not only are legacies left and slaves sold in this way to build churches, but the right is openly defended by the church. In 1838 the great Methodist Church in America, holding, through ministers, and elders, and members, in their own church 250,000 slaves, said in their general conference in Cincinnati that they had no right, no wish, no intention to interfere with the relation of master and slave as it existed in the slave states of the American union. What was this but saying to the world, we have no right, no wish, no intention to release the bondman from his chains? The annual conference in the south took the broad ground of the right of property in man, asserting it in a resolution, proclaiming it in an address, preaching it in thanksgiving sermons, putting it forth in 4th of July orations, and even quoting Scripture. I could tire your patience by reading if it were required, extracts from documents, the genuineness of which has never been called in question, showing that the right is asserted by the slave-holder, to property in human beings. (Hear, hear.)

But I must hasten to another point—How are we to get rid of this system? This is the question which mostly concerns the people of this country. There are different ways by which you may operate against slavery. First let me state how it is upheld; it is upheld by public opinion. How is public opinion maintained? Mainly by the press and by the pulpit. How are we to get these committed on the side of freedom. How are we to change our pro-slavery pulpit into an anti-slavery one, our pro-slavery literature to anti-slavery literature, our pro-slavery press into an anti-slavery press? I can only point British abolitionists to the mode they adopted in their own country. Here, happily for you, the pulpit was already on your side to a considerable extent, at least the Dissenting pulpit. (Cheers.) The Wesleyans have retained a sufficiency of the



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spirit of their founder, John Wesley, to declare with him, that slavery is the sum of all villainies. (Cheers.) You had but to proclaim the sin of slavery in the people's ears, and they rallied around your standard on behalf of emancipation. Not so in our country. They have taken the strongest ground against us, but I am in duty bound to say that in the northern states they are fast getting into your own way. I will, however, speak of this under another head. We have had the pulpit against us. I am not here to represent one class of abolitionists, particularly, in the United States, but the cause of the slave, and the friends of the slave, at large. However, I am more interested in the religious aspect of this question than in its political aspect. There are two classes of abolitionists in the United States; one takes the ground that slavery is the creature of the law, that it must, therefore, be proceeded against as such; and they have formed themselves into what is called, "The liberty party." There is another class—that with which I am particularly associated, and they take the ground that our energies should be devoted to the purifying of the moral sentiment of the country, by directing its energies to the purification of the church, and the exclusion of slave-holders from communion with it. (Loud cheers.) We have proceeded at once to expose the inconsistency of retaining men-stealers as members of the Church of Christ. Our attention was more particularly turned to this, by this able collection of facts by J. G. Birney, who was in this country about six years since. He brought together a number of facts, showing that the American churches were the bulwarks of American slavery. Finding this to be the case, we brought the denunciations of the inspired volume to bear against slave-holding and slave-holders; for after all, it is with the slave-holder that we have to do, and not with the system. It is easy to denounce the system; many of the slave-holders will hold up their hands to denounce the system; the Free Church of Scotland will denounce the system, but the brand of infamy is to be fixed upon the brow of the slave-holder. (Cheers.) Here alone we can successfully meet and overthrow this system of iniquity. The abolitionists have been labouring for the last fifteen years, in season and out of season, in the midst of obloquy and reproach, in the midst of mobs and various kinds of opposition, to establish the conviction that slave-holding is a sin, and that the slave-holder is a sinner and ought to be treated as such. (Loud cheers.) Thanks to heaven, we have succeeded to a considerable extent in establishing this conviction in the minds of the people in the north, and to some extent in the south. Our efforts have been devoted to bringing the denunciations of religion against it. In this way we have succeeded in expelling pro-slavery, and putting in their stead, anti-slavery publications. Half-a-dozen



