

Supplementary Readings

To be used with *The Shaping of American Congregationalism*

Readings in the History and Polity of the National
Association of Congregational Christian Churches

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Rev. Dr. Arlin T. Larson, editor

PREFACE

Learning about the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches is not easy. No comprehensive history has been written. Only a few of the founders remain active. No seminary offers a course tailored to it. Months or years of participation, informal contacts, and overhearing the scuttlebutt are usually required. The "Congregational History and Polity" course is designed to accelerate the learning curve by immersing the student in modern Congregationalism's traditions and practices, as well as in the more comprehensive Congregational story.

We see this as essential for seminarians seeking a firm foundation in the community they are preparing to serve. Equally important is educating the many ministers who come to Congregationalism from other traditions. Church members seeking a better understanding of their faith may also appreciate a package that brings widely scattered materials together.

The first volume, for instance, *of Readings in the History and Polity of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches* collects Congregational reflections of the nature of the church(es) as recorded in the *Congregationalist* magazine. The articles collected are neither comprehensive nor definitive; we are not even certain to what extent they are representative. What can, however, be said is that the authors are men and women active in the Association whose views the magazine's editors deemed worthy of distribution.

At the very least the readings collected inform the reader of the parameters of discussion within the NACCC. They will additionally provide an introduction to leaders of the Congregational way and hopefully some insight into this movement's peculiar contribution to the Body of Christ.

This project is in its early stages. We would appreciate your suggestions and notice of our errors and omissions.

Rev. Dr. Arlin T. Larson, editor

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INTRODUCTION

Though of paramount importance to the sixteenth century founders of Congregationalism, and to the twentieth century founders of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, polity concerns have never constituted the sole focus of Congregationalism. Congregationalists have been deeply involved in the full range of American intellectual, cultural, social, and political life. The Supplementary Readings will engage you in this wider scope of concerns. Most are excerpted from longer works, hoping to give the flavor of the authors' style and letting them define the issues in their own terms. Perhaps you will want to follow up with the complete version of some. The Congregational Library in Boston is available to help you find documents that are no longer in print.

These authors expressed concerns and views in ways considered exemplary or definitive by their contemporaries. It behooves us to pay attention. To understand earlier sections of the path we are now on. To gain insight into contemporary situations. Perhaps even to be wakened to issues and modes of understanding to which our ancestors were better attuned than we. Are certain actual events the will and action of God & others not? When, for example, Edward Johnson marvels at the "Wonder-working Providence of Zion's Savior," which he sees at work in the Puritan migration, it makes our contemporary sense of God's working seem vague & indefinite. As mainline Protestantism is challenged by Pentecostalism and evangelicalism, the early Congregationalists' focus on conversion and church membership again becomes relevant. Urbanism, multiculturalism, immigration? We have still not resolved the issues attended to by Josiah Strong and Washington Gladden.

Some works may feel vaguely alien, even objectionable, from a twentieth century perspective. It could be literary style. The use of "f" for "s" and "v" for "u" (and vice versa), the "thee's" and "thou's" of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Or it may be more substantive. Jonathon Edward's "angry God." William Ellery Channing's debunking of traditional doctrines. Josiah Strong's celebration of (and challenge to) the "Anglo-Saxon" race. The point, however, is not so much to judge as to understand the depth and scope of Congregational faith, and to appreciate its enormous creativity. Hopefully to let our minds be expanded by our forebearers and join the dialogue with them in contemporary circumstances.



A respectable number of Citizens having formed themselves into a Society for promoting the Manumission of Slaves, and protecting such of them as have been, or may be, liberated, the following Extracts from their Proceedings, are published for the information of the Public.

“ **T**HE benevolent Creator and Father of men, having given to them all an equal right to life, liberty, and property, no Sovereign power on earth can justly deprive them of either; but in conformity to impartial government and laws to which they have expressly or tacitly consented.

“ It is our duty, therefore, both as free Citizens and Christians, not only to regard with compassion, the injustice done to those among us who are held as slaves; but to endeavour, by lawful ways and means, to enable them to share equally with us, in that civil and religious Liberty, with which an indulgent providence has blessed these States, and to which these our brethren are, by nature, as much entitled to as ourselves.

“ The violent attempts lately made to seize and export for sale, several free Negroes, who were peaceably following their respective occupations, in this city, must excite the indignation of every friend to humanity, and ought to receive exemplary punishment.

“ The hope of impunity is too often an invincible temptation to transgression; and as the helpless condition of the persons alluded to, doubtless exposed them to the outrage they experienced, so it is probable that the like circumstances may again expose them and others to similar violences. Destitute of friends and of knowledge, struggling with poverty, and accustomed to submission, they are under great disadvantages in asserting their rights.

“ These considerations induce us to form ourselves into a Society, to be stiled a Society for promoting the Manumission of Slaves, and protecting such of them as have been, or may be, liberated.

