

LETTER OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE BAPTIST UNION, TO THE BOARD OF THE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION OF BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES.

London, Sept. 13, 1836.

Dear Brethren,—The letter of April last, addressed by you, on behalf of the Convention, to the Union of Baptist churches in Great Britain, arrived in sufficient time to be read at one of the meetings of this body in June; and we have the opportunity of giving you the most emphatic assurance, therefore, that it was received in a spirit of fervent Christian love and delight. We feel that we love you, because of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ towards you, and because of his image in you; most earnestly do we pray, that the one may become daily more perfect, and the other more abundant.

We acknowledge, that you take a correct view of the position which we occupy, and the warfare to which we are called. We have to contend "with usages and opinions time-hallowed, and endeared by a thousand cherished recollections, and to break down barriers guarded by an interested and powerful hierarchy." It is of the highest moment, that we should gird ourselves for the conflict, in the strength and in the spirit of Christ. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, neither should our temper be secular. We are not permitted to doubt, that spiritual weapons shall be mighty, through God, to pull down strong holds. Pray for us, that, in all our exertions, we may both aim at his glory, and promote it. With gratitude to God we can say, that the internal mischief to which you have alluded, is sensibly on the decline.

Though grateful, we are not surprised, to learn that our deputed brethren acquired among you "a deep personal regard." We take this opportunity of repeating our acknowledgments (already publicly expressed) of the kind and courteous manner in which they were received. May we be permitted, also, to express our sincere regret, that we had not the pleasure of welcoming to our assemblies a deputation in return!

You have solicited "the continuance of our correspondence from year to year." And you have solicited it upon terms most frank and honourable. You "entreat" us, "as we also entreat you," not only to assist you with our "counsel," but, "as faithful brethren, to remind you" of any "danger" to which we may deem you to be exposed; and as, of course, there could be no satisfactory correspondence upon any other principles, so, we trust, it will not be displeasing to you, if we bring them into action on the present occasion. Whatever freedom we may be con-

ceived to take, we certainly cherish the spirit, and we hope to use the language, both of affection and respect.

Our deputed brethren, although they did not mention the subject of slavery in the public proceedings of the Convention, at a private meeting, assembled for the purpose, made known the feelings of pain and lamentation with which our body, in common with all religious bodies in this country, at that time regarded the state of American society, and American churches, in reference to it. Since that period our feelings have grown far more deep and solemn. The facts which have been brought to light have afflicted us beyond measure, and have made us feel it our imperative duty to put into a channel of public utterance the sentiments of the united churches, in the series of resolutions, which were passed unanimously at the public meeting on the 22d of June, and which we transmit to you herewith.

We are not uninformed of the degree in which, in the American Union, slavery is either incorporated in the social system, or upheld by public opinion; nor have we been unobservant of the sensitiveness with which remarks on it, whether foreign or domestic, have been almost universally received. We have no wish to give offence, but our duty to God and to man will not permit us to be silent, nor can we believe, after what you have written, that you wish us to be so. You will not refuse to consider what, "as faithful brethren," we address to you; and most sincerely do we add our prayer, "The Lord give you understanding in all things!"

It is surely a position which admits of no dispute, that in this, as in other matters, a line of conduct may be expected from the disciples of Christ, materially different from that which may be anticipated from men of the world. Of what use, otherwise, are the rectitude and tenderness of conscience, the holy light, and the exalted principles which characterize a Christian? Now it is to the churches, of which you are the representatives, that we make our appeal. Professors of the name of Christ! whatever others do, we entreat *you*, neither hold a slave, nor countenance slavery.

According to some allegations, indeed, which, with whatever truth, have been made on behalf of American slaveholders, we are called upon to believe, that, through the force of iniquitous laws, the liberation of slaves is impracticable. Otherwise, we are assured, many would gladly set them free: but in existing circumstances, it is necessary, and even obligatory, to detain them. Of course, we understand this as the language of lamentation and complaint. Here is a practical, and avowedly regretted, restriction on the