faithful abolitionists in the north were found sufficient to purify a church. Never was the truth of that saying in the Scriptures more beautifully illustrated, that "one should chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight," than in the history of this movement as regards members of the church. Five or six members would band together and say to the minister, "We want you to remember the poor slave in your prayers. We hear you thank God that you live in a land of civil and religious liberty, and yet, you make no reference to the three millions who are denied the privilege of learning the name of the God that made them. We ask you to pray for the slave." He would say, "No; I cannot pray for the slave, I should give offence to that rich member of my church who contributes largely to my salary. I may drive him from the church, and may be the means of destroying his soul. (Laughter.) Is it not better that I should preach such doctrines as would retain him in the church, and thereby, by enunciating great principles, be the means eventually—mark, eventually—of bringing him to a sense of his duty in this matter? I cannot mention the slave." But the brethren insisted upon it, growing more and more firm. In the prayer meeting *they* would pray for the slave. (Cheers.) In the conference meeting *they* would exhort for the slave; they would tell of his woes, and beg their brethren to unite with them; the consequence would be, that in a short time they must be put out of the church, or they must leave the church. Often they would say to the minister, "Unless you remember the bondman we cannot support you; we must leave our pews vacant." One vacant pew, is all-powerful in asserting a great and glorious principle, when it is vacant in consequence of adherence to it. A few vacant seats, would soon make the minister see that something must be done for the slave, and he would commit himself by opening his mouth in prayer. To be sure this is not the highest motive by which he could be influenced; but this was one of the motives, and I think a legitimate one, by which the friends might operate on the man. For, after all, bread and butter has a great influence on the subject. (Laughter and cheers.) I am convinced, however, that a great number of northern pulpits, came up to this glorious work from higher motives than self-interest; and I believe their hearts were always on the side of the slave, and their only fear was, they could not live and preach the Gospel. They thought it was necessary for them to live. George Bradburn, an individual whom some of you may remember was present at the World's Convention in 1840, said, he was once met by a minister, who said to him, "Brother Bradburn, I think you abolitionists are too severe upon us poor ministers; we have to take a great deal; you do not seem to remember it is necessary we should live." Said George Bradburn, in his peculiar way, "I do not

admit any such necessity. (Laughter.) I hold that it is not necessary for any man to live unless he can live honestly." (Cheers) Our proceedings with the church have had the effect of dissolving several very important connexions with the slave states. Previously to this movement the slave-holding minister could come to the north and preach in our pulpits; the northern minister could go to the south and preach in their pulpits; the slave-holding minister of a church could come and join a northern church; and the northern church minister could go and join the southern church. All were woven and interwoven, linked and interlinked together; they had a common cause to maintain. Now we have succeeded in making it unpopular and discreditable to hold Christian fellowship with slave-holders. (Cheers.) The great Methodist general conference in 1844, came to the decision that it was at least not expedient, or rather it was inexpedient, for a bishop to hold slaves. This was a great step. (Hear, hear.) I must dwell upon this, not, however, to reflect on our Methodist brethren, but as an illustration of the state of morals in the church. A slave-holding bishop, Bishop Andrews, of South Carolina, married a slave-holding wife, and became the possessor of fifteen slaves. At this time, the Methodist church in the north, were of opinion that bishops should not hold slaves. They remonstrated with the conference to induce Bishop Andrews to emancipate his slaves. The conference did it in this way if they did it all. A resolution was brought in, when the bishop was present, to the following effect:—"Whereas Bishop Andrews has connected himself with slavery, and has thereby injured his itinerancy as a bishop,"—it was not, "Whereas Bishop Andrews has connected himself with slavery, and has thereby become guilty, or has done a great wrong;"—but "has thereby injured his itinerancy as a bishop; we therefore resolve that Bishop Andrews be, and he hereby is,"—what?—"requested to suspend his labours as bishop till he can get rid of"—what?—"slavery?"—"his impediment." (Laughter.) This was the name given to slavery. One might have inferred from the preamble that it was to get rid of his wife. (Laughter and loud cheers.) How long did it take to pass that resolution? They remained in New York discussing this question three weeks. They had fasting and prayers; they had various kinds of meetings. Part of the slave-holding ministers remonstrated against the resolution, as an insult to the slave-holding members of the conference. The resolution, however, was passed, although it was partly recalled by subsequent action on the part of the general conference. Such was the determination of the slave-holding members of that conference to adhere to the institution of slavery, that they at once moved for a dissolution of fellowship with the northern anti-slavery members of that conference. It



was not the northern members that came out from the slave-holding members, but the slave-holding members that came out from the northern members. (Hear, hear.) I am glad the secession took place; it was our efforts in the north that made it necessary. "Coming events cast their shadows before them." They saw that the spirit that was manifested in 1844, that the holding of slaves was injurious to the itinerancy of the bishop, would in 1848, in all probability, go so far as to say that it was not only injurious to this itinerancy, but at variance with the law of God, and they have now seceded. It was to get rid of the anti-slavery men, but they took the wrong course to preserve their institution. What we want is to get the slave-holders pent up by themselves; too little distinction has been drawn between the slave-holder and the anti-slavery man, between the pure and the base. We want to get slave-holding politics, slave-holding civility, slave-holding religion, slave-holding ministers, slave-holding bishops, slave-holding church members, slave-holding churches, and slave-holding everything, in a position where the eyes of the world can look at them, without looking through any other thing else. (Cheers.) This we are doing. The Baptists have dissolved their connexion. The Free-will Baptists have long done so. The Covenanters have always been separated. The Society of Friends many years ago set an example to the world of excluding slave-holders. (Loud cheers.) We have succeeded in creating a warm and determined religious feeling against slavery. Even political abolitionists are opposed to slavery on religious ground; although I feel that they have not been so active on religious grounds as they ought to have been, yet I would not say that they have been without religious influence in bringing forward this question. Although they could not do so in their party, they have done so as individuals. Gerrit Smith has taken a leading part. William Goodell is calling for separation from slave-holders; and a great mass of the abolitionists of New York are taking ground against the union with slave-holders in a religious form. We have succeeded in divorcing slave-holders from the church to a considerable extent. I fear that I am proceeding at too great a length. (Cries of "No, no.") I therefore come back hastily to what I wish you to do.