To the Honourable Members of the CONTINENTAL
CONGRESS, Representatives of the THIRTEEN
UNITED AMERICAN COLONIES*.

MUCH HONOURED GENTLEMEN,

AS God the Great Father of the Universe, has made you the fathers of these Colonies; and in answer to the prayers of his people, given you counsel, and that wisdom and integrity, in the exertion of which, you have been such great and extensive blessings, and obtained the approbation and applause of your constituents, and the respect and veneration of the nations in whose sight you have acted, in the important, noble struggle for LIBERTY: We naturally look to you in behalf of more than half a million of persons in these Colonies, who are under such a degree of oppression and tyranny, as to be wholly deprived of all civil and personal liberty, to which they have as good a right as any of their fellow-men, and are reduced to the most abject state of bondage and slavery, without any just cause.

We have particular encouragement thus to apply to you, since you have had the honour and happiness of leading these Colonies to resolve to stop the slave-trade; and to buy no more slaves imported from Africa. We have the satisfaction of the best assurances that you have done this not merely from political reasons; but from a conviction of the unrighteousness and cruelty of that trade, and a regard to justice and benevolence, deeply sensible of the inconsistency of promoting the slavery of the Africans, at the same time we are asserting our own civil liberty, at the risque of our fortunes and lives. This leaves in our minds no doubt of your being sensible of the equal unrighteousness and

* The reader is desired to observe, that the first edition of this dialogue was published early in the year 1776, before the declaration of our Independence.

oppression, as well as inconsistency with ourselves, in holding so many hundreds of thousand of blacks in slavery, who have an equal right to freedom with ourselves, while we are maintaining this struggle for our own and our children's liberty and a hope and confidence that the cries and tears of these oppressed will be regarded by you; and that your wisdom and the great influence you have in these colonies, will be so properly and effectually exerted, as to bring about a total abolition of slavery, in such a manner as shall greatly promote the happiness of those oppressed strangers, and the best interest of the public.

There are many difficulties and obstacles; we are sensible, in the way of this good work. But when the propriety, importance, and necessity of it, come into view, we think ourselves warranted to address you, in the words spoken to Ezra, on an occasion not wholly dissimilar. "Arise, for this matter belongeth unto you; we also will be with you: be of good courage and do it."

The righteous and merciful governor of the world has given the greatest encouragement to go on, and thoroughly execute judgment, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, both in his word, and in the wonderful things he has done for us since we have began to reform this public iniquity. But if we stop here, what will be the consequence!—

It is observable, that when the Swiss were engaged in their struggle for liberty, in which they so remarkably succeeded, they entered into the following public resolve: "No Swiss shall take away any thing by violence from another, neither in time of war, nor peace." * How reasonable and important is it that we should at this time heartily enter into, and thoroughly execute such a resolution! And that this implies the emancipation of all our African slaves, surely none can doubt.

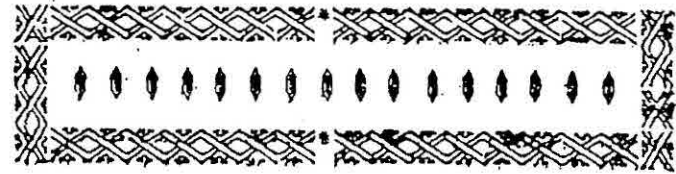
* Dr. Zuber's Short Account, p. 41.

In this view, the following dialogue is humbly offered to your perusal, hoping that it may have your approbation and patronage.

May you judge the poor of the people, save the children of the needy, relieve the oppressed, and deliver the spoiled out of the hands of the oppressor; and be the happy instruments of procuring and establishing universal LIBERTY to white and black, to be transmitted down to the latest posterity! With high esteem, and the most friendly sentiments, We are, honourable Gentlemen,

Your very humble servants,

THE EDITORS.



A. DIALOGUE, &c.

A. SIR, What do you think of the motion made by some among us, to free all our *African slaves*? They say, that our holding these blacks in slavery, as we do, is an open violation of the law of God, and is so great an instance of unrighteousness and cruelty, that we cannot expect deliverance from present calamities, and success in our struggle for liberty in the *American colonies*, until we repent, and make all the restitution in our power. For my part, I think they carry things much too far on this head; and if any thing might be done for the freedom of our slaves, this is not a proper time to attend to it, while we are in such a state of war and distress, and affairs of much greater importance demand all our attention, and the utmost exertion of the public.

