

and children, as brute beasts are sold, be in conformity with the pure principles of the word of God. Looking at the principles of God's word apart altogether from any positive prohibition of slavery, I should say *a priori*, that the system of holding such a property in man, was opposed to the mind and will of God.

B. I should take this as a token of the humane feelings of my friend. But here stands the matter; the apologists for slavery demand a positive prohibition, and nothing short of this will bend them to give up the hold they have of their African brethren. And it is but justice to say, that I have heard of slave-holders being such kind friends to the slave, that he has become perfectly satisfied with his condition.

A. Doubtless there have been humane pirates too, but did this circumstance justify piracy. My friend seems to think, that the slave-holders are such men that they are only waiting for farther light on the path of duty,—so that, when it is received, they will readily set at liberty their families of bondsmen. But does my friend remember the conduct of a royal slave-holder recorded in Scripture. He received a positive injunction concerning the Israelites in their bondage within his dominions. But did Pharaoh of Egypt obey the divine command? I true not. The clearer it was, he hardened his heart the more, and refused to obey. So is it with the slave-holder. The Scriptures give evidence enough to shew that the right of property in the Africans, is a foul usurpation on the part of their masters. And yet it is maintained,—yes, and will doubtless be apologized for too, until these modern tyrants receive an overthrow akin to that of the ancient taskmasters of Egypt, in the Red Sea.

B. Is not, then, the Lord's deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt, a testimony against the lawfulness of slavery? There was no necessity for this act, had slavery been a thing of indifference. The Lord might easily have accomplished all his purpose concerning Israel, though in a state of servitude. But the fact, that he saved them from slavery, and placed them in a state of freedom, seems demonstrative enough, that the conduct of the slave-holder is opposed to the mind of the merciful God, who hath made of one blood all the nations of men.

A. My friend has made something like a near cut to the argument I was about to advance. I confess I like what he has said regarding the deliverance of Israel from the Egyptian bondage, as bearing upon the ques-

tion of slavery,—seeing it goes to shew that there is a warrant for a christian legislature abolishing the whole system. The slave-holders and their friends are fond of arguing that Scripture leaves the slave holding form of society entire, and only presents motives to the hearts and understandings of christians, urging to acts of honesty and kindness; but your argument goes to shew, that though Israel were not all converted men, yet, that God in mercy to them as a nation, struck off their fetters and set them free.

B. The wise man has said, "iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend," and such I have experienced at this time. Your conversation has given me so much new light on this subject, that I must acknowledge the obligation to be wholly on my part. I had often heard it asserted, that Scripture was entirely silent about the framework of society, and that it was a matter of indifference whether men were in a state of slavery or not, but certainly the deliverance of the Israelitish nation from Egyptian slavery demonstrates the erroneousness of such a view. However, as my friend has promised something farther, I shall gladly listen to whatever argument he may adduce, by way of exposing the true nature of this moral pestilence, which has so long afflicted a large portion of our race.—But has my friend ever reflected upon the fact, that the Jews were allowed to make slaves of the nations round about?

A. As my friend has manifested so much of candour in this discussion, I should wish the more earnestly to expose the baselessness of the whole fabric of slavery. The heathen nations in and around Canaan, were accounted the enemies of God, and the Israelites were commanded to destroy them; but surely this commandment can never be pleaded as an abolition of the anterior law of God, forbidding the shedding of man's blood,—and with as little reason can the permission allowed to the Jews, of enslaving the captives of the nations round about, be pleaded as a reversal of the anterior law of love and equity to our brethren of mankind. The answer given by Christ on a like occasion is fully in point,—"from the beginning it was not so." It is vain, therefore, to plead the permission given to the Jews, of making slaves of the heathen, as warranting a similar permission to the Gentiles, of making slaves of each other. A Jew may rightfully plead this apology for slavery, but in the mouth of a Gentile it is absurd.