The CHAIRMAN here rose, and said,—There is not a foot of ground in the United States where Frederick Douglass's legal owner would not have a right to seize him. This man, as may be supposed, is highly enraged at the course he is pursuing, and this stimulates his desire to get possession of his person, and to inflict upon him the punishment which he thinks his conduct deserves. Frederick Douglass has left a wife and four children in America, and I wish to state that he has published



a little book, entitled *The Narrative of Frederick Douglass*, which may be had at the door, and by the sale of which he and his wife and children are supported.

A Voice.—Who is his legal owner?

Mr. DOUGLASS.—I ran away from Thomas Auld, of St. Michael's, Talbot county, Maryland, who was my legal owner. Since I came to this country, I have, as our president has said, published a narrative of my experience, and I kindly sent a copy to my master. (Laughter, and cheers.) He has become so offended with me, that he says he will not own me any longer, and, in his boundless generosity, he has transferred his legal right in my body and soul to his brother, Hugh Auld (laughter), who now lives in Baltimore, and who declares that he will have me if ever I set my foot on American soil. (Hear, hear.)

I may be asked, why I am so anxious to bring this subject before the British public—why I do not confine my efforts to the United States? My answer is, first, that slavery is the common enemy of mankind, and all mankind should be made acquainted with its abominable character. (Cheers.) My next answer is, that the slave is a man, and, as such, is entitled to your sympathy as a brother. (Hear, hear.) All the feelings, all the susceptibilities, all the capacities, which you have, he has. He is a part of the human family. He has been the prey—the common prey—of Christendom for the last three-hundred years, and it is but right, it is but just, it is but proper, that his wrongs should be known throughout the world. (Cheers.) I have another reason for bringing this matter before the British public, and it is this, slavery is a system of wrong, so blinding to all around, so hardening to the heart, so corrupting to the morals, so deleterious to religion, so sapping to all the principles of justice in its immediate vicinity, that the community surrounding it lack the moral stamina necessary to its removal. It is a system of such gigantic evil, so strong, so overwhelming in its power, that no one nation is equal to its removal. It requires the humanity of Christianity, the morality of the world, to remove it. (Cheers.) Hence I call upon the people of Britain to look at this matter, and to exert the influence I am about to show they possess, for the removal of slavery from America. I can appeal to them, as strongly by their regard for the slave-holder as for the slave, to labour in this cause. (Hear, hear.) I am here because you have an influence on America that no other nation can have. You have been drawn together by the power of steam to a marvellous extent; the distance between London and Boston is now reduced to twelve or fourteen days, so that the denunciations against slavery uttered in London this week, may be heard in a fortnight in the streets of Boston, and reverberating amidst the hills of Massachusetts. There is nothing said here against slavery, that will not be re-

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corded in the United States. (Hear, hear.) I am here also, because the slave-holders do not want me to be here; they would rather that I was not here. (Cheers.) I have adopted a maxim laid down by Napoleon, never to occupy ground which the enemy would like me to occupy. The slave-holders would much rather have me, if I will denounce slavery, denounce it in the northern states, where their friends and supporters are, who will stand by and mob me for denouncing it. (Cheers.) They feel something like the man felt, when he uttered his prayer, in which he made out a most horrible case for himself, and one of his neighbours touched him and said, "My friend, I always had the opinion of you that you have now expressed for yourself—that you are a very great sinner." Coming from himself it was all very well, but coming from a stranger it was rather cutting. (Cheers.) The slave-holders felt that when slavery was denounced among themselves, it was not so bad, but let one of the slaves get loose, let him summon the people of Britain, and make known to them the conduct of the slave-holders towards their slaves, and it cuts them to the quick, and produces a sensation such as would be produced by nothing else. (Cheers.) The power I exert now is something like the power that is exerted by the man at the end of the lever; my influence now is just in proportion to the distance that I am from the United States. My exposure of slavery abroad will tell more upon the hearts and consciences of slave-holders, than if I was attacking them in America, for almost every paper that I now receive from the United States comes teeming with statements about this fugitive negro, calling him a "glib-tongued scoundrel" (laughter), and saying that he is running out against the institutions and people of America. I deny the charge, that I am saying a word against the institutions of America or the people as such. What I have to say is against slavery and slave-holders. I feel at liberty to speak on this subject. I have on my back the marks of the lash; I have four sisters and one brother now under the galling chain. I feel it my duty to cry aloud and spare not. (Loud cheers.) I am not averse to having the good opinion of my fellow-creatures. I am not averse to being kindly regarded by all men, but I am bound even at the hazard of making a large class of religionists in this country hate me, oppose me, and malign me as they have done—I am bound by the prayers and tears and entreaties of three millions of kneeling bondsmen, to have no compromise with men who are in any shape or form connected with the slave-holders of America. (Reiterated cheers.) I expose slavery in this country, because to expose it is to kill it. Slavery is one of those monsters of darkness to whom the light of truth is death. Expose slavery, and it dies. Light is to slavery what the heat of the sun is to the root of a tree, it must die under it. All the slave-holder