B. Sir, I am glad you have introduced this subject, especially, as you own a number of these slaves; I shall attend to it with pleasure, and offer my sentiments upon it freely, expecting you will as freely propose the objections you shall have against any thing I shall advance. And I take leave here to observe, that if the slavery in which we hold the blacks, is wrong; it is a very great and public sin; and therefore a sin which God is now testifying against in the calamities he has brought upon us, consequently must be reformed, before we can reasonably expect deliverance, or even sincerely ask for it. It would be worse than madness then, to put off attention to this matter, under the notion of attending to more important affairs. This is acting like the mariner, who, when his ship is filling with water, neglects to stop the leak or ply the pump, that he may mend his

sails. There are at the lowest computation, 800,000 slaves in *British America*, including the *West-India* islands; and a great part of these, are in the colonies on the continent. And if this is in every instance wrong, unrighteousness and oppression; it must be a very great and crying sin, there being nothing of the kind equal to it on the face of the earth. There are but few of these slaves, indeed in *New-England*, compared with the vast numbers in the islands and the southern colonies; and they are treated much better on the continent, and especially among us, than they are in the *West-Indies*. But if it be all wrong, and real oppression of the poor helpless blacks, we, by refusing to break this yoke, and let these injured captives go free, do practically justify and support this slavery in general, and make ourselves, in a measure at least, answerable for the whole: and we have no way to exculpate ourselves from the guilt of the whole, and bear proper testimony against this great evil, but by freeing all our slaves. Surely then, this matter admits of no delay; but demands our first, and most serious attention, and speedy reformation.

A. I acknowledge the *slave trade*, as it has been carried on with the *Africans*, cannot be justified. But I am not yet convinced that it is wrong to keep those in perpetual bondage, who by this trade have been transported from *Africa* to us, and are become our slaves. If I viewed this in the light you do, I should agree with you that it is of the highest importance that they should all be made free without delay; as we could not expect the favour of Heaven, or with any consistency ask it, so long as they are held in bondage.

B. I am glad you have attended to the affair so much as to be convinced of the unrighteousness of the slave trade. Indeed, this conviction has been so spread of late, that it is has reached almost all men on the continent, except some of those who are too deeply interested in it, to admit the light which condemns it. And it has now but few advocates, I believe; being generally condemned and exploded. And the members of the

Continental Congress have done themselves much honour, in advising the *American* colonies to drop this trade entirely; and resolving not to buy another slave, that shall be imported from *Africa*.

But I think it of importance that this trade should not only be condemned as wrong, but attentively considered in its real nature, and all its shocking attendants and circumstances; which will lead us to think of it with a detestation and horror, which this scene of inhumanity, oppression and cruelty, exceeding every thing of the kind that has ever been perpetrated by the sons of men, is suited to excite; and awaken us to a proper indignation against the authors of this violence and outrage, done to their fellow men; and to feelings of humanity and pity towards our brethren, who are the miserable sufferers. Therefore, though I am not able to paint this horrid scene of barbarity and complicated iniquity, to the life, or even to tell the one half which may be told, in the short time allotted for this conversation; yet I will suggest a few particulars; leaving you, if you please, to consult the authors who have given a more particular description.

Most of the *Africans* are in a state of heathenism; and sunk down into that ignorance and barbarity, into which mankind naturally fall, when destitute of divine revelation. Their lands are fertile, and produce all the necessaries of life: The inhabitants are divided into many distinct nations or clans; and of course are frequently entering into quarrels, and open war with each other. The *Europeans*, *English*, *French*, *Dutch*, &c. have carried on a trade with them for above 100 years; and have taken advantage of their ignorance and barbarity, to persuade them to enter into the inhuman practice of selling one another to the *Europeans*, for the commodities which they carry to them, most of which, they stand in no real need of: but might live as well, or better without them: particularly spiritous liquors, which have been carried to them in great quantities by the

Americans. They, by this means, have tempted and excited the poor blacks to make war upon one another, in order to get captives, spreading distress, devastation and destruction over a vast country; by which many millions have perished: and millions of others, have been captivated, and sold to the *Europeans and Americans*, into a state of slavery, much worse than death. And the inhabitants of the towns near the sea, are taught to exert all the art and power they have, to entrap and decoy one another, that they may make slaves of them, and sell them to us for rum; by which they intoxicate themselves, and become more brutish and savage than otherwise they could be, so that there are but few instances of sobriety, honesty, or even humanity, in these towns on the sea, to which the *Europeans* have access: and they who live the furthest from these places, are the least vicious, and much more civil and humane.

They stand in no need of the rum that is carried there in such vast quantities, by which so many thousands have been enslaved, and which has spread such infinite mischief among them. And I leave it with you to consider to what a dreadful degree the *Americans* have, by this abominable practice, brought the curse upon them, pronounced by an inspired prophet; and how very applicable it is to this case. "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink: that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayst look on their nakedness *." And is not this curse evidently come upon us, in a dreadful degree, in such a way, as to paint itself out, so that he who runs may read it? We have put the bottle to our neighbours' mouths, by carrying immense quantities of rum to them, and incited them to drink, that we might take advantage of their weakness, and thereby gratify our lusts. By this means multitudes of them have been enslaved, and carried to the *West-India* islands, there to be kept to hard labour, and treated ten thousand times worse than dogs. In consequence of which, incredible quantities of rum,

* Hab. ii. 15.

and molasses which has been distilled into rum among ourselves, have been imported; the most of which is consumed in intemperance and drunkenness, in such a dreadful degree, as to exceed any thing of the kind in any part of the world; by which thousands, yea millions, have ruined themselves, body and soul, for ever. Let any one consider this, and forbear to confess, if he can, that this woe has fallen heavily upon us, and that in such a way and connection as to point out the sinful cause.

