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SLAVERY.

SLAVERY is a grave offence against the slave, his owner, society, and the pure and undefiled religion of love and charity, taught by Christ, but not yet in practice by his professed disciples. The infant slave at birth possesses all the divine qualities of humanity fresh from his Creator, and, of every shade of colour, is capable of being made a good and valuable citizen of the world. These infants are capable of being so placed, trained, educated, and employed, by a new combination of rational surroundings, that they may be made to become at maturity far more valuable and much better members of society than any citizen now living in any country. Better and of more value, because all of every country have been to this day mis-placed, mis-trained, mis-educated, mis-employed, and mis-governed, and in consequence have been forced to become far more inferior, and of much less value to society, than all of humankind may be made to become, when they shall be from birth rationally placed, trained, educated, employed, and governed, through a new and rational combination of surroundings, formed in accordance with the laws of God and nature—thus creating consistency and unceasing harmony between man, nature, and God.

Slavery is a grave offence against the owner of slaves. The slave is an essentially bad surrounding to the master and family by whom he is kept as a slave. The master and his family must in consequence be deteriorated in all their faculties, physical and mental; and it is utterly impossible for them while retaining slaves in their service to become Christians,—except in name. They must of necessity be cruel hypocrites or grossly irrational; for as Christians they profess charity and love for the human race,—even to love their enemies; while in practice they are doing the greatest injury to their near neighbour—their slave; and not to benefit the master or his family, but to make both continually to profess one thing and act another.

Slavery is a grave and heinous offence against society. For while it is continued and sanctioned by human laws, and countenanced by custom, most injurious and irrational surroundings must be created and maintained, against the best interests of society; and while these inferior and deteriorating surroundings, which are absolutely necessary for the continuance of slavery,

are in existence, they obstruct and prevent the possibility of introducing good and rational surroundings. And let it never be forgotten that, according to all past and present experience,—As are men's natural qualities, made by God, and their surroundings, made by society, so must men become. Bad and inferior surroundings must make bad and inferior men :—Good and superior surroundings must make good and superior men.

Will the *savans* of to-day, the scientific and wise men of the most advanced nations, have the kindness to make something like an approximate estimate of the difference in the amount and degree of happiness to be experienced, between a society made by its surrounding to become bad and inferior, and a society made by its surroundings to become good and superior ? And also of the difference in the difficulty of governing the society made to become irrational, and the society made to become rational ? When they shall have solved these two problems, the advanced and prominent statesmen and the deeply learned political economists may be then requested to prepare a budget of the finances, or production and expenditure of these opposing societies.

These difficulties once fairly made known to the public, would, it is believed, settle the question for ever between bad and inferior, and good and superior surroundings of all nations and peoples.

Will the writers in the leading journals, daily and weekly, with the monthly periodicals, take up these subjects of deep and lasting interest to the human race ? And will they now abandon their waste of time, and the waste of the time of the population of the world, in giving to the public the endless local nothings, necessarily arising, and continually recurring, from the irrational surroundings which ignorance of human nature and its laws has induced all nations to create and maintain, in direct opposition to universal facts and self-evident deductions from them ? How much might they write upon these subjects to enlighten themselves and the public ! How evident is it to those who know the inward feelings of the best minds in society, that they are now yearning strongly for real knowledge ! Not for cunning—how to attain money and position in society, but how to acquire and maintain happiness, or, in other words, how to attain the knowledge and the means by which they can be placed within rational and common-sense surroundings—such surroundings as will not only permit, but strongly assist them to acquire and practice the divine principles of universal love and charity, and to apply themselves with all sincerity, earnestness, and energy, to promote the happiness of all around them.

Who can so feel and act under the presesent irrational, opposing, repulsive, and false system of society ? Not one,—however he may be inclined to do so in all sincerity of purpose.

Such, however, is the state of society, arising from the error on which alone it is based, and such the involved entanglement

produced by the contending and opposing interests arising of necessity from this false fundamental error, that slavery cannot now be suddenly abolished without producing great present evils, and even dangerous results to the peace of any nation which may attempt in ignorance to effect thus prematurely one of the most virtuous actions. While I was in the United States, and when my son Robert Dale Owen was an active member in their Congress, I was with him anxious to see this vexed question permanently adjusted, with the least ill-will and least injury to all parties. We saw the error of the violence of the two parties which divided the north from the south. I was intimate with John C. Calhoun, from 1824, to 1847 when I last returned from the United States. I was well acquainted through him with the strong educated prejudices of the south in favour of slavery, and how very sensitive he was himself upon this subject. I was also well acquainted with several leading Abolitionists, with their strong right feelings on the subject, and their many educated prejudices against the true spirit and right measures by which the evil of slavery was to be overcome. Both parties then exhibited and now exhibit a great want of a correct knowledge of human nature and of the new acquired productive powers from the sciences of chemistry and mechanics, when they shall be wisely applied. A knowledge of human nature would have given the slave-owner a knowledge of the high value which correct conduct would give to every infant of every shade and colour. A knowledge of the immense productive powers acquired within the last century would have enabled both parties to have discovered that these new powers, whenever understood and rightly applied, would render slavery not only unnecessary in any part of the world, but less profitable than free servitude, as long as society should find free servitude necessary and profitable. Thus knowing and to a considerable extent having the confidence of the leading advocates for and against slavery, I wrote a letter intended for the Washington journals of both parties—those journals being always open to my communications. The letter contained the substance of the plan stated, and I took it to Mr. Calhoun to ask his opinion of the practical measures I proposed, by which to gradually abolish slavery in the United States. He read it with strong sensitive feeling, and then earnestly intreated me not to publish it; for he said it would create an excitement that might be dangerous to both parties, north and south.

My friendship for him and my estimate of his many virtues and amiable private character induced me to accede to his wishes, and I withheld the publication of the letter. My experience from that period, (1845 or 1846,) has confirmed me in the views I then held upon the subject, and upon this gradual abolition of American slavery—a slavery so utterly unworthy of the nation assuming to be the leading nation in personal and national

liberty and progress in civilisation. A nation which possesses such an extraordinary amount of advantages for entire independence of the rest of the world, ought to set an example to all other nations and peoples over the globe, of right, justice, and freedom from physical and mental slavery.

The conditions proposed for the gradual abolition of slavery in the United States were as follows:—

1st.—That from and after a day to be named, (say 1st of January in the following year,) all children of slaves shall be born free,—but the owner of the parent or parents of the new free born, shall well train or educate him or her, as the case may be, to become a good and valuable citizen of the United States.

2nd.—The owner shall keep a just account of the cost of keep and of education against the free born citizen, and against this account place the value of the services of the free-born, either male or female, and as soon as these accounts balance each other, then the free born to be at liberty to choose his or her own service or employment, and to receive their own earned wages or remuneration, making their own bargain.

3rd.—A commission of five to be appointed in each state—two from the south to see justice done to the owner,—two from the north, to see justice done to the slave,—and these four to appoint a mutual person to keep harmony by his aid and vote between all parties interested.

This is a short outline for the consideration of the parties now unwisely in conflict.

How long is the human race yet to be influenced and governed by violence, force, and hostile feelings, instead of the far more effective feelings of charity and love, of calm patience and wise consideration, all parties making due allowance for the educated prejudices and injurious surroundings of their opponents! Surely the time is near at hand when all will see and feel the necessity of ceasing to obstruct its coming, as society is evidently preparing for this change.