asks of me, is silence. He does not ask me to go abroad and preach in favour of slavery; he does not ask any one to do that. He would not say that slavery is a good thing, but the best under the circumstances. The slave-holders want total darkness on the subject. They want the hatchway shut down, that the monster may crawl in his den of darkness, crushing human hopes and happiness, destroying the bondman at will, and having no one to reprove or rebuke him. Slavery shrinks from the light, it hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest its deeds should be reprov'd. (Cheers.) To tear off the mask from this abominable system, to expose it to the light of heaven, aye, to the heat of the sun, that it may burn and wither it out of existence, is my object in coming to this country. (Cheers.) But I am here because certain individuals have seen fit to come to this land, to misrepresent the character of the abolitionists, misrepresent the character of the slaves, misrepresent the character of the coloured people, and have sought to turn off attention from the slave system of America. I am here to revive this attention, and to fix it on the slave-holders. What would I have you then to do? I would have the church, in the first place—Methodist, Baptist, Congregationalist, all persuasions—to declare, in their conventions, associations, synods, conferences, or whatever be their ecclesiastical meetings, "*no Christian fellowship with slave-holders.*" (Loud cheers.) I want the slave-holder surrounded, as by a wall of anti-slavery fire, so that he may see the condemnation of himself and his system glaring down in letters of light. I want him to feel that he has no sympathy in England, Scotland, or Ireland; that he has none in Canada, none in Mexico, none among the poor wild Indians; that the voice of the civilized, aye, and savage world, is against him. I would have condemnation blaze down upon him in every direction, till, stunned and overwhelmed with shame and confusion, he is compelled to let go the grasp he holds upon the persons of his victims, and restore them to their long-lost rights. (Loud cheers.) Here, then, is work for us all to do. Let me say to the churches that have spoken on the subject, I thank you with my whole heart. I thank the Evangelical Alliance, though I would rather they had taken stronger ground, and not only have said, "Slave-holders shall not be invited," but "Slave-holders shall not be admitted."\* (Loud cheers.) I am a great lover of music, but I never heard any music half so sweet to my ears, as the voice of our president last night at another meeting,—the Temperance meeting at Exeter-hall—where a motion was made to the following effect—"That this meeting learns with pleasure the determination of the National Temperance Society to hold a world's convention in August next. On that resolution, our

\* Alas the Evangelical Alliance has since done worse.

worthy president said that the fifty pounds he was to give to that society would be withheld if they admitted slave-holders to that convention. (Loud cheers.) The fact is out: it has gone careering across the Atlantic, and it will fall amidst slave-holders like a bomb-shell. I have to say to those who have spoken on the subject, that they have not only my gratitude, but the gratitude of the millions ready to perish. But I have to say to you further, although you have done much, there is much more to be done. If you have whispered truth, whisper no longer: speak as the tempest does—stronger and stronger. Let your voices be heard through the press, through the pulpit, in all directions. Let the atmosphere of Britain be such that a slave-holder may not be able to breathe it. Let him feel his lungs oppressed the moment he steps on British soil. (Loud cheers.) Why should the slave-holder breathe British atmosphere when it is such as it is? (Hear, hear.) I had heard of Britain long before I got out of slavery. I had not heard of it in the eloquent strains and eloquent language of Curran; but I had heard of the great truth embodied in that eloquent sentence which proclaims that the moment a slave sets his foot on British soil his body swells beyond the measure of his chains—they burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated, disenthralled by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation. (Loud cheers.)