But to return. (This trade has been carried on for a century and more, and for many years past, above an hundred thousand have been brought off the coast in a year, so that many, many millions have been torn from their native country, their acquaintance, relations and friends, and most of them put into a state of slavery, both themselves, and their children for ever, if they shall have any posterity, much worse than death. When numbers of these wretched creatures are collected by the savages, they are brought into the public market to be sold, all naked as they were born. The more than savage slave-merchant views them, and sends his surgeon, more particularly to examine them, as to the soundness of their limbs, their age, &c. All that are passed as fit for sale, are branded with a hot iron in some part of their body, with the buyers mark; and then confined, crowded together in some close hold, till a convenient time to put them on board a ship. When they are brought on board, all are immediately put in irons, except some of the women perhaps, and the small children, where they are so crowded together in that hot climate, that commonly a considerable number die on their passage to the *West Indies*, occasioned partly by their confinement, partly by the grief and vexation of their minds, from the treatment they receive, and the situation in which they find themselves. And a number commonly die after they arrive at the *West-Indies*, in seasoning to the climate; so that, commonly, not above seventy in an hundred survive their transportation; by which means

about thirty thousand are murdered every year by this slave-trade, which amounts to three millions in a century. When they are brought to the *West-Indies*, they are again exposed to market, as if they were so many beasts, and sold to the highest bidder; where again they are separated according to the humour of the traders, without any regard to their friendships or relations, of husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, &c. being torn from each other, without the least regard to any thing of this kind, and sent to different places, without any prospect of seeing each other again. They are then put under a task-master, by the purchasing planter, who appoints them their work, and rules over them with rigour and cruelty, following them with his cruel whip, or appointing one to do it, if possible, more cruel than himself. The infirm and feeble, the females, and even those who are pregnant, or have infants to take care of, must do their task in the field equally with the rest; or if they fall behind, may be sure to feel the lash of their unmerciful driver. Their allowance of food at the same time is very coarse and scant, and must be cooked by themselves, if cooked at all, when they want to be asleep. And often they have no food but what they procure for themselves, by working on the sabbath; for that is the only time they have to themselves. And to make any complaint, or petition for relief, will expose them to some severe punishment, if not a cruel death. The least real or supposable crimes in them, are punished in the most cruel manner. And they have no relief; there being no appeal from their masters sentence and will, who commonly are more like savage beasts, than rational, human creatures. And to petition for liberty, though in the most humble and modest terms, is as much as their lives are worth; as few escape the most cruel death, who presume to hint any thing of this kind to their masters: It being a maxim with those more than cruel tyrants, that the only way to keep them under, and prevent their thinking of the sweets of liberty, is to pu-

nish the least intimation of it in the severest manner, as the most intolerable affront and insult on their masters. Their labour is so hard, and their diet so scant and poor, and they are treated in all respects with such oppression and cruelty, that they do not increase by propagation in the islands, but constantly decrease, so that every planter must every year purchase five at least to every hundred he has on his plantation, in order to keep his number from diminishing.

But it is in vain to attempt a full description of the oppression and cruel treatment these poor creatures receive constantly at the hands of their imperious, unmerciful, worse than *Egyptian* task-masters. Words cannot utter it. Volumes might be written, and not give a detail of a thousandth part of the shockingly cruel things they have suffered, and are constantly suffering. Nor can they possibly be conceived of by any one, who has not been an eye witness. And how little a part does he see! They who are witnesses to any part of this horrid scene of barbarous oppression, cannot but feel the truth and propriety of *Solomon's* words: "So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of the oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of the oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead, which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive *:" *Solomon* never saw any oppression like this, unless he looked forward to this very instance, in the spirit of prophecy.

A. Sir, there is one important circumstance in favour of the slave-trade; or which will at least serve to counterbalance many of the evils you mention; and that is, we bring these slaves from a heathen land, to places of gospel light; and so put them under special advantages to be saved.