One word about the Free Church of Scotland. (Cheers.) The facts ought to be stated. The Free Church of Scotland—do you know what Church that is? I have been talking to a people who do not need any explanation on the subject; for I have been in Scotland recently. About two years ago the Free Church of Scotland sent a deputation to the United States, composed of the Rev. Dr. Cunningham, Mr. Chalmers of this city, Mr. Lewis of Dundee, Mr. Fergusson, and Dr. Burns, for the purpose of explaining the disruption that occurred in Scotland to the people of America, and of soliciting pecuniary aid to enable the Free Church to build churches and to pay their ministers. On reaching the United States, the deputation were very early addressed by the committee of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, beseeching them in the most Christian and powerful manner not to go into the slave states and solicit aid from slave-holders, not to take the price of blood to build free churches and pay free church ministers in Scotland. (Hear, hear.) The deputation did not heed this advice; they went at the invitation of a slave-holder, Dr. Smythe, into the slave states. They were admitted into the pulpits of slave-holders; they were welcomed to the houses of slave-holders; they enjoyed all the hospitalities and attentions that the slave-holders were capable of showering upon them; and they took the slave-holders' money, or rather the money of which the



slave-holders had robbed the slaves. (Hear, hear.) They have returned to Scotland, and have deliberately attempted, and persevered in their attempt, to show that slavery in itself is not inconsistent with Christian fellowship. (Cries of "Shame!" and hisses.) I hear a hiss. ("Not at you.") I am used to being hissed in Scotland on this subject (laughter), for they do not like me to state the thing in my own language. They have undertaken to show, that neither Christ nor his Apostles, had any objection to slave-holders being admitted to church fellowship. They have undertaken to show, that the Apostle Paul in sending Onesimus back to Philemon, sanctioned the relation of master and slave. (Hear, hear.) Their arguments on this question are vain, being quoted in the United States by the slave-holding, pro-slavery papers against the abolitionists, and against those who are separating from the slave-holder. (Hear.) Now I have to bring certain charges against that deputation. I charge them, in the first place, with having struck hands in Christian fellowship with men-stealers. (Cheers.) I charge them, in the next place, with having taken the produce of human blood to build free churches, and to pay free church ministers in Scotland. I charge them with having done this knowingly, (cheers), they having been met by a remonstrance against such conduct by the executive committee of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. I have to charge them with going among men-stealers, with a perfect knowledge that they were such. (Cheers.) I have to charge them with taking money that not only was stolen, but which they knew to be stolen. I have to charge them, moreover, with going into a country where they saw three millions of people deprived of every right, stripped of every privilege, driven like brutes from time into eternity in the dark, robbed of all that makes life dear, the marriage institution destroyed, men herded together like beasts, deprived of the privilege of learning to read the name of the God who made them; and yet that deputation did not utter a word of denunciation against the man-stealer, or a word of sympathy, for these poor, outraged, long-neglected people. (Loud cries of "Shame!") What I want the brethren of England to do is this; to tell the Free Church of Scotland that they have done wrong. (Immense cheers.) Christians of England! we want you to say to the Free Church of Scotland, the words you have just heard:— "*Send back the money.*" (Cheers.) They can never remonstrate against the slave-holder while they hold on to the money; therefore they should send it back. I want you to aid my friend, my eloquent friend, the slaves' friend, Mr. George Thompson. (Loud cheers.) My friend Mr. Thompson and myself expect to leave early to-morrow for Scotland; we are going there with few of the wealthy, few of the influential to second our efforts. We believe that it is the duty of the Free

Church of Scotland to send back the money. I believe it is in our power, under God, to induce a state of feeling in Scotland which will demand the sending back of that money. We now want your aid; we want you to raise your voices and your sympathies. Let us have your sympathy. *Write*, "Send back the money." *Speak*, "Send back the money." *Preach*, "Send back the money." (Immense cheering.) I believe that the sending back of that money to the United States, will do more to unrivet the fetters, to break the chains of the bondsman, and to hasten the day of emancipation, than years of lecturing by the most eloquent abolitionists. It would produce such an effect, that it would send slavery staggering to its grave as if struck by the voice of Heaven. The truth is, the slave-holders have now scarcely anywhere to lean. They leaned against the northern states—the abolitionists have removed their prop. They used to lean a good deal on their religious fellowship in England. It was once said to a person, "You come from Maryland: are you a slave-holder?" "Yes." "Then you cannot come in." (Cheers.) The Christian people of England are beginning to see the inconsistency of holding fellowship with these men, and are breaking loose from them. The United Secession Synod has declared unanimously, that it will no longer strike hands in Christian fellowship with the men-stealers in America. (Cheers.) The Relief Synod, whose meeting is now in session in Edinburgh, has come to the same unanimous conclusion. (Cheers.) The Evangelical Alliance has said, through Dr. Candlish one of the Free Church leaders, that the slave-holders ought not to be invited. I tell you slavery cannot live with all these stabs. "Send back the money—send back the money." (Loud cheers.) If it is not inconsistent with this meeting, allow me to do what I have done in Scotland. I want to have all the children writing about the streets "Send back the money." I want to have all the people saying "Send back the money;" and in order to rivet these words in the minds of the audience, I propose that they give three cheers, not hurrahs, but say "Send back the money." (The vast assembly spontaneously complied with Mr. Douglass's request. The effect produced was indescribable. Mr. Douglass then sat down amid reiterated rounds of applause.)

Dr. CAMPBELL then stood forward, and was received with loud cheers, on the subsidence of which he said—The money—the money—the money—will be sent back. (Cheers.) The people of England—of whom I look upon this meeting as a fair specimen—will demand that the money be sent back. (Cheers.) The people of England will have no fellowship with slave holders. No small sum of the entire contributions raised by the Free Church, was contributed by the people of this country, and if the Evangelical Alliance reject the slave-holder—we reject the



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slave-holders' money. This money and ours shall not clink in the same box. (Loud cheers.) The Free Church, at this moment, is an object of interest to the civilized world. Dr. Chalmers's name is of itself a power, a tower of strength. Dr. Chalmers has said some of the best things against slavery that mortal man ever uttered; and Dr. Candlish has done, if possible, even more than he. I read a speech yesterday morning; a speech worthy of Cicero or Demosthenes; a more glorious speech British type never put together, and the British press never gave to mankind; it was the speech of George Thompson of Glasgow. (Cheers.) I declare that when it was read to me my hair stood on end. (Hear, hear.) He has done many noble things; his is a noble name in connexion with the anti-slavery movement. and now Frederick Douglass, the "beast of burden," the portion of "goods and chattels," the representative of three millions of men, has been raised up! Shall I say the *man*, (cheers) if there is a man on earth, he is a man. (Cheers.) My blood boiled within me when I heard his address to-night, and thought that he had left behind him three millions of such men. The Free Church made a noble struggle for what they call liberty, and they, of all mankind, ought to be the last to patronize slavery. The Free Church will not do it; they do not mean to do it; but they have got into a false position, and would give a world, if they had one, to see a fair way of getting out of it. The Free church ministers are a body of noble men, and the Free Church people are every way worthy of their ministry. The sum itself is a trifle. I believe they have received, after all, only just enough to pollute the glorious stream which from honorable sources, has been poured into their treasury. To what does it amount? To the paltry sum of 3,000*l.*, out of an amount somewhere about 750,000*l.* or 760,000*l.* (Hear, hear.) Will they be losers by parting with this 3,000*l.*? If they could only just succeed in a manly effort to eat their own unwise words, to shift their position, they might soon extricate themselves. They will, they must give it up. (Cheers.) You have given three cheers for the surrender of the money. In one of the Scotch papers this man (Douglass), this mighty man, is represented as going to the foot of Arthur's Seat, with a spade, and two fair Quakeresses as his companions, where he began to carve out with the spade, on the green grass, very beautifully "Send back the money." (Laughter, and loud cheers.) The paper goes on to say, that he was apprised in the midst of the philanthropic work that it was a felony, and that he would be at the tender mercies of a Mr. Baillie Gray. I do not think that a man who has braved the fury of the slave-holder, would be likely to tremble at the name of Baillie Gray. (Cheers. But the matter must not end thus. We must see more of this man (cheers), we must have more of this man. One would have

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taken a voyage round the globe some forty years back—especially since the introduction of steam—to have heard such an exposure from the lips of a slave. (Cheers.) It will be an era in the individual history of the present assembly. Our children—our boys and girls—I have to-night seen the delightful sympathy of their hearts evinced by their heaving breasts, while their eyes sparkled with wonder and admiration, that this black man—this slave, had so much logic—so much wit—so much fancy—so much eloquence. He was something more than a man according to their little notions. (Cheers.) Then, I say, we must hear him again. We have got a purpose to accomplish. He has appealed to the pulpit of England. The English pulpit is with him. He has appealed to the press of England—the press of England is conducted by English hearts, and that press will do him justice. About ten days hence and his second master, who may well prize “such a piece of goods” (cheers), will have the pleasure of reading his burning words, and his first master will bless himself that he has got quit of him. (Laughter, and cheers.) We have to create public opinion, or rather, not to create it, for it is created already (cheers); but we have to foster it; and when to-night I heard those magnificent words—the words of Curran, by which my heart, from boyhood has oft-times been deeply moved—I rejoice to think that they embody an instinct of an Englishman’s nature. I heard, with inexpressible delight, how they told on this mighty mass of the citizens of the metropolis. (Cheers.) Britain has now no slaves; we can therefore talk to other nations now, as we could not have talked a dozen years ago. (Hear, hear.) I want the whole of the London ministry to meet Douglass. (Cheers.) For as his appeal is to England, and throughout England, I should rejoice in the idea of Churchmen and Dissenters merging all sectional distinctions in this cause. Let us have a public breakfast. (Cheers.) Let the ministers meet him; let them hear him; let them grasp his hand; and let him enlist their sympathies on behalf of the slave. (Cheers.) Let him inspire them with abhorrence of the man-stealer—the slave-holder. No slave-holding American shall ever cross my door. (Loud cheers.) No slave-holding or slavery-supporting minister shall ever pollute my pulpit. (Renewed cheers.) While I have a tongue to speak, or a hand to write, I will, to the utmost of my power, oppose these slave-holding men. (Cheers.) We must have Douglass amongst us to aid in fostering public opinion. The great conflict with slavery must now take place in America; and while they are adding other slave states to the Union, our business is to step forward and help the abolitionists there. (Cheers.) It is a pleasing circumstance that such a body of men has risen in America, and, whilst we hurl our thunders against her slavers, let us make a distinction between those who advo-