B. I know this has been mentioned by many in favour of the slave-trade: but when examined, will turn greatly against it. It can hardly be said with truth,

* Eccl. iv. 1, 2.

that the *West-India* islands are places of gospel light. But if they were, are the Negroes in the least benefited by it? Have they any access to the gospel? Have they any instruction, more than if they were beasts? So far from this, that their masters guard against their having any instruction to their utmost; and if any one would attempt any such thing, it would be at the risque of his life. And all the poor creatures learn of Christianity, from what they see in those who call themselves Christians, only serves to prejudice them in the highest degree against the Christian religion. For they not only see the abominably wicked lives of most of those who are called Christians, but are constantly oppressed by them, and receive as cruel treatment from them, as they could from the worst of beings. And as to those who are brought to the continent, in the southern colonies *, and even to *New-England*, so little pains are taken to instruct them, and there is so much to prejudice them against Christianity, that it is a very great wonder, and owing to an extraordinary divine interposition, in which we may say, God goes out of his common way, that any of them should think favourably of Christianity, and cordially embrace it. As to the most of them, no wonder they are unteachable, and get no good by the gospel; but have imbibed the deepest prejudices against it, from the treatment they receive from professed Christians; prejudices which most of them are by their circumstances restrained from expressing; while they are fixed in the strongest degree in their minds.

But if this was not the case, and all the slaves brought from *Africa*, were put under the best advantages to become Christians, and they were in circumstances that

* It can be proved, that since the war begun, a proposal was made to send some blacks, who were qualified to teach Christianity, into the southern colonies, to teach the blacks there, and attempt to Christianize them: but the gentlemen who were better acquainted with the disposition of slave-holders, in those parts, discouraged the design, and said the masters of the blacks in general, would not suffer any such thing!

tended to give them the most favourable idea of Christians, and the religion they profess *; and though all concerned in this trade, and in slavery in general, should have this wholly in view, viz. their becoming Christians, by which they should be eternally happy; yet this would not justify the slave-trade, or continuing them in a state of slavery: For to take this method to christianize them, would be a direct and gross violation of the laws of Christ. He commands us to go and preach the gospel to all nations; to carry the gospel to them, and not to go, and with violence bring them from their native country, without saying a word to them, or to the nations from whom they are taken, about the gospel, or any thing that relates to it.

If the *Europeans* and *Americans* had been as much engaged to christianize the *Africans*, as they have been to enslave them; and had been at half the cost and pains to introduce the gospel among them, that they have to captivate and destroy them; we have all the reason in the world to conclude that extensive country, containing such a vast multitude of inhabitants, would have been full of gospel light, and the many nations there, civilized and made happy; and a foundation laid for the salvation of millions of millions; and the happy instruments of it have been rewarded ten thousand fold for all their labour and expence. But now, instead of this, what has been done on that coast, by those who pass among the Negroes for Christians †, has only served to produce and spread the greatest and most deep-rooted prejudices against the Christian religion, and bar the way to that which is above all things desirable,

* Which cannot be the case, so long as they are held in a state of slavery, or they are brought away from their native country in the manner they are; so that the supposition is inconsistent, and destroys itself.

† For they have no way to get an idea of a Christian, but from the appearance and conduct of the *Europeans* or *Americans*, in the practice of all their unrighteousness, cruelty, profaneness and debauchery.

their coming to the knowledge of the truth that they might be saved. So that while, by the murdering or enslaving millions of millions, they have brought a curse upon themselves, and on all that partake with them, they have injured in the highest degree innumerable nations, and done what they could to prevent their salvation, and to fasten them down in ignorance and barbarity to the latest posterity!—Who can realize all this, and not feel a mixture of grief, pity, indignation and horror, truly ineffable! And must he not be filled with zeal to do his utmost to put a speedy stop to this seven-headed monster of iniquity, with all the horrid train of evils with which it is attended.

And can any one consider all these things, and yet pretend to justify the slave-trade, or the slavery of the *Africans* in *America*? Is it not impossible, that a real Christian, who has attended to all this, should have any hand in this trade? And it requires the utmost stretch of charity to suppose that any one ever did, or can buy or sell an *African* slave, with a sincere view to make a true Christian of him *.

* It has been often said, in vindication of the slave-trade, that the blacks are so cruel to each other, that they would put their captives to death, if they could not sell them; so that they who buy them save their lives, and do them the greatest kindness. And, at the same time, this trade is of the greatest advantage to the West-India islands and the southern States, and to all in connexion with them: For while men cannot do the business which is done by the blacks, in those hot climates, so that were not the blacks introduced and improved, all this labour, and the produce of it, must cease.

Answer. These suggestions may be a sufficient vindication of the slave-trade with the interested and inattentive; but the impartial and judicious will see with how little reason and truth they are urged, when they have attended to the following observations.

There is no evidence that those people did kill the captives, in general, which they took in war; but the contrary is evident, from the account given of them by those Europeans who have travelled and lived long among them. They represent those nations, which have not been corrupted by the whites, to be, in general, industrious, friendly and hospitable; and in a great measure happy in the enjoyment of society, and the comforts of life. [See *A short account of that part of Africa inhabited by the*

A. All this seems to be little to the purpose; since it was granted in the beginning of our conversation, that the slave-trade, as it has been carried on, is not to be justified. But what is this to the question we proposed to consider; which is, Whether it be wrong to hold the blacks we have among us in a state of slavery, or ought to set them free without delay? To this you have said little or nothing as yet.