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cate slavery and those who oppose it. (Hear, hear.) George Thompson has been there. (Cheers.) This man, Frederick Douglass, has been there, and has been compelled to flee. (Cheers.) I wish, when he first set foot on our shores, he had made a solemn vow, and said—"Now that I am free, and in the sanctuary of freedom, I will never return till I have seen the emancipation of my country completed." (Cheers.) He wants to surround these men, the slave-holders, as by a wall of fire; and he himself may do much towards kindling it. Let him travel over the island, east, west, north, and south, everywhere diffusing knowledge and awakening principle, till the whole nation become a body of petitioners to America. (Cheers.) He will, he must do it. He must for a season make England his home. He must send for his wife. (Immense cheers.) He must send for his children. (Renewed cheers.) I want to see the sons and daughters of such a sire. (Loud cheers.) We, too, must do something for him and them worthy of the English name. (Cheers.) I do not like the idea of a man of such mental dimensions, such moral courage, and all but incomparable talent, having his own small wants, and the wants of a distant wife and children supplied by the poor profits of his publication, the sketch of his life. Let the pamphlet be bought by tens of thousands. But we will do something more for him, shall we not? (Loud cries of "Yes, yes.") I know you will. (Cheers.) He is going to Scotland, and George Thompson is going with him. (Cheers.) George Thompson's name in Scotland is mighty. (Hear, hear.) I am continually in the receipt of papers from Scotland, and I find that there is a preparation going on there for a glorious struggle. The Free Church is now met; and these men are on their way with the tongue of truth and the torch of eloquence. (Cheers.) The Old Church, the Bond Church, over which the Free Church obtained such a triumph, are Thompsonites to a man, and they join in the cry, "Send back the money." (Cheers.) The "Residuary Church," the "Bondsmea" the "Erastians," that it was said would "do any thing for bread and butter," have now had an opportunity afforded them for the recovery of their popularity, and they will not neglect it; and while they are doing their part admirably, the whole of the Dissenters are with George Thompson. (Cheers.) It only remains that we pass a resolution of thanks to Frederick Douglass, the slave that was, the man that is! He that was covered with chains, and that is now being covered with glory, and whom we will send back a gentleman. (Cheers.) The resolution I have to move is this:—

"That the cordial thanks of this meeting be presented to Frederick Douglass, the representative and advocate of three millions of American slaves, whose deplorable condition, both in law and practice, whilst it reflects the deepest disgrace on

the republican institutions and Christian professions of the United States, excites in the heart of every friend of humanity and freedom the liveliest sympathy and commiseration. And further, that this meeting would encourage the noble band of abolitionists of every political party and religious denomination in the United States to unite in one common, vigorous, and persevering effort to promote the entire abolition of the system of slavery which unhappily prevails among them."

Such is the resolution I have the honour to move, and I esteem it one of the greatest felicities that has ever occurred to me in my public life. (Long continued cheers.)

G. W. ALEXANDER, Esq., in seconding the resolution, said— I shall scarcely do more than express my cordial approval of the motion that has been made. I shall, however, venture to say that I entirely agree in the sentiment expressed by Joseph Sturge yesterday, that as a friend of the Temperance Society I can have nothing to do with any conference to which a slave-holder shall be admitted. (Cheers.) I will give fifty pounds towards that convention, but I will not sit with slave-holders and men-stealers. (Cheers.) The evils of slavery have been exposed so fully by the eloquent slave you have heard, that it would be vain to attempt to urge the subject further upon you. I will, however, recall one or two facts to your attention to which he has not adverted, and which appear of considerable interest and importance. He has not alluded to the fact, that not merely is the slave liable to lose his life for attempting to escape, but the white man for assisting him in it is also liable to death. An individual was sentenced by a person making a high profession of religion for this alleged crime, and it was only by the sympathy expressed in resolutions sent from this country to America that that sentence was not executed. (Hear, hear.) The very fact that slavery exists in Columbia, is a proof that the whole of the United States are implicated in that system, because the Federal Government has power over it, and yet the slave market exists in the very capital of America. Not only is this the case, but in the capital not merely are the slaves forbidden to be taught to read, but even the free people of color. This has been stated by one of the deputation of the Free Church that went to America. The same member also states, that it was his lot on more than one occasion, to travel with slaves who were being taken to the far south, and were, in all human probability separated for ever from their wives and children.