Negroes, printed at Philadelphia, 1762.] And there is abundant evidence from history, and testimonies incontestible, that these nations have been encouraged and induced to carry on most of their wars, for more than a century past, by the Europeans and Americans, that they might get captives to sell to traders in the souls and bodies of men; and where this trade has been the means of saving one life, it has destroyed millions. Therefore, if professing-Christians, instead of encouraging them in their cruelty, and tempting them to destroy, captivate, and sell each other, had taken as much pains to teach them humanity and benevolence, as they have to reduce millions to a state of slavery worse than death; they might have saved as many lives, as now they have been the means of destroying.

Besides, the cruelty of those savages to each other, is no warrant to the slave-trader to buy those supposed victims, and put them into a state of slavery, which, by their own confession, is worse than death. This, surely, is not an act of mercy, but of cruelty. The voice of mercy and humanity is against selling them as slaves. Who does not know that, "one who was the means of preserving a man's life, is not, therefore, entitled to make him a slave, and sell him, as he does a piece of goods."

As to other suggestions, viz. That the blacks are necessary to cultivate the lands in those hot climates, since the whites are not able to labour there, it may be observed, that there is not the least evidence of this, but much of the contrary. Whites are healthy, and do the labour in the East-Indies, which blacks do in the West, in the same climate; and that to much greater advantage, of which authentic accounts have been published. The truth is, most of the whites which are born in the southern states, or the West-Indies, are not educated to labour, but, great part of them, in idleness and intemperance. The blacks are introduced to do the work, and it is thought a disgrace for a white person to get his living by labour. By this means, the whites in general are vicious, and all imbibe such a haughty and tyrannical spirit, by holding so many slaves, that they are above labour, and many of them, rather a plague than a blessing to all about them: And

BUT ALL I have said upon the slave-trade, to shew the unrighteousness, the cruelty, the murder, the opposition to Christianity and the spread of the gospel among the Africans; the destruction of whole nations, and myriads of souls, which are contained in this horrid practice, has been principally with a view to a more clear and satisfactory determination of the question before us, which you have now renewedly proposed—For I think

whole families are ruined for ever, by means of this slavery. Whereas, if African slaves had never been introduced, or this slavery were now abolished; and every man had his farm or plantation, no more than he could cultivate to the best advantage, by the help of his children, and perhaps a few hired men; this would introduce industry, temperance and economy; the land would produce much more than it does now; and the country be filled with industrious, virtuous inhabitants, happy themselves, and blessings to all around them, instead of the comparatively few families now; many of which are a burden to the earth, and a disgrace to human nature.—This brings the words of Solomon fresh to mind, Eccl. viii. 9. “There is a time, when one man ruleth over another *to his own hurt*.”

We cannot hesitate to say, this sage observation is verified in the most striking manner, and to the highest degree, in the slavery under consideration. It is an unspeakable hurt to the public, to the commonwealth. It is inconsistent with republican principles, and tends to overthrow the liberty of those states, and introduce monarchy and tyranny, to have such slavery tolerated among us, and so many petty sovereigns and lords, ruling over a number of vassals with despotic sway. Their children naturally imbibe those arbitrary principles, and grow up as unfit to be useful members of those free, republican states, as do the children of the most haughty monarch on the globe. And those men rule over themselves to their own hurt, and the hurt, the misery and ruin of their families, temporal and *ETERNAL*.

But if it should still be thought by any; or it be in fact true, that those climates cannot be cultivated by whites; let it be remembered, that this is no justification of the horrid slave trade, and slavery now practised. But it is a good reason why the whites should abandon the places where they cannot live, unless it be on the blood of others, as good as themselves; and renounce the business which is carried on in the exercise of so much unrighteousness and cruelty. If the blacks only can labour there, the lands are theirs, by right; and they ought to be allowed to possess them, to cultivate, and enjoy the fruit of their labour.

the following proposition may be advanced as undeniable, viz. *If the slave-trade be unjustifiable and wrong; then our holding the Africans and their children in bondage, is unjustifiable and wrong; and the latter is criminal in some proportion to the inexpressible baseness and criminality of the former.* For,

FIRST, If they have been brought into a state of slavery, by unrighteousness and violence, they having never forfeited their liberty, or given any one a right to enslave and sell them; then purchasing them of these piratical tyrants, and holding them in the same state of bondage into which they, contrary to all right, have brought them, is continuing the exercise of the same unrighteousness and violence towards them. They have yet as much a right to their liberty as ever they had, and to demand it of him who holds them in bondage; and he denies them their right, which is of more worth to them than every thing else they can have in the world, or all the riches the unjust master does or can possess; and therefore injures them in a very high degree every hour he refuses or neglects to set them at liberty. Besides,

SECONDLY, Holding these blacks in a state of slavery, is a practical justification of the slave-trade, and so brings the guilt of that on the head of him, who so far partakes in this iniquity, as to hold *one* of these a slave, who was unrighteously made so by these sons of violence. The old adage, “The partaker is as bad as the thief,” carries such a plain truth in it, that every one must discern it: And it is certainly applicable to this case.

It is impossible to buy one of these blacks and detain him a slave, without partaking with him who first reduced him to this state, and put it in his power thus to possess him; and practically justifying him for so doing, so as to bring upon himself the guilt of first enslaving him. It is not therefore possible for any of our *slave-keepers* to justify themselves in what they are doing, unless they can justify the slave-trade. If they fail here,

they bring on themselves an awful degree of the guilt of the whole.

THIRDLY, By keeping these slaves, and buying and selling them, they actually encourage and promote the slave-trade: And therefore, in this view, keeping slaves, and continuing to buy and sell them, is to bring on us the guilt of the slave-trade, which is hereby supported. For so long as slaves are bought and possessed, and in demand; so long the *African* trade will be supported and encouraged.

A. But there is a stop put to the importation of slaves into the *American* Colonies, as they have resolved no more shall be bought. This being the case, the keeping those we have among us in slavery, is no encouragement to the slave-trade:

B. I grant, if this resolution should be perpetual, and extend to the *West Indies*, it would discourage the slave-trade; so far as the *Americans* are concerned in it: But it would be more effectually discountenanced and condemned, if slavery was wholly abolished; and it cannot be consistently done without this. For if it be wrong to import and buy them *now*, it was *always* wrong; and therefore they that are already slaves among us, are injured, and unjustly enslaved; and we have made them our slaves without the least right; and ought to retract it, and repair the injury done to them, so far as is in our power, by setting them free, and compensating them otherwise, so far as we are able. There is therefore a palpable inconsistency in resolving to import and buy no more slaves; and yet refusing to let those go out free, which we have already enslaved, unless there be some insuperable impediment in the way.

The whole I have said concerning the unlawfulness of keeping the blacks in slavery, if the trade by which they are become our slaves be unlawful, may be illustrated by the following example.

A number of robbers invaded a certain province, and took off most of their goods and effects, and carried them

to a neighbouring province, and sold them to the inhabitants; and the robbers finding this encouragement, continued the practice for many years. At length the people of the injured province applied to their neighbours, who had their goods of the robbers, and were now in possession of them, and asked them to restore what was taken from them by violence, and to which they had a good and indisputable right; it being impossible these robbers could give a right to what they had unjustly taken from them. But the people in whose possession the stolen goods were found, utterly refused to deliver them up to the injured people who demanded them. They told them, they had indeed been greatly injured, and they must condemn the robbers as very injurious and cruel in what they had done: But as they now had these goods in their own possession, they intended to keep them, and looked on themselves under no obligation to deliver them up, though they suffered so much, and would probably perish for want of them. And they intended still to buy all the robbers should bring to them.

To this the injured replied, "By partaking with these robbers in receiving the goods at their hands, you practically justify their conduct, and must share with them in their guilt. For by this means you encourage them, and are determined to go on to encourage them in this violence and rapine: And by condemning them, you equally condemn yourselves, and must remain under this condemnation till you restore the goods we demand; and resolve never to purchase any thus taken from us by violence."

Upon this they determined to purchase no more of them, but refused to deliver up what they had already got in possession. But the oppressed told them, they did right in resolving to injure them no more in that way; but they were now very inconsistent with themselves; for if it were wrong to purchase any more, it was as wrong to withhold what they had already gotten

in possession: And they had no other way to justify themselves in detaining their goods, and to be consistent, but by proceeding to take whatever those robbers should bring to them in future, and justifying themselves in so doing, and the robbers in all their depredations.

A. This reasoning looks something plausible, I confess; but the holy scripture approves of making and keeping slaves; and this surely is sufficient to keep us in countenance.

B. I hope you will not appeal to the holy scripture, in support of a practice, which you and every one else must allow to be so inexpressible unjust, inhuman and cruel, as is the slave-trade; and consequently so glaringly contrary to the whole tenor of divine revelation. And if the slave-trade is such a gross violation of every divine precept, 'tis impossible to vindicate the slavery to which the *Africans* have been reduced by this trade, from the holy scripture. Of this we have such a certainty *a priori*, that would be a horrid reproach of divine revelation, to pretend this practice can be supported by that; or even to look into it with any hope or expectation of finding any thing there in favour of it. And if there be any passages in the bible, which are capable of a construction in favour of this practice, we may be very certain it is a wrong one. In a word, if any kind of slavery can be vindicated by the holy scriptures, we are already sure our making and holding the Negroes our slaves, as we do, cannot be vindicated by any thing we can find there; but is condemned by the whole of divine revelation. However, I am willing to hear what you can produce from scripture, in favour of any kind of slavery.