The resolution was then put, and carried by loud acclamation.

JOHN SCOBLE, Esq., briefly seconded the resolution, which was put and carried amid long-continued cheers.

GEORGE THOMPSON, Esq., being loudly called for, then rose and said—I did not anticipate so very satisfactory a termination, as I suppose I may regard this resolution to be, of the proceedings



of to-night. I expected—what all who knew my friend Frederick Douglass expected, when attending a lecture delivered by him—a very high intellectual treat; but I did not expect that there would emanate from this meeting the resolution which you have so unanimously and so enthusiastically adopted. You have done well; you have done a good part in this vast meeting, by thus bearing your testimony against the error committed by the Free Church of Scotland in receiving contributions from the slave states of America. A word in behalf of the people in connection with that church. The facts of the case are these:—The money being received by the deputation, brought home by them, and appropriated by those who have the management of the affairs of the Free Church, there does exist in the minds of the deputation, and their intimate friends in the Free Church, a very strong disinclination to send the money back. They had committed themselves before the agitation of the question in Scotland to any great extent. When it was spoken of in the newspapers, a defence was set up of the course the deputation had pursued, and it became necessary, as the opposition grew stronger, to utter this defence over and over again, till, unhappily, some of the most distinguished and illustrious men connected with that church were so deeply committed by the reiterated expression of their opinion, that I do not know that a more hopeless task could be imposed upon any individuals in the world than was imposed upon them, to recant their opinions and record the return of the money. The people of the Free Church are with you. They are remonstrating with their ministers, and they are leaving their churches. (Cheers.) The majority of the ministers of that church are with us, and I do believe that if Dr. Chalmers were to rise in the assembly of the Free Church and propose the sending back the money, with tears of joy in the court below, and in the gallery above, they would unanimously bless him for his act, and rejoice that the church was restored to the character she enjoyed ere that money was brought to their treasury. (Hear, hear.) But still I have seen no indication of any disposition on the part of these leading ministers to give way. They have argued upon the question, written upon it most subtly, and Dr. Candlish, in a deliverance he prepared for the assembly, endeavoured to argue that there is a distinction between the system and the men, and while he has denounced the system, he has preserved the men; I do not see how, without a frank acknowledgment of error, they can undo what they have done. (Hear, hear.) But they must restore the money, or witness a rent in the church. (Cheers.) People come to us, literally weeping over the error that has been committed by the deputation. They are singing songs in the streets of Scotland, "Send back the money." (Cheers.) They are writing on the walls of the Free Churches,

"Send back the money." (Cheers.) And when a gentleman with a black coat and a white neckerchief passes through the streets, a little child whispers, "Send back the money." (Loud cheers.) The money must go back, or that event will take place to which I have referred. There has been one wish expressed by Dr. Campbell, which I desire most earnestly that you should remember. Privileged to enjoy the friendship of Frederick Douglass, I know that Dr. Campbell touched a tender chord when he referred to the fact of his separation from his wife and children. It was only the night before last that he expressed to me, and he knew not that I should mention it, his deep uneasiness, his restlessness, his inability to enjoy the kindness he everywhere experiences, while separated from those who to him are all the world; and his determination to pack up and be off, and endeavour, by some means or other, to return with them, that he might, in freedom and happiness, have about him in this country those whom he loves. He has not got rich by making speeches; but this I know, and I speak it to his credit, he has pursued a most independent course in this country. (Cheers.) He has shown any thing but a desire to turn his great abilities for the advocacy of this cause to his own account. (Hear, hear.) He is willing to spend and to be spent, and I do trust that we shall be of opinion that he shall not be permitted to live alone in this land; and indeed, I do not know that his children are safe. You know the application of these remarks.

JOHN SCOBLE, Esq., here rose, and announced a donation of five pounds towards sending for Mrs. Douglass and her children; which was followed by loud cheers.

The CHAIRMAN rose and said—The question of bringing over Frederick Douglass's wife and family, is one on which, both as to the time and manner, you would, I know, wish to consult his feelings. I have just been asking him whether he would prefer going for them, or they should be sent for at once? He says he should prefer the latter. My friend, G. W. Alexander, has authorised me to say he will give twenty pounds towards this object, and I shall have pleasure in doing the same. Cheers.

Several other donations were then announced; and it was stated that special subscriptions for this object would be received by Mr. Alexander, in Lombard-street, and at the Anti-Slavery-office.

GEORGE THOMPSON, Esq., said that the course which had just been pursued, would not only have the effect of making their friend happy in the society of those whom he loved, but they could scarcely furnish stronger demonstration of their efforts on behalf of the slave, than by making this kingdom the asylum of this man and his family, and by subscribing the means of bringing them amongst them.

The meeting then separated.