A. You know that a curse was pronounced on the posterity of *Ham*, for his wickedness, in the following words, *A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.* He could not be a servant unto his brethren, unless they made him so; or at least held him in servi-

tude. The curse could not take place unless they executed it, and they seem to be by God appointed to do this. Therefore while we, the children of *Japheth*, are making such abject slaves of the blacks, the children of *Ham*, we are only executing the righteous curse denounced upon them; which is so far from being wrong in us, that it would be a sin, even disobedience to the revealed will of God, to refuse to make slaves of them, and attempt to set them at liberty.

B. Do you think, my good Sir, it was the duty of *Pharaoh* to make the *Israelites* serve him and the *Egyptians*, and to afflict them, by ruling over them with rigour, and holding them in hard and cruel bondage, because God had expressly foretold this, and said it should be done? And was the *Affyrian* king blameless while he executed the judgments which God had threatened to inflict on his professing people? Did God's threatening them with those evils, warrant this king to distress, captivate and destroy them, as he did? And will you say, the *Jews* did right in crucifying our Lord, because by this they fulfilled the scriptures, declaring that thus it must be?—Your argument, if it is of any force, will assert and justify all this; and therefore, I hope, will be renounced by you, and by all who have the least regard for the holy scripture, with proper abhorrence.

But if this argument were not so fraught with absurdity and impiety as it really is, and it were granted to be forcible, with respect to all upon whom the mentioned curse was denounced; yet it would not justify our enslaving the *Africans*, for they are not the posterity of *Canaan*, who was the only son of *Ham* that was doomed to be a servant of servants. The other sons of *Ham*, and their posterity, are no more affected with this curse, than the other sons of *Noah*, and their posterity. Therefore this prediction is as much of a warrant for the *Africans* enslaving us, as it is for us to make slaves of them. The truth is, it gives not the least sha-

dow of a right to any one of the children of *Noah* to make slaves of any of their brethren *

A. The people of *Israel* were allowed by God to buy and make slaves from the nations that were round about them, and the strangers that lived among them, which could not have been the case, if this was wrong and unjust. And why have not we an equal right to do the same ?

B.—And why have not we an equal right to invade any nation and land, as they did the land of *Canaan*, and destroy them all, men, women and children, and beasts, without saving so much as one alive ? It was right for the *Israelites* to do this, because they had a divine permission and direction to do it, as the God of *Israel* had a right to destroy the seven nations of *Canaan* in what way he thought best, and to direct whom he pleased to do it. And it was right for them to make bond-servants of the nations round them, they having an express permission to do it from him who has a right to dispose of all men as he pleases. God saw fit, for wise reasons, to allow the people of *Israel* thus to make and possess slaves ; but is this any licence to us to enslave any of our fellow men, any more than their being allowed to kill the seven nations in *Canaan*, is a warrant to us to kill any of our fellow men, whom we please, and are able to destroy, and take possession of their estates ? This must be answered in the negative, by every one who will allow himself a moment's reflection. God gave many directions and laws to the *Israelites*, which had no respect to mankind in general ; and this under

* If it should be asked, why *Canaan* should be singled out from the other sons of *Hain*, and cursed for the sins of his father ? May we not conclude that the curse fell on all *Hain's* posterity, and that *Canaan* only is mentioned, as including all the rest ? It must be answered, No, by no means. We have no warrant to do this. The father sinned ; and God might justly have cursed all his posterity. But in his wisdom and sovereign goodness, he cursed only one branch of the family. And how effectually this has taken place, the scripture informs us.

consideration has all the marks of such an one. There is not any thing in it, or relating to it, from whence can be deduced the least evidence that it was designed to be a regulation for all nations through every age of the world, but every thing to the contrary. The children of *Israel* were then distinguished from all other nations on earth ; they were God's peculiar people, and favoured on many accounts above others ; and had many things in their constitution and laws that were designed to keep up their separation and distinction from other nations, and to make the special favour of Heaven towards them more apparent to all who had any knowledge of them : And this law respecting bondage, is suited to answer these ends. This distinction is now at an end, and all nations are put upon a level ; and Christ, who has taken down the wall of separation, has taught us to look on all nations as our neighbours and brethren, without any respect of persons, and to love all men as ourselves, and to do to others as we would they should treat us ; by which he has most effectually abolished this permission given to the *Israelites*, as well as many other institutions, which were peculiar to them.

Besides, that this permission was not designed for all nations and ages, will be very evident, if we consider what such a supposition implies : For if this be so, then all other nations had a right to make slaves of the *Israelites*. The *Egyptians* had a right to buy and sell them, and keep them all in bondage for ever. And the nations round about *Canaan*, had a right to bring them into bondage, as they sometimes did. And the *Babylonians* and *Romans* had a good warrant to reduce them to a state of captivity and servitude. And the *Africans* have a good right to make slaves of us and our children. The inhabitants of *Great-Britain* may lawfully make slaves of all the *Americans*, and transport us to *England*, and buy and sell us in open market, as they do their catthories, and perpetuate our bondage to the latest ration. And the *Turks* have a good right to Christian slaves they have among them ; and to m

